



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 August 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:22 P.M., 09 August 2019). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	4	EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION	12
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	4	■ Overseas Trade: Republic of Ireland	12
■ Post Office: North Cornwall	4	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	13
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	4	■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Credit Unions	13
■ Electronic Commerce: Regulation	4	■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Working Hours	14
EDUCATION	5	■ Hong Kong: Police	14
■ Higher Education: Equal Pay	5	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	15
■ Higher Education: Pensions	5	■ Anaemia: Northern Ireland	15
■ Overseas Students: Eastern Europe	6	■ Asthma: Death	15
■ Schools: Radicalism	6	■ Cancer: Health Professions	15
■ Schools: Sponsorship	7	■ Cancer: Health Services	16
■ STEM Subjects: Higher Education	8	■ Cancer: Nurses	16
■ Teachers: Training	9	■ Dental Services: Havering	17
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	10	■ Electronic Cigarettes	17
■ Agriculture: Subsidies	10	■ Electronic Cigarettes: Health Hazards	18
■ Donkeys: Animal Products	10	■ General Practitioners	18
■ Food Supply	11	■ Life Expectancy	19
■ Livestock: Electromagnetic Fields	12	■ Magnetic Resonance Imagers	19
		■ Malnutrition	19
		■ Measles	22

■ MMR Vaccine: Side Effects	22	■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Overtime	37
■ Nutrition	23	■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Reform	37
■ Obesity: Children	24	■ Legal Aid Scheme: Housing	38
■ Pharmacy	25	■ Probate: Computer Software	39
■ Sapropterin	25	■ Recorders	40
HOME OFFICE	26	■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals	42
■ Premier Inn: Fires	26	■ Translation Services	42
HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	26	SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION	43
■ Buildings: Insulation	26	■ Election Offences: Prosecutions	43
■ Housing: Standards	27	■ Electoral Register	44
■ Planning Permission	28	■ Electoral Register: Ethnic Groups	46
■ Social Rented Housing: Standards	28	■ Electoral Register: Students	47
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	29	■ Electoral Register: Young People	47
■ Bangladesh: Rohingya	29	■ Electoral Registration Officers: Standards	48
■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Ebola	29	TRANSPORT	49
■ Department for International Development: Credit Unions	30	■ Aviation: Exhaust Emissions	49
■ Developing Countries: Climate Change	31	■ Bus Services: Railways	49
■ Developing Countries: Education	31	■ Business: Aviation	50
■ Developing Countries: Loans	32	■ Channel Ferries	50
■ Yemen: International Assistance	32	■ Department for Transport: Post Office	50
JUSTICE	33	■ East Midlands Trains: Rolling Stock	51
■ Courts	33	■ Electric Vehicles: North Cornwall	51
■ Crown Courts: Bradford	33	■ Garages and Petrol Stations	51
■ Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges	35	■ Petrol: Ethanol	52
■ Employment Tribunals Service: Waiting Lists	35	■ Ports: Wales	52
■ Family Courts	37		

■ Public Transport	53	■ Shared Spaces	55
■ Railways: Market Harborough	53	■ South Wales Railway Line	55
■ Railways: Standards	54	■ Transport	56
■ Road Works: Small Businesses	54	■ Unmanned Air Vehicles: Registration	56
■ Roads: Safety	54		

Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Post Office: North Cornwall

Scott Mann: [\[279105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much of the £2 billion investment in the Post Office network has been spent in North Cornwall.

Kelly Tolhurst:

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

While the Government sets the strategic direction for the Post Office, it allows the company the commercial freedom to deliver this strategy as an independent business. Any allocation of funding to specific branches and regions is an operational matter for Post Office Limited. I have therefore asked Alisdair Cameron, the Group interim Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to my hon Friend on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the libraries of the House.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Electronic Commerce: Regulation

Neil Coyle: [\[279408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what his policy is on the regulation of third-party sellers on online marketplaces; and whether he plans to include those sellers in the forthcoming online harms legislation.

Matt Warman:

Consumer protections already apply to online traders operating directly or as a third party through a platform.

The Online Harms White Paper sets out the Government's plan to establish a statutory duty of care to make companies take more responsibility for the safety of their users and tackle harm caused by content or activity on their services. We have consulted on our proposals for the new duty of care to apply to companies and other bodies that allow users to share or discover user-generated content or interact with each other online.

Companies in scope of the regulatory framework will be held to account for tackling a broad range of harmful and illegal content or activity on their services. However,

where there is already an effective regulatory framework, this will be excluded from scope to avoid duplication.

The Online Harms White Paper consultation closed on 1 July. The Government will publish its response later this year.

EDUCATION

■ Higher Education: Equal Pay

Stephen Morgan: [\[281105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the gender pay gap in higher education (a) at Portsmouth University and (b) in the UK.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: Since April 2017, employers with more than 250 staff are required by law to annually report gender pay gap information. All of the gender pay gap data published by organisations, including the University of Portsmouth, is available on the government's reporting website: <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/>.

It is crucial that employers use their gender pay gap data to identify the barriers to women's recruitment and progression and take action to break down those barriers. The government has published advice for employers on how to diagnose their gaps and develop an action plan, alongside evidence-based guidance on practical actions they can take to close the gap.

The higher education (HE) sector has been proactive in taking action to address the gender pay gap and the government is supportive of this work. We have seen considerable progress in the number of women in leadership positions in HE, for example, the increase in female vice-chancellors. This is largely down to the dedicated efforts by the sector to improve the progression of women, through programmes such as the Aurora development programme and the world-renowned Athena Swan Charter. I also look forward to the findings of the Independent Review of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, led by Professor Julia Buckingham, which we expect to see published in September.

■ Higher Education: Pensions

Stephen Morgan: [\[281106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect on jobs of the decision not to support higher education institutions with increased pension costs (a) at Portsmouth University and (b) in the UK.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: In April 2019, the department published its response following the public consultation on funding increases to teachers' pensions employer contributions for all Teacher Pension Scheme employers in England. All

representations made by stakeholders, including the concerns raised by the University of Portsmouth, were considered, alongside all evidence relevant to the issues involved. This included the impact on redundancies, recruitment and retention. Details of this analysis can be found in figure 5 on page 14 of the government response, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-increases-to-teachers-pensions-employer-contributions>.

■ Overseas Students: Eastern Europe

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[280439]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department has taken to secure continued access to UK universities for eastern European students after 2020; and what steps his Department has taken to ensure that UK universities are affordable for European students after 2020.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: International students make a vital contribution to UK higher education, both economically and culturally, diversifying campuses and enriching UK student experiences. The UK government recognises the value of international students. In the International Education Strategy, published in March 2019, we set an ambition to increase the number of international students choosing to study in the UK to 600,000 by 2030, an increase of over 30%. A link to the International Education Strategy can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-global-potential-global-growth/international-education-strategy-global-potential-global-growth>.

On 28 May 2019, the government announced guarantees on student finance for EU nationals to help provide certainty. EU nationals (and their family members) who start a course in England in the 2020/21 academic year or before will continue to be eligible for 'home fee' status and student finance support from Student Finance England for the duration of their course, provided they meet the residency requirement.

Applications for courses starting in academic year 2021/22 do not open until September 2020. We will provide sufficient notice for prospective EU students on fee arrangements ahead of the 2021/22 academic year and subsequent years in future.

■ Schools: Radicalism

Catherine West:

[280462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance is in place for schools on the circumstances when they should provide information to the police on domestic extremists.

Nick Gibb:

The Department does not provide specific guidance to schools on circumstances where they should provide information directly to the police on domestic extremists. However, the Department has published advice on the Prevent duty, which explains what schools can do to protect children and young people from the risk of radicalisation.

Under the Prevent duty, a school may make a 'Prevent referral' as a result of concerns about extremism and for further multi-agency support. The means by which a referral can be made is determined locally and is either via the local authority or directly to the police. Guidance on Prevent referrals is available from these agencies. More information on the Department's guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>.

The Home Office has also developed an online 'Prevent referral' package, which explains when to make referrals and what to include, featuring examples from the education sector.

The Department also has a dedicated telephone helpline and email address that schools can use if they have an extremism-related concern that they are uncertain how to manage. This will include advice on whether concerns need to be shared further, including to the police. More guidance on this matter and information on the telephone helpline is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-extremism-in-schools-and-childrens-services/preventing-extremism-in-the-education-and-childrens-services-sectors>.

■ Schools: Sponsorship

Angela Rayner:

[280322]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many independent schools have become involved in academy sponsorship or the founding of free schools in the state system since 2017.

Nick Gibb:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: As at 23 July 2019, there are six independent schools sponsoring a total of 13 academies. All of these independent schools were approved as sponsors prior to 2017.

Of the free schools we have opened since 2017, the London Academy of Excellence (LAE) in Tottenham was set up by an independent school, Highgate School. LAE Tottenham is supported by Highgate School, as well as eight other leading independent partner schools.

The school's sister school, LAE Stratford, was set up by Brighton College in 2012. The school reported that in the 2018/19 academic year, 26 students received offers

from Oxford or Cambridge. This is an outstanding achievement, especially in a geographic area with relatively low Oxbridge destinations.

The Department has a joint understanding with the Independent Schools Council to encourage more independent schools to work in partnership with state-funded schools across four key areas: governance, teaching, curriculum and targeted school improvement. The Department announced funding for cross-sector partnerships in June and will invite bids in the autumn.

The joint understanding also encourages independent schools to offer a greater number of full bursary places, targeted at children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

■ STEM Subjects: Higher Education

Stephen Morgan: [\[281103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with universities on the effect of higher education funding on the sustainability of STEM courses in (a) Portsmouth and (b) the UK.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: Part of the teaching grant funding that the government provides to eligible higher education providers, via the Office for Students, is allocated to support the provision of high-cost subjects, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

As part of the government's consideration of the independent panel's report to the review of Post-18 Education and Funding, Department for Education officials are holding discussions with a number of stakeholders, including universities. These conversations are likely to include higher education funding and the provision of high-priority courses, such as STEM.

