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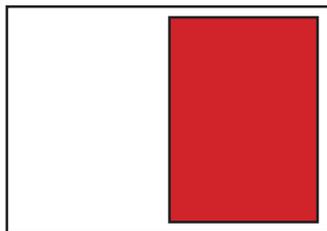
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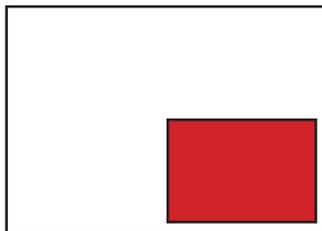
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ISSN 1744-6996



The setting sun through a gap in the trees



News & SPORTS Roundup

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

By Paul G Bazeley for Government World

April News Review

In Coronavirus news, restrictions were eased across the UK, with pubs, restaurants, gyms, hairdressers etc., allowed to reopen. Holidays were permitted within England with the same household. Scotland's coronavirus deaths sadly exceeded 10,000. The NHS announced a study had found that the Pfizer vaccine reduced hospitalisations in the elderly by 75%.

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, died at Windsor Castle aged 99. The Duke was said to have died of old age but died peacefully with the Queen by his side. Prince Philip was the longest-serving royal consort in British history and died two months before his 100th birthday.

US President Joe Biden announced

that all American troops would have withdrawn from Afghanistan by 11th September 2021. The date marks the 20th anniversary of the Al-Qaeda terror attacks in America, which saw planes fly into the twin towers. The UK and later Germany announced it would also withdraw all troops from Afghanistan following the announcement from the US.

The former US police officer, Derek Chauvin, was found guilty on all counts of the murder of George Floyd.

Many sports teams, athletes and governing bodies across the UK took part in a social media boycott for four days in a 'show of solidarity against online abuse'. It was hoped it would urge social media companies would do more to stop abuse on their platforms.

An unopened copy of the Nintendo

video game Super Mario Bros. sold for \$660,000, the most ever paid for a video game.

The tech company LG said it would exit the smartphone market due to competition from budget and large name brands. It became the first major smartphone manufacturer to leave the market.

The 93rd Academy Awards, also known as the Oscars, took place in Los Angeles. The film Nomadland won best picture, Anthony Hopkins won best actor for his role in The Father, and Frances McDormand won best actress for her role in Nomadland.

April Sports Review

Six Premier League teams and other large teams from around Europe signed up to a European Super League; the League was classed as a competition for elite European football clubs. UEFA and FIFA both condemned the new League and stated that players taking part in the new competition would not be allowed to participate in their events, including the FIFA World Cup. In addition, UEFA announced it would look to ban the clubs imminently. A few days later, clubs began to pull out of the proposed Super League after fan backlash and pressure from UEFA and FIFA. A few days later, the Super League says it is suspending the project.

The 85th edition of the Masters was held at the Augusta golf course. Hideki Matsuyama won the championship by one shot to win the coveted green jacket; he became the first Japanese player to win a major tournament.

Rachel Blackmore, an Irish jockey, became the first female winner of the Grand National. The horse she rode

was called Minella Times. North Korea announced it would be pulling out of the 2021 Summer Olympics, stating it was concerned with the COVID-19.

May News Review

The UK COVID-19 alert level was reduced to level 3, which meant the virus was not increasing exponentially. The number of people who received both COVID-19 vaccines exceeded 20 million, while the total number of vaccines administered reached 60 million. Further restrictions were eased in England, Scotland and Wales; most notably, a ban on international travel was lifted. The single-dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccination became the fourth vaccine approved in the UK.

A by-election in Hartlepool is won by Jill Mortimer, a Conservative Party candidate, in what was formally a labour stronghold. It was the first time the Conservative Party have won the constituency and was the first

time a female MP will hold the constituency. The Scottish National Party (SNP) won a historic fourth term in office in the Scottish Parliamentary elections. Most seats in the Scottish Parliament are now in favour of a second independence referendum.

Protests broke out across America, marking the anniversary since George Floyd's death. Floyd's family met with President Joe Biden at the White House and appealed to congress to pass the police reform legislation.

A Ryanair flight was diverted to Minsk after Belarusian authorities conveyed a false bomb threat on orders of President Alexander Lukashenko. Officers arrested the passenger Roman Protasevich, who had been critical of the president. Amnesty International, along with others, called for the release of Protasevich and his girlfriend calling them political prisoners.

Microsoft announced it cease support for Internet Explorer, the internet browser, in June 2022.

Darwin's Arch, a natural rock arch found in the Galapagos Islands, collapsed due to natural erosion. All that remains now are stone towers, which some have named the 'pillars of evolution' to continue the tribute to Charles Darwin.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson married Carrie Symonds, a political activist and conservationist, in a ceremony at Westminster Cathedral.

Italy won the 2021 Eurovision Song Contest with their entry 'Zitti e buoni' by Måneskin; it's the first time the country has won since 1990. The UK achieved a score of 'null points'.

May Sports Review

Chelsea beat Manchester City 1-0 in the Champions League final, winning the trophy for the second time. In the Women's Champions League, Barcelona beat Chelsea to win the prestigious tournament for the first time.

Valladolid won their first Europa League and first major trophy after beating Manchester United on penalties.

Manchester City were crowned Premier League champions for the fifth time after their close rivals Manchester United lost 2-1 to Leicester City. Later in the month, Leicester City beat Chelsea 1-0 to win the FA Cup for the first time in the club's history.

