

## **Written Questions answered from 30 November to 7 December 2000**

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

### **Contents**

2	Questions to the First Minister
2	Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economic Development
6	Questions to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
8	Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services
16	Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs
18	Questions to the Minister for Culture and Sport and the Welsh Language
19	Questions to the Minister for Environment
22	Questions to the Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities

## Questions to the First Minister

### Notification of Official Announcements

**Alison Halford:** What steps will the First Minister take to ensure Assembly Members are informed of local issues that affect their constituencies prior to official announcements by Assembly Secretaries and officials in the press and media? (WAQ7232)

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** All Assembly press notices are placed on the Assembly's website at the same time as they are released to the press and broadcast media. Members, therefore, already have a means to see announcements in advance of their appearances in the press and media.

Company announcements involving the Assembly are not always notified to the Assembly before being made public.

### Richard Rogers Partnership Fees

**Glyn Davies:** What are the maximum total fees that could be earned by the Richard Rogers Partnership for its work on the new Assembly building? (WAQ8110)

**The First Minister:** When the scheme design and cost plan are agreed by the policy steering group, the fees payable to the team assembled by the Richard Rogers Partnership will be capped, based on an agreed figure at that stage. It is not possible to provide that figure until the cost plan is agreed.

## Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economic Development

### Ffatrioedd Parod yng Ngwynedd, Ynys Môn a Chonwy

**Dafydd Wigley:** A wnaiff y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog a'r Gweinidog dros Datblygu Economaidd restru'r stadau diwydiannol yng Ngwynedd, Ynys Môn a Chonwy sydd yn rhannol neu'n gyfan gwbl mewn perchnogaeth gyhoeddus; a nodi ar gyfer pob stad faint o ffatrioedd parod sydd ar hyn o bryd yn wag ac ar gael i'w gosod, a beth yw maint yr unedau? (WAQ7747)

**Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog a'r Gweinidog dros Datblygu Economaidd (Michael German):** Mae'r stadau diwydiannol sydd mewn perchnogaeth gyhoeddus yn yr ardaloedd hyn yn gyfuniad o eiddo Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru ac awdurdodau lleol.

Nid ydym yn cadw manylion am adeiladau awdurdodau lleol, ac efallai y byddwch yn dymuno mynd â'ch ymholiad atynt hwy. Isod, rwyf wedi rhestru adeiladau sydd yn berchen i Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru yn y siroedd dan sylw.

Yng Ngwynedd, mae gan Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru bedair uned ddiwydiannol ar gael i'w gosod, sydd yn gyfanswm o 8,000 o droedfeddi sgwâr, a phum uned swyddfa ar gael i'w gosod, yn gyfanswm o 10,250 o droedfeddi sgwâr.

Yn Ynys Môn, mae dwy ffatri barod newydd o 19,000 o droedfeddi sgwâr yn wag, ac ar gael i'w gosod er y cafwyd cynnig o brydles am y ddwy.

Yng Nghonwy, mae dwy uned o 3,000 o droedfeddi sgwâr yn wag ac ar gael i'w gosod, un uned o 15,000 o droedfeddi sgwâr yn wag ond cafwyd cynnig am brydles, ac un uned o 25,000 o droedfeddi sgwâr yn wag ond cafwyd cynnig am brydles.

## **Advance Factories in Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Will the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economic Development list the industrial estates in Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy which are partly or entirely in public ownership; and note for every estate how many advance factories are empty at the moment and available to be let, and how big the units are? (WAQ7747)

**The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economic Development (Michael German):** The publicly-owned industrial estates in these areas are a mixture of Welsh Development Agency and local authority properties.

We do not keep details of local authority premises and you may therefore wish to pursue your inquiry with them. I have set out below a list of premises owned by the Welsh Development Agency in the counties in question.

In Gwynedd, the Welsh Development Agency has four industrial units available to let totalling 8,000 square feet, and five office units available to let totalling 10,250 square feet.

In Anglesey, two new advance factories of 19,000 square feet are vacant and available to let although both are under offer for lease.

In Conwy there are two units of 3,000 square feet vacant and available to let, a single unit of 15,000 square feet vacant but under offer for lease and a single unit of 25,000 square feet vacant but under offer for lease.

## **Canolfannau E-fasnach**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Faint o ganolfannau e-fasnach sydd ar agor yng Nghymru ar hyn o bryd, a faint o ganolfannau o'r fath sydd wedi cau i lawr dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf? (WAQ7748)

**Michael German:** Sefydlwyd rhwydwaith o 26 o ganolfannau cymorth technoleg gwybodaeth a chyfathrebu Cyswllt Busnes ledled Cymru. Mae gan nifer o'r prif ganolfannau hyn is-swyddfeydd llai. Nid oes yr un canolfan wedi cau yn ystod y flwyddyn ddiwethaf.

## **E-commerce Centres**

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many e-commerce centres are now open in Wales and how many have closed during the last year? (WAQ7748)

**Michael German:** A network of 26 Business Connect information and communications technology support centres are established throughout Wales. A number of these main centres have smaller satellite offices. No centres have closed during the past year.

## **Labour Reserve in Wales**

**Dafydd Wigley:** What is Michael German's estimate of the labour reserve for each of the 22 counties in Wales? (WAQ7559)

**Michael German:** There is no official definition of 'labour reserve'. One possible definition is those persons who are not in employment, figures for which are given in the table below.

**Persons of working age currently not in employment (a)**

Local Authority	Number of persons of working age who are currently not in employment	Percentage of working age population
Isle of Anglesey	11,100	30
Gwynedd	21,700	31
Conwy	14,000	24
Denbighshire	17,200	32
Flintshire	20,500	21
Wrexham	23,300	30
Powys	13,900	19
Ceredigion	14,800	37
Pembrokeshire	22,300	32
Carmarthenshire	28,500	30
Swansea	48,400	35
Neath Port Talbot	33,700	41
Bridgend	23,400	29
The Vale of Glamorgan	19,800	27
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	56,200	38
Merthyr Tydfil	14,200	44
Caerphilly	34,000	33
Blaenau Gwent	15,300	40
Torfaen	16,000	28
Monmouthshire	11,400	25
Newport	23,000	28
Cardiff	53,000	27
Wales	535,600	31

Source: Office for National Statistics, Labour Force Survey (average June 1999 to May 2000)

(a) Those not in employment include unemployed, retired, disabled, long-term or temporarily ill persons, students and those looking after the family home.

