

Written Questions answered between 23 February and 2 March 2006

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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Questions to the First Minister

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the estimated cost of the proposed renaming of Welsh Assembly Government departments? (WAQ45833)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): The costs are estimated to be negligible.

Leighton Andrews: Who holds responsibility for the coordination of healthy eating and cooking initiatives, given that schemes are supported under the health, education and social justice portfolios? (WAQ45851)

The First Minister: The Minister for Health and Social Services leads on the national nutrition strategy for Wales, 'Food and Well Being', which covers a wide range of programmes for the whole population that encourage healthy eating and deliver cooking initiatives.

The coordination of work in this area in relation to children and young people through the Cabinet subcommittee on children and young people, chaired by the Minister with responsibility for children, Jane Hutt, with membership comprising myself, the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language, the Minister for Education and Life-long Learning, the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration and the Minister for Economic Development and Transport.

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the First Minister and his Government? (WAQ45955)

The First Minister: The Welsh Assembly Government's achievements are set out in my report, which for 2005 can be found at: <http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubannualreports/content/2005/contents-e.htm> which sets out our progress against the Government's strategic agenda, 'Wales: A Better Country'.

My next report is scheduled for publication ahead of the summer recess.

John Griffiths: What discussions has the First Minister had with UK Government Ministers regarding the Government of Wales Bill? (WAQ45967)

The First Minister: I meet regularly with UK Government Ministers to discuss the Government of Wales Bill and its implications for the future governance of Wales.

Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

Nick Bourne: What financial support is the Minister providing to local authorities to encourage cycling in Wales? (WAQ45836) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Economic Development and Transport.*

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): The transport grant settlement for 2006-07, which I announced on 8 February, included some £7 million to encourage walking and cycling and support the highly successful Safe Routes to Schools initiative.

I would also refer you to my reply to WAQ44670 from John Griffiths on 9 November and the reply you received from the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport to WAQ44261.

Leighton Andrews: When does the Minister expect to complete his assessment of the bid by the Pentref Bowmen for the 2008 world field archery championships? (WAQ45852)

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): Further information is required in support of Pentref Bowmen's request for funding.

Leighton Andrews: When did the Minister last meet the Heritage Lottery Fund, what assessment has he made of HLF investment in the former coalfield areas, and will he make a statement? (WAQ45853)

Alun Pugh: I met the Heritage Lottery Fund this morning. While I have not undertaken a formal assessment of HLF funding for former coalfield areas I have discussed with it a range of issues regarding its funding programmes and priorities, with a view to its forthcoming consultation for its third strategic plan.

William Graham: What level of financial support is being given to the Athletic Association of Wales in this Commonwealth Games year? (WAQ45902)

Alun Pugh: In the financial year 2005-06 the Athletics Association of Wales is receiving £347,000 of funding from our sports council. In 2006-07 AAW is set to receive £414,000. As a result of the Foster report, the Athletics Association of Wales will also receive legacy funding of £170,000 in 2006-07 as part of a five-year package of funding from UK Athletics for the modernisation of the sport.

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the Minister and his department? (WAQ45936)

Alun Pugh: I refer you to the answer provided by the First Minister to WAQ45955.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: A wnaiff y Gweinidog restru cyfraniadau a wnaeth Llywodraeth Cymru er 1999 i gyfleusterau chwaraeon cymunedol sydd wedi'u lleoli mewn ysgolion yng Nghymru? (WAQ45958) [W]

Alun Pugh: Nid oes unrhyw arian o fewn maes fy mhortffolio i wedi cael ei roi tuag at y diben hwn. Er hynny, mae'r Gronfa Loteri Fawr yn buddsoddi rhyw £50 miliwn mewn galluogi cymunedau i ddefnyddio cyfleusterau chwaraeon mewn ysgolion trwy ei rhaglen AG a Chwaraeon Ysgol.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister list the contributions made by the Government of Wales to community sports facilities in schools in Wales since 1999? (WAQ45958) [W]

Alun Pugh: No funding from within my portfolio area has gone towards this purpose. However, the Big Lottery Fund is investing some £50 million in enabling community use of school sports facilities through their PE and School Sport programme.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am gyfraniad Llywodraeth Cymru i'r neuadd chwaraeon gymunedol yn Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera? (WAQ45959) [W]

Alun Pugh: Ddim o fewn fy mhortffolio i. Er hynny, cafodd Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera £291,526 o'r Gronfa Loteri Fawr trwy ei Rhaglen AG a Chwaraeon Ysgol i adeiladu neuadd chwaraeon newydd a chyfleusterau newid a fydd, fel un o amodau'r grant, ar gael i'w defnyddio gan y cyhoedd.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister list the contributions made by the Government of Wales to the community sports hall in Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera? (WAQ45959) [W]

Alun Pugh: None from within my portfolio. However, Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera did receive £291,526 from the Big Lottery Fund through their PE and School Sports programme to build a new sports hall and changing facilities which will, as a condition of the grant, be available for community use.

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister make a statement on the uptake of sport among the youth of Wales? (WAQ45975)

Alun Pugh: I refer you to the answer I gave to you on 19 January 2006.

Eleanor Burnham: Will the Minister make a statement on the work that he and his department have undertaken in response to the amended motion on arts policy carried on the 1 February 2006? (WAQ45976)

Alun Pugh: I will be submitting a paper to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee on Wednesday 8 March 2006 about a review of the role of the Arts Council of Wales. The Assembly Government is, of course, fully complying with the terms of the resolution on 1 February.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister confirm the number of peripatetic music teachers in Cardiff compared to 1997? (WAQ45978) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.*

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): This information is not available centrally.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of visitors to the Wales Millennium Centre? (WAQ45979)

Alun Pugh: In 2005 the numbers of visitors to the Wales Millennium Centre were as follows:

- Over 344,000 attended performances in the Donald Gordon Theatre and the Weston Studio. Of this figure, 45,000 attended 27 performances by the Welsh National Opera in the Donald Gordon Theatre.
- Over 250,000 casual visitors visited the building.

Public programmes

- Over 15,000 people took guided tours of the building.
- Over 14,000 children from 316 schools visited the Centre for organised activities.
- 593 free performances were held in the public spaces and over 33,000 people attended.
- 430 business functions and conferences were held and nearly 20,000 attended these events.

Carl Sargeant: Will the Minister make a statement on the use of sporting facilities in Flintshire? (WAQ45980)

Alun Pugh: In a recent Sports Council for Wales survey, which focused on rates of participation and usage of sporting facilities in Wales, results showed that over 19 per cent of the population of Flintshire

had used a leisure centre or fitness centre in the four weeks prior to interview, compared with an overall percentage of over 17 per cent of people in Wales.

As outlined in 'Climbing Higher', we want to increase rates of participation in sport and physical activity among all ages, which will include increased usage of leisure facilities.

Our Sports Council for Wales is working to address this matter, for example all 71 primary/specialist schools in Flintshire participate in our Dragon Sport programme, with over 6,600 participants.

Karen Sinclair: Will the Minister make a statement on rugby in north Wales? (WAQ45981)

Alun Pugh: The Welsh Rugby Union is responsible for the development of rugby union in Wales and I understand the union is working with the clubs in north Wales to develop a strategic plan for the sport in the region.

William Graham: Will the Minister make a statement on the promotion of the arts in Wales? (WAQ45982)

Alun Pugh: The Welsh Assembly Government has stressed the importance of arts and culture in 'Wales: A Better Country'. Our commitment is demonstrated through new companies, theatres, galleries and community based work across Wales. The arts council has benefited greatly from significant extra investment—its budget was £15 million in 1999-2000. This year it is £27 million, an increase of 80 per cent.

International initiatives have put Wales firmly on the international arts calendar. The Welsh pavilion was at Venice again for last year's Biennale and the second Artes Mundi prize has just opened at Amgueddfa Cymru/National Museum Wales. This year will also see the first award of the Dylan Thomas international literary prize. The Welsh Assembly Government backs all of these initiatives.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on his efforts to bring the 2006 FA Cup Final to Cardiff? (WAQ45983)

Alun Pugh: The Assembly Government made no special attempts to bring the 2006 FA Cup Final to Cardiff, as it was always anticipated the game would take place at Wembley. However delays in building the new stadium have resulted in the match being transferred to Cardiff.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Assembly Government support for cultural institutions in Mid and West Wales? (WAQ45984)

Alun Pugh: The Welsh Assembly Government is promoting and supporting cultural institutions in all areas of Wales. Institutions supported in Mid and West Wales include the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, and the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea.

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement about the contribution of The Alarm to Welsh music? (WAQ45985)

Alun Pugh: I recognise that many bands making popular music have made a contribution to the cultural life of Wales, and to the profile of Wales on the international stage. The Alarm has been a long standing band whose songs, such as '68 Guns' and 'Sold Me Down The River', have had a significant following.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on how he is encouraging the sponsorship of sport in Wales by non-governmental bodies? (WAQ46063)

Alun Pugh: Wales' success in hosting and attracting high profile events such as the Rugby World Cup, Ryder Cup 2010, the FA Cup Final and the Wales Rally GB is helping to generate some £50 million a year in sponsorship. 'Sportsmatch Cymru' is also creating vital links between business and grass roots sport.

Questions to the Minister for Economic Development and Transport

Catherine Thomas: How is the Welsh Assembly Government attracting inward investment into Llanelli? (WAQ45846)

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): The Welsh Assembly Government and its partners in Team Wales will continue to promote the whole of Wales, including Llanelli, as an attractive place in which to do business.

Since the Assembly's inception, inward investment projects recorded for Llanelli have an expected investment of over £81 million. These projects are expected to create almost 900 jobs and safeguard over 1,700.

Catherine Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on job creation within the Llanelli area? (WAQ45847)

Andrew Davies: The Llanelli waterside masterplan, which I launched last September, is an ambitious regeneration initiative to develop a mix of commercial, leisure, retail and residential uses and to provide for up to 1,500 new jobs. The proposal will help stimulate the revival of the local economy through creating confidence in Llanelli as an investment location.

Regional selective assistance and Assembly investment grants continue to be available and, since April 2004, the two grant schemes have helped create 136 jobs and safeguarded/maintained a further 358 in the Llanelli area.

Catherine Thomas: What support has been provided by the Welsh Assembly Government to boost tourism in Llanelli? (WAQ45848)

Andrew Davies: Since 2001 the Wales Tourist Board has approved £1.2 million of grant for tourism projects, investing nearly £3 million in Llanelli. The South West Wales Regional Tourism Partnership (established 2002) has also been allocated a total of £4 million to help implement its regional tourism strategy.

Developments such as the Millennium Coastal Park, new golf facilities and improvements to Burry Port harbour have all helped boost tourism in the Llanelli area. Carmarthenshire County Council also works closely with Business Eye to support and develop tourism businesses.

Catherine Thomas: Will the Minister provide information on regional selective assistance and Welsh Assembly Government investment grants into Llanelli? (WAQ45849)

Andrew Davies: Since the inception of the Assembly, 20 offers of regional selective assistance, worth £23.6 million, have been made in Llanelli. These offers are expected to create or safeguard some 2,289 jobs and lever in over £72 million in capital expenditure.

I launched the Assembly investment grant scheme in April 2002. To date, 34 offers of grant, worth over £1 million, have been made to Llanelli companies. These grants are expected to cost some £2.7 million, and, while this is not a job creation scheme, it is expected that the projects will create 78 new jobs.

Leighton Andrews: What advertising contracts have been let by the WDA overseas, and to whom? (WAQ45854)

Andrew Davies: In the last three years the WDA has only commissioned large enough scale advertising campaigns to warrant contracting work in the USA. To this end the WDA have secured the services of Spring O'Brien to buy the advertising space and Mackenzie Communications to develop the advertising. All other advertising activity is handled through the local WDA offices on an ad hoc external tender basis.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide details of how his allocation of transport grant funds for 2006-07 will benefit road transport in Mid and West Wales? (WAQ45889)

Andrew Davies: The TG settlement for 2006-07 I announced on 8 February included £6 million for the Ceredigion link road stage 1 scheme and £3.970 million for the Ammanford distributor road, phase 1/1.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide details of how his allocation of transport grant funds for 2006-07 will benefit rail transport in Mid and West Wales? (WAQ45890)

Andrew Davies: I did not invite any new transport grant rail bids in 2006-07. The Cambrian line improvement was completed in 2005-06, and transport grant contributed £1.945 million. The Cabinet written statement on the final budget last November made it clear that I am continuing to improve rail links across Wales and that I am funding the retention of three class 158 trains for redeployment across the rural rail network to ease overcrowding. In addition, I am awaiting a feasibility study on the infrastructure required to improve the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth time to hourly, and a business case on additional services for the Heart of Wales line.

Kirsty Williams: How many jobs have been created in Wales for each year since 1999 as a result of the Assembly Government's commitment to sustainability? (WAQ45899)

Andrew Davies: Although employment in Wales has risen by nearly 120,000 since the inception of the National Assembly for Wales, it is not possible to attribute accurately a particular proportion of this increase to the wide-ranging work of the Assembly Government and its partners in promoting sustainable development.

Kirsty Williams: How many jobs have been created in Wales for each year since 1999 as a result of attempts by the Assembly Government to improve the resource efficiency of businesses? (WAQ45900)

Andrew Davies: Although employment in Wales has risen by nearly 120,000 since the inception of the National Assembly for Wales, it is not possible to attribute accurately a particular proportion of this increase to the work of the Assembly Government and its partners in promoting resource efficiency.