Stephen Morgan: [\[281104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect on funding for STEM subjects at higher education institutions of the UK leaving the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: Part of the teaching grant funding that the government provides to eligible higher education providers, via the Office for Students, is allocated to support the provision of high-cost subjects, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

The department's officials engage regularly with higher education institutions in relation to higher education funding and the provision of high-priority courses such as STEM, as well as on EU Exit.

■ Teachers: Training

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[279378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to improve the provision of mental health training for teachers and lecturers at universities.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 24 July 2019]: Higher education providers have legal responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) to support students, including those with mental health conditions. As independent and autonomous institutions it is for providers to determine the precise nature of any mental health training they offer to staff.

Mental health service provision is a priority for the government, which is why the former Prime Minister (Theresa May), my right. Hon friend for Maidenhead recently announced measures on 17 June which overhaul the government's approach to preventing mental illness. These measures included providing £1 million to the Office of Students (OfS) for a competition to find innovative new ways to support mental health at universities and colleges. The OfS is currently working with students, sector representatives, experts and relevant government departments to develop priorities. They aim to publish further details by the end of the year.

The department is also working closely with Universities UK on embedding the Step Change programme. This calls on higher education leaders to adopt mental health service provision as a strategic priority and take a whole-institution approach to embed a culture of good mental health practice.

The University Mental Health Charter, which was announced in June 2018, is also expected to drive up standards in promoting mental health and wellbeing, positive working environments and excellent support for both students and staff.

The former Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Chris Skidmore), my hon. Friend for Kingswood gave a speech on 7 May 2019 that focused on early career researcher contracts and employment conditions. The Independent Review of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, led by Professor Julia Buckingham, has recognised issues of wellbeing and poor mental health as a significant challenge faced by early career academics and researchers. Recommendations to address these challenges are currently under review and a revised concordat is expected in September.

We hope future joint work by the OfS and Research England into the mental health and wellbeing of doctoral researchers can identify good practice to take forward in this area.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Dr David Drew:

[\[280135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many pilot environmental land management schemes have been agreed, where those pilots will take place; and what the start date is for each such pilot.

George Eustice:

Tests and trials allow us to co-design and test the operability of elements of the new system and to understand if and how new elements of the Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme work in a real life environment. Tests and trials are not analysing methods of delivery of environmental outcomes rather how the scheme or innovative mechanism will operate.

We received 113 proposals from stakeholders to conduct tests and trials of the new ELM scheme in phase one. We identified 49 of these which most closely matched the identified priorities and would help us test critical elements or building blocks of the new scheme. Of these 49, two have subsequently merged with other phase 1 proposals and one has withdrawn from the process, leaving 46.

The national pilot is due to start in 2021. It will test different types of possible approaches to deliver the new ELM scheme, and the underlying scheme mechanics (such as the payments system) before the ELM scheme launches in 2024.

■ Donkeys: Animal Products

Dr David Drew:

[\[280134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with (a) China and (b) countries in east Africa on ending the international trade in donkey skins; and what recent steps he has taken to help implement an international ban on the trade in donkey skins.

Zac Goldsmith:

Defra takes the welfare of donkeys and other equids very seriously and has taken an active role in global efforts to monitor and strengthen welfare standards for these species. This included contributing to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Code chapter on *Welfare or Working Equids* adopted by OIE members in 2016, which provides species specific guidance to complement the general welfare principles applying to all animals. In addition we have contributed to the EU voluntary initiative developing guidance on responsible ownership and care of equidae. Influencing the raising of global standards through international fora can be an effective and sustainable way to address these issues across the world and therefore have a broader impact than bilateral meetings with particular countries. This is part of the Government's strong commitment to strengthening welfare standards.

■ Food Supply

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[281001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure adequacy of the provision of food for (a) hospitals, (b) schools and (c) care settings in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal on 31 October 2019.

George Eustice:

Public sector food provision for specific sectors including hospitals, schools and care settings is led by the relevant Government departments. However, Defra has been working closely with lead Departments (DfE, DHSC, MOJ, MOD) to support their contingency planning for food supply to public services. Defra is providing advice and support to these departments especially to support their engagement with the food industry. Lead Government Departments are engaging with key suppliers for schools, hospitals and prisons to ensure the supply chain is prepared and supply is maintained.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[281002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the maintenance of food suppliers in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

George Eustice:

The UK's high degree of food security is built on access to a range of sources including strong domestic production and imports from other countries. This will continue to be the case whether we leave the EU with or without a deal.

Defra Ministers and officials meet regularly with the food industry to understand the potential impacts of leaving with no deal at the end of October and support contingency planning by the industry. This includes working with Defra's long established Food Chain Emergency Liaison Group (FCELG). The FCELG membership is drawn from across the agri-food chain industry sectors from farm to fork.

Caroline Lucas: [\[281009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations the Government has received from representatives of (a) food companies and (b) food bank organisers on the worst-case effect on food supplies of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Caroline Lucas: [\[281011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to involve (a) food surplus re-distributors and (b) frontline charities that feed vulnerable groups including (i) homeless shelters, (ii) domestic violence refuges, (iii) mental health groups in supply chain conversations and planning in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

George Eustice:

Defra Ministers and officials have been meeting regularly with the food industry to understand the potential impacts of a no deal scenario in October and support contingency planning by the industry. Alongside this, there has been cross-Government engagement including Defra with 3rd sector organisations to understand the concerns and views of representatives from the food aid sector.

The Government is committed to a strong safety net for those who need it and will continue to spend over £90 billion a year on welfare benefits. Additionally, Defra is working to increase levels of surplus food being redistributed through a £15 million fund to reduce unnecessary food waste that is still edible and can be redirected to feed those in need.

■ Livestock: Electromagnetic Fields

Dr David Drew:

[\[280136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has commissioned research on the potential effect of electro-magnetic waves on levels of premature deaths in farm animals.

Zac Goldsmith:

Defra manages an active programme of research to support the health and welfare of livestock. The research programme focusses on prevention and control of infectious diseases as well as covering animal welfare issues. There is no current research funded on electro-magnetic waves and their potential impact from this programme.

Defra does have a regular, consistent systematic process for identifying and assessing new threats to animal health and welfare through the Veterinary Risk Group and the issue has not been raised which could inform future research requirements.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Overseas Trade: Republic of Ireland

Chuka Umunna:

[\[281128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what additional procedures companies will face in order to trade between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal; and whether those procedures will be different to procedures at any other UK border.

James Duddridge:

The Government is steadfast in our commitment to the Belfast Agreement and will do everything in our power to ensure no return to a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

On 13 March, the UK Government announced a unilateral approach to checks, processes and tariffs for trade moving from Ireland to Northern Ireland. This policy

aims to retain the status quo as far as possible by doing all we can to avoid a hard border. This approach is strictly temporary.

The UK Government will not introduce any new checks or controls on goods crossing from Ireland to Northern Ireland, including any new customs declarations for nearly all goods. The UK temporary tariff regime would therefore not apply to goods crossing from Ireland into Northern Ireland.

We would need to apply a small number of measures strictly necessary to comply with international legal obligations, protect the biosecurity of the island of Ireland, or to avoid the highest risks to Northern Ireland businesses - but these measures would not require checks at the border. Expressly:

- Businesses pay VAT and Excise on goods from Ireland today and the UK Government would continue to collect these taxes on Irish goods in future. Small businesses trading across the border and not currently VAT registered would be able to report VAT online periodically without any new processes at the border. Traders would need to make electronic declarations for excise goods.
- To protect human, animal, and plant health, animals and animal products from countries outside the EU would need to enter Northern Ireland through a designated entry point and regulated plant material from outside the EU and high risk EU plant material would require certification. Plants and plant products which have not been previously checked by an EU Member state would need to be pre-notified before arriving in the UK and checked at authorised inland trade premises.
- To fulfil essential international obligations, there would be new UK import requirements such as checks on documents or registration for a very limited set of goods, such as endangered species and hazardous chemicals. This would not involve any infrastructure or checks at the border including in Northern Ireland.

Because these are unilateral measures, they only mitigate the impact of exit that are within the UK Government's control. These measures do not set out the position in respect of tariffs or processes to be applied to goods moving from Northern Ireland to Ireland. The Irish Government has so far not set out their position on the procedures for goods moving across the land border from Northern Ireland to Ireland.

In a no deal scenario, we are committed to entering into discussions urgently with the European Commission and the Irish Government to jointly agree long-term measures to avoid a hard border.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:

[\[279368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 271335, for what reasons his Department does not

offer a payroll deduction service to enable employees to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Christopher Pincher:

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not have a facility to allow staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions, however staff can still make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

Financial wellbeing is a key part of pay and benefits package, and we offer a range of services to help staff build financial capability so they can make informed decisions about their finances.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Working Hours

Jon Trickett: [\[278376\]](#)

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

Christopher Pincher:

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not hold this information because time-off-in-lieu (TOIL) is not recorded centrally and is managed by individual teams, particularly overseas.

■ Hong Kong: Police

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [\[279392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what (a) training, (b) capacity building and (c) assistance (i) the UK Government and (ii) Scotland Yard provides to the Hong Kong Police Force.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

[Holding answer 6 August 2019]: In recent years, UK law enforcement agencies have provided training and assistance to the Hong Kong Police Force in a number of areas, including illicit finance and traffic policing. UK law enforcement agencies maintain regular engagement with the Hong Kong Police Force in the course of information exchange and joint investigations of serious and organised crime – as they do with counterparts throughout the world. All cooperation with overseas partners – including those in Hong Kong – is conducted under the Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJA) risk management system, which is used across Government to assess human rights risks.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Anaemia: Northern Ireland

Jim Shannon: [\[280245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many patients in Northern Ireland were (a) diagnosed and (b) treated for iron deficiency anaemia in each of the last three years.