**Employment in Caernarfon and Wales**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Will Michael German produce a table showing the rate of employment (that is, the proportion of the employed working age population) for the constituency of Caernarfon and for Wales as a whole for 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99? (WAQ7560)

**Michael German:** The information requested, prepared by the Office of National Statistics, is in the table below.

**Percentage of working age population in employment**

Year	Caernarfon		Wales	
	Estimate (%)	Approximate sampling variability of estimate (%) (1)	Estimate (%)	Approximate sampling variability of estimate (%) (1)
1996/97	70.0	± 14.0	68.4	± 1.4
1997/98	65.7	± 13.8	68.2	± 1.4
1998/99	58.1	± 11.6	67.7	± 1.3

Source: Office of National Statistics, Labour Force Survey (annual)

(1) Estimates are subject to sampling variability. The 95 per cent confidence interval of an estimate is the estimate ± sampling variability.

## **The Welsh Development Agency's Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Mainstreaming Good Practices in Equal Opportunities in Rural Wales Scheme**

**Alun Cairns:** Would Michael German provide a breakdown of costings relating to the Welsh Development Agency's small and medium sized enterprises mainstreaming good practices in equal opportunities in rural Wales scheme? (WAQ7866)

**Alun Cairns:** Would Michael German provide a breakdown of costings relating to WDA's SME equalities project? (WAQ7867)

**Michael German:** The WDA is currently operating two SME equal opportunities projects: the SME equalities project in industrial south Wales, and the increasing SME competitiveness through increased access to the workforce project, which is being run in Mid Wales.

The SME equalities in industrial south Wales project has a budgeted cost of £683,220 for the period September 1998 to December 2000. Expenditure up to 31 October has been £674,028.

The increasing SME competitiveness through increased access to the workforce project has a budgeted cost of £549,183 for the period February 1999 to July 2001. Expenditure up to 31 October 2000 has been £229,110.

### **Review of Objective 1 Administration**

**Alun Cairns:** When did Michael German make public his plans to review Objective 1 administration? (WAQ7868)

**Michael German:** The plans to review Objective 1 administration was made public when the partnership agreement was published—I refer you to section 4, 'Enterprise and Economic Development', paragraph 17, concluding sentence.

### **A Branding Conference**

**Alun Cairns:** Would Michael German make a statement on the establishment of a branding conference aimed at promoting a positive image of Wales? (WAQ7869)

**Michael German:** The First Minister recently met a cross section of public and private sector people with considerable experience and successful track records in marketing to obtain a range of views and ideas on how we can more positively promote the image of Wales. He is currently considering the issues that came out of that session and how to move the agenda forward.

### **Sub-regional Offices of the Welsh European Funding Office**

**Gwenda Thomas:** Does Michael German have any plans to establish any sub-regional offices of the Welsh European Funding Office, as requested by the South Wales Economic Forum? (WAQ8021)

**Michael German:** The Welsh European Funding Office has offices in Mountain Ash which successfully served industrial south Wales under the previous Objective 2 programme, as well as offices in Cathays Park, Cardiff. WEFO has no current plans to establish further offices but is keeping the matter under constant review as it firms up an operational framework that will require close co-operation with local partnerships and their lead bodies.

### **Enabling People in Rural Areas to Access Job Opportunities**

**Kirsty Williams:** What plans does he have to enable people living in rural areas who rely upon public transport to access job opportunities? (WAQ8107)

**Michael German:** Local bus services represent the core of the local public transport network, especially in many of our rural communities. In the current financial year the Assembly provides to local authorities £5 million under the bus subsidy grant scheme to enable councils to enhance the number and range of subsidised services in their areas, and the allocation to Powys is £380,000. This money is additional to the £10 million spent on such subsidies by authorities from their own budgets.

The Employment Service provides additional help to people looking for work. Several bus and train operating companies offer discounted travel under the New Deal, and the Employment Service is piloting innovative schemes such as loaning mopeds to New Deal participants who would otherwise be unable to reach their place of work. I congratulate the companies concerned, including Cardiff Bus, First Cymru and Arriva, and would encourage others to work with the Employment Service to develop more such schemes.

Finally, the Objective 1 and 3 programmes will provide a significant additional investment in helping people back to work and in tackling the problems of social disadvantage that affect many people living in isolated rural communities. Both programmes include a range of preventative and active measures for addressing the needs of unemployed people and helping them to overcome barriers to employment. These measures include support for initiatives to increase accessibility and transport support to help people to access learning and employment opportunities.

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

### **Bilingual Teaching Materials to Combat Substance Misuse**

**Gareth Jones:** Will the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning indicate, according to key stages, the number of drug prevention resources available to schools in Wales? (WAQ7323)

**Gareth Jones:** What is Jane Davidson doing to ensure schools are able to receive bilingual information and teaching materials to combat substance misuse? (WAQ7324)

**Gareth Jones:** Will Jane Davidson make a statement on the availability of bilingual information and teaching materials to combat substance misuse? (WAQ7325)

**The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (Jane Davidson):** I refer you to the answer that Rosemary Butler, the then Secretary for Education and Children gave to Dai Lloyd's OAQ7135 on 12 October on the subject of bilingual teaching materials on substance abuse, which is given below.

### **Bilingual Teaching Materials on Substance Misuse**

**Q19 David Lloyd:** To what extent are bilingual teaching materials on substance misuse available to schools? (OAQ7135)

**The Secretary for Education and Children (Rosemary Butler):** Discretion on the use of materials rests with schools. The National Assembly has recently funded the publication of a new drug education handbook for teachers and youth workers. This handbook provides bilingual guidance on drug education and the school curriculum that will help schools with their task. The handbook provides a reference guide to teaching resources and support materials already available to schools relating to substance misuse. It also provides details of related websites.

### **Schools in Denbighshire**

**Nick Bourne:** Has Jane Davidson had any representations about the state of schools in Denbighshire? (WAQ7712)

**Nick Bourne:** Will Jane Davidson make a statement on the capital building programme for schools in Denbighshire? (WAQ7713)

**Nick Bourne:** Has Jane Davidson had any representations about the state of the fabric of schools in Denbighshire? (WAQ7714)

**Nick Bourne:** Will Jane Davidson make a statement about what moneys are being made available for capital spending on repairing and refurbishing schools in Denbighshire? (WAQ7735)

**Jane Davidson:** I am aware that Denbigh has particular budgetary problems that have prevented the authority investing significantly in its school buildings. I hope this situation will improve quickly and that it will be able to develop a viable capital programme that will address the backlog of school repairs in the county. Within its allocation from the local government settlement, it is for the authority to determine the level of investment in schools taking account of the needs and priorities of all services within its responsibility.

