

# Government *WORLD*™

*Spring 2017 Edition*



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Cover picture: Tall ship moored in Woolwich Pier



By Paul G Bazeley for  
Government World

# Paul's News Roundup

*Summary of the main news  
and sports events over the last  
three months*

## January News Review

Theresa May announced that the UK will leave the European Single Market. The PM claimed that staying in the single market would mean 'not leaving the EU at all' and claimed she would attempt to gain the 'freest trade possible'. May also warned Europe that trying to penalise the UK could be disastrous for the EU.

Five people were killed after a man opened fire

in Fort Lauderdale airport. The shooting occurred near the Terminal 2 baggage claim when the suspect Esteban Santiago-Ruiz, who had brought his gun from Anchorage on an internal flight, began the attack. Over 30 people were injured in the shooting, which investigators believe was not linked to terrorist organisations.

Moonlight won the best drama motion picture at the Golden Globes, while the film La La Land won the best Musical or Comedy.

Donald Trump was sworn in as the 45th President of the US after the shock election result the year before.

Theresa May was the first foreign leader to meet the new President after he said it was going to be 'America first' in his speech.

Joaquin 'El Chapo' Guzman was extradited to the US to face charges. The drug lord, who had escaped from two high-security prisons, faces several indictments across the US. It is strongly believed Guzman will be sentenced to life in prison.

Luxottica and Essilor agreed to a €50 billion merger. Italy's Luxottica makes frames for many well-known brands, while France's Essilor is the world's largest manufacturer of lenses and contact lenses. The merger could mean the two

companies will have a stranglehold on the market and force a lot of smaller companies out of the eyewear market.

Sir John Hurt died at the age of 77. The actor was known for his role in The Elephant Man, Alien, Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings, Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy as well as many others. He was once described as 'simply the greatest actor in the world' by director David Lynch.

## January Sports Review

FIFA announced that the World Cup will be expanded from 32 teams to 48 effective from 2026.

The Jamaican sprinter Nesta Carter was discovered to have taken a banned substance when competing in the 2008 Olympics. The result meant that Usain Bolt lost his gold medal from the 4 x 100m relay as the team are disqualified.

Fans thought they had stepped back in time after Serena Williams beat her

sister Venus Williams 6-4, 6-4 in the women's final. A day later Roger Federer beat Rafael Nadal in a five set thriller which ended 6-4, 3-6, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3.

## February News Review

The House of Commons backed the Brexit bill by 498 votes to 114. While the SNP Plaid Cymru and the Lib Dems opposed the bill, Labour and the Conservative party backed the bill to win by 384 votes allowing Prime Minister Theresa May to begin Brexit negotiations.

An Egyptian national ran towards a group of soldiers attacking one. The perpetrator was shot five times by another soldier before being taken to hospital. The attacker was said to have been

carrying spray cans and was planning on defacing the artwork. The soldier was taken to hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

The Grammy Awards saw Adele win album of the year for '25' as well as record of the year and song of the year for 'Hello'. Chance the Rapper won Best New Artist and David Bowie was posthumously honoured winning several awards for his album 'Blackstar'.

Kim Jong-nam, the eldest son of previous North Korean leader Kim Jong-il and half brother of Kim Jong-un, was assassinated at Kuala Lumpur airport. He was attacked by two women with VX nerve agent who claimed they thought they were taken part in a prank. It is thought that the assassination was ordered by North Korea.

La La Land won the Best Picture award at the British Academy Film Awards. Casey Affleck won the best leading actor and Emma Stone won the best leading actress award. Meanwhile at the Oscars Moonlight won the best picture award, after the film La La Land was mistakenly announced. Emma Stone and Casey Affleck repeated their success by winning the best actress and best actor awards.

The Queen marked her 65th anniversary on the throne. Queen Elizabeth II is the first monarch to reach the sapphire anniversary. Suggestions have been made for an extra bank holiday to mark the occasion.

## February Sports Review

The New England Patriots won the Super Bowl by beating the Atlanta Falcons 34-28. The Patriots were trailing by 25 points in the third quarter before coming back to win, it is the largest comeback in Super Bowl history.

Manchester United beat Southampton 3-2 in the EFL Cup Final (formerly known as the Football League Cup). It is the fifth time United have won the trophy.

## March News Review

A 52-year-old Briton drove a car into pedestrians along Westminster Bridge injuring 50. The perpetrator then abandoned the car and fatally stabbed an unarmed police officer; he was then shot by another policeman and died at the scene. The attacker, identified as Khalid Masood, was said to be inspired by ISIS who later claimed responsibility.

Theresa May signed a letter to invoke article 50 informing the EU of the

UK's intent to leave the European Union. It starts a countdown of two years until the UK leaves the EU.

A man drove a car into a crowd in Antwerp, Belgium. Nobody was injured in the attack and the man was detained by soldiers. The suspect was found to be carrying two knives, a gun that was said to be not lethal and a suspicious substance which was dealt with by bomb disposal experts.

Huge snow storms in America meant a state of emergency is declared. Approximately 100,000 people were left without power and schools were closed during the storm which hit New York, Boston and Philadelphia.

Chuck Berry, the Rock 'n' Roll musician died. The 90

year old responsible for hits such as Johnny B Goode and Roll Over Beethoven is widely regarded as one of the heaviest influencers in Rock 'n' Roll music.

## March Sports Review

In the Six nations, England equalled New Zealand's record for consecutive test victories by beating Scotland in the fourth round and winning the championship. In the final round, England had to beat Ireland to beat New Zealand's run of consecutive matches and win the grand slam, however, they were beaten 13-9.

A bronze bust of Cristiano Ronaldo was revealed at Madeira airport to honour the famous footballer from the island. However, many took to social media to mock the bust which looked very little like the man himself.

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# There is nothing more important than keeping our children safe online



Louise Haigh MP,

Louise Haigh MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for the Digital Economy, commenting on a study from the Children's Commissioner for England on keeping children safe when online, said:

"There is nothing more important than keeping our children safe online and I know many parents worry

about this every single day.

"But children are having to fend for themselves in an online world that is becoming as much a part of their lives as the offline world. That's why Labour have repeatedly called for statutory online education so children can make informed decisions online and ask questions in a safe environment.

"This report proves that the Government are still playing catch-up with the challenges faced by children online, and their unwillingness to introduce comprehensive online education looks all the more short-sighted.

"With online bullying on the rise, data mined without consent and children left with little control over the content they post, Ministers need to get their act together."

# The year to save our Union



independence, these two parties of government are stretching the Union to breaking point.

"But 2017 is the year we can put the building blocks in place to save our Union.

"We can start preparing for a People's Constitutional Convention for the entire UK, and I have proposed a federal solution, where every nation and the regions of England could take more responsibility for what happens in their communities – while firmly safeguarding the redistribution of wealth across the UK.

"In 2014, we saved our Union and I was proud to be part of a campaign that stood up for Labour values of solidarity and co-operation.

"But 2016 saw the UK put at risk once again. The reckless actions of Ruth Davidson's Westminster colleagues led to a Brexit vote that created the divisions in our society that Nicola Sturgeon thrives upon.

"With the Tories pursuing a hard Brexit, and the SNP pursuing

"After more than 300 years, it is time for a new Act of Union to safeguard our family of nations for generations to come."

# Police Scotland pay out record levels of compensation

Police Scotland paid out records sums in compensation last year, it has been revealed.

Research by the Scottish Conservatives has shown the single force was made to pay £1.27 million in damages for 2015/16.

That compares to £1.17 million the previous year, and just under £1 million in 2013/14, when Police Scotland was created.

Last year, around £459,000 was paid following employment liability claims, £351,000 in public liability claims and £461,000 in motor liability payments.

The figures were released following a Freedom of Information request by the Scottish Conservatives,

though Police Scotland wouldn't disclose the details surrounding individual payments.

The force did say the £1,270,268 total for 2015/16 was a result of 516 claims, making an average of around £2500 per incident.

Police Scotland is one of the most under-pressure public sector organisations in terms of staffing and finances.

It was reported in August that the single force has a funding black hole of around £21 million, although it is thought that has now reduced to nearer £17 million.

Scottish Conservative chief whip John Lamont said:



Scottish Conservative chief whip John Lamont

“In an organisation the size of Police Scotland, there will always be compensation pay outs of various types.

“But it's very worrying to see these payments increase at a time when the single force can least afford it.

“People will be alarmed that police are involved in incidents which prompt compensation payments on hundreds of occasions

each year.

“It means every day there is at least one incident which results in taxpayers' money being used to compensate for an error or incident.

“That's far too high, and progress needs to be made on getting these numbers down.”



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# Maximum sentence for stalking to double

- **maximum prison sentences for stalking to double from 5 to 10 years**
- **government acts to make sure punishment fits the seriousness of the crime**
- **move builds on recently announced plans for new stalking protection orders**

People who stalk victims and devastate their lives can be sent to jail for longer, the Ministry of Justice has announced.

The maximum custodial sentence available to the courts for stalking will increase from 5 to 10 years, and from 7 to 14 years if the offence was racially or religiously aggravated.

Ministers say the plans will help make sure the

punishment reflects the severity of the crime and its damaging consequences on victims.

Justice Minister Sam Gyimah said:

“Stalkers torment their victims and can make everyday life almost unbearable. We are doubling the maximum sentences available to the courts so these awful crimes can be properly punished.

