

Written Questions answered between 27 November and 4 December 2003

[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

Ministerial Vehicles

Jonathan Morgan: How many ministerial vehicles are used by the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ30398)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): Five.

Money Spent on Ministerial Vehicles

Jonathan Morgan: How much money has been spent on the provision and running of ministerial vehicles by the Welsh Assembly Government in: (a) 1999, (b) 2000, (c) 2001, (d) 2002 and (e) 2003? (WAQ30399)

The First Minister: The information is shown in the following table. The costs include vehicle purchase, maintenance, fuel charges, insurance, road tax and breakdown cover. They also include the cost of hired chauffeur driven cars, which are used when Assembly cars are not available. They do not include the associated costs of the Assembly drivers.

Year	Cost (£)
1999-2000	71,500
2000-01	87,500
2001-02	88,000
2002-03	70,500
2003-04 (to date)	36,000

Questions to the Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

Welsh Heroes Campaign

Nick Bourne: What is the cost to the taxpayer of the Welsh Heroes campaign? (WAQ29150)

Substantive answer following holding reply issued on 30 October 2003.

The Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport (Alun Pugh): Culturenet Cymru is running a series of projects including educational initiatives such as ‘Gathering the Jewels’ as well as popular projects such as the Welsh Heroes campaign. The total cost of Culturenet Cymru is £600,000 per annum. In the very short time—six weeks—since the Welsh Heroes project began, there have been over 1 million hits to the website, and over 23,090 names have been put forward.

Film Academies

Jenny Randerson: What plans are there to establish film academies in Wales following the announcement of a £50 million skills strategy for the film industry by Skillset and the UK Film Council in their document ‘A Bigger Future’? (WAQ30353)

Alun Pugh: I understand that a number of institutions across the UK will be recognised as screen academies, following a tendering process. Throughout the UK, there will be up to four screen academies in further education, up to five screen academies in higher education and one film business academy. In further education, there will be separate arrangements for England, Scotland and Wales. Guidelines and application forms for the tender process should be available early in 2004.

Welsh Language Schemes

Owen John Thomas: Has the Minister received Welsh language schemes from each local health board? (WAQ30425) [W]

Alun Pugh: I understand that the local health boards are currently preparing draft Welsh language schemes which will be submitted to the Welsh Language Board before going out to public consultation.

Cynlluniau Iaith Gymraeg

Owen John Thomas: Pa gamau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cymryd i greu fframwaith deddfwriaethol i'w gwneud yn ofynnol i'r nifer mwyaf posibl o gyrff baratoi cynlluniau iaith Gymraeg? (WAQ30426) [W]

Alun Pugh: Mae adran 6(1)(o) Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 yn galluogi gyrff cyhoeddus i gael eu pennu fel gyrff y gall Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg roi hysbysiad yn ei gwneud hi'n ofynnol iddynt baratoi cynlluniau iaith Gymraeg. Mae'r gwaith o bennu gyrff cyhoeddus i gael eu henwi o dan adran 6(1)(o) Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 yn broses barhaus, ac mae pedwar Gorchymyn o'r fath wedi cael eu gwneud hyd yma. Mae gwaith ar y gweill ar hyn o bryd i bennu gyrff ychwanegol.

Ynghlwm â hyn, mae Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn ymrwymedig i wthio ffiniau'r ddeddfwriaeth bresennol, ac mae llawer o waith eisoes wedi'i wneud i bennu ymgwymerwyr dŵr/carthffosiaeth o dan y Ddeddf, gyda'r bwriad o wneud offeryn statudol ym mis Ionawr. Dyma'r enghraifft gyntaf o ddwyn y cyfleustodau o dan gwmpas Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg.

Cytunwyd hefyd y bydd cynlluniau iaith Gymraeg yn dod yn rheidrydd sylfaenol i gymdeithasau tai. Caiff y cynlluniau hyn eu datblygu yn unol ag amserlen sydd i'w chytuno rhwng Llywodraeth y Cynulliad a Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg.

Welsh Language Schemes

Owen John Thomas: What action has the Minister taken to create a legislative framework that makes it a requirement for the maximum number of bodies to prepare Welsh language schemes? (WAQ30426) [W]

Alun Pugh: Section 6(1)(o) of the Welsh Language Act 1993 allows public bodies to be designated as those which the Welsh Language Board may notify and require them to prepare Welsh language schemes. Identifying public bodies to be named in an Order under section 6(1)(o) of the Welsh Language Act 1993 is a rolling process, with four such Orders having been made to date. Work is currently ongoing to designate additional bodies.

As part of this, the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to push the boundaries of current legislation and work is well under way to designate water/sewerage undertakers under the Act, with a statutory instrument projected to be made in January. This is the first instance of the utilities being brought under the ambit of the Welsh Language Act.

It has also been agreed that Welsh language schemes will become a fundamental obligation of housing associations. These schemes will be developed in line with a timetable to be agreed between the Assembly Government and the Welsh Language Board.

Yr Iaith Gymraeg

Owen John Thomas: Pa gamau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cymryd i sicrhau bod materion yn ymwneud â'r iaith Gymraeg yn cael eu cynnwys fel elfennau perthnasol wrth ddatblygu polisiau a chyflenwi gwasanaethau ar draws holl adrannau'r Cynulliad a'r holl gyrff cyhoeddus a noddir gan y Cynulliad? (WAQ30427) [W]

Alun Pugh: Ar lefel gweinidogol, yr wyf wedi ymrwymo i hyrwyddo ystyriaeth o'r iaith ymhlith fy nghyd-Weinidogion. Yr uned iaith Gymraeg yr wyf i'n gyfrifol amdani yw'r grym y tu ôl i'r broses o brif-ffrydio ar lefel swyddogol. Mae'r uned yn hwyluso ac yn galluogi'r broses o brif-ffrydio drwy Lywodraeth y Cynulliad.

Mae'r uned hefyd yn monitro'r broses o brif-ffrydio'r iaith yng ngwaith Llywodraeth y Cynulliad. Bydd yr adroddiad blynyddol cyntaf ar hynt 'Iaith Pawb' a'r cynllun iaith Gymraeg yn cael ei gyhoeddi yn ystod tymor yr haf 2004.

