

## Written Questions answered between 30 September and 7 October 2004

[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

#### Assembly Staff in South Wales East

**William Graham:** Will the Minister outline how many Assembly staff are to be located in South Wales East? (WAQ37989)

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** The number of posts currently estimated to be located in the new Merthyr office is 439, excluding security staff—that figure is yet to be determined.

#### Meeting with the Minister for the Armed Forces (DARA)

**Jenny Randerson:** On what date in the last year did the First Minister meet the Minister for the Armed Forces in the UK Government to discuss issues related to the Defence Avionics Repair Agency? (WAQ38137)

**The First Minister:** There were three meetings with the Minister for the Armed Forces on 21 October 2003, 1 July 2004 and 27 September 2004, one aborted meeting due to train delays that was replaced with a phone call on 17 June, and several telephone calls and exchanges of correspondence.

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

### The Menter Iaith Welsh Holidays Project

**Lisa Francis:** What is the menter iaith Welsh holidays project? (WAQ34201)

**The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh):** The holidays in Welsh project is an initiative run by mentrau iaith Gwynedd and Conwy. Its aim is to attract learners and Welsh speakers to Gwynedd and Conwy to use Welsh on holiday. The scheme identifies various businesses where there are opportunities to use or improve Welsh language skills in a naturally Welsh environment. Further information is available at: [www.holidaysinwelsh.com](http://www.holidaysinwelsh.com).

### Datblygu 'Cyfnodau Sabothol Dysgu Iaith'

**Owen John Thomas:** Faint o arian sydd wedi cael ei wario ar ddatblygu 'cyfnodau sabothol dysgu iaith'—'Iaith Pawb', tudalen 45—yn 2003-04? (WAQ37928) [W]

**Owen John Thomas:** Faint o arian sydd wedi'i glustnodi ar gyfer datblygu 'cyfnodau sabothol dysgu iaith' yn 2004-05? (WAQ37929) [W]

**Alun Pugh:** Yr oedd ymrwymiad 'Iaith Pawb' i ariannu cyfnodau sabothol ar gyfer 2005-06. Felly, ni chafodd unrhyw arian ei wario yn ystod 2003-04, ac nid oes dim wedi'i glustnodi ar gyfer 2004-05. Yn y cyfamser, mae swyddogion yn datblygu cynllun i gyflawni yr ymrwymiad yn 'Iaith Pawb' ar gyfer 2005-06. Hefyd, mae cyfnodau sabothol dysgu iaith yn weithgaredd cymwys yn rhaglen datblygiad proffesiynol parhaus Cyngor Addysgu Cyffredinol Cymru ers 2003-04.

### Developing 'Sabbatical Languages Learning Periods'

**Owen John Thomas:** How much money has been spent on developing 'sabbatical languages learning periods' ('Iaith Pawb', page 45)—in 2003-04? (WAQ37928) [W]

**Owen John Thomas:** How much money has been earmarked for developing 'sabbatical languages learning periods' in 2004-05? (WAQ37929) [W]

**Alun Pugh:** The 'Iaith Pawb' commitment provided funding for sabbaticals from 2005-06. Therefore, no money has been spent in 2003-04 and earmarked for 2004-05. Meanwhile, officials are developing a scheme

to meet the commitment in 'Iaith Pawb' for 2005-06. In addition, the Welsh language sabbatical is an eligible activity in the General Teaching Council for Wales's continuing professional development programme since 2003-04.

### **Securing the National Eisteddfod of Wales's Future**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister outline his considerations for securing the future of the National Eisteddfod of Wales? (WAQ38153)

**Alun Pugh:** The Assembly Government recognises the importance of the National Eisteddfod in supporting and promoting the Welsh language and Welsh culture. This is reflected by the fact that the Eisteddfod is one of the largest recipients of grant from the Welsh Language Board. In recent years, our funding to the Eisteddfod has increased substantially—£400,000 in 2004-05, compared with £300,000 in 2002-03.

It is vital that the Eisteddfod makes itself more attractive to a wider range of people if it is to prosper. I am pleased that the current management recognises that fact, as it is crucial that the Eisteddfod modernises and embraces change to improve its marketing and attract more visitors. Some successful innovative practices were introduced this year in Newport and I look forward to seeing these being built on in future.

### **The 100 Welsh Heroes Internet Poll**

**Peter Black:** How many complaints has the Minister received about the conduct of the 100 Welsh heroes internet poll? (WAQ38154)

**Alun Pugh:** Two, including yours.

### **Culturenet Cymru's 100 Welsh Heroes Project**

**Peter Black:** Will the Minister make a statement on Culturenet Cymru's 100 Welsh heroes project? (WAQ38155)

**Alun Pugh:** Culturenet Cymru was set up to develop and provide national, bilingual, networked cultural information and communications technology services. The 100 Welsh heroes project was designed to be a popular project aimed at promoting awareness and use of the web for cultural purposes.

### **The Wales Versus England World Cup Qualifying Match**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister outline discussions he has held with the Football Association of Wales concerning the allocation of tickets for the Wales versus England World Cup qualifying match at Old Trafford on 9 October 2004? (WAQ38156)

**Alun Pugh:** I have not held any discussions with the FAW concerning the allocation of tickets for the forthcoming England versus Wales World Cup football qualifying match. That is a matter for the FAW to deal with.

## **Improving Access to Local Libraries in Wales**

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on improving access to local libraries in Wales? (WAQ38157)

**Alun Pugh:** The Welsh Assembly Government demonstrates a clear commitment in ‘Wales: A Better Country’ to ‘develop library services’. Accessibility is identified as a key element and the public library standards, which we introduced, will be used to underpin developments.

**CyMAL:** Museums Archives and Libraries Wales was established on 1 April 2004 as a new division of the Welsh Assembly Government. One of CyMAL’s main objectives is to develop capacity in local libraries to extend access for everyone in Wales to improved collections and information services. I recently announced grants to libraries totalling £970,000 in respect of CyMAL’s libraries development grant scheme, and an adviser will be employed by CyMAL to help libraries extend services.

Libraries are also working to provide access to resources from home via the internet 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Public libraries across Wales now provide online access to about 100 reference resources and to back-issues of around 15 UK newspaper titles. Many library catalogues are available online and users can search for, reserve and renew items online.

## **Cycling Facilities in North Wales**

**Ann Jones:** What discussions has the Minister had regarding cycling facilities in north Wales? (WAQ38158)

**Alun Pugh:** I have not been directly involved in discussions, but am aware of proposals to develop a new cycling facility at ‘The Meadows’ site in Prestatyn as a regional training and competition venue for north Wales. I understand that the Sports Council for Wales fully supports the principle of this development and is assisting the Welsh Cycling Union in drawing up a business plan. This is due to be submitted to Denbighshire County Council very shortly with a view to determining next steps and potential sources of funding. I will be following progress closely.

