1. The meaning of citizenship and civic engagement in the 21st Century? Why does it matter, and how does it relate to questions of identity?

In a speech to the Charity Commission in January, the Prime Minister set out the Government’s determination to build a shared society based on the values of citizenship, responsibility and fairness. In the speech, the Prime Minister spoke of how the word ‘citizen’ implies that we have responsibilities to the people around us, and that whilst individual rights are to be valued, there should be more focus on the responsibilities that we have to one another. Society is built on the bonds of family, community, citizenship and strong institutions.

The Government is committed to building a stronger civil society that works for everyone – one in which people are supported to come together and improve their own lives and people of all ages are encouraged to play a part in their community as active citizens. From responses to the annual Community Life Survey¹ which explores levels of community cohesion and engagement, it is evident that Britain is on the whole well-integrated, with 85% of respondents feeling they belonged very or fairly strongly to Britain and 81% of respondents agreeing their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

However, Government must not be complacent. More needs to be done to make sure nobody is excluded or left behind and we must be prepared to take strong action where people refuse to integrate and fail to embrace the shared values that make Britain great. The Department for Communities and Local Government is reviewing the available evidence on the main causes of poor integration, and in the coming months will bring forward plans for tackling these issues through a new integration strategy.

The Community Life Survey also collects information on social action and on three types of civic engagement: participation, consultation and activism. In 2016-17, the most common form of civic engagement was ‘civic participation’, with 41% saying they had undertaken some form of participation in the last year and 5% saying they had participated at least once a month. Annual levels of civic participation and civic consultation have increased from 33% to 41% and 16% to 18% respectively between 2015-16 and 2016-17. In 2016-17, 60% of adults had engaged in some form of civic engagement (participation, consultation, or activism) and/or formal volunteering, an increase from 2015-16 (55%).

It is important for all British citizens to understand and uphold the rights and responsibilities that are implicit in this status, and citizenship is taught in schools as a fundamental part of the national curriculum. Education plays an important role in helping children develop the knowledge, skills and values that will prepare them to be active citizens in modern Britain.

¹ Community Life Survey in England 2016-2017
and to grow into fully rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance.

The Government also attaches great importance to helping those who settle here to understand the rights and responsibilities that come with British citizenship. The aim of citizenship education and the tests for those who decide they want to become British is to ensure that none of our citizens is excluded from meaningful participation in society. It is not about promoting conformity to a particular stereotype of “Britishness”. It is about making sure that the common citizenship, which is so often implicit in all that we do, is also formal and explicit so that it is easier for everyone to understand and share in. It also reinforces the fact that our sense of identity, and understanding of mutuality and interdependence, comes just as much from our contributing to the society around us, as it does from accessing any entitlements that we possess.

Passing the Life in the UK Test has been a requirement for those seeking to naturalise since 1st November 2005, and a similar requirement was extended to settlement applications in 2007. Nationality law also requires that as part of the naturalisation process for acquiring British citizenship applicants must also have sufficient knowledge of English (or Welsh/Scottish Gaelic), and attend a citizenship ceremony and undertake the oath and pledge.

Volunteering and/or civic engagement do not feature in the naturalisation requirements. However, the core “Life in the UK” text contains a chapter on “Your Role in the Community” which covers subjects such as values and responsibilities; being a good neighbour; getting involved in local activities; helping in schools; looking after the environment; and blood and organ donation.

2. Citizenship is partly about membership and belonging. Are there ways we could strengthen people’s identity as citizens, whether they are citizens by birth or naturalisation? Could citizenship ceremonies or events throughout the educational process play a role? Should pride in being or becoming British be encouraged?

All schools and relevant further education providers are expected to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. These are the bedrock of British values and without them we cannot expect any young person to play a full part in civic society in this country.

Schools have a vital role in promoting integration and an understanding of different faiths and communities. All publicly funded schools are required to promote community cohesion, including through the national curriculum Citizenship programme of study, which includes knowledge of the diverse range of identities in the UK and the importance of respecting others. Schools can provide many opportunities for their pupils to learn about and mix with people from different backgrounds – for example through visits and establishing links with other schools. All schools and relevant further education institutions are expected to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.
As referred in question 1 above, the Life in the UK core text and test are designed to ensure people who are applying for British citizenship appreciate what being a British citizen means, and that it is as much to do with what you contribute to society as the entitlements it brings. The Life in the UK core text, which was last substantively updated in 2013, traces the development of British democracy, its legal system, language and culture over time, to assist the reader in understanding how the UK has become the country which it is today.

3. Civic engagement can be seen as both a responsibility and a right of citizenship. Beyond the existing legal framework, should citizens have additional formal rights and responsibilities? How do you see the relationship between the two? Should they have the force of law individually or be presented as reciprocal duties between citizen and state? How should they be monitored and/or enforced?

The Government’s view is that in a democratic society, a value is placed on personal freedom. Some freedoms are protected by law, but more frequently they are a matter of social and cultural conduct that demonstrates respect for others, with the law being there as a remedy for serious failings. We expect those who live in our society to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance, and for that to be reciprocated by support for the society which makes that possible. Whilst this means we undertake to respect and understand that different people may hold different views about what is ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ at a personal level, all people living in England are subject to its law. Where religious or other beliefs lead to observance of laws particular to that religion, then particular care needs to be taken to explore the relationship between state and religious law, and to ensure that protections granted by state law are not being violated or compromised. The rule of law is there to protect freedoms that we believe are meant to be enjoyed at the individual level, both by citizens who grow up in this country and by those who choose to live here.

As the Prime Minister made clear (when speaking as Home Secretary) “…in a pluralistic society like ours, there are responsibilities as well as rights. You don’t only get the freedom to live how you choose to live. You have to respect other people’s rights to do so too. And you have to respect not just this fundamental principle but the institutions and laws that make it possible.

The overwhelming majority of people in Britain accept and positively cherish this proposition. We choose to live here, immigrants come to live here, and many millions of people around the world dream of building a life here precisely because we have a free society, diverse communities and pluralistic values.”

4. Do current laws encourage active political engagement? What are your views on changes to the franchise for national or local elections, including lowering the voting age? Should changes be made to the voting process or the voting registration process?

The Government is committed to creating a democracy that works for everyone, and has pledged to continue to modernise and improve the electoral registration process, making it as accessible as possible, so that every voice counts. Government has an important role in
setting the legislative framework and providing the tools to ensure that all electors are able to play an active part in the democratic process. We also recognise, though, the valuable role others have to play and we have been keen to work with our partners, who have a vital stake in the electoral ecosystem. We recognise that organisations from other sectors have expertise in developing and sustaining new approaches to engage people, particularly those groups that are less likely to be registered to vote. In addition, we are working with the Scottish Government as a result of the devolution of competence in respect of local government elections and elections to the Scottish Parliament provided for in the Scotland Act 2016, and with the Welsh Government as a result of the forthcoming devolution of competence in respect of local government elections and elections to the National Assembly for Wales provided for in the Wales Act 2017.