“I would like to thank Alex Chalk MP and Richard Graham MP for their considerable efforts in highlighting this issue.

“We are also working across the criminal justice system to ensure mental health issues associated with these crimes are properly addressed.”

The government will seek to implement the change through an amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill, currently going through Parliament. It will go further than the amendment recently passed in the House of Lords, as it will also raise the maximum sentence for harassment – from 5 to 10 years and 7 to 14 years if racially or religiously aggravated.

The move will make it possible for the courts to impose longer sentences in the most serious cases.

The government is taking further action to protect victims from stalking, including new protection orders to intervene early to keep victims safe and stop ‘stranger stalking’ before it escalates. The new measures will allow the police to place controls on perpetrators, preventing their behaviour intensifying while the crime is being investigated.

## PM statement on Martin McGuinness

Prime Minister Theresa May’s statement on Martin McGuinness’ decision to not stand in the Northern Ireland Assembly election.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

“Martin McGuinness served the people of Northern Ireland as deputy First Minister for nearly a decade.

“We recognise his work over many years securing a number of significant political agreements.

“He played a key role in moving the Republican movement towards a position of using peaceful and democratic means.

“I want to send him best wishes for his retirement.

“We will all continue to work to make sure that the people of Northern Ireland are able to live freely and in peace.”



# Insufficient funding for forensic science puts justice at risk



Forensic Science Regulator  
Dr Gillian Tully PhD, MCSFS

A lack of funding to improve forensic science is jeopardising the integrity of the criminal justice system, a new report warns.

In her annual report, Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) Dr Gillian Tully, said not all police forces were fully committed to reaching the required standards, with some failing to recognise the impact of quality failures in the area.

She also said that the main challenge to achieving quality forensic science over the past year was

financial and called on police forces and the Legal Aid Agency to make more funding available.

Forensic Science Regulator, Gillian Tully, said:

“Police forces must not treat quality standards for forensic science as an optional extra – and neither must others delivering forensic science in the Criminal Justice System

“Progress has been made, but some forces say they can’t afford to deliver both operational work and the required standards of forensic science. The standards are not an unachievable “gold-plated” ideal - they are the minimum standards expected of any reliable forensic science.”

The second annual Forensic Science

Regulator’s report also calls for investment in the forensic systems currently used by police to ensure they can keep up with increasing amount of work.

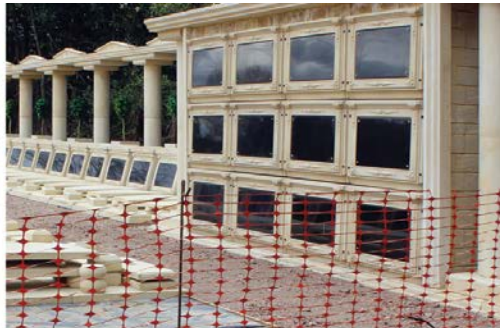
Other key findings from the report include:

- The regulator found there is still a significant risk of DNA contamination in police custody. She warns that if guidance is not followed as a matter of urgency, contamination could compromise evidence or mislead the courts.
- There is also a risk of contamination at Sexual Assault Referral Centres which provide support for alleged victims of rape and sexual assault. An investigation by the regulator is currently ongoing following a case last year when

contamination at a centre meant that a complainant’s samples could not be used.

- The report found that forensic science carried out by instruction from defence lawyers has also been under significant financial pressure because of the current legal aid funding.
- Police forces are required to reach the required standards for digital forensics by 2017. Although there has been a substantial effort within policing to assist forces in reaching the required standards for digital forensics, few will receive accreditation within the timeframe.
- There is still a risk of incorrect classifications by investigators who classify firearms to establish whether they are illegal weapons.
- There is a risk that some forensic medical examiners being commissioned do not have the required level of training and qualification.

The Forensic Science Regulator will continue to work with police and other agencies across the criminal justice system to improve quality of forensic science.



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## 2016 deadliest on record for migrants crossing Mediterranean: UN agency



Migrants from the Mediterranean are rescued in the Channel of Sicily, Italy. Photo: IOM/Francesco Malavolta (file)

More migrants were killed crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Europe in 2016 than ever before, according to the United Nations migration agency in the region.

At least 363,348 people crossed the sea 'mostly to Italy and Greece' but 5,079 additional people were either killed or are missing. The UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) released its preliminary figures, but they are expected to increase

with the addition of fatalities from December.

"The probable addition of several hundred more fatalities recorded in 2016 only deepens the tragedy," said IOM Director General William Lacy Swing.

He added that Europe's frustration with a seemingly endless cycle of migrant rescue followed by reports of shipwrecks and more drownings will continue unless Governments throughout the region find a way to manage migration

comprehensively.

Mr. Swing called for "finding creative means to permit safe, legal and secure migration" which could be done through work visas, family reunification or temporary protected status.

2 Instead of doubling down on tactics that don't work, let's use this New Year to try something that's actually new," he stressed.

Meanwhile, IOM has carried out its first aid training courses in Libya with rescuers involving migrant lifesaving operation in the Mediterranean Sea.

The training, which is part of the Sea and Desert Migration Management for Libyan Authorities to Rescue Migrants (SEA DEMM), was funded by the European Union.



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## Over 300 volunteer bailiffs help fight against illegal fishing

From Cornwall to Cumbria, an army of dedicated anglers is helping the fight against illegal fishing and fish theft. They are the recruits of the Angling Trust and Environment Agency's Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS) who act as the "eyes and ears" on riverbanks and lakes, reporting suspicious incidents and providing crucial information to the Environment Agency and the police.

VBS began as a pilot project in the South East in 2012 following a formal partnership between the Environment Agency and the Angling Trust. It was rolled out across the country in spring 2015 and, following inductions last autumn, proudly boasts more than 300 volunteers.

Bailiffs are unpaid and rigorously vetted before they are selected.

Successful candidates receive an intensive training course on what is expected of them from enforcement professionals, including the Angling Trust, the Environment Agency and the Head of the UK National Wildlife Crime Unit.

Volunteers are trained on fisheries enforcement law, signs of illegal fishing and how to record information in a way that could be used as evidence. First-hand learning includes attending joint patrols with the police and Environment Agency.

Volunteers recently gained valuable experience when they joined police and Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officers on a joint patrol of the River Severn and at a number of stillwaters. Even at a relatively quiet period of the year they found reports of illegal fishing.

It's not just rod licence offenders that are being reported either. On other patrols people have been cautioned by the police for going equipped for poaching, motoring offences and possessing drugs and weapons.

Dilip Sarkar MBE, the Angling Trust's National Enforcement Manager, said:

"All of our volunteers are valued and we now have the sound foundation to move forward, increase engagement and provide more practical training. We have come a very long way, since the formal partnership and although we still have far to go, this activity is already making a difference."

Graeme Storey, National Fisheries Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

"All money raised through rod licence sales is used

to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries benefiting anglers. The Voluntary Bailiff Service is our latest move to tackle illegal fishing and to protect that revenue. The vast majority of anglers who fish legally deserve to see those who flout the law brought to account but to that criminal minority our message is clear: we won't hesitate to take action."

The Angling Trust and Environment Agency are appealing for more anglers to join the VBS. Induction and training days are being run this spring and anyone interested in joining the VBS should email [karen.sarkar@anglingtrust.net](mailto:karen.sarkar@anglingtrust.net)



Dilip Sarkar MBE, the Angling Trust's National Enforcement Manager

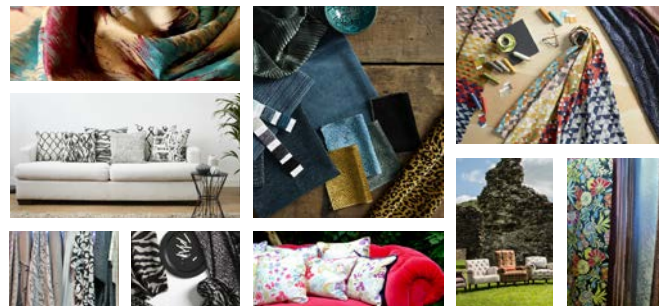
# GDP growth shows strong end to 2016 for the UK economy

Commenting on the first estimate of GDP for the fourth quarter of 2016, released by the Office for National Statistics, Suren Thiru, Head of Economics at the British Chambers of Commerce, said:

“The first estimate of UK GDP growth for the final quarter of 2016 confirms that the UK economy enjoyed a strong end to the year – mirroring our own survey data. While there was a welcome pick-up in output from manufacturing and construction, the UK remains heavily reliant on services and consumer spending as the main drivers of growth. The yearly figure of 2.0% UK GDP growth is broadly in line with historic trends.

“However, outperforming last year’s performance in 2017 will be a challenge for the UK economy. Higher inflation and uncertainty over the implications of Brexit are expected to bear down on the UK’s near-term growth prospects. This is likely to squeeze consumer spending and dampen firm’s investment intentions, resulting in a prolonged period of materially below trend growth.

“A key priority for the UK government must be to support long-term business investment, including addressing the escalating burden of up-front taxes and costs, such as business rates, which are impeding the ability of firms to invest, recruit and grow their business.”