Inter Milan ended Juventus' nine-year run of Serie A wins after securing the title for themselves. It is the first time since the 2009-10 season that Inter Milan have won the League. In Spain, Atletico Madrid won the La Liga for the first time since the 2013-14 season after beating Real Valladolid 2-1 on the last day. Bayern Munich won the Bundesliga title as their striker Robert Lewandowski scored his 41st goal in a 5-2 win over FC Augsburg. Lewandowski set a new record for the most number of goals scored by an individual in a Bundesliga season, beating Gerd Muller's record of 40 goals. Finally, Lille ended PSGs run of three consecutive titles after winning the Ligue 1, Lille's first title since 2011.

Phil Mickelson became the oldest winner of a major championship after claiming the 2021 PGA Championship at the age of 50; the win is his 6th major.

The Colombian, Egan Bernal of the Ineos Grenadiers won the Giro D'Italia winning by 1' 29".

June News Review

The total number of COVID-19 cases across the world exceeded 175 million. The UK recorded no daily deaths of COVID-19 for the first time since March 2020. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency approved the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for people aged 12-15. Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the final easing of lockdown would be delayed by four weeks due to rising cases and allow for further vaccinations to be given.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock admitted breaching COVID-19 social distancing rules after The Sun reports he had an affair with his aide Gina Colangelo. Hancock later resigned from his role as Health Secretary after mounting pressure. Sajid Javid, the former chancellor, replaced him.

In a shock result, the Chesham and Amersham by-election was won by the Liberal Democrats. The result saw the Conservative Party lose the constituency for the first time after suffering a swing of 25.2% away from the party.

The Public Health Minister, Jo Churchill, announced that junk food adverts on daytime television and the internet would be banned by the end of the year to help fight rising cases of childhood obesity.

Derek Chauvin was sentenced to 22 and a half years in prison for the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis on 25th May 2020. The former police officer expressed condolences to Floyd's family during the sentencing.

The British government announced a free trade agreement between Britain and Australia. The deal is the first to be built since the UK left the EU and covers goods such as cars, ceramics, biscuits and Scotch Whisky.

El Salvador became the first country to accept the cryptocurrency Bitcoin as legal tender.

Australian and Chinese researchers announced the discovery of two new species of woolly flying squirrels in the Himalayas: the Tibetan woolly flying squirrel and the Yunnan woolly flying squirrel. However, very little is known about the creatures.

June Sports Review

UEFA Euro 2020 began a year late, with Italy beating Turkey 3-0 in Rome in the tournament's first game. The tournament was held in 11 countries as a 'one-off' to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the championship. Cristiano Ronaldo, the Portuguese player, became the highest scorer in the competition's history with 11 goals.

He is also the first player to score in five Euro tournaments.

In tennis, Barbara Krejčíková beat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova in three sets to win the women's French Open singles title; it was her first Grand Slam win. Novak Djokovic defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas in five sets to win his 19th Grand Slam men's singles title.

Danish footballer Christian Eriksen suffered a cardiac arrest while playing for his country in the Euros. The player was given urgent medical attention on the pitch before being taken to the hospital. It was later announced he was in a stable condition.

John Rahm won the 121st US Open by one shot, winning his first major and becoming the first Spanish player ever to win the championship.

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Hundreds of free qualifications on offer to boost skills and jobs

April

An estimated 11 million adults now have the opportunity to gain a new qualification for free, designed to help them to gain in-demand skills and secure great jobs.

Almost 400 qualifications are available to take from today (1 April) - backed by £95 million in government funding in 2021/22 - as part of the government's Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

The qualifications on offer range from engineering to social care to conservation and are available to any adult who has not already achieved a qualification at Level 3 (equivalent to A-levels).

The roll out marks a major milestone in the delivery of the landmark Lifetime Skills Guarantee - announced by the Prime Minister in September 2020. The Guarantee aims to transform the skills system so everyone, no matter where they live or their

background, can gain the skills they need to progress in work at any stage of their lives. It will also ensure employers have access to the skilled workforce they need, and more people are trained for the skills gaps that exist now, and in the future.

Adults who take up the free courses have the potential to boost career prospects, wages and help fill skills gaps, while supporting the economy and building back better.



For example, with a Diploma in Engineering Technology adults can progress to roles in Maintenance or Manufacturing Engineering. A Level 3 Diploma in Electrical Installation or a qualification in Adult Care can also provide a gateway to sectors offering rewarding careers and where there are multiple job opportunities.

So more unemployed people can take full advantage of these courses, the government will pilot an extension to the length of time they can receive Universal Credit while undertaking work-focused study.

They will now be able to train full time for up to 12 weeks, or up to 16 weeks on a full time skills bootcamp in England, while receiving

Universal Credit to support their living costs. This will allow access to more training options and provide a better chance of finding work, while continuing to receive the support they need.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

“As we cautiously lift lockdown restrictions, the government’s focus is on recovering from the pandemic and building back better.

The Lifetime Skills Guarantee is fundamental to that – with free courses giving adults the expertise they need to find new, better jobs.

My message is clear. At every stage of your life, we will help you get the skills you need



to train, retrain, and get into jobs you want and our economy needs.”

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

“The launch of these free qualifications for adults is a pivotal moment in the delivery of our Lifetime Skills Guarantee, which will make sure everyone can train, retrain or upskill throughout their lives.

As we build back better and rebuild our economy, it is vital we level up more opportunities for people across the country and help more people progress in work.

This offer will help give millions of adults the chance to gain the skills they need to secure rewarding careers in key sectors of the economy including construction, healthcare and digital. With almost 400 to choose from, there is something there for everyone.”

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Theresa Coffey MP said:

“Opening up a wider choice of courses and qualifications for jobseekers could be the clincher that lands them their next job.

