



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 22 July 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:20 P.M., 22 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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Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.
Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Avara Avlon Pharma Services: Insolvency**

Jessica Morden:

[\[278449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with Astrazeneca and Avara Avlon about the (a) three year guarantee on enhanced redundancy payments and terms for staff agreed as part of the sale of the company for £1 in December 2016 and the (b) collapse of Avara Avalon.

Kelly Tolhurst:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no discussions with Avara. This is a commercial matter which BEIS have been monitoring for some time, however we have not sought to intervene while staff consultation and the administration process are underway.

AstraZeneca announced on Wednesday that they have set aside funding of up to £12m, to be administered independently, to make sure their former employees at the Avlon site receive full severance should the ongoing administration of the site not generate enough funds to cover redundancy costs.

■ **Coal: Imports**

Philip Davies:

[\[277307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much coal was imported for use in (a) UK coal fired power stations (b) UK steel works and (c) other industrial processes in 2018.

Chris Skidmore:

BEIS does not hold data identifying the source of the coal supplied to each consumer.

■ **Companies: Registration**

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[278461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many additional staff his Department plans to recruit to Companies House to monitor the verification process outlined in his Department's consultation on corporate transparency and register reform published on 5 May 2019.

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[278463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's public consultation on corporate transparency and register reform published on 5 May 2019, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the verification process and the cross-checking system.

Kelly Tolhurst:

This consultation is still open. I am grateful for the hon. Member's interest and encourage him to submit his views before it closes on 5 August.

After the consultation has closed and following analysis by the Department of the responses, the Government will consider what measures it proposes to implement or explore further.

Jonathan Edwards:[\[278462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's public consultation on corporate transparency and register reform published on 5 May 2019, what enhanced (a) transparency and (b) accountability will be introduced in the verification process.

Kelly Tolhurst:

This consultation is still open. I am grateful for the hon. Member's interest and encourage him to submit his views before it closes on 5 August.

After the consultation has closed and following analysis by the Department of the responses, the Government will consider what measures it proposes to implement or explore further.

■ Consumer Goods: Electrical Safety**Gill Furniss:**[\[277803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will ask the Office for Product Safety and Standards to (a) undertake an urgent review of and (b) support Electrical Safety First campaign to improve the regulation of electrical goods sales.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Manufacturers and importers have a legal obligation to place only safe electrical products on the market and distributors have obligations to ensure the electrical products they sell are safe.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is working in partnership with several strategic stakeholders, including Electrical Safety First, undertaking a number of projects on the safety of electrical goods. This includes work aimed at preventing counterfeit and non-compliant goods entering the UK market.

I have written to major online platforms to ask them to do more to ensure that unsafe products are identified and removed from their sites.

■ Consumer Goods: Safety**Gill Furniss:**[\[277804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that recalled products are not subsequently available to purchase online.

Kelly Tolhurst:

It is important that where products are subject to recall they are not offered for sale, either online or offline.

I have recently written to major online retailers to urge them to take necessary measures to ensure that electrical products subject to recall are not made available through their platforms. I have asked these businesses to share with OPSS the actions they are taking to achieve this.

This follows a previous letter from OPSS informing these platforms of the recall of certain models of Whirlpool tumble dryer.

If a business is found to be selling such products, OPSS will take appropriate action to secure public safety.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Living Wage**Rachel Reeves:**[\[277710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many workers employed by his Department are paid less than the Living Wage Foundation London living wage.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Department Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy does not have any employees paid less than the Living Wage Foundation London living wage.

Rachel Reeves:[\[277711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to gain Living Wage Foundation accreditation as a living wage employer.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Government is committed to ensuring fair remuneration for workers across the economy. In April 2019, the National Living Wage (NLW) rate was increased to £8.21 per hour, a rise of 4.9 percent. This means that the annual earnings of a full-time worker on the NLW will have increased by over £2,750 since the policy was introduced. We are also supporting and encouraging employers to pay more where possible and appropriate.

In line with this, at the end of last year, at the request of my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State, officials in BEIS undertook a review of the pay of staff working through its contractors, in order to ensure they receive a wage which is fair and directly comparable to other employers across the local labour market.

As a result of this review, the Department agreed with its contractors (Aramark and ISS) that, from 1 March 2019, they would align the pay of their cleaning, catering, mailroom and security staff to the appropriate median rates for those occupations as identified in the 2018 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). This survey captures pay details for around 300,000 employees from the HMRC Pay As You Earn

(PAYE) system down to Local Authority level and is therefore a robust and reliable source of pay data.

The immediate change for some staff has been significant. For example, some of our lowest paid security guards saw an increase of over 15%. Pay for staff working through our contractors will continue to track the median rate in future years

The Department does not currently intend to seek accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation.

■ Global Navigation Satellite Systems

Nia Griffith: [\[278448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the cost of a UK global navigation satellite system.

Chris Skidmore:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 6 December 2018 by the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, my hon. Friend the Member for Watford (Richard Harrington MP) to Question [198212](#).

■ Horizon 2020

Jim Shannon: [\[277740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to participate in the Horizon Europe programme after the UK leaves the EU.

Chris Skidmore:

The UK and EU have a long history of jointly tackling global challenges, with strong links between our research and innovation communities. We wish to continue collaborating with European partners and are considering association to Horizon Europe. We have been fully participating in Horizon Europe negotiations, and are pleased with the significant progress and constructive way in which Member States and EU Institutions have worked together.

After the UK leaves the EU, we will build on existing relationships in Brussels and seek to influence Horizon Europe in line with UK priorities. The Horizon Europe programme must be finalised before we can make an informed decision on future participation. We would not be able to seek association until the Programme has been adopted and we have exited the EU.

The Government is committed to backing UK researchers and innovators by supporting measures to enable world-class collaborative research, including support for small businesses. As a responsible government, we are considering alternative options in case the UK does not associate to Horizon Europe, but this does not change our policy on considering association to Horizon Europe.

■ Loneliness**Chris Ruane:**[\[277655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the loneliness strategy 2018, what progress has been made on his Department's commitment to establish and grow a network of champions to encourage employers to support employees' social wellbeing.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Employers can play an important role in tackling loneliness in their workforce and wider society. The Department worked closely in partnership with the Campaign to End Loneliness to develop the Employer Pledge. Take up has been positive and I am pleased that there is continued interest among employers to tackling loneliness in their workforce as part of their wider approach to workplace wellbeing

The Department continues to work with the Campaign to End Loneliness to run an Employers' Leadership Group on Loneliness. The group strengthens cooperation and coordination between Government, business and other groups with an interest in tackling loneliness. The group is currently carrying out work to identify good employer practice and produce case studies and guidance to help employers tackle loneliness in the workforce and in the wider community.

Chris Ruane:[\[277659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility has made in strengthening the Department's consideration of loneliness as a policy concern.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Employers can play an important role in tackling loneliness in their workforce and wider society. The Department worked closely in partnership with the Campaign to End Loneliness to develop the Employer Pledge. Take up has been positive and I am pleased that there is continued interest among employers to tackling loneliness in their workforce as part of their wider approach to workplace wellbeing

The Department continues to work with the Campaign to End Loneliness to run an Employers' Leadership Group on Loneliness. The group strengthens cooperation and coordination between Government, business and other groups with an interest in tackling loneliness. The group is currently carrying out work to identify good employer practice and produce case studies and guidance to help employers tackle loneliness in the workforce and in the wider community.

■ Novartis: Great Grimsby**Melanie Onn:**[\[278551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which ministers he has appointed to the taskforce to find a new buyer for the Novartis site in Great Grimsby.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department of International Trade are closely monitoring the situation. We are working with the company, the local authority and Local Enterprise Partnerships to support their efforts in helping to preserve highly skilled jobs in the area and to help find a buyer for the site.

■ **Parental Leave: Self-Employed****Kevin Brennan:**[\[278392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to his oral contribution of 16 July 2019, Official Report, column 663, what the timeframe is for his Department to respond to the consultation on shared parental leave for the self-employed.

Kelly Tolhurst:

We are currently evaluating the Shared Parental Leave and Pay scheme and are in the process of collecting data and information from a wide variety of sources. The evaluation will conclude later this year.

We expect to be in a position to report on the evaluation later this year.

■ **Research: Finance****Chris Green:**[\[277765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the equity of the distribution of research and development spending for areas with poor health outcomes.

Chris Skidmore:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne Central (Chi Onwurah MP) on 9 May 2019 to Question [249283](#). Further to that answer, on 11 July 2019 the Government announced £135 million of funding to support National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaborations (ARCs). The NIHR ARC scheme will support high-quality applied health and care research to make tangible improvements for patients, the public and to health and care services. NIHR ARCs will work with local partners and patients and the public from across the local communities they serve, and particularly with Academic Health Science Networks, to tackle local health and care priorities.

Chris Green:[\[277766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the Government's target of increasing research and development funding to 2.4 per cent of GDP benefits the areas with the poorest health outcomes, particularly parts of the north of England.

Chris Skidmore:

The 2.4% R&D Roadmap will set overall direction for how we can achieve the 2.4% R&D ambition by 2027, and 3% in the longer term, through the use of strategic public funding to leverage private R&D investment.

It aims to transform R&D intensity across all sectors of the economy, supporting the development of new technologies, industries, and products that bring growth, good jobs across the UK, and social improvements for all.

The 2.4% R&D Roadmap will bring together Government, academia, and industry to collaboratively focus their efforts on increasing R&D investment. In the area of health, this includes the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS R&D activity, and work with industry in taking forward the Life Sciences Sector Deal. The 2.4% R&D Roadmap will also align closely with the Industrial Strategy's Grand Challenges. This includes the Ageing Society Grand Challenge which will create new demands for technologies, products and services for an ageing population, and the AI and Data Grand Challenge which will use data, artificial intelligence, and innovation to transform the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of diseases like cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and dementia by 2030.

In order to achieve the 2.4% R&D target, we need to accelerate the growth and build on R&D strengths across the UK. The Government has put in place a number of initiatives to support every part of the UK to identify and leverage their R&D strengths, from Science and Innovation Audits to the Strength in Places Fund. The Strength in Places Fund (SIPF) is investing £237m up to 2021-22 in growing new and existing centres of excellence for research and innovation across the UK.

We are working with Local Economic Partnerships as they develop Local Industrial Strategies to identify science and innovation strengths and the action needed to unlock R&D growth in places across the country.

Chi Onwurah:[\[278489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July to Question 273388 and with reference to the 2015 report of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills entitled Research and development: relationship between public and private investment, whether his Department has conducted further analysis since the publication of that report on the finding that an extra £1 of public funding would give rise to an increase in private funding of between £1.13 and £1.60.

Chris Skidmore:

The 2015 report was commissioned and published by BEIS, and considered during the 2015 Spending Review, together with other evidence and analysis. It provides the most recent published assessment of leverage rates between public and private sector R&D.

The Department is committed to continuously improving and developing a robust R&D evidence base across the Department and its partner organisations, such as UKRI.

New research on R&D that meets the professional standards for analysis in Government is published on Gov.UK. Best practices in quality assurance are essential to ensure that partners and the public can have trust in Government analysis.

■ Science: Finance

Chi Onwurah: [278490]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 273388, what (a) discussions he has had with and (b) advice he has received from UK Research and Innovation on the quantitative relationship between (i) public and (ii) private sector investment in science.

Chris Skidmore:

UK Research and Innovation leads on engagement with industry in developing the challenges under the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) and advises BEIS on projects. We are expecting to meet more than 1:1 match between industry and government funding for Wave 3 of the ISCF. Recently, we announced £220 million allocated from UK Research Partnership Investment Fund, which will bring in a further £500 million in private R&D funding; and £153 million of government funding on quantum technologies, with an additional £205 million expected to be pledged by industry.

■ Small Businesses: Government Assistance

Mr Jim Cunningham: [278354]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to provide (a) advice, (b) support and (c) services for small business owners looking to grow their business.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [278355]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that small business owners are aware of the advice, support, and services available from the Government to help them grow their business.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Through our ambitious, modern Industrial Strategy we are working to make the UK the best place to start and grow a business. We are committed to ensuring all small businesses have access to the advice and support they need to succeed to start, grow, and scale their businesses.

All businesses can access core services, information and guidance on starting up and running a business, as well as their statutory rights and obligations, on our GOV.UK sites and www.gov.uk/browse/business. The Business Finance and Support

Finder tool on the website provides information on how to access a wide range of Government-backed financial support for start-up businesses, such as funding and grant schemes.

The Business Support Helpline forms a key part of the Government's offer to SMEs in England, providing trusted and joined-up information and sign-posting businesses to relevant sources of support. The Helpline number is 0300 456 3565. In 2018, it helped 31,500 businesses, of which 65% were entrepreneurs and start-ups.

The network of 38 Growth Hubs across England (one in each Local Enterprise Partnership area) provide businesses with tailored advice and support, as a dedicated, free and impartial 'single point of contact'. At the end of FY18/19, Government had invested £56.4 million in Growth Hubs, with a further £12 million committed of core grant funding to LEPs for Growth Hubs for the FY19/20 funding period. LEPs have self-reported that in FY17/18 their Growth Hubs supported over 130,000 businesses, of which over 13,000 received high intensity support of 12 hours or more. They helped over 8,000 individuals start a business and achieved an average customer satisfaction rate of 89.5%.

The Government-backed British Business Bank is there to make finance markets work better for small businesses at all stages of their development. The Bank's programmes are currently supporting over £6.6bn of finance to over 89,000 smaller businesses (as at end-March 2019). The British Business Bank's Start-Up Loans programme provides loans to entrepreneurs seeking to start and grow their own businesses. Since 2012, the Programme has delivered almost 65,000 loans, worth nearly £511m to small businesses (as at end-June 2019).

Finally, we are working to make small business owners more aware of the wide range of advice and support available to them. We continue to develop our online support through GOV.UK, ensuring SMEs can access the key information they need on running their business any time they wish. And we are also improving SME awareness of finance options: the British Business Bank helps publish the Business Finance Guide, and has launched an online Finance Hub, an online advice platform aimed at raising awareness of appropriate finance options for SMEs.

■ Small Businesses: Urban Areas

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[278358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support small businesses in towns and small cities.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Through our ambitious, modern Industrial Strategy we are working to make the UK the best place to start and grow a business. We are committed to ensuring all small businesses have access to the advice and support they need to succeed to start, grow, and scale their businesses.

All businesses can access core services, information and guidance on starting up and running a business, as well as their statutory rights and obligations, on our

GOV.UK sites and www.gov.uk/browse/business. The Business Finance and Support Finder tool on the website provides information on how to access a wide range of Government-backed financial support for start-up businesses, such as funding and grant schemes.

The Business Support Helpline forms a key part of the government's offer to SMEs in England, providing trusted and joined-up information and sign-posting businesses to relevant sources of support. The Helpline number is 0300 456 3565. In 2018, it helped 31,500 businesses, of which 65% were entrepreneurs and start-ups.

An integral part of the Government's Industrial Strategy is at local level, working to develop prosperous communities across the UK. For example, the Government is providing help to local businesses to create more highly skilled jobs through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

The Government's commitment to work with all LEPs and Mayoral Combined Authorities in England to develop Local Industrial Strategies. These are locally led and developed in partnership with Government, setting out clearly defined priorities for how cities, towns and rural areas will make the most of their distinctive strengths and better coordinate economic policy at the local level.

Earlier this year we published the first Local Industrial Strategies in the West Midlands and Greater Manchester. We aim to agree Strategies with all local areas in 2020.

In addition, the Government backed British Business Bank's programmes are currently supporting over £6.6 billion of finance to over 89,000 SMEs. The Start-Up Loans programme, now part of the British Business Bank, has delivered nearly 65,000 loans totalling almost £511m (as at end-June 2019). It was extended in the autumn budget to April 2021 to enable an additional 10,000 loans to be made to entrepreneurs.

■ William Hill: Closures

Marion Fellows:

[\[278547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will make an assessment of the effect on trends in the level of high street footfall of William Hill's recent announcement to close branches throughout the UK.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Department does not hold data on the effects of individual store closures on High Street footfall.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Brexit: Internet****Neil O'Brien:**[\[274645\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many (a) unique visitors, (b) page views and (c) impressions from (i) the UK and (ii) other countries there have been for each of the no-deal technical guidance documents published on the gov.uk website.

Oliver Dowden:

A list of (a) unique visitors, (b) page views and (c) impressions from (a) the UK and (b) other countries for each of the no-deal technical guidance documents published on GOV.UK has been placed in the Library.

Technical notices are one way in which the government shares information with businesses and citizens on what they need to do to prepare for a scenario where the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

The government has also developed a large number of other products and is using a range of channels to communicate directly with citizens and businesses on the steps they should take to prepare. This includes:

- A Public Information Campaign that has delivered over 3.3 million unique page views on GOV.UK. Between December 2018 and March 2019, there have been over 12.9 million sessions on GOV.UK visited Brexit content.
- 750 pieces of 'No Deal' guidance. This includes a settled status guide with over 4 million views and the 'driving abroad' guide with over 300,000 views.
- Extensive engagement with industry and trade associations and direct communications with businesses to support planning. To provide further advice we have contacted approximately 145,000 businesses who trade with the EU directly to help them get ready for No Deal customs procedures

■ Cabinet Office: Contracts**Jon Trickett:**[\[277114\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the names of the firms his Department has hired contractors from in each of the last three years.

Kevin Foster:

The information for 2016/17 is not held centrally and could not be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Cabinet Office hired contractors from the following firms in 2017/18 and 2018/19:

2017/18 Allen Lane Ltd Brook Street UK Ltd Capita Capita Business Services Ltd Capita Resourcing Ltd CDG Ltd Cedar Recruitment Ltd Certes Computing Ltd CGI IT UK Ltd Cloud Technology Solutions Code iT Recruitment Computer Network Defence Ltd Costain Ltd DF Press Ltd DLA Piper UK LLP DMSG Ltd E Synergy Solutions Ltd EP90group Ltd Ergon Ltd Experian Ltd Experienced Management Consultants

Limited Green Park Interim And Executive Ltd Harris Management Consultancy Ltd Hays Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd Hydrogen International Ltd Informed Solutions Ixydo Ltd J Squared Business Consulting Ltd Kainos Software Ltd KPMG LLP LA International LA International Computer Consultants Ltd Law Morgan Limited Layer 7 IT Security M4 Managed Services International Ltd Medway Consulting Mercator IT Solutions Ltd Methods Business & Digital Technology Ltd Methods Digital Ltd Michael Page UK Ltd Morgan Law Mott Macdonald NCC Services Ltd North Highland Ltd Office Angels Ltd Optimum Fleet Ltd PA Consulting Services Ltd Parasol Ltd Parity Professionals Ltd Parity Resources Ltd Parity Solutions Ltd Pertemps Project Workout Ltd Reed Reed Specialist Recruitment Rethink Recruitment Solutions Ltd Robertson Bell Ltd Sanderson Government & Defence Ltd Smart Sourcing Plc Softwire Technology Ltd Sopra Steria Recruitment Ltd The ID Crowd Ltd The Light Machine Thoughtworks Ltd Triad Group Plc Trustmarque Solutions Ltd Turner & Townsend Project Management Two & A Half Bears Ltd Venn Group Ltd VMA Global Resourcing Group Yes And

2018/19 Airbus Defence & Space Ltd Alesto Ltd Alexander Mann Solutions Ltd Allen Lane Ltd Badenoch & Clark Ltd Bindmans LLP Bishop Lloyd & Jackson Solicitors Brook Street UK Ltd Capita Capita Business Services Ltd Cedar Recruitment Ltd Certes Computing Ltd Chillmark Consulting Ltd Cloud Technology Solutions Code iT Recruitment Company X Consulting Ltd Computer Network Defence Ltd Convivio Team Ltd Costain Ltd Cragg Ross Dawson Ltd Deep Digital Ltd Deighton Pierce Glynn Deloitte LLP DF Press Ltd DMSG Ltd E Synergy Solutions Ltd Edinburgh Innovations Ltd EP90group Ltd Ergon Ltd Ernst & Young LLP Experian Ltd Experienced Management Consultants Limited Fuel Recruitment Goodman Masson Ltd Green Park Interim & Executive Ltd Hardwicke Harris Management Consultancy Ltd Harvey Nash Plc Hays Specialist Recruitment Ltd Hodge Jones & Allen LLP I C Consultants Ltd Improvement & Development Agency Infosec Inquisito Ltd Integral Commercial Services Ltd Interserve Facilities Management Ltd ITN Solicitors Ixydo Ltd Janes Solicitors Jobvite Inc

Kainos Software Ltd LA International LA International Computer Consultants Ltd Layer 7 IT Security Lucid Support Services Ltd M4 Managed Services International Ltd Methods Business And Digital Technology Ltd Methods Digital Ltd Michael Page UK Ltd Michael Standing Montagu Evans LLP Morgan Law Mott Macdonald MyCSP Ltd Neil Hudgell Ltd Optimum Fleet Ltd Parity Professionals Ltd Parity Resources Ltd Parity Solutions Ltd Pepperscape Consulting Pertemps Quo Imus Ltd Reed Robertson Bell Robertson Bell Ltd Rsm Risk Assurance Service LLP Sanderson Government & Defence Ltd Shared Services Connected Ltd Smart Sourcing Plc Softwire Technology Ltd Sopra Steria Recruitment Ltd Steve Mullins Consulting Sutherland Global Services Uk Ltd Talent International UK Ltd The ID Crowd Ltd The Light Machine Thoughtworks Ltd Torero Abecassis Empis & Cowlard Ltd Triad Group Plc Value Dynamics 2007 Ltd Waldegrave House Ltd T/A Mandala Leaders

■ Cabinet Office: Ethnic Groups

Seema Malhotra: [\[279043\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in his Department.

Kevin Foster:

Information about the ethnicity of staff working in the Cabinet Office (and other Government Departments) is published annually as part of the Annual Civil Service Employment Survey. The most recent statistics for March 2018 are published at <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/summary.asp?mode=construct&version=0&dataset=129> . Statistics for March 2019 are scheduled for publication on 24th July 2019. Please note that in the Cabinet Office, Grade 7 is merged with Grade 6 in the Band A payband.

Summary representation rates of ethnic minority SCS by department are published on the Civil Service diversity dashboard as at December 2018.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-diversity-inclusion-dashboard/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-dashboard> .

The table below provides more statistics on BAME staff in Cabinet Office:

GRADE	NO. OF BAME	% REPRESENTATION	% DECLARATIONS
Band A	197	17%	68%
SCS1	21	11%	70%
SCS2	5	10%	68%
All Grades	791	20%	59%

■ Cabinet Office: Procurement

Frank Field: [\[277652\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of goods procured by the Government were manufactured in the UK in the last 12 months for which information is available.

Oliver Dowden:

The Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally.

■ Cabinet Office: Working Hours

Jon Trickett: [\[278365\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

Kevin Foster:

This information is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Domestic Abuse**

Philip Davies: [\[277306\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he had made of the number of (a) male and (b) female perpetrators of domestic violence who have also been victims of domestic violence.

Philip Davies: [\[277309\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment he has made of the prevalence of domestic violence within (a) gay, (b) lesbian and (c) bisexual couple relationships.

Philip Davies: [\[277310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the prevalence of partner domestic violence perpetrated by each sex by (a) ethnicity and (b) nationality.

Kevin Foster:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [Combined PQ 277306_ 277309_ 277310.pdf]

■ **Overseas Trade: Republic of Ireland**

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[278395\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the value of trade (a) exports and (b) imports between the UK and the Irish Republic in each of the last three years.

Kevin Foster:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ278395.pdf]

■ **Public Sector: Computer Software**

Jo Platt: [\[278599\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of computers in the public sector that are using Windows 7; and whether his Department has set a deadline for the withdrawal of Windows 7 in advance of Microsofts' end of support for that operating system.

Oliver Dowden:

Decisions about technology choices rest with individual departments and bodies in the public sector. As such, Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally.

The Cabinet Office itself does not have any computers using Windows 7.

The National Cyber Security Centre has published information on the upcoming removal of Windows 7 Support, here: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/one-year-left-windows-7-support>

Jo Platt: [\[278600\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent discussions he has had with Microsoft on support for Windows 7 operating systems used by the public sector; and whether he has requested an extension of that support.

Oliver Dowden:

Details of Ministerial meetings are published on GOV.UK.

Public Sector: Procurement**Toby Perkins:** [\[276536\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect on public sector contracts at the (a) NHS, (b) Passport Office, (c) Department for Work and Pensions and (d) Metropolitan Police of redundancies at DXC Technology.

Oliver Dowden:

We regularly monitor the performance of all our strategic suppliers, including DXC Technology. The continued delivery of public services is our top priority.

We have met with DXC Technology to understand its plans and the impact they will have on Central Government contracts.

Individual contracting authorities are responsible for the performance of their contracts. We continue to support them in their engagements with DXC Technology to ensure the continuity of public services.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS**Gambling****Mr Gregory Campbell:** [\[278399\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what steps the Church of England is taking to tackle problem gambling.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

Gambling-related harm impacts the lives of hundreds of thousands of people across the country. Of particular concern is the 55,000 children classified as problem gamblers in Great Britain.

The Church of England and the bishops in the House of Lords have regularly raised this issue with the Government, charities and the industry itself.

The Bishop of St Albans successfully campaigned with others to reduce the stake on fixed-odds betting terminals in Great Britain and tabled an amendment to the Northern Ireland Executive (Formation) Bill 2019 to ask the Government to report on the case for legislative and regulatory alignment between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Government accepted this amendment.

The Bishop of St Albans also sponsored a motion for debate in the General Synod of the Church of England, which was passed at the February 2019 session. He also successfully balloted for the House of Lords to establish the Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry. The Committee Inquiry is underway and is expected to report between March and April 2020.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces Covenant

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhési:

[\[277822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant remains a cross-Government priority and a nationwide commitment to ensure those who serve and have served, and their families, are not disadvantaged, and that special provision may be appropriate for those who have sacrificed the most.

The Armed Forces Covenant's Annual Report is available at this link (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-covenant-annual-report-and-summary-2018>) and sets out the major annual achievements of the Armed Forces Covenant across the UK and highlights remaining challenges and new commitments.

Strategic direction and oversight has been improved by the creation of the Armed Forces Covenant and Veterans Board, held biannually and chaired by the Secretary of State for Defence and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on behalf of the Prime Minister, with Ministerial representation from the relevant Departments and the Devolved Administrations.

Alongside the Covenant and Veterans Board and the Annual Report to Parliament, governance arrangements include independent scrutiny and challenge from the Service charities and military Family Federations, performance metrics, and quarterly meetings of the Covenant Reference Group, co-chaired at Director-General level by Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Defence.

Through the sharing of good practice, the overall outcomes for the Armed Forces community are improving. We remain committed to strengthening the Armed Forces Covenant, through new avenues, as well as our tried and tested methods of success.

■ Astute Class Submarines

Mr Mark Francois:

[\[278417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) procurement and (b) life-cycle costs are for a Royal Navy Astute Class submarine.

Stuart Andrew:

It is not possible to identify a single unit cost for an Astute Class submarine as Boats one to three (Astute, Ambush, and Artful) were contracted as a batch, with the rest of the class subject to separate contractual arrangements. However, as an example of the main costs involved, the whole-boat contract for Agincourt, the seventh and last boat in the class, announced in May 2018, was £1.5 billion. This covers the totality of work involved in the boat build, including test and commissioning. The procurement costs include initial support provisioning, however, in-service support costs of a submarine will vary with the individual platform material state. These costs form part of wider submarine maintenance contracts and are not easily identifiable separately and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Defence Medical Services: ICT

Mr Mark Francois:

[\[278418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the planned in-service date is for the cortisone IT programme for the Defence Medical Services; and what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the funding for that programme.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Cortisone Programme is scheduled to achieve Initial Operating Capability (IOC) in July 2022 with the roll-out of new Primary Medical Care IT services to fixed medical treatment facilities, in the UK and overseas. IOC will be deemed achieved when 80% of the MTFs are successfully operating the new services. Some user benefits from the Programme are expected earlier, from January 2021, when the medical information services interface between the Ministry of Defence and the National Health Service is improved.

Cortisone capability will be brought into service through Agile delivery methodologies. The Cortisone business case, approved in 2018, contained a model of the anticipated cost of delivery, rather than a firm cost provided by a preferred bidder. The model has been demonstrated to be robust, and we are confident that the capability expressed in the business case can be delivered with the funds approved.

■ Defence: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[278408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many contracts of a value of equal to or more than £1 billion have had the provisions of Chapter 6 Section 10 of the Green Book applied to them since the publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[278409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many contracts of a value of equal to or more than £100 million have had the provisions of Chapter 6 Section 10 of the Green Book applied to them since the publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[278410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many contracts of a value of equal to or more than £10 million have had the provisions of Chapter 6 Section 10 of the Green Book applied to them since the publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015.

Stuart Andrew:

All Ministry of Defence (MOD) investment appraisals are conducted in line with the HM Treasury Green Book, including the provisions of Chapter 6 Section 10 where relevant.

Between publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review in November 2015 and 31 March 2018, the MOD awarded nearly 250 contracts above £10 million. Nearly 40 of these are worth more than £100 million, with none over £1 billion. These figures do not include extensions to existing contracts. Information on contracts awarded during the 2018-19 financial year is not yet available. Information on whether provisions are used for individual contracts, is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Future Large Aircraft

Mr Mark Francois: [\[278419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether restrictions have been imposed on the type of stores that are carried by the A400M as a result of vibration problems with that aircraft.

Stuart Andrew:

A400M routinely carries ordnance, munitions and explosives in support of the UK's Defence commitments including in the broader Middle East. The type of stores that can be carried have been cleared through a qualification process in line with operational priorities, and there are no restrictions specific to A400M due to vibration.

Mr Mark Francois: [\[278420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost to the public purse is of the programme of work being undertaken by Airbus to increase the (a) serviceability and (b) reliability of the RAF's A400m aircraft fleet.

Stuart Andrew:

There is no single activity or programme to address aircraft serviceability. All aircraft are operated and maintained in accordance with the Air System Document Set, which includes the Operator's Maintenance Plan. This defines the servicing schedules and their periodicity based primarily on usage. With regard to reliability, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 1 July 2019 to Question 269009.

Attachments:

1. 269009 - Future Large Aircraft [269009 - Future Large Aircraft.docx]

■ **HMS Queen Elizabeth**

Stephen Morgan: [\[277834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure the safety of those who serve on HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Mark Lancaster:

The safety of all Armed Forces personnel is paramount at all times in planning and conducting our operations.

All personnel who embark in Royal Navy warships (including HMS Queen Elizabeth) are trained in their core roles, including the operation of equipment, to safely operate in all environments to minimise the risk of accidents. Additionally, they undergo assured training to be able to deal with incidents should they occur including fire, flood, damage control and medical/first aid.

Stephen Morgan: [\[277835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of fixing the (a) propulsion problem and (b) leak on board HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Stuart Andrew:

Maintenance of Royal Navy warships (including their power and propulsion systems) is funded through an In Service Support allocation of Naval funds through a Maritime Support Delivery Framework contract.

While an immediate assessment of the flood damage in HMS Queen Elizabeth has been conducted, a detailed survey remains ongoing. It is therefore too early to establish costs but it is not envisaged to impact upon the ship's future operational test programme.

Stephen Morgan: [\[277836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment she has made of the ability of HMS Queen Elizabeth to protect UK military interests.

Stuart Andrew:

We routinely assess all military capability across Defence to ensure we have the appropriate equipment and capabilities to continue to counter the changing threats we face and to protect UK interests at home and around the globe.

The Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, which will operate with embedded F35B Lightning Strike aircraft and as part of an integrated Task Group, are the largest, most capable and powerful surface warships ever constructed in the UK. We look forward to achieving an initial operating capability in December 2020. Their capability will be continuously reviewed throughout their expected service life of up to 50 years.

■ **Maritime Patrol Aircraft: Guided Weapons**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[278407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether her Department has plans to modify the missile systems of P-8 aircraft.

Stuart Andrew:

There are currently no plans to modify the weapon systems of the P-8A Poseidon. However, once we have reached the full operating capability of the aircraft, the Department will be in a position to assess the weapon choices available that meet our needs and to enable us to make decisions on future aircraft configurations.

■ **Porton Down: Animal Experiments**

Ben Lake: [\[278579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the 3,865 animals used in scientific procedures at DSTL Porton Down in 2017 were experimented upon under a multiple generic licence.

Ben Lake: [\[278580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the 1,941 animals used in scientific procedures at DSTL Porton Down in 2018 were experimented upon under a multiple generic licence.

Stuart Andrew:

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) at Porton Down, Wiltshire, is licensed by the Home Office to conduct the Ministry of Defence's in-house research involving the use of animals.

In 2017 and 2018, no animals were used in scientific procedures at Dstl Porton Down under a multiple generic licence. Dstl does not hold licences of this type.

Animals are used in experiments to develop new vaccines, therapies and treatments that save the lives of UK military and can benefit civilians. Chemical and biological weapons are a real and present threat. That is why Dstl continues its vital work in providing better protection against the use of these agents and against conventional threats.

■ Torpedoes: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[278411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether it remains her Department's policy to take the Sting Ray lightweight torpedo out of service between 2026-2030; and what plans her Department has for the replacement that torpedo.

Stuart Andrew:

The Royal Navy has embarked upon a pre-concept phase regarding the future light weight torpedo programme which will assess the options for extension or replacement of the Sting Ray torpedo.

■ Type 31 Frigates: Radar

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[278406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which radar system will be attached to the Type 31a frigate.

Stuart Andrew:

At this stage in the programme it is too early to confirm design, equipment and systems for the Type 31e frigates.

Final decisions will be made at the main investment decision point, taking into account the role of the ship, operating environment and future threats.

■ Veterans: Advisory Services

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[277821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent steps her Department has taken to ensure that service members are directed to support services if required when leaving the armed forces.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We already offer every Service leaver assistance with their transition when they leave us, through our Armed Forces' resettlement provision and the Career Transition Partnership. However, for a small proportion who still face problems, it is right to offer additional support.

We are introducing a new holistic transition policy relating to the significant life changing processes which affect both the Service person and their immediate family through the entire time they are within or connected to the Armed Forces, through to discharge and beyond. This is to support successful transition into civilian life.

In conjunction with this new policy, we are creating a new organisation to deliver further support to those Service leavers who face the greatest challenges to making a successful transition when they leave the Armed Forces. The service will be available to all leavers and will be based on the need of the individual.

■ Warships: Procurement**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[278412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence of 25 March 2019, Official Report, column 5, what the evidential basis is for the statement that the EU Commission has publicly questioned the legality of applying article 346 to the procurement of support ships by other member states.

Stuart Andrew:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 3 April 2019 to Question 238591 to the right hon. Member for Warley (Mr John Spellar).

Attachments:

1. 238591 - Defence Procurement [238591 John Spellar - Defence Procurement.docx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Bookmakers: Closures****Marion Fellows:**[\[277775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to limit job losses as a result of (a) further William Hill (b) other bookmakers branch closures.

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.

The government will engage with William Hill and other bookmakers, as well as the Association of British Bookmakers, 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.

■ Cricket: Sportsgrounds**Mike Amesbury:**[\[278596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of cricket pitches that have been sold for (a) housing development and (b) other commercial development since 2010.

Mims Davies:

The Government is completely committed to playing our part in strengthening grassroots cricket in this country, and are working with Sport England and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) to help improve the prospects for the game at all levels. Since 2009, Sport England has invested £100,070,150 of Government

and National Lottery funding into the game of cricket including investing in new and existing cricket facilities, boosting participation in the game and attracting people of all ages from diverse backgrounds to start or continue playing cricket.

DCMS does not hold figures for the number of cricket pitches sold for housing or commercial development. Sport England records show there are currently 7,106 pitches in England which are operational at present, whether that be local authority, school, club owned, free to play or otherwise.

■ Cultural Heritage: Africa

Chi Onwurah:

[\[278486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the French Government's approach to returning African cultural artefacts to their countries of origin, including the joint development of secure museums in those countries, what assessment he has had made of the potential merits of the UK adopting a similar approach to the return of artefacts held by UK museums.

Rebecca Pow:

The French Government is still formulating their approach to these issues, including the basis on which any African cultural artefacts might be returned to countries of origin.

Decisions about items in collections are a matter for UK museums themselves - and in the case of national museums, statutory duty lies with the board of trustees who operate independently from government.

The UK is a world leader in culture and heritage and our museums co-operate extensively with countries around the world on the circulation, promotion and protection of their collections, including capacity building programmes supporting museums development and cultural heritage protection.

■ Cybercrime

Jo Platt:

[\[277853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the cyber security implications of permitting DNS over HTTPS resolvers operating in the UK to reside outside of UK jurisdiction.

Jeremy Wright:

We are working with industry to understand rollout plans for DNS over HTTPS, including intentions relating to the use of resolvers. We are working closely with the National Cyber Security Centre to ensure that cyber security implications are considered alongside privacy and safety implications of DNS over HTTPS and that solutions will not compromise the security of UK businesses and citizens online.

■ Food: Advertising**Grahame Morris:**[\[277703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will introduce a 9pm watershed on advertising of junk food products on (a) TV and (b) on-demand services.

Jeremy Wright:

We want to reduce children's exposure to advertising for products high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS), so have consulted on introducing a 9pm watershed on TV and similar protection online (including around on-demand services), as well as other possible options. Despite strict restrictions already being in place to prohibit HFSS product advertising around children's programming, and similar protection online, evidence suggests children are still exposed to significant levels of HFSS advertising across the media they engage with most.

There is no lead option in our consultation and we will be led by the evidence in determining the way forward. The consultation closed last month, and is available to view at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/further-advertising-restrictions-for-products-high-in-fat-salt-and-sugar>. We are carefully considering responses and will respond as soon as possible.

■ Football Association and Premier League**Chi Onwurah:**[\[278488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many times he has met with the (a) Premier League and (b) Football Association to discuss improving (i) financial transparency and (ii) football regulation in the last 12 months.

Mims Davies:

Ministers meet regularly with stakeholders in football to discuss a range of issues including financial transparency and regulation, and will continue to do so in support of their governance of the game.

■ Gambling: Video Games**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[277807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to regulate the use of loot boxes in online games aimed at children.

Jeremy Wright:

Products, such as loot boxes, and other microtransactions in online games have to comply with consumer legislation which protects consumers of all ages from misleading and/or aggressive marketing. Consumers requiring advice should contact the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06 (www.citizensadvice.org.uk/). Consumers living in Scotland should contact Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 164 6000 (www.consumeradvice.scot/).

The government welcomed the introduction last year by the Video Standards Council Rating Board and PEGI (Pan European Game Information) of a new label for video games to warn parents where they include the potential to make in-game purchases such as loot boxes.

However, we are aware of concerns around loot boxes, and will continue to look closely at any evidence around this issue.

■ Hockey: Finance

Ben Bradley: [\[277845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to increase funding for hockey at grassroots level across the UK.

Mims Davies:

DCMS arm's length body, Sport England's core market investment into England Hockey for 2017/21 is £9.83 million. £7m is targeted on interventions including developing a more flexible format, protecting key facilities and improving governance and the use of data in driving up participation. £2.83 m is for developing talent at grassroots level.

Additionally, in the last 10 years, Sport England have invested £4.8m in Hockey facilities, clubs and projects (3.8m Lottery, £1m Exchequer)

Future funding will depend on the strength of incoming bids and to what extent they meet the aims of the Government sport strategy, Sporting Future.

■ Internet: Children

Kevin Brennan: [\[278394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the jurisdiction of the (a) Information Commissioner's Office and (b) Ofcom to the development of an age appropriate design code of practice for online services.

Jeremy Wright:

The Data Protection Act 2018 introduced a requirement on the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to produce a statutory code of practice on age-appropriate design. The code will provide guidance on the design standards that the providers of online services, which process personal data and are likely to be accessed by children, will be expected to meet. Earlier this year, the Information Commissioner undertook a public consultation on her draft code.

