

## Written Questions answered between 22 and 29 March 2007

[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 First Minister make a statement on how quickly he has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49222) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I am responding to the above written Assembly question on behalf of my Cabinet colleague.

Number of written Assembly questions tabled since January 2006	3,764
percentage of substantive answers to WAQs issued to Assembly Members within five working days	18 per cent
percentage of substantive answers to WAQs issued to Assembly Members within eight working days	95 per cent
percentage of holding reply answers to WAQs issued to Assembly Members	5 per cent
percentage of holding reply answers to WAQs issued to Assembly Members that are followed up by a substantive letter within 10 working days	73 per cent

**Val Lloyd:** Will the Minister make a statement on the impact of his policies on the constituency of Swansea East? (WAQ49437)

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** The impact of Assembly Government policies on Swansea East are illustrated by the answers given by my Cabinet colleagues, which set out the many policies and programmes that they are successfully driving forward.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the First Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in his department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49522)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister:** The Permanent Secretary has supplied the following answer:

A table has been placed in the Library. The table below lists visits undertaken by policy officials throughout Welsh Assembly Government departments during the period 1 March 2006 to 28 February 2007.

You will wish to note that the visit details do not cover visits to Northern Ireland or any other region of the UK, visits by private office officials who are accompanying Ministers or visits to Wales or the UK by officials who are based in overseas offices. Ministers' visits were detailed in response to written Assembly questions that you tabled on 29 January (WAQ49226, WAQ49219, WAQ49212, WQA49241, WAQ49236, WAQ49231, WAQ49221, WAQ49217 and WAQ49250)

1984 = 2	1990 = 3	1996 = 3
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**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for ministerial and officials' visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49523)

**The First Minister:** Ministers and officials have used both the Eurostar service and air transport to visit Brussels. In determining the most appropriate mode of transport a number of criteria are taken into account including Ministers' diaries, cost, convenience and environmental considerations.

**John Marek:** How many members of staff are paid through the Assembly Government budget to provide support to the Shadow Commission or to the Presiding Officer and what are their grades? (WAQ49923)

**The First Minister:** The Permanent Secretary has supplied the following answer:

There are currently two members of staff paid through a budget that I manage, to provide support to the Shadow Commission. One is a senior civil servant and the other a higher executive officer.

I am arranging for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Library.

### Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly he has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49211) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Nick Bourne:** How much was spent by the Minister's Department on Hospitality in 2006? (WAQ49213) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** Hospitality expenditure incurred during the 2006 calendar year is set out in the table below.

Department	£'000
Education Lifelong Learning & Skills	7
Enterprise Innovation & Networks	371
Environment Planning & Countryside	125
Health & Social Services	38
Local Government & Public Services	6
Culture	34
Social Justice & Regeneration	11
Health Inspectorates <sup>1</sup>	6
Corporate Departments <sup>2</sup>	196
<b>Total</b>	<b>795</b>

<sup>1</sup> Health Inspectorates include: Care Standards Inspectorate Wales, Social Services Inspectorate Wales; and Health Inspectorate Wales. These costs are recorded within with the Inspectorates MEG.

<sup>2</sup> Corporate Departments include: Finance; Human Resources; Strategy Communications & Equality; Legal Services; Corporate Information & Services; Office of the First Minister; and the Office of the Permanent Secretary.

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials' visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49536) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister:** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in his department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49537) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Owen John Thomas:** What steps is the Minister taking to encourage young people to participate in exercise? (WAQ49875)

**The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh):** I launched the ‘Climbing Higher: Next Steps’ document last year, which sets out a framework for investment in sport and physical activity. This includes a range of programmes aimed at generating more opportunities for young people such as our 5x60 programme aimed at providing extra curricular activities in secondary schools, the free swimming initiative, the provision of more quality coaches for young people and the north-west Wales outdoor partnership, which is targeting young people to engage in outdoor adventure activities through the medium of Welsh.

**Karen Sinclair:** Will the Minister make a statement on Assembly Government policies to promote football in Wales? (WAQ49876)

**Alun Pugh:** Our Sports Council for Wales is working alongside the Football Association of Wales Trust in delivering our policies. These centre around raising participation levels among boys and girls, improving skill levels, receiving quality coaching and ensuring there are opportunities available for all.

**Ann Jones:** What assessment has the Minister made of the effect of the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003 on the performance of live music Wales? (WAQ49879)

**Alun Pugh:** The licensing of entertainment is not devolved to the National Assembly for Wales and I have, therefore, made no formal assessment of the effect of the Licensing Act in Wales.

This issue is a matter for the UK Government’s Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Even though the licensing authorities in Wales are now the 22 unitary authorities, the Assembly has no responsibility in respect of licensing. By law, licensing authorities are required to take the guidance of the Licensing Act 2003 into consideration when drawing up their licensing policy statements. The DCMS licensing and alcohol department monitors the effects of the Act to ensure that the Act does all that has been promised.

The initial survey carried out in 2003-04 covered both England and Wales, but the Welsh Assembly Government agreed to fund an increase to the sample in Wales to ensure that DCMS had a good general picture of the impact of the Licensing Act across England and Wales.

MORI interviewed licensees (or those responsible for licensing arrangements) in 1,577 pubs and inns, restaurants and cafes, student unions, small clubs, members clubs and associations and church and community halls across England and Wales. This included a booster sample of 267 venues in Wales. The survey found that:

- almost half (47 per cent) of pubs, clubs, student unions and restaurants had put on live acts at least once in the past year
- a fifth (19 per cent) of the venues staged live music regularly—at least twice a month

- more than half (55 per cent) of venues put on music because customers demand it but that many potential venues have not thought about putting on live music despite the changes in the new licensing laws.

The survey was used to inform the work of the live music forum, which DCMS set up in January 2004. The forum worked with partners across the live music world to ensure that they were making the most of the opportunities offered by the Act and the range of ways to promote live music and foster grass-roots talent. The Welsh Music Foundation was represented on this group.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the future of the National Botanic Garden of Wales at Llanarthne? (WAQ49905)

**Alun Pugh:** The garden has gone through a number of changes including the appointment of a new chairman, a number of new trustees and a new director and new chief finance officer. They have a number of exciting developments under way for this coming tourist season, including the development of the new tropical greenhouse as designed by John Belle.

With the financial support of the Welsh Assembly Government the garden has made positive strides forward that bode well for the future.

**Laura Anne Jones:** What plans does the Minister have to establish a permanent home for a sporting hall of fame in Wales? (WAQ49930)

**Alun Pugh:** Even though Wales is a small nation, there has been no shortage of individuals who have achieved sporting success on the world stage. The Welsh Assembly Government has supported a number of exhibitions to celebrate their success, the most recent being the exhibition on John Charles. Through Amgueddfa Cymru—National Museum Wales, the Assembly Government provides a home for the Welsh sports hall of fame at St Fagans National History Museum. Although the Cymru'n Creu working group put forward ideas in May 2002 for a larger home for the collection, no-one has ever put forward a business case or plan to turn those ideas into reality. However, we would be interested to consider such a plan.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to promote community theatres in Wales? (WAQ49969)

**Alun Pugh:** Our arts outside Cardiff programme provides an additional £2 million investment every year into the performing arts outside Cardiff, in addition to the Welsh Assembly Government's support for the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff. This funding is allocated to regional performing arts centres, most of which include regional theatre companies and work with community theatres.

The funding table, which is attached below, details the awards made to the regional performing arts centres. The venues have used the funding to support the presentation of high-quality performing arts events, more effective audience development and marketing work, joint productions with other venues, including community theatres, and with touring companies, as well as to widen the scope and scale of work available for other venues. The regional performing arts centres support smaller venues in their areas, thus spreading the benefit. The funding is also used to facilitate greater levels of co-ordinated planning and creative collaboration between venues and theatre groups.

In October 2006, I announced an additional £250,000 revenue funding for English-language theatre, bringing the total funding for ELT to £750,000 from 2007-08. Proposals for the use of this money were outlined to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee in October 2006.

<b>Arts Outside Cardiff Funding, Regional Performing Arts Centres 2004-05</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	£20,500
Clwyd Theatr Cymru	£100,000
Cwmni Mega	£16,725
Diversions Dance Company Ltd	£35,317
Ensemble Cymru	£3,325
Mid Wales Opera	£3,325
Wales Theatre Company	£50,000
<b>2004-05 Total</b>	<b>£229,192</b>
<b>2005-06</b>	
Aberystwyth Arts Centre	£38,000
Blackwood Miners' Institute	£25,000
Carlson Dance Company	£40,000
Clwyd Theatr Cymru	£100,000
Creu Cymru—the Touring Agency for Wales	£9,775
Earthfall Dance Ltd	£21,260
Galeri Caernarfon Ltd	£90,642
Grand Theatre, Swansea	£60,000
Pavilion Theatre	£55,000
Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council	£70,000
Taliesin Arts Centre	£17,000
Taliesin Arts Centre	£63,640
The Riverfront	£35,000
Theatr Brycheiniog	£55,000
Theatr Hafren	£8,000
Theatr Mwldan	£55,000
Torch Theatre Company	£22,000
Venue Cymru	£10,000
<b>2005-06 Total</b>	<b>£775,317</b>
<b>2006-07</b>	
Aberystwyth Arts Centre	£125,879
Blackwood Miners' Institute	£50,000
Clwyd Theatr Cymru	£95,000
Creu Cymru—the Touring Agency for Wales	£17,755
Cwmni Mega	£35,000
Earthfall Dance Ltd.	£29,620
Galeri Caernarfon Ltd	£65,642
Galeri Caernarfon Ltd	£87,000
Grand Theatre, Swansea	£40,000
Grand Theatre, Swansea	£65,000
Mappa Mundi	£33,480
Pavilion Theatre	£124,822
Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council	£125,000
Theatr Spectacle Theatre	£88,486
Taliesin Arts Centre	£125,600
The Riverfront	£60,000
Theatr Brycheiniog	£120,000
Theatr Hafren	£49,852
Theatr Mwldan	£125,000
Torch Theatre Company	£99,520
Vale of Glamorgan festival	£24,000
Venue Cymru	£34,852

Volcano Theatre Company	£74,392
<b>2006-07 Total</b>	<b>£1,695,900</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,700,409</b>

The arts outside Cardiff funding programme also supports additional Night Out community touring events in Communities First areas. This funding helped to increase the number of events to 635 in 2006-7, of which 187 were in Community First areas.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister make a statement detailing the location and names of the 14 clubs and 18 new teams that have been developed for disabled football players since 2005? (WAQ49993)

**Alun Pugh:** Details of the latest disability football clubs set up since 2005 as a direct result of the partnership working between the Football Association of Wales Trust and Disability Sport Wales are as follows:

**Anglesey**

Llangefni Lions (Pan Disability 16+)

**Blaenau Gwent**

Abertillery (Pan disability U16 and 16+)

**Bridgend**

Bryntirion Athletic FC (Pan Disability 16+)

Bridgend Schools Inclusive (Pan Disability U16)

**Caerphilly**

Pont Dragons (Pan Disability U16)

**Cardiff**

Cardiff Coyotes (Pan Disability U16)

Cardiff Bluebirds VI (Visually Impaired club U16)

**Ceredigion**

Ceredigion Stars (Pan Disability all ages)

**Conwy**

Llandudno Multi-disabled (Pan Disability all ages)

**Denbighshire**

Rhyl (Pan Disability U16)

**Flintshire**

Connahs Quay Nomads (Pan Disability U16)

**Merthyr Tydfil**

Merthyr Dragons (Pan Disability U18)

**Monmouthshire**

Mardy Juniors (Abergavenny) (Pan disability U16)

**Neath/Port Talbot**

Afan Lido Dragons (Pan disability U16) [pre 2005]

**Newport**

Newport Dragons (Pan Disability all ages) [pre 2005]

Newport Dragons Wheelchair FC (all ages)

**Pembrokeshire**

Cleddau Warriors (Pan Disability all ages)

Preseli Warriors (Pan Disability all ages)

**Powys**

Llandrindod Wells JFC (Pan Disability U16)

**Swansea**

Swansea City Bravehearts (Pan Disability all ages) [pre 2005]

Swansea City VIP's (Visually Impaired U16)

**Vale of Glamorgan**

Vale Reds (Pan Disability U16)

Llantwit Major Deaf Football Club (16+)

**The following clubs are under development, or are due to start soon:**

**Carmarthenshire**

Carmarthen Town (Pan Disability U16)

Holding initial recruitment festival in April 2007.

**Conwy**

Mochdre JFC (Pan disability U16)

Sessions due to start April 2007.

**Denbighshire**

Rhyl VI FC – Visually Impaired Football Club

Sessions starting late March 2007.

**Neath/Port Talbot**

Welsh Wonders

New Pan disability under 16 club being formed as off shoot of the established Welsh Wonders pan disability multi sport club. Sessions have already started.

**Powys**

Ystradgynlais AFC/Ystradgynlais Multi sport club

The established Ystradgynlais multi sport club already participate in football specific festivals/tournaments. Work is under way to develop a separate football club in partnership with Ystradgynlais AFC to sustain this activity.

**Rhondda Cynon Taff**

Cambrian Village Trust

Extra curricular sessions under way at Ysgol Hen Felin in Ystrad with a view to opening up to other schools to form club, similar to Torfaen below.

**Torfaen**

St. Albans/Torfaen Schools



Joint sessions to start in March 2007 between all SEN schools in authority with view to forming club.

**Wrexham**

Brickfield FC (Pan disability Under 16)

Sessions due to start April 2007.

The majority of these clubs are pan disability for players under 16 years of age. In terms of the number of teams, we are informed by Disability Sport Wales and the FAW Trust that each club would have a minimum of 2 teams.

**Questions to the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly he has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49237) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Alun Cairns:** Will the Minister publish the estimated calculation, together with a breakdown, for the response of disproportionate cost provided in the answer to WAQ49151? (WAQ49400)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (Andrew Davies):** The cost of providing a full response to WAQ49151 was estimated to be at least £578.

**Alun Cairns:** Will the Minister list all inward investment projects that have received regional selective assistance, together with the numbers of jobs created, in every constituency in Wales since 2003? (WAQ49401)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Andrew Davies:** The attached document lists, by constituency, inward investment projects that have received offers of regional selective assistance from 1 January 2003 to March 2007. Inward investment is defined as foreign direct investment and investment from elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Jobs figures are forecast at the time of the offer; this is not a comprehensive list as some offers are not included because they are not yet in the public domain.

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials' visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49530) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in his department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49531) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Nick Bourne:** What proportion of the passengers using the proposed RAF Valley to Cardiff air link is estimated to come from the private sector rather than the public sector? (WAQ49846)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Andrew Davies:** Estimated passenger figures have not distinguished between private and public sectors.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on plans to reduce train services between south Wales and London to accommodate the Cheltenham races? (WAQ49906)

**The Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (Andrew Davies):** The Department for Transport is responsible for the franchise management of First Great Western (FGW), which operates train services between south Wales and London. Changes to the timetable have been made by FGW to enable passengers to attend the festival, including Welsh race supporters. Details of these changes can be found on the FGW website at: <http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk/Content.aspx?id=898>.