## **The Free Swimming Initiative**

**Denise Idris Jones:** Will the Minister give a progress report on the free swimming initiative? (WAQ38159)

**Alun Pugh:** Since Easter 2004, all 22 local authorities across Wales have been delivering free swimming to all children and young people aged 16 and under during all school holidays. Initial evidence suggests that the initiative has again been successful in raising the number and frequency of juvenile swims and I expect this to be borne out in the statistical data, which I expect to receive from local authorities by the end of November.

My officials have been working with local authorities and other partners over the summer to develop criteria for delivering a free swimming pilot for older people. I should be in a position to announce the details of the pilot very shortly.

## The Paralympic Games

**John Griffiths:** Will the Minister make a statement on the participation of athletes from Wales in the Paralympic games? (WAQ38160)

**Alun Pugh:** Wales, with 5 per cent of the population of GB, supplied 14 per cent of the athletes and won 28 per cent of the medals, a superb achievement. I would particularly like to congratulate David Roberts on a superb total of four gold medals and am delighted to say that Tanni Grey Thompson is now acknowledged to be Britain's greatest ever Paralympian. With two golds in Athens and 11 paralympian gold medals in total, achieved during a quite remarkable career.

## Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Casnewydd

**John Griffiths:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar yr Eisteddfod yng Nghasnewydd eleni ac am bwysigrwydd cynnal yr Eisteddfod mewn ardaloedd lle nad yw'r Gymraeg yn gryf? (WAQ38161) [W]

**Alun Pugh:** Yr oedd Eisteddfod Casnewydd yn ddatliad llwyddiannus o'r iaith Gymraeg a diwylliant Cymru, gan ddenu 150,000 o bobl gan gynnwys nifer o ddysgwyr a'r di-Gymraeg. Yr oeddwn yn un o'r rhai a groesawodd y mentrau cyffrous yng Nghasnewydd eleni, er enghraifft tywyswyr ac arwyddion a deunydd hyrwyddo dwyieithog.

Yn y pen draw, mater i'r Eisteddfod yw a ddylai'r wyl barhau yn un deithiol. Fodd bynnag, does dim dwywaith bod yr Eisteddfod yn perthyn i Gymru gyfan a'i bod yn gadael gwaddol diwylliannol ac ieithyddol yn yr ardaloedd y mae'n ymweld â hwy.

## The National Eisteddfod in Newport

**John Griffiths:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Eisteddfod in Newport this year and the importance of holding the Eisteddfod in areas where the Welsh Language is not strong? (WAQ38161) [W]

**Alun Pugh:** The Newport Eisteddfod was a successful celebration of Welsh language and culture, attracting 150,000 people, including many learners and non-Welsh speakers. I was among the many people who welcomed the innovations in Newport, such as meeters and greeters, bilingual signs and promotional material.

Whether the Eisteddfod remains a peripatetic festival is ultimately a decision for the Eisteddfod. However, there is no question that the Eisteddfod belongs to the whole of Wales and leaves a cultural and linguistic inheritance in the areas it visits.

## The Welsh Assembly's Major Events Strategy for 2004-05

**Laura Anne Jones:** What is the Welsh Assembly's major events strategy for 2004-05? (WAQ38162)

**Alun Pugh:** We continue to work closely with our key public sector partners in developing and attracting high-quality events that provide a wide range of economic, cultural and social benefits to Wales. An example of one such event is the women's World Cup cycling event, which is coming to Newport next year thanks to a significant financial contribution from the Assembly Government, along with the Sports Council for Wales and Newport City Council.

## **Questions to the Minister for Economic Development and Transport**

### **The LG Philips Factory Site**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement on the future of the LG Philips factory site? (WAQ37887)

**The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies):** I hope to be in a position to make a full written statement on this matter next week.

### **The Settlement Agreement for the LG Site**

**William Graham:** Further to question WAQ37439, will the Minister provide full details of the settlement agreement for the LG site? (WAQ37923)

**Andrew Davies:** I hope to be in a position to make a full written statement on this matter next week.

### **Forestry Sub-plotting**

**Michael German:** Will the Minister make a statement on the effect of forestry sub-plotting on the tourism potential in Wales? (WAQ37925)

**Andrew Davies:** The Welsh Assembly Government's policy for woodlands is set out in its strategy 'Woodlands for Wales'. I have not been made aware of any tourism issues associated with forestry sub-plotting.

### **The Reduction in Train Services (Cardiff to Manchester Piccadilly Route)**

**Kirsty Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on what discussions the Minister has had with Arriva Trains regarding the reduction in train services on the Cardiff to Manchester Piccadilly route? (WAQ37937)

**Andrew Davies:** I have made my concerns known. Arriva Trains Wales has announced that, in response to concerns raised about the re-timing of the 7.15 a.m. Cardiff to Manchester Service, to run 30 minutes earlier as a result of Network Rail's west coast route modernisation programme, it will be providing an extra train, Mondays to Fridays, commencing on 27 September.

It will depart Cardiff at 7.15 a.m., calling at Newport, Cwmbran, Pontypool and New Inn, Abergavenny, Hereford, Leominster, Ludlow, Craven Arms, Church Stretton and Shrewsbury. It will then continue to Chester. It will assist people travelling to work, college and school along the route.

### **Public Subsidies Provided to Arriva Trains**

**Kirsty Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on what public subsidies Arriva Trains receive from the National Assembly for Wales for services on the Cardiff to Manchester Piccadilly route? (WAQ37938)

**Andrew Davies:** The responsibility for subsidy payments to Arriva Trains Wales under the Wales and borders franchise currently rests with the Strategic Rail Authority.

### **The Proposed Gwynt y Môr Site**

**Leighton Andrews:** Can the Minister confirm whether his 2010 target for wind energy took account of the likely output of the proposed Gwynt y Môr offshore site? (WAQ37986)

**Andrew Davies:** I have made clear our renewable energy target of 4 terrawatts an hour by 2010 will require about 800 megawatts of onshore wind development and about 200 megawatts of renewable energy from other technologies.

The Gwynt y Môr offshore windfarm project is at a preliminary stage and is a very large novel project which, like all the large UK second-round offshore windfarm projects, raises a wide range of issues which require very careful examination, not least those associated with potential navigation issues. We, therefore, consider it premature to rely on this project contributing to our 2010 targets. However, it could, if consented, contribute significantly to our 2020 targets.

### **Y Gwasanaeth Bws Trawscambria rhwng De a Gogledd Cymru**

**Alun Ffred Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar y gwasanaeth bws Trawscambria rhwng de a gogledd Cymru? (WAQ37987) [W]

**Andrew Davies:** O dan fy strategaeth bysiau a choetsys pellter hir, yr wyf wedi darparu cymorth ariannol i'r gwasanaeth Trawscambria i'r gogledd o Aberystwyth ers dwy flynedd. Y llynedd, yr oedd hyn yn werth tua £39,000 ar gyfer y gwasanaeth o Fangor i Aberystwyth. Eleni, yr wyf wedi neilltuo hyd at £171,000 i Gyngor Gwynedd ar gyfer bysiau newydd, gwell ar hyd y llwybr o Fangor i Aberystwyth. Dylai'r rhain ddechrau rhedeg yn gynnar yn y flwyddyn newydd.

