This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 July 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:39 P.M., 09 July 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.
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Sexual Offences: Prosecutions

Ann Coffey:  [272118]

To ask the Attorney General, how he will ensure that the Criminal Justice Board review of how rape and sexual violence cases are handled across the criminal justice system provides independent scrutiny of CPS case handling.

Lucy Frazer:
Rape and serious sexual offences are horrific crimes, which can have a significant and profound impact on victims.

I recognise that there is real current concern around the criminal justice response to rape and serious sexual offences. The Government’s Review provides an opportunity to identify areas, from the beginning to the end of the criminal justice process, where the police, CPS and HM Courts and Tribunals Service can improve practice and outcomes in cases involving these offences. The CPS will work with partners across the criminal justice system to address any issues that are highlighted as a result of the Review.

All those involved in the Review, including the AGO and the CPS, are committed to ensuring that the Review is conducted with the requisite degree of openness and independence as to enable the public to have full confidence in its final findings.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Boilers: Standards

Dr David Drew:  [272120]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 25 June to Question 266066 on boilers, for what reasons Building Research Establishment has changed its assessment set out in its paper of 7 February 2018 that there is an increased risk that boilers will in fact be non-compliant.

Chris Skidmore:
I understand the Building Research Establishment (BRE) has not changed its assessment. Their position is that their analysis does not conclude that the current Ecodesign regulation results in consumers being mis-sold, nor that boilers sold in England do not meet the efficiency standards set by Government. For further details of their analysis the Honourable Member may wish to contact BRE directly.
Business: Public Holidays

Theresa Villiers:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will meet representatives of businesses that make printed calendars to discuss the decision to change the date of the 2020 early May bank holiday.

Kelly Tolhurst:
The Government recognises that the decision to move the early May bank holiday from 4 to 8 May 2020 has caused difficulties to some individuals and businesses. But on this historic occasion the Government wants to ensure as many people as possible have the opportunity to pay a fitting tribute to our heroes of the Second World War on the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Representatives from businesses that publish printed calendars have contacted the Department and we have responded to them directly.

Climate Change

Seema Malhotra:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to (a) end subsidies to the fossil fuel-based energy industry, (b) phase out fossil fuel-based energy infrastructure and (c) accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy within the 11-year timeframe set out in the IPCC report to limit temperature rise this century to 1.5 degrees Celsius published on 8 October 2018.

Chris Skidmore:
Climate change is one of the most urgent and pressing challenges we face today, and the UK is committed to tackling it. We have set a new net zero greenhouse gas emissions target for the UK, to be delivered by 2050. This world-leading target will bring to an end our contribution to climate change, and makes us the first major economy to legislate for net zero emissions.

We are taking steps to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. We project that oil and gas will play a smaller role in meeting the UK’s demand for energy over time, although there will continue to be a need for oil and gas as we transition to a low-carbon economy. We have committed to introducing legislation to phase out unabated coal-fired power generation in Great Britain from 1 October 2025 whilst supporting renewables. UK-wide coal consumption is now at its lowest recorded level since the start of the industrial revolution and over half of our electricity came from low carbon sources last year.

The UK uses a definition of fossil fuel subsidies developed with the EC and other G20 EU Member States to respond to the G20 commitment to phase out such subsidies. The definition, based on the approach of the International Energy Agency, is – “A fossil-fuel subsidy is any government measure or program with the objective or direct consequence of reducing below world-market prices, including all costs of transport, refining and distribution, the effective cost for fossil fuels paid by final consumers, or
of reducing the costs or increasing the revenues of fossil-fuel producing companies.”

The UK has no fossil fuel subsidies.

Seema Malhotra:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of pursuing the target of net zero emissions by 2050 on historically economically marginalised communities; and what steps his Department has taken to ensure that policies to achieve the net zero target account for the needs of (a) workers in carbon-intensive industries and (b) historically economically marginalised communities.

Chris Skidmore:

The transition to a clean, low carbon economy can help give us towns and cities with cleaner air and warmer homes with lower bills, while growing our economy and supporting new jobs in growing low carbon industries – already there are almost 400,000 jobs in low carbon business and their supply chains. By one estimate this could grow to 2 million jobs in 2030.

But as our economy changes we must make sure that this growth is inclusive, benefits people right across the UK, supporting workers as industries change and ensuring the costs as well as the benefits are shared fairly, protecting consumers, workers and businesses. The Offshore Wind Sector Deal sets out that offshore wind could support 27,000 jobs across the UK by 2030. With the industry committed to sourcing 60% total lifetime UK content and increasing UK content in the capital expenditure phase, there will also be a need for highly skilled workers in manufacturing areas throughout the supply chain. The sector will also bolster regional clusters by working with local, regional, and devolved government and economic development agencies.

That is why we have announced that HM Treasury will be conducting a review into the costs of decarbonisation, including how to achieve this transition in a way that works for households, businesses and public finances, and the implications for UK competitiveness.

Consumer Goods: Electrical Safety

Carolyn Harris:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Consumer Protection Partnership in protecting the public from unsafe electrical products.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Consumer Protection Partnership (CPP) was formed in April 2012 to bring together key partners within the consumer landscape to better identify, prioritise and coordinate collective action to tackle the issues causing greatest harm to consumers.
Consumer safety, including risks posed from unsafe electrical products is a priority for the Department and the CPP offers one forum to ensure that stakeholders voices are heard and engaged on this important issue.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards is taking forward work to improve consumer safety by increasing rates of registration for electronic products. We are examining mandatory registration and developing a range of options, underpinned by research and a strong evidence base to understand the obstacles to registration, consumer attitudes and the opportunities of new technology. Research with 4,000 consumers has been undertaken and a field trial to test different approaches is due to start in the Autumn.

### Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable them to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy does not offer employees a payroll deduction service to enable them to join a credit union.

### Electricity: Heating and Transport

Giles Watling:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to accelerate the electrification of (a) heat and (b) transport.

Chris Skidmore:

The electrification of heat, notably through heat pumps, can play a key role in decarbonizing heat, which is an essential step in meeting our carbon budgets. The Government is committed to supporting the deployment of heat pumps. Through the Renewable Heat Incentive we are spending £2.8bn between 2018/19 and 2020/21 to support innovative low carbon heat technologies in homes and businesses, including heat pumps.

The Government is currently developing the future policy framework for supporting low carbon heat, including through the Future Homes Standard announced by my rt. hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer in February 2019. This will set standards through building regulations to drive uptake in low carbon heating.

Low consumer awareness and confidence in heat pumps also remain key issues. BEIS will launch a demonstration project on the electrification of heat in 2019, which will help demonstrate the feasibility of a possible large-scale transition to heat pumps and develop innovative solutions that work for a wide range of homes and consumers.
The Government is working to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission electric vehicles, and for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

To achieve this, we are investing nearly £1.5bn between April 2015 and March 2021, with grants available for plug in cars, vans, lorries, buses, taxis and motorcycles, and schemes to support charge point infrastructure at homes and workplaces and on residential streets.

The Road to Zero Strategy was published last year, it sets out a clear pathway to zero emissions, to give clarity and certainty to both industry and motorists.

**Energy**

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many energy companies have ceased trading in each of the last five years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

There are now around 60 domestic energy suppliers in the market, up from 13 in 2010. Since 2014, 16 domestic suppliers have ceased trading. GB Energy (in 2016), was the first supplier to cease trading since 2008. There was one market exit in 2017 and the most recent exit was in March 2019. All customers were swiftly moved to a new supplier by Ofgem.

**New Businesses: Internet**

**Jim Shannon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support his Department provides for young people who want to set up an online retail business.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

As outlined in our Digital Strategy and Charter, our ambition is to ensure the UK is the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business.

Support is in place to help small, early stage companies raise equity finance through the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme, which offers tax reliefs to individual investors who purchase new shares in those companies. It complements the Enterprise Investment Scheme, which offers tax reliefs to investors in high risk and growing companies. The Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme is intended to recognise the particular difficulties which very early stage companies face in attracting investment, by offering tax relief at a higher rate.

Tech Nation, which receives grant funding from DCMS, provides a range of resources to support the growth of digital businesses in the UK. This includes a Digital Business Academy that provides free online courses on starting and growing a digital business.
The Start Up Loans Company, a subsidiary of the British Business Bank, delivers the Government’s Start Up Loans programme providing finance and support for businesses who struggle to access other forms of finance.

Online support is available for young people to start a digital business and apply for financing at the following websites:

https://www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline
https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/start
https://technation.io/resources/digital-business-academy/
https://www.startuploans.co.uk/about-start-up-loans-company/

Post Offices

Marion Fellows:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many new post office branch locations opened in the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2019.

Kelly Tolhurst:

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

While the Government sets the strategic direction for the Post Office, it allows the company the commercial freedom to deliver this strategy as an independent business. The management of the network is an operational matter for the Post Office. I have therefore asked Alisdair Cameron, the Group interim Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Marion Fellows:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of opportunities advertised on the Post Office business opportunities website are for (a) new branches and (b) branches where the current postmaster is seeking a replacement.

Kelly Tolhurst:

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

Marion Fellows:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which communities do not have a post office as a result of (a) temporary, and (b) permanent branch closures.

Kelly Tolhurst:

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

While the Government sets the strategic direction for the Post Office, it allows the company the commercial freedom to deliver this strategy as an independent business. The management of the network is an operational matter for Post Office Limited. I have therefore asked Alisdair Cameron, the Group interim Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Marion Fellows:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which post office branches been replaced with (a) an outreach and (b) a mobile service.

Kelly Tolhurst:

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

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Productivity: North of England

Andrea Jenkyns: [271528]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how he plans to use the Northern Powerhouse strategy refresh to improve productivity in the North of England.

Jake Berry:

The Government’s continued commitment to the Northern Powerhouse, and the North’s vital role in improving the country’s productivity, is reflected in my rt. hon. Friend the Prime Minister’s recent decision to make the Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth a joint appointment between the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. This builds on the commitment at Autumn Budget 2018 to refresh the Northern Powerhouse Strategy.

The Strategy will be developed across government and in partnership with external stakeholders, including mayoral combined authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and civic and business leaders, to ensure the whole of the North of England benefits from government investment with a clear plan for improved productivity and prosperity. It will also reflect the development of Local Industrial Strategies across the North, the first of which was published last month by Greater Manchester with government.

The refreshed Northern Powerhouse Strategy will be published in due course.

Renewable Energy

Giles Watling: [272288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will (a) review and (b) increase the 6GW capacity cap in the Contracts for Difference auctions to support the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Chris Skidmore:

We set the the 6-gigawatt capacity cap for the third Contracts for Difference allocation round based on our understanding of the pipeline of projects. It aims to promote competitive tension, whilst delivering significant capacity, and ensure smooth delivery of low carbon generation through the 2020s.

Renewable Energy: Investment

Paul Farrelly: [271403]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of enabling investors to realise returns while solar power plants, onshore and offshore wind farms and hydroelectric power plants are being built to ensure that projects go ahead.
Chris Skidmore:
The existing renewable support schemes are designed so that payment is based on generation, and ensures that renewable assets are attractive to investors. Over 42GW of new renewables have been constructed through the Contracts for Difference, Renewables Obligation and Feed in Tariffs Schemes (to 2018).

Satellites
Jamie Stone:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the timeframe for bringing forward secondary legislation to enable the launch of small satellites will ensure that the target date of achieving a first launch by 2021 can be met.

Chris Skidmore:
The Space Industry Act 2018 was a major step towards establishing the safe and supportive regulatory framework needed to enable launches to take place from the early 2020s. Work across Government is now under way to develop the secondary legislation and stand up the regulator to accept applications for spaceflight licences by early 2021.

Science: Finance
Chi Onwurah:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what account he has taken of his Department's report entitled What is the relationship between public and private investment in science, research and innovation published in July 2015, in determining future funding for science.

Chris Skidmore:
The 2015 report by Economic Insight was considered during the 2015 Spending Review, and before more recent announcements related to the National Productivity Investment Fund, together with other evidence and analysis.

The Government has a long term plan for Science, Research and Innovation. As a first step to reaching the 2.4% target, public R&D spending has been raised from around £9.5bn in 2016-17 to around £12.5bn in 2021-22. This is a total increase of £7bn over 5 years, and the biggest increase in public funding of R&D on record.

Public spending in R&D for years beyond current budgets will be considered in the next Spending Review.

Social Services: Conditions of Employment
Frank Field:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide more details on his plans for dedicated employment rights for care workers.
**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). We intend to bring forward a consultation in due course.

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**Wind Power: Seas and Oceans**

**Giles Watling:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the finding of the Committee on Climate Change that the UK will require up to 75GW by 2050, if he will review the 30GW by 2030 target for offshore wind.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Offshore Wind Sector Deal foresees up to 30GW of installed offshore wind capacity by 2030, provided costs continue to fall. This level of certainty, unmatched by any other major European market, sets a firm foundation for offshore wind to play its role in reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

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**CABINET OFFICE**

**Cabinet Office: Brexit**

**Ruth Jones:**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on his Department's preparations for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The UK Government has been working directly with the Welsh Government, and the other Devolved Administrations, at Ministerial and official level to minimise disruption in the event we leave the EU without a deal. The Welsh Government last attended the Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) on 28 June 2019.

**Tom Brake:**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what preparations his Department is making for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement; and how much funding has been allocated to those preparations.

**Mr David Lidington:**

As a responsible Government, we have been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal for nearly three years. The Government is putting in place a range of mitigations for such a scenario. The Cabinet Office is playing its part by,
amongst other things, putting in place arrangements to deploy expertise to departments.

The Cabinet Office has allocated £58.8m in 2019/20 for EU Exit activity. The costs for each scenario cannot be readily separated, given the significant overlap in plans in many cases.

Cabinet Office: Overtime

Jon Trickett:  [272747]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the amount of unpaid overtime worked by staff in his Department in the last 24 months.

Oliver Dowden:

Information about unpaid overtime is not held. Cabinet Office encourages staff and their Line Managers to adopt positive work/life balance arrangements which includes flexible working hours and working from home whilst ensuring business needs are met. But this is managed at a local level within Business Groups where it is the responsibility of line managers to ensure their staff are not working excessive hours and comply with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations 1998.

Civil Service: Pension Funds

Seema Malhotra:  [272842]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the capacity of civil service pension funds to engage in shareholder advocacy with the companies in which they have holdings; and to what extent those funds have exercised that capacity to date.

Oliver Dowden:

‘The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme and Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme’ are unfunded schemes and therefore do not engage in shareholder advocacy as they do not have any direct share holdings in companies.

Seema Malhotra:  [273389]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his policy is on adopting environmental, social, and governance criteria in relation to civil service pension funds.

Oliver Dowden:

‘The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme and Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme’ is an unfunded scheme and therefore does not have any investments.

Cycling

Christian Matheson:  [273400]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which Departments have introduced the cycle to work scheme.
Christian Matheson:
To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government has plans to implement the cycle to work scheme across all Departments; and if he will make a statement.

Oliver Dowden:
Seventeen of the eighteen main Whitehall departments have a Cycle to Work Scheme in place. As this policy falls under delegated authority, it is for individual departments to decide whether to offer this scheme to their employees.

European Parliament: Elections

Mr Gregory Campbell:
To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what changes were introduced in postal and proxy voting procedures for the 2019 European Parliamentary Elections compared to previous (a) European or (b) General Elections.

Kevin Foster:
No changes were put in place for proxy voting for the 2019 European Parliamentary elections.

For postal voting, it was identified that using the International Business Response Licence process could assist the return of postal votes from overseas. This was used at the 2019 European Parliamentary elections, as it had been in national polls since 2016, but not at the previous European Parliamentary elections in 2014.

DEFENCE

Apache AH-64 Helicopters: Procurement

Andrew Rosindell:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when her Department plans to complete its order for all 50 AH-64E Apache attack helicopters.

Stuart Andrew:
The order for all 50 Apache AH-64E attack helicopters was placed with the US Government in June 2016 and deliveries are planned to be complete by early 2024. The US Government manages the timing of subcontracts to support the required aircraft delivery schedule.

Arctic: Navy

Mr Kevan Jones:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps her Department is taking to increase UK maritime capabilities in the Arctic and the High North.
Mark Lancaster:
The Royal Navy has the capability to project force using a variety of assets in the High North and Arctic, dependent on the location, season and threat, including amphibious assets focused around 3 Commando Brigade and Commando Helicopter Force who have well-established expertise in cold weather warfare. It has one purpose-built Ice Patrol Ship (HMS Protector) and the UK will maintain an ability to operate under the Arctic ice. Given the changing nature of the Arctic, and in support of the UK Government Arctic Policy Framework, we are seeking to develop sustainable, modernised and proportionate Defence capability for the region, including investment in appropriate Defence research and commercial technology. All Royal Air Force operational aircraft are capable of performing in cold weather with appropriate preparation and maintenance. The Royal Air Force's fleet of nine P-8A Maritime Patrol Aircraft, as well as F35 Lightning II operating from HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales, will further contribute to the UK's capabilities in the region. In the longer-term, the Ministry of Defence will explore opportunities offered by space and autonomous systems to meet future Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance requirements.

Armed Forces: Germany

John Spellar: [271371]
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress has been made in establishing a joint bridging unit in Germany.

Mark Lancaster:
In October 2018, a Joint Vision Statement was signed, reaffirming the continuing importance of close defence co-operation with Germany. This committed the UK to a combined river crossing capability with shared facilities in Minden. Elements of an Engineer Squadron are already operating at Minden, alongside our German partners. We continue to grow the UK elements of this capability and anticipate that the wider battalion will be fully operational within the first half of the next decade.

Astute Class Submarines

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: [272913]
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how long it would take and at what cost to replace an Astute class submarine.

Stuart Andrew:
A decision on whether or not to acquire a replacement submarine would be taken in the light of the circumstances at the time. The cost and schedule of doing so would depend on the circumstances that created a requirement for a replacement.
Defence: Finance

Andrew Rosindell: [272137]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether she has plans to increase defence spending in the next three years.

Penny Mordaunt:
Future spending plans will be agreed at the next Spending Review.

The first duty of any Government is the safety and security of the British people at home and abroad. That is why we have committed to spending at least 2% of our GDP on Defence every year of this Parliament.

Defence: Modernisation

Mr Kevan Jones: [272778]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps she is taking to ensure the modernising defence programme is coordinated with the NATO defence planning process.

Penny Mordaunt:
NATO is the cornerstone of our defence. The Modernising Defence Programme, published in December 2018, reaffirmed the UK's position as a leading voice in NATO and European security, including our commitment to the NATO Readiness Initiative. These commitments remain at the heart of UK Defence planning as we modernise to meet new threats.

Electronic Warfare

Angela Crawley: [272888]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment she has made of the UK's ability to defend itself against cyber-attacks.

Mark Lancaster:
Cyber is a tier 1 threat and remains a national priority. The National Cyber Security Strategy, published on 1 November 2016, sets out ambitious policies to protect the UK in cyber space, supported by a £1.9 billion transformational investment. Our vision for 2021 is that the UK is secure and resilient to cyber threats, prosperous and confident in the digital world.

To operate and defend our networks and provide worldwide assured communications for defence, our Global Operations and Security Control Centre at Ministry of Defence (MOD) Corsham is operational 24/7, equipped with sophisticated cyber defence capabilities. We take the cyber threat very seriously. We are enhancing our cyber defence capabilities with recently announced plans to invest over £40 million in developing a new Cyber Security Operations Capability (CSOC). The CSOC will enhance our ability to secure Defence networks and systems against cyber threats and bring together our defensive cyber activity, enabling us to continue to operate safely and securely.
We are also investing £265 million in a pioneering approach to root out cyber vulnerabilities within our military platforms and wider cyber dependent systems. The new Cyber Vulnerability Investigations programme enables the MOD to better understand cyber risks, and thereby ensure its ability to defend itself against cyber attacks.

### HMS Talent and HMS Triumph

**Deidre Brock:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when HMS Talent and HMS Triumph will be based at HMNB Clyde; and when and where those vessels will be decommissioned.

**Deidre Brock:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 1 July 2013 to Question 162999 on Trafalgar Class Submarines, whether those planned end of service dates remain the same for each boat.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The planned out-of-service dates for Royal Navy submarines are withheld as disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

An error has been identified in the answer given to the hon. Member to Question 269749 answered on 3 July 2019 which stated that the three Trafalgar Class submarines were based at Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde. While all Royal Navy submarines operate under the administrative command of the Submarine Flotilla, on current plans HMS Talent's base port change will take place in the next few weeks and HMS Triumph's in 2020.

### Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how long it takes and at what cost to replace an F35 fighter jet.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how long it would take and at what cost to replace a Typhoon Eurofighter.

**Stuart Andrew:**

A decision on whether or not to acquire a replacement F-35 or Typhoon aircraft would be taken in light of circumstances at the time. The cost and schedule of doing so would depend on the circumstances that created a requirement for a replacement.
Ministry of Defence: Brexit

Tom Brake:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what preparations his Department is making for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement; and how much funding has been allocated to those preparations.

Mark Lancaster:
As a responsible Government, we've been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of a no deal for nearly three years. We are putting in place a range of mitigations, these include a central team who deal exclusively with Defence issues relating to the UK's decision to leave the EU, including preparations for a no deal scenario. This team draws on subject matter experts from across the department and works with colleagues in other government departments on cross-cutting issues.

The Treasury has allocated over £4.2 billion of additional funding to departments and Devolved Administrations for EU exit preparations so far. This breaks down as £412 million over the spending review period for the Department for Exiting the European Union, the Department for International Trade and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (Autumn Statement 2016); £286 million of additional funding for 2017-18 (a full breakdown of which can be found in Supplementary Estimates 2017-18); over £1.5 billion for 2018-19 (Supplementary Estimates 2018-19); and over £2 billion for 2019-20 (Main Estimates 2019-20).

This funding is to cover all exit scenarios and is in addition to departmental efforts to reprioritise from business as usual toward preparations for the UK's departure from the EU. Work on no-deal exit preparations cannot be readily separated from other EU exit work, given the significant overlap in plans in many cases.

Ministry of Defence: Overtime

Jon Trickett:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate she has made of the amount of unpaid overtime worked by staff in her Department in the last 24 months.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:
The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has made no estimate of unpaid overtime, as this information is not collected. However, it is the responsibility of all line managers to ensure employees are not working excessive hours, in line with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations 1998.

The MOD is committed to the wellbeing of its staff, and to ensure staff are able to maintain their work/life balance.

Ministry of Defence: Serco

Jo Stevens:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many contracts her Department has awarded to Serco since July 2013; and what the value is of those contracts.
Stuart Andrew:
Since July 2013 the Ministry of Defence has awarded six contracts to Serco Ltd, with a total value of £27 million. This does not include three contracts awarded to AWE, in which Serco has a 24.5% share.

