

Written Questions answered between 14 December 2006 and 4 January 2007

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

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

Contents

2	Questions to the First Minister
2	Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport
5	Questions to the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks
12	Questions to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
19	Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside
21	Questions to the Finance Minister
22	Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services
29	Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

Questions to the First Minister

Alun Cairns: Further to WAQ48384, will the First Minister publish the notes and minutes of the meeting with the UK Chief Scientific Adviser? (WAQ48493)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): There is no agreed note made—the meeting was in the nature of an informal conversation, and not for the purpose of taking decisions. The areas of interest discussed were climate change and technologies to combat it; avian flu; research council grants, and how resource should be focused on quality; and social science collaboration with natural sciences.

Jenny Randerson: Has the Minister had any discussions with UK Government on charges for freedom of information requests? (WAQ48831)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The First Minister: The current charging regulations establish a framework for charging within which public authorities must operate. The Assembly Government is therefore able to operate its own charging policy. This ability is not affected by any changes currently proposed at the UK level.

Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on developing cricket among young people in Wales? (WAQ48458)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): One of the aims of the ‘Climbing Higher’ strategy is to develop more opportunities for young people to engage in sport and physical activity.

Our Sports Council for Wales is providing over £340,000 this year to support the Cricket Board of Wales in delivering junior cricket structures across Wales. This includes the provision of high-quality coaching and sustainable and inclusive cricket programmes targeted at young people.

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on funding for community cricket in Wales? (WAQ48459)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: Since 1995 our Sports Council for Wales has provided over £6.1 million to help support the development of cricket within our communities across Wales. This includes the creation of new junior and female teams, more coach education opportunities and the provision of assistance towards equipment and facility development costs.

In addition the Sports Council for Wales, as part of the coaching plan for Wales, is working with the Cricket Board of Wales to increase coaching opportunities at a community level.

Alun Cairns: What plans does the Minister have to use the test match status awarded to Sophia Gardens as a springboard to promote cricket among young people in Wales in the same way as the Ryder Cup is being used to promote golf? (WAQ48460)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: Any major event such as an Ashes test match provides a wide range of opportunities to promote and encourage participation in sport and physical activity. This is an integral part of my 'Climbing Higher' strategy and why I have committed funding towards developing events that can promote and encourage mass participation, as well as providing an opportunity to promote sport among our young people, who hopefully will go on to represent their country on a world stage.

We have already had a number of positive discussions with Glamorgan County Cricket Club about how the test match and the period running up to the match can be used for maximum benefit.

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on support available for cricket development officers in Wales? (WAQ48461)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: The Cricket Board of Wales receives over £115,000 to support five development officers whose areas of responsibility are coterminous with the governing body regions. These people work to improve standards and increase participation in cricket through the development of clubs, better coaching and encouraging volunteer development.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on his priorities for promoting sporting excellence in Wales? (WAQ48558)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: One of the key aims of the Welsh Assembly Government's 'Climbing Higher' strategy is to achieve systematic and sustainable sporting success at the highest international level on the world stage by creating a supportive infrastructure that seeks to identify, nurture and develop talented individuals from all parts of Wales.

'Climbing Higher—Next Steps' sets a clear framework to deliver successful sport and a sporting nation. Our priorities include focusing on the sports which can deliver greatest international success, adopting an athlete-centred approach with regular and frequent access to the best coaches and training facilities, developing effective national governing bodies, clubs and effective competitive structures at all levels.

The Welsh Assembly Government has invested over £5 million per annum in performance sport in Wales and will be investing even more in the future. We are committed to bringing about improved performances and even greater international success in Welsh sport.

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister list all the sporting and cultural events held in Wales in the last three years that have received funding directly from the National Assembly together with the sums they received? (WAQ48671)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: Attached are tables, by year, outlining all the sporting and cultural events held in Wales in the last three years that have received funding directly from the Welsh Assembly Government together with the sums they received.

I apologise for the delay in providing this information. A copy of this letter will be published in the Official Record.

2003-04	
Project/initiative	Cost 2003-04 (£s)
Great Wales Triathlon	100,000
Cardiff Capital of Culture	139,000
2004-05	
Project/initiative	Cost 2004-05 (£s)
UEFA Finals (2007) feasibility study	6,000
Cardiff Capital of Culture 2008	25,000
European Duathlon Championships 2004	5,000
Faenol Festival	100,000
2005-06	
Project/initiative	Cost 2005-06 (£s)
Hay Festival	30,000
Women's World Cup Cycling Grand Prix	50,000

2006-07 - Culture Funding	
Project/initiative	Cost 2006-07 (£s)
Big Anthem Fawr	35,000
Heineken Cup	25,000
Brecon Jazz	90,000
Hay Festival	30,000
Faenol Festival	40,000
Porthcawl Elvis Festival	16,000

2006-07 - Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks Funding	
Project/initiative	Cost 2006-07 (£s)
Artes Mundi	80,000
RHS Spring Show	15,000
Heineken Cup Final	25,000
FIM Speedway Grand Prix	55,225
Wales Open Golf	40,000
Bryn Terfel's Faenol Festival	35,000
Abergavenny Food Festival	10,000
International Festival of Musical Theatre	25,000

Nick Bourne: What financial assistance is being made available to the Torch Theatre in Milford Haven over the next three years? (WAQ48834)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: The Assembly Government has provided Torch Theatre with financial assistance amounting to almost £5.5 million directly and through the Arts Council of Wales over the last three years.

The theatre received over £3 million in 2004-05, including £2.75 million capital investment for redevelopment. In 2005-06 the theatre received almost £2.44 million, including a further £1.75 million of capital development money and £22,000 from Arts Outside Cardiff money.

This year the theatre received £330,664, including almost £100,000 of Arts Outside Cardiff money. Funding for 2007-08 onwards has yet to be decided.

The substantial investment in the redevelopment of the theatre will mean full renovation of the existing auditorium; an improved entrance foyer and box office; the creation of a new gallery, bar and restaurant; new administration offices; a new studio space in the community education building with flexible seating arrangements for approximately 100 people, which will be suitable for drama, dance, rehearsals and meetings/conferences; new, fully accessible dressing rooms and film projection facilities; and the installation of lifts in order to achieve full accessibility throughout the building.

These improvements will result in more flexibility for the venue to provide professional and community live performances. The second space and the studio should also accommodate performances by local organisations and allow the Torch to increase the membership of its youth theatre. There are currently 60 young people on the waiting list.

The new and improved catering facilities and cinema will also provide the Torch with increased opportunities for income generation.

Janet Ryder: Will the Minister list a) how many playing fields are there in each local authority area b) how many there were last year and c) how many there were in the previous year? (WAQ48849)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Alun Pugh: The responsibility for these facilities remains with local authorities and information on the number of fields is not held centrally. I reported earlier this year (OAQ00851) that we understand there are approximately 2,000 playing fields on local authority records, varying from large multi pitch formal sporting grounds, to more informal recreational areas and kick-about pitches.

As part of the review of 'Technical Advice Note (Wales) 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space' the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside is commissioning research on the current provision of playing fields and open space in Wales.

Questions to the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks provide a list of names of those who visited Ireland recently, at cost to the Welsh Assembly Government, with regard to the Ryder Cup? (WAQ48452)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (Andrew Davies): Nearly 300 key business and golf tourism guests were hosted by 'Team Wales' at various times throughout the week of the event. This included a Wales reception for 200 guests which showcased Welsh food and drink and was aimed at

raising Wales's profile as a business and tourism destination as the next European host nation for the Ryder Cup.

Details of the other meetings and guests remain commercial in confidence at this time. A team of 29 officials attended the event at various times during the week and undertook a variety of roles. In addition to ministerial representation, the team consisted of guest hosts, Newport/infrastructure representatives, Wales event organisers, PR/media personnel, exhibition stand staff and Ryder Cup Wales staff.

Nick Bourne: What was the total cost to the Assembly Government of the recent Ryder Cup visit to Ireland? (WAQ48453)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The total cost for Wales's presence in Ireland is close to being finalised and the estimated outturn is £205,000.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on the proposed Llandeilo bypass? (WAQ48491)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: A public workshop and consultation exhibition was held earlier this year to consider options for resolving traffic problems in Llandeilo and Ffairfach. All responses received have been carefully considered and analysed. I hope shortly to announce my decision on the way forward.