I have received representations about the condition of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn. I visited the school last week to see for myself the condition of the school buildings and I hope that a way can be found to enable conditions in the school to be improved. Officials from the National Assembly, Denbighshire County Council and others will consider the options for the future of the school and report back to me very quickly. My predecessor has also received representations about Brynhyfryd School.

Under the New Deal for Schools capital programme, Denbighshire has been allocated the following funding to help improve its school sites:

	£
1997-98	167,000
1998-99	441,412
1999-2000	448,218
2000-01	511,000

Allocations for 2001-02 have yet to be determined.

More generally, in announcing the National Assembly's provisional budget on 19 October, the Minister for Finance, Local Government and the Communities indicated that significant additional funds would be made available for capital expenditure in Wales over the next three years. Including the current financial year's capital funding, the overall run of capital funding provision for schools is:

2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
£97.177million	£85.744 million	£100.124 million	£107.124 million

This level of investment in school infrastructure will significantly improve the school stock in Wales and provide a sound platform for us to achieve the objective in 'Betterwales.com' of making all schools fit for purpose by 2010.

### School Shower Facilities

**David Melding:** How many maintained schools in Wales do not have operational shower facilities? (WAQ8045)

**David Melding:** Is it a requirement for schools to have operational shower facilities for pupils after physical education lessons? (WAQ8046)

**David Melding:** Are there any personal hygiene implications for pupils in schools which do not have operational shower facilities? (WAQ8047)

**Jane Davidson:** Information relating to how many maintained schools in Wales do not have operational shower facilities is not collected centrally. Regulation 3(7) of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 requires the provision of changing accommodation including showers for pupils who have attained the age of 11 years and are in receipt of physical education. That accommodation has to be readily accessible from the school grounds and from any accommodation provided for physical education within the school buildings.

### **Welsh Baccalaureate Pilot Scheme**

**Nick Bourne:** Does Jane Davidson's administration intend to launch a pilot scheme for the Welsh baccalaureate and, if so, can she outline a timescale for this pilot scheme? (WAQ8200)

**Jane Davidson:** I will outline proposals for taking forward the Welsh baccalaureate pilot scheme, and the timescale for its development, in my report to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee on 13 December.

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

### **Ward Cleaning**

**David Davies:** Will the Minister for Health and Social Services assess the benefits of returning the responsibility for the control of ward cleaning to ward sisters? (WAQ6783)

**The Minister for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt):** The maintenance of a high standard of ward cleanliness and physical order has always been recognised as a key role for the ward sister in delivering quality clinical care. Improving the environment of care is featured as a key supporting aim in the strategy for nursing, midwifery and health visiting in Wales 'Realising the Potential'.

Over the past few years ward-based domestics have been replaced with contract domestic services. While there were some advantages to this system, namely standard specifications, cleaning policies and procedures and critical mass to cover the whole hospital, it appeared to remove the control, monitoring and quality assurance role from the ward sister.

I wish to see the return of this ability to control when areas are cleaned and the option of flexibility of domestic services to fit with the clinical demands of individual areas.

Recruitment and training of domestic staff can be most efficiently carried out by agency-type arrangements, but clinical staff must exert influence over such matters as infection control, specific standards for equipment and best timing for cleaning to have to take place.

I have requested that a multi-professional group be set up under the medical and nursing professional officers within the Assembly to work with their service colleagues to consider the implementation of the guidelines 'Standards for Environmental Cleanliness in Hospitals'.

### **Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine**

**David Davies:** What steps can Jane Hutt take to inform parents whose children are not covered by the MMR vaccine of the high risk of going overseas to countries where vaccination rates are significantly lower than in the UK? (WAQ6792)



**Jane Hutt:** Information on the risks associated with children who have not received the MMR vaccine are contained in the health education materials given to all parents in Wales: 'A Guide to Childhood Immunisations' and 'A Second Dose of Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine'. General advice on health when abroad is contained in 'Health Advice for Travellers'.

The MMR vaccine provides essential protection and increasing uptake must be our aim. The great weight of independent professional advice supports the use of the MMR vaccine and I believe we must continue to encourage its use. To that end, next spring we will run a campaign to boost uptake rates.

### **Tuberculosis Immunisation**

**Rod Richards:** What is Jane Hutt's policy on tuberculosis immunisation and will she make a statement? (WAQ7545)

**Rod Richards:** Is there a sufficient stock of BCG in Wales to meet demand? (WAQ7546)

**Rod Richards:** Is Jane Hutt's policy on tuberculosis immunisation is different from that in (a) England and (b) Scotland? (WAQ7547)

**Rod Richards:** Is Jane Hutt monitoring incidences of TB outside the UK and will she make a statement? (WAQ7548)

**Rod Richards:** Is Jane Hutt aware of any research into the possible links between TB and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, and its implications for Wales? (WAQ7549)

**Jane Hutt:** Due to the nature of the questions submitted I will take them together.

There is a shared UK Health Departments' policy on tuberculosis: BCG immunisation. Immunisation is recommended for the following groups: health service staff, veterinary staff, prison staff, those in old peoples' homes, immigrants from high-prevalence countries and their infants, those travelling to high-prevalence countries and school children between the ages of 10 and 14 years.

In September 1999, we suspended routine schools-based BCG immunisation sessions, due to supply problems. The sole UK supplier, Celltech Medeva, suspended production due to technical difficulties. The immunisation of higher risk groups, including high-risk neonates, has not been interrupted as stocks were sufficient to maintain this. Manufacture has recommenced and the supply position is improving, however for now routine schools immunisation is restricted to the London area where prevalence is highest.

The European Union, funded by the Directorate of General Health and Consumer Protection, undertakes the monitoring of the incidence of TB outside the UK. The European Union produces weekly and monthly bulletins, which are made available through the interchange of data between EU administrations (EUPHIN). This information is collated and disseminated by the Department of Health on behalf of the UK Health Departments. The Public Health Laboratory Service undertakes surveillance in the UK. The World Health Organisation also undertakes surveillance on communicable disease, in particular drug-resistant TB.