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# Europe must do more to assist, protect freezing refugees and migrants in Europe



Cécile Pouilly, spokesperson for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Photo: OHCHR

The United Nations refugee agency is urging European authorities to step up support and security for refugees migrants facing harsh winter conditions, particularly amid reports that people have frozen or been injured trying to enter or move across Europe.

“Saving lives must be a priority and we urge States authorities across Europe to do more to assist and protect refugees and migrants,” said Cécile Pouilly, the spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), at the

Palais des Nations press briefing in Geneva.

The UN agency and partners have scaled up their own efforts in Greece, Serbia and other countries in the region. In Greece, for example, workers transferred hundreds of people to better accommodations, and passed out close to 360,000 high thermal blankets, winter boots and other warm items.

Grave concerns remain, however, for families living on the Greek island of Samos, where newcomers have been in limbo for months.

Speaking about the

situation there, Ms. Pouilly said that UNHCR is “deeply worried at the situation of some 1,000 people, including families with young children, who continue to live under unheated tents and dormitories.”

She reiterated the UN agency's call to further accelerate procedures on Samos and other islands which would allow faster transfers to the mainland, where better accommodation is available.

The freezing temperatures has killed a number of refugees and migrants, reportedly including two Iraqi men and a Somali woman in southeastern Belgrade, and an Afghan man at the Greece-Turkey border.

The spokesperson reiterated UNHCR's call “to increase safe pathways for the admission of people in need of protection,” including through options such as resettlement and family reunification so as to cut the reliance on human smugglers.

# 2016 was the hottest year ever recorded – UN weather agency

The world has just witnessed the hottest year on record, surpassing the exceptionally high temperatures of 2015, the United Nations weather agency has reported, highlighting new records in indicators of human-caused climate change, as well as loss of Arctic sea ice.

The globally averaged temperature in 2016 was about 1.1 degree Celsius higher than the pre-industrial period, according to a consolidated analysis by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), continuing the trend in which 16 of the 17 hottest years on record will have been during this century (1998 is the outlier).

“2016 was an extreme year for the global climate and stands out as the hottest year on record,” said WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas, stressing that “temperatures only tell part of

the story.”

In a news release, he emphasises that “long-term indicators of human-caused climate change reached new heights in 2016, as carbon dioxide and methane concentrations surged to new records,” adding that carbon dioxide, as well as methane concentrations contribute to climate change.

Carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere for thousands of years, trapping heat and causing the earth to warm further. The lifespan of carbon dioxide in the oceans is even longer. It is also the single most important greenhouse gas emitted by human activities. According to the WMO, carbon dioxide is responsible for 85 per cent of the warming effect on the Earth’s climate over the past decade.

Rising sea levels as Greenland glacier melts

Rising temperatures and concentrations of major greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are not the only record-breaking indicators of climate change, also Arctic sea ice remains at very low levels.

“We have also broken sea ice minimum records in the Arctic and Antarctic,” Mr. Taalas noted. “Greenland glacier melt – one of the contributors to sea level rise – started early and fast. Arctic sea ice was the lowest on record both at the start of the melt season in March and at the height of the normal refreezing period in October and November,” he explained.

Based on WMO consolidated analyses Mr. Taalas also concludes that the “Arctic is warming twice as fast the global average,” and adds “the persistent loss of sea ice is driving weather, climate and ocean circulation patterns in

other parts of the world.”

Extreme weather causing huge socio-economic disruption and losses

Throughout 2016, there were many extreme weather events which caused huge socio-economic disruption and losses.

“The one degree change means that the amount of disasters related to weather and hydrology have been increasing,” said Mr Taalas recently in an interview with UN News, adding that “it will have a negative impact on the economies of the countries, and it will also impact the lives and wellbeing of all humans.”

WMO has linked weather-related events to conclusions by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which recently reported 19.2 million new displacements due to weather, water, climate and geophysical hazards in 113 countries in 2015. That number is more than twice the number of people displaced due to human-related conflict and violence.

Record ocean heat contributed to widespread coral reef bleaching, including in the Great Barrier Reef, which has seen up to 50 per cent of its coral die in certain parts.

# Green member of House of Lords seeks to 'abolish' herself

Jenny Jones, Green member of the House of Lords, will continue her fight to transform the unelected chamber.



Baroness Jones' House of Lords Reform Bill will get its second reading on Friday, with reform of the Lords more important now than ever to enable proper scrutiny of the Brexit process.

Baroness Jones hopes to gather support from within the Lords for her plans to replace the House of Lords with a democratic and

effective second chamber. This would use proportional representation to elect a new house, but keep many existing peers as non-voting experts.

Her Bill is the first with this mix of proposals to come from within the Lords.

Jenny Jones said:

"I'm not the only Lord who wants to abolish their right to vote in the second chamber, but I'm aiming to be one of the most energetic peers in making it happen. I'm relatively new to the Lords and I hope my fresh approach will help fast track the various discussions about Lords reform.

"The referendum vote in favour of Brexit makes Lords reform both urgent and

inevitable. The government could try to push through all kinds of bad ideas on the back of the Brexit negotiations, the Great Repeal Act and hasty trade deals.

"We need an effective and democratic chamber to help scrutinise the secondary legislation and the international deals.

"The Government may well give itself so-called Henry 8th powers to just unilaterally repeal or amend European laws after the Repeal Act passes, opening the door to a bonfire of environmental and social protections. We need a second chamber that has the legitimacy and popular backing to challenge the use of such anti-democratic powers."

## PM congratulates the Queen on her Sapphire Jubilee

Prime Minister Theresa May, on behalf of the nation, congratulated Her Majesty the Queen on her 65-year reign.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

"The Sapphire Jubilee marks yet another remarkable milestone for our remarkable Queen.

"I know the nation will join with me in celebrating and giving thanks for the lifetime of service Her Majesty the Queen has given to our country and to the Commonwealth. It is a testament to her selfless devotion to the nation that she is not marking becoming the first monarch to reign for 65 years with any special celebration, but instead getting on with the job to which she has dedicated her life.

"She has truly been an inspiration to all of us and I am proud, on behalf of the nation, to offer our humble thanks and congratulations on celebrating her Sapphire Jubilee."



# UK Role in Fusion following EU Exit

The UK government's intention to leave Euratom alongside leaving the EU was announced just over two weeks ago in the White Paper entitled "The United Kingdom's exit from, and new partnership with, the European Union". This has obvious implications for UKAEA - especially the continued operation of JET after 2018 and the UK's continued participation in ITER.

UKAEA has since received the following statement from the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Jo Johnson MP :

"The research done at the

Culham Centre for Fusion Energy is rightly recognised as world class and it has driven UK leadership in fusion R&D for many years. The Government has no



intention of compromising this position following the decision to withdraw from the Euratom Treaty. Leaving Euratom is a result of the decision to leave the EU

as they are uniquely legally joined. The UK supports Euratom, and we value international collaboration in fusion research and the UK's key role in these efforts.

"Maintaining and building on our world-leading fusion expertise and securing alternative routes into the international fusion R&D projects such as the Joint European Torus (JET) project at Culham and the ITER project in France, will be a priority.

"The Government is working closely with the UKAEA management and board on ways to achieve this."

## Theresa May should take urgent action to stand up for bill payers - Clive Lewis

Clive Lewis MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, commenting on the energy price increases from Npower, said:

"This government is doing nothing to enforce their own regulator's strong advice that there should be no price hike.

"They have done nothing to increase the number of families getting help to insulate their home. And they are not doing enough to ensure better customer treatment.

Theresa May should take urgent action to stand up for bill payers"

# New powers to crack down on laser attacks



People shining laser pens to distract pilots, train and bus drivers could face fines of thousands of pounds or a jail sentence under stronger new powers designed to protect the public.

Shining lasers at any transport operator will become an offence under new legislation. This new law will make it even safer for aircraft travel as well as passengers using buses,

taxis and trains both now and in the future.

Currently, it is an offence to shine lasers at pilots and offenders could face fines of up to £2,500. But police do not have the powers to effectively tackle and investigate the inappropriate use of laser devices against aircraft, trains, buses and other forms of transport. One of the current laws means that police have to prove

a person endangered the aircraft when committing the offence of shining a laser, whereas the new law will mean that police will only have to prove the offence of shining the laser.

Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling said:

“Shining a laser pointer at pilots or drivers is incredibly dangerous and could have fatal consequences. Whilst we know laser pens can be fun and many users have good intentions, some are not aware of the risks of dazzling drivers or pilots putting public safety at risk. That’s why we want to take the common sense approach to strengthen our laws to protect the public from those who are unaware of the dangers or even worse, intentionally want to cause harm. This kind of dangerous behaviour risks lives and must be stopped.

“There are around 1,500 laser attacks on aircraft every year in the UK and we know there have been similar attacks on trains and buses. What I am announcing are plans to give the police effective powers to investigate and bring those who misuse lasers to justice.”

The powers and penalties for the offence will be outlined in upcoming legislation.

Steve Landells, Flight Safety Specialist at the British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA) said:

“BALPA welcomes this move to tighten the law on lasers. Any move to give the police and authorities more powers to tackle this real and growing threat to flight safety is a good thing, and we are pleased that the government has included action on lasers in this bill”.

The first laser attack on an aircraft was reported in 2004 with over 200 attacks reported per year by 2008. Since 2011, there have been approximately 1,500 attacks per year on aircraft.