The scheme is in Phase 2 of the trunk road forward programme and could be ready to start construction by April 2010 subject to the completion of the statutory consent procedures and the availability of finance.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Welsh Assembly Government ensure that local authorities have adequate finances to implement any future school transport improvements? (WAQ48691) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.*

Laura Anne Jones: How is the Welsh Assembly Government ensuring that local authorities have adequate budgets in order to ensure safer school transport? (WAQ48692) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.*

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson): There are no specific grants for home to school transport—it is funded through each local education authority's education budget through the local government settlement. Authorities must make best use of existing resources to continue to provide efficient and safe school transport. Many school transport improvements can and have been achieved by authorities already, in many cases at little or no additional cost.

There is however £1 million of new money in the Assembly's budget in 2007-08 and the following two years to support school transport improvements. No decisions have yet been taken about the use of this money, but officials are discussing this issue with the Welsh Local Government Association.

Any future cost implications for LEAs will depend to a degree on what law is made using the Assembly measures. An estimate of those costs will be undertaken when we are formulating these proposals.

Laura Anne Jones: How does the Welsh Assembly Government plan to use future powers relating to seatbelts on school buses and assessments of school buses and bus drivers to improve school transport safety in Wales? (WAQ48693) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.*

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson): The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the National Assembly a power to make legislation for travel of persons receiving primary, secondary or further education or training to and from the schools or other places where they receive education or training. The power does not permit the National Assembly to make legislation for matters excepted by the Government of Wales Act 2006. In terms of travel a number of matters remain the preserve of the Department for Transport and these include the law for safety and standards of vehicles, vehicle and driver licensing. After the framework power contained in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 has been converted into an Assembly Measure we will want to make legislation for learner travel. The scope of those legislative proposals is to be decided. We will need to give careful consideration to the broad scope and the detail of the legislation made using the Assembly Measure. That consideration will of course bear in mind the committee review of school transport April 2005 and the points made during the road safety debate on 3 October.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 includes arrangements that will effect Criminal Records Bureau checks for home to school transport. The Act makes enhanced level CRB checks mandatory for persons who drive a vehicle for the purpose of conveying children or any person supervising or caring for them. Thus, drivers of dedicated school buses, taxi drivers, and escorts will have to be CRB checked. The commencement date of these new provisions is yet to be decided and the detail of arrangements would be set out in regulations which would prescribe circumstances.

Nick Bourne: What trunk road improvements are scheduled in Powys for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and will the Minister detail the costs? (WAQ48722)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 6 December.

Andrew Davies: A large number of improvements of various sizes and costs take place every year on our trunk road network. Individual schemes costing over £1 million within Powys in the years requested are at:

- Four Crosses on the A483 (£3 million, earliest start 2007-08 subject to the satisfactory completion of statutory procedures)
- Moors Straight on the A483 (£1 million, expected to start 2007-08)
- Alltmawr on the A470 (£4.3 million, earliest start 2008-09 subject to the satisfactory completion of statutory procedures).

The improvement on the A40 at Llansantffraed (£1.1 million), currently in construction, is expected to be completed in spring 2007.

In addition to the above larger schemes, indicative annual spend on an all-Wales basis over the next two to three years for the following programmes is shown below. These have yet to be fully programmed and allocated, and are clearly subject to final budget allocations:

community schemes	£0.5 million
small schemes	£0.5 million
bridge upgrades	£6.0 million
local safety schemes	£1.5 million
remedial earthworks	£2.9 million
noise reduction schemes	£1.0 million

skidding resistance	£2.0 million
lighting and structures, major maintenance and renewal of carriageways	£28.0 million

Nick Bourne: What trunk road improvements are scheduled in Pembrokeshire for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and will the Minister detail the costs? (WAQ48723)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 6 December.

Andrew Davies: A large number of improvements of various sizes and costs take place every year on our trunk road network. Individual schemes costing over £1 million within Pembrokeshire in the years requested are on the A40 at the Kell, and schemes on the A477 at Watershill-Redberth and at Milton-Nash. These three schemes are expected to cost just over £1 million each, and are currently scheduled to start in 2007-08.

In addition to these schemes phase 2 of the trunk road programme also includes two schemes on the A40, Penblewin to Slebech Park and Llanddewi Velfrey to Penblewin. Phase 2 schemes are those that could be ready to start by April 2010.

Draft statutory Orders for an improvement on the A40 between Penblewin and Slebech Park are expected to be published soon. Subject to the satisfactory completion of statutory procedures, this scheme (with an anticipated works cost of about £28 million) could be ready to start in the winter of 2007, with completion by the end of 2009. The contiguous A40 Llanddewi Velfrey improvement scheme, which includes a bypass for Robeston Wathen, is progressing towards the publication of orders.

Pembrokeshire is also affected by another Phase 2 scheme in Carmarthenshire, A477 St Clears to Red Roses. The preferred route for this scheme was recently announced.

In addition to the above larger schemes, indicative annual spend on an all-Wales basis over the next two to three years for the following programmes is shown below. These have yet to be fully programmed and allocated, and are clearly subject to final budget allocations:

community schemes	£0.5 million
small schemes	£0.5 million
bridge upgrades	£6.0 million
local safety schemes	£1.5 million
remedial earthworks	£2.9 million
noise reduction schemes	£1.0 million
skidding resistance	£2.0 million
lighting and structures, major maintenance and renewal of carriageways	£28.0 million

Nick Bourne: What trunk road improvements are scheduled in Carmarthenshire for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and will the Minister detail the costs? (WAQ48724)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 6 December.

Andrew Davies: A large number of improvements of various sizes and costs take place every year on our trunk road network. There are no individual schemes costing over £1 million programmed within Carmarthenshire in the years requested.

Indicative annual spend on an all-Wales basis over the next two to three years for the following programmes is shown below. These have yet to be fully programmed and allocated, and are clearly subject to final budget allocations:

community schemes	£0.5 million
small schemes	£0.5 million
bridge upgrades	£6.0 million
local safety schemes	£1.5 million
remedial earthworks	£2.9 million
noise reduction schemes	£1.0 million
skidding resistance	£2.0 million
lighting and structures, major maintenance and renewal of carriageways	£28.0 million

Nick Bourne: What trunk road improvements are scheduled in Ceredigion for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and will the Minister detail the costs? (WAQ48725)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 6 December.

Andrew Davies: A large number of improvements of various sizes and costs take place every year on our trunk road network. The only individual scheme costing over £1 million within Ceredigion in the years requested is the scheme on the A487 at Glandyfi. This is expected to cost about £5 million, and subject to the satisfactory completion of statutory procedures could be ready to start in 2007-08.

In addition to the above scheme, indicative annual spend on an all-Wales basis over the next two to three years for the following programmes is shown below. These have yet to be fully programmed and allocated, and are clearly subject to final budget allocations:

community schemes	£0.5 million
small schemes	£0.5 million
bridge upgrades	£6.0 million
local safety schemes	£1.5 million
remedial earthworks	£2.9 million
noise reduction schemes	£1.0 million
skidding resistance	£2.0 million
lighting and structures, major maintenance and renewal of carriageways	£28.0 million

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on the number of manufacturing jobs lost in Wales since the merger of the WDA? (WAQ48833)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: I refer the Assembly Member to my response to WAQ48688.

Lisa Francis: How much money has been allocated for each Regional Tourism Partnership for each year since 2003? (WAQ48838)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: Funding allocations for the regional tourism partnerships were as follows for each financial year from 2003.

(Figures in £000)	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Total	2,500	3,000	3,500	3,500	3,500
Regional split					

North	875	1,050	1,155	1,144	1,144
Mid	500	600	665	656	656
SE	500	600	805	818	818
SW	625	750	875	882	882

Lisa Francis: How much money has the Welsh Assembly Government set aside for improving the VisitWales website? (WAQ48839)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: Development of our destination management system and associated websites is an ongoing process. For the financial year 2006-07 a budget of £100,000 has been allocated for development work.