My advice is that there are no perceived links between TB and CJD and that we are not aware of any current research in this area.

### **National Health Service Preparation for the Euro**

**David Davies:** What information is available to Jane Hutt regarding NHS spending on preparation for the euro? (WAQ7550)

**Jane Hutt:** Information on NHS spending on preparation for the euro is not held centrally, as I said in my answer to David Davies's WAQ7277. Some preparatory work is being done in a sample of English NHS bodies and the Assembly is monitoring this work.

### **Provision of Induction Loops by Public Sector Organisations**

**Alun Cairns:** What guidelines are in place for public sector organisations in providing induction loops for the hearing impaired? (WAQ7745)

**Jane Hutt:** The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires that those providing services or managing premises should not discriminate against disabled people. Where an auxiliary aid or service would enable or facilitate disabled persons' use of services provided to members of the public, it is the duty of the provider of that service to take reasonable steps to provide that auxiliary aid or service.

Induction loops are one example of auxiliary aids that it may be considered reasonable to provide.

The Code of Practice, 'Rights of Access, Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises' is readily available and public sector organisations should be aware of the requirements of the Act.

### **Sale of Premises Used as Residential and Nursing Homes**

**Alun Cairns:** What information can Jane Hutt give in relation to the sale of premises that are being used or have recently been used as residential and nursing homes? (WAQ7749)

**Jane Hutt:** I am aware of the problems currently facing private care home providers and I have recently had a constructive discussion with representatives of the sector. Following the commencement of the Care Standards Act 2000 we have a clear agenda to improve protection and raise the quality of care for vulnerable people in Wales in residential and nursing homes. While the sale of a private nursing or residential home is entirely a matter for the owner, we will continue to work closely with the care sector in implementing our policies. I will look closely at the impact of the new national standards, especially on smaller homes and in rural areas where there may be few alternatives. There will be full consultation before standards are introduced.

In relation to local authority premises, care services must be secured under the Best Value framework. Within this framework, the issue of a local authority closing or externalising residential home services is a matter for the authority, taking into account its legal obligations, and the resources available to it. Where authorities are closing homes, this should be undertaken in full consultation with all those with an interest and should ensure that a full assessment of the individual needs of residents is completed before alternative placements are made.

### **Organ Transplants (Death while Awaiting)**

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many patients died in each year from 1995 to 1999 while on the waiting list for an organ transplant within Wales? (WAQ7871)

**Jane Hutt:** There is only one transplant unit in Wales, which is in Cardiff. The following table shows the number of people who died waiting for a transplant at that unit, and the total number of Welsh residents who died awaiting organ transplants, including those at Cardiff.

### Patients who died while on the waiting list for an organ transplant

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>All patients waiting for a kidney transplant at Cardiff</b>	7	5	11	10	8
<b>Welsh residents waiting for a transplant anywhere in the UK:</b>					
Kidney (a)	8	6	11	10	7
Thoracic organ	7	11	9	6	5
Liver	-	2	3	1	1

Statistics prepared by UK Transplant from the National Transplant Database maintained on behalf of transplant services in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

(a) Including those Welsh residents waiting at Cardiff.

### Availability of Hospital Beds in North Wales

**Dafydd Wigley:** Will Jane Hutt make a statement on the availability of hospital beds in north Wales? (WAQ7872)

**Jane Hutt:** The average daily number of available beds in the North Wales Health Authority area (1) in recent years is shown in the table below.

#### Average daily number of available beds

1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
3,264	3,202	3,184	3,251

(1) As reported by NHS trusts geographically situated in the North Wales Health Authority area.

### Nurses Employed in Wales

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many nurses are in employment within Wales and will Jane Hutt make a statement? (WAQ7873)

**Jane Hutt:** Information on staff directly employed by the NHS in Wales is collected annually as at 30 September. The latest data available relates to 30 September 1999 at which time there were 32,708 (or 23,973 whole-time equivalent) staff in the nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff group. This includes qualified and unqualified staff, as shown in the following table.

#### Nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in post at 30 September 1999

	Number	Whole-time equivalent
<b>Qualified</b>	22,068	17,008
<b>Unqualified</b>	10,640	6,965

In addition to these staff there were, at 1 October 1999, 698 whole-time equivalent staff employed as practice nurses by general medical practitioners in Wales.

### Outpatients Waiting for More than Six Months

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many outpatients were waiting for treatment for more than six months in each of the last 10 years, by constituency within Wales? (WAQ7874)

**Jane Hutt:** The central collection of waiting list numbers is based on figures provided by health authorities at NHS trust level. Numbers waiting by constituency are not collected.

The number of patients waiting over six months for first outpatient appointment by health authority in Wales since 1997 can be found in Table 1. Table 2 gives the number for Wales as a whole from 1994 to 1996.

**Table 1: Number of Welsh residents waiting over six months for first outpatient appointment**

	31 Mar-97	31 Mar-98	31 Mar-99	31 Mar-00	30 Sep-00
<b>Bro Taf Health Authority</b>	1,886	3,801	8,784	12,426	16,244
<b>Dyfed Powys Health Authority</b>	964	1,169	1,664	4,226	6,119
<b>Gwent Health Authority</b>	1,830	2,978	5,847	9,787	10,011
<b>Morgannwg Health Authority</b>	977	1,404	2,741	4,802	5,791
<b>North Wales Health Authority</b>	299	988	2,792	6,750	7,814
<b>Wales Total</b>	5,956	10,340	21,828	37,991	45,979

**Table 2: Number of Welsh residents waiting over six months for first outpatient appointment**

	31 Mar-94	31 Mar-95	31 Mar-96
<b>Wales</b>	31,611	16,524	6,014

Data is only available on a comparable basis for health authority from June 1996 onwards. Data for trust level is only available on a comparable basis from April 1999.

### **Patients Waiting for Treatment for Heart Disease**

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many patients were waiting for in-patient treatment for heart disease in each of the last 10 years in each constituency within Wales? (WAQ7875)

**Jane Hutt:** The central collection of waiting list numbers is based on figures provided by health authorities at NHS trust level for numbers waiting by specialty. Data are not held centrally by constituency, procedure or medical condition.

