



Government *WORLD*™

Winter 2016 Edition

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Cover picture: Power station over River Trent



By Paul G Bazeley for
Government World

October News Review

The British Pound reached a 31 year low against the US dollar. After the 23rd June Brexit vote, the pound weakened, however, after Theresa May announced Brexit talks would begin in early 2017 the pound fell to its lowest level since 1985. The pound fell almost 15% lower than before the EU referendum.

France cleared the Calais Jungle relocating

Paul's News Roundup

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

thousands of migrants that lived in the camp. Although riot police were used for a short time and the final day saw a small group in the camp use gas canisters to set fire to the camp and burn it to the ground in protest, the operation was completed relatively well with buses being used to transport the migrants to other accommodation.

The final presidential debate between Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump took place in Las Vegas. With large viewership

worldwide, it was widely reported in a range of polls that Clinton had won the debate although the figures varied in different reports.

The Samsung Galaxy Note, which had been released a few months earlier was recalled and production eventually ceased due to a battery defect that caused overheating, fires and explosions. Some airlines banned passengers taking the phone onto planes due to the risk of fire. Samsung was criticised for the handling of the situation and the company revised their earnings forecast for their third quarter with a significant drop in profits.

Diane James resigned as leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) after just 18 days in charge. James

claimed that party colleagues had not supported her despite having members support.

It was a bad month for UKIP after an altercation in the European Parliament left Steven Woolfe a UKIP Member of European Parliament hospitalised. The MEP is believed to have been punched in the head by his fellow UKIP MEP and aptly named Mike Hookem. Woolfe was taken to hospital after suffering a seizure and collapsing in Strasbourg.

The Simpsons became the longest-running American, prime time, scripted television series as it aired its 600th episode. The fourth episode of the 28th season was named 'Treehouse of Horror XXVII' and received mixed reviews.

Bob Dylan, the singer songwriter, won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Despite the honour, however the singer did not acknowledge the award.

October Sports Review

The USA team won the Ryder Cup for the first time since 2008. They beat a lacklustre Europe 17-11 meaning the US ended the European winning streak.

The All Blacks continued their domination of the Rugby Union world and won a record breaking 18th consecutive test match as they beat Australia 37-10 at Eden Park in Auckland.

Maria Sharapova had her two-year ban reduced to 15 months. The tennis star had been given the ban after testing positive for a banned substance at the 2016 Australian Open. Sharapova consistently states that she did not know the substance was on the banned list.

November News Review

Donald Trump won the US Presidential election, beating the odds and shocking the world, despite losing the popular vote. Following the result, protests began in several places across the US including New York, California, Los Angeles, Seattle and Chicago. Rather amusingly the Canadian immigration website crashed due to overwhelming visits which coincided with the election of Trump.

New analysis into the effects of smoking revealed that smoking 50 cigarettes will cause an average of one DNA mutation in each lung cell. The team responsible for the research

hope it will deter people from smoking and while quitting will prevent added risk of further mutations the damage cannot be reversed.

'Three' the UK mobile company admitted there had been a serious cyber breach with millions of customers details involved. Hackers successfully used an employee login to access customer information. Three said that although data had been accessed no financial information had been compromised, but that names, phone numbers, addresses and dates of birth had.

HM Prison Bedford had parts of the prison overrun by approximately 200 prisoners. Specially trained officers were brought in

to regain control. The riots, which took six hours to control, caused approximately £1 million in damage. Many claimed the riots were due to staff shortages.

Thomas Mair was found guilty of the murder of MP Jo Cox and was given a whole life sentence. The judge claimed that Mair had been inspired by white supremacism when the trial had taken seven days, where the murderer made no effort to defend himself.

The Canadian singer, songwriter, poet and novelist Leonard Cohen died at the age of 82. Cohen had just released his latest album 'You want it darker' weeks before his death. It is thought the singer died in his sleep.

Fidel Castro the former Cuban president died aged 90. The orchestrator of the Cuban Revolution had been the head of the government until 2008 when he handed power to his brother Raul Castro. The death was met with a mixed reaction with

mourners lining the streets in Havana, Cuba, while Cuban exiles believed he was responsible for thousands of deaths and imprisonments.

November Sports Review

Andy Murray finished the year as the Tennis number one after he defeated Novak Djokovic 6-3, 6-4 at the ATP World Titles. It finishes off a strong year for the Scotsman which saw him lift the Wimbledon trophy once again,

Ireland brought New Zealand's record breaking test match unbeaten run to an end by beating the All Blacks 40-29. It is the first time Ireland have beaten the Kiwis in 29 matches which spanned 111 years.

Manny Pacquiao, the Philippine Senator, beat Jessie Vargas in Las Vegas to win the WBO welterweight title. Pacquiao won by a score of 118-109, 118-109 and 114-113. The Philippine had reportedly trained in the evening so he could continue his day job as senator.

Nico Rosberg won the F1 driver's championship five points ahead of teammate Lewis Hamilton. The German-Finnish star had had a hard fought season with tensions running high between him and Hamilton throughout.

LaMia Airlines Flight 2933 crashes near Medellin, Colombia killing most of the people onboard. The plane included the Chapecoense football team. Three leading Brazilian Football Clubs

are quick to offer players to the team after they lost the majority of their squad. It is believed the flight was running out of fuel.

Norwegian Magnus Carlsen beat Russian Sergey Karjakin to retain the World Chess Championship title.

December News Review

Twelve people were killed and many more injured when a truck crashed through a busy Christmas market in Berlin, Germany. The perpetrator Anis Amri had stolen a truck by shooting the driver before driving it through the market. Amri had fled the scene but was later killed in a shoot-out in Milan, Italy days later. The so-called Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack.

Carrie Fisher suffers a heart attack and dies a few days later. The actress was best known for her portrayal of Princess Leia in the Star Wars film franchise. The actress was 60 years old. Her mother Debbie Reynolds, the actress and singer, died the day after her daughter from a stroke, she was 84.

Inmates overran a wing of HM Prison Swalesie in the Isle of Sheppey, Kent. Riot officers ended the disturbance after 60 inmates took control of a wing of the prison. The riot came after there had also been problems at HMP Birmingham and HMP Bedford. The riot drew attention to an apparent lack of resources and problems within the British prison system.

Donald Trump was named Time Person of the Year. The magazine named the President Elect as it's 90th Person of the Year. The magazine names the person based on who had the greatest influence throughout the year and is not necessarily a popular choice.

The Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. The President won the award for reaching a peace deal with rebels from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. In his speech, Santos said “Ladies and Gentlemen, there is one last war in the world, and it is the war in Colombia”

Snow fell in the Sahara desert for the first time in 37 years. The desert which spans countries including Morocco, Algeria and Libya is over 3.5million square miles in size. Snow was last seen in the desert in 1979 and is only the second time it has happened in living memory.

December Sports Review

Five days after he won the Formula One Driver Championship Nico Rosberg retired from F1. The 31-year-old said he had achieved his goal and teammate Lewis Hamilton said it meant he could focus on his family. Rosberg won one championship, 23 races and appeared on the podium 57 times in 206 Gran Prix races.

Chapecoense was awarded the Copa Americana title. They were supposed to play Atletico Nacional in the final before the plane crash which killed most of their team. Atletico was awarded a fair play award after they campaigned for Chapecoense to be awarded the title.

Going into to the busy Christmas period of the Premier League Chelsea remained at the top of the table, while Liverpool, Man City and Arsenal are in the other Champions League spots. Spurs and Man Utd are also within challenging distance.

Distance runner Mo Farah and tennis player Andy Murray were knighted, while heptathlete Jessica Ennis-Hill and rower Katherine Grainger were made dames in the Queens 2017 New Year Honours list. Sir Roger Bannister, the first man to run a mile in under four minutes, was made a companion of honour which is the highest award at the age of 87.

END



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The value in waste

The Government Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Mark Walport, and Defra Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Boyd, have visited organisations in York to investigate the opportunities for waste in the bioeconomy.

The bioeconomy includes all economic activity derived from bio-based products and processes such as the production of crops or the manufacture of the latest bio-based medical therapies. It includes biorefining which is comparable to today's petroleum refining that produces multiple fuels and products from petroleum.

The chief scientists visited the Biorenewables Development Centre (BDC) research and development facilities in York to meet clients, including local company, Wilson Bio-Chemical, who are working with the BDC to scale-up their technology for turning

household waste into biofuels and high-value products chemicals. They also met with GSK and Veolia to discuss their research collaboration to use food by-products in antibiotic production.