Lynne Neagle: Will the Minister provide details of the formula used to allocate funding for road safety grants to local authorities, including details of any weighting for sparsity and deprivation? (WAQ48840)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The local road safety grant is distributed by a formula that has been agreed with the Welsh Local Government Association. It is based 50 per cent on population share and 50 per cent on non-pedestrian road accident casualties on non-trunk roads. Each authority is allocated a minimum of 2.5 per cent of the total grant payable. The guidance issued to local authorities asks them to consider focusing some funding in Communities First areas.

Owen John Thomas: What consideration has the Welsh Assembly Government given to proposals by Cardiff County Council to remove the rail link to Cardiff bay? (WAQ48844)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: Cardiff council is commissioning research to understand if there is scope for replacing the existing train service with an alternative mode of public transport.

The Assembly Government will consider the outcome of the research when it is completed.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister consider placing signs on the A55 detailing attractions in Llandudno, to be paid for by local businesses, to attract people into the town? (WAQ48845)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The town of Llandudno is already signed as a destination from the A55, and there are tourism signs on the A55 informing the public of the existing attractions within Llandudno. These white-on-brown signs are consistent with the tourism signs for similar towns along the north Wales coast. Such signs have been provided to assist visitors to find the relevant attraction and are supplementary to the existing destination signs. They have been provided to assist traffic management and are not intended to be an advertisement for tourist attractions.

In accordance with our existing policy, retail businesses would not be eligible for any signage, although such signage was permitted previously. Businesses can, however, seek planning permission to erect advertisement signs on land outside the existing highway boundaries at their own expense, detailing local attractions/outlets.

A review of the Assembly Government's guidance on the provision of white-on-brown signs is currently being carried out and it is anticipated that such a review will be completed by Easter 2007.

Trish Law: Following the Minister's written statement on the Ryder Cup on 4 October 2006, will he provide a breakdown of the £236,000 total budget for Team Wales's presence in Ireland? (WAQ48862)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Andrew Davies: The total budget for Wales's presence in Ireland was set at £236,000 over the 2005-06 and 2006-07 financial years. Expenditure and income totals have now been finalised, and the expenditure breakdown is as follows:

	£
Flights, accommodation, subsistence and ground transport	118,000
Official Wales events	34,500
Promotional activity	67,500
Income	-19,000
Total	201,000

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister detail all correspondence he has sent to Burberry management regarding the proposed closure of the company's factory in Treorci? (WAQ48877)

Andrew Davies: I have written to Burberry management several times, highlighting all areas of support that could be available to the company to retain manufacturing within the Rhondda valley. All communications have stressed that Welsh Assembly Government's priority is to work with the company to identify ways in which this operation can be sustained in the Rhondda.

Leanne Wood: How many times has the Minister met with (a) Burberry management: and (b) the GMB regarding the proposed closure of the company's factory in Treorci? (WAQ48882)

Andrew Davies: My officials and I have had discussions with Burberry management on numerous occasions since the announcement of the proposed closure on 6 September 2006. The first meeting was within a week of the announcement and I also met with the GMB union on the same day, and have had several discussions with them since.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister make a statement about what action he has taken to prevent the closure of the Burberry factory in Treorci? (WAQ48883)

Andrew Davies: I have met senior executives of Burberry and have offered the company every assistance in maintaining its operation in the Rhondda valley. My officials continue to investigate all avenues and are discussing options with both Burberry and the GMB for the company to retain employment within the Rhondda valley.

Leanne Wood: Has the Minister made any financial offers to Burberry plc to retain jobs at the factory in Treorci, and, if so, will he state the details of those offers? (WAQ48890)

Andrew Davies: Burberry was offered £140,000 in regional selective assistance in March 2003 to assist a project involving the extension and adaptation of the Treorchy facility.

The first instalment of RSA in the sum of £50,000 was paid in August 2004. No further claims have been made. £90,000 is still available to Burberry if they choose to complete the project.

In meetings with the company, I and my officials have made it clear that other forms of support, in addition to the RSA offer, might be available to the company if it maintains its operation in the Rhondda valley.

The company have, however, been made aware that if closure of the factory goes ahead, my officials will seek full recovery of the £50,000 paid.

Questions to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Nick Bourne: How many incidents of arson have there been in Welsh schools in 2006 and in each previous year since the establishment of the National Assembly? (WAQ48464) *Transferred for answer by the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration.*

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart): The table below shows the incidents of arson in Welsh schools since 1999. The data for 2006, however, are not yet available.

Data for 2005 are provisional and will be finalised in December 2006 following validation and reconciliation by Department of Communities and Local Government of figures with the fire and rescue services. Finalised data for 2005 is due for publication in January 2007.

Deliberate School Fires in Wales 1999-2005(a)

Year	No. of Deliberate Fires
2005(p)	40
2004	45
2003(b)	39
2002(b)	64
2001	36
2000	47
1999	54

- (a) Figures prior to 2005 are based on sampled data, weighted to brigade totals.
- (b) Figures in 2002 and 2003 do not include incidents during periods of industrial action.
- (p) Data for 2005 are provisional.

Lisa Francis: Would the Minister make a statement on the variation in the cost of Welsh lessons for adults across Wales? (WAQ48468)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson): As autonomous bodies, it is for further education and higher education institutions to determine their fees policy for learners aged 19 and over. When setting fees, institutions take into account the ability of the learner to pay. This results in the majority of providers offering concessions for the unemployed, people receiving pensions, or reduced course fees in deprived areas. In general fees vary from £1 to £2.58 an hour, with reductions of 50 per cent, but free to those who are means-tested. Some providers offer free provision such as taster or weekend courses and these are sometimes funded by Europe.

From 2007-08, funding for Welsh for Adults will be channelled through the six language centres only and they will be expected to subcontract with other providers that have a level of expertise in Welsh for Adults. As the funding will go through the six language centres only, the six centres will own their provision and that of providers with which they have a contract for the delivery of provision. The six language centres will be expected to agree a fees policy with third party providers for their regions/subregions that will be consistent across the region/subregion and offer concessionary rates to those on lower incomes.

Alun Cairns: What research will the Minister undertake to assess the Dore method? (WAQ48823)

Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on Dore support for dyslexic pupils? (WAQ48824)

Alun Cairns: How many pupils in Wales have received support for dyslexia using the Dore method? (WAQ48825)

Alun Cairns: What plans does the Minister have to expand the Dore method of overcoming dyslexia? (WAQ48826)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: Dyslexia is a complex heterogenous condition which overlaps with other specific learning difficulties. Methods that claim to address the whole range of dyslexia, without taking into consideration the needs of the individual children and young people, may not be selective enough.

There is no information about numbers of pupils in Wales who have received support using Dore methodology.

There is a good deal of debate as to the value of the Dore method. More research needs to be undertaken, including appropriate comparison with other methods of proven effectiveness in terms of cost and outcome, before the Assembly Government would be prepared to endorse or fund it. However I will seek the views of our external reference group for specific learning difficulties (dyslexia).

We are fully committed to supporting dyslexia-friendly schools and have provided £25,000 to support the dyslexia-friendly schools initiative in Wales.

Owen John Thomas: Pa gynlluniau sydd gan y Gweinidog i ddarparu cyllid newydd i sicrhau newidiadau sylfaenol a hir-dymor ar gyfer adeiladu adnoddau a datblygu addysg Gymraeg o fewn sefydliadau addysg uwch? (WAQ48841) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Janre Davidson: Yr wyf wedi cyflwyno pecyn o fesurau gwerth tua £4 miliwn hyd yma i gynyddu'r ystod o gyfleoedd ac mae'r sector yn ymateb. Mae pynciau mor amrywiol â cherddoriaeth, astudiaethau'r cyfryngau a ffiseg yn cael eu datblygu.