Jo Churchill:

This data is not held. Healthcare is a devolved matter and data on diagnosis and treatment of specific conditions are a matter for the devolved administrations of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively.

■ Asthma: Death

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: [\[280363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of deaths caused by asthma in (a) adults and (b) children exposed to high levels of air pollution during April 2019; and what comparative assessment he has made of the number of those deaths and the average number of deaths for asthma among those groups in April in each of the last 10 years.

Jo Churchill:

I refer the hon. Member for Tooting to the answer I gave on 17 May 2019 to Question [252069](#).

■ Cancer: Health Professions

Karen Lee: [\[280457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to tackle cancer workforce shortages in the NHS people plan.

Jo Churchill:

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.

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.

■ Cancer: Health Services

Andrew Gwynne: [\[280964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when a long-term workforce plan which sets out the number of staff required to meet the current and future needs of cancer patients will be published.

Jo Churchill:

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.

■ Cancer: Nurses

Karen Lee: [\[280453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the number of cancer clinical nurse specialist vacancies in the NHS.

Jo Churchill:

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 at the following link:

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

The large majority of vacancies are filled by a combination of bank and agency staff.

■ Dental Services: Havering

Andrew Rosindell: [\[280220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his department is taking to increase the availability of orthodontists in Havering.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England is responsible for commissioning National Health Service dental services in England including orthodontic services.

NHS England has confirmed that new personal dental services contracts across London will start in October 2019. This will help meet the orthodontic needs of local residents within each borough. NHS dental practices will continue to provide the same NHS services that all children are currently eligible to receive.

■ Electronic Cigarettes

Mr Ranil Jayawardena: [\[281031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to ban e-cigarettes wherever the smoking ban is in place. .

Mr Ranil Jayawardena: [\[281032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to ban (a) e-cigarette shops and (b) smoking on NHS hospital property.

Jo Churchill:

The Government believes in proportionate regulation of e-cigarettes, recognising that they are not risk-free. Through the European Union Tobacco Products Directive 2014/40/EU (TPD), transposed into United Kingdom law by the UK Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 (TRPR), we have introduced measures to regulate e-cigarettes. These measures reduce the risk of harm to children, protect against any risk of renormalisation of tobacco use, provide assurance on relative safety for users, and give businesses legal certainty. This has enabled the UK to implement appropriate standards for products whilst allowing smokers to move to e-cigarettes should they wish.

The Government has made a commitment to review the TRPR by May 2021 to consider its regulatory impact. In addition, as announced in the Tobacco Control Plan the Government will review where the UK's exit from the European Union offers us opportunities to re-appraise current regulation to ensure this continues to protect the nation's health.

The Government has no plans to introduce legislative proposals to ban e-cigarettes, e-cigarette shops or smoking on National Health Service property.

We continue to support the implementation of smokefree policies across all hospitals in England. The Government's tobacco control plan for England published in July 2017 reiterates our ambition to achieve smokefree mental health services and NHS

estate by 2019/20. The NHS Long Term Plan, published in January 2019, further supports the creation of a Smokefree NHS with the commitment to offering NHS-funded tobacco treatment services to all patients who smoke.

■ Electronic Cigarettes: Health Hazards

Mr Ranil Jayawardena: [\[281030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the increased numbers of people vaping on (a) nicotine addiction, (b) incidences of increased blood pressure and (c) heart attack rates.

Jo Churchill:

Public Health England (PHE) has published a series of reports on electronic cigarettes including the effects of vaping on health. The reports are available to view at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/e-cigarettes-and-vaping-policy-regulation-and-guidance>

While nicotine can contribute to raised blood pressure and cardiovascular risk, it is tar and carbon monoxide, which are the major sources of cardiovascular risk in cigarette smoke, producing nicotine vapour from a solution rather than by burning tobacco means that electronic cigarette vapour is free from almost all the toxic chemicals that accompany nicotine in cigarette smoke.

The Office for National Statistics has recorded the numbers of people using e-cigarettes since 2014 and the combined number of people using e-cigarettes and smoking has not increased since then. The proportion of people who smoke has decreased substantially in the same period.

PHE encourages people who both vape and smoke to stop smoking completely, because this greatly reduces health risks.

■ General Practitioners

Tom Brake: [\[280121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how local areas will be held accountable for progress made on the five year deal to expand GP services.

Jo Churchill:

As delegated commissioners of primary care services, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) will ensure general practitioner (GP) practices and their Primary Care Network (by extension through the Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service (DES)) are delivering their contractual requirements. As such, CCGs are responsible for assuring that services outlined in the GP contract (including the Network Contract DES) are delivered and that any claims for funding are validated.

CCGs are supported in this by NHS England and NHS Improvement regional teams.

■ Life Expectancy

Tom Brake: [\[280123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the proposed Green Paper on Prevention, what assessment of he has made of his Department's ability to improve healthy life expectancy by at least five extra years by 2035.

Jo Churchill:

The Prevention Green Paper 'Advancing our Health: prevention in the 2020s', was published on 22 July 2019. The proposals it sets out will make a valuable contribution to the nation's health. The Green Paper acknowledges further action will be needed in future to support the Ageing Grand Challenge ambition on healthy life expectancy.

■ Magnetic Resonance Imagers

Jim Shannon: [\[280292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average age is of MRI machines used by the NHS.

Jo Churchill:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Malnutrition

Eleanor Smith: [\[280427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of hospital admissions there were for adults with malnutrition as a (a) primary and (b) secondary condition in (i) England (ii) each Clinical Commissioning Group and (iii) each parliamentary constituency in each of the last ten years; and if he will make a statement.

Eleanor Smith: [\[280428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children were admitted to hospital with malnutrition as a (a) primary and (b) secondary condition in (i) England, (ii) each clinical commissioning group and (iii) each parliamentary constituency in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

NHS Digital has provided a count of finished admission episodes (FAEs) in each of the last 10 years with a primary or secondary diagnosis of malnutrition for adult and child patients resident in England. This information is provided in the attached tables.

Information by clinical commissioning group and parliamentary constituency is too small to be meaningful and has not been provided in order to protect patient confidentiality.

Activity for adults in English National Health Service Hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector.

	YEAR		TOTAL ADMISSIONS	PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS	SECONDARY DIAGNOSIS
Admissions	Percentage	Admissions	Percentage		
2008-09	11,953,809	348	0.0029%	2,545	0.0213%
2009-10	12,319,781	417	0.0034%	3,113	0.0253%
2010-11	12,629,229	485	0.0038%	3,843	0.0304%
2011-12	12,744,605	608	0.0048%	4,475	0.0351%
2012-13	12,837,889	626	0.0049%	4,564	0.0356%
2013-14	13,159,078	589	0.0045%	5,707	0.0434%
2014-15	13,554,017	683	0.0050%	6,268	0.0462%
2015-16	13,869,134	703	0.0051%	6,664	0.0480%
2016-17	14,078,269	732	0.0052%	7,132	0.0507%
2017-18	14,154,577	735	0.0052%	7,802	0.0551%

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

Activity for children in English NHS Hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector.

	YEAR		TOTAL ADMISSIONS	PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS	SECONDARY DIAGNOSIS
Admissions	Percentage	Admissions	Percentage		
2008-09	1,850,531	26	0.0014%	176	0.0095%
2009-10	1,894,664	40	0.0021%	134	0.0071%

	YEAR		TOTAL ADMISSIONS	PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS	SECONDARY DIAGNOSIS
2010-11	1,928,249	43	0.0022%	1800.0093 %	
2011-12	1,449,122	38	0.0026%	1570.0108 %	
2012-13	1,484,907	37	0.0025%	1680.0113 %	
2013-14	1,964,359	25	0.0013%	1850.0094 %	
2014-15	1,984,768	37	0.0019%	1930.0097 %	
2015-16	2,038,411	29	0.0014%	2670.0131 %	
2016-17	2,043,080	47	0.0023%	2430.0119 %	
2017-18	2,020,591	57	0.0028%	2630.0130 %	

Source: HES, NHS Digital

Notes:

1. A finished admission episode (FAE) is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period.

2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 20 (14 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and seven prior to 2002-03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was admitted to hospital.

3. ICD-10 codes used to define malnutrition are:

E40 Kwashiorkor;

E41 Nutritional marasmus E42 Marasmic kwashiorkor;

E43 Unspecified severe protein–energy malnutrition;

E44 Protein–energy malnutrition of moderate and mild degree;

E45 Retarded development following protein–energy malnutrition;

E46 Unspecified protein–energy malnutrition; and O25 Malnutrition in pregnancy.

5. Adult: the patient was 18 years old or greater at the start of the episode of care.

6. Child: the patient was under 18 years old at the start of the episode of care.

Eleanor Smith: [\[280431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many patients readmitted to hospital within (a) zero to seven and (b) eight to 180 days were recorded as suffering malnutrition as a primary or secondary condition in each of the last ten years.

Jo Churchill:

Information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Measles

Adam Holloway: [\[280995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has published on distinguishing between rashes caused by the measles vaccine and those arising from the wild strain of measles.

Adam Holloway: [\[280996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that statistics on the infection rate for measles do not include people who have received the live measles vaccine and contracted a measles-like rash and fever.

Jo Churchill:

While post vaccine rash and fever is generally mild, distinguishing from wild-type measles is not based on clinical examination, rather it is based on a combination of laboratory analysis, information on the timing of vaccine and epidemiological information. The national measles guidelines describe the management and investigation of suspected cases of measles, and is available to view at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-measles-guidelines>

Statistics on confirmed measles cases are reported by vaccination status and are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-mumps-and-rubella-lab-confirmed-cases-in-england-2019>

■ MMR Vaccine: Side Effects

Adam Holloway: [\[280997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) body inclusion encephalitis and (b) other adverse events experienced after a measles vaccine are identified in a timely way by healthcare professionals.

