

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 3 January 2014

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to arrive not later than two weeks after publication of this report.

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Storey, Mervyn (North Antrim)  
Swann, Robin (North Antrim)  
Weir, Peter (North Down)  
Wells, Jim (South Down)  
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

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# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 3 January 2014

## Written Answers to Questions

### Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

#### **Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission: Staff**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of staff employed by the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission, broken down by religion.

**(AQW 28565/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):** The Loughs Agency is an Agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission. The Loughs Agency has responsibility for the promotion and development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters.

The Loughs Agency has 10 staff based in the south of Ireland and 46 staff based in the north of Ireland. The Loughs Agency is only required to hold information on community background for employees living in the north. Of these, the breakdown is as follows:

- 20 Protestant employees;
- 25 Catholic employees; and
- 1 non determined employee.

#### **Loughs Agency: A5 Western Transport Corridor**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) why Loughs Agency did not respond to the findings and conclusions of the screening exercise on the A5 Western Transport Corridor; (ii) whether Loughs Agency are a statutory consultee; (iii) whether it is normal for Loughs Agency to respond; and (iv) whether any consideration was given by Loughs Agency to issuing a response.

**(AQW 28746/11-15)**

Mrs O'Neill:

- (i) The Loughs Agency has been involved in various stages of the wider A5 Western Transport Corridor consultation process from as far back as 2007. The Agency was involved, pre public enquiry, where it has fully participated via letter, email or verbally and has put forward relevant comments. The Loughs Agency did submit a response to the screening exercise. The Agency's response was set out in a letter dated 28th March 2011.
- (ii) The Loughs Agency is currently a non-statutory consultee.
- (iii) The Loughs Agency responds to all consultations that falls within its remit.
- (iv) As stated earlier, the Loughs Agency issued a response on 28th March 2011.

### North Antrim: Stolen Livestock

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many incidents of stolen livestock have been reported in the North Antrim area, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 29300/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:**

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Number of Incidents	80	66	87

The above table records the number of incidents involving missing or stolen cattle in the Ballymena Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO) area. The majority of the North Antrim area is in the Ballymena DVO area.

APHIS does not differentiate between missing or stolen cattle. Information involving any other missing or stolen livestock is not recorded on APHIS at present.

APHIS does not record information on a constituency basis.

### Eggs Imported from Italy or Greece

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she is aware of eggs being imported from Italy or Greece.

**(AQW 29320/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My officials interrogated the Trade Control and Export System (TRACES) database and can confirm that there are no records of direct imports of hatching eggs from either Italy or Greece during 2013.

In accordance with EU law table eggs move freely between Member States (MS). DARD is therefore not informed of consignments coming into the north from other MS including Italy and Greece.

### Funding Package to Encourage Farmers to fit Security Devices to Their Machinery

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department will be administering the recently announced funding package to encourage farmers to fit security devices to their machinery.

**(AQW 29380/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Front line administration of this initiative will be undertaken by NFU Mutual staff.

The contact number to reserve the subsidised rates for TRACKER and CESAR is 028 90 818688. The line will be open 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday and the package is available until 31st January 2014, subject to availability.

### Tree Disease and Pests

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to list the number of meetings she has held on future strategies to combat tree disease and pests with officials in the (i) Republic of Ireland; and (ii) regions of the United Kingdom.

**(AQW 29388/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In the past 12 month I have had three meetings with Ministers from the south of Ireland which included agenda items related to tree and plant health strategy on the 9 and 10 July and on the 13 November. My officials have been regularly liaising with their DEFRA counterparts on these issues over this period however I have had no meetings with British Ministers during this period.

## Future Capital Grant Scheme for Farmers

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the work undertaken by her Department on a future capital grant scheme for farmers; and to detail the timescale for this work.

**(AQW 29409/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department's proposals for a capital grant scheme in the new Rural Development Programme (RDP) were outlined in a consultation document published on 1 July 2013, with the period of public consultation closing on 21 October 2013.

My officials are considering the consultation responses received and will continue to develop the programme in conjunction with the Stakeholder Consultation Group before it is submitted to Europe. There is further work to be done on the proposals for the new Programme before it is submitted informally to Europe to commence the process of approval.

## Third Sector Organisations

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) all third sector organisations funded by the Department who provide services to the public; and (ii) the value of each contract.

**(AQW 29412/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The following table outlines the third sector organisations funded by my Department in the 2012/13 financial year.

<b>Name of Third Sector Organisation Funded by DARD</b>	<b>Value of Contract</b>
Fermanagh Rural Community Network	£169,689
Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network	£159,500
Tyrone, Armagh, Down & Antrim	£169,798
South Antrim Rural Network	£99,569
Rural Area Partnership In Derry	£133,100
North Antrim Rural Network	£128,831
County Down Rural Community Network	£99,710
County Down Rural Community Network	£198,916
Rural Support	£84,775
University of Ulster	£103,000
City & Guilds	£77,416
Queen's University Of Belfast	£54,541
LANTRA	£28,035
Northern Regional College	£20,963
CIEH	£20,295
RSPB	£8,358
Calc Open Learning	£7,090
UCAS	£5,729
South Eastern Regional College	£5,355

<b>Name of Third Sector Organisation Funded by DARD</b>	<b>Value of Contract</b>
Institute of Materials Minerals & Mining	£5,023
Royal Society For Public Health	£3,762
Food & Drink Sector Skills	£3,635
Randalstown Arches Association	£3,611
Young Farmers' Club Of Ulster	£3,600
Federation of Irish Bee Keepers Association	£2,664
Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board	£2,614
Wageningen University	£2,200
ABC Awards	£2,161
Food And Environment Research Agency	£2,040
South West College	£1,736
Banbridge District Ent Ltd	£1,520
Southern Regional College	£1,250
Inst of Materials Minerals & Mining	£1,182
British Horseracing Educ & Stds Trust	£989
St John Ambulance (Ni)	£975
Open College Network Northern Ireland	£955
Assumption Grammar School	£930
SFQC	£762
Deaf Awareness & Communications	£759
Banbridge Rugby Club	£680
North West Regional College	£640
Shopmobility	£591
Royal College Of Veterinary Surgeons	£578
Larne Enterprise Development company Ltd	£508
Action Cancer	£500
International Safe Transit Association	£498
North Irish Dragons	£450
Strabane Enterprise Agency	£429
Belfast Metropolitan College	£350
Regent House Grammar School	£350
Inishowen Vintage Club	£322
Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Ltd	£308
Greenkeepers Training Committee	£280



<b>Name of Third Sector Organisation Funded by DARD</b>	<b>Value of Contract</b>
Antrim Enterprise Agency	£273
Ni Chest Heart & Stroke Association	£240
Enterprise Ireland	£237
British Horse Society	£210
LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)	£206
Sixtowns Community Resource Centre	£190
Lisburn City Council	£183
Churchill & District Association	£180
Harper Adams University College	£175
Newtownstewart Leisure Complex Ltd	£163
Institute of Food Science And Technology	£105
Fermanagh Harriers Hunt Club	£100
Inst of Agricultural Engineers	£100
Titanic Schools Project	£100
Institute of Groundsmanship	£98
Royal Horticultural Society The	£84
Claudy Rural Development Ltd	£80
Inst of Agricultural Management	£75
Connemara Pony Breeder's Association	£73
Society of Garden Designers	£64
Mullaghbawn Community Centre Association	£60
Irish Thoroughbred Breeders' Association	£56
British Sandwich Association The	£55
Causeway Enterprise Agency	£50
Dooneen Community Association	£50
Teagasc	£50
Garvagh Development Trust	£45
Southwest College	£40
Loughgiel Community Association	£30
Markethill District Enterprises Ltd	£30
Ulster Ram Breeders Association	£30
RoSPA	£29
Cooneen Community Hall	£25

## Tuberculosis Breakdown: Alternative Control Herds

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the criteria for determining whether there is a potential animal welfare or human hardship problem following a tuberculosis breakdown; and (ii) whether breakdown herds can have immediate access to Alternative Control Herds.

**(AQW 29485/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** (i) Given the range of potential animal welfare or human hardship problems following a tuberculosis breakdown it would not be appropriate to apply rigidly defined criteria. Each case will be considered on its merits following discussion between the herdkeeper and the patch Veterinary Officer or local Divisional Veterinary Officer.

(ii) Any herd keeper who has a problem which they believe will be relieved by moving animals to an Alternative Control Herd (ACH) will be able to apply to do so. Alternative Control Herds will be able to accept cattle from TB free herds on a routine basis. Moves to ACHs from TB breakdown herds will be considered by the Department on a case by case basis and will be permitted where the move will resolve a potential animal welfare or human hardship problem at the breakdown herd, which cannot be resolved by other means such as purchase of additional fodder. It will take some weeks before the first ACHs are approved. Therefore, in the meantime, anyone experiencing animal welfare or hardship problems as a result of TB restrictions should contact their local DARD Direct office for advice.

## Rural Development Programme

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the European visits made by her Department in the course of implementing the current Rural Development Programme or planning future programmes in each of the past three years.

**(AQW 29486/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** For the purposes of answering this question 'European visits' has been taken to mean meetings with the European Commission on implementation of the 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme and development of the 2014-2020 Programme. The following table details the meetings which have taken place in this context in the last three years.

Meeting Type	Number	Programme
Rural Development Annual Review	3	2007-2013
EU Rural Development Committee	2	2007-2013 2014-2020
EU Commission – ad hoc issues	3	2007-2013 2014-2020

The answer excludes meetings on negotiating the regulations, which have taken place in Europe over the last three years and which provide the framework for the new Programme.