Fel yr argymhellwyd gan y grŵp llywio cyfrwng Cymraeg, fe gwblhawyd arfarniad opsiynau o'r ddarpariaeth addysg uwch cyfrwng Cymraeg dros y tymor canolig a hir yn ddiweddar. Yr oedd yr arfarniad hwnnw yn argymhell model a ffafriar ar gyfer dyfodol y ddarpariaeth, ar sail model rhwydwaith a gaiff ei lywio gan fframwaith strategol cenedlaethol cyffredinol ac a gefnogir gan swyddogaeth bwysicach i'r Ganolfan Datblygu Addysg Cyfrwng Cymraeg. Yr wyf yn disgwyl derbyn argymhellion y Cyngor Cyllido Addysg Uwch Cymru ar ddatblygu canfyddiadau'r arfarniad hwnnw, a hynny yn y dyfodol agos. Yn anochel bydd y penderfyniadau ar gyllid, gan gynnwys i ba raddau y gellir defnyddio'r

cyllid presennol yn fwy strategol i gefnogi'r agenda hon, yn ddibynnol ar ystyried y cyngor hwnnw. Mae'r cyngor cyllido wedi ymgynghori â'r sector ynghylch sut y gellir datblygu'r model a ffafrir i gyflawni'r cam sylweddol ymlaen yr ydym am ei weld—mae ein targed o gael 7 y cant o fyfyrwyr i dderbyn peth darpariaeth addysg uwch drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn un heriol. Mae'n hanfodol bod y sector yng Nghymru yn cytuno ar y ffordd ymlaen ac yn bwrw ymlaen ar hyd y ffordd honno—nid yw hyn yn rhywbeth y gallwn ei orfodi arni. Nid yw ychwaith yn fater syml o adnoddau.

Owen John Thomas: What plans does the Minister have to provide new funding to ensure basic and long-term changes for securing resources and developing Welsh-medium education in higher education institutes? (WAQ48841) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: I have put in place a package of measures to date at a cost of some £4 million to increase the range of opportunities and the sector is responding. Subjects as diverse as music, media studies and physics are coming online.

As recommended by the Welsh-medium steering group an options appraisal of provision of Welsh-medium higher education over the medium and long term has been recently completed. That appraisal recommended a preferred model for future provision based on a network model guided by an overarching national strategic framework and supported by an enhanced role for the Welsh Medium Teaching Development Centre. I am awaiting the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales's recommendations on taking forward the conclusions of that appraisal and expect that advice very shortly. Decisions on funding including the extent to which existing funding can be used more strategically in support of this agenda necessarily await consideration of that advice. The funding council has consulted with the sector on how the preferred model can be taken forward to achieve the step change we want—our target of 7 per cent of students receiving some HE provision through the medium of Welsh is a challenging one. It is essential that the way forward is agreed and carried forward by the sector in Wales—this is not something that can be imposed. Neither is it a simple matter of resources.

Owen John Thomas: Pa gamau sy'n cael eu cymryd i sicrhau bod yr iaith Gymraeg yn cael ei phrifffrydio ac yn rhan greiddiol o'r sefydliad mathemateg a gwyddorau sy'n cael ei sefydlu rhwng sawl sefydliad addysg uwch yng Nghymru? (WAQ48842) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Jane Davidson: Yr wyf yn falch o allu cefnogi'r broses o sefydlu Sefydliad Gwyddorau Mathemategol a Chyfrifiannol gydag ychydig dros £5 miliwn o gyllid o'r rhaglen 'Ymgeisio yn Uwch'. Caiff y sefydliad ei greu drwy ddwyn ynghyd y rhagoriaeth bresennol ym Mhrifysgol Cymru, Aberystwyth, Prifysgol Cymru, Bangor, Prifysgol Caerdydd a Phrifysgol Cymru Abertawe, ac adeiladu arni. Ei nod yw cynyddu bri mathemateg a chyfrifiannu yng Nghymru, meithrin cysylltiadau â diwydiant, masnach a busnes, creu cyllid sylweddol ar gyfer ymchwil a chynnig fforwm ar gyfer addysg ac ymwybyddiaeth y cyhoedd o'r gwyddorau mathemategol. Yr wyf yn ystyried bod hyn yn hynod bwysig i ategu strategaeth wyddoniaeth y Cynulliad a'n hamcan o fod yn economi sy'n cael ei llywio gan wybodaeth.

Er bod y sefydliad yn canolbwyntio ar ymchwil yn hytrach nag addysgu, bydd yr ymchwil a wneir yn ymdreiddio i'r addysgu yn y pedwar sefydliad sy'n bartneriaid, ac yn ei gyfoethogi. Mae hynny'n cynnwys yr addysgu ym Mhrifysgol Cymru, Aberystwyth lle mae Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn cefnogi'r cyfleoedd i astudio mathemateg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg drwy'r gymrodoriaeth addysgu mewn gwyddorau mathemategol a ffisegol.

Owen John Thomas: What steps are being taken to ensure that the Welsh language is mainstreamed and is a core part of the institute of mathematics and science which is being founded jointly by higher education institutes in Wales? (WAQ48842) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: I am pleased to be able to support the establishment of the Institute of Mathematical and Computational Science with just over £5 million funding from the 'Reaching Higher' programme. The institute is created by drawing together and building on existing excellence at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, the University of Wales, Bangor, Cardiff University and the University of Wales Swansea. Its aim is to enhance the standing of mathematics and computation in Wales, to foster links with industry, commerce and business, to generate substantial research funding and to provide a forum for education and public awareness of the mathematical sciences. I see this as highly important in underpinning the Assembly's science strategy and our objective to be a knowledge-led economy.

While the institute is research-focused not a teaching institute, the research undertaken will filter down and enhance teaching at all four partner institutions, including the University of Wales, Aberystwyth where opportunities to study mathematics through the medium of Welsh are supported by the Assembly Government funded teaching fellowship in mathematical and physical sciences.

Janet Ryder: Will the Minister make a statement on the progress made to get school buildings fit for purpose? (WAQ48846)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: Good progress is being made in making school buildings in Wales fit for purpose. Funding of an average of £150 million annually is being provided for investment in school buildings, and will continue to at least 2009-10. Including the capital value of private finance initiative schemes, support is expected to total £667 million over the period 2004-05 to 2007-08, significantly ahead of our manifesto commitment of £560 million during the lifetime of this Assembly.

Janet Ryder: What are the criteria for making a course applicable for a student studying it to be entitled to seek an Assembly learning grant? (WAQ48847)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: There are two types of Assembly learning grant. For those studying a further education course, the requirement is that the course is studied at a publicly funded FE institution, a local authority maintained school, special school or college, or with a third party provider. The course should lead to a nationally recognised qualification and should involve at least 275 contact hours per academic year.

For those studying in higher education, the course will generally be of at least one year's duration, wholly provided by a publicly funded institution or in conjunction with institutions inside or outside the UK, and will be of a higher standard than that of advanced level GCE, but usually no higher than that of a first degree.

Janet Ryder: Will the Minister make a statement on the increase in number of classes which have more than 30 children in primary schools? (WAQ48848)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: The September 2006 class size count showed that just 50 of the 4,007 infant classes in Wales had more than 30 pupils. Although an increase of four over the equivalent figure recorded in September 2005, this is within the normal annual fluctuations which might be expected and is statistically insignificant. All but four of these classes of over 30 were due to temporary permitted exceptions to the law.

There were 135 junior classes of over 30 pupils recorded at September 2006, compared with 100 such classes last year. In the context of the total number of junior classes (5,471), an increase of 35 is again not of great significance. However in the coming months I will be considering ways of ensuring that junior classes continue to contain 30 pupils or fewer.