Jo Churchill:

The safety of all the United Kingdom's vaccination programmes is of paramount importance. Any serious side effects are extremely rare, and the large majority of side effects are mild and transient, such as sore arms, headaches and tiredness. We would recommend that all eligible children are vaccinated, as any potential risk of side effects is far outweighed by the benefits of vaccination.

Healthcare professionals have access to a range of materials, such as 'Immunisation against infectious disease: the green book' and Patient Group Directions to support their decision-making in the case of any suspected adverse effects.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) operates the 'Yellow Card Scheme', which is vital in helping the MHRA monitor the safety of all healthcare products in the UK. This system allows for reporting of any potential adverse events for all medicines, including vaccines, with guidance for healthcare professionals, patients and the public on how to use the scheme.

In addition, Public Health England (PHE) offers diagnostic services for suspected cases of encephalitis, which is a notifiable condition. Under statutory duty, cases must be reported by healthcare professionals to PHE's local Health Protection Teams. This can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/notifications-of-infectious-diseases-noids>

■ Nutrition

Eleanor Smith: [\[280420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the implementation of the guidance on Commissioning Excellent Nutrition and Hydration 2015 to 2018.

Eleanor Smith: [\[280421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the document entitled Guidance – Commissioning Excellent Nutrition and Hydration 2015 – 2018, published by NHS England in October 2015, how many commissioners have identified a local senior or executive champion to drive local work on nutrition and hydration and to make improvements.

Eleanor Smith: [\[280422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of commissioners that (a) reviewed existing service provision and (b) agreed improvement trajectories as set out in the NHS England Commissioning Excellent Nutrition and Hydration 2015 to 2018 guidance.

Eleanor Smith: [\[280423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has plans to update the Commissioning Excellent Nutrition and Hydration 2015-2018 NHS England guidance.

Jo Churchill:

The importance of good quality food for patients, visitor and staff is recognised both in terms of improving health and for their overall experience of services. Patients have the right to receive tasty, nutritious and free food as part of their National Health Service treatment.

Data is not collected centrally on the number of local senior or executive champions to drive local work on nutrition, the number of commissioners that reviewed existing service provision or agreed improvement trajectories as set out in the guidance.

In July 2018 the Healthcare Food Standards and Strategy Group started a review of the national standards for Healthcare Food for patients, staff and visitors. This work is building on the Hospital Food Panel report of 2014 and is focusing on marking out the way in which organisations need to comply with the five core standards and bringing in a wealth of tools, resources and examples of good practice to help them achieve the standards.

■ Obesity: Children

Tom Brake:

[\[280122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Childhood Obesity Plan, Chapter two, what steps he is taking to ensure the halving of childhood obesity by 2030.

Jo Churchill:

As part of delivering measures outlined in chapter two of the childhood obesity plan, we have held consultations on ending the sale of energy drinks to children, calorie labelling in the out-of-home sector, restricting promotions of fatty and sugary products by location and by price, and introducing further advertising restrictions on TV and online for products high in fat, salt and sugar. The consultation on Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services runs until 13 August. We have received a high level of responses to the consultations and it is important we take the time to consider them carefully before we set out further action.

Chapter 3 of the childhood obesity plan, published on 22 July 2019 as part of 'Advancing our health: prevention in the 2020s', sets out further measures to help meet our ambition including confirmation of our intention to end the sale of energy drinks to children under the age of 16, and our plans for infant feeding, clear nutrition labelling, food reformulation to improve the nutritional content of foods, and support for individuals to achieve and maintain a healthier weight.

In addition, the Chief Medical Officer is reviewing what more can be done to help us meet our ambition of halving childhood obesity by 2030. The review, due to report in September, will consider the approaches taken internationally, regionally and across the country, and will make a series of recommendations.

'Advancing our health: prevention in the 2020s' is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/advancing-our-health-prevention-in-the-2020s>

■ Pharmacy

Neil O'Brien: [\[281058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase the number of community pharmacies.

Jo Churchill:

The Government is not actively looking to increase the number of community pharmacies in England.

Applications to provide National Health Service pharmaceutical services continue to be determined by NHS England and NHS Improvement, informed by the local pharmaceutical needs assessment, which outlines the level of NHS pharmaceutical services provision in a given area, including if there are any gaps or unmet needs.

In England, access to NHS pharmaceutical services is good. There are over 11,500 community pharmacies, which is 12% more than a decade ago. This coverage means that 80% of the population live within 20 minutes walking distance of a community pharmacy, with more pharmacies in the most deprived areas.

Maintaining access to NHS pharmaceutical services remains an important priority for the Government. We will continue to maintain the good level of access we have in England through the Pharmacy Access Scheme, which provides additional financial support to pharmacies in areas where there are fewer pharmacies.

■ Sapropterin

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[280943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of whether Kuvan should be assessed through NICE's highly-specialised technology appraisal.

Jo Churchill:

Decisions on whether individual medicines are suitable for assessment by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), and whether they meet the criteria for the highly specialised technologies programme, are taken through an established topic selection process.

The process is overseen by NICE and includes consideration against published criteria by a topic selection panel and engagement with stakeholders. Although NHS England, NHS Improvement and the Department provide input and are part of this panel, the decision-making process is led by NICE. Kuvan for the treatment of phenylketonuria was last considered by the topic selection panel on 15 February 2019.

In the absence of guidance from NICE, it is for National Health Service organisations and healthcare professionals to make decisions on whether to fund Kuvan on the basis of an assessment of the available evidence. Treatment for patients with phenylketonuria who are not receiving Kuvan or for who Kuvan is not effective includes dietary protein restriction combined with dietary supplements.

HOME OFFICE

■ Premier Inn: Fires

Mr Steve Reed: [\[279065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his Department plans to make an assessment of whether combustible materials in the roof contributed to the spread of the fire at the Premier Inn near Cribbs Causeway on 18 July 2019.

Kit Malthouse:

Avon FRS has confirmed that it will be conducting an investigation into the fire.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Buildings: Insulation

Matthew Pennycook: [\[281026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Statement of 18 July 2019, Building safety update, HCWS 1757, what his Department's definition is of the exceptional circumstances that would provide justification for private sector building owners not completing remediation of buildings with unsafe ACM cladding by June 2020.

Esther McVey:

Our expectation is that remediation should be completed within six months of agreeing a plan – by June 2020. Exceptional circumstances that may prevent this deadline being met will be considered on a case by case basis once full applications are received.

Matthew Pennycook: [\[281027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Statement of 18 July 2019, Building safety update, HCWS 1757, how leaseholders will be notified whether the owners of the private sector buildings to which they hold a leasehold will be required to complete remediation of those buildings with unsafe ACM cladding by June 2020.

Esther McVey:

We are requiring responsible entities (that is, the party with primary legal obligation to carry out remediation works) to inform all leaseholders and residents that they will be applying for funding from the Private Sector Aluminium Composite Material Cladding Remediation Fund.

Responsible entities will also be required to inform leaseholders and residents of the nature of the works they intend to carry out as well as providing regular updates to leaseholders and residents on the progress of their funding application and remediation works.

Matthew Pennycook: [\[281028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Statement of 18 July 2019, Building safety update, HCWS 1757, what steps he is taking to expedite remedial works on buildings with unsafe ACM cladding in cases where private sector building owners have given a clear commitment to that remediation and a plan has been agreed but the proposed finish date for those works is after June 2020.

Esther McVey:

We will work closely with responsible entities at all stages in the process to ensure that remediation is completed at pace and by June 2020, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

■ Housing: Standards

Alex Cunningham: [\[281098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 20 June 2019 to Question 263865 on permitted development rights, what assessment he has made of the implications for the quality of new homes of the lack of minimum standards in Building Regulations for (a) space and (b) daylight; and if he will undertake to review those regulations.

Esther McVey:

The review of permitted development rights for the change of use to residential will consider the quality standards of the homes delivered in England. This will consider matters relating to size, location, amenity and design. In addition, as part of its implementation plan for the Hackitt review, the Government has said that it will review the Building Regulations guidance. Any issues that are identified, such as space or daylight could contribute to our ongoing consideration of building regulations. The Government will set out its detailed plans in due course.

Alex Cunningham: [\[281099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) incentivising or requiring housebuilders to monitor and collect data on the performance of homes post-occupancy and (b) requiring housebuilders to publish that information.

Esther McVey:

The Government is taking action to raise the quality of new build homes. We are reforming the building safety system, reviewing the Approved Documents to the Building Regulations including the conservation of fuel and power, and working with industry to improve productivity and skills, all of which will raise building performance and standards. We are also currently consulting on the design and delivery of a New Homes Ombudsman, including their role in driving up the quality of new build homes.

■ Planning Permission

Alex Cunningham: [\[281101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to ensure that planning permission is time limited to prevent completions being built to superceded building regulations.

Esther McVey:

Generally, when a planning permission is granted, the development must commence within three years. The intention behind this time limit is to prevent the accumulation of planning permissions which are unimplemented. It also allows councils to review the development's suitability in the light of circumstances which may have altered over the three year period

When new Building Regulations are introduced, time limited transitional provisions are normally included. Transitional provisions are kept under review for changes to Building Regulations.

■ Social Rented Housing: Standards

Tim Farron: [\[280987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to recent English Housing Survey statistics which show that four per cent of local authority housing and 13 per cent of social housing fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of restoring central Government funding for housing providers to enable the remaining non-decent homes to be improved.

Esther McVey:

The Decent Homes Standard has driven improvements to the quality of social housing. Between 2011 and 2016 Government provided a total of £1.76 billion to 45 councils across England to tackle the backlog of non-decent homes, making over 158,000 homes decent.

Local Authority Housing Statistics show that the proportion of non-decent local authority dwellings was 4 per cent 1 April 2018. The English Housing Survey shows that, in 2017, 13 per cent of social rented homes overall (516,000) were considered non-decent, down from 20 per cent (759,000) in 2010. This is lower than the proportion of private rented (25 per cent) and owner occupied (19 per cent) homes.