Separately, we have also set out our plans for world-leading legislation to make the UK the safest place in the world to be online in the Online Harms White Paper. This will make companies more responsible for their users' safety online, especially children and other vulnerable groups. The government has also committed to developing practical advice for companies on keeping children safe online, including through technical guidance.

■ Internet: Cryptography**Jo Platt:** [\[277854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the effect on online safety of the (a) DNS and (b) HTTPS protocol.

Jeremy Wright:

We are aware of ongoing developments relating to the DNS and HTTPS protocol and are working with industry and other relevant stakeholders on them. Work to understand the potential implications on online safety and other government policies is ongoing and we are committed to ensure that online protections are maintained.

■ Public Houses**Seema Malhotra:** [\[276539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the contribution of pubs to (a) local economies, (b) local employment and (c) the Industrial Strategy.

Rebecca Pow:

Pubs are a major part of the tourism and hospitality offer for the UK, with the tourism sector worth over £68bn to the UK and employing over 1.5m people directly.

The Industrial Strategy is building long-term strategic partnerships with businesses through Sector Deals between Government and industry, and most recently agreed a Tourism Sector Deal. This Deal recognises the significant contribution of pubs to local economies and the tourism sector; for example, 42% of international visits include at least one visit to a pub. The Government considers pubs to be a crucial element in the employment ecosystem of the Tourism Sector workforce, and has announced that the British Beer and Pub Association will be partnering with UKHospitality to manage a new Hospitality and Tourism Skills Board (under the Tourism Industry Council), and will carry out an annual workforce survey.

The British Beer and Pub Association also put forward a consultation response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper.

■ Rugby: Disability**Ben Bradley:** [\[277844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding his Department has allocated from the public purse to wheelchair rugby in each of the last five years.

Mims Davies:

At the grassroots level, Sport England has invested a total of £3,387,319 Lottery and Exchequer funding to support Wheelchair Rugby since 2014/15.

For the 2013-17 Rio Paralympic cycle, UK Sport invested £3,037,607 into Wheelchair Rugby, and £57,000 into the 2015 BT World Wheelchair Rugby Challenge. In the current 2017-21 Tokyo cycle, UK Sport awarded £50,000 for the GB Wheelchair Rugby team to compete at the 2018 World Championships in Australia, £500,000 from UK Sport's Aspiration Fund, and £50,000 to support their International Relations strategy.

■ **Sports: Coventry**

Colleen Fletcher: [\[276550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what funding his Department allocated to projects to support grassroots sports facilities in Coventry in each of the last five years.

Mims Davies:

Sport and physical activity facilities in Coventry have benefited from over £1.2m Exchequer and Lottery funding through Sport England over the last five years. This is on top of Sport England's total spend on community sport and physical activity in Coventry over the same period, more than £6.5m.

■ **Television: Licensing**

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[277633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with the BBC on requiring people in care homes to purchase TV licences; and if he will make a statement.

Jeremy Wright:

The Government remains clear that residents of care homes may be eligible for an Accommodation for Residential Care (ARC) licence fee concession. Licences issued under this concession currently cost £7.50 per room, flat or bungalow, and the Government has no intention to change this.

Guidance on the concession can be found on the TV Licensing website:

<https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/faqs/FAQ78> .

EDUCATION

■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]**

Thelma Walker: [\[912085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to improve local authority support for vulnerable children.

Nadhim Zahawi:

We are providing local authorities with more money to support vulnerable children, with an additional £410 million invested this year across adults' and children's social

care. Separately, we are investing £84 million over 5 years to drive improvements in children's services across local authorities, especially through early intervention.

In 2018, the department introduced a new, tougher Ofsted inspection framework to drive improvement in children's services. The department intervenes robustly in every local authority judged 'inadequate' by Ofsted, bringing in experts to assess which improvements will ensure better services. This might include removing service delivery from the council's control by establishing a trust, giving children's services a fresh start.

Since May 2010, 46 local authorities have been lifted out of intervention and have not returned, and the number of inadequate local authorities has reduced from 30 to 19 since July 2017. We aim to continue making these improvements at pace so that, by 2022, less than 10% of local authorities are rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted, halving failure rates within 5 years and providing consistently better services for thousands of children and families across the country.

To get ahead of failure, we are investing an additional £20 million in our regional improvement strategy, working collaboratively with the Association of Directors of Children's Services, Local Government Association, Solace and the rest of the sector to identify local authorities that need additional support. Our Regional Improvement Alliances and high-performing 'Partners in Practice' local authorities support those at risk of failure, embedding a system of sector-led improvement with more than 70 local authorities receiving support to date.

■ Apprentices: Film

Kevin Brennan:

[\[278393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2019 to Question 274454, whether his Department plans to collect data which would enable an assessment of the amount of apprenticeship levy money that was (a) paid by and (b) spent on apprenticeships by screen industry companies in financial year 2018-19.

Anne Milton:

The apprenticeship levy is collected by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) from employers with a pay bill in excess of £3 million per year. HMRC does not collect data which allows levy collection to be broken down by sector.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) does not require levy-paying employers to register a sector when they set up an online apprenticeship service account to manage their funds. Therefore, ESFA are unable to supply information on the sectoral distribution of spending on apprenticeships. There are currently no plans to change the registration process to collect this information from employers registering for an apprenticeship service account.

We are working closely with employers in the creative industries, including companies in the screen industry, so they can realise the benefits of apprenticeships. The Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport is developing an innovative pilot which will enable apprentices to benefit from hands-on experience on the sets of

major films and television shows. Launching later this year, it will explore a new model that fulfils the requirements of high-quality apprenticeships, but uses multiple placements on film and television productions, as well as addressing skills shortages.

■ Apprentices: Taxation

Paul Farrelly:

[278402]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will take steps to (a) increase transparency of the amount of apprenticeship levy spent on different types of apprenticeship and (b) help ensure the availability of data on the socioeconomic background of apprentices by apprenticeship level.

Anne Milton:

Our quarterly 'Apprenticeships and Traineeships' and monthly 'Apprenticeships and Levy Statistics' data releases provide extensive information on the breakdown of apprenticeship starts by level, sector subject area and framework/standard. This is in addition to whether starts are supported by the apprenticeship levy. The most recent quarterly release was published on 11 July 2019 and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships-july-2019>. This data, in addition to our extensive engagement with employers and sector bodies, informs our picture of emerging demand across the employer-led apprenticeships programme.

We use the 'Further education: indices of multiple deprivation' data release to understand the background of apprentices and inform our widening participation policies. This data is broken down by apprenticeship level and benchmarked against data for participation in all further education and skills training. We know that apprentices disproportionately come from more disadvantaged areas: in 2017/18, 24% of participating apprentices came from the most disadvantaged fifth of areas, compared to 15.6% from the least disadvantaged fifth. This data is available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765589/Index_of_Multiple_Deprivation_201516_to_201718.xlsx.

■ Apprentices: Young People

Paul Farrelly:

[277672]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to reintroduce young apprenticeships.

Anne Milton:

There are currently no plans to reintroduce the Young Apprenticeships programme. However, high-quality apprenticeships are available to people of all ages. Our reforms are improving apprenticeships by making them longer with more off-the-job training and formal assessment at the end.

An apprenticeship provides the foundation for a successful career and is a great option for young people who are strong academically but want on-the-job experience and a high-quality alternative to full-time university study.

Traineeships are available to provide quality training to those young people who need to develop their skills and experience in order to enter the labour market. The department's recent Traineeship Impact Evaluation Report shows that 75% of trainees are in apprenticeships, other jobs, or further learning a year after their traineeship.

■ Children: Day Care

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[277636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to assist local authorities to increase the (a) provision and (b) affordability of childcare for disabled children in the school summer holidays.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Local authorities are required to secure sufficient childcare in their area, so far as is practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

Since 2011, all local authorities have a duty to provide a range of short breaks services for disabled children and their families. Responsibility for funding short breaks rests with local authorities. They are best placed and have the freedom to decide how to deliver services, target their resources and priorities, and be flexible to meet the local needs of disabled children and young people.

Tax-Free Childcare was introduced in 2017 to support families with the costs of childcare, for which 1.6 million families are eligible. For every £8 parents pay into an online account, the government pays £2 – up to a maximum contribution of £2,000 per child each year, for children aged up to 12. Parents of disabled children receive extra support (worth up to £4,000 per child, for each year and until their child is 17) which can be used to pay for childcare provision both during term time and in school holidays.

■ Free School Meals: Norwich South

Clive Lewis:

[\[278562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of (a) children and (b) children eligible for free school meals reached a good level of development at age five in Norwich South in each of the last three years.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The requested data is shown in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. 278562_table
[278562_table_percentage_of_children_achieving_a_good_level_of_development_in_early_years_foundation_stage_profile_teacher_assessments.doc]

■ Further Education: Yorkshire and Humber

Alex Sobel: [\[278595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding his Department has allocated to further education colleges in Yorkshire and Humber in each year since 2010.

Anne Milton:

The department publishes the funding allocations for individual colleges annually.

Links to funding allocations for the most recent years for both 16 to 19 year olds and adults are given below:

Funding allocations for 16 to 19 year olds can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-allocation-data-2018-to-2019-academic-year>.

Funding allocations for adults can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-allocations-to-training-providers-2018-to-2019>.

■ GCE A-level and GCSE

Lucy Powell: [\[278513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his policy is on pupils using private tutors as scribes in (a) GCSE and (b) A level exams.

Nick Gibb:

The regulation of GCSE and A level qualifications is a matter for Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation. I have asked its Chief Regulator, Sally Collier, to write directly to the hon. Member and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

■ Information Technology: Education

Paul Farrelly: [\[277670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of compulsory teaching of information technology until the age of 16.

Paul Farrelly: [\[277671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of teaching coding in primary schools.

Nick Gibb:

In September 2014, the Government introduced computing as a national curriculum subject at all four key stages, replacing the former information and communications technology curriculum. Computing education is now compulsory in all state maintained schools. As part of the new Ofsted inspection framework, operational from September 2019, inspectors will expect all pupils to study a broad and balanced curriculum, either through the National Curriculum, which includes computing, or a curriculum of comparable breadth.

The computing curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils have experience of writing computer programs. The UK is one of the first G20 countries to have introduced coding into the primary curriculum. The computing curriculum also ensures that pupils can become digitally literate.

In November 2018, the Government announced the new National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE), led by leading industry experts and backed by £84 million of funding. The NCCE recently appointed the first 23 Computing Hubs, operational from autumn 2019, which will provide a range of continuing professional development opportunities for all teachers, and will build local expertise and capacity for school to school support.

■ Religion and Sex and Relationship Education: Primary Education

Angela Rayner:

[\[277201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what role Ofsted will play in ensuring that primary schools comply with (a) relationships education, relationships and sex education and (b) religious education.

Nick Gibb:

From September 2019, primary schools will be encouraged to follow the new relationships education curriculum and compliance will be compulsory from September 2020.

Ofsted's role, in relation to schools, is to provide an independent assessment of their effectiveness on a range of matters. This includes the breadth, balance and ambition of the school's curriculum.

As set out in Ofsted's published School Inspection Handbook, from September 2019, inspectors will take account of the relationships education taught in each school as part of an evaluation of pupils' personal development. Inspectors will also take account of the religious education taught, as part of assessing the quality of education provided by the school.

It is not Ofsted's role to inspect denominational religious education in faith schools as part of its inspections. This provision is inspected separately under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Angela Rayner:

[\[277202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions his Department has had with OFSTED on the teaching of (a) relationships and sex education and (b) religious education in primary schools.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has regular discussions with Ofsted on a range of matters concerning the school curriculum.

Ofsted and faith organisations contributed to the relationships and sex education consultation and were part of the round table engagement face to face meetings in Autumn 2018. The Department is committed to supporting schools to teach all

subjects to a high standard and, therefore, will continue to work with subject experts and Ofsted to ensure that schools are well supported.

■ **School Meals: Vegetarianism**

Catherine West: [\[276580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his policy is on encouraging schools to expand vegetarian options for school meals.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Requirements for School Food Regulations (2014), which came into force in January 2015, regulates the food and drink provided at both lunchtime and at other times of the school day. Beyond this, we believe that headteachers, school governors and caterers are best placed to make decisions about their school food policies, taking into account local circumstances and the needs of their pupils. In doing so, we expect schools to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with particular requirements, for example to reflect dietary and cultural needs. School food policies work best when schools discuss them with parents and pupils, so that parents have the opportunity to raise pupils' particular dietary needs.

■ **Schools: Charitable Donations**

Steve McCabe: [\[278353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to tackle the financial imbalance in donations received by state schools in affluent areas and those in poorer areas.

Nick Gibb:

Schools have historically generated income to bring communities together as well as to bring in extra funding, over and above schools' core budget. There are many types of income generation, which range from letting out premises to beetle drives. Overall, schools generate around £1.3 billion a year, which is roughly 4% of the schools' budget. Income specifically from donations and voluntary funds has remained steady at about 0.7% of schools' overall budgets since 2011-12.

As set out in the Department's Supporting Excellent School Resource Management strategy, the Department intends to publish guidance for schools on these issues.

Schools: Uniforms

Ms Lisa Forbes: [\[277859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 3 July 2019 to Question 273502, whether primary legislation is required to place his Department's guidance on school uniforms onto a statutory footing.

Nick Gibb:

Statutory guidance cannot be issued without the legislative powers to do so.

■ Special Educational Needs: Finance

Bim Afolami:

[\[276598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money has been spent by each school in England on children with special educational needs in each year since 2010.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The information requested is not held centrally. Children with special educational needs are funded through the schools and high needs national funding formulae, which have been separate since 2013. Local authorities and schools have statutory duties under the Children and Families Act (2014) to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. However, we do not prescribe in detail how local authorities should allocate their high needs funding, or how schools should use their funding.

The total funding amounts for schools, and for high needs, since 2013 are as follows:

YEAR	SCHOOLS FUNDING AMOUNT (BILLION)	HIGH NEEDS FUNDING AMOUNT (BILLION)
2013-14	£30.4	£5.0
2014-15	£30.7	£5.2
2015-16	£32.2	£5.2
2016-17	£32.7	£5.3
2017-18	£33.1	£5.8
2018-19	£33.7	£6.1
2019-20	£34.5	£6.3

■ Students: Loans

James Frith:

[\[277277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether part-time students studying undergraduate courses using distance learning will be eligible to apply for maintenance loans for the 2019-20 academic year.

Chris Skidmore:

In March 2019, the government announced its decision not to extend maintenance loans to part-time distance learners in the 2019-20 academic year. This was on the grounds that the demand for a loan product aimed at part-time distance learners is unlikely to be high enough to make the introduction of such a loan economically viable.

■ Teachers: Sick Leave**Ian Lavery:** [\[277195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of teaching staff currently signed-off from work with a stress-related illness in (a) England, (b) the North East, and (c) Northumberland in the latest period for which figures are available.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not held centrally.

The overall number of teachers taking any sickness absence up to the 2017/18 academic year has been published in the school workforce in England statistics, which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>.

National figures are provided in table 16 of the main tables and subnational figures in the regional, local authority and school tables. The information is not broken down by the type of illness.

■ Universities: Students**Hugh Gaffney:** [\[277256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to increase the level of financial support available to university students.

Chris Skidmore:

Living costs support increased by 10.3% for students on the lowest incomes in the 2016-17 academic year compared to the previous system, with further inflationary increases for each year since then. The government has announced a 2.8% increase in maximum loans for living costs for the 2019-20 academic year starting in August.

An announcement on financial support for academic year 2020-21 will be made in due course.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ A127: Speed Limits****James Duddridge:** [\[276530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, under which statutory provisions his Department is able to direct Basildon Council and Essex County Council to reduce the speed limit on the A127.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Sections 85(5) and 86(8) of the Environment Act 1995.

■ Agriculture: Subsidies**Dr David Drew:**[\[277105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure the equity of the transition to environmental land management payments for farms of different sizes.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The seven year agricultural transition period in England, as set out in the Agriculture Bill, will make sure there is a gradual transition from the current system to the new, avoiding a cliff edge for farm businesses of all sizes. It will give all farmers sufficient time to adapt and prepare for the new Environmental Land Management system which will be piloted and rolled out during the transition.

During the transition, we will apply reductions to Direct Payments in a fair way, with higher reductions initially applied to amounts in higher payment bands.

This method balances the views of those who feel recipients of the highest payments should initially face higher reductions with the strong calls for the reductions to be shared amongst all farmers from the start of the transition.

Mr David Davis:[\[277642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to support the farming and agriculture industry in (a) the UK, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) Haltemprice and Howden constituency.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Farming has a bright future outside the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. The Great Yorkshire Show demonstrated the strengths that British farming has to offer with a record-breaking number of entries for sheep and cattle, and great produce from Wensleydale cheese to North Yorkshire game.

I know very well the importance of supporting these farmers in Yorkshire and Humber, home to my own constituency and farm, as well as my Rt Hon friend's constituency, Haltemprice and Howden. As we prepare to leave the EU, the UK Government is taking a number of steps to support our farmers and industry in England and across the UK.

For the UK as a whole, the Government has pledged to continue to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support until the end of this Parliament, expected in 2022; this includes all funding provided for farm support under both Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 of the current Common Agricultural Policy.

The Government has also guaranteed that any projects where funding has been agreed before the end of 2020 will be funded for their full lifetime. This means, in the event the UK leaves the EU with no deal, the UK Government would fund any remaining payments to farmers, land managers and rural businesses due after October 2019. This would ensure continued funding for these projects until they

finish. The guarantee also means that Defra and the devolved administrations can continue to sign new projects after the UK leaves the EU during 2019 and 2020.

As agriculture is devolved, each administration will have the flexibility to develop agricultural policy suited to their own unique circumstances, once the UK has left the EU. It is for the Scottish, Welsh and future Northern Ireland Governments to decide upon future agricultural policies for their respective nations.

For farmers in England, the Agriculture Bill marks a decisive shift in our support. We will create an ambitious new system based on paying “public money for public goods”. Public goods will include improving air and water quality, and habitats for wildlife. By paying for things the public value, we can also improve animal welfare and reduce the use of antibiotics in our food chain. Financial support for innovations like precision farming can help farmers become more productive, reduce the use of expensive chemicals and protect the environment.

Critically, our Agriculture Bill also includes a seven year transition period of 2021–2027 for Direct Payments to help farmers in England to plan for the future. In the meantime direct payments for 2019 and 2020 will be made on the same basis as they are now, with simplifications where possible.

■ **Animals: Exports**

Neil O'Brien:

[\[275832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential increase in the number of Export Health Certificate that will be required in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

David Rutley:

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal we expect the number of Export Health Certificates (EHCs) issued for exports to increase.

To address this increase, we have offered free training to official veterinarians, with around 1000 official veterinarians now able to sign EHCs.

We have created a new Certification Support Officer. This role will assist Certifying Officers to collate the evidence needed for certification. 250 have registered and 90 have qualified in Great Britain so far.

We have offered local authorities funding to help them meet demand for EHCs, and a new web portal for processing EHCs will also help by speeding up the application process.

The proposed risk based approach to inspecting EHCs will increase the capacity for local authority Certifying Officers to certify export health certificates for fish and fish products.

■ Construction and Furniture: Health Hazards

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[277635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to air quality of introducing fire toxicity assessments to fire safety tests of upholstered goods and construction materials.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is the lead Government department on fire safety regulations and has responsibility for product safety.

Defra's Air Quality division has not made any assessment of the potential benefits to air quality of introducing fire toxicity assessments to fire safety tests of upholstered goods and construction materials.

■ Eutrophication

Stephen Morgan: [\[278586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help local authorities tackle eutrophication.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Local planning authorities are supported by the responses of regulators the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England as statutory consultees in the planning process. The EA undertakes further duties as a regulator by controlling the quantity of nutrients from Sewage Treatment Works to water bodies through the Environmental Permitting Regulations.

■ Forests

Bim Afolami: [\[276593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what information his Department holds on the amount of woodland there was in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Scotland and (d) Northern Ireland in each year since 2010.

David Rutley:

The Forestry Commission produces statistics on woodland area in the UK. These are Official Statistics, produced to meet the standard of the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Woodland area statistics can be found on the Forest Research website, together with background information at:

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/statistics-by-topic/woodland-statistics/>

The area of woodland for each country since 2010, taken from the published statistics, is shown in the table below:

WOODLAND AREA (MILLIONS OF HECTARES)

Year	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK
2010	1.29	0.30	1.38	0.09	3.06
2011	1.29	0.30	1.38	0.09	3.07
2012	1.30	0.30	1.40	0.11	3.11
2013	1.30	0.31	1.41	0.11	3.13
2014	1.30	0.31	1.42	0.11	3.14
2015	1.31	0.31	1.43	0.11	3.15
2016	1.31	0.31	1.44	0.11	3.16
2017	1.31	0.31	1.44	0.11	3.16
2018	1.31	0.31	1.45	0.11	3.17
2019	1.31	0.31	1.46	0.11	3.19

■ **Salmon**

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[277604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on salmon stocks in English rivers of seals.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

No formal assessment of the effect of seal activity on Atlantic salmon stocks has been made in English rivers.

Although diet studies suggest that seals typically prey on other fish species, seals are known to consume salmon in estuaries, around nets and river mouths. Predation by seals is controlled by regulations including licensed sustainable culling, as well as non-lethal methods such as sound scaring equipment.

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[277605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what research programmes on the decline of salmon stocks in English rivers his Department is currently allocating funding to.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Defra funds research conducted by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and the Environment Agency to address factors contributing to the decline of salmon in English rivers. Factors, such as water quality, migration barriers, marine survival and exploitation are addressed in Defra's 5 year

Implementation Plan for Salmon Management in England and Wales, conducted by Cefas for the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation. Progress on these plans is reported on annually.

Projects Defra is currently funding include:

- Anthropogenic Factors – ‘Prioritising the management of salmonid based on the relative impacts of anthropogenic factors’
- Stock assessment methodology improvement – ‘Genetic sex ratio analysis of salmon smolts and adults’
- Climate Change – ‘Predicted effects of Climate Change on UK diadromous fish populations’

■ **Sheep Meat: Import Duties**

Jo Stevens:

[\[278535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Department for International Trade's draft tariff schedule, Temporary rates of custom duty, published on 13 March 2019, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on livestock farmers in the event that the EU matches the tariff on sheep meat proposed in that draft tariff schedule in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

David Rutley:

Consistent with World Trade Organisation rules, the EU must apply tariffs equally to imports from all countries where there is not a trade agreement or any other preferential arrangement in place. In the event of no deal, this includes the UK.

We anticipate that the application of EU tariffs on UK exports would have a substantial negative impact across the UK farming sector, particularly for sheepmeat where those tariffs are high and around 30% of production is exported, approximately 95% of which goes to the EU. This is just one reason why delivering a negotiated settlement remains the Government's top priority.

■ **Sheep: UK Trade with EU**

Jenny Chapman:

[\[278469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the rearing and sale of lamb and mutton of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Jenny Chapman:

[\[278470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what contingency plans his Department has made in relation to sheep that are not sold to the EU in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Jenny Chapman: [\[278471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure his Department will have adequate cold storage facilities available for the storage of sheep meat in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Jenny Chapman: [\[278472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to ensure adequate amounts of animal feed are available to feed sheep that are not sold to the EU in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Jenny Chapman: [\[278473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has in place to deal with sheep meat that is not sold into the EU as a result of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

David Rutley:

It is in everyone's interests to secure a good deal with the European Union and that is exactly what we are committed to do. The Government recognises the concerns of stakeholders and is determined to get the best deal for the UK in our negotiations to leave the EU, including for our globally recognised sheep meat.

As a responsible Government it is our duty to prepare for every eventuality, including that of no-deal. Significant work is underway to ensure that UK exporters can maintain access to EU markets. We are confident that we will achieve third country listing with the EU prior to our departure, as we did prior to the April date. This will allow the UK to export to the EU. A no-deal Brexit would mean that goods traded between the EU and the UK will be subject to the same tariffs as goods from third countries.

The UK is the largest producer of sheep and by far the largest exporter of sheep meat in the EU. Around 30% of production is exported, with 95% of these exports going to the EU. The application of high EU tariffs on UK exports of sheep meat will have a substantial negative effect on the income of UK sheep farmers. At Defra, we are doing all we can to mitigate the challenges they face and we have contingency plans in place to minimise disruption. We will be monitoring the market situation closely and My Rt Hon friend, the Secretary of State, has made it clear that we will support our most vulnerable sectors, such as our sheep farmers.

Government has also pledged to continue to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support until the end of this parliament, expected in 2022. This includes all funding provided for farm support under both Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 of the current CAP. This commitment applies to the whole UK.

We are in regular dialogue with the farming unions, processors and allied industries about storage, feed and other supplies in the event of a no deal. These discussions have been constructive and will continue.

■ Tree Planting

Frank Field:

[\[273331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many trees will be planted in order to reach the Government's target of 11 million trees in each year from July 2019 to the end of this Parliament.

David Rutley:

Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2019 we have planted 3.64 million trees towards our target of 11 million by the end of this Parliament, and we are on track to meet the target.

The Woodland Carbon Fund, Woodland Creation Planning Grant and Countryside Stewardship initiatives are already in place to support land managers to plant trees. They are demand-led grant schemes for independent landowners. It is therefore not possible to have exact annual planting figures for future years.

In order to increase tree planting rates, we have simplified the application process for our grant schemes, and made them open for applications year-round. We have also announced £5.7 million to kick start a new Northern Forest, as well as £50 million for the Woodland Carbon Guarantee scheme, which will open for applications this year.

■ Waste: Exports

Alex Chalk:

[\[275789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to penalise (a) local authorities and (b) companies found to be illegally exporting refuse and recycling abroad.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The UK Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations set out offences in relation to the shipment of waste and provide that a person found guilty of an offence can be fined and/or imprisoned for up to two years. The regulations are enforced by the UK's competent authorities which will take appropriate action against any illegal activity.

The UK has a robust approach to enforcing these controls. The UK environmental regulators take a pro-active, intelligence led approach to checking compliance, targeting exports which pose a high risk and intervening to stop illegal exports taking place. In 2017/18, the Environment Agency issued 158 stop notices, prohibiting the export of unsuitable waste. It stopped 367 containers of waste destined for illegal export at ports and intervened further upstream to prevent 8,974 tonnes of waste from reaching our ports.

After exports are stopped, the costs associated with returning a waste shipment that is found to be unfit for export to the site of origin for further treatment can be a significant cost to the exporter. This prevents illegal exports and makes sure that the waste is recovered or disposed of in an environmentally sound manner.

I have asked the Environment Agency to contact you with more information on their enforcement activities and the letter will be placed in the Library.

■ Wildlife: Conservation**Paul Farrelly:**[\[278400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the creation of national recovery network maps to identify (a) the location of wildlife and (b) where wildlife should be in the future.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

This is already part of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ Brexit****Chuka Umunna:**[\[278494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many technical notices on ensuring that citizens and businesses have the information they require to prepare for the UK leaving the EU have been withdrawn; and for what reasons have those notices been withdrawn.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Department for Exiting the European Union coordinated the initial publication of 106 Technical Notices between July and September 2018. Departments are responsible for their own Technical Notices, including deciding if they should be withdrawn and the reasons why.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Working Hours**Jon Trickett:**[\[278370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Department for Exiting the European Union is committed to the wellbeing of its staff and ensuring that staff maintain a work-life balance. The Department has a range of flexible working policies in place to avoid excess working hours and complies with the EU Working Time Directive.

If there are occasions when staff have to work extra hours, they may be able to claim overtime or time off in lieu for the additional hours worked. Working hours are managed locally with line managers and no central records are held of excess working hours that are not paid as overtime.

■ Musicians: Visas**Nic Dakin:**[\[277712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what progress he has made on ensuring reciprocal mobility agreements between the UK and the EU for people in the music industry that require short-term visas after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

In the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal, UK nationals undertaking paid work, including in the music industry, in the EU should check with the Embassy of the countries they plan to travel to for what kind of visa or permit, if any, they will need. The FCO provides advice on their [country-specific travel pages online](#). Information about entry requirements for those intending to work or provide a service in an EU Member State is listed on our [advice pages for UK businesses](#) on gov.uk.

The Political Declaration agreed between the UK and the EU acknowledges the importance of mobility for cultural cooperation. The UK has proposed reciprocal mobility arrangements with the EU that support businesses to provide services and move their talented people. We also want to discuss how to facilitate the temporary mobility of self-employed professionals and employees providing services. The detail of our reciprocal mobility arrangements will be discussed in the next phase of negotiations.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Torture****Liz McInnes:**[\[277753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the evidence of torture in the Democratic Republic of the Congo submitted to his Department by the Freedom From Torture charity.

Liz McInnes:[\[277754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the extent of the use of torture against political activists by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Liz McInnes:[\[277755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if his Department will make the eradication of torture in detention settings a priority for the Government's engagement with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Harriett Baldwin:

We are aware of the report undertaken by Freedom from Torture. We remain concerned at the human rights situation in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) which includes sexual and gender based violence, arbitrary arrest and detention, extrajudicial killings, inhumane and degrading treatment and restrictions to

democratic space. We continue to call upon the government of the DRC to exercise restraint and proportionality in any security response, and to investigate and hold to account those accused of committing acts of violence, including members of the security forces.

The UK continues to work to improve the human rights situation in the DRC, including by helping to educate human rights defenders and by promoting conflict resolution. The UK also helps fund the United Nation Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO), which tracks human rights abuses and violations in DRC. We have also financed projects in support of the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI), gender inequality, improving democratic participation and through DFID programmes we are supporting security reforms. We continue to raise human rights and rule of law in our regular discussions with the DRC government. When I met the President during my visit to DRC in May I encouraged him to fulfil his inauguration commitment to improve the lives of the Congolese people and address the human rights situation.

■ **Iraq: Internally Displaced People**

Conor McGinn: [\[278549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Iraqi counterpart on the safety and security of internally displaced people returning to Bartella.

Conor McGinn: [\[278550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the level of employment opportunities for internally displaced people returning to towns on the Nineveh Plains; and what support his Department is providing to those people.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK strongly supports the safe, voluntary and sustainable return of internally displaced Iraqis to the areas liberated from Daesh, including in the Nineveh Plains. Both the Prime Minister and other Ministers discussed these issues with the President of Iraq during his visit to the UK in June and I also discussed them with the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Mohammad Al-Hakim, on 25 June. We have contributed £23.15 million to the UN's Funding Facility for Stabilisation to help the Government of Iraq rebuild communities in liberated areas to enable further voluntary returns of displaced persons. We have not made a recent specific assessment of the level of employment opportunities for internally displaced people returning to towns on the Nineveh Plains.

■ **Iraq: Reconstruction**

Conor McGinn: [\[278548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with (a) his Iraqi counterpart and (b) his counterpart in the Kurdistan Regional Government on security and reconstruction in Batnaya.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We regularly engage with both the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government on the need for security and reconstruction throughout the territories liberated from Daesh. The Prime Minister and other Ministers discussed these issues with the President of Iraq, Barham Salih, during his visit to the UK on 25-27 June.

■ Kashmir: Politics and Government**Liz McInnes:**[\[277200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in Kashmir.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

I refer the Honourable Member to the answers of 11 June 2019 (PQ 259251) and 17 June (PQ 263167).

■ Libya: Armed Conflict**Stephen Gethins:**[\[276558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps the Government has taken to work towards finding a political solution to the conflict in Libya.

Stephen Gethins:[\[276559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the assault on the UN-backed Government of National Accord in Libya.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK remains deeply concerned by the situation in Libya. We are actively engaged in international diplomatic efforts to secure an end to the fighting and a return to the UN-led political process. As penholder on Libya in the UN Security Council, we agreed a Security Council statement on 6 July condemning the abhorrent attack on the Tajoura migrant detention centre, in which so many lost their lives. The UK, US, France, Italy, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates agreed a statement on 16 July, supporting the mediation efforts of UN Envoy Ghassan Salame and calling for a halt to the fighting and return to UN-led political talks. There can be no military solution in Libya; only an inclusive political settlement will bring about the stability its citizens deserve.

■ Libya: Arms Trade**Stephen Gethins:**[\[276561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his French counterpart on arms sales to combatants in the conflict in Libya.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We are concerned by reports of military equipment entering Libya from a range of sources. We take all such reports seriously, given the UN arms embargo. On 16 July the UK agreed a P3+3 statement (by the UK, US, France, Italy, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates), calling on all UN member states to fully respect their obligations under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions to contribute to Libya's peace and stability and to prevent destabilising arms shipments to Libya.

■ **Libya: Detention Centres****Stephen Gethins:**[\[276560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will support calls for a UN Investigation into the recent airstrike on a migrant detention centre in Tripoli.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK condemns the abhorrent attack on the detention centre in Tajoura and supports the UN Secretary-General's call for an investigation. We are clear that the full facts of this attack must be established and, ultimately, those responsible for violations of International Humanitarian Law must be held to account. This tragic incident underlines the need for all parties to de-escalate, allow humanitarian access, and return to UN political mediation.

■ **Mali: Politics and Government****Liz McInnes:**[\[277198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in Mali.

Harriett Baldwin:

I am deeply concerned by the security situation in Mali, particularly central Mali, which has experienced a recent increase in violence. As I have previously stated, it is essential that the perpetrators are brought to justice, that the cycle of violence is ended, and that impunity is tackled.

As part of the Government's new strategic approach to Africa, we are increasing our engagement with and support to the Sahel region. Along with increasing our presence in Mali and Mauritania, we will be opening new embassies in Niger and Chad, and have created a new cross-Government Joint Sahel Department that combines our defence, development, and diplomatic expertise so that we embody a truly comprehensive approach to supporting the region to tackle its complex challenges.

The Defence Secretary visited Mali this month and announced that UK Armed Forces will deploy to Mali in 2020 in support of the UN Peacekeeping Operation; United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), to which the UK is the sixth largest funder. The existing commitment of three UK Chinooks and accompanying personnel has been extended for six months.

■ North Macedonia: NATO**Mr Gregory Campbell:** [\[278397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans he has to hold discussions with his North Macedonian counterpart on that country's application to join NATO.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK strongly supports North Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic ambitions, including NATO membership. Most recently, the then Minister of State for Europe and the Americas discussed North Macedonia's accession to NATO with Foreign Minister Dimitrov in the margins of the Global Media Freedom Conference in London on 10 July. The Prime Minister also discussed NATO membership with the Prime Minister of North Macedonia, Zoran Zaev, at the Poznan Summit in Poland on 5 July.

The Government will continue to support North Macedonia to implement its Strategic Defence Review in preparation for NATO membership, including through funding a UK defence adviser working in North Macedonia's Defence Ministry.

■ Racial Discrimination**Jo Stevens:** [\[277767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has recently worked with the US Administration on tackling racism globally.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We are not aware of any recent bilateral discussions specifically on tackling racism globally. However, we work closely with the US on a number of important global challenges.

■ Rain Forests: Conservation**Sir Greg Knight:** [\[278388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent diplomatic steps his Department has taken to help preserve rainforests.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The British Government is committed to the preservation of rainforests, and engages with governments around the world on the environment. For example, our posts in Brazil frequently engage with the Brazilian Government on a number of environmental issues including deforestation. We have had positive discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture and work closely with them on our International Climate Finance programmes.

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

■ South Africa: Crimes of Violence

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[277665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his South African counterpart in the (a) recent trends in the level of violence and murder in Cape Town and (b) the potential consequences for visitors from the UK of those matters.

Harriett Baldwin:

Our High Commission in South Africa regularly raises issues of concern with the South African authorities where necessary, in particular where UK nationals are involved. We work with South African law enforcement, providing training and capacity building to the South African Police Service and support links between our legal systems. UK nationals should always consult Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice, which is regularly reviewed.

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[278396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his South African counterpart on potentially changing the travel advice for UK nationals in the Cape Town area due to recent violence.

Harriett Baldwin:

Our High Commission in Pretoria and Consulate in Cape Town have regular engagement with the South African host authorities on safety and security. We keep our travel advice under constant review and make regular updates to ensure it reflects our assessment of risk to British nationals, including highlighting hotspots where British nationals would be at more risk of being the victims of crime or violence.

■ Sudan: Demonstrations

Liz McInnes:

[\[277196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Sudanese counterpart on the reports of the killing of peaceful protesters in Sudan in June.

Harriett Baldwin:

We are aware of the BBC Africa Eye investigation which alleges that senior Sudanese military rulers ordered the killing of protestors on 3 June. In his statement of 3 June, the Foreign Secretary condemned the attack on protestors by Sudanese security forces and said that the Transitional Military Council (TMC) bore full responsibility for these events. The UK has been clear, at both ministerial and official levels, that there must be justice and accountability for atrocities committed both by the former regime and more recently. On 23 June, the UK Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan delivered this message directly to the Sudanese authorities. The UK has also made public statements in multilateral fora such as the EU Foreign Affairs Council

(17 June) and the UN Human Rights Council (9 July). We note the agreement between the TMC and Forces of Freedom and Change to conduct a transparent and independent investigation into the violence committed against peaceful protestors on 3 June.

Liz McInnes:

[\[277197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of the findings of the BBC Africa Eye investigation that the killing of protestors in Sudan on 3 June was ordered by that country's senior military rulers.

Harriett Baldwin:

We are aware of the BBC Africa Eye investigation which alleges that senior Sudanese military rulers ordered the killing of protestors on 3 June. In his statement of 3 June, the Foreign Secretary condemned the attack on protestors by Sudanese security forces and said that the Transitional Military Council (TMC) bore full responsibility for these events. The UK has been clear, at both ministerial and official levels, that there must be justice and accountability for atrocities committed both by the former regime and more recently. On 23 June, the UK Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan delivered this message directly to the Sudanese authorities. The UK has also made public statements in multilateral fora such as the EU Foreign Affairs Council (17 June) and the UN Human Rights Council (9 July). We note the agreement between the TMC and Forces of Freedom and Change to conduct a transparent and independent investigation into the violence committed against peaceful protestors on 3 June.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Cancer: County Durham

Grahame Morris:

[\[277701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps is he taking to reduce the number of emergency cancer diagnoses in County Durham.

Seema Kennedy:

Improving diagnosis and ensuring better outcomes for patients diagnosed with cancer is a priority for the Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). To achieve this, the CCG is working collaboratively with colleagues from public health, primary care and secondary care on a strategic piece of work. The CCG believes that a multi-disciplinary approach is necessary in order to address inequalities.

Grahame Morris:

[\[278475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to NHS England's Commissioner-based Cancer Waiting Times for May 2019 (Provisional), published on 11 July 2019, for what reason the NHS Durham Dales, Easington and

Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group is not meeting the target for patients to receive their first cancer treatment within 62 days of an urgent GP referral.

Seema Kennedy:

Cancer is a priority for this Government and impetus has been given to ensuring that more patients are seen and treated for cancer. The drive to improve survival rates through earlier diagnosis, therefore, has meant that demand and activity have been rising for a number of years. This has resulted in more people being referred and diagnosed than ever before.

Improving diagnosis and ensuring better outcomes for patients diagnosed with cancer is a priority for Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and County Durham is consistently better in terms of coverage than the national average for all three cancer screening programmes. The CCG is working collaboratively with colleagues from public health, primary care and secondary care on a strategic piece of work, with a view that a multi-disciplinary approach is necessary in order to address inequalities in cancer.

The CCG has developed the Action Plan 'County Durham Reducing Health Inequalities in Cancer Action Plan for 2018-19'.

■ **Cancer: Diagnosis**

Sir David Amess:

[\[276504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the long-term workforce plan for the NHS will consider how many diagnostic professionals are needed to meet the ambition to diagnose three out of every four cancers in the next 10 years.