Commenting on the visit Sir Mark Walport said:

“Changing our approach to waste can yield considerable economic, environmental and social benefits and science and technology has a role to play.

“It is great to see first-hand how the chemistry and biology science base at the University of York is working with industry to solve some of the major challenges they face. Organisations like the BDC and their partners who are doing pioneering work to turn municipal waste into reusable products such as biofuels and chemicals will help make UK businesses

more sustainable and more competitive.”

The visit is ahead of a report by the chief scientists which will examine how the UK can produce less waste and use our resources more productively. The purpose of the visit was to explore innovative technologies and collaborations that exploit waste as a resource.



The timing of exit from the EU (John Redwood MP)

The following statement has appeared from the Conservative party. It is good news for business who want to reduce the uncertainties, and for all who want to see progress with our exit from the EU:

- On 23 June the British people voted to leave the EU and the Government will deliver on their verdict. We are not going to give a running commentary on every twist and turn of our exit negotiations. But when there are things to say – like today – we will keep the public up to date.
- First on timing: there will be no unnecessary delays in invoking Article Fifty. We will invoke Article Fifty no later than the end of March next year. Second, on process: the Government will shortly introduce a Great Repeal Bill to remove the European Communities Act from the statute book on the day we leave, meaning that the authority of EU law in Britain will end.
- The Prime Minister will set out further detail in her speech to conference this afternoon. ”

UK elected to the UN Human Rights Council

The UK has been successful in its bid for election to the UN Human Rights Council for the term January 2017 – December 2019.

This follows an eleven month campaign, resulting in a high number of votes from countries around the world.

Following the announcement of the election results in New York today, Human Rights Minister Baroness Anelay said:

“I am delighted that the UK has been re-elected to serve a further three year term on the Human Rights Council. The UK has been a strong advocate of the vital work of the Council since its inception, and we are honoured to continue to serve as a member.

“The UK works tirelessly to protect vulnerable people from discrimination and to

champion global causes including ending modern slavery and violence against women and girls, and promoting the universal right to freedom of religion or belief.

“We will continue to use our voice to help strengthen the Council, to support countries working to improve their human rights record and to hold to account nations that commit serious and systematic violations against their citizens as we did recently leading a strong resolution at a Special Session at the Human Rights Council to address the deplorable situation in Aleppo.

“I thank those who supported our candidacy and look forward to working closely with the Council, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and civil society to

On Day of Non-Violence, Ban highlights link between peace and nature

United Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today stressed the link between non-violence, peace and nature as he observed the International Day of Non-Violence.

“Every year on the International Day of Non-Violence, we re-commit ourselves to the cause of peace, as exemplified by the life of Mahatma Gandhi who was born on this day 147 years ago,” Mr. Ban said in his message for the Day.

The UN General Assembly, through a resolution in 2007, designated 2 October as the International Day of Non-Violence to coincide with the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the country’s independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.

“We know that a culture of non-violence begins with

respect for others, but it does not end there. To nurture peace, we must respect nature. I am pleased this year’s International Day of Non-Violence puts the focus on sustainability and the environment,” Mr. Ban said.

“In all he did, Gandhi honoured our obligation to all living things. He reminded us that ‘Earth provides enough to satisfy everyone’s needs, but not everyone’s greed.’ Gandhi also challenged us to ‘be the change we wish to see in the world,’ the Secretary-General noted.

Today that commitment is reflected in a momentous way, the UN chief said, as India is depositing its instrument of ratification to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

“What better way to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi and his legacy for people and planet,” he said, urging all countries to complete their domestic processes for ratification and also strive in all activities to achieve progress through non-violence.

Consumer Rights Act - first birthday

The Consumer Rights Act came into force one year ago on 1 October 2016 in the biggest shake up of consumer law in a generation.

Replacing 8 pieces of dated consumer legislation, the Act clarified the law for both consumers and businesses. It created a specific timeframe of 30 days for consumers to reject a faulty item and get a full refund, while giving new legal rights to consumers downloading music or buying ebooks over the internet.

Since October 2015, Citizens Advice recorded 10.5 million visits to its online advice portal from people eager to learn about their new powers over refunds, repairs and replacements of faulty goods.

Examples of your rights under the Act:

- two weeks after buying a toaster you discover it doesn't work. As it is less than 30 days old, you can return it to the shop and receive a full refund
- while getting your hair cut and highlighted, the hairdresser leaves the foils on for too long, damaging your hair. As reasonable care was not taken and the damage cannot be fixed, you are entitled to a full refund
- you buy a new app to organise your music but a bug in the program deletes the data from your phone. If you can prove the app caused the damage, the designers are liable to repair it (ie recover your music) or pay you compensation

Scottish First Minister to speak at Arctic Circle Assembly

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon will outline Scotland's commitment to sustainable development and reducing emissions at this year's Arctic Circle Assembly in Iceland on Friday.

The annual conference in Reykjavik is attended by around 2,000 delegates from 50 countries with an interest in the development and protection of the Arctic and its consequences for the future of the planet.

The First Minister was invited to speak at the Assembly by former President of Iceland Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson following the Paris Climate Change talks, and will undertake a full day of meetings and engagements at the conference. UN

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will address the Assembly on Saturday.

Ms Sturgeon said:

"Like many countries with an interest in the Arctic, Scotland has a strong commitment to take action on climate change, one of the biggest challenges the world faces. So I was pleased to accept former President of Iceland Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson's invitation to address the conference following last December's Paris Climate Change summit, and it's a welcome step forward that EU members ratified the Paris Agreement last week.

"I'll outline the steps Scotland is taking to cut emissions and how we want to use our position as a world leader to work with other like-minded countries and limit the effects of climate change in the coming decades."

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Community mausolea



Community mausolea



Burial chambers with integrated memorials



Stone and granite Majestic Memorial Mausolea



Stone memorial orbs

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More young people in apprenticeships than ever before

More people than ever before are taking advantage of high quality apprenticeships and traineeships that give them the skills and experience they need for a successful career.

The figures also show that there are more young people starting apprenticeships, with over 130,000 starts by under 19-year-olds during the 2015 to 2016 academic year.



Provisional figures released today (6 October 2016) show a rise in the number of people reaping the benefits of apprenticeships with around 905,000 people in an apprenticeship this year alone.

Skills and Apprenticeships Minister Robert Halfon said:

“Apprenticeships work, that’s why they lie at the heart of our commitment to giving everyone the chance they

deserve to get the skills and jobs they need for their future.

“It is great news that there are more apprentices and trainees than ever before. I am determined that we build on this success so that everyone who wants to can benefit from the ladder of opportunity they offer.”

High quality skills and apprenticeships lie at the heart of the government’s drive to create the skilled workforce British industry needs to thrive, to boost productivity and build an economy that works for all.

Today’s provisional figures show that just under 27,000 higher and degree apprenticeships were started so far in 2015 to 2016. Some of the top employers in the country such as BAE Systems and Fujitsu are already on board when it comes to higher apprenticeships and

degree apprenticeships are currently available in careers ranging from engineering to public relations. The government is continuing to work with higher education institutions, including Russell Group universities, to discuss their plans for delivering degree apprenticeships.

Traineeships play a significant part in the government’s commitment to creating the highly skilled workforce our employers need. Today’s figures show provisionally that there were 23,900 traineeship starts in 2015 to 2016, a substantial increase from 19,400 in 2014 to 2015. Traineeships equip young people who are looking for work with the skills, confidence and vital work experience they need to gain an apprenticeship or other job.

To encourage more young people to consider an apprenticeship as a valid and credible route to a rewarding career, the government has launched the Get In Go Far campaign. The campaign shares the stories of top apprentices working in leading employers including Lloyds Banking Group, Accenture and JCB.

Fish find shows mine water scheme is reaping rewards

There's early indications that a mine water treatment scheme is reaping rewards after lots of fish were found in a once heavily polluted bright orange watercourse in Saltburn-by-the-Sea.

During recent Environment Agency monitoring surveys at Saltburn Gill the water was running clear and fish stocks – including juvenile brown trout, bullheads and a juvenile flounder - were spotted.

The encouraging signs come just months after the new Saltburn mine water treatment scheme was officially opened on 1 July.

The £3.6million scheme was funded by the Department for

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and was carefully designed by Coal Authority experts, in partnership with the Environment Agency and Defra, to address pollution problems caused by historic mining operations. It started operating during 2015.

'Fantastic to see fish returning'

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

"The water in Saltburn Gill is now running clear and it is fantastic to see fish like the brown trout and European bullhead returning to these rivers.