## Time for SNP and Labour to become ‘born-again democrats’



John Lamont is the MP for Berwickshire, Roxburgh & Selkirk

The SNP and Labour should become “born-again democrats” and accept the result of the EU referendum, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

Speaking at a Scottish Parliament debate – dubbed by Nicola Sturgeon as the most historic in Holyrood history – chief whip John Lamont criticised political opponents for seeking to reject the Article 50 process.

And turning on its head a nationalist accusation that the Scottish Conservatives were “born-again Brexiteers”, he said it was “time for the SNP to accept the result of the EU referendum”.

The debate brings the total number of hours Brexit has been debated to 37, compared with just eight hours on education, something the SNP claims to be a priority.

Scottish Conservative chief whip John Lamont said:

“The SNP is keen to call the Scottish Conservatives ‘born-again Brexiteers’, but perhaps it’s time for the nationalists to become born-again democrats.

“They’ve been on the losing side of two recent

referendums, and seem unable to accept the result of either.

“And with this performance, it seems Scottish Labour aren’t much better at accepting the will of the people.

“The Scottish Government should be focusing on getting the best deal for both Scotland and the UK.

“It should be looking for the right solution for Scotland’s needs, especially on matters like farming, fisheries, trade and research support.

“We are entering a challenging time, with pitfalls to be avoided and opportunities to be seized.

“The next two years must not be about game-playing, grandstanding or political posturing.”

## PM call with US President Trump:

Prime Minister Theresa May spoke with US President Trump.



A Downing Street spokesperson said:

“The Prime Minister spoke to President Trump, as part of their regular engagement. They discussed a range of issues, including trade and security and also discussed the President’s upcoming state visit to the UK. The Prime Minister said she looks forward to welcoming him later this year.”

# GC collaborates in research about dangers in food supplements

## Hidden ingredients in food supplements

Food supplements of herbal origin are now commonly used by many people as part of their personal healthcare regimens and there has been a tremendous growth in the supplies and sales of supplements. However, food supplements are at risk from contamination on a global scale with illegal ingredients.

According to a team of experts from Queen's University Belfast, Kingston University and the Government Chemist at LGC that included Emeritus Professor Duncan Burns, Dr Michael Walker and Professor Declan Naughton, many food supplements contain hidden pharmaceutical ingredients that could be causing serious health

risks.

Their research, outlined in a peer-reviewed paper, found that over-the-counter supplements - commonly advertised to treat obesity and erectile dysfunction problems - are labelled as fully herbal but often include potentially dangerous pharmaceutical ingredients, which are not listed on the label.

Professor Burns, Queen's University, explained:

"Our review looked at research from right across the globe and questioned the purity of herbal food supplements. We have found that these supplements are often not what customers think they are – they are being deceived into thinking they are getting health benefits from a natural product when actually they are taking a

hidden drug.

"These products are unlicensed medicines and many people are consuming large quantities without knowing the interactions with other supplements or medicines they may be taking. This is very dangerous and there can be severe side effects."

## Health consequences

The research raises serious questions about the safety of slimming supplements (Sibutramine, withdrawn from license in 2010) and undeclared ingredients in erectile dysfunction supplements (Tadalafil, sulfoildenafil). These ingredients can react with other medications, for example those containing nitrates, and cause serious health problems.

Professor Burns noted:

"This is a real issue as people suffering from conditions like diabetes, hyperlipidemia

and hypertension are frequently prescribed nitrate containing medicines. If they are also taking a herbal supplement to treat erectile dysfunction, they could become very ill."

## Next steps

The research paper describes the laboratory methods and techniques that can help with supplement testing in the future to ensure the safety of consumers. It highlights the vital role research and, in particular, techniques like data-mining, can play in informing regulators about current trends in supplement contamination.

Dr Michael Walker commented:

"The laboratory tests we describe in our paper will assist regulators to tackle this problem proactively to protect consumers and responsible businesses.

Professor Declan Naughton explained:

"This is very important to ensure effective testing strategies and, ultimately, to help keep the public safe."

## ‘Cymraeg for Kids’ rolled out across Wales

‘Cymraeg for Kids’ is a unique project set up by the Welsh Government in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to support and encourage parents and prospective parents to transfer the Welsh language to children and promote the benefits of bilingualism.

Established in April 2016, the project works with NHS Wales and other partners to provide advice and support on the benefits of raising a child bilingually. It also provides groups for parents and carers to engage in activities that promote the development of Welsh language skills in children from birth to school age.

A network of officers currently delivers these services in 14 local authorities, but this new

money will enable Mudiad Meithrin to expand these activities across the whole country for the first time. The nature of the services offered will be tailored to meet the specific linguistic needs of parents.

Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language, Alun Davies said:

“We know that the combination of parental and social interaction with frequent exposure to practical language assists language learning and positively affects the linguistic competence of the child in later life.

“Encouraging and promoting the use of the Welsh language within the family remains one of the Welsh Government’s key priorities.

“It is vital we support our most important resource, namely our people – whether they’re fluent, lacking in confidence or eager to learn. We need to enable them to use the language in increasingly practical, creative and fun ways.”

Dr Gwenllian L. Davies, Chief Executive of Mudiad Methrin, said:

“We’re really pleased to be able to expand ‘Cymraeg for Kids’ to all parts of Wales and look forward to encouraging and supporting families to use Welsh at home. We’ll continue to work closely at a local level with all partners who share the vision of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.”

## With fewer people active, UN health agency urges people to get moving

Not enough exercise contributes to cancer, diabetes, depression and other non-communicable diseases, according to the United Nations health agency, which is urging people to get up and get active.

According to a new document the World Health Organization (WHO), less and less people are active in many countries with nearly a quarter of all adults and more than 80 per cent of adolescents being too sedentary.

WHO’s Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020 recommends that inactive people start with “small amounts of physical activity” and then gradually increase duration, frequency and intensity over time.

Physical activity can be any activity, not just sport, that uses energy - from playing and doing household chores to gardening and dancing.

“Any activity, be it for work, to walk or cycle to and from places, or as part of leisure time, has a health benefit,” according to the UN agency.

# Record number of employers named and shamed for underpaying

- More than 350 employers named for underpaying their workers the national minimum or living wage
- More than 15,500 of the UK's lowest paid workers receive back pay thanks to government investigations
- Employers who failed to pay National Living Wage named and shamed for the first time

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has named 359 businesses who underpaid 15,513 workers a total of £994,685, with employers in the hairdressing, hospitality and retail sectors the most prolific offenders.



Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility  
Margot James MP

As well as recovering arrears for some of the UK's lowest paid workers, HMRC issued penalties worth around £800,000.

For the first time, the naming list includes employers who failed to pay eligible workers at least the new National Living Wage rate, which is currently £7.20 for workers aged 25 and over.

Business Minister Margot James said:

“Every worker in the UK is entitled to at least the national minimum or living wage and this government will ensure they get it.

“That is why we have named and shamed more than 350 employers who failed to pay the legal minimum, sending the clear message to employers that minimum wage abuses will not go unpunished.”

Excuses for underpaying workers included using tips to top up pay, docking workers' wages to pay for their Christmas party and making staff pay for their own uniforms out of their salary.

## Westminster welcomes Welsh language at the Welsh grand committee

MPs will be given the chance to speak Welsh in parliamentary debates in the Palace of Westminster for the first time ever this year.

The UK Government, responding to the Commons' Procedure Committee's report on the matter, today confirms it will bring forward a motion in Government time enabling MPs to speak in Welsh when the Welsh Grand Committee meets in Westminster.

MPs are currently only permitted to speak Welsh in Westminster's parliamentary proceedings when the Welsh Affairs select committee is taking evidence.

Making proceedings of the Welsh Grand Committee bilingual means that the Welsh language will be used for short debates, legislative scrutiny and the questioning of ministers in Westminster for the first time ever.

## BCC: Dash for housing must not sacrifice business land

Commenting on the release of the housing white paper by the The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid, Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

“Business communities around England want to see housebuilding on the rise – as it supports construction and property businesses locally, and increases confidence across the board. The government’s renewed commitment to raising our poor record on housebuilding is to be welcomed. So too is a drive to build homes for rent, as well as homes for

sale, as they represent an important mix in many areas where businesses are seeking staff.

“Yet a dash for housing that leaves no room in our towns and cities for offices, depots, laboratories, workshops and factories would be a huge mistake. Ministers must ensure there are enough well-connected sites for commerce and industry across England, where far too much prime business land has been sacrificed to housing development in recent years. Building homes without leaving room for workplaces would be a mistake that takes a generation to correct.”

## UK Minister condemns Russia’s Domestic Violence law

Russia’s new legislation sends the wrong message about tackling violence against women and children

On 7 February the Russian Government passed into law an amendment which decriminalises domestic violence in Russia. It reduces ‘battery within the family’ from a criminal to an administrative offence, with weaker sanctions for offenders.

Baroness Anelay, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Human Rights and the Prime Minister’s Special Representative for Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict said:

“It is deeply disappointing that Russia has introduced new legislation decriminalising domestic violence. This sends the wrong message about the Russian authorities’ commitment to tackling

violence in the home. Victims of domestic violence, which are most often women and children, need more protection, not less.”