Mae Arriva wedi cynnig y dylai'r rhan o'r daith sy'n cael ei gweithredu'n fasnachol i'r de o Aberystwyth gysylltu â threnau yng Nghaerfyrddin. Cyn penderfynu dim, a deallaf na fydd hynny'n digwydd tan y flwyddyn newydd, mae'r cwmni wedi ymrwmo i drafod ei gynlluniau, gan gynnwys y dewis yn y lle cyntaf o fws fydd yn ddolen gyswllt gyfochrog â'r rheilffordd, yn fanylach â First Cymru, a chynghorau sir Gaerfyrddin a Cheredigion, sydd yn fy hysbysu'n uniongyrchol am y sefyllfa.

## **The Trawscambria Bus Service between South and North Wales**

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Trawscambria bus service between south and north Wales? (WAQ37987) [W]

**Andrew Davies:** Under my longer distance bus and coach strategy, I have provided financial support to the Trawscambria service north of Aberystwyth for two years. Last year, this was approximately £39,000 for the service from Bangor to Aberystwyth. This year, I have allocated up to £171,000 to Gwynedd Council for new, improved buses along the Bangor to Aberystwyth section. These should be operational from early in the new year.

Arriva has proposed that the commercially operated leg of the services south of Aberystwyth should connect with trains at Carmarthen. Before decisions are made, which I understand will not be until the new year, the company is committed to discussing its plans, including the option of initially continuing a parallel bus link to the rail link, in more detail with First Cymru, and Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion county councils, which are keeping me closely informed.

## **The Future of Pay Phone Boxes in Welsh Communities**

**Peter Black:** What discussions has the Minister had with BT about the future of pay phone boxes in Welsh communities? (WAQ37992)

**Andrew Davies:** I have written to Ofcom, regulator of the communications industries, emphasising the importance of maintaining comprehensive coverage of telecommunications in areas where there is no mobile coverage. I am aware that BT is currently consulting locally on payphones throughout Wales.

## **The LG Factory in Newport (Removal of Water Treatment Plant)**

**William Graham:** Can the Minister confirm that permission has been given to remove water treatment plant from the LG factory in Newport? (WAQ37994)

**Andrew Davies:** Final agreement on the transfer of the buildings is imminent and I will make a full written statement next week giving such information as I can without breaching commercial confidentiality.

## **Meeting with the Minister for the Armed Forces (DARA)**

**Jenny Randerson:** On what date in the last year did the Minister meet the Minister for the Armed Forces in the UK Government to discuss issues related to the Defence Aviation Repair Agency? (WAQ38138)

**Andrew Davies:** The First Minister met the Minister for the Armed Forces as described in his reply to you in WAQ38137. In addition, I have met the Parliamentary Under-secretary of State at the Wales Office to discuss DARA issues, and my officials have had several meetings and discussions about DARA with their counterparts at the Ministry of Defence.



## Liaisons with the Press Office

**William Graham:** Further to my point of order raised in Plenary on Tuesday 21 September 2004, can the Minister confirm if his private office liased with the press office prior to the 25 August 2004? (WAQ38144)

**Andrew Davies:** Yes; they did not.

## Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

### NVQ in Childcare

**Janet Ryder:** Would the Minister publish a table showing the percentage of completes at level 2, 3 and 4 NVQ in childcare? (WAQ35326)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson):** The number of NVQs completed is currently not collected in comparable data by Education and Learning Wales across all of its programmes. It has inherited data collection systems for further education and work-based learning, and definitions applied to data collections vary between these programmes. It should be noted that information in respect of further education is collected for the academic year and for work-based learning on the financial year. The introduction of the lifelong learning Wales record from August this year across all ELWa learning programmes—except post-16 schools—will enable comparisons in the future, with all data being collected for the academic year. The information as requested is available in respect of further education for the academic year 2002-03 and is included in table 2 below.

Table 2: NVQs in childcare at further education institutes in Wales during 2002-03.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Number of qualifications</b>	<b>Completion rate</b>
NVQ level 2	800	74 per cent
NVQ level 3	1847	76 per cent
NVQ level 4/5	36	50 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>2683</b>	<b>75 per cent</b>

Source: ELWa individualised student record 2002-03

The number of NVQs completed by level is not collected under the work-based learning programmes by sector. The definition of a completer for this programme requires a learner to complete all activities identified in an individual learner plan, which may include, for example, basic or key skills, an NVQ and a technical certificate. Some work-based learners may complete an NVQ, however if the key skills have not been achieved this would not count as a completion. Such completions are collected for those strands of the programme which have a framework, for example, modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships and modern skills diploma adults. Information on NVQs achieved in childcare by level is collected and is included in table 3 for comparative purposes.

Table 4 provides the number of completions in childcare by framework for the work-based learning programme. This is not comparable with completions of NVQs in childcare as contained in table 2 above.

Table 3: NVQs in childcare achieved by WBL participants in 2002-03

<b>Level</b>	<b>Number of outcomes</b>
NVQ level 2	201
NVQ level 3	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>

Source: ELWa national trainee database.

Table 4: Number of individual learning plan completions 2002-03

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Leavers</b>	<b>Leavers completing ILP</b>	<b>Percentage completing ILP</b>
Modern apprenticeship	192	72	38 per cent
FMA/MSDA/Other	349	71	20 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>26 per cent</b>

Source: ELWa national trainee database (data subject to further update).

While ELWa was unable to provide information that provides a complete answer to the questions that you posed, I trust that the information that I am able to provide is useful to you.

### **The Cost of Providing an NVQ Course in Childcare**

**Janet Ryder:** Would the Minister publish a table showing the cost of providing an NVQ course in childcare, by each provider in Wales of NVQ courses, of level 2, 3 and 4? (WAQ35329)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**Jane Davidson:** ELWa does not hold information on the cost of delivering such courses for all providers in Wales. However, ELWa is able to provide information on the indicative funding for NVQs in childcare delivered at further education institutes in Wales during 2002-03. The figures provided in table 1 below do not give the exact amount of funding allocated due to the complexities of the funding methodology used in calculating individual college allocations and are therefore indicative. The figures provided have been calculated by taking the indicative weighted student learner units and multiplying these by the standard funding rate in 2002-03, which was £61.40.

Table 1: Indicative childcare allocation to FEIs 2002-03

Level	Indicative funding
NVQ level 2	£341,400
NVQ level 3	£938,145
NVQ level 4	£14,911
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,294,456</b>

Source: ELWa 2002-03 MIDFESS.