"I am delighted Defra funded this scheme

which has made a huge difference to the natural environment, so future generations are able to enjoy these waters once more for years to come."

The Environment Agency's Richard Jenkins, Team Leader of the North East Analysis and Reporting Team which carried out the surveys, said:

"Our rivers are the

healthiest they've been for 20 years and schemes like this are playing an important role in ensuring water quality improvements continue.

"Certainly the results of this survey is excellent news and an early indication that the great partnership work to improve the gill is making a difference for this generation and generations to come.

"There appears to be a positive biological response to the work, but there's still a lot of investigation to do.



Surveys being carried out at Saltburn Gill

October

The monitoring is part of a much wider project looking into the restoration of the watercourse.

“We’re carrying out a number of ecological and water quality investigations over the coming months and years to monitor any improvements.”

Delighted with excellent performance

Tracey Davies, Head of the Environment Team at the Coal Authority, added:

“We are delighted with the excellent performance of the system, as it removes in excess of 98% of iron from the raw mine water before the cleaned water is released into the local waterways.

“This means we are preventing over 100 tonnes

of iron from entering the Saltburn Gill and the North Sea every year.

“It is schemes like this that will help us create even more effective and sustainable mine water treatment sites elsewhere in Britain and we have estimated that stopping this iron entering the water at Saltburn-by-the-Sea has the potential to add £10.5million into the local economy over the next 25 years.”

The area of East Cleveland saw large scale deep mining for well over 100 years. When local ironstone mining operations stopped in the 1960s, the pumps that removed water from the mines were turned off and removed.

Water made its way into

the old mine workings and eventually reached the surface in 1999. Although not harmful to people, the iron ochre caused severe pollution to both the Skelton Beck and Saltburn Gill, discoloured the beach and sometimes caused an orange plume to form in the North Sea.

A community group – Saltburn Gill Action Group – worked with the Environment Agency and Coal Authority to gain funding to investigate options to clean up the pollution and together they secured the necessary funds from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to address the issue for the community.

Heavy smog continues to shroud Beijing

Heavy air pollution continues to hit Beijing and surrounding areas and will not disperse until Tuesday night, the city’s weather bureau said Monday (10th Oct).

According to the bureau, the concentration of hazardous fine particulate matter known as PM2.5 in Beijing was between 100 and 200 micrograms per cubic meter, indicating moderate pollution.

The city issued its first yellow alert for air pollution in the second half of this year on Sunday, triggering restrictions on work at construction sites, outdoor barbecues and burning straw.

Meteorological experts expect north China to face more smog in autumn and winter, given unfavourable weather conditions this year.

China has a four-tier colour-coded system for severe weather, with red being the most serious, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

THE LONDON
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**Chelsea Football Club, Stamford Bridge,
Fulham Road, London, SW6 1HS**

New kit tested as part of major flood response exercise

Environment Agency teams across England are training with new temporary flood barriers, pumps, vehicles, and drones as part of Exercise Certus, which reaches its climax today (Wednesday 12 October).

The exercise, which involves around 1,000 staff, is designed to test that the Environment Agency is ready to respond more rapidly and flexibly to future flooding following the Government's National Flood Resilience Review (NFRF).

As well as new technology the Environment Agency has awarded a 1-year contract to Stobart Group to store, track, and transport its 40 kilometres of temporary barriers and other mobile equipment. The contract will include use of the Stobart Group's network of resilience centres, distribution centres and extensive fleet of over 3,000 trucks.

Stobart Group will be

working with the Environment Agency to provide a 24/7 logistics support service throughout the year assisting the Environment Agency before, during, and after flooding.

The Environment Agency has also reached a key 'winter ready' milestone with all those communities affected by flooding last winter now having the same level of flood protection they had before winter 2015/16.

This is a result of a £65m programme across the north of England, involving 20,000 inspections and around 650 repair projects, to restore flood defences or, as in the case of the Foss Barrier, significantly upgrade them.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency, said:

"I've seen for myself the devastating impact that flooding has on lives and livelihoods. Our staff

have already put a huge amount of work into helping communities recover from last winter's floods and reducing flood risk to thousands of homes.

"Now we are rising to the challenge of responding to flooding as extreme weather becomes more common: In Exercise Certus our teams have been training with new kit, including flood barriers, pumps, and vehicles so that we can respond more rapidly and flexibly.

"We welcome the contract with Stobart Group that will make us more resilient and improve our ability to get the right equipment to the right places at the right time – helping us to better-protect more communities more of the time.

"Our £65m repair programme means flood-affected communities will be protected again. Meanwhile, between January and June 2016, we completed over

120 schemes, better-protecting nearly 48,000 homes from flooding. But there is no such thing as 100% protection against flooding. It's everyone's responsibility to be prepared and in next month's Flood Action Campaign we'll call on everyone to play their part."

Floods Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

"This exercise proves we have the ability to move quickly to provide support around the country in the event of a flood this winter.

"Our £2.5 billion investment programme will better protect 300,000 properties against flooding for the long term and with new high volume pumps, four times as many temporary defences as last year, and the Environment Agency able to move rapidly to help protect homes and businesses, we're better prepared than ever before."

Andrew Tinkler, Stobart Group Chief Executive Officer, said:

"Last year's floods were devastating for many communities across the UK. I am very pleased to announce that Stobart Group will be providing support to the Environment Agency over the next 12 months and utilising our logistical expertise, skilled workforce and assets to deploy equipment as and when required."

UK to lead the way in quantum technologies

Sir Mark Walport, Government Chief Scientific Adviser, sets out how the UK could lead in the application of quantum technologies in a report published 3rd November 2016) by the Government Office for Science.

Quantum technologies have already contributed to lasers, digital cameras, solar cells, GPS, and mobile communication. A new generation of quantum technologies are now emerging, which could allow accurate navigation without the need for GPS, enable detection of buried hazards, provide new methods for imaging the human body without exposure to harmful radiation, and potentially solve problems that would stump existing super computers.



Sir Mark Walport, Government Chief Scientific Adviser (Source: BIS Digital Image Library)

The UK is among the world leaders in quantum research and the report, 'The quantum age: technological opportunities', highlights areas where the UK could maintain and even increase its lead. It highlights the implications of quantum technologies for the UK economy and the ways in

which they could improve peoples' lives over the next 15 years.

The report argues that the UK could enhance its international position and capitalise on this comparative advantage by:

- building on the progress made by the UK National Quantum Technologies Programme with increased coordination and partnership with the private sector, domestically and internationally
- establishing innovation centres bringing together academics and industrial partners to commercialise the technologies
- laying the foundations for a quantum technology industry in the UK

Sir Mark Walport said:

"The UK is playing a leading role in the research and development of quantum technologies. Quantum timekeeping, imaging, sensing, communications and computing have the potential to generate a large array of valuable new products and services.

"We must ensure we continue to commercialise the outputs from our excellent research base. We have an opportunity to develop a world class industry, supported by a skilled workforce and stimulated by global demand."

The report has been developed by Sir Mark Walport, the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, and Sir Peter Knight, Emeritus Professor of Quantum Optics at Imperial College London, with contributions from government, industry and academic experts from around the country.

The wheels are coming off PM's promise of making Tories the party for working class people

Clive Lewis MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, responding to reports in the Financial Times today that Theresa May is potentially rowing back on her corporate governance plans she announced only last month in her conference speech, said:

"The wheels are clearly starting to come off the Prime Minister's promise of making the Tories the party for working class people. And it is clear that Theresa May does not have the authority to stand up to her own Cabinet and implement the policies she announced only last month.

"The fact that senior government advisors

are briefing national newspapers that the Prime Minister is already back tracking on her own conference speech to her party shows that the Tories shambolic approach to Brexit extends to every aspect of government.

"The Government need to put on record what their plans are on corporate governance, whether or not they intend to row back on this issue.

"Businesses need clarity on this issue, and so do their workforces. Scandals like BHS and Sports Direct can happen because of a failure of weak corporate governance structures. It is time we saw leadership from the Government on this matter."



Clive Lewis MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
Source: Wikipedia, Photo by Chris McAndrew

Children are at risk of a disadvantaged start in life simply because of where they were born

Tulip Siddiq MP, Shadow Minister for Early Years, responding to Save the Children's 'Untapped Potential' report, said:

"The nationwide shortage of trained nursery teachers is deeply worrying.

"As the effects of fewer qualified staff are felt more acutely in areas of greater deprivation, Government inaction is creating a situation where children are at risk of a disadvantaged start in life, simply because of where they were born.