It should also be noted that since January 2011, details of central government contracts above the value of £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder. Contracts published prior to 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:
https://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive
Those published after 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:
https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search

Patrol Craft: South West

Scott Mann:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress her Department is making on the (a) construction and (b) commissioning of offshore patrol vessels for deployment in the South West.

Stuart Andrew:
The first two Batch 2 River Class Offshore Patrol Vessels, HMS Forth and HMS Medway are now in service with the Royal Navy. Ship 3, Trent, is in the final phase of acceptance, while Ships 4 and 5, Tamar and Spey, remain under construction. All five ships are expected to be in-service before the end of 2021 and, under current plans, will be based at Portsmouth.

Shipbuilding: Digital Technology

Mr Kevan Jones:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps her Department is taking to support the development of metal 3D printing in the shipbuilding industry.

Stuart Andrew:
The Ministry of Defence recognises the importance of 3D printing in the UK manufacturing sector and is taking into account related research when developing manufacturing policy. We will support the commercialisation of new technologies such as 3D printing and work with defence suppliers to review requirements and develop manufacturing technologies that can benefit shipbuilding.

We judge that 3D printing could have future benefit to the shipbuilding and wider defence sector.

Type 31 Frigates: Guided Weapons

Mr Kevan Jones:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether her Department has plans for the Sea Ceptor missile system to be fitted to the five planned Type 31e frigates.
Stuart Andrew:
Final decisions on the weapons specification and fit of the Type 31e frigates will be made at the main investment decision point, taking into account the role of the ship, operating environment and future threats.

Type 45 Destroyers

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential (a) time taken and (b) cost incurred to replace a Type 45 destroyer.

Stuart Andrew:  
A decision on whether to acquire a replacement Type 45 destroyer would be taken in light of circumstances at the time. The cost and schedule of doing so would depend on the circumstances that created a requirement for a replacement.

USA: Military Alliances

Mr Kevan Jones:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps she is taking to improve the interoperability of UK and US armed forces.

Mark Lancaster:  
The US remains the UK’s primary defence and security ally and our forces are designed to operate seamlessly alongside the US either bilaterally, in a NATO or other coalition construct. The Department is committed to improving interoperability with the US and conducts a programme of regular exercises to maintain momentum. The UK and US have embedded personnel across each other’s militaries in order to ensure the highest levels of interoperability exist.

US-UK cooperation on our aircraft carrier, the F35 Lightning and P-8 programmes will extend our ability to operate together seamlessly. We will look for further such opportunities to maximise the value of our mutual investments to ensure interoperability with the US on the capability, force structures and policies required to meet the challenge of great power competition.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Brexit

Tom Brake:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what preparations his Department is making for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement; and how much funding has been allocated to those preparations.

Margot James:  
As a responsible Government, we’ve been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal for nearly three years. We are putting in place a range of mitigations,
which include assessing and reducing the risk of disruption to personal data flows to
and from the UK in the event of a no deal through legislation, public and private
sector communications and preparations for adequacy decisions from the EU.

The Treasury has allocated over £4.2 billion of additional funding to departments and
Devolved Administrations for EU exit preparations so far. This breaks down as
£412m over the spending review period for the Department for Exiting the European
Union, Department for International Trade and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office
(Autumn Statement 2016); £286m of additional funding for 2017/18 (a full breakdown
of which can be found in Supplementary Estimates 2017/18); over £1.5 billion for
2018/19 (Supplementary Estimates 2018/19); and over £2 billion for 2019/20 (Main
Estimates 2019/20).

This funding is to cover all exit scenarios and is in addition to departmental efforts to
reprioritise from business as usual toward preparations for the UK’s departure from
the EU. Work on no-deal exit preparations cannot be readily separated from other EU
exit work, given the significant overlap in plans in many cases.

### Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Credit Unions

**Gareth Thomas:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his
Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit
union; and if he will make a statement.

**Margot James:**

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport does not offer a payroll
deduction facility to be used for joining a credit union service. There are currently no
plans to introduce one.

### Gambling: Young People

**Clive Lewis:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is
taking to prevent young people from becoming addicted to gambling.

**Mims Davies:**

Preventing children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed by gambling is
a priority for government and a core licensing objective for the Gambling
Commission.

Operators offering gambling services to people in Great Britain must have a licence
from the Gambling Commission and must have effective policies and procedures
designed to prevent underage gambling. Where there is a failure to do so, the
Gambling Commission has shown it is willing to act using the range of powers to act
at its disposal.

The Gambling Commission has taken action to strengthen protections for young
people. In May this year it introduced stricter age and identity verification controls,
requiring all consumers to be age verified before they are able to deposit money or access free-to-play demo games. Government has also worked positively with five major operators resulting in commitments to using online technology where available to target gambling adverts away from people showing signs of problem gambling behaviour. They will also further share further data with to protect problem gamblers from experiencing further harm.

From September 2020, health education will be compulsory for all pupils in state-funded primary and secondary schools. This will cover education on online harms, including the risks related to online gambling. The non-statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) programme of study, published by the PSHE Association, includes teaching about gambling and its psychological and financial impact. GambleAware, an independent charity which funds services to help to reduce gambling harms, is working with the PSHE Association to develop resources for schools to promote resilience and raise awareness around risk-taking and gambling.

William Hill: Redundancy

Marion Fellows:

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to support William Hill and its staff following the announcement that 700 branches will close; and if he will make a statement.

Mims Davies:

The government reduced the maximum stake on B2 gaming machines from £100 to £2, to help stop extreme losses by those who were least able to afford them. We engaged with the gambling industry to understand the potential impact on jobs, both as proposals were developed and following the announcement.

William Hill has said that it will provide support to workers affected as part of its consultation process on shop closures.

The government will engage with William Hill to establish the level of employee support that may be required. Jobcentre Plus’s Rapid Response Service is also ready to support any worker who may be affected by job losses associated with this announcement.

EDUCATION

Apprentices: Public Consultation

Nic Dakin:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the March 2019 report by the National Audit Office and current inquiry by the Public Accounts Committee into apprenticeships, if he will launch a public consultation on the future of the apprenticeships programme.
Anne Milton:
We welcome the Public Accounts Committee’s recent report and were pleased that the Committee has acknowledged our focus on putting quality at the heart of our apprenticeship reforms.

The government is carefully considering the Committee’s findings and will respond in due course. We keep all aspects of our policy under review in order that apprenticeships continue to support employers in developing the skills they need to grow, in addition to offering value for money for the taxpayer.

Apprentices: Taxation

Nic Dakin: [271483]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether apprenticeship levy-paying employers will continue to be able to use half of the funds that they contribute to the apprenticeship levy; and if he will make a statement.

Anne Milton:
Levy-paying employers are able to use all of the funds that they contribute to the apprenticeship levy and which are available to them in their apprenticeship service account. In addition, employers receive a 10% top-up to the funds entering their account every month which they are also able to spend on apprenticeship training and assessment.

We continue to keep all aspects of funding policy under review.

Nic Dakin: [271484]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help apprenticeship levy-paying employers to use more of the levy funding available to them than the 15 per cent that they used between 2017 and 2019; and if he will make a statement.

Anne Milton:
Spending on apprenticeships is demand-led. Employers can choose the type, level and quantity of apprenticeships that they offer, as well as when they offer the apprenticeships, to meet their current and future skills needs.

Between May 2017 and April 2019, levy-paying employers spent 18% of the funds available to them on the training and assessment of new apprentices. In addition, levy-paying employers will also have benefitted from ongoing funding for apprenticeships for their employees which started prior to the introduction of the levy.

They will also benefit from additional payments to support apprentices employed with levy-payers (such as English and Maths teaching and payments to support disadvantaged learners), and 95% of the funding for training for any apprenticeships started once their levy funds have been exhausted.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency works closely with employers, for example through webinars and employer roadshows, to encourage them to increase the number of apprenticeships that they offer and make the most of the long-term
benefits that apprenticeships can bring to their organisations. We have ongoing face-to-face support for over 1,000 of the largest levy-paying employers through our national account managers, and ongoing support via telephone for small and medium-sized enterprises to encourage them to invest their levy funds.

To further support all employers to make the long-term, sustainable investment in training, we have increased the amount that levy-paying employers can transfer to other employers from 10% to 25%.

We do not anticipate that all levy-payers will use all the funds in their accounts. Income from the levy is also used to fund apprenticeship training for non-levy paying employers.

Nic Dakin: [271486]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 20 June 2019 to Question 267319 on Apprentices: Taxation, how frequently his Department plans to publish expiry of funds information for the apprenticeship levy.

Anne Milton:
We do not currently intend to publish expiry of funds information for the apprenticeship levy as a matter of course.

Catherine McKinnell: [272836]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the value of apprenticeship levy funds expiring from employers' accounts was in June 2019; and what plans the Government has for those funds.

Anne Milton: [Holding answer 8 July 2019]: The amount of funds expiring in employers’ digital apprenticeship service accounts in June 2019 was £26 million.

As well as funding apprenticeships in levy-paying employers, levy contributions are also used to fund training for existing apprenticeship learners and new apprenticeships in non-levy paying employers. We do not anticipate that all employers who pay the levy will need or want to use all the funds in their accounts, however they are able to do this.

Breakfast Clubs

Mike Amesbury: [273492]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding to support breakfast clubs in primary schools.

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 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. 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 programme is available to primary schools, as well as secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units that are eligible to take part. 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.

■ Department for Education: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Anne Milton:

Although the department does not offer employees a specific payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union, we offer consolidated voluntary deductions from pay for subscriptions and premiums as well as a Give As You Earn scheme to enable employees to make tax-free donations to charities through payroll.

■ Numeracy: Nottinghamshire

Ben Bradley:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to increase the level of numeracy in Nottinghamshire.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is investing to improve Mathematics education from early years through to age 18, so that young people have the right skills for employment, further education and everyday life.

In early years, the Department is investing £20 million in the Professional Development Programme. This will provide training on language, literacy and numeracy education for pre-reception early years staff in disadvantaged areas, including around 45 settings in Nottinghamshire.

Since 2014, the Department has funded a network of 35 Maths Hubs across England, including two lead schools in Nottinghamshire (George Spencer Academy and Minster School). The Hubs have sought to improve Mathematics teaching from early years through to post-16. Maths Hubs deliver the £76 million Teaching for Mastery programme, which adapts Mathematics pedagogy from top performing east-Asian
jurisdictions to English schools. The programme is funded to reach a total of 11,000 primary and secondary schools across England by 2022. This includes establishing a Mastery Readiness Programme for schools in greatest need.

To further support the transition between primary and secondary school, schools in Nottinghamshire have also received approximately £1.1 million in additional funding to raise levels of literacy and numeracy of Year 7 pupils. Students on a 16 to 18 study programme who have yet to achieve a GCSE grade 4 or above in Mathematics are required to continue to study the subject.

The Department is funding the £16 million Advanced Mathematics Support Programme to improve and increase provision of, and participation in, AS and A level Mathematics, further Mathematics, and level 3 core Mathematics qualifications, through a range of support to help schools and colleges improve advanced Mathematics teaching.

In 2018, 77% of pupils in Nottinghamshire local authority met the expected standard for Mathematics at Key Stage 2, which is 1% higher than the England average and up from 70% in 2016 when new tests were introduced.

At GCSE level, 71.8% of Nottinghamshire local authority’s pupils achieved a grade 9 to 4 at GCSE Mathematics in 2018, which is slightly higher than the figure for 2017. 75.3% of 19 year olds held a GCSE 9 to 4 or other level 2 qualification in 2018, compared to the national average of 75.6%. 23% of academic students took Mathematics A level at the end of Key Stage 5.

Regional Schools Commissioners: West Midlands

Eddie Hughes:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to update the April 2016 Regional Vision Statement for the West Midlands and publish a new statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

In light of changes over time to how Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) interact with the school system, we are reviewing the published Regional Vision Statements, and expect to decide on any replacements or revisions shortly.

The RSC for the West Midlands will be meeting my hon. Friend, the Member for Walsall North, on 22 July 2019 at which time he will be able to discuss the regional vision for the West Midlands RSC area.

Retail Trade: Apprentices

Nic Dakin:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the reduction in retail sector apprenticeship starts between 2012 and 2017.
Anne Milton:
The retail framework had around 1,000 starts in 2017/18, with a further 8,300 on the new retail standards. Two of the largest supermarkets were involved in the design of these standards.

It is important to recognise that apprenticeships are paid jobs and can be subject to wider labour market and economic pressures. The impact of a number of companies closing down, online shopping and automation means that there has been a general decrease in recruitment within the retail sector.

In 2018, I hosted a roundtable with employers in the retail sector, including John Lewis and Greene King, to explore some of the challenges and opportunities for apprenticeships in retail, and we continue to work closely with employers to better understand these.

Earlier this year, I met with the British Retail Consortium, and I am in regular contact with ministers from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the issue.

Schools: Finance

Neil O’Brien: [273496]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of (a) primary and (b) secondary schools (i) are eligible for and (ii) receive the full amount of funding under the sparsity element of the national funding formula; and what the average amount was that each eligible school received in the latest period for which data is available.

Nick Gibb:

The table below shows the number and proportion of mainstream schools in England that received sparsity funding in 2018-19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRIMARY</th>
<th>SECONDARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools</td>
<td>16,758</td>
<td>3,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number eligible for sparsity funding</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion eligible for sparsity funding</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number eligible for maximum sparsity funding</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion eligible for maximum sparsity funding</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td>0.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average sparsity funding for eligible schools (£)</td>
<td>14,766</td>
<td>34,625</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[1] Schools are only counted as eligible for sparsity funding if the local authority has included the factor in their funding formula. The maximum amount of sparsity funding under the national funding formula is £25,000 for primary schools and £65,000 for secondary schools.

[2] This is the mean value for schools receiving sparsity funding where the local authority has included the factor in their funding formula.

Neil O'Brien:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many mainstream (a) primary and (b) secondary schools received a lump sum payment, and for how many schools that lump sum represented (i) less than one per cent, (ii) 2 to five per cent; (iii) five to 10 per cent, (iv) 10 to 20 per cent, (v) 20 to 30 per cent, (vi) 30 to 40 per cent, and (vii) over 50 per cent of their total income.

Nick Gibb:  
The table below shows the number of mainstream schools in England that received a lump sum payment in 2018-19 and the proportion of their total income (from the schools block allocation) this represented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRIMARY</th>
<th>SECONDARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools</td>
<td>16,756[1]</td>
<td>3,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lump Sum</td>
<td>16,756</td>
<td>3,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% to 5%</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>2,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% to 10%</td>
<td>5,332</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% to 20%</td>
<td>7,482</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20% to 30%</td>
<td>2,060</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% to 40%</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40% to 50%</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50%</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] In line with the published data the figures exclude two primary schools whose data has been suppressed.

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Schools: Uniforms

Mike Amesbury:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the affordability of school uniforms for people on low incomes.
**Nick Gibb:**
It is for the governing body of a school (or an academy trust, in the case of academies) to decide whether there should be a school uniform policy, and if so, what it should be. It is also for the governing body to decide how the uniform should be sourced.

In 2015, the Department commissioned the ‘Cost of School Uniform Survey’ which provides the most recent information the Department holds on the cost of school uniform. The findings of the survey are available here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/436576/RR474_Cost_of_school_uniform.pdf.

The cost of uniform should not act as a barrier to obtaining a good school place. No school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling unable to apply to, or attend, a school of their choice. The current guidance on uniform sets out that a school should ensure that its school uniform policy is fair and reasonable for all its students.

The Department’s guidance is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform.

**Ms Lisa Forbes:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to implement the recommendations of A better deal: boosting competition to bring down bills for families and firms, November 2015, Cm 9164, in relation to school uniforms.

**Nick Gibb:**
It is for the governing body of a school (or an academy trust, in the case of academies) to decide rules relating to appearance including whether there should be a school uniform, what it will be and how it is sourced.

The Department has issued best practice guidance on school uniform, which emphasises the need for schools to give highest priority to cost considerations. The guidance sets out that no school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling unable to apply to, or attend, a school of their choice, due to the cost of the uniform. The Department’s guidance is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform.

**Special Educational Needs: Transport**

**Emma Hardy:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children with special educational needs receive free home to school transport in England.

**Emma Hardy:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children with an education health and care plan receive free home to school transport in England.
Emma Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of children with special educational needs that are unable to access education as a result of inadequate provision of free home to school transport.

Emma Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of children with an education health and care plan that are unable to access education as a result of inadequate provision of free home to school transport.

Nick Gibb: The information requested is not held centrally about the number of children that receive free home to school transport.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide free home to school transport for all eligible children. They also have a discretionary power to provide free or subsidised home to school transport for other children.

A child is eligible for free home to school transport if they are of compulsory school age and they attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than the statutory walking distance from their home. The statutory walking distance is two miles for children under the age of eight and three miles for children aged eight and over. They are also eligible if they attend their nearest suitable school and cannot reasonably be expected to walk there because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problem, or because the route is unsafe.

Emma Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of young people with special educational needs in post-16 education that receive local authority funded home to school transport in (a) England and (b) each local authority.

Emma Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of young people with an education, health and care plan in post-16 education who receive local authority funded home to school transport in (a) England and (b) each local authority.

Emma Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, many young people with special educational needs in post-16 education have been unsuccessful in an application for local authority funded home to school transport in (a) England and (b) each local authority for the latest school year.

Emma Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, many young people with an education health and care plan in post-16 education have been unsuccessful in an application for local authority funded home to school transport in (a) England and (b) each local authority for the latest school year.
authority funded home to school transport in (a) England and (b) each local authority for the latest school year.

**Anne Milton:**

The Department for Education does not collect data on the number of young people for whom local authorities provide post-16 transport arrangements, including young people with special educational needs and Education, Health and Care Plans.

The statutory responsibility for transport for 16-19 year olds rests with local authorities who have a duty to publish a transport policy statement each year, specifying the arrangements they will make to support young people to access further education and training. The department expects local authorities to make reasonable decisions about what support should be available based on the needs of their population, the local transport infrastructure and the resources they have available.

The post-16 transport duty also applies to students aged up to 25 with special educational needs. Local authorities post-16 transport policy statements must include specific arrangements for these students. The transport needs of young people with special educational needs should also be reassessed by their local authority when a young person moves from compulsory schooling to post-16 education.

**Emma Hardy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the amount spent in England by local authorities on home to school transport for children with special educational needs in (a) pre-16 and (b) post-16 education.

**Emma Hardy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the amount spent in by local authorities in England on home to school transport for children with education, health and care plans in (a) pre-16 and (b) post-16 education.

**Emma Hardy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money has been spent from the public purse on free home to school transport for children and young people with special educational needs in (a) pre-16 and (b) post-16 education in each year since 2014.

**Emma Hardy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money has been spent from the public purse on free home to school transport on children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan in (a) pre-16 and (b) post-16 education in each year since 2014.

**Emma Hardy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money has been spent from the public purse on chaperones to support children with special educational needs travel from home to school in (a) pre-16 education and (b) post-16 education every year since 2014.
Emma Hardy:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much has been spent from the public purse by local authorities on contracts for specialist providers of transport to support children with special educational needs travel from home to school in (a) pre-16 and (b) post-16 education every year since 2014.

Nick Gibb:
Local authorities are required to submit statements about planned and actual expenditure on education and children and young people’s services to the Secretary of State for Education. This data includes spending on home to school transport and home to post-16 provision transport. The data is available in the attached table and is published here: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-local-authority-school-finance-data#local-authority-and-school-finance.

Regarding the amount spent specifically on transport for children with Education Health and Care Plans, on chaperones to support children with special education needs, or on specialist providers of transport for children with special educational needs, the information requested is not held centrally. The Department also does not collect information about other public funds that may be spent on home to school transport, for example, through the 16-19 bursary fund.

Attachments:
1. 271583-271588_PDF
[271583_271584_271585_271586_271587_271588_SEN_transport_table.pdf]

Summer Schools: Finance
Seema Malhotra:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) financial and (b) other support the Government (i) is providing in 2019 and (ii) has provided in each of the last five years to schools for summer school programmes.

Nick Gibb:
The Government’s Holiday Activities and Food programme has awarded money to organisations to deliver free holiday club provision for pupils eligible for free school meals over the 2018 and 2019 summer holidays. £2 million was awarded in 2018 and this has more than quadrupled to £9.1 million this summer. The clubs funded through this programme are required to provide free healthy food and enriching activities, including physical activities and elements of nutritional education.

The Department has invested £22 million for the academic years 2017-18 and 2018-19 to enable disadvantaged children and young people living in some of the most deprived parts of the country to participate in extra-curricular activities (including after school and holiday provision) which will enable them to develop essential life skills.

This Essential Life Skills programme is aimed at disadvantaged children and young people aged 5-18 across 12 Opportunity Areas. Within each Opportunity Area, local authorities are receiving grants to develop their own Essential Life Skills programme to meet the needs of pupils and young people in their communities. It is the
responsibility of the local Partnership Board in each Opportunity Area to decide what programmes and activities best meet the needs of children and young people in the area.

- Technology: Skilled Workers

Jim Shannon:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure the supply of skilled workers in the tech sector.

Anne Milton:

To make sure that the UK is a world-leading digital economy that works for everyone, it is crucial that individuals have the digital skills they need for life and work, including for a career in the technology sector.

We have introduced computing as a statutory national curriculum subject at all four key stages and have introduced a new Computer Science GCSE and A Level. The content was developed with industry experts to better equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to become active creators of digital technology.

As part of the Industrial Strategy, the government has committed substantial spending on mathematics, digital and technical education to increase the take-up and better teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects in schools. For example, in November 2018 the department launched the National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE), backed by £84 million of new funding. The NCCE is run by a coalition of STEM Learning, the British Computing Society and Raspberry Pi, and supported by industry.

The NCCE is delivering a comprehensive programme of continuing professional development to improve the teaching of computing and drive up participation in computer science at GCSE and A level, particularly amongst girls. We expect that this will help equip these young people with the knowledge they need to pursue a career in the technology sector.

We are also improving careers advice in schools so that young people are aware of the high-quality options available for both technical and academic routes into digital careers, and that they have access to information about the variety of careers that digital technology pathways have to offer. STEM activities, including employer talks and workplace visits, are built into school career programmes. The Careers & Enterprise Company funds opportunities for young people to meet a wide range of STEM employers, including those from the technology sector.