Seema Kennedy:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has commissioned Baroness Dido Harding to lead a number of programmes to engage with key National Health Service interests to develop a detailed workforce implementation plan.

The interim NHS People Plan, published on 3 June 2019, acknowledges that further action must be taken to increase the numbers of staff. It will undertake a detailed review of all branches of workforce in advance of the full People Plan, in order to identify steps to grow and recruit a world class cancer workforce to the NHS.

■ **Cancer: Health Services**

Grahame Morris:

[\[277702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will commission a fully-funded long-term cancer workforce plan for the NHS to help ensure increased patient demand is met.

Seema Kennedy:

The interim NHS People Plan, published on 3 June 2019, puts the workforce at the heart of the National Health Service and will ensure we have the staff needed to

deliver high quality care. A final People Plan will be published soon after the conclusion of the 2019 Spending Review.

Phase 1 of the Cancer Workforce Plan for England, published in December 2017 by Health Education England (HEE), set out plans to expand capacity and skills in the cancer workforce, including targeting additional training support for seven priority professions which are key to cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment, such as clinical radiology, histopathology, oncology and diagnostic and therapeutic radiography.

HEE will now work with NHS England and NHS Improvement to understand the longer-term workforce implications of further development of cancer services. This work will inform the final People Plan.

■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments

Ian Blackford:

[\[277762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many UK companies have been issued with a licence to sell cannabis products for the NHS.

Seema Kennedy:

Any company meeting the standards for the manufacture of unlicensed medicinal products, can supply cannabis-based products for medicinal use.

Cannabis-based products for medicinal use are Schedule 2 controlled drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001, which means that manufacturers, importers and distributors of these products must hold valid Home Office and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) licences for the relevant activities which will include possession, supply and production of controlled drugs. Where products are sourced from abroad, importers must obtain an import licence from the Home Office and the MHRA each time they import these products.

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Finance

Ms Lisa Forbes:

[\[277858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure funding for Clinical Commissioning Groups is equitable and protects patient outcomes.

Stephen Hammond:

The allocation of funding to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to support them in commissioning services for their local population is one of the key duties of NHS England. The approach NHS England must take in setting allocations is outlined in the mandate from the Department which says:

“The Government expects the principle of ensuring equal access for equal need to be at the heart of NHS England’s approach to allocating budgets.”

The approach is also informed by NHS England’s duty to reduce inequalities to accessing services and the outcomes of care.

These two aims are reflected in the target formula, which produces a target allocation or 'fair share' for each area, based on a complex assessment of factors such as demography, morbidity, deprivation, and the unavoidable cost of providing services in different areas. The NHS England Board has agreed a pace of change policy that seeks to bring all CCGs to target funding over time.

The formula is based on independent academic research and is overseen by an independent external group, the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation, which provides advice to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Chief Executive of NHS England.

■ Construction and Furniture: Health Hazards

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[277634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential health benefits of adding an assessment of fire toxicity to fire safety tests for upholstered products and construction materials.

Stephen Hammond:

The Department has made no specific assessment of the potential health benefits of adding an assessment of fire toxicity to fire safety tests for upholstered products and construction materials.

■ Continuing Care: Medical Examinations

Barbara Keeley: [\[278451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many applications for Standard NHS Continuing Healthcare were completed in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17, (c) 2017-18 and (d) 2018-19.

Barbara Keeley: [\[278452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many assessments for Standard NHS Continuing Healthcare were completed in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17, (c) 2017-18 and (d) 2018-19.

Barbara Keeley: [\[278453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were assessed as eligible for Standard NHS Continuing Healthcare in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17, (c) 2017-18 and (d) 2018-19.

Caroline Dinéage:

The following table provides the total number of standard referrals received for standard NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC), for the years 2016/17 to 2018/19. We do not hold this data for 2015/16.

PERIOD	NUMBER OF REFERRALS
2016/17	76,945
2017/18	75,322
2018/19	73,475

The following table shows the number of referrals which were completed for standard CHC, for the years 2017/18 to 2018/19. We do not hold data on the number of referrals which were completed before 2017/18.

PERIOD	NUMBER OF REFERRALS COMPLETED
2017/18	75,426
2018/19	76,803

The following table shows the number of people assessed as eligible for standard CHC, for the years 2015/16 to 2018/19.

PERIOD	NUMBER ASSESSED AS ELIGIBLE
2015/16	22,346
2016/17	19,173
2017/18	16,947
2018/19	15,963

Paul Blomfield:

[\[278480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the assessment process for eligibility for NHS continuing healthcare; and whether he has any plans to review that process.

Caroline Dinenge:

The Department published an updated National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC) in March 2018, following a period of extensive engagement with stakeholders and those working across the National Health Service and local government.

The update provided clarity on policy areas and reflected legislative changes such as the Care Act 2014. Importantly, none of the 2018 amendments and clarifications to the National Framework changed the eligibility criteria for NHS CHC.

Following the of the National Framework, the Department and NHS England are working jointly to explore the NHS CHC and NHS-funded Nursing Care initial pathway including the CHC Checklist tool.

NHS England has launched an NHS CHC Strategic Improvement Programme and is helping clinical commissioning groups to improve their application of the NHS CHC National Framework. The Programme aims are to provide fair access to CHC in a way which ensures better outcomes, better experience, and better use of resources.

■ Dental Health: Children

Julie Cooper: [278533]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure all local authorities in England take part in Public Health England's Oral Health Survey of five-year-old children 2019.

Seema Kennedy:

In England local authorities have the statutory duty to commission or undertake oral health surveys. Public Health England published a toolkit in 2016 to support local authorities to meet this responsibility and works locally with them to deliver the surveys. The toolkit is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/773332/Commissioning_High_Quality_Information_to_Support_Oral_Health_Improvement.pdf

■ Dental Services: Children

Julie Cooper: [278528]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) practices participating in and (b) children who have benefitted from the Starting Well scheme since its launch in spring 2018.

Julie Cooper: [278529]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the interim evaluation of the Starting Well Scheme will be published.

Julie Cooper: [278531]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of dental practices who have participated in the Starting Well Core scheme since its launch.

Seema Kennedy:

The Starting Well programme was established by NHS England to reach out to children not regularly being seen by a dentist in 13 high needs areas. NHS England has advised that there are currently over 200 practices participating in the programme. However, data is not held about the number of children who have benefitted since its launch.

NHS England has advised that the Starting Well programme board has taken a decision not to publish an interim report but anticipates that the full report will be published by the end of this year.

NHS England has also developed Starting Well Core, an offer made available to all local dental commissioners in England. The aim is to promote early preventative care for children aged 0-2 as well as increasing dental access and attendance. NHS England has confirmed that as of 31 March 2019, approximately 1,400 NHS England dental practices were participating in Starting Well Core. NHS England advises that participation has been defined as any practice holding a contract to deliver primary care dental services where the local commissioning team had varied the contract to remunerate for Units of Dental Activity delivered in excess of 102% (up to a maximum of 104%) of the National Health Service contract value, attributable to children aged 0-2 years, for the 2018/19 financial year.

Julie Cooper:

[\[278530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of children under the age of five were seen by an NHS dentist in England in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18 and (c) 2018-19.

Seema Kennedy:

The following table shows the number and proportion of children under the age of five seen by a National Health Service dentist in the last 12 months, in England, in 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19.

END OF YEAR	NUMBER OF CHILDREN 0-4 YEARS OLD SEEN IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS	TOTAL POPULATION OF CHILDREN 0-4 YEARS OLD	PROPORTION OF CHILDREN 0-4 YEARS OLD SEEN IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS
March 2017	1,135,028	3,434,680	33.0%
March 2018	1,159,889	3,429,046	33.8%

For March 2019, data will be published in August 2019.

■ Dental Services: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[276554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children aged 4 and under were admitted to hospital for a tooth extraction as a result of decay in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry local authority area in each of the last five years.

Seema Kennedy:

The data is not held in the format requested.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Brexit**Jo Stevens:**[\[279081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding his Department has allocated for contingency plans in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

Stephen Hammond:

The Autumn Budget 2018 confirmed an additional £500 million of cross-Government funding for 2019/20, meaning the Government will have invested over £4 billion in preparing for European Union exit since 2016. The Department has been allocated £50 million, as set out in the Chief Secretary's Written Ministerial Statement [HCWS1205](#), laid before Parliament on 18 December 2018.

The Department is keeping the resources required to support preparations under constant review and together with the additional funding provided by HM Treasury, the Department may also prioritise funding from existing settlements to support necessary EU Exit preparations.

■ Diabetes: Pharmacy**Paul Farrelly:**[\[276523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to use pharmacists to help improve care for people with type 2 diabetes.

Seema Kennedy:

Taking into account announcements around the future of community pharmacy set out in the NHS Long Term Plan and the general practitioner contract, the Department, supported by NHS England and NHS Improvement, is currently working with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee to determine the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework settlement for 2019/20 and beyond. These are confidential negotiations and as such we are unable to provide any detail on these discussions at this time.

■ Drugs: Storage**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[277760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the stockpiling of goods for sale at Christmas on warehouse capacity for medicines before the UK leaves the EU on 31 October.

Stephen Hammond:

As part our contingency planning for 31 October possible 'no deal' European Union exit, we have assessed the additional warehouse capacity required to meet the six-

week stockpile request made of industry and have confidence that the capacity we have in place for 31 October will be sufficient.

Our assessment includes potential seasonal fluctuations in demand for medicines, and the storage is secured through to December so it will not be affected by the additional storage required for Christmas goods.

■ Eating Disorders: Mental Health Services

Lisa Nandy: [\[277720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 09 July 2019 to Question 275188 on Eating Disorders: Mental Health Services, on what date NHS England plans to begin testing four-week waiting times for adult and older adult community mental health teams.

Lisa Nandy: [\[277721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 09 July 2019 to Question 275188 on Eating Disorders: Mental Health Services, if he will publish a list of the local areas in which NHS England plans to begin testing four-week waiting times for adult and older adult community mental health teams.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS England will make information available in the coming months on the sites developing new models of integrated primary and community mental health care in 2019/20 and 2020/21, including those testing four week waiting times.

■ Health Services: Technology

Daniel Zeichner: [\[277756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to item 9 of NICE's public board meeting agenda, 17 July 2019, how will membership of the (a) task and finish groups and (b) patient working group be decided; and what opportunities will exist for patient groups not invited to participate with the patient working group.

Seema Kennedy:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has advised that membership of the task and finish groups will be decided by the working group. There are three patient/lay representatives on the methods working group with a wide range of experience, covering a range of topic areas, reflecting the programmes under review. Two of the patient/lay representatives also belong to the Patients Involved in NICE coalition.

NICE has established a dedicated patient working group. There are six patient organisation representatives on the group, including those who belong to the Patients Involved in NICE coalition. The group will work directly with patient/carer groups to coordinate the patient perspective on both methods and process.

A stakeholder workshop with patient groups was held in January 2019 that included representatives from 22 patient organisations.

Patient groups will be involved in the review of each of the specific methodological areas as detailed in the paper presented to the NICE board on 17 July 2019. Experts in the area will be invited to participate in topic specific methods task and finish groups.

Patient organisations will have the opportunity to comment directly on proposals during the public consultation in summer 2020.

■ Hearing Impairment: Health Services

Dr David Drew:

[\[276507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 26 June 2019 to Question 269620 on Hearing Impairment, what steps his Department has taken to (a) issue and (b) promote commissioning guidance to clinical commissioning groups in relation to people with hearing loss.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Commissioning Framework for Hearing Loss Services was published in July 2016. The guidance has been shared with commissioners in England through usual channels. Third sector organisations also promoted the Framework as did hearing loss service providers. A launch event at Portcullis House hosted by the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on deafness and hearing loss was held on 19 July 2019 along with a number of events pre and post publication of the Framework, including a presentation to the British Academy of Audiology and attendance at the NHS Roadshow.

■ HIV Infection: Drugs

Helen Hayes:

[\[277792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he is having with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a long-term and sustainable funding package for the extension of PrEP trials.

Helen Hayes:

[\[277793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a small investment for public health budgets to increase the provision for PrEP trials.

Seema Kennedy:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has had numerous discussions with cabinet ministers to discuss a range of topics in advance of the Spending Review. Public health funding for 2020 onwards, including for HIV and sexual health services, will be considered carefully in the next Spending Review, in the light of the available evidence.

It is for individual local authorities to decide their spending priorities based on an assessment of local need, including sexual health services, taking account of their

statutory duties. Participation in the pre-exposure prophylaxis Impact Trial is on a voluntary basis.

■ **Hyperactivity: Diagnosis**

Jo Platt: [\[277852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health and Social Care of 15 May 2018, Official Report, column 111WH, what progress has been made in discussions with NHS Digital on what data can be made accessible via the mental health dataset waiting times for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder assessments.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Government is committed to supporting people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) to live healthy, independent lives and to participate in their communities. NHS Digital continues to work with the Department and NHS England on the development of access and waiting times reporting for mental health care pathways. Consideration is being given as to how collection of data on ADHD can be improved on a national level, including improving consistency and comparability of any data currently collected. The Department is also working closely with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and their ADHD Implementation Working Group to look at how the current NICE guidance and quality standard on ADHD are being implemented and to inform discussions about how data can be improved.

■ **In Vitro Fertilisation**

Stephen Morgan: [\[278588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Clinical Commissioning Groups adhere to the guidance on patient needs to provide continued access to IVF treatment for patients.

Stephen Morgan: [\[278589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the equity of access to IVF treatment across (a) Clinical Commissioning Group and (b) post codes.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Infertility is recognised as a disease by all mainstream international health organisations. In the United Kingdom, infertility affects one in seven of all couples of child-bearing age. It can cause great psychological distress for those seeking to start a family, if not addressed. There are effective treatments and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Fertility Guidelines set out clearly how the treatment can be offered in the most clinically and cost-effective way. The Government recognises that there is variation in the commissioning of National Health Service fertility services across England. Patients with infertility have every right to expect NHS services based on clinical need.

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) have a statutory responsibility to commission healthcare services that meet the needs of their whole population, including fertility services. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's guidance for commissioners is a new tool to help them implement NICE Fertility Guidelines and use the benchmark price treatments.

I wrote to the Chief Executives of all CCGs in England on 17 June 2019 to promote the guidance and benchmark price, and strongly encourage them to implement fully the NICE Fertility Guidelines.

■ Loneliness

Diana Johnson: [\[277688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the 2018 Loneliness Strategy, what steps his Department has taken to work with the Loneliness Action Group to share learning on loneliness and ensure effective implementation of the strategy.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government has engaged closely with the Loneliness Action Group in the development of and now implementation of its loneliness strategy. Government officials have regularly attended the quarterly Loneliness Action Group meetings, to share updates and hear the group's views. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport and Civil Society (Mims Davies MP), who leads the Government's work on loneliness, spoke at the Loneliness Action Group conference in May 2019.

■ Loneliness: Health Education

Diana Johnson: [\[277687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made against his Department's commitment, as set out in the 2018 Loneliness Strategy, for Public Health England to reach one million members of the public with information on loneliness as a key risk factor for mental health problems.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government's Loneliness Strategy 'A connected society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness – laying the foundations for change', acknowledged that tackling loneliness is complex and a long-term challenge, requiring action across many fronts and working with local government, public services, the voluntary and community sector and businesses to identify opportunities to tackle loneliness and build more integrated communities.

The Every Mind Matters campaign was piloted in the Midlands in October 2018 and will be launched across England in October 2019. The campaign launch can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-launches-new-mission-to-put-prevention-at-the-top-of-the-mental-health-agenda>

The Midlands campaign can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-mental-health-campaign-launched-across-the-midlands>

The campaign aims to help people become better informed and equipped to look after their own mental health and contains advice on the impact of loneliness on mental health, promotes the benefits of social connection and facilitates self-care to improve mental health by offering personalised action plans.

■ Loneliness: Social Prescribing

Diana Johnson:

[\[277685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made against his Department's commitment, as set out in the 2018 Loneliness Strategy, to test methods that will improve how a range of organisations, such as community pharmacies, social workers and community nurses, refer into existing social prescribing services and provision in 2019-20.

Caroline Dinenge:

The Government's Loneliness Strategy 'A connected society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness – laying the foundations for change', acknowledged that tackling loneliness is complex and a long-term challenge, requiring action across many fronts and working with local government, public services, the voluntary and community sector and businesses to identify opportunities to tackle loneliness and build more integrated communities.

Discussions are underway with a range of public sector organisations such as job centres, local authorities, Public Health England and National Health Service agencies to identify what more can be done to improve how they better refer into social prescribing services and provision.

In addition, social workers play a key role in referring people into community services and the co-chair of the Principal Social Worker network sits on the National Social Prescribing network to promote their work and share learning.

The Department expects to report on the outcome of this commitment in late autumn.

■ Loneliness: Social Services

Diana Johnson:

[\[277686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made against his Department's commitment, as set out in the 2018 Loneliness Strategy, to improve knowledge sharing among social workers through the Chief Social Worker for Adults to develop social workers' (a) ability to recognise people who may be experiencing loneliness and (b) their knowledge and services or support to refer people on to.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government's Loneliness Strategy 'A connected society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness – laying the foundations for change,' acknowledged that tackling loneliness is complex and a long-term challenge, requiring action across many fronts and working with local government, public services, the voluntary and community sector and businesses to identify opportunities to tackle loneliness and build more integrated communities.

The Government has commissioned an evidence review to support the Chief Social Worker for Adults' commitment in the Loneliness Strategy, to improve knowledge sharing among social workers and recognition and support for people who may be experiencing loneliness.

The review summarises the evidence into key messages and recommendations for social workers, other social care practitioners and employers. The Department will publish the review in the summer – this will inform specific guidance for social workers to ensure that they include loneliness in their assessment and care planning and that they also contribute to community development and other projects that can help tackle loneliness.

■ Medical Treatments**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[278512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether NICE's multiple technology appraisal process can be applied to treatments evaluated through NICE's highly specialised technologies appraisal programme.

Seema Kennedy:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has advised that the highly specialised technologies (HST) programme has, to date, only needed to assess single products for single indications. Should a situation arise for the evaluation of multiple technologies for the same indication within the HST process, the feasibility and suitability of this would be considered at that point. Any such process would closely reflect the established multiple technology appraisal process, which is designed to appraise more than one technology.

■ NHS Business Services Authority: Fines**Conor McGinn:**[\[277777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many penalty charge notices have been issued by the NHS Business Authority in each year since 2010.

Seema Kennedy:

The following table shows the number of penalty charge notices issued by the NHS Business Service Authority. Prior to 2014, this function was carried out by NHS England, in partnership with NHS Protect (NHS Counter Fraud Authority) and data is not held for this time.

YEAR	PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES ISSUED BY THE NHS BUSINESS SERVICE AUTHORITY
2014	35,812
2015	408,478
2016	992,703
2017	1,287,985
2018	1,578,728
2019	829,626

Note:

Date range: September 2014 – 14 July 2019

Conor McGinn:

[\[277778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many penalty charge notices issued by the NHS Business Authority have been overturned due to wrongly identified benefits on prescription forms in each year since 2010.

Seema Kennedy:

The following table provides the number of penalty charge notices overturned because the person was confirmed to be receiving a qualifying benefit when their prescription form was checked against Department for Work and Pensions benefit data.

CASE START YEAR	DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS ONLY
2017	25,479
2018	141,791
2019	103,455

Note:

Date range: the data is only available from October 2017.

■ NHS: Apprentices

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[277722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many apprenticeship starts in England were funded by the NHS in (a) 2017-18 and (b) 2018-19 at each apprenticeship level.

Stephen Hammond:

The Department does not centrally collect the information requested.

Public sector organisations in scope to meet the public sector apprentice target provide data annually to the Department for Education on numbers of apprentice starts. Data provided by the Department for Education show the National Health Service organisations in scope had 13,800 apprentice starts in 2017/18.

Published statistics which cover public sector apprenticeships in England in the first year of the target, 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/public-sector-apprenticeships-in-england-2017-to-2018>

Data is not available on 2018/19 starts until later this year.

Any NHS organisations not in scope for the apprenticeship target will not be included in the return, though they may have apprentices training within their organisation.

■ NHS: Computer Software**Jo Platt:****[277855]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275828, what the timeframe is for the full withdrawal of the Windows XP operating system from across the NHS.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

0.16% of National Health Service machines are currently using Windows XP.

It is not possible to set a timeframe for complete removal of Windows XP from all NHS machines. This is because removal is not always possible, particularly where Windows XP is embedded in medical devices.

All NHS organisations have been given guidance on how to mitigate the risks if they cannot completely remove Windows XP from their estate, for example, they can segregate the affected machines from the network. They can also contact NHS Digital for further bespoke advice and support to mitigate risks.

All NHS organisations must report through the mandatory Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT) whether or not they continue to run unsupported systems. Through the DSPT organisations must provide assurance that they are managing, monitoring and mitigating the risk. NHS Digital and NHSX then follow up with NHS trusts if that assurance is unsatisfactory.

Jo Platt:**[278598]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many computers are operating Windows 7 across the NHS.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

National Health Service organisations are being supported to upgrade existing Microsoft Windows operating systems, allowing them to reduce potential vulnerabilities and increase cyber resilience.

As of 30 June 2019, approximately 1.05 million NHS computers are using Windows 7 from a total of around 1.37 million. This equates to approximately 76% of the NHS estate currently on Windows 7.

All NHS organisations, with the exception of one which had already upgraded to Windows 10, have signed up to receive Windows 10 licences and Advanced Threat Protection.

Deployment of Windows 10 is going well and in line with target to make sure the NHS is operating on supported software when Windows 7 goes out of support in 2020.

■ NHS: Drugs**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[277758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his oral evidence at the Health and Social Care Committee on 9 July 2019, what the expiration date is for the options on the additional transport capacity for medicines; what the timescales are for exercising those options; and what the cost to the Department will be if those options are not exercised.

Stephen Hammond:

The details of the contract notices, specification and contract conditions associated with the procurement of contingency freight solutions for medicines and medical products is currently being finalised as part of the pre-procurement market engagement being conducted ahead of publication.

The terms and conditions associated with the procurement exercises will be available in conjunction with the contract notice publication, to inform potential bidders.

■ NHS: Finance**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[278967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to allocate additional funding to the NHS in increase spending on (a) infrastructure, (b) the NHS workforce and (c) public health.

Stephen Hammond:

The NHS Long Term Plan was launched in January 2019 by the National Health Service, and thanks to the Government's investment of £33.9 billion in cash terms by 2023-24, will transform patient care and make sure every penny of taxpayers' money is spent wisely.

The future of budgets outside of the NHS England resource settlement will be confirmed later this year at the Spending Review.

■ NHS: Pay**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[277749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to paragraph 170 of his Department's Annual Report 2018-19 on the increased NHS resource budget and to the Written Statement on NHS Workforce made on 21 March 2018, HCWS574, if he will clarify when the additional £4.2 billion was agreed by the Chancellor for the NHS Agenda for Change three year pay deal.

Stephen Hammond:

Funding for the multi-year (2018/19 – 2020/21) Agenda for Change (AfC) pay and contract reform deal was confirmed alongside the Government's announcement via a Written Ministerial Statement ([HCWS803](#)) laid before the House on 27 June 2018 that the Government was accepting the collectively agreed deal. This statement followed the previous Written Ministerial Statement ([HCWS574](#)) laid before the house on 21 March 2018 in which additional funding for the AfC deal was committed to should trades union members agree to the deal.

In line with the Chancellor's commitment at Budget 2017, the Government released the £800 million already set aside to support the first year of the deal for 2018/19 in England.

Funding for the remaining two years of the deal (2019/20 and 2020/21) has been made available as part of the long-term funding settlement for the National Health Service.

■ NHS: Vacancies**Colleen Fletcher:**[\[276553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help fill vacancies for medical staff in the NHS.

Stephen Hammond:

The Government has committed to funding for universities to offer an extra 1,500 undergraduate medical school places for domestic students. The first 630 places were taken up in September 2018 and the remaining additional places will have been made available by universities by 2020/21. By 2020, five new medical schools will have opened in England to help deliver the expansion.

The number of medical specialty training places that are available each year is set by Health Education England and based on their assessment of service gaps and predicted workforce needs.

However, it is the responsibility of National Health Service trusts to have staffing arrangements in place that deliver safe and effective care. This includes recruiting the staff needed to support these levels and meet local needs.

The NHS Long Term Plan set out the need to ensure a sustainable overall balance between supply and demand across all staff groups.

Colleen Fletcher:

[276555]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of NHS hospitals have had vacancies for medical staff unfilled for more than (a) one, (b) two, (c) three and (d) four years.

Stephen Hammond:

NHS Improvement does not hold data for the length of time vacancies have been unfilled for, nor does it hold vacancy data for individual hospitals.

NHS Improvement collects vacancy data for three staff groups; doctors, nurses and 'other staff'. These vacancy statistics are published for England and at the regional level of North, Midlands and East, London and South.

NHS Digital published the latest NHS Improvement vacancy data which can be found in the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-vacancies-survey/february-2015---march-2019-provisional-experimental-statistics>

Vacancies are filled by a combination of bank (82,900) and agency staff (28,900). There are more temporary staff than vacancies because bank and agency staff are also used to provide cover for short and long-term sickness absence, and maternity and paternity leave.

■ Ophthalmic Services

Jim Shannon:

[277723]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 12 April 2019 to Questions 242132 and 242133 on Ophthalmic Services, what assessment he has made of the merits of having a tariff for combined trabecular bypass and cataract procedure that does not cover the cost of a combined procedure; and if his Department will publish the reference cost for the 2017-2019 national tariff for BZ91.

Stephen Hammond:

In the development of each national tariff, NHS England and NHS Improvement undertakes an overall assessment of the impact of proposals. While this provides an overall assessment of impact, detailed feedback on proposed prices for individual HRGs (units of healthcare) is sought from clinical Expert Working Groups (EWGs). This is to ensure that the published tariff supports clinical practice.

For the 2017/19 tariff (set for two years), the prices for BZ91 were increased following EWG feedback. However, for the 2019/20 tariff the EWG advised that increasing the prices was no longer appropriate. The EWG felt that there had been a significant change in clinical practice since the 2017/19 prices were set, with a shift to performing minimally invasive glaucoma surgery (MIGS), which are significantly

cheaper, rather than open/tube glaucoma procedures. Based on diagnosis and procedure codes entered into patient records, MIGS activity is assigned to the HRG BZ91. However, the current codes do not allow differentiation between MIGS and non-MIGS activity. This means that BZ91 covers procedures of different levels of resource use.

Reference costs are collected and published annually and the latest published data is for the financial year 2017-18. The reference cost data and links to previous years data can be found at the following link:

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/reference-costs/#rc1718>

■ Patients: Transport

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[277750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on the joint scoping exercise carried out by NHS England and NHS Improvement on the review of non-emergency patient transport services.

Seema Kennedy:

In ensuring that non-emergency Patient Transport Service (PTS) are delivered efficiently and consistently across England, NHS England and NHS Improvement carried out an initial review of PTS delivery. The Department is working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to review their initial analysis, and will decide on the next steps to take to improve the fairness and consistency of services in due course.

■ Post-polio Syndrome: Health Services

Ian Austin: [\[277683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support people with post-polio syndrome.

Seema Kennedy:

There is currently no cure for post-polio syndrome. However, support and a range of treatments are available to help manage symptoms and improve quality of life. Some of the ways in which symptoms may be managed include rest and exercise, mobility aids, weight control and healthy eating, painkilling medication and psychological support.

As set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, NHS England is taking action in a range of areas to improve the care, treatment and support provided to people with long term conditions, including those with post-polio syndrome. This includes rolling out the NHS Comprehensive Model of Personalised Care across the country, reaching 2.5 million people by 2023/24.

Further information on treatment and support available to those affected can be found via the National Health Service website at the following link:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/post-polio-syndrome/treatment/

■ Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: Veterans

Alex Sobel:

[\[278594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to improve support for ex-military personnel with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

In addition to mainstream mental health services, NHS England commissions two bespoke services for veterans experiencing mental health difficulties.

The first is the Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) which supports serving personnel who need additional support as they are leaving the armed forces and veterans who have mental health issues. The TILS is also the entry point to the Complex Treatment Service (CTS), the second service commissioned by NHS England. The CTS is able to provide a range of more intensive care and treatment for veterans with military related complex mental health difficulties, many of whom will have experienced trauma. Veterans can often access bespoke and quicker referral pathways such as TILS, which is commissioned to provide an initial assessment within two weeks.

In December last year, NHS England also announced an extra £10 million to expand the already established Veterans' Mental Health TILS and the Veterans' Mental Health CTS, as well as seeking to close the gaps in current mental health provision to capture those individuals that are nearing crisis.

■ Prescriptions: Fees and Charges

Conor McGinn:

[\[277776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government has to add universal credit as an option on prescription exemption forms.

Seema Kennedy:

Work is ongoing to update the FP10 prescription form, to include a new exemption tick box for use by Universal Credit claimants, at the earliest opportunity. Any change to the form involves major system and software updates across the National Health Service to enable all the re-designed forms to be used and processed.

■ Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham



Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[277806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of waiting time targets achieved by Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham in each of the last five years.

Stephen Hammond:

This information is not available in the format requested.

NHS England publishes monthly operational performance data for each waiting time standard online. The following link includes all of the performance data for the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust over the last five years:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/>

■ Sickle Cell Diseases: Social Services**Diana Johnson:****[277689]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people with (a) sickle cell disease and (b) sickle cell disease and (i) stroke, (ii) chronic kidney disease, (iii) end-stage renal disease and (iv) pulmonary hypertension received social care support in the latest period for which figures are available; and what the annual cost is of providing that support to people in each of those groups.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department does not hold the information requested on the number of people with sickle cell disease who have received social care support.

■ Smoking: County Durham**Grahame Morris:****[278474]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of public health funding for smoking cessation services in County Durham.

Seema Kennedy:

Local authorities will receive over £3.1 billion in 2019/20 for use on public health. It is for local authorities themselves to determine how best to use these resources based on their assessment of local need and with regard to their statutory duties. Future funding for local authorities' public health responsibilities will be considered carefully in the next spending review, taking full account of the available evidence.

■ Social Security Benefits: Haemochromatosis**Alex Sobel:****[278593]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps he has taken to improve her Department's support for people with haemochromatosis in (a) England and (b) Yorkshire and the Humber.

Caroline Dinage:

Services for patients with genetic haemochromatosis are commissioned locally through clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) which have a statutory responsibility

to commission services which meet the needs of their local population. For example, Leeds CCG commissions the consultant led haematology service at Leeds Teaching Hospitals, which includes support for haemochromatosis. Sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs) are enabling service coordination across wider footprints and the NHS Long Term Plan sets out the ambition for all STPs to evolve into integrated care systems (ICSs) by April 2021. ICSs are an 'evolved' form of a STP, making faster progress in integrating care across their area, bringing together organisations to provide more seamless care for patients.

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 NHS 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.

■ **Sugar: Advertising**

Tom Watson:

[\[277679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to public health of stopping the advertising of high sugar milk and milk-replacement products on public transport.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department has not assessed the potential benefits to public health of stopping the advertising of high sugar milk and milk-replacement products on public transport.

As committed to in the second chapter of our childhood obesity plan, published in June 2018, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have jointly consulted on introducing further advertising restrictions for products high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) on TV and online. As part of this consultation we invited views on whether the scope of this consultation should be extended to other forms of media and how HFSS products should be defined. We have received a high level of responses to the consultation and it is important we take the time to consider them carefully before we set out further action.

■ **Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access**

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[277757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the 2019 Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access, how many opportunities there have been for pharmaceutical industry trade bodies to input into NHS England's commercial framework; and what steps the Government is taking to secure the participation of industry trade bodies.

Seema Kennedy:

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

The commercial framework will support an integrated pricing and access process and is being tested with and informed through consultation with stakeholders including the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry.

In preparation for public consultation in the coming months, NHS England and NHS Improvement are actively engaging with industry trade bodies and health system partners, in the first instance, to outline progress on the development of the commercial framework. The consultation on the draft framework is anticipated to be launched in Quarter 3 2019 with consultation events to be held in Manchester and London, and implementation of the commercial framework is expected to follow.

HOME OFFICE**101 Calls: Fees and Charges****David Linden:****[278582]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 13 May 2019 to Question 251240 on 101 Calls: Fees and Charges, whether (a) that review has concluded and (b) he plans to place a copy of that review in the Library.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Following an announcement by the Home Secretary on 28 May, the Home Office is making 101 calls free of charge to the public from 1 April 2020.

The decision has been published on the Home Office website and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-to-scrap-101-non-emergency-number-charges>

al Qaeda**Joan Ryan:****[277619]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information he holds on the number of Al Qaeda (a) members and (b) supporters in the UK.

Mr Ben Wallace:

For reasons of national security, it would not be appropriate to disclose figures on the number of Al Qaeda affiliated individuals in the UK.

Membership and support for a proscribed terrorist organisation is an offence under sections 11 and 12 of the terrorism act 2000. The police and security services work day and night to keep the public safe, they are currently managing nearly 800 live investigations of around 3,000 individuals.

■ Biometrics: Luton**Mr Gavin Shuker:****[277707]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the closure of the Crown post office in Luton on the accessibility to biometric information services for visa or immigration applications.

Caroline Nokes:

Customers making immigration applications can no longer use Post Office branches to enrol their biometrics in the majority of cases. Most customers now enrol their biometrics at a UK Visas & Citizenship Application Service (UKVCAS) centre.

The previous service offered by the Post Office was biometric enrolment only, whereas the new UKVCAS service brings together multiple services to make the application process more streamlined.

The UKVCAS service is run by our commercial partner, Sopra Steria Ltd (SSL), who undertook market research to identify service locations; their research included the impact on customer travel time, cost and accessibility. The results of this were that 62% of customers will, on average, have to travel less than 25 miles to visit a core service point, with 78% travelling less than 50 miles.

SSL can also cater for customers who wish to have more flexible, on-demand, mobile application services, for example at university campuses, employers' offices or individual customers' homes.

As part of this contract SSL continuously captures and analyses customer feedback and reviews customer demand to ensure there is sufficient capacity. During May and June SSL opened six additional sites: Manchester, Cardiff, Exeter, Leeds, Sheffield and Edinburgh, with the view to open more.

For information on the closest core and enhanced service points to Luton, please see the UKVCAS website at: <https://www.ukvcas.co.uk/locations>.

■ Children: Exploitation**Lyn Brown:****[275719]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policy of the recommendations of the Children's Society report, Counting Lives: Responding to Children Who Are Criminally Exploited, published in July 2019 on (a) amending the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to include a definition of child criminal exploitation, (b) introducing with the Department for Education a cross-Departmental strategy against child criminal exploitation including changes to relevant statutory guidance, (c) introducing universal access to Independent Child Trafficking Advocates providing support throughout childhood and the transition into adulthood and (d) ensuring that all local safeguarding partnerships maintain an assessment of how many children are at risk of child criminal exploitation in their areas and use that assessment in planning their early intervention and prevention activities.

Victoria Atkins:

Criminal exploitation in the form of county lines has a devastating impact on those affected and we must work together to identify and safeguard the vic-tims and potential victims of this form of exploitation as early as possible.

We welcome the report published by the Children's Society and will consider its findings carefully as we continue to develop and strengthen our response to county lines.

In 2018, the Department for Education revised the Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance to reflect the risks to include specific mention of the risks to children from county lines, criminal exploitation and other harms from outside the home.

New arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, must be implemented by safeguarding partners by the end of September 2019. It will be for local determination what the arrangements cover, but they must set out how all children, including those at risk of child criminal exploitation, will be kept safe. In order to bring transparency about the activities undertaken, the safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every 12-month period, setting out what they have done as a result of the arrangements and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

The Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 considered the def-inition of exploitation under the Act and found it is sufficiently flexible to meet a range of new and emerging forms of modern slavery.

In addition, there is an existing, published definition of child criminal exploi-tation in the Serious Violence Strategy. The strategy is available https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachm ent_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf

Section 48 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which makes provisions for Inde-pendent Child Trafficking Advocates was also considered by the Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. In-line with one of the Review's recommendations, Independent Child Trafficking Advocates have recently been renamed Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs).

ICTGs are an additional source of advice and support for all trafficked children and somebody who can advocate on their behalf. The current service model provides one-to-one support for children who lack a figure of parental responsibility for them in the UK and an expert ICTG regional practice co-ordinator whose role will be to focus on children who do have a figure of parental responsibility for them in the UK. The ICTG regional practice co-ordinator works with statutory bodies including the police, social workers and the Criminal Justice System to foster effective multi-agency working to safeguard these vulnerable children.

The Government remains committed to rolling out ICTGs nationally with the service currently being available in one third of local authorities in England and Wales. The

Government Response to the Independent Review was published on 9 July and is available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-independent-review-of-the-modern-slavery-act>

■ Crime: Females

Paul Blomfield: [\[278479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of whether misogynistic crimes targeted at women should be treated as hate crimes by the police.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government has asked the Law Commission to review the adequacy and parity of protection offered by the law relating to hate crime. This review covers both existing protected characteristics and whether additional strands, including sex and gender, should be added. The Law Commission will be undertaking a public consultation and we will consider the results of their report in due course.

■ Crime: Rural Areas

Mrs Kemi Badenoch: [\[278571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of a national definition for rural crime.

Victoria Atkins:

Those living in rural areas can be the victim of the same crimes as those living in urban areas. However, we know that certain crimes, such as hare coursing and livestock offences, predominantly affect rural communities and that is why we supported the introduction of the National Police Chiefs' Council's Rural Affairs Strategy, which was published last July.

■ Deportation: Romania

David T. C. Davies: [\[277690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps he is taking to ensure UK residents deported to Romania, and subject to detention, are held in conditions that are of an acceptable standard.

Mr Nick Hurd:

In making a decision to deport a person, the Home Office is required to take into account a range of factors including whether removal could be contrary to the Human Rights Act 1998. If the individual will be imprisoned and prison conditions are such that they would be considered a violation of their human rights, they will not be deported. The Home Office does not disclose country specific information regarding deportation of foreign national offenders as its disclosure could prejudice relations between the UK and foreign governments.

■ Education and Employment: Females

Sarah Champion: [\[275758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July to Question 269825, what steps she has taken to implement recommendation 36 (e) of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women to create educational and employment opportunities for women who wish to exit prostitution.

Victoria Atkins:

We believe that people who want to leave prostitution should be given every opportunity to find routes out. The Government's priority is to protect those selling sex from harm and exploitation and target those who exploit vulnerable people involved in prostitution.

To these ends, since 2016, we have provided over £2m to organisations supporting sex workers, this includes £650,000 through the Violence Against Women and Girls Service Transformation Fund to Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner to provide a victim-focused service for sex workers who are victims, or at risk, of sexual or domestic violence and abuse, exploitation or human trafficking.

The Tampon Tax Fund has also been used to provide specialist support to sex workers. Since 2016 we have provided £389,000 of funding which has been awarded to four specialist organisations supporting women to exit prostitution: One25; Street Talk; Women at the Well; and the Magdalene Group.

In March 2017, £595,917 was also awarded via the Tampon Tax Fund to three organisations working with women involved in prostitution: Brighton Oasis Project; the Joanna Project and WM Consortium Sexual Violence Providers.

Additionally, in 2018, Camden Council was awarded £398,000 through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government £20m fund to support women with chaotic lifestyles, including those involved in prostitution.

■ Electric Scooters

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[277623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many fixed penalty fines have been issued to electric scooter riders by police in each of the last two years.

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[277624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions he has had with (a) the Mayor of London, (b) the Metropolitan Police and (c) Transport for London on the enforcement of the regulations governing the use of electric scooters on roads, pavements and cycle highways.

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[277625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Transport on the regulation of the use of electronic scooters.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Office collects and publishes data on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued for motoring offences in the 'Police Powers and Procedures, England and Wales' statistical bulletin, which can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales>. However, information on the type of vehicle issued with a FPN is not

collected. Data for the 2018/19 financial year is due to be published in October 2019.