Helen Mary Jones: In terms of the specific learning difficulties in higher education, what plans has the Minister to provide appropriate funding for lecturers/support staff to pursue any courses necessary, so that they acquire the practising certificate? (WAQ48850)

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister consider nominating a representative onto the 'Welsh Dyslexia Project' working party on the Department for Education and Skills report on special learning difficulties in higher education? (WAQ48851)

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister consider setting up a Wales working party to discuss issues raised from the DfES guidelines on specific learning difficulties in higher education? (WAQ48852)

Helen Mary Jones: Following the DfES guidelines on assessing special learning difficulties, what plans has the Minister to develop appropriate Assessment material through the medium of the Welsh language to meet the need of Higher Education establishments and these students? (WAQ48853)

Helen Mary Jones: Now that the assessment of students in higher education institutions in Wales for specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, is being devolved, what plans does the Minister have to bring forward legislation for student support, including disabled students' allowances, and will advice be given to local authorities on acceptable evidence of a specific learning difficulty for disabled students' allowances purposes? (WAQ48854)

Helen Mary Jones: Will assessments of special learning difficulties in higher education be based on DfES guidelines? (WAQ48855)

Helen Mary Jones: Following the report and guidance published by the DfES working party on assessment of special learning difficulties in higher education, what qualifications do those assessing specific learning difficulties in higher education need to have? (WAQ48856)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: In accepting responsibility from academic year 2006-07 onwards for administering financial support for all eligible, Welsh-domiciled students, the general criteria adopted by the Welsh Assembly Government for assessing eligibility for the range of awards available, including the disabled students' allowance, are similar to those used by DfES. We have adopted the specific learning difficulties working group 2005/DfES guidelines for assessment for DSAs. This will, in due course, require those assessing DSA applications to hold a practising certificate in specific learning difficulties assessment. In taking forward the application of the guidelines, Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills officials will be working closely with the Wales regional office of the Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties and Skill Wales (the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities).

Janet Ryder: How much of the school history syllabus is Welsh history? (WAQ48860)

Janet Ryder: How much of the music syllabus in Wales focuses on Welsh composers and Welsh music? (WAQ48859)

Janet Ryder: How much Welsh politics is included in the national curriculum? (WAQ48858)

Janet Ryder: How much Anglo-Welsh literature is included in the English literature syllabus? (WAQ48857)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: The national curriculum subject Orders all include a statutory general requirement for the Curriculum Cymreig, 'to develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales'. In the Orders for history, Welsh, music and English, specific requirements relating to Wales are included although no percentage of time that teachers should spend on this or any other aspect of the curriculum is specified.

In terms of history, the current subject Order requires that pupils at key stage 1 (five to seven years) be taught about people and events from both the history of their own area and that of Wales, Britain and other countries; at key stage 2 (seven to 11 years) that they be taught about important developments, key events and notable people in their locality, Wales and Britain; at key stage 3 (11 to 14 years) that they be taught about the main political, economic, social and cultural features of selected periods from the histories of Wales and Britain during the last millennium.

Pupils choosing to follow a history course at GCSE are required to study a substantial element of British history (which may include British history in general, or the history of England, Ireland, Wales or Scotland). The Welsh Joint Education Committee has two GCSE specifications. The four British history topics in specification A are all explicitly focused on the history of Wales and England. In specification B, one of the optional in-depth studies is 'Popular Movements in Wales and England 1815 to 1845'; one of the optional themes is 'The Welsh Language c.1900 to the present day'; and one of the two studies in development is the history of crime and punishment in Wales and England.

In terms of music, the programmes of study at key stages 1, 2, and 3 state that the range of music chosen for performing and listening should include the music of Wales. At GCSE, the WJEC specification is based on five areas of study, one of which is entitled 'Music in Wales.' This includes Welsh songs (art, folk, cerdd dant and pop), Welsh harp music and Welsh orchestral music.

In terms of politics, the community aspect of the personal and social education framework provides the opportunity for a study of politics at all age levels in the context of the different roles of people within a community. Schools are required by law to provide personal and social education to their pupils and to have regard to this framework in making that provision.

The framework states that: 'Pupils are members of communities, from local through national to global, and can be helped to play a meaningful and active part in them. Such active citizenship implies a number of considerations. First, there needs to be an understanding of the nature of communities in Wales and beyond and the roles, relationships, conflicts and inequalities that affect the quality of life. In this context pupils explore rights and responsibilities in a democratic society under the rule of law. Secondly, pupils should be encouraged and equipped to demonstrate commitment to community life in participation, service and action which promotes the well-being of that community. Finally, we need to cultivate in young people a political 'literacy' which enables them to make effective decisions and judgements in the world of political and legal systems.'

At key stage 2, there is a requirement to understand the importance of democratic decision-making and involvement and how injustice and inequality affect people's lives. At key stage 3, the requirement is to understand the issues relating to democracy in Wales, to know the rights and responsibilities of a young

citizen and to know how representatives (MEPs, MPs, Members of the National Assembly, councillors etc) are elected and what their roles are. At key stage 4, the requirement is to know how democratic systems work, to understand how individual citizens, public opinion, lobby groups, and the media can contribute and have an influence and impact and to understand how Government evolves and affects individuals.

In terms of English, there are specific requirements in the programmes of study for reading at all key stages for pupils to read Anglo-Welsh literature. At key stage 1 the reference is to 'stories and poems from Wales' and at key stages 2-4, the requirement is 'works by Welsh authors writing in English and those works that have a Welsh setting or a special relevance for Wales'.

The GCSE criteria for English include a requirement to study work by a Welsh author writing in English or that has a Welsh setting or special relevance to Wales, as well as texts from other cultures and traditions. The WJEC specification for GCSE English requires one piece of coursework to be based on poetry or drama 'with a Welsh relevance' and the WJEC GCSE English Literature specification always includes a Welsh text as one of the optional set books—currently *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas. The WJEC specification for GCE English Literature currently includes as optional set texts: *A Toy Epic* by Emyr Humphreys, *Selected Poems* by Dylan Thomas, and *Welsh Retrospective* by Dannie Abse.

The full curriculum documentation on all these subject areas can be found on the Assembly website in the education and skills pages under 'Curriculum and Assessment'. Details of the WJEC's syllabuses are available on its website.

Janet Ryder: What powers does the Welsh Assembly Government have to change the school curriculum in Wales? (WAQ48861)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: The curriculum in Wales is dealt with in Part 7 of the Education Act 2002. The Assembly powers in the 2002 Act include power to:

- add requirements to the basic curriculum (otherwise than in respect of religious education and sex education);
- change the bottom end of the age range for the national curriculum;
- specify the period of the foundation stage;
- modify the key stage periods;
- specify the areas of learning for the foundation stage and specify in relation to them desirable outcomes, educational programmes and assessment arrangements;
- specify for key stages 1,2,3 and 4 in relation to the foundation subjects such attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment targets as the Assembly considers appropriate;
- amend section 105 and 106 of the 2002 Act to change or add to the core and foundation subjects for key stages 1,2,3 and 4;
- specify the meaning of modern foreign language for the purpose of the foundation subjects;
- direct exceptions or provide for exceptions by regulations to the national curriculum (sections 111-114); and
- incur expenditure on programmes of research, development and dissemination (section 118).

In addition, section 178(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Assembly a power to make regulations including any provision that could be made by Act of Parliament on the school curriculum. This includes power to amend or repeal any provision about the school curriculum. This power will become an Assembly Measure power on implementation of the Government of Wales Act 2006 in May 2007.

The AM might like to note that the Assembly's powers are set out for all to see in the legislation published by HSMO on the internet. She and her advisers should be able to access this without any difficulty. Alternatively, they could have contacted the library service for this.

Janet Ryder: Will the Minister please make a statement on a) how many teachers in Wales are teaching through the medium of Welsh, b) how many are able to teach through the medium of Welsh but are not doing so and what are the above figures for a) and b) for each year since 2003? (WAQ48863)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: The number of qualified teachers teaching through the medium of Welsh, or able to do so, in maintained primary and secondary schools is shown in the table below:

At January of each year:	Teaching through the medium of Welsh	Able to teach through the medium of Welsh but not doing so
2003	14,429	919
2004	14,478	1,156
2005	14,693	1,099
2006	15,052	1,320

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister provide an update/timescale on the current position of the proposed closure of Argoed Primary School? (WAQ48864)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Jane Davidson: It has taken my officials some time to submit advice to me on this proposal because of difficulties they have experienced in obtaining clear information from the local education authority. If at all possible we will issue a decision letter by the end of term.

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

Eleanor Burnham: Will the Minister make a statement on how global warming will affect Wales? (WAQ48478)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones): Climate change will affect Wales. For example, we can expect to see:

- higher sea levels;
- increased storminess;
- hotter, drier summers; and
- wetter, milder winters.

I am developing a climate change adaptation action plan, to set out the action required in Wales in response to these impacts.