The **Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013** paved the way for the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration in Great Britain from June 2014. This included amending the Representation of the People Act 1983 and was the biggest change to the electoral registration system in a century. It abolished the old, patriarchal ‘head of household’ paperwork in favour of a citizen-centred approach, including the launch of a new website enabling **online registration.** As a result it has never been easier to apply to join the electoral register. This can be done online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) in as little as 3 minutes. The effect has been transformational, with 27,912,055 applications to register to vote made since its launch. The service caters for citizens both at home and abroad, meaning UK citizens resident in Great Britain, or formerly resident in Great Britain, are able to participate in democracy wherever they are in the world by registering online.

In addition to this citizen-led, user friendly interface with the registration system we also need to modernise its foundations. This includes reviewing the annual canvass in England, Wales and Scotland, required by the Representation of the People Act 1983, to consider if it can be made more efficient and easier for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to administer. Building on pilots in 2016, working with the Scottish Government we have launched an additional **24 canvass pilots in 2017.** The pilots allow EROs to undertake less prescribed, more cost effective approach to canvass, allowing for innovation and giving EROs the freedom to trial and implement what works best in their locality – the areas they know best. The results of the pilots will be considered in due course to inform any future changes to the canvass.

The process of voting is seen by the general public as positive, with satisfaction levels for elections the UK increasing by 9 percentage points to 77% in 2016. This shows a trend back towards the higher levels of satisfaction previously seen between 2006 and 2010.
People were more likely to say that they are satisfied with the voter registration system too. 80% said that they were satisfied with the process, showing a 5 point increase on December 2015. 73% of people also feel confident that the personal information they provide in order to register to vote is held securely.

On the whole, the electoral process is generally seen to be safe from fraud and abuse (73%), with only around 1 in 10 (8%) saying that they believe electoral fraud to be a common and widespread issue.

The Cabinet Office’s Digital and Democratic Engagement Team leads the Government’s commitment to encourage democratic participation and promote voter registration, particularly amongst those groups who are least likely to be on the electoral register. It engages with local authorities to ensure policies, and the delivery of projects, are sense-checked and on track. In addition, it works with voluntary and community organisations with unique links to under registered groups in order to underline the importance of democratic participation more widely.

Promoting Democratic Engagement
Within the context of the legislative framework for electoral registration, the Government is committed to ensuring that ours is a democracy that works for everyone. As such we are working to promote engagement, including amongst those groups that are traditionally less likely to be registered to vote. For example, within the scope of the law and purdah guidance, we have supported the Electoral Commission’s public awareness campaign and worked across Government departments to reach a diverse range of audiences. This has been successful in helping to build the largest ever parliamentary register of 46.8 million electors ahead of the 2017 General Election.
However, some groups still face barriers to participation. We are addressing these through a combination of policy and communication activity, including tackling specific issues that discourage some people from accessing our democracy. These include:

(i) **Disabled people**
The Government is committed to ensuring the Register to Vote website is as accessible and user friendly as possible for everyone, including people with disabilities. We are considering a range of suggested website improvements identified through various feedback channels and user research activities, including amending the online voter registration process to capture the accessible format needs of disabled voters and for this information to be passed onto relevant electoral service teams for action. Once this review, which includes an accessibility audit, has been completed, we will report on its outcomes and our intended next steps.

We are also committed to improving the access to support for blind and partially sighted people, through changes to the Certificate of Visual Impairment by the Department of Health at the request of the Minister for the Constitution. Providing the facility for local authorities to use records for those with visual impairments to support participation in electoral events provided the person’s consent has been given to do so. As a result, people with vision impairments will have access to wider services which will assist them in voting at elections.

We will continue to work with leading charities including Mencap, RNIB, Scope and key electoral stakeholders to improve the accessibility of future elections for disabled people.

(ii) **Young People**
The 2017 General Election saw youth turnout reach a 25-year high, estimated at 67%. This was an increase of 16 percentage points on the 2015 General Election. However, statistics show that young people remain under-registered and Government has been working with the civil society sector to boost this group’s participation in society and democracy. For example, the National Citizen Service (discussed in more detail below in the response to question 6) provides participants with the opportunity to build new skills for work and life, while taking on new challenges, meeting new friends and giving back to their communities. A standing commitment to democratic engagement was also incorporated as part of the NCS Trust's Royal Charter granted in April 2017. This builds on the current requirement of the NCS Trust to promote social mobility, personal social development and support employment prospects by equipping them with relevant practical skills. It reads as follows: ‘In exercising its primary functions, the NCS Trust must a. treat the need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of participants as the paramount consideration, and b. have regard to the desirability of i. promoting social mobility, ii. promoting the personal and social development of participants, iii. promoting the employment prospects of participants by equipping them with relevant practical skills, iv. encouraging participants to take an interest in debate on matters of local or national political interest, and promoting their understanding of how to participate in national and local elections, and v. ensuring value for money.’

(iii) **Students**
The Cabinet Office has been working with parliamentarians, including Baroness Royall, to ascertain how best to increase the registration levels of students in England. This resulted in measures being included in the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 to allow the Office for Students to require Higher Education providers to actively promote electoral registration amongst their student populations.

(iv) Anonymous Registration
The Government will propose changes to the current anonymous registration scheme, to make it more accessible to those escaping domestic violence. Anonymous registration allows those whose safety would be at risk if their name and address appeared in the electoral register to register to vote with confidence.

(v) Overseas Voters
The Government is looking to encourage greater participation in our democracy by all under registered groups. The Conservative Party manifesto for the current Parliament included a commitment to legislate to scrap the current 15 year time limit on voting from overseas. Our aim is to deliver votes for life for British citizens resident overseas, ahead of the next scheduled General Election in 2022. The Government’s position is clear: participation in our democracy is a fundamental part of being British, however far you have travelled.

Democratic Engagement Strategy
The Government is committed to a Democracy That Works For Everyone. The Government’s Democratic Engagement Strategy, due for publication in November, will examine the challenges and opportunities for democratic engagement and voter registration, review existing evidence, explore the experiences of under registered groups and those working with them, and set out the Government’s next steps in response to this learning.

Voting Age
As regards changing the franchise, we have no plans to lower the voting age for UK Parliamentary elections. This is outlined in the Conservative party manifesto commitment to maintain the minimum voting age for these elections at eighteen.

The Scottish Parliament has lowered the voting age to 16 for elections to the Scottish Parliament and local government elections in Scotland using powers devolved by the UK Government. Equivalent powers to amend the franchise for elections to the National Assembly for Wales and local government elections in Wales will be devolved to the National Assembly for Wales when the relevant provisions in the Wales Act 2017 are commenced.

There is no standard age of majority in the UK at which one moves from being a child to being an adult. Instead, the rights and responsibilities young people gain, and the activities in which they can participate, build over time. People gain the right to do some things when they turn 16 and other things when they turn 17 or 18.

According to the most recent evidence the Government is aware of most people in the country seem to believe that 18 is the age at which most young people are likely to be sufficiently politically aware, mature, and independent enough to make up their minds as to
who should represent them. For similar reasons, you have to be 18 to sit on a jury. While there is some variation within the UK and around the world, the overwhelming majority of democracies consider 18 to be the right age to enfranchise young people.