### **Cyfnodau Sabothol ar gyfer Athrawon**

**Owen John Thomas:** Sawl athro/athrawes sydd wedi cael cyfnod sabothol o dri mis i ddysgu iaith yn 2003-04? (WAQ37930) [W]

**Owen John Thomas:** Sawl athro/athrawes fydd yn cael cyfnod sabothol o dri mis i ddysgu iaith yn 2004-05? (WAQ37931) [W]

**Jane Davidson:** Er 2003-04, mae arian ar gyfer cyfnodau sabothol dysgu iaith i athrawon wedi bod ar gael o dan raglen datblygiad proffesiynol parhaus Cyngor Addysgu Cyffredinol Cymru. Mae un athro wedi manteisio ar y cyfle hwn. Mae swyddogion yn datblygu cynllun ar hyn o bryd i gyflawni'r ymrwymiad yn 'Iaith Pawb' i gynnig hyfforddiant i athrawon yn y Gymraeg drwy gyfrwng cyfnodau sabothol yn ystod 2005-06.

### **Sabbatical Periods for Teachers**

**Owen John Thomas:** How many teachers have had three-month sabbatical periods to learn a language in 2003-04? (WAQ37930) [W]

**Owen John Thomas:** How many teachers will have a three-month sabbatical periods to learn a language in 2004-05? (WAQ37931) [W]

**Jane Davidson:** Since 2003-04 funding for Welsh language sabbaticals for teachers has been available under the General Teaching Council for Wales's continuing professional development programme. One teacher has taken advantage of this opportunity. Officials are currently developing a scheme to meet the commitment in 'Iaith Pawb' to offer Welsh language training for teachers through sabbaticals in 2005-06.

### **Welsh-medium Incentive Supplements**

**Kirsty Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on the availability of Welsh-medium incentive supplements for students studying for a postgraduate certificate of education in physics through the medium of Welsh at institutions in Bangor, Aberystwyth and Cardiff (University of Wales Institute, Cardiff)? (WAQ37939)

**Jane Davidson:** The Welsh-medium incentive supplement scheme provides an incentive of £1,200 to eligible students undertaking qualifying secondary initial teacher training courses through the medium of Welsh. It is aimed at attracting to those courses students who need additional assistance to raise their confidence and competence so that they can teach through the medium of Welsh. The supplement was approved for a variety of courses at Bangor, Aberystwyth and Carmarthen.

The national plan for a bilingual Wales, 'Iaith Pawb', includes a commitment to improve the operation and attraction of the Welsh-medium incentive supplements. An independent review is in progress at present and should be completed in the autumn. Decisions on next steps will be made once the results of the review have been considered.

### **Trecastle CP School**

**Lisa Francis:** When does the Minister intend to make a decision about Trecastle Community Primary School? (WAQ37948)

**Jane Davidson:** I hope to be in a position to make the decision in the next few weeks so that it can be issued before the half term break.

### **Modern Apprenticeships (Last Three Years)**

**Brian Gibbons:** Will the Minister provide the number of students who have started and finished modern apprenticeships over the last three years (WAQ 38139)

**Jane Davidson:** The table below gives the number of starts and leavers over the last three financial years.

Programme	Financial year	Starts (a)	Leavers (b )
Modern apprenticeships	2001-02	6,200	5,000
	2002-03	6,800	5,600
	2003-04	8,000	5,800
Foundation modern apprenticeships	2001-02	11,800	9,200
	2002-03	11,700	10,600
	2003-04	10,200	8,700
Modern skills diploma for adults (c)	2001-02	1,000	100
	2002-03	800	400
	2003-04	900	700

- a. Starts—number starting new training episodes.  
b. Leavers—numbers leaving training episodes, including through completion, but excluding conversions.

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

### The Household Waste Recycling Act 2003

**Ann Jones:** What guidance does the Minister intend to issue to waste collection authorities in Wales to accompany the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003? (WAQ37909)

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the implementation in Wales of the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003? (WAQ37910)

**The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones):** The National Assembly for Wales has the power to implement the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 in Wales, but not the duty to do so. We can therefore decide whether implementing the Act will assist local authorities to deliver the existing challenging targets for recycling and composting already contained within 'Wise about Waste', the national waste strategy for Wales 2002. Achieving these targets will require all local authorities effectively to exceed the requirements of the Act with regard to the range of materials collected and with regard to the access to

easy and convenient recycling that they will need to provide for their populations. The Act does not come into effect until 2010, and we will be able to review the situation well before that date to see whether this additional statutory lever will be necessary.

The Assembly Government has already issued extensive guidance to local authorities with regard to recycling, both within 'Wise about Waste' and in the 'Guidance on Municipal Waste Management Strategies in Wales', published in 2002.

### **The Hunting Ban**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Would the Minister make a statement on how a ban on hunting will affect rural Wales? (WAQ37911)

**Carwyn Jones:** Although hunting with dogs is not a devolved matter, the Welsh Assembly Government recognises that hunting concerns many people in Wales. This is why, in December 2000, a Plenary Meeting referred the matter to the National Assembly's Agriculture and Rural Development Committee to consider its bearing on Wales. The report was completed in 2002 and is on the web at

<http://assembly/committees/1999-2003/agriculture%20&%20rural%20development/hunting%20with%20dogs/Finalreporte.html>

### **Cronfa Ddwr Llanisien**

**Owen John Thomas:** Pa gamau sydd wedi cael eu cymryd i annog Asiantaeth Amgylchedd Cymru i ddod i gasgliad cynnar ar benodi'r caeau sydd o amgylch cronfa ddwr Llanisien fel safle o ddiddordeb gwyddonol arbennig? (WAQ37913) [W]

**Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynllunio a Chefn Gwlad (Carwyn Jones):** Dim. Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru sy'n gyfrifol am benodi safleoedd o ddiddordeb gwyddonol arbennig.

### **Llanishen Reservoir**

**Owen John Thomas:** What steps have been taken to encourage the Environment Agency Wales to come to an early conclusion on designating the fields surrounding Llanishen reservoir as a site of special scientific interest? (WAQ37913) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** None. Responsibility for notification of SSSIs rests with the Countryside Council for Wales.

### **Adnewyddu Adfeilion Tai Mynydd**

**Elin Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar bolisi'r Llywodraeth ar adnewyddu adfeilion tai mynydd, a pha ganllawiau a roddir i awdurdodau lleol er mwyn gweithredu'r polisi? (WAQ37927) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Mae polisi'r Llywodraeth ar aildefnyddio ac addasu adeiladau yng nghefn gwlad wedi'i nodi yn 'Polisi Cynllunio Cymru', ac wedi'i ategu gan Nodyn Cyngor Technegol 6: 'Amaethyddiaeth a Datblygu Gwledig'. Mae 'Polisi Cynllunio Cymru' yn datgan, ym mharagraff 7.6.11, os nad oes modd adnewyddu'r adeilad presennol heb ei addasu, ei ailadeiladu neu ei estyn yn sylweddol, y dylai datblygiad o'r fath fod yn amodol ar reolau llym tebyg i'r rhai ar godi adeiladau newydd yn y wlad. Dylai awdurdodau cynllunio lleol ystyried y polisi hwn wrth baratoi eu cynlluniau datblygu a gallai fod yn berthnasol i benderfyniadau ar geisiadau cynllunio unigol.