Enforcement of road traffic law is an operational matter for the police to determine in line with local priorities. There have been no discussions with the Mayor of London, the Metropolitan Police or Transport for London on the enforcement of the regulations governing the use of electric scooters.

The Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy, published on 19 March 2019 by the Department for Transport, includes a Regulatory Review to address the challenges of ensuring our transport infrastructure and regulations are fit for the future. One strand of this will look at options for enabling micromobility devices, and a consultation will be issued in due course. The Home Office will work with Dft as proposals are developed.

■ Firearms: Licensing**Chuka Umunna:****[279019]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Guidance on how to prepare for Brexit if there's no deal, published by the Department for Exiting the European Union, what parts of the plan for travelling with a European Firearms Pass in the event of a no deal Brexit have been implemented.

Mr Nick Hurd:

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, UK residents travelling to EU countries with their firearm or shotgun would no longer be able to use a European Firearms Pass. They would instead have to comply with whatever licensing or other requirements each EU country imposes.

In preparation for this eventuality, the Government has published a technical notice setting out information on the potential loss of the European Firearms Pass, to allow UK businesses and citizens to make informed plans and preparations.

There would be no weakening of the UK's firearms controls. EU nationals bringing firearms temporarily into the UK would still require a visitors' firearm permit issued by a UK police force.

■ Hezbollah**Joan Ryan:****[277618]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 January 2018 to Question 122667 on Hezbollah, whether his policy on not collecting that data has changed since the Government's decision to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety in February 2019.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government's approach to this issue has not changed. Investigations into individuals who may be members or supporters of proscribed organisations are an operational matter for the police and intelligence agencies. The department does not collect data on specific numbers of Hizballah members or supporters in the UK.

John Spellar:[\[277640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department has taken to tackle the domestic operations of Hezbollah since its full proscription.

Mr Ben Wallace:

Investigations into the activities of proscribed terrorist organisations are an operational matter for the police and intelligence agencies. The Government does not comment on intelligence matters.

■ Home Office: Working Hours**Jon Trickett:**[\[278378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much time off in lieu has been taken staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

Victoria Atkins:

Time off in lieu taken by staff is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost, these arrangements are processed and monitored locally.

■ Immigrants: Detainees**Mr David Davis:**[\[276155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrant detainees were referred to the National Referral Mechanism in each year since 2015.

Mr David Davis:[\[276156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of migrant detainees referred to the National Referral Mechanism were subsequently given positive decisions by the Home Office that there were reasonable grounds to believe they were trafficked to the UK.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is committed to identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery. The National Crime Agency regularly publishes NRM data, and the number of potential victims referred into the NRM for 2018 is available online here:

<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/component/finder/search?q=national+referral+mechanism+end+of+year+2018&Search=> Annual summary statistics for previous years are also published on the NCA website.

The statistics also show the outcomes of reasonable and conclusive grounds decisions. This data does not distinguish whether individuals are migrant detainees. Since 29th April this year the Single Competent Authority (SCA) took over

responsibility for decision making in the NRM from the NCA and UKVI. Publishing of statistics for future years regarding the NRM will therefore be the responsibility of the Home Office.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield: [\[278477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will place in the Library a copy of the algorithms citizen matching layer and business logic.

Caroline Nokes:

Under the EU Settlement Scheme, we conduct automated checks of certain tax and benefits records held by HM Revenue & Customs and the Department for Work and Pensions, where the applicant chooses to provide their National Insurance number. The checks help to provide evidence of the applicant's residence in the UK and remove or reduce the need for them to submit documentary evidence of this.

The business logic of how the checks calculate the period of residence is available on gov.uk at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-settlement-scheme-uk-tax-and-benefits-records-automated-check>

We have also published there the memorandum of understanding with each department, reasons why records may not be found, and guidance on the wide range of other evidence we can use to confirm UK residence.

All applications under the scheme are decided by a caseworker.

Paul Blomfield: [\[278478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will include data on administrative reviews in his Department's monthly statistics report on applications made to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Caroline Nokes:

The third official statistics – 'EU Settlement Scheme Statistics, June 2019' – on the operation of the scheme were published on 18 July 2019. These can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics-june-2019>

The Home Office is committed to publishing more detailed quarterly statistics on the EU Settlement Scheme, alongside our Immigration Statistics, from August 2019. Home Office statisticians and officials are currently considering the content and will take into account the views of statistics users.

Jo Stevens: [\[279079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what comparative estimate he has made the proportion of non-UK EU citizens who have applied to the settled status scheme in (a) Wales and (b) the UK.

Caroline Nokes:

The third official statistics – 'EU Settlement Scheme Statistics, June 2019' – on the operation of the scheme were published on 18 July 2019, including applications

received in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics-june-2019>

The Home Office is committed to publishing more detailed quarterly statistics on the EU Settlement Scheme, alongside our Immigration Statistics, from August 2019. Home Office statisticians and officials are currently considering the content and will take into account the views of statistics users.

■ Immigration: Windrush Generation

Afzal Khan: [\[277850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2019 to Question 276277 on Immigration: Windrush Generation, what the criteria of proportionality will be when applied to people applying to the Windrush compensation scheme.

Caroline Nokes:

The proportionality test related to the immigration exemption in the Data Protection Act 2018 requires the rights of the individual data subject to be weighed against the likely prejudice to the maintenance of effective immigration control in so allowing such rights. It is not targeted at any individual cohort or schemes and may only be applied on a case by case basis

Afzal Khan: [\[277851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2019 to Question 276276, whether the reasons for a decision sent to a claimant will include HMRC and DWP data checks on the claimant's employment or benefits history.

Caroline Nokes:

Letters setting out a final decision for a claim made under the Windrush Compensation Scheme will reference any payments made by another Government department.

■ Islamic State

Joan Ryan: [\[277620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information he holds on the number of Daesh (a) members and (b) supporters in the UK.

Mr Ben Wallace:

For reasons of national security, it would not be appropriate to disclose figures on the number of Da'esh affiliated individuals in the UK.

Membership and support for a proscribed terrorist organisation is an offence under sections 11 and 12 of the terrorism act 2000. The police and security services work day and night to keep the public safe, they are currently managing nearly 800 live investigations of around 3,000 individuals.

■ Metropolitan Police: Finance

Tom Brake: [\[277612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding the Government has allocated to the Metropolitan Police Service in each year since 2015.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The 2019/20 police funding settlement provides the biggest increase in police funding since 2010, with more money for local police forces, counter terrorism and tackling serious and organised crime

Total funding is increasing by over £1 billion in 2019/20, including council tax, extra funding for pensions costs, and the serious violence fund.

The Metropolitan Police Service are receiving £2,735.4m in total funding (including council tax) in 2019/20, an increase of £175.3m on 2018/19 and a total of £224.6m compared to 2017/18.

The table below sets out the core grant funding figures for the Metropolitan Police Service each year since 2015 including the National, International and Capital City Grant:

CORE GRANT					
FUNDING	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<i>MPS</i>	2,087.5	1,904.6	1,882.1	1,882.1	1,927.1

■ Police: Mental Illness

Steve McCabe: [\[278352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to help support police officers who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government takes the issue of police wellbeing, including mental health, very seriously and has invested in programmes which offer help directly to officers and staff. In July 2017 the Home Office awarded £7.5 million from the Police Transformation Fund to the College of Policing over three years to pilot and, if these pilots were successful, roll out a dedicated national service to help provide enhanced welfare support to serving police officers and staff.

Following two years of development and piloting, the National Police Wellbeing Service (NPWS) was launched in April 2019. The NPWS has developed evidence-based guidance, advice, tools and resources which can be accessed by forces, as well as individual officers and staff. These include resources for forces to help forces better support officers and staff who are experiencing mental health problems.

In July 2018, we launched 'A common goal for police wellbeing – to be achieved by 2021.' This requires that by 2021, policing will ensure that every member of the police service feels confident that their welfare and wellbeing is actively supported by their police force throughout their career. The goal was published by the Home Office and jointly owned by a number of different organisations, including Public Health England. This goal represents the result of six months of engagement by the Home Office with policing partners and health experts, setting out a shared vision for ensuring police officers and staff have the support they need to flourish.

■ Police: Recruitment

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: [\[277801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the criteria are for exclusion on medical grounds for police recruitment.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Recruitment to the police is managed locally by forces. This is done within a national application, assessment and selection framework, in line with national guidance maintained by the College of Policing. Individual police forces in England and Wales are therefore responsible for deciding when and how they run their recruitment and selection processes.

Guidance on medical standards for applicants is provided by the College of Policing. College guidance uses Home Office circular 59 / 2004 National Recruitment Standards - Medical Standards for Police Recruitment:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-recruitment-standards-medical-standards-for-police-recruitment>.

■ Police: Sick Leave

Sir Greg Knight: [\[277661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate his Department has made of the number and proportion of police officers who are signed-off from work with stress and work-related illness.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The number and proportion of police officers who are signed-off from work with stress and work-related illness is not collected centrally by the Home Office.

The Home Office collects and publishes information on the number of police officers on long-term absence as at 31st March each year, including long-term absence for sickness, but not specifically stress and work-related illness. Long-term absence includes officers on leave more than 28 days.

These data are available in the Absence Open Data tables published alongside the annual 'Police workforce' statistical bulletin, available here:

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

■ Sleeping Rough: Havering

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[278422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many rough sleepers there are in Havering; and how many have been deported by his Department's Rough Sleeper Support Service in each of the last three years.

Caroline Nokes:

According to the 2018/2019 report produced by the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), which is publicly available online and can be accessed by anyone, 32 people were seen sleeping rough in Havering across the course of that year. CHAIN is a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London.

The Rough Sleeping Support Service, which was first announced in August 2018 as part of the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy, was introduced to help non-UK nationals sleeping rough resolve their immigration cases and access the support that they need. It does not undertake any enforcement action. It has an administrative role, conducting status checks, identifying priority cases and ensuring that we can help those who require evidence of their immigration status or assistance in leaving the UK.

The Home Office may take action on a case-by-case basis where individuals have exhausted all other avenues and are unwilling to leave the UK voluntarily. This is in line with existing immigration law.

Removals of non-UK rough sleepers cannot be disaggregated in the published statistics on the removal of those without lawful status. It is also not possible to directly attribute removals to interaction with the RSSS because a range of factors will have affected how decisions were reached in these cases. A person's removal from the UK is determined by their immigration status and circumstances, including unwillingness to depart voluntarily, not by contact with the RSSS.

■ Trespass

Mr Mark Francois:

[\[278421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the timescale is for bringing forward proposals to make acts of deliberate trespass a criminal rather than a civil offence.

Mr Nick Hurd:

On 6 February, the Home Secretary announced a set of measures to extend powers available to the police, which we believe will enable unauthorised encampments to be tackled more effectively. The Written Ministerial Statement can be found at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-02-06/debates/19020635000011/EnforcementAgainstUnauthorisedEncampments>.

The Home Secretary also made clear that the Home Office would conduct a review into how the Government can criminalise unauthorised encampments. This review is

currently underway, and a public consultation will be launched on the final set of proposals this summer.

■ **Undocumented Migrants: English Channel**

Mr Philip Hollobone: [\[278443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate the Government has made of the number of illegal seaborne migrants that have crossed the Short Straits (a) from 1 October to 31 December 2018, (b) from 1 January to 31 March 2019 and (c) since 1 April 2019.

Caroline Nokes:

The Permanent Secretary's letter to the Home Affairs Select Committee on small boat attempts up to and including February 2019 can be found here:

<https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/home-affairs/Correspondence-17-19/19-03-05-Letter-from-Sir-Philip-Rutnam-KCB-Permanent-Secretary-Home-Office-Migrant-boats-in-the-channel.pdf>

The data since February is currently being reconciled to ensure accuracy. No decision has been taken on mode or frequency of any future publication of this data.

■ **Visas: Married People**

Sir Henry Bellingham: [\[278926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 11 March 2019 to Question 229177 on visas: married people, if he will collate and publish figures for (a) the number of applications submitted under Appendix FM where the sponsor did not meet the financial requirement but argued that there were exceptional circumstances pertaining to their case and (b) the number of applications that were successful.

Caroline Nokes:

Information collected, collated and published in official statistics is kept under review, balancing user needs against burdens on suppliers, in accordance with the Code of Practice for Statistics, implementing the Statistics and Registration Act 2007 (copy available at <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/the-code/>).

■ **Visas: Migrant Workers**

Seema Malhotra: [\[279030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate he has made of the number of applications received in each of the last twelve months for Leave to Remain extension application as a Tier 1 Highly Skilled general migrant; and how of those cases were concluded within eight weeks.

Seema Malhotra: [279031]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the processing of extension applications may exceed the eight-week agreed service standard; and with what frequency that standard has been exceeded in each of the last three years.

Seema Malhotra: [279032]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the reasons are that qualify an extension application as complex.

Caroline Nokes:

The Tier 1 (General) route closed to Leave to Remain extension applications on 6 April 2015. Therefore, no Tier 1 General extension applications were received in the last twelve months.

The data regarding exceeding the eight-week service standards in current application routes can be found using the link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/in-country-migration-data-may-2019>

The statistics specific to service standards can be found on tab InC_02.

Historical data regarding service standards can be found via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data#previous-data-releases>

Complexity is identified on a case by case basis and will also vary depending on the application route. Therefore there is not an exhaustive list of the circumstances in which particular types of application might be deemed to be complex. Where an application is defined as non-straightforward, due to complexity, the customer will be written to within the normal processing time to explain why it will not be decided within the normal standard service, and to explain what will happen next.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Devolution: Lincolnshire

Sir Edward Leigh: [912083]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has plans for devolution in Greater Lincolnshire.

Jake Berry:

The Government agreed a devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire in March 2016 but it was not subsequently agreed by two of the ten local councils. I met with leaders last year to discuss their ambitions for devolution and invited them to develop further proposals.

■ Green Belt

Bim Afolami:

[\[276594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what (a) quantum and (b) proportion of greenbelt land in England has been built on in each year since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

a) The amounts of Green Belt land within England changing to developed use in each year from 2013-14 to 2017-18 are published in Live Table P381 within the '2017 to 2018 land use based change tables' at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-land-use-change-statistics>. Figures for previous years exist only for 2011 and earlier years and are not on the same basis as those included within Table P381

b) Corresponding figures for the proportion of Green Belt land that has been developed in each year from 2013-14 to 2017-18 can be obtained by expressing the figures within Live Table P381 as a percentage of the total area of Green Belt land for the relevant year as shown in the 'Area since 1997 - England' table within the Accompanying tables at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-green-belt-statistics-for-england-2017-to-2018>

The Government remains committed to protecting the Green Belt. Most types of new building are inappropriate there, and should be refused permission unless in very special circumstances. Only in exceptional circumstances may a Green Belt boundary be altered, using the Local Plan process of consultation of consultation, followed by rigorous examination of the revised Plan. By clarifying the exceptional circumstances test and increasing support for higher density and re-use of brownfield land, our revised National Planning Policy Framework gives local authorities more power to protect their Green Belts and manage the allocation of land for development.

■ Green Belt: Planning Permission

Valerie Vaz:

[\[277719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many planning applications on Green Belt land in (a) Walsall South constituency and (b) England have been referred to the National Planning Unit in each of the last 10 years.

Kit Malthouse:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer to question UIN 277187 on 18 July.

■ Homelessness: Families

Robert Halfon:

[\[912093\]](#)

What recent representations he has received on the effect of the out-of-area placement of families by borough councils on receiving local authorities.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

I have received representation on this matter from a number of local authorities, including that of my Hon Friend, during my recent visit to Harlow. I was also delighted to meet Streets2Homes, a local homelessness organisation, and hear about the excellent work they are doing on homelessness and rough sleeping.

Housing: Construction**Bim Afolami:**[\[276595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of houses that have been built in (a) Hertfordshire, (b) Bedfordshire, (c) Surrey, (d) Northamptonshire and (e) Berkshire in each year since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

Estimates of house building; new build dwellings completions for Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Surrey, Northamptonshire and Berkshire, in each year to March quarter 2019, are shown in Live Table 253 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building>.

These cover new build dwellings only and should be regarded as a leading indicator of overall housing supply. The Department also publishes an annual release entitled 'Housing supply: net additional dwellings, England', which is the primary and most comprehensive measure of housing supply

(a) The figures show 21,950 'house building; new build dwelling completions' in Hertfordshire since April 2010

(b) The figures show 20,990 'house building; new build dwelling completions' in Bedfordshire since April 2010

(c) The figures show 23,180 'house building; new build dwelling completions' in Surrey since April 2010

(d) The figures show 24,080 'house building; new build dwelling completions' in Northamptonshire since April 2010

(e) The figures show 20,290 'house building; new build dwelling completions' in Berkshire since April 2010.

Julia Lopez:[\[276603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that more homes are built to accessible and adaptable standards for older and disabled people; and what steps his Department is taking to assess progress on such building standards.

Kit Malthouse:

On 25 June, the Prime Minister announced we will consult on mandating higher accessibility standards for new housing. New Planning guidance was published on 26

June to support councils to put clear policies in place for addressing the housing needs of older and disabled people.

The annual English Housing Survey collects data on accessible and adaptable features in new homes retrospectively.

■ **Housing: Disability and Older People**

Helen Hayes: [\[278564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to improve access to housing for (a) older and (b) disabled people.

Kit Malthouse:

In the revised National Planning Policy Framework, we strengthened policy to create a clear expectation that all councils have policies in place for addressing the housing needs of older and disabled people. In the Framework, we have also 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.

■ **Housing: Insulation**

Mr Steve Reed: [\[912097\]](#)

What steps he is taking to ensure that unsafe combustible cladding is removed from homes.

James Brokenshire:

The Government has provided £600 million funding to remove unsafe Aluminium Composite Material cladding from high rise residential buildings in the social and private sector. We are backing local authorities to take enforcement action where building owners are refusing to remediate high-rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding.

■ **Housing: Microgeneration**

Seema Malhotra: [\[275755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to support the incorporation of infrastructure for microgeneration in housing developments throughout the UK.

Kit Malthouse:

National planning policy recognises that small-scale renewable energy and low carbon projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and can be included as part of a planning application. In addition, for existing buildings, permitted development rights for micro-generation from renewable energy

sources that include wind, solar and ground and air source heat pumps were introduced in 2015 and apply to both residential and non-residential development.

■ Housing: Older People

Hugh Gaffney:

[\[277257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to increase the availability of suitable homes for the elderly.

Kit Malthouse:

This Government recognises that providing more homes for older people is vital to support an ageing population. Offering older people a better choice of accommodation can help enable them to live independently for longer and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. The proposals set out in the White Paper, "Fixing our broken housing market", underline our commitment to do more to provide the homes we need for all in our society

In the White Paper we acknowledged that older and disabled peoples' housing needs was an issue that needed to be addressed. We have strengthened the revised National Planning Policy Framework, published in July 2018, and on 26 June 2019 we published new guidance to help councils to put these policies in place. This makes it clear that authorities should set clear policies to address the housing needs of groups with particular needs such as older and disabled people. This guidance also sets out the range of options these should consider, from housing with improved accessibility through to more specialised options.

■ Housing: Sales

Stephen McPartland:

[\[276185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to tackle the disparity in discounts on properties offered to (a) council tenants and (b) right to buy schemes.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government remains committed to ensuring that housing association tenants have the opportunity to own their homes at an equivalent discount to that offered to local authority tenants under the statutory Right to Buy. The Voluntary Right to Buy pilot currently underway in the Midlands is a clear demonstration of that commitment and is giving thousands of housing association tenants in the East and West Midlands the opportunity to apply to purchase their homes at Right to Buy level discounts. The pilot will be independently evaluated after completion and future policy decisions will be taken in light of that evaluation.

■ Local Plans

Helen Hayes: [\[278563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent estimate he has made of the number of Local Plans that include a requirement on new homes to be accessible and adaptable.

Kit Malthouse:

At present, the Government does not collect this data. A recent report by Habinteg suggests that less than a third of all English local plans currently set specific requirements for a percentage of new homes to be built to accessible or adaptable standards.

We have strengthened policy in the revised National Planning Policy Framework, published in July 2018, so that local planning authorities are expected to put in place specific policies to address the housing needs of older and disabled people. We have also strengthened the policy approach to accessible housing by setting out an expectation that planning policies for housing should make use of Government standards for accessible and adaptable housing.

■ National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Sir Peter Bottomley: [\[277606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the company Big Ideas was appointed in a contested competitive process to work on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

No. The Big Ideas Community Interest Company was appointed as they specialise in community engagement and commemoration and have an excellent track record.

Sir Peter Bottomley: [\[277607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many views on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial were submitted by the company Big Ideas to the Westminster City Council public comment website.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Westminster City Council has a record of all comments placed on the Westminster City Council Website. All comments were put on the website individually using names and addresses as per the requirement of the Westminster City Council Planning Committee. The portal is open to the public and all comments can be viewed there.

Sir Peter Bottomley: [\[277608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how the company Big Ideas described the alternatives to the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial project to the groups and individuals with which it interacted.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Big Ideas Community Interest Company was engaged to encourage local and national conversations on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

Private Rented Housing: Electrical Safety**Patrick Grady:**[\[912092\]](#)

What recent progress has been made on the introduction of mandatory electrical safety checks in the private rented sector.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

We have worked with industry to design proportionate legislation that delivers real benefits to tenants and we'll be ready to lay the Statutory Instrument introducing mandatory checks as soon as parliamentary time allows. This will make rented properties safer, so we're encouraging landlords to comply early and get familiar with the changes.

Private Rented Housing: Pensioners**Steve McCabe:**[\[278349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what representations he has received from pensioners on the challenges they have faced when renting a home from a private landlord.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Department does not record correspondence to the level of detail requested.

The Government has undertaken a number of measures to tackle the challenges faced by tenants, including older renters. These include banning unfair letting fees and capping deposits with the Tenant Fees Act 2019, empowering tenants who are paying rent for unfit properties to take action against their landlords and get compensation through the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, and making £20 million available through the Private Rented Sector Access Fund to enable better access and sustainment of tenancies for people who are, or at risk of becoming, homeless.

Professions: Insurance**Emma Hardy:**[\[276601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to support (a) architects, (b) engineers, (c) approved Inspectors, (d) quantity surveyors and (e) fire engineers in renewing their professional indemnity insurance.

Kit Malthouse:

We are aware of challenges that construction professionals are facing with securing professional indemnity insurance. While this is principally a matter for those

professionals and their insurers, we are in contact with trade bodies and insurance bodies to consider whether and how government can help. We are working with the Association for Consultant Approved Inspectors and insurance bodies to look at options for helping Approved Inspectors to secure insurance that provides adequate cover for their clients, residents and the firms themselves. In parallel, we intend to review the role of Approved Inspectors under the future building safety system, as part of which we will review the insurance requirements for the sector.

■ Refuges: Closures

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[277638]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate she has made of the number of women's refuges that have closed since 2010.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Department does not hold centrally the number of women's refuges that have closed since [2010](#).

We are currently consulting on the Future Delivery of Support to Victims and their Children in Accommodation-Based Domestic Abuse Services closing on 2 August. The proposals for a statutory duty will require local authorities to convene a Local Partnership Board. Local Partnership Boards will be responsible for robustly assessing need for support for victims and their children in safe accommodation, developing, agreeing and publishing an area-wide Domestic Abuse Strategy, ensuring local commissioning of support services is in line with this to meet the diverse support needs of victims and their children and report to central Government on progress.

It is our intention that the proposals for a statutory duty, subject to the outcome of the public consultation, will form part of the Domestic Abuse Bill at a later stage.

■ Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel

Chris Ruane:

[277658]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on how many occasions the rough sleeping advisory panel has met since its inception, (a) when and (b) where those meetings took place; and who attended each such meeting.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel has met a total of eight times since its inception. The meetings were all held either at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF or in the House of Commons, SW1A 0AA. Full details of members can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-backed-advisory-panel-commits-to-help-eradicate-rough-sleeping>.

The Government is committed to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. No one should ever have to sleep rough. That is why last summer we published the cross-government Rough Sleeping Strategy. This sets out an ambitious £100 million

package to help people who sleep rough now, but also puts in place the structures that will end rough sleeping once and for all. The Government has now committed over £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the spending review period. This year, Rough Sleeping Initiative investment totals £46 million and has been allocated to 246 areas – providing funding for an estimated 750 additional staff and over 2,600 bed spaces.

The expert Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel formed of key representatives from across local government, homelessness and housing sectors, informed the development of a truly cross-Government strategy to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it altogether.

■ Shared Ownership

Mr David Davis:

[\[277643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the shared ownership model for housing development.

Kit Malthouse:

Between 2010-11 and 2017-18, around 65,000 new Shared Ownership homes have been delivered.

We believe that shared ownership has an important role to play, as part of a diverse and thriving housing market, supporting mixed developments and helping those who aspire to home ownership but may be otherwise unable to afford it. The combination of rent and mortgage will often be lower than the cost of outright purchase and in many areas lower than the cost of private renting.

■ Sleeping Rough

Paul Farrelly:

[\[277668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Government remains on track to meet its target of ending rough sleeping in England by 2027.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Government is committed to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. No one should ever have to sleep rough. That is why last summer we published the cross-government Rough Sleeping Strategy. This sets out an ambitious £100 million package to help people who sleep rough now, but also puts in place the structures that will end rough sleeping once and for all. The Government has now committed over £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the spending review period.

In its first year, our Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) provided over 1,750 new bed spaces and 500 staff. This year we have expanded the RSI with investment of £46 million for 246 areas – providing funding for an estimated 2,600 bed spaces and 750 staff.

The most recent figures, from the Official 2018 Rough Sleeping Snapshot, show that the number of people sleeping on our streets on a particular night has fallen for the first time in several years. The number of those sleeping rough on one night in 2018 is 2 per cent lower compared to the previous year. This follows year-on-year increases, with an average annual increase of nearly 16 per cent.

In areas where the Government has targeted funding and interventions through its RSI, the number of those reported as sleeping rough on a single night in 2018 fell by 19 per cent, compared to the national decrease of 2 per cent. This is in contrast to the overall 41 per cent increase in areas that were not part of the initiative, an encouraging sign of progress.

The RSI funds local authorities to provide specialist services to help the most vulnerable people in society off the streets. We will publish an evaluation later this year which will help to understand the impact of the initiative.

■ Social Rented Housing

Clive Efford:

[\[912098\]](#)

What recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of new homes for social rent since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

Since 2010, we have delivered over 430,000 new affordable homes, including over 308,000 for rent. Between 2010-11 and 2017-18, we delivered nearly 135,000 social rent homes.

Our £9 billion Affordable Homes Programme will deliver around 250,000 new affordable homes by March 2022, including at least 12,500 for social rent.

■ Social Rented Housing: Construction

Dr David Drew:

[\[277104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the report entitled Capital grant required to meet social housing need in England 2021 – 2031, published by the National Housing Federation in June 2019, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings that (a) over the decade from 2021 it will be necessary to build 145,000 social homes each year and (b) on average a capital grant from Government of £12.8 billion per year will be required to provide these homes; and what action he is taking to increase the number of social homes in England.

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. In September we announced an additional £2 billion of long-term funding certainty for housing associations. This extra funding will deliver more affordable homes and stimulate the sector's wider building

ambitions, through strategic partnerships. £1 billion of this funding is open for bidding with existing Homes England Strategic Partnerships.

We have increased the size of the Affordable Homes Programme, re-introduced social rent, removed the Housing Revenue Account 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 Services: Finance

Paul Blomfield: [\[912091\]](#)

What recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the funding allocated to local authorities for adult social services.

Rishi Sunak:

This Government has recognised the pressures faced by adult social services and has provided councils with access to an additional £10 billion of dedicated funding for adult social care in the three years to 2019-20.

Future levels of funding will be settled in the Spending Review, where the overall approach to funding local government will be considered.

■ Temporary Accommodation: Children

Colleen Fletcher: [\[276549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of families with children living in temporary accommodation in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England in (i) each of the last two years and (ii) the latest month for which information is available.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The most recent data for families with children in temporary accommodation was published in May 2019 and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

Time spent in temporary accommodation can mean people are getting help and it ensures no family is without a roof over their head.

The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 helps prevent the use of temporary accommodation long distances from the family's previous home and community. Homeless households also have legal rights to request a review of a decision to place them in unsuitable accommodation.

In 2011, the law was changed to allow councils to place homeless families in decent and affordable private rented homes as well as social rented homes. This now means homeless households should not have to wait as long for settled accommodation.

The Government has targeted funding streams focused on reducing the number of households in Temporary Accommodation. For example we have recently launched

the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Access Fund which will fund schemes that will support families who are or at risk of homelessness, supporting them to sustain and access PRS accommodation.

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Mike Amesbury: [\[277846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on what date he plans to publish the consultation on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; and if he will make a statement.

Mike Amesbury: [\[277847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the funding allocated to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be equivalent in real terms to those EU funding streams it will replace.

Jake Berry:

The Government will consult widely on the design of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Final decisions on the composition of the Fund are due to be made following the Spending Review.

Mike Amesbury: [\[277849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which projects currently in receipt of EU funding will continue to receive the same level of funding under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal on 31 October 2019.

Jake Berry:

The Chancellor announced in August and October 2016 that the Government will guarantee EU projects agreed before we leave the EU, to provide more certainty for UK organisations over the course of EU Exit. In July 2018, the Chief Secretary laid a Written Ministerial Statement (HCWS926) extending this guarantee to provide further stability for UK organisations in a 'no-deal' scenario.

The guarantee now covers all projects that would have been funded by the EU under the 2014-2020 programme period, including all European Regional Development Fund projects.

The Government recognises the importance of reassuring local areas on the future of local growth funding once we have left the European Union and we will consult widely on the design of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT■ **Africa: Overseas Aid****Chi Onwurah:**[\[278487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the announcement by the French Development Agency of €1 billion in equity and €1 billion in loans being made available to African entrepreneurs through the programme Choose Africa, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the UK adopting a similar scheme.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK is committed to supporting entrepreneurship in Africa to grow local economies, create jobs, reduce poverty and support sustainable development. Last summer, the PM announced that CDC Group, the UK's Development Finance Institution, would invest up to £3.5 billion in businesses in Africa over four years (2018 to 2021). CDC has already committed £1.9bn in Africa over the last 3 years (2016-2018). CDC is invested in 698 different companies in Africa, directly supporting 370,000 jobs.

Through CDC and other country specific initiatives, we will mobilise a further £4 billion of private investment for Africa. This investment will allow businesses to grow, produce goods and services for local people, generate income and tax revenues, and help address the financing gap for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

In January next year, the UK will convene an Africa Investment Summit to further promote investment in Africa and to strengthen the partnership with UK investors and companies.

■ **Amin al-Husseini****Joan Ryan:**[\[R\] \[277621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on reports of a description on social media on 4 July 2019 by President Abbas's religious affairs adviser that Haj Amin Al-Husseini is a role model.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK strongly condemns all forms of violence and incitement on both sides of the conflict. We continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to avoid engaging in or encouraging any type of action and language that makes it more difficult to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict.

We have an active dialogue with the Palestinian Authority (PA) on their commitment to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to tackle language and avoid actions that could incite violence or hatred, including an annual assessment of the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding that DFID holds with the PA.

■ Developing Countries: Education

Dan Carden: [\[277831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what plans the UK's International Ambassador for Human Rights has to (a) promote to partner countries and (b) publicly reinforce the findings of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education on the provision of public education and regulation of private involvement in education presented to the UN Human Rights Council in July 2019.

Rory Stewart:

Every child has a right to a good quality education. DFID's education policy [Get Children Learning](#) makes clear that the state is the guarantor of quality basic education for all, but need not be the sole financer or provider of education services. This is the position we will continue to a) promote to partner countries and b) reinforce publicly. We welcome the focus in the UN Special Rapporteur's Report on the importance of regulation in education systems.

Dan Carden: [\[277832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if he will make an assessment of the implications for the Government's policies of the finding of the UN Special Rapporteur on Education presented to the UN Human Rights Council in July 2019 that public-private partnerships in education that focus on involving private actors for service delivery have empirically largely failed, in particular in fragile countries.

Rory Stewart:

We welcome the focus in the UN Special Rapporteur's Report on the importance of the regulation in education systems, which is consistent with DFID's position set out in the 2018 education policy [Get Children Learning](#). We await with interest the publication of the study referred to in the UN Special Rapporteur's Report.

Dan Carden: [\[278583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what plans his Department has to monitor, track and publish the proportion of its education spending allocated for delivery by (a) public and (b) private providers.

Rory Stewart:

We monitor and track *all* programmes and programme partners, and remain committed to the transparent publication of aid spending and delivery, through such information platforms as [DevTracker](#). This includes education spending.

■ Developing Countries: Health Services

Norman Lamb: [\[278415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to support developing countries' national plans to deliver universal health coverage.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK Government provides funding to the World Health Organisation through the universal health coverage (UHC) partnership programme, along with the EU, Japan and other donors. This supports the development of UHC country plans to help countries to prioritise their own pathway to achieve UHC. Over 60 countries have now developed these plans and we are advocating use of the plans to drive greater coordination of efforts from other multilaterals.

Norman Lamb:[\[278416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether his Department has plans to encourage governments of developing countries to invest five per cent of GDP in primary healthcare.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK is a global champion for Universal Health Coverage; one of the key ways to deliver the health-related SDGs and climate resilient, sustainable development more broadly. At the UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage this September, the UK will be a strong advocate for increased domestic resources for primary health care and prevention and is pushing for positive commitments in this regard.

■ Developing Countries: Poliomyelitis**Ian Austin:**[\[277682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the progress of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in eradicating polio globally.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

In 1988, when the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was founded, there were 350,000 cases of paralysis from polio every year. In 30 years, with UK support, GPEI has led efforts that have reduced cases of polio by 99%.

DFID closely monitors progress towards eradication through a number of mechanisms including our membership of GPEI's key governance bodies and our country-level engagement. There has been a slight increase in polio cases this year compared to the last. The last step – reaching all children in inaccessible and often conflict-affected areas – is proving the most difficult. We must remain focussed on completing the task to ensure the benefits to global health are not lost, and that we do not slide back.

■ Humanitarian Aid**Chuka Umunna:**[\[278492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that humanitarian workers globally can carry out their roles without risk of attack.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK Government is committed to: advocating for greater compliance with International Humanitarian Law which includes the protection of the wounded and sick, health care personnel and facilities, medical transport and aid workers around the world; supporting our partners to work according to the humanitarian principles including impartiality and neutrality; and providing direct funding to organisations directly improving security and risk management of aid workers, and improving the research in this area.

■ **Palestinians: Schools****Joan Ryan:****[R] [278333]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July 2019 to Question 272127, which organisation completed the evaluation; and if he will place a copy of the evaluation in the Library.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The independent evaluation commissioned by the Palestinian Authority (PA) was completed by the Arab European Foundation. DFID is not the owner of the report. Ultimately it will be the decision of the Palestinian Authority whether to make the evaluation public.

■ **Poliomyelitis: Disease Control****Dan Carden:****[278585]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the Government plans to make a commitment to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative at its pledging conference in Abu Dhabi in November 2019.

Rory Stewart:

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative has recently launched their new strategy for 2019 – 2023. We are currently considering the strategy and a future UK offer of continued support, as are all global donors.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE■ **Arms Trade: Saudi Arabia****Stephen Gethins:****[270751]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the cost to the public purse was (a) of his Department's legal team and (b) in legal fees to the appellant for his Department's defence of the 2017 High Court case on arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Graham Stuart:

[Holding answer 5 July 2019]: The cost to the public purse of (a) the Department for International Trade's (DIT) legal team was £146,752.61, and (b) the cost to the public purse in legal fees to the appellant for this Department's defence of the 2017 High

Court case on arms sales to Saudi Arabia was £45,000. In addition, other money disbursed from the public purse for the purposes of this case was £138,292.14. This figure represents DIT legal costs to date associated with the Special Advocate representing the Appellant in closed proceedings in the Judicial Review.

The figures provided comprise net legal costs, including disbursement costs and these represent the legal cost to DIT. The legal costs provided here do not include figures spent by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence. There may also be further legal costs that have not yet been billed to the department.

■ Defence and Security Organisation

Jonathan Edwards: [\[277162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the Defence and Security Organisation core markets are for 2018-19; and if he will make a statement.

Graham Stuart:

I refer the Hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr to the answer I gave to the Hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion on 12 July 2018, UIN:161130.

■ Department for International Trade: Working Hours

Jon Trickett: [\[278372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

George Hollingbery:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has a Flexi-time policy, available for the use of all delegated grades and accessible on the Digital Workspace. This policy and the Department are compliant with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations 1998 in respect of civil servants' working hours.

This policy allows DIT staff to take time off in lieu where they have worked extra hours. This is managed locally between employees and their line managers, whose responsibility it is to ensure that their staff are not working excessive hours.

Data on time off in lieu is not held centrally.

DIT is committed to supporting the wellbeing of all its members of staff and has appropriate policies in place to support this, alongside a departmental Health and Wellbeing Plan.

■ Drugs: EU External Trade

Daniel Zeichner: [\[277761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the European Commission press release entitled EU-U.S. trade talks: milestone reached in mutual recognition on pharmaceuticals, dated 11 July 2019, whether the recently agreed mutual recognition agreement between the US and EU will continue to apply to manufacturers of pharmaceuticals in the UK in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

George Hollingbery:

All operational aspects of the EU-US mutual recognition agreement on conformity assessment (MRA) will continue to apply to the UK in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

The MRA signed between the UK and the US in Washington DC on 14 February 2019 provides continuity of the EU-US MRA, including the annex on Good Manufacturing Practice for pharmaceuticals. It is ready to enter into force as soon as the EU-US MRA ceases to apply to the UK, whether in the event of a deal or no-deal scenario.

For further information, please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-us-mutual-recognition-agreement>

Foreign Investment in UK**Ian Lavery:****[278506]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to protect foreign investment in the UK ahead of the the UK leaving the EU on 31 October 2019.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is leading on Government's shared intent to safeguard the UK's position as a world-leading destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

The UK continues to have many strengths that attract investors: an open, liberal economy, world-class talent and a business-friendly environment. The most recent data from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) ranked the UK as third globally for FDI in 2018—and the number one destination in Europe, ahead of Germany.

DIT is supporting investment into UK communities by targeting promotional support towards projects with the greatest potential to maximise national wealth and value for investors. We also remain committed to ensuring that the UK continues to be a competitive destination for foreign investment—and are working with Government colleagues to develop policies to improve the UK business environment and ensure the UK continues to be one of the most attractive places in which to work and invest.

Import Duties**John Redwood:****[278326]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate he has made of average price reduction on non-EU goods into the UK from setting a new UK tariff schedule on exit from the EU.

George Hollingbery:

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, the UK will implement the temporary tariff which will apply to all trade from partners not subject to alternative trade arrangements. This policy seeks to balance the impact on consumers from price rises

and on producers from exposure to global competition. Under the temporary tariff, over 90% of imports by value currently entering the UK from outside the EU will be liberalised, rising from over 50%.

In addition to tariffs, prices for imported goods depend on various factors, including exchange rate fluctuations, shipping costs and on various non-tariff barriers. Given the range of issues affecting prices, the Government does not attempt to estimate goods prices.

■ **Import Duties: Food**

Jo Stevens:

[\[278537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential response from the EU on the Government's plan to maintain zero tariffs on (a) eggs, (b) cereals, (c) fruit and (d) vegetables imported into the UK in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

George Hollingbery:

Many UK agri-food products would face substantial tariffs on exports to the EU in a no deal scenario. Consistent with WTO rules, the EU must apply tariffs equally to imports from all countries where there is no trade agreement or any other preferential arrangement in place. In the event of no deal, this includes the UK. There has been no indication that the EU would modify their tariff policy as a result of our exit or following the publication of the UK's 'Most Favoured Nation' schedule, the temporary tariff.