**Secure Elections**
Moving to whether changes should be made to the voting process, in line with our manifesto commitment, we plan to legislate to ensure that a form of identification must be presented before voting. It is intended that this requirement be tested through pilot schemes at local government elections in England to be held in May 2018. Pilots will help to identify the best way of administering this new requirement.

In his review, Sir Eric Pickles argued that requiring voters to provide a form of identification at polling stations before voting could improve the rigour of our electoral system. The Government agrees that the options for asking voters to present identification should be explored further. The pilot schemes we are planning to run in a number of local authority areas in England in 2018 will be designed to test the impact of voter identification on all aspects of elections in Great Britain, including cost and turnout.

The Government is committed to providing a clear and secure democracy, but we remain aware of the important consideration that not all registered electors would be able to provide a passport or a driving licence (or other specific documents) if requested. Consequently, the Government’s response to Sir Eric’s review sets out a variety of other types of identification that voters may be asked to produce in pilot schemes before voting.

If the pilot schemes are successful, voter identification measures could be introduced in other polls in Great Britain. Our view is that any measures need to be proportionate, and should enhance public confidence in the integrity of our democracy.

**5. What should be the role of education in teaching and encouraging good citizenship?**

At what stages, from primary school through to university, should it be (a) available, and (b) compulsory? Should there be any exemptions? Should there be more emphasis on political participation, both inside and outside classes? How effective is current teaching? Do the curriculum and the qualifications that are currently offered need amending?

Education plays an important role in equipping children with the knowledge, skills and values that will prepare them to be citizens in modern Britain. All schools are under specific duties to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of their pupils and, to prepare them for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. Furthermore, we expect all schools and further education (FE) institutions to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. The Department for Education (DfE) has provided advice to schools on how they can do this, for example by establishing a strong school ethos supported by effective relationships throughout the school; meeting
requirements for collective worship; and providing relevant activities beyond the classroom. Schools are also required to have a behaviour policy, which encourages good behaviour and respect, and prevents all forms of bullying and intolerance. Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, all primary schools will be required to teach Relationships Education, and all secondary schools will be required to teach Relationships and Sex Education, ensuring pupils are taught about healthy and respectful relationships.

Citizenship is taught in many areas of the school curriculum, including subjects such as religious education, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), history, English, geography, and other activities that the school chooses to offer. For example, schools can also promote citizenship through participating in programmes such as the National Citizen Service (NCS) or Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP), which enables young people to develop key skills such as responsibility, teamwork, self-reliance, and a sense of service to others.

Citizenship is also part of the national curriculum at key stages 3 and 4 and it is compulsory in maintained secondary schools. Primary schools can also choose to teach Citizenship at key stages 1 and 2, following the non-statutory framework for Citizenship, which is available on.gov.uk. Academies do not have to follow the national curriculum and can develop their own curricula, tailored to meet the particular needs of their pupils or the particular ethos of the school. However, they are still required (like all schools) to teach a broad and balanced curriculum and promote fundamental British values. Academies may therefore choose to teach Citizenship to fulfil these duties.

A high quality Citizenship curriculum helps to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society as responsible citizens. Pupils are taught about democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Teaching should equip pupils to explore political and social issues critically, to debate, and to make reasoned arguments.

All education providers should also encourage their pupils to respect other people, whatever their personal circumstances, background or beliefs. When inspecting schools and FE settings, Ofsted takes account of how well schools and FE institutions promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including their understanding of, and respect for, different faiths and cultural diversity.

DfE is working with the Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT) to produce guidance and resource packs to help teachers lead knowledge-based debates on topics relating to fundamental British values and contemporary political and social issues, including extremism. The first set in a series was launched in July 2017 and is available on the Educate against Hate website. In July 2017, online modules “Side by Side” were launched for students in FE.

Universities do not have a curriculum in the same way that schools do. However, they still have a role to play in assisting their students to understand citizenship. They have a responsibility to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all students. This includes legal obligations for ensuring that students do not face discrimination, harassment or victimisation and to have regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism. This can help students better understand the society they are part of and the responsibilities
that citizens have towards each other.

Democracy is one of the fundamental British values we expect schools and FE institutions to promote. DfE has provided advice to schools on how to teach this, including through holding classroom-based debates. Debate is fundamental to a thriving democracy and has a clear place at the heart of our education system. Universities and FE colleges have a particularly important role to play in allowing challenging and varied debates.

As with other curriculum subjects, Ofsted does not report separately on the effectiveness of citizenship as part of its inspection process. Key aspects of citizenship are, however, considered within the judgements on leadership and management, and personal development, behaviour and welfare. In the case of school inspection, inspectors also consider pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors expect schools and colleges to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

The national curriculum was comprehensively reviewed and then published in 2013 and we currently have no plans to review it. The national curriculum outlines the body of essential knowledge that must be taught in maintained schools; this essential knowledge should not change significantly over time. Alongside this, we have also been reforming GCSEs and A levels to be more demanding and knowledge based, to match the best education systems in the world and to keep pace with universities’ and employers’ expectations.

6. Do voluntary citizenship programmes such as the National Citizen Service do a good job of creating active citizens? Are they the right length? Should they be compulsory, and if so, when? Should they include a greater political element? Should they lead to a more public citizenship ceremony? Are they good value for money? What other routes exist for creating active citizens?

The National Citizen Service (NCS) is a voluntary personal and social development programme open to all 16 and 17 year olds across England and Northern Ireland. Since 2011, over 300,000 young people from all walks of life have participated in NCS, and over 100,000 are expected to take part in 2017 alone. NCS is the responsibility of the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, and delivered by the NCS Trust, currently an independent community interest company, through a network of regional and local delivery partners.

The NCS Act achieved Royal Assent in April 2017, and the NCS Trust was granted a Royal Charter and a clear mission to make NCS available to all young people, particularly those from deprived backgrounds, to contribute to a Britain that works for everyone. The Charter also guarantees the Trust’s operational independence.

NCS is not a citizenship scheme per se although the volunteering component to the programme has an important role to play in creating a younger generation of active citizens. NCS was set up to achieve the following three purposes:
• Social Cohesion - By exposing young people to peers from different backgrounds;
• Social Mobility - Through teaching young people ‘softer’ skills for work and life;
• Social Engagement - By encouraging young people to contribute to their communities and therefore feel a part of their local areas as active citizens.

Consecutive independent evaluations show that NCS participants are emerging from the programme more confident about getting a job, more confident leading and working in teams and more confident meeting and working with others from different backgrounds.

The NCS Trust estimates that past NCS participants have donated around 10 million hours of volunteering while participating in the NCS programme and the 2015 independent evaluation of NCS showed that past NCS participants contribute four additional hours per month to their communities versus their peers who did not take part in the NCS. This engagement demonstrates that young people are emerging from the programme more assured of their ability to make a difference on the world around them and more able to locate the right people to talk to in their communities to make things happen. As a result, these young people are poised to continue to make a contribution to their local areas as active citizens invested in the future of their communities.