Carl Sargeant: Will the Minister outline the purpose of the recent Welsh Assembly Government RSA grant offer to Airbus? (WAQ45912)

Andrew Davies: The RSA grant offer is to secure the creation of 650 new jobs at Airbus's Broughton facility by the end of December 2006. Without the grant some of the work undertaken at Broughton would have been placed with companies throughout the world and the new jobs would not have been created.

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the numbers of road traffic accidents between Black Cat corner at Llandudno down the A470 to Betws y Coed in each of the last three years for which figures are available? (WAQ45918)

Andrew Davies: Transport Wales officials have requested this information from our agents, the North Wales Trunk Road Agency. It is anticipated that it will be available by the end of February 2006. On receipt I will arrange for it to be forwarded to you.

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the numbers of road traffic accidents along the A55 between Holywell and Llandudno in each of the last three years for which figures are available? (WAQ45919)

Andrew Davies: Transport Wales officials have requested this information from our agents, the North Wales Trunk Road Agency. It is anticipated that it will be available by the end of February 2006. On receipt I will arrange for it to be forwarded to you.

Sandy Mewies: How is the Welsh Assembly Government attracting inward investment into Delyn? (WAQ46032)

Sandy Mewies: Will the Minister provide information on regional selective assistance and Assembly investment grants into Delyn? (WAQ46033)

Andrew Davies: The Welsh Assembly Government and its partners in Team Wales continue to actively promote the whole of Wales, including Delyn, as an attractive place in which to do business. A dedicated team provides advice and support to both potential new inward investors and to existing investors.

Regional selective assistance plays an important part in influencing many company decisions to invest and expand. Since the inception of the Assembly, seven offers of regional selective assistance, worth £1.84 million, have been made to companies investing in the Delyn area. These offers are expected to lever in some £24.5 million investment and create or safeguard 212 jobs.

I launched the Assembly investment grant in April 2002 as a tool to assist small and medium-sized enterprises, especially indigenous SMEs, to invest in their businesses. To date, 38 offers worth over £2.4 million have been made. These offers are expected to generate some £28 million of new investment.

Laura Anne Jones: What funds will the Welsh Assembly Government make available in 2006 to help local authorities modernise and update local roads? (WAQ46066)

Andrew Davies: On 8 February I announced an investment of over £70 million in 2006-07 to help develop the local road network in Wales.

Laura Anne Jones: How is the Assembly Government ensuring that cyclists travelling on the Valley lines in South Wales East are able to store their bikes on the trains? (WAQ46078)

Andrew Davies: Arriva Trains Wales has produced a leaflet, 'Cycling by Train'. These leaflets are available at all main ATW stations. While ATW's trains have limited capacity to carry bikes, it has assured me that it aims to make cycle carriage as easy as possible.

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to promoting and developing the use of cycling as a healthy, accessible, convenient, and environmentally friendly way of making local journeys as part of an integrated, sustainable transport system.

Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Nick Bourne: What is the Minister doing to promote cycling in schools? (WAQ45834) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Economic Development and Transport.*

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): We promote cycling among school pupils by allocating funding to local authorities through the Safe Routes to School initiative. This funding allows authorities to provide improved infrastructure for cyclists on their journeys to and from school and end of trip facilities such as secure cycle parking and storage space. In addition we encourage local authorities to provide cycle training for school pupils and to make it more widely available.

Leanne Wood: What are the allocation criteria for the small schools fund? (WAQ45835)

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): The Welsh Assembly Government continues to provide additional funding intended to encourage innovation in small and rural schools. Between 2002-03 and 2004-05 a total of £9 million was allocated to local education authorities as a special grant in order for them to provide support for innovation, particularly in small and rural schools. The funding was distributed between LEAs according to a formula that gave the greater share of the grant to authorities with predominantly rural populations and higher numbers of small schools. (A 70 per cent weighting was given to rurality, 20 per cent was weighted on the basis of the number of small schools and 10 per cent was weighted on deprivation.)

The terms of the grant allowed LEAs to use the funding to support innovative schemes for schools to work together, schemes to increase the community use of schools, or to provide help to teaching heads in small schools.

In 2005-06 £3.5 million is available for the same activities and has been distributed using the same formula but through different routes:

- £1.5 million through the better schools fund to fund collaboration between and innovative working in small schools (£0.9 million as grant, £0.6 million as match funding in revenue support grant).
- £1 million for administrative support for schools with teaching heads through the special grant report for additional revenue funding for schools.
- £1 million as an identified element of community focused schools grant to develop community focus in small and rural schools.
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For 2006-2007 all the funding has been moved back into one budget expenditure line to aid transparency, and funding has been increased £4.1 million as follows:

- £1.5 million will be allocated through the better schools fund to fund collaboration between and innovative working in small schools.

- £1 million will be provided for administrative support for schools with teaching heads through a grant scheme under section 14 of the Education Act 2002.
- £1.6 million (£0.6 million up on the amount for 2005-06) will be available as an identified element of community focused schools grant to develop community focus in small and rural schools.

Guidance for local education authorities on how they should utilise their grant allocations can be found in Circular 18/2005 in the case of the better schools fund and circular 31/05 in the case of the community-focused schools grant. The grant scheme for the funding, which will continue to provide additional support to teaching heads, is currently being drawn up, but will largely reflect the conditions previously attached to the additional revenue funding special grant allocated for the same purpose.

Leighton Andrews: What is the Minister's policy on the creation of vegetable gardens by schools as part of healthy eating initiatives? (WAQ45855)

Jane Davidson: Food, including nutrition and other health-related issues, features prominently in the programmes of study for science, PE and design and technology. Food also features in the new framework for personal and social education, which the Assembly Government decided to make a statutory requirement in all maintained schools from September 2003.

Many schools are already taking food education further by growing food in the school grounds as a means of delivering the curriculum or as an after-school activity, and by visiting farms and forming links with local food producers.

Some primary schools in Wales are introducing school gardens as part of their work on the Welsh network of healthy school schemes.

The Women's Institute is also offering support to school gardening programmes, and is linking locally with healthy schools co-ordinators to support schools that are already thinking more broadly about health as part of their involvement in the WNHSS.

WIs are being encouraged and supported to forge links with local primary schools in their area to develop projects either on school grounds or land belonging to the community. Over the next three years, it is envisaged that about 400 gardens will be created.

The work of the food in schools working group also includes providing recommendations as to how change can be delivered through educating children as to where their food comes from and food production in the context of sustainable development.

The group is due to present me with the draft report in April. A period of consultation will follow with all interested parties over the summer.

Leighton Andrews: What is the Minister's policy on teachers having disciplinary powers outside school grounds? (WAQ45856)

Jane Davidson: I am committed to working with the profession and taking appropriate steps to tackle poor behaviour in our schools.

All maintained schools must have a clear behaviour policy, which sets out the boundaries of what is acceptable, the hierarchy of sanctions and the arrangements for their consistent and fair application.

Guidance on the application of a school's behaviour policy outside school grounds can be found in National Assembly for Wales guidance circular 1/2004 'Exclusions from Schools and Pupil Referral Units.' This advises that pupils' behaviour outside school on school business, for instance, school trips,

away school sports fixtures, or work experience placements, is subject to the school's behaviour policy. Bad behaviour in these circumstances should be dealt with as if it had taken place in school.

For behaviour outside school, but not on school business, a headteacher may exclude a pupil if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the pupil body as a whole. This will be a matter of judgment for the headteacher. Pupils' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the school or on a journey to or from school can, for example, be grounds for exclusion.

In addition to the powers available on exclusion I will also be considering closely any legislative opportunities available in the forthcoming Education Bill that will further support our teachers in tackling challenging behaviour in our schools and outside their grounds.

Leighton Andrews: What is the Minister's policy on the teaching of phonics in schools? (WAQ45857)

Jane Davidson: We have decided against a prescriptive one-size-fits-all strategy for the promotion of literacy in Wales. Instead, we have placed the emphasis on local authorities working with schools to develop and implement local strategies. This approach ensures that strategies build on local strengths and are tailored to local circumstances. The Assembly Government has supported this work through funding made available in the better schools fund (and formerly grants for education support and training) and support provided to local authorities as part of our basic skills strategy. In particular, the basic skills quality mark has provided a framework for ongoing improvements in both literacy and numeracy and every primary and secondary school in Wales is on target to achieve the standard required by the quality mark by the end of March this year.

Advice from Estyn is that most schools in Wales use a phonics programme as one element of their overall approach to the development of literacy skills. The inspectorate has confirmed that such schemes, including those based on synthetic phonics, can make a real difference, but no one scheme outperforms the field. The key to success lies not simply in the selection of a particular approach but supporting whatever programme is adopted with effective training for teachers and other staff and making firm linkages with language and literacy teaching across the curriculum.

Our approach has been welcomed by schools and LEAs, and in her recent annual report the chief inspector confirmed that the good progress made in developing pupils' literacy skills has contributed a great deal to improved results in English, mathematics and science in primary schools. There is, therefore, a real strength in an approach that recognises that there are a range of effective approaches to the teaching of reading and writing. In this sense, although the context is very different, we are looking closely at the findings of the Rose review in England on the teaching of reading in primary schools, including the role of synthetic phonics, to ensure that strategies employed by practitioners in Wales continue to be informed by best practice.

Leighton Andrews: What account has been taken in the Flying Start strategy of the lessons learned from the successful On Track project in Tylerstown? (WAQ45859)

Leighton Andrews: What account has been taken of the experience of the On Track project in Tylerstown in framing the childcare strategy for Wales? (WAQ45860)

Leighton Andrews: What account has been taken of the experience of the On Track project in Tylerstown in framing the parenting action plan? (WAQ45861)

Jane Davidson: The final report of the evaluation of On Track in Tylerstown will be published in 2010. However, key themes reflected in the emerging findings are fundamental to Flying Start, the childcare strategy and parenting action plan. These include an integrated multi-agency approach to provide non-stigmatising preventative services, incorporating parental support and childcare for the developmental

benefit of children. Schools are recognised as having a key role both in the emerging findings and the three initiatives.

Ann Jones: What is the projected total Sure Start budget in Wales for each for the next three years? (WAQ45916)

Ann Jones: What was the total Sure Start budget in Wales for each year since its inception? (WAQ45917)

Jane Davidson: The Sure Start programme, for children aged nought to three and their families, was launched in 1999. From April 2003 this programme was one of the streams unified within the Cymorth grant.

From 1999 to 2003 the Sure Start budgets were as follows:

1999-2000	£3.0 million
2000-01	£11.0 million
2001-02	£11.5 million
2002-03	£14.0 million

The Cymorth budgets from 2003 to 2009 are as follows:

2003-04	£40.7 million
2004-05	£43.9 million
2005-06	£44.7 million
2006-07	£56.7 million
2007-08 (indicative)	£59.6 million
2008-09 (indicative)	£59.6 million

Within Cymorth no specific budget for Sure Start is set. The current Cymorth guidance requires a minimum investment of 34 per cent of local allocations in the nought to three age group.

In addition children aged nought to three in the most disadvantaged areas will benefit from the new Flying Start initiative. The budget for this initiative is £15 million in 2006-07 and the indicative budget for the following year is £31 million.

Michael German: Can the Minister please explain why the move to a new site of Llanfoist Primary School in Monmouthshire is being treated as a statutory closure given that no amalgamations are being proposed and the sole effect of the proposal is for the school to move to a new building? (WAQ45932)

Jane Davidson: The reorganisation of provision at Llanfoist required statutory procedures because the replacement school will be larger, at 210 places, than the current 124-place school, and because it involved a transfer to a new site. Both of these are alterations which require the publication of statutory proposals. It was for Monmouthshire LEA to decide whether to publish proposals for an enlargement and transfer, or for a school closure and establishment of a new school. Although in this instance the authority chose the latter approach, the Llanfoist scheme will not be counted as a school closure when numbers of closures are reported. This is in accordance with our established practice.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister say whether or not she is determining the proposal made by Rhondda Cynon Taf council to close Blaenclydach Infants School, and if she is not taking the decision can she list the reason(s) why? (WAQ45933)

Jane Davidson: I will not be determining the proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Education Authority to discontinue Blaenclydach Infants School. It is generally accepted that it is not appropriate for Ministers to take decisions on issues which relate directly to their own constituency. In my role as Assembly Member for Pontypridd, I have made representations on behalf of my constituents and have had discussions with the local authority about its current programme of school reorganisation proposals. Given that the authority is bringing forward proposals on a similar basis right across its area, and taking into account the representations I have already made and wish to continue making, it is not appropriate for me to determine any of the current proposals from Rhondda Cynon Taf, whether they affect schools inside or outside my own constituency area.

Lisa Francis: How many a) primary school pupils and b) secondary school pupils played truant in each year since 1999? (WAQ45944)

Jane Davidson: Truancy is classified by schools as an unauthorised absence: this includes any absence for which a satisfactory explanation, in the school's view, has not been provided.

UK research has shown that small concentrations of truants account for a large proportion of absenteeism figures, with 2 per cent of pupils responsible for more than half of all unauthorised absences in 450 schools studied.

Absenteeism information in Wales is collected centrally in terms of half-day sessions missed and not by individual pupil. Therefore it is not currently possible to assign absences to individual pupils and therefore provide an accurate and truly representative picture of the number of pupils playing truant in Wales.