The UK is committed to addressing domestic violence, and particularly violence against women and girls at home and overseas. Globally, one in three women will experience physical or sexual violence at some point in her lifetime. A 2008 report issued by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggest 14,000 women die annually at the hands of husbands or other relatives’ and that domestic violence occurs in one in four Russian families.

Tackling violence; promoting gender equality; and empowering all women and girls are essential to defending human rights. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is supporting women’s rights projects across 28 countries with a total projected spend of more than £3.5 million between 2016 and 2018.

## Women in innovation: female start-ups get inspired

Around 200 female entrepreneurs attended Innovate UK's networking event on 8 February 2017. The event was designed to help the women - who all applied to our Women in Innovation competition - to turn their ideas into successful businesses.

Delegates were able to practice pitching their ideas, get advice from innovation experts and network with peers and business leaders. There was also a question and answer session with Innovate UK ambassador Claire Williams, the Deputy Team Principal of Williams F1.



Claire Williams, Deputy Team Principal of Williams F1, answers questions from delegates.

Dr Ruth McKernan, Chief Executive of Innovate UK said:

“We want to inspire the next generation of UK entrepreneurs. Every growing business benefits from a mentor to show them the way. It's especially important that we do this for people from a diverse range of backgrounds

who haven't traditionally participated in Innovate UK competitions but who would greatly benefit from our support.

“Events like this help give aspiring innovators the tools they need to succeed, whether they're looking for funding to carry out a feasibility study or want the support of an established partner to take their solution to market.

This was the first women-only Innovate UK competition and is part of our new infocus initiative to encourage diversity in innovation. It followed research that

just 1 in 7 Innovate UK funding applications came from women.

The wider economic impact of addressing the gender imbalance is significant. Research suggests that if participation is increased to the same levels as men, women-led SMEs could potentially contribute an incremental £180 billion gross value added (GVA) to the UK by 2025.

We continue to work with the 15 competition winners, who each received £50,000 as well as a package of tailored support and business mentoring.



Female entrepreneurs listen to inspiring speeches.



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# MOT fails could be avoided by basic car maintenance

Nearly 50% of all faults found on MOTs could be avoided by carrying out regular, simple checks and maintenance, like replacing bulbs, wipers and tyres.

Between April 2015 and March 2016, nearly 1 in 5 cars taken for their MOT had problems with lighting and signalling - including simple problems such as blown bulbs.

## Tips to avoid a fail and stay safe

Check that brakes work

smoothly, tyres are legal, headlights and other lights work, windscreen wipers and washers work, and the driver's view of the road is clear of any obstruction.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is urging drivers to carry out regular, simple checks on their vehicles to avoid MOT fails and the accidents that defects cause.

Make sure that:

- brakes work smoothly and that the vehicle

- doesn't pull to one side
- tyres are correctly inflated, have no cuts or bulges, and that they all have at least 1.6mm of tread
- headlights and other lights work - give them a tap to check they're not loose or damaged and check the colours are correct and match
- windscreen wipers and washers work
- the driver's view of the road is clear of any obstruction, such as stickers, toys or air fresheners

## Car defects contributing to accidents

The 2015 road casualties report for Great Britain shows that car defects were a contributory factor in 1,131 accidents.

Over 75% of defects that contributed to accidents were either braking or tyre issues.

The MOT is there to help avoid this and help you keep your vehicle safe to drive. However, you need to follow the standard to pass the MOT all year round.

## Safe to drive at all times

DVSA Chief Executive, Gareth Llewellyn, said:

"DVSA's priority is to help you keep your car safe to drive on our roads.

"Don't wait until your MOT to find out if your car needs attention. Make sure your car is properly maintained and safe to drive at all times.

"Carrying out regular checks on lights and tyres will help you to stay safe and legal, as well as saving you time and money when your car's MOT is due."

## Top reasons for MOT failures between April 2015 and March 2016

Type of defect	% of MOTs where the defect was found
Lighting and signalling	18.9%
Suspension	13%
Brakes	10%
Tyres	7.7%
Issues affecting the driver's view of the road	7.2%

# Baby born from 16-year-old frozen embryo in S. China

A healthy baby boy has been born from an embryo frozen 16 years ago, a hospital in south China announced on Monday.

A 46-year-old woman gave birth to a son at the First Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat-sen University in Guangdong Province in early February. Her other first son, already 16 years old, was from the same batch of embryos frozen in 2000.

“I’m just really ecstatic to have another child,” said the woman. She gave birth to her first child through IVF in 2000, when the hospital froze her 18 other embryos.

Last year, the mother came to the hospital asking to get pregnant again, after China lifted the one-child policy.

“There were a few issues to handle when she asked to unfreeze her embryos,” said Xu Yanwen, director with the reproductive center of the hospital. “It was not easy to awaken the frozen embryos because of freezing techniques and there were also problems with her womb.” Xu added that risks were also high for women of advanced maternal age.

Both the baby and mother are doing well and will be discharged

from hospital soon.

Xu Yanwen said that embryos frozen in the hospital date back as early as 1994.

“As more mothers come to have their embryos unfrozen, the record may probably be broken any time,” Xu said.

With the end of the one-child policy, an increasing number of woman of advanced maternal age have visited the hospital to conceive with the help of Assisted Reproductive Technology, Xu said.

“In 2016, we received about 1,000 woman above 40 years old

seeking to have more babies, and the average age of women to have their eggs retrieved rose from 32.7 years to 33.7 years,” Xu said.



# Children living in workless households at lowest level since records began



Work and Pensions Secretary, Damian Green said:

“More parents now have the opportunity to find work and enjoy the dignity and security of having a regular wage.

“We will continue to build on this success as we roll-out Universal Credit to all parts of the country – ensuring that it always pays to be in work.

The latest employment figures show that there are 31.84 million people in work, and the unemployment rate (4.8%) is at the lowest in over a decade.

The proportion of lone parents working rose to 67.9% in 2016, an increase of over 10% since 2010.

The number of households where no one works has fallen by 828,000 since 2010 and is now at its lowest level in more than a decade, according to newly released independent figures.

Over 17.6 million households now have at least one working adult, meaning that around 9 in every 10 children live with a working adult.

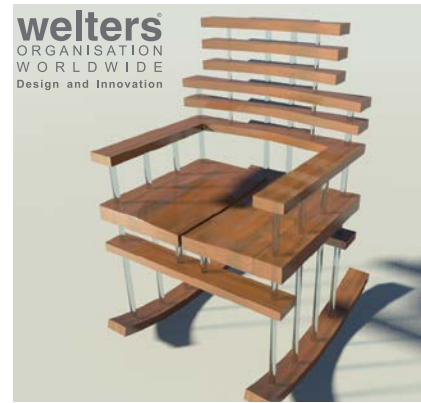
Less than 15% of households are classed as workless, with the number having fallen by 72,000 since last year.

The government’s welfare reforms are returning fairness to the benefit system and encouraging people who are able to work to do just that. They include:

- the benefit cap, which ensures that families don’t receive more in benefits than the average family earns
- Universal Credit, the biggest change to the welfare system in a generation
- the Claimant Commitment, which spells out what we expect from jobseekers when they search for work
- the New Enterprise Allowance scheme, which helps people on benefits to become their own boss

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## Green Party warns Government cuts to policing are putting lives at risk

The Green Party is warning of the danger of underinvestment in public services following the revelation policing in England and Wales is in a “perilous state” due to Government cuts [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“The devastating impact of Government underinvestment is clear. Severe budget cuts mean some police officers can’t properly respond to emergencies, track down offenders or protect domestic violence victims. This is now clearly putting lives at risk.

“Underinvestment in the NHS, social care

and prisons has already created even greater need, and put even greater strain on public services. Rather than being dealt with appropriately and sensibly, problems are being passed from one agency to another, including the police service, and greater cost being incurred in the long run.

“Despite the hard work of those on the frontline, the people who deserve help, support and protection are being left without it. These cuts are short-sighted and no solution. The Government must recognise this urgently before the budget next week, and change course, otherwise even more lives will be put at risk.”

## Dinosaur tracks found in NE China

Dinosaur tracks have been found in northeast China’s Jilin Province, according to an announcement by scientists from China, the Republic of Korea and the United States.

The tracks were found on a rural mountain road in Longjing City in the Korean Autonomous Prefecture of Yanbian, Jilin in August 2015.

“The tracks include footprints of hadrosaurs

that are 55 centimeters long. The trackmaker’s body could have reached 7 meters long,” Xing Lida, associate professor from China University of Geosciences, told Xinhua.

Several tracks of carnivorous dinosaurs were also discovered with various footprint sizes ranging from 43 to 21 centimeters, Xing said.

The discovery will help with research to understand the region’s landscape during the Cretaceous period, Xing added.



Dinosaur tracks have been found in northeast China’s Jilin Province, according to an announcement by scientists from China, the Republic of Korea and the United States.

## Revealed: The Brexit challenges facing the creative industries



### The Power of Creativity and Brexit paints a testing picture for the industry.

The Liberal Democrats have published a paper setting out the challenges facing the UK's creative industries.

The Power of Creativity and Brexit paints a testing picture for the industry, with potentially huge impacts from changes to freedom of movement, loss of investment and funding and less access to markets after Brexit.

The creative industries are of huge importance to Britain's economy - the music industry alone contributes £3.8bn to the economy.