Mae 'Iaith Pawb' yn ymrwymo Llywodraeth y Cynulliad i sicrhau bod y Gymraeg yn cael ei hystyried yn rhan brif ffrwd o'r holl gyrff cyhoeddus a noddir gan y Cynulliad. Yn ei lythyr cylch gwaith 2003-04 at yr holl gyrff cyhoeddus a noddir gan y Cynulliad, gofynnwyd iddynt sicrhau bod y Gymraeg yn cael ei hystyried yn rhan o brif ffrwd eu gwaith a'u bod yn paratoi strategaeth i'r diben hwnnw.

The Welsh Language

Owen John Thomas: What action has the Minister taken to ensure that matters concerning the Welsh language are included as relevant elements in the development of policies and in providing services throughout the Assembly's departments and across all Assembly sponsored public bodies? (WAQ30427) [W]

Alun Pugh: At ministerial level, I am committed to promoting consideration of the language with my Cabinet colleagues. The Welsh language unit, for which I am responsible, is the driver behind the process of mainstreaming at official level. The unit is facilitating and enabling the process of mainstreaming throughout the Assembly Government.

The unit also monitors the mainstreaming of the language into the work of the Assembly Government. The first annual progress report on 'Iaith Pawb' and the Welsh language scheme will be produced for the summer term of 2004.

'Iaith Pawb' commits the Assembly Government to mainstream consideration of the Welsh language throughout its sponsored public bodies. As part of the 2003-04 remit letters to all ASPBs, we required them to mainstream consideration of the language and to produce a mainstreaming strategy to this end.

Sefydlu Uned Iaith Gymraeg

Owen John Thomas: Pa gamau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cymryd i sefydlu uned iaith Gymraeg o fewn gweinyddiaeth Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru i hwyluso'r broses o weithredu a monitro cynllun iaith Gymraeg y Llywodraeth? (WAQ30428) [W]

Alun Pugh: Fe'ch cyfeirïaf at yr ateb a roddwyd i WAQ26924 ar 7 Gorffennaf 2003. Erbyn hyn, mae wyth aelod o staff yn uned yr iaith Gymraeg ac mae'r uned yn recriwtio aelod arall o staff ar hyn o bryd.

Establishing a Welsh Language Unit

Owen John Thomas: What action has the Minister taken to establish a Welsh language unit within the Welsh Assembly Government administration to facilitate the process of implementing and monitoring the Government's Welsh language scheme? (WAQ30428) [W]

Alun Pugh: I refer to the answer given to WAQ26924 on 7 July 2003. The Welsh language unit now has eight members of staff, with an additional member of staff currently being recruited.

Defnydd o'r Iaith Gymraeg

Owen John Thomas: Pa gamau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cymryd i ddatblygu, crynhoi a chyhoeddi ystod o ddangosyddion ystadegol ac arolygon defnydd iaith ynglŷn â'r defnydd o'r iaith Gymraeg, lefelau rhuglder ac ymdreiddiad? (WAQ30429) [W]

Alun Pugh: Mae data cadarn yn hanfodol ar gyfer cynllunio ieithyddol effeithiol. Yn unol â'n hymrwymadau yn 'Iaith Pawb' i gasglu data mwy rheolaidd, mwy helaeth a mwy perthnasol ar y Gymraeg, mae ystadegydd wedi'i secondio gan Lywodraeth y Cynulliad i weithio gyda Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg. Mae data o gyfrifiad 2001 wedi cael ei ddadansoddi yn fanwl ac ar gael ar wefan y bwrdd, a chaiff rhagor o ddata ei ddadansoddi maes o law.

Mae arolygon a ffynonellau data perthnasol eraill yn cael eu harchwilio, a chynigion ar gyfer ehangu neu newid yn cael eu hystyried fel rhan o'n hymrwymiad i brif-ffrydio'r Gymraeg.

Caiff yr arolwg o gartrefi Cymru, a gynhelir yn 2004, 2005 a 2006, ei ddefnyddio i gasglu gwybodaeth ynghylch defnydd iaith, gan ddiweddarau ac ehangu ar y wybodaeth a ddarparwyd gan arolwg cymdeithasol Cymru 1992.

Bydd bwrdd yr iaith yn cynnal dau brosiect ymchwil sylweddol yn ystod y 12 mis nesaf. Bydd un o'r prosiectau hyn yn archwilio pam nad yw rhai rhieni dwyieithog yn trosglwyddo'r ddwy iaith i'w plant, a'r llall yn canolbwyntio ar rwydweithiau cymdeithasol pobl ifanc a'u defnydd o'r Gymraeg. Nod y ddau arolwg fydd darparu cynigion ymarferol y gellir gweithredu arnynt.

Use of the Welsh Language

Owen John Thomas: What action has the Minister taken to develop, compile and publish a range of statistical indicators and language-use surveys concerning the use of the Welsh language, fluency levels and infiltration? (WAQ30429) [W]

Alun Pugh: Sound data is a prerequisite for effective language planning. In line with our commitments in 'Iaith Pawb' to compile more pertinent, regular and extensive data regarding the Welsh language, a statistician has been seconded from the Assembly Government to work with the Welsh Language Board. Detailed analyses of the 2001 census have been released on the board's website and more will be forthcoming.

Other surveys and relevant sources of data are being examined and proposals for expansion or change are being considered as part of our commitment to mainstreaming the Welsh language.

The Welsh household survey, to be undertaken in 2004, 2005 and 2006, will be used to gather information about language use, updating and extending the previous knowledge base provided by the 1992 Welsh social survey.

The Welsh Language Board will be undertaking two substantial research projects in the coming 12 months. One of these projects will examine why some bilingual parents do not transfer both languages to

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their children; the other will focus on young people's social networks and their use of Welsh. Both will seek to provide practical proposals for action.

Fforwm Iaith

Owen John Thomas: Pa gamau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cymryd i ymgynghori ynglŷn â'r cynigion ar gyfer fforwm iaith? (WAQ30431) [W]

Alun Pugh: Byddaf yn ymgynghori'n fuan ar gynigion am fforwm iaith yn unol â'r ymrwymiad yn 'Iaith Pawb'.

A Language Forum

Owen John Thomas: What action has the Minister taken to consult on the proposals for a language forum? (WAQ30431) [W]

Alun Pugh: I will shortly be consulting on proposals for a language forum in line with the commitment in 'Iaith Pawb'.