This is a continuation of an established FGW practice during the period of very high demand when the much lower level of scheduled services to Cheltenham would be unable to cope with the high demand for travel to the races. It is worth noting that FGW and the other train operators have provided a much higher level of services to Cardiff for events at the Millennium Stadium.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a progress report on plans to upgrade the Swansea Quadrant bus station (WAQ49907)

**Andrew Davies:** On 5 March 2007, I announced that I had awarded £3.88 million from the transport grant settlement for 2007-08 to enable Swansea City and County Council to take forward the Quadrant bus interchange redevelopment. I also indicated that the local authority should maximise the amount of private sector funding available to help with the scheme. I have asked officials from Transport Wales to meet with the local authority to discuss how the project can be taken forward.

**David Lloyd:** Has the Minister made any assessment of the potential impact of solid free-form fabrication (SFF) technology on the future of the Welsh economy? (WAQ49908)

**Andrew Davies:** I have not considered SFF in isolation, but these rapid prototyping technologies form part of the consideration of assistance to manufacturing. The product and design research centre (PDR) at University of Wales Institute, Cardiff and the mechanical engineering centre (MEC) in Cardiff University both have excellent facilities and skills in this field, which can help business in Wales move forward with SFF technologies. These are currently mostly used in prototyping, but they are advancing into manufacturing in both metals and polymers, especially low-run production and bespoke products using standard components, such as in-ear hearing aids.

**Jenny Randerson:** What discussions have you had regarding the Allied Steel and Wire pension issue? (WAQ49927)

**Andrew Davies:** Since 2002 both the First Minister and I have regularly raised the plight of the ASW pension scheme members with UK Government Ministers, including past and present Secretaries of State for Work and Pensions. We continue to do so.

On 21 February the High Court decided that it agreed with the parliamentary ombudsman that UK Government information on the security of occupational pension schemes was misleading, although the court rejected other conclusions of the ombudsman's report.

I welcome the Secretary of State's statement on 22 February in which he said that the UK Government is already reviewing the financial assistance scheme with the findings of the European Court of Justice's 25 January ruling in mind, and we await with much interest the UK Government's response to the High Court decision. I am very pleased indeed about the Chancellor's announcement in yesterday's budget of an additional £6 billion in the financial assistance scheme, which will ensure that all affected will receive 80 per cent of their core pension rights.

**Trish Law:** Has the Minister been involved in any discussions with the UK Government to help secure Welsh jobs in Remploy? (WAQ49933) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.*

**The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson):** I am in regular contact with DWP regarding the ongoing review of Remploy, and I met the DWP Minister for disabled people, Anne McGuire, in December, to discuss the implications of the review for Wales. Remploy is currently consulting with staff, employees and trade unions on its modernisation strategy, and DWP will be seeking the views of the Welsh Assembly Government when Remploy's proposals have been submitted for consideration.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister detail the criteria for the allocation of local regeneration funds to local authorities, and can he clarify whether local authorities applied for funds or whether funds were allocated at the discretion of the Assembly Government? (WAQ49952)

**Andrew Davies:** Since 2001 the local regeneration fund match-funding pot has been allocated on a formula basis to the 21 local authorities eligible to receive European structural funds under the 2000—2006 programmes. The formulas took into account total population, population in deprived wards and sparsity of population (Objective 1) and population within eligible wards (Objective 2).

To obtain local regeneration funds, each local authority must submit an application to the Welsh European Funding Office for each eligible project within its area.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister detail whether the £3.2 million received by Carmarthenshire County Council local regeneration funds was based on tenders made by the council? (WAQ49953)

**Andrew Davies:** LRF funding is granted on the basis of approved European-funded applications that have been submitted by local authorities in respect of specific projects. No specific European-funded project in Carmarthenshire has been awarded LRF funding of £3.2 million.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to encourage foreign investment in Wales? (WAQ49960)

**Andrew Davies:** We have a range of support measures to encourage inward investment, including financial and other support, available to indigenous companies too, but the most significant incentive is a robust, dynamic and stable economy. It is these factors that bring sustainable success for Wales and for the people of Wales.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the number of companies who have chosen to base themselves in Wales since 1999? (WAQ49961)

**Andrew Davies:** In the period 1 April 1999 to the end of February 2007, we have recorded 323 new inward investment projects, 141 from overseas, for Wales and a total of 88 acquisitions and joint ventures, 67 from overseas. It is reasonable to conclude that new inward investment projects represent companies that have chosen to base themselves in Wales because of the vibrant commercial environment that Wales offers and that acquisitions and joint ventures, many of which have involved companies new to Wales, have taken place by virtue of opportunity allied with a vibrant and robust commercial environment.

There are significant highlights such as Britax Rumbold, Delicarta, Wockhardt, G24 Innovations, General Dynamics, Handelsbanken, ING Direct, the Quinn Group and Yell.com. They and many others, including the reinvestments that we have secured, provide very clear evidence that Wales offers a climate that can attract and sustain companies from a range of sectors such as aerospace, pharmaceuticals, financial services, general manufacturing, defence telecommunications and business services.

We have a diverse and balanced economy providing opportunity in the knowledge economy, the manufacturing sector, the service sector and the public sector. These achievements will be built on in the years ahead.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to improve bus links between north and south Wales (WAQ49971)

**Andrew Davies:** On 7 March 2007, I announced plans to form a new management board for the TrawsCambria network. The board will be chaired by Simon Shouler, head of my department's Transport Planning and Administration Division. It will also include members representing key stakeholders from bus operators, local authorities, regional transport consortia, bus and train users as well as the tourism sector. The board is charged with bringing forward detailed plans for completing the long distance bus network by 2009.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to improve railway links between north and south Wales? (WAQ49972)

**Andrew Davies:** The Assembly Government is committed to improving rail services in Wales. We have and continue to fund station improvements, platform extensions, additional rolling stock, additional services and safety enhancements throughout Wales.

Arriva Trains Wales introduced 12 modern class 175 trains into its fleet from December 2006 as direct replacement for the equivalent number of older class 158 trains. The trains are deployed on the west Wales to Manchester service group and the Cardiff to Holyhead services.

The Assembly Government is currently considering with Arriva Trains Wales the feasibility of introducing business class accommodation on coaches on the Holyhead-Cardiff services.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to improve the road infrastructure in Mid and West Wales? (WAQ49973)

**Andrew Davies:** My current intentions for large-scale improvements are given in the 2004 supplement to my trunk road forward programme 2002. In addition to these improvements, my Transport Wales department is also pursuing a large number of smaller-scale improvements, ranging in scale from minor community schemes, such as enhanced footways, and safety schemes through to larger, upgrade schemes,

such as that at Llansantffraed on the A40, near Talybont-on-Usk, which is nearing completion, and the improvement proposed at Glandyfi on the A487.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to improve the road infrastructure between north and south Wales? (WAQ49974)

**Andrew Davies:** My current intentions for large scale improvements are given in the 2004 supplement to my trunk road forward programme 2002, which shows a number of improvement schemes on the A470 and the A483 north of Newtown, which form the core north-south routes. In addition to these, my Transport Wales department is pursuing a large number of smaller-scale improvements, ranging in scale from minor community schemes and safety schemes through to larger, upgrade schemes.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to encourage investment into our airports in Wales? (WAQ49975)

**Andrew Davies:** Transport grant of £1.5 million has been paid to Isle of Anglesey County Council to construct the new civilian passenger terminal at maes awyr Môn/Anglesey airport.

A Welsh Development Agency section 10 infrastructure grant of £110,000 was awarded to Powys County Council to help fund the extension of the runway at Welshpool airport. This work was completed in April 2006.

We are in advanced negotiations in supporting significant development for future expansion at west Wales airport at Aberporth.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister make a statement explaining what actions the Welsh Assembly Government has taken or is planning to take to support the bid from the Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway company to the Office of Rail Regulation for a new rail service between Wrexham and London? (WAQ49990)

**Andrew Davies:** The Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway company (WSMR) has revised its open access plans following an objection to its application lodged by west coast trains, which has a 'non-compete' protection clause in its track access agreement. As a consequence, WSMR has made a fresh application to the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) for a track access licence.

The Assembly Government has been formally consulted by the ORR on the content of WSMR's revised application for a track access agreement. I can confirm that the Assembly Government will provide a fully supportive response to this consultation exercise.

The Assembly Government intends making a strategic investment in enhancing the railway infrastructure and the provision of a depot at Wrexham for the purpose of improving the capacity and capability of the asset. This will benefit all train operators, including WSMR. The Assembly Government's investment at Wrexham is contingent upon the enhanced asset being included in the regulated asset base.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister make a statement explaining what actions the Welsh Assembly Government has taken or is planning to take in response to the north west route utilisation strategy undertaken by Network Rail? (WAQ49991)

**Andrew Davies:** Route utilisation strategies (RUS) are produced by Network Rail (NR) and set out what the railway should look like over the next 10 years—one is produced for each geographical region. The North West RUS has not yet been published and I cannot pre-empt what it may contain.

What I can confirm is that the consultation process for the Wales RUS is already under way. The Wales RUS will include lines within Wales, as well as those lines that link Wales with England through the provision of Arriva Trains Wales passenger services. My officials are involved in the Wales RUS process, and the outcome of this work will be published during summer 2008.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister make a statement explaining what actions the Welsh Assembly Government has taken to ensure that existing UK Government guarantees to retain the UK share of the future work on Airbus aircraft manufacturing projects are enforced? (WAQ49992)

**Andrew Davies:** The UK has traditionally secured a 20 per cent work-share of new Airbus civil aircraft programmes. There are no guarantees on future work-share, but undertakings given to the UK Government by EADS are designed to ensure that any work package location decisions affecting the UK are taken for purely economic and commercial reasons. The UK and Assembly Governments have a strong relationship with EADS and Airbus, and the Department of Trade and Industry, working closely with Assembly Government officials, represented the UK's interests in the Airbus Power 8 restructuring programme and work-share for the A350 XWB.

Under the recent Power 8 announcement, the UK, through its Broughton and Filton plants, will remain the Airbus centre of excellence for wings, and Broughton will become the 'core site' within Airbus for final wing assembly. For the new A350 XWB, the UK has secured a 20 per cent work-share and will be responsible for the overall design and engineering of the wing at Filton, with wing assembly to be carried out at Broughton.

Given that Airbus UK is the centre of excellence for wings and the position achieved on the A350 XWB, the UK will be in a strong position for securing similar work-share arrangements on future aircraft programmes.

### **Questions to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly she has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49232) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials' visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49532) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in her department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits. (WAQ49533) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Janet Ryder:** How is the Welsh Assembly Government advertising the educational maintenance allowance scheme? (WAQ49891)

**The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson):** The Welsh Assembly Government promotes the education maintenance allowance scheme under the Student Finance Wales banner, with information provided on its comprehensive bilingual website, [studentfinancewales.co.uk](http://studentfinancewales.co.uk), and telephone advice on 0845 602 8845. Application packs, leaflets and posters are distributed by delivery partners in May-June each year and many students are sent an information leaflet direct to their homes to coincide with the receipt of their summer examination results. Poster advertising and press advertising campaigns have also been used to widen awareness of the scheme during its three year roll-out.

**Janet Ryder:** Does the Welsh Assembly Government work with the Westminster Government to advertise the education maintenance allowance scheme? (WAQ49892)

**Jane Davidson:** While the education maintenance allowance schemes that operate in the four nations are fundamentally the same, they are nevertheless separate schemes. The Welsh Assembly Government advertises the education maintenance allowance scheme in Wales, under the Student Finance Wales banner. Our literature makes it clear that the scheme in Wales applies to participating schools and colleges in Wales. The scheme in England is administered and advertised on behalf of the Westminster Government by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Assembly's Student Finance Wales Division team do liaise with LSC contacts to share information and to address cross-border issues.

**Helen Mary Jones:** What percentage of funding to work-based learning (WBL) providers is spent on training a) public sector employees and b) private sector employees in particular SMEs? (WAQ49893)

**Jane Davidson:** We do not hold information as to whether the employer of a WBL learner is a public or private sector organisation, however, our records show that of the 6,588 employers involved in WBL, 4,579 are SMEs, therefore, circa 70 per cent).

**Nick Bourne:** What is the Minister doing to promote the teaching of foreign languages in Wales? (WAQ49903)

**Jane Davidson:** The Assembly Government is committed to improving opportunities for the study of modern foreign languages. Our national languages strategy, 'Languages Count', sets out our approach to improving the take-up of MFL beyond the age of 14 and increasing the recognition by schools, pupils, parents and employers of the importance of language learning.

CILT Cymru, the centre for information on language teaching and research, is charged by the Assembly Government with supporting the delivery of the strategy working with schools, local authorities, learning providers and employers. Underpinned by £700,000 each year provided by the Assembly Government, CILT provides a programme of professional development for practitioners and supports pilot work for primary schools in partnership with a local secondary school to offer a foreign language. The centre is also working with a range of providers to develop wider options for language learning for 14 to 19-year-olds and to promote the benefits of languages to business.

The recent independent evaluation of work in primary schools was very positive and confirmed that pupils, teachers and parents had welcomed the opportunity to begin to learn a language in key stage 2. On this basis, it has been agreed that resources be made available in the better schools fund, from 2008, to enable all primary schools to offer a foreign language on a non-statutory basis.

As set out in 'The Learning Country: Vision into Action', there is a need to take stock and consider how we can build on strengths, including the language module in the Welsh baccalaureate, and address areas for improvement. Work is, therefore, in hand to refresh 'Languages Count' by September 2008 in parallel with the implementation of the revised school curriculum and assessment arrangements.

**Nick Bourne:** What is the Minister doing to reduce the size of primary school classes in Wales? (WAQ49904)

**Jane Davidson:** Since 1999, the Welsh Assembly Government has achieved great success in ensuring that primary classes contain 30 pupils or fewer. In January 1998, 30 per cent of infant pupils were in classes of more than 30 pupils. The introduction of the statutory 30 pupil infant class size limit led to this figure falling to 2 per cent by 2001 and it has remained at around this level ever since. The legislation allows for certain temporary exceptions in particular circumstances and these account for most of the classes of over 30 that continue to arise. From 2001 onwards the Welsh Assembly Government has also sought to ensure that junior classes contain 30 or fewer pupils, providing around £75 million for this purpose between 2001 and 2006. In September 2000, 29 per cent of junior pupils were in classes with more than 30 pupils; in September 2006 only 3 per cent of pupils were. The average primary class size is now 24.4.

The roll-out of the foundation phase will have a positive impact on adult-pupil ratios in the infant sector and younger children will do much of their learning in small groups. In addition, it should be noted that the raising attainment and individual standards in education in Wales grant is being used in ways which will improve adult-pupil ratios in our most disadvantaged schools.