### **Renovating the Ruins of Mountain Houses**

**Elin Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Government's policy on renovating the ruins of mountain houses, and what guidance has he given to local authorities to implement the policy? (WAQ37927) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** The Assembly Government's policy on the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings is set out in 'Planning Policy Wales', supplemented by Technical Advice Note 6: 'Agricultural and Rural Development'. 'Planning Policy Wales' states, in paragraph 7.6.11, that if the existing building is unsuitable for conversion without extensive alteration, rebuilding or extension, such development should be subject to similar strict control to that over new house building in the open countryside. This policy should be taken into account by local planning authorities in Wales in the preparation of their development plans and may be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

### **Gorchymyn Cregyn Bylchog Cymru a Lloegr**

**Alun Ffred Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar y bwriad i ddiwygio Gorchymyn Cregyn Bylchog Cymru a Lloegr? (WAQ37933) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Mae fy swyddogion wrthi'n ystyried ymatebion i ymgynghoriad a gwblhawyd yn ddiweddar ar offeryn statudol newydd i Gymru ar fesurau cadwraeth ar gyfer cregyn bylchog yn nyfroedd Cymru. Yr wyf yn disgwyl i Orchymyn newydd ddod gerbron y Cynulliad erbyn diwedd y flwyddyn.

### **The England and Wales Scallops Order**

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the intention to amend the England and Wales Scallops Order? (WAQ37933) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** My officials are currently considering responses to a recently concluded consultation exercise on a new Welsh statutory instrument for scallop conservation measures in Welsh waters. I expect a new Order to come before the Assembly by the end of the year.

### **The Use of Biodigestors within the Fallen Stock Scheme**

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on any progress regarding the use of biodigestors within the fallen stock scheme? (WAQ37942)

**Carwyn Jones:** The European Commission has advised that bio-reducer or digestion systems are not currently approved as a safe means of disposing of animal by-products. However, the Commission is willing to consider such methods on submission, by the relevant company, of scientific data proving the safety of its process.

### **Y Polisi Amaethyddol Cyffredin**

**Helen Mary Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar unrhyw gynnydd parthed gweithredu elfennau trawsgydymffurfio a'r gronfa genedlaethol wrth ddiwygio'r polisi amaethyddol cyffredin? (WAQ37944) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** O ran y safonau a fydd yn berthnasol i'r drefn trawsgydymffurfio, yr wyf yn bwriadu gwneud cyhoeddiad yn ystod yr wythnosau nesaf. O ran manylion y broses o weithredu'r gronfa genedlaethol, mae'r trafodaethau wrthi'n cael eu cwblhau ar lefel y DU. Pan y byddant wedi dod i ben, byddaf wedyn yn gwneud cyhoeddiad yn eu cylch.

### **The Common Agricultural Policy**

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on any progress regarding implementing cross-compliance and the national reserve elements within reform of the common agricultural policy? (WAQ37944) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** On the standards that will apply for the cross compliance regime, my intention is to make an announcement in the course of the next few weeks. For the operational detail on the national reserve, negotiations at the UK level are being finalised. When they are completed, I will then make an announcement.

### **Effaith y Mesur Hela ar Gasglu Stoc Marw**

**Helen Mary Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar effaith y Mesur Hela ar gasglu stoc marw? (WAQ37945) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Mewn rhai ardaloedd, gall gwahardd hela â chwn fod â goblygiadau ynghylch cyfleoedd i ladd anifeiliaid heb greulondeb ar y fferm a chael gwared ar anifeiliaid trig. Gallai'r ffermwyr hynny sydd ar hyn o bryd yn defnyddio'r gwasanaeth stoc marw, y mae helfeydd yn eu darparu, wynebu costau ychwanegol os byddant yn defnyddio iardiau celanedd neu ffyrdd eraill o waredu anifeiliaid trig oddi ar y fferm. Serch hynny, mae'r rhan fwyaf o helfeydd eisoes yn codi tâl am y gwasanaeth hwn, ac nid oes unrhyw reswm pam na all barhau i fod yn gyfle busnes pe bai helfeydd yn cael eu gwahardd.

### **The Effect of the Hunting Bill on Collecting Fallen Stock**

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement regarding the effect of the Hunting Bill on collecting fallen stock? (WAQ37945) [W]



**Carwyn Jones:** A ban on hunting with hounds may have implications for the disposal and humane slaughter of fallen stock in some areas. Those farmers who currently use the fallen stock service provided by hunts could be faced with additional costs if they use knackery yards or other off-farm disposal routes. However, most hunts already make a charge for this service and there is no reason why it should not continue as a business opportunity should hunts be banned.

### **Y Cynllun Stoc Marw**

**Helen Mary Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog adrodd ar y cynnydd parthed y cynllun stoc marw? (WAQ37946) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** Mae disgwyl y bydd y cynllun stoc marw cenedlaethol yn dechrau cyn bo hir. Bydd ffermwyr yng Nghymru, fel yng ngweddill y DU, yn cael eu hannog i ymuno â'r cynllun.

### **The Fallen Stock Scheme**

**Helen Mary Jones:** Will the Minister report on any progress on the fallen stock scheme? (WAQ37946) [W]

**Carwyn Jones:** The national fallen stock scheme is expected to start shortly. Farmers in Wales, as in the rest of the UK, will be encouraged to join the scheme.

### **The Illegal Use of Off-road Motorbikes in the Countryside**

**Rosemary Butler:** What action is the Assembly Government taking to prevent the illegal use of off-road motorbikes in the countryside? (WAQ37990) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration.*

**The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart):** The police take the lead in tackling anti-social and unlawful use of off-road motorbikes in Wales. They are able to invoke the Road Traffic Act 1988, which makes it an offence to drive a vehicle carelessly or inconsiderately or without authority on land which is not a road. Powers under the Police Reform Act 2002 strengthened these provisions and permits the immediate seizure if they are causing alarm, annoyance or distress.

### **The National Reserve**

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Will the national reserve open in October? (WAQ38140)

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Will there be appeals arrangements for the national reserve? (WAQ38141)

**Alun Ffred Jones:** When will the Assembly Government's plans regarding the national reserve be published? (WAQ38142)

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Will there be common rules throughout Britain on the national reserve? (WAQ38143)

**Carwyn Jones:** European legislation requires the national reserve to operate at a member-state level. The four agriculture departments are discussing the detailed arrangements on how to implement the reserve within the UK. These negotiations are nearing completion and I expect to be able to make an announcement in the next few weeks. The intention would be to then publish detailed guidance for the reserve application process.

### **Expected Completion of the Review of TAN 20**

**Sandy Mewies:** When does the Minister expect the review of TAN 20 to be completed? (WAQ38163)

**Carwyn Jones:** The research to inform TAN 20 was originally conceived as a six-month project, however, the complexities of the task as outlined in the specification has meant that it has now been running for over 20 months and it is likely to be subject to further delay. In the light of this delay, we are currently assessing the nature and timetable of the TAN review and are proposing completion of a full review by the end of 2006. I will write with further information, once it is available.