The Social Housing Green Paper asks if there are any changes to what constitutes a decent home that we should consider, and whether we need additional measures to make sure homes are safe and decent. We are currently considering the responses to the consultation.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Bangladesh: Rohingya

Liz McInnes: [\[280273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the decision to move Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh to the island of Bhasan Charan, which is at risk of severe flooding and cyclones.

Andrew Stephenson:

We have made clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocation of refugees must be safe, dignified and meet international humanitarian principles and standards.

The UK fully supports the UN's position that full and detailed technical and protection assessments should be conducted of Bhasan Char before any relocations of Rohingya are considered. We welcome the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to ensure any relocations are voluntary and are conducted in coordination with UN agencies.

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Ebola

Jo Swinson: [\[280175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment he has made of the spread of Ebola to the city of Goma and the potential risk of the outbreak spreading to Rwanda.

Andrew Stephenson:

The spread of Ebola to Goma is deeply concerning. Goma's position on the border increases the chance of Ebola spreading to Rwanda.

The UK is a leading donor to the Ebola response in DRC and has played a pivotal role in helping neighbouring countries like Rwanda prepare. On 15 July, DFID announced that the UK would provide up to a further £50 million to the response to December 2019. UK Aid is supporting a range of activities, including the construction of screening facilities at border crossings and the vaccination of health workers in DRC and the region.

Jo Swinson: [\[280176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to overcome the (a) local mistrust of health officials and (b) militia violence which have impeded efforts to prevent the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo from spreading further.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the second largest in history and the first in a conflict zone. The UK has been a major supporter of the response since the start, providing funding, technical expertise, and political support.

The response has been hampered by repeated attacks against health workers and health facilities. Improving community trust and ownership are essential to getting the outbreak under control. UK funding supports community engagement and working with local leaders and religious groups to foster trust and ownership. It supports efforts to understand community concerns better and feed this understanding back into the response. Examples include employing people who have recovered from Ebola to talk to communities about the health care they received as a way to build community trust in health workers.

The UK and other donors are also supporting the UN to strengthen security in Ebola affected areas to protect both communities and response workers.

Liz McInnes:

[\[280274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what further steps his Department is taking to stop the spread of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the World Health Organization declared the crisis a public health emergency of international concern.

Andrew Stephenson:

The UK has been one of the major supporters of the response to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since it began in August 2018. This has included providing significant funding and technical expertise. Two days before the declaration of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), on 15 July, DFID announced additional financial and technical support of up to £50 million – recognising the seriousness of the situation in DRC and the high risk of regional spread.

Following the PHEIC declaration, the UK has echoed the WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, in encouraging countries, companies and individuals to avoid measures that could undermine the response and further fuel insecurity, notably the closure of borders.

■ Department for International Development: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:

[\[279365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 271330, for what reasons his Department does not offer a payroll deduction service to enable employees to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Stephenson:

DFID will assess the potential merits of enabling departmental staff to contribute to a credit union through payroll if at any time we receive a request from our employees to provide such a facility. DFID can find no record of a request being made.

■ Developing Countries: Climate Change

Chris Law: [\[278526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what plans he has to investigate alternative sources of climate finance from (a) public and (b) private sources.

Andrew Stephenson:

Delivering the global transition to a low carbon economy will require unprecedented levels of investment from the public and private sectors. The Government is fulfilling our pledge to deliver £5.8 billion between 2015/2016 and 20/21. In addition to investing our own resources, the Government continues to press multilateral organisations to help countries tackle climate change through providing finance. The Multilateral Development Banks have an important role to play, and in the last year the World Bank has set new targets for the proportion of its finance which contributes to low carbon, resilient development. In 2018, 70% of World Bank projects include some climate benefits, up from 37% just two years ago.

Private finance is crucial, and the Government uses some of its climate finance to unlock investments from the private sector. To date, we estimate that the UK has leveraged £910 million of private investment. CDC and the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) have a key role in crowding in other investors and demonstrating that investment in low carbon, resilient development is possible. CDC has invested over \$500 million in renewable power over the last 2 years, and PIDG \$300 million.

The recently published UK Green Finance Strategy outlines how we will position the UK at the forefront of this global shift, catalysing the investment needed to transition to a net zero economy.

■ Developing Countries: Education

Stephen Twigg: [\[279358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the merits of a Global Plan of Action for Education as called for by UNESCO in its report of July 2019 entitled meeting commitments: are countries on track to achieve SDG 4; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Stephenson:

The recommendations in UNESCO's report of July 2019: *Meeting commitments: are countries on track to achieve SDG 4* align well with DFID's education policy: *Get Children Learning* and the work the UK is supporting in such areas as learning measurement, education financing, research and policy dialogue. We welcome

UNESCO's report and look forward to hearing more about suggestions for a Global Plan of Action for Education.

■ Developing Countries: Loans

Anneliese Dodds: [\[280374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of UK aid to developing countries goes towards loan repayments.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) provides full relief on eligible debt owed by countries which have reached Completion Point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank, and the African Development Fund (AfDF) of the African Development Bank. The UK contributed £107 million to the MDRI in 2017 and this is all official development assistance (ODA).

When necessary, the UK also provides relief on loans made bilaterally by the Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD) to developing countries, through the coordinated process of the Paris Club of creditors. In 2017 the UK provided £3 million of ODA as such debt relief on ECGD loans.

Therefore in 2017 the total UK debt relief, through the MDRI and bilaterally, represented 0.78% of total UK ODA in 2017.

■ Yemen: International Assistance

Alex Norris: [\[280387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the processing time for humanitarian supplies imported through the port of Aden in Yemen.

Andrew Stephenson:

The UK tracks Yemen's imports and ports to monitor trends and predict pressure points in humanitarian supplies. We work with the private sector, non-governmental organisations and United Nations agencies to improve our understanding of how Aden Port functions and to advise the United Arab Emirates who are leading international efforts to improve Aden Port.

The UK regularly raises humanitarian concerns with both parties to the conflict, calling on them to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 2451 and facilitate safe, rapid, and unhindered access for humanitarian and commercial supplies, including through Aden Port.

JUSTICE

■ Courts

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[272170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many sitting days in courts were presided over by a recorder in (a) England, (b) Greater London and (c) Greater Manchester in (i) each of the last three financial years and (ii) the 2019-20 financial year.

Edward Argar:

The number of sittings days sat by recorders in the last three financial years in the requested locations are set out in the table below. These figures cover sitting days by recorders in County, Family and Crown Courts.

	1 APRIL 2016 TO 31 MARCH 2017	1 APRIL 2017 TO 31 MARCH 2018	1 APRIL 2018 TO 31 DECEMBER 2018 ¹
England	30,769	30,459	16,801
Greater London	9,578	8,907	4,566
Greater Manchester	1,522	1,720	907

¹ Note these figures are only for nine months as opposed to the twelve months in the columns for 2016/17 and 2017/18. This is because the latest published data 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>. It is part of the Royal Courts of Justice Annual Tables (which contain at Table 5.2 a breakdown of sitting days by type of work and level of judge)

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

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

■ Crown Courts: Bradford

Philip Davies: [\[277304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 10 July 2019 to Question 273758 on Courts, what the average length of time was between first court appearance and trial in Bradford Crown Court in each of the last five years.

Edward Argar:

Please find attached table providing:

- Average (mean and median) number of days from first listing at the magistrates' court to main hearing at the Crown Court, for completed Crown Court trial cases at Bradford Crown Court, 2014-2018

Table - Average number of days first listing to main hearing, for completed Crown Court trial cases in England and Wales, 2014 to 2018.

	YEAR	FIRST LISTING TO TRIAL NUMBER OF START DEFENDANTS DATE WITH COMPLETED OF CASES (NUMBER OF DAYS)
Mean	Median	
2014	1,347	117 98
2015	1,212	121 106
2016	1,181	135 121
2017	1,071	141 128
2018	940	156 161

Notes

(1) Trial is identified based on the "case type" variable (e.g. case_type =T), this is recorded at the point of receipt into the Crown Court and it is possible that not all cases went on to trial.

(2) Includes cases with an offence to completion time greater than 10 years but excludes a small number of cases with identified data quality issues and breaches.

(3) Includes all criminal cases which have received a verdict and concluded in the specified time period in the Crown Court.

(4) Statistics are sources from linked magistrates' courts and Crown Court administrative data systems - with a match rate of around 95%.

(5) Only one offence is counted for each defendant in the case. If there is more than one offence per defendant that complete on the same day, a set of validation rules applies to select one offence only and these relate to the longest duration, seriousness and the lowest sequence number of the offence.

(6) Around 95% of defendants have a main hearing date.

(7) A median value of 0 indicates that the case had a first listing and was completed on the same day.

(8) Committal proceedings were abolished nationally on 28 May 2013. Triable either-way cases are now sent rather than committed.

■ Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges

Richard Burgon: [\[279092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have paid Employment Tribunal Fees during the operation of that policy.

Edward Argar:

We do not collect information on the number of individual claimants who paid fees in the Employment Tribunals.

The number of fee payments received in the Employment Tribunals between 29 July 2013 (when fees were introduced) and 26 July 2017 is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2017> . Fee payments do not directly correlate to the number of individual claimants because there could be multiple claimants named in single claim.

■ Employment Tribunals Service: Waiting Lists

Richard Burgon: [\[272281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the longest waiting time was between an application for an employment tribunal and the date of first hearing in (a) 2012, (b) 2015 and (c) 2018 by employment tribunal office.

Edward Argar:

The longest time between an application for an employment tribunal and the date of first hearing in (a) 2012, (b) 2015 and (c) 2018 can be found in the table below.