Helping people get the skills they need is a central part of our Plan for Jobs which is already supporting people of all ages into work as we build back better from the pandemic.”

Helen Tupper, co-author of Sunday Times best-selling book *The Squiggly Career*, said:

“Our jobs today are constantly changing and one of the ways people can increase their ability to adapt is through ongoing learning. Course fees are a barrier for many adults but the introduction of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee has significantly increased the accessibility of adult learning opportunities, making hundreds of free courses available for people to increase their employability and gain skills to progress in work or secure a better job. If you’re an adult considering your next step, I’d really encourage you to think about how new skills could boost your existing strengths and check out any free opportunities you’re eligible for.”

As well as the free courses, as part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, thousands of adults have taken advantage of new Skills Bootcamps which offer free, flexible courses lasting up to 16 weeks covering areas including construction, digital and technical. Skills Bootcamps – which are currently running in six areas of the country - provide a chance to learn specific skills and offer a fast-track to an interview with a local employer at the end. Skills Bootcamps will be expanded across the country later this year.

The government's Skills for Jobs White Paper, published in January, enshrines the Lifetime Skills Guarantee – setting out landmark reforms that will realigning the post-16 education system around the needs of employers, so that people are trained for the skills gaps that exist now, and in the future, in sectors the economy needs, including construction, digital, clean energy and manufacturing.

The White Paper forms a key part of the government's Plan for Jobs which is protecting, supporting and creating jobs across the country and will help everyone to benefit from the opportunities available to them.

Behaviour experts to support schools with poor discipline

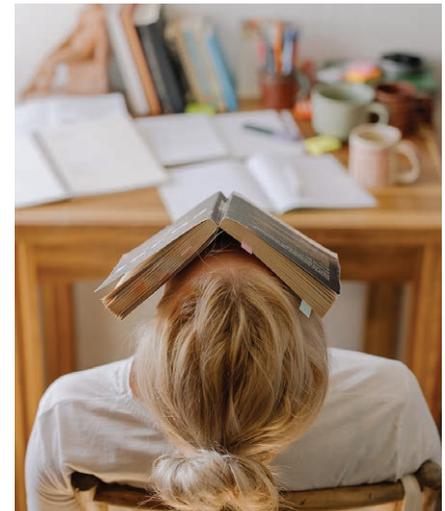
April

Heads and behaviour leads from some of England's highest performing schools and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) have today been confirmed as mentors and trainers in the Department's £10 million Behaviour Hubs programme.

Designed to support schools struggling with poor discipline, training through the Behaviour Hubs for the first group of participating schools will commence from the start of the summer term, at a time when a minority of pupils may need extra support from their schools to re-engage with education following the pandemic.

The lead schools and MATs will work closely with the schools they are supporting to diagnose what could be improved, develop and launch new behaviour approaches and policies and provide ongoing mentoring and support.

The lead schools selected have shown that good discipline overwhelmingly results in the best Ofsted ratings and overall outcomes for their students, and have demonstrated their capacity to support other schools to achieve the



same.

Lead schools will advise their counterparts on issues ranging from setting clear expectations to eliminate low-level disruption in classrooms that is so damaging to teachers and other pupils, to more systematic approaches to maintaining order and discipline across the school, such as forbidding the use of mobile phones and maintaining quiet corridors.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

“Behaviour and discipline are the cornerstone to so much of what defines this country’s most successful schools.

Whether it’s supporting some of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged children with the routines and structures needed to help them fulfil their potential, or helping prepare young people for the expectations of the workplace, parents and teachers know that orderly and disciplined classrooms are best.

That is why I will always support schools taking a firm approach, for example taking action to tackle the scourge of ever-present mobile phones – because I know the

positive impact it will have on students’ wellbeing and attainment.”

Perryfields Primary Pupil Referral Unit is one of the 22 schools and two multi academy trusts from secondary, primary, special and alternative provision selected as leads in the Behaviour Hubs programme.

Peter Hines, Headteacher of Perryfields Primary PRU:

“The team at Perryfields Primary PRU is immensely proud of the work that it does to improve the life chances of young people in Worcestershire. We are delighted to have the opportunity to widen the impact of this work by being a lead school in the

Behaviour Hubs programme.”

We want to share with other schools how we have created the behaviour culture at Perryfields which is underpinned by exceedingly high expectations and a belief that all pupils matter so each and every one of them can be set on a pathway to fulfil their aspirations and potential. We look forward to working with colleagues across the country to share our passion for making a difference and improving young people’s education and life chances.”

Schools taking part in the



programme will also have access to training on common problems and effective approaches led by Tom Bennett, founder and director of ResearchED, and the Department's lead behaviour adviser and his team of behaviour advisers. There will be open days at lead schools to observe good systems and approaches in action as well as hub networking events and online forums for schools to share experiences.

Tom Bennett, Lead Behaviour advisor to the Department said:

“It's been a real honour to recruit some of the best schools in the country to offer their support to other schools who want to refocus on behaviour and culture. Every school can, with assistance, be safe, calm places where everyone is treated with dignity, and students and staff can learn and flourish together.

We know that some schools are further towards that ideal than others, and many more that can, and only need direction from those who have walked the path before them.

The Hubs project is designed to start reasonably modestly, build a model that

works, and then expand into a size and shape that supports more schools that need it. This has the capacity to make a real and substantial difference to the lives of futures of many thousands of children and families and I cannot wait to see it develop.”

Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner for England said:

“Good behaviour is really important in enabling all children to learn and be happy at school.