The value of exports to the EU across the creative industries is £19.8bn, and these products are not fully covered by WTO rules - a future option the government has failed to rule out.

Baroness Bonham-Carter, the Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Culture Media

and Sport said: "Liberal Democrats have always been proud to back the fantastic creative companies and individuals who are based in Britain. We will stand up for them as the government pursues a hard-Brexit that poses a real risk to their future prosperity.

"I know that whatever deal Theresa May negotiates that artists, musicians, designers, producers and everyone else working across this industry will do their best to make a success of things, but Liberal Democrats are more ambitious than believing any old deal will do.

"We want what is best for Britain, and best for our industries. We will fight to keep Britain in the single market, which would

support our industries and preserve their access to the biggest market in the world. The Government have rightly recognised the impact of changes to market access for banks and financial services but they must think about other industries and sectors too.

"The Conservatives are putting up barriers to talented individuals to succeed in Britain. We believe passionately in an internationalist, welcoming Britain confident of our place in the world and we will keep campaigning to build a country that is open, tolerant and united."



Baroness Bonham-Carter, the Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport

# Future cities: urban spaces will be ‘radically different’

**Some of the UK’s leading thinkers in urban infrastructure came together to start a conversation about the challenges of supporting a growing population in cities.**

The event was part of the Future Cities Dialogue project, by Forum for the Future, Innovate UK, Sciencewise and Ipsos Mori. It coincided with the release of a report which reveals the current trends and challenges in urban development and offers 3 visions for what our cities could look like in 20 years. This is based on substantial dialogue with citizens on the types of cities they would want to live in.

## Growing cities

With more than 70% of people estimated to be living in urban areas by 2040, city infrastructure and design is going to need to drastically change in order to better support its citizens.

Speaking at the breakfast session, James Goodman, Director of Futures, Forum for the Future, said:

“The year 2040 will be radically different from today. The population in the UK will be 74 million, climate change will have progressed and food production will have needed to increase between 50 and 80%.

“In that landscape, the role of cities is critical because it is where ideas are formed

and implemented.”

## How people are going to live

The group felt that the trajectory of growth in people would place pressure on public and private spaces. The consensus was that infrastructure design will need to get smarter, more collaborative and focus on the needs of people if it is to be effective.

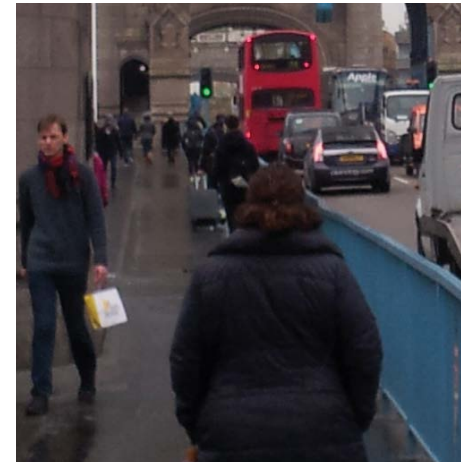
Sophie Thomas, Founding Director of Thomas Matthews and the former Director of Circular Economy for Royal Society of Arts, said:

“How are people going to live in these cities? What is the density? That is not going to feel like London and the other cities we know now. Where is all the public space going to go? This is what we really

need to be thinking about and what the infrastructure needs to focus on. Where is my 10-year-old going to play football?”

Rob Whitehead, Head of Strategy, Future Cities Catapult, added:

“The key question is how do we manage the public interest versus the private interest? My optimistic side feels that the promise of what we have ahead of us, is that together we can find better, smarter ways of balancing our interests as a whole in a much more responsive and fine-tuned way than we do now..”



## “It is deeply concerning that millions remain in low paid, insecure work”



Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on Labour Market Statistics, said:

“We welcome the overall increase in employment, but are deeply concerned that millions remain in low paid, insecure work.

“The Government has

also failed to close the employment gap faced by women, disabled people and ethnic minority groups, who are all less likely to be in work.

“Working families face the increasing costs of basic essentials, stagnating wages and the Government slashing social security, leaving families £1,400 a year worse off up to 2020.

“Labour would reverse cuts to in-work support that could see working families lose £2,600 a year, ban the exploitative zero-hours contracts being used on hundreds of thousands of workers, and guarantee a real Living Wage.”

## Green MEP slams government over failure on ‘cheap’ renewables

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP for the South West, has accused the government of failing consumers and the environment over energy policy. The accusation follows new projections from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) which estimate that onshore wind and solar will be as cheap or cheaper than gas by 2020 [1]. BEIS now acknowledge an increased role for renewables, particularly due to potential improvements in battery storage. Molly Scott Cato said:

“Having hammered the renewables sector for ideological reasons, the government now discovers that wind and solar are set to become the cheapest ways to generate electricity.

“Government energy policy supposedly seeks to deliver secure, affordable and low

carbon energy. They have failed on all three counts. But in particular we now see that by failing to pursue a transition to renewable energy they have missed the opportunity to provide electricity for the consumer at the lowest cost.”

Two years ago, Dr Scott Cato commissioned a report which concluded that the South West could generate over 100% of its energy needs from a mix of renewable sources and create 122,000 new jobs through a renewable energy transition [2]. She said:

“The UK has some of the best potential for renewable energy generation in Europe. It is clear that renewable energy should form the backbone of our economic strategy post-Brexit. This will not only be good for the economy and for creating thousands of new jobs, it would, by the government’s own belated acknowledgement, be good for consumers too.”



# Global buyers get a taste of Wales in an effort to reach new markets post-Brexit

As part of the Welsh Government's commitment to raise Wales' global profile as a first-class place to do business, it is hosting the largest ever showcase of Wales' food and drink industry. The event, being held in the Celtic Manor, brings together producers, buyers and food industry professionals.

The two-day TasteWales event is hosting over 50 buyers from countries across the globe, including the Far East, Middle East, North America and Europe, over 100 UK buyers and in excess of 100 Welsh producers.

The event has Meet the Buyer opportunities, where influential domestic and international buyers can meet with Welsh food and

drink producers to explore the potential of working together and identify new trade channels.

It also boasts an Innovation Skills and Business Zone where attendees will have the opportunity to see new developments and learn more about the support available for businesses in the sector.

Food and drink is already one of Wales' largest sectors, employing over 223,000 people and worth over £17bn to the Welsh economy annually.

Exports for the sector have grown by 95% in the past decade and continue to grow, up 13% in the first six months of 2016 compared to the same time in 2015.

Speaking ahead of TasteWales, the Economy Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“We are extremely proud of our high-quality food and drink and recognise the enormous value it brings to our economy. Food and drink is a priority sector for the Welsh Government and this is why we have set an ambitious target to grow the sector by 30% by 2020.

“Food and drink exports have grown considerably and I am keen to see this continue. There are challenging times ahead as we navigate towards a future outside of the EU, particularly given almost 90% of our food and drink exports go to the EU. We continue to call for full and unfettered access to the

single market, a request which has been replicated in discussions with representatives of the industry.

“However, in light of the UK's decision to leave the EU, it is now more important than ever we promote the very best the food and drink industry has to offer and continue to make an impact in global markets. The event is part of our response to overcoming future challenges and provides an exciting opportunity for Welsh producers to strike new deals with some impressive and influential buyers.”



The Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates

## More than 100 housing estates receive regeneration cash boost

More than 100 housing estates across the country are set to benefit from a significant investment to kick-start their regeneration, the Communities Secretary Sajid Javid has announced.

From Gateshead to Plymouth, the £32 million Estate Regeneration Fund will be distributed to local authorities and housing associations across England to speed up the building of thousands of new homes.

After successful engagement with local communities, a total of 105 estates will benefit from the funding, to be used to speed up regeneration schemes in their early stages. It will also help address problems that hold up projects and give local authorities access to skills to ensure high-quality regeneration.

In Birmingham, the money will be used to start discussions with local communities and ensure the Meadway regeneration creates a place local residents are proud of. In Milton Keynes it will be used to kick start the regeneration of 6 estates to provide thousands of new homes.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

“For too long a number of housing estates across the country have been areas characterised by low-quality homes and high social deprivation.

“This government is determined to have a housing market that works for everyone. That’s why we’re turbocharging the regeneration of these rundown estates, so they can thrive as communities.”

Housing and Planning Minister Gavin Barwell said:

“Our housing white paper set out ambitious proposals to help fix the broken housing market and to encourage good design.

“Estates regeneration must be locally-led, and this £32 million fund will help breathe new life into estates throughout the country. It will help more ordinary working people have the security of a decent place to live.”

Reforms in the recently published housing white paper set out the government’s bold new plans to build more homes across England. This funding will help provide thousands of new homes from the carefully planned redesign of estates.

Announced last year, the Estate Regeneration

Strategy offered a blueprint for regenerating estates, providing advice and guidance to help improve and speed up development.

In addition to the £32 million released, £140 million in loan funding is available over the length of this Parliament to encourage investment in regeneration from the private sector to help build places that work for everyone.

Local authorities and housing associations submitted bids for the funding. Bids were assessed by a joint panel of the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Homes and Communities Agency.

The £140 million loan fund was initially announced last year, and is designed to cover costs such as land assembly, leaseholder buy-outs, re-housing costs, demolition, and preparatory construction works.