Figures for levels of unauthorised absences from secondary schools and primary schools can, however, be accessed from the Statistics for Wales website at the following link:
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/index.htm>

William Graham: Will the Minister make a statement on the support the Welsh Assembly Government provides to teachers? (WAQ45973)

Jane Davidson: Teachers can access a range of professional development opportunities to support them throughout their careers, from induction and early professional development through individual development opportunities to middle management, leadership and headship training.

The induction and EPD arrangements ensure that newly qualified teachers receive support in the vital early years of their career. In addition, over 21,500 development opportunities to provide support for continuing professional development have been funded by the General Teaching Council for Wales to date.

The development of a professional development framework by the GTCW is an important step in supporting teachers in recognising the different stages and expectations of a teacher's career. It will help teachers plan their own development by setting out key professional 'milestones' for differing career paths and options open to them as they move through their working life.

The national headship development programme provides training for aspiring headteachers, support for newly appointed headteachers and professional development for headteachers in post. The launch of a new leadership development programme in 2007 will pave the way for greater support for school leaders in the twenty-first century.

To support teachers who wish to improve their skills in teaching through the Welsh language, £1 million has been provided to fund sabbaticals scheme during 2005-06. Pilot programme from January 2006 to

July 2007 will provide an opportunity for up to 80 practitioners from the schools sectors to access the scheme. To further support staff teaching across all ages and stages, and to ensure they receive support to remain at the leading edge of research and practice in learning and teaching, we are leading a pedagogy debate in Wales.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on the importance of smaller farm businesses in Wales? (WAQ45838)

The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones): Small and very small farm businesses, defined using 'European size units' (calculated by giving a weight to each hectare of crops and to each animal) comprise a significant proportion of the total number of farm businesses in Wales. The June 2004 census details 84 per cent of Welsh holdings in the small/very small categories, which translates to 47 per cent of the agricultural land area. Sixty-one per cent of full-time farmers and 88 per cent of part time farmers are farming small and very small holdings. The small farm businesses are important in their own right, but also in the context of the rural economy. Consequently the Welsh Assembly Government considers the needs of all farm businesses when developing countryside policy. More information on farm businesses can be viewed on our website ([www.countryside.wales.gov.uk/headline.agriculture.htm](http://www.countryside.wales.gov.uk/headline/agriculture.htm))

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister make a statement on what role the planning system plays in ensuring that the needs and requirements of small farm businesses are met? (WAQ45839)

Carwyn Jones: 'Planning Policy Wales' and 'Technical Advice Note (Wales) 6: Agricultural and Rural Development', are supportive of farm businesses, large or small. This includes urging local planning authorities to take a positive approach to the conversion of existing buildings, or the provision of sensitively designed new buildings for business use, especially where they are located within or adjoining farm building complexes.

Leighton Andrews: Pursuant to WAQ44425, will the Minister instruct supermarkets in Wales to use alternatives to disposable plastic bags? (WAQ45862)

Carwyn Jones: Neither the National Assembly for Wales nor the Welsh Assembly Government has any powers to instruct supermarkets in Wales in this way.

Leighton Andrews: What is the Minister's policy on the timing of hedge cutting/laying by farmers? (WAQ45863)

Carwyn Jones: Following consultation on proposed changes to the single payment cross-compliance regime, I announced, towards the end of last year, that there will be no changes to the current hedge cutting or laying dates because of the potential damage to wildlife. I agreed two exceptions: an earlier cutting period allowed for arable farmers where normal practice determines that the winter arable crop is planted before 31 August and an extension to 30 April for specialist hedge laying/training events.

Both exceptions are subject to compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

William Graham: Will the Minister make a statement on the implementation of marine environmental high risk areas along the Welsh coastline? (WAQ45908)

Carwyn Jones: Marine environmental high risk areas (MEHRAs) have been introduced in response to recommendations made by the late Lord Donaldson in his report, 'Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas', following the Braer tanker disaster off the Shetland Islands in January 1993.

MEHRA status informs mariners of areas of high environmental sensitivity where there is a realistic risk of pollution from merchant shipping and where they need to exercise even more caution than usual. This is just part of the information available to mariners to enable them to navigate UK waters safely.

The locations of MEHRAs have been identified after taking into account shipping risk, environmental sensitivity and other environmental protection measures already in place at each location. MEHRAs will now be notified by a marine guidance note to mariners who will be expected to exercise an even higher degree of care than usual when passing through them. They will also be marked on Admiralty charts.

The designation of the Pembrokeshire islands as a MEHRA is to be welcomed.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister detail the incidence of enzootic bovine leukosis for each year since 1999, and will he detail the source of infection(s)? (WAQ45909)

Carwyn Jones: The UK has officially enzootic bovine leukosis free status: the most recent case was in 1996. There were no cases in 1999 and there have not been any cases since.

Sandy Mewies: What measures are in place to legally enforce dog owners to clear up after their animals? (WAQ45924)

Carwyn Jones: The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 simplified and clarified local authorities' enforcement powers, and has given them the power to designate open land to which the public have access as a 'poop scoop' area in which dog owners must clean up after their dogs. Any person who fails to do so may be fined up to £1,000 upon conviction by the courts.

Local authorities have the power to issue fixed penalty notices, instead of charging a person, where they believe that a dog fouling offence has been committed in a designated area. The Welsh Assembly Government increased the level of fixed penalty notices for dog fouling offences from £25 to £75 with effect from 1 April 2004. Since that date, local authorities have been able to issue £75 penalty notices for dog fouling offences [under section 88(6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and section 4(2) of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996.

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the Minister and his department? (WAQ45946)

Carwyn Jones: I refer you to the answer provided by the First Minister to WAQ45955.

Elin Jones: What was the cost of controlling and compensating bovine TB in Wales for 2003-04 and 2004-05, and what percentage was this of the total costs for the UK (or England and Wales)? (WAQ46054)

Elin Jones: How much compensation has been paid to farmers for bovine TB in 2003-04 and 2004-05 in Wales? (WAQ46055)

Carwyn Jones: Assembly Government expenditure on TB compensation and associated costs in Wales amounted to £9,645,000 in 2003-04 and £9,157,000 in 2004-05, representing some 28 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, of equivalent expenditure in Great Britain.

Elin Jones: How much money has been paid to veterinary practices for testing for bovine TB in 2003-04 and 2004-05? (WAQ46056)

Carwyn Jones: Payments (excluding VAT) to local veterinary inspectors in respect of TB tests in Wales in the financial years 2003-04 and 2004-05 were £1,644,184.41 and £1,913,608.14 respectively.

Elin Jones: Of the animals sent off as reactors for bovine TB how many were negative at post-mortem and later culture tests? (WAQ46057)

Carwyn Jones: In 2003 and 2004, 32 per cent and 33 per cent (respectively) of all reactors at disclosing tuberculin tests in GB were found at post-mortem to display visible lesions. Of these, 90 per cent plus tested positive for mycobacterium bovis on culture.

Data on TB post-mortem and bacteriological examinations for cattle slaughtered in 2005 are currently being compiled, provisionally expected for the end of March 2006.

Failure to confirm the disease by post-mortem examination at the slaughterhouse, or by culturing m.bovis in the laboratory, does not mean that the disease was not present in the animal, or that the animal had not been in contact with bovine TB. In the early stages of the disease, it is not always possible to see lesions, and it is not possible to culture from samples in every case. Culture is difficult and less sensitive than the tuberculin skin test. The purpose of post-mortem examination and bacteriological culture of tuberculin test reactors is not so much the validation of test results, but rather to determine for epidemiological purposes the severity of disease in infected animals and the type of m.bovis organism involved.

Elin Jones: How many farms in Wales are on TB standstill at present? (WAQ46058)

Carwyn Jones: On the 31 December 2005 there was a provisional figure of 1,630 Welsh herds under restriction.

Elin Jones: A wnaiff y Gweinidog fanylu am faint o arian cyhoeddus sydd wedi ei wario ar ddatblygu'r safle, a'r adeiladau sydd yn eiddo i Dairygold yn Felinfach? (WAQ46059) [W]

Carwyn Jones: Adeiladwyd yr uned wreiddiol yn Felinfach, a elwir yn Dairygold House, gan Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru ym 1996 am gost o £533,518. Prynwyd y safle gan Dairygold yn 2002 am £310,000 (gwerth y farchnad ar yr adeg honno). Gwerth buddsoddiad y sector cyhoeddus oedd £223,518.

Prynwyd Cwmni Caws Dyffryn Aeron gan gwmni Dairygold Food Products UK a derbyniodd grant marchnata a phrosesu gwerth £663,528 ym mis Mehefin 2002, a oedd yn cynrychioli 40 y cant o gyfanswm cost y prosiect sef £1,658,820 er mwyn ehangu nifer y llinellau pecynnu o 4 i 6. Gwerth buddsoddiad y sector cyhoeddus oedd £663,528.

Felly cyfanswm buddsoddiad y sector cyhoeddus ar y safle yw £887,046.

Elin Jones: Will the Minister provide details of how much public money has been spent to develop the site and buildings that are now the property of Dairygold in Felinfach? (WAQ46059) [W]

Carwyn Jones: The original unit at Felinfach, which is now known as Dairygold House, was built by the Welsh Development Agency in 1996 at a cost of £533,518 and purchased by Dairygold in 2002 for the sum of £310,000 (the market value at the time). Public sector investment was effectively £223,518.

Aeron Valley Cheese Company was purchased by Dairygold Food Products UK and awarded a processing and marketing grant of £663,528 in June 2002, representing 40 per cent of total project cost of £1,658,820 to expand the number of packing lines from four to six. Public sector investment was £663,528.

Therefore the total public sector investment in the site is £887,046.

Elin Jones: Does the Minister have any intention to delay the introduction of pre-movement testing in Wales? (WAQ46076)

Carwyn Jones: There are currently no plans to delay the introduction of pre-movement testing in Wales.

Questions to the Finance Minister

John Marek: Will the Minister give details of the last official function that she has asked an Assembly Member, not being a member of the Welsh Assembly Government, to fulfil on her behalf? (WAQ45850)

The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): I asked Ann Jones AM, as Chair of the Local Government and Public Services Committee, to launch the consultation on the draft west Cheshire—north-east Wales sub-regional spatial strategy on 12 December.

All Cabinet members and my Deputy Minister were unavailable due to Cabinet business.

Leighton Andrews: What are the average salaries paid to council cabinet members in Wales, and what comparison has the Minister made with council cabinet salaries for authorities of similar size in England? (WAQ45875)

Sue Essex: This information is not held centrally. It is for each local authority to determine its own scheme of allowances for its councillors, within the requirements of the regulations (The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of County and County Borough Councils and National Park Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2002) and the supporting statutory guidance: these set the range of allowances and the maximum amounts payable.

Cabinet members, along with other councillors who have special responsibilities, may receive a special responsibility allowance from their local authority. Councillors who are eligible to receive a SRA from their local authority are:

Band 1	Directly elected mayors in a mayor and cabinet executive
Band 2	Leaders of councils in a leader and cabinet executive.
	Directly elected mayors in a mayor and manager executive.
Band 3	Chairs of Boards in councils operating Alternative Arrangements.
	Members of Cabinets in leader and cabinet executives.
Band 4	Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
	Leader of the Largest Opposition Group
	Members of Boards in councils operating Alternative Arrangements
	Chairs of Planning Committees

Band 5	Chairs of other Council Committees
	Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Committees
	Vice-Chairs of Planning Committees
	Members of Cabinets in Mayor and Cabinet Executives
Band 6	Vice-Chairs of Council Committees
	Leaders of other political groups (which consist of at least 10 per cent of Council's membership)

A deputy leader of a council, operating executive arrangements, and a vice-chair of the board of a council operating alternative arrangements, may receive a SRA of up to 10 per cent greater than that available to other members of the executive or board.

The maximum rates of payment allowed to members described in these bands will vary according to the population size of the authority concerned, based on the latest national census of population (2001). The population groupings are as follows:

Group A	300,001 and above
Group B	Between 200,001 and 300,000
Group C	Between 100,001 and 200,000
Group D	100,000 and below

The maximum SRAs for each band and group for 2005-06 are set out below:

	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Band 1	£57,559	£49,335	£41,114	£32,890
Band 2	£46,045	£39,468	£32,891	£26,314
Band 3	£23,012	£19,733	£16,445	£13,156
Band 4	£13,815	£11,839	£9,867	£7,894
Band 5	£9,211	£7,894	£6,577	£5,262
Band 6	£4,605	£3,948	£3,289	£2,631

The maximum annual increase in these rates is linked to any annual increase in the basic salary level of members of the National Assembly for Wales.

No authority may pay more than one SRA to a member of that authority and, within each local authority, no more than 50 per cent of all councillors may receive a SRA.

A review of the regulations and guidance is currently underway. It is proposed that revised regulations will establish an independent remuneration panel to make recommendations to local authorities on the types and level of allowances payable.

Lisa Francis: Which Local Authorities in Wales subscribe to the RNIB talking books scheme? (WAQ45952) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport.*

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): The RNIB talking book service is a library of professionally recorded audio books. Books are held centrally and are delivered to subscribing members on request.

All local authorities in Wales provide financial support for users of the talking book service. Except in a few cases, where the authority has negotiated a service level agreement with RNIB, this means that they pay the £70 annual subscription for each individual user.