## Departmental visits to Europe

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) any reviews, carried out regarding Departmental visits to Europe, as part of officials' normal duties; and (ii) if any visits were assessed.

**(AQW 29487/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** A total of 8 meetings have been held with the EU Commission on the implementation of the 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme and the development of the 2014-2020 Programme. Due to the nature of these meetings no formal review or assessment was required. Three of these

meetings were Annual Reviews following completion of the Annual Progress Report and are an EU requirement. Two meetings were attendance at Rural Development Committee. Information from these meetings was disseminated to relevant DARD staff on return. The remaining three meetings were in relation to specific issues and the outcome of these meetings was discussed with relevant staff.

### **Single Farm Payment Applications**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail how many 2013 Single Farm Payment applications have had field Maximum Eligible Area (MEA) discrepancies identified, and are subject to further Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) checks.

**(AQW 29493/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** At the outset of the verification checks on 2013 Single Farm Payment applications, the Department identified 3,529 businesses where one or more fields had been claimed with an area greater than the Maximum Eligible Area held by the Department.

### **Single Farm Payment Process**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail at what stage of the 2013 Single Farm Payment process field Maximum Eligible Area (MEA) discrepancies were identified in applications.

**(AQW 29494/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Maximum Eligible Area (MEA) discrepancies were initially identified during the claim validation process. This process commenced after all field information from paper Single Application Forms had been entered into Departmental systems. MEA discrepancies can also be identified through on-the-spot checks such as land eligibility inspections.

### **Single Farm Payment Applicants**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) what information has been issued to Single Farm Payment applicants that have had field Maximum Eligible Area (MEA) discrepancies identified with their claims; and are subject to Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) checks; and (ii) at what stage of the process this information was issued.

**(AQW 29495/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In September 2013 the Department identified 3,529 businesses where one or more fields had been claimed with an area greater than the Maximum Eligible Area held by the Department.

In all of these cases the Department established whether it held any information which explained why the farm business claimed an area greater than the MEA. In circumstances where the Department did not hold such information, letters were issued to farm businesses on 11 November 2013 requesting responses within a 10 day period. These letters requested an explanation from the farm business.

### **Single Farm Payment Applications**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline whether discrepancies identified with the field Maximum Eligible Area for 2013 Single Farm Payment applications that are subject to Land Parcel Identification System checks are attributable to individual applicants or to her Department.

**(AQW 29496/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** At the outset of the verification checks on 2013 Single Farm Payment applications, the Department identified 3,529 businesses where one or more fields had been claimed with an area greater than the Maximum Eligible Area held by the Department.

The discrepancies identified have been investigated and are found to have occurred for a variety of reasons including farmer error in the claim and outstanding updates to the LPIS. The majority of discrepancies investigated have been attributed to error by the farmer.

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Women in Apprenticeships

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline any plans he has to promote women in apprenticeships.

**(AQW 29244/11-15)**

**Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):** The most recent edition of my Department's ApprenticeshipsNI Statistical Bulletin indicates that from the introduction of the ApprenticeshipsNI programme in 2007 to date, the percentage of females starting ApprenticeshipsNI funded training has increased from 35% to 51%. A full copy of the Statistical Bulletin can be viewed by following the link below.

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/publications/r-and-s-stats/apprenticeshipsni-statistical-bulletins.htm>

Factors impacting on this increase include the introduction of an all-age provision coupled with accessibility for those working a minimum of 21 hours per week.

As outlined in my oral statement to the Assembly on Tuesday 4 June 2013, I am aware of a range of gender equality issues facing Northern Ireland. I recognise that females, despite gaining strong educational attainments in the further and higher education fields, are much less likely than males to pursue careers in economically relevant areas such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).

The implementation of the STEM Strategy, 'Success through STEM' sets out how we will collectively help to address this issue. Businesses themselves have an important role to play. For example, the STEM Business sub-group ran a seminar entitled 'Are you getting the balance right?' in association with the Equality Commission. The seminar engaged with STEM businesses to investigate the issues of gender bias in STEM and assist in identifying additional steps businesses can take to make careers in STEM attractive to women.

As the member will be aware, in February I announced a major review of my Department's apprenticeship policy. The terms of reference for this work state the intention to explore how apprenticeships could have a better gender balance. This review, which is all encompassing in nature, is progressing as planned and I will be reporting its findings shortly.

### Retention of Apprentices

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he has given any consideration to how the public sector can be used to assist in the retention of apprentices during the economic downturn.

**(AQW 29245/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Employment Service Advisers, working across my Department's network of Jobs and Benefits Offices, will explore all employment opportunities with apprentices who are made redundant.

My Department's employment and training programmes, such as Training for Success, Youth Employment Scheme and Steps to Work, include the opportunity for work placement. Training Suppliers work with a range of employers, from all sectors, in order to facilitate suitable placements.

As the member will be aware, in February I announced a major review of my Department's apprenticeship policy. This review, which is all-encompassing in nature and will consider the public sector context, is progressing as planned and I will be reporting its findings shortly.

## Proposed Lifting of the Cap on University Numbers

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the local implications for a proposed lifting of the cap on university numbers.

**(AQW 29248/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** In the Chancellor's Autumn Statement it was announced that universities in England will be given an extra 30,000 student places for 2014/15 and that the cap will be abolished altogether for 2015/16

This change may present the opportunity for more students from Northern Ireland who wish to study in England to take advantage of the additional places being made available. However, there is no strong evidence as to how the regime of higher fees and cost of living expenses will affect the decision of students to study there.

The availability of more places in England may make it more challenging for the local universities to attract students from outside Northern Ireland to study here.

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Agri-Food Sector

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the economic value of the co-operative sector within the agri-food sector; (ii) the number of jobs sustained within the sector, for each of the last five years; and (iii) the plans to further support its growth.

**(AQW 29222/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** The following figures are based on information for 2012 for agri-food co-operative societies and their subsidiary companies:

(i) Total turnover: £1,093,814,302

External Sales: £744,002,883

Value Added: £79,398,594

(ii) Total employment:

2012 – 2,247 employees

2011 – 2,239 employees

2010 – 2,179 employees

2009 – 2,145 employees

2008 – 2,091 employees

(iii) The Agri-food Strategy, 'Going for Growth', outlines the development strategy over the next six years to 2020, including sub-sector targets and recommendations. Future development plans submitted to Invest NI for consideration for financial assistance will be assessed according to current procedures.

### Statutory Evidence Gathering Powers

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether any statutory evidence gathering powers on issues affecting consumers exists, comparable to Section 24 of the Consumer Estate Agents and Redress Act in Great Britain; and to outline any plans she has in relation to this issue.

**(AQW 29256/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Section 24 of Consumer Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 allows the National Consumer Council to request that information be provided to it from certain persons in connection with its functions under the Act. Included among these persons are the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority and the Water Services Regulation Authority.

The provisions that allow the National Consumer Council to request information from these Authorities are broadly similar to the provisions that allow the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland to request information from the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation, under both the Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

With the review of consumer landscape in GB it is proposed that responsibility for the consumer advocacy role for postal matters in Northern Ireland will transfer to the Consumer Council. This transfer of responsibility will come with the power to require that information be provided to the Council, in relation to postal matters. The legislative basis for this power will be through an amendment to the provisions of Section 24 of the Consumer Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007.

## Consumer Council

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much of the Consumer Council budget was spent on each of its functions, including (i) handling enquiries and complaints; (ii) producing publicity materials; (iii) carrying out research; (iv) consumer education activities; and (v) other activities, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 29257/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The budget information is not available in the format requested but the figures below detail the staff salaries for the three years in question together with the amounts spent on work programme by project in 2011/12 and 2012/13 and by area in 2010/11.

### STAFF SALARIES

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Consumer Support	257,674	274,209	278,524
Policy & Research	564,703	545,054	581,176
Consumer Education	153,748	160,930	175,125
Communications	141,355	158,025	137,194
Corporate Services	518,961	541,372	558,411
	<b>1,636,441</b>	<b>1,679,590</b>	<b>1,730,430</b>

### WORK PROGRAMME

By Project	2012/13	2011/12
Fuel Poverty	11,636	34,668
Passenger Rights	27,574	21,929
Household Efficiency	57,102	13,992
Insurance	28,700	3,528
Financial Capability and Initiatives	27,885	60,582
Improving Customer Care	34,652	14,100
Regulation Working Better	22,333	7,099
Public Transport Reform	14,279	6,864

<b>By Project</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Outreach Strategy	22,079	35,081
*Core Costs	51,200	91,180
Water Governance and Performance	0	5,311
**Consumer Interest	0	27,721
(Money Affairs Policy Recommendations)	0	5,514
	<b>297,440</b>	<b>327,569</b>

\*(including consumer education, corporate plan and annual report)

\*\*\*(including research and consumer panels)

<b>By Area</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
Energy	24,007
Consumer Education	31,726
Transport	43,651
Communications including website	59,792
Water	17,535
Consumer Support	34,174
Money Affairs	34,432
Cross-sectional	74,166
	<b>319,483</b>

## Consumer Council

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the staff (i) role; (ii) function; and (iii) grade of staff in the Consumer Council.