The Estates Regeneration Advisory Panel, co-chaired by the Housing Minister and Lord Heseltine met 6 times during 2016 to help develop the Estate Regeneration National Strategy.

## Extra £7 million for innovative all-Wales autism service



The announcement brings the total amount of funding allocated to supporting autism services in Wales to £13 million up to 2021.

Wales is the first part of the UK to create a national service to provide lifetime support to children and adults with autism, and their families. The innovative service, which will be rolled out across the country by 2018, will provide new adult diagnostic services; support for families and carers; help with transition from child to adult provision and training for professionals.

The additional £7 million funding announced over

four years (2017/18 – 2020/21) will ensure all regions in Wales are able to provide consistent, high quality, and sustainable autism support.

Minister for Social Service and Public Health, Rebecca Evans, said:

“Wales has long been a leader in providing support for people with autism and their families, publishing our first action plan back in 2008. The National Integrated Autism Service is another important step forward. It will help ensure people receive consistent

services and get the right support, at the right time, wherever they live in Wales.

“The additional funding I have announced at the start of National Autism Week, demonstrates our continued commitment to improving autism services. I am confident that the four year funding will enable regions to deliver sustainable support to families.”

The funding will also help deliver the Welsh Government’s Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategic Action Plan. This includes a commitment to developing improved autism resources, such as the new scheme developed by the WLGA, “Can you see me?” which is to be rolled out in the coming months.

The initiative promotes understanding and acceptance of autism within communities in Wales. It

is launched with a video showing support from sporting stars from Wales’ national football and rugby squads.

Leaflets and posters for outlets such as shops, banks, hairdressers and cinemas as well as dentists and GPs have been created to support interactions with people with autism. People with autism can also choose whether they would like to make others aware of their autism by wearing a wristband or showing a card (which will also be available for mobile phones).

Steve Thomas CBE, Chief Executive of the WLGA, said:

“This scheme, which has been led by the National ASD Development Team within the WLGA, will be a significant step in terms of recognising the needs of individuals with ASD across communities in Wales. I am delighted that local authorities will take this forward and play a key role in promoting it. The WLGA warmly welcome the extra funding that has been announced by the Minister, which will help us deepen our work with individuals with ASD, their family and carers, and professionals working with children and adults with ASD.”



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# National News Headlines January 2017

## 1st January

- Lords revolt at Tory plans for 'free-market' universities
- May: I'll fight for Remainers in Europe, too
- Charities linked to terrorism at record high

## 2nd January

- Rail passengers see season ticket prices rise £600 in 7 years
- Rail strikes 'risk driving firms out of City'
- Top GP urges Tories to drop seven-day plan

## 3rd January

- Leaving EU customs union could create 400,000 jobs in UK
- Labour too weak to win election alone, Fabian Society says
- Terror suspect linked to Bin Laden wins right to stay in UK

## 4th January

- You pay the £25m bill to house 750 'child' migrants
- MPs who defied constituents over Brexit 'will face fight to keep seats'
- Brexit talks set to be hit by loss of EU ambassador

## 5th January

- 'Migrants being able to speak the language is vital'
- Diana letters about William and Harry to be sold at auction
- Middle-class families face inheritance tax trap

## 6th January

- Changing of the Guard altered over terror fear
- Soft Brexit could take independence 'off table' in short term
- David Bowie terminal cancer diagnosis 'three months before death'



# National News Headlines January 2017

## 7th January

- Putin did order hacking campaign to help Trump win White House
- Humanitarian crisis in NHS, says Red Cross
- Stroke victim spent 54 hours in corridor

## 8th January

- May in split with Boris as she kicks out rebel EU envoy
- PM launches her 'Shared Society'
- May urged to get a grip on NHS as winter crisis spirals

## 9th January

- Queen on the mend as she is seen for first time in 5 weeks
- Theresa May promises mental health care overhaul
- Boris meets Trump's top team in Brexit boost

## 10th January

- Greece in deep freeze... now Britain waits for thundersnow!
- Fears of Brexit delay as McGuinness's exit leads to Ulster chaos
- 35,000 British car owners contact lawyers in just ONE day to sue VW

## 11th January

- Smugglers offer £100 UK 'deal' to migrants
- Corbyn calls for salary cap in attack on the 'grotesque levels of difference' in pay
- Labour leader has 'day of chaos'

## 12th January

- May blasts claim of 'humanitarian crisis' in the NHS
- Corbyn's attack on British troops
- Ex-British intelligence officer 'behind Trump Russia dossier' named



# National News Headlines January 2017

## 13th January

- Brexit boom 'sparked by Kiwi deal'
- At last! PM to spell out how we'll leave EU
- Royal rebel Lord Snowdon dies aged 86

## 14th January

- May insists Britain won't bow down to Euro judges
- Salmon prices set to leap due to infestations of sea lice
- Labour faces new turmoil as Hunt quits for V&A job

## 15th January

- Plan to hire £500k-a-year fat cat fuels revolt over Parliament revamp
- May's big gamble on a clean Brexit
- Parliament to grill Facebook chiefs over 'fake news'

## 16th January

- Corbyn still backs a pay cap – but not for super-rich footballers
- Donald Trump says UK 'doing great' after Brexit vote
- New phone system promises to put an end to the curse of the cold callers

## 17th January

- Suspicions raised at rocketing rate of 'gay' refugees
- May rejects 'partial' EU membership in Brexit speech
- Police budget cuts would leave capital vulnerable to terror attacks, says Khan

## 18th January

- We should learn Urdu and Polish says top linguist
- Brexit: Boris Johnson says countries queuing up for trade deals
- May's Brexit threat to Europe



# National News Headlines January 2017

## 19th January

- Wheelchair users win right to oust mothers with buggys on buses
- Use Brexit to cut £1.4bn from foreign aid bill, ministers told
- Unemployment at 11-year low ... and wages are going up too

## 20th January

- Burglary's out of fashion as fraud tops crime chart
- Congestion on roads now so bad that C-charge is 'no longer fit for purpose'
- Plan to cut emissions by two thirds over 15 years

## 21st January

- UK women set to march against Trump
- Personal data being shared on huge scale, claims Which?
- Minister hints at ban on some lettings agency fees

## 22nd January

- PM plans 'builders universities' to train an army of young manual workers
- Cross-party MPs plot to halt hard Brexit as supreme court verdict looms
- Hundreds of thousands of US women unite to voice defiance over Trump

## 23rd January

- Outrage after £17m of £25m foreign aid goes to consultants
- PM's blueprint for industrial revolution in Brexit Britain
- Browned toast and potatoes are 'potential cancer risk', say food scientists

## 24th January

- Pension plight of millions forced to quit jobs too early
- Supreme Court says Parliament must give Article 50 go-ahead
- Trump resigns Scottish golf course directorships





## 25th January

- Outrage over Obama's £177m parting gift to the Palestinians
- MPs call for White Paper on EU exit plan
- Rough sleeping rises at appalling rate, charity says, as figures show 16% rise

## 26th January

- Boomtime for steel and cars as Britain motors ahead of the G7
- We can lead together again, May to tell America
- Put 'grammar stream' in every school to help bright pupils, says Ucas head

## 27th January

- Theresa May and Donald Trump to hold face-to-face talks
- May: No more wars like Iraq
- May flies into storm as state visit overshadowed by Trump policy shocks

## 28th January

- Sir John Hurt: Bafta-winning actor dies aged 77
- Theresa May 'to discuss trade' with President Erdogan on Turkey visit
- Plastic bottle levy 'would reduce pollution in Thames'

## 29th January

- May refuses three times to condemn Trump as border blitz sparks chaos
- Soldiers failed by Troubles inquiry
- Princes pledge a permanent memorial for Princess Diana

## 30th January

- Trump executive order: Million sign petition to stop UK visit
- Devolved leaders to call for Brexit role at Cardiff talks
- UK 'need not fear electricity blackouts' says ex-National Grid boss

## 31st January

- Care for elderly will collapse without more cash, warn councils
- Brexit: MPs to begin formal process with two-day debate
- 100mph Doris to whip UK



# National News Headlines February 2017

## 1st February

- Ministers told to get a grip on NHS bill for treating foreign patients
- David Cameron 'tried to get Mail editor sacked' over Brexit stance
- Illegal puppy imports 'more than treble' in three years

## 2nd February

- Farage brands Khan 'hypocrite' over travel ban
- Brexit plan to be published in government White Paper
- University applications fall with drop in nursing and EU students

## 3rd February

- Cap on benefits saves the taxpayer millions
- Israel PM heads to London for post-Brexit trade talks
- Russian hacking aims to destabilise West, Sir Michael Fallon says

## 4th February

- Trump envoy blasts Russia over Ukraine
- Staff arrested amid electronic tag tampering claims
- Trump looks to roll back financial regulations

## 5th February

- Tax haven plan will ruin UK, Merkel warns May
- For journalists, facts must be the highest priority
- EU leaders hit out at Trump's 'lack of respect'

## 6th February

- Get tough with Iran over nukes Israel tells May
- IPSO rules against Daily Express EU Poll
- UK economy to beat world 'for 30 years'



# National News Headlines February 2017

## 7th February

- Housing market broken, ministers admit ahead of White Paper
- Number of motorists caught driving while banned rises
- Give more land to builders, councils told