I welcome this package of support for schools which have experienced challenges in this area, especially given the extra strains caused by the pandemic, helping children to get back on track and thrive – not just academically, but socially too.”

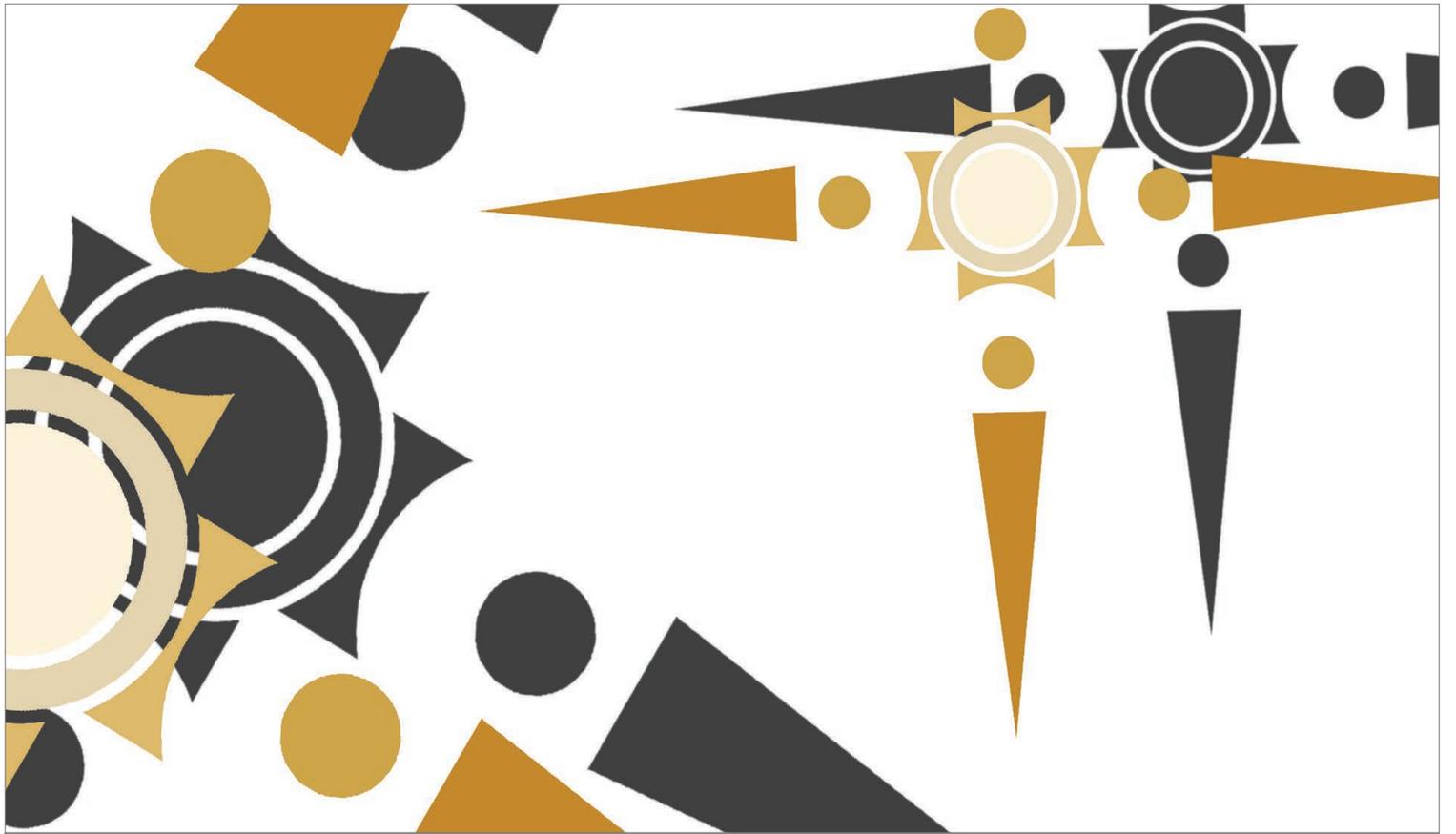
Leora Cruddas, Chief Executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, said:

“Good standards of behaviour in a school are essential to the safety and success of all pupils. Every child has the right to go to a school where they feel safe and able to learn.

Establishing and sustaining a culture of good behaviour can be challenging. CST welcomes the appointment of exemplary schools and trusts with strong cultures of good behaviour. This will enable the system to share the strongest educational philosophies and practices.”

The programme will run on a termly basis, with lead schools and MATs forming hubs with a different two supported schools each term. The programme will expand next year, with further lead schools and MATs appointed to support more schools to help reach the target of 500 supported schools over the three-year programme.





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Government hits vaccination target as PM praises “precious protection” offered by jabs

April

All adults over 50, the clinically vulnerable and health and social care workers have now been offered a life-saving Covid-19 jab.

All adults over 50, the clinically vulnerable and health and social care workers have now been offered a life-saving Covid-19 jab, as the government prepares to move into the next phase of the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

The target was reached ahead of schedule, with the government having pledged to offer a first dose to priority cohorts 1-9 by 15 April.

Nearly 40 million vaccines have now been given in total, with adults under 50 expected to begin to be invited in the coming days.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

We have now passed another hugely

significant milestone in our vaccine programme by offering jabs to everyone in the nine highest risk groups.

That means more than 32 million people have been given the precious protection vaccines provide against Covid-19.

I want to thank everyone involved in the vaccine rollout which has already saved many thousands of lives.

We will now move forward with completing essential second doses and making progress towards our target of offering all adults a vaccine by the end of July.