**(AQW 29258/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Office	SCS G5
Director (x2)		G7
Personal Assistant		E02
Executive Officer		E02
Head of Communications	Communications	DP
Communications Officer (x2)		SO
Placement Student		AA
Head of Education	Consumer Education	DP
Senior Policy Officer (x2) (1 of these posts is currently vacant)		SO

<b>Role</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Policy Officer (this post is currently vacant)		E01
Consumer Support Officer		E02
Placement Student		AA
Head of Consumer Support	Consumer Support	DP
Consumer Affairs Officer (x2)	(carrying out enquiries/ complaints)	E01
Consumer Support Officer (x5) (1 of these posts is currently vacant)		E02
Administrator (this post is currently vacant)		AO
Head of Policy Team (x4)	Research and policy	DP
Senior Policy Officer (x7) (1 of these posts is currently vacant)		SO
Policy Officer (x3)		E01
Administrator		AO
Head of Finance & Human Resources	Corporate Services	DP
Finance Manager	(includes Finance, IT and HR)	SO
IT Manager		SO
Corporate Services Manager		SO
Finance Officer (x2)		E01
Administrator (x2)		AO

Some of the posts are part-time.

G5 = Grade 5

G7 = Grade 7

DP = Deputy Principal

SO = Staff Officer

E01 = Executive Officer 1

E02= Executive Officer 2

AO = Administrative Officer

AA = Administrative Assistant

## **Renewable Heat Incentive**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given that regulations published for the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive prohibits grant aid but not loans, why applications are being refused from people who have taken out Carbon Trust Loans.

**(AQW 29280/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** On 1 November 2013, DETI received a formal request, under the dispute resolution process for the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), to review a decision taken by Ofgem not to accredit an installation. The issue in question was whether an installation that has availed of a Carbon Trust Loan was eligible to receive the Northern Ireland RHI.



As a result of the review, DETI has revoked the Ofgem decision and considers that an installation that has availed of a Carbon Trust loan is eligible to be considered for accreditation under the Northern Ireland RHI scheme.

In addition, DETI has revised the operating procedures for the scheme. Where an applicant has availed of 'de minimis' aid prior to making an Northern Ireland RHI application for accreditation, the Northern Ireland RHI aid will be provided on the basis of the European Commission's 'de minimis' regulation, Commission Regulation (EC) No 1998/2006 of 15 December 2006 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006R1998:EN:NOT>

### **Site Management: Electricity**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what legislative and other barriers exist to demand site management in relation to electricity.

**(AQW 29351/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I am entirely supportive of maximising the potential which demand side management measures offers.

My officials have been engaged in discussions with the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation to encourage facilitation of the range of demand side measures in Northern Ireland in the context of the Single Electricity Market.

This engagement includes consideration of legislative and other measures which might be desirable or required in the context of wider work on market integration and compliance with relevant EU legislation.

The Department has encouraged the Utility Regulator to explore options for facilitating the range of demand side management measures under the existing regulatory framework while the longer term arrangements are scoped and developed.

### **Repair Costs for the Moyle Interconnector**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on her discussions with Mutual Energy regarding the repair costs for the Moyle Interconnector.

**(AQW 29378/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Mutual Energy advise that interim repairs to restore the Moyle interconnector to full transfer capacity are expected to cost between £2million and £4million and, subject to obtaining the necessary approvals, should be completed during 2014. Mutual Energy has also agreed proposals with the Utility Regulator for a permanent repair of the Moyle by laying new low voltage cables along a similar route to the existing cables. This is to be completed in 2017 at a current estimated cost of £60million.

### **Repair Costs for the Moyle Interconnector**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for a breakdown of the cost to repair the Moyle Interconnector; and from where will this cost be met.

**(AQW 29379/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Mutual Energy advise that interim repairs to restore the Moyle interconnector to full transfer capacity are expected to cost between £2 million and £4 million and, subject to obtaining the necessary approvals, should be completed during 2014. Permanent repair of the Moyle is to be completed in 2017, at a current estimated cost of £60 million.

The cost to repair the Moyle will be funded from a variety of sources with a view to minimising costs to consumers. This will include charges levied on consumers via their energy suppliers for use of the system, revenue from Moyle capacity auctions, and proceeds from insurance claims in relation to the cable faults.

## **Taxiing: Employment, Training, Taxes and Tourism Promotion**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the importance of taxiing to the local economy in terms of employment, training, taxes and tourism promotion.

**(AQW 29404/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Taxiing provides an essential service to both citizens and visitors. It is important for tourists, shoppers, businesses, school children and the night economy.

Taxi drivers are often the first point of contact for visitors and therefore have a vital role in providing a warm welcome and sharing their valuable knowledge of the area. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board welcomes the participation by local taxi drivers in WorldHost training to ensure they are equipped with industry leading customer service skills when welcoming visitors to Northern Ireland.

According to the Department of Environment, there were almost 16,000 taxi driver licences and almost 2,000 taxi operator licences in Northern Ireland on the 30 September 2013. Statistics from the Department of Regional Development also show that 2% of journeys per person per year are undertaken in taxis or black taxis in the 2010-12 period; this equates to 15 taxi journeys per person per year.

While statistics are scarce on the economic output of taxi drivers, particularly because many are self employed, statistics are available on taxi operations. In December 2013, the Inter-Departmental Business Register showed there were approximately 175 VAT and/or PAYE registered taxi operations in Northern Ireland. These businesses collectively had a turnover of over £39 million and employment of 975.

## **Single Tiered Taxi Industry: Tourism Industry**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the impact of a single tiered taxi industry on the tourism industry, in relation of clarity and simplicity, fairness and costs.

**(AQW 29405/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Legislation to introduce a single tier licensing system for taxis is a matter for the Department of the Environment.

Taxis provide an important service for visitors to Northern Ireland and are often the first point of contact. I welcome proposals that will provide fair and equitable standards for service providers and deliver a high quality service that meets visitors' expectations of a modern tourism destination.

## **Department of Finance and Personnel**

### **Northern Ireland Civil Service Shower Facilities**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel which Civil Service offices that offer shower facilities for people that cycle to work; and whether there are plans to install shower facilities across all offices.

**(AQW 27675/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):** There are a total of 123 buildings in the NICS and Agency estate that have showers available for cyclists. Provision of additional shower facilities are planned in a further 2 buildings.

There is currently no plan to provide shower facilities throughout the NICS estate for cyclists as it is a matter for the Department with premises officer responsibility to consider the appropriateness of such facilities in a particular building.

In existing buildings for which my Department has premises officer responsibility, where circumstances allow and space is available and it is appropriate to do so and budget constraints permit, shower facilities are provided.

### Energy Performance Certificates

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he will consider offering a reduction for high performing domestic and non/domestic properties in Energy Performance Certificate assessments to encourage property holders to invest in energy efficiency schemes.

**(AQW 28620/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** Although it isn't clear from the question I assume that it is a reduction in rates that is referred to.

In 2009 my Department introduced a scheme to provide a rates holiday to the first occupiers of newly built zero and low carbon houses. It was decided to close the scheme in 2012 due to the high cost of administration and the relatively low take up, and to transfer the funding to the Green New Deal, in order to make better use of available money in pursuit of similar aims.

I have no plans to introduce another rates scheme of this nature using energy performance certificates.

### Average Disposable Income

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail, for the most recent consecutive five years for which data is available, (i) the average disposable income per head; (ii) comparable figures for British regions; and (iii) comparable figures for regions in the south of Ireland.

**(AQW 28864/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** Comparable data in the form of Disposable Income of Households presented as Purchasing Power Standards based on final consumption per inhabitant is produced by Eurostat and is presented in Table 1. This information is only available up to 2010 and takes account of the differences in the cost of living between countries.

**TABLE 1: DISPOSABLE INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS BY NUTS 2 REGIONS 2006-2011 (EUROSTAT)**

<b>Purchasing power standards based on final consumption per inhabitant</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
United Kingdom	17,415	17,252	17,078	16,649	17,190
North East (UK)	14,783	14,424	14,346	14,169	14,592
North West (UK)	15,664	15,429	15,361	15,009	15,532
Yorkshire and The Humber	15,537	15,177	14,967	14,413	14,853
East Midlands (UK)	16,099	15,864	15,625	15,126	15,602
West Midlands (UK)	15,650	15,345	15,141	14,841	15,370
East of England	18,425	18,091	17,840	17,465	17,825
London	21,834	22,173	21,981	21,488	22,090
South East (UK)	19,785	19,470	19,157	18,629	19,329
South West (UK)	17,443	16,988	16,863	16,585	17,108
Wales	15,284	15,112	14,987	14,535	15,125
Scotland	16,398	16,563	16,612	16,189	16,827

<b>Purchasing power standards based on final consumption per inhabitant</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Northern Ireland	15,374	15,879	15,479	14,535	14,950
Éire/Ireland	14,193	14,965	15,158	14,680	14,845
Border, Midland and Western	12,644	13,395	13,667	13,493	13,711
Southern and Eastern	14,758	15,538	15,704	15,117	15,265

**Source:** Eurostat

#### **Background Note**

- 1 The Office for National Statistics provides Eurostat with Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) which forms the basis of the UK regional figures provided. Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) is the amount of money that individuals (i.e. the household sector) have available for spending or saving. This is money left after expenditure associated with income, e.g. taxes and social contributions, property ownership and provision for future pension income. It is calculated gross of any deductions for capital consumption.
- 2 The Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides Eurostat with Disposable Income which forms the basis of the ROI regional figures provided. CSO define Disposable Income as total income minus current taxes on income (i.e. income taxes, other current taxes) minus social insurance contributions.
- 3 Eurostat define the purchasing power standard (PPS) as an artificial currency unit. Theoretically, one PPS can buy the same amount of goods and services in each country. However, price differences across borders mean that different amounts of national currency units are needed for the same goods and services depending on the country. PPS are derived by dividing any economic aggregate of a country in national currency by its respective purchasing power parities (PPPs). PPS is the technical term used by Eurostat for the common currency in which national accounts aggregates are expressed when adjusted for price level differences using PPPs. Thus, PPPs can be interpreted as the exchange rate of the PPS against the euro.

