In addition to the above, certain of the Group's subsidiaries had committed facilities at 31 March 2011 of £7,152 million (2010: £5,759 million) in aggregate, of which £667 million (2010: £1,647 million) was undrawn. Of the total committed facilities £2,137 million (2010: £1,139 million) expires in less than one year, £3,719 million (2010: £2,880 million) expires between two and five years, and £1,296 million (2010: £1,740 million) expires in more than five years.

Redeemable preference shares

Redeemable preference shares comprise class D and E preferred shares issued by Vodafone Americas, Inc. An annual dividend of US$51.43 per class D and E preferred share is payable quarterly in arrears. The dividend for the year amounted to £58 million (2010: £56 million). The aggregate redemption value of the class D and E preferred shares is US$1.65 billion. The holders of the preferred shares are entitled to vote on the election of directors and upon each other matter coming before any meeting of the shareholders on which the holders of ordinary shares are entitled to vote. Holders are entitled to vote on the basis of twelve votes for each share of class D or E preferred stock held. The maturity date of the 825,000 class D preferred shares is 6 April 2020. The 825,000 class E preferred shares have a maturity date of 1 April 2020. The class D and E preferred shares have a redemption price of US$1,000 per share plus all accrued and unpaid dividends.

23. Post employment benefits

Background

At 31 March 2011 the Group operated a number of pension plans for the benefit of its employees throughout the world, which vary depending on the conditions and practices in the countries concerned. The Group's pension plans are provided through both defined benefit and defined contribution arrangements. Defined benefit schemes provide benefits based on the employees' length of pensionable service and their final pensionable salary or other criteria. Defined contribution schemes offer employees individual funds that are converted into benefits at the time of retirement.

The Group operates defined benefit schemes in Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. Defined contribution pension schemes are currently provided in Australia, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom. The Group's principal defined benefit pension scheme in the United Kingdom was closed to new entrants from 1 January 2006 and closed to future accrual by current members on 31 March 2010.

Income statement expense

	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m
Defined contribution schemes	130	110	73
Defined benefit schemes	4	50	40
Total amount charged to the income statement (note 31)	**134**	**160**	**113**

Defined benefit schemes

The principal actuarial assumptions used for estimating the Group's benefit obligations are set out below:

	2011[1] %	2010[1] %	2009[1] %
Weighted average actuarial assumptions used at 31 March:			
Rate of inflation	3.1	3.5	2.6
Rate of increase in salaries	2.9	4.6	3.7
Rate of increase in pensions in payment and deferred pensions	3.1	3.5	2.6
Discount rate	5.6	5.7	6.3
Expected rates of return:			
Equities	8.2	8.5	8.4
Bonds[2]	5.1	5.1	5.7

Notes:
(1) Figures shown represent a weighted average assumption of the individual schemes.
(2) For the year ended 31 March 2011 the expected rate of return for bonds consisted of a 5.3% rate of return for corporate bonds (2010: 5.5%; 2009: 6.1%) and a 3.6% rate of return for government bonds (2010: 4.0%; 2009: 4.0%).

The expected return on assets assumptions are derived by considering the expected long-term rates of return on plan investments. The overall rate of return is a weighted average of the expected returns of the individual investments made in the group plans. The long-term rates of return on equities are derived from considering current risk free rates of return with the addition of an appropriate future risk premium from an analysis of historic returns in various countries. The long-term rates of return on bonds are set in line with market yields currently available at the statement of financial position date.

Mortality assumptions used are consistent with those recommended by the individual scheme actuaries and reflect the latest available tables, adjusted for the experience of the Group where appropriate. The largest scheme in the Group is the UK scheme and the tables used for this scheme indicate a further life expectancy for a male/female pensioner currently aged 65 of 23.5/24.3 years (2010: 22.3/25.4 years, 2009: 22.0/24.8 years) and a further life expectancy from age 65 for a male/female non-pensioner member currently aged 40 of 27.0/26.6 years (2010: 24.6/27.9 years, 2009: 23.2/26.0 years).

Measurement of the Group's defined benefit retirement obligations are particularly sensitive to changes in certain key assumptions including the discount rate. An increase or decrease in the discount rate of 0.5% would result in a £156 million decrease or a £178 million increase in the defined benefit obligation respectively.