The JCVI are expected to publish their final advice on how the government should vaccinate those aged under 50.

This advice will pave the way for the next phase of the vaccination programme, which

is expected to begin this week.

NHS organisations in the four nations, in collaboration with devolved administrations, will decide how to operationalise the JCVI advice.

It is thought that people in England in their late 40s will be the first to be invited to book their jabs.

Over 7 million second doses have now been given – with a record 475,230 given on Saturday – and we remain on track to offer a first vaccine to all adults by 31 July.



BRIT Awards to go ahead with live audience as latest event in Government research programme

April

The 2021 BRIT Awards ceremony will go ahead with a live audience as the latest addition to the government's Events Research Programme, which looks at how venues can restart large events and welcome crowds back safely this summer.

The BRIT Awards with Mastercard will

return to London's The O2 arena on Tuesday 11 May with an audience of 4,000 people and live performances from Dua Lipa, Headie One, Arlo Parks and BRIT Rising Star Award winner Griff, among other acts to be announced.

Audience members will not be socially

distanced or required to wear face coverings once seated in the arena, however they will be required to follow existing Government guidance when travelling to the venue and adhere to rules set out by the event organisers.

All attendees must have proof of a negative lateral flow test result to enter the venue. As part of the wider scientific research on the trial events, attendees will also be asked to take a test after the event to gather further evidence on the safety of indoor settings, reduced social distancing and the removal of non-pharmaceutical interventions like face coverings.

They will also have to provide contact details for NHS Test and Trace to ensure everyone can be traced in the event of an audience



member receiving a positive test after the event.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:

“The BRITs are always a big night in the music calendar, but this year’s awards will be particularly special. They will reunite live audiences with the best of British talent for the first time in a year, while providing a vital opportunity to see how we can get large crowds back safely as soon as possible.

Music connected us when we were separated by this pandemic, and now it’s going to help bring us back together again.”

The research gathered from this year’s BRIT Awards will build on the evidence collected at other pilots in the programme, including the World Snooker Championships at the Sheffield Crucible and an outdoor gig at Sefton Park hosted by Festival Republic.

The evidence from these pilots will be used to inform government policy to bring about the phased return of fuller audiences to venues and events across England.

Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive BPI & BRIT Awards, said:

“The BRIT Awards team are excited to confirm our plans to host a live audience at our ceremony on May 11th. There could be no better way to celebrate music’s biggest night than with an audience present for the first live performances at The O2 in over a year. Most importantly, this is also a key moment in the return of live music, which we all want to see back at scale as quickly as possible.

We will be working closely with the Government, The O2 and all our partners to finalise details and ensure all safety measures and guidelines are adhered to. More exciting performance announcements will be made in the coming days.”

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

“We continue to take steps to getting back to doing the things we love, whether that’s meeting friends and loved ones, or attending live sport and music.

These planned pilots mean we can gather the necessary evidence to inform our plans for future events, ensuring mass events can take place safely.

I am enormously grateful for the hard work

of scientists and clinicians from across the country, which will mean we can start to enjoy these events again safely.”

Danielle Kennedy-Clark, Deputy General Manager of The O2 said:

“We’re proud that The O2 has been selected to host the largest indoor capacity pilot event with The BRITs. This scientific trial is an important step on the path to recovery for the live entertainment industry, and our operational teams are making the final preparations to be able to welcome people into The O2 again for the first time in more than a year.”

The information gathered from events as part of the Events Research Programme will be crucial to understand how all venues - from major sport stadiums and theatres to wedding venues, conference centres and nightclubs - could operate safely this summer. The programme of pilots will explore how different approaches to social distancing, ventilation and testing protocols could ease opening and maximise participation.

Flagship summer schools programme opens today to help students recover lost learning

April

Schools in England can now register to offer a summer school to help children recover learning they have lost during the pandemic

Schools will be encouraged to bid for a share of £200 million in government funding to design summer schools for students who have experienced the most disruption.

Incoming Year 7 students will predominantly



be encouraged to get involved, to help them navigate the important transition between primary and secondary school following a year of disrupted learning.

Summer schools will include a variety of activities from group activities such as sports to mental health support and academic catch up such as maths and English lessons.

Summer schools are one part of £1.7 billion already invested by the government in ambitious catch-up activity over the next year, including high quality tutoring.

A longer-term plan to help all students recover from the impact of the pandemic is currently under development, led by Education Recovery Commissioner Sir Kevan Collins.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Our resilient kids are now back in the classroom, seeing their friends and having all of the benefits that being in school brings. But we know that time out of school necessary to control the pandemic has had an impact on the learning of pupils right across the country. Additional support this summer – on top of the National Tutoring programme and additional funding for schools – will help boost learning and wellbeing plus help prepare those pupils about to start secondary schools.

We're supporting schools to plan their summer provision as early as possible, and making sure parents and pupils themselves have the notice they need to plan their own summers.

I am confident that this summer of enrichment and engagement in

academic work will be a great success, tailored to local needs by the wonderful heads and teachers who best understand the needs of their students.

Schools can sign up via an online form on GOV.uk to confirm their plans, with flexibility for schools to target funding at other groups of students dependent on their local circumstances.

Parents should expect to hear from their schools over the course of May and June as they progress with their planning, but it remains at the discretion of schools which students they target their summer school offer towards.

The government anticipates that a two week summer school will give students an opportunity to make up some lost academic ground before they start a new school.

Summer schools should also offer an opportunity for schools to support students' wellbeing, and schools should include activities such as team games, music, drama or sports activities, in their plans.

Schools will need to determine how best to use the funding and staff the scheme to ensure that the extra time is used effectively.