#### **Funding Allocation During the October Monitoring Round**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the criteria used to determine which Department of Employment and Learning projects were awarded funding at the October Monitoring Round 2013.

**(AQW 29214/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** The Department of Employment and Learning submitted no bids as part of the 2013-14 October monitoring round.

#### **Average Weekly Earnings**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail, for the most recent five years for which data is available, the (i) total average weekly earnings broken down by both public and private industrial sectors; (ii) total amount of this money paid as bonuses across these sectors.

**(AQW 29247/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** The average (mean) gross weekly earnings and bonus pay for all employee jobs in Northern Ireland for public and private industrial sectors is provided in Table 1 for the years requested.

The figures are from the Northern Ireland Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Table 1: Mean Gross Weekly earnings and Bonus<sup>1</sup> Pay for all employee jobs<sup>2</sup>, by public and private industrial sectors.

All Employees 2013 <sup>3</sup>	Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)		Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	x	368	x	0.00
Mining and Quarrying	x	x	x	x
Manufacturing	x	481	x	10.90
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	x	x	x	x
Water collection, treatment and supply	x	x	x	x
Construction	x	437	x	1.10
Motor trades	x	358	x	37.55
Wholesale	x	390	x	17.37
Retail	x	237	x	2.61
Transport & storage (inc. postal)	460	454	0.04	9.08
Accommodation & food services	x	186	x	0.85
Information & communication	x	563	x	6.23
Finance & insurance	653	543	0.00	5.18
Property	401	x	0.00	x
Professional, scientific & technical	x	428	x	3.76
Business administration and support services	x	321	x	7.93
Public administration and defence	496	x	4.31	x
Education	465	x	0.00	x
Health	486	254	4.21	0.00
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	335	237	0.00	2.96

All Employees 2012 <sup>3</sup>	Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)		Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	x	242	x	0.00
Mining and Quarrying	x	x	x	x
Manufacturing	x	473	x	6.83
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	x	715	x	6.64
Water collection, treatment and supply	x	x	x	x
Construction	x	458	x	5.33
Motor trades	x	334	x	22.27

All Employees 2012 <sup>3</sup>	Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)		Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Wholesale	x	389	x	14.18
Retail	x	211	x	1.28
Transport & storage (inc. postal)	438	384	4.34	4.31
Accommodation & food services	x	182	x	0.02
Information & communication	x	595	x	7.55
Finance & insurance	446	582	1.74	14.91
Property	397	x	0.00	x
Professional, scientific & technical	x	436	x	8.04
Business administration and support services	x	282	x	7.09
Public administration and defence	557	x	2.59	x
Education	421	x	0.99	x
Health	507	249	10.65	0.08
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	345	218	0.00	0.53

All Employees 2011 <sup>3</sup>	Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)		Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	x	219	x	0.00
Mining and Quarrying	x	x	x	x
Manufacturing	x	468	x	13.98
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	x	751	x	49.59
Water collection, treatment and supply	x	x	x	x
Construction	x	491	x	5.76
Motor trades	x	333	x	25.66
Wholesale	x	429	x	18.49
Retail	x	262	x	2.81
Transport & storage (inc. postal)	460	438	0.00	9.05
Accommodation & food services	x	200	x	0.44
Information & communication	x	536	x	9.51
Finance & insurance	581	615	0.00	6.69
Property	391	x	0.00	x

<b>All Employees 2011<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)</b>		<b>Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)</b>	
	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Professional, scientific & technical	809	456	0.00	9.59
Business administration and support services	x	276	x	8.90
Public administration and defence	556	x	2.37	x
Education	438	x	0.32	x
Health	520	261	2.52	0.11
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	x	241	x	0.78

<b>All Employees 2010<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)</b>		<b>Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)</b>	
	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	x	270	x	0.52
Mining and Quarrying	x	x	x	x
Manufacturing	x	437	x	9.38
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	x	686	x	16.96
Water collection, treatment and supply	x	x	x	x
Construction	x	450	x	0.93
Motor trades	x	340	x	30.80
Wholesale	x	407	x	12.30
Retail	x	246	x	2.48
Transport & storage (inc. postal)	398	412	0.12	3.45
Accommodation & food services	x	181	x	0.18
Information & communication	x	485	x	0.88
Finance & insurance	607	515	0.00	3.06
Property	406	x	0.00	x
Professional, scientific & technical	x	444	x	2.24
Business administration and support services	x	279	x	3.27
Public administration and defence	528	x	1.93	x
Education	415	x	0.45	x
Health	467	249	2.70	0.36
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	333	x	3.80	x

All Employees 20093	Mean Gross Weekly Pay (£)		Mean Gross Weekly Bonus (£)	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	x	x	x	x
Mining and Quarrying	x	x	x	x
Manufacturing	x	433	x	8.12
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	x	669	x	4.20
Water collection, treatment and supply	x	x	x	x
Construction	x	431	x	2.29
Motor trades	x	330	x	12.06
Wholesale	x	425	x	14.06
Retail	x	235	x	2.29
Transport & storage (inc. postal)	443	375	0.03	6.42
Accommodation & food services	223	194	x	0.27
Information & communication	x	504	x	5.43
Finance & insurance	493	497	2.41	12.66
Property	413	x	0.36	x
Professional, scientific & technical	x	462	x	4.93
Business administration and support services	x	284	x	6.59
Public administration and defence	526	x	1.47	x
Education	410	x	0.04	x
Health	466	262	2.89	0.24
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	382	242	5.88	0.65

**Source:** Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (NI & UK)

**Notes:**

- 1 Gross weekly bonus pay covers all bonus payments such as profit sharing, productivity, performance and other bonus or incentive pay, piecework and commission.
  - 2 Employees (full-time and part-time) on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
  - 3 The introduction of methodological changes to improve the quality of ASHE data has resulted in discontinuities in trends. Estimates for 2011, 2012 and 2013 are not directly comparable to earlier results.
- 'x' denotes figures which are unreliable due to sample sizes associated with the cell.



## Adults with Mental Health Issues

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of people with mental health issues finding it difficult to secure a work placement in the public sector; and what action his Department is taking to address this problem.

**(AQW 29311/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** Corporate HR (CHR) in my Department manages applications for unpaid work experience placements with the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) departments. Each year approximately 200 placements are facilitated by the NICS for individuals seeking work experience, including people with disabilities.

During 2013 CHR facilitated Action Mental Health to raise awareness within NICS of issues facing people recovering from mental health illness in returning to the world of work. Following a limited pilot placement in my department involving Action Mental Health, and further consultation with departments, CHR developed a new work experience scheme specifically for people with disabilities, including people with mental health issues. This new scheme will augment existing work experience arrangements and will launch in January 2014.

Information on the revised policy arrangements and application forms for the scheme will be available on the NICS Recruitment website [www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk) in January 2014.

## Rating Review

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the proposed timeframe for the rating review of non-domestic properties.

**(AQW 29362/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** The revaluation of all commercial property in Northern Ireland is well underway.

Land & Property Services (LPS) is making good progress on the validation of the rental evidence it received and the detailed market analysis has started.

The valuation process will then follow in March next year and by late 2014 LPS will produce a draft Valuation List which will inform individual ratepayers of their new assessments, before the new bills issue in April 2015.

## Life Expectancy

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list, in ascending order, life expectancy in the North Down constituency, broken down by ward.

**(AQW 29465/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** Period Life Expectancy at birth for North Down Local Government District (2008-2010) is 79.0 years for men and 82.2 years for women. Life expectancy statistics for electoral wards are not available.

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Recruitment of Hospital Consultants

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there are any particular difficulties in recruiting hospital consultants locally, compared to other parts of the UK.

**(AQW 29272/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** Health and Social Care Trusts have informed my Department that they have had difficulties in recruiting hospital consultants locally in a certain number of specialties. The difficulties occur in a range of different specialties and vary across

Trusts. We are aware that there are also difficulties in recruiting consultants in certain specialties in other parts of the UK, particularly in specialties such as Emergency Medicine.

## **Mental Health Services**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what investment has been made in mental health in South Down, over the last three years; and what plans his Department has to improve mental health services in South Down over the next three years.

**(AQW 29310/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Health services in the South Down constituency area are provided by the South Eastern HSC Trust (in the northern part of the constituency) and the Southern Trust (in the southern part of the constituency). As mental health services are provided on a Trust wide basis, the Trusts cannot provide information on financial investment solely in the South Down constituency area.

Developemnts in Mental Health Services within the South Eastern HSC Trust

Mental Health Services within the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust's area of South Down have benefitted from a range of investments over the past three years.

This investment has strengthened the Mental Health infrastructure within the South Down area, with the enhancement of locally based Home Treatment Services, Day Hospital Provision, Community Mental Health Teams, Outpatient Services, Personality Disorder Services, Psychological Therapies, Supported Living Schemes, Rehabilitation Services, Carers Support, Addiction Services and Acute Mental Health Inpatient Provision. Additionally there has been an investment to strengthen the responsiveness of Out of Hours Mental Health Services to individuals who present to Emergency Departments with self-harm across the Trust's of South Down.

Over the next three years it is envisaged that additional investment will enable the Trust to:

- Implement new models of care that will support and enhance provision within the community and voluntary sector through a new Trust-wide Health & Wellbeing Hub Model (encompassing the South Down area)
- Support a new pilot project within the locality that will target respite arrangements for mental health carers
- Enhance the range of psychological therapy services
- Deliver an enhanced psychiatric liaison service to the Trust's Emergency Departments.

## **Developments in Mental Health Services within Southern HSC Trust**

Mental Health Services in the Southern Trust have undergone significant reform and modernisation since 2009.