Lisa Francis: How many public libraries have a) opened and b) closed in Wales since 1999 and would the Minister specify the date and location of each? (WAQ45953)

Sue Essex: The details currently available for each Public Library Service are listed in the table below.

Local Authority	No change	Name of Library Opened	Date Opened (M/Yr)	Name of Library Closed	Date Closed (M/Yr)	Comments
Anglesey, Isle of	No change					
Blaenau Gwent	No change					
Bridgend		Ogmore Vale Library	December 1999			Replacement for existing library, part of joint facilities with Leisure Centre—Ogmore Vale Life Centre
		Pyle Library	June 2000			Replacement for existing library, part of joint facilities with Leisure Centre—Pyle Life Centre
		Caerau 'Cyberlink' Library	September 2002			Specialist ICT library
		Sarn 'Cyberlink' Library	July 2003			Specialist ICT library
				Evanstown Library	June 2005	Low usage and difficulties installing ICT facilities. Replaced with mobile library (books) and Cyberlink mobile ICT unit
Caerphilly		White Rose Information Resource Centre - New Tredegar	November 2004			New library and community centre replacing existing service point
Cardiff		Splott	April 2006	Splott Library	July 2005	Being fully rebuilt as part of Leisure Centre, with double the floor space—opening April 2006
Carmarthenshire		Ysgol y Bedol	September 2005	Garnant	2005	New library replacing existing service point
				Tycroes	Dec 2005	Replaced by mobile service
Ceredigion	No change					
Conwy	No change					
Denbighshire	No change					
Flintshire				Caergwrle	Dec 2004	Replaced with mobile service
				Kinnerton	Dec 2004	Replaced with mobile service

				Northop	Feb 2006	Replaced with mobile service
				Pen-y-ffordd	Dec 2004	Replaced with mobile service
Gwynedd				Aberdyfi	June 2000	
		Blaenau Ffestiniog	April 2003			New lifelong learning complex replacing existing service point
		Dolgellau	November 2005			Extension to the library building to incorporate Meirionnydd Record Office
		Penrhyndeudraeth	July 2003			Library incorporated in a community resource centre
Merthyr Tydfil	No change					
Monmouthshire	No change					
Neath Port Talbot				Croeserw		
Newport		St Julian's Library and Learning Centre	Nov 2005			Branch library added to existing community centre
Pembrokeshire	No change					
Powys	No change					
Rhondda Cynon Taff				Llanharan	August 2000	Replaced with mobile service
Swansea	No change					
Torfaen	No change					
Vale of Glamorgan		New Barry Library	late 2006	Barry Library	Oct 2001	Library located in the nearby leisure centre until the new central library is opened
Wrexham		Bryn Teg Memorial Centre	Sept 2002			New community centre including library
		Llay Park Resource Centre	August 2004			

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the Minister and her department? (WAQ45954)

Sue Essex: I refer you to the answer provided by the First Minister to WAQ45955.

Peter Black: Will the Minister make a statement on the impact on council tax of police restructuring? (WAQ45968)

Sue Essex: The Assembly Government has made it quite clear to the Home Secretary on a number of occasions that costs resulting from restructuring police forces in Wales should be fully met by the Home Office and not fall on the Assembly Government or Welsh council tax payers.

Nick Bourne: What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to ensure that rural communities are provided with public services of the highest standard? (WAQ45971)

Sue Essex: We have set our vision for high quality, responsive public services in 'Making the Connections', published in June 2005, and have supported the delivery of those services by providing £1.4 billion (revenue support grant/non domestic rates) of Assembly Government support to mid, west and north Wales local authorities for 2006-07.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail the cost for implementing equal pay for each local authority? (WAQ46064)

Sue Essex: All local authorities have a target of implementing a new pay and grading system by April 2007. Most are now at the job evaluation stage and will then progress to analysing pay data and differentials before introducing the new pay scales.

To assist with introducing the cost of evaluating and implementing equal pay arrangements I have made provision within the Local Government Settlement, equivalent to an additional 4.5 per cent on the non-teaching pay bill over a period of three years. However, it is important to remember that compliance with equal pay legislation is ultimately a matter for each authority.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail for each local authority the cost of implementing the new pension contract? (WAQ46077)

Sue Essex: The regulation of the local government pension scheme is a non-devolved function held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

ODPM is currently consulting on amendments to the local government pension scheme which will (a) remove a discriminatory provision and (b) allow compliance with new tax regime, but there is no new pension contract and thus no costs calculated.

The changes ODPM is contemplating are intended to stabilise employer contribution rates and meet the cost of revoking changes made to the local government pension scheme regulations as at 1 April 2005.

Kirsty Williams: What policies is the Minister currently pursuing to allow councillors to balance employment commitments with their roles in public life? (WAQ46079)

Sue Essex: The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to introducing measures to encourage a better cross section of the electorate to consider entry into local government. These include the introduction of regulations that require the payment of a basic allowance to all councillors and making available a responsibility allowance for those with special responsibilities. Regulations have also been introduced which extend entitlement to the local government pension scheme to Welsh county and county borough councillors.

Ahead of the 2008 local elections the Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Local Government Association will resume their widening participation campaign, which operated prior to the 2004

elections. That campaign will continue to examine ways to encourage a more diverse representation of the community to stand for election. It will considered initiatives such as:

- how employers may be encourage to support flexible working and leave arrangements, including sabbaticals for employers who become councillors.
- Council meetings to be held at times which fit well for those in employment or caring responsibilities.

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to supporting training and development of elected members across Wales. With the WLGA's training and development branch we will continue to seek ways to modernise the office of elected members in order for them to meet the demands of office and balance personal and career interests.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Leighton Andrews: What are the achieved ambulance response times in the RCT local health board area? (WAQ45864)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons): This information is held in the public domain and is available on the following link:
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwalesheadline/content.health/200>

Leighton Andrews: What policies are in place to encourage the appointment of salaried general practitioners and to retain GPs in the valleys? (WAQ45865)

Brain Gibbons: The new GMS contract gives practices the flexibility to recruit the primary care team they consider appropriate to the delivery of high-quality general medical services. Some LHBs in difficult to recruit areas, notably Rhondda Cynon Taf, have recruited their own salaried GPs (and nurses) to provide locum cover for practices thus ensuring continuity of service.

The report on GP recruitment and retention commissioned by the chief medical officer indicated that solutions to retention problems work best if they are devised and implemented locally. Hence local health boards are responsible for ensuring that they have robust recruitment and retention plans. LHB financial allocations include moneys for recruitment and retention within their 'administered funds'. Officials have requested sight of recruitment and retention plans to monitor the position across Wales and to inform future policy development.

Leighton Andrews: Will the Minister list all the healthy eating and cooking schemes promoted by his department? (WAQ45866)

Brain Gibbons: Food and Fitness Grant Scheme (2004-06).

Funding under the food and fitness small grant scheme was provided for 20 projects that address nutrition, physical activity or a combination of both. These included 14 specifically looking at healthy eating and cooking skills.

In addition six larger projects, addressing both nutrition and physical activity, are being funded for three years.

Project Grants

The Ageing Well Programme—Age Concern Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan	Cardiff
Food and Fitness Programme—Caerphilly Local Health Board	Caerphilly

Swansea Green Gym—Swansea Health Alliance	Swansea
Improving access to affordable healthy food—Garnsychan Partnership	Torfaen
Healthy Lifestyle Project—Pembrokeshire Public Health Team	Pembroke
Cooking Skills Courses—Coleg Llandrillo Cymru	Conwy

Small Grants

Food and Nutrition in Youth Clubs	Denbigh
Good to Go—217 Community Resource Project	Swansea
Food and Fun—Tan y Maen Mental Health Resource Centre	Gwynedd
Healthy Lunch Boxes	Blaenau Gwent
Community-led Food Access—Groundwork Trust	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Get Cooking for Children—Markham Community House	Caerphilly
Healthy Food Options—Pantyffynon Mother & Toddler Group	Carmarthenshire
Fit for Living' Initiative—Age Concern	Powys
Food and Fitness for Older People	Torfaen
Community Health Awareness and Trials Programme Bedlinog	Merthyr
Food & Fitness Mental Health Partnership—Newport Mind	Gwent
Shapes—Wylcwm Street Medical Surgery	Powys
Top Tots – Sure Start Health Outreach	Caerphilly
FANFARE—Torfaen Race Advisory Forum	Torfaen

Food and Fitness Grant Scheme (2006-08)

A further round of funding for joint projects addressing both healthy eating and increasing physical activity levels was launched in 2005. 25 projects will commence April 2006.

Physical Fun and Fine Food	Powys
Healthy Eating and Fitness Project	Powys
Live Life Live Health	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Grow With Us	Swansea
Health and Fitness Programme	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Unpacked Lunch	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Bee Healthy Scheme	Cardiff
The Bangladeshi Health & Fitness Group	Swansea
Food, Fitness and Fun	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Community Fit Club	Wrexham
Weight Management Programme	Bridgend
Fit N Fun Clubs	All Wales
Food and Fitness Project	Denbighshire
Food and Fitness Project	Cardiff
Active Children's Programme	Conwy
Healthy Lifestyles Project	Carmarthenshire
Food and Fitness Initiative	Blaenau Gwent
Reach Out	Monmouthshire
Behaviour Change Training	Carmarthenshire
Food and Fitness Project	Cardiff
Glynch Community Food & Fitness Scheme	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Young, Free and Fit	Flintshire
Food and Fitness Project	Newport
Healthy Lifestyles	Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot
Obesity Treatment and Management	Cardiff

Community Food Co-operatives:

In April 2004 a two-year pilot scheme to develop community food co-operatives in Wales throughout North Wales and South Wales commenced. The pilot is focusing on socially disadvantaged communities. 77 food co-operatives have been set up to date.

Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (WNHSS)

The WNHSS is a network of local schemes, which are partnerships between health and education. Many of the schools look at nutrition and undertake such activities as establishing fruit tuck shops, school nutrition action groups, pupils working with caterers to develop healthy packed lunches etc. There are currently approximately 500 fruit tuck shops in schools that are members of the scheme.

Get Cooking

Through the Health Challenge Wales Voluntary grant scheme the National Federation of Women's Institutes-Wales is being funded to develop the Get Cooking project in seven Federations in Wales. The project is being developed in Glamorgan (Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Vale of Glamorgan, RCT, Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff), Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Powys Montgomery, Anglesey and Clwyd Flint, and will involve holding practical classes in basic food preparation and cooking to small groups of young people aged 14-25. Twenty-eight courses will be delivered over a two-year period

Inequalities in Health Fund

Over a third of the Inequalities in Health Fund portfolio are projects which have a healthy eating and or cooking scheme element:

Tackling Obesity	Blaenau Gwent
Communities Lifestyle Modification Programme	Bridgend
CHD Resource Centre, Local Health Initiatives	Caerphilly
Food and Health Advisor	Caerphilly
A multi-disciplinary team approach to developing a patient focused CHD prevention programme	Cardiff
Community Heart Disease Prevention programme for Llanelli	Carmarthenshire
Communities for Reducing Inequalities in Health	Ceredigion
Community Action on CHD—Rhyl and North Denbighshire	Denbighshire
Heart of Flintshire project	Flintshire
Calon Lan Gwynedd	Gwynedd
The Merthyr Tydfil 'Heartlinks' Project	Merthyr
Alive and Ticking—Raising awareness of Heart Disease in the Community	Neath and Port Talbot
Heart Food and Health	Neath and Port Talbot
Big Sister	Newport
Primary & Community Care Nutrition Project	Newport
Pembrokeshire Community Heart Health Project	Pembrokeshire
Pembrokeshire Community Heart Health Project	Pembrokeshire
Tackling Inequalities in Health Together	Powys
Heart Attack—Food for Living, Food for Life	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Dietetics in Primary Care	Swansea
Barry Heart Health	Vale of Glamorgan
CHD and Travellers—Redressing the Balance	Wrexham
Healthy Eating Community Classes	Wrexham
Community action to prevent CHD in deprived communities - Ynys Mon	Ynys Môn
Community Action on CHD—Denbigh and South Denbighshire	Denbighshire

Leighton Andrews: Pursuant to WAQ44134, will the Minister set out the average annual increase in salaries for (a) consultants (b) GPs and (c) nurses? (WAQ45867)

Brain Gibbons: Average increase for consultants since 1 April 1999, including the effect of the new contract, is 6 per cent. Average annual increase for nurses works out at 10.2 per cent, including the effect of 'Agenda for Change'. GPs, as independent contractors, do not receive an NHS salary.

Leighton Andrews: Pursuant to WAQ44134, will the Minister distinguish between staff costs committed to employing new staff and increases in pay across the board? (WAQ45868)

Brain Gibbons: It is not possible to distinguish increases in staff costs since 1999 between costs associated with employing new staff and general pay increases across the board. However, NHS staff numbers have increased by 23.7 per cent in whole-time equivalent since 1997. The number (headcount) of doctors and dentists has increased by 25 per cent and nurses by 34.6 per cent.

Leighton Andrews: What is the Minister's policy on healthy living centres and have any such centres been funded through lottery funds in Wales? (WAQ45869)

Brian Gibbons: A network of 29 healthy living centres was established across Wales between 1999 and 2002, with £19.9 million of lottery funding. Twenty eight are funded as one closed, and all money is committed. The aim was to help people to maximise their health and well-being, particularly those from deprived communities. The focus is on health as a positive attribute, which helps people to get the most out of life. The concept embraces both physical and mental wellbeing and involves partnership working, for example, local government.