"The Tories have ignored this area for too long and in doing so are failing to put working families first. It's time they put a real strategy in place to ensure a childcare system that delivers for children, parents and the economy."

High Court ruling proves importance of EU air quality laws, says Green MEP

‘The government must finally face up to its moral and legal responsibility for tackling Britain’s air quality crisis.’



Keith Taylor, MEP

Responding to the news that the High Court has ruled against the government in a vital legal challenge on air pollution, Keith Taylor, Green Party MEP, said:

“The government has

been exposed, yet again, as failing in its duty to take even the most basic action to combat an air pollution crisis that needlessly claims the lives of more than 50,000 people in Britain every year.”

“The failure highlighted by the judge today is as much moral as it is legal; Ministers have displayed an extremely concerning attitude of indifference towards their duty to safeguard the health of British citizens.”

“ClientEarth has worked tirelessly to hold to account this government for its irresponsible and deadly apathy in the face of a public health crisis that costs the British public more than £20bn a year.”

“Theresa May’s administration is failing to do even the bare minimum,

as required by EU laws the UK itself helped to set, to improve the quality of the air we all breathe. The bare minimum.”

“Where embraced and enforced, EU air pollution limits are helping to prevent thousands of deaths every year. In fact, this government readily acknowledges that it is EU law that has been the driver of any positive air quality action in the UK. For the sake of the health and prosperity of the British people, we cannot risk scrapping these safeguards.”

“The government must finally face up to its moral and legal responsibility for tackling Britain’s air quality crisis. Ministers must now be forced to make a firm commitment to maintaining and strengthening vital EU air quality laws.”

Ruth reacts to Trump victory

Reacting to the result of the US presidential election, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:



“It’s not the result I wanted but we now have to hope that President Trump turns out to be a different man to candidate Trump.

“Mr Trump tapped into the disaffection we are seeing across the world right now due to economic uncertainty. That’s not something we can ignore.

“Those of us who believe open, western values are the best way to provide economic security for people now have to redouble our efforts to show they deliver for people.”

John Healey comments on child homelessness figures from Shelter

John Healey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Housing, commenting on new child homelessness figures from Shelter, said:

"Tory Ministers should hang their heads in shame over these shocking figures showing over 20,000 children are facing homelessness this Christmas. These are the children that can't go home and after six years Conservative Ministers can't dodge their responsibility for this scandal.

"Six years of failure on housing has led directly to today's rapidly rising homelessness. Since 2010, Ministers have ended

funding for genuinely affordable social rented housing, cut housing benefit for families on low incomes, done nothing about rising costs and insecurity for private renters, and slashed funding for homelessness services by almost a half.

"Homelessness is not inevitable and the last Labour Government cut homelessness before it rose again after 2010.

"Ministers should back Labour's plans to build thousands more affordable homes to rent and buy, and re-think further planned cuts to housing benefit which will make the problem of growing homelessness worse."

Drowning giant panda rescued in Sichuan



A giant panda was saved from drowning after it accidentally fell into the water at Wolong National Natural Reserve in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

It is believed that the 4-year-old female panda got lost before stepping into a power

station in the reserve area and falling into the water in the afternoon.

Rescue workers used an anaesthetic rifle to tranquilize the animal and then pulled it ashore. The panda was found unharmed and was returned to its natural habitat after waking up.

Asian hornet outbreak contained in Gloucestershire and Somerset



“*Vespa velutina*, also known as the Asian hornet is an invasive non-native species from Asia. Photo: Charles J Sharp, Wikipedia

An outbreak of Asian hornets has been successfully contained by bee inspectors who promptly tracked down and destroyed their nest in Gloucestershire.

Asian hornets were first discovered in the Tetbury area in September, but the National Bee Unit moved swiftly to find the nest and remove it.

No further live Asian hornets have been seen since the nest was treated with pesticide and removed in early October.

Two dead Asian hornets were discovered in separate locations close by in north Somerset, but no nests or live hornets have been located by inspectors and there have been no

further sightings.

Nicola Spence, Defra Deputy Director for Plant and Bee Health, said:

“I am pleased our well-established protocol to eradicate Asian hornets has worked so effectively.

“We remain vigilant, however, and will continue to monitor the situation and encourage people to look out for any Asian hornet nests.”

As winter sets in, worker Asian hornets will begin to die as they cannot survive in the cold weather. However Defra remains vigilant, working closely with the National Bee Unit and their nationwide network of bee inspectors, as well as partners APHA and Fera.

Defra’s success in locating the Asian hornet nest

was thanks to its close working relationship with the National Bee Unit and the execution of the department’s well-established plan. This included imposing a three-mile surveillance zone in Gloucestershire and Somerset, with bee inspectors scouring the area, using infrared cameras and traps to track the hornets and the nest. Defra also opened a local control centre to coordinate the response between the various agencies and teams involved.

Asian hornets pose no greater risk to human health than a bee, though they are a threat to honey bee colonies, which is why Defra took quick action to identify and destroy the nest.

The species arrived in France in 2004 and is now common across large areas of Europe. It was discovered for the first time in the British Isles in Jersey and Alderney this summer.

It is possible Asian hornets could reappear in England next year and members of the public are urged to report any suspected sightings in the spring.

SNP council tax grab plans revealed

The SNP must restore the principle of local accountability to Council tax – as new figures today reveal the extent of the cash grab from some parts of Scotland to others.

Scottish Conservative research shows that Edinburgh and north-east Scotland are paying the heaviest price for SNP's controversial council tax proposals.

Edinburgh will lose nearly £10 million a year, Aberdeenshire will lose £6 million, and Perth and Kinross will pay out £3 million.

The controversial proposals – to take funds from some council areas and spend it on an attainment fund in other areas – were rejected by opposition parties in Holyrood last week.

In order to push the

plans through, even the SNP were forced to admit that their plans “undermine the principle of local accountability and autonomy”.

But, if it goes ahead, it means that Council tax payers in many parts of Scotland will soon be asked to pay higher rates, and yet will discover that much of that money will not be spent in their area.

Commenting on the new figures today, Scottish Conservative deputy leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“The SNP's plans threaten a fundamental part of local taxation – which is the money raised in that area should stay in that area.

“Across Scotland, communities are now discovering that their council tax payments are being taken away and spent



Scottish Conservative deputy leader Jackson Carlaw

in an entirely separate part of the country. It's quite simply wrong.

“The Scottish Conservatives will join with other opposition parties in demanding that the SNP goes back to drawing board.

“People have had enough of local decision making being nationalised by a remote Scottish Government and it has to end.

Google's decision to invest in the UK is fantastic news

Clive Lewis MP, Shadow Business Secretary, responding to reports Google is to invest in the UK said:

“Google's decision to invest in the UK is fantastic news. The 3000 jobs it will create with their commitment to doing business here in the UK is good news.

“I welcome, in particular, their statement that they are happy to ‘pay heir fair share of tax’. The onus is now on the Government to make sure they do.

“We also note their warning that getting brexit wrong could jeopardise this kind of decision in the future - this is why the Government's current shambles is so worrying.”

Poll reveals plunging support for separation

Support for separation across Scotland has dropped to its lowest since the 2014 referendum, a new poll has revealed.



And in a further blow to the SNP, less than a third of Scots back Nicola Sturgeon's drive for a second independence vote.

The YouGov survey showed just 44 per cent back the break-up of Britain, lower than in September 2014.

It comes as the SNP closes its so-called national survey, which sought the views of Scots across the country on the constitution.

Support for the Scottish

Conservatives has risen in both the constituency and regional opinion polls, YouGov revealed, while leader Ruth Davidson has double the approval rating of the First Minister.

Nicola Sturgeon previously said the only grounds for calling another referendum would be an expansion in public support for independence.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"The SNP has spent the

last 12 weeks promoting a so-called national survey to convince the people of Scotland of the need for a second referendum.

"Today, it got its answer – fewer than one in three want another referendum, the lowest since the 2014 vote.

"My message to Nicola Sturgeon is clear – we voted on independence two years ago. Move on.

"Stop disrespecting the majority of the people of Scotland by continuing to push your divisive and unwanted second referendum, and get on with the job you were elected to do."

Jeremy Corbyn's comment on the High Court ruling on triggering Article 50

Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party commenting on the High Court ruling on triggering Article 50 said:

"This ruling underlines the need for the Government to bring its negotiating terms to parliament without delay. Labour respects the decision of the British people to leave the European Union. But there must be transparency and accountability to parliament on the terms of Brexit.

"Labour will be pressing the case for a Brexit that works for Britain, putting jobs, living standards and the economy first."