However, the Government's intention in setting the temporary tariff has been to balance producer and consumer impacts in a way that is broadly neutral in its impact on agri-food production and consumption patterns.

■ **Open Individual Export Licences: Saudi Arabia**

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[277815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to paper (a) DEP2019-0710 and (b) DEP2019-0711 that were placed in the Library, what the expiry dates were for each of the extant Open Individual Export Licences under review.

Graham Stuart:

The information requested will be placed in the libraries of the House, with an expiry date for each of the licences. This deposit will replace a) DEP2019-0710 (UIN 267765) and b) DEP2019-0711 (UIN 268564).

The spreadsheets include details of (a) all extant Open Individual Export Licences for Saudi Arabia, including licences for dual-use items, and (b) all extant export licences for military-rated goods to Saudi Arabia.

The Government is carefully considering the implications of the recent Court of Appeal judgment for decision making, including extant licences. While this is taking

place, the Government will not grant any new licences for export to Saudi Arabia or its coalition partners of items that might be used in Yemen.

■ Overseas Investment

Dan Carden: [\[277827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what criteria were used to select India, the Philippines, South Africa and Nigeria as the main target countries for his Department's Investment Promotion Programme.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade developed an economic model to score and rank all aid eligible countries (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee list) on a range of economic, social and structural indicators from the World Bank, World Economic Forum and UN Council on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and other internationally-recognised sources. The selected countries scored highly on the need for economic development, investment opportunity and are priority countries for Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Dan Carden: [\[277830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what consultation his Department conducted to inform the design of the Investment Promotion Programme.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) consulted with the Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs), relevant departments of focal countries, British and other foreign businesses invested in focal countries, DIT, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development and HM Trade Commissioners in posts in the focal countries, chambers of commerce, business councils, multilateral development banks operating in the focal countries, other donors funding investment and trade capacity building programmes, the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, HM Treasury, Cabinet Office, UK Export Finance and CDC (UK's development finance institution) while designing the IPP. DIT is still refining the programme design and is currently developing a Full Business Case.

■ Overseas Trade: Israel

Jack Lopresti: [\[277705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what opportunities he has identified for further bilateral trade co-operation with Israel after the UK leaves the EU.

George Hollingbery:

The UK and Israel signed a trade continuity agreement in February 2019. The agreement simplifies trade and allows businesses to trade as freely as they do now when the UK leaves the EU, without any additional barriers or tariffs.

Going forward post-Brexit, the British and Israeli governments have established a Working Group to work towards a smooth transition of our trading arrangements and to plot the course for the future trading relationship between the UK and Israel. Additionally, the UK will be hosting the inaugural UK-Israel Trade and Investment Conference in London this year. This event will showcase the close trading relationship between our two countries and look to the future on areas of opportunity for businesses.

■ Trade Agreements: USA

Jo Stevens: [\[277768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether it is his Department's policy that food which meets the standards of the US Food and Drug Administration's food defect levels handbook guidance will be saleable in the UK in the event of a free trade agreement with the US.

George Hollingbery:

We do not wish to pre-empt discussions relating to a future UK-US trade deal, however the Government is proud of our high standards of food safety and these will not be watered down when we leave the EU. High standards and high quality are what our domestic and global customers demand, and that is what we will provide.

It is vital that we explore new trading opportunities, but these should not mean a dilution of the standards for which British food is world renowned.

Jo Stevens: [\[278536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of negotiating as part of a trade agreement between the UK and the US a change in the level of actionable limits for foreign bodies in food sold in the US.

George Hollingbery:

I refer the Hon. Member for Cardiff Central to the answer I gave on 22 July 2019, UIN: 277768.

■ UK Trade with EU: Food

Jo Stevens: [\[278538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of tariffs imposed by the EU on the competitiveness of the UK's export of (a) eggs, (b) cereals, (c) fruit and (d) vegetables to the EU; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect of such tariffs on the agricultural sector.

George Hollingbery:

The Government's priority is to leave the EU with a deal, ensuring that goods trade with the EU remains tariff free. If the UK leaves the EU without a deal in place, both the UK and EU would be subject to their respective Most Favoured Nation (MFN) rules for trade in goods. The EU has been clear that they would apply their MFN

tariffs on UK exports in this scenario. We anticipate that the application of EU tariffs on UK exports would have some negative impacts on the UK farming sector, on produce where a high proportion of production is exported to the EU.

■ Whisky: Scotland

Patrick Grady: [\[277771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment he has made of the role of Scotch whisky as an export product in increasing UK access to high-value overseas markets.

Patrick Grady: [\[277772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment he has of the contribution of Scotch whisky to the UK's food and drink exports market.

Graham Stuart:

Scotch Whisky continues to be a major contributor towards the UK's overall exports, representing 21.4% of total exports of UK food and drink.

Ministers and officials from this department hold regular discussions with the Scotch Whisky Association and other representatives from the industry with the aim of further increasing whisky exports and to help them to take advantage of a wide range of overseas opportunities. The Department is working to address tariff and non-tariff barriers facing the sector through our planned future trade agreements and other dialogues with partner countries. The current Chief Executive of the Scotch Whisky Association is an adviser to the Board of Trade.

Scotch is the largest export within the food and drink sector with over £4.8bn in sales in 2018, a rise of 7.7% compared to 2017.

JUSTICE

■ Courts: Recorders

Richard Burgon: [\[276573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Recorders sat in each court that was open on the 1 May 2019.

Paul Maynard:

We are unable to supply details of how many Recorders sat in each court that was open on 1 May 2019. This is because the latest published data on sitting days only runs to December 2018 and under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics we cannot provide any more recent data until that data (covering 2019) has been published. The data for 2019 will be published in June 2020.

The latest published data is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2019>.

■ Dangerous Driving

Ms Lisa Forbes:

[\[277860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to (a) raise the maximum penalty for causing death by (i) dangerous driving and (ii) careless driving under the influence of drink or drugs to life imprisonment, (b) create a new offence of causing serious injury by careless driving and (c) increase the minimum period of disqualification for drivers convicted of causing death by any driving offence.

Robert Buckland:

We are focused on getting the law right, to ensure the changes we make are comprehensive, proportionate and, crucially, practical.

We will bring forward proposals for changes in the law to increase the maximum penalties for causing death by dangerous driving and careless driving under the influence of drink or drugs to life imprisonment, and create a new offence of causing serious injury by careless driving as soon as possible. These proposals will take account of other government proposals for safer roads.

■ Legal Aid Scheme

Paul Farrelly:

[\[278403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of uprating the financial thresholds for legal aid eligibility.

Paul Maynard:

On 7 February 2019, the Government published its Legal Support Action Plan in which it announced a comprehensive review of the wider legal aid eligibility regime. The review will study the income and capital thresholds for legal aid entitlement and assess the effectiveness with which the means testing arrangements appropriately protect access to justice, particularly with respect to those who are vulnerable.

The review 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.

Richard Burgon:

[\[278557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what total Government expenditure on legal aid has been since 1989 in (a) nominal and (b) real terms.

Paul Maynard:

The tables below show total Government expenditure on legal aid between 2005-6 and 2018-19 in nominal and real terms. The information requested is not available for the period prior to 2005-6 as each series is presented as far back in time as it can be produced on a basis that is comparable with the most recent figures. Beyond this, measures of overall expenditure may not be directly comparable because the way legal aid is administered and public money is managed and accounted for have changed. In February, the government published the Legal Support Action Plan which committed to a number of changes to legal aid, including improving the Exceptional Case Funding scheme, expanding the scope of legal aid to all special guardianship orders in private family law, and removing the means test for those with parental responsibility who wish to oppose adoption and placement orders. In addition, we are reviewing the legal aid means testing framework to ensure that those who need legal aid are able to access it into the future. The Ministry of Justice, aims to complete the review by Summer 2020.

RDEL - nominal terms (£m)

Financial Year	Criminal legal aid	Civil legal aid	Central Funds	Total legal aid
2005-06	1,200	436	9	1,645
2006-07	1,190	775	20	1,985
2007-08	1,203	824	46	2,073
2008-09	1,172	903	73	2,148
2009-10	1,101	961	88	2,150
2010-11	1,175	1,026	78	2,279
2011-12	1,115	966	101	2,182
2012-13	995	946	98	2,039
2013-14	967	825	81	1,873
2014-15	889	685	63	1,637
2015-16	861	600	49	1,511
2016-17	863	646	45	1,554
2017-18	891	678	49	1,619
2018-19	879	731	48	1,657

RDEL - real terms (2018-19 prices) (£m)

Financial Year	Criminal legal aid	Civil legal aid	Central Funds	Total legal aid
2005-06	1,534	1,077	88	2,699
2006-07	1,478	965	65	2,508
2007-08	1,458	998	79	2,535
2008-09	1,382	1,065	87	2,534
2009-10	1,280	1,171	103	2,554
2010-11	1,342	1,171	89	2,602
2011-12	1,257	1,088	113	2,458
2012-13	1,100	1,045	108	2,252
2013-14	1,048	889	58	2,031
2014-15	952	734	67	1,753
2015-16	915	638	52	1,605
2016-17	897	671	47	1,614
2017-18	890	691	50	1,649
2018-19	879	731	48	1,657

Note: 2018 - 19 prices are based on the deflator series published by the ONS on 28 June 2019. RDEL (Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit) is current expenditure from within the annual Departmental Expenditure Limits that are set by the Treasury for each government department, and is used in the MoJ and LAA Annual Report & Accounts. It aims to measure the value of all work carried out in each period, regardless of whether it is on cases that have finished. RDEL excludes AME (hence so do the budgeting measures shown in the table). AME (Annually-Managed Expenditure) broadly covers unpredictable or uncontrollable expenditure. In legal aid terms this is work in progress where the payment date is unknown. It can be negative for individual years. In 2013-14, responsibility for Central Funds spending transferred from the Ministry of Justice to the Legal Aid Agency. From October 2014 a new administrative system has enabled these statistics to be based on the general ledger prior to accounting adjustments, and therefore from 2015-16 they are no longer identical to the RDEL figures.

■ Magistrates

Richard Burgon: [\[278554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Leadership Magistrates there were by (a) gender, (b) age, (c) ethnicity, (d) socio-economic background and (e) who have declared a disability in the latest period for which figures are available.

Paul Maynard:

Judicial leadership appointments are a matter for the judiciary.

There are eight leadership magistrates; one national leadership magistrate and seven regional leadership magistrates. Disclosure of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability is not possible due to the potential for individuals to be identifiable as a result of the small numbers.

■ Mediation

Bim Afolami: [\[276592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many mediators there are in England; and how many mediations by subject have taken place in each of the last five years.

Paul Maynard:

Whilst the department does not hold information on privately-funded mediation, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) holds data on family mediation cases in England and Wales that have started and are funded by Legal Aid. This can also be found in Table 7.2 of the Legal Aid statistics:

FAMILY MEDIATION STARTS				
Financial Year	All Issues	Children Only	Property & Finance	Grand Total
2014-15	1,919	5,001	1,172	8,092
2015-16	1,889	5,574	1,369	8,832
2016-17	1,468	5,027	1,116	7,611
2017-18	1,141	4,270	891	6,302
2018-19	1,166	4,493	856	6,515

Further breakdown of cases and more information can be found in the published Legal Aid statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/legal-aid-statistics-january-to-march-2019>.

The Department does not hold data on the total number of family mediators. However, Legal Aid funded family mediation must have Family Mediation Council (FMC) accreditation. There are currently 1053 individual mediators accredited by the

FMC in England and Wales. The complete list can be found on the FMC register at: <https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/fmc-full-register/>.

For civil cases, a list of individual mediators accredited by the Civil Mediation Council (CMC) can be found at: <https://civilmediation.org/about/cmc-members-list/>. The courts signpost users to mediators that are CMC accredited, but this may not reflect all mediators offering mediation sessions. The department does not hold data on privately-funded mediation for civil cases.

■ Ministry of Justice: Overtime

Richard Burgon: **[277786]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much his Department paid in overtime payments to (a) directly employed and (b) agency staff in each year since 2010.

Edward Argar:

Responses to the two parts of the questions are as follows:

Part (a) - At this point it cannot be determined if the full data set for directly employed staff is available. The reason for this is because in Feb 2017 MOJ rationalised its payrolls and moved to a new payroll system (known as SOP), so any prior year's data, if available, would need to be sourced from legacy systems. To do this would require raising requests with several legacy suppliers who could then determine if the data was available. The cost of doing this would be disproportionate. Only data for the following financial periods are available. This data covers the MOJ group:

- February 2017 - March 2017 - £18,418,976
- April 2017 – March 2018 - £103,919,954
- April 2018 – March 2019 - £93,402,051
- April 2019 - June 2019 - £21,944,613

The average number of employees throughout the above periods was:

- In 2017 - 71,000
- In 2018 – 72,000
- In 2019 – 76,000

It should also be noted that there are many reasons why someone may get paid overtime, for example, in prisons for carrying out bedwatch or dealing with incidents of unrest. All of these elements have been included in the above figures.

Part (b) – This data is not available because MOJ engage agency staff via third party providers such as Brook Street, and these staff are not on the MOJ payroll and therefore details of any overtime paid are not held by MOJ. MOJ pay for these individuals, who are generally charged out at an hourly rate, via invoice.

■ Prison Sentences: Females

Richard Burgon: [\[278553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many women were sentenced to imprisonment for (a) 1 month or less, (b) 3 months or less and (c) 6 months or less for each of the offences listed in the Home Office Offence Code that his Department classifies as (i) non-violent and non-sexual offences and (ii) violent and sexual offences.

Richard Burgon: [\[278561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many women sentenced to prison for theft from shops received sentences of (a) less than one month, (b) less than three months, (c) less than six months, (d) less than 12 months and (e) 12 months or more.

Edward Argar:

The Ministry of Justice has published information on the number of women sentenced to immediate custody for theft from shops offences, and the length of these sentences in the Outcomes by Offence data tool available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/802314/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2018.xlsx

Select '46 Theft from Shops' in the Offence filter

Select '02: Female' in the Sex filter

The total women sentenced to immediate custody can be found in row 36 and custodial sentence lengths can be found in row 56 onwards.

The Ministry of Justice does not have a specific classification for (i) non-violent and non-sexual offences and (ii) violent and sexual offences, as offences are classified by indictable or summary offence groupings and prosecutions are counted for principal offences. Broad indictable groups for '01: Violence against the person' and '02: Sexual offences' can be displayed using the Offence group filter in the above data tool for violent and sexual offences; all other offence groups would broadly cover non-violent and non-sexual offences. However, note that some offences that would be classified as violence (such as common assault and battery) are counted in the summary offences category.

Please note that the figures given in the pivot table relate to defendants for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with.

■ Prison Service: Industrial Health and Safety

Richard Burgon: [\[277787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many calls have been made to his Department's body fluid exposure and sharps Injury telephone helpline in each month since December 2017.

Richard Burgon: [\[277789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on how many occasions have prison staff calling the Body Fluid Exposure and Sharps Injury telephone helpline been advised to attend A&E in each month since December 2017.

Robert Buckland:

HMPPS has a duty of care to its staff to ensure they are provided immediate and specialist advice following suspected and actual Bodily Fluid Exposure (BFE) incidents. In December 2017 HMPPS put in place a 24 hour Bodily Fluid Exposure and Sharps Injury telephone helpline which provides an initial assessment by a qualified nurse clinician.

Number of calls to the Body Fluid Exposure and Sharps Injury telephone helpline per month:

(see annex A)

Number of times staff have been directed to contact Accident & Emergency:

(see annex C)

Attachments:

1. Annex A [Copy of Annex A-PQ277787.xlsx]
2. Annex C [Copy of Annex C- PQ277789.xlsx]

■ Prisoners: Special Educational Needs

Steve McCabe: [\[278346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 20 March 2019 to Question 231895, whether prison governors have assessed all new prisoners for learning difficulties and/or disabilities on reception since April 2019; and what proportion of the new prison population has been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities.

Robert Buckland:

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) introduced a Management Information System alongside the new education contracts in April this year to help collect a range of data for prison education including information on all new prisoners screened for learning difficulties and/or disabilities on reception to prison. Following this, for those who go into learning and where screening indicates an issue, education suppliers will assess them to ensure the right adaptations and support arrangements are put in place (including for maths and English delivery).

The new system is still being embedded across the prison estate. I will therefore write to the Hon Member with the information once the data requested is verified and becomes available. A copy of my letter will also be placed in the Library.

I can assure the Hon Member that prisoners continue to be screened for learning difficulties and/or disabilities on reception into prison using existing paper-based systems.

■ Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[277823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent steps he has taken to improve the health and safety of prison staff.

Robert Buckland:

The health and safety of our staff and those in our care remains our top priority. Risks to staff are continually assessed, and suitable controls are implemented accordingly. The effectiveness of those controls is monitored at local and national level, and through joint audit work with prison unions.

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, and trauma support services.

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.

Rosie Cooper:[\[278444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 270730 on Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety, whether all prison staff who are not directly employed by HMPPS have access to (a) occupational health services, (b) employee assistance programmes, (c) trauma support services and (d) personal well-being zones.

Robert Buckland:

HMPPS value the contribution made by external partners to HMPPS and work collaboratively with suppliers to ensure the health and safety of non-directly employed staff in prison and probation sites

Prison staff not directly employed by HMPPS can have access to the Employee Assistance Programme, trauma support services and personal well-being zones. These arrangements are agreed by officials in consultation with our external partners. However, it is normal practice for most of our external partners to have their own support arrangements in place for their staff.

Prison staff not directly employed by HMPPS do not have access to all occupational health services because occupational health is the responsibility of their employer.

However, contractors and third party supplier staff do have access to a 24 hour body fluid exposure and sharps injury help line, which gives non-directly employed prison staff access to immediate and specialist advice and guidance from a nurse following

a suspected and actual body fluid exposure incident. This is part of our commitment to helping to protect staff from the risk of contracting blood borne viruses.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[278445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 270730 on Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety, what assessment he has made of risk to prison staff who are (a) directly employed by HMPPS and (b) contractors of (i) exposure to new psychoactive substances, (ii) assaults with excreta and (iii) other assaults.

Robert Buckland:

With regard non HMPPS employees working in prisons, we work closely at all levels with their employers and staff unions. There is a wide range of procedures and systems in place across the estate to control and mitigate their exposures to the risk referred to.

Guidance was issued in 2017 on the control of secondary exposure and scientific research into the risk commenced in May 2018 and is currently focused on post-exposure testing of staff across ten prisons. It has been agreed that the testing programme will be expanded to include a further 10 prisons.

Violence against those working in prisons will never be tolerated. The Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act received Royal Assent on 13 September and came into force on 13 November. This will increase the penalty, from 6 to 12 months, for those who assault emergency workers including prison officers. We provide post-incident care teams, occupational health support and counselling for members of staff who are assaulted while doing their jobs.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[278446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 270730 on Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety, what steps he is taking to support the physical, emotional and social well-being of prison staff who are not directly employed by HMPPS; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Buckland:

HMPPS value the contribution made by external partners to HMPPS and work collaboratively with suppliers and their staff unions to ensure both the physical health and safety and the emotional well-being of non-directly employed staff in prison and probation sites.

There is a wide range of Health and Safety procedures and systems in place across the estate to control and mitigate exposures to the risks referred to.

HMPPS Health, Safety and Fire conduct workplace inspections to identify any hazards and introduce safety measures within the workplace before such hazards cause harm to all staff (whether employed directly or indirectly), offenders and visitors. This is an integral part of the HMPPS Health, Safety and Fire risk management system

In terms of emotional and social staff support, prison staff not directly employed by HMPPS can have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), trauma support services and personal well-being zones. The EAP 24/7 helpline is accessible confidentially and without the need for line manager referral. The helpline provides access to counselling for work or non-work related issues, legal and consumer advice, as well as support for managers in handling of sensitive situations. These can all aid emotional and social well-being for not directly employed staff in prisons

Violence against those working in prisons will never be tolerated. The Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act received Royal Assent on 13 September and came into force on 13 November. This will increase the penalty, from 6 to 12 months, for those who assault emergency workers including prison officers. We provide post-incident care teams, occupational health support and counselling for members of staff who are assaulted while doing their jobs.

■ Prisons: Staff

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[277660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the number and proportion of prison staff who are signed-off from work with stress or other work-related illnesses.

Robert Buckland:

On 31st March 2019 there were 24 prison staff who were signed off from work due to work related illnesses. This is 1.6% of all prison staff who were signed off from work on that day due to sickness related absences.

Work related illnesses are defined as anyone who has been had a sickness classified either 'Accident Injury Work Related' or 'Assault Work Related' in the sickness data.

HMPPS is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff in England and Wales, with all staff having access to a comprehensive occupational health service and employee assistance programme.

■ Sexual Offences Act 2003

Sarah Champion:

[\[278517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the review of the definition of positions of trust in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 will conclude in the summer.

Sarah Champion:

[\[278518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether positions of trust as defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 will be extended to cover all adults with power and authority over young people as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Paul Maynard:

I recognise that there are concerns about those who might abuse their position of power over a 16 or 17-year-old to pressure them into engaging in a sexual relationship. Such behaviour is very likely to be caught by the robust laws we already

have in place. Any sexual activity with a child under 16 is a criminal offence, regardless of whether consent is given. Any non-consensual sexual activity is also a crime, whatever the age of the victim and whatever the relationship between the victim and perpetrator.

However, we remain absolutely committed to protecting children and young people from sexual abuse and we want to ensure that existing offences are being used effectively to tackle this behaviour, and that those working with young people understand their responsibilities and act appropriately.

My department, working closely with colleagues across government, is taking forward a review of the existing law, to check that that it is working effectively and ensuring young people are protected.

I shall consider the findings of that review carefully.

■ **Sexual Offences: Victim Support Schemes**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[277824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment has he made of the adequacy of (a) funding for and (b) access to specialised services for (i) people and (ii) BAME people experiencing sexual violence.

Edward Argar:

The Ministry of Justice provides funding to specialist sexual violence services to support victims to cope and, where possible, recover from the impact of crime. We awarded increased funding to services in April this year and made a commitment of £24m over three years. This funding is reaching 96 rape support centres across England and Wales, ensuring specialist provision in each of the country's 42 Police and Crime Commissioner areas.

We provide £306,849 funding for helplines and online services to ensure that all victims, regardless of location, can access support.

Services in receipt of Ministry of Justice grant funding are expected to understand and respond to the specific needs of victims in their area. This includes the provision of services tailored to victims that may face additional barriers, such as BAME groups, to accessing support.

Victims may also access Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs). There are 47 SARCs in England who carry out forensic medical examinations and offer counselling services. NHS England Investment in SARCs will increase to £35m by 2020. Victims may also access NHS mental health services.

We are exploring ways to improve support for BAME victims as part of our work to tackle racial disparity in the Criminal Justice System.

■ Social Security Benefits: Tribunals

Colleen Fletcher: [\[276546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of appeals to the tribunal service in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England in relation to (i) personal independence payment, (ii) employment and support allowance, (iii) income support, (iv) jobseeker's allowance, (v) tax credits, (vi) universal credit were successful in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Colleen Fletcher: [\[276547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average length of time was for the Tribunals Service to administer a First-Tier Social Security and Child Support appeal in relation to (a) personal independence payment, (b) employment and support allowance, (c) income support, (d) jobseeker's allowance, (e) tax credits, (f) universal credit in (i) Coventry, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) England in the latest period for which figures are available.

Colleen Fletcher: [\[276548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many appellants are waiting for the Tribunals Service to list their First Tier Tribunal Social Security and Child Support appeal in relation to personal independence payment in (a) Coventry, (b) West Midlands and (c) England.

Paul Maynard:

Information about the volumes, outcomes, and timeliness of appeals in the First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support) (SSCS) is published at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics

SSCS appeals are listed into the hearing venue nearest to the appellant's home address. The published data (which can be viewed at the link above) provide information about the outcomes and timeliness of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Universal Credit (UC) appeals for hearing venues covering (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England for the period January – March 2019, the latest period for which data are available.

The tables below contain the requested information for (iii) Income Support (IS), (iv) Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and (v) Tax Credits:

PROPORTION ¹ OF APPEALS DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE APPELLANT FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY TO MARCH 2019 (THE LATEST PERIOD FOR WHICH DATA ARE AVAILABLE)

	IS	JSA	Tax Credits ²
Coventry	~	~	~
West Midlands ³	28%	~	20%
England ⁴	45%	32%	34%

AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME TO ADMINISTER APPEALS (IN WEEKS) FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY TO MARCH 2019 (THE LATEST PERIOD FOR WHICH DATA ARE AVAILABLE)

	IS	JSA	Tax Credits ²
Coventry	42	37	20
West Midlands ³	44	31	19
England ⁴	30	26	22

As at March 2019 (the latest period for which data are available) there were a total of 625 PIP ⁵ appeals waiting to be listed ⁶ in the Coventry venue; 4660 in the West Midlands ³ ; and 35,091 in England ⁴ .

1. Proportion based on the number of cases found in favour of the appellant at a tribunal hearing, as a percentage of the cases heard at a tribunal hearing
2. Includes Working Family Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit.
3. SSCS data are recorded by the office that dealt with the case, and if the case went to oral hearing, the location of the tribunal hearing, normally the hearing venue nearest to the appellant's home address. Cases relating to the West Midlands region are attributed to the following SSCS venues: Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Coventry, Nuneaton, Stoke, Shrewsbury, Hereford and Worcester.
4. Excludes SSCS Scotland Region and Wales Region.
5. Personal Independence Payment (New Claim Appeals), which is replacing Disability Living Allowance was introduced on 8 April 2013, also includes Disability Living Allowance Reassessed cases.
6. Appeals waiting to be listed are those awaiting a tribunal hearing date, and may include cases previously adjourned, postponed or those waiting to be reheard as directed by the Upper Tribunal.

~ Equates to a value of fewer than 5

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and are the best data available.

The data may differ slightly to that of the published statistics as these data were run on a different date.

Decisions on benefit entitlement can be overturned on appeal for a variety of reasons. For instance, further evidence, including evidence in the form of oral testimony, may be provided at the hearing. HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) cannot comment on decisions made by independent tribunal judiciary.

Waiting times are calculated from receipt of an appeal to its final disposal. An appeal is not necessarily disposed of at its first hearing. The final disposal decision on the appeal may be reached after an earlier hearing had been adjourned (which may be directed by the judge for a variety of reasons, such as to seek further evidence), or after an earlier hearing date had been postponed (again, for a variety of reasons, often at the request of the appellant). An appeal may also have been decided at an earlier date by the First-tier Tribunal, only for the case to have gone on to the Upper Tribunal, to be returned once again to the First-tier, for its final disposal.

HMCTS has been working with the judiciary to reduce waiting times for appeals and has appointed additional judges and panel members. This includes 250 judges across the First-tier Tribunal, 125 disability qualified members and up to 230 medical members. In addition, more PIP appeals are being listed per session and case-management "triage" sessions have been introduced, with the aim of reducing the time taken for appeals to reach final determination. All these measures will increase the capacity of the Tribunal, with the aim of reducing waiting times for appellants.

In addition, we have recently launched a new digital service with a view to enabling speedier processing of appeals and provide a better service for all parties to the proceedings. Information on the new digital service can be found at:

www.gov.uk/appeal-benefit-decision/submit-appeal

Latest figures (to March 2019) indicate that since PIP was introduced, 4.1 million decisions have been made, and of these, 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned at Tribunals. For ESA (post Work Capability Assessment) to December 2018, 4.1m decisions have been made and of these 8% have been appealed and 4% have been overturned.

■ Youth Custody: Sports

Richard Burgon:

[\[277222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average number of hours per week was that a (a) child and (b) young adult aged 19 to 21 in custody spent playing sport in each year since 2010.

Edward Argar:

The requested information cannot be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service is committed to ensuring that young people in custody are given the opportunity to take part in sport. In October last year, together with a number of leading football organisations, it launched the Twinning Project, in which 40 English Football League and Premier League clubs are working together with prison establishments to help reduce re-offending. The form this work will take will vary depending on the needs of the establishment and the club, but will range from professional coaching qualifications to refereeing and employability skills. There are also plans to extend this approach to include other sports, such as Rugby League.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Equality Commission for Northern Ireland: Recruitment**

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[278398\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment she has made of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's recruitment criteria as a result of the composition of new commissioners announced in June 2019.

John Penrose:

Following an open competition on 17 June 2019, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced a number of new appointments to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. This competition was regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). All stages of the process, including the recruitment criteria, were overseen by an independent panel member.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Ethnic Groups

Seema Malhotra: [\[279056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in her Department.

John Penrose:

I can confirm there are no BAME staff employed at Grade 3 within the Northern Ireland Office. Fewer than five staff have declared as BAME at both Grades 7 and 5 and in order to comply with Data Protection Act requirements, I am unable to disclose this number as a full answer would risk the identification of individuals.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Working Hours

Jon Trickett: [\[278382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in her Department in each of the last five years.

John Penrose:

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

The Northern Ireland Office is committed to ensuring the wellbeing of their staff in support of a healthy work/life balance. The Department has an active Wellbeing Network and line managers are aware of their responsibilities for ensuring that their team members do not work excessive hours.

■ Offences against Children: Northern Ireland

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[277666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether she plans to table legislative proposals to implement payments to victims of historical and institutional abuse in Northern Ireland.

John Penrose:

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has made it very clear that she is determined to see redress for victims of historical institutional abuse as soon as possible. The UK Government has made clear that legislation will be introduced at Westminster by the end of the year, should a restored NI Executive not be in place.

Currently, officials in the Northern Ireland Executive Office are working with the Northern Ireland Office of the Legislative Counsel to redraft the legislation for a redress scheme in line with the NI parties' recommendations.

When the legislation has been revised and received, the Secretary of State will consider the best way forward and the next steps as a matter of urgency.

TRANSPORT■ **Aviation****Seema Malhotra:**[\[276540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU without a deal for the aviation industry on (a) the passage of flights across EU countries and the UK, (b) air services agreements, (c) aviation safety and security, (d) border management and (e) the environment.

Chris Grayling:

The contingency measures adopted by the EU and the reciprocal measures announced by the UK mean that flights will be able to continue as now in the period after we leave the EU, even in a "no deal" scenario. The same high safety and security standards will continue to apply to those flights, and passengers will see no changes at the border at UK airports. The UK will continue to work internationally to reduce the environmental impact of aviation.

■ **Aviation: Alternative Fuels****Gareth Thomas:**[\[277102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the viability of deploying sustainable alternative aviation fuels.

Michael Ellis:

Sustainable alternative aviation fuels are an important means of reducing aviation emissions.

The Government is encouraging the production and use of sustainable alternative aviation fuels in the UK. Recent changes to the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) mean that renewable aviation fuels are eligible for reward, in the form of tradeable certificates. Additionally, the Future Fuels for Flight and Freight Competition (the F4C) makes up to £20 million of capital funding available to projects that will produce low carbon waste-based fuels to be used in aeroplanes and lorries.

Research commissioned by the Department in support of the competition considered

the feasibility of technologies that could produce advanced renewable fuels for use in aviation. The research is published here at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/637662/dft_f4c-feasibility_final_report.pdf.

The Government's new aviation strategy, Aviation 2050 – The future of UK aviation, will be published later this year. Through consultation on that Strategy the Government is also considering further policies it can put in place to assist the long-term uptake of sustainable alternative fuels in this sector.

■ Blue Badge Scheme

Stephen Morgan: [\[277837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the use of the term non-physical to refer to people with hidden disabilities in the new Blue Badge guidance on the well-being of people with (a) myalgic encephalomyelitis and (b) Parkinson's disease.

Stephen Morgan: [\[277838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect on people with disabilities of the term non-physical to refer to people with hidden disabilities as part of the new Blue Badge guidance.

Michael Ellis:

The Department recognises the sensitivities with using certain terminology when referring to the new criteria and will be replacing the term non-physical disability with "non-visible ('hidden') condition" in the guidance.

The new criteria include people who are unable to walk or have very considerable difficulty when walking, are at risk of serious harm to their health or safety or are unable to undertake a journey without it causing very considerable psychological distress. People with conditions such as myalgic encephalomyelitis, or Parkinson's disease, may qualify for a badge if they meet these criteria.

■ Community Transport: Licensing

Bill Grant: [\[277808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether community transport operators relying on the exclusively non-commercial exemption to holding a public service vehicle operators' licence will be able to continue to do so pending his Department's publication of a final response to the consultation on Section 19 and Section 22 permits; and what criteria are used to define non-commercial for that purpose.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

In March the Department clarified the scope of two exemptions to the EU Regulation on operator licensing in guidance and enacted a new additional exemption; so that community transport operators can carry on taking people to the shops, work, school, hospital and the doctor.

The definitive view of what the non-commercial exemption means will be a matter for the High Court. Once it has reached a decision, the Government will revise its guidance in line with the High Court's judgement.

■ Driving Tests

Douglas Chapman:

[\[278524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 274560, what the driving test centre service standard travel distance criteria is; what the locations are of the test centres that each of the 19 closed test centres merged with; and which test centres those closed test centres have merged with.

Michael Ellis:

The driving test centre service standard travel distance criteria is as shown in the table below:

LEVEL	AVERAGE POPULATION FOR A LOCAL AUTHORITY	TESTS GENERATED BY CANDIDATES	ROAD DISTANCE FROM TEST FACILITY	ATTAINMENT BASED ON ROAD DISTANCE AND ESTIMATED CAPACITY OF TEST CENTRE
Service level 1	1,250 or more people per square kilometre	783,276	7 miles	84.0%
Service level 2	Between 100 and 1,249 people per square kilometre	610,410	20 miles	97.0%
Service level 3	Fewer than 100 people per square kilometre	86,709	30 miles	98.2%

The distance between the closed test centre and the merged test centre, in all 19 cases, met the driving test centre service standard travel distance criteria.

The locations of the test centres that each of the 19 closed test centres merged with, and the test centres that each of the 19 closed test centres merged with, are shown in the table below:

LOCATIONS OF THE TEST CENTRES THAT EACH OF THE TEST CENTRES THAT EACH OF THE 19
THE 19 CLOSED TEST CENTRES MERGED WITH CLOSED TEST CENTRES MERGED WITH

Bredbury	Bredbury
Hyde	Hyde
Redditch	Redditch
Bradford	Bradford (Heaton)
Chadderton (2)	Chadderton (2)
Glasgow	Glasgow (Anniesland)
Cheetham Hill	Cheetham Hill
Morden	Morden (London)
Lancing	Lancing
Barking	Barking (Tanner Street)
Avonmouth	Avonmouth
Cambridge (2)	Cambridge (Brookmount Court) (2)
Llantrisant	Llantrisant
Mitcham	Mitcham (London)
Isle of Skye	Isle of Skye (Portree)
Kingstanding	Kingstanding
Featherstone	Featherstone

■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Mohammad Yasin:

[\[277244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many charging points for electric vehicles there are in England; and how many of those are located in each region.

Michael Ellis:

Figures on the total number of electric vehicle chargepoints are unavailable. Members of the public and businesses are able to install chargepoints without government support, and information on these are not routinely collected. Chargepoints that do receive government funding can be decommissioned or removed without notifying Government. The charging point platform Zap-map reports that, as at July 16th, there are 19,939 publicly available connectors in England, with the numbers in each region as follows:

REGION	NUMBER OF CHARGEPOINT CONNECTORS	PERCENTAGE WITHIN ENGLAND
East Midlands	1,299	7%
East of England	1,618	8%
Greater London	6,417	32%
North East	1,045	5%
North West	1,807	9%
South East	3,239	16%
South West	1,903	10%
West Midlands	1,388	7%
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,223	6%

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[\[278342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to increase the number of electric car charging points (a) throughout the UK and (b) in Gloucestershire; and if he will make a statement.

Michael Ellis:

The Government has a number of schemes which can be accessed by EV drivers across the country, including in Gloucestershire. The Government is providing funding for schemes to support chargepoint infrastructure at homes and workplaces and on residential streets. The Government's on street residential charging scheme offers grants to local authorities to help support this investment at local level. We want to encourage private sector investment to build and operate a self-sustaining public network that is affordable, reliable and accessible. In many cases, the market is best placed to identify the right locations for chargepoints and make improvements to the network and it is essential that viable commercial models are in place.

We will continue to monitor whether any significant gaps in uptake or infrastructure provision emerge in the medium term. In the future we will consider whether there is a case for direct central government support in areas where there is a market failure, which may include areas outside the major conurbations.

In August 2017, South Gloucestershire Council were awarded £4,790,910 under Government's [£42m] Low Emission Bus Scheme, for the provision of 110 Biomethane low emissions buses and accompanying infrastructure. The purpose of the scheme is to help improve regional air quality in UK towns and cities.

■ Freight

Andy McDonald: [\[276542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2019 to Question 273804 on Freight, what assessment he has made of the value for money of the freight network capacity plans that he announced in December 2018.

Chris Grayling:

Ahead of letting the freight contracts in December 2018, the Department undertook all relevant value for money assessments and clearances, in line with good practice.

As part of the procurement process, price benchmarking was undertaken to ensure contracted prices for Government were commensurate with market rates.

Andy McDonald: [\[276543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2019 to Question 273804 on Freight, what comparative assessment he has made of the value for money of the plans for new freight network capacity made in (a) December 2018 and (b) June 2019.

Chris Grayling:

The framework that my Department is setting up on behalf of wider Government will provide a long-term approach to securing freight capacity when needed. This approach, which is different from that adopted in December 2018, will provide additional flexibility and resilience.

At this stage in the procurement process the Government is not committed to buying or reserving any freight capacity. The costs associated with any capacity secured through the framework will be determined later in the process, once the framework is in place and Government has 'called-off' the capacity it requires.

■ Great Western Rail Franchise

George Eustice: [\[277158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to commence negotiations with the First Group on the terms of an extension to the Great Western franchise after March 2020.

Andrew Jones:

The current Great Western franchise agreement expires at 01.59am on 1 April 2020, having been extended to the fullest extent possible under its terms. In November 2017 the Secretary of State announced his intention to negotiate a new franchise agreement with the incumbent operator and discussions with FirstGroup are already under way.

■ Great Western Railway: Catering**George Eustice:** [\[277159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has received on the standard of catering services on the new Class 800 trains operated by First Group under the Great Western franchise.

Andrew Jones:

The Department published the response to its consultation on the future of the Great Western franchise on 28 August 2018:

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736146/great-western-rail-franchise-stakeholder-briefing-document.pdf). This shows ten areas of response from consultees about catering.

George Eustice: [\[277160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect on passengers of the decision by the First Group to discontinue its buffet car facilities and replace them with a more limited trolley service.

Andrew Jones:

The Department published the response to its consultation on the future of the Great Western franchise on 28 August 2018:

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736146/great-western-rail-franchise-stakeholder-briefing-document.pdf). This shows ten areas of response from consultees about catering, including comments about both trolley services and buffet cars

George Eustice: [\[277161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to make it a condition of any future extension of the Great Western franchise that an operator must provide full buffet car catering facilities.

Andrew Jones:

The Department published the response to its consultation on the future of the Great Western franchise on 28 August 2018:

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736146/great-western-rail-franchise-stakeholder-briefing-document.pdf). Decisions on policy on the specification of the next Great Western franchise are informed by this consultation, which did not show strong demand for full buffet car catering facilities.

■ Heathrow Airport: Exhaust Emissions**Sir Greg Knight:** [\[277662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the potential reduction in emissions from aviation as a result of reduced stacking in the event of the completion of a third runway at Heathrow airport.

Michael Ellis:

The UK has embarked on an ambitious programme of airspace modernisation, one of the key drivers of which is to reduce aviation's environmental impact. This programme should allow more direct routing, reduce delays, enable aircraft to climb at a faster rate, and also reduce the amount of stacking.