The evaluation also shows that young people are more likely to vote after taking part in the programme, indicating that NCS has helped them understand their role in the democratic process. And indeed, the NCS Trust were recently granted a Royal Charter that includes under the body’s wider functions a requirement to “have regard to the desirability of encouraging participants to take an interest in debate on matters of local or national political interest, and promoting their understanding of how to participate in national and local elections”.

NCS is a voluntary programme taking place outside school during either the summer holidays or autumn and spring half terms. The summer programme takes place over four weeks, with a slightly shorter version running for the spring and autumn.

Consecutive, independent evaluations commissioned for all past programmes since 2011 show that NCS is having its intended impact on participants across all seasons. Young people are emerging from the programme more confident, more engaged and more socially responsible, indicating that the traditional structure of the programme and both the 3 and 4 week models are working.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is committed to working with the NCS Trust to ensure that the design of the NCS programme continues to deliver the intended results as well as value for money. This includes evaluating the different length programmes.

Government wants to make sure that every young person who wants to is able to take part in the NCS. We believe that NCS will be most attractive to young people and can have the most impact by retaining its voluntary ethos. Young people need to want to take part to
create an atmosphere of a shared experience at a pivotal point in their lives to ensure that NCS continues to have a positive impact across its main outcome areas.

The NCS Trust currently work primarily with “The Basics” (Bite the Ballot) & “Rock Enrol” (Cabinet Office) to deliver sessions on democratic engagement. Both modules inform young people about how to get on the electoral register, and in many cases young people are registered to vote during these sessions.

The Basics (Bite the Ballot) is embedded in all direct delivery under The Challenge (approximately 35% of the total provision). Analysis from summer 2015 showed that 15% of other programme timetables included either The Basics or Rock Enrol.

Outside this, 30% of the remaining phase 2 timetables make explicit reference to other sessions or activities about democratic engagement. These included workshops with local politicians, sessions with local Youth Parliaments or other structures, challenge sessions on youth manifestos, and youth-led debates.

In addition to this existing activity, it was suggested during previous debates in the House of Lords on the NCS Bill in November 2016 that NCS should include a greater political element and a closing ceremony centred around a celebration of British citizenship.

Government recognises the benefits of citizenship education for young people. Though NCS can achieve some of the same outcomes as citizenship education, such as a sense of community and desire to participate in community matters through volunteering, it is not a citizenship scheme. The NCS primarily exists to achieve its three core purposes: social mobility; social cohesion; and social engagement. As such, the NCS Trust is not funded, resourced, or equipped with the specific expertise to provide instruction in citizenship. Adding this requirement would be burdensome and distract the NCS Trust from achieving its core functions.

Moreover, the purpose of the existing NCS graduation ceremony is for participants to celebrate their personal NCS journeys and everything they have learnt on the programme in the presence of their friends and family. There is a risk that broadening the scope of the graduation ceremony into citizenship could exclude some communities or individuals which would change the shared celebratory feel of communal achievement that is an integral feature of the current ceremonies.

Consecutive independent evaluations show that NCS is good value for money. The 2015 evaluation of the programme by Ipsos Mori showed that for every £1 spent on the summer 2015 programme, up to £1.50 of benefits are realised.

However, DCMS agrees with the recently published NAO and PAC Committee reports on NCS that argue that the value for money of the programme needs to be improved as NCS

2 The NCS Trust has also commissioned a report on the value for money of the programme which monetises wellbeing http://www.ncsyes.co.uk/sites/default/files/NCS%20Wellbeing%20and%20Human%20Capital%20Valuation%20-%20Jump.pdf
expands. The NCS Trust and DCMS are therefore working closely together to enhance the value for money of the programme. The NCS Trust will shortly be re-commissioning their provider network when the current set of contracts expire in Autumn 2018. This will be a key opportunity to ensure that the new provider contracts deliver better value for money. NCS Trust is also developing a series of pilots to test new ways of delivering the programme at lower costs and finding new delivery partners. This will inform the re-commissioning process.

**What other routes exist for creating active citizens?**

DCMS grant funds the British Youth Council (BYC) to encourage young people to engage with democracy and have their views heard on topics that matter to them.

One such initiative is the UK Youth Parliament, a youth organisation made up of approximately 600 democratically elected members (300 Members of Youth Parliament, and 300 Deputy Members) aged between 11 and 18 years. Members are elected to represent the views of young people in their areas both to Government and to national and local youth service providers.

BYC also coordinate Make Your Mark, the largest ballot of youth views in the UK. It gives the UK Youth Parliament its mandate and gets young people aged 11-18 involved in democracy, helping them to learn to engage, debate, listen and negotiate on a variety of topics. In 2016, 978 216 young people voted and the aim is to reach a million votes through the 2017 ballot.

DCMS supports the #iwill Campaign which is coordinated by the charity Step Up to Serve. The campaign aims to achieve a once in a generation step change in attitudes towards social action to ensure social action is celebrated by society and a part of life for as many 10-20 year olds as possible. Over 700 businesses and charities have pledged support for the campaign. The #iwill fund is an integral part of this work and brings together £40m of seed funding from Government and Big Lottery Fund to create a central investment pot. since its inception there has been £16 million of match funding from organisations such as Pears Foundation, the Duke of Edinburgh and Sport England. All this activity and funding is designed to increase the number of 10-20 year olds taking part in meaningful social action to 60% by 2020.

Sport has a huge role to play in encouraging individuals to become active citizens engaged in meaningful volunteering activities. Sport is heavily reliant on its 5.6 million volunteers, both at a grass roots level and through additional support required to run major events.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance estimated there were approximately 150,000 community sports clubs in the UK (2014) and each of these benefits from the support of an average of 24 volunteers. Volunteering is the backbone of sport and sports clubs and those are kept going through a wide range of voluntary activity. It offers a wide-range of technical and nontechnical roles: coaching; refereeing, officiating and stewarding; fundraising; providing transportation; coaching and administration, and multiple opportunities for people to get involved and contribute to the life of their communities.
Volunteering is at the heart of Government’s sport and physical activity strategy. Sport England launched their new Volunteering strategy in December 2016 and is investing over £20 million over 4 years (2017 - 21) to support its implementation. This strategy sets out our plans to allow more people to engage in all types of volunteering through sport and physical activity as active citizens.

7. How can society support civic engagement? What responsibility should central government, devolved and local governments, third sector organisations and the individual have for encouraging civic engagement? What can the Government and Parliament do to support civil society initiatives to increase civic engagement?