Britain building again as new homes rise by highest level in 8 years

Figures out today (15 November 2016) show the number of new homes has risen 11% in a year – the highest annual total in 8 years (since 2007 to 2008), representing the third consecutive year-on-year increase.

Housing and Planning Minister Gavin Barwell welcomed the figures as further evidence that government measures to deliver more homes were working and that Britain is building.

The figures mean more than 893,000 additional homes have now been delivered since 2010. The 189,650 net additions over the past year resulted from: 163,940 new build homes, 30,600 gains from change of use between non-

domestic and residential, 4,760 from conversions between houses and flats and 780 other gains.

Housing Minister Gavin Barwell said:

“We promised to turbocharge house building so more people can have the security of their own home, and that is exactly what we are doing with the biggest increase in the number of new homes in many years.

“We know there is more to do to ensure the housing market works for everyone and not just the privileged few and we will be setting our further details in our housing white paper shortly.”

The government is

determined to boost house building and recently announced a £3 billion Home Building Fund which will help build more than 25,000 new homes this Parliament and up to 225,000 in the longer term.

An additional £2 billion is also being made available to help speed up delivery of homes on surplus public sector land.

And the Neighbourhood Planning Bill, which is currently going through Parliament, will support house building by speeding up processes and strengthening neighbourhood planning.

The Bill will:

- further strengthen neighbourhood

- planning to give even more power to local people
- improve the use and discharge of planning conditions, especially pre-commencement conditions
- continue the reforms of compulsory purchase to make the process clearer, fairer and faster for all those involved
- better monitor the impact of permitted development rights on housing supply



Caroline Lucas demands Government halt Heathrow plans

Caroline Lucas, the Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, has demanded that the Government cancel plans for Heathrow expansion until they can prove their plans are compatible with the UK's climate change obligations. The Greens' co-leader's call comes after the Climate Change Committee indicated that expansion at Heathrow risks Britain breaking its climate change targets. This letter comes at the end of the UN climate negotiations

in Marrakech where countries across the world have reaffirmed their commitment to the

historic Paris Climate Agreement.

In a Parliamentary Question Lucas has asked the Secretary of State at BEIS to confirm that that final approval for Heathrow

won't be given unless there are guarantees that expansion won't breach climate change

obligations.

Caroline Lucas said:

"This letter from the Climate Change Committee blows apart the government's previous reassurances

around airport expansion and climate change. Their projections had used outrageously optimistic assumptions about emissions trading schemes as their basis – and their unreliability is now being exposed. Ministers must not go any further with their plans for Heathrow until this issue is resolved.

"Building an airport which breaches our climate change targets is entirely out of the question, and ministers might soon come to the same conclusion as the many experts who say that expansion at Heathrow simply doesn't fit with climate-proofing our economy."



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Government supports 'Awards for Valour (Protection)' Bill

The 'Awards for Valour (Protection)' Bill will make it a crime for anyone to pose as a military veteran and deceive others by wearing honour or gallantry medals that they have not earned.



From left to right the medals shown are: the Victoria Cross, the George Cross and the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross

New proposals will make it a crime for anyone to pose as a military veteran by wearing medals, awarded by the nation, that they have not earned themselves.

The 'Awards for Valour (Protection)' Bill was supported by the Government at Second Reading in the House of Commons today.

With Government support,

the Bill should become law and those flouting the rules, widely known as 'Walter Mittys', could face up to 3 months in prison or an unlimited fine.

Defence Minister Harriet Baldwin, who responded to the Bill in the Commons today on behalf of the Government said:

"Wearing unauthorised medals is harmful because it undermines the integrity of our formal military honours system – a historic system that has honoured the bravery and dedication of our world-class Armed Forces since the 19th century."

The Bill tabled by MP Gareth Johnson and supported by the Government is also backed by the House of Commons Defence Committee and an e-petition signed by 11,000 members of the public.



Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Defence Procurement
Harriett Baldwin MP

The Bill rightly protects family members wearing relative's medals as a sign of respect and theatrical, TV or film productions.

Following the Bill passing Second Reading today, it will now move to the Committee Stage where it will be gone through in detail and any necessary amendments made.

It is already an offence under the Fraud Act of 2006 for someone to wear a medal they are not entitled to, but only if it is for financial gain. This offence carries a sentence of up to 10 years' imprisonment. This Bill seeks to tackle those who are not covered by this provision.

Launch of Labour's 'Care for the NHS' campaign poster

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, speaking at the launch of Labour's 'Care for the NHS' campaign poster, said:

"The Conservatives are failing our health service, which has been pushed into financial crisis and soaring deficits. Patients are facing longer waits, with hospitals overcrowded, understaffed and threatened with closure. Labour will stand up for the NHS. We will always make sure the NHS has the funding it needs and will join up services from home to hospital with a properly integrated health and social care

service. Labour created the NHS to care for us all, now it's time to care for the NHS."

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, said:

"The Autumn Statement

revealed that for the Tories, the NHS is always at the back of the queue. It's jaw dropping that when the NHS is facing the biggest financial squeeze in its history - when waiting lists are at four million,

when A&Es are in crisis – that the Autumn Statement contained not a single penny piece of extra investment for social care and the NHS. Instead the Conservatives have ignored the chorus of voices pleading for them to address the mess they've created in social care with cuts to budgets of £4.5 billion. The crisis in social care is such that thousands more older and disabled people face being left without access to services."

NHS FUNDING?

EVERYONE'S STILL WAITING

**3.9 million people on NHS waiting lists.
But not a penny more for the NHS & social care from the Tories.**

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More than 15 million people now have the security of a workplace pension, thanks to automatic enrolment

A key reason behind this huge rise is the number of people being automatically enrolled into workplace pensions. Recent analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies shows that between 2012 and 2015, 95% of the rise in private sector membership was the result of automatic enrolment.

This policy – which was launched in 2012 and will be fully rolled out by 2018 – has arrested the decline in pension saving over the past decade. With millions of people set up in a workplace pension, workers can benefit from years of saving which will give them greater financial security in retirement.

Minister for Pensions, Richard Harrington said:

“The report demonstrates how automatic enrolment is helping millions of working people save for their

retirement, so they can look forward to extra income on top of their State Pension and a better standard of living as a result.

“It is clear automatic enrolment is playing a key role in shaping the retirement landscape for generations to come. However I want to build on this success and will be looking at how we can get even more people saving, and saving more.”

In 2015, the annual total amount being saved by employees was £81.8 billion, an increase of £1.4 billion from 2014 and a further £7.1

billion since 2012.

The amounts people are saving are set to increase as minimum contribution rates are scheduled to rise from 2% to 5% in April 2018, and from 5% to 8% in April 2019. To help employers and their employees adjust to the costs, the contribution level is being phased in over the next few years.

The latest analysis estimates there will be an extra £17 billion of workplace pension saving per year as a result of automatic enrolment by 2019/20.

We will announce the scope of the 2017 review of automatic enrolment before the end of the year. The review will help ensure that automatic enrolment continues to work for employers and individuals alike.

The new report is the third edition of DWP's annual official statistics on workplace pension participation and saving trends of employees eligible for automatic enrolment.

Don't ignore the Workplace Pension

#DontIgnoreIt



Over 50,000 sign up for Land Registry's free Property Alert service

The service helps people to detect fraudulent activity on their property by sending them email alerts when there is certain activity on the property being monitored, such as a mortgage being taken out against it. The recipient can then decide whether they think the activity is suspicious and act quickly if so. The alert email tells them who to contact should they be concerned.

Alasdair Lewis, Director of Legal Services, said:

"Property is usually our most valuable asset so it's important to protect it from the ever-increasing risk of fraud. Land Registry is doing all it can to detect and prevent fraud but no

system can be 100 per cent fraud-proof, which is why we urge people to follow our advice about protecting themselves from property fraud, including signing up for Property Alert."

Property fraud

Property fraud is where fraudsters try to "steal" a property, most commonly by stealing the homeowner's identity and selling or mortgaging the property without their knowledge. They then disappear with the money leaving the true owner to deal with the consequences.

Since 2009, Land Registry has stopped fraud on properties worth more than £92 million.

How Property Alert works

You can monitor up to 10 registered properties in England and Wales. You will receive email alerts when there is certain activity on the properties you are monitoring, such as an application to change the ownership details.

Although Property Alert won't automatically stop fraud from happening, it's a useful early warning of suspicious activity which the home-owner can investigate if they are suspicious.