With regards to Heathrow expansion, the environmental impact of the proposed airspace changes linked to this development, including their likely effect on CO₂ emissions, will be assessed in coming years through the statutory Civil Aviation Authority airspace change process. Therefore there is currently no estimate of the reduction in emissions as a result of modernising Heathrow's airspace.

The Airports National Policy Statement is also clear that a new Northwest Runway will not receive development consent unless, with mitigation, it can demonstrate compliance with legal obligations on air quality.

■ Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships**Nia Griffith:**[\[278447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the UK has plans to be a signatory to the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The UK is a strong supporter of action to improve the international standards for ship recycling.

The Hong Kong Convention is not expected to enter into force internationally in the near term, so the UK alongside other states, has implemented a Europe wide regime that seeks to immediately improve standards in ship recycling.

The EU Ship Recycling Regulation (EU) No 1257/2013 – which will be retained in UK law after we leave the EU – entered into force on 1 January 2019. It establishes a list of acceptable yards for ship recycling, and creates controls on ships flagged to, or calling at, the UK that are intended for recycling.

The deadline for States to become a signatory to the Hong Kong Convention passed in August 2010. The Government's current focus is on the effective implementation of the European Ship Recycling regime, but we will shortly turn to the implementation of the Convention, with a target of ratification in the next five years as set out in our strategy, 'Maritime 2050: navigating the future'.

■ Loneliness**Nic Dakin:**[\[277713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department has made on the commitment, in the loneliness strategy to encourage organisations across the transport sector to develop new initiatives to tackle loneliness.

Nic Dakin:

[\[277714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department has made on the commitment in the loneliness strategy to (a) create new partnerships with transport providers and community organisations who are developing ideas and initiatives for how transport can be used as a means to help tackle loneliness, and (b) use industry-wide forums to promote these.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department for Transport is actively working with the transport sector to highlight the issue of loneliness and develop solutions.

At the UK Bus Summit in February I announced a partnership with Greener Journeys to encourage bus operators to come together to tackle loneliness. Buses are a vital means of transport for many people and I am pleased to see such a range of initiatives being trialled by bus companies over the course of the year, including Go Ahead Group's "Chatty Bus" campaign to encourage conversation between passengers. Most recently, in July I marked 'Catch the Bus' week, an important event to help raise the profile of all the work that is going on.

My Department has also been working in partnership with the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), which is raising awareness about how activities such as volunteering on our railways can help to tackle loneliness.

Along with our partners, I spoke about the importance of the transport sector supporting the loneliness agenda with a wide range of stakeholders at the Department's Transport Communications Network on 31 January 2019.

More widely, the Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy, published on 19th March, sets out clear principles to ensure that our future transport system works to overcome problems like loneliness and social exclusion. The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with external stakeholders across the transport sector and others, and a public call for evidence, and will help frame our future engagement with the industry.

The transport sector has an important role to play in reducing loneliness, alongside government and other sectors, and we will continue to engage with a range of stakeholders.

Nic Dakin:

[\[277715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department has made on the commitment in the loneliness strategy to increase the numbers of drivers trained to support older and disabled passengers.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government believes that community transport operators provide vital services that both encourage growth and reduce isolation by linking people with their communities. Most community transport operators provide vital social care services to older or disabled people as well as those most at risk of isolation.

The Department has taken steps to protect this sector. In March 2019 we clarified the scope of two exemptions to the EU Regulation on operator licensing in guidance and enacted a new additional exemption; so that community transport operators can continue to take vulnerable people to the shops, work, school, hospital and the doctor.

We have committed to fund the Community Transport Association (CTA) to enable the existing Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) training to be recognised as part of the qualification for professional coach and bus drivers, thereby encouraging an increase in the numbers of drivers trained to support the needs of older, isolated and disabled passengers.

Nic Dakin:

[\[277716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department's has made on the commitment in the Loneliness strategy to explore with seven mobility centres in England how the Government can help to identify signs of loneliness or lack of social connections.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

In May this year, the Government provided a grant of £250k to enable seven of the thirteen Mobility Centres in England to trial an expansion of their services to disabled people who do not or can no longer drive, and need support to access public transport. This includes Mobility Centre staff identifying and acting on signs of loneliness amongst their clients. The trial will commence by the end of the summer.

Transport has a key role to play in tackling loneliness and the Department is very active in the cross-Government efforts to tackle loneliness and works closely with stakeholders to ensure transport's role is fully aligned to the wider strategy.

Government has engaged closely with the Loneliness Action Group in the development, and now implementation, of its loneliness strategy, and regularly attend the quarterly Loneliness Action Group meetings, to share updates and hear views from the group.

The Department will continue to engage widely in support of the implementation of the Government's strategy and to ensure our transport network plays its part in this vital area.

■ **Luton Station: Access**

Mr Gavin Shuker:

[\[277706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to improve accessibility at Luton station.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Luton is one of the 73 stations announced in April that will benefit from the £300 million Access for All funding available over the next 5 years. The Access for All programme delivers a step free, accessible route into the station and to and between each platform.

Network Rail are working with Luton Borough Council to try to ensure that the Council's proposals for a wider redevelopment of the station are integrated and allow the Access for All phase of development to commence as soon as possible.

■ Rail Accident Investigation Branch: Zero Hours Contracts

Jo Stevens: [\[277205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many of the investigations undertaken by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch since 2010 have involved people working under a zero hours contract.

Andrew Jones:

[Holding answer 18 July 2019]: The RAIB does not routinely record contractual terms as part of every investigation. RAIB investigations are guided by individual events, and their recommendations form part of a culture of learning and continuous improvement which has led to the UK having one of the best railway safety records in Europe.

■ Railways: Surveys

Dame Cheryl Gillan: [\[277594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275643 on Railways: Surveys, what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of updating the National Rail travel survey.

Andrew Jones:

The Department is currently considering updating the National Rail Travel Survey. Prior to making a final decision on proceeding we are about to embark on a formal supplier market engagement process through a DfT framework. Making our budget estimate public at this time could prejudice the Department's ability to achieve value for money, so we are not able to share the estimate at present.

Dame Cheryl Gillan: [\[278330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275643 on Railways: Surveys, what the (a) start and (b) end time was the gathering of information to prepare the National Rail Travel Survey December 2010.

Andrew Jones:

The National Rail Travel Survey (NRTS) dataset is comprised of two principal components. The London Area Transport Survey (LATS) was conducted in 2000 and 2001 and covered London and South-East regions. A second wave covering the rest of Great Britain was undertaken during 2004 and 2005. Through both of these components, every national rail station in Great Britain was included in the survey.

Full details of the National Rail Travel Survey methodology can be found in the overview report available on the Department's website at this address:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/73094/national-rail-travel-survey-overview-report.pdf

■ Roads: Accidents**Sir Greg Knight:****[278389]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the number of deaths and serious injuries per mile travelled experienced in (a) motor cars, (b) motor cycles and (c) motor scooters.

Michael Ellis:

The rates of people killed or seriously injured per billion vehicle miles for car users and motorcycle users are published in tables RAS30067 and RAS30066 respectively, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras30-reported-casualties-in-road-accidents#casualties-in-accidents-since-1979>.

In 2017, there were 38 car users killed or seriously injured per billion vehicle miles in Great Britain, compared to 2,149 for motorcyclists.

In the road accident data, motorcycles include mopeds and motor scooters.

Please note that the number of serious injuries provided is as reported by the police. Since 2016, changes in severity reporting systems for a large number of police forces mean that serious injury figures are not comparable with earlier years.

On 19 July, the Department published the Road Safety Statement. The statement and action plan includes actions to improve safety for motorcyclists as well as rural road users, young road users and older road users. The statement is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-statement-2019-a-lifetime-of-road-safety>

■ Roads: Construction**Anneliese Dodds:****[277839]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway road will be subject to a strategic environmental assessment.

Michael Ellis:

The preferred route for the Oxford to Cambridge expressway, anticipated to be announced in autumn 2020, will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. A Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be required.

Anneliese Dodds:**[277840]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether (a) major routes and (b) feeder roads are classified as (i) projects or (ii) programmes for the purposes of determining whether they require strategic environmental assessments.

Michael Ellis:

Individual road enhancement schemes are projects that are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment requirements as necessary. Strategic Environmental Assessments are a specific legal requirement for plans and programmes that set the framework for the future development consent of projects.

Anneliese Dodds: [\[277841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the benefit to cost ratio of the Oxford to Cambridge expressway road is; and whether that ratio is comparable with other transport proposals under review.

Michael Ellis:

The Government published a strategic outline business case for the construction of the 'missing link' between Oxford and Milton Keynes in September 2018 (available on the Department for Transport website). This showed a benefit cost ratio of 1.2 or 1.3 for the preferred corridor B.

Highways England is in the process of identifying potential routes within the preferred corridor which will enable a more thorough assessment of benefits and costs. At the current stage of work the estimated benefit cost ratio is not unusual.

Anneliese Dodds: [\[277842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the benefit to cost ratio of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway road includes the (a) cost and (b) effect of (i) new feeder roads and (ii) increases in road capacity.

Michael Ellis:

The estimation of scheme benefits and costs in the strategic outline business case for the 'missing link' between Oxford and Milton Keynes was not based on any specific route design considerations. They were derived using the appropriate modelling tools, which take account of the effect of the new capacity on traffic demand, journey times, safety and environmental impacts.

Highways England is in the process of identifying potential routes within the preferred corridor which will enable a more thorough assessment of benefits and costs.

Anneliese Dodds: [\[277843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway project on the Government's greenhouse gas emissions targets.

Michael Ellis:

Highways England is in the process of identifying potential routes within the preferred corridor for the Oxford to Cambridge expressway for a non-statutory public consultation in the autumn. This work will include an assessment of environmental impacts, including carbon emissions using the Defra forecasts for emission rates.

■ Roads: Repairs and Maintenance

Sir Greg Knight: [\[278390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of using drones to detect defects in roads.

Michael Ellis:

The Government is committed to exploring all technology, including the use of drones, to identify road defects and improve road maintenance.

The Infrastructure Inspection Pathfinder project, carried out by the Connected Places Catapult (previously Transport Systems Catapult) under the Government Drone Pathfinder Programme, aims at accelerating the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to enable UK businesses to access wider inspection and surveying capabilities of this smart technology.

■ Roads: Safety

Andy McDonald: [\[276544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress Highways England have made towards its target of ensuring that the majority of roads with a (a) 1* and (b) 2* safety rating under the EuroRAP3* assessment programme have improved to a 3* rating; and what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the conclusion of the Highways England Strategic Road Network Star Rating Report published on 4 July 2019 that for the funding period 2015-2020 60 per cent of journeys on Highways England's single carriageways are forecast to be below the three-star road safety benchmark under the EuroRAP/iRAP rating system for the safety of road infrastructure.

Michael Ellis:

The Road Investment Strategy (RIS 1) 2015 - 2020 has enabled Highways England to deliver unprecedented levels of investment on the strategic road network in England and the star rating system is an assessment tool which Highways England continue to use to assist them in prioritising future investment opportunities. The latest data indicates 95% of our travel will be on roads rated 3* and above by 2020, which exceeds the target set in the delivery plan.

On single carriageways Highways England are committed to investing £77 million in improvement schemes by 2020, which is over and above enhancements through routine maintenance such as new road markings, signing and vegetation clearance. Highways England will review the star rating of the network when it is re-evaluated as part of RIS 2. Estimates of star ratings by 2020 are conservative as they do not reflect the impacts or include the results of these designated funds. Travel on single carriageways only accounts for a small proportion of overall traffic on the network.

■ Rolling Stock: Procurement

Andy McDonald: [\[276541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's news story, Competition opens to create community facilities as Pacer trains retire from passenger service, published on 11 July 2019, how much that competition has cost; and how many of his Department's staff have worked on that competition to date.

Andrew Jones:

Launching the competition has brought no additional cost to the Department. Porterbrook are providing the Pacer carriages that will be converted into community assets free of charge. One member of Department staff will be responsible for the day to day running the competition for the next six months. This will include supporting external judges, who are giving their time for free, to select winning community groups when the competition closes in September.

Severn Beach Railway Line**Jack Lopresti:**[\[277704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what is the cost to the public purse is for the maintenance work on the Severn Beach line planned for July and August 2019; and what additional maintenance work is planned for that line.

Andrew Jones:

Network Rail's total allocated budget for the maintenance work on the Severn Beach line planned for July and August 2019 is approximately £700,000. The only additional maintenance work planned at present is ongoing track renewal work.

Shipping: Charging Points**Andy McDonald:**[\[277752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 275205 on Shipping: Exhaust Emissions, what estimate has he made of the capital expenditure required by a port to fund a berth for electric charging of vessels.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Clean Maritime Plan, published earlier this month, sets out a route map for zero emission shipping in the UK. Alongside the Clean Maritime Plan, the Government published research setting out some of challenges around increasing uptake of electric charging. As noted in this research, capital expenditure costs associated with electric charging berths will vary greatly. They may be influenced by, for instance, the size of the vessels being plugged in, the existing grid infrastructure, and the layout of port infrastructure. The Government believes that electric charging will have a role to play in reducing emissions from UK shipping, and will continue to work with the ports and shipping industries, the Clean Maritime Council, and the National Grid to better understand the opportunities for shoreside power.

Shipping: Exhaust Emissions**Karl Turner:**[\[277709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Clean Maritime Plan, published 11 July 2019, whether the zero-emission shipping target applies to international or domestic shipping.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

In June 2019, the UK became the first major economy to legislate for net zero emissions, setting a target for 2050. Emissions for UK domestic shipping fall within this target. Although emissions from international shipping and aviation are not formally included within the legislation at this point, it is essential that these sectors play their role. To ensure we are on the right trajectory for net zero emissions across the economy, we will continue to leave 'headroom' for international shipping and aviation emissions in our carbon budgets. Government continues to be of the view that action to tackle emissions from these sectors must be done globally to be effective. The UK will continue to take a leadership role at the IMO, pushing for the most ambitious measures to deliver the vision, and emission reduction targets, of the IMO GHG Strategy.

The Clean Maritime Plan sets out aspirational goals for the sector, not mandatory targets. These goals encompass both international and domestic shipping in UK waters. Mandatory targets will be considered further in relation to incentives for zero emission shipping, on which Government will launch a Call for Evidence in 2020.

■ Taxis: Licensing

Stephanie Peacock: [\[277809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which of the recommendations in the Report of the Task and Finish Group on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing the Government plans to adopt.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government response to the Task and Finish Group on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing advised which of the recommendations made to government will be taken forward; this includes several which will require legislation to enact, such as the introduction of national minimum standards and national enforcement powers. The Government will legislate for these and other commitments when time allows.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[277810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the timeframe is for the Government's implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the Task and Finish Group on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[277811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what legislative proposals the Government plans to bring forward in relation to the recommendations in the Report of the Task and Finish Group on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government response to the Task and Finish Group on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing advised which of the recommendations made to government will be taken forward; this includes several which will require legislation to enact, such as the

introduction of national minimum standards and national enforcement powers. The Government will legislate for these and other commitments when time allows.

TREASURY

■ Bank Services: Payments

Gill Furniss: [\[277802\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect on (a) consumers and (b) businesses of the September 2019 deadline for the introduction of multi-factor authentication on electronic payments.

John Glen:

The implementation of Strong Customer Authentication, which mandates two-factor authentication for some online payments, will introduce more secure payments for individuals and businesses.

This was introduced by the second Payment Services Directive. HM Treasury published an impact assessment on the implementation of this EU directive in 2017.

In an Opinion published on 21 June, the European Banking Authority (EBA) acknowledged the complexity of payments markets and the practical challenges arising from the changes that are required by Strong Customer Authentication across the EU, which may lead to some actors in the payments chain not being ready by 14 September 2019.

The FCA is therefore working closely with industry to develop a migration plan to implement Strong Customer Authentication in a timely and effective manner.

■ Business and Consumers: Payments

Chuka Umunna: [\[278491\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of two-factor payment authentication on (a) consumers and (b) businesses.

John Glen:

The implementation of Strong Customer Authentication, which mandates two-factor authentication for some online payments, will introduce more secure payments for individuals and businesses.

This was introduced by the second Payment Services Directive. HM Treasury published an impact assessment on the implementation of this EU directive in 2017.

In an Opinion published on 21 June, the European Banking Authority acknowledged the complexity of payments markets and the practical challenges arising from the changes that are required by Strong Customer Authentication across the EU, which may lead to some actors in the payments chain not being ready by 14 September 2019.

The FCA is therefore working closely with industry to develop a migration plan to implement Strong Customer Authentication in a timely and effective manner.

■ **Business: Disclosure of Information**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[278357\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of scrapping quarterly reporting for businesses with a turnover of under £85,000.

Jesse Norman:

There have been no changes to the reporting requirements for businesses below the VAT threshold. Making Tax Digital (MTD) applies only to VAT registered businesses above the £85,000 VAT threshold.

The Government has been clear that any move to extend MTD would happen only after it has assurance that the MTD for VAT service is working well, and will therefore not be mandating MTD for any new taxes or businesses in 2020.

■ **Corporation Tax: Small Businesses**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[278356\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to lower the corporation tax rate for small businesses.

Robert Jenrick:

Since 2010 the Government has successively reduced the UK Corporation Tax rate to support businesses, both large and small. Now at 19%, the UK Corporation Tax rate is currently the lowest in the G20, and in April 2020 it will be lowered further from 19% to 17%.

■ **Financial Ombudsman Service**

Gillian Keegan: [\[277299\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will review the process for allocating a case to an investigator by the Financial Ombudsman Service to reduce the time taken for that process.

John Glen:

This is a matter for the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) which is operationally independent from Government. The question has been passed on to the FOS. The FOS will reply directly to the member for Chichester by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ **Financial Services: Islam**

Stephen Timms: [\[277616\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of using Islamic financial certificates, sukuk to finance infrastructure

projects without adding to Government debt on the public sector balance sheet; and if he will make a statement.

Alan Brown: [\[277781\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of using sukuk to finance infrastructure projects; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

The proceeds from the Sukuk, like the proceeds from the wider gilt programme, flow into the consolidated fund. This is used for general expenditure, including expenditure on infrastructure. The government considers the core gilt program rather than the Sukuk to be the most cost-effective way of raising money for expenditure, including that of infrastructure projects. The main purpose behind the decision to issue a second Sukuk is to reaffirm the government's commitment to the UK being the Western hub for Islamic finance, whilst also providing high-quality liquid assets to UK-based Islamic banks.

■ Free Zones

Jo Stevens: [\[278534\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the role of free ports in tackling global tax avoidance and evasion.

Jesse Norman:

Free Trade Zones and ports play a clear role in facilitating legitimate international trade, but where there is lax oversight or weak governance they are susceptible to abuse by transnational criminal networks. Under the joint leadership of HMRC and the US Department of Homeland Security, the OECD Countering Illicit Trade Taskforce has made significant progress in developing draft guidance on measures to enhance the transparency of Free Trade Zones, so as to promote clean and fair trade and to make them unattractive to people and organisations looking to conduct tax evasion and commit crime.

■ Government Securities: Islam

Stephen Timms: [\[277615\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Mansion House speech of 20 June 2019, when he plans to issue a second sovereign sukuk; and if he will make a statement.

Alan Brown: [\[277780\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Mansion House dinner speech on 20 June 2019, what his timeframe is for his Department to issue a second sovereign sukuk; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

Over the coming weeks the relevant teams at HM Treasury will work with the Debt Management Office and other officials on formulating the procurement process for the appointment of structuring and legal advisers. A specific timetable has not yet been determined for this. Further announcements, including on the timing of the issuance, will be made in due course.

■ Incinerators: Taxation**Sandy Martin:**[\[278608\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential (a) financial and (b) environmental merits of an incineration tax for household waste.

Robert Jenrick:

A number of respondents to last year's call for evidence on single use plastic waste suggested that an incineration tax could discourage incineration and promote more environmentally beneficial forms of waste management.

At Budget 2018, the Chancellor announced that he would not at this point be taking forward a tax on the incineration of waste. However, should wider policies not deliver the government's waste ambitions, government will consider the introduction of such a tax, in conjunction with landfill tax, taking account of the possible impacts on local authorities.

■ Manufacturing Industries: Government Guaranteed Credit**Frank Field:**[\[277654\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the value was of credit guarantees provided by the Government to the manufacturing industry in each of the last 10 years.

Robert Jenrick:

The Government recognises the vital role that manufacturing plays in the UK economy. Therefore, we support the sector in a number of ways, including through the provision of several credit guarantee schemes.

Please see below for an indication of the support made available to the manufacturing industry over the last 10 financial years through credit guarantee schemes. This includes data on the flow of credit guarantees from UK Export Finance, and the British Business Bank (since its establishment in 2014/15).

MANUFACTURING £M

2009/2010	1,930
2010/2011	1,877
2011/2012	1,798
2012/2013	2,284

MANUFACTURING £M

2013/2014	1,044
2014/2015	1,215
2015/2016	554
2016/2017	1,784
2017/2018	1,297
2018/2019	3,734

This data has been identified from credit guarantees to the manufacturing sector using the standard industrial classification (SIC) as used by the Office for National Statistics, where possible. This does not include other forms of credit support, such as the Repayable Launch Investments.

In addition to manufacturing-specific support, the Government also supports various programmes to help businesses access the finance they need through the British Business Bank.

■ National Productivity Investment Fund

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[277664\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much funding was allocated to (a) Northern Ireland, (b) Scotland and (c) Wales from the National Productivity Investment Fund in (i) 2017-18, and (ii) 2018-19.

Elizabeth Truss:

The Government established the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) to increase capital spending for areas critical for improving productivity: housing, transport, digital infrastructure and Research & Development (R&D).

Digital infrastructure and R&D spending are reserved so UK Government investment, including through the NPIF, covers England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The NPIF includes £425m in 2017-18 and £820m in 2018-19 on R&D funding, and £25m in 2017-18 and £150m in 2018-19 on digital infrastructure.

Housing and transport spending is devolved, and in these areas, the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government have received increases in their capital budgets as a result of applying the Barnett formula to changes in spending in England.

■ Raw Materials: Taxation

Sandy Martin: [\[278609\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on revenue of a tax on virgin materials including on plastics.

Robert Jenrick:

At Budget 2018, the government announced its intention to tackle the scourge of single-use plastic waste through the introduction of a new tax on plastic packaging which does not contain a sufficient amount of recycled content, taking effect from April 2022. This world-leading new tax will provide a clear economic incentive for businesses to use more recycled material in the production of packaging, instead of using virgin plastic. It will achieve similar objectives to a tax on virgin plastics, but in a more targeted and effective way.

Earlier this year, the government launched a consultation seeking views on the initial proposed design for the tax. This closed in May and the government intends to publish a summary of responses in due course.

■ Retail Trade: Tax Burden

Paul Farrelly: [\[277669\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) reducing and (b) simplifying the tax burden for independent retailers.

Jesse Norman:

At Budget 2018 the Government introduced a Retail discount which cuts small retailers' business rates bills by a third for two years from April 2019. This is worth over £1 billion to businesses. The Government has also doubled the threshold for Small Business Rate Relief from April 2017 benefitting the smallest retail properties. This means 675,000 of the smallest businesses now pay no rates at all.

The Government is committed to a fair tax system that is simple to understand and easy to comply with. The Office of Tax Simplification provides independent advice to the Chancellor on simplifying the tax system.

■ Revenue and Customs: Staff

Anneliese Dodds: [\[278592\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many full-time equivalent staff, including Revenue and Customs Digital Technology Services Ltd employees, does HMRC have.

Jesse Norman:

At the end of June 2019, HMRC employed 59,093 people on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis, including 749 FTE within Revenue and Customs Digital Technology Services.

■ Roads: Northern Ireland

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[277663\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much and what proportion of UK Guarantees Scheme guarantees issued to date have been allocated to road projects in Northern Ireland.

Elizabeth Truss:

To date, no guarantees under the UK Guarantees Scheme have been issued to road projects in Northern Ireland. This information, alongside details of the UK Guarantees scheme, is publicly available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-guarantees-scheme>. The UK Guarantees Scheme was established in 2012, with a capacity of up to £40 billion, to support private investment in UK infrastructure projects. As the scheme is demand-led, it only operates where needed and guarantees are not allocated by region. So far, the UK Guarantees Scheme has issued £1.8 billion of guarantees, supporting over £4 billion worth of investment.

■ Taxation

Bim Afolami: [\[276590\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much revenue (a) capital gains tax and (b) stamp duty have raised for the Exchequer (i) in total quantum terms and (ii) as a proportion of total UK revenue in each year since 1997.

Jesse Norman:

The amount of receipts of (a) capital gains tax and (b) stamp duty received by HMRC (i) in total quantum terms and (ii) as a proportion of total HMRC receipts is shown in the table below for the years 1999-00 to 2018-19. Data before this date is not available in a consistent format.

£ MILLIONS

Year	Total HMRC Receipts	Capital Gains Tax	Capital Gains Tax as a % of Total HMRC Receipts	Shares	Stamp Duty Land Tax	Total Stamp Taxes	Total Stamp Taxes as a % of Total HMRC Receipts
1999-00	294,177	2,122	0.7%	3,711	3,184	6,895	2.3%
2000-01	315,638	3,236	1.0%	4,477	3,684	8,161	2.6%
2001-02	321,741	3,034	0.9%	2,852	4,132	6,984	2.2%
2002-03	324,725	1,596	0.5%	2,538	5,011	7,549	2.3%

£ MILLIONS

2003-04	347,946	2,225	0.6%	2,559	4,986	7,545	2.2%
2004-05	375,801	2,282	0.6%	2,715	6,251	8,966	2.4%
2005-06	402,874	3,042	0.8%	3,465	7,454	10,918	2.7%
2006-07	428,629	3,830	0.9%	3,757	9,635	13,392	3.1%
2007-08	456,121	5,268	1.2%	4,167	9,958	14,124	3.1%
2008-09	445,531	7,852	1.8%	3,203	4,796	7,999	1.8%
2009-10	414,920	2,491	0.6%	3,017	4,886	7,903	1.9%
2010-11	453,957	3,601	0.8%	2,971	5,961	8,932	2.0%
2011-12	472,690	4,337	0.9%	2,794	6,125	8,920	1.9%
2012-13	474,267	3,927	0.8%	2,234	6,907	9,141	1.9%
2013-14	494,197	3,908	0.8%	3,108	9,273	12,381	2.5%
2014-15	515,971	5,559	1.1%	2,926	10,738	13,664	2.6%
2015-16	534,306	7,060	1.3%	3,320	10,682	14,002	2.6%
2016-17	569,394	8,561	1.5%	3,714	11,766	15,480	2.7%
2017-18	593,956	7,793	1.3%	3,519	12,906	16,425	2.8%
2018-19	622,890	9,242	1.5%	3,620	11,939	15,558	2.5%

The source for this data is published statistics on HMRC tax receipts and national insurance contributions which are available at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmrc-tax-and-nics-receipts-for-the-uk>

■ Treasury: Working Hours

Jon Trickett:

[278377]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

Robert Jenrick:

The information requested is not centrally available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure employees are not working excessive hours.

HM Treasury operates a flexible working hours scheme which allows staff to take time off in lieu at a later date if they work over agreed working hours, within agreed limits, and ensuring compliance with the Working Time Regulations 1998. Where it is

not appropriate or possible to take time off in lieu of hours worked, staff may be paid for these additional hours at plain time rate, in line with our overtime policy.

It is in the interests of the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff that work in excess of the normal hours of duty in a week should not be consistently required. We are keen to ensure that all staff enjoy a good work life balance and are currently upskilling our Senior Civil Service in managing staff wellbeing – as of December 2018 we had already achieved 78% attendance. It is with this in mind that we strongly recommend that time off in lieu be taken in the event of working excess hours. However, it is recognised that from time to time, this may be unavoidable.

■ UK Trade with EU

Anneliese Dodds: [\[278591\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the proportion of companies that need economic operator and registration identification numbers have them.

Jesse Norman:

Data on the proportion of companies that need Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) numbers is not readily available. Using 2018 trade in goods data, HM Revenue and Customs estimate that around two thirds of the total value of trade undertaken only with the EU was carried out by VAT registered businesses which solely trade with the EU, and which have now registered for an EORI number.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Carer's Allowance

Paul Blomfield: [\[278481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the rate of the carer's allowance to match the rate of jobseeker's allowance.

Paul Blomfield: [\[278482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of increasing carer's allowance to the same level as jobseeker's allowance.

Justin Tomlinson:

This Government recognises and values the vital contribution made by carers in supporting some of the most vulnerable in society.

The information requested on the cost to the public purse of increasing the rate of Carer's Allowance to that of Jobseeker's Allowance is not available but an indicative cost can be calculated using data published on StatXplore and gov.uk.

The current rate of Jobseeker's Allowance for those aged 25 and over is £73.10. The difference between this and the rate of Carer's Allowance (currently £66.15 a week) is £6.95. As of November 2018, there were approximately 780,000 claimants receiving Carer's Allowance in England and Wales. Thus, paying an additional £6.95 a week to carers in England and Wales would cost in the region of £280m a year. Carer's Allowance has been devolved to the Scottish Government since September 2018 and is delivered in Scotland by DWP for an interim period under an Agency Agreement.

The Government also provides targeted financial support for carers on low incomes through income-related benefits such as Universal Credit, Pension Credit and Income Support. In April 2019, the additional amount for carers in receipt of Pension Credit and Income Support increased to £36.85 a week. The Universal Credit carer element increased to £160.20 per monthly assessment period. Universal Credit also adjusts to fluctuating earnings and periods when paid employment is not feasible, for example due to caring responsibilities. The Government is committed to helping carers balance providing care with their own paid employment where this is possible, as indicated in the Carers Action Plan.

■ Child Maintenance Service: Staff

Marion Fellows:

[\[277774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many members of staff worked (a) for the Child Maintenance Service and (b) in the financial investigations unit of that Service in each year since 2013.

Will Quince:

We have provided figures from 2017. This is because prior to 2017, figures showing Child Maintenance Service as a separate department to Child Maintenance Group are not available.

These figures are a snapshot taken in the month of June only for each year, as figures fluctuate from month to month.

Please see table below:

	FIU	CMS
June 19	86	5684
June 18	19	5433
June 17	19	5238

■ Children: Day Care**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[277637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to increase the (a) provision and (b) affordability of childcare for children of working parents in school summer holidays.

Will Quince:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer to Question 273325, answered on 9 July 2019

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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.

■ Children: Maintenance**Marion Fellows:**[\[277773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure people liable under the Child Maintenance Service's Direct Pay category pay (a) in full and (b) on time.

Will Quince:

The Child Maintenance Service (CMS) provides support to all Direct Pay clients. Those who do not receive their maintenance in full and on time, should contact the CMS straight away, so the case can be moved into the Collect & Pay service to enforce regular payments of ongoing maintenance and arrange collection of arrears.

For clients using the Direct Pay service a payment schedule is issued, detailing the maintenance and arrears due to be paid. It is clearly explained to both parents that they will be responsible for managing their payments and keeping appropriate records of the child maintenance payments made.

At the start of every case, and at each annual review, parents are notified what to do if their arrangement breaks down. The CMS sends SMS messages to parents using Direct Pay three months after they set up their arrangement to remind them to contact the Service if their arrangement is not working.

The importance of full and on time payments is emphasised to clients by CMS caseworkers and Child Maintenance Options call handlers. Receiving parents are advised to contact us if payments are not received.

■ Disability and Society Inter-ministerial Group

Chris Ruane: [\[277657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on how many occasions the Inter-Ministerial Group on disability and society has met in each of the last two years; and which ministers attended each of those meetings.

Justin Tomlinson:

The new Inter-Ministerial Group on Disability and Society was established in spring/summer 2018, and met on Wednesday 4th July 2018, on Wednesday 31st October 2018 and on Monday 25th March 2019.

Details about the meetings, including ministerial attendance are confidential to allow full and frank discussions between Government Ministers and ensure the effectiveness of ministerial discussions and collective decision-making processes.

■ European Social Fund

Mike Amesbury: [\[277848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of employment support projects that are funded by the European Social Fund.

Alok Sharma:

European Social Fund (ESF) projects aim to increase labour market participation, promote social inclusion and develop the skills of the potential and existing workforce, including amongst the most vulnerable people in society.

To date, 363 projects have set out to achieve this within the current England ESF programme (this figure excludes technical assistance projects), amounting to total investment worth £3.65 billion, around £2 billion of which is EU funded. This figure will increase as further projects are agreed and delivered over the lifetime of the programme.

■ Industrial Accidents: Scotland

Hugh Gaffney: [\[277258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of recorded workplace deaths in Scotland in each of the last three years.

Justin Tomlinson:

Notifications of workplace fatal injuries to workers are made under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

The table below provides the number of fatal injuries to workers in Scotland reported under RIDDOR over the last 3 years.

Fatal injuries to workers in Scotland 2016/17 – 2018/19

YEAR	NUMBER OF FATAL INJURIES TO WORKERS
2016/17	18
2017/18	17
2018/19	29*

*Data for 2018/19 is provisional.

There has been an increase of 12 deaths between 2017/18 and 2018/19 in Scotland, mostly due to an increase in deaths in the Agriculture, forestry and fishing sector (from 3 in 2017/18 to 13 in 2018/19, though 2017/18 was a particularly low year for fatalities in the Agriculture, forestry and fishing sector in Scotland).

Numbers from one-year to the next are subject to natural variation. The increase seen in the number of workplace deaths in Scotland in 2018/19 are within bounds of natural variation.

■ Mesothelioma: Death

John Healey:

[\[276514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference the report entitled, Asbestos-related diseases in Great Britain, 2018, published in October 2018, how many deaths from mesothelioma there were in each (a) region and (b) local authority area.

Justin Tomlinson:

The latest mesothelioma death statistics for Great Britain by region and local authority were published on the HSE website on 3 July 2019 and are summarised in the report at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/mesothelioma/mesoarea.pdf>.

Mesothelioma deaths and Standardised Mortality Ratios by region and local authority area for the period 1981-2017 are available in tables MESOAREA01 and MESOAREA02 for males and females respectively at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/mesoarea.xlsx>. The statistics are further broken down by a 5-year time-period in tables MESOAREA03 and MESOAREA04 for males and females respectively.

Standardised Mortality Ratios allow an assessment of whether the death rate in each area is higher or lower than that for Great Britain as a whole, after allowing for population age differences.

■ Pension Credit: Telephone Services

Sir Edward Davey: [\[277103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many calls were made to the pension credit claim line in each of the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement.

Guy Opperman:

[Holding answer 18 July 2019]: Calls to Pension Credit Claim Line in each of the last 12 months are outlined in the table below:

MONTH	NO. OF CALLS
July 18	49168
August 18	36885
September 18	38635
October 18	54165
November 18	39811
December 18	27092
January 19	45258
February 19	39569
March 19	42377
April 19	46210
May 19	43720
June 19	60060
Total	522950

DWP officials continue to monitor the numbers of enquiries and claims to Pension Credit in order to ensure that levels of service to the public can be maintained and that we are able to respond flexibly and quickly to changes in demands on services including any increase in Pension Credit take-up.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Chris Ruane: [\[277656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the proportion of personal independence payment reports completed by ATOS that were categorised as (a) unacceptable and (b) learning required in each of the last four years.

Justin Tomlinson:

Independent Assessment Services (IAS), previously Atos Healthcare carries out Personal Independence Payment (PIP) consultations in Scotland, North East and North West England, London and Southern England. Capita carry out PIP consultations in Wales and Central England.

PIP reports are graded as either 'acceptable', 'acceptable with feedback', 'acceptable with amendments' or 'unacceptable'. The table below provides IAS figures for all these categories and is only available from April 2016.

GRADES	APR 16- MAR 17	APR 17-MAR 18	APR 18-MAR 19
Acceptable	7,300	7,930	7,480
Acceptable with Feedback	1,380	1,820	1,990
Acceptable with Amendments	650	1,220	1,780
Unacceptable	460	620	500
Total Audited	9,790	11,590	11,750

Figures rounded to the nearest 10

Data obtained from the CHES MI Team

■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations

Martin Whitfield:[\[277271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what data her Department holds on the number of applications for personal independence payments that were (a) refused and (b) reduced based on informal observations made of the applicant upon face to face assessment.

Martin Whitfield:[\[277818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis in receipt of disability living allowance who (a) underwent a reassessment and (b) made a new application for personal independence payments had their (i) application rejected and (ii) award reduced as a result of an informal observation made by the assessor in each year since 2013.

Justin Tomlinson:

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

Informal observations form part of the suite of evidence used by Health Professionals at the face to face assessment to help Case Managers determine entitlement to

benefit, along with medical evidence, history of conditions, social and occupational history, functional history including the 'typical day' and the functional examination.

More information can be found at paragraph 1.6 in the Personal Independence Payment Assessment Guide at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-independence-payment-assessment-guide-for-assessment-providers/pip-assessment-guide-part-1-the-assessment-process#carrying-out-pip-assessments>

■ Personal Independence Payment: Multiple Sclerosis

Martin Whitfield:

[276584]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis in (a) Scotland, (b) Northern Ireland, (c) Wales and (d) England (i) made new applications for personal independence payments and (ii) were reassessed from disability living allowance to personal independence payments in each year since 2013.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department does not hold the data requested on the disability of a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claimant at the point of registration (application) for a claim. Data on a PIP claimant's condition is not recorded until the claimant attends an assessment.

The latest available data on PIP clearances can be broken down by main disabling condition for both new claims and DLA reassessment claims for those that attended an assessment (awarded and disallowed post referral to the AP due to failing assessment), for each month from the introduction of PIP in April 2013 to the last available data in April 2019. Data can also be split by geographical area within Great Britain (region).

Stat-Xplore can be found at <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance on how to use Stat-Xplore can be found here: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/index.html>

Please note that the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) is only responsible for benefits in Great Britain. Social security benefits, including PIP, are a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and your questions regarding PIP in Northern Ireland should be directed at the Department of Communities in Northern Ireland.

Martin Whitfield:

[276585]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis in (a) Scotland, (b) Northern Ireland, (c) Wales and (d) England that were in receipt of disability living allowance and underwent a reassessment for personal independence payments applied for mandatory reconsideration of the decision in each year since 2013; and how many of those people (i) had their decision overturned and (ii) had their decision upheld.

Martin Whitfield: [276586]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis in (a) Scotland, (b) Northern Ireland, (c) Wales and (d) England that made a new application for personal independence payment applied for mandatory reconsideration of the decision in each year since 2013, and how many of those people had had their decision (i) overturned and (ii) upheld.

Martin Whitfield: [277819]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis in receipt of disability living allowance in (a) Scotland, (b) Northern Ireland, (c) Wales and (d) England appealed a decision at tribunal relating to a reassessment for personal independence payments and had that decision overturned (i) by her Department before the date of that tribunal and (ii) by that tribunal in each year since 2013.

Martin Whitfield: [277820]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis in (a) Scotland, (b) Northern Ireland, (c) Wales and (d) England who made a new application for personal independence payments appealed the decision made by her Department at tribunal and had that decision overturned by (i) her Department before the date of the tribunal and (ii) the tribunal in each year since 2013.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) mandatory reconsiderations (MR) and appeals for claimants with a primary disabling condition of Multiple Sclerosis in Scotland, Wales and England can be found in the tables below.

The Northern Irish Assembly has devolved responsibility for social security benefits. The responsibility for statistics in Northern Ireland lies with the Department for Communities: <http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk>

Since PIP was introduced 4.1m decisions have been made up to March 2019, of these 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned.

Reassessments from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to PIP.

Table 1: The number of Initial Decisions, MRs and appeals for reassessment claims to PIP with a main disabling condition of multiple sclerosis, Scotland.