Charges made to the consolidated income statement and consolidated statement of comprehensive income ('SOCI') on the basis of the assumptions stated above are:

	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m
Current service cost	12	29	46
Interest cost	95	77	83
Expected return on pension assets	(103)	(76)	(92)
Curtailment/settlement	–	20	3
Total included within staff costs	**4**	**50**	**40**
Actuarial losses recognised in the SOCI	(190)	149	220
Cumulative actuarial losses recognised in the SOCI	306	496	347

Notes to the consolidated financial statements continued

23. Post employment benefits continued

Fair value of the assets and present value of the liabilities of the schemes

The amount included in the statement of financial position arising from the Group's obligations in respect of its defined benefit schemes is as follows:

	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m
Movement in pension assets:			
1 April	1,487	1,100	1,271
Exchange rate movements	(2)	(10)	50
Expected return on pension assets	103	76	92
Actuarial (losses)/gains	(6)	286	(381)
Employer cash contributions	24	133	98
Member cash contributions	5	12	15
Benefits paid	(51)	(45)	(45)
Other movements	(2)	(65)	–
31 March	**1,558**	**1,487**	**1,100**
Movement in pension liabilities:			
1 April	1,690	1,332	1,310
Exchange rate movements	(4)	(15)	69
Arising on acquisition	–	–	33
Current service cost	12	29	46
Interest cost	95	77	83
Member cash contributions	5	12	15
Actuarial (gains)/losses	(196)	435	(161)
Benefits paid	(51)	(79)	(45)
Other movements	(3)	(101)	(18)
31 March	**1,548**	**1,690**	**1,332**

An analysis of net assets/(deficits) is provided below for the Group's principal defined benefit pension scheme in the UK and for the Group as a whole.

					UK					Group
	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m	2008 £m	2007 £m	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m	2008 £m	2007 £m
Analysis of net assets/(deficits):										
Total fair value of scheme assets	1,180	1,131	755	934	954	1,558	1,487	1,100	1,271	1,251
Present value of funded scheme liabilities	(1,127)	(1,276)	(815)	(902)	(901)	(1,488)	(1,625)	(1,196)	(1,217)	(1,194)
Net assets/(deficit) for funded schemes	**53**	**(145)**	**(60)**	**32**	**53**	**70**	**(138)**	**(96)**	**54**	**57**
Present value of unfunded scheme liabilities	–	–	(8)	–	–	(60)	(65)	(136)	(93)	(98)
Net assets/(deficit)	**53**	**(145)**	**(68)**	**32**	**53**	**10**	**(203)**	**(232)**	**(39)**	**(41)**
Net assets/(deficit) are analysed as:										
Assets	53	–	–	32	53	97	34	8	65	82
Liabilities	–	(145)	(68)	–	–	(87)	(237)	(240)	(104)	(123)

It is expected that contributions of £28 million will be paid into the Group's defined benefit retirement schemes during the year ending 31 March 2012. The assets of the scheme are held in an external trustee administered fund.

Actual return on pension assets

	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m
Actual return on pension assets	97	362	(289)
Analysis of pension assets at 31 March is as follows:	%	%	%
Equities	61.6	59.6	55.6
Bonds	36.5	37.5	41.9
Property	0.3	0.3	0.4
Other	1.6	2.6	2.1
	100.0	**100.0**	**100.0**

The schemes have no direct investments in the Group's equity securities or in property currently used by the Group.

History of experience adjustments

	2011 £m	2010 £m	2009 £m	2008 £m	2007 £m
Experience adjustments on pension liabilities:					
Amount	23	8	6	(5)	(2)
Percentage of pension liabilities	1%	–	–	–	–
Experience adjustments on pension assets:					
Amount	(6)	286	(381)	(176)	26
Percentage of pension assets	–	19%	(35%)	(14%)	2%

24. Provisions

	Asset retirement obligations £m	Other provisions £m	Total £m
1 April 2009	361	545	906
Exchange movements	(7)	(6)	(13)
Arising on acquisition	–	20	20
Amounts capitalised in the year	40	–	40
Amounts charged to the income statement	–	259	259
Utilised in the year – payments	(3)	(157)	(160)
Amounts released to the income statement	–	(37)	(37)
Other	(21)	–	(21)
31 March 2010	**370**	**624**	**994**
Exchange movements	(4)	(12)	(16)
Amounts capitalised in the year	4	–	4
Amounts charged to the income statement	–	300	300
Utilised in the year – payments	(8)	(193)	(201)
Amounts released to the income statement	–	(59)	(59)
Other	(47)	66	19
31 March 2011	**315**	**726**	**1,041**

Provisions have been analysed between current and non-current as follows:

	2011 £m	2010 £m
Current liabilities	559	497
Non-current liabilities	482	497
	1,041	**994**

Asset retirement obligations

In the course of the Group's activities, a number of sites and other assets are utilised which are expected to have costs associated with exiting and ceasing their use. The associated cash outflows are generally expected to occur at the dates of exit of the assets to which they relate, which are long-term in nature.

Other provisions

Included within other provisions are provisions for legal and regulatory disputes and amounts provided for property and restructuring costs. The Group is involved in a number of legal and other disputes, including notification of possible claims. The directors of the Company, after taking legal advice, have established provisions after taking into account the facts of each case. The timing of cash outflows associated with legal claims cannot be reasonably determined. For a discussion of certain legal issues potentially affecting the Group, refer to note 28. The associated cash outflows for restructuring costs are substantially short-term in nature. The timing of the cash flows associated with property is dependent upon the remaining term of the associated lease.