A range of mental health services, based at Daisy Hill Hospital, are available to GPs providing to the Newry and Mourne Council population, which includes South Down, including:

- Primary Mental Health Care Service (for short term intervention for mid-moderate mental health problems with outreach clinic in Kilkeel)
- Support & Recovery Team providing longer term support and recovery for people with mental health problems
- Addiction Clinic at Daisy Hill Hospital
- Eating Disorder Clinic at Daisy Hill Hospital.

The Southern Trust has plans to enhance Mental Health Services across the Trust area in the following areas:

- Psychiatry liaison services to Acute hospitals

- Further development of community addiction services including alcohol liaison services;
- Centralisation of acute in-patient mental health services on the Bluestone site with the opening of 10 Psychiatrist Intensive care beds and 10 Assessment and Treatment beds for adults with a learning disability;
- Enhancement of eating disorder services.

### Domiciliary Care Workers

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when domiciliary care workers will be registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

**(AQW 29376/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Strengthening public protection through registration of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland is one of my Department's key policy priorities. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council was set up specifically to deliver on that policy commitment and ensure we have a competent and confident workforce that is trusted by service users and their families.

Roll out of registration has been subject to public consultation and on that basis registration has been progressed on a phased priority basis for specific groups. It is compulsory for the following groups to be registered with the NISCC: social workers, social work students; social care workers in adult residential care and in nursing homes; and social care managers in adult residential, day care and domiciliary settings.

My officials are currently working with the NISCC to develop proposals, including a timeframe, for continuation of rollout of registration to the final groups of social care workers, including domiciliary care workers. These proposals will be subject to public consultation.

### Ambulance Downtime

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the downtime statistics for ambulances, in the last month, in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 29381/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that ambulance downtime refers to the ambulance turnaround time, i.e. the length of time for the ambulance to be made ready for the next journey following arrival at hospital.

It should be noted that the NIAS do not capture information on the date/time of admission of patients to emergency care departments. As a consequence, information on turnaround times detailed in the response refers to the time between the ambulance arriving at the emergency care department and it 'clearing' the location. The crew will remain with the patient until they have been handed over to the relevant clinical personnel within the HSC Hospital environment. The ambulance turnaround time will include patient handover and other aspects such as the time to clean and replenish the ambulance for the next call.

The information provided relates to all ambulance journeys, including urgent and routine patient journeys in addition to those resulting from emergency calls.

Ambulance turnaround times for each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in November 2013 are detailed in the table below.

HSC Trust	< 15 min	15 - 30 min	30 - 45 min	45 - 60 min	1 - 2 Hrs	2 - 3 Hrs	More than 3 Hrs	Total
Belfast	387	1,472	1,507	608	190	2	0	<b>4,166</b>
Northern	553	1,345	436	67	19	0	0	<b>2,420</b>

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>&lt; 15 min</b>	<b>15 - 30 min</b>	<b>30 - 45 min</b>	<b>45 - 60 min</b>	<b>1 - 2 Hrs</b>	<b>2 - 3 Hrs</b>	<b>More than 3 Hrs</b>	<b>Total</b>
South Eastern	184	882	935	325	97	0	0	<b>2,423</b>
Southern	358	1,124	487	193	163	24	4	<b>2,353</b>
Western	497	1,017	283	59	38	1	0	<b>1,896</b>
Other locations	124	74	12	5	2	0	0	<b>217</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>2,103</b>	<b>5,914</b>	<b>3,660</b>	<b>1,257</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13,475</b>

**Source:** NIAS

Other refers to patients who refused to travel and those taken to locations which were not an acute hospital. e.g. Belfast International Airport, Northern Ireland Cancer Centre, Lurgan Hospital etc.

### **Ambulance Downtime**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what was the longest ambulance downtime at each hospital in the last month; and on how many occasions downtime exceeded two hours.

**(AQW 29382/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that ambulance downtime refers to the ambulance turnaround time, i.e. the length of time for the ambulance to be made ready for the next journey following arrival at hospital.

It should be noted that the NIAS do not capture information on the date/time of admission of patients to emergency care departments. As a consequence, information on turnaround times detailed in the response refers to the time between the ambulance arriving at the emergency care department and it 'clearing' the location. The crew will remain with the patient until they have been handed over to the relevant clinical personnel within the HSC Hospital environment. The ambulance turnaround time will include patient handover and other aspects such as the time to clean and replenish the ambulance for the next call.

The information provided relates to all ambulance journeys, including urgent and routine patient journeys in addition to those resulting from emergency calls.

- (i) During November 2013, the longest ambulance turnaround time for each acute hospital is detailed in the table below.

### **LONGEST AMBULANCE TURNAROUND TIME, BY HOSPITAL**

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Time (HH:MM:SS)</b>
Royal Victoria	2:56:42
Belfast City	1:47:42
RBHSC	1:30:00
Mater	1:20:17
Antrim Area	1:36:47
Causeway	1:13:22
Whiteabbey	0:33:35
Ulster	1:45:32

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Time (HH:MM:SS)</b>
Lagan Valley	1:30:52
Downe	1:29:33
Craigavon Area	3:53:31
Daisyhill	1:58:55
South West Acute	2:02:38
Altnagelvin	1:58:01
Tyrone county	1:16:27

**Source** NIAS

- (ii) In November 2013, ambulance turnaround time exceeded 2 hours on 31 occasions, 28 in Craigavon Area, twice in the Royal Victoria and once in the South West Acute.

**Nursing Qualification**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the process for re-entry to nursing for qualified nurses who have temporarily stepped out of the profession. **(AQW 29427/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A Nurse/midwife who has previously been on the NMC register and wishes to apply for readmission after a break of at least three months, will need to meet the specific requirements as listed below:

- 450 hours of registered practice and 35 hours of learning activity must have been completed in the previous three years within the UK or overseas and NMC will ask the nurses/midwives to sign a declaration to this effect.
- A Nurse/midwife will also need to complete an application to readmit to the register and provide NMC with references.
- If a nurse/midwife cannot meet the required hours but can meet 750 hours of practice in the last five years and 35 hours of learning in the last three years, NMC will have a discussion to decide whether the necessary requirements are met or not. At this stage NMC will provide the nurse/midwife with an application pack and provide further information.

Practice can include supervisory, teaching, research and managerial roles as well as providing direct patient care. However, practice hours completed while the nurse/midwife were lapsed or not registered, for example working as a health care assistant, cannot be counted towards the practice requirement.

It is illegal to work in a role requiring registration whilst unregistered in any circumstances. Applications for re-admission from registrants who are found to have been working are referred to the Registrar's Advisory Group for consideration.

**Ambulance Waits Outside Hospital**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the longest ambulance waits outside each hospital in Northern Ireland for the 12 weeks from August to October 2013. **(AQW 29443/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that this question refers to the ambulance turnaround time, i.e. the length of time for the ambulance to be made ready for the next journey following arrival at hospital.

It should be noted that the NIAS do not capture information on the date/time of admission of patients to emergency care departments. As a consequence, information on turnaround times detailed in the response refers to the time between the ambulance arriving at the emergency care department and it

'clearing' the location. The crew will remain with the patient until they have been handed over to the relevant clinical personnel within the HSC Hospital environment. The ambulance turnaround time will include patient handover and other aspects such as the time to clean and replenish the ambulance for the next call.

The longest ambulance turnaround time for each Hospital during the 12 weeks from August to October 2013 are detailed in the table below.

#### **LONGEST AMBULANCE TURNAROUND TIME, BY HOSPITAL**

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Time (HH:MM:SS)</b>
Royal Victoria	02:00:00
Belfast City	01:00:00
Mater	01:30:00
Antrim Area	01:30:00
Causeway	01:30:00
Ulster	01:55:00
Lagan Valley	01:10:00
Downe	01:30:00
Craigavon Area	03:33:30
Daisyhill	03:08:55
South West Acute	02:05:00
Altnagelvin	02:29:53

## Department of Justice

### **Joint Work Programmes**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice to list the joint work programmes his Department has engaged in with other parts of the UK.

**(AQW 29340/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice):** A list, in chronological order, of the joint work programmes undertaken by my Department with other parts of the UK is provided in the table below. The list includes programmes since 12 April 2010 when the devolution of policing and justice took place. However the list also includes one ongoing programme which commenced prior to devolution which my Department is involved in.

**JOINT WORK PROGRAMMES UNDERTAKEN BY THE WITH OTHER PARTS OF THE UK**

<b>Title of Inter-Governmental Joint Work Programme</b>	<b>Name of Department(s) Engaged in Joint Work Programme</b>	<b>Date Programme Commenced</b>	<b>Date Programme Ended</b>
Central Assistance Programme	Home Office	November 2005 (pre devolution).	Ongoing
UK Steering Group on Police use of Less Lethal Weaponry	Home Office, MOD, DOJ, Scottish Government	DOJ joined the programme in April 2010.	Ongoing
Cooperation on delivery of forensic services (on a trilateral basis with the Republic of Ireland's forensic laboratory).	Forensic Services, Scottish Police Services Authority	October 2010	Ongoing
National Crime Agency	Home Office	October 2010.	Ongoing
Review of Future Regulation of Private Security Industry	Home Office, Scottish Government, DOJ	November 2010.	Ongoing
Draft Modern Slavery Bill	Home Office	September 2012.	Ongoing
Disclosure and Barring Service, Modernisation Programme	Home Office, Scottish Government	December 2012.	Ongoing
Joint Strategic Group on Human Trafficking	Home Office, Ministry of Justice, Scottish Government, Welsh Government, DOJ	December 2012	Ongoing

**Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service: Compensation**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the procedure in cases in which compensation has been ordered after convictions which are not appealed, but the compensation is not paid; and whether the compensation can be taken from state benefits and paid directly to victims through the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service.