Questions to the Minister for Economic Development and Transport

The Expansion of Public Transport Services

Janet Davies: What recent discussions has the Minister had regarding the expansion of public transport services? (WAQ29591)

The Minister for Economic Development and Transport (Andrew Davies): I have frequent discussions with public transport operators, local authorities and others.

Reports Submitted by the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association

David Davies: What reports has the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association submitted to the economic development department and could I have copies? (WAQ30097)

Andrews Davies: AWEMA has submitted seven reports to the Assembly Government's economic development department. These are as follows:

- three economic development officer's progress reports;
- two economic development grant progress reports; and
- two AWEMA economic development budget reports

On the question of access to these reports, I have asked officials to consider whether the information you have requested can be made available to you in a way that is consistent with the provisions contained within the National Assembly's code of practice to public access to information and the code of practice on the provision of information to Assembly Members. I will write to you when I have received further advice on this matter.

AWEMA

David Davies: What services has AWEMA given to the National Assembly's economic development department? (WAQ30098)

Andrews Davies: Support was provided for an economic development officer to enable AWEMA to develop its capacity to help take forward Assembly Government policies to ensure that minority interests participate in and contribute to economic prosperity in Wales.

Structural Funding Programme Monitoring Committees

Alun Cairns: What background checks are made into the members of the structural funding programme monitoring committees? (WAQ30140)

Andrew Davies: The European structural funds 2000-06 programme monitoring committee members are nominated by the umbrella voluntary, private and public organisations that form the wider partnership. It is up to those organisations to make any necessary background checks.

Benji and Co. Ltd , Llanidloes

Glyn Davies: Has the Minister indicated that, if the KTH site at Llanidloes is allocated to Benji and Co. Ltd of Llanidloes, he will withdraw the proposal to provide a new access to the site from the Llanidloes bypass? (WAQ30142)

Andrew Davies: I have given no such indication. However, it has been made clear from the start that the new access road is a key part of a wider regeneration strategy for Llanidloes and must be seen in the light of wider regeneration proposals for the town as a whole. The former KTH site at Llanidloes forms an integral part to the regeneration of the town in the long term.

The Business Requirements of Benji and Co. Ltd , Llanidloes

Glyn Davies: Has the Minister discussed the business requirements of Benji and Co. Ltd of Llanidloes with either the chair or chief executive of the Welsh Development Agency? (WAQ30143)

Glyn Davies: What steps have been taken to assist Benji and Co. Ltd of Llanidloes to find suitable business premises in or around Llanidloes? (WAQ30144)

Andrew Davies: I have not discussed the specific requirements of Benji and Co. Ltd with either the chairman or chief executive of the WDA, but my officials are liaising with the executive director of the WDA's mid Wales regional office.

The Llanidloes regeneration group, as a priority, has also agreed to do all that it can to support the expansion of Benji and Co. Ltd in conjunction with the ongoing efforts of the WDA. Meetings have already been held with the company to try to identify suitable alternatives.

Rail Services in North Wales

Ann Jones: What discussions has the Minister had with Arriva Trains regarding rail services in north Wales? (WAQ30312)

Ann Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on rail services in north Wales? (WAQ30313)

Andrew Davies: I met the chief executive of Arriva Trains, Mr Bob Davies, and his Wales team on 11 November 2003 and discussed rail services in north Wales, including the need for station enhancements. I also welcome the additional Virgin services between Euston and north Wales, which are to be introduced by September 2004.

The Delivery of Broadband in North Wales

Mark Isherwood: Will the Minister make a statement on the delivery of broadband in north Wales? (WAQ30314)

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Andrew Davies: The implementation of the five-year, £115 million Broadband Wales programme is continuing to deliver a range of complementing projects. These involve tackling market failure, addressing demand and supply deficiencies and widening both the scope of affordable access to broadband and the range of technologies being used to deliver it.

A range of supply and demand projects are being driven forward to achieve broadband connectivity throughout north Wales. These include:

- The all-Wales small and medium-sized enterprise satellite subsidy scheme was introduced to assist businesses not served by ADSL with the cost of accessing broadband via satellite. Up to £1,500 is available and further details can be obtained from the WDA. This scheme is to be extended by the end of the year to become technology-neutral. The associated try-before-you-buy scheme has encouraged numerous businesses throughout Wales to go on and purchase broadband. This scheme is available from information and communications technology support centres throughout Wales.
- Investment in the digital all-Wales health service network 2 has provided broadband connectivity to 61.5 per cent of the primary and secondary NHS sector in north Wales.
- The lifelong learning network has also provided broadband coverage to 71 per cent of secondary schools in Conwy, 57 per cent in Gwynedd and 90 per cent in Wrexham.
- In January 2004, a demand stimulation project will begin with the aim of improving awareness and understanding of the benefits of broadband to business and residential users, which will result in increased supply and increased take-up.
- The Assembly Government is in the process of recruiting eight Broadband Wales taskforce representatives, who will facilitate successful partnerships/initiatives and promote the benefits of broadband to enable the delivery of the Broadband Wales programme. Some of these posts will cover north Wales.
- Many areas of north Wales will be able to benefit from the Objective 1 projects. One such project is the regional innovative broadband support project. This project, which recently received approval from the Wales European Funding Office, will provide financial support in order for broadband initiatives to be driven forward at local level. Another project, which the Assembly is hopeful to receive approval on, is the broadband infrastructure subsidy initiative. This will provide businesses and communities with access to broadband connectivity.

Service Sector Jobs

Owen John Thomas: How many service sector jobs have been lost in Wales through outsourcing overseas? (WAQ30315)

Andrew Davies: No such data are available. We operate in a competitive international economic environment and 'A Winning Wales' is about improving the performance of the Welsh economy. My report to the Economic Development and Transport Committee on 17 November showed that employment in Wales has risen by 72,000 since 2001, our base year for measuring progress under 'A Winning Wales'.

Objective 1

Mark Isherwood: Will the Minister make a statement on how partnerships with Welsh businesses help in the delivery of Objective 1? (WAQ30316)

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Andrew Davies: The business sector is represented on all partnerships assisting in the delivery of Objective 1. The Wales European Funding Office's private-sector unit provides advice to the business sector on accessing funds, which can be done directly, by submitting a project, or indirectly via intermediary schemes. Currently, 160 Objective 1 projects are led by private-sector sponsors with funding totalling some £66 million, which is almost 11 per cent of total grant committed to date. In addition, private-sector facilitators have been appointed to help private-sector applicants.