Funding for healthy living centres has either come to an end or will be coming to an end over the next few years. The centres will be looking for other funding opportunities or other ways to become self-sustaining. The Big Lottery Fund has supported local projects with their long-term planning and development via the network of health living centres in Wales. Active living programmes are the next round of funding.

The Assembly does not provide financial assistance to healthy living centres. As recently discussed with the Big Lottery Fund, the decision to continue funding is determined locally based on local needs and in line with health, social care and wellbeing strategies.

Leighton Andrews: Pursuant to WAQ44426, has the National Public Health Service for Wales review of the Palmer et al study now been published? (WAQ45870)

Brain Gibbons: Following the publication of Professor Palmer's study, the National Public Health Service for Wales, in partnership with the congenital anomaly register and information service, undertook to conduct a thorough appraisal of this study.

The NPHS and CARIS have indicated that they are content with the general conclusions of the study. These conclusions highlight the need for continued enhanced surveillance of congenital anomalies in Wales and for further research to improve the evidence base in relation to both the aetiology of congenital anomalies and the impact of the environment on health in Wales.

I am advised that a comprehensive response will be available in early March 2006.

Leighton Andrews: How many GP practices have been identified by the primary care estate forum as facing serious issues with high interest rate surgery loans or negative equity? (WAQ45871)

Brian Gibbons: Data have been provided on GP practices throughout Wales on fixed and high interest rate loans. It is impossible from the data to identify which of the practices face serious issues with high interest rate loans. Only two practices have raised this matter. Chief executives of the LHBs have also been contacted and they do not see this as a widespread problem.

The number of practices with negative equity has not been identified. A mortgage deficit grant is available for the relocation of a practice with negative equity. Only one application has so far been received by the primary care estate forum.

Leighton Andrews: What is the Welsh Assembly Government's policy on the use of hostel-based overnight accommodation in early intervention and preventative services for families and children? (WAQ45873)

Brian Gibbons: Our policy is set out in our national homelessness strategy for Wales 2006 to 2008. Local authorities have duties to secure accommodation for homeless families with children under the Housing Act 1996. We are legislating to restrict the use of bed-and-breakfast premises and to set standards for all temporary accommodation, including hostels. Hostels that are properly designed and managed have a role in the provision of emergency accommodation.

Residential family centres also have a vital role in providing temporary accommodation for families in a crisis.

Leighton Andrews: What are the minimum requirements established by the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales for early intervention and preventative services for families and children offered in overnight hostel-based accommodation? (WAQ45874)

Brian Gibbons: SSIW does not set minimum standards. The national homelessness strategy for Wales 2006 to 2008 and statutory guidance on the Housing Act 1996 require local authorities to develop prevention of homelessness services, and to secure accommodation in event of emergency when families becomes homeless.

For residential family centres, regulations and standards are inspected by the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales.

Kirsty Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on the availability of home oxygen supplies in Wales? (WAQ45888)

Brian Gibbons: The new oxygen contract commenced on 1 February. Prescriptions for oxygen written after 31 January are still being dispensed, meaning pharmacists have been able to backup the new service, while Air Products work towards meeting the patients' needs within acceptable timescales. Their service is improving and being continuously monitored.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister detail for each LHB area the (i) available funding, (ii) available treatment (ii) facilities for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis? (WAQ45905)

Brian Gibbons: Detailed information of this kind is not held centrally.

Local health boards receive both a recurrent discretionary allocation and an allocation for protected and ring-fenced services. LHBs are responsible for managing the totality of their discretionary allocation and for making best use of this resource to commission health care services. Protected and ring-fenced allocations are directed for the purpose intended by the Minister and are fully funded.

The treatment and management of rheumatoid arthritis is delivered in both primary and secondary care settings dependent upon individual needs. Local health boards are responsible for determining which specific services are to be delivered in each locality across Wales, and how they are to be provided. This applies to a wide range of services including those for rheumatoid arthritis.

The Welsh Assembly Government is currently finalising service development and commissioning directives to help improve the health and wellbeing of people with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions. This work is in line with 'Designed for Life' and focuses on the treatment prevention, management and independence of people with these conditions across the care pathway.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister detail the timetable for the publication of the emergency care strategy? (WAQ45906)

Brian Gibbons: The delivering emergency care services policy is in its final draft. One or two final additions are being made this week and we will then undertake a public consultation. I would anticipate that, subject to printing and translation, we will be publishing the document in March.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister detail the indicative budget for drugs for rheumatoid arthritis? (WAQ45907)

Brian Gibbons: Local health board revenue allocations for drug prescribing are based on global calculations, not constructed on the basis of specific individual drug budgets.

Irene James: Will the Minister make a statement about consistent access and delivery of oxygen to patients in Wales? (WAQ45911)

Brian Gibbons: The new oxygen contract commenced on 1 February. Prescriptions for oxygen written after 31 January are still being dispensed, meaning pharmacists have been able to backup the new service, while Air Products work towards meeting the patients' needs within acceptable timescales. Their service is improving and being continuously monitored.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister state whether all women diagnosed with breast cancer in Wales are tested for HER2? (WAQ45915)

Brian Gibbons: The recently published all-Wales medicines strategy unit guidance on planning for and implementing trastuzumab (Herceptin), should it be licensed and positively approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, advises that all women newly diagnosed with breast cancer should be tested for HER2. I, therefore, expect this advice to be implemented across Wales unless it is clinically appropriate not to do this.

Jonathan Morgan: What is the cost to GP surgeries of releasing nurse practitioners for training purposes and how are they compensated? (WAQ45926)

Brian Gibbons: The global sum funding arrangements within the GMS contract incorporates all staff costs including training and development. The costs are therefore a matter for the practices themselves. I regret we do not hold data on these costs centrally.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the role of the National Assembly for Wales in the suspension of Mr Tim Buxton, Consultant Paediatric Neurosurgeon at Morriston Hospital, in April 2003? (WAQ45928)

Brian Gibbons: The Assembly had no role in the suspension of Mr Buxton. The decision was taken by Swansea NHS Trust and remains a matter for it.

Jonathan Morgan: What role will you have in approving the application by Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust for a new transplant unit at University Hospital Wales? (WAQ45929)

Brian Gibbons: Welsh Assembly Government officials have not yet received a business case proposing the development of a new transplant unit at UHW from Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust.

If a business case is received regarding a new transplant unit, it will be processed by WAG officials in the same manner as any other business case—I will have no formal role in approving the application. Approval will be granted by the capital investment board, chaired by Ann Lloyd.

The process for the scrutiny of business cases has been revised in order to accommodate the introduction of a new template for business cases, known as the five-case model. Templates were issued to business case developers within all NHS trusts in January. Each proposal for capital investment will be scrutinised from five perspectives, namely:

- Strategic—case for change
- Economic—value for money
- Financial—affordability
- Commercial—contract and the procurement process
- Management—delivering the project and its solution

Scrutiny of business cases will be undertaken by the investment policy and appraisal group, Welsh health estates, regional offices and WAG officials. Further detail regarding the scrutiny and approval of business cases is available in Welsh health circular (2006) 001.

Jonathan Morgan: What financial support do you provide to patients who might need renal dialysis while away from the UK? (WAQ45930)

Brian Gibbons: Health Commission Wales is responsible for funding the provision of temporary dialysis away from home/holiday dialysis. A policy is in place that reflects guidance set by the Department of Health. This was approved by the National Commissioning Advisory Board in June 2004 and was reviewed in December 2005.

In summary, the policy supports the funding of temporary dialysis where reciprocal funding arrangements are in place:

- The European economic area;
- Switzerland; and
- Australia.

Jonathan Morgan: When will you launch the renal national service framework and what level of resources will be allocated to supporting it? (WAQ45931)

Brian Gibbons: The draft national service framework for renal services will be published for consultation very shortly. It will be accompanied by a policy statement that sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's aims for tackling renal disease in Wales. The resource implications of implementing the policy aims and the NSF standards over time are being assessed in high-level terms in order to inform more detailed commissioning considerations by local health boards and Health Commission Wales when they take implementation forward.

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the Minister and his department? (WAQ45947)

Brian Gibbons: I refer you to the answer provided by the First Minister to WAQ45955.

Lisa Francis: What advice is the Government giving to consumers about the risk of Legionnaire's disease? (WAQ45948)

Brian Gibbons: The issue of enforcement in relation to Legionella is a function of the premises where the organism is suspected to be present at levels which would constitute a danger to health.

If the premises are subject to inspection by the Health and Safety Executive, the matter is not devolved and enforcement or follow-up action is for that organisation.

If the premises are subject to local authority inspection, then enforcement lies with the relevant local authority making use of HSE guidance and codes of practice under the remit of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act. Local authority inspections under such legislation are not devolved.

The provision of advice to consumers is not a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.

Lisa Francis: What percentages of people are registered with an NHS dentist in each local health board area in Wales? (WAQ45949)

Brian Gibbons: Registration figures for adults and children in Wales by LHB at September 2005 are shown in the table below. These statistics have yet to take into account the great success personal dental services pilot schemes have had in Wales with the creation of an additional 153,764 NHS dental places over the last few months.

Patients registered with a dentist for NHS dental treatment by LHB area at 30 September 2005

LHB	Adults (per cent)	Children (per cent)	Total Population (per cent)
Anglesey	32.1	53.0	36.6
Blaenau Gwent	54.1	56.7	54.7
Bridgend	57.7	66.0	59.6
Caerphilly	55.0	65.4	57.5
Cardiff	48.9	67.1	52.9
Carmarthen	22.4	48.0	28.0
Ceredigion	25.0	38.2	27.4
Conwy	35.1	54.4	39.1
Denbighshire	60.8	73.6	63.5
Flintshire	28.2	46.3	32.2
Gwynedd	22.0	51.3	28.2

Merthyr Tydfil	47.1	35.1	44.3
Monmouthshire	42.8	71.9	49.2
Neath Port Talbot	53.2	62.3	55.2
Newport	52.4	63.0	55.0
Pembrokeshire	15.6	48.3	22.9
Powys	44.6	61.3	48.1
Rhondda Cynon Taf	56.9	56.7	56.9
Swansea	69.5	85.5	72.8
Torfaen	45.1	61.8	49.0
Vale of Glamorgan	36.6	49.6	39.7
Wrexham	35.7	50.7	39.0

Lisa Francis: Would the Minister reveal the number of cases of MRSA in each local health board area for each year since 1999? (WAQ45950)

Brian Gibbons: Data regarding MRSA are not collected at local health board level. Healthcare associated infections data are reported to the National Public Health Service at NHS trust level. The mandatory staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia-reporting scheme, which has been in place in Welsh acute hospitals since 2001, is co-ordinated by the National Public Health Service. This covers methicillin sensitive as well as methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MSSA and MRSA). The latest report, which is published, on an anonymised basis, is available on the NPHS website.

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites/documents/379/Anon%2018th%20S.aureus%20Report.pdf>

Data is shown up to 30 September 2005.

Number of MRSA bacteraemias in Wales, 2001 to 2005

	No. MRSA bacteraemias	Rate MRSA bacteraemias/1,000 bed days
Apr 01 – Mar 02	466	0.11
Apr 02 – Mar 03	486	0.12
Apr 03 – Mar 04	489	0.12
Apr 04 – Mar 05	440	0.11
Apr 05 – Sep 05	202	0.10

Individual trust results will be available as part of our open publication intentions, which we anticipate will begin publication from April this year.

Christine Chapman: What guidance does the Welsh Assembly Government give to local health boards concerning self-medication in hospitals? (WAQ45960)

Brian Gibbons: 'Self medication' is the term used to describe the situation where someone purchases a medicine in order to self treat. It should not be confused with 'self administration'. The standards for pharmaceutical services in provider units in Wales sets out the minimum standards for a comprehensive pharmaceutical service. These include the need to have a formal written policy for medication history. Such histories should include all medicines, including those purchased for self treatment.

Christine Chapman: Will the Minister make a statement on the role of self-medication in hospitals in Wales? (WAQ45961)

Brian Gibbons: Self medication within hospitals does not exist as such. Medicines are prescribed for the patient following full clinical assessment, and this assessment should include those previously purchased for self treatment.

Christine Chapman: Will the Minister list how many hospitals in Wales have self-medication systems in place? (WAQ45962)

Brian Gibbons: As far as I am aware no hospital has a policy of 'self medication'.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on the Welsh Assembly Government's record in providing free NHS dental services across Wales? (WAQ45974)

Brian Gibbons: Charges for NHS dental treatment were first introduced in 1951 and since then successive governments have considered that those who can afford to should make a contribution towards the cost of dental treatment subject to a maximum charge for a course of dental treatment. Currently NHS patients pay 80 per cent of the relevant item-of-service fee paid to the dentist up to a maximum per course of treatment, currently at £354 in Wales.

There are exemptions from charges for NHS dental treatment, these are dependent on factors such as age, health status and financial circumstances. The groups of people who are exempt from dental charges will continue to receive free NHS dental treatment, following the introduction of the new dental contract in April.