**(AQW 29365/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Compensation ordered following a criminal conviction cannot currently be deducted from state benefits.

I am developing legislation to bring forward a Fines and Enforcement Bill and am considering a number of measures to improve the enforcement of court imposed fines and other sums including compensation.

**Rural Crime Unit**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the effectiveness of the Rural Crime Unit.

**(AQW 29387/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** An evaluation of the Rural Crime Unit is scheduled to be undertaken by the Rural Crime Unit Steering Group in Autumn 2014, following the Rural Crime Unit's first year of operation. This evaluation

will provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the Rural Crime Unit and help determine the future operation of the Unit.

While I do not think it would be appropriate for me to make an assessment of the Unit's effectiveness prior to the completion of this evaluation, an outcome of the Unit's effective partnership working was recently evidenced when the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development and I launched an initiative to provide a subsidy to farmers in E and F policing districts to encourage the fitting of security equipment to their farm machinery.

This initiative was informed by the work of the Rural Crime Unit which identified those districts as 'hotspot' areas for the theft of farm machinery.

Data from the unit will primarily be used to assist District Commanders in making operational decisions and targeting deployment of police resources. It will also provide an opportunity for partners from the Rural Crime Unit Steering Group to support farmers through the development of crime prevention initiatives.

### **Over-Demand on Forensics Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice (i) what action is he taking to address the over-demand on forensics service; and (ii) for his assessment of the subsequent delays impacting on court cases by missing timetable targets.

**(AQW 29407/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:**

- (i) It is difficult to predict the demand for forensics services. However, Forensic Science Northern Ireland (FSNI) has arrangements in place to enable brokering to other forensic science providers when capacity exceeds demand. FSNI is also working with colleagues in Scottish and Irish laboratories to identify any opportunities for dealing with excess demand. To date these opportunities have been limited as they too experience excess demands in some areas.

In addition, FSNI recently launched a Transformation Programme which aims to improve timeliness and capacity across the organisation. As well as overseeing the introduction of new facilities for evidence recovery and the analysis of DNA and a new case management system, the Programme aims to deliver an increase in capacity and improvement in turnaround times in those areas where this initiative is applied.

- (ii) Speeding up justice is one of my key priorities. A multi agency programme is in place to bring improvements to the criminal justice system. FSNI has a part to play in speeding up the processes which deliver forensic information to the courts. FSNI continues to work closely with the PSNI and the Public Prosecution Service to identify and prioritise those cases which may result in a delay in court processes.

### **Non-National Sex-Offender: Restrictions**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 28917/11-15, whether it is accepted that, as the law stands, a non-national sex-offender who committed offences outside Northern Ireland can move to, and live in, Northern Ireland without restrictions which would otherwise apply to a Northern Ireland citizen, until police become aware of the past convictions, and that is likely only if there is a further offence committed in Northern Ireland or the person is sought under a European or International Arrest Warrant; and for his assessment of the risk to the public that this poses and of the increased vulnerability of potential victims.

**(AQW 29449/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There is little I can add to the answer I gave to AQW/28917/11-15. The law currently requires that the court make a notification order under section 97 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 once it is proved that the person has a conviction for a relevant offence outside the UK. Once a notification order has been made the person is subject to the same notification requirements as if he had been



convicted in this jurisdiction. I also made reference to the provisions in the Criminal Justice Act (NI) 2013 which, on commencement, will make sex offenders convicted outside the UK subject to notification after they have been in NI for a qualifying period.

Information in relation to previous convictions from other jurisdictions can come to police attention in a number of ways, such as those described in the question, but also including information sharing across jurisdictions.

As I said in my answer to AQW/28917, border controls and immigration are not devolved matters, and it is not possible to place travel restrictions on persons who live within the EU.

### **Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service: Mixed Committals**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to clarify (i) the content of the recent guidance given by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service in respect of listing mixed committals as special hearings; (ii) the reasons for this guidance; and (iii) when it was issued.

**(AQW 29450/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service has not recently issued guidance in respect of listing mixed committal proceedings as special hearings.

### **Legal Aid: Very High Cost Cases**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how much has been paid in Legal Aid in Very High Cost cases in each of the last three financial years; and to how many (i) legal firms; (ii) junior and senior counsel; and (iii) defendants, do the figures relate.

**(AQW 29451/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The amounts paid by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission in Very High Cost cases in the last three financial years is as follows:

	<b>Crown Court</b>	<b>Magistrates Court</b>	<b>Total</b>
2010-11	£12.84M	£0.11M	<b>£12.95M</b>
2011-12	£6.26M	£0.26M	<b>£6.52M</b>
2012-13	£10.95M	£0.30M	<b>£11.25M</b>

Additional detail can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff: Environmental Allowance**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Justice what percentage of Prison Officers receive an environmental allowance; and whether he has any plans to offer this payment to Prison Officers who are not in receipt of the allowance, in light of the increase in dissident republican activity.

**(AQW 29455/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** 31% of staff formerly received a Northern Ireland Prison Service Payment to reflect the special circumstances in which they worked. This was consolidated into salaries in 1995 (officers) and 2006 (Governors) as part of a wider pay deal.

The Prison Service Pay Review Body has provided me with a comprehensive report on the issue of an allowance. They have recommended payment of a supplementary risk allowance of £1,320 per annum for the remaining prison grade staff (69%) not in receipt of the consolidated payment. NIPS Management are considering how this will be financed from within existing baselines.

## Legal Aid: Not for Profit Organisations

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the annual amount of Legal Aid claimed by not-for-profit organisations, which have contracts with his Department, for each of the last five years.

**(AQW 29499/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission, through funding provided by the Department of Justice, has grant funding agreements with two not-for-profit organisations: the Housing Rights Service, for the provision of advice and assistance in mortgage repossession, and ejection proceedings and the Law Centre (NI), for the provision of legal services for immigration, asylum and human trafficking.

Payments made to the holders of these grants over the last 5 years, are as follows:

Financial Year	Law Centre NI	Housing Rights Service	Total
2008/09	£ 169,083	0.00	<b>£ 169,083</b>
2009/10	£217,497	0.00	<b>£ 217,497</b>
2010/11	£ 247,289	0.00	<b>£247,289</b>
2011/12	£ 206,784	0.00	<b>£206,784</b>
2012/13	£ 254,786	£60,000	<b>£314,786</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£1,095,439</b>	<b>£60,000</b>	<b>£1,155,439</b>

These figures include the current grants as well as payments made from the Legal Aid Fund in respect of advice and assistance and legal services not covered by the grants.

It is not possible for the Commission to provide full details of the additional amounts actually claimed from the Legal Aid Fund as, for example, in High Court cases the Commission pays Legal Aid bills as assessed by the Taxing Master. The amount paid from the Legal Aid fund will therefore differ from the amount actually claimed.

## Legal Aid

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost to the Legal Aid fund of representation for the estimated 56 re-opened inquests into suspicious deaths and matters, referred back to the courts by the Attorney General.

**(AQW 29500/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are now 57 legacy inquest cases in total, of which 12 have been disposed of. There are, therefore, 45 active legacy inquest cases relating to 73 deaths.

Of the 12 cases disposed of, two were referred to the Coroner by the Attorney General under section 14 of the Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959. Of the 45 on-going cases, 23 were referred to the Coroner by the Attorney General.

Funding for representation in legacy inquest cases is available, subject to specified criteria, by way of 'exceptional legal aid'. Applications for such funding are submitted to the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission.

To date, fees have been paid by the Commission in two cases disposed of that were referred to the Coroner by the Attorney General. The total costs paid by the Commission amounted to £22,000 (inclusive of VAT). Of the remaining 23 on-going cases referred to the Coroner by the Attorney General, to date funding has been granted in 5 cases. However, as these cases are still in preparation, figures for the total estimated costs are not available.

The Commission has not yet received applications for funding in relation to the other 18 on-going cases referred to the Coroner by the Attorney General. Until applications for funding are received, the potential cost of a successful application cannot be assessed.

### **Legal Aid: Not for Profit Organisations**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the annual amount of public funding, other than Legal Aid, allocated to not-for-profit organisations which have contracts with his Department, for each of the last five years.

**(AQW 29501/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Since its formation in April 2010 the Department of Justice, including its Agencies but not its arm's length bodies, has allocated no public funding other than Legal Aid to not-for-profit organisations which have contracts for the provision of legal services in each of the last three financial years.

## Department for Regional Development

### **Bus Service from Belfast International Airport**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he would organise an open procurement competition to encourage a Bus Service from Belfast International Airport dropping and collecting passengers to and from Belfast City Hotels.

**(AQW 29167/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** The current road service licensing arrangements, administered by the Department of the Environment (DoE), enables private bus operators to identify gaps in the market and apply for a licence to run a service, if it is not already adequately catered for by Translink or by other private operators.

### **20mph Zones: Roads Service Divisions**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the 20mph zones in each roads service division.

**(AQW 29235/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Details of the roads with a 20 mph Speed Limit that my Department has legislated for, from 1996 to date, are available in the Assembly Library.

### **Work Programme in the Foyle Constituency**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline his Department's work programme in the Foyle constituency up to the summer of 2014, including road works listed by street.