### **Questions to the Finance Minister**

#### **The Central Administration Budget ('Special Projects')**

**Jenny Randerson:** What new—not recurring from previous financial years—'special projects' are funded from within the central administration staff costs block of the 2004-05 Assembly budget? (WAQ34605)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Finance Minister (Sue Essex):** There are two 'special projects' funded from within the central administration budget this year. One is a review of inspectorates within the Assembly and the other is looking at better quality public services within Wales.

#### **The LG Site**

**William Graham:** Further to question WAQ37634, will the Minister confirm that Assembly staff will be located in the administration block of the LG site during 2004? (WAQ37995)

**William Graham:** Further to question WAQ37634, will the Minister indicate the anticipated expenditure of locating Assembly staff at the LG site? (WAQ37996)

**Sue Essex:** As I said in my response to your WAQ37634, the transfer to Welsh Assembly Government of the LG site near Newport may result in temporary use of the administrative block pending overall disposal, but no decisions have been made.

## Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

### Familial/Hereditary Breast Cancer

**Sandy Mewies:** What work has been undertaken by the NHS in Wales to identify and care for women at risk of familial/hereditary breast cancer? (WAQ37259)

*Substantive answer following holding reply.*

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt):** There are a number of known risk factors for breast cancer. One is a family history, but this is thought to account for 5 to 10 per cent of cases of breast cancer. Age is a far greater factor, with 80 per cent of cases being detected in women over 50. This is why the national breast screening policy targets women between 50 and 64 for a periodic free screening. All women, whether or not the risk factors apply to them, should follow advice on self-examination and should raise any concerns with their GP.

### Road Traffic Accidents Involving Ambulances

**Kirsty Williams:** How many road traffic accidents involving Mercedes Sprinter style ambulances were there in the last two years in Wales and how many were attributed to (a) driver error and (b) mechanical failure? (WAQ37875)

**Kirsty Williams:** How many ambulances have been involved in road traffic accidents in the last two years in Wales and how many were attributed to (a) driver error and (b) mechanical failure? (WAQ37876)

**Jane Hutt:** The information you have requested is not held centrally and is a matter for the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust.

### The Viability of Community Hospitals

**Michael German:** What briefings has the Minister received from the civil service on the viability of community hospitals in Wales with fewer than 30 beds? (WAQ37878)

**Jane Hutt:** I receive regular briefing from my officials on all matters relating to the NHS in Wales, including the future of community hospitals.

In December 2003, a framework document was distributed to the service, intended to inform and assist LHBs and their partners in the production of local Wanless action plans. Among other matters, this framework dealt with possible patterns of future community hospitals in intermediate care services in Wales.

### The Wales Cancer Bank

**Kirsty Williams:** When will the decision be made on the updated business plan submitted in June for the

Wales cancer bank? (WAQ37901)

**Jane Hutt:** I expect that a decision will be made by the end of October 2004.

### **Mammograms**

**Jonathan Morgan:** How many patients have waited longer than 10 days for a mammogram during the past two years? (WAQ37920)

**Jonathan Morgan:** How many mammograms have been commissioned in English hospitals during the past two years? (WAQ37921)

**Jane Hutt:** The information you have requested is not held centrally.

### **Y Gwasanaeth Ambiwylans Awyr**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Pa drafodaethau diweddar y mae'r Gweinidog wedi'u cynnal gyda chynrychiolwyr y gwasanaeth ambiwlans awyr ynghylch dymuniad y gwasanaeth i gynyddu'r ddarpariaeth yn ystod yr haf? (WAQ37926) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae'r gwasanaeth ambiwlans awyr ar hyn o bryd yn gweithredu yng ngolau dydd am wyth awr y diwrnod, saith diwrnod yr wythnos. Nid wyf wedi cael trafodaethau â chynrychiolwyr y gwasanaeth ambiwlans awyr yn ddiweddar, ond yr wyf wedi cael ar ddeall bod elusen ambiwlans awyr Cymru wrthi'n ystyried pa mor ymarferol fyddai codi nifer yr oriau gwaith yng ngolau dydd yn ystod misoedd yr haf.

### **The Air Ambulance Service**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** What recent discussions has the Minister held with representatives of the air ambulance service about the service's aspirations to increase provision during the summer? (WAQ37926) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** The air ambulance service currently operates during daylight hours for eight hours a day, seven days a week. I have not had any recent discussions with representatives of the air ambulance service but have been advised that the Wales air ambulance charity is looking at the feasibility of increasing the number of daylight operating hours during the summer months.

### **Cefnogaeth Ariannol ar gyfer y Gwasanaeth Ambiwylans Awyr**

**Owen John Thomas:** Pa gynlluniau sydd gan y Gweinidog i gynyddu'r gefnogaeth ariannol ar gyfer y gwasanaeth ambiwlans awyr? (WAQ37932) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** Mae Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn rhoi cymorth ariannol i'r gwasanaeth ambiwlans awyr yng Nghymru drwy gyllido cost y parafeddygon sy'n gweithio ar y ddau ambiwlans awyr. Caiff costau rhedeg yr hofrenyddion eu cyllido gan roddion elusennol, felly hefyd y caiff yr holl wasanaethau ambiwlans awyr yn

Lloegr eu cyllido. Ond mae'r sefyllfa yn yr Alban yn wahanol. Mae hofrenyddion yn ogystal ag awyrennau gwasanaeth ambiwlans yr Alban yn cael eu hariannu'n ganolog.

Yr wyf wedi gofyn i'm swyddogion holi eu cyd-swyddogion yn yr Alban ynghylch y resymeg tu ôl i'r penderfyniad i ariannu'r gwasanaeth ambiwlans yn ganolog. Serch hynny, mae'n bwysig cofio y byddai'n rhaid i unrhyw fanteision posibl a allai ddeillio o gyllido'r gwasanaethau ambiwlans awyr yn ganolog yng Nghymru yn y dyfodol, gael eu hystyried ochr yn ochr ag anghenion y gwasanaethau ambiwlans o ran cyllid a blaenoriaethau pwysig eraill.

### **Financial Support for the Air Ambulance Service**

**Owen John Thomas:** What plans does the Minister have to increase the financial support for the air ambulance service? (WAQ37932) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** The Welsh Assembly Government provides financial support for the air ambulance service in Wales through funding the costs of paramedics working on both air ambulances. The cost of running the helicopters is funded from charitable donations, as is the case for all air ambulance services in England. The position in Scotland, however, is different. The Scottish ambulance service has both helicopters and aircraft that are funded centrally.

I have asked my officials to discuss with their Scottish counterparts the rationale behind the decision to centrally fund the air ambulance service in Scotland. However, it should be recognised that any potential benefits that could be realised from centrally funding air ambulance services in Wales in the future would need to be considered against the funding needs of the ambulance services and other competing priorities.

### **Autism**

**Laura Anne Jones:** What assistance is available to help those diagnosed with autism, their families and carers and are there any specialist centres in south Wales that deal with the condition? (WAQ37934)

**Jane Hutt:** Local health boards and local authorities are responsible for the provision of local services for people with autism and for assessing the support needs of their families or carers. Local health boards and local authorities are required to work with partners, including NHS trusts, and the voluntary sector to identify the needs of the local population and develop services to meet those needs.