Nick Bourne: What is the Minister doing to ensure transparency across all aspects of the planning portfolio? (WAQ48479)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: My planning responsibilities involve policy making and decision making. Planning policy is developed after the close involvement of stakeholders and wide consultation and publicity. The new local development plan system requires local community involvement in the preparation of the local plans. The bigger planning decisions are taken after public inquiries and include detailed reasons for the decision.

Carl Sargeant: Will the Minister make a statement on the Eco-Schools scheme? (WAQ48480)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to the continued support and improvement of the Eco-Schools programme which is managed in Wales by Keep Wales Tidy.

Over 1,300 Welsh schools are now part of the Eco-Schools programme. Pupils, staff, families and the wider community are making a real commitment to continuously improve their environment by making environmental action an intrinsic part of the school culture and the dedication of Keep Wales Tidy in providing support and learning resources for schools has undoubtedly raised awareness of environmental and sustainable development issues both within schools and the communities they serve.

The Welsh Assembly Government currently provides funding of £100,000 per year to support the programme and has recently provided Keep Wales Tidy with an additional £250,000 over the next two years. This funding will provide support to increase the number of Eco-Schools officers available to support schools through the programme to enable more schools across Wales to achieve their green flag status, the highest level of recognition awarded to a school for achievement in promoting environmental sustainability. The funding will also support other improvements to the programme such as enhancing the Eco-Schools website and recognising schools' achievements with an annual Eco-Schools competition.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on how agriculture benefits the environment in Wales? (WAQ48481)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: Countryside landscape is man-made and valued by the taxpayer. We depend on farmers to sustain that environment. Through sensitive management of the countryside, biodiversity is assisted. Hedge planting and cutting policy and the timing of hay making are significant in terms of bird populations and mixed cropping provides wildlife benefits. Safeguarding the environment is only achievable through a combination of legislation and incentives. Agri-environment schemes currently provide financial incentives to achieve measurable benefits. The success of these schemes will be assessed in a review of axis II in 2007.

Laura Anne Jones: Will the Minister make a statement regarding the use of alternative fuels in Wales, as a means of reducing pollution? (WAQ48482)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: Under the Environment Agency's substitute fuels protocol the use of alternative and waste-derived fuels is being increasingly implemented within a variety of industrial installations. The use of such fuels encompasses the application of strict emissions limits prescribed within the EU waste incineration directive and is applied as part of the integrated pollution prevention and control permitting

regime. This regime involves formulating and applying a site-specific form of environmental regulation to each installation and is enforced at all such industrial sites.

The Welsh Assembly Government is also committed to promoting and encouraging the uptake of cleaner fuels and vehicles in Wales and is currently looking at various ways of doing this. Along with the UK Government's UK wide initiatives such as the renewable transport fuels obligation and the EU biofuels directive we support the Department for Transport's grant and advice programmes which are:

Low carbon research and development—providing funding towards the cost of research and development for prototype low-carbon vehicles and technologies; and

Infrastructure development—providing grants to support the installation of cleaner transport fuelling and recharging infrastructure.

These grants are available in Wales and are administered by the Energy Savings Trust and funded by UK Government.

William Graham: Will the Minister confirm the number of farms in Wales that have been awarded a certificate for the countryside educational visits accreditation scheme? (WAQ48488)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Carwyn Jones: This is a Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs initiative via the English rural development plan. There is no Welsh equivalent funded via the Wales rural development plan.

Questions to the Finance Minister

Kirsty Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on how she ensures good value for money when delivering public services? (WAQ48865)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to maximising value for money in order to deliver better quality public services in Wales. As part of our public service reform programme, 'Making the Connections', we have set a target of achieving gains worth £600 million a year by 2010 across the public service. We are challenging service delivery organisations to achieve greater efficiency, get better value and re-allocate resources to the front line.

David Melding: Has the Minister considered the recommendations of the Atkinson review, 'Measurement of Government Output and Productivity', and will she make a statement? (WAQ48869)

Sue Essex: The key aim of the year-long Atkinson review was to recommend methods and approaches which can be used to measure UK Government output and productivity.

These recommendations are being taken forward by the UK Centre for the Measurement of Government Activity (UKCeMGA), which is part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS). UKCeMGA's aim is to strengthen the capability of ONS to publish authoritative and coherent measures of the output and productivity of government-provided services in the UK national accounts, concentrating on the key functional areas of health, education, public order and safety and social protection.

The Welsh Assembly Government is supporting the work of UKCeMGA by supplying relevant Welsh data, where these exist in a suitable form: for example we have supplied Welsh education output data to be used as a component of UK education output.

We will continue to work with UKCeMGA to extend the data we provide about Government activity in Wales and to ensure we have a sound understanding of its approach and its relevance in a Welsh context.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Nick Bourne: How many of the 30 stations at the new kidney dialysis unit at West Wales General Hospital will be utilised and operational? (WAQ48448)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Brian Gibbons): It is planned initially to open 20 stations at the new dialysis unit. This is the number needed for the 80 patients currently receiving treatment at Carmarthen. The 30 stations at the new kidney dialysis unit represent the unit's full capacity and were agreed as a method of 'future-proofing' the development against expected increases in demand.

Kirsty Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on the availability of advocacy services for elderly mentally ill patients in Wales? (WAQ48456)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The need for increased provision of advocacy for older people in general is supported by the older people's national service framework. 'Raising the Standard', the revised adult mental health national service framework, promotes the delivery of advocacy services to all in-patients in mental health settings across Wales. The policy intent is to have high-quality advocacy services available and accessible to those who require it, including those receiving services in the community. This is likely to be reinforced by the joint National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence/Social Care Institute for Excellence dementia guidelines, due to be published on 29 November.

It is for commissioners to decide on the health and social care needs of their local population and to champion advocacy through the joint strategic route of the health and social care strategies.

Kirsty Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on the impact of the Mental Health Capacity Act 2005 on the ability of volunteers to deliver advocacy services for elderly mentally ill patients? (WAQ48457)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The Mental Capacity Act 2005 introduces for the first time a statutory right to advocacy. This will be known as the independent mental capacity advocate (IMCA) service. It will be available in very specific circumstances and to those individuals who have no-one else (family or friends) to support them. Ordinarily, the service will be available in relation to decisions relating to serious medical treatment and accommodation moves.

As the IMCA service will be staffed by suitably qualified advocates, the policy intention is that volunteers will not be used to provide the IMCA role. However, in cases where advocates (including volunteers) are currently supporting older people with mental health problems, the IMCA will work alongside that advocate and their role will enjoy primacy only in relation to the specific circumstances as detailed above.

The impact of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 on the ability of volunteers to deliver advocacy services for this group of individuals is likely to be minimal, and volunteers currently engaged to provide support will continue to do so.

Lisa Francis: Can the Minister outline whether the additional funding for disease-modifying therapies, as confirmed in his announcement, will bring an end to the current postcode lottery in the availability of such drugs? (WAQ48484)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: There is no 'postcode lottery' in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government aims to ensure equity of access to high-quality and evidence-based services across the country. The additional £700,000 funding that has been made available to Health Commission Wales will allow the prescribing centres commissioned to treat Welsh MS patients to commence treatment for patients who had previously been assessed as eligible for treatment, and any new MS patients who present for the remainder of 2006-07 and are assessed as eligible for disease-modifying therapies under the guidance of the Association of British Neurologists.

William Graham: Will the Minister outline the additional services required to monitor and treat a potential outbreak of TB in Wales? (WAQ48489)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The National Public Health Service runs the Welsh tuberculosis programme and has worked closely with the Welsh Assembly Government to strengthen TB services in Wales. To this end, the Assembly has provided £35,000 to the NPHS in the 2006-07 financial year to fund the following:

- one additional full-time biomedical scientist;
- improving the laboratory diagnosis, characterisation and typing of TB to assist regional communicable disease teams during TB outbreaks;
- further enhancement of routine TB surveillance in Wales;
- introduction of technology for the early identification of multi-drug resistant TB.