**(AQW 29241/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I would advise the Member that information on completed and proposed roads schemes for the current financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

[http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils](http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils)

Northern Ireland Water has proposals for a number of work packages in the Foyle Constituency which include:

- Londonderry Drainage Area Plan: Buncrana Road Work Package, Stage 2 (early contractor involvement);
- Foyle Springs, Derry Flood Alleviation;

- Clooney Park West, Londonderry Storm Sewer Extension;
- Gortinreid Bridge Waste Water Pumping Station - Pumping Main Upgrade;
- Londonderry Drainage Area Plan: Buncrana Road Work Package, Stage 2;
- Ard Na Smoll, Dungiven, Storm Sewer Extension; and
- Lone Moor Road, Londonderry, Storm Sewer Extension.

### **Public Hire Taxis Parking Outside Official Ranks**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister for Regional Development what position his Department takes on Public Hire taxis parking outside official ranks in Belfast which results in blocked roads; and how he polices 'over-ranking'.

**(AQW 29277/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department does not have the statutory power to enforce over ranking at taxi ranks. However, it has the power to enforce parking restrictions, which are marked by signage and road markings. It carries out this function through its parking enforcement contract with NSL.

NSL's Traffic Attendants (TAs) issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to vehicles parked in contravention of parking restrictions. Where parking restrictions exist outside taxi ranks, PCNs can be issued to vehicles parked in contravention of the restrictions, for example, vehicles parked on double yellow lines or in bus lanes.

### **Public Hire Taxi Drivers: Blocked Roads and Footpaths**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any correspondence between his Department, and its agencies, and the PSNI on penalising Public Hire taxi drivers who block roads and footpaths.

**(AQW 29278/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department has the power to enforce parking restrictions, which are marked by signage and road markings. It carries out this function through its parking enforcement contract with NSL, which is managed by the Department's Parking Enforcement Unit. Where parking restrictions do not exist but vehicles are parked in manner which causes an obstruction, enforcement power rests with the PSNI.

There has been no correspondence between my Department's Parking Enforcement Unit and the PSNI regarding Public Hire taxi drivers blocking roads or footpaths.

If a member of the public contacts the Parking Enforcement Unit in relation to parked vehicles that are causing an obstruction where no parking restriction applies, officials will advise them to contact the PSNI directly.

### **Brook Street, Derry: Gritting Schedule**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the traffic figures and school buses using the street, why Brook Street, Derry has not been added to the gritting schedule.

**(AQW 29321/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** At the request of residents, Roads Service implemented a traffic calming scheme in Brook Street in March 2009. Translink was consulted on the proposals and no objections or comments were received. Roads Service considers that use of Brook Street by buses is not appropriate due to the presence of the traffic calming features. Whilst Brook Street is not included on the current gritting schedule, a salt box has been provided for use by the public on a self-help basis.

As well as reducing vehicle speeds, the presence of traffic calming measures at this location makes it less attractive to through traffic. My Department would not wish to encourage the use of Brook Street by through traffic. A suitable alternative route via Foyle Road and Bishop Street, which is included on

the salted network, is available. In addition, Roads Service made alterations to the Foyle Road/Bishop Street junction in February 2010 so that buses could be more easily accommodated on these roads.

### Third Sector Organisations

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) all third sector organisations funded by the Department who provide services to the public; and (ii) the value of each contract.

**(AQW 29413/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The table below sets out the third sector organisations which receive grant assistance from my Department to assist them in the provision of services to the public. My Department does not have contracts with these organisations rather provides grant assistance to them.

I have provided the levels of grant provided for the 2013/2014 financial year.

<b>Name of Third Sector Organisation</b>	<b>Grant 2013/14 £</b>
CDM Transport (Cookstown, Dungannon & Magherafelt)	553,798.63
Down District Accessible Transport (Down , North Down & Ards)	439,843.16
Easilink Community Transport(Omagh, Strabane & Foyle)	534,627.42
Fermanagh Community Transport	490,443.00
Lagan Valley Rural Transport (Lisburn)	208,896.00
North Coast Community Transport (Limavady, Coleraine, Moyle, Ballymena & Ballymoney)	605,224.00
Southern Area Transport (Armagh, Lurgan, Banbridge, Newry & Mourne)	392,246.97
South Antrim Community Transport	212,665.39
Disability Action Transport Scheme (DATS)	2,946,819.00
Volunteer Now	80,788.00
Disability Action Group Transport	185,952.00
Disability Action Mobility Centre	81,587.00

### Cregagh View Residential Development, Cushendun

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 27652/11-15, will the Minister enable works on the Cregagh View Residential Development, Cushendun, to be completed.

**(AQW 29416/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** This development in Knocknacarry comprises eight completed houses and 16 sites at which construction has not yet started, and the developer is in Administration. As only one third of the houses are complete, my Department's Roads Service has no immediate plans to take enforcement action, however, I have asked officials to keep the situation under review.

### Departmental Cycling Unit

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to (i) provide an update on the work of the new departmental cycling unit; and (ii) detail any plans to address cycling issues in rural areas.

**(AQW 29418/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** In order to give increased focus and priority to the needs of cyclists throughout Northern Ireland, including in rural areas, and to encourage greater participation in this healthy and sustainable

form of transport, I established a Cycling Unit in November 2013. I have given it responsibility for ensuring that cycling provision is a key element in both transport strategy and delivery and to deliver effective progress of a range of cycling initiatives.

My officials are presently exploring how the new cycling unit can co-ordinate all cycling related matters in both urban and rural areas in a coherent manner and are developing a detailed work programme for the unit which includes an Active Schools Travel Programme. This will provide a programme of cycling and walking skills training for our young people in up to 180 schools across Northern Ireland and this includes schools which serve more rural areas.

### **Residential Parking in Inner South Belfast**

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update in residential parking in inner south Belfast.

**(AQW 29423/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department is currently developing Residents' Parking Schemes in the Lower Malone and Rugby Road/College Park Avenue areas of Belfast. These schemes are well advanced, both in terms of design and consultation, and officials hope to carry out the formal consultation on the proposals in spring 2014.

Informal consultation is currently underway to determine if residents' parking proposals for the Donegall Pass area have broad local support. There are also plans to begin a similar exercise in the Sandy Row area in early January 2014.

My Department's Roads Service has been unable to progress a Residents' Parking Scheme in the Stranmillis area due to a lack of consensus amongst local residents and business associations, who have fundamental differences of opinion on the proposals.

### **Cost of Street Lighting**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of street lighting in each district, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 29426/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Details of my Department's expenditure on street lighting in each Council district, in each of the last five years, are provided in the table below:

<b>Council</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Antrim	703	799	807	734	1,360
Ards	999	822	866	608	1,066
Armagh	822	514	947	1,203	764
Ballymena	1,449	993	872	1,250	1,114
Ballymoney	282	338	438	538	307
Banbridge	552	273	469	770	615
Belfast	3,530	3,290	3,592	3,577	3,830
Carrickfergus	457	636	316	692	439
Castlereagh	936	706	712	553	752
Coleraine	2,306	1,052	1,316	1,466	1,169

Council	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cookstown	399	392	392	455	412
Craigavon	1,143	2,454	1,286	2,126	1,148
Derry	1,748	2,075	1,759	2,415	2,438
Down	994	588	505	1,137	825
Dungannon & South Tyrone	739	682	659	741	695
Fermanagh	1,014	725	749	1,058	868
Larne	399	377	298	519	470
Limavady	481	387	495	489	395
Lisburn	1,935	1,346	1,016	888	962
Magherafelt	480	446	1,040	466	432
Moyle	206	176	166	222	177
Newry & Mourne	1,299	1,016	1,263	786	1,111
Newtownabbey	1,206	1,759	1,246	1,627	1,412
North Down	1,164	1,048	1,008	1,086	1,079
Omagh	817	860	345	786	757
Strabane	660	586	648	636	582

### Road Maintenance: Damage and Injuries

**Mr Ó hÓisín** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many claims have been made against his Department for damaged caused to vehicles, or injuries sustained, due to unsatisfactory road maintenance in each of the last five years; and how many of these claims were (i) successful; and (ii) unsuccessful.

**(AQW 29445/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Details of the number of claims my Department has received for damage caused to vehicles, or injuries sustained, in the last five financial years, are shown in the table below. However, it is not possible to provide details of how many of these claims were due to unsatisfactory road maintenance.

The table also provides details of the number of claims that were successful, unsuccessful or are still ongoing. It should also be noted that claims received by my Department may not always be concluded in the same financial year.

#### CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE CAUSED TO VEHICLES AND INJURIES SUSTAINED

	Claims Received	Successful	Unsuccessful	Ongoing
2008/2009	2,737	1,116	1,583	38
Personal Injury	856	198	621	37
Vehicle Damage	1,881	918	962	1
2009/2010	3,432	1,626	1,703	103

	<b>Claims Received</b>	<b>Successful</b>	<b>Unsuccessful</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Personal Injury	946	176	670	100
Vehicle Damage	2,486	1,450	1,033	3
2010/2011	3,565	1,851	1,596	118
Personal Injury	1,006	221	668	117
Vehicle Damage	2,559	1,630	928	1
2011/2012	2,739	1,048	1,562	129
Personal Injury	1,086	183	776	127
Vehicle Damage	1,653	865	786	2
2012/2013	2,400	834	1,416	150
Personal Injury	955	88	733	134
Vehicle Damage	1,445	746	683	16

### **Contingency Plans in the Event of Future Rail Strikes**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline whether his Department has developed contingency plans in the event of future rail strikes.

**(AQW 29464/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Translink has a business continuity strategy and has developed a range of contingency plans to cover a wide spectrum of service disruptions. Implementation will depend very much on the type and extent of disruption, however, NI Railways' approach is to continue to develop a positive industrial relations environment and hence reduce the likelihood of strikes occurring in the first place.

### **Wi-Fi availability on Northern Ireland Railways**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the effectiveness and quality of Wi-Fi availability on Northern Ireland Railways.