G7 tech leaders agree bold new proposals to boost online safety worldwide

April

- Declaration signed in digital and tech ministerial meeting ahead of June G7 Leaders Summit
- Principles to improve online safety include commitments on human rights and protecting young people
- Roadmap to digitise outdated paper-based system for global trade among other agreements

Leaders from the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US and EU signed a declaration containing a series of shared principles on how to tackle the global challenge of online safety, including that online firms should have systems and processes in place to reduce illegal and harmful activity and prioritise the protection of children.

The principles, which have been shaped by the UK's world-leading approach, say that any steps to improve online safety must support the values of open and democratic societies and respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The joint ministerial declaration was signed at

a virtual meeting hosted by UK Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden to fire the starting gun on this year's G7 Summit. The agreements are part of the first of seven ministerial declarations due to be signed this year.

Other measures include plans to turbocharge exports by digitising the cumbersome and centuries-old paper-based system for key international trade transactions and improving the free flow of data.

In a sign of stronger cooperation to address concerns over the market power of big tech platforms, international regulators and policymakers will meet with the UK's Competition and Markets Authority in the autumn to discuss long term coordination and enforcement.

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

“As a coalition of the world’s leading democracies and technological powers, we want to forge a compelling vision of how tech should support and enhance open and democratic societies in the digital age.

Together we have agreed a number of priorities in areas ranging from internet safety to digital competition to make sure the digital revolution is a democratic one that enhances global prosperity for all.”

The G7 Digital and Tech ministerial meeting is the culmination of ongoing discussions and negotiations around a number of priority areas and in the ministerial declaration published today, G7 member states have agreed to:

- Internet safety principles to guide work to improve online safety. G7 countries commit to protecting human rights online and agree that tech companies have a corporate responsibility for their users’ safety. This means they should have systems and processes in place to reduce illegal and harmful activity and prioritise the protection of children. These are based on underlying principles in the UK Government’s Online Harms White Paper.
- Develop a framework for the use of electronic transferable records, to address legal barriers and coordinate domestic reforms so companies can use digital solutions for the shipment of goods and trade finance - replacing slow and

outdated paper transactions.

- A consensus that a more joined-up approach to regulation and promoting competition in digital markets is needed to better serve consumers and businesses. Regulators have agreed to meet in the autumn to discuss these issues further.
- Cooperation to seize the opportunities and benefits of data free flow with trust for people, businesses and economies. The G7 will build evidence on the impacts of data localisation, promote regulatory cooperation and accelerate the development of best practice approaches for data sharing across a broader set of priority areas. These areas may include transport, science and research, education and natural disaster mitigation.
- Collaboration on how democratic governments and stakeholders can support the development of digital technical standards that online tools, services and protocols should measure up to, and which, among other things, will guide the development of a free, open and secure Internet.

For the first time the G7 also discussed the importance of promoting security and resilience in critical digital infrastructure, in particular in telecommunications, including 5G and future communications technologies. In the declaration, G7 countries commit to developing their collaboration on this throughout the year.

Building on the momentum from this G7 Digital and Technology track, the UK will also host the Future Tech Forum this September. The Forum will convene like-minded democratic partners to discuss the role of technology in supporting open societies and tackling global challenges, in collaboration with industry, academia, and other key stakeholders.

As is tradition for the host nation to highlight their culture, over the two days of the ministerial track (28 - 29 April) G7 ministers and invited guests will enjoy performances from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and National Theatre. These organisations, and over 5,000 others, have benefitted from the unprecedented £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund.



COVID-19:

What we know so far - part 4

by Paul Bazeley

Picking up from previously, having come through a harsh winter spell which consisted of another lockdown, the UK was beginning to ease restrictions, with Phase 1 parts 1 and 2 going ahead as planned. Cases of COVID-19 and deaths from the virus were declining, and the vaccination rollout was continuing at a rapid and rather impressive pace.

What has happened since?

A brief overview.

Moving into April 2021, things seemed to be going well. The second phase of restriction easing in England went ahead with non-essential retail beginning trading once again, and pubs and restaurants able to serve people outside. Gyms and other indoor leisure and personal services, such as hairdressers and nails salons, were also allowed to reopen. Self-catering holiday rentals were also allowed to resume business, but only for one household.

The Scottish government also began to ease some of the rules, allowing six people from 6 different households to meet outdoors. The previously approved Moderna vaccine also started to be used for vaccinations joining the Pfizer-BioNTech and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines. By the end of April, anyone aged 40 and over was being offered a COVID-19 jab.

India was added to the UK red travel list after a variant originating from India, B.1.617, commonly known as the Delta variant, spread quickly throughout the UK. This meant anyone returning from India would be required to isolate for ten days in a quarantine hotel. It also meant that all non-British nationals from India were banned from entering the UK.

During May, the planned third phase of restriction easing went ahead; this allowed up to six people or two households to meet indoors and rules impacting social contact outdoors removed. Hotels were allowed to reopen, and indoor hospitality services

could resume with table service only. Limits on the number of fans able to attend outdoor sporting events were also increased.

The vaccination race continued moving quickly, with those aged 30 and over able to book a jab by the end of the month. The medical regulations body approved a single dose jab created by Johnson & Johnson for use in the UK.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock announced that the Delta strain of COVID-19 was “more than half and potentially as many as three-quarters of all new cases”. However, he stated the strain seemed to be contained within certain hotspots, mainly in the North-West of the country.

Coming into June, the number of coronavirus cases was once again beginning to rise. It was revealed that the Delta variant was thought to be

more transmissible than the original strain and the previously dominant Alpha variant, also known as the Kent variant.