- Vocational Guidance: Secondary Education

Paul Farrelly:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps he has taken to improve careers information and guidance for secondary school leavers.
Anne Milton:
Our careers strategy, published in December 2017, committed investment, support and resources to help schools make visible and lasting improvements. It endorses the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance, based on rigorous national and international research. The benchmarks help schools develop a programme of high quality careers advice and all schools are expected to meet the 8 benchmarks by the end of 2020.

To support schools in implementing the benchmarks, we have funded 1,300 bursaries for face-to-face careers leader training and have established a network of 40 careers hubs. Hubs bring together schools, colleges, Local Enterprise Partnerships, businesses and careers organisations to work together towards achieving the benchmarks.

We are also funding The Careers & Enterprise Company to help connect schools and colleges with employers, to provide meaningful encounters with the world of work for young people. Through its Enterprise Adviser Network, over 2,000 business volunteers have been matched to schools and colleges to help them develop their careers education plans.

Under the Baker clause, introduced in January 2018, all secondary schools must invite providers of technical education and apprenticeships to talk to all pupils to support them to understand their full range of options. Schools must also publish a policy statement setting out these opportunities and make sure that this statement is followed.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

Jim Shannon:
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of culling badgers on TB rates in cattle.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
Rigorous statistical analysis, which adjusts for differences related to the risk of TB in cattle, has been carried out to measure any association between badger culling and cattle TB incidence in comparison to areas where badger culling has not taken place. This analysis covers data from the first two years of culling in Areas 1 and 2 (Gloucestershire and Somerset). It is available at the following link:

An updated statistical analysis of this data has been submitted to a peer-review journal.

The raw data, can be found on the following link:
Brixham Harbour

Dr Sarah Wollaston:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has plans to allocate funding to ensure the future of Brixham Harbour.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
It is expected that the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) will continue until 2020. In the event of no deal being reached, the Chancellor announced on 24 July 2018 that all EMFF projects approved before the closure date of the current programme will be fully funded under a Treasury guarantee. On 10 December 2018, this Government announced £37.2 million of extra funding for the UK seafood sector for projects approved during 2019 and 2020 to boost the industry as we become an independent coastal state.

Applications for funding to improve infrastructure in fishing ports should be directed to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) in England. Applications are assessed against the scheme rules. The European Grants Team in the MMO processes applications for funding and projects over £100,000 will be assessed by a selection panel.

All applications in England should be sent to:

Marine Management Organisation
Lancaster House, Hampshire Court
Newcastle Business Park
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 7YH
Telephone: 0208 026 5539
Email: emff.queries@marinemanagement.org.uk

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
The Department does not currently offer a payroll deduction service that enables staff to join a credit union and at present has no plans to do so.
Food: Far East

Jim Shannon: [271457]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations his Department has received on (a) certification and (b) packaging of food items imported from the Far East.

David Rutley:
According to our records, Defra has not received any representations on certification and food stamp packaging of food items imported from the Far East.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Brazil: Rain Forests

Faisal Rashid: [272247]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his Brazilian counterpart on protecting the Amazon rainforest.

Sir Alan Duncan:
Our posts in Brazil frequently engage with the Brazilian Government on a number of environmental issues including deforestation. We have been having positive discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture and work closely with them on our International Climate Fund programmes.

We are working with Brazil to help ensure it continues to protect the Amazon and have invested nearly £120 million through the International Climate Fund on projects to limit deforestation, prevent forest fires and implement the Forestry Code in the Amazon, Atlantic Forest and Cerrado biomes.

British Indian Ocean Territory: Sovereignty

Catherine West: [272901]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the UN General Assembly Resolution of 22 May 2019 on the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, if he will support the Chagos Refugees Group and Mauritian Government in arranging a visit to the Chagos Archipelago for UK-based Chagossians after the six month time period set out in that Resolution.

Sir Alan Duncan:
We were disappointed that this matter was referred to the International Court of Justice, contrary to the principle that the Court should not consider bilateral disputes without the consent of both States concerned. We have no doubt about our sovereignty over BIOT, which has been under continuous British sovereignty since 1814.
We are aware of the Mauritian Government's proposal to organise a visit to the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). We urge Mauritius to reconsider. Any unauthorised visit to BIOT will be treated with the utmost seriousness. The UK Government, as the sovereign authority, will continue to progress an expanded programme of UK-arranged visits to the British Indian Ocean Territory for Chagossians: five visits have taken place so far with 76 Chagossians each spending a week visiting the Territory. Two to three visits are planned to take place each year for the remainder of the life of the support package. Visits are advertised to Chagossian communities in UK, Mauritius and Seychelles. Any eligible Chagossian or Chagossian group seeking to visit BIOT is welcome to do so through this programme.

### China: Diplomatic Service

**Tim Loughton:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what restrictions the UK Government places on diplomats from China travelling in the UK; and who is responsible for those diplomats.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Chinese diplomats have no restrictions placed on them when travelling in the UK, and the Chinese Embassy is responsible for those diplomats.

### China: Human Rights

**Fiona Bruce:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on the continued harassment and detention of human rights lawyers in China since the mass arrest of lawyers and their colleagues on 8 July 2015.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We remain seriously concerned that a number of Chinese lawyers and rights activists (often referred to as “709” due to their date of detention) have remained detained since July 2015. These cases have raised serious issues about due process and transparency of justice in China. We urge the authorities to release those detained for the peaceful and constitutionally-protected expression of their views.

### China: Sub-Saharan Africa

**Liz McInnes:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of (a) China’s influence in sub-Saharan Africa and (b) the extent of Chinese investment in ports in sub-Saharan Africa.
Harriett Baldwin:  
China is Sub-Saharan Africa’s largest trading partner and a significant source of investment and development finance. Decisions about the extent of Chinese investments in ports are for the respective countries to decide. The UK want to work with China and our African partners to ensure all investments are economically viable and sustainable for the debtor.

Falkland Islands: Sovereignty

Andrew Rosindell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his Argentinian counterpart on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:  
None. The position remains unchanged.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Brexit

Ruth Jones:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on his Department's preparations for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

Sir Alan Duncan:  
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has an active programme of engagement with our partners, including the Welsh and Scottish Governments. We remain focused on ensuring our smooth and orderly withdrawal from the EU. As part of this, we continue to prepare for all Brexit scenarios and are making sensible decisions about the timing and pace at which some of this work is progressing.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:  
The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not offer employees a payroll deduction service to join a credit union.

Iran: Baha’i Faith

Dr David Drew:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on the use of Tazir laws to facilitate punishment against members of the Baha’i community in Iran; and if he will make a statement.
**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
We remain aware of the continued reports of harassment and mistreatment of members of the Baha'i faith in Iran, including the increase in arrests in 2018. The British Government supports the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran's assessment that discrimination against the Baha'i community in Iran is legally sanctioned by a lack of constitutional recognition and the absence of other legal protections for adherents of this faith. We regularly call upon Iran to cease harassment of all religious minorities and to fulfil its international and domestic obligations to protect freedom of religion or belief.

**Israel: Hebron**

Lisa Nandy: [271514]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2019 to Question 263894 on Israel: Hebron, if he will make representations to the Israeli Government on reports of tear gas canisters being fired at schools in Hebron by Israeli armed forces.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
We regularly raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities about Israel's use of force in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

**Israel: Trade Agreements**

Lisa Nandy: [271552]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether Israeli settlements in the Palestinian Territories will be included in the future free trade agreement between the UK and Israel.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
The UK and Israel have a strong and important trading relationship. We do not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories as part of Israel and therefore they are not covered by the EU-Israel Association Agreement which currently governs our trade with Israel, nor the UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement which will govern our trade after the UK leaves the EU. Products from Israeli settlements do not receive preferential tariff treatment under either Agreement.

**Israeli Settlements: Companies**

Lisa Nandy: [271545]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will reconsider the Government's opposition to listing in the UN business and human rights database of companies involved in settlement-related activities in the Palestinian Territories.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
We have no plans to reconsider our involvement in the UN business and human rights database. We continue to believe that the database goes beyond the competence of the Human Rights Council. Human rights obligations are directed at
states, and not individuals or businesses. Ultimately it is the decision of an individual or company whether to operate in settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The British Government neither encourages nor offers support to such activity.

■ Jagtar Singh Johal

Eddie Hughes: [271575]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what (a) reassurances about the health of Jagtar Singh Johal and (b) information on when he will (i) stand trial or (ii) be released his Department has received from the Indian Government.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

Our consular staff in India visit Mr Johal regularly to monitor his welfare and ensure he is able to access his legal representatives. They last visited Mr Johal on 27 June. The British Government cannot interfere in the judicial processes of other countries any more than we would accept interference in our own judicial system. However, we can consider approaching the authorities if there are concerns that a trial does not follow internationally recognised standards for a fair trial or is unreasonably delayed compared to local cases. In our representations to the Government of India on Mr Johal's behalf, we have raised his right to a fair trial.

■ Law of the Sea

Caroline Lucas: [272190]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, what steps the Government is taking to ensure benefits from areas of the ocean beyond national jurisdiction are shared fairly and equitably; if he will make it his policy to promote the international law principle of common heritage of mankind in future sessions of that Conference; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK regards a new Implementing Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction as an important step forward in addressing the challenges that the ocean faces. The UK is pressing for an ambitious Agreement to be concluded in 2020. It will be a key mechanism in enabling the designation of 30 per cent of the ocean as Marine Protected Areas by 2030.

UNCLOS makes clear that the concept of “the common heritage of mankind” applies only to the non-living resources of “the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.” Any new Implementing Agreement under UNCLOS must be consistent with this concept. The UK is an active member of the International Seabed Authority, which is currently drafting a Code for Deep Sea
Mining, and considering a mechanism for the equitable sharing of benefits arising from deep-sea mining.

The UK supports a regime of benefit sharing under the new Implementing Agreement that is focused on the sharing of scientific data and research and better coordinated capacity building and the transfer of marine technology to developing countries to enable them not only to better share in the sustainable use of the resources of the ocean, but also in its conservation. We are studying positively proposals for the new Implementing Agreement to achieve this outcome.

Malawi: Diplomatic Relations

Andrew Rosindell: \([272204]\)

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

Harriett Baldwin:

Bilateral relations between the UK and Malawi remain strong. Following the Presidential election on 21 May, our High Commission in Lilongwe is engaging with the newly appointed Government to agree areas for future co-operation. The UK supports prosperity and development for the people of Malawi with around £140 million invested per year through the Department for International Development (DFID)’s work, which is targeted on the most vulnerable in society. The UK-funded Commonwealth Trade Facilitation Programme is helping Malawi adopt faster and more efficient customs procedures. In turn, these will reduce the cost of doing business and create a more enabling environment for intra-Commonwealth Trade. In conjunction with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), we are also providing expertise and training to Malawian rangers to tackle the Illegal Wildlife Trade. The recently announced Royal Visit to Malawi by HRH The Duke of Sussex in the Autumn will strengthen further our deep and long-standing relationship with Malawi.

Medicine: Israel

Jim Shannon: \([271463]\)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing co-operation between medical R&D facilities in the UK and Israel.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK and Israel are co-operating in a wide range of areas in medical R&D, with many successful partnerships across academia and business. The Britain Israel Research and Academic Exchange Partnership has supported medical collaboration over the last seven years, distributing 19 grants for joint research excellence totalling over £8 million. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv and the British Council manage the programme with private funding raised from a diverse coalition of non-Government organisations. In 2018 the British and Israeli Governments signed an agreement...
covering a two year £4 million bilateral programme to support business-to-business R&D collaboration between Israeli and UK companies. Projects to receive funding will be announced later this month with a number of medical R&D projects in contention.

The UK-Israel Tech Hub at our Embassy also helps to create tech and innovation partnerships across several sectors, including healthcare. One of their projects, the UK-Israel Dangoor Healthcare Initiative, aims to create a pipeline of digital innovation for the NHS. We are currently exploring further opportunities to expand cooperation in medical R&D.

### Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

**Stephen Gethins:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Iranian counterpart on (a) allowing a UK Government representative to meet Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe in prison in Iran to assess her health and well-being and (b) the implications of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe's diplomatic status for the terms of her detention.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The treatment of all British-Iranians detained in Iran, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, is a priority for the Government. We continue to raise her case, and our other consular cases, with the Iranian Government at every opportunity, including requesting consular access. I did this during my visit to Tehran on 23 June. We will continue to take action in line with what we believe will produce the best outcomes in their cases.

Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe does not hold diplomatic status; rather, the Foreign Secretary exercised diplomatic protection in her case. Whilst he was clear that diplomatic protection would not lead to immediate results, it is essential that we formally recognise that Iran has failed in its treatment of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe in its obligations under international law, and we will continue to consider using all the diplomatic and legal tools available to us to secure her release.

### Nigeria: Terrorism

**Dr David Drew:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic steps he has taken with the Nigerian Government to help prevent the alleged funding of supply of weapons to terrorist groups by the oil industry in that country.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

We are not aware of any evidence to corroborate the cited allegations against oil companies in Nigeria. Militants, pirates and criminals are active across the Niger Delta and their access to weapons is of real concern. The British Government regularly discusses insecurity in the Delta with a range of State and Federal government bodies, who share our concern. We also remain committed to supporting
Nigeria in dealing with the threats posed by terrorist groups in the North East of Nigeria.

**Sri Lanka: Power Stations**

**Tom Brake:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 30 April to Written Question 245704, whether the UK Government plans to send experts to (a) to determine whether the Chunnakam power plant in Northern Sri Lanka was responsible for pollution in that area and (b) assist in the cleanup process in that area.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
We are aware of the challenges Sri Lanka faces around water management and quality. We understand that an investigation has determined that the power plant was responsible for pollution in the area, but investigations to determine the extent of pollution in the area are ongoing. We are making enquiries about the progress of the compensation scheme.

Staff at the British High Commission in Colombo are in contact with relevant officials locally to ensure that UK concerns are registered. This is not an issue on which the UK provides technical or other assistance in Sri Lanka.

**Sudan: Paramilitary Forces**

**Liz McInnes:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the strength of Sudan’s rapid support forces.

**Harriett Baldwin:**
The UK does not routinely engage with Sudan’s Rapid Support Forces (RSF). There are not officially published figures of the number of personnel within the RSF, although there have been publically reported graduation ceremonies for over 9,000 RSF members between May 2017 and April 2019. In a public address in Khartoum on 22 June, Mohamed Hamdan Dagolo (known as Hemetti), Commander of the RSF and Deputy Chair of the Transitional Military Council, stated that there are 30,000 Sudanese soldiers are in Yemen. We cannot guarantee the accuracy of this information nor can we assess how much of this deployment is RSF. In light of this statement and given recent recruitment it is likely that the total numbers of RSF are above 30,000.

**Tibet: British Nationals Abroad**

**Tim Loughton:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what restrictions have been placed on British tourists and officials who have been granted access to the Tibet Autonomous Region in recent years.
**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
When officials have visited the Tibet Administration Region (TAR) in recent years, these visits have followed a formal programme organised by the Chinese authorities. Foreign and Commonwealth Office Travel Advice describes the restrictions on tourist visits to the TAR. It notes that tourists can only travel to the TAR on an organised tour and must get a permit in advance through a specialised travel agent in China. It goes on to note that Chinese authorities sometimes stop issuing these without notice.

**Tibet: Diplomatic Service**

**Tim Loughton:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many requests for diplomatic access to the Tibet Autonomous Region were submitted by Government officials (a) in the UK and (b) working at the British embassy in Beijing in each of the last five years; and how many of those requests were granted.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
We do not hold detailed records on requests for access to the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) by officials over the past five years. However, we can confirm that the British Ambassador to China visited in 2017 and UK officials visited in 2014. We have recently submitted a request for access to the TAR, which is pending.

**Tim Loughton:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Government made any requests to open a mission in Lhasa.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**
We have not made any recent requests to the Chinese Government to open a mission in Lhasa.

**Trinidad and Tobago: Diplomatic Relations**

**Andrew Rosindell:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to improve diplomatic relations with Trinidad and Tobago.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**
Bilateral relations between the UK and Trinidad and Tobago are warm and positive. Our close cooperation on shared priorities such as crime and security is underpinned by a 2017 bilateral Security Memorandum of Understanding. Working together through the Commonwealth, we promote democratic values and equality, and jointly tackle global challenges such as climate change. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s International Programme Fund, cross-HMG Conflict, Security and Stability Fund and Counter Terrorism Programme Fund all support our work in Trinidad and Tobago.
Venezuela: Arms Trade

Stephen Gethins: [272165]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the European Union’s embargo on sales of arms and military equipment to the Venezuelan Government.

Sir Alan Duncan:
The UK led international efforts for the introduction of a rigorous EU sanctions regime against Venezuela in November 2017 which includes an arms embargo and an embargo on equipment which could be used for repression. We are not aware of any sales of arms or military equipment by EU countries to the Venezuelan Government since that date.

Venezuela: Drugs and Food

John Spellar: [271358]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the shortage of food and medicine in Venezuela.

Sir Alan Duncan:
We regularly discuss the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela at meetings with international partners including during the visits to the UK by the Colombian President Duque and US Secretary of State Pompeo. The UK is providing £14.5 million of humanitarian assistance to respond to the crisis.

Wang Quanzhang

Fiona Bruce: [273375]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Chinese Government on the health of imprisoned human rights lawyer Wang Quanzhang.

Dr Andrew Murrison:
The British Government has taken regular action bilaterally and multilaterally in cases involving detained human rights lawyers and activists, including the case of Wang Quanzhang. This has included raising our concerns about lawyers and activists at China’s Universal Periodic Review in November 2018, and at the last UK/China Human Rights Dialogue. Moreover, the Minister of Asia and the Pacific raised Wang Quanzhang’s case with the Chinese Government during his visit last July. The Foreign Secretary raised Wang Quanzhang’s case last July, when he met Chinese State Councillor Wang Yi; he also met with family members of detained human rights lawyers. Additionally, the Foreign Secretary released a statement on 29 January 2019, which expressed concern over the sentencing of Wang Quanzhang, and urged the Chinese government to ensure fundamental civil and political rights are protected, in line with China’s constitution and its international commitments.
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Agoraphobia: Mental Health Services

Mike Amesbury: [273491]
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department provides to help people with agoraphobia to live independently.

Jackie Doyle-Price:
There are a range of options available to help people manage their agoraphobia. The National Health Service website provides information and advice on a range of mental health matters, including panic disorder, and provides access to digital applications through the NHS Apps Library that can support people.

Lifestyle changes and self-help techniques may help, including taking regular exercise, eating more healthily, and avoiding alcohol, drugs and drinks that contain caffeine. Medication may be recommended by a general practitioner if these are not effective.

Through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, people with agoraphobia can also refer themselves directly for psychological therapies, including cognitive behavioural therapy.

In severe cases of agoraphobia, medication may be used in combination with other types of treatment, such as psychological therapies and relaxation therapy.

Alcoholic Drinks: Misuse

Mr Jim Cunningham: [273324]
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of training for NHS staff on diagnosing and treating alcohol abuse.

Stephen Hammond:
United Kingdom medical schools determine the content of their own curricula. The delivery of these undergraduate curricula have to meet the standards set by the General Medical Council (GMC), who then monitor and check to make sure that these standards are maintained. The standards require the curriculum to be formed in a way that allows all medical students to meet the GMC’s ‘Outcomes for Graduates’ by the time they complete their medical degree, which describe knowledge, skills and behaviour they have to show as newly registered doctors.

The GMC’s ‘Outcomes for Graduates’ state that doctors must be able to recognise and identify factors that suggest patient vulnerability and take action in response. In particular, they must be able to recognise where addiction (including to alcohol) is contributing to ill health and take action by seeking advice from colleagues and making appropriate referrals. Furthermore, the GMC’s Generic Professional Capabilities Framework states that doctors in training must be able to do the same and act on this information.
Cannabis: Medical Treatments

Frank Field:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will bring forward legislative proposals on a regulatory category medicinal cannabis.

Seema Kennedy:  
Legislation on cannabis for medicinal use has already been passed. The law was changed on 1 November 2018 to allow clinicians on the General Medical Council’s Specialist Register to prescribe unlicensed cannabis-based products for medicinal use, where it is clinically appropriate and in the best interest of patients.

The regulations use the existing regulatory frameworks for medicines and the misuse of drugs, an approach which the Government believes is proportionate and evidence-based, ensuring that clinicians can access these products whilst minimising the risk of misuse, harm and diversion.

Applications can also continue to be made to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency by any company wishing to market their product as a licensed medicine.

Carers: Poverty

Chris Ruane:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the proportion of people caring for someone at the end of their life who experience financial hardship.

Caroline Dinenage:  
This information is not held centrally. However, the Government is committed to continuing to support carers to provide care as they would wish, and to do so in a way that supports their own health and wellbeing, employment and other life chances. That is why it published its Carers Action Plan 2018-2020 in June 2018 which sets out a programme of targeted work to support unpaid carers.

Dental Services: Greater London

Joan Ryan:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many dental practices have closed in (a) Enfield and (b) London since 2010.

Joan Ryan:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS dentists are accepting patients in Enfield.

Seema Kennedy:  
Data on the number of dentists accepting new patients is not held centrally and dental practice closures is not held in the format requested.


Department of Health and Social Care: Brexit

Ruth Jones: [271626]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on his Department's preparations for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

Stephen Hammond:
The Department has been working directly with the Welsh Government and the other devolved administrations at Ministerial and official-level to minimise any disruption in the event of 'no-deal'.

I met with the Welsh Minister for Health and Social Services, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, and the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health for Northern Ireland in March. ‘No deal’ contingency preparations were discussed, and the Department has continued to update all the devolved administrations as plans develop.

Recently, I wrote to Ministers in Wales and Scotland and senior officials in the civil service in Northern Ireland to update all the devolved administrations on ‘no-deal’ contingency planning assumptions for continuity of supply of medicines and medical products. Engagement will continue as contingency plans are further developed.

Department of Health and Social Care: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas: [271334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Dinenage:
The Department does not offer employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union.

Department of Health and Social Care: Serco

Jo Stevens: [273403]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many contracts his Department has awarded to Serco since July 2013; and what the value is of those contracts.

Caroline Dinenage:
The Department has had one contract with Serco since July 2013. The details are as follows:

Service - Healthy Start Vouchers
Start Date – 1 April 2014
End Date – 31 March 2020
Value - £14,576,200

Doctors: Training

Frank Field:  [271363]
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the level of availability of (a) places on UK Foundation Programme F1 and F2 courses and (b) work within the NHS for course graduates.

Stephen Hammond:
The UK Foundation Programme can be under- or over-subscribed as it is subject to variation for a number of reasons. In 2018 there was a fill rate of 98.6% ¹, however in 2019 there were initially more eligible applicants than available places. Additional places have now been provided, meaning all eligible graduates have been allocated a Foundation Programme post to start from August 2019.