MAXIMUM WAITING TIME (IN WEEKS) FROM RECEIPT TO FIRST HEARING

	January 12- December 12	January 15- December 15	January 18- December 18
	All Claims ^{1,2}	All Claims ^{1,2}	All Claims ^{1,2}
Aberdeen	250	96	142
Birmingham	629	387	216
Bristol	238	243	135
Cardiff	232	130	146
Dundee	146	106	138
Edinburgh	225	183	117
Glasgow	197	254	579

MAXIMUM WAITING TIME (IN WEEKS) FROM RECEIPT TO FIRST HEARING

Leeds	595	275	231
London Central	198	266	209
London South	190	206	213
Manchester	475	450	289
Newcastle	573	440	244
Nottingham	287	221	394
Stratford	254	283	209
Watford	195	407	344

¹ SINGLE CLAIMS
ARE MADE BY A
SOLE
EMPLOYEE/WORKER,
RELATING TO
ALLEGED BREACHES
OF EMPLOYMENT
RIGHTS.

² Multiple claims are where two or more people bring proceedings arising out of the same facts, usually against a common employer. In this instance the lead multiple claim would be listed for hearing. This table provides the maximum listing time for both single and lead multiple claim cases.

Timeliness is impacted by the complexity of a case, each one would be dealt with on it's own merits and as such, some cases can take longer to progress than others. Claims such as equal pay and discrimination are types of jurisdictions which require longer hearing time and additional case management.

A claim may contain one or more jurisdictional complaint (grounds for the claim). Depending upon the complexity of the jurisdiction this may importantly influence the listing of such claims.

All data were taken from the Employment Tribunals Central database and as such is management information that is, provisional and subject to change.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system, and is the best data that is available at the time of publication.

95% of multiple claims are stayed awaiting decision from a lead claim, as these are usually complex claims involving jurisdiction such as equal pay, holiday pay and pensions and it can take some time for these claims to be dealt with. This explains why the oldest claims in the table exceed ten years in length as they spend the majority of this period as a stayed claim.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service has been working with the tribunal's judiciary to appoint additional judges to increase the capacity and performance of the tribunal. 58 (or 51.5 full time equivalent) salaried employment judges took up positions in England and Wales from April 2019.

■ Family Courts

Philip Davies: [\[278939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July to Question 273769 on Family Courts, who the person is on the panel that represents male victims.

Edward Argar:

Neil Blacklock, the Development Director of Respect, a charity working with male victims of domestic abuse and those subject to allegations of domestic abuse, was appointed to the panel in July 2019. The public call for evidence, launched on the 19th July 2019 and open until the 26th August 2019, aims to collect evidence from as broad a range of perspectives as possible, including from the experiences of male victims and organisations working on their behalf, and the panel is considering other mechanisms in order to facilitate wider participation in this call for evidence.

■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Overtime

Richard Burgon: [\[280395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many hours of overtime were worked by HM Courts & Tribunals Service staff in each year since 2010.

Edward Argar:

I am unable to answer this question as HM Courts and Tribunals Services does not hold the required information.

■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Reform

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[279404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 17 July 2019 to Question 263790 on HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Reform, whether the academic research for evaluation of reform was made publicly available; and what plans he has for further research on that topic in the current financial year.

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[279442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 17 July 2019 to Question 263790 on HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Reform, whether the (a) content

of and (b) responses to the Social Security and Child Support digital capability survey will be made publicly available.

Edward Argar:

The following academic research for evaluation of reform is publicly available:

Research on the Citizen User Experience:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmcts-citizen-user-experience-research>

London School of Economics evaluation of video hearings in the First-tier Tribunal (Tax Chamber):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-video-hearings-party-to-state-a-process-evaluation>

We expect to publish the research on the Professional User Experience and on Social Security and Child Support appellants' digital capability within the next six months.

Flexible Operating Hours is an ongoing project and we anticipate that research will be published upon completion. On 19th July, the evaluation plan for the HMCTS flexible operating hours pilot was published and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flexible-operating-hours-evaluation-plan-and-summary>

The Government has committed to undertake an overarching evaluation of the courts and tribunals modernisation programme. This will take into account existing data and management information, and further qualitative and quantitative research which we are planning to commission for the evaluation. We are planning to begin commissioning for this research shortly. We are aiming to publish the interim report of our evaluation during the course of the reform programme in 2021, and we will publish a final evaluation report following completion of the programme.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Housing

Chris Elmore:

[\[270393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to help people in South Wales that are unable to travel to a housing legal aid provider.

Edward Argar:

The Legal Aid Agency (LAA) keeps availability of legal aid providers under constant review, and takes urgent action whenever it has concerns.

The LAA has recently tendered for new face-to-face housing contracts across the 134 housing and debt procurement areas across England and Wales. Contracts commenced on 1 September 2018. As of 31 May 2019, there is at least one provider offering housing and debt services in all but 4 procurement areas. Legal advice is still available in these areas through the Civil Legal Advice telephone service, and the LAA is considering how to secure provision in these areas and will set out next steps shortly.

In addition to the Civil Legal Advice telephone service offering legal services in a range of issues to those who need it, we are investing £5m in innovative new technologies to help people access legal support wherever they are in England and Wales.

■ Probate: Computer Software

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[278565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the rollout of new software at probate registries across England and Wales.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[278566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department has taken to mitigate the potential effect of the rollout of new software at probate registries across England and Wales on the length of time it takes to obtain grants of probate and letters of administration.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[278567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average time taken was to obtain grants of probate and letters of administration from probate registries across England and Wales in each month in 2018 and 2019.

Edward Argar:

The recent, temporary increase in waiting times was caused by a combination of an increased volume of incoming work and the transition to a new case management system. The move to the new system meant that staff had to spend time being trained and familiarising themselves with it. There were also some initial performance issues which have now been resolved.

At the end of June 2019, 93% of users indicated, from five feedback options, that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the online application service provided.

Urgent action has been taken to address the delays which have been experienced in the probate service. Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is increasing staffing levels and further improving the digital service to help reduce waiting times.

Official statistics are not published on the average length of time from receipt of the application to the issue of a grant of probate and letters of administration. HMCTS internal management information, which is not subject to the rigorous quality assurance processes of official statistics, has been used to show the following average times from receipt of an application to a grant being issued:

MONTH AND YEAR	AVERAGE WEEKS TO GRANT ISSUED
January 2018	3
February 2018	3
March 2018	3

MONTH AND YEAR	AVERAGE WEEKS TO GRANT ISSUED
April 2018	3
May 2018	3
June 2018	3
July 2018	3
August 2018	3
September 2018	3
October 2018	3
November 2018	3
December 2018	3
January 2019	2
February 2019	2
March 2019	3
April 2019	2
May 2019	6
June 2019	9

These figures do not include cases which are waiting for a grant to be issued. The data from April 2019 to June 2019 have been extracted from the HMCTS Reform Core Case Data system, which is a new system in active development, and may not be directly comparable with figures for earlier periods. All figures, especially those for April 2019 to June 2019, are provisional and subject to revision.

Some grants are experiencing delays of between four and six weeks outside of our targets as a result of significant increases in work during March and April and some technology issues which have now been resolved. We have recruited more staff and are now issuing in excess of 1,000 grants a day, which is bringing waiting times down further.

■ Recorders

Richard Burgon:

[\[279093\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Recorders have sat to hear cases in each year since 2010.

Edward Argar:

Information on how many Recorders have sat to hear cases in each year has only been held centrally since 2017/18. The below table, however, sets out the number of Recorders in post at 1st April of each year since 2010. We expect Recorders in post to have been offered the opportunity to sit.

YEAR	NUMBER OF RECORDERS ¹
2010	1,233
2011	1,221
2012	1,155
2013	1,196
2014	1,126
2015	1,031
2016	1,130
2017	920
2018	830
2019	873

¹ FIGURES ARE AT 1ST APRIL OF EACH YEAR.

SOME RECORDERS HOLD MORE THAN ONE JUDICIAL APPOINTMENT. IN SUCH CASES, THE APPOINTMENT THAT THE JUDICIAL OFFICE HOLDER UNDERTAKES FOR THE MAJORITY OF THEIR TIME IS KNOWN AS THEIR PRIMARY APPOINTMENT. IN ORDER TO AVOID DOUBLE COUNTING OF JUDGES, THIS TABLE SHOWS FIGURES FOR PRIMARY APPOINTMENTS ONLY AND AS SUCH WILL NOT COUNT JUDGES WHOSE APPOINTMENT AS A RECORDER IS NOT THEIR PRIMARY APPOINTMENT.

Figures are from the published Judicial Diversity Statistics which can be found here:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/publication-type/statistics/>

Recorders sit mainly in the Crown, County and Family Courts. Figures on court sitting days are published on Gov.uk and the latest information covering 2018 is available here. It is part of the Royal Courts of Justice Annual Tables (which contain at Tables 5.1 and 5.2 a breakdown of sitting days by type of work and level of judge):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2019>. This information covers both England and Wales and is published annually.

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Jessica Morden: [\[279393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of benefit appeals to HM Courts and Tribunal Service made against Department of Work and Pensions decisions were overturned on appeal in (a) Wales and (b) Newport East constituency in the latest period for which figures are available.

Edward Argar:

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 of appeals for hearing venues covering (a) Wales and (b) the Newport East constituency for January – March 2019, the latest period for which data are available.

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. Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service cannot comment on decisions made by independent tribunal judiciary.

Latest figures (to March 2019) indicate that since Personal Independence Payment was introduced, 4.1 million decisions have been made, and of these, 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned at Tribunals. For Employment and Support Allowance (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.

■ Translation Services

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[279405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275723, what the total spend of his Department was on translation services (a) in the 2017-18 financial year and (b) since 1 April 2018.

Edward Argar:

This question has been interpreted to mean costs for all language services, both translators, and interpreters provided in a court setting, and for printed materials available in HMCTS buildings.

The spend by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service on courts translations services was as follows,

	TOTAL COST (£)
Financial year 2017-18	11,487,719.68
Financial Year 2018-19	11,000,690.76
April 2019 – 30 Jun 2019	3,670,157.83

These figures do not include any expenditure related to central funds as these are not included in the accounts for HM Courts and Tribunals Service.