This Government’s set out its vision for a Shared Society, where nurturing the responsibilities of citizenship is the bedrock of a fairer and stronger Britain that works for everyone. As part of this, there is significant potential to harness more effectively the skill and passion of citizens, communities and businesses to help tackle long-standing challenges this country faces. That’s why we are:
- Accelerating the development of projects that complement public services through the Centre for Social Action.
- Devolving power and resources so people can take action on issues they care about.
- Encouraging the role of social action to be considered in the design of public services.
- Encouraging and enabling more people to take part in social action

Social action is about people coming together to help improve their lives and solve problems that are important to their communities. Social action can broadly be defined as practical action in the service of others, which is:
- carried out by individuals or groups of people working together
- not mandated and not for profit
- done for the good of others - individuals, communities and/or society
- bringing about social change and/or value

Social action:
- Increases the resources available to achieve social goals
- Gives public services access to new expertise and knowledge
- Enables broader and better targeted support
- Empowers local groups, enabling local solutions and building resilient communities
- Creates new models for how society can respond to challenges
- Helps reduce demands on public services

The UK is a very generous place, with a long and proud tradition of social action, and levels of volunteering and giving have increased. The Community Life Survey shows that 75% of people give money to charity in the average month; and the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) World Giving Index shows that the UK is the most generous nation in Europe and one of the most generous countries in the world. Individuals’ charitable giving continues to be an important source of income for charities in this country. CAF’s research indicates around £10bn was donated to charity in 2016.
This Government is committed to helping to build a compassionate country that works for everyone. So we will continue our work to make giving as easy and compelling as possible; and take steps to help civil society organisations to access the tools, training and moments they need to harness the generosity of the public.

**What can the Government and Parliament do to support civil society initiatives to increase civic engagement?**

**Government support for charitable giving**

Government has recently taken a range of steps to encourage and enable giving. This includes funding subsidised fundraising training for small, local charities; simplifying the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme; launching the inaugural Local Charities Day to celebrate their work; matching public donations to local charities to incentivise giving and encouraging innovation by testing the effectiveness of matched crowdfunding to fund art and heritage projects.

In addition, we coordinated a series of Giving Roundtables bringing experts together to consider what more can be done. We heard strong messages about the need to support small charities to develop their fundraising and digital skills; to encourage more collaboration in communities; and the opportunity to unlock more giving from high-net-worth individuals.

Following the Roundtables, we have already announced funding for a further three years of subsidised fundraising training, and we’ll be setting out more detail on our other plans to take these themes forward in due course.

**The Centre for Social Action**

The CSA aims to identify and accelerate the development and spread of high impact social action initiatives that complement public services and improve social outcomes.

On 1 December 2015, then Minister for Civil Society Rob Wilson, publically committed investing ‘£15 million in a new phase in the Centre for Social Action, taking the ideas that can make a difference, and enabling them to grow and become routine in our public services and communities’.

Examples of CSA work:

- In the first phase (2013-2016), the CSA backed 215 initiatives, many in health and education/social mobility as well as others like jobs, digital and rehabilitation.
- The portfolio includes the Dementia Friends social movement; helping establish, scale and mainstream models like Code Club, City Year, The Access Project and Shared Lives; backing new social action innovations that technology has only recently allowed like GoodSam; helping to shape whole system change in health, care and tutoring.
- Programmes have collectively mobilised more than 2 million people into social action, and leveraged around £30m alongside a Government investment of £36m.

More than 30 programme evaluations have shown that social action transforms lives; helping students that had fallen behind at school to catch up, job seekers to find work,
isolated older people to feel less lonely, and more. Examples include:

- **Dementia Friends**: 1.2m volunteer Dementia Friends created public savings in reduced medical care, paid care and working benefits and valuable impacts in volunteering time.
- **End of Life Social Action Fund**: funded 7 volunteer befriending services to provide social support to people at end of life and their carers.

Programme evaluation found that increased contact with befriending volunteers demonstrated a significant improvement in quality of life for people in their last year of life. Examples include:

- **Into University**: reached 18,000 students in 2013-14 with 79% reaching university and £4.20 social value generated for every £1 invested.
- **Code Club**: expected to scale to nearly 30% of English primary schools by 2018 at a cost of just £9 per pupil per year.

**Enabling Social Action**

In February 2017 OCS and New Economics Foundation (NEF) launched the **Enabling Social Action Tool** which provides resources, ideas and case studies on how to embed social action into existing public services, develop new programmes and create the conditions for social action, including community action.

**Community Action**

The Prime Minister Theresa May’s speech on shared society called on Government to step up and, rather than allow people to just get by on their own, be part of the solution by supporting people to have their voices heard across every layer of society. This is exactly what community action policy has been doing and will continue to do. “We are a country built on the bonds of family, community and citizenship and there is no greater example of the strength of those bonds than our great movement of charities and social enterprises”.

Community action is about people taking action on the issues that matter to them to help improve their own lives. The following are examples of our key programmes and the impact they have had.

The **Community Organisers** programme trained individuals to work in communities and act as local leaders, bringing people together to take action on the things they all care about. The original Community Organisers programme (2011-2015) listened to over 150,000 residents, worked in over 400 neighbourhoods and supported over 2000\(^3\) community projects. We know that where community organisers are at work, people have a stronger sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, they feel more valued, they become more likely to team up and improve their area. Following the success of this programme, we have committed to expanding the number of Community Organisers recruited to 10,000 by March 2020. The programme will train organisers through local hubs, the National Citizens Service, Public sector, VSO and local partnerships.

In **Community Organiser** areas, communities have benefited from projects and listenings; 75% of organisers and 72% of employers think that it is more common that people form

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\(^3\) [Evaluation of the Community Organisers Programme](#), P59
new groups around shared ideas and projects; 70% of organisers and 64% of employers think that it is more common that people have the skills to organise activities and projects for themselves and others in the neighbourhood. Analysis by TNS-BRMB found that individuals living in organiser areas were significantly more likely to agree that local people pull together to improve the neighbourhood (51% and 39% respectively), reported a stronger sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods; and were more likely to organise a paper petition (44% and 37% respectively) or organise a group (9% compared with 4%).

The Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund (2011-2015) was a small grants programme targeting deprived wards. Local people set funding priorities for their own communities and around 600 volunteer panels made 27.2 million in funding recommendations to nearly 18,000 projects. Communities have matched this to the tune of over £93 million, including £15.3 million in cash and 5.5 million volunteering hours. For every £1 of government money, people matched with the equivalent of £3.40 of in-kind support, exceeding expectations three-fold.

As a result of Community First, 72% said that it is more common that people are taking part in local groups, events and activities. Local groups in these areas - traditionally seen as ‘cold spots’ by funders - have also been strengthened. 86% of projects funded through Community First said that their experience had encouraged them to apply for funding from other sources; the proportion of project leads who felt highly confident they could organise local activity to address local needs increased from 48% to 67%.

Cities of Service (Sept 2014 - Oct 2015) worked with local authorities to encourage people to take action around key local strategic issues. Seven local authorities grew volunteer teams to tackle issues from loneliness amongst older people, to food poverty. Over 10,000 volunteers were engaged across the 7 Cities, reaching over 18,500 beneficiaries.

Initiatives consist of a mixture of low-intensity or one-off activity, like ‘Love Where You Live’ in Barnsley and ‘Pride in Your Community’ in Telford, to more intense one-to-one support such as ‘Circles of Support’ offering befriending and activities with older people in Swindon. In Barnsley, 945 volunteers spent 2,249 hours improving their local environment, including removing 13 tonnes of rubbish from the Trans Pennine Way.

**Volunteering in Health & Social Care**

In health and care, we are scaling projects that harness the assets of communities to provide support to statutory services and draw on the passion and commitment of volunteers to offer support beyond the capacity of the public sector.