For specialty training programmes, the current overall fill rate is slightly higher than in 2018, with 83.8% of training posts currently accepted for programmes beginning in 2019, compared to 81.9% at the same stage last year ². Some specialties will continue to recruit through further rounds, and therefore the number of trainees is likely to rise.

Notes:

Haemochromatosis: Health Services

Frank Field:  [271374]
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve the (a) rates of diagnosis and (b) management of genetic haemochromatosis.

Seema Kennedy:
The Government is committed to making the United Kingdom a leader in embedding genomics in healthcare and offer a consistent, world class approach to the genetic identification of rare diseases, including genetic hemochromatosis. The Genomics Medicine Service was announced in October 2018, supported by the National Genomic Test Directory which specifies which genomic tests are commissioned by the National Health Service in England, the technology by which they are available, and the patients who will be eligible to access a test. Genetic haemochromatosis is included in the National Genomic Test Directory.

Services for patients with genetic haemochromatosis are commissioned locally through clinical commissioning groups with sustainability and transformation
partnerships (STPs) enabling service coordination across wider footprints. The NHS Long Term Plan set out the ambition for all STPs to evolve into Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) by April 2021. ICSs are an 'evolved' form of an STP, making faster progress in integrating care across their area, bringing together organisations to provide more seamless care for patients.

Health Services: Accountability

Gareth Snell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many referrals have been received by his Department under sub-section 244 of the National Health Service Act 2006 since the implementation of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 by (a) local authority and (b) clinical commissioning group where such a request has been passed to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel; and what the outcome was of any decision.

Stephen Hammond:

Since the commencement of the Health and Social Care Act in 2012, the Department has received 23 referrals from local authorities and none from clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). CCGs are the bodies that propose service change and do not have the power to refer such changes to the Secretary of State.

Findings and final advice on each of the 23 cases are set out in detail on the Independent Reconfiguration Panel’s website.

Health: North of England

Andrea Jenkyns:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how he plans to use the Northern Powerhouse strategy refresh to improve health outcomes for people in the North of England.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government’s continued commitment to the Northern Powerhouse, and the North’s vital role in improving the country’s health and productivity, is reflected in the Prime Minister’s recent decision to make the Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth a joint appointment between the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the devolution agreement giving Greater Manchester responsibility for their own £6 billion budget for health and social care services. This builds on the commitment at Autumn Budget 2018 to refresh the Northern Powerhouse Strategy.

The Strategy will be developed across Government and in partnership with external stakeholders, including mayoral combined authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and civic and business leaders, to ensure the whole of the North of England benefits from Government investment with a clear plan to improve quality of life, productivity and prosperity. It will also reflect the development of Local Industrial Strategies across the North, the first of which was published last month by Greater Manchester with the Government.
The refreshed Northern Powerhouse Strategy will be published in due course.

Healthy Start Scheme

Dr Rupa Huq: [271516]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of (a) the value of eligible Healthy Start vouchers that have not been used in (i) England, (ii) London and (iii) Ealing; and (b) the cost to the public purse on promoting Healthy Start vouchers in the last 12 months.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

It is not possible to provide information on the value of vouchers that have not been used in a geographical area. Vouchers are sent to a specific address but they can be spent in any location. We do not track where individuals choose to spend their vouchers and therefore cannot monitor unused vouchers by specific location.

Funding allocated to the Healthy Start scheme is accounted through a single cost centre together with the Nursery Milk scheme. A split by individual scheme is therefore not available. In 2017-18 funding for these schemes was £104,709,791. Audited spend data for the 2018-19 financial year is not yet available. This includes funding for the Healthy Start website which costs approximately £12,000 per year and which, together with the Start4Life website, promotes the Healthy Start scheme to the public and retailers.

HIV Infection: Canterbury

Rosie Duffield: [273480]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to ensure that gay and bisexual men accessing the Gate Clinic at Kent and Canterbury Hospital have access to PrEP; and if he will make a statement.

Seema Kennedy:

Since October 2017, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been provided by the National Health Service through the three-year PrEP Impact Trial. Participation in the trial is on a voluntary basis and it is for clinics and local authorities to decide whether they wish to take part.

Hospices: Children

Dan Carden: [271620]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that vulnerable families can access children’s hospice services in the long-term.

Caroline Dinenage:

To compensate for the lower levels of statutory funding children’s hospices receive, NHS England provided £11 million in 2018/19 through the Children’s Hospice Grant, which is awarded and administered annually.
On 1 July 2019, NHS England announced that it would increase its funding of children’s hospices to £25 million by 2023/24. This replaces the previous commitment to additional funding which required clinical commissioning groups (CCG) match funding. Instead NHS England has now guaranteed the additional investment for hospices.

NHS England has also committed that where palliative care is provided by means other than through hospices, it will run a needs assessment to understand whether additional investment is required nationally or from CCGs.

Levels of National Health Service-funded hospice care provision are determined locally by CCGs, which are responsible for ensuring healthcare services are commissioned to meet the needs of local populations. In partnership with other local service providers, such as local authorities, NHS commissioners should identify any gaps in the provision of local services and put in place service-development plans to address identified needs.

### Hyperactivity: Mental Health Services

**Anneliese Dodds:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department holds on the number of patients with ADHD that access NHS Mental Health services.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

NHS Digital holds information on people in contact with secondary care mental health services who have a recorded diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or hyperactivity. However, as these statistics do not include people diagnosed with these conditions who are only in contact with primary care services, such as their general practitioner, these are an undercount of the total number of people with these diagnoses.

Treatment and service use, by Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRS) score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASRS score a</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment and services</td>
<td>0-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current treatment for a mental or emotional problem

| No treatment | 89.2 | 65.7 | 78.5 |
| Medication only | 8.6 | 24.3 | 19.2 |
| Counselling or therapy only | 1.4 | 2.8 | - |
### ALL ADULTS 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medication and counselling</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any current counselling or therapy</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any health care service use for a mental or emotional problem</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any community care service in past year</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any day care service in past year</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bases</td>
<td>6,829</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

The ASRS (Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale) is described in Section 8.2. A score of 4 or more is considered a positive screen for ADHD. The ‘4 or more’ group include those with a score of 6 on the ASRS.

Source: APMS 2014, NHS Digital

**Anneliese Dodds:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his department plans to publish the pathway for people with ADHD.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

NHS services should be following guidance published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) on ‘Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): diagnosis and management (NICE guideline 87)’, which was revised in April 2018. This covers recognising, diagnosing and managing ADHD in children, young people and adults. It aims to improve recognition and diagnosis, as well as the quality of care and support for people with ADHD.

NHS England is developing new mental health pathways for adults, children and young people with mental health diagnoses and co-morbid neurodevelopmental disorders. These could benefit people with autism, ADHD and other neurodevelopmental disorders who have mental health needs by facilitating better and faster diagnosis.

There is no confirmed publication date for these pathways.
**Liothyronine**

Seema Malhotra: [271506]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the value for money of prescribing Liothyronine (T3) on the NHS.

Seema Malhotra: [271507]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure access to Liothyronine on the NHS as an alternative to Levothyroxine.

Seema Malhotra: [271508]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps he has taken to ensure access to Liothyronine on the NHS for people with hypothyroidism.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department has made no assessment. Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for the planning, commissioning and access to health care services for their local area.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working closely with CCGs on the prescribing of liothyronine to support them with the implementation of guidance for CCGs on items which should not be routinely prescribed in primary care.

This guidance includes recommendations on the use of liothyronine in line with the British Thyroid Association, who advise that a small proportion of patients treated with levothyroxine continue to suffer with symptoms despite adequate biochemical correction. In these circumstances, where levothyroxine has failed and in line with this guidance, endocrinologists providing NHS services may recommend liothyronine for individual patients after a carefully audited trial of at least three months duration of the drug.

Further guidance on the prescribing of liothyronine has been published by the Regional Medicines Optimisation Committee. The aim of the guidance is to make best practice on the prescribing of liothyronine clearer. CCGs are expected to have regard to national guidance, and are responsible for developing their own local approaches to its implementation taking into account local priorities and needs.

**Mental Health Services: Detention Centres**

Thangam Debbonaire: [273419]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many mental healthcare professionals are employed in (a) Harmondsworth and (b) Colnbrook immigration removal centres.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

From 1 April 2019, the number of whole time equivalent (WTE) posts, across both centres, was increased from 11.6 to 19.8 – including a new senior nursing role and
7.2 WTE registered mental health nurse roles. The increase in staff numbers will enable the provision of 24 hours, seven days a week nursing care.

The number of mental healthcare professionals employed as at the end of June 2019 was 8.6 WTE. These staff work across both the Harmondsworth and the Colnbrook immigration removal centres.

Recruitment to the newly created posts is ongoing.

### Mental Health Services: Mothers

**Sir Vince Cable:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of maternal postnatal checks in identifying maternal mental health problems.

**Sir Vince Cable:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the effectiveness of GPs in identifying and treating perinatal mental health problems in mothers; and if he will make a statement.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the hon. Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Laura Smith MP) on 2 July to Questions [268577](#) and [268578](#).

### Mental Health Services: Radicalism

**Neil Coyle:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to ensure that targeted mental health support reaches people who are at risk of being radicalised.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

Bespoke guidance and e-learning was published by NHS England in 2017 to support mental health practitioners and providers to exercise their statutory and professional duties to safeguard vulnerable adults, children and young people at risk of radicalisation.

### NHS: Pensions

**Frank Field:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help mitigate the effect of pension taxation on the NHS.

**Stephen Hammond:**

I laid provided a Written Ministerial Statement ([HCWS1587](#)) on 4 June 2019 setting out the interim People Plan for the National Health Service. As part of this, it was announced that the Department would publish a consultation exploring proposals to introduce greater pension flexibility for clinicians in the NHS Pension Scheme. Increased flexibility is designed to address disincentives that may encourage senior
clinicians to limit or reduce their workloads whilst participating in the NHS Pension Scheme.

The consultation will propose a 50:50 option which is intended to provide increased flexibility to clinicians regarding the growth of their NHS Pension Scheme benefits. This option will offer a 50% pension accrual and halved contributions. It was requested by the British Medical Association earlier this year, and they have welcomed this as a step in the right direction.

Retaining and maximising the contribution of our highly-skilled clinical workforce is crucial to the delivery of the ambitions for patient care set out in the Long Term Plan for the NHS. Accordingly, the Government is prepared to provide pension flexibility that appropriately balances the benefit of new flexibilities with their affordability to the public purse.

The consultation period will be an opportunity to listen to a range of views before reaching a final proposition that works for both staff and taxpayers. The Department encourages staff and employers to engage with our consultation when it opens this month.

NHS: Staff

Jim Shannon:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps is he taking to improve retention of NHS staff.

Stephen Hammond:

NHS Improvement and NHS Employers have been leading programmes of support with trusts, working to improve the retention of the nursing workforce. A universal offer of support has been provided to all trusts, and NHS Improvement continues to provide a direct programme of support to trusts with the highest attrition rates in order to support improvements in retention.

Strategies include targeted support on areas such as flexible working, supporting new starters and older workers, and development and career planning. NHS Improvement and NHS Employers are releasing resources and case studies to disseminate best practice models.

The new contract for junior doctors (2016) enshrines safe working, high quality training and ensures fair pay for work done.

We are also committed to offering improved working lives, flexible training options, and rewarding careers and conditions. On 24 June, Health Education England published ‘Enhancing Junior Doctors’ Working Lives – annual progress report 2019’ and the work it has undertaken in this area. The programme includes a range of initiatives to help to retain doctors in the National Health Service, ensuring that the junior doctors who work so hard throughout their training feel supported at work. The report is available at the following link:

NHS England and Health Education England are working together with the medical profession to increase the general practitioner (GP) workforce and support GPs to remain in the NHS. Actions include a GP Retention Scheme, the GP Retention Fund, the GP Health Service and the Releasing Time for Care Programme.

Action to improve NHS staff retention in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is a matter for each of the devolved administrations in that country.

Nurses: Training

Jim Shannon:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will reinstate the student nurse bursary.

Stephen Hammond:

The Government has no plans to reinstate the bursaries for nursing degrees in England. The tuition fee model means universities can offer more training places removing the cap that was in place under the previous centrally funded system. Eligible pre-registration nursing and midwifery students can now receive more funding than under the National Health Service bursary system through tuition fee loans and living cost support from the Student Loans Company.

The interim People Plan published on 3 June 2019 sets out some of the steps needed to ensure the NHS have the staff they need to deliver high quality care, including growing our nursing workforce by 40,000 in the next five years.

Nurse education, training and funding in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is a matter for each of the devolved administrations in that country.

Obesity: Children

Gloria De Piero:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of children in (a) Ashfield, (b) Rushcliffe and (c) England have been classified as (i) overweight or (ii) obese in reception class in each year since 2010.

Gloria De Piero:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of children in (a) Ashfield, (b) Rushcliffe and (c) England have been classified as (i) overweight or (ii) obese in school year six in each year since 2010.

Gloria De Piero:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of adults in (a) Ashfield, (b) Rushcliffe and (c) England have been classified as (i) overweight or (ii) obese in each year since 2010.

Seema Kennedy:

The attached tables set out the proportion of both children, in reception year and year six, and adults classified as overweight or obese in Ashfield, Rushcliffe and England.
Attachments:

1. Overweight and obese adults and children tables [273360 tables.docx]

Public Health: Finance

Andrea Jenkyns:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to ensure future public health funding allocations prioritise areas with the poorest health outcomes.

Seema Kennedy:

Future decisions on the allocation of funding for local authority public health functions will take account of the impact on areas with the poorest health outcomes, in line with the Secretary of State’s statutory duties on health inequalities.

Rare Diseases: European Reference Networks

Mr Gregory Campbell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the UK will continue to be a part of the European Reference Network for rare diseases after the UK leaves the EU.

Caroline Dinenage:

The United Kingdom is fully committed to continuing the close working relationship with our European partners on health and care. In our July 2018 White Paper, the Government set out its aim to explore continued participation in European Reference Networks as part of a future agreement on science and innovation. The European Commission have shown that they recognise the significant expertise of UK clinicians and both sides appreciate the importance of maintaining UK participation.

Self-harm: Mental Health Services

Jim Shannon:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support people who self-harm.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Prime Minister recently announced that tailored advice will be provided to parents on supporting their children’s mental health and well-being, including information on subjects such as stress, screen time, online bullying, body image and self-harm. This will be developed by Public Health England by 2020. This will accompany advice provided to children and young people through Public Health England’s Rise Above programme on dealing with difficult emotions and situations that can lead to problems such as stress, bullying and self-harm.

We are aware of a rise in young people self-harming, which is why we included a new key area for action to address self-harming in the cross-Government National Suicide Prevention Strategy in 2017. Our close work with the Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on their Online Harms White Paper
will also help to tackle online harms associated with harmful suicide and self-harm content across the internet, including social media.

**Smoking**

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the July 2017 tobacco control plan for England, when the Government plans to announce a date for achieving its smokefree generation target of smoking prevalence at 5 per cent or below.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The Government’s vision, as set out in the Tobacco Control Plan for England published in 2017, is to create a smokefree generation by reducing adult smoking prevalence to 5% or below. The current smoking rates for England are 14.4%, the lowest on record. The Government has not yet committed to a date by which to achieve a smokefree generation but continues to keep progress on reducing prevalence under close review.

**Smoking: Health Services**

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that tobacco companies have no involvement in (a) smoking cessation services and (b) public health campaigns.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The United Kingdom is a signatory to the World Health Organization’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The Government takes very seriously its treaty obligations, including the commitment under Article 5.3 to protect public health policies with respect to tobacco control from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry. It expects all public bodies to follow comply with the FCTC Secretariat’s guidance on this Article.

To remind the National Health Service of this commitment, NHS England issued a note to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in the CCG bulletin dated 26 July 2018. Public Health England (PHE) has also written to local authorities and Directors of Public Health advising against such partnerships, a message reiterated in the PHE blog. The blog is available to view at the following link:

https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2018/01/05/duncan-selbies-friday-message-5-january-2018/

**Social Services: Children**

**Paul Farrelly:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report by the Children's Commissioner entitled vulnerable children: time for action, published in
July 2019, what steps his Department is taking to support children’s social care services to meet their statutory duties.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**
The Government is determined to improve the way local agencies work together to identify and protect people at risk. We are implementing reforms following the Children and Social Work Act 2017, placing a responsibility on health and other partners to work together to develop effective, multi-agency arrangements.

**Stem Cells: Donors**

**Chris Ruane:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase BAME recruitment to the stem cell registry.

**Caroline Dinenage:**
Since 2011 the Department has provided over £26.8 million in financial support to NHS Blood and Transplant and Anthony Nolan to enable the establishment of a unified United Kingdom Stem Cell Registry and improve access to and outcomes of stem cell donation. This includes improving equity of access to unrelated donor stem cell transplantation for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) patients through targeted recruitment to the UK Stem Cell Registry and the Department has set specific targets about the proportion of donors that must be from BAME backgrounds.

**HOME OFFICE**

**Agriculture: Migrant Workers**

**Dr David Drew:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to encourage EU nationals working in the agricultural and food production sectors to remain in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

**Caroline Nokes:**
The Government recognises the valuable contribution which EU citizens make to the UK. The EU Settlement Scheme, which enables them to obtain the UK immigration status they need to remain here permanently after we leave the European Union, opened fully on 30 March 2019. By 10 June 2019, more than 800,000 applications had been received under the scheme and almost 700,000 people had been granted status.

**Asylum: Housing**

**Alex Cunningham:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many properties have been procured by the new asylum accommodation provider Mears in the North East; how many
service-users can be accommodated in those properties; and for how many service-users in the North East has new accommodation not yet been procured.

**Caroline Nokes:**
I refer the Honourable member to the answer given to PQ 272938 on 8th July 2019.

**Alex Cunningham:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what contingency plans have been put in place in the event that the asylum accommodation provider in the North East is unable to procure sufficient housing stock to accommodate the service-users in that region.

**Caroline Nokes:**
I refer the Honourable member to the answer given to PQ 272939 on 8th July 2019.

**Alex Cunningham:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers in the North East will be required to leave their property during the transition to a new accommodation provider; and what steps he is taking to minimise disruption for those people who rely on local services.

**Caroline Nokes:**
The Home Office and its accommodation providers are working closely to plan and alleviate impacts on service users and their families during the transition of services from G4S to Mears in the North East Yorkshire Humber region.

Providers continue in commercial discussion with their potential supply chain, sub-contractors and landlords; including on planned upgrades to the existing estate alongside the provisional acquisition of potential new properties that may also be brought in use during the AASC contract.

Mears are working closely with the Home Office, COMPASS provider and local authorities in the region to ensure all parties are kept informed of progress and disruption to service users is minimised.

Information regarding the overall number of service users who will be required to change address during transition will be communicated pending the conclusion of ongoing commercial discussions and progression of property acquisition.

**Alex Cunningham:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans have been put in place to support vulnerable asylum seekers in the North East through the transition period between asylum accommodation contracts; and how the needs of those service users will be assessed.

**Caroline Nokes:**
The Home Office and its accommodation providers are working closely to plan, safeguard and minimise impacts on all service users during the transition of services from G4S to Mears in the North East Yorkshire Humber region. This includes the
sharing of information in relation to service users’ needs so that providers can consider individual needs ahead of transition.

The ASSC and AIRE contract requires that all Providers comply with all relevant mandatory and statutory requirements and the Authority’s rules, guidance, instructions and policies, including safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This includes recognising the indicators of a vulnerable or at risk person with specific needs, and responding appropriately to their needs. In addition UKVI’s Asylum Safeguarding Hub is working closely with providers to ensure a consistent and common framework and standard operating procedures for the identification of needs and safeguarding of vulnerable services users.

Alex Cunningham: [272834]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how his Department plans to record complaints during the transition period between asylum accommodation contracts; and whether that information will be published.

Caroline Nokes:

Under the new Asylum Accommodation and Support Contracts (AASC) and Advice Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) contracts, all issues and complaints raised by Service Users will be managed by the AIRE provider thereby simplifying the system for the service user and allowing for a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities. The AIRE provider will be responsible for capturing, logging and referring feedback and complaints to the AASC Provider or Home Office for resolution, in a timely manner in line with the Key Performance Indicators underpinning the AASC and AIRE contracts.

The AIRE provider will work closely with Service Users to ensure they are aware of the action being taken to resolve the complaint and communicate any delays in resolution where the complaint may be complex. If the AIRE and AASC provider is unable to resolve a Service User complaint within a timely manner, this can be escalated to the Home Office for action where appropriate. The Home Office reserves the right to undertake an independent investigation into any Service User requests for support or complaints, and the Accommodation Provider’s performance in responding and implementing actions in response to such requests for support or complaints.

The Home Office and Providers will monitor all complaints raised throughout the transition period and beyond and will continue to engage with Local Authorities through the Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships to listen to and act in response to any wider concerns raised, ensuring swift and appropriate action. The Home Office does not routinely publish data in relation to asylum complaints.

Alex Cunningham: [272835]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether risk management information and contingency plans on the transition to the new asylum accommodation provider in the North East have been shared with local authorities involved in dispersal in that region.
Caroline Nokes:
The Home Office has designed the Asylum Accommodation and Support Transformation project to replace the current asylum accommodation and support services to ensure a smooth transition of services from one Provider to another. The transition governance structure has allowed the Home Office and its Providers to work closely with local authorities and other statutory partners to oversee regional plans and monitor and manage emerging risks and issues including ensuring effective contingency measures are in place to minimise impacts to all Service Users.

In the North East Yorkshire Humber region, Mears continue in commercial discussion with their potential supply chain, sub-contractors and landlords to ensure there is suitable and sufficient accommodation available to ensure a smooth transition of services before the current COMPASS contracts end in September 2019. Information regarding emerging risks and contingency plans will continue to be shared through the transition governance structures as those discussions conclude.

Andy McDonald:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many properties new asylum-accommodation provider Mears has procured in the North East; how many service-users can be accommodated in those properties; and the number of service users in the North East for whom new accommodation has not been procured.

Caroline Nokes:
The provider of asylum accommodation under the forthcoming Asylum Accommodation and Support Contract (AASC) in the North East Yorkshire Humber region is working closely with local authorities to ensure there is suitable and sufficient accommodation available to ensure a smooth transition of services before the current COMPASS contracts end in September 2019.

Mears continue in commercial discussion with their potential supply chain, sub-contractors and landlords; including on planned upgrades to the existing estate alongside the provisional acquisition of potential new properties that may also be brought in use during the AASC contract.