I remain committed to maintaining primary classes of 30 pupils or fewer. Class sizes across the primary sector continue to be monitored to ensure that the statutory infant class size limit is enforced. We may also need to consider introducing an equivalent junior class size limit in the future.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on her policies for improving primary education in rural areas? (WAQ49935)

**Jane Davidson:** My broad policies for improving primary education are equally relevant in all areas of Wales, whether rural or urban. All pupils deserve access to well-resourced schools in buildings fit for purpose, staffed by well-qualified teachers. In recognition of the additional challenges faced by small and rural schools, additional funding worth £4.1 million in 2006-07 is available, which is weighted towards more rural areas. Its purposes are to fund extra support for headteachers with a classroom teaching commitment, to assist schools in working together to deliver a broad curriculum, and to develop the community focus of schools—all with the aim of raising standards

**Peter Black:** Will the Minister make a statement on the funding of further education? (WAQ49936)

**Jane Davidson:** The further education (FE) sector has seen a significant increase in funding over recent years through the FE pay initiative and the strategic capital investment programme. FE institutions are now funded on an equitable basis to school sixth forms through the national planning and funding system.

**Peter Black:** Will the Minister make a statement on how she intends to achieve the Government objective of making all schools fit for purpose by 2010? (WAQ49937)

**Jane Davidson:** As set out in 'The Learning Country: Vision into Action', all school buildings are to be fit for purpose on the basis of target dates to be agreed with individual local authorities. We will provide



on average funding of £150 million a year to 2009-10 for the improvement of the school building stock and consult authorities on the need for investment beyond 2010.

**William Graham:** Will the Minister confirm the timetable for the establishment of a school of computation and mathematical science in Wales? (WAQ49938)

**Jane Davidson:** The Wales Institute for Mathematical and Computational Science is being supported by the provision of £5.021 million from the Reaching Higher fund. The funding is being provided over five years from 2006-07 to 2010-11.

**William Graham:** Will the Minister outline the guidance she has issued to local education authorities considering the viability of schools with declining pupil numbers? (WAQ49939)

**Jane Davidson:** Guidance indicates that, while some surplus places in schools are necessary to cope with fluctuations in numbers of pupils, excessive numbers of unused places, which can arise as numbers fall, mean that resources are tied up unproductively. Where there are excessive numbers of surplus places LEAs should review their provision and, where feasible, make proposals for their removal, especially where schools have significant levels of surplus. The definition of 'significant' surplus is 25 per cent or more of a school's capacity and at least 30 unfilled places. The Welsh Assembly Government has not issued specific guidance on the minimum viable size for a school or set a size that should trigger a review. It is for individual authorities to decide on the appropriate and sustainable size for schools in their localities.

**Carl Sargeant:** Will the Minister make a statement on infant and junior class sizes in Wales? (WAQ49940)

**Jane Davidson:** You tabled the same question on 15 February 2007 (WAQ49497). I refer you to the response I provided on that occasion.

**Carl Sargeant:** Will the Minister make a statement on childcare places in Wales? (WAQ49941)

**Jane Davidson:** Between 1999 and 2006, the number of registered childcare places increased from 54,603 to 67,711.

The Genesis Wales project aims to provide 8,500 places to beneficiaries in both Objective 1 and Objective 3 areas by the end of March 2008, and the Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club (CPCKC) project aims to provide 1,700 new places in Objective 1 areas by the end of August 2007.

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement about the delivery of Assembly funding for schools in Denbighshire? (WAQ49942)

**Jane Davidson:** Assembly Government policy is that funding for schools should be provided in the main through the local government revenue settlement, with decisions on levels of school funding made by local authorities in light of local needs and circumstances. Authorities are accountable to their electorates for the decisions they make.

Average increases in local authority education budgets in recent years have been in line with, or above, average increases in the local government settlement. Denbighshire's education budget for 2006-07 was £63.5 million, an increase of 7.6 per cent on 2005-06. Average gross per pupil spend in Denbighshire this year is £4,357.

Under the local government settlement for 2007-08, Denbighshire will receive a revenue support grant of £125.4 million, an increase of 4.7 per cent on last year's settlement after adjusting for transfers, and above the Welsh average of 4.4 per cent.

Schools budget forums enable schools and authorities to discuss local funding issues. Local authorities must take account of the views of their forum before setting their schools budget each year. Funding is distributed to schools in their delegated budgets according to the authority's individual local funding formula, together with any hypothecated revenue grant funds.

As set out in my response to the report of the Assembly Committee on School Funding, local authorities that set an education budget that differs from their education indicator-based assessment in 2007-08 have been asked to report on the reasons to their schools forum, their full council and the Assembly Government. This will aid both transparency of funding and local accountability.

Between 2002-03 and 2007-08 we have also provided Denbighshire with capital funding of almost £6.385 million in formula school building improvement grant. Their additional £9 million lump sum grant has been allocated from 2005-06 to 2008-09 and will provide funding for one new primary school and four extensions/major refurbishments.

**Laura Anne Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the teaching of languages in schools in Wales? (WAQ49943)

**Jane Davidson:** The study of a modern foreign language is a statutory requirement for 11 to 14-year-olds at key stage 3. Schools are required to offer one or more of the official languages of the European Union and may, in addition, offer any language for which there is a substantial demand and which the school can resource. There are also opportunities for pupils to continue to study a modern foreign language beyond the age of 14.

The Assembly Government is committed to improving opportunities for the study of languages. Our national languages strategy 'Languages Count', sets out our approach to improving the take-up of language learning beyond the age of 14 and increasing the recognition by schools, pupils, parents and employers of the importance of language learning.

CILT Cymru, the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, is charged by the Assembly Government with supporting the delivery of the strategy. Underpinned by £700,000 each year provided by the Assembly Government, CILT provides a programme of professional development for practitioners and supports pilot work for primary schools in partnership with a local secondary school to offer a foreign language. The centre is also working with a range of providers to develop wider options for language learning for 14-19 year olds.

The recent independent evaluation of work in primary schools was very positive and confirmed that pupils, teachers and parents had welcomed the opportunity to begin to learn a language in key stage 2. On this basis, it has been agreed that resources be made available in the Better Schools fund, from 2008, to enable all primary schools to offer a foreign language on a non-statutory basis.

As set out in 'The Learning Country: Vision into Action', there is a need to take stock and consider how we can build on strengths, including the language module in the Welsh Baccalaureate, and address areas for improvement. Work is, therefore, in hand to refresh 'Languages Count' by September 2008 in parallel with the implementation of the revised school curriculum and assessment arrangements.

**Laura Anne Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on how schools in Wales raise awareness of health issues? (WAQ49944)

**Jane Davidson:** I recognise how important it is that young people are educated in a wide variety of issues, including life skills and issues surrounding health, which will help develop them into more rounded individuals able to cope in a competitive and rapidly changing world.

The importance of this was reflected in the decision to make personal and social education (PSE) a statutory requirement within the basic curriculum for children aged 5 to 16 from September 2003.

PSE in schools is an essential element in a balanced and holistic education that equips children and young people to be more personally effective, healthy and responsible in society. In particular, within the physical aspect of the PSE framework, pupils are helped to maintain their physical health and wellbeing, sustain their growth and development and know how to keep themselves safe.

In addition to the PSE curriculum, the Welsh Assembly Government is promoting and supporting healthy lifestyles among young people through a number of initiatives:

#### **The Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Schemes**

There are 22 local schemes, which have been accredited as part of the Welsh network of healthy school schemes, and over 1,300 schools are currently involved.

The Welsh Assembly Government has developed the WNHSS by providing funding and guidance to help health and education services working in partnerships to set up and run local healthy school schemes in all areas of Wales. These local schemes help schools in their area to make changes for good health. The Welsh Assembly Government accredits local schemes as part of WNHSS.

#### **Appetite for Life**

In July 2005, the Welsh Assembly Government set up the food in schools working group, to examine how to improve the quality and nutritional standards of school meals, and how to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to driving forward improvements in food and nutrition in our schools. This applies not only to school lunches but to all food provided to our children during the course of the school day.

Their report, 'Appetite for Life', sets out the group's review of school meals and their proposals on how we continue to drive forward our whole-school approach to improving all food available during the school day. It was launched for public consultation on 29 June, alongside the food and fitness implementation plan.

The consultation period ended on 31 October. We received in the region of 500 responses to the consultation exercise—nearly 200 responses to the main document and more than 300 responses to the children's and young people's versions.

Officials are currently undertaking a detailed analysis of these responses: an initial analysis shows that there is significant support for all of the 41 proposals in 'Appetite for Life'. The action plan is currently being developed and will be launched in the summer.

#### **Food in Schools**

The development of fruit tuck shops is being encouraged as part of the Welsh network of healthy school schemes and over 400 schools have set them up. A guide to setting up fruit tuck shops has been published jointly by the National Assembly for Wales and the Food Standards Agency Wales.

Water coolers have been provided to over 300 primary and secondary schools in Communities First areas. They were installed January to March 2004, in conjunction with Welsh Water. All schools have been sent the 'Think Water—Guidance on Water in Schools' booklet.

Guidance on the use of healthy vending, 'Think Healthy Vending' has been made available to all schools.

The Welsh Assembly Government made a commitment to provide funding for all children of primary school age registered in maintained primary schools in Wales to have the opportunity of a free, healthy breakfast at school each day. This initiative is intended to help improve the health and concentration of children to assist in the raising of standards of learning and attainment. It will seek to involve parents but is not intended to replace breakfast already provided. It will allow all those that, for whatever reason, have not had breakfast, to have one in school. The provision of free breakfasts is optional. Feedback from those participating in the initiative has been extremely positive with schools seeing benefits to pupils and to the school as a whole.

Based on the most recent information available from local education authorities, there were a total of 559 (35 per cent) schools confirmed as having started serving breakfast by the end of the autumn term 2006. A further 206 schools are scheduled to participate by the end of autumn term 2007. This gives a total of 765 (47 per cent) primary schools across Wales. This number continues to increase as more schools learn of the many benefits of participating in this initiative.

A cooking bus has been sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government, through Design Dimension Educational Trust, as part of its programme of work outlined in the 'Food and Fitness—Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Children and Young People in Wales' implementation plan. The cooking bus is a specially designed mobile trailer that provides four fully fitted kitchens complete with qualified teachers. The bus visits schools and provides practical cooking lessons for pupils and one teacher training session at each school. One session at every venue is also used to help parents of young children to develop their cooking skills.

It will focus on visiting primary schools in Communities First areas that are part of the Welsh network of healthy school schemes, and which are already working on healthy eating and physical activity.

#### **Physical Education and School Sport (PESS)**

The Sports Council for Wales is currently being funded by the Welsh Assembly Government (£6.9 million made available to date with a further £2.65 million committed for 2007-08) to lead on implementation of the PESS action plan for Wales. The central element of this work lies in the establishment of development centres (DCs) that bring together local consortia (including primary and secondary schools, colleges, higher education providers, leisure centres and sports clubs) to make best use of facilities and to share best practice and expertise in a manner that will raise standards in physical education and school sport. There are currently 73 DCs across Wales, 60 fully funded, with at least two in every local authority area. The target is for all schools to be involved in PESS partnerships by 2010. Each LEA has appointed a PESS co-ordinator to support the DCs and disseminate good practice.

A range of specialist projects are providing training support for teachers (some 10,000 development opportunities provided to March 2007), and practical guidance (training and resources) has been developed to support teaching of the more technically difficult areas of PE. Guidance on health-related exercise (a key element of the national curriculum requirement for PE) has also been developed. The PESS initiative has firm links with the Assembly Government's healthy schools initiative. All schools participating in PESS partnerships are encouraged to develop a healthy and active lifestyles policy, incorporating all aspects of the school from staff to pupils, to the curriculum and environment. PESS also draws firm links with the Assembly's wider strategic policy initiatives and cross-cutting programmes for encouraging a healthy, fitter society set out in 'Well Being in Wales', 'Climbing Higher' and the food and fitness strategy.

Estyn provides regular monitoring reports on implementation of the PESS action plan. The last report, July 2006, concluded that the initiative is making good progress and is having a significant impact on the quality of provision, opportunities and standards in physical education in development centres in Wales.

#### **Smoking Prevention**

With regard to smoking prevention, our Smoke Bugs! clubs encourage young people in Wales, aged between 8 and 11, to lead smoke-free lives. The programme is directed at children in their homes with

recruitment through schools and other appropriate settings. Members enjoy a range of activities and events including competitions, prizes, quizzes and a quarterly newsletter.

On reaching secondary school, pupils are offered the opportunity of participating in the smoke-free class competition in both years 7 and 8 (at ages 11-13). This is part of a European initiative that currently involves 14 countries. Pupils enter as a class, and pledge not to smoke for the five-month competition period. Prize draws award cash prizes for the school after three, four and five months. The competition ran in Wales for the first time in 1997-98.

A new programme, ASSIST, will be rolled out to secondary schools in the next year. This is a peer support programme that was developed and successfully trialled by Cardiff and Bristol universities.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many schools have closed since 1999? (WAQ49963)

**Jane Davidson:** A total of 86 schools have closed since 1999, including 11 nursery schools. I have listed the individual schools below, by LEA. The list does not include amalgamations of junior and infant schools, closures of special schools or instances where a school has been replaced by a new school on the same site. Nursery school closures are shown separately.

LEA	YEAR	SCHOOL	
Anglesey		None	
Blaenau Gwent	1999	Glanyrafon (secondary)	
	2000	Cwmtillery junior	
	2001	Rassau primary*	
	2002	Areal primary*	
	2003	Cwmcelyn infant	
	2004	Ty'r Graig primary	
Bridgend	2003	Brynhyfryd primary	
		Fronwen primary	
Caerphilly	2002	Tynewydd junior	
	2004	Glanynant infant	
Cardiff	2002	Cwmsyfiog primary*	
	2004	Tirphil primary*	
	2005	Bedwelty* (secondary)	
	2004	Viriamu Jones primary*	
	Carmarthenshire	1999	Bethlehem primary*
			Gwynfe primary
		2001	Myddfai primary*
		2003	Alltwalis primary*
			Llanfihangel yr Arth primary*
			Cwmbach primary*
		Llangynin primary*	
	2004	Llanddowror primary*	
		Henllan Amgoed primary*	
		Garnant primary	
		Glanaman primary	
	2006	Trap primary	
	2007	Cwmgwili primary*	
Ceredigion	2006	Brynherbert primary	
		Ferwig primary*	
Conwy		None	
Denbighshire	2000	Nantyglyn primary	

Flintshire	2004	St Winefrides primary (St Asaph)*
Gwynedd		None
Merthyr Tydfil	1999	Graig Bedlinog infant*
	2002	Pentrebach infant*
	2005	Vaynor Penderyn*(Secondary)
Monmouthshire	2003	Llanellen primary
	2005	St David's junior* (Abergavenny)
		Croesonnen infant*( Abergavenny)
		Park Street infant* (Abergavenny)
	2006	Clydach primary*
		Darenfelin primary*
Neath Port Talbot		None
Newport		None
Pembrokeshire	1999	St David's primary
	2000	Caldey Island primary
		Manordeifi primary*
		Bwlchygroes primary*
	2001	Penffordd primary
	2002	Dinas primary*
	2003	Moylegrove primary*
	2004	Tredafydd primary
		Blaenffos primary*
		Hermon primary*
	2006	Albion Square nursery and infant
		Penally primary*
Powys	2005	Libanus primary*
		Trecastle primary*
Rhondda Cynon Taff	2006	Sarn Church of England VA primary
	1999	Dunraven primary
		Blaenrhondda primary
		Blaenycwm primary
		Hendrefadog infant
	2005	Treherbert infant
	2006	Cynon infant*
		Newtown primary*
		Blaenclydach infant*
		Blaenllechau infant*
		Trefforest primary*
		Graig y Wion primary*
		Nantgarw infant*
Swansea	2001	Dynevor* (secondary)
		Penlan Boys* (secondary)
	2006	Garnswllt primary*
Torfaen	2001	Park Terrace primary*
		Upper Cwmbran infant*
	2006	Pentwyn primary*
Vale of Glamorgan	2004	Penarth Church in Wales primary
Wrexham	2004	The Groves (secondary)*

**Nursery School Closures (The majority of LEAs closed none)**

LEA	YEAR	SCHOOL
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Blaenau Gwent	2003	Church Square nursery
Bridgend	2001	Nantymoel nursery*
	2003	Ogmore Vale nursery*
Caerphilly	2002	Pencoed nursery
Cardiff	2005	Gilfach Fargoed nursery
Merthyr Tydfil	2006	Vachell nursery
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2003	Ynys Owen nursery*
		Glynhafod nursery*
	2006	Tir Gwaid nursery
Swansea	2006	Hirwaun nursery*
		Bryn nursery*

\* determined by Secretary of State or National Assembly for Wales

School closure proposals that do not attract objections are determined by the body responsible for publishing proposals (normally the LEA).