The Welsh Assembly Government has introduced free dental check-ups, not free treatment, for people aged under 25 and 60 and over, which is unique to Wales. However, this does not include free continuing care or free dental treatment plans.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement about the long-term future of NHS dental services? (WAQ45989)

Brian Gibbons: In April we are introducing a new dental contract. One of the main benefits will be local commissioning, which will give LHBs increasing influence about how NHS dental services for their area are developed to meet local needs. Last year I announced an additional £5 million to help the rollout of personal dental service schemes across Wales. PDS schemes are based on the proposed new dental contract and should provide the necessary flexibility in working practices dentists have been asking for.

The new contract will enable dentists to treat patients more as individuals, concentrating on preventative and quality treatment work and break the present treadmill where dentists are paid a wide range of different fees for each procedure they undertake. It will guarantee dentists an income based on their historic earnings (with appropriate uplifts) without them having to worry whether the work they are undertaking generates charge income.

To date 137 of these schemes have been approved. These schemes have secured NHS dental care for some 507,613 patients and will provide extra capacity for an additional 153,764 patients across Wales. Currently over 360 dentists in Wales have moved over to the new ways of working under PDS.

Jonathan Morgan: What budget has been allocated to fund 'Agenda for Change'? (WAQ45990)

Brian Gibbons: £60.07 million has been issued in the allocation letter, with a further £2.5 million being held centrally.

William Graham: Will the Minister make a statement on the supply of oxygen for use by patients in their homes? (WAQ45991)

Brian Gibbons: There have been well documented problems with the introduction of the new system for supplying oxygen to patients in their homes. We are working with the Department of Health and the private suppliers to ensure these problems are overcome as quickly as possible.

Karen Sinclair: Will the Minister make a statement on social services in north Wales? (WAQ45992)

Brian Gibbons: The legal responsibility for assessing needs and for planning and commissioning local social care services for older people, other adults and children in north Wales rests with individual local authorities. It is the Assembly Government's role to take action at a strategic level and I will publish for consultation in May, a policy directions paper for social services in Wales.

Our responsibilities for social services in north Wales and elsewhere in the country include providing the policy framework and related statutory guidance. The Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales undertakes the regulation and inspection of care settings and standards of care that can be expected. The Social Services Inspectorate for Wales also undertakes performance evaluation of social services and provides support for service development and for workforce training and development.

William Graham: Will the Minister make a statement on the measures he is taking to reduce the 'postcode lottery' with regard to medical treatment in Wales? (WAQ45993)

Brian Gibbons: There is no 'postcode lottery' in Wales. All our policies are designed to ensure equity of access and quality of service across the country.

Laura Anne Jones: What discussions has the Minister had with the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration about the relationship between health and housing? (WAQ45994)

Brian Gibbons: I have had discussions with the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration on a range of housing, health and social care issues.

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of healthcare services in the Vale of Clwyd? (WAQ45995)

Brian Gibbons: Denbighshire Local Health Board and Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust provide the local healthcare services in the Vale of Clwyd.

The LHB works with Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust to ensure that the population of Denbighshire, which includes the Vale of Clwyd, have access to in-patient, day-case and out-patient services that are in line with the targets set by Welsh Assembly Government. The LHB also works in partnership with Denbighshire County Council to plan services together and produce a health, social care and wellbeing strategy. This helps to prioritise the needs of the local population to target areas where attention is required.

There are approximately 58 GPs providing primary care access in 16 practices across the county of Denbighshire, of which there are 47 GPs in 13 practices in the Vale of Clwyd. Work is currently underway through the primary care estate strategy on how the fabric and the range of primary care service could be improved.

Secondary care hospital services are mainly provided at the Glan Clwyd site at Bodelwyddan, and HM Stanley at St Asaph, but Health Commission Wales commissions some specialist services from trusts outside the area.

More local services are provided by the Royal Alexandra, Prestatyn and Denbigh local community hospitals. These provide local community beds to support care close to home. The future use and needs for these services are being considered as part of a number of local and national reviews, including the primary care estate strategy, and the secondary care review. The Prestatyn hospital is currently out to consultation aimed at identifying the best way to deliver local needs.

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the role of ‘ward housekeepers’ in ensuring wards are clean and improving the patient experience in Wales? (WAQ45996)

Brian Gibbons: A range of staff, sometimes known as ward housekeepers, who focus on the patient experience and support nursing staff, are a valuable element in patient care and are to be welcomed. The title and role of these staff may vary between NHS trusts in Wales.

The responsibilities of these staff may include cleaning, privacy-related and dignity-related activities and providing non-nursing assistance and support to patients.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on NHS dentistry in Wales? (WAQ45997)

Brian Gibbons: I am aware of the difficulties being experienced in some parts of Wales in accessing NHS dental services. Steps have been taken to address that through the Welsh dental initiative, which gives financial incentives to dentists who are willing to provide NHS dental treatment in designated areas. In the last two years 12 new practices have opened, and 50 practices have expanded their NHS dental provision.

In April last year I announced an additional £5 million to help the rollout of personal dental service schemes across Wales. PDS schemes are based on the proposed new dental contract, which will be introduced this April and should provide the necessary flexibility in working practices which dentists have been asking for.

To date 137 of these schemes have been approved. These schemes have secured NHS dental care for some 507,613 patients and will provide extra capacity for an additional 153,764 patients across Wales. Currently over 360 dentists in Wales have moved over to the new ways of working under PDS.

Peter Black: Will the Minister make a statement on the implementation of ‘Agenda for Change’? (WAQ45998)

Brian Gibbons: 90 per cent of job matching is now complete with most organisations likely to complete this by the end of February, although some organisations will not complete this until April or May.

Assimilation to ‘Agenda for Change’ pay is at 40 per cent of staff, although this is very variable, ranging from almost 90 per cent, to some organisations having just started due to payroll technical and capacity problems and the parallel introduction of the electronic staff record computerised payroll system.

Concerns have been expressed by organisations about the possible higher than expected cost of ‘Agenda for Change’ compared with the anticipated levels which were funded. Work is being undertaken to obtain more accurate costs as assimilation progresses.

Carl Sargeant: What is the Minister doing to ensure that people with serious mental illnesses who are sent to prison are able to continue their treatment? (WAQ45999)

Brian Gibbons: Both the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Health have provided funding, commencing 2001, for secondary care mental health in-reach services to prisoner populations. There is some comparability between these services and those provided by community mental health teams to the wider population, and a particular emphasis on early identification and assessment of those displaying symptoms of mental illness, as well as continuity of care for those with a known history. The care programme approach is now being implemented within prison environments.

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister make a statement on home care in Wales? (WAQ46001)

Brian Gibbons: The legal responsibility for assessing needs and for planning and commissioning local home care services rests with individual local authorities in Wales. The Assembly Government's role is at a strategic level and I will publish for consultation in May, a policy directions paper for social services in Wales. As you know, I made a statement in Plenary on 15 February 2006 on home care in Wales that announced a new package of measures to support older and disabled people to maintain their independence in their own homes.

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister make a statement on mental health services in Wales? (WAQ46002)

Brian Gibbons: Mental health, together with cancer and cardiac services, is a high priority for the Assembly Government. We are committed to improving both in-patient and community mental health services and improving the experience of all service users, including people from black and minority ethnic groups, older people, working age adults, children and young people.

I recently announced £5 million in recurrent funding for mental health services in Wales, to help implement the revised national service framework and, together with £75 million capital investment, this demonstrates the Assembly's commitment to driving up standards in our mental health services.

Michael German: What plans does the Minister have for improving cancer treatment? (WAQ46003)

Brian Gibbons: Tackling cancer remains one of the Welsh Assembly Government's top priorities for the NHS in Wales. Our strategy for improving access to and the quality of diagnosis and treatments is via the progressive implementation of our national cancer standards and National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence cancer service guidance. Driving the delivery of these standards is seen by the Welsh Assembly Government as the key to ensuring the best possible outcomes for patients with cancer. The three cancer networks are currently developing action plans for implementing the standards by March 2009.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the average weekly financial support for a nursing care placement in Wales, and what assessment has he made of how this compares with England and Scotland? (WAQ46004)

Brian Gibbons: NHS funded nursing care is paid to care homes for each resident assessed as eligible (requiring registered nursing care) at a current rate of £107.63 per week. This will rise to £111.00 in April 2006.

Residents in care homes with nursing may also seek local authority financial support towards their personal care and accommodation costs, the level of which will depend on a financial assessment.

In England the registered nursing care contribution is currently paid at three bands £40, £80 and £129, according to assessed nursing needs. In Scotland, residents currently receive £65 per week towards their nursing care costs.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on his plans to develop intermediate care? (WAQ46005)

Brian Gibbons: Intermediate care is being taken forward through the NSF for older people, which is due to be launched in March 2006. This identifies the standard for future development:

Intermediate care is established as a mainstream, integrated system of health and social care, which:

- enables older people to maintain their health, independence and home life;
- promptly identifies and responds to older people's health and social care needs, helping to avoid crisis management and unnecessary hospital or care home admission;
- enables timely discharge or transfer from acute hospital settings to more appropriate care settings which promote effective rehabilitation and a return to independence.

Local commissioning strategies required, under the service and financial framework, by the end of March 2007, are to include a joint strategic plan for the delivery and evaluation of Intermediate Care Services.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the nursing care beds for each year since 1999? (WAQ46006)

Brian Gibbons: No figures for nursing care beds are held prior to December 2003. In December 2003 there were 315 care homes with 12,227 beds. In March 2004 there were 317 care homes with 12,286 beds. In March 2005 there were 313 care homes with 12,302 beds. In January 2006 there were 314 care homes with 12,407 beds.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the elderly mentally ill care beds for each year since 1999? (WAQ46007)

Brian Gibbons: There is no registration category for solely EMI care beds. Care homes are registered to provide care for older people or younger adults, with individual homes then registered to provide care for service users with specific needs. There is no published information on the breakdown of the number of places for each service user type.

Changes in the legal definition of care homes by the Care Standards Act 2000, service developments such as de-registrations brought about by supported housing developments and changes in the way small homes are counted make information of this nature unreliable.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on guidance regarding 'top-ups' for nursing care fees, and any plans he may have to review them? (WAQ46008)

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the Office of Fair Trading report on 'top-ups' for nursing care fees? (WAQ46009)

Brian Gibbons: Under the National Assistance Act 1948 (Choice of Accommodation) Directions 1993 local authorities can, at a resident's request, place them in more expensive suitable accommodation than the authority would usually pay for. This is on the understanding that a third party is able to make up the difference (to 'top up') and that this top-up does not contribute towards the costs of an individual's assessed care needs. In undertaking such placements authorities become responsible for commissioning

the full costs, including any top-up, with the third party making payment to the authority or directly to the home. Updated guidance was issued to authorities, local health boards and NHS trusts in September 2004.

The Office for Fair Trading report last year on its market study of care homes recommended that Government amend legislation and guidance so that authorities became responsible for commissioning the full costs of accommodation, including any top up, with the third party reimbursing the authority for the top up fee. To effect this, a change in primary legislation would be required. However, the Department of Health considered that authorities and individuals should continue to have a choice as to how top ups are paid and so do not consider it appropriate to amend primary legislation. Nevertheless, as part of our response to the OFT's study we will be writing to local authorities to remind them of their overall responsibilities under the current directions.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of nurses leaving the NHS for each year since 1999? (WAQ46010)

Brian Gibbons: The Welsh Assembly Government collects data on nurses leaving trusts, but does not differentiate between those who leave one trust to join another, and those who leave the NHS altogether. The number of nurses and midwives who left NHS Wales trusts was as follows:

2000	Data not available
2001	1,347
2002	914
2003	849
2004	687

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of nurse training places for each year since 1999, and what assessments he has made for future provision? (WAQ46011)

Brian Gibbons: The number of nurse training places in Wales commissioned for the years between 1999-2000 to 2005-06 is as follows:

1999-2000	2,664
2000-01	2,897
2001-02	3,261
2002-03	3,499
2003-04	3,782
2004-05	3,770
2005-06	3,672

The Assembly commissions nurse training places in order to meet the future staffing needs of the NHS in Wales, as identified in NHS trust and local health board workforce plans. This will continue to be the basis on which commissioning numbers are determined, while the Assembly continues to remain on target to meet its commitment of increasing the number of nurses in the service by 6,000 by 2010.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of kidney transplants carried out in Wales every year, and whether there are any proposals to increase this provision? (WAQ46012)

Brian Gibbons: The national service framework for renal services has been developed to improve renal services for NHS Wales patients. The renal unit at the University Hospital of Wales Cardiff already undertakes over 60 kidney transplants per annum and in the last year has piloted simultaneous pancreatic and kidney transplantation.

The Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust has recently presented a business case for the development of a purpose designed renal transplant unit to Health Commission Wales for consideration.

David Lloyd: How is the Minister promoting organ donation in Wales? (WAQ46013)

Brian Gibbons: We recognise the need to encourage as many people as possible to consider donating organs after their death so more patients can benefit from transplants.

The Welsh Assembly Government works closely with NHS blood and transplant and other health administrations to develop proposals to increase the number of organs available and improve transplant services.

We have also worked with NHSBT to ensure bilingual promotional materials are available in Wales. In addition we have sponsored radio advertisements and organ donation stands at Fresher's Fayres throughout Wales.

I have met with NHSBT and Welsh Kidney Patients Association and discussed the importance of organ donation.