Example of how Property Alert helped to prevent a fraud

A landlord was renting out a property in England while he lived overseas. He was aware that absent landlords are more at risk of property fraud and signed up to our free Property Alert service. When he received an alert email informing him of a mortgage application being made against his property worth over £300,000, he contacted our property fraud line immediately as he wasn't expecting this. Using this intelligence, we investigated and discovered the fraud. We then prevented the application from being registered. His contact details were out of date, so we advised him to update them, which he did so that if we need to contact him in the future he will receive our emails or letters.

Most at risk

You're more at risk if your property:

- is rented out
- is empty
- is mortgage-free
- isn't registered with Land Registry

Putting an end to laser attacks on planes

Since 2009 over 10,000 aircraft in the UK alone have been targeted by hand held lasers. The reckless targeting of aircraft poses a significant and growing threat to aviation safety. However it is often difficult to obtain evidence to secure a conviction and existing laser detection equipment is very expensive.

Scientists at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) have developed an innovative app that analyses laser dazzle events, making it quicker and easier for the police to arrest and prosecute offenders, deter the targeting of aircraft and allow pilots to take steps to prevent themselves from being dazzled.

The Laser Event Recorder

app (LERapp) has been developed using an iPhone. It utilises the inbuilt camera, GPS and connectivity to record, analyse and communicate details of the incident. The app can be modified for use on Android phones and other platforms.

The benefits of the LERapp are that it:

- provides a low cost solution (pilots can use their own phone)
- is easy and intuitive to use
- allows pilots to take steps to prevent them being dazzled
- makes it easier for the police to identify arrest and prosecute offenders
- deters people from using lasers irresponsibly

Dstl has signed an agreement with Profound Technologies to develop and market the LERapp.

The contract is the first to be signed using Dstl's Easy Access IP contracting framework. This has been designed to help commercialise IP that is at a very early stage in its development or where there are significant financial risks and uncertainties. Easy Access IP allows companies to develop and refine the work at no cost. This allows Dstl to bring products to market that will benefit the economy and society that would otherwise not be available.

Commenting on today's announcement the Dstl scientist who developed the LERapp, Craig Williamson, said:

"The LERapp has the potential to significantly improve aviation safety. It

is another example of the innovative and exciting work that Dstl is doing. Like much of our work, there are clear uses outside the military and security environments. The Easy Access IP scheme is a great opportunity to build new links with industry, and reflects our increasing openness to partnering and collaboration."

Randall Fitzgerald, President, Profound Technologies added:

"Profound Technologies is excited about the opportunity to commercialize and exploit the technology developed by Dstl. The Easy Access IP program levels the playing field for smaller entities with fewer resources to compete and enter the marketplace. We believe that the technology is much needed and our goal will be to make it an industry standard from a safety standpoint."

The LER app is expected to be available in the summer of 2017.

LERapp could also be used in a wide range of non-aviation users. This includes car drivers and police officers.

Labour will support Government additions to Brexit motion



consistently said that they will invoke Article 50 by the end of March 2017. And Labour have consistently said that we will not frustrate or delay the process of triggering Article 50. Therefore Labour will accept the Government’s amendment tomorrow.

“Labour’s focus has always been on getting an assurance from the Government that a basic plan for Brexit will be published before Article 50 is invoked.

“The victory today is that the Government have now finally accepted Labour’s call and committed to publish a plan.

“The Government now need to focus on ensuring that plan delivers a sensible Brexit deal that protects jobs, the economy and living standards. Labour will hold them to account on this every step of the way.”

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First major survey of Britain's attitudes on obesity published

Public Health England commissioned a set of questions on obesity as part of the British Social Attitudes survey to inform its future work.

The findings of the first British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey on obesity, commissioned by Public Health England (PHE), were published today (8 December 2016).

PHE commissioned NatCen Social Research to include a set of questions in its BSA survey to understand the public's view of obesity and related issues. The paper, Attitudes to obesity, presents NatCen's analysis of the results.

The primary findings show that people underestimate

their weight and struggle to identify the point when someone becomes obese. Almost two thirds of adults are overweight or obese. All of this combined suggests being overweight or obese is normalised in society.

BSA is an authoritative source of data on the views of the British public, carried out annually since 1983. It uses a random probability sampling methodology to yield a representative sample of adults, aged 18 and older, living in private households in Britain. The 2015 BSA survey consisted of 4,328 interviews with a representative, random sample of adults in Britain, and a response rate of 51%.

It is a source of public insight for PHE to use in delivering its commitments as part of the government's Childhood Obesity Plan.

We will not let Donald Trump and Scott Pruitt stop global climate change action

*Jonathan Bartley: 'Just as surely as climate change is real, the action to halt it and transition to a low carbon global economy that creates the climate security we need is unstoppable.'

The global community will not allow Donald Trump's appointment of fossil fuel friend Scott Pruitt [1] to halt the fight against climate change, the Green Party has said.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader, said:

"Donald Trump's decision to appoint climate denier and fossil fuel friend Scott Pruitt as head of his environment department is a reckless decision and highlights how Trump is out of touch with an international community increasingly committed to tackling climate change.

"The Paris Agreement is an



United States President Donald Trump and Scott Pruitt, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

example of what we can do when we work together. But with the effects of climate change being felt all over the world, and worrying variations in both Arctic and Antarctic sea ice levels, it is clear that we must do more, not less, to tackle the greatest threat the world faces.

"Just as surely as climate change is real, the action to

halt it and transition to a low carbon global economy that creates the climate security we need is unstoppable.

"The announcement comes one day after the Green Party launched a campaign to kick fossil fuels out of politics in the UK [2]. If Trump won't show leadership in this, others in the global community certainly will."

Grammar schools will not improve education for all - Rayner

Angela Rayner MP, Shadow Education Secretary, commenting on the EPI Report on Grammar Schools and Social Mobility, said:

"Today's report joins the mountains of evidence that proves a return to grammar schools will not improve education for all, but will actively make things worse.

"Tory plans to bring back grammar schools are nothing more than a distraction to cover up the real problems they have created over the last 6 years: a teacher shortage crisis, thousands of children in super-sized classes, school budget cuts and not enough good school places.

"As the consultation on grammar schools closes today the Tories need to recognise that a Government's job is to provide a good education for all children, not just a lucky few."

Scottish Conservatives launch new mental health policy

The Scottish Conservatives have launched their new mental health policy, demanding a step change in support for those suffering from mental ill health.

In the policy document they call for a parity of esteem between mental and physical health, and for an additional £300 million to be spent over the course of this parliament on helping treat mental health.

Last week NHS statistics revealed that a fifth of children and adults with mental health issues were not seen within the 18-week treatment time target.

And data released earlier this year in the Scottish Health Survey also showed that one in five adults reported symptoms of depression in 2015, up from 14 per cent six years ago.

Measures in the policy include:



- A new £10 million community mental health development fund to help increase the capacity for social prescribing and to fund projects across Scotland
- Bringing forward plans for mental health link workers in GP practices as part of our aim to have specialist mental health support in every GP practice or hub
- Mental health support provided in every A&E department on a 24/7 basis
- Appointing a mental health champion in schools and businesses
- Helping more disabled people who also suffer with mental health issues into work
- Looking into how social media companies can help tackle online bullying
- A review of all services available for mothers-

to-be and mothers of young children with a view to expanding ante-natal and post-natal mental health services

- The implementation of a much better referral system for young people who self-harm so that they are able to be seen without delay and referred to a local support group

It comes ahead of the Scottish Government announcing its new 10-year mental health strategy, which is due to be published in the new year.

The party announced their new policy at the Edinburgh office of PWC, where Ruth and the party's mental health spokesman Miles Briggs learned about the steps the company is taking to support mental health.

Scottish Conservative mental health spokesman Miles Briggs said:

"Since May we have been speaking to a wide range of mental health organisations and charities to discuss what would be the best way to improve services in Scotland.

"Their views have helped us shape our new strategy, and we believe that these measures could make a significant difference to those suffering from mental ill health."

A century of support: Department for Work and Pensions turns 100 years old



Through 14 name changes, 77 Secretaries and Ministers of State, and across more than 700 jobcentres throughout the country, the department has been at the forefront of improving people's lives.

In 1942 William Beveridge set out how he would tackle the '5 giant evils of society' and create the framework for the modern welfare state. In 2016 DWP continues to meet these challenges, working to reduce poverty, increase financial inclusion, cut

workplace accidents and promote greater saving for retirement.

Through reforms such as Universal Credit, the new State Pension and Personal Independence Payment, DWP helps millions of people find work, secure dignity in retirement and regain independence from ill health every single day.