The number of people waiting for in-patient or day case treatment in the specialty of cardiac surgery, cardio-thoracic surgery or paediatric cardiac surgery by health authority in Wales since 1997 can be found in Table 1. Table 2 gives the number for Wales as a whole from 1991 to 1996.

**Table 1: Number of Welsh residents waiting for in-patient or day case treatment in the specialty of cardiac surgery, cardio thoracic surgery or paediatric cardiac surgery**

	31 Mar-97	31 Mar-98	31 Mar-99	31 Mar-00	30 Sep-00
<b>Bro Taf Health Authority</b>	99	164	223	188	209
<b>Dyfed Powys Health Authority</b>	86	122	137	188	198
<b>Gwent Health Authority</b>	60	139	148	99	114
<b>Morgannwg Health Authority</b>	45	162	199	202	183
<b>North Wales Health Authority</b>	63	92	6	200	209

<b>Wales Total</b>	353	679	713	877	913
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**Table 2: Number of Welsh residents waiting for inpatient or day case treatment in the specialty of cardiac surgery, cardio thoracic surgery or paediatric cardiac surgery**

	<b>31 Mar-91</b>	<b>31 Mar-92</b>	<b>31 Mar-93</b>	<b>31 Mar-94</b>	<b>31 Mar-95</b>	<b>31 Mar-96</b>
<b>Wales</b>	169	405	254	435	437	297

Data is only available on a comparable basis for health authorities from June 1996 onwards. Data for trust level is only available on a comparable basis from April 1999.

### **Organ Transplants (Numbers Awaiting)**

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many people are currently awaiting organ transplants in Wales? (WAQ7876)

**Jane Hutt:** There is only one transplant unit in Wales, which is in Cardiff. The following table shows the number of people waiting for a transplant at that unit, and the total number of Welsh residents awaiting organ transplants, including those at Cardiff.

#### **Patients awaiting organ transplants, as at 8 November 2000**

<b>All patients waiting for a kidney transplant at Cardiff</b>	211
<b>Welsh residents waiting for a transplant anywhere in the UK:</b>	
Kidney (a)	250
Thoracic organ	22
Liver	2

Statistics prepared by UK Transplant from the National Transplant Database maintained on behalf of transplant services in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

(a) Including those Welsh residents waiting at Cardiff.

### **Organ Transplants (Average Waiting Time)**

**Dafydd Wigley:** What is the average length of time a patient has to wait until they receive an organ transplant? (WAQ7877)

**Jane Hutt:** Data relates to the UK and are median values for transplants since 1995. They are waiting times on the active waiting list from registration to transplant and so do not include patients who were removed from the list, died or are still waiting.

#### **Average waiting time for an organ transplant (days)**

<b>Kidney</b>	300
<b>Heart</b>	100
<b>Heart /lung</b>	250
<b>Lung(s)</b>	180
<b>Liver</b>	45

Statistics prepared by UK Transplant from the National Transplant Database maintained on behalf of transplant services in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

## Patients Awaiting Cancer Treatment

**Dafydd Wigley:** How many patients were waiting for in-patient treatment for cancer in each of the last ten years in each constituency within Wales? (WAQ7878)

**Jane Hutt:** The central collection of waiting list numbers is based on figures provided by health authorities at NHS trust level for numbers waiting by speciality. Data are not held centrally by constituency, procedure or medical condition.

Information on the number of patients waiting for the treatment of cancer is not collected centrally. A breakdown of patients waiting for in-patient or day case treatment in the speciality of clinical oncology (radiotherapy) or medical oncology, by health authority in Wales since 1997 can be found in Table 1. Table 2 gives the number for Wales as a whole from 1991 to 1996.

**Table 1: Number of Welsh residents waiting for in-patient or day case treatment in the specialty of clinical oncology (radiotherapy) or medical oncology**

	31 Mar-97	31 Mar-98	31 Mar-99	31 Mar-00	30 Sep-00
<b>Bro Taf Health Authority</b>	33	22	20	7	13
<b>Dyfed Powys Health Authority</b>	0	0	2	1	0
<b>Gwent Health Authority</b>	30	7	0	7	11
<b>Morgannwg Health Authority</b>	0	0	0	1	1
<b>North Wales Health Authority</b>	45	49	53	34	19
<b>Wales Total</b>	108	78	75	50	44

**Table 2: Number of Welsh residents waiting for inpatient or day case treatment in the speciality of clinical oncology (radiotherapy) or medical oncology**

	31 Mar-91	31 Mar-92	31 Mar-93	31 Mar-94	31 Mar-95	31 Mar-96
<b>Wales</b>	62	18	9	37	70	30

Data is only available on a comparable basis for health authority from June 1996 onwards. Data for trust level is only available on a comparable basis from April 1999.

## Waiting Times for Cataract Operations at Nevill Hall

**Nick Bourne:** What are the current waiting times for cataract operations at Nevill Hall Hospital? (WAQ8042)

**Jane Hutt:** Presently, Nevill Hall Hospital holds a joint waiting list with the Royal Gwent Hospital for cataract surgery.

Following the appointment of two new ophthalmology consultants, staff at the Royal Gwent Hospital are currently reviewing waiting lists. Patients who need overnight care or general anaesthetics will continue to be listed at the Royal Gwent Hospital. Local patients who are suitable for surgery at Nevill Hall (e.g. local anaesthetic day-case patients) will be transferred back there from the Royal Gwent Hospital.

Nevill Hall will have established its own waiting list by the new year.

## **Improvements to Waiting Times for Cataract Operations**

**Nick Bourne:** What is being done to improve waiting times for cataract operations? (WAQ8043)

**Jane Hutt:** I made £500,000 available to health authorities from the Assembly's 2000-01 eye care initiative to help cut cataract surgery waiting lists. When, in May, I allocated additional money to tackle waiting lists/times and winter pressures, one of the targets was that no person should have to wait over six months for cataract treatment. Discussions are continuing to confirm the reduction to a maximum wait of four months by the end of March 2002, within the wider context of reducing all waiting times.

## **Average Waiting Time for Cataract Operations**

**Nick Bourne:** What is the average waiting time for a cataract operation? (WAQ8044)

**Jane Hutt:** Although no information is held for this, all health authorities agreed as part of the allocation of extra money last May that the maximum waiting time for a cataract operation would be six months by the end of March 2001. Discussions are continuing to confirm the reduction to a maximum wait of four months by the end of March 2002, within the wider context of reducing all waiting times.