AWEMA

David Davies: What role did the Minister play in the decision to award a grant of £17,000 to AWEMA? (WAQ30318)

Andrew Davies: I refer the Member to my response to WAQ29889 provided on 20 November 2003.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services

Owen John Thomas: What discussions has the Minister had concerning the impact of the general agreement on trade in services upon his powers as a Minister? (WAQ30319)

Andrew Davies: None. The general agreement on trade in services is the responsibility of the UK Government. It has no impact upon my powers as Minister.

Local Authority Road Schemes

Peter Black: What resources are available for local authority road schemes in 2004-05 that may be unsuccessful in the bidding for transport grant? (WAQ30320)

Andrew Davies: Local authorities wishing to pursue new road schemes in 2004-05 would need to put together a funding package, based on their own resources and other public and private-sector contributions as appropriate.

Successful Schemes for Transport

Peter Black: When does the Minister envisage announcing the successful schemes for transport grant for 2004-05? (WAQ30321)

Andrew Davies: I expect to announce the transport grant settlement for 2004-05 at around the turn of the year.

Broadband Policy

Mick Bates: Will the Minister make a statement on broadband policy in Wales? (WAQ30322)

Andrew Davies: I refer you to my previous response to your WAQ29372, dated 30 October 2003. In the short amount of time that has elapsed since my last response, the only change that I am able to notify you of is that the regional innovative broadband support project has received approval from the Wales European Funding Office.

The Strategic Rail Authority

Mick Bates: What recent discussions has the Minister had with representatives of the Strategic Rail Authority? (WAQ30323)

Andrew Davies: I meet representatives of the Strategic Rail Authority regularly, most recently Richard Bowker on 20 October. We both attended and spoke at the signing ceremony for the new Wales and

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Borders rail franchise when we were both very positive about working together with Arriva Trains to improve services in Wales.

Economic Development Policies

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister make a statement on how his economic development policies are impacting on mid and west Wales? (WAQ30324)

Andrew Davies: Our economic policies are working well in mid and west Wales.

The Dragon International Film Studios

Janice Gregory: Will the Minister give a progress report on the Dragon international film studios development in the Ogmore constituency? (WAQ30326)

Andrew Davies: The Assembly Government continues to have productive discussions with the company about its application for assistance, and we aware that the company is also in dialogues on private finance, planning and other issues.

Broadband Coverage

Lisa Francis: Will the Minister make a statement about broadband coverage in Wales? (WAQ30327)

Andrew Davies: More than 300 internet service providers are able to operate throughout Wales. The main operator is BT, which is principally responsible for ensuring that the exchanges are broadband-enabled. BT recently announced trigger levels for another 244 exchanges in Wales. NTL has a cable network that is operating across south Wales. In addition, MLL Telecom provides a wireless technology service that allows providers to extend their reach to business and residential customers in areas where copper or fibre solutions were considered to be technically or economically unattractive. I welcome all efforts by suppliers to make Wales broadband-enabled by all suitable technologies.

Tackling Economic Inactivity

John Griffiths: Will the Minister make a statement on progress in tackling economic inactivity in Wales? (WAQ30328)

Andrew Davies: According to the Labour Force Survey, economic inactivity among the working age population in Wales in the three months to September 2003 was 43,000 lower than a year earlier. The working-age economic inactivity rate fell by 2.6 percentage points to 23.4 per cent over this period, the biggest reduction among the devolved countries and English regions.

A World-class Workforce

John Griffiths: Will the Minister make a statement on what he is doing to support the development on a world-class workforce in Wales? (WAQ30329)

Andrew Davies: 'A Winning Wales' sets out our plans to improve the skill levels of the Welsh workforce to ensure that we can compete in the industries of the future. I am working closely with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to ensure that that is delivered, as set out in 'A Winning Wales' and in the skills and employment action plan.

The KTH Site near Llanidloes

Glyn Davies: Has a contract been awarded for the demolition of any of the buildings on the KTH site near Llanidloes and, if it has, when was it awarded? (WAQ30332)

Andrew Davies: No.

Financial Support to AWEMA

David Davies: Was the Minister aware in advance of the decision to give financial support to AWEMA? (WAQ30333)

Andrew Davies: No.

Financial Support to AWEMA

David Davies: What ministerial involvement was there in the decision to give financial support to AWEMA, and will the Minister make a statement? (WAQ30334)

Andrew Davies: The decision to award funding to AWEMA from the pathway to prosperity fund was taken in October 2000 by the then Minister for Economic Development.

Foreign and Domestic Inward Investment

Ann Jones: How many jobs have been (a) created and (b) sustained in (i) the Vale of Clwyd constituency and (ii) Denbighshire by foreign inward investment and domestic inward investment in each of the last five years? (WAQ30336)

Andrew Davies: Jobs assisted with overseas inward investment and inward investment from other parts of the UK are listed below:

	1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02		2002-03	
	New	Safe	New	Safe	New	Safe	New	Safe	New	Safe
Foreign inward investment	159	-	-	-	29	-	79	193	-	-
Indigenous inward investment	34	21	-	959	-	60	-	-	49	-

These jobs fall in the Vale of Clwyd constituency and none is separately recorded for the rest of Denbighshire for this period.

Inward Investment

Ann Jones: How many jobs were created or secured by inward investment in each north Wales county in each of the last five years? (WAQ30337)

Andrew Davies: Jobs to be created or safeguarded by inward investment projects recorded by the Welsh Development Agency over the past five financial years, by unitary authority area are as follows:

	1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02		2002-03	
	New	Safe	New	Safe	New	Safe	New	Safe	New	Safe
Conwy	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-
Denbighshire	193	21	-	959	29	60	79	193	49	-
Flintshire	1,214	751	432	540	2,372	3,087	491	41	526	595

Gwynedd	40	-	104	317	336	-	305	306	45	4
Wrexham	183	220	245	215	127	-	-	-	12	-
Ynys Mon	286	234	221	71	29	-	18	238	217	80

Penallta Link Road in Caerphilly

Helen Mary Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on the Penallta link road in Caerphilly? (WAQ30352)

Andrew Davies: A public inquiry was held on 8 April 2003 to hear objections to the orders made by Caerphilly County Borough Council for the proposed Penallta link road. The contents of the inspector's report are being considered and a decision is expected before Christmas.