**NHS England STP & Social Action:** Government has been working with NHS England on better embedding social action & volunteering in health and social care through membership of their People and Communities Board.

NHS England have asked its 44 NHS Footprint areas to work with local health and social care leaders, including the Voluntary and Community Service Enterprise sector to prepare what are known as local Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs). NHS England as part of its Five Year Forward View strategy have committed to people and communities being at
the heart of this work. NHS England has also agreed that social action and volunteering is a key enabler and should be included in each STP. The 44 STP areas cover every part of England, each STP will set out how best to spend funding, support growth and transform care in the face of rising demand and more complex patient needs.

**Q-Volunteering**
Through a new three year programme called Q-Volunteering, the Office for Civil Society and the programme partners (NHS England, the Department of Health, Healthwatch England, the NHS Confederation, NHS Horizons and Care England) are working with local NHS ambulance-led partnerships, to develop a social action-based system transformation and leadership programme in health and care. Locally led ambulance services will recruit and train volunteers to promote self-care and patient activation, in order to support better outcomes for patients, carers and help moderate pressure on local health and care.

**Encouraging civic engagement more broadly**
The Localism Act 2011 gave new rights to individuals and communities in England, making it easier for them to have a say in developments at a local level and achieve their ambitions for the place where they live. These included the Right to Bid, Right to Challenge and Neighbourhood Planning. The Government has funded the establishment of the ‘My Community’ website [https://mycommunity.org.uk/](https://mycommunity.org.uk/), which has tools and resources to support communities take action to shape their local area.

Every town, village or neighbourhood is home to buildings or amenities that play a vital role in local life, including community centres, libraries, swimming pools, village shops, markets or pubs, which if closed or sold into private use, would be a real loss to the community. Under the Right to Bid, local authorities are required to maintain a list of assets of community value which have been nominated by the local community. When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Act then gives community groups the time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market, helping local communities keep much-loved sites in public use and part of local life.

Over 4,000 Assets of Community Value have been listed in England and we estimate that our programmes alongside the Community Right to Bid have helped around 150 assets to be transferred into community ownership since 2012. We have provided funding to support communities to exercise these rights, including £1.85 million to help community groups to take on the ownership of their local pub alongside £1.77 million from the organisation Power to Change. We are also providing £3.25m over the next two years through the Communities Fund programme to support a mix of local authority and community-groups to deliver solutions to entrenched social issues such as domestic violence and long term unemployment.

The Government believes that innovation in public services can offer greater value for taxpayers’ money and better results for local communities. The best councils are constantly on the look out for new and better ways to design and deliver services. Many recognise the potential of social enterprises and community groups to provide high-quality services at good value, and deliver services with and through them.
In some places, however, voluntary and community groups who have bright ideas find that they do not get a proper hearing. Under the Right to Challenge, these groups, parish councils and local authority employees have the right to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service. The local authority must consider and respond to this challenge; and where it accepts it, run a procurement exercise for the service in which the challenging organisation can bid. This makes it easier for local groups with good ideas to put them forward and drive improvement in local services. For example, community enterprise Halifax Opportunities Trust, used the Right to Challenge to bid for the contract to manage a large proportion of Calderdale Council’s Children Centres. The Halifax Opportunities Trust won the tender, securing contracts for services worth over £8m.

Through the Neighbourhood Planning process, communities can for the first time produce plans that have real statutory weight in the planning system, enabling people to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new development they want to see go ahead. As a result, over 2,200 groups have started the neighbourhood planning process since 2012, in areas that cover nearly 13 million people across England, and over 390 successful neighbourhood planning referendums have taken place, with an average ‘yes’ vote of 89%, on an average turnout of 33%. Locality, a national network of community-led organisations, is delivering the Government’s neighbourhood planning support programme, for which DCLG have made available £22.5 million for 2015-18 to provide grants, technical support, advice and the MyCommunity website. In addition, local authorities are funded to fulfil their legal duty to support organisations producing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order. Funding for local authorities has been available since October 2012.

Many of the projects supported by DCLG’s integration programme have the aim of encouraging participation in society and promoting social action to build community cohesion and reduce social exclusion. This includes £9.7 million since 2011 for the Near Neighbours programme which brings together people from different faiths and no faith to improve their neighbourhoods and create links and build networks and skills in some of our most multicultural (and deprived) inner city areas. Between 2014 and March 2017 this programme supported around 1,400 local events and small community projects that brought different faith and ethnic groups together reaching over 209,000 people.

8. What are the values that all of us who live in Britain should share and support? Can you identify any threats to these values, which affect the citizenship of, for instance, women or various minority groups? If so, how can their citizenship be strengthened?

The Government defines British values as including regard for the rule of law, participation in and acceptance of democracy, equality, individual liberty, free speech and mutual respect, tolerance and understanding of different faiths and beliefs. These values, which were reiterated in the Government’s manifesto, are supported by the overwhelming majority of British people, and are sustained by our most important local and national institutions.
This Government is committed to creating a fair society in which all people, of whatever ethnic origin or background are valued, are able to participate fully and realise their own potential. The Prime Minister has spoken of the need to ensure that our society works for everyone. We are currently considering the findings of Dame Louise Casey’s independent review into how to boost opportunity and integration in isolated communities published on 5 December and we have also launched an audit to look into racial disparities in our public services.

The UK is an open and diverse country where people from all parts of society can be successful. This is a key part of the UK’s values and will not change.

Extremism poses a threat to our shared values. The Government defines extremism as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. If left unchallenged, those values that bind our society together start to fall apart. Women’s rights are eroded, hatred, intolerance and bigotry become normalised, minorities are targeted and communities become separated from the mainstream. The Government therefore has a responsibility to protect the public from all of the harms – in addition to terrorism – which extremists pose to our society. We want to defeat all forms of extremism, wherever it occurs.

The Government is taking a comprehensive approach through our four-year Counter Extremism Strategy (published in October 2015). The strategy addresses extremism in all its forms, including Islamist and far/extreme right extremism.

The strategy sets out a range of action, including Government support for the public sector and civil society to confront extremist narratives that run contrary to our shared values; our commitment to working with everyone who is committed to standing against extremism in their communities; our determination to disrupt the most harmful extremists, including prosecuting those who break the law; and supporting efforts to improve community cohesion.

We have made significant progress in defending our shared values against extremism in recent years. As part of the Counter-Extremism Strategy Government has:

- Improved our understanding of extremism through the work of the Extremism Analysis Unit - which has also helped disrupt extremist activity.

- Awarded funding and support for 53 civil society groups to tackle extremism via our £63m ‘Building a Stronger Britain Together’ programme. We intend to expand our network to over 100 groups in the coming months.

- Grown our network of Community Coordinators embedded in Local Authorities, to develop knowledge of extremism locally and identify and support groups challenging extremism. Twenty-seven are in post to date and 42 Local Authorities have agreed to work with us overall.
• Published the main findings from the review into Islamist extremist funding and what Government is doing in response\(^4\).

• Published a new Hate Crime Action Plan (in July 2016). Key achievements include launching funding schemes for protective security measures for places of worship and community-led projects to tackle hate crime, and measures to increase reporting of hate crime and support victims.