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister make a statement explaining whether she has the power, or any intention, to issue guidance to prevent local authorities in Wales from charging for transport for students over the age of 16 to school or college? (WAQ49994)

**Jane Davidson:** The provisions of sections 509, 509AA, 509AB, 509AC and 509A of the Education Act 1996 provide the current legislative framework with regard to the duties of local authorities in respect of transport for students from home to school or college.

Under the current legislative framework, the provision of financial support for learner travel for those over compulsory school age is discretionary. LEAs have a statutory duty under section 509AA(1) of the Education Act 1996 (as amended) to produce and publish transport policy statements, which specify the arrangements they consider necessary to make for the provision of transport and support for learners aged 16-19.

LEAs are under a duty to have regard to any guidance issued by the National Assembly for Wales in preparing their transport policy statements. In addition, local authorities are required to ensure that transport arrangements for learners receiving full-time education or training in further education colleges and other settings should be as favourable as they are for learners receiving education in LEA-maintained schools in order to ensure equality of opportunity, as specified in Welsh Assembly guidance circular 05/07.

Under section 509AA(9), the Assembly may, if it considers it expedient to do so, direct an LEA to make arrangements for providing transport or for providing financial assistance, where those arrangements have not been specified in its transport policy statements. Under such circumstances, the LEA would have to comply with that direction.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 has important provisions for learner travel which give the National Assembly for Wales power to make law encompassing home-to-school transport and post-16 travel matters. The new power provides the means to change the law in the Education Act 1996 (as amended) with a comprehensive set of Welsh laws to serve as a framework for policy designed for Wales. This will appear in the Assembly's legislation programme after the May 2007 election. The exact timing and scope of such proposals, including travel entitlements for learners in the 16-19 age group are matters for the next Assembly Government to consider.

## Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly he has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49227) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials' visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49534) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in his department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49535) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Nick Bourne:** Can a homeowner located in a TAN 15 floodplain area, and therefore subject to new planning restrictions, claim a council tax discount? (WAQ49909)

**The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones):** There is no provision for a homeowner to claim a discount on council tax for properties within flood risk areas. The planning restrictions in TAN15 impact mainly on new, rather than existing, development. The aim of the guidance is to direct new development away from those areas that are at high risk of flooding.

**Mick Bates:** Will the Minister make a statement on the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49914)

**Mick Bates:** How many new Tir Gofal applications have been received since the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49915)

**Mick Bates:** How many new Tir Gofal applications remain unprocessed since the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government began? (WAQ49916)

**Mick Bates:** How many new Tir Gofal applications have been visited or mapped by Assembly Officials since the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49918)

**Mick Bates:** Have there been delays in Tir Gofal payments due to the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49922)

**Mick Bates:** How long will it take for the Tir Gofal applications backlog to be cleared following the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49917)



**Mick Bates:** How is the Minister ensuring that no important data gets lost during the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49919)

**Mick Bates:** What work was done to ensure compatibility of the mapping systems of the Countryside Council for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government before the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government began? (WAQ49920)

**Mick Bates:** Can the Minister assure individuals and organisations that no delay in either the processing of applications or payments will result as a consequence of the transfer of the Tir Gofal functions of the Countryside Council for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ49921)

**Carwyn Jones:** The First Minister announced on 30 November 2004 that the administration of the Tir Gofal scheme should be transferred to the Welsh Assembly Government, and this was successfully completed on 16 October 2006.

New applications to the Tir Gofal scheme amount to 1,444, and these have not been processed as yet. This is not due to the transfer of the administration of the Tir Gofal scheme to the Welsh Assembly Government but, rather, these applications remain unprocessed as the implications for Tir Gofal of the Assembly budget and the new rural development plan are still being considered. Once this situation has been resolved, and future funding is clear, new applications will be processed and Assembly officials will undertake any mapping or visits that are required.

Payment claims under existing Tir Gofal agreements are being processed to requirements set out in the individual agreements, taking account of the new EC rural development control regulation requirements stipulating the validation and inspection checks before payments can be made. These agreements are being processed as soon as is possible, but they do require a considerable amount of work due to EC requirement to crosscheck before payments can be released. Since January this year, 571 management and capital works claims have been processed, amounting to £1.31 million. Rural Payments Division, Tir Gofal staff, are prioritising work on payments, and eligible claims, without anomalies, are being processed for payment upon receipt. In order to process claims as efficiently as possible, farmers need to respond to queries regarding crosscheck anomalies. We are currently awaiting responses from over 200 farmers with regard to such anomalies.

The risk of loss of important data during the transfer of administrative duties for Tir Gofal to the Welsh Assembly Government was minimised as all data and systems were transferred in their entirety. This process is now complete and all important data have been safely transferred.

The mapping systems of the Countryside Council for Wales were managed by the Welsh Assembly Government prior to the transfer of administrative duties for Tir Gofal to the Welsh Assembly Government, and so they continue to be. No compatibility issues have arisen due to the transfer.

No delays in either the processing of applications or payments have resulted as a consequence of the transfer of the administration of the Tir Gofal scheme to the Welsh Assembly Government, and no such delays are foreseen in the future.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to encourage retailers to stock local produce across Wales? (WAQ49970)

**Carwyn Jones:** The Welsh Assembly Government runs programmes aimed at supporting Welsh food and drink producers in gaining national listings of their products by the major retailers and ensuring that these listings are retained. My officials are also in contact with representatives of the key supermarkets to ensure that opportunities for the stocking of local Welsh products are maximised, as evidenced by the recent Tesco 'Meet the Buyer' event in west Wales.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister outline what he has been doing to promote the concept of food miles in Wales? (WAQ49976)

**Carwyn Jones:** My officials are working closely with multiple retailers and the service sector to encourage more local and regional sourcing of Welsh food and drink products, thereby reducing food miles. The Welsh Assembly Government's support for food festivals and farmers' markets is also partly aimed at reducing food miles by providing fora for bringing together local producers and consumers.

**Leanne Wood:** What discussions has the Minister had with the Environment Agency regarding the remediation of Brofiscin quarry, near Groesfaen in Rhondda Cynon Taf? (WAQ49977)

**Carwyn Jones:** My officials from the Environmental Protection and Quality Division of the Welsh Assembly Government are in regular contact with the Environment Agency. The Assembly continues to fund the agency to undertake investigations at Brofiscin quarry. A report is awaited which will inform decision making on the most appropriate remediation method.

**Leanne Wood:** What steps is the Minister taking to ensure that Monsanto and its successor companies are held liable for historical contamination of sites in Wales? (WAQ49979)

**Carwyn Jones:** I refer you to my written statement issued on 20 March. The Environment Agency, through its lawyers, is pursuing options to identify liability for historical contamination of sites in Wales.

**Leanne Wood:** What steps is the Minister taking to ensure that those responsible for the pollution at Brofiscin quarry will be held liable for its remediation? (WAQ49980)

**Carwyn Jones:** I refer to my response to the previous question (WAQ49979), and confirm that liability in relation to Brofiscin Quarry is being pursued by the Environment Agency.

**Leanne Wood:** What advice has the Minister received regarding the impact of the current Solutia Inc bankruptcy case being heard in Manhattan on Environment Agency Wales' efforts to hold companies to account for historical pollution in Wales? (WAQ49995)

**Carwyn Jones:** My recent statement, together with previous responses today, confirms that the Environment Agency's lawyers are pursuing legal representation regarding issues of liability through the appropriate channels.

**Owen John Thomas:** What discussions has the Minister had with the Environment Agency to ensure that a formal complaint is lodged against the assets of the Monsanto group regarding pollution at Brofiscin quarry before the end of March deadline? (WAQ50000)

**Carwyn Jones:** I refer you to my written statement of 20 March and previous responses today. I can confirm that the Environment Agency's lawyers are pursuing legal representation regarding issues of liability through the appropriate channels.

### Questions to the Finance Minister

**Leanne Wood:** Will the Minister list the expenditure since 1999 on consultants employed by the Welsh Assembly Government and ASPBs to conduct reviews or assessments of policy, listing each item of expenditure awarded, the cost of each contract, the purpose of each item of expenditure and the dates on which they awarded? (WAQ48879)

**Leanne Wood:** Will the Minister list the expenditure since 1999 on consultants employed by the Welsh Assembly Government and ASPBs to consider, conduct or assess marketing or advertising campaigns, listing each item of expenditure awarded, the cost of each contract, the purpose of each item of expenditure and the dates on which they awarded? (WAQ48880)

**Leanne Wood:** Further to written Assembly questions WAQ47892, WAQ47893, WAQ47894, WAQ47895, WAQ47896, WAQ47897, WAQ47899 and WAQ47900, will the Minister include the same details for all contracts with consultants, not just management consultants? (WAQ48881)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Finance Minister (Sue Essex):** As there was no further response by the end of the second Assembly, the following holding reply is taken as the substantive reply.

Your request does not provide sufficient information for my officials to be able to locate and identify the information that you seek. It would be helpful if you would advise your definition of 'consultants'. For example, research contracts are not recorded as consultancy contracts, and contracts where there is an element of service delivery by the contractor would also not be recorded as consultancy contracts.

Please provide a further description of the type of information that you want so that it might be identified. It might be helpful in this respect if, for example, you were able to describe your interests. Once you have provided this additional information, we will then be able to process your request. I would be grateful for your reply by 30 January 2007.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly she has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49220) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Nick Bourne:** How much was spent by the Minister's department on publicity in 2006? (WAQ49255)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Sue Essex:** I can confirm that my department did not spend anything on publicity in 2006. Also no publicity was procured outside central communications during this time.

**Jonathan Morgan:** Further to the answer given to WAQ47077, will the Minister give a breakdown of the Welsh Assembly Government's expenditure on a) recruitment and b) public notices? (WAQ49278)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Jane Hutt:** The Assembly Government's expenditure on recruitment for 2005-06 was £455,164 and for public notices it was £1,036,680 (£914,501 for highways public notices and £122,179 other public notices)

**Jonathan Morgan:** Further to the answer given to WAQ47077, will the Minister detail the annual expenditure of the Welsh Assembly Government on all communications not procured by the Central Communications Division? (WAQ49279)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Jane Hutt:** Total spent on communications, procured outside the Central Communications Division, in the same period was £20,245,000. The breakdown, with examples of communication campaigns is as follows:

Enterprise, Innovation & Networks	£15,880,00 (trade & invest marketing, business tourism, golf & events, international tourism marketing, UK tourism marketing, business support/ entrepreneurship/innovation, e-Wales, Ryder cup, transport)
Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills	£450,000 (free breakfast for all primary schools, extending entitlement, ILD Wales, Welsh for Adults, student finance Wales, business support marketing)
Environment, Planning & Countryside	£2,207,000 (agri-food promotion, bovine TB, farming connect promotion)
Culture, Welsh Language & Sport	£347,000 (Cymal, CADW)
Health & Social Services	£1,300,000 (Health challenge Wales, sexual health, Welsh Backs)
Social Justice & Regeneration	£61,000 (fire safety, housing, drug & alcohol helpline, CAF/CASS Cymru)

(Figures rounded to nearest £1,000)

(‘communication’ for this purpose included such items as public information campaigns and promotion of Wales as a location for investment and as a tourist destination)

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials’ visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49524) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in her department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49525) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Carl Sargeant:** Will the Minister make a statement on the policy agreement between the Welsh Assembly Government and Flintshire County Council? (WAQ49945)

**Sue Essex:** In 2004-05, I concluded a policy agreement with Flintshire County Council which set out the improvements that the authority had agreed with the Assembly Government to deliver by 2007. Flintshire subsequently received the first instalment of the performance incentive grant, totalling £1,428,476.

In 2005-06, Flintshire demonstrated satisfactory performance against its policy agreement measures and received a further performance incentive grant of £1,468,919.

Officials have concluded the 2006-07 review of Flintshire's performance and paid the third instalment of the performance incentive grant, which is £1,464,862. The authority has demonstrated continued improvement against the milestones for reducing the number of children leaving school without a qualification, energy efficiency, reducing the number of adults experiencing a delayed transfer of care, and reducing the number of looked-after children experiencing a change of school.

**Jeff Cuthbert:** Will the Minister make a statement on the proposal to introduce a new all-Wales small business rate relief scheme? (WAQ49946)

**Sue Essex:** The National Assembly has introduced legislation to replace the rural rate relief scheme with a small business rate relief scheme from 1 April 2007. The new scheme will be fairer than the old scheme, under which entitlement to relief varied according to geographical location. Under the new scheme, the same criteria will now apply to businesses across Wales, no matter where the business is situated. It will mean that around half of all businesses in Wales will receive some relief on their rates, and most post offices in Wales will receive 50 per cent or 100 per cent relief.

The total amount of relief that businesses in Caerphilly should receive under the first year of the scheme is expected to increase to around £589,500 from the £82,000 that they are expected to receive in the last year of the old rural rate relief scheme.