Our most recent statistics show language service requests are at their highest since the new contract was introduced in 2016 the clear majority were fulfilled. It is vital that victims, witnesses and defendants understand what is happening in court to ensure justice is done, and we will always take steps to ensure a qualified interpreter is provided when needed.

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[279412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275723 on Translation Services, how much funding was allocated to each provider of translation services in each financial year since 2010-11.

Edward Argar:

HMCTS do not allocate funding by supplier for any type of expenditure, so would not be able to provide details on how much was allocated for translation services by supplier.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

■ Election Offences: Prosecutions

Chris Ruane: [\[280939\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, how many successful prosecutions for (a) postal vote fraud, excluding by proxy voting, and (b) electoral registration fraud there have been in each of the last 15 years.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Commission has collected and published information about allegations of electoral fraud from the police since 2008.

The table below shows the number of successful prosecutions for allegations of postal vote and electoral registration fraud. It splits convictions for postal vote fraud into those relating to applications to vote by post and those relating to voting by post.

Number of successful prosecutions relating to postal vote fraud

YEAR	CONVICTIONS RELATING TO APPLICATIONS TO VOTE BY POST	CONVICTIONS RELATING TO VOTING BY POST	CONVICTIONS RELATING TO ELECTORAL REGISTRATION
2018	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0
2016	0	0	1
2015	0	0	1
2014	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0
2011	0	0	2
2010	1	0	0
2009	n/a	n/a	2
2008	n/a	n/a	0

The police-recorded cases of alleged personation offences in 2008 and 2009 were not broken down to record the type of personation, i.e. polling station, postal voting or proxy voting. It is for this reason these figures are not available.

■ Electoral Register

Chris Ruane:

[\[280153\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what steps have been taken by the Electoral Commission to inform hon. Members of the performance of electoral registration officers in their (a) constituency and (b) local authority.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Electoral Commission's performance standards framework has not involved any formal notifications to Members of Parliament since 2014. Assessments of the performance of EROs are made annually by the Commission and the details of any ERO who has not met the standards in full are made available on the Commission's website.

Chris Ruane: [\[280154\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, which electoral registration officers identified themselves as below standard at using information services to (a) verify entries in the register of electors and (b) identify potential new electors in the latest period for which figures are available.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Electoral Commission's performance standards framework has not involved any element of self-assessment by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) since 2014.

The Commission has not assessed any ERO as not meeting this specific element of the performance standards since its inclusion in 2016.

Chris Ruane: [\[280155\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, how many letters the Electoral Commission has written to hon. Members as a result of their electoral registration officers having failed at least one standard performance indicator in each year for which data is available.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Electoral Commission's performance standards framework has not included any formal notifications to Members of Parliament since 2014. Assessments of the performance of Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) are made annually by the Commission and the details of any ERO who has not met the standards in full are made available on the Commission's website.

Chris Ruane: [\[280156\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, with reference to the Answer of 5 July 2011 to Question 63427 on Electoral Register, which electoral registration officers rated themselves too highly in their self-assessment and had their ratings reduced in each year since 2014.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Electoral Commission's performance standards framework has not involved any element of self-assessment by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) since 2014.

Assessments of the performance of EROs are made annually by the Commission and the details of any ERO who has not met the standards in full are made available on the Commission's website.

Chris Ruane: [\[280160\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, which local authority had the biggest percentage (a) increase and (b) decrease in electoral registration in each year since 2010.

Bridget Phillipson:

The table below sets out the largest increases and decreases in the registered local government electorate, by local authority, from 1 December of one year to 1 December of the following year. For example, the 2010 row shows the change in the number of register entries between 1 December 2009 and 1 December 2010.

YEAR	LARGEST % INCREASE	LARGEST % DECREASE
2010	Shepway (8.9%)	Richmondshire (-7.2%)
2011	Aberdeen (4.9%)	Clackmannanshire (-4.6%)
2012	Clackmannanshire (4.3%)	Tower Hamlets (-6%)
2013	Tower Hamlets (11.3%)	Taunton Deane (-8.8%)
2014	Wellingborough (6.5%)	Ceredigion (-12.7%)
2015	East Devon (5.2%)	Cambridge (-11.8%)
2016	Colchester (9%)	Manchester (-3.8%)
2017	Tower Hamlets (12%)	Hyndburn (-6%)
2018	Barking & Dagenham (4.5%)	Isles of Scilly (-7.1%)

Chris Ruane:

[\[280161\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what the ranked order of spending per person on electoral registration by local authorities was in the last year for which figures are available.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Commission does not collect data on the spending per person on electoral registration by local authorities.

■ Electoral Register: Ethnic Groups

Chris Ruane:

[\[280158\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what recent discussions the Commission has had with (a) church and community leaders from black and minority ethnic communities and (b) Operation Black Vote on increasing registration levels for voters in those communities.

Bridget Phillipson:

We know from our research of the electoral registers that voters from BME communities are less likely to be registered to vote when compared with white voters.

As part of all of its public awareness campaigns ahead of elections, the Electoral Commission provides voter registration resources to a wide range of groups or individuals, to use in encouraging registration. These are freely available via the Commission's website or its 'Roll Call' newsletter, to which anyone can subscribe.

We also identify specific organisations who could help promote registration to under-registered groups and actively provide these partners with resources: these have recently included, for example, the Council of African and Caribbean Churches and the Muslim Women's network. It also works closely with Electoral Registration Officers, who hold many important relationships with church and community leaders to promote voter registration at a local level.

The Commission most recently contacted Operation Black Vote ahead of the Government's voter ID pilots which took place in May 2019, to seek a contribution to its statutory evaluation of the pilots. It did not receive a response.

■ Electoral Register: Students

Chris Ruane: [\[280159\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, with reference to the Answer of 23 April 2012, Official Report, column 623W on Electoral Register, what steps he has taken to improve student registration.

Bridget Phillipson:

We know from our research of the electoral registers that students and young people are less likely to be registered to vote.

As part of its public awareness campaigns ahead of elections, the Commission seeks to target under-registered groups wherever this is possible. This includes placing advertising on platforms like Snapchat and Instagram, and buying TV advertising space during times when people aged 16 to 34 make up a larger proportion of the audience.

The Commission also provides voter registration resources to a wide range of groups or individuals, to use in encouraging registration. These are freely available via the Commission's website or its 'Roll Call' newsletter, to which anyone can subscribe. Ahead of the elections in May 2019, it developed a number of resources in partnership with the National Union of Students, including social media images, posters and a resource pack for individual student unions.

■ Electoral Register: Young People

Chris Ruane: [\[280146\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what assessment the Electoral Commission has made of the potential merits of auto-enrolment on the electoral register of young people when they are given their national insurance number.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Commission believes that registering young people automatically when they are allocated their National Insurance number would be an effective way of improving completeness levels among attainers.

It recently published the findings of feasibility studies examining the potential for data sharing between organisations holding reliable information about citizens and Electoral Registration Officers. It found that data sharing could be achieved by linking national data sources to the individual electoral registration service, which is already connected to the systems used by Electoral Registration Officers to manage their electoral registers.

In this way, it would be possible for information about young people allocated National Insurance numbers to be shared with Electoral Registration Officers, to support automatic or automated electoral registration.

Chris Ruane: [\[280928\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what recent assessment the Electoral Commission has made of electoral registration rates of attainers in (a) Scotland, (b) Northern Ireland, (c) Wales and (d) England.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Electoral Commission conducts research into the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers in the UK at regular intervals. The most recent study was published in 2016 and was an assessment of the December 2015 registers.

The study provided findings on attainers for Great Britain and separately for Northern Ireland. Below the headline findings, it was not possible to report separately for England, Scotland and Wales because of the size of the sample used in the research.

In December 2015, the Commission found that 45% of attainers in Great Britain and 8% in Northern Ireland were correctly registered.

The results of the Commission's next accuracy and completeness study will be published in autumn 2019.

■ Electoral Registration Officers: Standards

Chris Ruane: [\[280147\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, if he will make an assessment of the ability of the Electoral Commission to monitor the performance of electoral registration officers in dealing with electors who (a) have low reading and writing skills, (b) are visually impaired and (c) have learning difficulties.

Bridget Phillipson:

The Electoral Commission sets standards for and monitors the performance of Electoral Registration Officers (EROs). These standards have the objective of ensuring that all eligible people are able to participate in the electoral process.

The Commission provides guidance to EROs to support them in delivering their functions and meeting the performance standards. In developing this guidance to improve the accessibility of electoral registration services, the Commission works with a variety of disability organisations – including groups representing electors with sight loss and learning difficulties – to ensure its work reflects good practice.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation: Exhaust Emissions

Paul Farrelly: [\[279385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to ensure that all airlines operating in the UK have a carbon offset scheme to which customers can sign up.

George Freeman:

[Holding answer 24 July 2019]: On 18 July 2019 the government launched a call for evidence on carbon offsetting for all transport modes, including aviation.

This call for evidence explores how we might improve consumer understanding of the emissions from their journeys and their options to offset them, and if travel providers should be required to offer voluntary carbon offsets to their customers.

This is an area where we believe more information is needed to understand how any schemes could work successfully and we are looking forward to seeing the views and evidence that come through in response.

■ Bus Services: Railways

Ian Lavery: [\[278508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve the integration and cooperation of bus and train services.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Decisions on how best to co-ordinate bus and rail services are best tackled locally. The needs of all public transport users must be taken into account when considering how to manage the different public transport networks. Changes at one station or location may benefit passengers there but may be a disadvantage to passengers further along the route.

The Department is currently in the process of building the Bus Open Data Digital Service which will serve as a platform for bus operators to provide their route, timetable, location, and fares data. This data can then be used by application

developers to build products and services to help passengers plan their journeys, including onward journeys from railway stations.

The Williams Rail Review is looking at how strategic planning can be improved, including at the local level, so train services and stations can be integrated with local bus services and cycling routes.