In December 2002, my colleague Jane Davidson, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, and I announced that Wales would have a strategy for autistic spectrum disorder. Since then, Assembly policy and professional advisers, in collaboration with the voluntary sector alongside experts in the field of autism, including representatives from Autism Cymru and the National Autistic Society, have been making good progress. It is anticipated that the draft all-Wales strategy will be going out to public consultation in the forthcoming months.

The development of this strategy is both exciting and pioneering. It will give Wales a lead in developing high-quality services of proven effectiveness uniformly accessible across Wales. Our aim is to ensure that

individuals with autistic spectrum disorder and their families and carers receive lifelong support appropriate to their needs.

Local education authorities generally provide support for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder within mainstream schools with support from suitably trained staff. However, we recognise that a small number of children with autistic spectrum disorder will need education outside the mainstream classroom and there are a number of schools that support their specialist needs.

In addition, the Education Act 2002 contains a number of Wales-only clauses, which allow for regional collaboration between local authorities to provide specialist services. A regional centre of excellence was officially opened earlier this month by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning at Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn in Denbigh. This was made possible by a £2 million capital grant to Denbigh. Discussions are ongoing between authorities in south-east and south-west Wales to provide similar facilities in their areas. The Assembly has also approved funding for the creation of a facility for pupils with high functioning autism at Fairwater High School, Cwmbran, to serve the counties of Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Torfaen and Newport. We hope to develop our regional provision further to ensure equity of access to provision across Wales for individuals with autistic spectrum disorder and their families.

### **Y Contract Newydd ar gyfer Deintyddion**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog adrodd ar unrhyw gynnydd ynghylch y contract newydd ar gyfer deintyddion, ac a wnaiff ddatganiad ar sut y mae wedi diweddarau'r byrddau iechyd lleol ar y datblygiadau hyn? (WAQ37943) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** Ym mis Awst cyhoeddais mai'r dyddiad gweithredu ar gyfer y contract newydd i ddeintyddion, nad ydynt mewn contractau lleol, fyddai 1 Hydref 2005. Dywedais hefyd y dylai deintyddion a byrddau iechyd lleol sy'n dymuno symud i gontractau lleol cyn y dyddiad hwn ystyried gwneud hynny nawr gan ddefnyddio cynlluniau gwasanaeth deintyddol personol. Bydd templad o'r contract newydd ar gael yn fuan.

Mae grwp prosiect o dan gadeiryddiaeth prif weithredwr bwrdd iechyd lleol yn cael ei sefydlu i arsylwi sut y caiff y trefnidadau cytundebol newydd eu gweithredu, ac i ddarparu ffynhonnell o brofiad ac arbenigedd ymarferol er mwyn darparu gwybodaeth i lywio'r ffordd ymlaen. Bydd yr aelodau yn cynnwys cynrychiolwyr y byrddau iechyd lleol, Cymdeithas Ddeintyddol Prydain, pwyllgorau deintyddol yng Nghymru a phwyllgorau deintyddol lleol, y Gwasanaeth Iechyd Cyhoeddus yHydfH

Cenedlaethol, cynghorau iechyd cymuned, ac eraill sydd â diddordeb. Hefyd, mae swyddogion yn cynnal rhaglen o ymweliadau a sgysiau â'r byrddau iechyd lleol ynghylch y newidiadau arfaethedig.

### **The New Contract for Dentists**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister report on any progress regarding the new contract for dentists, and will she make a statement on how she has kept local health boards updated on these developments? (WAQ37943) [W]

**Jane Hutt:** In August, I announced that the implementation date for the new contract for dentists not already in local contracts would be 1 October 2005. I also said that dentists and LHBs that wish to move to local contracts ahead of this date should consider doing so now using personal dental service schemes. A template of the new contract will be available shortly.

A project group under the chairmanship of a LHB chief executive is being established to oversee implementation of the new contractual arrangements and to provide a source of practical experience and expertise to inform the way forward. Membership will include representatives of local health boards, the British Dental Association, Welsh and local dental committees, the National Public Health Service, community health councils and other interested parties. In addition, officials are undertaking a programme of visits and talks to LHBs about the proposed changes.

### **Appointing an Older Persons Commissioner for Wales**

**Brynle Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to appointing an older persons commissioner for Wales? (WAG37949)

**Jane Hutt:** Public consultation on the report and recommendations of the Welsh Assembly Government's advisory group on a commissioner for older people in Wales ends on 30 September. I will be considering the consultation responses shortly and will announce the Welsh Assembly Government's proposals in due course.

### **Paediatric Neurosurgery**

**Peter Black:** What discussions has the Minister had with community health councils regarding the proposals by Health Commission Wales on paediatric neurosurgery? (WAQ38148)

**Jane Hutt:** The provision of paediatric neurosurgery services is a matter for Health Commission Wales. I am aware that, following community health council objections to the public consultation on a proposal to transfer the services in Swansea to Cardiff in 2002, a full independent clinical audit and option appraisal has been carried out. The CHCs, which placed objections to the proposal, are now considering the findings of these two exercises. Health Commission Wales will then decide the way forward in the light of the CHC comments.

### **Risks of Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Contamination**

**William Graham:** Will the Minister make a statement on possible risks of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease contamination of our donated blood supply in Wales? (WAQ38149)

**Jane Hutt:** The risk of vCJD transfer via blood and blood products was a recognised theoretical possibility and a series of steps had been taken prior to the initial announcement in December 2003 of the first probable transfer via blood. This included removing white blood cells—which may carry a significant risk of transmitting vCJD—from all blood used for transfusions since October 1998.

I have ensured that the recommendations of the CJD incidents panel and the Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Blood and Tissue for Transplantation have been implemented here. The MSBT has

advised that a UK-wide policy should be introduced to exclude whole blood donors who have been previously transfused. These measures are applied to blood transfusion services in Wales and are consistent with those in the rest of the UK:

- the critical date of transfusion, after which a donor is excluded, should be 1 January 1980 as it is generally accepted that there would have been no dietary exposure to bovine spongiform encephalopathy in the UK before then;
- donors to be excluded would be those who definitely know that they have received a transfusion, and those who are unsure if they have previously had a blood transfusion;
- apheresis donors who have previously had a blood transfusion.

My officials estimate that these changes will result in approximately a 10 per cent loss of blood donors.

The risk-reduction measures applied to all blood, including the additional measures recently announced, offer the best possible current approach based upon present scientific understanding of vCJD. The risks to the Welsh blood supply are considered to be no better or worse than for the whole of the UK. Blood transfusion remains a life-saving procedure and must continue to feature in any risk assessment and management exercise.

### **The Development of Pharmacy Services in Wales**

**Ann Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement about the development of pharmacy services in Wales?  
(WAQ38150)

**Jane Hutt:** ‘Remedies for Success—A Strategy for Pharmacy in Wales’ recognised that pharmacy services in Wales play a central role in promoting and supporting healthy lifestyles, managing common ailments, managing prescribed medicines, managing long-term conditions and advising and supporting other healthcare professionals. However, within each of these areas, there is scope to do more and to do better.