**Peter Black:** Will the Minister make a statement on the deprivation grant awarded to local councils in Wales? (WAQ49947)

**Sue Essex:** The amounts local authorities in Wales will receive in deprivation grant for 2007-08 are listed below:

Local Authority	£000s
Isle of Anglesey	508
Gwynedd	494
Conwy	174
Denbighshire	169
Flintshire	225
Wrexham	322
Powys	48
Ceredigion	107
Pembrokeshire	366
Carmarthenshire	1,195
Swansea	969
Neath Port Talbot	2,359
Bridgend	758
The Vale of Glamorgan	167
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	4,223
Merthyr Tydfil	2,146
Caerphilly	2,466
Blaenau Gwent	2,625
Torfaen	452
Monmouthshire	0
Newport	716

Cardiff	1,511
Total	22,000

**Peter Black:** Will the Minister make a statement on how she is incentivising the implementation of the Beecham review? (WAQ49948)

**Sue Essex:** We are supporting the implementation of the Welsh Assembly Government's response to Beecham with a budget of £42 million over the next three years. This will finance a full programme of support for public service bodies through PSMW, Value Wales and the Making the Connections improvement fund.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on her policies for improving delivery of local public services? (WAQ49949)

**Sue Essex:** 'Delivering Beyond Boundaries', published in November 2006, sets out the actions that the Welsh Assembly Government intends to take in light of Beecham, and these will accelerate progress towards our goal of transforming the way in which public services are delivered and the experience of everyone who uses them. We are currently consulting on local service boards, which will have a key role in integrating local service and improve delivery.

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement on the efficiency of provision of local government services in South Wales East? (WAQ49950)

**Sue Essex:** It is difficult to generalise about services provided by six local authorities. Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen have all made significant progress with their policy agreements this year and received performance incentive grants in excess of £5 million in recognition of the improvements they have achieved in delivering services.

One of the key principles underpinning 'Making the Connections' and 'Delivering Beyond Boundaries', the Assembly Government's response to the review of local service delivery in Wales by Sir Jeremy Beecham, is that public services outcomes in Wales will be optimised when service providers work together in collaboration. A copy of 'Delivering Beyond Boundaries' can be found on the Welsh Assembly Government's website at [www.Wales.gov.uk](http://www.Wales.gov.uk).

I am very pleased with the level of commitment that local authorities in south-east Wales have shown to collaboration and joint working, whether through the spatial plan, the WLGA regional co-ordinating committee, the Heads of the Valleys initiative, or otherwise. Further developments in this area will be essential to maintaining a standard of services that meets public need.

### Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly he has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49216) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Detail the numbers of hospitals closed each year between 1979 and 1996, and the number of beds in each hospital? (WAQ49295)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** The information contained within the responses to questions 49295 / 49297 / 49298 relates to calendar years. The data is drawn from the hospital usage statistics and consequently relates to those hospitals that include inpatient beds. The data excludes partial closures, hospitals rebuilt but with the same name and hospitals that may have been closed and then reopened.

Concerning bed numbers on the same three questions, it is not possible to provide meaningful data. During the lifetime of a hospital (e.g. possibly a number of decades) the service profile will change and affect the bed numbers. Equally bed numbers often change on a daily/weekly basis in response to operational issues such as control of infection/staffing numbers/refurbishments/temporary service changes.

While taking the above into account, as appropriate, the responses to your individual questions are as follows:

The following central data is available relating to hospitals that were closed.

1979 = 2	1985 = 6	1991 = 12
1980 = 4	1986 = 3	1992 = 3
1981 = 1	1987 = 1	1993 = 6
1982 = 0	1988 = 1	1994 = 8
1983 = 1	1989 = 0	1995 = 4
1984 = 2	1990 = 3	1996 = 3

For bed information please see explanation above.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister detail which new hospitals built each year since 1997 were built with private finance initiative investment? (WAQ49296)

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons):** Three NHS hospitals in Wales have been built through the private finance initiative and have opened since 1997: Chepstow Community Hospital, St David's Neighbourhood Hospital in Cardiff, and Neath Port Talbot Hospital.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Detail the numbers of hospitals closed each year between 1979 and 1996, and the number of beds in each hospital? (WAQ49295)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** The information contained within the responses to questions 49295 / 49297 / 49298 relates to calendar years. The data is drawn from the hospital usage statistics and consequently relates to those hospitals which include inpatient beds. The data excludes partial closures, hospitals rebuilt but with the same name and hospitals which may have been closed and then reopened.

Concerning bed numbers on the same three questions it is not possible to provide meaningful data. During the lifetime of a hospital (eg possibly a number of decades) the service profile will change and affect the bed numbers. Equally bed numbers often change on a daily / weekly basis in response to operational issues such as control of infection / staffing numbers / refurbishments / temporary service changes.

Whilst taking the above into account as appropriate the responses to your individual questions are as follows:

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1981 = 1	1987 = 1	1993 = 6
1982 = 0	1988 = 1	1994 = 8
1983 = 1	1989 = 0	1995 = 4
1984 = 2	1990 = 3	1996 = 3

For bed information please see explanation above.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister detail the number of new hospitals built each year since 1997, and will he detail the number of beds in each hospital? (WAQ49297)

**Brian Gibbons:** The following are the numbers for hospitals open since 1997 that contain in-patient beds.

1997 = 1	2001 = 0	2005 = 0
1998 = 0	2002 = 3	2006 = 0
1999 = 1	2003 = 1	
2000 = 0	2004 = 0	

Additionally, a new community hospital has been built in Tenby, which does not contain in-patient beds. Two are under construction at Ysbyty Alltwen, Porthmadog, and Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda, and business cases are being developed for three more at Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and the Cynon Valley.

For bed information please see explanation above.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister detail the number of hospitals closed each year since 1997, and will he detail the number of beds in each hospital? (WAQ49298)

**Brian Gibbons:** The following central data is available relating to the closure of hospitals. Closures shown are the dates when in-patients activity ceased. In some instances, day care/day case and out-patient activity may have continued.

1997 = 2	2001 = 3	2005 = 1
1998 = 4	2002 = 3	2006 = 0
1999 = 3	2003 = 1	
2000 = 2	2004 = 6	

For bed information please see explanation above.

**Nick Bourne:** How much was spent by the Minister's department on publicity in 2006? (WAQ49244)

**Brian Gibbons:** Further to your above question and my response of 22 March, it has been brought to my attention that not all of the data had been included in this reply. Therefore, revised figures are provided below.

The total spent on publicity during April-December 2006 was £1,368,682, and this has been broken down with examples of the publicity campaigns not procured centrally as follows:



- Older people and long-term care: promotional materials for the strategy for older people and the social services strategy—£25,850
- Children First: children and families publicity—£3,610.46
- Strategy Directorate: chronic diseases—£120
- Community, Primary Care and Health Service Policy Directorate: dental contract—£1,481
- Complaints leaflet/independent complaints facilitation leaflet—£10,000
- Expert patients programme publicity materials—£10,000
- Care Standards Inspectorate Wales—£25,923.72
- Health Commission Wales—£20,000
- Health Inspectorate Wales—£16,764.06
- Welsh Backs campaign—£544,057
- Healthy Wales video—£13,876
- Health Challenge Wales—£480,000
- Sexual health—£217,000

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the steps he is taking to address health inequalities in the vale of Clwyd? (WAQ49330)

**Brian Gibbons:** I refer you to my answer to WAQ48898 of 22 January 2007.

**William Graham:** Will the Minister outline how his policies promote the co-ordination of the delivery of health and social services in South Wales East? (WAQ49332)

**Brian Gibbons:** The health communities in south-east Wales are working to deliver the Welsh Assembly Government's policy as set out in 'Designed for Life'. The most advanced is the work for the old Gwent area, as set out in the 'Clinical Futures' project. Formal public consultation has recently been concluded on this.

Our strategy for social services in Wales, 'Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities: A Strategy for Social Services in Wales over the Next Decade', will be published later this month and is also very relevant for the health communities in south-east Wales. It will emphasise the importance of effective partnerships between social services and the NHS, which use care pathways to support people. Promoting good partnership working at the interface between health and social care is vital. The increased use of the flexibilities measures under section 31 of the Health Act 2006, including pooled budgets, integrated provision and lead commissioning, will support this approach

Plans are advanced for two new local general hospitals in Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent as part of the 'Clinical Futures' project.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on his policies for improving access to the NHS in rural Wales? (WAQ49335)

**Brian Gibbons:** Any change in NHS provision must be measured against the ambition, as set out in 'Designed for Life', of delivering sustainable, safe, world-class health and social care for all residents by 2015, including those in rural areas.

**Jocelyn Davies:** Can Minister provide the number of years lost due to epilepsy and status epilepticus deaths for the years since the 2002 national audit? (WAQ49430)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** The average annual number of years of life lost per 10,000 residents due to epilepsy and status epilepticus is given in the following table.

**Years of life lost by epilepsy (c) and status epilepticus (d) (a)**

Year (b)	Average annual years of life lost
2003 – 2005	3.63

Health Solutions Wales

- (a) The number of deaths of people aged under 75 in each five-year age group is multiplied by the difference between the midpoint of the age group and 74.5. The average annual years of life lost are obtained by summing across the age groups and dividing by 5. The figures are presented as a rate per 10,000 residents.
- (b) Due to the relatively small numbers of deaths due to epilepsy and status epilepticus each year, the years of life lost are calculated on a three-year period.
- (c) ICD-10 Code G40.
- (d) ICD-10 Code G41.

**Jocelyn Davies:** Further to his answer to WAQ48868, will the Minister detail whether the numbers of death given include status epilepticus deaths? (WAQ49436)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** The answer to WAQ48868 excluded deaths due to status epilepticus. The number of deaths that occurred among Welsh residents is given in the following table:

Number of deaths by main cause and year (a)

Year	Epilepsy (b)	Status epilepticus (c)
2002	52	3
2003	61	2
2004	53	4
2005	39	3

**Source:** Office for National Statistics

- (a) Cause of death is based on ‘final’ cause of death, which takes account of any additional information provided by medical practitioners or coroners after the death has been registered.
- (b) ICD-10 code G40.
- (c) ICD-10 code G41.

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials’ visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49528) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in his department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49529) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Jenny Randerson:** What funding arrangements have been put in place to ensure adequate service capacity for patients identified with HER2 positive breast cancer? (WAQ49552)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** Local health boards are responsible for commissioning services for patients who require treatment following confirmation that they are HER2 positive.

The decision on whether or not to prescribe trastuzumab (Herceptin) after diagnosis is a clinical one based on the nature of the tumour and the appropriateness of the treatment for the individual concerned. Following guidance issued by the all-Wales medicines strategy group on trastuzumab for early breast cancer, the regional cancer networks undertook an assessment of need and developed commissioning advice, supported by the local health boards, for the testing and administration of treatment, to meet demand.

**Jenny Randerson:** What assessment has the Minister made of the service capacity benefits arising from the use of oral chemotherapies for the treatment of cancer? (WAQ49553)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** As the use of oral chemotherapies increases, there will be some service capacity benefits regarding reducing pressure on pharmacy aseptic units and nursing chemotherapy day units.

However, it is important that oral chemotherapy is not seen as the easy option. The risks associated with it can be as great as with conventional chemotherapy. Supporting these patients will still require extensive resources from the specialist teams currently delivering chemotherapy services.

It is the role of the cancer networks to work with all stakeholders to develop preferred service models for the delivery of cancer services across Wales. Work is currently being undertaken to consider the effect of future changes in the delivery of chemotherapy.

**Rosemary Butler:** What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to improve cardiac services in Gwent? (WAQ49870)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Brian Gibbons:** Cardiac services for people in Gwent are commissioned by local health boards and Health Commission Wales. The Assembly Government's strategy for improving cardiac services is through the implementation of the coronary heart disease national service framework. The service and financial framework process—the delivery plan agreed between the Welsh Assembly Government and the NHS—sets annual targets designed to reduce waiting times and achieve the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities.

A state-of-the art catheter laboratory was opened at the Royal Gwent Hospital in November 2005. This facility was funded by the Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund. The new facility doubled the previous capacity for specialist cardiac diagnostics and also provides a purpose-built cardiac catheterisation laboratory and day ward on site. This expansion will enable an initial and subsequent phased increase in the provision of angiography.

The quality and outcomes framework of the general medical services contract is an incentive scheme for the provision of high-quality primary care and includes points and indicators for patients with coronary heart disease. GP practices in Gwent achieved 97.66 per cent of points in 2005-06, and 93.78 per cent in 2004-05. That achievement was above the Welsh average in both years.

The inequalities in health fund was established in 2001 to stimulate and support local action to tackle inequalities in health and contributory factors such as inequities in access to services. The fund currently supports 62 projects with a primary focus on coronary heart disease. Projects are targeted at disadvantaged communities.

The fund is currently supporting 13 projects in the Gwent region (a further three have previously reached completion). Work has covered screening and risk assessment, lifestyle change advice—including nutrition and smoking cessation—weight management programmes, specialist obesity clinics, exercise on referral and cardiac rehabilitation programmes. Some projects have also specifically targeted ethnic communities.

Evaluations are still ongoing but results to date have been positive. Projects are scheduled to complete throughout the 2007-08 financial year and teams are currently engaging with their local commissioners with a view to mainstreaming successes.

**Helen Mary Jones:** What guidance does the Welsh Assembly Government provide to each local health board and trust in Wales about provision for adolescents with mental illnesses? (WAQ49894)

**Brian Gibbons:** The Welsh Assembly Government published its 10-year strategy for the improvement of child and adolescent mental health services in Wales, entitled 'Everybody's Business', in 2001.

This document focused on the responsibility of all agencies and services in safeguarding the mental health and psychological wellbeing of children and young people, and clearly set out which services would fall to either the local health boards or Health Commission Wales to commission.

Ministers have re-affirmed that they are committed to the NHS developing the CAMHS commissioning networks that were outlined in Welsh Health Circular 2003/063 and required by WHC 2005/075. These networks will be better placed to map out provision, plan what is required in their area and commission the required level of services.

Guidance on the age range of patients treated by CAMHS was issued in 2002, as Welsh Health Circular 2002/125.

The Children First grant and the resources identified include an element to develop the local authority contribution to CAMHS services. Local authorities are expected to develop local arrangements with the NHS, the Youth Justice Board and voluntary bodies.

The Assembly Government has set stretching service and financial framework targets for CAMHS since 2004. The new target set for 2007-08 is specifically aimed at reducing the waiting times for admissions for tier 4 services.

This approach has been replicated in the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services. The mental health and psychological wellbeing of children and young people is being addressed as one section of the NSF. It contains specific and measurable key actions for the delivery of multi-agency services across tiers 1 to 4 that are closely linked to the CAMHS strategy 'Everybody's Business'.

The education guidance 'Inclusion and Pupil Support', issued in November 2006, states that joint training sessions with parents, carers, professionals from other agencies such as health service staff, Careers Wales and local voluntary groups are a helpful way of furthering professional understanding and of improving provision made for individuals through better joint working.

NHS child and adolescent mental health services are currently active in many parts of Wales in providing training to schools, to help them fulfill their role as part of tier 1 CAMHS services, as set out in 'Everybody's Business'. This ties in with a recommendation in the recent Estyn report, 'Behaviour Management Training (2004)', that more should be done to improve the understanding of teachers and support staff about mental health in children.

The national strategy on school-based counselling was issued for consultation in February 2007.

CAMHS provision at all levels and through all agencies will be reviewed independently over the next 12 months by the Wales Audit Office and Health Inspectorate Wales. In addition, issues of transition to adult services are being considered as part of the Welsh Assembly Government adult service review, and as part of a review of secure forensic mental health services.

These reviews will provide opportunities to identify in more detail the progress made since the launch of 'Everybody's Business', and the outcomes achieved for vulnerable children and young people. They set the direction for the remainder of the 10-year strategy.