**(AQW 29466/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** WiFi on NI Railways has proven to be very popular, with up to 20% of passengers making use of the service (up to 60,000 user sessions per week). WiFi has been a factor contributing to the current unprecedented rates of growth in passenger numbers across the network.

Passengers may experience some black spots where WiFi/mobile phone coverage is restricted.

### **New Cycle Lanes in North Down**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the additional usage of new cycle lanes in North Down in the last five years.

**(AQW 29467/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department is committed to providing safer roads for the growing number of vulnerable road users, including cyclists and pedestrians, through a range of safety measures, such as, traffic calming and enhancement of the pedestrian and cycling network. I fully recognise the benefits to be obtained from improving the cycle network, in particular the environmental and health benefits and the positive contribution to an integrated transport system.

Over the past 5 years, my Department has invested in the region of £4.1m in creating approximately 75km of new cycle lanes, however, it currently does not carry out monitoring of usage of new cycle lanes.



## Department for Social Development

### Social Security Agency: Sanctions

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many benefits claimants have been referred to the Social Security Agency to have sanctions applied to their benefits, in each of the last three years; and (ii) how many of these claimants had sanctions applied, broken down by age group. **(AQW 28950/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** My Department only has information available from May 2011 to respond to this AQW request. The table below provides the details of the number of claimants referred for consideration of sanctions, and of the numbers applied. Information on the age breakdown of claimants referred for sanction is not recorded.

Period	No of claimants referred for sanction	No of sanctions applied
1 May 2011 – 31 March 2012	21,419	6,831
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	36,821	11,546
1 April 2013 – 30 November 2013	22,940	8,104
<b>Totals</b>	<b>81,180</b>	<b>26,481</b>

### Social Housing Developments in Derry

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQWs 28991/11-15, 28992/11-15, 28993/11-15 and 28994/11-15, what action he has taken to ensure that further social housing developments in Derry are brought forward as a matter of urgency. **(AQW 29374/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive produces and publishes an Unmet Social Housing Need Prospectus on its website and this forms an integral part of the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP).

The prospectus provides essential information for housing associations and developers in respect of locations of unmet social housing need shortages of programmed development sites. These are locations where the Housing Executive would welcome suitable proposals/ schemes.

Housing Associations are encouraged to use the Prospectus to identify locations where there is a current unmet social housing need, with a view to exploring development opportunities and bringing forward proposals for inclusion within the SHDP.

The SHDP and the Unmet Housing Need Prospectus is managed on a 3 year rolling programme and updates are posted to the Housing Executive's website on a weekly basis.

I have recently approved the new Social Housing Development Programme for the period 2014/15 – 2016/17, and this will be published on the Housing Executive's website shortly.

### Crumlin Road Courthouse

**Mr Humphrey** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the progress of the Crumlin Road Courthouse. **(AQW 29400/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department, with ministerial support from across the NI Executive, has been working in co-operation with OFMDFM, SIB, NIEA (DOE) and BCC to identify a sustainable end use for the Crumlin Road Courthouse. Following a procurement competition, a consultant was appointed in July 2013 to complete a Development Study. The consultants have engaged a wide range of stakeholders,

carried out a comprehensive condition report on the building and conducted considerable research into potential end uses. A number of options were presented at a consultation event on 21 November and public feedback has now been sought. A full report is expected in early in the New Year.

### **Warm Homes Scheme Measures: Rural Areas**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the percentage of Warm Homes Scheme measures that have been delivered in rural areas since its inception in each contract area; and how this compares with the target set for delivery.

**(AQW 29428/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive manages the Warm Homes Scheme on behalf of the Department. The Warm Homes Scheme was introduced in July 2009, since then up to 30 November 2013 it delivered a total 41,976 interventions. Of these, 16,866 (40%) interventions have been in rural areas. The overall Warm Homes Scheme target is to deliver 40% of energy efficiency measures in rural areas.

The table below provides details from the start of the scheme in July 2009 to 30 November 2013. For contract Area A that figure is 29% and Area B the figure is almost 51%.

Year	Area A			Area B			Warm Homes Scheme Total		
	Completed Jobs	Rural Jobs	Rural %	Completed Jobs	Rural Jobs	Rural %	Completed Jobs	Rural Jobs	Rural %
2009/10	3,231	922	28.54%	3,542	1,714	48.39%	6,773	2,636	38.92%
2010/11	4,909	1,527	31.11%	5,401	2,667	49.38%	10,310	4,194	40.68%
2011/12	4,951	1,525	30.80%	5,700	2,908	51.02%	10,651	4,433	41.62%
2012/13	4,750	1,214	25.56%	4,887	2,562	52.42%	9,637	3,776	39.18%
2013/14 (to 30/11/13)	2,583	741	28.69%	2,022	1,086	53.71%	4,605	1,827	39.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,424</b>	<b>5,929</b>	<b>29.03%</b>	<b>21,552</b>	<b>10,937</b>	<b>50.75%</b>	<b>41,976</b>	<b>16,866</b>	<b>40.18%</b>

The Information provided in this response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

## Town Centres: Free Wi-Fi

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Social Development how many town centres in each constituency have been assisted by his Department in attaining free wi-fi provision.

**(AQW 29441/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** In an effort to help to make town centres more attractive and competitive, my Department in conjunction with Council has introduced free Wi-Fi across a number of towns. To date, this initiative has been rolled out to 18 town centres across Northern Ireland. While most of the schemes have been in operation for a relatively short time, the feedback from shoppers and traders alike has been very positive.

The information requested is detailed in the table below:

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Number of towns which DSD has assisted in attaining free Wi-Fi provision</b>
East Antrim	0
East Belfast	0
East Londonderry	1
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	2
Foyle	0
Lagan Valley	1
Mid Ulster	2
Newry and Armagh	2
North Antrim	0
North Belfast	0
North Down	1
South Antrim	0
South Belfast	0
South Down	3
Strangford	2
Upper Bann	3
West Belfast	0
West Tyrone	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

## Medical Appointment Facilities: Royston House

**Mr Hilditch** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any plans to relocate the medical appointment facilities on the 4th floor in Royston House to ground floor accommodation that would meet the needs of Employment and Support Allowance patients attending medicals.

**(AQW 29461/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is currently evaluating options to provide ground floor medical examination provision for Belfast's Medical Examination Centre. It is hoped that a way forward will be agreed with the service provider in early in 2014.

## Homeless People: Under the Age of Eighteen

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people who are classified as homeless are under the age of eighteen.

**(AQW 29463/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that at 1st December 2013 there was a total of 44 single applicants awarded Full Duty Applicant status (homeless) and aged under 18 recorded on the waiting list.

## Apex: Housing Executive Site

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 28993/11-15, to detail why Apex were unsuccessful in acquiring the site.

**(AQW 29481/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** This scheme was originally programmed to start on site during 2014/15. The Association advised the Housing Executive in July 2013 that the scheme would not progress and the proposal was subsequently removed from the SHDP. Apex Housing has not yet acquired this site, however the Association has bid for a scheme to develop 52 units at Creggan Park during 2016/17.

## Clanmil Housing Association: Site

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 28994/11-15, to detail why Clanmil were unsuccessful in acquiring the site.

**(AQW 29482/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Clanmil Housing was unable to agree a price with the vendor and advised the Housing Executive on 4th July 2013 that the Association would be unable to progress this scheme. The proposal was subsequently removed from the SHDP.

## Apex: Housing Executive Site

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 28466/11-15, to detail why Apex were unsuccessful in acquiring the site.

**(AQW 29483/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** This scheme was originally programmed to start on site during 2014/15. The Association advised the Housing Executive in November 2013 that the scheme was at an early feasibility stage and was unlikely to progress until 2016/17. The proposal was subsequently slipped on the SHDP to 2016/17.

## Apex: Housing Executive Site

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 28992/11-15, to detail why Apex were unsuccessful in acquiring the site.

**(AQW 29484/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** This scheme was originally programmed to start on site during 2014/15. The Association advised the Housing Executive in July 2013 that the scheme would not progress and the proposal was subsequently removed from the SHDP. Apex Housing has not yet acquired this site, however the Association has bid for a scheme to develop 16 units at Rathmore Road during 2016/17.

# Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

## Public Transport: Parliament Buildings

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Assembly Commission pursuant, to AQW 28867/11-15, to outline (i) what efforts have been made to assess the current usage of public transport for employees and visitors to Parliament Buildings or other buildings within the wider Stormont Estate; and (ii) what consideration has been given to carrying out a survey amongst users of the Stormont Estate to establish whether staff members and visitors would use public transport if better links were provided.

**(AQW 29431/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The Stormont Workplace Travel Consortium (a consortium of all public service employers in the Stormont Estate area led by OFMDFM) commissioned Atkins Transport Planning Belfast to produce The Stormont Estate Workplace Travel Plan (November 2008). As one of the public service employers within the Stormont Estate the Northern Ireland Assembly fed into the Travel Plan through the Steering Group, Travelwise NI. A copy of the Travel Plan, which focuses on staff rather than visitors, is available from the Sustainable Development Office in the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Stormont Workplace Travel Consortium has not had a meeting for some time but the Northern Ireland Assembly continues to assess current usage of public transport by staff in Parliament Buildings through the staff survey.

Consideration is currently being given to the travel section of the 2014 Northern Ireland Assembly staff survey and its enhancement will provide opportunities to target the development of public transport links through the Stormont Workplace Travel Consortium.

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## Revised Written Answers

### Friday 3 January 2014

**(AQW 29441/11-15)**

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North Belfast	0
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South Antrim	0
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West Belfast	0
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<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

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