I therefore intend to initiate developments that will ensure that information and support on all medication issues will be more readily available, with easy access to new supplies of medication as required. Also new and emerging technologies will be harnessed to make services more accessible and convenient, new ways of providing services will be developed to meet people’s needs more effectively and the ‘partnership’ between the pharmacist and the patient will be strengthened.

The new pharmacy contract, which is being negotiated on an England and Wales basis, is likely to address many of these issues with greater emphasis on health promotion and preventative measures, with pharmacists more actively involved with day-to-day patient care.

The current position is that the NHS Confederation and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee are at present in discussion regarding the terms of the new contract. In August 2004, the PSNC unanimously accepted the financial offer of £1.766 billion from England. We are currently considering the financial implications for Wales and I am expecting a report from officials in due course.

England is planning a phased implementation of the new contract from January next year. In Wales, we



intend to initiate a project management process with new regulations being introduced by way of Assembly secondary legislation.

### **The New Integrated Children's Health Facility**

**Rosemary Butler:** Has the Minister had any discussion about funding for the new integrated children's health facility at Rogerstone? (WAQ38151)

**Jane Hutt:** I have met representatives from the Sparkle Appeal, established to raise money for the building of the proposed south Gwent children's centre.

Any requirement for central support for the capital costs for the development would need to be pursued through the normal business case development process, which would involve a debate on relative priorities for health capital funding. The relative priority attached to the scheme would need to be considered initially by local organisations and any subsequent development proposals would also need to be considered in the light of other competing priorities. At this stage, we have not received formal proposals from the organisations concerned. Should the full capital cost of a development be raised through the fundraising programme, it would be possible for early progress to be made, again, subject to formal commissioner support and confirmation that any revenue implications associated with this development were in place or affordable as part of future plans.

I cannot, at this stage, set out a definitive timetable for this project, but the south-east Wales regional office of the health and social care department is maintaining regular contact with the trust and with Sparkle with the view to clarifying project timescales at the earliest opportunity.

### **The Provision of Treatment for Emergency Admissions to Hospitals**

**Laura Anne Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on the provision of treatment for emergency admissions to hospitals across Wales? (WAQ38152)

**Jane Hutt:** Emergency admissions are given the appropriate treatment dependent on the nature of the emergency and the reason for admission. The specifics of individual treatments are the subject of clinical decisions by the healthcare professionals involved.

### **The Adequacy of Consultant Neurology Services in South Wales**

**Kirsty Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on the adequacy of consultant neurology services in south Wales? (WAQ38164)

**Jane Hutt:** Health Commission Wales is currently undertaking a strategic review of neurosciences services in south Wales. The final report of the review will be presented to the HCW board in January, and will include an analysis of the current specialised neurology services in south and north Wales.

### **The Review of Services for Patients with Neurological Conditions**

**Kirsty Williams:** Will the Minister make a statement on the progress of the Health Commission Wales review of services for patients with neurological conditions? (WAQ38165)

**Jane Hutt:** I understand from Health Commission Wales that the review is progressing well. The chair, Mr David Hardy, has visited the main neurosciences centres that serve the population of Wales. The three working groups have assessed the current strengths and weaknesses of the acute, long-term and rehabilitation services. An option appraisal exercise has been scheduled for November, which will involve a wide range of stakeholders in the service, including service users. The final report of the review is expected to be presented to the national commissioning advisory board in January 2005.

## Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

### Equality of Employment Opportunities

**William Graham:** Will the Minister outline the impact of Welsh Assembly Government policies on equality of employment opportunities? (WAQ35426) *Transferred for answer by the First Minister.*

*Substantive answer following holding reply issues on 25 May 2004.*

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** The majority of Welsh Assembly Government equality of employment policies focus on our own staff and are based on our quality principles. These include the ‘Two Ticks’ scheme, which guarantees disabled applicants an interview if they meet the minimum criteria for the post and the ‘work-life balance’ policy, which offers employees a range of flexible working arrangements.

This year, we are introducing a comprehensive data monitoring system called Snowdrop to assist us in analysing and tracking the impact of our equality employment practices.

The Welsh Assembly Government also influences the policies of external employers, for example, through its work under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the equal pay campaign.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires the Welsh Assembly Government to actively challenge racial discrimination in relation to unemployment. As part of this duty, the Welsh Assembly Government is developing a race equality scheme, which also encourages local government, the NHS Wales, and Assembly sponsored public bodies to comply with equality legislation, including monitoring of applicants for jobs, training and promotion.

The equal pay campaign aims to raise awareness of pay discrimination and encourage employers to carry out equal pay audits. During phase one of the campaign, over 20 employers completed pay reviews in the public sector. Phase two is currently underway and aims to encourage private sector employers to carry out equal pay audits.

## **Assistance to People Working on a Voluntary Basis**

**Laura Anne Jones:** How does the Assembly assist those people who work on a voluntary basis for good causes in Wales? (WAQ37988)

**Edwina Hart:** The Assembly Government promotes volunteering and provides support to volunteers in a variety of ways. This includes three specific grant programmes:

- millennium volunteers—a programme to encourage sustained volunteering among young people aged 16 to 24;
- Wales: the active community—a programme to support projects that raise the profile and stimulate more volunteering; and
- the volunteering in Wales fund—a programme to promote volunteering, particularly involving unemployed people, in the fields of health and social welfare.

Many of the projects that are funded through these programmes provide direct support to volunteers. For example:

- funding of training courses for volunteers and volunteer managers,
- the retired and senior volunteer programme—a scheme which recruits and supports older volunteers, and
- [www.volunteering-wales.net](http://www.volunteering-wales.net)—the Wales Council for Voluntary Action’s volunteering website, which is a one-stop resource for information on volunteering in Wales.

In May this year, we published a promotional guide, ‘Getting More out of Life as a Volunteer’, which outlines the benefits of volunteering, and explains the help and support that volunteers can expect, if they decide to get involved.

The independent commission to review the Assembly’s voluntary sector scheme has made a number of recommendations on how our support for volunteers and volunteering can be extended. I shall be outlining the Assembly Government’s response to these recommendations in Plenary on 13 October.

## **Measures to Tackle Anti-social Behaviour**

**Lorraine Barrett:** What discussions has the Minister had with her Westminster colleagues about measures to tackle anti-social behaviour? (WAQ37991)

**Edwina Hart:** I regularly meet Home Office Ministers to discuss a range of issues concerning community safety in Wales. We are agreed that community safety partnerships are best placed to tackle anti-social behaviour across Wales. The partnerships have many tools at their disposal to challenge anti-social behaviour and are increasingly making use of the new legislative framework to help them in their efforts.

## **Building Safer Communities in Wales**

**John Griffiths:** Will the Minister make a statement on progress in building safer communities in Wales?  
(WAQ37993)

**Edwina Hart:** The Assembly Government is working closely with community safety partnerships and other key agencies to deliver local strategies that are reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse across communities in Wales.