

Answers issued to Members on 24 February 2009

[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

Darren Millar (Clwyd West): Which Welsh Assembly Government departments are expected to be based in the Welsh Assembly Government premises currently under construction in Llandudno Junction? (WAQ53449)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): I refer you to the answer I gave to WAQ52598.

Darren Millar (Clwyd West): What are the anticipated timescales for completion and occupation of the Welsh Assembly Government offices currently under construction in Llandudno Junction? (WAQ53450)

The First Minister: The aim is for construction to be completed by spring 2010. This will be followed by a period of internal fit out of furniture and ICT prior to the building being occupied by staff in summer 2010.

Darren Millar (Clwyd West): Will the First Minister make a statement on current expectations regarding the number of employees to be based at the Welsh Assembly Government offices currently under construction in Llandudno Junction? (WAQ53451)

The First Minister: I refer you to the answer I gave to WAQ52598.

Questions to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): What is the estimated reduction in the number of adult learners in Wales for the financial year 2008/09? (WAQ53439)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): Data on learners at Welsh post-16 education providers are collected through the Lifelong Learning Wales Record. Provisional data for the 2008/09 academic year will be published in a Statistical First Release in November 2009.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): How many classroom assistants have been appointed for each year since 2005 and will the Minister provide a breakdown of the number of appointments at each grade? (WAQ53440)

Jane Hutt: Information on the number of classroom assistants appointed is not available centrally. The total number of classroom assistants in schools is collected annually in the school census. Data for 2005 onwards, by type of staff, are in table 6.17 of the annual 'Schools in Wales: General Statistics' publication, link below.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/swgs2008/?lang=en>

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire): Will the Minister make a statement on access to lymphoedema treatment for Powys Patients? (WAQ53459)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): Access to lymphoedema treatment must be based on patient need, irrespective of where they live in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government is working with the Welsh Association of Lymphoedema Specialists to develop a strategy to improve access.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): When will the Minister make a statement on the plans for new dialysis provision in Powys? (WAQ53441)

Edwina Hart: Following an all-Wales prioritisation exercise facilitated by the Renal Advisory Group and Renal Networks on 6 January 2009, new dialysis provision for Powys was confirmed as a priority. An option appraisal will now follow to consider various locations and configurations for the new capacity in Powys, and Welshpool will be one of the options considered. This option appraisal will inform a business case which will be submitted to the Assembly Government by September 2009.

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Brynle Williams (North Wales): What are the Welsh Assembly Government's plans to develop Wales as a high-value tourism destination for intra-UK and overseas tourists? (WAQ53465)

The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones): Increasing the daily spend of visitors to Wales has long been a key objective of Visit Wales in developing plans and campaigns.

Work to develop high-value tourism includes Visit Wales's partnership with, and support of, 'Wales in Style', an independent group which hand-selects and features high quality accommodation, eating places, days out and events with a view to providing the best experiences and destinations Wales can offer.

Another area of work is the development of Wales as a high-quality golf destination. This is a high-spend market with visitor numbers for this sector rising to 165,000 in 2007, and an associated contribution to the Welsh economy of just over £26million.

Brynle Williams (North Wales): What specific plans does the Welsh Assembly Government have to capitalise on the collapse of Sterling and increase the volume of intra-UK tourism in Wales? (WAQ53464)

Brynle Williams (North Wales): What plans does the Welsh Assembly Government have to reverse the decline in value of intra-UK tourism in Wales? (WAQ53462)

Alun Ffred Jones: In light of the economic down turn and strength of the Euro Visit Wales has shifted a proportion of its budget to target people that would normally be looking at European holidays for their main holiday and target them with a Wales message. This will include:

- Mailing lists of customers who have previously taken European holidays.
- Buying 'search words' for European holidays to ensure that Wales is strongly identified on search engines such as Google.
- Running tactical online advertising in environments where people may searching for their overseas and domestic holidays.

Visit Wales has also built in key messages about how Wales will be better value than overseas holidays in 2009 across the campaign. They shall be looking to extend the campaign and build in offers to support the campaign from Spring 09.

As regards the value of UK tourism in Wales, as I said during the recent tourism debate on 11 February, in terms of absolute visitor numbers and expenditure, our percentage share over recent years remains much the same, although there are fluctuations, largely due to external factors. As you may be aware, Visit Wales has recently launched a £2.2million marketing campaign involving television, cinema and online advertisements supported by print and direct marketing.

Brynle Williams (North Wales): What plans does the Welsh Assembly Government have to obtain Tourism Satellite Account data on current tourism expenditure in Wales? (WAQ53463)

Alun Ffred Jones: Visit Wales anticipates that current (2008) tourism expenditure data for Wales should be available in May. Following this, the Wales Tourism Satellite Account and Tourism Impact Model will be used to translate these data into updated estimates of tourism's contribution to the Welsh economy in terms of jobs and GVA. These estimates will be reported via the Welsh Assembly Government website and other communication channels in mid-2009.