These up to date tuberculosis surveillance and control systems are consistent with those in the rest of the UK and enable the NPHS to deal both with outbreaks of the disease and the management of sporadic cases.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister detail any correspondence he has had with Cabinet colleagues regarding hospital configuration in Wales? (WAQ48729)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The only piece of correspondence identified has been a press release from Alun Pugh AM about orthopaedic services in north Wales.

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister detail any correspondence he has had with Ann Lloyd or other senior officials in his department relating to hospital reconfiguration in mid and west Wales, excepting Powys? (WAQ48730)

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister detail any correspondence he has had from Ann Lloyd or other senior officials in his department relating to hospital configuration in Powys? (WAQ48731)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: We have carried out an extensive search of current material and have not identified any correspondence. We are also proceeding to search archived material. I will provide a further update on any information that is found.

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister detail in tabular form the net NHS expenditure per head in Wales from 1997 to 2006 and how do these figures compare to those of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland? (WAQ48820)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: This information is not held centrally.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the number and locations of cardiac surgeons in England performing cardiac operations on patients from Wales? (WAQ48821)

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the number and locations of cardiac surgeons in Wales? (WAQ48822)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: Cardiac surgery for Welsh patients is commissioned at 5 main referral centres where the majority of cardiac surgery is commissioned and takes place. They are:

Cardiff—University Hospital of Wales;
Swansea—Morrison;
Cardiothoracic Centre, Liverpool;
Manchester;
Birmingham.

We also contract with other providers, for example, North Staffordshire and Bristol where a range of services may be commissioned and where patients may have cardiac surgery, both elective or emergency, as required.

This excludes heart transplants conducted at specialist transplant units.

At 30 September (the latest date for which information is available) there were 12 consultants in Wales with a recorded main speciality of cardio-thoracic surgery. Six of these worked in Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust and six in Swansea NHS Trust.

Information on the number and locations of cardiac surgeons in England performing cardiac operations on patients from Wales is not available centrally. However, the following table shows the number of cardiac operations performed on Welsh residents by cardiac-thoracic surgeons in England, by trust where operation was performed.

Cardiac operations performed on Welsh residents by cardiac surgeons in England.

	2003-04	2004-05
Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Trust	24	22
Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University NHS Trust	358	300
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	10	16
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	-	4
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	2	-
Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust	4	1

King's College Hospital NHS Trust	-	-
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	-	2
Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	1	-
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	12	19
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	29	15
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	-	-
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	2	6
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	-	3
St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	8	-
St Mary's Healthcare NHS Trust	2	-
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	509	411
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	2	2
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	62	87
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	7	10
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	32	43
University Hospitals Coventry And Warwickshire NHS Trust	-	9
University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust	36	121
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	2	2
Total	1,102	1,073

Jonathan Morgan: What level of funding per student does the Cardiff School of Physiotherapy receive in the current financial year compared to Scotland and England? (WAQ48829)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The Cardiff School of Physiotherapy receives £6,153 funding per student. Funding details for schools in Scotland and England are not held centrally, therefore a comparison can not be made.

David Lloyd: Pa ystyriaeth y mae'r Gweinidog wedi ei rhoi i ddarparu arian ychwanegol i ariannu 'Cyngor Da Iechyd Da' o'r llinell gyllidol 'Atal Afiechyd'? (WAQ48832) [W]

Ateb terfynol yn dilyn yr ateb dros dro.

Brian Gibbons: Yn fy nghylch cynllunio'r gyllideb blynyddol rwy'n sicrhau, o fewn y swm cyfan o arian sydd ar gael, bod ystyriaeth yn cael ei rhoi i ddarparu cyllid ychwanegol ar gyfer yr holl ystod o gyfrifoldebau Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol. Mae hynny'n cynnwys y gwasanaeth 'Cyngor Da Iechyd Da' a sefydlwyd gan y weinyddiaeth hon.

David Lloyd: What consideration has the Minister given to providing additional funding for 'Better Advice Better Health' in the 'Prevention' budget line? (WAQ48832) [W]

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: In my annual budget round I ensure that, within the global sum of money available, the possibility of extra funding is considered across the range of Health and Social Services responsibilities. That consideration includes the 'Better Advice Better Health service established by this administration.

David Lloyd: What ministerial activity is happening in Wales, to mirror ministerial and select committee in England, which is looking at the whole field of research and development in prostate cancer management? (WAQ48335)

David Lloyd: What action is the Welsh Assembly Government taking to promote research and treatments of prostate cancer in Wales, and will he detail plans for how this work will develop further? (WAQ48336)

David Lloyd: What action is the Welsh Assembly Government taking to improve prostate cancer screening in Wales? (WAQ48337)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The Welsh Assembly Government has published national cancer standards for urological cancer, which includes prostate cancer. The three regional cancer networks are taking forward the implementation of these standards and service guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Our policy on tackling cancer is an holistic approach which addresses prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment through to palliative care.

The Welsh Assembly Government funds the Wales Cancer Bank which aims to collect and store cancer tumour, tissue and blood samples from all consenting patients with possible or confirmed cancer as a basis for future scientific studies. These studies will help establish the causes of cancer, and help identify areas for treatment and select the best treatment for individual patients. Since October 2006 the Wales Cancer Bank has been collecting samples from seven sites across Wales including: University Hospital of Wales, Llandough, Singleton and Murryston Hospitals (Swansea), Withybush Hospital (Haverfordwest), Royal Gwent Hospital (Newport) and Ysbyty Gwynedd (Bangor)—and in particular is collecting prostate cancer samples at the University Hospital of Wales site. The Wales Cancer Bank plans to collect samples from prostate cancer patients across more sites in the near future. Once the bank has built up sufficient samples, researchers will be able to apply to access them for future research studies.

We are working closely with the Department of Health and the Charter for Action on Prostate Cancer group and will consider what action should be taken in Wales once this work comes to fruition. The Prostate Cancer Charter for Action group wishes to raise awareness of prostate cancer. The director of the cancer services co-ordinating group is an observer on the Department of Health's prostate cancer advisory group which is considering ways of improving services for prostate cancer patients in England and which has noted the content of the charter. CSCG will advise the Welsh Assembly Government and the NHS on any further action required specifically to tackle prostate cancer over and above what we are already doing. As part of this, the CSCG urological cancers steering group has provided expert advice to Health Commission Wales on brachytherapy.

Health Challenge Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government's messages on healthy lifestyles promote health and raise awareness generally about cancer.

A test for prostate cancer has been developed. The National Screening Committee, which advises the four UK health administrations, does not support the need for a national screening programme because the risks associated with the test include false alarms. This in turn can result in unnecessary anxiety and treatment.

Men in Wales are supported in taking an informed decision about whether or not to take the prostate specific antigen test. The Welsh Assembly Government has produced a leaflet for this purpose and a website is available that contains a decision aid tool.

Janet Ryder: Why is a medical student who is in his fifth year of his course and has applied for an income assessed NHS bursary, and has previously received Assembly learning grant funding for his first four years of study, now ineligible for Assembly learning grant funding? (WAQ48866)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: For the first four years of their studies, medical students receive the same type of student financial support as other higher education students. In their fifth year of study they transfer to the NHS student support system and may receive a national health bursary. The Assembly learning grant is a component of the standard student finance support system.

Jocelyn Davies: What consideration has been given towards the introduction of a specific waiting-time target for epilepsy and will the Minister detail how current waiting times, and any proposed targets, reflect NICE guidelines for epilepsy which recommends that people should be seen urgently or within two weeks? (WAQ48867)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The Welsh Assembly Government is currently developing service development and commissioning directives for the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients with epilepsy. I would expect that guidance, as with our guidance on the treatment of other conditions, to specify that services in Wales should be planned, organised and delivered in line with National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines and recommendations. Our strategy on waiting times is to move towards setting formal targets that focus on the patient pathway from referral to treatment, as opposed to setting targets for individual steps along the pathway, such as assessment. We have set a target that will ensure that no one will wait more than 26 weeks from referral to treatment by December 2009. In order to achieve this target for epilepsy patients, prompt assessment will be critical to the way services are delivered.