## **Availability of Digital Hearing Aids**

**Glyn Davies:** Are digital hearing aids available to meet demand in Wales and is there any difference in availability between England and Wales? (WAQ8205)

**Jane Hutt:** Digital hearing aids are not part of the NHS standard range in either England or Wales.

The Department of Health has commissioned a pilot project on digital hearing aids that started in England in October and will be completed in March 2002. Twenty NHS trusts from across England will be involved in the project, and I understand that the Department of Health has advised them that they will not have the capacity to see patients from outside their usual area, and should include only patients in their existing service.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence published a report into hearing aid technology in August. The report concluded that there is insufficient scientific evidence available to support the widespread introduction of digital hearing aids at present, but would expect this to be available after the completion of ongoing research projects, including the Department of Health pilot project. NICE plans to review this guidance in July 2002. In view of these findings, I do not expect a decision to be made in England or Wales on whether digital hearing aids will be added to the NHS standard range until the results of the pilot project are known.

I have decided not to hold pilot schemes in Wales, as this would only duplicate the English research and be a waste of resources. This issue was raised during Committee discussions of the draft budget and I undertook to look at the development of audiology services and the supply of digital hearing aids. I had already discussed the issue with Jim Edwards, director of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (Wales), and you can be assured that I will give my full support to the modernisation of audiology services in Wales, including looking at the scope for funding an investment programme.

Health authorities in England and Wales have the discretion to make arrangements where there is exceptional clinical need for the supply of a commercial hearing aid, including digital hearing aids, from outside the NHS standard range. Unfortunately the decision to purchase will often depend on the authority's available resources and its overall priorities. To make this option more attractive to authorities, Welsh Health Supplies is making arrangements for audiology centres in Wales to have access to a central contract for the purchase of digital hearing aids at a cost comparable to hearing aids supplied to centres not participating in the pilot project in England. There is a lengthy procurement process to follow but I anticipate that this facility will be available to centres in Wales by March 2001.

## **Availability of Diagnostic Equipment for Detection of Hearing Difficulties**

**Glyn Davies:** Is there any difference in availability of diagnostic equipment for early detection of hearing difficulties and access to usage between England and Wales? (WAQ8206)

**Jane Hutt:** Information on the availability of diagnostic equipment is not held centrally, although I understand provision is variable both in Wales and England.

## **Residential and Nursing Care Homes (Threat of Closure)**

**Alun Cairns:** What investigations has Jane Hutt made into the possibility of residential and nursing care homes under threat of closure? (WAQ8209)

**Jane Hutt:** On 24 October I met with Care Forum Wales and the Registered Nursing Homes Association, the representative bodies for the care sector in Wales and was told about the difficulties that care home owners are currently facing. I will be meeting them again in the new year. In the meantime, Assembly officials will meet with the sector representatives to discuss the situation and the development of our policies to improve social care in Wales.

## **Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs**

### **Promoting Lower Energy Consumption**

**Glyn Davies:** What advice is given to promote schemes that lead to lower energy consumption? (WAQ7369) *Transferred for answer by the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economic Development*

**The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economic Development (Michael German):** The National Assembly for Wales's business and environment campaign seeks to assist companies to improve their energy efficiency and environmental performance. Activities under the campaign include:

- free on-site advice through energy advisers who help raise awareness of energy issues, assess measures already undertaken, offer advice on cost-effective actions to improve energy efficiency and provide links to other services available
- best practice and project dissemination events across Wales, to provide practical advice on energy use and the assistance available
- support of third party projects for schemes, which aim to lower business energy consumption, through the business and environment challenge scheme
- the services provided by the UK energy efficiency best practice programme, whose activities are controlled by the Assembly and tailored to meet the needs of Welsh business
- awareness raising activity e.g. media articles, on issues such as the climate change levy.

### **An Institute of Aquaculture for Wales**

**Dafydd Wigley:** What plans does the Government have to set up an institute of aquaculture for Wales; and how much of the Minister for Rural Affairs' department's budget has been earmarked for this purpose? (WAQ7562)

**The Minister for Rural Affairs (Carwyn Jones):** We have no plans to set up an institute of aquaculture for Wales.



The scientific and development services, which such an institute might provide is presently covered, on an England and Wales basis, by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, an executive agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The centre aims to contribute to the development of a diverse, competitive and sustainable fish and shellfish farming industry, and is well placed to support the Welsh aquaculture industry.

### **Concordat between MAFF and the Assembly**

**Mick Bates:** When will the subject-specific concordat on national listing matters and on the plant varieties office and controller referred to in point 48 of the concordat between MAFF and the Assembly be published? (WAQ7695)

**Carwyn Jones:** The detail of the subject-specific concordat on national listing matters and on the plant varieties office and controller has yet to be finalised. However, once agreed, it will be published as soon as possible thereafter.

### **Support for Organic Farming**

**Nick Bourne:** What plans does the Minister for Rural Affairs have to encourage and support the organic farming industry in Wales? (WAQ7736)

**Carwyn Jones:** I strongly support the expansion of organic farming. There are a number of measures, both new and ongoing, that are aimed at achieving this objective.

The organic farming scheme, which opened to applications earlier this month, provides financial support to farmers during the conversion period. You will recall that I announced on 7 October that the Assembly's budget for this financial year for the organic farming scheme has been increased from £1.95 million to £4.23 million. The Assembly's draft budget makes provision for an average of £4.5 million a year for each of the next three years.

The Welsh organic food sector action plan sets out an agenda for developing the organic sector in Wales, with the aim of encouraging an expansion of organic farming to 10 per cent of Welsh agricultural produce.

The Organic Centre for Wales, which was launched in July, will play a major role in supporting organic farmers by co-ordinating the very best training, access to information and practical advice, while the Organic Conversion Information Service will continue to provide free advice to prospective organic farmers.

Organic farmers are encouraged to enter Tir Gofal and are awarded extra points during the application assessment procedure.

### **Compensation for Damage Caused by OP Sheep Dips**

**Nick Bourne:** What plans does the Minister for Rural Affairs have to discuss with Westminster colleagues the need for compensation for damage caused by OP sheep dips to Welsh farmers from the dip manufacturers and the Government bodies which license the chemicals? (WAQ7737)

**Carwyn Jones:** The Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment found that any ill-health effects from prolonged low-level exposure to organophosphates remain unproved but the regulatory committees endorse the need for further research to address the question whether there may be a small group of individuals particularly susceptible to organophosphates.