Earlier this year, Caerphilly County Borough County submitted an application for funding from the local authorities non-match local regeneration fund. A grant of £1 million has been offered in principle, and will be confirmed once the council is in a position to proceed with the project.

Property Development Scheme

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Will the Minister make a statement on the sums of money available to the WDA in south-west Wales for the property development scheme in settlements for 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04? (WAQ30367)

Andrew Davies: Under the property development scheme, the WDA south-west region spent £25.1 million in 2001-02, £24 million in 2002-03 and forecasts a spend of £27.3 million for 2003-04.

Relief Road for Llandeilo

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister advise what measures he is taking to provide a relief road for Llandeilo? (WAQ30466)

Andrew Davies: The Assembly Government has appointed consultants to undertake a transport appraisal to identify, in conjunction with local interests, the problems in Llandeilo and possible solutions, as indicated in the trunk road forward programme (2002). The consultant's brief includes the need to liaise with officials from Carmarthenshire County Council.

Following a review of the strategic road network, the A476 will be trunked from the A48 at Cross Hands to the A483 at Ffairfach, and the A483 de-trunked from the M4/A48 at Pont Abraham to the A476 at Ffairfach. This change may take some time as it is subject to the availability of funds and making the necessary statutory Orders.

Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Student Support

Peter Black: What is the proposed membership and terms of reference for the group being set up under Professor Theresa Rees to look at student support in the light of the additional powers coming to the National Assembly? (WAQ30285)

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson): My intention is to reconvene the previous independent investigation group into student hardship and funding in Wales. The previous group was widely drawn, including representatives from the National Union of Students, local education authorities and the Trades Union Congress. Taking this step will make use of the expertise and experience gained by group members during the previous study. I will be writing to these former members shortly. I

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will also be seeking participation from England and Scotland not least because of the cross-border flows that affect higher education institutions in Wales. I recognise that some members of the previous group may not be able to join this study owing to other commitments, so I shall also approach relevant Welsh bodies for nominations, including the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and Higher Education Wales.

I shall publish the terms of reference as soon as I am in position to do so.

Education Funding

Ann Jones: What education funding was provided for each county in Wales for each of the past five years? (WAQ30341)

Jane Davidson: The majority of funding to local authorities for education is provided through the local government revenue settlement. The settlement is unhypothecated and it is for each authority to determine the level of resources allocated to each service sector, including education, according to its perception of local needs and priorities.

Details of specific grants over the last three years to individual local education authorities were submitted to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee as annex D to my ministerial report to its meeting on 19 November. Figures for earlier years are not readily available.

Money Spent on Pupils

Ann Jones: Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the amount of money spent per pupil in each of the key stages in: (a) primary, and (b) secondary schools in Wales? (WAQ30342)

Jane Davidson: Information on local authority budgets for each of the key stages is not collected centrally. Information on per-pupil budgets for primary and secondary sectors is contained in paper ELL (2) 02-03 (p2) presented to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee on 9 July 2003.

Average Funding per Student in Further Education

Ann Jones: What was the average funding per student in further education in Wales in each of the last five years? (WAQ30343)

Jane Davidson: The average funding per full-time equivalent student over the last five years is provided in the table below. This excludes further education capital funding and any capital projects that may have been supported.

Further education recurrent funding per full-time equivalent

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
£ per FTE	2,615	2,751	2,841	2,940	3,054

Local Authorities' Expenditure on Education

Ann Jones: Will the Minister list the percentage of local authorities' total expenditure spent on education for each county in Wales for the latest available year, ranked in order from highest percentage to lowest? (WAQ30344)

Jane Davidson: The figures requested are given in the table below.

Authority	% of total expenditure spent on education (a)
Pembrokeshire	48

Torfaen	47
Caerphilly	46
Carmarthenshire	46
Newport	45
Merthyr Tydfil	45
Powys	45
Flintshire	45
Ceredigion	45
The Vale of Glamorgan	45
Monmouthshire	44
Rhondda Cynon Taff	44
Bridgend	43
Wrexham	43
Neath Port Talbot	43
Swansea	43
Isle of Anglesey	42
Conwy	42
Blaenau Gwent	41
Cardiff	40
Denbighshire	39
Gwynedd	39
Wales average	43

(a) Gross revenue expenditure, includes expenditure funded from specific grants but is net of expenditure funded from sales fees and charges. Excludes capital expenditure

Questions to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside

The Control Programme of Ruddy Ducks

Alun Ffred Jones: Which body is responsible for the control programme of ruddy ducks in Wales? (WAQ30106)

The Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Carwyn Jones): The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is the lead body for the control programme of ruddy duck for the United Kingdom. In December 2002, Sue Essex AM agreed with Elliot Morley MP that the Assembly Government would support this approach and officials have been working closely with DEFRA and other devolved administrations on this.

The Shooting of Ruddy Ducks

Alun Ffred Jones: Will the Minister make a statement on any guidelines given for the shooting of ruddy ducks in Wales? (WAQ30107)

Carwyn Jones: There are no general licenses for shooting in Wales, however, as part of the UK strategy, a control trial is taking place to determine the most efficient control measures. The Assembly has allowed alternative methods of control to be looked at in Anglesey and on the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds reserve in Conwy. These include shooting and the destruction of eggs by pricking or coating with liquid paraffin.

The Potato Ring Rot Disease

Brynle Williams: Will the Minister outline whether it is the Assembly or DEFRA that is responsible for the eradication and control of the potato ring rot disease? (WAQ30330)

Carwyn Jones: The Welsh Assembly Government has policy responsibility for plant health matters in Wales. Operational matters, such as routine enforcement of plant health legislation and co-ordination of the response to ring rot are undertaken by DEFRA’s Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate on behalf of the Assembly.

Compensation for Livestock Loss

John Griffiths: What is the best annual estimate that can be made for the compensation from the National Assembly for livestock loss in Wales over and above the average market prices of the stock concerned at the relevant times for the period from the beginning of the Assembly to the present date? (WAQ30349)

Carwyn Jones: It is impossible to collect accurate market data for all classes of animals, as many such animals are never presented to market. However, in a report by the National Audit Office Wales on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales, ‘Compensating Farmers for Bovine Tuberculosis in Wales’, it was estimated that, in 2002, compensation was at least 50 per cent higher than underlying market prices for both commercial and pedigree animals. Steps are being taken in response to the recommendations contained in this report, which was published in July 2003.