• Continued to act to prevent extremism from gaining a foothold in our schools, including through strengthening regulations to safeguard children missing from education (introduced in September 2016).

• Concluded independent reviews of integration and of Islamist extremism in prisons. In direct response to the latter’s recommendations, Government has established a joint (OSCT-HMPPS) unit to take work forward, including introducing prison separation units in to manage a small number of the highest risk prisoners away from the general prison population.

• Launched an independent review into the application of Sharia law. The Chair will submit her final report later this year.

• Introduced new powers - via the Digital Economy Act 2017 – to enable Ofcom to act quickly against community radio stations and Internet Protocol TV channels when they breach Ofcom’s content standards. We have also revised the UK’s Broadcasting Code to make clear that hate speech and derogatory content is not permitted.

• Excluded ten individuals from the UK on the grounds of unacceptable extremist behaviour.

However, Government recognises that there is still too much tolerance of extremism in our country and we need to become far more robust in identifying it and stamping it out. We will therefore be establishing a new Commission for Countering Extremism. The Commission will advise the Government on how best to tackle extremism and will support the public sector and our communities to promote and defend our shared values and confront extremism wherever it exists.

The Government will continue to do everything it can to tackle extremism – but we know we can only defeat it through working in partnership with local communities. We will continue to stand with everyone who shares our values to keep our multi-faith, multi-society society one of the most successful in the world.

\(^4\) Written Ministerial Statement by Amber Rudd 12 July
http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statements/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons&use-dates=True&answered-from=2017-07-03&answered-to=2017-07-14&dept=1
9. Why do so many communities and groups feel “left behind”? Are there any specific factors which act as barriers to active citizenship faced by different communities or groups - white, BME, young, old, rural, urban? How might these barriers be overcome?

Britain is on the whole well-integrated, but more needs to be done to make sure nobody is excluded, or left behind, and that we are prepared to take strong action where people refuse to integrate and fail to embrace the shared values that make Britain great.

Dame Louise Casey’s review into how to boost opportunity and integration in isolated communities considers a number of issues, including population change; patterns of residential and school segregation; public attitudes and values; social and economic exclusion; and the equality impacts of cultural and religious practices. It concludes with a series of recommendations to Government for promoting integration. Dame Louise also considered the role of leadership and recommended that the Government should work with the Committee for Standards in Public Life to ensure that British values are enshrined in the principles of public life.

The Government’s manifesto has committed this administration to help people in more isolated communities to engage with the wider world, help women in particular into the workplace, and teach more people to speak English.

As mentioned in the answer to question 1, the Department for Communities and Local Government is reviewing the available evidence on the main causes of poor integration, and in the coming months will bring forward plans for tackling these issues through a new integration strategy.

Other work is in hand across Government to address the inequalities faced by particular groups, including:

- A Race Disparity Audit to look at the inequality in outcomes experienced by people of different backgrounds in every area of our public services from health to education, childcare to welfare, employment, skills and criminal justice. The first tranche of data will be published in autumn 2017.
- Alongside the Industrial Strategy work on developing local industrial strategies, a Civic Renewal approach will aim to support struggling areas, whose economies have not recovered from the impact of deindustrialisation, through regeneration and urban renewal. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is also developing proposals that will enable greater labour market access and participation for under-represented groups (including women and the disabled), ensuring that they can boost their earning power.
- Expanding the existing DfE Opportunity Areas across England, targeting social mobility ‘coldspots’ through education. Increased funding of £72 million is available to support local education providers and communities to address the biggest challenges in the twelve areas.

The Government aims to drive social mobility by breaking the link between a person’s background and where they get to in life. In education, we have protected the pupil
premium, worth nearly £2.5 billion this year, so that schools receive funding to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Department for Education’s gap index shows that the attainment gap between disadvantage pupils and their peers has narrowed by 9.3 per cent at key stage 2 and 7.0 per cent at key stage 4 since the pupil premium was introduced in 2011. This means better prospects for a more prosperous life as an adult.

Education alone will not be enough to transform social mobility. The best employers are already taking important steps, including engaging and supporting young people in schools, introducing fairer recruitment practices, removing barriers, opening up alternative routes to entry, and monitoring progress – but there is more to do to ensure that background is not a barrier to a good career.

10. How do you see the relationship between citizenship and civic engagement on the one hand and social cohesion and integration on the other? What effect does the level of diversity in schools and workplaces have on integration in society as a whole? How can diversity and integration be increased concurrently?

The Government believes that through the promotion of fundamental British values and equality of opportunity, we create the conditions for people to live and work together, to bridge boundaries between communities and to play a full role in society. When this is underpinned both by opportunities to succeed, and a strong sense of personal and social responsibility to the society which has made success possible, the result is a strong society.

Government supports national and local initiatives which aim to bring communities together around shared values, such as The Great Get Together in June 2017 to mark the first anniversary of Jo Cox’s death and reinforce her mantra that “we have more in common than that which divides us”, and The Big Iftar taking place annually since 2012 where Muslims open their doors to invite the wider community to break their fast with them during Ramadan. DCLG funds the Inter Faith Network which organises Inter Faith Week to encourage people from different faiths to participate in local activities together – Inter Faith Week 2016 saw over 600 events take place across the UK.

DCLG is also funding the Joseph Interfaith Foundation to provide culturally sensitive training for young refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia to enable them to integrate into the UK society, including by building their understanding of respect for the rule of Law, parliamentary democracy and the concept of female equality as part of women’s Human Rights.

Schools play a vital role in promoting integration and are all required to promote community cohesion and fundamental British values. The teaching of religious beliefs and cultures helps in the development of an understanding and respect for different faiths and communities. Good quality religious education can develop children’s knowledge of the values and traditions of Britain and other countries, and foster understanding among different faiths and cultures. That is why religious education remains compulsory for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, at all key stages.
Schools without a religious designation should have a curriculum for religious education that reflects that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking into account the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Faith schools also make a strong contribution in this area and there are many excellent examples of Church and faith schools providing opportunities for their pupils to mix with children of different faiths and backgrounds. DfE and DCLG are working closely to ensure that schools play a key role in supporting with Government’s wider integration agenda. DfE will continue to work closely with church and other faith schools to promote and support integration and community cohesion. We will set out further details of our approach in this area and in relation to the 50% cap on faith admissions in faith free schools in due course.

Dame Louise Casey’s review explored diversity and integration in schools and the Government is currently preparing an integration strategy that will set out how we address these important issues.

11. How important are levels of English proficiency for first and second generation immigrants and what could be done to increase them, including through support for ESOL classes? Are there particular barriers faced by newcomers to Britain? Could the naturalisation process, including the citizenship test, be improved and if so, how?

The Government recognises the importance of English proficiency to enable people to participate fully in society. This is why we are supporting English learning at all levels and across all age groups.