The question of compensation is a matter for the licensing Ministers. Although control of organophosphates is not a devolved matter, it is of considerable importance to us in Wales. National Assembly officials are closely involved with the official group on organophosphates set up to co-ordinate policy on the use of organophosphates in the UK.

### **Representations on Organophosphate Sheep Dips**

**Nick Bourne:** What representations has the Minister for Rural Affairs received regarding exposure to organophosphate sheep dips, and will he publish any received? (WAQ7738)

**Carwyn Jones:** I have had several representations about sheep dip. It would be inappropriate to place copies in the Library as the representations were not in response to a public consultation exercise and the correspondents have not agreed to the comments being made available.

### **Sheep Annual Premium Scheme**

**Glyn Davies:** What is the priority given to different categories of applicant for sheep annual premium scheme quota under the 2001 national reserve allocation? (WAQ7870)

**Carwyn Jones:** The national reserve categories for sheep annual premium quota allocations in priority order are:

Category 1: producers who, at the time of the 1991 sheep annual premium scheme, were participating in a qualifying national environmental or extensification scheme which required a reduction in sheep numbers, and whose participation has ended.

Category 2: producers who take over land from which quota has been removed by a departing tenant or sharefarmer.

Category 3a: producers who enter sheep production or increase the number of eligible sheep in an existing flock because they are converting from arable to livestock farming under the terms of an approved environmental scheme.

Category 3b: individual producers (not companies) who are newcomers to farming aged under 40.

Category 4: individual producers (not companies) who are newcomers to farming aged 40 and over.

Category 5: producers who enter sheep production, or increase the number of eligible sheep in an existing flock, because they are converting to organic production under the Organic Aid Scheme.

Category 6a: producers (individuals or companies) who are making their first claim for sheep annual premium.

Category 6b: producers who take over part of an area of land which was formerly used for sheep production by other producers and then temporarily taken out of agricultural use for industrial, military, commercial or construction purposes.

## **Questions to the Minister for Culture, Sports and the Welsh Language**

### **Languages for which the Minister is Responsible**

**Rod Richards:** Will the Minister for Culture, Sports and the Welsh Language list the languages of Wales for which she is responsible? (WAQ7412)

**The Minister for Culture, Sports and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson):** I have a legal responsibility, which I take very seriously, for the Welsh language. As Minister for Culture, Sports and the Welsh language, and in line with the vision set out in 'Betterwales.com', I am committed to fostering Wales's unique and diverse identity and the benefits of bilingualism while encouraging everyone here to look confidently outward and welcome new cultural influences within the context of an open and multicultural community.

#### **Public Bodies not yet asked to Prepare a Welsh Language Scheme**

**Elin Jones:** Will Jenny Randerson name the public bodies in Wales the Welsh Language Board has not yet asked to prepare a Welsh language scheme? (WAQ8210)

**Jenny Randerson:** I have asked the chief executive of the Welsh Language Board to write to you with the information requested. I will arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library.

#### **Crown Bodies that have not yet Presented a Welsh Language Scheme**

**Elin Jones:** Will Jenny Randerson name the crown bodies that have not as yet presented a Welsh language scheme to the Welsh Language Board? (WAQ8211)

**Jenny Randerson:** I have asked the chief executive of the Welsh Language Board to write to you with the information requested. I will arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library.

#### **Public Bodies that Have Not Yet Produced a Welsh Language Scheme**

**Elin Jones:** Will Jenny Randerson name the public bodies in Wales that have received notice from the Welsh Language Board to produce a Welsh language scheme but who have not as yet done so? (WAQ8212)

**Jenny Randerson:** I have asked the chief executive of the Welsh Language Board to write to you with the information requested. I will arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library.

#### **Bodies which will be Required to Present a Welsh Language Scheme**

**Elin Jones:** Will Jenny Randerson state which bodies the Assembly intends to designate as public bodies to be added to the list of public bodies which have the duty of presenting a Welsh language scheme to the Welsh Language Board? (WAQ8213)

**Jenny Randerson:** A number of bodies have been considered for inclusion this year and have been consulted on the proposal that they should be named in Assembly legislation as a public body which can be directed by the Welsh Language Board to submit a Welsh language scheme. I will be submitting a list of names for the consideration of the Subject Committee within the next few weeks.

### **Questions to the Minister for Environment**

#### **Siting of Mobile Telephone Masts**

**Alun Cairns:** What guidelines does the Assembly offer to local authorities in relation to the siting of mobile telephone masts? (WAQ7322)

**The Minister for Environment (Sue Essex):** National planning guidance on telecommunications development is to be found in section 8.8 of Planning Guidance (Wales): Planning Policy, First Revision, (April 1999). That guidance is supplemented by advice in Technical Advice Note (Wales) 19,

'Telecommunications', paragraphs 27 to 29, which contains advice on the siting and design of apparatus, including masts. Revised policy and technical guidance is in preparation.

### **Discussions following the Fuel Duty Protests**

**Nick Bourne:** What discussions has Sue Essex had with Welsh farmers and hauliers following the recent fuel duty protests? (WAQ7739)

**Sue Essex:** I have met representatives of Welsh farmers and hauliers on three occasions when we had a very useful exchange of views about their concerns. Following a meeting of the Transport Forum on 21 September views were collated and I forwarded them to the Minister for Transport, Lord Macdonald, so that they could be taken into account by the UK Government. A copy of the report is in the Library.

### **Discussions with Westminster Colleagues on Cutting Fuel Tax**

**Nick Bourne:** What discussions has Sue Essex had with her Westminster colleagues in relation to cutting fuel tax? (WAQ7740)

**Sue Essex:** I have had several discussions with Lord Macdonald, the Minister for Transport, about the impact of fuel duty. I was also able to let him have the views of a wide range of people including farmers and hauliers following a meeting of the Transport Forum on 21 October. A copy is in the Library.