Budget for Livestock Loss

John Griffiths: What is the total amount paid from the National Assembly for Wales budget for livestock loss in Wales from the beginning of the Assembly to the present time? (WAQ30350)

Carwyn Jones: Bovine tuberculosis is the only animal disease for which compensation to farmers has been paid from the Assembly’s budget. The annual cost to control bovine TB in Wales over each of the last five years is as follows:

1998-99	£491,000
1999-2000	£1,304,000
2000-01	£1,507,000
2001-02	£2,218,000 *
2002-03	£7,910,000 *

*net of carcass receipts

Sheep Rustling

Nick Bourne: What action is the Minister proposing to take to tackle the growing problem of sheep rustling in the Builth area of mid Wales? (WAQ30361)

Carwyn Jones: This is something that I am also concerned about. However, it is an operational policing matter in which the Assembly has no locus.

I do know that Dyfed-Powys Police patrol looking for rustlers, and always follow up reported incidents.

I am also aware that farm watch schemes are in existence, involving networks of farmers engaged in mutual self help with police support. The schemes aim to safeguard livestock and farm machinery: neighbouring farmers alert each other to thefts and machinery is marked so that it can be identified from the air by the police helicopter.

Horses Entering the Food Chain Legally

Glyn Davies: How many horses from Wales enter the food chain legally? (WAQ30370)

Carwyn Jones: I have been advised by the Food Standards Agency that there are at present no slaughterhouses in Wales licensed to process horses for human consumption. It is possible that horses from holdings in Wales may be slaughtered for human consumption in licensed premises outside of Wales. However, while records are kept by the Meat Hygiene Service on the numbers and species of animals processed in individual premises, the origin of the animal is not recorded. Therefore the information requested is not available.

Equine Passports

Glyn Davies: What will be the cost of introducing equine passports in Wales? (WAQ30372)

Carwyn Jones: It is not possible to produce a separate and accurate figure for Wales because of the uncertainties surrounding the numbers of animals and the various charging arrangements. However, a regulatory impact assessment issued in April 2003 indicated that the full introduction of horse passports throughout GB was around £17.6 million, with a subsequent annual cost of £1 million to £2 million.

Horse Population

Glyn Davies: How many horses are there in Wales? (WAQ30373)

Carwyn Jones: Results from the agricultural census give a figure of around 40,000 horses on some 7,000 agricultural holdings in Wales. This only covers known farm holdings, not horses kept on other premises.

Equine Passport

Glyn Davies: By what date must all horses, including semi-feral horses, in Wales have an equine passport? (WAQ30374)

Carwyn Jones: Implementation of the European Commission decision 2000/68 in Wales is anticipated to be autumn 2004.

Wetlands, Land Use Change and Flood Management

Rhodri Glyn Thomas: Has the Minister any intention to introduce new measures during the next 12 months with regard to wetlands, land use change and flood management? (WAQ30404)

Carwyn Jones: I am currently consulting on alternative models for improving flood management in Wales. This initiative will provide the opportunity to change existing arrangements to better suit the needs of this century and the future challenges of climate change. The consultation period on future flood defence arrangements in Wales ends on 5 December and I welcome any comments on the options outlined in this consultation document, a copy of which was sent to all Assembly Members.

A major project funded by the lottery 'Wetlands for Wales' is in progress. It is a joint initiative between Countryside Council for Wales, RSPB, the Environment Agency and North Wales Wildlife Trust. The aim of this project is to restore and improve the conservation status of eight wetland sites. Other wetlands are being brought into improved management via site of special scientific status management agreements and management schemes for European marine sites.

As part of the process of improved flood management in Wales, I have agreed to fund three pilot catchment flood management plans, to be delivered by the Environment Agency. These plans should help

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to identify the most appropriate way of managing flood risk in the future, taking into account possible changes in both climate and land use.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Eleanor Burnham: Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh implementation of section 68 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000? (WAQ30442)

Carwyn Jones: The Assembly Government will be consulting shortly on draft regulations prepared in accordance with the provisions of section 68 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and it is hoped that regulations enabling easements to be sought across common and other land will be brought into effect in the first half of next year. I cannot give any firmer indication about timing until I have seen and considered the responses to the consultation.

Forest Enterprise

Kirsty Williams: Will the Minister make a statement on the budget for Forest Enterprise for 2003-04 and 2004-05? (WAQ30467)

Carwyn Jones: Forest Enterprise (now the Wales Forest Management Agency and part of the Forestry Commission Wales), is directly funded from within the environment, planning and countryside main expenditure group. The Forestry Commission's baseline was set as part of spending review 2000 when the Assembly took over responsibility for funding forestry in Wales.

Since then the Forestry Commission has been faced with falling prices for its range of timber products and, in particular, the impact of the Shotton Pulp Mill moving towards 100 per cent recycled material, both of which have impacted on the Forestry Commission's net funding position. Historically the Assembly have been able to address this shortfall in funding through end-year flexibility, but the financial pressure that has had to be addressed as part of business planning round 2003 has meant that EYF cannot be relied upon in future years. Other measures have had to be taken, including efficiency savings, identifying new market opportunities and so on .

The impact of reduced timber income is challenging to accommodate. Although the Forestry Commission is doing all that it can to support emerging markets such as biofuels, this will have little impact in the short term. In 2003-04 and 2004-05 the Forestry Commission is rescheduling the harvesting programme to work higher value and lower working cost areas, but this is not sustainable and can only be done in the short term. It is also deferring the costly thinning and felling that are undertaken for environmental purposes (e.g. the restoration of ancient woodlands).

In addition, business planning round 2003 included a £2 million sum to commence work on the key programmes arising from the Assembly's 'Woodlands for Wales' strategy, namely an increase in broadleaved planting and bringing the Assembly's woodlands into a continuous cover regime through low impact silvicultural systems. The impact of the Forestry Commission's budget settlement for the next two years is that these programmes will now be extended over a longer timescale.

Questions to the Finance Minister

Council Tax Increases

Nick Bourne: Further to the Minister's statement in the Assembly on 12 November 2003, regarding council tax, that she did not intend to interfere 'unless council tax increases hit extreme numbers', could she advise what she regards as extreme? (WAQ30286)

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The Finance Minister (Sue Essex): I would consider a rise of 45 per cent, which was the council tax rise posted for this financial year by the Tory-run Wandsworth Council, to be extreme.