**Helen Mary Jones:** When is the Harvey Jones adolescent unit in Cardiff going to be opened in Bridgend? (WAQ49895)

**Brian Gibbons:** There are consultation proposals planned from May 2007 for the transfer and development of the child and adolescent mental health services in-patient service from the Harvey Jones unit to the Princess of Wales Hospital site by 2010. It also proposes that, in the interim, the service move to upgraded accommodation at Glanrhyd, Bridgend, to be available by spring 2008.

**Helen Mary Jones:** When the Harvey Jones adolescent unit is opened in Bridgend, will it include two new wards, one for the emergency admission of mentally ill adolescents, and one to treat young people up to the age of 25 with eating disorders? (WAQ49896)

**Brian Gibbons:** There are consultation proposals planned from May 2007 for the transfer and development of the child and adolescent mental health services in-patient service from the Harvey Jones unit to the Princess of Wales Hospital site by 2010. It also proposes that, in the interim, the service move to upgraded accommodation at Glanrhyd, Bridgend, to be available by spring 2008.

In the light of a sustained reduction in the number of admissions, HCW has decided to develop a new tertiary specialist community eating disorder service to support local services in treating patients with an eating disorder. HCW is working with trusts to develop the new service, which is expected to commence later this year. HCW will review the overall service configuration in south Wales once the new service is in place.

**Helen Mary Jones:** How much funding is the Welsh Assembly Government investing in treating adolescents with mental illnesses in Wales? (WAQ49897)

**Brian Gibbons:** It is difficult to quantify the total spend in relation to the treatment of adolescents with mental illness only. However, for 2005-06, the actual recorded spend on CAMHS via the NHS programme budget returns indicate that the spend on CAMHS was £37.3 million, of which £27 million was LHB spend and £10.3 million was HCW spend.

Included in this recorded spend, £1.2 million recurrent NHS funding has been made available for CAMHS from 2004-05 for:

- the provision of beds for adolescents who require admission in emergencies;
- forensic adolescent consultation teams;

- primary mental health workers; and
- the development of a diploma level module by the University of Glamorgan and the University of Wales, Bangor.

Specific CAMHS targets were set in the service and financial framework process for each of the years 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, and a total of £2 million of non-recurring NHS funding has been made available since 2005-06, to improve access to waiting times for CAMHS, by improving the capacity, capability and demand management of specialist CAMHS in Wales.

Welsh Assembly policies developed to provide support and advice to children and adolescents who may be experiencing emotional problems are all rooted in the CAMHS strategy 'Everybody's Business', which was launched in 2001.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the lack of funding for the treatment of patients with obstructive sleep apnoea in Cardiff? (WAQ49899)

**Brian Gibbons:** The commissioning of local services, including those for obstructive sleep apnoea, is the responsibility of LHBs, in partnership with Health Commission Wales, as appropriate. LHBs are well placed to evaluate local need and commission and develop services accordingly. They often have to make difficult decisions as part of the commissioning process and work to ensure at all times that locally identified needs are planned for.

A review of obstructive sleep apnoea services is being undertaken in Wales and the results will help to identify how services for this condition may be best provided in Wales in the future. The service development and commissioning directives for respiratory conditions, which are currently being finalised following the recent public consultation, also addresses obstructive sleep apnoea and recommends that regional respiratory health networks should be established for such specialised conditions.

The forthcoming commissioning guidance will encourage a more collaborative form of commissioning on a regional basis to ensure the effective use of resources available.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the future of Fairwood Hospital in Swansea? (WAQ49900)

**Brian Gibbons:** In line with our guidance on proposals to change health services, efforts are focused on making a decision locally on what is in the best interests of patients. To that end, the community health council is taking forward work to ensure that all possible avenues have been explored in seeking agreement on the provision of future services in Swansea. The CHC is considering the additional information received from the LHB and trust. A workshop has been arranged on 3 April in order to ensure thorough consideration of this information.

Following the workshop, the CHC will formally meet officers from the Welsh Assembly Government health and social services regional office in mid April to take this work forward. It would be inappropriate to speculate as to when a final decision will be made because it will depend on the outcome of the workshop. We are not at a stage where final agreement has been reached or decisions made.

If agreement cannot be reached following the workshop and further information needs to be provided by the trust and LHB, the regional officers will meet them again to see whether the issue can be resolved.

If agreement cannot be achieved then, any proposal will be sent to me for my consideration and determination

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on plans to open a new hospital in Swansea to replace the current hospitals at Morriston and Singleton? (WAQ49901)

**Brian Gibbons:** Swansea health community and its partners have now developed a strategic outline programme, which outlines the options for the future provision of acute, mental health and community health services in Swansea. This SOP is now being considered by the Assembly in conjunction with similar SOPs received from all other regions of Wales. During the spring, a new all-Wales capital programme will be produced, based on these SOPs, which will identify the proposed capital spending priorities for Wales for the next 10 to 15 years.

The various options available for acute services in Swansea will need to be evaluated fully through the all-Wales NHS capital investment process before a preferred option can be identified. Work is already under way on the preparation of a strategic outline business case, which should be completed towards the end of 2007. This will further examine the options for the proposed single integrated hospital. It is unlikely that the final option will be confirmed until the outline business case is developed and submitted during 2008.

**Nick Bourne:** Does the Minister have any plans to provide a specialist liver unit for liver disease sufferers in Wales? (WAQ49902)

**Brian Gibbons:** There are no current plans to provide such a unit. Patients with liver disease are treated principally by gastroenterologists across Wales at local hospitals. Patients who require more complex case management or liver transplants are referred to specialist clinics in England for treatment. Such services need a large catchment population of at least 7 million to maintain clinical standards with dedicated infrastructure.

Health Commission Wales currently commissions tertiary liver services from well-established specialist centres in Birmingham and London for use by Welsh patients.

**David Lloyd:** Will the Minister make a statement on the use of temporary contracts for nursing and ancillary staff working at Fairwood Hospital, Swansea? (WAQ49910)

**Brian Gibbons:** All trusts, as part of a sound management process, operate a vacancy review process. This is to ensure that, as posts become available, assessments of service requirements are undertaken, in order to deliver effective efficient services that will not compromise patient care and are of the highest standard.

The majority of staff remaining at Fairwood Hospital are original staff and are therefore on permanent contracts. However, any nursing or ancillary vacancies arising are being filled on a temporary basis, as the future of these posts is undetermined until a final decision has been reached on the services provided from Fairwood Hospital. All staff have been kept fully updated during this process.

**Elin Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on his plans to support the appointment of a hepatologist in Wales? (WAQ49911)

**Brian Gibbons:** There are no hepatologists practising in Wales at present. In Wales, patients with liver disease are treated principally by gastroenterologists. Therefore, although there are plans to expand hepatology services in Wales, these do not include the recruitment of hepatologists.

**Karen Sinclair:** Will the Minister give an update on the catch-up programme for Prevenar in Wales, the conjugated pneumococcal vaccine? (WAQ49912)

**Brian Gibbons:** The pneumococcal vaccine catch-up campaign was launched on 4 September 2006 alongside the introduction of a revised routine childhood immunisation programme. Some early uptake figures regarding the catch-up programme in children reaching two years of age will be available later this week in the National Public Health Service's quarterly COVER statistics publication covering the period October-December 2006. However, as the catch-up campaign is still ongoing, and uptake at two years of age is the best routine indicator of uptake in children included in the catch up, later COVER reports will give a more comprehensive account of overall uptake rates.

**David Lloyd:** Will the Minister make a statement on the availability of positron emission tomography scanners in Wales, and what plans does he have to increase provision? (WAQ49913)

**Brian Gibbons:** It is the responsibility of Health Commission Wales to reach decisions on individual requests for PET scan funding within the framework of their policy on access.

On 24 January 2007, the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks and I formally launched the Wales Research and Diagnostic Positron Emission Tomography Centre, based in purpose-built accommodation at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff. We are committed to the development of new treatments and the provision of modern equipment to improve the quality and effectiveness of health services to the people of Wales. This PET centre, once operational and taking advantage of the latest technology, will help Wales to achieve that goal. Combined with the latest in x-ray technology, this facility will produce detailed and accurate images for both clinical staff and researchers. We expect it to be operational by the end of 2008.

**Laura Anne Jones:** Will the Minister outline what is being done by the Welsh Assembly Government to inform women in Wales about the need for regular cervical screening? (WAQ49924)

**Brian Gibbons:** Cervical Screening Wales invites all women aged 20 to 64 who live in Wales to attend for cervical screening every three years. Each woman receives a personal invitation and a leaflet, 'Cervical Screening: The Facts', with information to enable her to make an informed choice about screening.

In addition to this routine activity, Cervical Screening Wales is currently commissioning a media (TV and cinema) advertising campaign to encourage women to attend for regular cervical screening.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister detail how the number of nurse training places to be made available is decided? (WAQ49925)

**Brian Gibbons:** NHS trusts in Wales submit workforce plans to the workforce development unit at the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare annually, outlining the staff whom they expect they will need over the next five-year period to deliver services. These preliminary figures are also presented to the partnership forum.

Nursing student places are commissioned annually based on the workforce plans provided by the NHS. There is a four-year time lag between the plans being submitted and a nurse becoming qualified. While this makes an accurate balance of supply and demand somewhat difficult, the future processes to be used for managing workforce planning are currently being reviewed.

The number of nurses (including auxiliaries) has risen from 30,948 in 1997 to 43,215 in 2005. The whole-time equivalent number of qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff rose by 572 to 20,698



(29,416 staff in post) between 2004-05. The target of having 6,000 additional nurses by 2010, which was set by my predecessor, is well on the way towards being met, as an increase of 4,977 was reached by 2005.

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the school nurses strategy? (WAQ49926)

**Brian Gibbons:** Following discussion by the Cabinet sub-committee on children and young people, a group was established across the Assembly Government to develop a national consensus on the role of school nurses and to draw up an action plan to take forward a modern school nursing service in Wales. The group has taken evidence on different models of school nursing and this evidence has been drawn together into a draft framework.

I recently received a briefing on the draft framework, which includes proposed standards for school nursing services in Wales. Before it undergoes wider consultation, I have asked officials to circulate the draft framework more widely across Assembly Government departments.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ49099, will the Minister detail the actual private financial initiative investment made for each project? (WAQ49928)

**Brian Gibbons:** I was unable to provide an answer to this question within the deadline as the information was unavailable. I have now received the information from my officials, and this is set out below:

There have been no initial capital sum payments by NHS trusts. All capital costs associated with PFI schemes are paid by the third party contractor and all NHS costs associated with PFI are revenue in nature, via leasing arrangements, and are therefore annual revenue payments.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Further to his answer to WAQ49099, will the Minister detail the total capital investment made for each project? (WAQ49929)

**Brian Gibbons:** The estimated capital values for the NHS Wales trusts' private finance initiatives, as stated in their 2005-06 audited accounts, are as detailed:

NHS trust	Scheme	£000
Bro Morgannwg	Baglan Hospital	66,000
Cardiff and Vale	St David's Hospital	13,847
Carmarthenshire	Contract energy management scheme	300
Conwy and Denbighshire	Renal unit	1,673
Gwent	Newport hospitals' energy scheme	4,000
Gwent	Chepstow Community Hospital	10,000
Gwent	Nevill Hall Hospital energy scheme	3,300
Gwent	Nevill Hall Hospital day surgery unit	3,275
North Glamorgan	Combined heating and power plant	995
Pembrokeshire and Derwen	Combined heating and power plant	150
Pontypridd and Rhondda	Staff accommodation at Royal Glamorgan Hospital	2,521
Total		106,061

**David Lloyd:** Will the Minister make a statement on the number of children with Munchausen syndrome by proxy in Wales? (WAQ49931)

**Brian Gibbons:** This information is not held centrally.

**Laura Anne Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on epilepsy services in Wales? (WAQ49932)

**Brian Gibbons:** Services are in place in Wales to ensure that the diagnosis of epilepsy is undertaken within a secondary care setting by a consultant neurologist. The ongoing management of those patients is undertaken by a general practitioner. Specialist epilepsy nurses provide important additional support and can help to bridge the gap between primary care and consultant-led care.

The Welsh Assembly Government is currently finalising the service development and commissioning directives for epilepsy, which will be submitted to me for my approval for public consultation by the end of March. It is anticipated that a three-month public consultation process will commence following the Welsh Assembly elections in May 2007, with the aim to publish the final document by August 2007.

**Jenny Randerson:** Will the Minister make a statement on the need for a hepatologist in Wales? (WAQ49934)

**Brian Gibbons:** There are no hepatologists practising in Wales at present. In Wales, patients with liver disease are treated principally by gastroenterologists. Therefore, although there are plans to expand hepatology services in Wales, these do not include the recruitment of hepatologists.

**Jenny Randerson:** What assessment has the Minister made on the implantation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance on the treatment of early and metastatic breast cancer in each of the cancer networks and NHS trusts? (WAQ49951)

**Brian Gibbons:** The national cancer standards describe the core aspects of cancer services that should be provided to patients throughout Wales and aim to promote best practice in diagnosis, treatment, care and support, regardless of the cancer type. The standards, which were published in June 2005, pick up on the major themes of NICE's improving outcomes guidance.

These universally applicable standards include access to high-quality imaging and diagnostic services, waiting times to treatment, access to safe and effective surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatments, and the provision of high-quality information and support throughout each stage of the patient's journey. The Assembly Government has set a target date for these standards to be achieved in full by March 2009.

With regard to the treatment of early and metastatic breast cancer, NICE has produced a number of technology appraisals that apply to drugs and treatment regimes. The NHS is legally obliged to fund and resource medicines and treatments recommended by NICE's technology appraisals. In addition, NICE is currently in the process of developing two clinical guidelines—one for early-stage breast cancer and one for advanced (metastatic) breast cancer. These are both at an early stage of development, with guidance expected to be published in early 2009.

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister detail why current services provided by the breastfeeding support group Milk Mates will not be utilised as part of Flying Start? (WAQ49954) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills*

**The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson):** Milk Mates has previously been a part of Sure Start in the Vale of Glamorgan, which comes under the umbrella of Cymorth—the children and youth support fund. Cymorth has a wider remit than Flying Start and therefore funds a wider range of support activities. Flying Start is concentrated on the four core entitlements of additional health visiting, quality child care for 2-year-olds, parenting programmes and

language and play sessions. Partnerships may include additional services that complement these core entitlements at their discretion once the core services have been secured.

Having considered local need, the Vale of Glamorgan children's and young people's partnership have decided to realign the Sure Start services funded under Cymorth with Flying Start, as there was considerable overlap in the areas of operation.

As Milk Mates already works closely with health visitors and midwives, the partnership has negotiated that this professional support will continue under the universal health visiting and midwifery service, and support will continue to be given by the partnership through the transition period. The possibility of locating Milk Mates volunteers within baby clinics and other suitable health locations is currently being explored by the partnership. This would enable the valuable support Milk Mates volunteers provide to be continued on a wider basis, and not just in the areas that they had previously served under Sure Start, therefore mainstreaming a Cymorth project.