In the middle of June, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced up to a four-week delay of the final phase of restriction easing initially scheduled for 21st June. The PM expressed concerns over the spread of the Delta variant and announced that the vaccination rollout would be accelerated.

The Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, took most of the limelight by the end of the month. The Sun newspaper revealed he had broken social distancing restrictions during an affair with his aide and close friend Gina Colangelo. On the day the news broke, Hancock apologised for breaking social distancing and for “letting people down”. Afterwards, the Prime Minister said he accepted the apology and considered the matter “closed”.

Cross-party pressure and backlash from the public mounted in the 24 hours since the story broke, with many stating it undermined the rules the government was trying to impose. The evening after the story was published, Hancock resigned, saying that the people who “make these rules have got to stick by them”. He was replaced later that day by former chancellor Sajid Javid.

By the end of the month, anybody aged 18

years and over was able to book in for their first vaccination.

Where are we now?

Well, we’re in a bit of a limbo. The final phase of restriction easing has been delayed and will hopefully occur on the 19th July 2021. Regarding vaccination progress, the country is ahead of its target and way ahead of most of the rest of the world.

The worry is the rise of the Delta variant as the dominant strain. Research suggests it is more transmissible than other variants. Still, many seem confident the vaccine will protect against and reduce the number of hospitalisations and deaths.

What does the future look like?

Unfortunately, there still isn’t much to report. The UK vaccination rollout seems to be a success and is still going strong, yet case numbers are rising once again. Boris Johnson seemed confident that phase four, the final phase of restriction easing, would go ahead on the 19th July 2021. However, it seems hard to believe that case numbers will drop soon when they seem to be rising exponentially; this is probably why there was a further push in the vaccination program this June.

Now, the smart money would probably be on

the restrictions easing next month, and the government potentially seeing it as a ‘herd immunity’ plan like initially proposed before the lockdown. The difference is that most adults will have had at least one of their jabs.

It is clear this virus is in our future whether we like it or not. Perhaps the next few months will reveal how the government and their advisors envisage us living with this virus. But, as the previous article stated, the threat of a variant that is unsusceptible to the vaccine still seems a worry for lots of people at the moment.

A follow-up article will feature in a future edition of Government World.



44,000 trees to be planted as Urban Tree Challenge Fund reopens

May

Thousands of trees will be planted near schools and healthcare centres and in areas with fewer trees and higher social deprivation, as the Urban Tree Challenge Fund has re-opened for applications, Defra and the Forestry Commission announced today.

Across the country 44,000 large trees will be planted in towns and cities. These will support areas to improve health and wellbeing and help connect people to the outdoors.

Evidence from Forest Research shows the majority of adults surveyed agreed that their level of happiness when in nature has increased compared to before the pandemic. The new trees will also play a crucial role in the fight against climate change, supporting the UK's journey to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and commitment to increase tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares

of trees a year by 2025.

Today's announcement comes ahead of the government setting out its wider plans on how it intends to deliver on its tree planting commitment. A new action plan for trees and woodland will be published shortly to outline how government will plant new high-quality, well-managed trees and woodlands and improve the condition and resilience of existing ones.

The Urban Tree Challenge Fund has reopened following the success of the first



two rounds where a combined total of up to 134,000 new trees will be planted across England's towns and cities.

Forestry Minister Lord Goldsmith said:

"I am delighted to announce the reopening of this hugely successful fund, made possible by £6 million from our Nature for Climate Fund. Ahead of our forthcoming ambitious action plan for trees, woodland and forestry, and to complement our manifesto ambition to have every new street lined with trees, the Urban Tree Challenge Fund provides a fantastic example of how trees can be planted, managed and enjoyed to provide the greatest impact - in areas where they are needed most."

Forestry Commission Chair Sir

William Worsley said:

“The pandemic has shown us just how important trees and nature are, wherever you live.

Through targeting funding toward areas where they will have the biggest benefits, including near healthcare and educational facilities, this fund will deliver increased benefits for health and wellbeing, as well as contributing towards the government’s ambition to increase woodland creation across England.”

Illustrating the success of the fund to date, Slough Borough Council have planted over 8,500 trees under the Urban Tree Challenge Fund. Through the delivery of diverse community-led tree planting projects, the Council have seen wider health and educational benefits to the general public, students and schools, stakeholders and community groups.

Louise Handley at Slough Council said:

“The funding from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund has allowed us to bring post Covid initiatives to the most deprived areas of our community, which focus on up skilling for employment, active lifestyles, citizen

science and volunteering.

The design of the Urban Forest has facilitated a move away from close mown grass cutting regimes to one of biodiversity improvement and habitat creation. This initiative has the potential to reach all of Slough’s population and its flora and fauna.”

Over the next two years, up to £6 million will be available for planting in addition to necessary maintenance payments. The grants are administered by the Forestry Commission, and successful applicants are match-funding the money they receive.

Grants will fund the planting of trees and the first three years of their care to ensure they can flourish into the future.

Also being announced today is a new £1 million Woods into Management Innovation Fund which is due to open in May and will focus on improving the condition of existing woodlands. The aim of this scheme, as part of government’s Nature for Climate Fund, is to increase the area of woodland in active management to improve their ecological condition, help them adapt to a changing climate and recover from the impacts of pests and diseases. The scheme is aimed at forestry businesses and conservation

organisations who are in a position to help owners better manage their existing woodlands.

This is part of a series of Nature for Climate Fund announcements this spring, leading up to the publication of the government’s action plan on trees, woodland and forestry.