Timber for the New Assembly Building

Mick Bates: Can the Minister list the country of origin, volumes and companies supplying timber and timber products that are being used, or are to be used, in the new Assembly building? (WAQ30292)

Mick Bates: What action is being taken by the Minister's department to ensure that all timber and timber-based products procured for the new Assembly building are sourced from legal and sustainable sources? (WAQ30293)

Sue Essex: Procurement of timber and timber products is still ongoing. It is therefore too early to confirm the country of origin, volumes and companies supplying timber for the new Assembly building.

However, in line with the Assembly's sustainability policy, I can confirm that Taylor Woodrow Construction Ltd's objectives include for 'All projects to procure timber from sustainable sources wherever practicable, Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified timber being the preferred choice.'

Assembly Members will also be aware that the aim is to achieve a Buildings Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method excellent rating. As part of this assessment, the use of materials from sustainable sources is assessed, with additional credits being awarded for the use of materials from such sources. The aim is to gain maximum credits as far as is practicable.

The Procurement of Timber

Mick Bates: What is the Labour Assembly Government's policy on the procurement of timber and what measures are in place to ensure that all timber or timber products sourced for the Welsh Assembly Government are from legal and sustainable sources? (WAQ30294)

Sue Essex: The Assembly has a statutory duty under section 121 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 to promote sustainable development in the exercise of its functions. Under the Assembly's sustainable development scheme we are required to integrate sustainable development into our internal operations, which includes both our green housekeeping and procurement policies.

The scheme is published on the internet, and requires that, as far as possible, all wood that is procured comes from sustainable managed forests and legal sources. The current revision of our green guide for suppliers will specify that, whenever possible, wood should carry the Forestry Stewardship Council or equivalent certification.

Past Service Awards

Nick Bourne: Further to her reply to WAQ29801, will the Minister reveal how many of the 50 items of correspondence or e-mails she has received since the Assembly approved the regulations to introduce past service awards were supportive of the Assembly's decision? (WAQ30351)

Sue Essex: Five items of correspondence were supportive of the past service awards. There were a further seven items of correspondence which requested further information without giving an opinion on the merits of the awards. Many of the remaining items indicated a need for further information about the purpose of the awards, even if it was not specifically requested.

Councillors who have Applied for the One-off Payment

Glyn Davies: Will the Minister name the councillors who have applied to receive the one-off payment under the Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of County and County Borough Councils) (Past Service Awards) (Wales) Regulations 2003 along with their political affiliation? (WAQ30369)

Sue Essex: This information is not available to the Assembly Government.

Priorities for Spending on Public Services

Nick Bourne: What are the Assembly Government's priorities for spending on public services over the next 12 months? (WAQ30444)

Sue Essex: The Government's spending priorities are set out in our strategic plan 'Wales: A Better Country', and reflected in the final budget.

The Existing Debating Chamber

Nick Bourne: What studies have been undertaken into the cost of converting the existing debating Chamber so it can be utilised when the new Chamber is complete? (WAQ30551) *Transferred for written answer by the Chair of the House Committee.*

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Marek): The Presiding Office has not commissioned or carried out any studies into the cost of converting the existing Chamber for future use when the new Chamber is complete.

The Existing Debating Chamber

Nick Bourne: What plans does the Welsh Assembly Government have for the use of the existing debating Chamber when the new Chamber is complete? (WAQ30552) *Transferred for written answer by the Chair of the House Committee.*

John Marek: The House Committee will be responsible for considering and agreeing the future use of the existing debating Chamber when the new Chamber is complete. Members have informally discussed the potential use of the existing Chamber as an additional committee room. This and other options will need to be evaluated by the House Committee in due course in order to decide on how best to utilise this space.

The Cost of Security Measures for the New Assembly Building

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide an estimate of the cost of security measures for the new Assembly building? (WAQ30553)

Sue Essex: The cost of the entire security solution for the new Assembly building is likely to be in excess of £5 million. However, this is still subject to further review and value engineering exercises.

New Assembly Building (Estimated Cost of Furniture, Fixtures, Fittings and IT)

Nick Bourne: Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the latest estimated cost of furniture, fixtures, fittings and IT costs for the new Assembly building? (WAQ30554)

Sue Essex: I am unable to disclose the latest estimates for the fit-out of the new building, for reasons set out in the answer I gave to OAQ28476.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Health and Planning Report

Mick Bates: It is now 25 months since the health and planning report was said to be publishable. When can we expect it to be published and when will it be brought before the Assembly? (WAQ30291)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt): In January 2002 the children and young people Cabinet sub-committee recommended that consideration of public health issues should form a part of planning procedures. The need for further work to deliver this was endorsed by the Cabinet in May 2002.

A research report was commissioned from the University of Aberystwyth Centre for Research into Environment and Health and the University of Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff in September 2002. A practitioner seminar was held in January 2003 to inform the work.

The Cabinet received an interim report on progress on 27 January 2003. The research report should be finalised shortly, and then consideration can be given as to whether, and, if so, how, its recommendations should be implemented, in parallel with continuing work on 'Planning: Delivering for Wales'. I anticipate that the Cabinet will consider the way forward, with advice from my colleague Carwyn Jones AM, the Minister responsible for planning, in the new year.

The research report will be published thereafter.

Continuing Care Cases

Kirsty Williams: Can the Minister confirm whether local health boards have been given instructions not to make any decisions on continuing care cases until all-Wales guidance is in place? (WAQ30331)

Jane Hutt: Local health boards are making decisions on current continuing NHS healthcare applications as required. Local health boards are also undertaking the investigation of applications for reimbursement of past care costs, based on claims that continuing NHS healthcare was incorrectly refused by the pre-existing health authorities (following the ombudsman's report). The outcome of these investigations will be submitted to an all-Wales review panel, which is being established to provide a fair and transparent decision-making process for the determination of these claims across Wales.

Waiting Time for Children Referred to a Clinical Psychologist

Ann Jones: What is the current waiting time for a child to be referred to a clinical psychologist in each of the local health boards in Wales? (WAQ30345)

Jane Hutt: This information is not held centrally.