**Eleanor Burnham:** What consultation was held between Welsh health professionals and local health boards about the reduction in numbers of copies of the British National Formulary publication given to practicing GPs in Wales? (WAQ49955)

**Eleanor Burnham:** Has a full analysis of the impact of changes to the distribution procedure regarding the British National Formulary been carried out prior to the implementation of the changes, and, if so, what was the extent of this analysis? (WAQ49956)

**Eleanor Burnham:** Was the lack of accessibility of the online version of the British National Formulary to staff without ready access to computers considered before the decision was taken to change the previous BNF distribution procedures in Wales? (WAQ49957)

**Eleanor Burnham:** Was the situation of needing the use of the British National Formulary outside of GP practices, for example, during house visits, considered before the decision to reduce the numbers of copies distributed in Wales was taken? (WAQ49958)

**Eleanor Burnham:** What agreement was made between Welsh health professionals and local health boards about the reduction in numbers of copies of the British National Formulary publication given to practicing GPs in Wales? (WAQ49959)

**Brian Gibbons:** The British National Formulary was originally ordered and paid for by health authorities and distributed to primary, community and secondary health care persons and bodies, together with relevant teaching establishments. With the 2003 reorganisation, funding was transferred to the National Public Health Service, but, from April 2006, the budget was transferred to the Assembly with orders co-ordinated by the NHS business services centre on our behalf.

The allocation of BNF 52 and the paediatric BNF has been met in full from the budget for this financial year, and they have been supplied to prescribers in the normal way.

Recent demand for hard copies of the BNFs for an increasing number of potential prescribers has put a considerable strain on the resources available. More cost-effective targeting of resources has now been achieved, by taking advantage of the significant investment in information technology in the NHS, to transfer some users to the online service, which provides an equivalent access to BNF information.

The business service centre headquarters have written to recipients to advise of the reduction in the number of hard copies of BNFs that are available and to advise that the location of hard copies is made known to those who may require them within each practice or organisation.

A small quantity of hard copies will be retained by local offices of the business service centre as a reserve and, subject to availability, additional copies may be provided upon request where an appropriate need is identified.

Where prescribers prefer to use a hard copy, and have not been provided with one on this occasion, they will also have the option of obtaining them directly from the publishers at a special NHS rate of a 50 per cent discount off the normal published price.

Feedback has been received following this initiative and this will be taken fully into account before ordering the paper copies of BNF 54.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister outline what he has been doing to promote healthy eating in Wales? (WAQ49962)

**Brian Gibbons:** Poor diet is a major concern and we have developed strategies and programmes to address this. The Welsh Assembly Government, in partnership with the Food Standards Agency Wales, are working to bring about positive changes to the nutritional status of people in Wales through the implementation of the national nutrition strategy, food and wellbeing. It has led to a number of initiatives aimed at encouraging people to eat a healthy diet, such as:

- the food and fitness health promotion grant scheme, which provides financial support for community projects that encourage healthier eating and more active lifestyles;
- a community food co-operatives programme, which has been established to supply, from locally produced sources as far as possible, quality affordable fruit and vegetables to disadvantaged communities. Over 110 co-operatives have been opened under the scheme since April 2004;
- grants totalling £1.2 million, which are being provided to NHS trusts across Wales to increase dietetic capacity in the community through utilising dietitians' expertise to train and develop community workers or peer educators working with people in the community on healthy eating; and
- a food in hospital task and finish group, chaired by the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, has been established to look at the provision of food and drink in hospitals for patients, staff and visitors.

The food and fitness five-year implementation plan to promote healthy eating and physical activity for children and young people in Wales, launched in June 2006, sets out some of the ways in which the Assembly Government is helping to support parents, children and young people in their efforts to eat well, stay fit and achieve the highest standard of health possible. The plan identifies actions in schools and the community, as well as training and resources for adults who work with children, to enable them to learn about healthy eating and physical activity. A number of programmes are under way to implement the actions outlined in the plan. These include:

- additional funding, which has been released to fund additional co-ordinators to support the expansion of the Welsh network of healthy school schemes to all LEA-maintained schools;
- grants have been made available for food and fitness projects in WNHSS schools, for example, playground games, bike racks, fruit tuck shops, school gardens, water coolers, healthy vending and out-of-school cookery classes;
- guidance on whole school food and fitness policies has been developed;
- guidance on packed lunches has been developed; and
- a pilot scheme to look at ways of introducing or increasing healthy food options within leisure centres.

A quality of food strategy to improve the quality of food consumed in Wales is currently being developed. The remit for the strategy is broad and cross-cutting and will look to integrate policies from key areas across the Assembly Government such as agriculture, education, social justice and health and will link the healthy eating and sustainable development agendas.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many hospitals have closed since 1999? (WAQ49965)

**Brian Gibbons:** A total of 19 hospitals in Wales have closed since 1999.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many hospitals have been downgraded since 1999? (WAQ49966)

**Brian Gibbons:** Service profiles of hospitals are continually reviewed to reflect clinical requirements and the service needs of the local population and, therefore, services will expand, reduce and relocate as necessary. There is no standard definition of hospital downgrading and therefore no central information is held.

**Leanne Wood:** What steps has the Minister taken to ensure that the pollution of Brofiscin quarry does not pose a risk to human or animal health? (WAQ49978)

**Brian Gibbons:** The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside issued a statement on Brofiscin quarry on 20 March 2007, stating that investigations to date have confirmed that there is no identifiable harm or immediate danger to human health.

In March 2005, the Environment Agency became the lead enforcement authority once the site was designated as a 'special site' by the local authority under part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The local health board has the responsibility for the health of its local population and is engaged in a multi-agency partnership process in respect of the investigation of this complex site.

There is evidence of pollution of deep groundwater, but no risk to any potable supplies. Surface waters are intermittently affected and there are measures in place to prevent livestock drinking from surface water sources.

The National Public Health Service and the Health Protection Agency are aware that additional environmental investigations have been undertaken and these results are expected to be available in spring 2007. The local health board (with specialist support from the National Public Health Service and the chemical hazards and poisons division of the Health Protection Agency, if appropriate) will provide relevant support to the Environment Agency and local authority to both comment on the findings of these most recent investigations and communicate information to the local community.

At the national level, the National Public Health Service (together with the Health Protection Agency) has, during 2006-07, provided advice to the Welsh Assembly Government, in relation to the implementation of the second year of the contaminated land grant scheme/capital fund, which has funded the further investigation of contaminated land sites across Wales.

**Janet Ryder:** Further to the reply to WAQ49380, WAQ49381 and WAQ49382, will the Minister confirm what grade or band is the norm for an experienced staff nurse working full time in a coronary care unit within an NHS trust in Wales? (WAQ49981)

**Brian Gibbons:** The introduction of the NHS job evaluation scheme has recognised that a newly qualified nurse will commence at band 5. The precise range of duties and responsibilities could vary within coronary care units, and this may be reflected in a range of bands reflecting the duties and responsibilities of nurses who work in this clinical area.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister state when the planned review into the future role of Llandudno hospital will be completed? (WAQ49982)

**Brian Gibbons:** Conwy Local Health Board is leading the general review into Llandudno hospital on behalf of the local commissioners with a direct interest in the hospital. As agreed with Conwy community health councils, an independent chair is to be appointed by the LHB to oversee the review. The LHB is currently in discussion with suitable candidates and expects to make the appointment imminently. The review will take up to six months thereafter, before reporting back to the commissioners.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister state when the planned review into breast surgery services currently at Llandudno hospital will be completed? (WAQ49983)

**Brian Gibbons:** Conwy Local Health Board is leading the review into breast surgery on behalf of the local commissioners of the service. As agreed with Conwy community health councils, independent experts are to undertake this review. The LHB has appointed two experts and the review is now under way and a report from the experts will be provided to the commissioners by late June 2007. Thereafter, commissioners will determine the future provision of this service and communicate this, in a timely manner, to the main Llandudno review group as a definitive decision.

**Lisa Francis:** What proposals are HCW working on to provide alternatives to in-patient treatment for eating disorder patients in Carmarthen, and will they include the setting up of a community intensive therapy team in the Carmarthenshire area? (WAQ49984)

**Brian Gibbons:** HCW is currently working closely with trusts to develop proposals for alternatives to in-patient treatment. These include specialist outreach teams and day-care facilities to support more patients at home, manage demand and ensure that only those patients requiring tertiary in-patient services need to travel to such centres.

HCW is reviewing the future demand for in-patient beds for patients in the light of a sustained reduction in admissions and plans to develop stronger community orientated services. The outcome of this review will inform the shape of the future provision for eating disorder services. There are plans to pilot a community-based service in south-east Wales, which, if successful, may be rolled out across the three regions.

HCW supports the development of community-based services and is currently researching the varying models of community intensive therapy teams that could be commissioned throughout Wales.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister make a statement on what action the Welsh Assembly Government has planned or is planning to take following the vote to pass NDM3450 on 6 Feb 2007? (WAQ49985)

**Brian Gibbons:** You have asked me to make a statement on what actions the Welsh Assembly Government has planned or is planning to take following the vote to pass NDM3450 on 6 February 2007. The resolution on that day was:

The National Assembly for Wales:

*1. recognises that public confidence has been shaken by the handling of the consultations into the reconfiguration of the acute sector in the health service; and*

*2. calls on the Welsh Assembly Government to conduct a review of the current consultation procedures with the aim of introducing a robust and transparent system before further reconfiguration takes place.*

*3. calls on the Assembly Government to improve co-ordination and joint working between the ambulance service, accident-and-emergency departments and GP out-of-hours services, as part of creating a modern, fit-for-purpose healthcare service in Wales.*

*4. regrets the failure of the Assembly Government to establish, at an earlier date, an inquiry into the flawed consultation process concerning the provision of emergency surgery services at Prince Philip Hospital in Llanelli, which has meant that those services have already been suspended.*

*5. welcomes the Minister's statement on 1 February 2007 that he has now agreed to an independent inquiry into the provision of emergency surgical services at Prince Philip hospital in Llanelli, and calls on the Minister to:*

*a) publish the terms of reference for this inquiry as a matter of urgency;*

*b) include in the terms of reference an examination of any contribution his department made in the decision to close emergency surgery services at Prince Philip Hospital; and*

*c) ensure that the inquiry is completed by 15 March so that his response can be considered in an Assembly Plenary meeting during this current Assembly term.*

You have asked what I plan to do to deal with this resolution. I will deal with each point separately.

Points 1 and 2—*recognises that public confidence has been shaken by the handling of the consultations into the reconfiguration of the acute sector in the health service and calls on the Welsh Assembly Government to conduct a review of the current consultation procedures with the aim of introducing a robust and transparent system before further reconfiguration takes place.*

In acknowledging that a number of reconfiguration proposals generated public concern, it also needs to be acknowledged that a great deal of progress had been made with the acute services review in a relatively short time. In addition, a significant outcome was a high level of public awareness of, and support for, the need for change.

A number of decisions have been accepted by community health councils where concern has been expressed, such as in Llandudno and mid and west Wales. The NHS has taken these on board and is undertaking further work.

We are learning from this process. The former finance director is currently considering NHS governance issues, and my officials have already met to discuss the recent reconfiguration process, with a view to issuing revised consultation guidance. This revised guidance will provide clarity on regionally conducted consultations.

We will also be learning from the outcome of the independent inquiry in Llanelli. My officials will draw on issues identified as part of the inquiry, which will in turn inform the revised consultation guidance for the NHS.

Point 3—*calls on the Assembly Government to improve co-ordination and joint working between the ambulance service, accident-and-emergency departments and GP out-of-hours services, as part of creating a modern, fit-for-purpose healthcare service in Wales.*

The Assembly Government is already addressing this issue through the delivering emergency care services strategy. DECS's overall project vision is to provide a service that ensures that patients—no matter how or when they contact any of the emergency services—are assessed and then seen by the most appropriate health care professional at the most appropriate time.

Consultation on the DECS strategy ended on 10 October 2006. A project board is now considering the responses and will be publishing a final document in the spring of 2007. This will include an implementation plan.

Points 4 and 5—*regrets the failure of the Assembly Government to establish, at an earlier date, an inquiry into the flawed consultation process concerning the provision of emergency surgery services at Prince Philip Hospital in Llanelli, which has meant that those services have already been suspended and welcomes the Minister's statement on 1 February 2007 that he has now agreed to an independent inquiry into the provision of emergency surgical services at Prince Philip hospital in Llanelli, and calls on the Minister to:*

- a) publish the terms of reference for this inquiry as a matter of urgency;*
- b) include in the terms of reference an examination of any contribution his department made in the decision to close emergency surgery services at Prince Philip Hospital; and*
- c) ensure that the inquiry is completed by 15 March so that his response can be considered in an Assembly Plenary meeting during this current Assembly term.*

On 22 March 2007, I published a written Cabinet statement that deals with these matters. It can be found on:

<http://assembly/cabinet/Content/statements/2007/22.3.07%20inquiry%20into%20general%20surgical.%200carms.rtf>

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister state what the costs are to the Welsh Assembly Government of running Llandudno, St Asaph and Abergele hospitals in their present forms? (WAQ49986)

**Brian Gibbons:** It is a matter for local health boards to commission services from within their annual financial allocations and, in turn, to make resources available to trusts to deliver services. At present, trusts financially manage their services on a functional basis, rather than on a site-specific basis. In order to implement 'Designed for North Wales', future detailed financial modelling will identify the distribution of resources at a functional and site-specific basis to underpin service reconfiguration.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister state what the net savings to the Welsh Assembly Government will be if the plans to downgrade Llandudno hospital and close Abergele and St Asaph hospitals, as recommended in 'Designed for North Wales', are approved? (WAQ49987)

**Brian Gibbons:** 'Designed for North Wales' did not discuss downgrading Llandudno General Hospital. There are no direct savings to the Welsh Assembly Government arising from 'Designed for North Wales'. The main driver for change was to provide modern and safe clinical services of a high quality.

**Janet Ryder:** What assessment has the Minister made with relevant partners and stakeholders of the number of jobs that would be lost if plans to downgrade Llandudno hospital and close Abergele and St Asaph hospitals, as recommended in 'Designed for North Wales', are approved? (WAQ49988)

**Brian Gibbons:** There are no plans to downgrade Llandudno hospital. 'Designed for North Wales' is not based on jobs being lost; rather, it builds on the record number of new doctors, nurses and other health workers employed by the NHS in Wales. Trusts already have well established human resources policies relating to the transfer of staff, where that is required.

**Janet Ryder:** Will the Minister publish a table showing the amount of money that each independent hospice in Wales receives from the Welsh Assembly Government and the proportion of each hospice's revenue budget that that money represents? (WAQ49989)

**Brian Gibbons:** The commissioning of palliative care services rests with local health boards. In recognition of the valuable role that the voluntary sector plays in providing these services, the Assembly Government has made £10 million available over four years to enhance and develop these services.



From 2007-08, for the first time, the Assembly Government is making £2 million available for high-quality palliative care services provided by the voluntary sector that meet identified patient need. The allocation of this funding will be informed by the outcome of the review of palliative care services, which is currently being undertaken.