Secretary of State Damian Green said:

"Although I only joined the department in July this year,

it is an honour to be able to mark its 100th anniversary as a ministry. The welfare state we know today is older still, having been over a century in the making.

"But throughout our existence, we have been helping people find work, which I believe is one of the prime objectives of the welfare system. I am proud to be part of that and look forward to building on our history to create a modern, civilised and fair welfare system, fit for the world of work in the 21st century."

A century of support: Department for Work and Pensions turns 100-years-old

As Whitehall's biggest department, DWP employs nearly 88,000 staff who work tirelessly to support millions of people, handling payments worth £176 billion.

With around 22 million people receiving support from the welfare state every single year, DWP provides vital security for some of the most vulnerable individuals in society.

Permanent Secretary Robert Devereux said:

"Since its inception 100 years ago, DWP has, in a variety of incarnations, tackled major change time and again, including most recently our welfare reforms and service transformation.

"In my 6 years here I have met many colleagues who have built their careers in DWP and will have their own memories of our highs and lows. But whether supporting pensioners, disabled people, separated families or those seeking work, the obvious constant has been the importance of the work we do.

"The unwavering commitment and effort over hundreds of thousands of days that colleagues and their predecessors have invested has helped millions of customers at times of major vulnerability and upheaval in their lives."



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1st October

- House prices up 5% despite Brexit fears
- PM told to push for short, sharp Brexit
- Momentum vice-chair 'suspended by Labour' amid anti-Semitism row

2nd October

- REVEALED: How Cameron aborted last minute Brexit plea to Germany
- Widow of Falklands hero tells of her two-year battle to save their frozen embryos
- Syrian regime prepares for large-scale attack on Aleppo

3rd October

- Rioting migrants hoist Union flag
- Schools threaten four-day week in bid to save cash
- New blow for Brussels as voters rebel over migrants

4th October

- Former troops to bring back discipline in our prisons
- Student doctor numbers to rise by 25%
- Theresa May: Brexit will mean 'bumps in the road'

5th October

- Ukip's leader Diane James resigns after just 18 days in charge
- Theresa May: Tories must embrace 'new centre ground'
- May: It is wrong to sneer at patriotism

6th October

- Davidson: We'll fight break up of the UK
- UK fracking ruling due to be announced by government
- Mayor's aide quits as police quiz him over 'trolling of MP on Twitter'



National News Headlines October 2016

7th October

- Extra 2,000 schools are needed to cope with migrant influx
- Ebola nurse is back in hospital
- Hammond: We might have to compromise on migration

8th October

- Jeremy Corbyn's shadow cabinet reshuffle prompts new Labour row
- Anti-doping staff visit British Cycling
- More than 100 BBC stars face 'tax dodge' claims

9th October

- Trump battles to stay in race as fury grows over sex boast
- MPs demand vote on hard Brexit plans for UK to leave the EU's single market
- Fears Cabinet Brexit split is irreparable

10th October

- Home Office denies gagging report on mass immigration
- RBS squeezed struggling businesses to boost profits, leak reveals
- Inheritance should skip a generation, says minister

11th October

- Drive for Brexit sees huge swing to Tories
- Asylum seekers snare jihadi bombmaker
- BBC told it needs more older women

12th October

- Show your disgust at Russia, urges Boris
- 'Total chaos' as Southern Rail is hit by 72-hour strike and engineering work
- Environmental factors may increase risk of dementia



National News Headlines October 2016

13th October

- Marmite runs low in Brexit price row
- Race and religious hate crimes rose 41% after EU vote
- Jessica Ennis-Hill: Great Britain heptathlete retires from athletics

14th October

- Police failures let foreign criminals avoid deportation
- Consumers face rising supermarket food prices as pound continues to fall
- Obama piles pressure on 'cruel' Trump

15th October

- Bank boss warns May: Don't tell me how to do my job
- Coronation Street star Jean Alexander dies aged 90
- Syrian war is turning into direct clash between West and Russia, warns Assad

16th October

- Food bills to soar by £8 BILLION
- Ofsted chief slams May's 'obsession' with grammars
- Army outrage at 'betrayal' of Iraq war troops

17th October

- Show mercy, Boris urges Putin over Syrian siege
- Chakrabarti faces MPs' questions over timing of peerage
- Claims bill for NHS birth blunders triples in decade

18th October

- Britain joins fight to smash IS stronghold
- How spies broke law to snoop on your emails
- Woolfe quits 'toxic' Ukip and says party is in death spiral



National News Headlines October 2016

19th October

- No Parliament veto on Brexit deal says Boris
- Dentists condemn call for child migrants' teeth to be tested
- UK unemployment rate holds steady

20th October

- Now 49 MPs support bid to strip shamed Green of knighthood
- Gay men convicted of now-abolished sex offences to be pardoned
- Now Southern Rail faces strike by 1,000 drivers

21st October

- I may not accept result of election, threatens Trump
- Britain launches cyber warfare against jihadis
- Russian warships pass through English Channel

22nd October

- Security stepped up after arrest over Tube train device
- 'Smart' home devices used as weapons in website attack
- Union boss calls for terror summit after 'device' is blown up on Tube

23rd October

- Leading banks set to pull out of Brexit UK early next year
- City plans to hoard bitcoins to pay cyber ransoms
- House raided in Devon over plot to bomb Underground

24th October

- Bupa shame over a third of its care homes
- May holding Brexit talks with devolved nations
- Fury of ambulance chiefs over 9-hour 'gridlock' to access A&E



25th October

- Now exports boom to a 2-year high
- Labour fined over 'Ed Stone' general election costs
- Boris bids to block Heathrow expansion

26th October

- £513m black hole threat to care of elderly at home
- Heathrow runway 'could be ramp over M25'
- Goldsmith quits as Tory MP over Heathrow expansion

27th October

- Brexit won't harm Britain, admits world trade chief
- UK economy grows 0.5% in three months after Brexit vote
- Third runway threatens to make air pollution worse

28th October

- Plotting war with the West is stupid and unrealistic says Putin
- Anger of IDS over £3.4bn welfare cuts
- Bosses and politicians unite against 'crippling' rise in business rates

29th October

- Outrage as UK gives £160m in child benefit to eastern Europe
- Allow mobile phone network roaming in UK, urge MPs
- RBS losses hit £469 million after legal fees

30th October

- May declares war on unpaid interns in new Cameron snub
- May's 'just managing' families set to be worse off
- Clinton hits back at FBI as she fights for survival

31st October

- Revolution in benefit testing for disabled
- Mark Carney under pressure to say how long he'll stay
- RBS losses hit £469 million after legal fees



National News Headlines November 2016

1st November

- Police guard as Paris migrants camp torn down
- PM launches Poppy Appeal at Number 10
- 50,000 victims a day targeted in hackers' tax refund scam

2nd November

- Raise interest rates to head off inflation, Carney urged
- Truss to hold talks with prison officers over violence
- Brexit risks turning Britain into 'safe haven' for criminals

3rd November

- Extra 2,100 prison officers to be deployed
- Brexit: High Court judges to give legal verdict
- Shortage of foster families to take 'Jungle children'

4th November

- Thousands of smaller schools 'financially not viable'
- Turmoil for May as judges rule that parliament must decide on Brexit
- Sturgeon threatens to join Brexit court case

5th November

- BHS scandal tycoon Green 'to settle over lost £571m in weeks'
- Jeremy Corbyn calls for more transparency over Brexit plan
- A second referendum on the Brexit deal would be fair – and democratic

6th November

- Pensioners risk losing £1,000 as MPs call for end to 'triple lock' rise
- Clinton clings to narrow poll lead over Trump in knife-edge election
- Company car drivers face big rise in tax bill



National News Headlines November 2016

7th November

- Big freeze bites after north winds bring first winter snow
- May tells Remain plotters: We will control migration
- Theresa May rejects calls to raise Indian visa quota

8th November

- M&S to close clothing and home stores in turnaround plan
- Tesco halts online banking as hackers hit 40,000 accounts
- Clinton is cleared by FBI over emails hours before election

9th November

- Tesco Bank says attack cost it £2.5m and hit 9,000 people
- After a brutal contest that has riven America, a nation speaks
- RBS chief says sorry to thousands of companies

10th November

- Theresa May promises 'golden era' in UK-Chinese relations
- Trump's American revolution
- The 45th US President: 'Now it is time for America to bind the wounds of division'

11th November

- We must be No1 global priority, insists Farage
- May seals £5bn of investment from Chinese business
- Farage to be Trump go-between