FINANCIAL YEAR OF INITIAL DECISION	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRS REGISTERED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS WHERE THE INITIAL APPEAL WAS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
2013/14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014/15	70	10	10	#	#	0	#
2015/16	370	70	20	60	50	#	10
2016/17	1,360	210	60	150	100	10	20
2017/18	820	140	40	100	70	10	10
2018/19	690	120	20	80	60	10	10

Table 2: The number of Initial Decisions, MRs and appeals for reassessment claims to PIP with a main disabling condition of multiple sclerosis, Wales.

FINANCIAL YEAR OF INITIAL DECISION	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRS REGISTERED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS WHERE THE INITIAL APPEAL WAS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
2013/14	#	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014/15	150	40	20	20	20	#	0
2015/16	250	60	10	50	30	#	#
2016/17	930	200	60	150	90	10	10
2017/18	430	60	20	50	30	#	#
2018/19	240	50	10	20	10	#	0

Table 3: The number of Initial Decisions, MRs and appeals for reassessment claims to PIP with a main disabling condition of multiple sclerosis, England.

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRs REGISTERED	MRs COMPLETED WHERE THE AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRs COMPLETED WHERE THE AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
			LETED	LETED			
2013/14	#	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014/15	610	110	50	50	40	#	30
2015/16	2,720	640	160	470	300	30	40
2016/17	9,920	1,970	550	1,400	840	80	140
2017/18	7,160	1,380	330	1,040	620	100	70
2018/19	6,260	1,220	300	810	500	120	10

New Claims to PIP.

Table 4: The number of Initial Decisions, MRs and appeals for PIP new claims with a main disabling condition of multiple sclerosis, Scotland.

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRs REGISTERED	MRs COMPLETED WHERE THE AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRs COMPLETED WHERE THE AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
			LETED	LETED			
2013/14	130	20	10	20	10	#	#
2014/15	560	110	20	90	40	10	10
2015/16	470	120	20	100	40	#	20
2016/17	540	130	20	110	50	10	10
2017/18	500	110	10	90	40	#	10

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRS REGISTERED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
2018/19	440	100	10	80	30	10	#	10

Table 5: The number of Initial Decisions, MRs and appeals for PIP new claims with a main disabling condition of multiple sclerosis, Wales.

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRS REGISTERED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRSCOMP LETED WHERE THE INITIAL AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
2013/14	40	10	#	10	#	0	#	#
2014/15	250	40	10	30	10	#	#	10
2015/16	140	30	10	20	#	0	#	#
2016/17	180	40	#	40	20	#	10	10
2017/18	160	40	10	30	20	0	#	10
2018/19	190	50	10	30	10	#	#	#

Table 6: The number of Initial Decisions, MRs and appeals for PIP new claims with a main disabling condition of multiple sclerosis, England.

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF INITIAL DECISIONS	MRs REGISTERED	MRs COMPLETED WHERE THE AWARD WAS CHANGED	MRs COMPLETED WHERE THE AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED	APPEALS LODGED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS MAINTAINED	APPEALS WHERE THE DECISION WAS OVERTURNED IN FAVOUR OF THE CLAIMANT
			AWARD WAS CHANGED	AWARD WAS NOT CHANGED			
2013/14	530	90	30	60	30	10	10
2014/15	3,940	650	170	470	180	30	100
2015/16	3,240	730	130	600	240	20	150
2016/17	3,040	670	90	580	230	30	120
2017/18	3,130	740	110	630	280	40	160
2018/19	2,780	640	100	450	190	20	#

Source: PIP Computer System

All data rounded to the nearest 10. # refers to where there are less than 5 cases.

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

In the application process, claimants' primary disabling condition is only recorded for collation by the Department at assessment.

Data is based on primary disabling condition as recorded on the PIP computer systems. Claimants may often have multiple disabling conditions upon which the decision is based but only the primary condition is shown in these statistics.

The geography relates to the origin of the claim (i.e. derived from claimant's postcode).

PIP data includes normal rules and special rules for the terminally ill claimants.

Some decisions which are changed at MR, and where the claimant continues to appeal for a higher PIP award, are then changed again at tribunal appeal. Therefore the number of people who had a decision changed at MR and the number of people who had a decision changed at tribunal appeal cannot be added together.

Lapsed appeals are where DWP changed the decision after an appeal was lodged but before it was heard at Tribunal.

Claimants who have received benefit decisions more recently may not yet have had time to complete the claimant journey and progress to an MR and appeal.

Martin Whitfield: [\[277269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many personal independence payment applications by people with multiple sclerosis have been returned by decision makers to assessment providers having been deemed to be of insufficient quality in each year since 2013.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Martin Whitfield: [\[277270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with multiple sclerosis have requested a copy of their personal independence payment assessment report following a face-to-face assessment in each year since 2013.

Justin Tomlinson:

To gather this information, each claim would have to be looked at individually, therefore could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[276510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department has spent on administering reviews and appeals against disability benefits in each of the last ten years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The table below gives the operational costs for disability benefits for the years from 2013/14 to 2018/19. This is the only comparable data available for the period requested due to changes in benefit delivery. The question asks for the cost of 'administering reviews' which is not a recognised DWP terminology so we have assumed the request is for the cost of Reconsiderations, as well as Appeals.

Please note that the data supplied is derived from unpublished management information which was collected for internal Departmental use only and has not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. The data should therefore be treated with caution.

		18/19	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15	13/14
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
Appeals and Reconsiderations	66.93	66.07	49.33	37.21	39.20	51.0	3

■ Statutory Sick Pay

Hugh Gaffney:

[277255]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to increase access to statutory sick pay for low-paid workers.

Justin Tomlinson:

On Monday 15th July, the Government launched its consultation: 'Health is everyone's business: proposals to reduce ill health-related job loss.' The consultation invites views on a range of matters including extending Statutory Sick Pay to the lowest paid. It closes on 7 October 2019 and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/health-is-everyones-business-proposals-to-reduce-ill-health-related-job-loss>

■ Termination of Employment: Health

Chris Ruane:

[278386]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the proportion of ill-health related job losses that have been attributed to (a) mental ill and (b) physical ill health in each of the last three years.

Justin Tomlinson:

Recently published analysis of new data in the 2018 Annual Population Survey (APS) shows that 104,000 people leave work following a long-term sickness absence every year. Of the 99,000 people that left work and reported the health condition that was the main cause of their long-term sickness absence, 37,000 of them reported that the main condition causing their long-term sickness absence was mental health, 25,000 reported that it was because of a musculoskeletal condition and 37,000 reported other health conditions including some physical health conditions.

DWP/DHSC, 2019, Health in the workplace – patterns of sickness absence, employer support and employment retention, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/health-in-the-workplace-patterns-of-sickness-absence-employer-support-and-employment-retention>

■ Universal Credit

Chris Ruane:

[278385]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of claimants of universal credit that have taken an advance payment have seen payments reduced by (a) up to 20 percent (b) between 21 and 30 per cent, (c) 31 to 40 per cent and (d) over 40 percent of the initial amount in each of the last three years.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit (UC) new claim advances provide access to a payment for those in financial need, which can be accessed on the same day, until their first UC payment is due. Claimants can access up to 100% of the total expected monthly award, for which they can pay back over a period of up to 12 months.

The Department has taken a number of steps to ensure that advances meet the needs of claimants and that recovery arrangements are personalised and reasonable. The maximum rate of deductions cannot normally exceed 40 per cent of the Universal Credit standard allowance and does not reduce other components of an award, such as money paid for children, housing or when someone is caring for a severely disabled person. From October 2019 this will be reduced to 30 per cent and from October 2021 we are increasing the maximum recovery period for advances from 12 to 16 months.

However, the Government recognises the importance of safeguarding the welfare of claimants who have incurred debt, so last resort deductions can be applied to protect vulnerable claimants from eviction and/or having their fuel supply (gas/electricity) cut off, by providing a last resort repayment method for arrears of these essential services. In these cases, when it is considered to be in the best interests of the claimant and their family, deductions may be taken above the 40 per cent limit.

If a claimant is in financial difficulty as a result of the level of deductions being made they can contact the Department to request that a reduction in deductions be considered.

The latest available data for eligible claims to UC Full Service is provided in table 1:

TABLE 1	MONTH PAYMENT DUE		
	Feb-17	Feb-18	Feb-19
	%	%	%
up to 20 percent of Standard Allowance	42%	49%	47%
between 21 and 30 per cent of Standard Allowance		19%	18%
31 to 40 per cent of Standard Allowance	35%	31%	33%
over 40 percent of Standard Allowance	3%	1%	2%

Notes

1. The latest month for which data is available is February 2019.
2. When categorising claims into the groups above, the figures for the percentage of the Standard Allowance for individual claims have been rounded to the nearest percent.

3. Deductions include advance repayments and all other deductions, but exclude sanctions and fraud penalties which are reductions of benefit rather than deductions.
4. A claim can have more than one type of deduction applied to a given payment e.g. the total deduction could be the total of both an advance repayment and another deduction type.
5. Figures are for Universal Credit Full Service only; Universal Credit full service was fully rolled out by the end of 2018.

■ Universal Credit: Fraud

Steve McCabe:

[\[278344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275665 on universal credit: fraud, what recourse is available to people who without their full knowledge have had their information used to make a fraudulent claim.

Alok Sharma:

The Department takes benefit fraud very seriously and ensures that all cases are investigated thoroughly.

If a claimant has been the victim of fraud, and has not benefitted financially in any way, they will not be asked to repay the money. The Department considers all cases on their own merits and decisions are made on the strength of the evidence provided.

The Department remains committed to tackling the issue of fraudulent Universal Credit advance claims. We have set up a dedicated team of investigators to work on advances fraud cases, released a campaign on social media to raise awareness and remind people of the importance of safeguarding their identity and have been working with Social Media sites to shut down pages which promote this fraud, having shut down 52 so far.

If any claimant has concerns about the safety of their personal information, they should speak to a member of Jobcentre staff or get help from Action Fraud.

■ Universal Credit: Housing

Stephen Timms:

[\[277617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the liability for the whole rent of a property is reflected in the calculation of universal credit in cases where a claimant of universal credit in a joint tenancy remains after a partner leaves; and if she will make a statement.

Will Quince:

The Universal Credit regulations provide that a claimant is to be treated as liable to make rent payments - where the person who is liable to make the payments is not doing so, the payments are required in order to continue occupation, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to make other arrangements. Therefore, in the example described, it would be possible for the whole liability to be considered as part of the

UC calculation, subject to any usual restrictions such as the Local Housing Allowance or removal of the spare room subsidy.

■ **Universal Credit: Terminal Illnesses**

Lady Hermon: [\[278405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with the permanent secretary of the Department of Communities in Northern Ireland on the extension of the review of the universal credit six month rule on terminal illness to Northern Ireland.

Justin Tomlinson:

Through extensive work at both ministerial and official level, the UK government and devolved administrations continue to work closely together.

With regard the Secretary of State's announcement of an in depth evaluation of how the benefits system supports people nearing the end of their life and those with the most severe conditions, as the Honourable lady is aware, the Social Security system in Northern Ireland is wholly the responsibility of the Northern Ireland administration. However, I can confirm that my officials have been in touch with officials from the Department for Communities. Furthermore, I can assure the Honourable lady that we will remain in contact with colleagues in Northern Ireland as the evaluation progresses.

■ **Welfare Assistance Schemes**

Andrea Jenkyns: [\[276564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to (a) promote and (b) fund local welfare assistance.

Andrea Jenkyns: [\[276565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will allocate additional funding for local welfare assistance.

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[276576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of supplementing the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme with a centrally allocated fund.

Alok Sharma:

The reforms to the Social Fund in 2013 allowed local authorities in England and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales to deliver their own local provision for people who are in need of urgent help. Local authorities are best placed to decide how to promote and target flexible help to support local welfare needs. The Government has no further plans to review provision.

The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2015-16 identifies a notional amount relating to local welfare provision in each upper-tier and unitary authority's general

grant, totalling £129.6 million for England. The notional allocation for local welfare provision remains at £129.6 million in England in the Local Government Financial Settlement until 2019/20. There are no plans to ring-fence this notional allocation.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Industrial Strategy Update

Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Chris Skidmore):

[\[HCWS1762\]](#)

Our modern Industrial Strategy is a long-term plan to boost productivity and earning power for people throughout the country.

We set out to work in partnership with places to develop Local Industrial Strategies. These strategies are central to our aim of creating prosperous communities across the country. They are being developed locally and agreed with government, establishing a strong collaborative approach. They are long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the modern Industrial Strategy.

On 16 May we launched the first of these strategies – the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy. We followed this with the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy on 13 June. Now, alongside local partners, we are launching the next Local Industrial Strategies for the **Oxford-Cambridge Arc** (Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Oxfordshire and the South East Midlands) and the **West of England**.

The **Oxford-Cambridge Arc Local Industrial Strategies** mark a major contribution to the government's wider work on the Arc with their focus on driving productivity by outlining shared priorities across the region as a whole.

The four strategies set out how partners across the Arc will work to: harness the collective strength of the Arc's research base, driving greater collaboration in science and research; provide the skills needed for the future economy; maximise the benefits of new transport, energy and digital infrastructure; improve business support and finance for high growth companies and encourage foreign direct investment; and take a Natural Capital planning approach to development, contributing to the Clean Growth grand challenge mission.

- Buckinghamshire aims to grow the county's creative, space, advanced manufacturing and digital health sectors, building on the world-leading assets it already has such as the Westcott Space Cluster and Pinewood Studios;
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough aims to build an industrial ecosystem that is globally known for tackling the biggest challenges facing society, with interventions tailored to the needs of each of its sub-economies: Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough and The Fens;
- Oxfordshire plans to build on the county's world leading science and tech clusters to be a pioneer for transformative technologies and sectors, with its overarching ambition for the county to be a top three global innovation ecosystem by 2040;

- The South East Midlands' overarching ambition is to position the area as the 'Connected Core' of the Arc, a place with the right R&D assets, business environment and networks to foster, test and commercialise new innovations.

The **West of England Local Industrial Strategy** focuses on four key priorities:

- Strengthening innovation and driving productivity by: Connecting researchers, businesses and residents through a Global Centre of Innovation Excellence, and testing new products and services through a new West of England Network of Living Labs;
- Supporting all residents to contribute to and benefit from economic success by: targeting support to communities facing challenges, tailoring employment and skills support and linking everyone to jobs, training and services through better physical and digital infrastructure, that is accessible, sustainable and low carbon;
- Providing businesses with the space, networks and skills they need to boost productivity, grow and thrive by: encouraging uptake of modern technology, management and leadership practices; including more regional providers in businesses' supply chains and widening access to public procurement for small businesses; and supporting low carbon business models;
- Investing in infrastructure that reduces energy demand, lowers carbon emissions and is resilient to the impacts of climate change, supporting businesses to adopt new clean technology and energy efficiency measures.

Copies of these five Local Industrial Strategies will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office Update

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr David Lidington): [\[HCWS1772\]](#)

The UK has worked tirelessly to build our democratic system and values. In recent years, events across the world have demonstrated that sustaining and defending a flourishing democracy is increasingly important.

Therefore, the Cabinet Office is coordinating work and expertise across Government under a new Defending Democracy programme, which has been set up to:

- protect and secure UK democratic processes, systems and institutions from interference, including from cyber, personnel and physical threats;
- strengthen the integrity of UK elections;
- encourage respect for open, fair and safe democratic participation; and
- promote fact-based and open discourse, including online.

The Government has already started to roll out measures as part of this. On 5 May 2019 we announced a range of measures to crack down on intimidation, malign influence, interference and disinformation.

Following the Committee on Standards in Public Life report, the Government has published the Online Harms White Paper, committed to a new electoral offence, and will legislate to clarify 'undue influence' which includes acts or threats of violence to manipulate someone's vote. The Government recognises that rising levels of intimidation in public life can stop talented people, particularly women and those from minority backgrounds, from standing for public office. That is why we are taking action to confront it.

As part of the programme, we have also announced a plan for a consultation on electoral integrity, which will seek to address concerns around strengthen provisions which prevent UK democracy from foreign interference. This is something we would certainly invite Parliamentarians and others to engage with as it goes forward and will publish in due course.

Though this is a Government programme, we want to work with people from a broad range of perspectives to inform our work. That is why we are inviting the views of Parliamentarians, political parties, third party organisations, academics, regulators and others on the programme and its outcomes. At the same time, we will continue to consider all the recommendations already made to the Government.

By taking a broad and inclusive approach, this programme can build a consensus on the way forward to continue to defend our democracy in the future.

■ **Conflict, Stability and Security Fund Allocations 2019/20**

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr David Lidington): [\[HCWS1763\]](#)

My right honourable friend Lord Young of Cookham made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I wish to update the House on the progress of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) for the Financial Year 2018/19, as well as to announce the initial regional and thematic allocations for this financial year 2019/20.

The CSSF is a cross-government fund which uses both official development assistance (ODA) and non-ODA resources to deliver against both national security and UK Aid objectives, through security, defence, peacekeeping, peace-building and stability activity. In 2018/19, the CSSF spent £1,256.8 million against a cross-government allocation of £1,258.8 million (99.84%). A further breakdown of spend against regional and thematic allocation, by department and by discretionary and non-discretionary spend is included in the CSSF's Annual Report for 2018/19, published today.

The report includes examples of successful programmes and results as well as ways in which the CSSF has made improvements. A copy of this document is attached and has been published on Gov.uk.

FY 19/20 ALLOCATIONS

Allocation	Non-ODA	ODA	Total
Middle East North Africa	£20.0 m	£157.3 m	£177.3 m
South Asia	£17.7 m	£89.6 m	£107.3 m
Africa (sub-Saharan)	£33.6 m	£61.3 m	£94.9 m
Overseas Territories	£51.6 m	£5.1m	£56.7 m
Eastern Europe, Central Asia	£23.2 m	£28.8 m	£52.0 m
Western Balkans	£7.5m	£36.0 m	£43.5 m
Americas	£0.3 m	£11.8 m	£12.1 m
Good Governance Fund (Western Balkans and Eastern Europe)	-	£35.9 m	£35.9 m
Asia Pacific	£0.3	£5.2 m	£5.5 m
REGIONAL TOTAL	£154.2 m	£431.0 m	£585.2 m
Migration	£10.0 m	£17.5 m	£27.5 m
Counter Terrorism Programme Fund	£13.3 m	£12.6 m	£25.9 m
Multilateral Strategy	£4.0 m	£18.6 m	£22.6 m
National Security Communications	£2.5 m	-	£2.5 m
Serious and Organised Crime	£3.0 m	£12.0 m	£15.0 m
Commonwealth 18-20 Fund	-	£36.3 m	£36.3 m
THEMATIC TOTAL	£32.8 m	£97.0 m	£129.8 m
Peacekeeping	£291.0 m	£86.1 m	£377.1 m
MOD Deployed Military Activity Pool	£50.0 m	-	£50.0 m

FY 19/20 ALLOCATIONS

MOD Afghan Security – Operation TORAL	£110.0 m	-	£110.0 m
MOD Operation TOSCA – UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus	£18.1 m	-	£18.1 m
MOD UN Operations in Africa – Operation CATAN (Somalia) and Operation TRENTON (South Sudan)	£19.4 m	-	£19.4 m
Non-Discretionary TOTAL	£488.5 m	£86.1 m	£574.6 m
Corporate Delivery Support & Other (<i>this includes Stabilisation Unit, Joint Funds Unit and pilot activities</i>)	-	£16.0 m	£16.0 m
TOTAL CSSF	£675.5 m	£630.1 m	£1301.2 m

Attachments:

1. CSSF: Annual Report 2018/2019 [CSSF Annual Report.pdf]

■ Electoral Integrity Update

Minister for the Constitution (Kevin Foster):

[\[HCWS1767\]](#)

Today, the Cabinet Office published its evaluation of the 2019 voter ID pilots. The evaluation shows that a diverse range of local authorities delivered successful pilots. We know this because for the second successive year, the overwhelming majority of people who came to polling stations were able to cast their vote without difficulty.

When surveyed, people in areas testing the poll card model, and the mixed photographic and non-photographic model were significantly more confident in - and satisfied with - the process of casting their vote after polling day. Perceptions that there were sufficient safeguards in place to prevent voter fraud at polling stations increased in areas trialing photographic ID and mixed ID models.

Locally issued ID was made available, free of charge, whenever an elector was unsure that they were able to produce the required ID. In Pendle and Woking, 100 such voters made use of the provision. Woking, who were piloting voter ID for a second year, found

the number of people who did not return after being asked to present ID had decreased from 2018. Electoral administrators from Woking have inferred this may be due to local electors viewing the ID requirements as the new standard.

Alongside the Government's evaluation, the Electoral Commission will publish their evaluation on the voter ID pilots today.

Electoral fraud is an unacceptable crime that strikes at a core principle of our democracy - that everyone's vote matters. In our current system, there is undeniable potential for electoral fraud and the perception of this undermines public confidence in our democracy.

The success of both rounds of voter ID pilots shows voter ID is a reasonable and proportionate measure to prevent this. Ensuring your vote is yours, and yours alone. The introduction of this measure across Great Britain will strengthen the integrity of our electoral system and give the public confidence our elections are secure and fit for the 21st century.

Both last year's pilots and decades of experience of Northern Ireland - including at the most recent local elections - show voter ID does not have an adverse effect on election turnout or participation. We remain committed to rolling out this effective anti-fraud measure and bringing the whole of the United Kingdom into line with Northern Ireland, which has required ID to vote in elections since 1985.

Running pilots again in 2019 allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of how voter ID will work on a wider scale - and what works best for voters before national roll out. We will continue to look carefully at the evaluations from both the 2018 and 2019 pilots to help inform our next steps and shape how the final policy will look when it is introduced.

Attachments:

1. Cabinet Office Evaluation of Voter ID Pilots 2019 [2019 Voter ID Pilots Evaluation.pdf]

■ **Senior Civil Service and Senior Military Pay Awards**

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr David Lidington): [\[HCWS1771\]](#)

I am today announcing the Government's decision on pay for the senior civil service and senior military.

The Government received the Senior Salary Review Body's (SSRB) report on 2019 pay for the senior civil service and senior military on 7 June 2019. This will be presented to Parliament and published on Gov.uk.

Thanks to the government's balanced approach to public finances – getting debt falling as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low, we are able to continue our flexible approach to pay policy, allowing us to attract and retain the best people for our Civil Service and Senior Military.

We consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue modernising to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

The Government values the independent expertise and insight of the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) and takes on board the valuable advice, principles outlined, and constructive challenge to the Government's recommendations outlined in the report. The Government will follow the SSRB's recommendations, subject to a small number of differences which are set out below.

Within the current context there remains a need to take into account workforce requirements and affordability when making decisions on senior pay, as well as fairness in the approach for senior and junior grades.

Senior Civil Servants

SSRB recommendations set a 2.2% pay award with money allocated in the following priority order:

- 0.9% targeted at pay progression and anomalies
- 0.2% set aside for minima increases
- 1% increase for all SCS not benefiting from the minima increases, and those benefiting by less than 1% from the minima increases should be 'topped up' to a 1% increase (estimated cost of 0.9% of the paybill)
- 0.2% set aside to implement any specialist pay proposals.

The SSRB also recommended reductions to the maxima and commented on priority work to be undertaken for the 2020-21 pay award.

The Government accepts the SSRB's recommendations in full with the following exceptions:

- The overall figure should be limited to an average 2% increase in line with the figure contained in the delegated pay remit guidance. The reduction of 0.2% will be taken from the money set aside for specialist pay which we will not be implementing this pay year.
- The Government accepts the recommendation to decrease the maxima for all pay bands, but to delay implementation of this to next year whilst further work is undertaken on capability-based pay progression to ensure the levels set are robust and there is a clear and positive narrative for reduction.

In addition to the above action for this year's pay award, the Government commits to:

- To develop and evaluate a credible robust capability based pay progression system
- continuing to review the SCS performance management system as a priority; and
- keeping under review the impact of the interaction between Civil Service pensions and the current tax rules on recruitment and retention.

The Government will continue to engage closely with the SSRB to help develop our proposals further and invites the review body to contribute towards the further review of the Senior Civil Service pay framework including the commitments made above.

Senior Military Officers

The Government has rejected the SSRB's headline pay award recommendation, and instead will implement a 2% consolidated pay award with effect from 1 April 2019. The Government has accepted the SSRB's recommendations on senior military salaries to maintain the 10% increase to base pay on promotion from 1-star rank and to not change the current pay differentials for senior medical and dental officers.

Attachments:

1. Forty-First Annual Report on Senior Salaries 2019 [CP138.pdf]

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces' Pay Review Body Report 2019

Secretary of State for Defence (Penny Mordaunt):

[\[HCWS1770\]](#)

I am today announcing the Government's decision on pay rises for the Armed Forces.

The Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB) has made its recommendation for the 2019-20 pay award of 2.9%. We are accepting this recommendation in full (to be implemented in September salaries, backdated to 1 April 2019), and I am today laying their 2019 report.

Last year, the Government announced the largest pay rise in nearly a decade for almost a million public sector workers. This year's award builds on this and focuses attention on increasing pay for the most junior sailors, soldiers, and airmen and women, to ensure that they continue to receive a living wage. Consequently, the basic pay for other ranks on completion of their initial training will now be £20,000. This pay rise of over 6% represents an increase of £1,140 for over 7,200 newly trained sailors, soldiers, and airmen and airwomen.

The pay award also represents an annual increase of £995 in the nominal 'average' salary in the Armed Forces (which is at the Corporal level), as well as an annual increase of £769 in starting salary for an officer.

For all cohorts, this is in addition to the non-contributory defined benefit pension and access to incremental pay progression.

The AFPRB has also made recommendations on rises and changes to other targeted forms of remuneration and on increases to food and accommodation charges which have been accepted. Where applicable, these rate changes will also be backdated to 1 April 2019.

Thanks to the Government's balanced approach to public finances – getting debt falling as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low,

we are able to continue our flexible approach to pay policy, allowing us to attract and retain the best people for our Armed Forces.

We consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue modernising to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

■ **Combat Air Strategy Update**

Secretary of State for Defence (Penny Mordaunt):

[\[HCWS1778\]](#)

The Combat Air Strategy was launched a year ago on the opening day of the Farnborough Airshow, the birth place of aviation. It re-affirmed the Government's commitment to the Combat Air sector, laying out a clear vision for our nation to remain at the leading edge of this sector and providing a clear roadmap to achieve this.

On publication of the strategy, my right hon. Friend, the then Secretary of State for Defence, made a commitment to update the House annually on implementation of the strategy and the programmes it launched. Today I provide this update.

It is worth reflecting on the strategy and its key themes. First, it recognised the strength of our industry and its contribution to the well-being of our nation. This sector is economically, strategically important and is enables sovereign decision-making on where and how to deploy our military capability. Secondly, it makes clear that partnering with like-minded allies is the best means to deliver our collective objectives. The update will therefore cover both themes – domestic developments, as well as international.

Domestic Update

Alongside the launch of the strategy, the Department re-affirmed our commitment to the approximately £2 billion Future Combat Air System Technology Initiative (FCAS TI). This initiative will mature the technologies needed for our future combat air systems and crucially, develop key skills across both Government and industry. The central pillar of FCAS TI is 'Team Tempest', a co-funded partnership between Government and our industry partners. Over the last year this partnership has driven a step change in relationships and behaviours between Government and industry by aligning incentives, sharing costs and benefits and creating common interest in pace and agility. The team is on track to delivering 17 European-firsts and 7-world firsts. The first of these has already been achieved – the embedding of an electrical starter generator by Rolls-Royce within the main body of a powerful military aircraft engine. This increases the power density and reduces the complexity of future aircraft engines, resulting in more efficient engine designs and is fully exploitable to Rolls-Royce's multi-billion pound civil business. This technology will continue to be matured in the coming years, leading to a fully integrated novel power and propulsion system.

This partnership, and the private and public funding underpinning it, already supports over 1,000 jobs, many of them in high-end design, across the breadth of the country, from BAE Systems in Lancashire, to Rolls-Royce in Bristol and to Leonardo in Edinburgh and Luton. This number is set to rise to 1,800 by the end of this year.

The strategy recognised that there is significant capability residing in UK companies of all sizes and therefore, we are engaging with companies beyond our 'Team Tempest' partners. My right hon. Friend, the Minister for Defence Procurement hosted an Industry Engagement Day on the 19 March at Farnborough where 180 companies representing a wide range of capabilities and sizes, received briefs on the technologies being matured by 'Team Tempest' and the opportunities that exist for further collaboration. I am pleased to announce that the 'Team Tempest' partners have subsequently engaged an additional 500 companies and so far, have let over 120 sub-contracts in support of Team Tempest activities.

The Combat Air Sector is likely to be a key driver in new technologies and skills in areas such as automation, machine learning, advanced manufacturing and big data which will have broader benefit to the economy. Crucial to the long-term sustainability of this sector is ensuring that the skills needed in the future are identified, the workforce trained and that ultimately these skills are transferred to the next generation. Team Tempest has therefore established a dedicated STEM engagement team to inspire young people to be involved in this sector. This approach, along with the assurance provided by the strategy has resulted in record numbers of young people joining the workforce. This year, Leonardo MW will recruit 104 graduates and 62 apprentices, with the majority planned to be involved in Team Tempest activities. Similarly, BAE Systems is planning to recruit approximately 700 apprentices and 300 graduates to grow the percentage (currently 10%) of their Team Tempest workforce that are graduates and apprentices.

Working closely with officials from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Department has launched a skills index to monitor the health of industrial and government skills critical to the delivery of our national objectives. Industry have provided their inputs and we are analysing the results and intend to present our findings in September. The skills index will be used to inform and measure the success of interventions such as FCAS TI, to ensure the health of the sector.

International Update

On F-35, in February, the avionic and aircraft component repair hub in North Wales was awarded a second major assignment of work worth some £500 million by the US Government. This will create hundreds of additional jobs in the UK and was the result of working closely with industry to deliver a national campaign approach.

On Typhoon, the strategy confirmed our commitment to continue to invest in this remarkable platform. In June, NETMA, on behalf of the UK and the other European Partner Nations, awarded a €54 million contract for the Typhoon Long Term Evolution study to industry which will explore how to maximise Typhoon's capability for this decade and beyond.

The FCAS TI programme is maturing technologies for national usage, as well with our international partners. We are contracting our industry to work with their French counterparts on technologies that would maximise interoperability of our current and future platforms, recognising that, as currently envisioned, the Franco-German Système de Combat Aérien Futur (SCAF) acquisition programme does not meet the objectives laid out in our strategy. We are also investing in the development of the next generation Lift Fan for the F-35B, to reduce weight and improve the overall effectiveness of this world beating platform.

Our next generation acquisition programme will define and deliver the capabilities required when the backbone of the RAF, the Typhoon, leaves service. The team delivering this is working at pace, having within a few months of forming, delivered the Strategic Outline (Business) Case, which confirmed acquisition options to deliver our future combat air capability, which are now being explored and tested with potential international partners.

Despite challenging international dynamics, the Department has made great strides in our discussions with potential partners. With the support of wider Government (most notably officials from the FCO and DIT) and our industry, we have launched feasibility studies with potential partners.

We have discovered that there is a great appetite to collaborate with us. We offer a unique partnering approach, recognising the need to deliver ours and our partners' benefits together, learning from our rich history of collaboration. This approach provides the firm leadership needed and appears to be an attractive alternative to the traditional, dominant-junior partner relationships.

Last week I signed a Memorandum of Understanding with my Swedish counterpart on this topic. This marks a significant step in aligning our nations, recognising both nations have highly capable Combat Air sectors. We will work together to mutually develop our understanding of the systems required to deliver our future requirements and how best to develop, deliver and ultimately support them. Beyond Sweden, we are furthering our engagement with other potential partners and I aim to sign similar arrangements over the next year.

From progress to date, we believe that Europe can afford two separate Combat Air programmes. We are investing in technologies, such as open systems architectures and advanced design and manufacturing techniques which offer significant reductions to the time and cost of design, manufacture, in-service upgrades and modifications. We are also ensuring that collaboration will be with partners whose strategic objectives align with our own, including the determination to reduce costs. We recognise that in an effective and efficient collaboration, there will be an optimum number of partners, which may include those outside of Europe.

The strategy's next major steps are to continue the Concept Phase until December 2020, gathering evidence on the acquisition options presented and then submit the Outline Business Case. This will select the preferred acquisition route and concept to be taken forward into the assessment phase.

■ Support for Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans

Secretary of State for Defence (Penny Mordaunt):

[\[HCWS1784\]](#)

Our Armed Forces do an incredible job to protect us and our nation. They endure great hardships and separation from their loved ones, and they place themselves in harm's way and bear the physical and mental scars of traumatic experiences. They are prepared to risk their lives for us. We owe them a huge debt, and we also owe them justice and fairness.

The Government is clear that the Armed Forces are not above the law. It is right that whenever the Armed Forces embark on operations outside of the UK our people and their chain of command are bound to abide by the criminal law of England and Wales, as well as international humanitarian law as set out in the Geneva Conventions. Our service men and women are required to conform to the highest standards of personal behaviour and conduct. And when they fall short they must be held to account. Justice must be served.

The Government believes that, other than in exceptional circumstances, the conclusion of investigations into allegations made against members of the Armed Forces should draw a line – addressing the uncertainty faced by Armed Forces personnel concerned about the prospect of re-investigation and prosecution many years after the event. But the law as it stands cannot allow that line to be drawn with any confidence. That is why the Government believes change is needed to afford Armed Forces personnel and veterans greater protection from the threat of prosecution for alleged historical offences committed in the course of duty outside the UK. Armed Forces personnel and veterans should not be left with the threat of prosecution hanging over their heads for years to come, in circumstances where their actions have been investigated at the time.

Similar issues arise in relation to civil litigation. Military operations in Iraq resulted in litigation against the Ministry of Defence on an industrial scale: nearly 1,000 claims seeking compensation for personal injury or death (most of which also sought compensation for human rights violations), and approximately 1,400 judicial review claims seeking an European Convention on Human Rights-compliant investigation and compensation. Although the law does provide for a time limit in such cases, the Courts are currently given broad discretion as to whether to enforce that limit. The effect is that claims have routinely been brought late, with huge numbers of compensation claims permitted to proceed long after the relevant time limit.

The later a claim is brought, especially in respect of allegations emanating from a war zone, the harder it is to assess in a fair and proportionate manner. Records may no longer be sufficiently detailed to be able to prove or disprove specific allegations, and the memories of those involved in incidents fade over time. In such circumstances, the Government may have to choose between settling claims – the merits of which have not been established – or putting Armed Forces personnel and veterans through the ordeal of giving evidence on the Ministry of Defence's behalf. This is unfair to our personnel and to the taxpayer, who must pay the associated legal costs.

All of this goes to the heart of what is known as 'lawfare' – the judicialisation of war. And the risks and impacts of lawfare are clear: in terms of the financial costs; the stress and

strain placed on veterans; the potential impact on the morale of serving personnel and our ability to recruit future Armed Forces personnel; and the risk that decisions taken on operations may be corrupted in order to avoid the possibility of legal proceedings many years in the future – the “chilling effect” feared by military commanders.

This is why I announced on 21st May (HCWS 1575) my plans to take forward work to address this important and concerning issue. I am pleased to be able to announce today the launch of a public consultation on legal protections measures for the Armed Forces and veterans.

The consultation document contains proposed measures which we believe can be enacted in a manner which is consistent with our obligations under domestic and international law, while providing genuine benefits to our personnel:

- First, a proposal to legislate for a presumption against prosecution of current or former Armed Forces personnel for alleged offences committed in the course of duty outside the UK more than ten years ago. This measure would in effect raise the threshold to be applied by prosecutors when considering whether a prosecution is genuinely in the public interest in such cases. Two different options are set out in the consultation document for how this measure could be enacted.

- And secondly, a proposal to ensure that going forward, the law reflects the unique pressures faced by Armed Forces personnel while deployed on operations outside the UK, through the creation of a new partial defence to murder. This would be available to current and former Armed Forces personnel who caused a death in the course of duty outside the UK through using more force than strictly necessary for the purposes of self-defence, providing that the initial decision to use force was justified. If convicted, the defence would reduce a conviction for murder to manslaughter.

As part of the consultation, we are also seeking views on a proposal to restrict the Court's discretion to extend the normal time limit for bringing civil claims for personal injury and/or death in relation to historical events outside of the UK.

We hope that the proposals set out in the consultation will help ensure that our Armed Forces receive the justice and fairness that they are owed. And, through the consultation, we hope to test and refine what is proposed with the aim of bringing forward legislation as soon as possible.

■ UN Mission Update

Secretary of State for Defence (Penny Mordaunt):

[\[HCWS1779\]](#)

Reflecting our continued commitment to multilateralism and international peace and security, the UK continues to support increased engagement in the Sahel under the Government's new strategic approach to Africa.

We have committed to reinforcing our support for countries on the front line of instability, including stepping up to the UK's role in tackling the underlying causes of poverty and conflict in Mali and the wider Sahel region (Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mauritania).

I therefore wish to announce to the House the intention to expand the UK's contribution to The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) by deploying a Long-Range Reconnaissance Task Group of 250 personnel in 2020. The UK will support the Mission in implementing its mandated tasks - to support the implementation of the peace Agreement, promote stability in central Mali and to protect civilians, including supporting the rights of women and children.

The UK's intent is to provide the UN with high-quality forces to missions where their capabilities are most in demand. The UK contribution will provide improved situational awareness and information provision that will help the Mission – military and civilian – in support of the mandate, to progress towards a long-term and sustainable peace in Mali. This will signal a significant shift in the UK's approach to peacekeeping as we bridge the gap between those who pay and those who deliver by providing a highly employable, highly capable task force.

This announcement is a significant uplift from the two military staff officers the UK currently contributes to MINUSMA HQ, and the funding of a civilian role to support the UN's work on Sahel issues. It also demonstrates a continued commitment to UN peacekeeping following the completion of our commitment in 2020 to the UN mission in South Sudan.

The UK is committed to supporting the international community in combating instability in Mali, as well as strengthening our wider military engagement across the Sahel region, and is proud to do so under the auspices of the United Nations.

EDUCATION

■ Teachers Update

The Secretary of State for Education (Mr Damian Hinds):

[\[HCWS1766\]](#)

The School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) has recommended a 2.75% uplift to the minima and maxima of all pay ranges and allowances in the national pay framework, which is due to be implemented in Autumn 2019.

Last year, the government announced the largest pay rise in nearly a decade for almost a million public sector workers. Building on this, this year I have decided to accept in full the STRB's recommendations for a 2.75% uplift to the minima and maxima of all pay ranges and allowances.

The pay award will both raise starting salaries and increase the competitiveness of the pay framework. As a result, minimum starting salaries for classroom teachers will see an increase between £652 (Rest of England) and £816 (Inner London), and classroom teachers at the top of the main pay range could see an increase between £963 and £1,110. For more experienced classroom teachers at the top of the upper pay range, it could mean an increase of between £1,084 and £1,327.

As a result, the pay ranges for all teachers and leaders will see an uplift. Thanks to the flexible performance-based pay system we have, schools can choose to give teachers and leaders a higher pay rise where this is appropriate to their local context and budget

As this award is more than the 2% we assessed was affordable in our evidence to the STRB, I will invest a further £105 million into the existing Teachers' Pay Grant this financial year. This is on top of the £321 million funding that schools are already receiving through the Teachers' Pay Grant in 2019-20.

Last year, we specifically targeted early career pay because of the growing retention challenges within the first 5 years of a teacher's career. The STRB has recognised the improvements we have made to the unqualified and main pay ranges following the 2% uplift to the main pay range in 2017 and 3.5% uplift to both in 2018.

It is now vitally important to increase the competitiveness of the pay framework and help address the teacher supply challenges across the workforce. This year's pay award will also support the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy, which I published in January this year. The strategy underpins the Early Career Framework, which provides a fully funded 2-year package of support for all early career teachers.