With regards to children and young people, the Government’s ongoing school reforms focus on creating a school-led, self-improving system in which every child and young person has opportunity to achieve their full potential, regardless of ethnicity, gender or background. Under current school funding arrangements, local authorities may allocate a proportion of their funding to schools based on the number of pupils in each school for whom English is an additional language (EAL), and who have been in the school system for a maximum of three years. In 2016-17, 136 local authorities used the EAL factor in their local funding formulae, spending £282 million in total. Schools may also draw on their pupil premium funding to support those EAL pupils who are classed as disadvantaged.

Some pupils in the overall EAL group will have recently arrived in England from overseas – so mobility is another relevant factor that local authorities can currently use in their funding formulae. It provides additional funding to schools that had at least 10% of their pupils not starting at their school in August/September (and January for Reception pupils) over the previous three years. 66 local authorities used this factor in 2015-16, allocating a total of £24m through it.

Earlier this year, the Government’s second consultation on introducing a national funding formula for schools proposed that an EAL factor should form part of the new formula. We will be announcing our plans for implementing the national funding formula in due course.
The Department for Education’s school census now requires maintained schools in England to report annually on the written and spoken English language proficiency of their individual EAL pupils. This will help schools in planning their support provision for their EAL pupils and will also inform future policy on supporting EAL pupils.

To support adult learners the Government provides funding through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) for education providers to offer a range of approved English courses, depending on the needs in their local areas.

Government funding of English for Speakers of Other Languages (EOL) training seeks to:
- enable unemployed people on benefits to get the skills they need to get into and stay in work;
- support the integration of long-standing migrant communities and particularly those individuals most at risk of isolation from services and wider society; and
- support refugees, especially Syrians to settle in the UK.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are fully-funded for jobseekers on work-related benefits and can be made freely available to unemployed learners on other benefits at the discretion of the provider. All other learners are co-funded at an assumed rate, with the Government contributing 50% of the cost. In 2015/16, 110,600 adults in England received full or partial funding to participate in an ESOL course.

Adults in England also benefit from a legal entitlement to fully-funded English courses up to Level 2 (GCSE A*-C (9-4) or equivalent). This means anyone who has not completed their GCSE or equivalent in English language has access to a range of free courses to improve their skills. Those adults whose first language is not English may choose to pursue a regular English qualification, for example a Functional Skills or GCSE qualification, instead of, in addition to, or after completing an ESOL course. Adults are also able to access funded unaccredited community courses, including in English language. In 2015/16 583,600 adults in England received funding to participate in English courses. All adults benefitting from AEB-funded provision have to meet the general eligibility criteria, including in most cases a three-year residency requirement. This reflects the Government’s expectation that those newly arrived in England who have chosen to settle here, for example to improve their employment prospects, invest their own time and resources into learning English. Adults who are granted refugee or humanitarian protection status by the Home Office are eligible for the same skills funding as any other English resident and are not subject to the normal three year qualifying period.

AEB funding is allocated to education providers who have the flexibility to decide their level of ESOL and English language provision based on local needs. Therefore the amount of funding spent on ESOL and regular English provision varies from year to year. In 2015/16 just under £100m of the Adult Education Budget was spent on ESOL provision.

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5 See AEB funding rules - page 4ff
6 See AEB funding rules
The Government also provides targeted English language training to support integration. From November 2013 to March 2016, DCLG’s £8m Community-Based English Language programme supported 39,800 adults with the lowest levels of English who had not previously engaged with mainstream provision. Around 80% of participants were women, with over half from Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somalian ethnic groups, who 2011 Census data shows have the lowest levels of English.

On 18 January 2016, the previous Prime Minister announced a new English language offer worth £20 million over this Parliament. As a first step in rolling out the new programme, DCLG committed £3.7 million in 2016/17 to enable providers who delivered the Community-Based English Language programme to provide new tuition to nearly 14,000 learners by March 2017.

The Casey review published in December 2016 found that English Language was a common denominator and a strong enabler of integration. The report found that poor English Language skills, and thereby poor labour market outcomes, led to a strong correlation of increased segregation among Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic households in most deprived areas, suggesting a negative cycle that will not improve without a concerted and targeted effort. DCLG are developing proposals to address this as part of an Integration strategy.

To avoid a gap in provision Ministers agreed a further £4.6m funding to extend our existing community based English language provision for another year to reach over 19,600 new learners by March 2018.

The Government has also pledged up to £10m over 5 years for ESOL provision specifically for those refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict who have come to the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme. This funding will be available to Local Authorities to which these refugees are allocated as part of the resettlement programme and will enable them to access language tuition and integrate into local communities.

In addition, the £140m Controlling Migration Fund includes £100m to help ease local pressure on services in areas strongly affected by migration. This could include funding for English language support and other cohesion activity. To date £2.9m has been awarded to local authorities to support additional English Language tuition for migrants, and £3m for cohesion.

British citizenship is a privilege, not a right. We expect those wishing to settle here to demonstrate they are ready and able to integrate into society. We have made the acquisition of citizenship more significant. All applicants for naturalisation are required to pass both the new, revised Life in the UK test and have the relevant English language speaking and listening qualification. We also view the citizenship ceremony as an important part of the process of becoming a British citizen. It allows a successful applicant to commit their loyalty to their new country, often in front of family and friends.

12. Can you give examples of initiatives and role models that have helped promote a positive vision of British Citizenship within a tolerant and cohesive society?
In addition to the initiatives referred to in the responses to the above questions, some further examples are set out below.

The London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics showcased British Citizenship at its finest. One of the major contributing factors to the success of the London 2012 Games was the role played by volunteers such as LOCOG’s Games Makers and GLA’s London Ambassadors. There was a strong appetite from the public to volunteer - for the 70,000 Games Maker positions, over 250,000 applications were received and 40% of Games Makers were new to volunteering.

On the back of this renewed ardour for volunteering in sports, the legacy programme ‘Join In’ was established to continue to promote sports volunteering. At the heart of Join In is a network of Local Leader volunteers, many of whom are former Games Makers, who help coordinate and engage people in volunteering activities around the country. As well as sharing local volunteering opportunities, Join In also promotes opportunities to volunteer at some of the biggest sporting events in the world, like the Tour de France and Commonwealth Games.

DCLG’s Near Neighbours programme (referred to in response to question 7) includes the Catalyst young leaders programme which develops the skills and experience of 18-30 year olds so they can play their part in building a strong civil society – over 300 young people have passed through the programme since 2011.

The Government is actively supporting those working to protect their communities from extremism and promote shared values via our £63m ‘Building a Stronger Britain Together’ (BSBT) programme of support for community groups and strategic communications campaigns. Launched in 2016, BSBT encompasses a network of community co-ordinators, embedded in priority local authorities; funding and practical communications support to groups working to challenge and build resilience to extremism locally; and a programme of targeted campaigns to counter extremists’ narrative and promote shared values.

BSBT is currently funding and supporting 53 civil society groups to tackle extremism and we are committed to supporting over 100 groups in the coming months. Twenty-seven community coordinators are currently in post and we expect to have 42 embedded in local authorities across the UK by the autumn. Strategic communications campaigns underway this financial year include *Britain Helps*, which raises awareness of British aid in conflict zones and facilitates a dialogue with British Muslims on foreign policy; and *Safer Giving*, which seeks to disrupt extremist organisations from receiving charitable funding.