Mears are working closely with the Home Office, COMPASS provider and local authorities in the region to ensure all parties are kept informed of progress and disruption to service users is minimised. Details regarding the number of new properties and service users moves will be communicated, pending the conclusion of ongoing commercial discussions and progression of property acquisition.

Andy McDonald:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department will take in the event that asylum-accommodation provider Mears is unable to procure sufficient housing stock to accommodate service users in the North East.

Caroline Nokes:
The Home Office has dedicated staff managing the transition to the new Asylum Accommodation and Support Contract (AASC) which includes rigorous transition
governance structures which tracks progress against provider plans. The new provider, Mears, in the North East region has undertaken due diligence activity across all current properties to assess their ongoing suitability and this activity continues to inform their commercial negotiations with their property supply chain.

Due to the on-going commercial sensitivities around these matters we will communicate details further in due course. The Home Office will continue to monitor and manage all Providers closely to ensure sufficient suitable accommodation is secured to deliver an effective transition of services.

Andy McDonald:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers in the North East will be required to leave their properties during the transition to a new accommodation provider.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office and its accommodation providers are working closely to manage transition of services from G4S to Mears in the North East Yorkshire Humber region.

Mears continue in commercial discussion with their potential supply chain, sub-contractors and landlords; including on planned upgrades to the existing estate alongside the provisional acquisition of potential new properties that may also be brought in use during the AASC contract.

Information regarding the overall number of service users who will be required to change address during transition will be communicated pending the conclusion of ongoing commercial discussions and progression of property acquisition.

Andy McDonald:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support the Government provides to vulnerable asylum-seekers in the North East in the transition period between asylum accommodation contracts; and how the needs of those service-users are assessed.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office and its accommodation providers are working closely to plan, safeguard and minimise impacts on all service users during the transition of services from G4S to Mears in the North East Yorkshire Humber region. This includes the sharing of information in relation to service users’ needs so that providers can consider individual needs ahead of transition.

The ASSC and AIRE contract requires that all Providers comply with all relevant mandatory and statutory requirements and the Authority’s rules, guidance, instructions and policies, including safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This includes recognising the indicators of a vulnerable or at risk person with specific needs, and responding appropriately to their needs. In addition UKVI’s Asylum Safeguarding Hub is working closely with providers to ensure a consistent and common framework and standard operating procedures for the identification of needs and safeguarding of vulnerable services users.
Andy McDonald:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how his Department plans to record complaints by service users during the transition period between asylum accommodation contracts; and whether that information will be made public.

Caroline Nokes:
Under the new Asylum Accommodation and Support Contracts (AASC) and Advice Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) contracts, all issues and complaints raised by Service Users will be managed by the AIRE provider thereby simplifying the system for the service user and allowing for a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities. The AIRE provider will be responsible for capturing, logging and referring feedback and complaints to the AASC Provider or Home Office for resolution, in a timely manner in line with the Key Performance Indicators underpinning the AASC and AIRE contracts.

The AIRE provider will work closely with Service Users to ensure they are aware of the action being taken to resolve the complaint and communicate any delays in resolution where the complaint may be complex. If the AIRE and AASC provider is unable to resolve a Service User complaint within a timely manner, this can be escalated to the Home Office for action where appropriate. The Home Office reserves the right to undertake an independent investigation into any Service User requests for support or complaints, and the Accommodation Provider’s performance in responding and implementing actions in response to such requests for support or complaints.

The Home Office and Providers will monitor all complaints raised throughout the transition period and beyond and will continue to engage with Local Authorities through the Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships to listen to and act in response to any wider concerns raised, ensuring swift and appropriate action. The Home Office does not routinely publish data in relation to asylum complaints.

Asylum: Yemen

Lyn Brown:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many refugees from Yemen the UK (a) accepted asylum applications from and (b) granted asylum to in (i) 2014, (ii) 2015, (iii) 2016, (iv) 2017, (v) 2018, and (vi) 2019 to 4 July 2019.

Caroline Nokes:
The Home Office publishes data, in its quarterly Immigration Statistics re-lease, on the number of applications for asylum in the UK, broken down by nationality for each quarter, in table as_01_q (Asylum, volume 1), and data on the number of applications granted asylum (as well as other forms of leave) at initial decision in the same table.

The next update to these statistics will be published on 22nd August, and will cover
the period to end of June 2019.

**Crimes of Violence**

**Tulip Siddiq:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date the Government
plans to publish its formal response to the public consultation on a new legal duty to
support multi-agency action to tackle serious violence.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The consultation on a new legal duty to support a public health approach to
preventing and tackling serious violence was launched on 1 April and closed on 28
May. The Government response to the consultation will be published shortly.

**Detention Centres: Staff**

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average ratio is of
detainees to detention officers at (a) Colnbrook and (b) Harmondsworth immigration
removal centres in the most recent period for which figures are available.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made
of the ratio of detainees to detention officers in immigration removal centres that is
considered to be safe.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many hours per day are
detainees in (a) Harmondsworth and (b) Colnbrook immigration removal centres routinely
locked in their rooms.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the highest number of
detainees was in (a) Harmondsworth and (c) Colnbrook immigration removal centres in
the last 12 months.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Home Office does not specify a ratio of detainee to detainee custody officer
(DCOs) within immigration removal centres (IRCs) and this information is therefore
not recorded. Instead, IRC suppliers are required to provide a safe and secure
environment for detainees in their care and all IRC contracts require a minimum
staffing level based on the size and layout of each individual centre. The Home Office
and its suppliers do not release information on staff deployment as doing so could
compromise security of the removal estate.

In the period ahead, new contracts will set high expectations for the quality of the
management and staffing in IRCs. The current re-procurement of the contract for the
Gatwick IRCs includes provision for increased staffing in key areas, including residential units, to improve welfare and safety.

The dignity and welfare of detainees across the entire detention estate is of the utmost importance and the use of periods of time where detainees’ freedom of movement is restricted contributes to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in our centres.

Detainees at both Harmondsworth and Colnbrook immigration removal centres (IRC) have a rest period following lunch and curfew period at night, where the total hours of confinement cannot exceed 12 hours a day during the week and 12.5 hours a day at weekends and on bank holidays.

Information on the number of people detained in Harmondsworth and Colnbrook IRCs on the last day of each quarter is available in table dt_12_q of the detention tables in the latest release of ‘Immigration Statistics, year ending March 2019’.

Eggs

Dr David Drew: [273320]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans his Department has to ensure that the egg industry has access to migrant workers after the UK leaves the EU.

Caroline Nokes:

In December 2018, the Government set out its proposals in “The UK’s future Skills-based Immigration System” White Paper. The White Paper proposals include a new route for skilled workers which will be open to anyone at RQF level 3 and above, irrespective of where they are applying from. This route will not be capped, allowing all of those who meet our requirements to come to the UK.

The White Paper also includes a transitional route for temporary workers which will be open to anyone from qualifying countries, wishing to fill positions at any skill level, for up to 12 months. We do not intend to impose a cap on the number of people wishing to use the route.

The Government is undertaking an extensive programme of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders across the UK, throughout 2019, including with the private, public and voluntary sectors and local government, as well as industry representatives and individual businesses, before taking final policy decisions on the future system.

Extradition: USA

Mr Jim Cunningham: [273322]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answers of 20 June 2019 to Questions 265420, 265421 and 265422 on Extradition: USA, for what reason the figures are collected from local government level and not held centrally.
Mr Nick Hurd:
The Answers stated that all the figures given were from local management information. The statistics are collated from management information held by the UK Central Authority.

They have not been quality assured to the level of published National Statistics, and as such they should be treated as provisional and therefore subject to change. I can confirm that they are not collected from local government and are held centrally.

Mr Jim Cunningham:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many extradition requests have been made by the UK for US citizens in each year since 2014; and how many of those requests were (a) successful and (b) remain outstanding.

Mr Nick Hurd:
As a matter of long-standing policy and practice, we do not disclose whether an extradition request has been made or received until such time as a person is arrested in relation to the request. We therefore cannot provide the total number of extradition requests made by the UK for US citizens in each year since 2014.

We can however provide the total number of US citizens (including dual nationals) arrested in relation to extradition requests made by the UK to the US since 2014. The figure for 2019 is up to 4 July 2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF US CITIZENS ARRESTED</th>
<th>NUMBER EXTRADITED</th>
<th>NUMBER OUTSTANDING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- (one request withdrawn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>2019</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All figures are from local management information, and have not been quality assured to the level of published National Statistics. As such they should be treated as provisional and therefore subject to change. The figures do not include Scotland, which deals with its own extradition cases.
Fire Prevention

Robert Halfon: [273379]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps his Department is taking to increase fire safety in (a) care homes and (b) other residential blocks.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to care homes and the parts of multi-occupied residential premises that are used in common by occupants of more than one dwelling. The Fire Safety Order requires those responsible for a premises to undertake and review regularly a fire risk assessment and put in place and maintain adequate and appropriate fire protection measures to mitigate the risk to life from fire to as low as is reasonably practicable.

The Home Office recently launched a Call for Evidence on the Fire Safety Order to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The call for evidence runs until 31 July 2019.

Robert Halfon: [273380]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether fire evacuation guidance issued by his Department includes information on the additional time required to evacuate vulnerable people.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to all non-domestic premises, including parts of multi-occupied residential premises that are used in common by occupants of more than one dwelling. The Government makes available a suite of premises-specific guidance to help those with responsibilities under the Fire Safety Order to comply, including the requirement to provide suitable escape routes and emergency exits.

Supplementary guidance, which provides extra information on accessibility and means of escape for disabled people, is also made available on Gov.UK.

Frontier Worker Permit

Stuart C. McDonald: [272855]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he plans to introduce a scheme for frontier workers to allow them to apply for a Frontier Worker Permit.

Stuart C. McDonald: [272856]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate his Department has made of the number of frontier workers resident in the Republic of Ireland but working in Northern Ireland who would be entitled to retain rights under Article 10 (1) (c) of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community.
Caroline Nokes:
In a deal scenario, EEA and Swiss citizens frontier working into the UK by 31 December 2020 will need to apply for a frontier worker permit to prove their right to enter the UK for work after that date. Further details about the application process will be set out in due course, if the UK leaves the EU with a deal.

In a no-deal scenario, EEA and Swiss citizens frontier working into the UK by exit day will be able to continue to come to the UK for work for up to three months from each entry until 31 December 2020. They will need to apply for frontier worker status to continue coming to the UK for work after that date. Further details about the application process for frontier worker status will be set out in due course, if the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

The Home Office has not made an estimate of the number of frontier workers resident in Ireland and working in Northern Ireland or those who would be entitled to retain rights under Article 10(1)(c) of the draft EU Withdrawal Agreement.

Home Office: Serco

Jo Stevens: [273404]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many contracts his Department has awarded to Serco since July 2013; and what the value is of those contracts.

Caroline Nokes:
Since July 2013, the Home Office has awarded 3 contracts to Serco, with a total contract value of £2.2bn.

Immigrants: Detainees

Thangam Debbonaire: [273420]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans he has to reduce the number of people held in UK immigration removal centres.

Thangam Debbonaire: [273421]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans he has to change the provision of immigration removal centres in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Nokes:
In the year ending March 2019 24,333 individuals entered the detention estate which is the lowest level since comparable records began in 2009. In the same period 71% of detainees were held for 28 days or less and 93% for less than four months.

The Government expects that changes in policy and operational approaches will lead to a reduction in the number of those detained, and the duration of detention before removal, in turn improving the welfare of those detained.

The Government is committed to using detention sparingly and only when necessary. The Home Office has taken a systematic approach to modernising and rationalising
the immigration detention estate, ensuring the geographical footprint and resilience required to meet our future needs. By this summer the estate will be almost 40% smaller than it was four years ago and of significantly higher quality.

### Immigration: Windrush Generation

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people at Full Time Equivalent have been employed to establish and administer the system for compensation for victims of the Windrush scandal in the last 12 months.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The number of FTE employed to establish and administer the Windrush Compensation Scheme has fluctuated according to business need. A small, dedicated development team was set up to establish the scheme, averaging around 20 FTE. Now that the scheme is open for claims we have a budgeted complement for the policy and operational teams of up to 135.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have applied for compensation from the Windrush compensation scheme to date.

**Caroline Nokes:**

We will publish information on the number of claims submitted, number of claims paid and the overall amount paid out by the scheme in due course as part of our regular reporting to the Home Affairs Select Committee.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the effect of a wrong decision being made denying a person the right to re-enter the UK under the Windrush scandal on eligibility for benefits and tax credits which require residency in the UK for the last two years.

**Caroline Nokes:**

Officials in the Home Office continue to work closely with the DWP and HMRC on the design and delivery of the compensation scheme but also on individual cases through the Taskforce. The joint working has enabled those with a right to benefits to have them re-instated.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for compensation by people affected by the Windrush scandal have been successful, and how many of those successful applicants have received compensation.
Caroline Nokes:
We will publish information on the number of claims submitted, number of claims paid and the overall amount paid out by the scheme in due course as part of our regular reporting to the Home Affairs Select Committee.

Migrant Workers

Mark Pawsey:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the UK (a) retains and (b) attracts highly skilled contractors from the EU after the UK leaves the EU.

Mark Pawsey:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how the future skills-based immigration system will enable highly skilled contractors from overseas to fill temporary roles on a (a) self-employed and (b) employed basis after the UK leaves the EU.

Mark Pawsey:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what visa routes will be introduced in the future skills-based immigration system to enable highly skilled contractors from overseas to continue to provide temporary and specialist services in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

Caroline Nokes:
The Government set out its proposals for the future skills-based immigration system in the White Paper published on 18 December. It states that those wishing to base themselves in the UK to work on a self-employed or freelance basis will continue to be able to do so where they are able to qualify under the exceptional talent, business start-up or innovator routes. In addition, those skilled professionals who are technically self-employed but effectively filling a position with a UK-based business, for example, barristers, will continue to be able to be sponsored under the new route for skilled and highly skilled workers.

The UK has existing commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services and bilateral free trade agreements concluded between the EU and third countries which provide for the admission of contractual service suppliers and self-employed professionals where they are coming under contract to supply a service to a UK client. These commitments, which the UK expects to continue to be bound by following the UK’s exit from the EU, are currently implemented through existing provisions in the UK immigration system, and these arrangements will continue after the UK leaves the EU. The Government expects to build upon these existing commitments in future trade agreements with the EU and other key trading partners.

The White Paper on the UK’s future relationship with the EU sets the Government’s intention to agree reciprocal mobility arrangements with the EU that support businesses’ ability to provide services.
■ Migration Advisory Committee: Public Appointments

George Eustice: [273370]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 14 May 2019 to Question 250476, when he plans to start the recruitment process for a new chair of the Migration Advisory Committee when Professor Manning's term ends in November 2019.

Caroline Nokes:
The recruitment process for the appointment of the chair of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), which will be made in accordance with the Cabinet Office Governance Code on Public Appointments (the Code), is under consideration. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf

As set out in the Code, in the planning stages, Ministers are consulted about the possible recruitment options, which include possible re-appointment or open competition.

■ Overseas Visitors: Visas

Thangam Debbonaire: [273413]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visitor visas have been received, by nationality of country of origin, in each of the last 10 years.

Thangam Debbonaire: [273414]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications there have been for visitor visas for the purposes of visiting family, by country of origin of applicant, in each of the last 10 years.

Caroline Nokes:
Information on the amount of visit visa applications received for the purposes of visiting family is not available. The standard visit visa has replaced a range of previous visas including the family visit visa (see https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa)

Information on the number of total visa applications, grants and refusals, by nationality, the large majority of which are visit visas, can be found in table vi_02_q in volume 1 of our visas tables, the latest of which is available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2019/list-of-tables#visas

■ Radicalism: Germany

Lyn Brown: [273358]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will make an assessment of potential links between the Nordkreuz network in Germany and extremist groups in the UK.
Mr Ben Wallace:
The Government takes the threat from all forms of extremism seriously. We undertake a large number of assessments of the threat, including analysis of links between extremist groups overseas and those in the United Kingdom.

Reoffenders: Prosecutions

Andrew Rosindell: [272134]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions he has had with the Director of Public Prosecutions on ensuring more effective prosecutions of cases involving repeat offenders.

Mr Nick Hurd:
The Home Secretary and the Director of Public Prosecutions meet regularly through the Criminal Justice Board (CJB), which brings together leaders from across the criminal justice system to address cross-system issues, including reoffending.

UK Visas and Immigration: Staff

Thangam Debbonaire: [273410]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many full-time equivalent employees there were in UK Visas and Immigration and its predecessor bodies in each of the last 10 financial years.

Caroline Nokes:
UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) was formed in April 2013. From June 2014, UKVI figures on staffing are published quarterly on gov.uk at: [https://www.gov.uk/search?q=Border+and+immigration+cross+cutting+data]. Staffing figures prior to this are not published.

UKVI regularly reviews its capacity plans and resources, redeploying and recruiting staff where necessary to help meet and maintain service standards for individual services”.

Thangam Debbonaire: [273411]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were employed by UK Visas and Immigration in assessing and processing claims for asylum in each of the last 10 financial years.

Caroline Nokes:
The number of people who were employed by UK Visas and Immigration in assessing and processing claims for asylum in each of the last 10 financial years, is not held in a way that can be easily aggregated. To obtain this information would require detailed reporting against multiple cost centres and could only be obtained at disproportionate costs.

Decisions on asylum claims are made by decision makers in Asylum Operations. There are recruitment strategies in place to maintain staffing at the required levels to
allow us to manage asylum intake and reduce the overall time to make initial asylum decisions.

All asylum claims lodged in the UK are carefully considered on their individual merits against a background of relevant case law and up to date country information.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Affordable Housing: Rural Areas

Dr David Drew:  [273315]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that communities and local authorities work together to provide adequate numbers of affordable homes in rural areas when drawing up Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 8 July 2019]: The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that in rural areas, planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. These opportunities should be explored in both local plans and neighbourhood plans that look to allocate housing.

The Framework also makes it clear that in rural areas housing development that reflect local needs should be supported. The rural exception sites policy specifically promotes the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas.

In addition, an £8.5 million ‘discounted homes’ pilot is being used to support communities who wish to bring forward affordable homes for sale through neighbourhood planning, many of these are expected to be in rural areas.

High Rise Flats: Insulation

Mr Steve Reed:  [271512]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to identify (a) privately owned and (b) social housing high-rise blocks of flats with high pressure laminate cladding and combustible insulation.

Mr Steve Reed:  [271513]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate his Department has made of the number of (a) privately owned housing blocks and (b) social housing blocks with high pressure laminate cladding and combustible insulation that have been remediated.

Mr Steve Reed:  [271515]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure that high pressure laminate cladding and
combustible insulation is removed from (a) privately owned and (b) social housing blocks in the event that the building owners do not remove that material.

**Kit Malthouse:**

*[Holding answer 4 July 2019]*: The Department has not formally collected data on on non-Aluminuim Composite Material external wall systems on high rise residential buildings.

Advice Note 14 makes it clear that Building Owners should seek professional advice on the fire safety of their buildings and take any necessary subsequent actions. Local authorities have powers to enforce this if required. This Advice Note can be found at:


### Housing: Fire Prevention

**Peter Kyle:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what progress the Government has made in ensuring that non-compliant fire doors in housing are replaced.

**Peter Kyle:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what financial support the Government is making available to the housing industry to ensure that non-compliant fire doors are replaced.

**Kit Malthouse:**

We have been clear that the Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) composite fire door industry must take responsibility for replacing their defective fire doors. The Association of Composite Fire Door Manufacturers has committed to producing an industry led action plan to ensure that doors are replaced where this is required.

**Peter Kyle:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidance the Government has issued to the housing industry on the replacement of non-compliant fire doors.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Expert Panel has issued guidance for building owners on assurance and the replacing of flat entrance fire doors. This guidance can be found at:

Housing: Older People

Helen Hayes:

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that all elderly people live in decent and accessible homes.

Kit Malthouse:

Everyone deserves a decent and safe place to live, and Government is committed to helping older and disabled people to live independently and safely. Over 516,000 local authority homes have been brought up to the Decent Homes Standard since 2010. The Social Housing Green Paper asked whether there are any changes to what constitutes a Decent Home and we are currently considering responses to the consultation. In the National Planning Policy Framework, we have strengthened the policy approach to accessible housing by setting out an expectation that planning policies for housing should make use of the Government’s optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing. Additionally, on 25 June the Prime Minister announced that Government will consult on mandating higher accessibility standards for new housing. Through the Disabled Facilities Grant Government also funds the provision of home adaptations to help enable eligible people of all ages to live independently and safely at home. Government has invested more than £2.7 billion into the grant (2012-13 to 2019-20), providing around 280,000 adaptations by the end of 2018-19.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Jake Berry:

The Department is aware that there are a number of credit union schemes on offer and that some departments have chosen to offer this facility through payroll. For a number of reasons, not least the administrative issue when employees leave the civil service or move between departments, we have decided not to pursue this benefit. We do however encourage MHCLG employees to make use of other Civil Service wide opportunities such as the Charity for Civil Servants ‘Money Matters’ service and the Department’s Employee Assistance provider who are available to aid in financial management and provide advice where required.

Social Rented Housing: Construction

Matt Western:

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the oral contribution of the hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington of 13
June 2019, Official Report, column 860, whether his Department plans to adopt the target to build 155,000 social rented homes a year with at least 100,000 being council homes.

**Kit Malthouse:**
We are committed to increasing the supply of social housing and have invested over £9 billion into our Affordable Homes Programme to deliver 250,000 affordable homes by 2022, including at least 12,500 for social rent.

We do not publish yearly targets but deliver flexibly throughout the years of the programme to achieve our overall target and hold Homes England and the GLA to account for delivery.

We have increased the size of the Affordable Homes Programme, re-introduced social rent, removed the HRA borrowing cap for local authorities, and have set out a long-term rent deal for councils and housing associations in England from 2020. Housing associations and local authorities now need to accelerate delivery and build more affordable homes.

### Social Rented Housing: Older People

**Paul Farrelly:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to (a) improve housing standards for older people living in the rental sector and (b) ensure the adequacy of that housing.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**
Safe and secure housing is a top priority for Government, and older tenants will benefit from recent legislation to bring about a new, fairer deal for both tenants and landlords as we strengthen all tenants’ rights. This includes the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act, which complements existing enforcement activity by empowering all tenants to hold their landlords to account if they fail to provide and maintain quality accommodation, and the extension to mandatory licensing of high-risk houses in multiple occupation, bringing more properties into scope than ever before, while also introducing minimum room sizes.