### **Track Safety at Gwyn y Gaer**

**Nick Bourne:** Has Sue Essex had discussion with Railtrack and with Westminster colleagues regarding the safety of the track at Gwyn y Gaer in the former county of South Glamorgan? (WAQ7741)

**Sue Essex:** I attended a meeting on Thursday 2 November in London with the Deputy Prime Minister, the chief executive of Railtrack, the rail regulator, the Health and Safety Commission, shadow strategic rail authority and representatives of the train operating companies, to discuss the proposals for a national rail recovery programme to repair as quickly as possible all those sections of track identified as at risk of breakage.

I understand that Railtrack has identified track defects on the up line (Swansea to London direction) at Gwyn y Gaer, just outside Bridgend. A temporary speed restriction of 20 mph has been imposed and Railtrack plan to repair the line as soon as possible.

### **Future Fuel Duty Protests**

**Nick Bourne:** What discussions has Sue Essex had with her Westminster colleagues in relation to the way in which they will deal with any future fuel duty protests? (WAQ7750)

**Sue Essex:** The National Assembly for Wales is a member of the UK Government fuel taskforce. Both the First Minister and I have been involved in its discussions. We have also discussed the issues with the Secretary of State for Wales.

### **Cynllun Drafft Datblygiad Cynaliadwy'r Cynulliad**

**Dafydd Wigley:** Pa geisiadau sydd wedi dod i law i Sue Essex addasu cynllun drafft datblygiad cynaliadwy'r Cynulliad i gynnwys ystyriaethau o'r amgylchfyd cymdeithasol; ac a wnaiff ddatganiad ar y mater hwn? (WAQ7751)

**Sue Essex:** Mae copïau o'r ymatebion i'n hymgyngoriad ar y cynllun datblygu cynaliadwy drafft ar gael ar y fewnwyd. Yn ychwanegol at hyn, yr wyf i a Gweinidogion eraill wedi derbyn sawl cynrychiolaeth oddi wrth GWEINI, y Cyngor Gwaith Cymunedol Cristnogol yng Nghymru, o blaid y cais y dylai'r cynllun gyfeirio'n benodol at bwysigrwydd 'y gymuned yn y cartref'.

### **The Assembly's Draft Sustainable Development Scheme**

**Dafydd Wigley:** What requests has Sue Essex received for her to modify the Assembly's sustainable development scheme to include consideration of the social environment and will she make a statement on this matter? (WAQ7751)

**Sue Essex:** Copies of responses to our consultation on the draft Sustainable Development Scheme are available on the intranet. In addition, I and other Ministers have received several representations in support of the request from GWEINI, the Council of Christian Community Work in Wales, that the scheme should refer explicitly to the importance of the 'community in the home'.

### **A470 Road Improvement Scheme (Start of Work)**

**Nick Bourne:** When is work on the A470 Dolwyddelan to Pont yr Afanc road improvement scheme going to begin? (WAQ7912)

**Sue Essex:** Start of work is planned for 2002, as announced by my predecessor, Peter Law, in February.

### **A470 Road Improvement Scheme (Representations)**

**Nick Bourne:** What representations has Sue Essex received about the A470 Dolwyddelan to Pont yr Afanc road improvement scheme? (WAQ7913)

**Sue Essex:** I have recently received a number of letters from local businesses, Conwy County Borough Council, Dolwyddelan Community Council and the Assembly Member for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy about the planned start date of the scheme.

### **A470 Road Improvement Scheme (Ensuring Work Begins in 2001)**

**Nick Bourne:** Will Sue Essex seek to ensure that work on the A470 Dolwyddelan to Pont yr Afanc road improvement scheme begins in 2001? (WAQ7914)

**Sue Essex:** Start of work is planned for 2002, as announced by my predecessor Peter Law in February.

### **A470 Road Improvement Scheme (Babtie Report)**

**Nick Bourne:** Will Sue Essex consider the recommendations of the Babtie report in relation to the north-south strategic value of the A470 Dolwyddelan to Pont yr Afanc road improvement scheme? (WAQ7915)

**Sue Essex:** A presentation on the Babtie report has been made to the Environment, Planning and Transport Committee. Although the report suggests that the A470 at this location has little north-south strategic value, I accept the report's conclusion that the scheme should remain a high priority in order to solve the severe local highway problems.

### **Provision of Free Sandbags to all Homes**

**Nick Bourne:** Will Sue Essex discuss with all local authorities in Wales the need to provide free sandbags for all homes in Wales, to reduce the risk of flood damage? (WAQ8198)

**Sue Essex:** Most homes in Wales are at a very low risk of flooding and providing sandbags to all of them would be extremely wasteful of resources. I am content to allow local authorities to make their own judgements as to how and where they should use their resources. Sandbags may not be the best means of reducing the risk of flood damage in many cases and I shall be asking the Environment Agency to provide advice on the available alternatives.

### **Improving Flood Defences**

**Nick Bourne:** What discussions does Sue Essex intend to have with Welsh local authorities in relation to improving flood defences? (WAQ8199)

**Sue Essex:** I am meeting with representatives of local authorities on 6 December. Flood defence is on the agenda for that meeting.

## **Questions to the Minister for Finance, Local Government and the Communities**

### **Location of Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies' Headquarters**

**Val Feld:** Since the establishment of the National Assembly, how many Assembly sponsored public bodies have located their headquarters outside Cardiff? (WAQ7250)

**The Minister for Finance, Local Government and the Communities (Edwina Hart):** No Assembly sponsored public bodies have located their headquarters outside of Cardiff since the establishment of the National Assembly.

### **Council Tax Increases**

**Nick Bourne:** Which Welsh local authorities will be subject to council tax increases next year? (WAQ8201)

**Edwina Hart:** Final decisions on budgets and council tax levels rest with individual local authorities. I have announced in my draft budget the Assembly's settlement for local government. I will be announcing the full details of my provisional revenue settlement for local authorities in early December.

### **Review of Electoral Systems in Wales**

**Mick Bates:** Further to question OAQ781, can Edwina Hart provide details of discussions undertaken so far and with whom? (WAQ8202)

**Mick Bates:** Further to question OAQ7801, can Edwina Hart provide a timetable indicating when the review of electoral systems in Wales will begin? (WAQ8203)

**Mick Bates:** Further to question OAQ7801, can Edwina Hart provide details of how long the review is expected to take and when it will be concluded? (WAQ8204)

**Edwina Hart:** As stated in my response to OAQ7801, the precise details of the review are currently under consideration and I will bring forward proposals in due course.