## 8th February

- Trump unfit to address MPs, says Bercow
- Our NHS is in peril. An integrated health and social care system could save it
- MSPS to reject Brexit plan in 'key test' for Holyrood

## 9th February

- Party girl Tara dies after battling brain tumour
- Clive Lewis quits shadow cabinet as MPs back bill
- History is made as MPs finally back Brexit

## 10th February

- 200 illegals a day caught sneaking into Britain, and that's in just one month!
- High Court challenge to UK's child refugee efforts
- One-fifth of rail passengers buy wrong tickets from machines

## 11th February

- Trump in Twitter tirade at travel ban appeal court defeat
- Brexit: Labour rebels to receive formal written warning
- Public parks in danger of falling into neglect, warn MPs

## 12th February

- May: I'm not a crazed Brexiteer and I won't go jumping off a cliff!
- Church faces new split over attitude to gay relationships
- Peace at risk over Brexit, says former Irish leader



# National News Headlines February 2017

## 13th February

- Undercover Panorama report reveals prison chaos
- Pensioner incomes 'outstrip those of working families'
- Tories press May to take more lone child refugees

## 14th February

- Bullying 'led 999 staff to attempt suicide'
- Cancer pill denied to 500,000 women
- No 10 blames 'previous PM' for attack on whistleblowers

## 15th February

- Nato backs UK defence spending
- New questions for Nuttall on Hillsborough
- Abuse risks keeping women out of politics, warns Abbott

## 16th February

- Trump accuses US spies of doling out secrets 'like candy'
- Government 'must pay for president's visit'
- Ukip leader: Brexit hate crime 'a fabrication'

## 17th February

- NHS cuts blamed for 30,000 deaths a year
- Tony Blair calls for people to 'rise up' against Brexit
- Scotland falls behind rest of UK as jobless total rises

## 18th February

- Stay radical, says Farage in plea to the Ukip faithful
- Holyrood being 'overlooked' in division of powers after Brexit
- Blair's Brexit speech sparks Labour fury



# National News Headlines February 2017

## 19th February

- Javid in 'betrayal' storm after U-turn on business rates
- Chaos looms for EU citizens who hope to stay in Britain
- 'Dirty meat' fear as 25% of abattoirs fail tests

## 20th February

- Beds shortage 'proves NHS at breaking point'
- Council tax to rise while services cut, says LGA
- Brexit: Lords to begin debating bill to trigger Article 50

## 21st February

- £300-a-day peers doing nothing at all ...says a peer!
- Hospital cuts planned in most of England
- EU wants Britain to keep paying billions 4 years after Brexit

## 22nd February

- Osborne stamp duty hike sees dramatic slump in tax revenues
- Ministers retreat on rate rises
- Teacher shortage at 'crisis point', MPs warn

## 23rd February

- Courts to ban cross-examination of victims by abusers
- Government puts London in peril by cutting funds for the Met, warns Mayor
- May orders ministers to get behind the Union

## 24th February

- Backlash over huge profits for British Gas
- Conservationists call for 'red squirrel army'
- Net migration falls as fewer Eastern Europeans come to UK after EU vote



# National News Headlines February 2017

## 25th February

- Brexit boost as Boeing opens first European factory in UK
- Branch closures and job cuts as RBS loses £735k an hour
- Car buyers should have 'long, hard think' about diesel

## 26th February

- Heseltine to lead Lords' Brexit revolt
- Corbyn told: take blame for poll flop or we face disaster
- Terror chief: Threat is worst for a generation

## 27th February

- Labour meltdown as Corbyn snarls: I will be leader in 2020
- Curb on migrants to start in weeks
- NHS accused of covering up huge data loss

## 28th February

- Caffe Nero pays no corporation tax again – after £25m profit
- Find 6% cuts to slash spending by another £3.5billion, ministers told
- Ukip at war as Farage calls for MP's head



# National News Headlines March 2017

## 1st March

- Not all paedophiles should be sent to jail says police chief
- New drivers caught using phones to lose licence
- Half of businesses expected to contest 'significant' rate rises

## 2nd March

- Credit card debt reaches record £66bn
- May plans to trigger Brexit in two weeks
- Two British doctors die fighting with Isis

## 3rd March

- May savages Sturgeon over 'Brexit games'
- Artificial life created in the lab
- Trump on trial: Senate calls on British spy to give evidence on Russia file

## 4th March

- May: 'Independence drive harming public services'
- The new MI6: less white and less like Bond
- Calais mayor bans refugee food handouts

## 5th March

- Trump launches Twitter attack on Obama over alleged wiretap
- Watchdog to launch probe into misuse of data in politics
- 'T-levels' to boost skills for life after Brexit

## 6th March

- Chancellor set to reject a giveaway Budget despite Treasury windfall
- 'Eight out of 10 homes in flagship London schemes sold to overseas buyers'
- 'Epidemic' of sex harassment in universities



# National News Headlines March 2017

## 7th March

- Vauxhall workers' jobs fear as French strike £1.9bn takeover deal
- The Russians are waging cyber war in Europe, says Boris
- Brexit-blocker peers may land us with a bad deal, warns PM

## 8th March

- Millions face 'monster' rise in energy prices
- Budget 2017: Hammond's 'upbeat' message over Brexit future
- 250,000 appeals against business rates still not settled after seven years

## 9th March

- Hammond: Budget National Insurance rise due to 'new challenges'
- White Van Man gets battered by Budget
- Sturgeon: Autumn 2018 'common sense' for indyref2

## 10th March

- May denies breaking Tory tax promise
- Budget 2017: 'Disarray' over National Insurance rises
- Tories revolt over Hammond tax raid on self-employed

## 11th March

- Unlimited fines for bulk buying ticket touts
- Tories 'no longer low-tax party'
- May poised to fire Brexit starting gun next week

## 12th March

- Farage hands police file accusing Tories of a 'secret poll plot'
- MPs slam May over lack of a plan if Brexit talks collapse
- Web creator unveils plan to beat data abuse and fake news





# National News Headlines March 2017

## 13th March

- Anger 'as foreign aid funds terror in schools'
- Rents fall for first time in six years
- Britain will be 'bottom of heap on trade links' without deal on Brexit

## 14th March

- Brexit bill: Parliament clears way for talks with EU
- Scottish independence: Theresa May 'should not block referendum'
- Queen set to approve Brexit Bill at breakfast tomorrow

## 15th March

- Brexit: Donald Tusk warns UK against 'no deal threat'
- Sturgeon abandons bid to stay in the EU
- SNP tells May: there is still time for a deal

## 16th March

- May steps in to halt Tory rebellion with U-turn on tax rises
- Conservative Party fined £70,000 over election expenses
- Tax U-turn shows that this lady is for turning – and it won't be the last time

## 17th March

- Britain's GCHQ agency denies wiretapping Donald Trump
- Sadiq: I will make London sporting capital of the world
- GCHQ rejects White House claim it helped spy on Trump

## 18th March

- May threatens to bring in a cap on rip-off energy prices
- Gordon Brown: 'Holyrood should gain Brexit powers'
- Only 44% think May will get a good deal on Brexit



# National News Headlines March 2017

## 19th March

- Major's plea for PM to disown Ultra Brexiteers
- Cross-party alliance forms to fight May on grammars
- Sturgeon's warning to May: obstruct second referendum at your peril

## 20th March

- 'Lack of money' prompts care firms to end council contracts
- Doping in amateur sport: Drug use 'fast becoming a crisis' - Nicole Sapstead
- Tories attack SNP 'deceit' as heat rises on indyref2

## 21st March

- Lonely elderly are suffering in silence
- Martin McGuinness, Sinn Féin, dies aged 66
- Tory grandees urge May: Rule out snap election

## 22nd March

- Britain follows US and bans laptops on Middle East flights
- Inf lation rise means savers lose cash with official bond
- McGuinness took IRA victims' secrets to his grave, say families

## 23rd March

- Terror At Westminster: We won't let evil drive us apart, vows defiant PM
- London attack: Seven held after armed police raids
- Anne cooks up trouble in GM food row

## 24th March

- Call for 'decently paid' maternity leave
- PM urges 'millions of acts of normality' to defy terrorism
- Boris urges websites to remove hate sermons



## 25th March

- £50bn bill is just what you owe us, EU chief tells UK
- May to ban Europeans trawling British seas
- Google threatened with web terror law

## 26th March

- Westminster attacker acted alone, say police
- Ukip civil war after Carswell quits party
- After the shock comes the grief

## 27th March

- Crackdown plea in backlash over postcode lottery in energy bill hike
- Labour breaks through to win five seats in City
- Internet giants 'must act' to end terrorist use of the web

## 28th March

- Out today, new £1 that buys lot less than original did
- Shambles as consultants get through LESS work each year
- Focus on EU trade deal, not divorce bill, rebels tell May

## 29th March

- Taxpayer hit by £100m bill for bungled nuclear clean-up deals
- Sadiq warns EU chiefs: Don't punish UK for Brexit
- Warnings as Trump scraps Obama's climate change policies

## 30th March

- Europe to lose our terror expertise if trade talks collapse
- Now it's time to back Britain and go global
- Brexit Looking backwards defeats looking forwards

## 31st March

- At last! Internet giants agree to clamp down on terrorist videos
- NHS operations: Waiting times to rise in 'trade-off', boss says
- UK will regain power to deport