In relation to kidney donation, the draft renal services national service framework identifies action to sustain and increase further the number of kidney transplants through an effective programme of raising both clinical and public awareness and organ donor registration.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on dialysis provision throughout Wales, and on any planned increases in provision? (WAQ46014)

Brian Gibbons: The provision of renal dialysis services is a matter for Health Commission Wales. The Assembly Government is due shortly to issue for public consultation, a draft policy statement on tackling renal disease in Wales and a national service framework that sets standards of care for those with or at risk from renal disease. The planning, organisation and delivery of renal services, including dialysis, will need to reflect the requirements of our policy aims and the standards of care.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the role of CSIW in monitoring NHS contribution to nursing care? (WAQ46015)

Brian Gibbons: CSIW is responsible for the regulation of adult care homes, including those that provide nursing care, in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000, associated regulations and national minimum standards.

The local health boards purchase nursing care and monitor the quality of that care in particular through regular assessment of the care users.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail the number of care hours provided within domiciliary care for each year since 1999? (WAQ46016)

Brian Gibbons: The number of care hours provided in each year since 1999 is shown in the following table.

Year ending 31 March	Home care services provided by local authorities (millions of hours)
1999	12.27
2000	11.63

2001	12.45
2002	12.64
2003	11.87
2004	12.72
2005	12.47

Notes

1. Homecare services includes both traditional home help services and other services designed to assist the client to function as independently as possible and/or continue to live in their own home. Overnight services/night-sitting services provided to people at home are included.

2. Data are reported on the AS3 return from local authorities.

3. Includes services provided directly by local authorities or purchased by local authorities from the independent sector. Services provided privately by service users are not included.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail the projected demand on nursing care beds? (WAQ46017)

Brian Gibbons: The Wales care strategy group, which reported in 2003, was asked to examine the current and future shape of the care sector. The report focused on older people, who are the prime users of nursing care beds. The group commissioned projections of the future demand for care services from the personal social services research unit at the London School of Economics.

On the basis of assumptions that there were no major changes in dependency levels and service provision, the report projected the demand for nursing beds for older people to increase from 8,307 in 2001 to 9,106 in 2010 and 10,346 in 2020.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the use of Exon Skipping as a potential therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy? (WAQ46023)

Brian Gibbons: A research project at Imperial College London is exploring the potential of this technique to correct the genetic defect and generate functional dystrophin protein. Having demonstrated proof-of-principle in human cell culture and animal model studies, planned clinical trials are being moved forward and should now complete in early 2008.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister state whether all women diagnosed with breast cancer are tested for HER2? (WAQ46024)

Brian Gibbons: The recently published all-Wales medicines strategy unit guidance on planning for and implementing trastuzumab (Herceptin) should it be licensed and positively approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, advises that all women newly diagnosed with breast cancer should be tested for HER2. I therefore expect this advice to be implemented across Wales unless it is clinically inappropriate.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: What guidance is issued to LHBs regarding the application process for Herceptin, and what is the average length of time taken to process applications across Wales? (WAQ46025)

Brian Gibbons: The process for applying for funding for off-licence and high-cost drugs varies across Wales. With the introduction of set criteria for considering applications for trastuzumab (Herceptin), this process should be efficient and optimal treatment for patients should not be compromised.

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on recent changes to the supply of oxygen to patient's homes? (WAQ46026)

Brian Gibbons: There have been well documented problems with the introduction of the new system for supplying oxygen to patients in their homes. We are working with the Department of Health and the private suppliers to ensure these problems are overcome as quickly as possible.

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on the safeguards that are in place to guarantee the supply of oxygen to patients' homes? (WAQ46027)

Brian Gibbons: There have been well documented problems with the introduction of the new system for supplying oxygen to patients in their homes. We are working with the Department of Health and the private suppliers to ensure these problems are overcome as quickly as possible.

In the meantime LHBs are engaging with the private suppliers and community pharmacies to ensure patients' safety.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister give an annual breakdown of the overall running costs of the 22 LHBs in Wales dating back to their creation, and a breakdown of the annual running costs for the previous five health authorities dating back to their creation? (WAQ46039)

Brian Gibbons: Due to the level of detail needed, it is not possible to collate the above information within the designated timescales. I will therefore write to you separately on this matter within the next two weeks.

Jonathan Morgan: What is the average deficit faced by local health boards in Wales, what assessment has the Minister made of comparative figures for English primary care trusts, and will he list those comparisons? (WAQ46040)

Brian Gibbons: Local health boards have a statutory duty to ensure that net operating costs do not exceed the resources allocated to the board by the Assembly each and every year. Local health boards that are forecasting overspends against resource limits must prepare a strategic change and efficiency plan and the plan must be approved by the Assembly.

In 2005-06, out of the 22 LHBs, 13 are not reporting any underspends or overspends, seven are forecasting surpluses totalling £8.3 million, and the remaining two are forecasting overspends of £4.7 million. The average financial position in Wales would therefore be a surplus of £0.164 million.

While the Assembly receives regular monthly financial reports and forecasts from the LHBs in Wales, the Assembly does not receive similar information on the financial performance of primary care trusts in England. Effective comparisons would also be difficult to make because of the differences in the structures and services that are provided by LHBs and primary care trusts.

Jonathan Morgan: What is the average deficit faced by NHS trusts in Wales, what assessment has the Minister made of comparative figures for England, and will he list those comparisons? (WAQ46041)

Brian Gibbons: As at the end of December 2005, nine of the 14 trusts were forecasting deficits totalling £25.3 million. The average deficit for the 14 trusts would therefore be £1.81 million.

While the Assembly receives regular monthly financial reports and forecasts from the trusts in Wales, no such information is obtained for English trusts and no comparisons are therefore possible.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on the overall financial performance of NHS trusts in Wales? (WAQ46042)

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on the overall financial performance of local health boards? (WAQ46043)

Brian Gibbons: I made an oral statement on NHS finances in the Plenary meeting on 15 February 2006. The following is based on that statement:

- The NHS has faced a significant financial challenge in 2005-06. It has been asked to maintain important reductions in patient waiting times, implement the new contracts for pay modernisation while also delivering efficiency savings.
- The current financial forecasts across Wales is a net deficit at the year end of approximately £20 million, i.e. 0.5 per cent of the NHS budget allocation.
- The NHS is facing another challenging year in 2006-07 and there is no doubt that some organisations need to improve their financial management arrangements even further to ensure that they meet their statutory responsibilities. This will continue to be the subject of even more stringent monitoring and performance arrangements during the challenges that lay ahead.
- As set out in the 'Designed for Life' strategy the financial pressures being faced require more fundamental changes to the services in Wales. The implementation of the 'Designed for Life' strategy and the current reconfiguration plans being developed for each region are therefore fundamental in addressing the clinical and financial problems across Wales. The recovery plans that are currently being developed by a number of NHS bodies need to be more robust and they need to fully reflect these modernisation developments.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on the overall financial balances of dental services in Wales and any deficit or surplus there may be? (WAQ46044)

Brian Gibbons: The general dental service is currently funded from the centrally held, demand-led family health services budget which is non-discretionary. Historically, when a dentist has left the NHS or reduced his or her NHS commitment, the LHB had no power to replace the lost capacity and the money reverted back to the central pot.

In line with the new dental contract in April, new arrangements are being introduced for local commissioning. Funding for the provision of dental services will be devolved to LHBs, allowing them to directly manage how NHS dental services for their area are developed to meet local needs. With local budgets LHBs retain the funding for NHS dentistry when the dentist leaves the area enabling LHBs to commission alternative local dental services.

The total net spend on dentistry for 2004-05 was £81 million, compared with £76 million in 2003-04.

Jonathan Morgan: How much money has been spent through strategic change and efficiency plans on helping the NHS out of budget deficits? (WAQ46045)

Brian Gibbons: Strategic change and efficiency plans were introduced in 2002. The repayable assistance, provided to both LHBs and trusts between 2002 and March 2005, is £67.694 million. This does not include any assistance that may be needed to cover overspends and deficits in 2005-06.

Jonathan Morgan: What assessment has the Minister made of the final sentence in paragraph 5 of the executive summary of the auditor general's report on 'The Finances of NHS Wales 2005', with specific

reference to the approximate £190 million of net debtor balances, and will he make a statement? (WAQ46046)

Brian Gibbons: The £190 million related to a presentational issue in the way that debtors were treated in 2003-04 accounts for LHBs.

2003-04 was the first year that the Government's resource accounting applied to LHBs. Under resource accounting, LHBs are not allowed to set up debtors with the Assembly for parliamentary funding (i.e. no debtors and creditors can be set up for any Assembly allocations made to LHBs).

This was a complete change in the way health authorities had previously accounted for these transactions and this technical accounting issue was not picked up until late in the preparation of the 2003-04 accounts process.

Adjustments had to be made to the LHB accounts in 2004-05 to present them in the correct resource accounting format. This had no impact on the financial performance of LHBs in 2004-05 or in future years and the £190 million quoted in the auditor general's report relates to the level of debtors that had to be presented differently.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister give an annual breakdown of the accounts of every LHB in Wales dating back to their creation? (WAQ46047)

Brian Gibbons: LHBs were created from the 1 April 2003. Summarised accounts of both LHBs and trusts are published annually and they are laid before the Assembly. These accounts provide summarised details for all 22 LHBs.

From the 1 April 2004 the Auditor General for Wales is responsible for laying the accounts of all individual LHB accounts before the Assembly. The 22 sets of individual accounts for 2004-05 have therefore been laid before the Assembly.

The annual accounts of LHBs provide approximately 50 pages of analysis in accordance with the agreed accounts directions. It is not possible to provide this level of breakdown for every LHB in response to this question, however both the individual accounts and the summarised accounts are available in the Assembly's Library.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister give an annual breakdown of the accounts of every NHS trust in Wales dating back to when records were first collected? (WAQ46048)

Brian Gibbons: There have been significant changes to the structures of NHS trusts since the first trust was created in 1992 to 1993. Summarised accounts of both LHBs and trusts are published annually and they are laid before the Assembly.

From the 1 April 2004 the Auditor General for Wales is responsible for laying all individual NHS trust accounts before the Assembly. The 14 sets of individual accounts for 2004-05 have been laid. Both the individual and summarised accounts are available within the Assembly's Library.

The annual accounts of NHS trusts provide approximately 50 pages of analysis in accordance with the agreed accounts directions. It is not possible to provide this level of breakdown for every NHS trust in response to this question.

Jonathan Morgan: What is the current cumulative deficit of all NHS bodies across Wales? (WAQ46049)

Brian Gibbons: The current cumulative 'deficits' (overspends in the case of LHBs) are reflected in the level of repayable assistance that has been provided under strategic and efficiency plans and this totals £67.694 million since 2002.

In addition to the above, there are four NHS trusts that have historical debts totalling £17.453 million, which are reflected in their accounts. It was agreed in 2002 by the former Minister for Health and Social Services that these debts would be cancelled when those NHS trusts had restored their organisations to financial balance. This has not been achieved to date.

Jonathan Morgan: What percentage of undisputed invoices were paid on time within the stated target by all NHS bodies for the most recent available period, and will the Minister give an annual breakdown for this figure over the last five financial years? (WAQ46050)

Brian Gibbons: The information provided by each trust in its published accounts and monthly monitoring returns does not provide the level of detail to identify the level of disputed and undisputed invoices.

The Assembly does not have the information on which to respond to this question. This information would need to be collected from individual trusts and the collection of this information would be too costly and can not be provided in line with Members' guidance on Assembly Questions.

Alun Cairns: Would the Minister make a statement on the treatments available for patients with chronic, non-cancer, primary lymphoedema and liopedema? (WAQ46051)

Alun Cairns: What consideration has the Minister given to extending treatment services to patients with chronic, non-cancer, primary lymphoedema and liopedema? (WAQ46052)

Alun Cairns: What discussions has the Minister had with the local health boards concerning the treatment of patients with chronic, non-cancer, primary lymphoedema and liopedema? (WAQ46053)

Brian Gibbons: I am aware of the issues surrounding the provision of both lymphoedema and lipoedema services. While I understand that there are no separate services for lipoedema, treatment for this condition will usually form part of the service provision for lymphoedema where it exists and by dermatology or general medical services. The all-Wales report on lymphoedema services by the cancer services co-ordinating group, published in October 2003, was produced to support local health boards, NHS trusts and the three cancer networks in the commissioning and delivery of these services and not specifically for cancer.

As part of its 2005-06 work programme, the Assembly Government has asked CSCG to seek progress updates against its report's recommendations from the cancer networks.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide the reasons why the process to appoint a new chief executive for Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust was unsuccessful last year? (WAQ46060)

Brian Gibbons: Chief executive appointments are a matter for the trust board. The Welsh Assembly Government was advised by the Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust that, following interview, no suitable candidate was found.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister advise whether he accepts draft 2 of the clinical service plan for the acute and community division of Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust? (WAQ46061)

Brian Gibbons: I am not party to this plan, but understand from inquiries that it is a document prepared for internal discussion within Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust. The way forward for acute services in Pembrokeshire, and indeed across Wales, is through the acute services reconfiguration process that we have agreed for the implementation of 'Designed for Life'. As such, I expect any clinical service plans to be aligned to and progressed through that process.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on the costs to Pembrokeshire and Derwen NHS Trust of providing mental health care to patients from other trust areas? (WAQ46062)

Brian Gibbons: This information is not held by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail the number of nurse students in Wales who drop out before completing their course, and will he detail the cost implications? (WAQ46065)

Brian Gibbons: It costs, on average, £33,000 to train a nurse over the three-year degree course. At present, between 9 and 10 per cent of nurse students drop out before completing their studies. There are currently approximately 3,500 nurses in training across Wales and we could therefore expect approximately 350 to drop out before the end of the three-year course.