Violent Incidents in Hospital

Ann Jones: Will the Minister list the number of violent incidents in each Welsh hospital in each of the past 10 years? (WAQ30346)

Jane Hutt: This information is not held centrally. Welsh Health Circulars in 2002 have made it clear to NHS trusts that they should collect this data and report to their management and to staff organisations.

School Nurses

Ann Jones: How many school nurses were employed by each health authority/local health board in Wales in each of the past 10 years? (WAQ30347)

Jane Hutt: Information is not collected on NHS staff in a way that identifies school nurses separately. They are included with all other nursing staff working in the community.

Patients Removed from General Practitioners' Lists

Ann Jones: How many patients were removed from general practitioners' lists by (a) county and (b) health authority/local health board in each of the past 10 years? (WAQ30348)

Jane Hutt: The table below shows the available data for the last two years, which was recorded broken down by former health authority area only.

Patient registration transactions

	Patients removed from GP list due to act or threat of violence	Patients transferred at the request of the GP	Patients transferred at the request of the patient
1993-94	4	3,530	48
1994-95	97	2,936	69
1995-96	48	2,830	35
1996-97	80	2,797	38
1997-98	90	3,489	90
1998-99	81	1,539	104
1999-2000	74	1,774	197
2000-01:			
Bro Taf	43	558	94
Dyfed Powys	13	81	13
Gwent	10	371	38
Bro Morgannwg	8	542	26
North Wales	-	393	52
Wales	74	1,945	223
2001-02:			
Bro Taf	40	591	133
Dyfed Powys	11	84	8
Gwent	28	380	13
Bro Morgannwg	13	602	34
North Wales	-	320	46
Wales	92	1,977	234

Workforce Trends in Nursing, General Practice and Midwifery

Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on recent workforce trends in a) nursing b) general practice and c) midwifery affecting NHS Wales? (WAQ30354)

Jane Hutt: The latest figures show that the number of staff directly employed by the NHS has risen to 81,400 in 2002, compared to a total of 68,620 in 1997. This is an increase of 5.8 per cent in one year and an increase of 18.7 per cent since 1997.

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The number of qualified nurses, midwives and health visitors working in the NHS has increased to 25,821 in 2002, which is an increase of 1,382 in one year and of 4,061 since 1997.

The numbers of general medical practitioners in Wales have risen over the last decade by 5 per cent. The total number, at 30 September 2002, stood at 1,930.

These increases also provide a positive indication that the growth needed to reach our 2010 staffing targets is taking place.

The number of vacancies has also fallen at the same time as the number of posts has risen. The total number of vacancies in the NHS fell by 13 per cent in the six months to 30 September 2002 and accounted for 2.5 per cent of all NHS posts.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration

Deprivation in North Wales

Mark Isherwood: Will the Minister make a statement on the relationship between processes used to measure poverty and those used to measure deprivation in north Wales? (WAQ30296)

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration (Edwina Hart): The concept of 'deprivation' is difficult to define and measure. The current official approach in Wales, and the rest of the United Kingdom, to overcoming these difficulties is to see deprivation as a composite of different dimensions or 'domains'. The Welsh index of multiple deprivation (WIMD) 2000 used the data available at that time to describe some of these domains. These individual aspects of deprivation were then combined in an overall index with the aim of identifying concentrations of multiple deprivation. In other words, multiple deprivation, as used in the WIMD 2000, cannot be directly measured. It is simply a combination of the different (though inter-related) deprivations represented by each of the domains.

The WIMD 2000 produced a ranking for individual electoral divisions in Wales, including those in north Wales. It is possible to combine the information in the domains to larger areas (for example for local authority areas or for north Wales as a whole). However, there is more than one way of combining data at individual electoral division level, so there is no way of getting unique rankings for local authority, or larger, areas.

The terms 'poverty' and 'deprivation' are often used interchangeably. However, it can be asserted that poverty means a lack of financial resources while deprivation refers to a lack of resources of all kinds. The WIMD 2000 identifies the following domains of deprivation:

- income deprivation
- employment deprivation
- health deprivation and disability
- education, skills and training deprivation
- housing deprivation
- geographic access to services.

One way of measuring poverty in Wales, including north Wales, is, therefore, through the income domain of the WIMD 2000.

The low income indicators used by the Department for Work and Pensions for its official measures of poverty are based on the family resources survey and the British household panel survey. These two household surveys do not have large enough sample sizes in Wales to produce statistically reliable figures about low income, or poverty, below the all-Wales level.

Equality of Pay Between Women and Men

Jenny Randerson: What action is the Welsh Assembly Government taking to ensure equal pay between women and men in Wales? (WAQ30301)

Edwina Hart: Phase one of the Welsh Assembly Government's equal pay campaign, aimed mainly at the public sector, is now complete and an initial evaluation has been completed. I have just agreed a package of proposals, jointly from the Trades Union Congress Wales and the Equal Opportunities Commission taking forward phase two of the campaign. Phase two which will mainly focus on the private sector and make use of the strong links that TUC Wales has with many employers to persuade them of the long-term benefits of equal pay policies.

Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation

Jenny Randerson: Will the Minister make a statement on when the licensing of houses in multiple occupation is expected? (WAQ30302)

Edwina Hart: We are committed to the proposals for licensing HMOs contained in the Housing Bill, which was announced in the Queen's Speech. The legislation will be introduced when the Bill has completed the parliamentary process.

Grants to Owner Occupiers

Peter Black: How many grants does the Minister envisage councils being able to award to owner occupiers next year on the basis of the budget of £103 million provided by the Welsh Assembly Government? (WAQ30305)

Edwina Hart: The Assembly Government has not set budgets for local authority expenditure on grants for owner occupiers. The resources for housing renewal are mostly unhypothecated and it is for authorities to decide how much should be used to address their local priorities. In addition to the unhypothecated resources, the Assembly Government has made a further £25 million available specifically to support renewal areas in Wales.

Multiple Occupation Registration Scheme

Ann Jones: Will the Minister list the counties in Wales which (a) have and (b) have not implemented a houses of multiple occupation registration scheme? (WAQ30340)

Edwina Hart: The latest information shows that Swansea, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Conwy councils operate HMO registration schemes with special control provisions. Ten other authorities have registration schemes and they are listed below:

- Cardiff
- Pembrokeshire
- Ceredigion
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Denbighshire
- Wrexham
- Flintshire
- Ynys Môn
- Gwynedd
- Neath Port Talbot
- Newport.