In addition to their pay, teachers continue to benefit from defined benefit pensions, which are amongst the most generous available.

Thanks to the government's balanced approach to public finances – getting debt to fall as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low – we are able to continue our flexible approach to pay policy, allowing us to attract and retain the best people for our schools.

We consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue to modernise to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

I am grateful for the in-depth considerations the STRB has given in concluding their report and recommendations for the 2019 teachers' pay award.

I will deposit in the House libraries a full list of the recommendations and my proposed approach for all pay and allowance ranges.

My officials will write to all of the statutory consultees involved in the STRB's 29th remit and invite them to contribute to a consultation on my response to these recommendations and on a revised School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and Pay Order. The consultation will last for 8 weeks.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**Foreign Affairs Council – 15 July 2019****The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr Jeremy Hunt):**
[[HCWS1773](#)]

I attended the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on 15 July. It was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Brussels.

Current Affairs

The High Representative and Foreign Ministers discussed the most pressing issues on the international agenda. This included Turkey's current drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Foreign Ministers also discussed the recent developments in Sudan. Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto reported on his visit to the region on behalf of the EU. Ministers noted that the agreement reached between the Transitional Military Council and Forces for Freedom and Change on 11 July was an important breakthrough, and underlined the importance of supporting the civilian transition, including through additional financial support.

Ministers also touched on Venezuela, following the visit of Special Adviser Enrique Iglesias to Caracas on 7-10 July. They reiterated the EU's support for a political solution through the Oslo process, while underlining strong concerns over the human rights situation following the report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet.

The High Representative also covered the EU-Ukraine Summit, the 5th anniversary of the downing of MH17, her recent visit to the Sahel region (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger) and the outcome of the fifth EU-G5 Sahel Ministerial meeting in Ouagadougou (9 July).

Iran

I briefed the Council on my recent engagement on Iran. The Council discussed the tense situation in the Gulf region and recent announcements and steps by Tehran to reduce its implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Ministers referred to ways of reducing the ongoing risk of military escalation and reiterated the EU's regret at the decision by the US to re-impose sanctions on Iran.

Ministers also took stock of ongoing EU efforts to enable the continuation of legitimate trade with Iran, including through the special purpose vehicle "INSTEX" which is now operational. They also urged Iran to reverse the steps taken and reaffirmed that the EU's commitment to the nuclear deal depended on full compliance by Iran.

Iraq

The High Representative spoke to Ministers about her visit to Bagdad on 13-14 July. Foreign Ministers took stock of developments in Iraq and discussed how the EU could provide further support.

Central African Republic

Ministers reflected on how the EU could strengthen its support to encourage further implementation of the peace agreement signed in Bangui on 6 February 2019. They agreed to start working on plans for a possible civilian Common Security and Defence Policy mission.

External Aspects of Migration

Ministers agreed that efforts to address migration should be stepped up. They noted that greater financial resources were needed, especially for the EU Trust Fund for Africa. Ministers also discussed the importance of accelerating resettlement of persons needing international protection and making progress on the disembarkation of migrants rescued at sea.

Lunch with the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Moldova Nicolae Popescu

Foreign Ministers conveyed their support, as well as their expectations, on the implementation of reforms related to the Association Agreement, and their willingness to resume conditional EU financial support.

Council Conclusions

The Council agreed a number of measures:

- The Council adopted conclusions on Iraq.
- The Council adopted conclusions on Turkish drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean.
- The Council adopted conclusions on the EU's priorities at the 74th UN General Assembly.
- A decision was adopted by the Council on sanctions against North Korea following the annual review.
- The Council authorised the opening of negotiations on a joint political declaration of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Union on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation.
- The Council adopted the EU's position in view of the second EU-Cuba Joint Council that will take place on 9 September in Havana.
- The Council approved the update of the military requirements for military mobility within and beyond the EU.
- The Council approved the adoption of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) statement on aviation partnership.
- The Council approved the adoption of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) statement on "Promoting women, peace and security at the ASEAN Regional Forum".
- The Council transposed an amendment adopted by the UN concerning one person listed under the South Sudan sanctions framework.

- The Council adopted the position to be taken on behalf of the EU in the Joint Committee established by the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the EU and the Philippines.
- The Council adopted the position to be taken by the EU in the Cote d'Ivoire-EU EPA Committee regarding adoption of Protocol 1 concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods for administrative cooperation (rules of origin).
- The Council endorsed the text of six Working Papers and one Information paper to be submitted by Finland on behalf of the European Union and its Member States to the 40th Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).
- The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to enter into negotiations on the modernisation of the Charter Treaty (10738/19). The Council also adopted negotiating directives (10745/19 ADD 1). In parallel, the representatives of the governments of the member states that are parties to the Energy Charter Treaty adopted a decision authorising the Commission to enter into negotiations for the elements falling under the competence of the Member States.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care (Seema Kennedy): [\[HCWS1777\]](#)

I am delighted to be able to announce a land mark 5-year settlement for the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework. This deal will transform the role of community pharmacy and embed them as the first port of call for minor illness and health advice in England.

Every day, in England there are around 1.6 million visits to community pharmacies. No appointment is necessary, and a person does not need to be registered with a pharmacy to benefit from their support or advice. The potential for community pharmacies to play a greater role across a wide range of health priorities is evident.

Over the last few months we have worked with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) to develop a future vision for community pharmacy and expand their role across three key areas: prevention, urgent care and medicines safety.

We have agreed a settlement that will now translate this vision into practice and begin to transform the role of community pharmacy. It will see community pharmacies better utilised and integrated within the primary medical and community services we are working to deliver.

This agreement will come into effect from October 2019 and will mark the start of a series of developments that will continue over the course of the settlement period, through to 2024.

We will continue to work with the PSNC, and NHS England and Improvement to further deliver this programme of work in partnership.

■ **Government response to the 32nd report of the NHS Pay Review Body**

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock): [\[HCWS1764\]](#)

I am responding on behalf of my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister to the 32nd Report of the NHS Pay review Body (NHSPRB). The report has been laid before Parliament today (Cm 147). Copies of the report are available to hon Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

This is the second year of the three-year Agenda for Change pay and contract reform deal (2018/2019 to 2020/2021), the NHSPRB was asked therefore not to make any pay recommendations for 2019/2020.

The Government welcomes the 32nd report of the NHSPRB and is grateful to the Chair and members for all their work and helpful observations, on effective workforce planning and how best to support the development of the NHS workforce.

We are pleased that their observations broadly reflect the themes published in the Interim People Plan and will help inform the upcoming final People Plan.

■ **Government response to the 47th report of the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration**

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock): [\[HCWS1765\]](#)

I am responding on behalf of my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister to the 47th Report of the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB). The report has been laid before Parliament today (Cm148) and a copy is attached. I am grateful to the Chair and members of the DDRB for their report.

The government is today announcing pay rises for Doctors and Dentists working across the NHS.

Building on our ambition to make the NHS the Best Place to Work, as set out in the NHS Interim People Plan, this is a pay rise that recognises the hard work and dedication of Doctors and Dentists and puts forward an approach for a potential multi-year deal with contract reform for specialty and associate specialist (SAS) doctors to enhance recruitment, retention, morale and productivity for this group.

We have recently agreed multi-year deals for both non-medical Agenda for Change staff and Doctors and Dentists in training and this is part of our approach to make the NHS the best employer in the world whilst supporting the NHS workforce to deliver excellent patient care.

Thanks to the government's balanced approach to public finances – getting debt falling as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low, we are able to continue our flexible approach to pay policy, allowing us to attract and retain the best people for our hospitals.

We consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue modernising to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

This pay rise represents one of the biggest uplifts in pay for medical staff for over a decade. In addition to their pay, medical staff continue to benefit from defined benefit pensions, which are amongst the most generous available.

Today's pay award is worth:

- Between £1,940 and £2,630 for consultants
- Between £970 and £1,820 for Specialty Doctors
- Between £1,360 and £2,250 for Associate Specialists

The DDRB were asked not to make a pay recommendation for General Medical Practitioners as this is the first year of the recently announced five-year contract deal. As part of this agreement, core general practice funding will increase by £978 million per year by 2023/24 providing greater certainty for GMPs to plan ahead.

The Government's response to the DDRB recommendations takes account of affordability in the context of the NHS Long Term Plan and the 2019 Spending Review. Given the NHS budget is now set for the next five years, there is a direct trade-off between pay and staff numbers and our response takes account of this trade-off.

The Government's response is as follows:

Consultants

- A 2.5% general uplift in pay backdated to April 2019.
- the value of both national and old style local clinical excellence awards (CEAs) to be frozen

Specialty Doctors (new grade 2008) and Associate Specialist (closed grade) (SAS doctors)

The government takes note of the DDRB's comments on the particular issues of morale and motivation in relation to this group that led to their pay recommendation. We agree that investment in raising the profile and attractiveness of SAS doctor roles is important and we are committing to negotiations on a multi-year pay agreement, incorporating contract reform for SAS doctors. SAS doctors will receive

- A 2.5% general uplift in pay backdated to April 2019.
- The potential for an additional 1%, on top of the 2.5% already paid to be added to pay in 2020/21 conditional on contract reform, through a multi-year agreement.

Doctors and dentists in training

On 27 June the government announced that Junior Doctors had overwhelmingly backed a four year deal incorporating pay increases and improved flexibility and working conditions. This brings to an end the junior doctors dispute and the British Medical Association (BMA) and NHS Employers have now collectively agreed the amended Junior Doctor Contract.

The four year deal guarantees pay increases of 2% per annum for the next four years and there will in addition be around £90m of investment into the contract including a new pay point for the most senior doctors in training, an allowance for those working less than full time to support flexible working and increased pay for those working the most weekends or whose shifts end in the early hours of the morning. Taken alongside an 8.2% four year pay rise, this will give junior doctors and current medical students the support they fully deserve.

General Dental Practitioners

- A 2.5% general uplift in the pay element of their contract backdated to April 2019.

General Medical Practitioner Trainers and Appraisers

- A 2.5% increase in full to the value of the GMP trainers grant and the GMP appraisers' grant.

Attachments:

1. Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration [CCS207_CCS0419070440-001_DDRB_Web Accessible.pdf published DDRB.pdf]

HOME OFFICE

■ **Announcement of the reappointment of the Chair of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD)**

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid Javid): [\[HCWS1781\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that Dr Owen Bowden-Jones has been reappointed to the ACMD both as a member and as its Chair. This re-appointment is for a 3-year term, beginning on 1st January 2020. Dr Bowden-Jones is an experienced clinician who provides assessment and treatment for people experiencing harms from emerging problem drugs.

The ACMD was established under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and provides advice to Government on issues related to the harms of drugs. It also has a statutory role under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

■ **Police Remuneration Review Body 2019 Government Response**

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid Javid): [\[HCWS1769\]](#)

The fifth annual report of the Police Remuneration Review Body was published today. In line with our letter setting the Body's remit it has made recommendations on pay and allowances for police officers at all ranks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The government has considered the recommendations of the report insofar as they relate to

police officers in England and Wales, which the Home Office is responsible for. We wish to express thanks to the Chair and members of the Review Body for their work on the report and pay recommendations.

Last year, the government announced the largest pay rise in nearly a decade for almost a million public sector workers. Building on this, this year the government has accepted in full the recommendations of the PRRB that a consolidated increase of 2.5% should be awarded to all ranks at all pay points. It has also accepted a corresponding increase to London Weighting and the Dog Handlers' Allowance and an increase in the on-call allowance for officers in the federated ranks from £15 to £20 for each 24-hour period on-call. These will be implemented with effect from 1 September 2019.

We asked the PRRB to review the National Police Chiefs' Council's proposals for progression pay for police apprentices. The PRRB recommended that subject to further review in the next pay round, no change is made to the current arrangements for apprentice progression. The government has accepted this recommendation.

Thanks to the government's balanced approach to public finances – getting debt falling as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low – we are able to continue our flexible approach to pay policy, allowing us to attract and retain the best people for our police forces.

We consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future. In addition to their pay, police officers continue to benefit from defined benefit pensions, which are amongst the most generous available.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue modernising to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

The Police Remuneration Review Body Report (CP 139) has been laid before Parliament and copies are available in the Vote Office and on GOV.UK

■ **Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (1 March 2019 to 31 May 2019)**

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid Javid): [\[HCWS1780\]](#)

Section 19(1) of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011 (the Act) requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant three-month period on the exercise of his TPIM powers under the Act during that period.

The level of information provided will always be subject to slight variations based on operational advice.

TPIM NOTICES IN FORCE (AS OF 31 MAY 2019)	3
TPIM notices in respect of British citizens (as of 31 May 2019)	3
TPIM notices extended (during the reporting period)	0
TPIM notices revoked (during the reporting period)	1
TPIM notices revived (during the reporting period)	0
Variations made to measures specified in TPIM notices (during the reporting period)	4
Applications to vary measures specified in TPIM notices refused (during the reporting period)	0
The number of current subjects relocated under TPIM legislation (as of 28 February 2019)	1

The TPIM Review Group (TRG) keeps every TPIM notice under regular and formal review. The second quarter TRG meetings took place on 4 and 13 June 2019.

On 15 March 2019 an individual was convicted for seven breaches of his TPIM notice and was sentenced to 16 months imprisonment.

On 22 March 2019 the trial of an individual charged with breaching his TPIM notice was discontinued as the jury could not reach a majority verdict. The CPS elected not to seek a re-trial as it was assessed not to be in the public interest.

On 13 May 2019 an individual was sentenced for one breach of his TPIM notice. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment (suspended for two years), a 12 hour curfew to be observed for 12 months, 150 hours unpaid work, 18 months attendance at an extremist risk guidance and identity help programme and a victim surcharge and collection order.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Communities update**

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire):

[\[HCWS1786\]](#)

On Saturday 20th July I published ‘*By deeds and their results: How we will strengthen our communities and nation*’.

The document sets out the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s vision for stronger communities, explaining why communities matter, what strong communities look like, and what government and partners can do to support their creation.

It also signals the intention that the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government work with other government departments to champion the importance of communities in every aspect of society, and focus its future work on building stronger communities across the country.

When communities are strong, society is strong. Communities can improve health and wellbeing, enable economic prosperity, help improve the local environment, and provide support in times of crisis. But eight years on from the Localism Act – the last piece of legislation focused on supporting communities – the challenges facing communities have evolved, and the time is right to assess and change the way in which government can support communities. This is particularly necessary given the long-term divisions which have been exposed following the vote on the UK’s future membership of the European Union.

‘*By deeds and their results*’ commits the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to several actions, including:

- Holding a national conversation with communities across England about their view of who we are as a nation, their vision for the future of their community and our country, and what local and national government can and should be doing to support their community to thrive. We want government and all public bodies to renew their understanding of their role in building stronger communities – this should be informed by direct conversations with people, in partnership with our existing local democratic institutions. The conversation will commence following the UK’s formal departure from the European Union.
- Establishing a series of Civic Deal pilots to test how government put into practice the principles in *By deeds and their results*. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will work jointly with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on these pilots. We will work with each pilot to consider how government activities can be better aligned and co-ordinated to support communities in identifying and delivering their own priorities.
- Publishing a Communities White Paper to renew government’s focus on building stronger communities across England. This will consider, for example, how

community rights are strengthened, promoted and made easier to take up; how funding for communities can be more simplified, integrated and less risk averse; and how communities can best shape local services and decision-making more broadly. The final scope of the White Paper will be developed in partnership with communities, including through the national conversation and Civic Deal pilots.

By deeds and their results is underpinned by four pillars, that will inform all work to strengthen communities across our department:

1. Trust, connectedness and local pride;
2. Active citizenship and local control;
3. Shared community spaces;
4. Shared prosperity, with no community left behind.

This publication represents the next step in an ongoing conversation with communities that will shape the department's future activity. By working in partnership with all stakeholders – including other government departments, councils, businesses, faith groups and civil society organisations – we can create an environment that supports and enables stronger communities to flourish.

■ Housing update

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire):

[\[HCWS1787\]](#)

The housing landscape has fundamentally changed since the introduction of the Housing Act 1988 – an Act that covers both the social and the private rented sector, as well as providing the tenure framework for a number of other landlords. With one in five households now in the private rented sector, with more families with children and older people renting their homes, it is time for a generational change to renting which better meets the needs of this important market.

Yesterday therefore, my Department launched a number of consultations, which will take forward this Government's commitment to protect tenants, support landlords, drive up standards in the rental sector and make the housing market fairer for everyone.

Cracking down on rogue landlords

The Government is determined that those renting their homes are not forced into inadequate or unsafe housing. The majority of landlords and property agents in the private rented sector provide decent and well-managed accommodation, but there is a small number who knowingly flout their legal obligations and rent out substandard accommodation. These few criminals account for a disproportionate amount of the 25% of private rented homes which are non-decent.

The Prime Minister committed to widen access to information on the database of rogue landlords and property agents to tenants. In its current form, the database is viewable only to local authorities. It is targeted at the most serious and prolific criminals, those who have been convicted of specified banning order offences such as failure to make a

property habitable when instructed by the local authority, through to serious crimes such as specified drug and sexual offences.

Our consultation, '*Rogue Landlord Database Reform: Widening Access and Considering the Scope of the Database of Rogue Landlords and Property Agents*', seeks views on how to open-up the database so tenants can know more about the landlord who they plan to, from or already rent from. We also want to consider the scope of the database, this consultation therefore also seeks views on whether the database should cover a wider range of relevant criminal, civil and housing regulation breaches to help further raise standards across the sector.

Abolishing section 21 'no-fault' evictions and supporting landlords to reclaim their property

On 15 April, I announced plans to abolish section 21 of the Housing Act 1988, putting an end to so-called 'no fault' evictions and giving tenants the certainty that they will not be asked to leave their home without a valid reason.

The Government wants to deliver a balanced and effective tenancy regime that is fair to both landlords and tenants and yesterday published '*A New Deal for Renting: resetting the balance of rights and responsibilities between landlords and tenants*'. This consultation seeks views on how tenancies should operate in future. It is the first step in a journey that will deliver on our commitment to bring greater fairness and transparency to tenants and ensure they have the security they need to plan for the future.

The consultation also proposes three new grounds and asks for views on the current grounds for eviction and how they can be improved. Landlords should have confidence that they will be able to regain possession of their property if they need to, and the consultation further explores whether the courts could use the accelerated procedure for dealing with possession order applications under some or all of the mandatory grounds in section 8 of the Housing Act 1988.

Taken together, the reforms proposed across these two consultations will build on government action to drive up standards across the sector, deliver the rental sector the country deserves and needs, and create a housing market that works for everyone.

Protecting residents of park homes

Finally, we have also published a consultation seeking views on how the fit and proper person test for park homes sites will work in practice. In the Government response to the review of park homes legislation, we committed to introducing the test subject to a technical consultation to ensure the effective operation of the test. When implemented, the test will strengthen local authorities' powers to target the worst offenders and remove unscrupulous and criminal site operators from the park homes sector.

I am making a copy of all consultations available in the Library.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Response to the consultation on UK Export Finance's Foreign Content policy**

Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade (Dr Liam Fox): [\[HCWS1761\]](#)

The Government will today publish the response to the consultation on UK Export Finance's (UKEF) Foreign Content policy. It sets out the approach UKEF will take to determine the level of non-UK goods, services and intangible assets in transaction supported by UKEF.

The purpose of the new approach is to ensure that UKEF's support is flexible and meets the needs of UK exporters to help them win business overseas, fulfilling UKEF's mission to ensure that no viable UK export fails for lack of finance or insurance from the private sector, while operating at no net cost to the taxpayer.

The consultation, published in April 2019, was part of UKEF's commitment in the Government's Export Strategy to review its products and policies to ensure they reflect the full breadth of its capability and the needs of business. The consultation received 28 responses, which were largely supportive of the approach proposed by Government in the consultation and reinforced the need for its foreign content policy to adapt to increasingly globalised supply chains.

The new policy ensures that UKEF will implement a principles-based approach to Foreign Content, recognising the full contribution of the UK supply chain. This approach will supplement UKEF's current UK content requirement, making it easier for UKEF to consider support for scenarios which are outside of a specific export contract, but which nevertheless are conducive to supporting and developing UK exports.

This approach will broaden the availability of UKEF support for all sectors including those to which it has not traditionally provided support. To align with this expectation, UKEF will be updating its definitions to clarify UKEF's ability to support intangible assets.

A copy of the consultation response will be placed in the libraries of the House.

JUSTICE

■ **Enforcement Update**

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS1776\]](#)

Further to a Statement made by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Lucy Frazer MP, on 26 November 2018, I wanted to update the House on the Ministry of Justice's review of the implementation of the enforcement agent reforms contained in the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007. These reforms, which came into force in 2014, aimed to provide protection to debtors from the aggressive pursuit of their debt from enforcement agents, whilst balancing this against the need for effective enforcement.

Our review was launched with a call for evidence on 26 November 2018 that ran to 17 February 2019. This sought to provide further information on the operation of the reforms following the Government's publication of the first post-implementation review on 2 April 2018. This review found that the reforms had led to many positive changes, including improved transparency and consistency, both in terms of the enforcement process and the fees charged by enforcement agents. The report noted, however, that some enforcement agents were still perceived to be acting aggressively and not complying with the new rules.

We received nearly 300 responses to the call for evidence from: individuals who have been visited by enforcement agents; enforcement agents, firms and trade associations; local authorities and other creditors; advice organisations and charities; MPs and members of the judiciary.

I am grateful to the Justice Committee for conducting an inquiry into this important issue. We are carefully considering its recommendations for further reform. We will provide a full response to the report and to our call for evidence, following further engagement with stakeholders over the summer.

Based on their data, civil enforcement agents now enforce around 3 million civil cases each year. Creditors need an effective, sustainable way to ensure that they receive the money owed to them. At the same time, the government must ensure that those in debt, especially the vulnerable, including those with mental health issues, are treated fairly and given the protections they deserve.

Enforcement agents carry out an important job in often very challenging circumstances.

Many firms have made considerable efforts to make sure that they are treating those in debt fairly, but complaints continue. All enforcement agents must operate to the same high standards. So, we will be pushing forward with a reform package to make sure that people do not face aggressive action from enforcement agents and to improve trust in the industry as a whole.

One area of our focus will be how people can make complaints against enforcement agents. Data submitted to our call for evidence has shown that the volume of complaints made about enforcement agents is much lower than would be expected relative to the volume of debts enforced, and compared to similar industries. Whilst this may in part be due to improvements in the sector, we believe that there are a number of barriers in the current complaints system that may deter people from making a complaint. We will look to address these with enforcement agents and others with a view to making the complaints system more effective, transparent and independent.

We are also considering what role independent regulation of enforcement agents could potentially play in ensuring that vulnerable debtors are treated fairly. We believe that regulation of this sector could be strengthened but we do not yet have a firm view on the form this should take. It is an issue that would benefit from further discussions with stakeholders. We are clear that any further regulation must be effective, proportionate and sustainable.

Alongside considering these reforms, we wish to bring quicker changes to the system to improve how enforcement agents operate. Our call for evidence and the Justice Committee's inquiry found strong evidence that body-worn cameras are important in protecting both those in debt and enforcement agents, raising standards in the industry and enabling complaints to be properly investigated. We will be taking forward work to make use of body-worn cameras mandatory for all private enforcement agents and to produce best practice guidance.

Under the current system, all enforcement agents have to demonstrate knowledge of the law, customer care, dealing with conflict situations and identifying vulnerable situations. We believe that there is a good case, however, to look again at the guidance and requirements for how enforcement agents interact with those in debt, with a view to addressing any unfair treatment of vulnerable people, including those with mental health issues.

The Ministry of Justice proposes to engage with the enforcement industry, debt advice agencies, creditors and others on these and other issues over the summer before responding in full to its call for evidence and the Justice Committee report. The response will include a full analysis of the variety of evidence submitted to the review and set out proposals for reform to enhance the regulation of enforcement agents. We will consult on any proposals for legislative reform.

This work forms part of wider cross-government efforts to improve the treatment of those in debt. This includes work by HM Treasury to implement a 'breathing space' and statutory debt repayment plan for people in problem debt and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government review of how local authorities can improve the way they collect Council Tax debt.

■ **Government response to the Prison Service Pay Review Body recommendations 19/20**

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Mr David Gauke):
[\[HCWS1768\]](#)

I am today announcing the government's decision on pay rises for prison staff.

The Prison Service Pay Review Body has made its recommendations for the 2019-20 pay award and we are accepting these recommendations in full.

Last year, the government announced the largest pay rise in nearly a decade for almost a million public sector workers. Today we are building on that with a pay award that is worth at least 2.2% for all prison staff and 3% for our Band 3 officers on the 'Fair and Sustainable' terms and conditions. This is the second year in a row we have put in place awards over 2% for our prison staff and this year's settlement represents the highest consolidated increase for over 10 years.

In addition to the headline increases we will also implement the totality of the other Review Body recommendations. This represents a full package for staff that will support us to recruit and retain prison officers and managers, contributing to safer prisons and

reduced reoffending. In addition to their pay, prison officers continue to benefit from defined benefit pensions, which are amongst the most generous available.

For a Band 3 officer on the modern terms and conditions the pay settlement is worth on average £1,277.

Alongside this investment in pay, prison officers are being trained to be more effective and gain experience in critical areas. The key worker role within the new offender management in custody model is currently being rolled-out across prisons. This has been enabled by the investment in additional Band 3 officers, and supports officers at this grade to build more effective relationships with prisoners in order to improve safety and help reduce reoffending.

Thanks to the government's balanced approach to public finances – getting debt falling as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low – we are able to continue our flexible approach to pay policy, allowing us to attract and retain the best people for our prisons.

We consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue modernising to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

The report has been laid before Parliament today 22 July 2019 and a copy is attached. I am grateful to the Chair and members of the Review Body for their report.

Attachments:

1. Prison Service Pay Review Body Eighteenth Report [MoJ.pdf]

■ **Prisons and Probation**

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Mr David Gauke):
[\[HCWS1783\]](#)

Today I would like to update the House on prisons and probation following the Opposition day debate of 14 May 2019.

Our prison and probation systems have faced challenges in recent years, with changes in population, changes in the nature of crimes being committed and wider societal changes impacting the criminal justice sector, such as the use of Spice and other psychoactive substances. We need to ensure that our prisons and probation services provide appropriate punishment, and work with offenders to stop the root causes of criminality, supporting them to re-join their communities.

HMP Birmingham was an exceptional case caused by a number of complex factors and the Government had been working closely with G4S to try and resolve the issues in HMP Birmingham. However, it became increasingly clear that G4S alone were not able to

make the improvements that were so badly needed. That is why the Government took decisive action to step in and did so at no additional costs to the taxpayer.

However, the Government is clear that the exceptional experience of HMP Birmingham is no more representative of the wider contribution of the private sector to our justice system than individual failings in the public sector are in the public estate. The Government remains committed to ensuring a mixed market for delivery of services in the justice system. Partnering with the private and voluntary sectors offers the taxpayer greater value for money, greater diversity of provision and greater innovation than we would see from the public sector alone. Our policy remains a commitment to what works; we will continue to resist ideological calls to spend taxpayers money in a particular sector, regardless of value proposition.

Government contracts are never awarded lightly: each is awarded following a robust process. Government has always been compliant with procurement regulations and follows these diligently when assessing supplier's suitability.

Through the competition processes we undertake a rigorous financial and operational assessment of bids put forward by any existing or potential operator to ensure bids are of sufficient quality, value for money and affordability. The Government also ensures, through the procurement and contract management processes, that we have sufficient measures in place to have confidence in the delivery and maintenance of the contracted services over their lifetime.

The Chief Inspector of Prisons has highlighted many examples of excellent performance by private prisons in his inspection reports and competition for custodial services in England and Wales is well established, and has been in place since the early 1990s. Privately managed prison providers achieve the majority of their targets, and their performance is closely monitored by the robust contract management processes HMPPS has in place.

Privately-managed prisons have also pioneered the use of modern technology to improve the running of establishments and help promote rehabilitation – innovations that in many cases are still not widely found in the public estate. This includes the development of in-cell telephony to help prisoners maintain ties with their families; interactive story-time activities between prisoners and their children; and the introduction of electronic kiosks, which allow prisoners to have greater control of managing their day-to-day lives.

Private probation providers have drawn on prior experience delivering employability services to improve the sourcing of Unpaid Work placements for offenders on community sentences, with nine out of 13 Community Rehabilitation Companies rated 'Good' for the delivery of Unpaid Work by HM Inspectorate of Probation. CRCs have also demonstrated their potential to drive innovation in rehabilitation programmes, with London CRC helping pioneer the Safer Streets Partnership to tackle gangs and knife crime and Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC developing the first behavioural intervention targeted at stalking offences.

The government therefore rejects the call to end plans to run competitions for new private prisons. We are also committed to ensuring a mixed market for service delivery in the

probation system, with offender management delivered by the National Probation Service, but up to £280m allocated for contracting of unpaid work and rehabilitative services from the private and voluntary sector. In addition, we plan to ringfence an initial £20 million per year for a Regional Outcome and Innovation Fund to be spent on innovative, cross-cutting approaches. There will inevitably in any large organisation be occasional instances where service delivery is not as expected, regardless of whether the public or private sectors are responsible. In these instances, we ensure prompt action is taken to rectify any identified issues, and to learn lessons. This Government will not shy away from learning lessons where they are required – and will not seek to denigrate the dedicated work of large numbers of those who deliver our public services simply because of who their employer is.

Instead, this government is committed to ensuring that all our prisons, public or private, are places of safety and reform, and that our probation services maximise their performance in keeping the public safe by helping offenders on community orders or leaving prison to turn their lives around in the community.

PRIME MINISTER

■ National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 - Third Annual Report

Prime Minister (Mrs Theresa May):

[\[HCWS1775\]](#)

Today, I am pleased to announce the publication of the third annual report of the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). This also provides an annual update on the National Security Capability Review (NSCR). I will be placing a copy of the report in the Libraries of the House and publishing the report on gov.uk.

In the SDSR, we committed to giving Parliament an annual update on implementation of the strategy. This Annual Report sets out our progress in delivering on our SDSR and NSCR commitments and shows how the United Kingdom continues to meet the threats and challenges posed by a changing world, proving the merits of Fusion doctrine, as introduced in last year's NSCR.

The NSCR reinforced our vision and values set out in the National Security Strategy and SDSR of a secure and prosperous United Kingdom with global reach and influence. Our overarching National Security Objectives: Protect Our People; Project Our Global Influence; and Promote Our Prosperity, continues to be the foundation of our National Security approach. In support of each of these objectives, we have made significant progress on a cross-government programme of activity, overseen by a sub-Committee of the National Security Council (NSC).

Much has changed since the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review was published in November 2015 – not least the United Kingdom's historic decision to leave the European Union. Whilst the principal threats to our national security remain the same, we face a challenge from a resurgence of state based threats. These threats are more complex and are testing the norms of the rules-based

international system on which we have come to rely for our prosperity and security. Nevertheless, NATO remains the bedrock of the UK's defence and the leading instrument of our national security.

Our outlook remains outward facing and the UK will not shy away from defending democratic principles across the globe whilst ensuring British values are safeguarded at home. We value that outreach, and our partnerships and relationships across the world which are the envy of friend and foe alike. They have proven time and again to be a critical factor in our successes on the global stage.

In the SDSR, we made 89 principal commitments. As at March 2019, we have completed 32, with the rest being progressed. The SDSR pledged to deliver a number of complex major projects and programmes, some with a delivery timescale of a decade or more; progress on these is as we would expect at this stage. The NSCR provided 27 further significant commitments of which 3 have already been completed.

We remain the only country in the G20 to meet both the expenditure targets of 2% of GDP on Defence and 0.7% of gross national income on overseas development, driving forward the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

TREASURY

■ HMRC Powers and Taxpayer Safeguards

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman):

[\[HCWS1785\]](#)

Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) have a vital purpose, to collect the tax revenue that pays for the UK's public services and benefits system. The Government recognises that public trust is essential to a healthy and effective tax system. UK citizens must know that their tax authority is fair, careful and even-handed and that it adheres to those core values in all its work.

But citizens also need to be reassured that HMRC have the powers they require to ensure that everyone pays their fair share of taxes. In some areas, particularly where HMRC are faced with fraud, evasion and complex avoidance, those powers are necessarily far-reaching. It is therefore of great public importance that they are exercised in a way that maintains public trust, with appropriate oversight and operational checks and balances, and statutory safeguards that enable taxpayers to dispute HMRC's decisions or complain about their treatment.

I am grateful to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee for its report *The Powers of HMRC: Treating Taxpayers Fairly* and for the opportunity to discuss these matters with them. I have also discussed matters of trust at HMRC in detail with officials and outside stakeholders, and I am today announcing several actions HMRC are taking to maintain and develop public trust in their operations.

Professional Standards Committee

The context in which HMRC operate is changing faster than ever before. New technology presents significant opportunities to make tax administration easier for both HMRC and

for taxpayers. But it also presents new challenges, as a small minority of taxpayers who wish to escape paying tax seek new ways to find unfair advantages.

As HMRC adapt to these changes, it is important both that they continue to maintain public trust in their approach to new technologies, and that the powers given by Parliament are implemented carefully and remain subject to appropriate oversight and safeguards.

So HMRC will establish a new Professional Standards Committee to advise the Commissioners of Revenue & Customs. The Committee, which will take advice from a range of independent experts, will consider, amongst other things, issues relating to the implementation of HMRC powers. The Committee will not consider individual cases or Government tax policies. HMRC will publish details of the Committee's membership and terms of reference in the autumn.

Powers and Safeguards

The House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee proposed a review of all powers granted to HMRC since the conclusion of the Powers Review in 2012. I have considered this carefully and concluded that a full review of HMRC powers is not necessary at this time. The powers granted to HMRC since 2012 were properly scrutinised before being granted by Parliament. The Government's view is that they remain necessary and proportionate. I have, however, asked HMRC to evaluate the implementation of powers introduced since 2012 in relation to the powers and safeguards principles, engaging with stakeholders, including taxpayers and their representatives. This will be published in early 2020.

Adjudicator

The Adjudicator's independent role in complaints handling is a core component of ensuring public trust in HMRC, and of HMRC's evolution as a service organisation.

HMRC will undertake a comprehensive review of the findings identified in the 2019 Adjudicator's report and will publish the results of the review by the end of this year. HMRC are working with the Adjudicator to ensure that they have effective mechanisms in place to learn quickly and appropriately from complaints and, if necessary, to make changes to their operational policy and processes.

To enable better access for taxpayers to the Adjudicator service, HMRC are also developing a secure digital channel for complaints.

Support for Taxpayers

HMRC understand that some taxpayers will always need extra help in their dealings with them and that others may need additional support at a point in time because they are dealing with a difficult life event. Some taxpayers may become anxious or distressed as a result of compliance activities, or when they get into debt. Ensuring that people who need support are treated with empathy and dignity is vital to maintaining wider public trust in HMRC.

HMRC have provided tailored assistance to taxpayers who need extra help and those in vulnerable circumstances since 2014 via their Extra Support service and also work closely with the voluntary and community sector. Working with their new Customer Experience Committee, and drawing on the experience of the Committee's independent, external advisers, HMRC have recently embarked on a programme to strengthen the support they provide to taxpayers who need extra help. Importantly, this includes extending the Extra Support service to people who may need additional help to deal with HMRC investigations and to help resolve disputes wherever possible without litigation. HMRC will report on the effectiveness of these measures in their next annual report.

HMRC will continue to work closely with external representatives through their forums, such as the Additional Needs Working Group and Individual Stakeholder Forum, to understand taxpayers' needs better and to improve support for taxpayers.

Transparency

HMRC have undertaken to increase transparency and enhance public trust by publishing more data and information about the exercise of their powers. HMRC will engage with stakeholders, including taxpayers and their representatives, to identify what further data and information HMRC should publish in support of these goals.

This year, as a first step towards that commitment, HMRC will expand the range of performance and management information they publish in their monthly and quarterly performance publications. Previous reporting focussed on specific aspects of their telephony and post processes, for instance, call waiting and post turnaround times, as well as compliance yield figures. From August HMRC will publish further information, including but not limited to, their debt management, registrations and repayment services.

Taxpayer experience

Compliance enquiries are a necessary and important feature of HMRC's work in collecting the right amount of tax. Maintaining public trust in HMRC requires that these enquiries are carried out, but also that they are done in an appropriate way. Compliance enquiries can be worrying for taxpayers and HMRC are committed to ensuring that their procedures are accessible and impartial and that HMRC officers treat taxpayers with professionalism and respect. This includes taking into account the specific circumstances of taxpayers.

HMRC are reviewing taxpayers' experiences during compliance enquiries. Drawing on taxpayer feedback, this work will look at how each stage of an enquiry or investigation can affect taxpayers. It will seek to identify improvements in the process and draw out appropriate common standards and expectations. This work includes a review of the content, language and tone of letters, to ensure that they are clear, courteous and tailored appropriately to the needs of the taxpayer, including those who need extra help. In this, HMRC are working closely with a range of stakeholder groups and forums to develop best practice, which should help HMRC to improve the way that they interact with taxpayers.

The Government will provide a further update to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee later this year on all of the areas of work outlined in this statement.

■ Off-payroll Engagements

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss): [\[HCWS1774\]](#)

In 2012, HM Treasury implemented a set of rules which required departments' most senior staff to be on payroll, and to seek assurance in relation to the tax arrangements of their long-term, high-paid contractors who are off-payroll.

Reforms to IR35 off-payroll working rules in April 2017 require public bodies to deduct tax and NICs if the off-payroll worker works like an employee, compliance of which is monitored by HMRC.

Following a review of the rules, I have concluded that the off-payroll rules implemented in 2012 are now superseded by the IR35 reforms, and the requirement for departments to include set contractual provisions and conduct an assurance process are no longer necessary.

However, it remains essential that board-level appointments and/or those with significant financial responsibility should be on the payroll of the department or other employing body, unless there are genuine exceptional circumstances that do not exceed 6 months. The HMT off-payroll rules have been amended to reflect the outcome of this review, and updated guidance has been published on the government website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-tax-assurance-process-of-public-sector-appointees>

This guidance includes increased transparency requirements, whereby the duration of off-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility is to be reported in departments' annual accounts in future reporting cycles. This will replace the need for annual reviews.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Proposals to Support Families

Secretary of State for Women and Equalities (Penny Mordaunt): [\[HCWS1782\]](#)

In the Good Work Plan, the Government announced the largest upgrade to workers' rights in a generation and set out a series of ambitious reforms to ensure the UK leads the world in meeting the challenges of the changing world of work. Building on these reforms, today the Government has launched a consultation on measures to support parents to enter, remain in and return to the workforce. Employees who feel that they are more in control of the balance between home and work commitments are more likely to be engaged at work. Their employers will benefit from greater employee loyalty, commitment and motivation and are likely to be able to draw on a wider pool of talent when recruiting.

The consultation seeks views on:

- high-level options for reforming parental leave and pay, and the costs, benefits and trade-offs of potential reforms;
- a proposal for a new entitlement to Neonatal Leave and Pay for parents of babies who require neonatal care following birth;
- whether employers should have a duty to consider whether a job can be done flexibly and make that clear when advertising a role;
- options for requiring large employers (those with 250 or more employees) to publish their family related leave and pay policies.

The Government's modern Industrial Strategy is creating a fairer and more equal workplace, to boost productivity and earning power for all. The consultation supports this by helping people manage their wider commitments in life benefiting both families and employers.

The consultation on parental leave and pay will run for 16 weeks and will end on 8 November. The remaining consultations will run for 12 weeks until 11 October 2019. The consultation can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/good-work-plan-proposals-to-support-families>.

I am placing a copy of the consultation in the Library of the House.