### Tenants: Forfeiture

**Tulip Siddiq:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the use of forfeiture against tenants.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**
The Government believes forfeiture is a draconian measure and should only be used as a last resort. We are reviewing the use of forfeiture and as a first step, have asked the Law Commission to update their 2006 report, *Termination of Tenancies for Tenant Default*, given the passage of time, and to take into account the implications of leasehold reforms currently underway.
Food Supply

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [272301]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the recent State of the World Food Security and Nutrition report findings that global hunger has increased for the fourth year running, what steps the Government is taking to (a) help end this trend and (b) help ensure that sustainable development goal two is achieved.

Harriett Baldwin:
The UK is playing its part in ending hunger and undernutrition through a substantial portfolio of agricultural and other economic development programmes, nutrition, agricultural research, social safety nets, resilience and humanitarian response interventions; through DFID’s bilateral programmes as well as support to multilateral institutions. But we are aware that more needs to be done if we are to end hunger by 2030, and the new report confirms the urgency. This is why we are discussing opportunities with partners for scaled-up and improved global interventions, to help reverse the negative trend on global hunger, including the German-initiated proposal for a major SDG2 moment in 2020.

Gaza: Reconstruction

John Lamont: [272238]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of processes to prevent the misuse of reconstruction material in Gaza.

Dr Andrew Murrison:
Following the review of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) by the UN, Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority in February 2018, and the implementation of improvements in January 2019, we assess that the GRM and, in particular, its Programme Monitoring Unit (PMU) has effective processes to monitor the entry and use of construction materials in Gaza. DFID has recently committed a further £700,000 to the PMU over the next two years. This support will be an important part of efforts to alleviate shelter and basic service needs which were exacerbated by the 2014 conflict and help stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty.

Kenya: Overseas Aid

Andrew Rosindell: [272141]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what country-specific direct support his Department is providing to Kenya to (a) support economic development and (b) strengthen democratic institutions in that country.
Harriett Baldwin:
The DFID Kenya economic development portfolio comprises a range of programmes primarily focused on Trade, Agriculture, Urban Economic Development, Energy and Jobs. Specifically, these initiatives aim to support Kenya in:

1. Reducing the time taken and costs involved in trading within Kenya and across the region by improving the efficiency of transport infrastructure and strengthening the regulatory and policy environment for trade.

2. Developing fairer, better functioning, market systems in agriculture, livestock and water sectors.

3. Responding to high levels of urbanisation by helping municipalities in Kenya to plan better and attract investment into climate-resilient infrastructure and value chain projects.

4. Designing and testing the commercial viability of different Green Mini-Grid models developed and operated by the private sector in Kenya.

5. Fostering innovation and job creation through providing seed-financing and technical assistance to competitively selected businesses with the potential to create large scale jobs including for the youth, those working in the informal sector and hard-to-reach places and those living with disabilities.

In addition, the DFID Kenya Governance portfolio is working to help strengthen democratic institutions in Kenya through supporting:

1. The Independent Elections and Boundary Commission to prepare and manage fair, credible and peaceful elections.

2. A range of other independent institutions such as the Independent Police Oversight Authority, the Office of the Auditor General, and the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission.

3. A range of civil society organisations working to better hold government to account in the areas of service delivery, police reform and public participation, as well as working with parliamentary committees, for example, the public accounts committees.

In line with the UK’s new approach to Africa, our work is helping to build a stronger, more modern partnership with Kenya.

Seychelles: Economic Growth

Andrew Rosindell:

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what country-specific direct support his Department is providing to the Seychelles to support economic development in that country.

Harriett Baldwin:
The Department for International Development does not provide country-specific direct support to Seychelles to support its economic development as it is a high
income country. The UK does fund international organisations working in Seychelles that support maritime security, tackle illicit finance flows, and help Seychelles assess its vulnerability to climate change.

Zambia: Overseas Aid

Andrew Rosindell:

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what country-specific direct support his Department is providing to Zambia to (a) support economic development and (b) strengthen democratic institutions in that country.

Harriett Baldwin:

The DFID Zambia economic development portfolio comprises programmes primarily focused on job creation and private sector investment, infrastructure and energy development. It supports the poorest with tools they can use for their own development. These initiatives include:

1. Supporting job creation and regulatory reform in high-potential sectors that provide opportunities for women and youth employment, including agriculture, services to the mining industry, tourism and household services (clean cooking, off-grid energy, on-site sanitation).

2. Fostering innovation and job creation through technical assistance to competitively selected businesses with the potential to create large scale jobs and grow to provincial, national and eventually regional businesses.

3. Increasing access to finance for growing businesses and facilitate new investment sources, including global impact investors (e.g. the ImpactCapitalAfrica initiative), local private wealth individuals (e.g. first-of-a-kind crowd-funding from Zambian residents) and state assets (e.g. engagement with Zambia’s development bank and pension funds).

4. Responding to high levels of urbanisation and Zambia’s geographical challenges by helping municipalities improve urban planning and supporting key Ministries and the private sector to develop more effective infrastructure solutions.

5. Piloting technology applications that deliver on development challenges and create and support sustainable businesses such as in rural mobility and off-grid cold chains.

6. Support climate smart agriculture approaches and financial inclusion for the rural and peri-urban poor.

DFID also provides direct support to create an enabling environment for citizens’ representation. Our support has contributed to 1.7 million new voters registering for the 2016 elections, and it enables Zambians to raise and debate issues that matter to them with their leaders, locally and nationally.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Arms Trade: Hong Kong
Jonathan Edwards:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what export licences relating to defence are in place with Hong Kong.

Graham Stuart:
The Government publishes Official Statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) about export licences granted, refused and revoked to Hong Kong – and other destinations - on GOV.UK.

These reports contain detailed information by destination – including the overall value, type (e.g. Military, Other) and a summary of the items covered by these licences.

The data currently provides details of licences up to 31 December 2018. Information about the period 1 January to 31 March 2019 will be published on 16 July 2019 and data covering the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 will be published in October 2019.

Department for International Trade: Brexit
Tom Brake:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what preparations his Department is making for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement; and how much funding has been allocated to those preparations.

George Hollingbery:
Like all government departments, we have been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal for nearly three years. The Department for International Trade is putting in place a range of mitigations, which include signing trade continuity agreements with partner countries, developing a temporary tariff policy that will apply in the event of no deal and communicating relevant information to businesses.

The Treasury has allocated over £4.2 billion of additional funding to departments and Devolved Administrations for EU exit preparations so far. This breaks down as £412m over the spending review period for the Department for Exiting the European Union, Department for International Trade and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (Autumn Statement 2016); £286m of additional funding for 2017/18 (a full breakdown of which can be found in Supplementary Estimates 2017/18); over £1.5 billion for 2018/19 (Supplementary Estimates 2018/19); and over £2 billion for 2019/20 (Main Estimates 2019/20).

This funding is to cover all exit scenarios and is in addition to departmental efforts to reprioritise from business as usual toward preparations for the UK’s departure from the EU. Work on no-deal exit preparations cannot be readily separated from other EU exit work, given the significant overlap in plans in many cases.
Department for International Trade: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

George Hollingbery:
I can confirm my department currently does not offer a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union. Staff can still make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

Technology: Foreign Investment in UK

Jim Shannon:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the role of the UK’s tech sector in attracting foreign direct investment.

Graham Stuart:
The Tech Nation 2019 report, states that the UK attracts more VC tech investment than anywhere else in Europe, with £6.3 billion raised in 2018.

During London Tech Week, June 2019, DIT hosted 20 delegations from our international Posts consisting of 600 innovative tech companies keen to invest and scale up in the UK and secured £1.2 billion of new FDI announcements creating 850 new jobs.

Through the AI Sector Deal, this government is actively supporting the development of talent, nationwide, ensuring that this position is strengthened and investment in AI, exceeding £3.8 billion, continues to grow.

JUSTICE

[Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Alex Cunningham:
Whether he plans to allocate additional funding to youth offending teams.

Edward Argar:
We value the vital work Youth Offending Teams do with children who have offended, and the work they do to prevent offending. The Youth Justice Board’s total funding this year for frontline services including Youth Offending Teams is £72.2m. This is greater than last year’s funding, which was £71.6m.

Of the £72.2m, £70.7m has been allocated to the core grant for Youth Offending Teams and £1.5m to frontline service improvement.
Animal Welfare: Prosecutions

Paul Farrelly:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people prosecuted under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 in each of the last 12 months.

Robert Buckland:  
The Ministry of Justice has published data up to December 2018. The number of prosecutions for offences under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 in each of the 12 months of 2018 can be found in the accompanying table.

Attachments:  
1. Table [PQ 271433 table.xlsx]

Bristol Prison: Safety

Thangam Debbonaire:  
What steps he is taking to help ensure a safe regime for (a) staff and (b) prisoners in Horfield prison in Bristol.

Robert Buckland:  
An Urgent Notification was invoked at HMP Bristol on 13th June 2019. There has been some progress at HMP Bristol under Special Measures to bolster staff to a sufficient level, reduce illicit drug use and improve living conditions by refurbishing a wing and a number of the showers. However, we know more support is needed. The Secretary of State will publish his response and an initial action plan within 28 calendar days (on 11th July) in response to the most serious and urgent concerns raised.

Immediate action has been taken to ensure prisoners can speak to Samaritans on their in-cell phones. In addition, action has been taken to address issues raised regarding the safer custody hotline and prevent issues from recurring, so prisoners’ family and friends can report any concerns about a prisoner’s welfare directly to the prison.

Burglary: Sentencing

Neil O’Brien:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average sentence length was for an offender convicted for domestic burglary for offenders for which this was their (a) first, (b) second, (c) third, (d) fourth, (e) fifth, (f) sixth, (g) seventh or (h) eighth or more conviction for that offence in each of the last five years.

Neil O’Brien:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of people sentenced for domestic burglary for (a) the third time, (b) more than three times received (i) an
immediate custodial sentence of up to three years, (ii) an immediate a custodial sentence of more than three years and (iii) a non-custodial sentence in each year since 1993.

Robert Buckland:
The information requested is provided in the tables attached with this answer. These tables include data on:

- The average custodial sentence length for offenders sentenced for domestic burglary, broken down by the order of sentence occasion, covering the period 2014 – 2018.
- The proportion of offenders sentenced for domestic burglary for the third time, broken down by sentence type and sentence length, covering the period 2000 – 2018.
- The proportion of offenders sentenced for domestic burglary for more than the third time, broken down by sentence type and sentence length, covering the period 2000 – 2018.

This data is not regularly published or held in an easily accessible format. The information supplied has been sourced from a number of complicated queries of the Police National Computer.

Attachments:
1. Table [PQs 272235 and 272237 Response Table.xlsx]

Camp Hill Prison

Mr Bob Seely:
What progress he has made on the sale of the Camp Hill prison site to Isle of Wight Council.

Robert Buckland:
We have commissioned a demolition survey of the former prison results should hopefully be available, in late July.

The Camp Hill element of HM Prison Isle of Wight closed on 31 March 2013. In summer 2014, the then Secretary of State decided that the former prison sites at Camp Hill, Reading and Wellingborough would be retained in case they offered a useful contingency option to deal with population pressures. The site was released for disposal on 10 January 2017.

Courts: Disability

Yasmin Qureshi:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether specialised employees with training on how to support people with disabilities are available in each court.

Paul Maynard:
HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) launched new guidance to staff in November 2018 to help ensure it meets its legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to
provide reasonable adjustments for users with disabilities. This empowers staff to remove barriers and support users with disabilities.

HMCTS will also shortly issue a new reasonable adjustment learning product for staff so that they have the capability and confidence to support court and tribunal users with disabilities. This learning will be mandatory for all HMCTS operational staff to complete.

HMCTS also has a page on GOV.UK setting out the support it provides, pointing users to who they can contact to get the right support, and explaining how individual needs will be discussed with the judge hearing a case.

HMCTS is committed to ensuring access to courts and tribunals is maintained for all staff and users.

Courts: Recorders

Yasmin Qureshi:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many sitting days in courts in England were presided over by a recorder in each of the last 18 months.

Paul Maynard:  
The table below shows the number of sitting days in courts in England that were presided over by a recorder in each of the last 18 months to December 2018. These figures cover sitting days by recorders in County, Family and Crown Courts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>RECORDER SITTING DAYS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul-17</td>
<td>2,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug-17</td>
<td>2,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep-17</td>
<td>3,158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct-17</td>
<td>2,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-17</td>
<td>2,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec-17</td>
<td>1,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-18</td>
<td>2,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb-18</td>
<td>2,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar-18</td>
<td>2,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr-18</td>
<td>1,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-18</td>
<td>1,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun-18</td>
<td>2,153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are only able to provide information to December 2018 as this aligns with the latest information on court sitting days which is published on Gov.uk and is available here. [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2019](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2019). It is part of the Royal Courts of Justice Annual Tables (which contain at Table 5.2 a breakdown of sitting days by type of work and level of judge).

The data source for these figures are a number of operational systems and as such are liable to change and may not reflect previously published statistics.

Last year Crown Court trial waiting times were at their lowest since 2014, with this year’s allocation of sitting days reflecting this.

### Courts: Sales

Yasmin Qureshi: [273363]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the sale price was of each (a) magistrates' court building, (b) youth court and (c) Crown court sold in the last two years.

Paul Maynard:

Sales of Magistrates', Youth and Crown court buildings from the 2017/18 financial year onwards are as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>RECEIPT (£)</th>
<th>REFORM/PRE-REFORM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abergavenny Magistrates Court</td>
<td>499,809</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnstaple Magistrates' &amp; County Court</td>
<td>95,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolton Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brecon Law Court</td>
<td>575,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caerphilly Magistrates Court</td>
<td>445,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester-le-Street Magistrates</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY</td>
<td>RECEIPT (£)</td>
<td>REFORM/PRE-REFORM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cirencester Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>Pre-reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolgellau Mags &amp; Crown Court</td>
<td>67,509</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorking Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>2,125,000</td>
<td>Pre-reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich Magistrates Court</td>
<td>12,005,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammersmith Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>43,000,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holyhead Magistrates Court (North Anglesey)</td>
<td>112,500</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keighley (Bingley) Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>254,310</td>
<td>Pre-reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool, Dale Street Magistrates</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyndhurst Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>Pre-reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northallerton Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswestry Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>110,602</td>
<td>Pre-reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Upon Thames Magistrates Court</td>
<td>9,850,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solihull Magistrates Court</td>
<td>4,300,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tottenham (Enfield) Magistrates Court</td>
<td>4,570,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towcester Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>Pre-reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltham Forest Magistrates Court</td>
<td>3,471,040</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watford Magistrates Court</td>
<td>3,836,000</td>
<td>Reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above excludes transfers of surplus properties to other government departments (such as Homes England) as these are not categorised as a sale transaction, but as an internal transfer within government.
The closure of any court is not taken lightly – it only happens following full public consultation and when communities have reasonable access to alternative courts.

Since the start of the Reform Programme, money raised from the sale of surplus buildings has been reinvested in the reform of HM Courts & Tribunals Service. The table above identifies pre-reform buildings where this is not the case.

**Richard Burgon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he made of the value of each court that his Department intended to sell prior to each sale.

**Paul Maynard:**

The table below provides a list of the estimated value of courts which have now been sold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>ESTIMATED VALUE</th>
<th>SALE VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abergavenny Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>499,681</td>
<td>499,809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow County Court</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bracknell Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>Information not held</td>
<td>1,000,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brecon Law Court</td>
<td>575,000</td>
<td>575,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgend Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>375,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caerphilly Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>570,000</td>
<td>445,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmarthen Law Courts (The Guildhall)</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>223,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester-le-Street Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>Information not held</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolgellau Mags &amp; Crown Court</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>67,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feltham Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>2,150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grantham Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>560,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
<td>12,005,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammersmith Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>37,000,000</td>
<td>43,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holyhead Magistrates’ Court (North Anglesey)</td>
<td>104,000</td>
<td>112,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool, Dale Street Magistrates’</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>Estimated Value</td>
<td>Sale Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llangefni County Court</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>72,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neath And Port Talbot County Court</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northallerton Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontypridd Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhyl County Court</td>
<td>81,000</td>
<td>92,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Upon Thames Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
<td>9,850,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solihull Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
<td>4,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spalding Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>Information not held</td>
<td>278,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tottenham (Enfield) Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>4,570,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltham Forest Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>3,471,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watford Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>3,836,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weston Super Mare Magistrates' Court</td>
<td>Information not held</td>
<td>116,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolwich County Court</td>
<td>1,280,000</td>
<td>2,555,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63,329,681</strong></td>
<td><strong>95,803,437</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above excludes transfers of surplus properties to other government departments (such as Homes England) as these are not categorised as sale transactions, but as internal transfers within government.

The closure of any court is not taken lightly – it only happens following full public consultation and when communities have reasonable access to alternative courts.

### Criminal Injuries Compensation

**Sarah Champion:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether a cap is placed on compensation for lost earnings paid as part of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.
Edward Argar:
Awards available to applicants under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2012 (the Scheme), can comprise injury, loss of earnings, special expenses, bereavement, funeral, child and dependency payments.

Where an applicant is eligible for an injury payment under the Scheme, they may also be eligible for a loss of earnings payment, where the applicant has no or very limited capacity for paid work as a direct result of that injury. Loss of earnings payments are calculated at statutory sick pay rate, beginning on the first day of the 29th week in which the applicant satisfies the conditions, and ending on whichever is earliest of the day on which the applicant no longer satisfies the condition, the day on which the applicant will reach state pension age, or where the criminal injury has resulted in a life expectancy below the state pension age, the expected end of the applicant's life.

The maximum award which may be made under this Scheme, inclusive of any payment in respect of loss of earnings, is £500,000.

Criminal Injuries Compensation: Sexual Offences

Richard Burgon:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many victims of sexual abuse have had their applications for compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme rejected because they had an unspent criminal conviction in the first six months of 2019.

Edward Argar:
The Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2012 (the Scheme), which was approved by Parliament, sets out that awards will be withheld where the applicant has an unspent conviction of a kind specifically identified by the Scheme. This includes custodial sentences and community orders.

In the first six months of 2019 (1 January 2019 to 30 June 2019), the number of finalised applications refused because of unspent convictions where the application was made as a result of sexual assault or abuse was 97. It should be noted that unspent criminal convictions may not be the only reason these cases were refused.

The Government recently announced a review of the Scheme which will include consideration of the rule relating to unspent criminal convictions.

Employment Tribunals Service

Richard Burgon:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average time to complete a single employment tribunal claim was in each year since 2010.

Paul Maynard:
HM Courts & Tribunals Service can only provide data for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2019. Data below the level of published statistics are not available prior to 1 April 2014 due to a data reconciliation exercise.
The average time taken to complete a single Employment Tribunal claim is published in the Tribunal Quarterly Statistics which can be found in Table T_1 of the Main Tables using the following link: www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics. The information is also included below:

2014/15 – 41 weeks
2015/16 – 29 weeks
2016/17 – 28 weeks
2017/18 – 27 weeks
2018/19 – 30 weeks

### Family Justice Panel: Public Appointments

**Tim Loughton:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what criteria was used to appoint the members of the Family Justice panel; and what gender balance requirements were applied.

**Paul Maynard:**

The members of the panel established to gather evidence on the protections provided by the family courts in cases involving domestic abuse and other serious offences were appointed for their expertise on the issue. The panel includes pre-eminent academics; senior judiciary; Women’s Aid to represent victims; the Chief Social Worker and the Association of Children’s Lawyers to represent practitioners. The panel will launch a public call for evidence open to all individuals and organisations, and is considering other mechanisms for gathering the full range of views on the issues.

### Glen Pava Prison and Wellingborough Prison: Contracts

**Richard Burgon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 21 May 2019 to Question 253599 on Glen Pava Prison and Wellingborough Prison: Contracts, on what date his Department plans to award the Prison Operator Framework; and if he will make a statement.

**Richard Burgon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 21 May 2019 to Question 253599 on Glen Pava Prison and Wellingborough Prison: Contracts, on what date his Department plans to announce the result of the mini-competition for the operation of the prison at Wellingborough.

**Robert Buckland:**

On the 5 June 2019 I wrote to the Justice Select Committee to provide an update on the modernisation of the prison estate. In that letter, which I will place a copy of in the House Library, I confirmed the six bidders (G4S Care and Custody Services UK Limited, Interserve Investments Limited, Management and Training Corporation
Works Limited, Mitie Care & Custody, Serco Limited, and Sodexo Limited) who had been accepted on to the Prison Operator Services Framework and who are now eligible to bid in future mini-competitions to operate individual prisons. We intend to launch the mini-competition for the first new Resettlement Prison at Wellingborough in July 2019 and anticipate making the award to the successful operator in July 2020.

The Government is committed to a mixed market of custodial services. The Prison Operator Framework will increase the diversity and resilience of the custodial services market in England and Wales, by creating a pool of prison operators who can provide high quality, value for money, custodial and maintenance services and enable us to effectively and efficiently manage a pipeline of competition over the next six years.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Length of Service

Richard Burgon: [273440]
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether (a) salary and (b) pension contributions for HM Courts and Tribunals Service staff are determined by length of service.

Paul Maynard:
The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is responsible for setting out the terms and conditions for all staff within Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service. Length of service is not a consideration in determining an employee’s starting salary or the annual pay award amount that they receive.

Length of service is not a factor in calculating an employee’s pension contributions.

Law Centres: Finance

Richard Burgon: [273434]
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much funding his Department has provided to law centres in each year since 2010.

Paul Maynard:
We recognise the valuable work that Law Centres do in local communities across the country, and we support them in this through legal aid contracts.

Government funding since 2010 is highlighted in the below table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL YEAR</th>
<th>LAW CENTRE COSTS (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>12,138,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>12,514,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>10,755,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>9,529,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>7,476,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Year</td>
<td>Law Centre Costs (£)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>6,693,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>6,646,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>6,341,686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>7,053,922</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As outlined in the Legal Support Action Plan, we are investing up to £5 million to deliver innovative services and test new methods of support to help people resolve their problems quickly and easily, in the way that best works for them. We are also launching several projects and pilots offering support to people with social welfare problems like housing, including an expansion of early legal advice to determine the most effective solutions going forward.

In addition, my officials continue to meet regularly with representatives of law centres to discuss ways in which we can work together to enhance the breadth of legal support available for everyone in society.

Legal Aid Scheme

Peter Kyle: [273455]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the timescale is for the review of the financial eligibility thresholds for people seeking legal aid.

Paul Maynard:
The comprehensive review of the legal aid eligibility regime is expected to conclude by Summer 2020 after which we will publish a full consultation paper setting out our future policy proposals in this area. We will seek to implement any final recommendations as soon as practicable following public consultation.

Legal Aid Scheme: Canterbury

Rosie Duffield: [911819]

What steps his Department is taking to improve provision of legal aid for housing cases in Canterbury.