The cost implications of this are that any funding that these students have received to date is non-recoverable. (Since students tend to drop out in the earlier years of the course, the investment to that point would be between £10,000 to £15,000 per student.)

The Welsh Assembly Government and higher education institutions are working together to minimise the number of nurse students who drop out of training in this way.

Helen Mary Jones: What discussions has the Minister had about the establishment and development of sexual assault referral centres in Wales? (WAQ46069) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration.*

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart): This function has not been devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government. I have had no discussions with the Home Office.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail the amount of money provided to the NHS for pensions for each year since 1999? (WAQ46070)

Brian Gibbons: The money provided to the NHS in Wales for pensions forms part of the local health boards and Health Commission Wales discretionary allocation. The Department of Health and Social Services at the Assembly do not hold separately identifiable information on a year-by-year basis.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail the amount of money provided to the NHS for drugs for each year since 1999? (WAQ46071)

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail the total spend on drugs within the NHS for each year since 1999? (WAQ46074)

Brian Gibbons: Net revenue allocations for primary care drugs and reported spend against those allocations are shown below.

Financial Year	Net primary care drugs allocation £ million	Reported spend against allocation £ million
1999-2000	327.6	324.8
2000-01	357.5	359.6
2001-02	390.1	380.0
2002-03	425.6	424.2
2003-04	457.6	474.0
2004-05	512.1	480.0
2005-06	535.6	N/A
2006-07	545.6	N/A

Secondary care drugs are traditionally funded from the discretionary revenue allocation for hospital and community health services. As such, secondary care drugs revenue allocations are not separately identifiable. Reported spend is shown below.

Financial Year	Reported spend on secondary care drugs £ million
1999-2000	85.1
2000-01	91.3
2001-02	95.7
2002-03	110.0
2003-04	127.3
2004-05	141.8

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail with regard to each LHB area the number of people waiting more than 36 weeks for a) radiology, b) occupational therapy, c) cardio-physiology, d) physiotherapy, e) adult hearing aids, f) podiatry, g) art therapies, h) speech and language therapy and i) dietetics? (WAQ46072)

Brian Gibbons: This information is not held centrally on a local health board split, only on a trust by trust split.

Helen Mary Jones: What measures will the Minister introduce in the next 12 months to meet the 2006-07, and 2009 waiting-time targets for therapy? (WAQ46073)

Brian Gibbons: Wales is the first UK country to publish diagnostic and therapy waiting times. The target that we have set is that no-one should wait over 36 weeks for diagnostic or therapy services by March 2007. The waiting-times target, for diagnostic and therapy services, as for other categories, will be 26 weeks by 31 December 2009. The local delivery plans have been submitted, which include information on how the 2007 and those leading up to 2009 will be achieved.

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister detail the total spend on pensions within the NHS for each year since 1999? (WAQ46075)

Brian Gibbons: The total NHS expenditure on pensions in Wales is not held centrally in the Health and Social Care Department at the Assembly. The NHS Pensions Agency in England and the local authority pension scheme are responsible for the payments to NHS pensioners in Wales.

The NHS pension scheme is a contributory scheme, with both the employer and employee making contributions. The detailed information in relation to these contributions is held by the individual NHS trusts in Wales. The total employer contribution for 2004-05 was £204 million.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

Catherine Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on the Welsh Assembly Government's contribution to taking forward the economic regeneration of Llanelli? (WAQ45841) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Economic Development and Transport.*

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): 'Wales: A Vibrant Economy' sets our vision for economic regeneration throughout Wales. Our priorities are to provide the right climate and appropriate support to increase employment still further and to raise the quality of jobs.

I launched the Llanelli waterside masterplan in September. This ambitious regeneration initiative will turn 100 acres located to the south of Llanelli town centre into a mix of commercial, leisure, retail and residential uses.

In addition, £2.4 million Objective 1 funding is supporting the regeneration of Llanelli town centre—'Building a Sustainable Llanelli—People, Business, Environment'. It will include grant assistance to local businesses, to provide a co-ordinated approach of actions.

Furthermore, £800,000 of Objective 1 funding will also help community groups develop and implement plans for economic, social and environmental regeneration of the area.

Catherine Thomas: What action has been taken to support the regeneration of communities within Llanelli? (WAQ45844)

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart): We have provided £1,380,531 in grants to the local authority through the physical regeneration fund.

I refer you also to my answer to WAQ45842.

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the Welsh Assembly Government's plans to activate the powers under the Housing Act 2004 to take over the management of empty properties? (WAQ45893)

Ann Jones: When will the Welsh Assembly Government activate the powers under the 2004 Housing Act to take over the management of empty properties? (WAQ45894)

Edwina Hart: We intend introducing the bulk of the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 covering licensing of houses in multiple occupation and the housing, health and safety rating system in the summer. The remaining provisions, including legislation covering empty dwelling management Orders, are likely to be introduced in the autumn.

Ann Jones: What is the average time taken to let local authority housing in each local authority area in Wales? (WAQ45895)

Edwina Hart: The information that we have available for 2003-04 on the average number of weeks taken to let local authority housing in each local authority in Wales is shown in the following table.

Average time taken to let vacant HRA dwellings, by unitary authority, 2003-04 (a)

	Vacant dwellings available for letting
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	Number	Number of weeks vacant	Average number of weeks vacant (b)
Isle of Anglesey	0	0	0
Gwynedd	3	0	0
Conwy	184	1,555	8
Denbighshire	0	0	0
Flintshire	..	..	..
Wrexham	69	2,889	42
Powys	475	1,716	4
Ceredigion	94	1,008	11
Pembrokeshire	..	..	..
Carmarthenshire	..	..	..
Swansea	1981	31,721	16
Neath Port Talbot	2	424	212
Bridgend (d)	250	5,775	23
The Vale of Glamorgan	452	3,500	8
Cardiff	..	..	..
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	189	11,325	60
Merthyr Tydfil	322	..	..
Caerphilly	1,300	7,027	5
Blaenau Gwent	45	..	..
Torfaen	0	0	0
Monmouthshire	324	1,313	4
Newport	..	..	..
Wales	5,690	68,253	12

- (a) Data shown are as reported by individual unitary authorities on the annual WHO4 return. Estimates have not been made for missing data.
- (b) Calculated from 'Number' and 'Number of weeks vacant'.
- (c) Bridgend retained responsibility for local authority housing up to 12 September 2003: after that date the stock was transferred to the RSL 'Valleys to Coast'.
- '..' = data not available.

Ann Jones: What is the average time taken to let registered social landlord housing in each local authority area in Wales? (WAQ45896)

Edwina Hart: The information is not available at a local authority level.

Ann Jones: What is the percentage of vacant council stock not let inside the average time in each local authority area? (WAQ45897)

Edwina Hart: Information requested is not collected centrally at this level of detail. Information on vacant council stock available for letting can be accessed via the statistical release, 'Local Authority management and Performance 2003-04'.

<http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwalesheadline/content/housing/2005/hdw200503152-e.htm>

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on performance indicators for council house repairs in Wales? (WAQ45898)

Edwina Hart: Performance indicators for council house repairs in Wales are contained within the 2004-05 National Assembly for Wales performance indicators on the local government data unit's website:

http://www.lgdu-wales.gov.uk/Documents/Project/PIs/ADS06000_Spreadsheet_for_publishing200405_eng.xls

The relevant indicators relating to council house repairs are 4.10 (a and b) and 4.11.

William Graham: What progress has the Minister made over the last year in encouraging more voluntary action in Wales? (WAQ45903)

Edwina Hart: Volunteering remains at the forefront of Assembly policy. We are currently evaluating the success of our UK Year of the Volunteer programme to assist in promoting volunteering in 2006 and beyond. We are working also with partner agencies to attract more young volunteers, as recommended by the Russell commission.

William Graham: What proposals does the Minister have to better improve the public perception of voluntary work in Wales? (WAQ45904)

Edwina Hart: The Assembly Government is working with the voluntary sector to develop a new all-Wales volunteering promotion campaign. This will follow up the '2005 Year of the Volunteer' initiative.

We are also working to implement the recommendations of the Russell commission.

Irene James: Will the Minister make a statement about the future of fire services in the Caerphilly CBC area? (WAQ45910)

Edwina Hart: Operational issues in relation to the provision of fire and rescue services within the Caerphilly CBC area are matters for South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority as the organisation with the statutory responsibility for the provision of the fire and rescue service in south Wales.

Nick Bourne: What study has the Minister undertaken into the implications for Welsh post offices of the Government's plan to phase out the post office card account? (WAQ45927)

Edwina Hart: Neither the post office card account nor post office services are devolved matters.

I have written to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on this issue, but have not undertaken a specific study of this matter.

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the Minister and her department? (WAQ45934)

Edwina Hart: I refer you to the answer provided by the First Minister to WAQ45955.

Lisa Francis: What is the latest estimate of the number of people in Wales who live in overcrowded conditions? (WAQ45935)

Edwina Hart: Figures on the number of people living in overcrowded conditions available are not available.

John Marek: Will the Minister respond to the recommendations in the audit report into the community facilities and activities programme grant to the KICK project in Caerphilly? (WAQ45966)

Edwina Hart: The report of the internal audit service into their review of KICK's record keeping, financial control systems and appropriate use of CFAP grant was made on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales. The report, covering the two visits to KICK, was sent to the Corporate Governance Committee and Wales Audit Office. It was sent to me for information.

KICK have implemented 12 recommendations, with three ongoing.

Ann Jones: What discussions has the Minister had with UK Government Ministers about policing in Wales? (WAQ45970)

Edwina Hart: I refer you to my reports to Plenary on 8 February 2006, 25 January 2006, 15 November 2005 and 28 September 2005, which are available on the intranet.

Eleanor Burnham: What discussions has the Minister had with the UK Government regarding the cost of police restructuring? (WAQ45972)

Edwina Hart: I refer you to my reports to Plenary on 8 February 2006, 25 January 2006, 15 November 2005 and 28 September 2005, which are available on the intranet.

Lisa Francis: What has the Minister done to urge the Department for Work and Pensions to carry out public consultations in respect of their decision to stop post office card accounts? (WAQ46018)

Lisa Francis: Has the Minister had any discussion with the DWP concerning the effects of their decision to stop the post office card account on the rural elderly population of Mid and West Wales? (WAQ46019)

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister list the organisations in Wales that she has had discussions with in respect of the DWP decision to stop Post Office Card Accounts? (WAQ46020)

Lisa Francis: Has the Minister had any discussions with the Department for Work and Pensions concerning public consultation in respect of their proposals to stop post office card accounts and, if so, can she outline what these were and will she release any correspondence emanating from these discussions? (WAQ46021)

Edwina Hart: Post offices and postal services are non-devolved matters. Responsibility for the post office card account lies with the Department for Work and Pensions.

I have written to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, calling on him to consider the impact that the lapse of the post office card account may have on the viability of post offices and on users of the card account.

Sandy Mewies: What action has the Welsh Assembly Government taken to improve community facilities in Delyn? (WAQ46037)

Edwina Hart: The Welsh Assembly Government has committed £1,103,730 to projects in the constituency of Delyn since 2002 under the community facilities and activities programme. Projects supported include: £252,913 to Refurbs Flintshire for furniture recycling and training services; £328,108 towards a small grant scheme administered by Flintshire Local Voluntary Council; £56,760 for the

RESULTS Key Fund for small voluntary groups. An award of £220,401 has been made to Flintshire Citizen's Advice Bureau to help provide a specialist advice service in the area.

Sandy Mewies: How much funding from the social justice and regeneration portfolio has been allocated to Delyn since 2003, and can the Minister provide a breakdown? (WAQ46038)

Edwina Hart: Since 2003 over £6.7 million of funding has been allocated to Delyn from my portfolio. £4.5 million relates to safer/stronger communities; £642,000 relates to housing; £1.5 million to regeneration; and £124,000 to Supporting Vulnerable People. A breakdown is attached. Delyn also benefits from general allocations of funds to Flintshire.

Allocations with social justice and regeneration portfolio specifically to Delyn since 2003:

Communities First	£3 million
Physical Regeneration Fund	£1.5 million
Communities Facilities and Activities Programme	£1.1 million
Safer Communities Fund	£368,000
Substance Misuse Action Plan Fund	£124,000
Home Energy Efficiency Scheme	£642,000
Total	£6.7 million

NB. These figures are based on allocation of funds specifically to Delyn.

Questions to the Business Minister

John Marek: Will the First Minister give a breakdown of the Welsh Assembly Government's total advertisement expenditure for the last year for which the figures are available, showing the amounts paid to the various commercial bodies? (WAQ45925)

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): In 2004-05 the cost of advertising procured by the central communication division was £760,520.

A full breakdown of the amounts paid to each supplier could only be supplied at a disproportionate cost.

Lisa Francis: What targets are in place to measure the performance of the Minister and her Department? (WAQ45951)

Jane Hutt: I refer you to the answer provided by the First Minister to WAQ45955.