■ Business: Aviation

Chuka Umunna: [\[280354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment the Government has made of whether businesses will be able to use air travel for the delivery of goods and services immediately after the UK's departure from the EU in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: The contingency measures adopted by the EU, including the implementing regulation amendment recognising the UK's security regime and the reciprocal measures announced by the UK, mean that flights and the movement of cargo and passengers will be able to continue, even in a no deal scenario. Indeed, both the UK and the EU are committed to maintaining connectivity.

■ Channel Ferries

Karl Turner: [\[277708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with his French counterpart on handling traffic from roll-on, roll-off ferry services originating from Dover and arriving at the Port of Calais in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The current Secretary of State is yet to engage in discussions with his French counterpart but will be shortly, however the Government's Border Delivery Group has liaised with French authorities at various levels.

■ Department for Transport: Post Office

Marion Fellows: [\[280260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2019 to Question 260045 on Department for Transport: Post Office, what the cost to the public purse was for this contract in each of the last five years.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: The information is considered to be commercial in confidence. To disclose information about fees, financial costs and any payments made would be likely to affect the commercial interests of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and the Post Office Ltd.

■ East Midlands Trains: Rolling Stock

Andy McDonald: [\[279067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the franchise for East Midlands Trains stipulates that the new rolling stock for that route should be manufactured by a company that is based in the UK.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The East Midlands franchise does not stipulate where any new rolling stock should be manufactured. This will be a commercial matter for the operator and the manufacturer.

■ Electric Vehicles: North Cornwall

Scott Mann: [\[279104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to increase the number of electric car charging points in North Cornwall.

George Freeman:

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.

The Government is also providing support through a number of schemes, which can be accessed across the country, including in North Cornwall. This includes schemes to help fund chargepoint infrastructure at people's 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. In February 2019, Cornwall County Council were awarded £94,000 through the Government's Ultra Low Emission Taxi Infrastructure competition, to deliver five chargepoints dedicated to charging electric taxis and private hire vehicles.

In conjunction with the Energy Savings Trust, this year the Office for Low Emission Vehicles has been running a series of roadshows for local authorities and public bodies across the UK, on best practice approaches to driving the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles. The event in Bristol was well attended including local authority and public sector representatives from across the south west.

■ Garages and Petrol Stations

Stephen Pound: [\[278332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to prevent garages from parking vehicles on streets that do not a display registration plate or a visible vehicle identification numbers; and if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of the powers available to the (a) DVLA, (b) the Metropolitan police and (c) local authorities in tackling that problem.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Legislation relating to the display of registration numbers and number plates already exists and enforcement is an operational matter for the police. Successful prosecution depends on the police sighting the vehicle on the public highway and establishing that an offence has been committed. Number plate offences are also included in the Home Office's fixed penalty system. This provides the police with a practical and effective means of enforcement. The police can also remove any vehicle that is causing an obstruction, is likely to cause danger or is broken down or abandoned without lawful authority.

Local authorities have legislative powers to fine garages for leaving two or more vehicles advertised for sale on the road.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency is responsible for enforcement against unlicensed vehicles and has legislative powers to clamp or remove such vehicles from public roads.

■ Petrol: Ethanol

Paul Farrelly: [\[278404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the amount of ethanol in petrol sold to reduce carbon emissions.

George Freeman:

In 2018 the Department published a call for evidence on "E10 petrol, consumer protection and fuel pump labelling". This document noted that using E10 (petrol containing up to 10% bioethanol) in place of E5 could reduce the net greenhouse gas emissions of a petrol vehicle by around two per cent.

■ Ports: Wales

Ruth Jones: [\[277856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with his Welsh counterpart on ensuring all UK ports are prepared for the UK leaving the EU.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government is engaging closely with the Wales Office and Welsh Government as part of the programme to ensure that all UK ports are prepared for the UK leaving the EU, including the possibility of a no-deal exit.

Jo Stevens: [\[279082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what level of funding his Department has allocated to contingency planning at the ports (a) Holyhead and (b) Pembroke Dock in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Contingency planning in relation to access to these Ports is a matter for the Welsh Government. However, the Department for Transport has provided analytical support, and along with Border Delivery Group and others, has liaised closely with the Welsh Government and the Wales Office on preparations.

■ Public Transport

Ian Lavery:

[\[278509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to incentivise people to use public transport since 2010.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Bus Services Act 2017 provides the tools local authorities need such as Enhanced Partnerships and Franchising to improve local bus services and increase passenger numbers. Our forthcoming Bus Open Data Digital Service will transform the experience for passengers by making it easier for them to work out the best options available.

The Government has committed to provide £150 million of funding to support the delivery of smart and integrated ticketing across local transport and rail services in the north. Transport for the North, working closely with my Department, is in the final stages of procuring a digital platform that would make data on fares available online.

The Government has introduced a requirement for new franchises to introduce 'one-click' automated Delay Repay compensation, to make it easier for passengers to claim compensation when they have suffered delays.

The Government has also rolled out smart ticketing on rail - smart tickets are now accepted at rail stations across almost all of the network, with all franchised operators offering smart cards and/or barcode ticketing.

We now want to ensure that across regional and urban commuter areas, smart ticketing can deliver the kind of pay-as-you-go structure that is used in London and make journeys easier.

■ Railways: Market Harborough

Neil O'Brien:

[\[280413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of trains were (a) cancelled or significantly late and (b) on time in each year since 1996 from Market Harborough to London Terminals.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We recognise performance on the railway has been unsatisfactory, and passengers have not always received the level of service they expected. While performance has improved recently, the new Transport Secretary understands passengers need the certainty of reliable journeys, and is determined to work with industry to improve performance.

We are unable to provide the data requested, as it is owned by Network Rail. We advise you contact them directly for further information or refer to their websites.

■ Railways: Standards

Neil O'Brien: [\[280409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which were the 100 scheduled rail journeys which were most frequently (a) cancelled or (b) significantly late over the last six month period for which data are available; and what proportion of each were (i) cancelled or (ii) significantly late.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We recognise performance on the railway has been unsatisfactory, and passengers have not always received the level of service they expected. While performance has improved recently, the new Transport Secretary understands passengers need the certainty of reliable journeys, and is determined to work with industry to improve performance.

We are unable to provide the data requested, as it is owned by Network Rail. We advise you contact them directly for further information or refer to their websites.

■ Road Works: Small Businesses

Toby Perkins: [\[278467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the amount of revenue lost by shops and small businesses because of roadworks or road closures annually.

Toby Perkins: [\[278468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals on compensation for businesses for revenue lost as a result of roadworks or road closures.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department has made no estimate of the amount of revenue lost by shops and small businesses as a result of road works or road closures and there are no plans to introduce legislation to compensate for such losses.

It should be recognised that works need to take place from time to time and many businesses will benefit from the resulting improvements. Authorities and utility companies should ensure that works are undertaken as quickly and efficiently as possible in order to keep disruption to a minimum.

■ Roads: Safety

Andy McDonald: [\[279066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the 11 July 2019 Road Safety Foundation

report that (a) local road safety in the UK has major structural weaknesses and (b) the lack of funding may compromise the ability of councils to fulfil their legal duties.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

We are grateful for the work done by the Road Safety Foundation and we will consider its findings and take action as needed.

On 13 June 2018, we published details of funding to improve 50 of England's most dangerous A roads; many of these projects are now underway.

On 19 July this year, as part of the Road Safety Statement, we announced a Rural Roads Working Group to consider road safety issues specific to rural roads.

The Department will continue to work closely with the Safer Roads Foundation to identify further opportunities to improve road safety.

■ Shared Spaces

Ian Austin:

[\[280186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with (a) the Royal National Institute of Blind People and (b) other NGOs on shared space schemes since his Department's announcement in July 2018 of a halt in the development of those schemes.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: Ministers meet regularly with groups representing disabled people, including those representing blind and partially sighted people, to discuss a wide range of inclusive and accessible transport issues. Officials in my Department also work closely with a wide range of stakeholders on many issues including shared space schemes, the opportunities they offer and the challenges they pose.

■ South Wales Railway Line

Jessica Morden:

[\[279397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to publish its study on improvements to rail capacity and speeds on the South Wales Mainline.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

[Holding answer 24 July 2019]: Studies considering improvements to rail capacity and speeds on the South Wales Mainline are in an early stage of development. The Department does not routinely publish early drafts of such studies. Currently officials are actively engaged in working with local stakeholders to develop the proposals further and make a case for funding through the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline.

■ Transport

Karl Turner: [\[280350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 22 July 2019 to Question 276184, if he will estimate the (a) number of staff and (b) departmental resources which have been allocated to (i) maritime, (ii) road transport and (iii) aviation aspects of the UK leaving the EU since April 2019 to 22 July 2019.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

[Holding answer 25 July 2019]: The number of people currently working on EU Exit within the Department can change as staff can move in accordance with priorities. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of staff numbers and departmental resources for modal areas given the cross cutting nature of some roles related to EU Exit.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles: Registration

Lee Rowley: [\[281036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of using British Model Flying Association drone registration data to avoid duplicate registrations in the UK Drone Registration Scheme.

Lee Rowley: [\[281037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to publicise the UK Drone Registration Scheme to (a) new and (b) drone owners.

Paul Maynard:

Small unmanned aircraft (SUAs) can be enormously beneficial, both commercially and as a leisure pursuit. However, SUAs also have the potential to pose a safety and security threat so it is important that those operating them understand the law and their responsibilities as a remote pilot of an aircraft in UK airspace.

The changes to the Air Navigation Order laid before Parliament in May 2018 require that all operators of SUAs of all types weighing 250g – 20kg must register their aircraft by 30 November 2019.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is working with the British Model Flying Association to see whether, as a service to their members, they may want to assist in the initial upload of data. The CAA will be launching an awareness-raising campaign to ensure that new and existing operators and remote pilots of small unmanned aircraft (SUAs) are aware of the requirement to register and take a competency test by 30 November 2019.