Paul Maynard:
After the latest LAA civil tender the number of offices providing legal aid services has increased by 7% in housing and debt. The LAA reviews the access to services on a regular basis and takes any necessary action to maintain access to those services.

As a result of the 2018 civil contract procurement activity access to providers offering Housing advice in Kent, and specifically the Kent Coast procurement area in which Canterbury falls, has increased.
Following an extensive and open programme of engagement, we recently published our review of LASPO. We announced that we are launching a series of pilots offering early legal advice for an area of social welfare such as housing. These pilots will help us determine the most effective solutions going forward.

Legal Aid Scheme: Education

Richard Burgon: [272275]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the cost was to the public purse on legal aid for education law in each year since 2010.

Paul Maynard:
This information is published at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/legal-aid-statistics and is updated on a quarterly basis. The relevant information is summarised in the table shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Total (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>2,632,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>2,639,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>2,487,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>1,554,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>1,338,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>1,236,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>1,607,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>1,868,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>1,740,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Costs are inclusive of VAT, profit costs, counsel fees and any disbursements incurred. Please note that costs recovered from the opponent in education law matters, and hence which were not charged to the legal aid fund, have not been included in the totals above.

Ministry of Justice: Brexit

Tom Brake: [272110]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what preparations his Department is making for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement; and how much funding has been allocated to those preparations.
Paul Maynard:
As a responsible Government, we’ve been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal for nearly three years. We are putting in place a range of mitigations to effectively prepare for the potential impact of EU exit across the full portfolio of the Ministry of Justice, including prisons, courts and tribunals. Our justice system is respected across the world. This was the case before we joined the EU, and it will continue to be the case after we leave.

The Treasury has allocated over £4.2 billion of additional funding to departments and Devolved Administrations for EU exit preparations so far. This breaks down as £412m over the spending review period for the Department for Exiting the European Union, Department for International Trade and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (Autumn Statement 2016); £286m of additional funding for 2017/18 (a full breakdown of which can be found in Supplementary Estimates 2017/18); over £1.5 billion for 2018/19 (Supplementary Estimates 2018/19); and over £2 billion for 2019/20 (Main Estimates 2019/20).

This funding is to cover all exit scenarios and is in addition to departmental efforts to reprioritise from business as usual toward preparations for the UK’s departure from the EU. Work on no-deal exit preparations cannot be readily separated from other EU exit work, given the significant overlap in plans in many cases.

Ministry of Justice: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:
The Ministry of Justice does not offer the facility to allow staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions.

Ministry of Justice: Serco

Jo Stevens:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many contracts his Department has awarded to Serco since July 2013; and what the value is of those contracts.

Robert Buckland:
The Ministry of Justice has awarded no contracts to Serco since July 2013.

Serco has however been successful in its bid to be a supplier on the Prison Operator Services Framework which was executed on the 4th July 2019. There is no financial value nor commitment of work to the Framework itself. The first competition on this Framework will be for the contract to provide custodial services at HMP Wellingborough. Serco will be entitled to bid for this contract.
### Offenders: Unemployment

**John Spellar:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent estimate he has made of the unemployment rate among former male inmates compared with the rate among the general male population.

**Robert Buckland:**
In May last year, we published our plans for reforming prison education and improving employment outcomes for ex-offenders in the Education and Employment Strategy. The strategy created a system in which each prisoner was set on a path to employment, with prison education and work geared towards employment on release from the outset.

In line with this, we introduced new performance measures to record the rates of employment for prison leavers at six weeks post-release. The Department is scheduled to publish the statistical data for this on 25 July in an annex to Community Performance Statistics on Gov.uk, at the following link:


### Offenders: Veterans

**Gareth Thomas:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2019 to Question 267162, whether he has made additional funding available to support new alliances with military charities to help offenders who are veterans of the armed forces.

**Edward Argar:**
The Government has committed £5.7 million to support programmes targeted at former service personnel in the criminal justice system.

Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service advertise grant opportunities for voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations for innovative projects and pilots, that reflect priorities of the agency. All grant funding to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, including those wishing to support former members of the Armed Forces, is competed openly and these opportunities are published on the Government contract finder website.

The Ministry of Justice is committed to ensuring that those who have served in the Armed Forces and who find themselves in the Criminal Justice System are able to access support in custody and the community

### Prison Officers: Training

**Stephen Metcalfe:**
What progress the Government has made on improving training and support for prison officers.
Robert Buckland:
A delivery review of the Prison Officer Entry Level training (POELT) course has culminated in the development of a Level 3 Custody and Detention Officer Apprenticeship. New learning methodologies will have greater focus on practice of the knowledge, skills and behaviours relevant to the Prison Officer role whilst also recognising the need for continuous training outside of the classroom. Two checkpoints will be included during this time where Apprentices will return to an L&D centre for further learning.

This will give new prison officers the confidence to carry out their role safely. The Apprenticeship will be launched in early adopter sites from October 2019. All training is reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current organisational policies and practices. New courses are developed based on requests from Stakeholders within the organisation.

Prisoners' Release: Employment

John Spellar:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to support people leaving prison to move directly to employment on their release.

Robert Buckland:
One year ago, our Education and Employment Strategy set out plans to transform the way prisoners develop the skills they need to secure employment on release.

Since then, we have introduced the New Futures Network (NFN), which brokers partnerships between prisons and employers in England and Wales. The Network places prisoners in jobs ahead of their release as well as facilitating Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL) placements, which offer continuity and can lead to immediate employment on release.

In addition, our new ROTL framework aims to increase the number of people these opportunities are available to by allowing more prisoners to access ROTL sooner and for longer.

Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety

Rosie Cooper:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of health and safety conditions for prison staff.

Robert Buckland:
The health and safety of our staff and those in our care remains our primary priority. Risks to staff are assessed and suitable controls implemented accordingly. The efficacy of those controls is monitored at local and national level via a variety of processes including joint audit work with prison unions. HM Prison & Probation Service’s (HMPPS) leadership team is kept regularly informed of trends in injuries
and ill health and of the status of occupational risks its staff is facing and is thereby in a position to respond accordingly.

HMPPS recognises that the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of employees is paramount. All HMPPS staff have access to an occupational health service and employee assistance programme. This includes 24 hour, 365 days a year access to signposting and counselling; trauma support services; a wide ranging health promotion website and personal wellbeing zone.

It is a priority to ensure that prisons are places of safety and reform and the government has invested an additional £70 million investment in safety, security and decency. This has included £16 million to improve conditions for prisoners and staff and £7 million on new security measures, such as security scanners, improved searching techniques, phone-blocking technology and a financial crime unit to target the criminal kingpins operating in prisons.

Prisons: Synthetic Cannabinoids

Ben Bradley:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many incidences there were of the use of synthetic cannabinoids in prisons in each of the last three years.

Robert Buckland:

Drug testing is an essential element of the HMPPS drug strategy and provides us with robust evidence on the prevalence of drug misuse. It can be used in support of security measures, to identify and signpost into drug treatment, monitor treatment compliance and act as an incentive to engage in treatment and drug free living.

HMPPS continues to explore new methodologies to develop our mandatory and voluntary drug testing frameworks enabling us to be responsive to the changing patterns of drug misuse in prisons. This includes the misuse of prescribed medication, and the dynamic market in psychoactive substances.

Data and information on drug testing is routinely published as part of the normal publication schedule which can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-hm-prison-and-probation-service-digest-2017-to-2018. Data on drug tests in 2018-19 will be published in due course in line with the normal publication schedule.

Probate: Standards

Dr Sarah Wollaston:

What recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the probate system.

Paul Maynard:

Waiting times in the probate service have recently increased. However, following urgent action by the courts service, they are now starting to improve.

The temporary delays were the result of more work coming into the system and the impact of the initial move to a new IT system for managing probate work.
Now that move is complete, and the unusually high workload has been dealt with, we expect waiting times to continue to improve – and be back to normal levels in the coming weeks.

Reoffenders: Sentencing

Neil O’Brien:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the highest number was of previous community orders issued to an offender sentenced to immediate custody in each year since 2007.

Robert Buckland:

Information on the highest number of previous community sentences received by an offender sentenced to immediate custody, covering the period 2007 – 2018, can be viewed in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. Table [PQ 271592 Response Table.xlsx]

Neil O’Brien:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the highest number of previous offences was that a convicted person committed for that same offence before receiving a sentence other than an immediate non-custodial sentence in each of the last three years for offences relating to (a) possession of a blade or point, (b) possession of an offensive weapon, (c) common assault, (d) assaulting a police officer, (e) sexual assault, (f) public order, (g) theft, (h) robbery, (i) burglary, (j) drugs, (k) criminal damage, (l) breach of anti social behaviour order, (m) fraud and (n) vehicle taking.

Robert Buckland:

Information on the highest number of previous cautions and convictions an offender had for a specified offence type before receiving a custodial sentence, covering the period 2016 – 2018, can be viewed in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. Table [PQ 271619 Response Table.xlsx]

Neil O’Brien:

If he will review sentencing policy for prolific offenders.

Robert Buckland:

We are looking to take forward reform of short custodial sentences. We know that offenders serving short sentences often have long offending histories, as well as multiple and complex needs. In cases of the most persistent offenders, the evidence shows they are 36% more likely to re-offend where they have received a short custodial sentence rather than a court order. Community penalties can address underlying behaviour, answer mental health and alcohol or drug misuse needs and provide reparation for the benefit of the wider community.
Suspended Sentences

Neil O’Brien:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what number and proportion of those who were given a suspended sentence in each of the last three years were required as part of that sentence to (a) do unpaid work, (b) be subject to a curfew, (c) undertake a treatment programme for alcohol or drug and (d) be subject to a rehabilitation activity requirement.

Robert Buckland:  
Information on the requirements attached to suspended sentence orders is not held centrally. Identifying the information held on record locally could only be done at a disproportionate cost.

Young Offenders: Homelessness

Richard Burgon:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 1 July 2019 to Question 269813, for what reason information is not collated in relation to children.

Edward Argar:  
As stated in the previous answer information is collected locally on a young person’s entry into custody, and may be updated over the course of their custodial episode. This information helps to inform staff in relation to the children in their immediate care.

As part of their assessment Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) record a child’s accommodation status and seek to address any issues relating to this. The Youth Justice Board is currently undertaking work to improve its own data collection and a child’s accommodation status will be included in this. The Ministry of Justice, however, does not hold a national coordinating role in this regard, so there is currently no essential business reason to collate this centrally. It is the general duty of every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need by providing a range and level of services, including accommodation, appropriate to those children’s needs.

We believe that everyone should have a safe and suitable home to live; having somewhere to live gives people a stable platform from which to access health services, hold down a job and reduces the likelihood of them reoffending. In keeping with this the Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018, launching a £100 million initiative to reduce and ultimately eliminate rough sleeping across England.
NORTHERN IRELAND

Funerals: Children

Mr Gregory Campbell:  [273337]
To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in the absence of devolved government, if she will consult on the potential merits of introducing a children’s funeral fund in Northern Ireland.

John Penrose:
This is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland, and as such is the responsibility of the Department for Communities (DfC). Information can be requested from the Permanent Secretary at DfC.

Northern Ireland Office: Brexit

Ruth Jones:  [271624]
To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on her Department’s preparations for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

John Penrose:
We remain focused on ensuring our smooth and orderly withdrawal from the EU with a deal as soon as possible. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland speaks regularly with Welsh Ministers on issues relating to EU Exit, through the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations.

Northern Ireland Office: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:  [271349]
To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether her Department offers employees a payroll deduction service to enable staff to join a credit union; and if she will make a statement.

John Penrose:
The Northern Ireland Office’s HR services, including payroll, are provided by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). MOJ does not offer the facility to allow staff to join a Credit Union through payroll deductions.

PRIME MINISTER

Climate Change

Thangam Debbonaire:  [273409]
To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to the Answer of 3 July 2019 to Question 270779 on Climate Change and with reference to with reference to her oral contribution of 26 June 2019, Official Report, column 650, what the evidential basis is for the statement that a regret motion in the House of Lords has the effect of blocking a Statutory Instrument.
Mrs Theresa May:
I have nothing further to add to my answer to the Hon Member during my oral statement of 3 July.

SCOTLAND

Scotland Office: Iron and Steel

Nic Dakin:  [271391]
To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will make it his Department's policy to sign up to the UK Steel Charter.

David Mundell:
The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland is currently assessing which aspects of the UK Steel Charter it is appropriate and relevant to commit to. However, the Charter is generally consistent with existing Government procurement policy to address barriers for UK steel producers.

I am pleased to see Ivan McKee signing the Charter on behalf of the Scottish Government. I feel that it is important that both Governments work together and support this vital industry.

Nic Dakin:  [271392]
To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether officials in his Department have had discussions with officials in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the UK Steel Charter.

David Mundell:
My officials have discussed the procurement of steel with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which has asked all Government departments to consider guidance on steel procurement and to notify of any upcoming opportunities for industry.

More broadly, the Government is committed to supporting the steel sector to realise the broader commercial opportunities that are open to it, which could be worth an additional £3.8 billion a year by 2030. We are establishing the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund – backed by up to £315 million of investment – to help businesses with high energy use (including steel companies) to cut their bills and transition UK industry to a low carbon future. We are also providing up to £66 million through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to help steel and other foundation industries develop radical new technologies.
TRANSPORT

■ A19

Grahame Morris: [273378]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will allocate funding to (a) improve road safety and (b) ensure sufficient capacity on the A19 in respect of traffic created by the Jade Business Park in Murton and the South of Seaham Garden Village.

Michael Ellis:
The Department expects to publish decisions in the latter part of the year on funding for the strategic road network between 2020 and 2025. However, we have already announced our intention to provide a safety and congestion designated fund. Highways England will decide where best to allocate this funding.

■ Cycling and Walking: Finance

Frank Field: [273330]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding the Government is allocating towards meeting its targets for walking and cycling.

Michael Ellis:
The Government’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS), published in April 2017, identified £1.2 billion of funding available for cycling and walking projects over the period 2016-21. Since then, additional funding streams have been made available, including the Transforming Cities Fund, Clean Air Fund, Future High Streets Fund and Housing Infrastructure Fund. As a result, almost £2bn of funding is now projected to be invested in cycling and walking projects between 2016/17 to 2020/21 from a range of funding programmes across Government.

■ Dartford-Thurrock Crossing

Sir David Evennett: [271416]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the level of air pollution caused by traffic congestion on (a) the A2, (b) Bob Dunn Way and (c) other roads approaching the M25 to cross the Dartford Crossing.

Michael Ellis:
Highways England monitor air quality using specialist equipment installed on the Dartford Crossing and surrounding road network. The monthly data they produce forms part of Highways England’s annual Air Quality Management Plan. This informs their strategic assessments and policy.

Highways England do not have monitoring sites outside the Strategic Road Network in the area of the Crossing.

Highways England have also completed a Preliminary Environmental Assessment of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) project including modelling of air quality.
The results of the modelling suggest that following the opening of LTC there will be no perceptible change in pollutant concentrations along the A2 and on Bob Dunn Way. There would be small improvements in pollutant concentrations along A225, A296, A226, and A296. On the M25 corridor itself, there are predicted to be larger improvements in air pollutant concentrations due to a reduction in congestion.

As part of the Development Consent Order application for LTC, Highways England are preparing an Environmental Statement which will include a detailed air quality assessment, to identify the effects and any mitigation measures required. The results of this detailed assessment will be fully reported within the Environmental Statement.

**Department for Transport: Brexit**

Ruth Jones:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on his Department's preparations for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

Chris Grayling:

The UK Government remains committed to engaging the devolved administrations fully in preparations for the UK's exit from the EU, and to secure a deal that works for the entire United Kingdom. Officials in my Department are in regular contact with Welsh Government officials to discuss a range of issues including preparations under all EU exit scenarios. DEvEU Ministers speak regularly with Ministers from the Welsh government on preparations for EU exit, including through the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations (JMC(EN)).

**Department for Transport: Overtime**

Jon Trickett:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the amount of unpaid overtime worked by staff in his Department in the last 24 months.

Michael Ellis:

Neither the central department nor its executive agencies hold this information. The Department has a policy in place to support both paid overtime and flexi-time working for grades below Senior Civil Service. Any additional hours that are recorded are either paid via payroll as overtime or taken as time off in lieu. Staff are not required or expected to work unpaid overtime.

**Department for Transport: Serco**

Jo Stevens:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many contracts his Department has awarded to Serco since July 2013; and what the value is of those contracts.
Michael Ellis:
A total of four contracts were awarded to Serco by the Department for Transport since July 2013. The total value of these contracts is £175,200.95

Electric Vehicles

Seema Malhotra: [271501]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the (a) number and (b) proportion of vehicles that are electric in each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK.

Michael Ellis:
The following table contains the number and proportion of all licensed vehicles that are electric at the end of March 2019. This includes battery electric, plug-in hybrid electric and fuel cell electric vehicles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION/COUNTRY</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PROPORTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>3,599</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>11,287</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and The Humber</td>
<td>14,174</td>
<td>0.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>11,449</td>
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<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>28,400</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>26,835</td>
<td>0.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>26,253</td>
<td>0.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>42,482</td>
<td>0.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>22,871</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>187,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>4,290</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>12,397</td>
<td>0.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>2,664</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom TOTAL</td>
<td>210,415</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seema Malhotra: [272192]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to support electric vehicles in (a) becoming competitive without financial incentives or subsidies for their purchase and (b) reaching price parity with non-electric vehicles.
Seema Malhotra: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to provide support for the purchase of electric vehicles to meet the targets set out in the Government's Net Zero Road Strategy.

Michael Ellis: We are investing nearly £1.5bn between April 2015 and March 2021, with grants available for plug in cars, vans, lorries, buses, taxis and motorcycles, and schemes to support chargepoint infrastructure at homes, workplaces and on residential streets. These subsidies are designed to support the early market and achieve a competitive, self-sustaining market.

The £400m public-private Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund will add thousands more public chargepoints. The Automated and Electric Vehicles Act gives Government new powers to regulate the chargepoint market and improve the experience for consumers. We have supported the installation of more than 20,000 public chargepoints, including over 2,000 rapid chargepoints. The UK's network is already one of the largest networks in Europe and the Road to Zero strategy includes new commitments to massively expand electric and low emission vehicle infrastructure across the country. The Government has also put in place a favourable tax regime that rewards the cleanest, zero emission vehicles.

The Government has awarded over £300m in grants via Innovate UK into ultra low emission technologies. Part of this is the Faraday battery challenge, designed to ensure research and innovation takes centre stage in the Industrial Strategy and to reduce the cost of new technologies.

The Government has also put in place a favourable tax regime that rewards the cleanest, zero emission vehicles. Go Ultra Low is a joint Government-Industry funded campaign which aims to inform vehicle purchasers about the operational savings from driving electric vehicles and to dispel widespread myths.

We anticipate that electric vehicles will achieve price parity with their petrol and diesel counterparts in the mid-2020s. We will review progress by 2025. Against a rapidly evolving international context, we will seek to maintain the UK's leadership position and meet our ambitions, and will consider what interventions are required if not enough progress is being made.

Fisheries: Scotland

Brendan O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's announcement of 3 July 2019 on specialist life vests to improve fishing safety, how much of the additional £700,000 in funding will be allocated to the Scottish Government to administer safety training.
Brendan O'Hara:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department’s announcement of 3 July 2019 on specialist life vests to improve fishing safety, what proportion of the additional £700,000 in funding will be allocated to the Scottish Government to administer.

Brendan O'Hara:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's announcement of 3 July 2019 on specialist life vests to improve fishing safety, how many personal floatation devices fitted with locator beacons will be made available to Scottish fishermen.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:
The Fishing Industry Safety Group Strategy and the Government aims to eliminate preventable deaths in fishing in the UK by 2027. The funding is therefore available to all UK fishermen and will be administered by Trinity House. Officials will be meeting with representatives from the National Federations, including the Scottish Fishermen’s Federation to develop the funding proposals.

Great Western Railway: Rolling Stock
Dr David Drew:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on how many occasions Great Western trains ran with reduced carriage numbers as a result of a shortage of sets in each month since the introduction of the new trains in October 2017.

Andrew Jones:
The Department for Transport does not hold the data requested.

Mersey Gateway Bridge: Fixed Penalties
David Hanson:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many fixed penalty notices have been issued to people crossing the Mersey Gateway bridge in each of the last five years.

David Hanson:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many unpaid fixed penalty notices for crossing the Mersey Gateway bridge resulted in action from a bailiff in each of the last five years.

Michael Ellis:
The Mersey Gateway Bridge and its tolling operation are the responsibility of Halton Borough Council and its operational company the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board. It is contracted to Merseyflow.

The Department of Transport does not hold the information requested.
Office of Rail and Road

Andy McDonald: [272850]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment has he made of the adequacy of the statutory remit of the Office for Rail and Road to work on behalf of the interests of rail passengers.

Andrew Jones: The role and statutory remit of the Office of Rail and Road is part of the Williams Rail Review of the structure of the rail industry which will report in the autumn.

Pollinators: Conservation

Ben Bradley: [272930]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps (a) his Department and (b) agencies of his Department have taken to support the National Pollinator Strategy on (i) roads (ii) railway lines.

Michael Ellis: Highways England recognise the critical role of pollinators and support the National Pollinator Strategy through their Biodiversity Plan. Highways England’s delivery of 3500 hectares of wildflower rich grassland is in progress and will support a wide range of pollinating insects.

Further details of how Highways England will support the National Pollinator Strategy are available on:


Network Rail has been working on a range of initiatives across the country aimed at protecting pollinators, such as the Green Transport Corridors Project in Cumbria and South Yorkshire, where locations were identified for pollinator habitat creation and enhancement.

Railways: Exhaust Emissions

Dr Matthew Offord: [272818]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of emissions at train stations.

Andrew Jones: The department recognises that poor air quality is a major public health issue.

We are funding ongoing research conducted by the Rail and Safety Standards Board (RSSB) into the effect of the rail industry on air quality. This includes recent research at King’s Cross and Edinburgh Waverly.

The Department has set out its aspiration to remove all diesel-only trains from the rail network by 2040. Moving the rail industry away from diesel will both reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality. Progress is already being made, with absolute
carbon emissions from passenger services in 2017-18 6.6 per cent lower than in 2016-17.

- **Railways: Fares**
  
  **Ian Mearns:**
  To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish his response to the consultation on pay-as-you-go on rail.
  
  **Andrew Jones:**
  The public consultation that ran between February 2019 and May 2019 looked at the options as to how a PAYG scheme might work, the extent of such an area and how fares could change to complement PAYG. We are currently investigating the details of how best to deliver a PAYG scheme. We also want to consider wider developments in Government such as the Williams Rail Review to deliver a more consistent PAYG scheme that is flexible and convenient for passengers as well as providing good value for taxpayers’ money. We will take these developments into account, along with the feedback we received during the consultation, and publish details in due course.