Jocelyn Davies: Will the Minister provide the numbers of deaths from epilepsy in Wales since the publication of the national audit of epilepsy deaths in 2002? (WAQ48868)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Brian Gibbons: The number of deaths which occurred to Welsh residents is given in the following table. Number of deaths where epilepsy was the main cause (a)

Year	Deaths
2002	52
2003	61
2004	53
2005	39

Source: Office for National Statistics.

(a) ICD-10 code G40. For 2004 and 2005 cause of death was as given in the death register and based on the doctor's certificate of cause of death: this is known as 'original' cause of death. For 2002 and 2003 cause was 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.

David Melding: What is the current estimate of the volume of counterfeit drugs entering the NHS in Wales? (WAQ48870)

Brian Gibbons: Responsibility for licensing medicines for use in the UK rests with the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Its role also covers operating a quality surveillance system to sample and test medicines and to address quality defects, monitoring the safety and quality of imported unlicensed medicines and investigating internet sales and the potential counterfeiting of medicines. Information on their surveillance work should be sought direct from the agency.

In the last year, the Welsh Assembly Government has received one official notification from the MHRA of a counterfeit medicine circulating in the UK. None of that medicine was found within Wales. No reports have been received by the Welsh Assembly Government's quality assurance unit from NHS Wales of possible counterfeit products in circulation.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister make a statement on the role of chiropractors in the management of musculoskeletal disorders in Wales (WAQ48872)

Brian Gibbons: The provision of all health services in Wales, including complementary medicines and therapies in the NHS, is the responsibility of the 22 local health boards. As commissioners of services they are responsible and well placed to assess the needs of the local area. Working with the NHS trusts, the voluntary sector and others, they are able to plan and prioritise local health services to meet identified need. Complementary medicine and therapies may be prescribed by the NHS provided they have been proven to be clinically safe and effective and are not listed in XVIII A of the drug tariff. Beyond this their use is a matter for clinical judgment based on the patient's clinical need.

The service development and commissioning directives for arthritis and chronic musculoskeletal conditions, which are due to be published early in the new year, make reference to the use of osteopathic and chiropractic interventions in the treatment of arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions. This focuses on recent work undertaken by NICE into the field of lower back pain which was published in June 2006.

David Lloyd: Will the Minister detail how his department is promoting chiropractic as a career? (WAQ48874)

Brian Gibbons: Chiropractic is a fast-growing independent healthcare profession. It is healthcare regulated but is not included in our careers information or workforce planning processes because chiropractors are not employed directly by the NHS. The general chiropractic council keeps a register of chiropractors who meet their standards for training, professional skills and health.

David Lloyd: What assessment has the Minister made on whether there is a need to increase numbers completing chiropractic degrees in Wales? (WAQ48875)

Brian Gibbons: Chiropractors are not employed directly by the NHS. As such, I have not considered the need to examine the numbers of those completing degree courses in the profession.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister list the name and location of each district general hospital in Wales and for each hospital state whether it provides a 24 hour accident and emergency service? (WAQ48878)

Brian Gibbons: A comprehensive list of the name and location of each district general hospital in Wales and information on whether they provide 24 hour accident and emergency services is already in the public domain and is published at <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm>.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister make a statement about why he has asked Pontypridd and Rhondda NHS Trust to delay submitting its proposals for the reconfiguration of health services in the area? (WAQ48884)

Brian Gibbons: I have not asked for a delay. The process for the reconfiguration of health services for the area is being led by Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Health Board and Merthyr Tydfil Local Health Board,

working closely with both Pontypridd and Rhondda Trust and North Glamorgan NHS Trust together with other relevant organisations.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister rule out removing 24 hour accident and emergency care from the Prince Charles Hospital in Merthyr? (WAQ48885)

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister agree to oppose any plans to remove 24 hour accident and emergency care from the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant? (WAQ48886)

Brian Gibbons: There are no such plans.

Leanne Wood: What investment plans does the Minister have for the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant? (WAQ48887)

Leanne Wood: How much money has the Minister allocated for capital spending at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant for the next financial year? (WAQ48888)

Brian Gibbons: There are no schemes at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital which are currently the subject of bids for central support. However, the Pontypridd and Rhondda NHS Trust may be funding smaller projects from within its discretionary capital allocation.

Leanne Wood: Will the Minister outline the steps, in terms of consultation with the public and AMs, trusts and/or local health boards would have to take to remove services from district general hospitals? (WAQ48889)

Brian Gibbons: It is the responsibility of local health boards across Wales to commission healthcare services for their resident population, including the services provided through district general hospitals. The LHBs undertake local health needs assessments and prioritise service developments accordingly, within the resources provided by the Welsh Assembly Government. These decisions have to be supported by available evidence and be made in a publicly accountable way.

The Welsh Assembly Government expects that, where there is to be significant service change, this would comply with Assembly guidance set out in WHC(2004)084, 'Shaping Health Services Locally'. This was published on 7 January 2005, and a copy is available in the Members' Library. WHC(2004)084 is currently being reviewed and any resulting changes will be published in the near future.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

Nick Bourne: What discussions has the Minister had with the Home Office regarding the shortfall in funding for police forces in Wales to meet the cost of preparing for mergers? (WAQ48483)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart): I wrote to Tony McNulty, the Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety, at the Home Office on 2 November expressing my deep concern about the Home Office's decision not to meet in full the costs incurred by police forces in Wales in preparing for the possibility of mergers.

Kirsty Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Assembly Government support for the voluntary sector in Powys? (WAQ48487)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Edwina Hart: In 2006-07, £197,748 was awarded to Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations and £178,791 to the Powys based volunteer bureaux and community support groups. The Assembly welcomes the recently launched tripartite compact between the voluntary sector, county council and local health board which will strengthen partnership working in Powys.

Leanne Wood: Now that the grant maxima for the home energy efficiency scheme has been raised, will the Welsh Assembly Government now be proactively targeting off gas communities for oil-based heating systems? (WAQ48547)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Edwina Hart: Promotional information now highlights the availability of oil. Our experience is that awareness of the HEES scheme is already widespread as demonstrated by the fact that over 250 applications are already being processed for the installation of oil central heating. There are no plans to specifically target off-gas communities.

Jonathan Morgan: How much money has been provided for the Wales Women's National Coalition in each year since 1999? (WAQ48591) **Transferred for answer by the Business Minister.**

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Business Minister (Jane Hutt): The Wales Women's National Coalition is an umbrella group for women's voluntary organisations in Wales. It has received core funding annually from the Welsh Assembly Government since 2001. Please see the table below for details of the funding:

2001-02	£37,500
2002-03	£50,000
2003-04	£50,000
2004-05	£50,000
2005-06	£75,000
2006-07	£76,875
2007-08	£78,797

In 2006-07, the Business Minister also agreed to provide one year of additional funding of £1,500 to enable them to carry out the duties of the Wales women's European network.

William Graham: Will the Minister outline her considerations of the impact of a network of dedicated parenting experts upon anti-social behaviour? (WAQ48708)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Edwina Hart: The Home Secretary announced on 21 November the setting up of a network of parenting experts in 77 areas in England, as part of a wider initiative to promote respect in communities. This measure is applicable to England only and we understand that the additional £4 million in finance is being provided by the Department for Education and Skills. There are different arrangements in Wales.

In Wales, we have our parenting action plan, which together with the Flying Start and Cymorth initiatives, promote positive parenting, making sure that all parents and carers in Wales have the confidence, advice and support they need to manage their children's behaviour effectively.

Janet Ryder: Will the Minister detail how many people were living in fuel poverty in Wales in 2005 and will she provide the figures by county? (WAQ48789)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

Edwina Hart: Living in Wales, which provides information at a national level, indicates that in 2004 130,000 households were in fuel poverty. As a result of energy price rises we estimate that another 30,000 households were in fuel poverty by the end of 2005. I have commissioned models to assess the impact of future energy price changes. Linked to this I have commissioned the Centre for Sustainable Energy to undertake further modelling work using a variety of sources to estimate fuel poverty at the ward level, the results of which should be available by Summer 2007.

Details of the Living in Wales survey are published at the following link:
http://new.wales.gov.uk/legacy_en/keypubstatisticsforwales/liw/liw.htm