12th November

- Now Remain MPs boast about their plot to halt Brexit
- More than 80 MPs plotting a second Brexit referendum
- Post-Brexit, the UK needs all the friends it can get – including Trump



National News Headlines November 2016

13th November

- Going it alone not an option, Nato chief warns Trump
- As the global axis of power shifts, a cold wind blows through the Baltic states
- Trump-Putin alliance sparks diplomatic crisis

14th November

- Alarm at surge in migrants adrift on tiny Channel boats
- 'Supermoon' viewers to get closest glimpse since 1948
- May under fire for dismissing Farage's alliance with Trump

15th November

- Bitter George puts the boot into Theresa
- William hails Attenborough for 'shaping culture of this country'
- Cox killing politically motivated, court hears

16th November

- 1,300 dodge deportation over 'right to a family life'
- Boris Johnson offering 'impossible' Brexit vision
- McDonnell: millions face inflation trap

17th November

- Brexit UK: Record total of European workers in Britain
- Obama delivers lesson in democracy
- Migrants flock for jobs in UK before Brexit

18th November

- Jails 'meltdown' will take months to fix, says Truss
- EU bills will go on after Brexit, warns Germany
- Call for transport minister to be fired after rail chaos



National News Headlines November 2016

19th November

- Britain's £100bn Budget black hole
- Queen will stay at palace while refit is carried out
- Trump meets Romney in search for secretary of state

20th November

- May clips Chancellor's wings – and orders him to start spending
- Europe's leaders to force UK into a 'hard Brexit'
- Northern city leaders call for urgent reversal of brain drain to south

21st November

- Care for the elderly in crisis as 4 out of 5 councils cannot cope
- Clegg: Legalise cannabis to raise £1 billion a year for the Treasury
- Theresa May wants post-Brexit UK at 'cutting edge'

22nd November

- 'Scrap stamp duty to help first-time buyers'
- Donald Trump: Nigel Farage would be great UK ambassador
- UK flooding: Heavy rain and strong winds warning

23rd November

- £2m penalty for hospitals that fail to help tackle sepsis
- Autumn Statement to include wages and house building announcements
- Hammond must hurry up fast broadband, says Khan

24th November

- 'Nigel Farage warns of 'seismic shock' if Brexit not delivered
- Tories borrow £122bn to fill Brexit black hole (and it could get worse)
- Borrowing is back – and we can blame it on Brexit



National News Headlines November 2016

25th November

- Major: Don't rule out 2nd referendum
- Black Friday bonanza ahead of new year price hikes
- Paris terror attackers 'funded by UK benefits'

26th November

- Brexit Bill could be forced through in just 5 days
- Homeless teens targeted by payday loan firms
- Farage and Ukip could yet mount a Trump-style assault on No 10

27th November

- Elderly care 'close to collapse' as council funding runs out
- Lib Dems try to lure Labour vote in Richmond byelection
- May carries on Labour's business pay crackdown

28th November

- 150 British troops to go to Poland in face of Putin threat
- Brexit: Legal battle over UK's single market membership
- Birmingham pub bombings: Families call for government funding for legal fees

29th November

- 'Have cake and eat it' Brexit notes played down by government
- Activists challenge right to leave single market in new Brexit battle for May
- As Italy and Austria vote, the EU should brace itself for yet more punishment

30th November

- Sleep deprivation 'costs UK £40bn a year'
- Benefit sanctions 'costing more than they save'
- Scots face 'unprecedented' £1.3bn public spending cut



National News Headlines December 2016

1st December

- New deal by oil giants will push fuel to £1.20 a litre
- Immigration reaches record high
- Corbyn's Labour losing touch, warns minister

2nd December

- Boris: We must confront strong men of Russia
- Police flooded with reports of football abuse
- The Government's attitude to 'legal highs' is failing the most vulnerable

3rd December

- Labour and SNP 'are failing child refugees'
- Rail commuter fury at 'outrageous rises in fares for poorer service'
- The Lib Dem victory signals a new political era

4th December

- Killer 'text drivers' may be jailed for life
- Hard Brexit stance could lose us power, say top Tories
- Sick children moved as intensive care units run out of beds

5th December

- Racial segregation 'growing in UK', Dame Louise Casey warns
- Supreme Court to hear government appeal over Brexit powers
- Doctors call for a complete ban on smoking in vehicles

6th December

- May sends troops and terror experts to Gulf
- Peers back new slimmed-down House of Lords
- Packed court as supreme battle for Brexit begins



National News Headlines December 2016

7th December

- Protest as Tories signal break-up of Network Rail
- May calls Remain MPs' bluff in Brexit vote showdown
- Housing crisis 'creates in-work poverty'

8th December

- How 89 MPs lined up to defy the will of the people
- Brexit: French financial regulator wooing London banks
- Grayling's bombshell letter: 'I want to keep rail out of Labour clutches'

9th December

- Saudi row widens Boris rift with May
- Rail strike chaos forces cancer patients to give up treatment
- Allies rally to Johnson over Saudi gaffe

10th December

- Labour set for disaster in election warns MP
- Boris Johnson: 'Profound concern' for people of Yemen
- Michael Gove: Theresa May was 'right to sack me'

11th December

- Hundreds more die unexpectedly at crisis hospitals
- Iraq 'witch hunt' fixer paid with public cash
- Protest silences Corbyn

12th December

- Cell implant could spell end of daily jab in war on diabetes
- Economy grows at its fastest for months
- UK's current GDP growth rate won't last, warns business body



National News Headlines December 2016

13th December

- Train drivers begin 48-hour walkout
- Christmas post strike adds to rail misery
- Hammond calls for 'soft Brexit' taking 4 years

14th December

- Southern rail strike enters second day as Acas talks start
- Schools face cuts of £3bn, says watchdog
- Rail strikes cost taxpayers £50m while train company saves cash

15th December

- Brexit trade deal could take 10 years, says UK's ambassador
- All new police officers in England and Wales to have degrees
- MPs savage ministers over air pollution in London

16th December

- Another day of strikes as train talks collapse
- Unsung hero carers 'save us £40bn'
- Budget cuts to hit two thirds of schools

17th December

- Factory output soars in latest Brexit boost
- Thousands of operations axed to free up NHS beds
- HMP Birmingham rioters 'will face full force of the law'

18th December

- TUC and business urge May to act now on rights of migrants in Britain
- Pressure on May as unions run rampant
- MP was targeted by MoD texts



National News Headlines December 2016

19th December

- Government 'triggered bitter rail dispute'
- Tory MPs tell May she must stand up to union barons
- Farmers using food banks after government payment delay

20th December

- May accuses unions of showing contempt for ordinary people
- Police review UK security after Berlin lorry attack
- Ministers 'will clamp down on foreign aid waste'

21st December

- Berlin fears new terror attack as police arrest wrong man
- Show ID before you vote in crackdown to tackle election fraud
- Government borrowing falls to £12.6bn in November

22nd December

- Post-Brexit UK shows surge in business growth
- Broadband boost for remotest parts of UK
- Queen delays Sandringham trip due to heavy cold

23rd December

- Get Britain out of the EU now, demand voters
- As foreign aid budget soars, our death rates leap by 10%
- Public health fears as toxic pollution in three areas of London breaches EU limit

24th December

- How Cameron made Syrian crisis worse, by ex-envoy
- Hospital waiting lists hit 8-year high
- May Christmas message urges unity after Brexit vote



25th December

- Union boss under fierce attack for acting as Corbyn's 'puppet master'
- TUC and business urge May to act now on rights of migrants in Britain
- FBI backs CIA over hacking

26th December

- Show goes on as royals turn out at Sandringham
- George Michael: Pop superstar dies at 53
- Storm Conor brings snow and wind to Scotland

27th December

- Call for action over 'degraded' countryside
- Number of patients waiting 12 hours in casualty trebles
- Electoral fraud: Voters will have to show ID in pilot scheme

28th December

- Modern slavery fears: Nearly 100 held in nail bar crackdown
- Rail strikes 'risk driving firms out of City'
- Obama races to save Middle East peace process

29th December

- Poorer white boys 'bottom of the class'
- Mass EU immigration 'inevitable' if Britain doesn't leave single market
- Trump starts to flex his muscles on foreign policy

30th December

- Cabinet files reveal plan to shoot nuclear intruders
- Obama and a return to Cold War
- Theresa May faces legal challenge over plans to scrap human rights laws

31st December

- Councils fail to prosecute over blue badge fraud
- New Year's Eve security tightened post-Berlin attack
- Trump praises 'smart' Putin for avoiding spy tit-for-tat