- **Railways: North of England**
  
  **Andy McDonald:**
  To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2019 to Question 263884 on Railways: North of England, what progress his Department has made on (a) tendering and (b) awarding contracts for telecommunication improvements in relation to the Transpennine route upgrade.
  
  **Andrew Jones:**
  The Autumn Budget 2017 announced funding for the Trans-Pennine Initiative, as part of the National Productivity Investment Fund. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is currently working with Network Rail to deliver gigabit-cable fibre infrastructure along the existing rail route between Manchester and York. This project is nearing completion, and announcements will be expected later in 2019. This reflects the Government’s commitment to improve telecoms on the railway network and for rural communities.

- **Rolling Stock**
  
  **Rachel Reeves:**
  To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when (a) he and (b) his Ministers were made aware that all pacer trains would not be withdrawn from service by rail operators before 1 January 2020.
  
  **Andrew Jones:**
  The first Pacers are due to be withdrawn from service in August and operators are working to remove all of them by the end of the year. No application for dispensations
with regard to rail vehicle accessibility standards in respect of the Pacers operated by Northern has been submitted to the Department to date.

**TREASURY**

### Coinage

**Clive Lewis:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much money from the public purse has been spent on the creation of the new 50p coin to commemorate the UK leaving the EU.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The cost of designing and producing commemorative coins is met by the Royal Mint out of its own revenues, at no cost to the taxpayer.

### Equitable Life Assurance Society: Compensation

**Mr Philip Hollobone:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will place in the Library a copy of the detailed methodology used to calculate Equitable Life payment scheme compensation payments.

**John Glen:**

The methodology for calculating payments to Equitable Life policyholders was published in 2011 and can be found at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equitable-life-payment-scheme-design](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equitable-life-payment-scheme-design)

### Fisheries: South West

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what programmes will be funded through the £10 million allocated for fisheries innovation South West announced in Budget 2018.

**Elizabeth Truss:**

At Budget 2018, the government announced that £10 million from UK Research and Innovation will be invested into the fisheries and seafood industries to help ensure the UK is a world leader in safe, sustainable and productive fishing.

Defra and Cefas will deliver this funding. I understand they expect to launch the fund shortly.

### Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

**Matthew Pennycook:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much revenue accrued to the public purse in Vehicle Excise Duty on cars registered in London in each of the last three financial years; and what estimate he has made of the amount of that revenue which will accrue to the public purse in the next two financial years.
Robert Jenrick:
The government does not collect Vehicle Excise duty (VED) data by region as place of registration has no bearing on road usage. For example, many company vehicles will be registered at a head office, but kept and used elsewhere.

The OBR publishes forecasts for national receipts in its Economic and Fiscal Outlook, available at the following link: www.obr.uk/efo/economic-fiscal-outlook-march-2019/

From 2020, English VED revenue will be hypothecated to the National Roads fund to deliver nationally significant schemes across the strategic road network, such as improvements to the M25.

Public Expenditure: Scotland

Gavin Newlands: [272191]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to UK Government spending on the 2022 Commonwealth Games, what comparability percentage will be applied for the purpose of the Barnett formula.

Elizabeth Truss:
The UK Government contribution to the 2022 Commonwealth Games budget is subject to the Barnett Formula, which HM Treasury will apply in the normal way. The Treasury will work with the devolved administrations to update and publish comparability factors in a revised Statement of Funding Policy alongside the next Spending Review.

Red Diesel

Matthew Pennycook: [273471]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Clean Air Strategy 2019, what progress he has made in reviewing current uses of red diesel to ensure that its lower cost is not discouraging the transition to cleaner alternatives.

Robert Jenrick:
In April 2019 HMT and Defra published a summary of responses to the call for evidence on non-road mobile machinery and red diesel. HMRC also published a research paper on the same topic. These can be found at:


and


The government will continue to pursue policies to reduce the overall environmental impact of diesel use and encourage the uptake of alternatives in industries where a practical substitute for diesel engines is available.
All taxes are kept under review and any changes are announced as part of the annual budget process.

**Soft Drinks: Taxation**

**Clive Lewis:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policy on the soft drinks industry levy of research by Cancer Research UK linking obesity and cancer.

**Robert Jenrick:**

All taxes are kept under review. New evidence related to fiscal interventions such as the Soft Drinks Industry Levy is considered as part of the normal Budget process. As set out in Phase 2 of the Childhood Obesity Strategy, HMT will review the Soft Drinks Industry Levy exemption for milk-based drinks in 2020.

**WALES**

**Wales Office: Iron and Steel**

**Nic Dakin:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether officials in his Department have had discussions with officials in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the UK Steel Charter.

**Alun Cairns:**

We have regular discussions with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on steel, including procurement. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has asked all Government departments to consider guidance on steel procurement and to notify of any upcoming opportunities for industry.

More broadly, the UK Government is committed to supporting the steel sector to realise the broader commercial opportunities that are open to it, which could be worth an additional £3.8 billion a year by 2030.

**Nic Dakin:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, if he will make it his Department's policy to sign up to the UK Steel Charter.

**Alun Cairns:**

The steel sector is hugely important to both the UK and Welsh economies, employing over 30,000 people across Great Britain, with around 9,000 of these employees based in Wales. While my Department typically does not directly buy or procure any steel, I am very supportive of the objectives of the charter.
WORK AND PENSIONS

Children: Maintenance

Marion Fellows:  [273429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many times the Child Maintenance Group has registered the maintenance debt of a non-resident parent with credit rating agencies in the last year.

Will Quince:
This information is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Department for Work and Pensions: Iron and Steel

Nic Dakin:  [271387]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether officials in her Department have had discussions with officials in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the UK Steel Charter.

Will Quince:
We have discussed the procurement of steel with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which has asked all Government departments to consider guidance on steel procurement and to notify of any upcoming opportunities for industry.

Nic Dakin:  [271388]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it her Department's policy to sign up to the UK Steel Charter.

Will Quince:
The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions will sign the UK Steel Charter.

Funeral Payments

Dr David Drew:  [272119]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to ensure that the Social Fund Funeral Payments meet the costs of cremation.

Will Quince:
The Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payments scheme, provides a significant contribution towards funeral costs for claimants in receipt of a qualifying benefit. It continues to meet the legislated necessary costs of a cremation, with the amount of the average award increasing year-on-year to meet these costs. It also provides up to £700 towards other costs, such as flowers, coffin and funeral director fees.
Immigrants: EU Nationals

Rebecca Long Bailey: [271477]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has informed any EU nationals that they have no recourse to public funds since June 2018.

Alok Sharma: Whether someone has recourse to public funds is a matter for the Home Office. However, where a person’s claim for benefit has been refused, DWP will inform the claimant of this decision and how they can request a reconsideration.

Jobcentre Plus: Closures

Sir Vince Cable: [273307]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the (a) financial implications and (b) net effect on jobs of the closure of benefit processing centres in London.

Will Quince: The Government Estate Strategy sets out an ambition to rebalance the economy, creating regional growth and locating jobs outside of London. This, along with the considerable increases in rental costs in London, and the commercial challenges in retaining property of any size, means that the Department’s strategy is to gradually migrate processing work out of London. While there will be no impact to public facing Jobcentre services, it does mean that a number of central London processing sites will close by 2023.

As we look to close these offices, we will redistribute the work to other processing hubs across the UK and, wherever possible, seek to redeploy London based staff to other areas of DWP or other Government Departments. We will not be in a position to assess the net impact on jobs until this activity has completed.

Finally, despite these closures, the Department will continue to be a significant employer in London.

Local Housing Allowance

Dr Rupa Huq: [272268]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of uprating Local Housing Allowance rates from April 2020; and if she will bring forward proposals to extend the exemption from the shared accommodation rate for people who have lived in a homeless hostel to include people aged 18 to 25.

Will Quince: There are no current plans to extend or maintain the Benefit Freeze after March 2020. Specific decisions on how to uprate the Local Housing Allowance rates from April 2020 will form part of the discussions in support of fiscal events later this year.
There is an exemption from the shared accommodation rate for those aged 25-34 who have previously spent 3 months (which doesn’t have to be continuous) in a homeless hostel/hostels specialising in rehabilitation and resettlement. There are no plans to extend this exemption to those under the age of 25.

For other individuals who may require more support and whose circumstances may make it difficult for them to share accommodation, Discretionary Housing Payments are available.

### Older People: Finance

**Paul Farrelly:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps she has taken to ensure that older people receive the financial support they are entitled to.

**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 make a claim for State Pension or report a change in their circumstances.

The DWP uses a wide range of channels including information on [https://gov.uk/](https://gov.uk/), in leaflets and by telephone to communicate information to potential customers about benefits, such as Pension Credit. Anyone wishing to claim Pension Credit can do so by calling 0800 99 1234 and 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.

Pension Credit is an important benefit specifically intended to help the poorest pensioners and there are over 1.6m pensioners already claiming over £5billion but we want to ensure that everyone eligible can claim what they are entitled to. 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](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 organisations a fact sheet about Pension Credit and forthcoming changes for couples to ensure that accurate information is available in the places where people are most likely to seek it.
Finally, the Government’s commitment to the triple lock has meant that the full basic State Pension is now worth around £1600 a year more (in cash terms) than it was in 2010 and significantly, the majority of people of pension age in receipt of a State Pension or another social security benefit receive their annual winter fuel payment automatically without the need to make a claim.

Pensions

Jack Dromey:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of non-advised pension savers used a face-to-face or telephone appointment with the Pension Wise guidance service when accessing their pension benefits in each of the last four years since its introduction.

Guy Opperman:

Below are the number of people who have sought guidance from Pension Wise year on year. As well as face-to-face and telephone appointments, since 2017 Pension Wise have also provided digital appointments. Information on the proportions of non-advised pension savers accessing their pension is not available. Over 50s with Defined Contribution pensions are eligible for guidance appointments with Pension Wise. Some of these customers may go on to seek independent financial advice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Digital</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>40,989</td>
<td>19,950</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>60,939</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>48,413</td>
<td>17,761</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>66,174</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>63,185</td>
<td>24,289</td>
<td>34,617</td>
<td>122,151</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>90,448</td>
<td>39,667</td>
<td>37,611</td>
<td>167,726</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Jack Dromey:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the timetable is for pension savers to start benefiting from the provisions of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018 for ensuring that those savers receive impartial pensions guidance before accessing their pension savings.

Jack Dromey:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the increase in impartial pensions guidance usage following the introduction of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act’s provisions for ensuring savers first receive impartial pensions guidance before accessing their pension savings.

Guy Opperman:

Since its creation in January, the Money and Pensions Service has been working with government and pension providers in developing tests to determine how a stronger
nudge into taking pensions guidance would work effectively in practice. Prior to its launch this work was progressed by Pension Wise under DWP.

An independent contractor has been appointed to carry out these tests in partnership with a number of pension providers. An evaluation report will be published this financial year, which will form the basis for which option is selected. Until the report has been published, we are unable to make an estimate in relation to an increase in the expected take up of Pension Wise guidance.

The Money and Pensions service continue to provide guidance appointments via Pension Wise, making 205,000 appointments available across their channels this financial year which would be almost three and a half times higher than Pension Wise’s first year of operation. Pension Wise have been successful in increasing demand for appointments year on year across all its channels.

### Personal Independence Payment: Terminal Illnesses

**Chris Ruane:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many personal independence payment claims made under special rules and supported by a clinician via a DS1500 were rejected by her Department in each year for which data is available.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

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

### Universal Credit

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of universal credit payments and administration in each year since 2014.

**Alok Sharma:**

The table below shows the cost to the public purse of Universal Credit Payments, this information has been published in the Spring Statement in April 2019 and can also be found via this link: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2019](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2019)

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure by benefit, £ million, nominal terms</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>1,585</td>
<td>3,322</td>
<td>8,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table below shows the estimate of the total cost of Benefit Handling Processes in UC for each financial year from 2014. Benefit Handling Processes are the cost DWP has incurred administering claims to UC and making UC payments.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefit Handling Processes, £ million</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>142.5</td>
<td>261.8</td>
<td>272.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Steve McCabe:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 24 June to Question 266642, for what reasons her Department holds information on the number of universal credit claimants with an existing advance who also receive a maximum budgetary advance and have offered to repay that advance over the maximum time period allowed but does not hold information on the proportion of those people who have repaid their budget advance within the pre-agreed time period.

**Alok Sharma:**

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost. The Department does collect information on advances paid and repayments for all advances through the Universal Credit award. However, each advance’s repayment progress would need to be tracked separately and a date in which repayment is completed would need to be calculated.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans the Government has in place to help people in receipt of universal credit with the cost of childcare over the summer holidays.

**Will Quince:**

The Government recognises that childcare costs can affect parents’ decisions to both obtain and maintain employment and is committed to removing barriers that prevent parents moving into work.

To overcome this barrier to employment, Universal Credit claimants are able to claim up to 85 per cent of their childcare costs, compared to 70 per cent on the legacy system. This can be worth up to £13,000 a year for families with two children.

We recognise the difficulty that some claimants might have in paying childcare costs over the summer holidays and have undertaken significant work to increase work coach awareness, understanding and promotion of both the Universal Credit childcare offer and the wider government childcare offer. This is to ensure that parents who are eligible for the 15 hours of free childcare for disadvantaged families with 2-year-old children, and 30 hours of free childcare for working families, take
these up. These free childcare offers can be used in combination with Universal Credit support for childcare.

In addition to this, budgeting advances are available for eligible claimants that can be used to cover the cost of paying additional upfront childcare costs or a deposit that might be needed during the school holidays.

Universal Credit: Angus

Kirstene Hair: [270439]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in Angus receive universal credit.

Alok Sharma:
As of May 2019 at a Local Authority level there were 4,400 people on UC (at the constituency level it is 3,835)

The latest available information on the number of people on Universal Credit by parliamentary constituency and local authority is published and can be found at:
https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:
https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html

Universal Credit: Terminal Illnesses

Chris Ruane: [273334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on how many occasions her Department's assessors have formally questioned a prognosis given by health professionals in DS1500 forms in each year for which data is available.

Justin Tomlinson:
The Department's assessment providers do not record the information requested. If they have a question about information recorded on a DS1500, or if there is no DS1500 available, they have an obligation to contact the relevant clinician to obtain further information. If they do not have any questions about information on the DS1500, they do not need to contact the clinician who completed the form.

William Hill: Closures

Marion Fellows: [273427]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to support staff of William Hill following the announcement that 700 branches will close; and if she will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:
DWP stands ready to support any affected by the proposed closures, with our Rapid Response Service (RRS) offer. This is a redundancy service designed to give support and advice to employers and their employees when faced with the prospect of
redundancy. It is coordinated nationally by the National Employer and Partnership Team (NEPT) and is managed by Jobcentre Plus.

Each Jobcentre Plus district deploy resources according to the situation and the requirements of the workforce. This service is available to be deployed nationally should William Hill require support from Jobcentre Plus. The RRS is delivered in partnership with a range of national and local partners, including National Careers Service and local service providers.

The range of support available from Jobcentre Plus and partners may include:

- Information advice and guidance.
- Connecting people to jobs in the labour market.
- Help with job search including CV writing, interview skills, where to find jobs and how to apply for them.
- Help to identify transferable skills and skills gaps (linked to the local labour market).
- Training to update skills, learn new ones and gain industry recognised certification that will improve employability.
- Help to overcome barriers to attending training or securing a job or self-employment such as child care costs, necessary tools, work clothes, travel costs etc.
- On-site presentations to those affected.
- Jobs Fairs and Job Clubs where appropriate.
MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

JUSTICE

Homelessness

Gloria De Piero:  

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many challenges have been made to decisions on intentional homelessness in each year since 2012.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 24 June 2019. The correct answer should have been:

Paul Maynard:  
The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. A full answer cannot be provided as the data requested is not held by HMCTS.

Legal Representation: Homelessness

Gloria De Piero:  

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many litigants have represented themselves in cases involving homelessness in each year since 2012.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 24 June 2019. The correct answer should have been:

Paul Maynard:  
The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. A full answer cannot be provided as the data requested is not held by HMCTS.
Post EU Energy Council

Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Chris Skidmore):

The EU Energy Council took place on 25 June 2019 in Luxembourg. The UK was represented by the Deputy Permanent Representative to the European Union, Katrina Williams.

Council Conclusions on the Future of the Energy Systems in the Energy Union

The Presidency put the Council Conclusions to Member States for adoption. The aim of the Conclusions was to identify priorities for the next decade of the energy transition, following on from the recently adopted Clean Energy For All Europeans Package and the Commission’s Long-Term Strategy for decarbonising the European economy.

Member States exchanged views, with comments largely focusing on language which reflected their varying positions on the role of nuclear, gas and carbon capture usage and storage in the future energy system. Many Member States also recommended that the text reflected greater ambition in line with the Paris Agreement, and some expressed disappointment that the EU had not agreed a 2050 net zero greenhouse gas emissions target at the 20 June European Council. Other Member States highlighted the importance of a just transition, and the need to integrate concerns about security of supply.

The UK intervention reinforced the importance of ensuring the transition to a safe and sustainable low carbon energy system to meet emissions reductions targets, highlighting the UK’s revised target of 2050 to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. The UK joined other Member States in highlighting the need for a technology neutral approach to maximise Member States’ abilities to deliver these targets. The UK also stressed the negative signal that not agreeing conclusions would send.

Following small amendments to the conclusions, Member States adopted the text.

EU External Energy Relations

The Commission provided information regarding the EU’s external energy relations, setting out context of the EU’s current relationships with Africa, the US, China and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Member States generally highlighted the importance of ensuring that the EU’s relationships with these groups were in line with shared objectives of ensuring European energy security and facilitating the transition towards a decarbonised energy system.

The UK’s intervention highlighted the importance of de-risking investment in Africa, noting the potential role which international climate finance may play in unlocking greater flows of private finance toward clean growth. The EU-US relationship was noted to be important for increasing access to liquid natural gas, which would help to increase
regional energy security, diversity of supply and competition. Regarding China, the UK highlighted the importance of focusing on practical cooperation and applying international standards, with a view to encouraging China to shift domestic and regional investment to low carbon alternatives to coal.

**Any Other Business Items**

The Commission gave an overview following on from its recent assessment of the draft National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), which Member States had been required to submit under the Governance Regulation. It noted some of the collective challenges which Member States faced to achieve their existing renewable energy and energy efficiency targets.

The Finnish Delegation updated Member States on the work programme for their incoming Presidency. They highlighted that their Presidency would be used to further enhance the EU’s Energy Union and its objectives, and would promote dialogue amongst Member States about their draft NECPs.

Ministers had an informal discussion over lunch on the role of the Euro in the field of energy.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

- Government response to Promoting professionalism; reforming regulation consultation

**Minister of State for Health (Stephen Hammond):**

Today I am publishing the Government response to the consultation Promoting professionalism; reforming regulation. Promoting professionalism; reforming regulation set out proposals to make professional regulation faster, simpler and more responsive to the needs of patients, professionals, the public and employers.

We will take forward legislative changes to the regulators’ fitness to practise processes and operating framework. We believe that this will realise the greatest benefits for regulatory bodies, registrants and the public.

These changes will deliver:

- Modern and efficient fitness to practise processes;
- Better supported professionals; and
- More responsive and accountable regulation.

We will also make the legislative changes recommended by the Williams review into Gross Negligence Manslaughter in Healthcare, including removing the General Medical Council’s right to appeal decisions made by the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service.
These changes are a real step forward in delivering on our manifesto commitment to
reform and rationalise the current outdated system of professional regulation of
healthcare professions.

In developing our response, we have reflected on and responded to the findings of a
number of recent reports, including the NHS Long Term Plan and the Interim People
Plan.

The consultation received over 900 responses from individuals, organisations, healthcare
professionals and members of the public. I would like to thank all those who took the time
to respond to the consultation. Their views will be instrumental in shaping the future of
professional regulation in the UK.

The UK and Devolved Governments will now work together to develop and then consult
on draft legislation.

HOME OFFICE

Modern Slavery

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and
Vulnerability (Victoria Atkins): [HCWS1704]

Today the Government has published its response to the Independent Review of the
Modern Slavery Act 2015 and launched a public consultation on the transparency in
supply chains requirements. A copy of the Government response and the consultation will
be placed in the House Libraries and both documents will also be published on Gov.UK.

The landmark Modern Slavery Act 2015 established the UK as a global leader in the fight
against modern slavery. The Act provided law enforcement with new tools and powers to
apprehend perpetrators, new duties on businesses to publish transparency in supply
chains statements, enhanced protections for victims and created the Independent Anti-
Slavery Commissioner role.

The Act has underpinned the significant progress the UK has made over the last five
years to tackle modern slavery. More victims than ever before are being identified and
receiving support. More police investigations are taking place to apprehend perpetrators
and bring them to justice. Thousands of businesses are taking seriously their
responsibilities to publish statements on the steps they are taking to prevent modern
slavery in their supply chains.

However, the Government is not complacent and we are determined to ensure our
legislation keeps pace with the evolving threat from modern slavery. That is why in July
2018, the Home Secretary commissioned Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Rt Hon Maria Miller MP
and the noble Baroness Butler-Sloss GBE to conduct an independent Review of the
Modern Slavery Act.

The final Review was laid in Parliament in May 2019. The Review made 80
recommendations aimed at improving our response on four discrete themes: the
Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, transparency in supply chains, legal application and Independent Child Trafficking Advocates.

The Review made a compelling case that now is the time to strengthen elements of our legislation and its implementation. The Government has accepted many of the Review’s recommendations now. Some recommendations require further consultation to determine the best way to deliver them. To support this, we are now launching a consultation on proposed measures to strengthen the transparency in supply chains legislation. The consultation seeks views from all interested parties on proposals to extend the reporting requirements to public sector organisations, measures to increase transparency and reporting quality and civil penalties. The consultation opens today and will run for ten weeks. On certain recommendations relating to Independent Child Trafficking Advocates, the Government has committed to publish a further update to Parliament.

I am grateful to the reviewers and all of those who contributed to the Review for their comprehensive work on this report. Tackling modern slavery remains a priority for the Government and our response to the Review will form a significant part of our future priorities. To implement our response, the Government will continue to work in partnership with law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, Devolved Administrations, the private sector, NGOs, civil society and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Housing update

Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire): [HCWS1703]

I have today received the interim report from the independent Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission. I have placed a copy in the library and made it available on www.gov.uk. I would like to thank the Commissioners for their work to date and look forward to receiving their final report later this year.