Information on individual hospice budgets is not kept centrally.

Below is a table of those hospices awarded funding as part of the £10 million palliative care funding programme.

Hospice	Brief description of scheme	Total offered £
Beacon of Hope	Additional services and staff	73,460
Bracken Trust	Provision of equipment training and staff	135,596
George Thomas Hospice	Contribution to the purchase of land	1,030,857
Gwynedd Hospice at Home	Additional services and staff	246,000
Holme Tower	Provision of 24-hour service and renovation of chapel	498,680
Hope House	Capital cost of Tŷ Gobaith, additional staff, counselling room and facilities	323,375
Hospice of the Good Shepherd	Additional services and staff	204,862
Hospice of the Valleys	Additional services and staff	499,586
Nightingale House	Additional services, staff and equipment.	1,188,000
Paul Satori	Provision of palliative care home services, staffing and equipment.	100,000
Paul Satori/Shalom House joint project	Additional services and staff	210,000
Severn Hospice	Additional services, staff and equipment.	63,360
Shalom House	Equipment and running costs of three-bed unit	101,000
St Anne's	Additional services, staff and equipment.	208,000
St David's Foundation, Newport	Provision of 24-hour palliative care services, on-call service and family support team.	1,004,441
St David's Hospice, Llandudno	Additional services, staff and equipment.	779,110
St Kentigern	Additional services, staff, equipment and conservatory.	823,436
Tŷ Bryngwyn	Costs for six-bed unit	850,000
Tŷ Croeso	Extra day running costs	38,065
Tŷ Hafan	Family support unit and team	673,263
Tŷ Olwen	Building new unit and additional services	335,000
Tyddan Bach	Development of existing building and additional services	130,000
Usk House	Additional opening extra day each week.	108,350

**Lisa Francis:** In respect of ambulance cover in Montgomeryshire, is the Minister aware of Montgomeryshire community health council's proposal that there should be a two-tier ambulance service, composing of at least two Montgomeryshire-bound rapid response vehicles, supported by emergency medical services ambulances, to transport patients to district general hospitals as necessary? (WAQ49998)

**Lisa Francis:** What discussions has the Minister had with Montgomeryshire community health council regarding its proposals for a two-tier system of ambulance cover for Montgomeryshire? (WAQ49999)

**Brian Gibbons:** I am aware that the chief executive of the trust, Alan Murray, gave a presentation to the council, which was well received. He was encouraged by its views regarding the piloting of an alternative model of pre-hospital care. I have had no direct discussions myself on this matter with the CHC, but Mr Murray has discussed this general approach with me.

I know that he is giving a commitment to oversee the new arrangements for Powys and, as a result, will be establishing a project team of both unscheduled care and operational colleagues to begin to scope and shape its future needs. The CHC will be invited to play an active role so that full advantage can be taken of its detailed local knowledge and experience. Powys Local Health Board is equally interested in being a part of this process.

A new regional director has recently been appointed to the central and west region of the trust and a major part of his remit is to consider a range of service options designed specifically to serve the more rural communities.

There is a real desire in the NHS in Wales to deliver a first-class service to the communities of Powys, in a new 'joined up' way.

**Jenny Randerson:** What assessment has the Minister made of the meeting of units of dental activity targets in Welsh dentistry, beyond what is currently in the public domain? (WAQ50001)

**Brian Gibbons:** LHBs, as the budget-holders, are responsible for commissioning and monitoring the contracts that they have entered into with dental providers in their area.

To help them to monitor contract activity, LHBs receive monthly reports of dental activity levels by contract. In January 2007, the dental practice division of the NHS business services authority wrote to LHBs to provide them with details of those contracts at risk of over-delivery or under-delivery in their contracted UDAs. The Welsh Assembly Government issued guidance to LHBs in January 2007 on how best to manage end-of-year issues around overperformance or underperformance against UDA targets.

### Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

**Mark Isherwood:** What funds were allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government, by unitary authority, to combat substance misuse, defined in separate terms of alcohol and also drugs in Wales, during the periods 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06? (WAQ49002)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart):** The allocation of funding between drug and alcohol services is a matter for local determination by the community safety partnerships. The tables have been placed in the library and provide a detailed breakdown of how each CSP allocated their funding.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly she has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49246) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

**Kirsty Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on the timetable for the implementation of regulations in Wales corresponding to the Mobile Homes (Written Statement) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006, which came into force in England last October? (WAQ49432)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Edwina Hart:** Because of other pressures, officials did not have sufficient time or resources to meet the timetable originally envisaged. However, these regulations will introduce important safeguards for mobile-home owners in Wales and, subject to the Assembly's legislative timetable, are likely to be introduced in the autumn.

**Val Lloyd:** Will the Minister make a statement on the impact of her policies on the constituency of Swansea East? (WAQ49445)

**Edwina Hart:** My policies have made an impact in the Swansea East constituency. For example, seven Communities First partnerships have been established in Swansea and the community safety partnership has received over £2.33 million from the substance misuse action fund (revenue) since 2003 to tackle substance misuse. Between 2003-04 and 2006-07, the Assembly Government has allocated £24.22 million in social housing grant to housing associations operating in the Swansea local authority area to assist with the provision of additional affordable housing for rent and low-cost home ownership.

**Rosemary Butler:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Welsh Assembly Government's programme of support for credit unions? (WAQ49456)

**Edwina Hart:** The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to assisting with the development of a strong credit union movement in Wales as a way of encouraging social inclusion. The creating wealth through credit unions project, operated by the Wales Co-operative Centre with the aid of Objective 1 funding, and with match funding from the Assembly Government, comes to an end in March 2007. It is likely that a similar project will be submitted once the convergence funding programme is operational. In the meantime, my officials are working with the Wales Co-operative Centre to ensure that all credit unions in Wales, and not just those in the convergence area, are able to access Assembly Government match funding.

**Nick Bourne:** What consideration is given to the use of the Eurostar train service for Ministerial and officials' visits to Brussels rather than air transport? (WAQ49526) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** I refer you to WAQ49523.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister provide a list of overseas visits undertaken by officials in her department in the last year and advise the reason for those visits? (WAQ49527) *Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer to my answer to WAQ49522.

**Nick Bourne:** In relation to her portfolio responsibilities, how does the Minister intend to respond to the conclusions of the UNICEF report on child welfare, which rated the UK last in a list of 21 advanced nations? (WAQ49538)

**Edwina Hart:** The percentage of children living in relative poverty in Wales has fallen from 35 per cent at the time of devolution to 28 per cent in the most recent period. Progress has been made and the

improvement in Wales has happened further and faster than in many other parts of the UK. A significant number of policies and programmes are in place and are planned across the Assembly Government that are aimed at achieving our goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

Within my own portfolio, the child poverty implementation plan is supported by a range of cross-cutting milestones and targets to track our progress towards the 2020 eradication target.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on the placing of post offices in local-authority-owned buildings, such as libraries and leisure centres? (WAQ49898)

**Edwina Hart:** The use made of local authority buildings is a matter for the local authority concerned.

In responding to the UK Government's consultation on its proposals for the future of the post office network, I asked Department of Trade and Industry Ministers to issue guidance to Post Office Ltd, which would require it to engage with local authorities (and other key local players) in drawing up proposals for post office coverage in a given area, to maximise the potential for coming up with alternative and/or imaginative arrangements for the provision of post office services.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many post offices have closed since 1999? (WAQ49964)

**Edwina Hart:** Post offices are a non-devolved issue and the Welsh Assembly Government does not collate this information.

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many council houses have been built in Wales since 1999? (WAQ49967)

**Edwina Hart:** This information has previously been published in the quarterly newbuild statistical release. The most recent release can be accessed via the following link:  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/40382313/403824/housing/housing-2006/sdr179-2006.pdf?lang=en>

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how many council houses have been sold in Wales since 1999? (WAQ49968)

**Edwina Hart:** This information has previously been published in the quarterly right to buy sales statistical release. The most recent release can be accessed via the following link:  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/40382313/403824/housing/housing-2006/sdr180-2006.pdf?lang=en>

### Questions to the Business Minister

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Minister make a statement on how quickly she has responded to written questions in 2006? (WAQ49218)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Business Minister (Jane Hutt):** I refer you to the answer that I gave to WAQ49222.

## Questions to the House Committee

**Leighton Andrews:** When did the House Committee formally decide to adopt the monoglot names ‘Siambr’, ‘Cwrt’, ‘Neuadd’ and ‘Oriol’ for use in the new building? (WAQ45879)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Chair of the House Committee (John Marek):** I refer the Member to the minutes of the House Committee meetings of 24 June 2004 and 23 June 2005, and the paper to the House Committee of 24 June 2005, which dealt with this matter. The relevant extracts from the minutes and the paper provided below for the Member’s information.

### **House Committee minutes, 24 June 2004**

#### **Item 5.2—New Assembly Building Update**

The Presiding Officer had e-mailed Assembly Members with proposed names for rooms in the new Chamber building. Members were asked to consult with groups.

#### **Action: Members**

### **House Committee paper, 23 June 2005**

#### **Paper 3—New Assembly Building Update**

#### **Naming of Spaces within the Building**

The committee received details of names for defined spaces within the new building at its meeting in June 2004 as follows:

- Senedd (describing the building as a whole)
- Siambr (the Chamber)
- Cwrt (the open area and canyons outside the Siambr and committee rooms)
- Neuadd (the hall at the front of the building overlooking the bay)
- Oriol (the gallery, which includes the public cafe and overlooks the Neuadd, Cwrt and Siambr)

For consistency, these names will be used in future papers to committee and in public information.

### **House Committee minutes, 23 June 2005**

#### **Item 2.3—New Assembly Building Update**

The Deputy Clerk presented House Committee with an update on current progress and issues relating to the construction, fit-out and operational policies of the new Assembly building.

Members noted or agreed the following:

- a site visit to view the building had been arranged for Wednesday, 6 July. Members would decide access arrangements following the visit;
- the names allocated to spaces in the Senedd, which would be used in future;
- final completion of the works under the building contract was scheduled for 30 August. However, some slippage in aspects of the building works would cause delay in the start of the fitting out programme. The slippage had been caused by a combination of factors including changes to ICT requirements and late delivery of equipment to site;
- options for childcare facilities in the bay were being considered and a questionnaire would be issued shortly;

- a Member asked that assurances be given by the contractor that the new building complied with building regulations in respect of the first floor service access, which could only be accessed via a lift;
- in addition to the link access, external access for Members should also be considered through a convenient door in the Assembly offices; and
- the desirability of fire doors being open but with automatic closing devices in the event of fire.

The House Committee agreed to accept the recommendations of the paper apart from the issue of access, which would be resolved after the site visit on 6 July.

William Graham asked for the minutes to note that his party had not been asked to nominate a representative on the Minister's policy steering group.

**Action: Dianne Bevan**

**Leighton Andrews:** What is the House Committee's policy on the use of bilingual or monoglot signs in the new Assembly building? (WAQ45880)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** The House Committee has not yet formally accepted responsibility for the building. Signage was provided under the building contract and will be considered by the House Committee in due course.

**Leighton Andrews:** At which meeting of the House Committee was it decided to adopt the name 'Senedd' for the new building? (WAQ45881)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** I refer the Member to my answer to his written Assembly question WAQ45879.

**Leighton Andrews:** Has there ever been a formal vote of the House Committee in favour of the name 'Senedd' for the new building? (WAQ45882)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** The committee has approved the name formally, without dissent. A formal vote was not taken.

**Carl Sargeant:** What translation will be given to the Welsh term of Senedd during debates? (WAQ45891)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** The term 'Senedd' is the name of the building agreed by the House Committee, and if Members wish to use it during debates (as they have recently) it is not proposed to translate it. This is consistent with the practice used in relation to other names, for example, no English translation is given for the words Tir Gofal, 'Iaith Pawb', Cadw and Estyn, when used in debate. Similarly, no Welsh translation is given for the English elements of terms such as homestart, Age Concern Cymru, Sportsmatch Cymru, Sportlot and Ofcom. Mnemonics such as ELWa contain the initials of English words (Education and Learning Wales in this case) and this term is also used in simultaneous translation.

**Carl Sargeant:** At which point did the House Committee agree on naming the new Assembly building the Senedd? (WAQ45892)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** I refer the Member to my answer to WAQ45879.

**Leighton Andrews:** Pursuant to the answer to WAQ45879, will the representative of the House Committee reproduce the e-mail from the Presiding Officer referred to in the House Committee minute of 24 June 2004? (WAQ46067)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** The e-mail was a private communication from the Presiding Officer to Members. It would not be appropriate for such communications to be published. However, the names proposed in the e-mail were: Senedd—new building as a whole; Neuadd—main reception large hall; Oriel—upper gallery events area and cafe; Cyntedd—Members' lobby; Siambr—main debating Chamber; Pont—bridge link; Swyddfa—existing office block; Glanfa—Pierhead; and Rhodfa—boardwalk.

**Leighton Andrews:** Who had access to the draft speech prepared for the opening of the Assembly building by the Clerk, which was allegedly leaked to the *Western Mail* on 11 February 2006, and does he plan to instigate an inquiry to the leak? (WAQ46068)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**John Marek:** It is not my practice to disclose matters relating to internal processes within the Assembly Parliamentary Service, or advice that staff give to Members. I have no plans to instigate an inquiry into the alleged leak.

**Leighton Andrews:** What has been the total underspend on the budgets managed by the House committee, year on year, since its inception. (WAQ48585)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Representative of the House Committee (William Graham):** The year-on-year underspend of budgets managed by the House Committee, from 2000-01 to 2005-06, totals £12.7 million. Last year, the under spend was 2 per cent of the allocated budget. The underspend accumulates under arrangements agreed between the Committee and the Finance Minister. It is used for major capital and one-off spending which would otherwise fall to be met from the Assembly's annual budget.

For example, the Committee approved the drawdown from EYF of £1.5 million in 2002-03 (in relation to the Pierhead), £4 million in 2005-06 (being a contribution to fitting out costs of the Senedd building project) and £1.2 million in the current financial year (for the Senedd running costs and work to support the effective implementation of changes arising under the Government of Wales Act 2006), leaving a balance of circa £6 million.

It is envisaged that the Committee will need to draw further on the accumulated balance in order to fund additional requirements this year, namely the interim support service for ICT in the Senedd; preparations for the ICT infrastructure and systems to support the Assembly Commission; and possibly funding the promotion of participation in the 2007 Elections via the work of the Electoral Commission.

The House Committee has always managed its budget prudently and has never overspent. The accumulated under spend has been used in lieu of a reserve or sinking fund (the House Committee does not have a formal reserve like the Government) to meet the cost of major works (like the Pierhead re-roofing and the Senedd ICT). These costs would otherwise need to fall on the Assembly's annual budget

At the end of the current financial year, any accumulated sum which remains will be available for the Welsh Assembly Government. In future years, new arrangements will be in place under the Welsh Consolidated Fund and the Assembly Commission.

The year on year underspends were as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Underspend</b>
2000-01	2,373
2001-02	2,357
2002-03	2,847
2003-04	1,672
2004-05	2,710
2005-06	710
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,669</b>