In recent months, we have announced the opening of the Local Authority Treescaping Fund, £12.1 million of investment for tree planting in Community Forests across the country, as well as a funding boost and new woodland creation partnership between Defra and Forest for Cornwall, and a £3.9 million pot to support innovative planting schemes in towns and cities and near rivers to reduce flood risk.



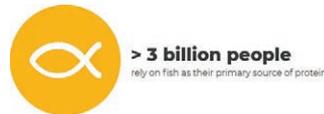
Overfishing, Conservation, Sustainability, and Farmed Fish

by Coty Perry

As with many other aspects of government policy, overfishing and other fishing-related environmental issues are a real problem, but it's not clear that government intervention is the solution. Indeed, it might be one of the main drivers of overfishing and other conservation and sustainability issues stemming from commercial fishing. Much like drone fishing, there are serious ethical issues of interest to the average angler.

There's another commonality that overfishing has with environmental issues more broadly: The Western companies primarily concerned with serious efforts to curb overfishing are not the ones who are most guilty of overfishing. What this means is that the costs of overfishing are disproportionately borne by the countries least engaged in practices that are counter to efforts to make commercial fishing more sustainable while also promoting conservation of fish biodiversity. All of these are important issues not just

for commercial fishermen, but also those interested in questions of conservation and sustainability in general, as well as recreational fisherman and basically anyone who uses fish as a food source. As the ocean goes, so goes the planet, so it is of paramount importance for everyone to educate themselves on what is driving overfishing, what its consequences are, and what meaningful steps — not simply theater to feel as if “something is being done” — can be taken.

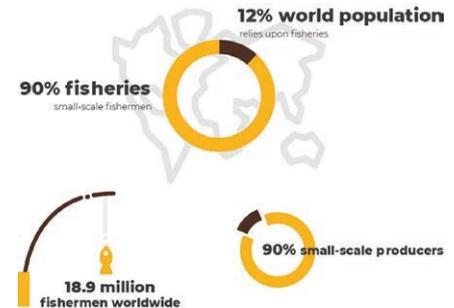


fish as their primary source of protein. About 12 percent of the world relies on fisheries in some form or another. 90 percent of these being small-scale fishermen — “think a small crew in a boat, not a ship,” using small nets or even rods, reels and lures not too different from the kind you probably use.

Indeed, over three billion people around the world rely on

There are 18.9 million fishermen in the world, with 90 percent of them falling under the same small-scale fisherman rubric discussed above.

Overfishing Definition: What is Overfishing?



First, take heart: As a recreational fisherman you are almost certainly not guilty of “overfishing.” This is an issue for commercial fishermen in the fishing industry who are trawling the ocean depths with massive nets

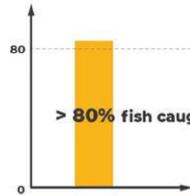


to catch enough fish to make a living for themselves and their families, not the angler who enjoys a little peace and quiet on the weekends.

Overfishing is, in some sense, a rational reaction to increasing market needs for fish. Most people consume approximately twice as much fish as they did 50 years ago and there are four times as many people on earth as there were at the close of the 1960s. This is one driver of the 30 percent of commercially fished waters being classified as “overfished.” This means that the stock of available fishing waters are being depleted faster than they can be replaced.

There is a simple and straightforward definition of when an area is being “overfished” and it’s not simply about catching “too many” fish. Overfishing occurs when the breeding stock of an area

becomes so depleted that the fish in the area cannot replenish themselves. At best, this means fewer fish next year than there are this year. At worst, it means that



a species of fish cannot be fished out of a specific area anymore. This also goes hand-in-hand with wasteful forms

of fishing that harvest not just the fish the trawler is looking for, but just about every other organism big enough to be caught in a net. Over 80 percent of fish are caught in these kinds of nets but fish aren’t the only things caught in nets.

What’s more, there are a number of wide-reaching consequences of overfishing. It’s not simply bad because it depletes the fish stocks of available resources, though that certainly is one reason why it’s bad. Others include:

- **Increased Algae in the Water:** Like many other things, algae is great but too much of it is very bad. When there are fewer fish in the water, algae doesn’t get eaten. This increases the acidity in the world’s oceans, which negatively impacts not only the remaining fish, but also the reefs and plankton.

- **Destruction of Fishing Communities:** Overfishing can completely destroy fish populations and communities that once relied upon the fish that were there. This is particularly true for island communities. And it’s worth remembering that there are many isolated points on the globe where fishing isn’t just the driver of the economy, but also the primary source of protein for the population. When either or both of these disappear, the community disappears along with it.

- **Tougher Fishing for Small Vessels:** If you’re a fan of small business, you ought to be concerned about overfishing. That’s because overfishing is mostly done by large vessels and makes it harder for smaller ones to meet their quotas. With over 40 million people around the world getting their food and livelihood from fishing, this is a serious problem.

- **Ghost Fishing:** Ghost fishing refers to abandoned man-made fishing gear that is left behind. It’s believed that an estimated 25,000

nets float throughout the Northeast Atlantic. This left behind gear becomes a death trap for all marine life that swim through that area. While much of this is caused due to storms and natural disasters, much of it is the result of ignorance and neglect on behalf of commercial fishermen.

- **Species Pushed to Near Extinction:**

When we hear that a fish species is being depleted, we often think it's fine because they can be found somewhere else. However, many species of fish are being pushed close to extinction by overfishing, such as several species of cod, tuna, halibut and even lobster.

- **Bycatch:** If you're old enough to remember people being concerned about dolphins caught in tuna nets, you know what bycatch is: It's when marine life that is not being sought by commercial fishermen is caught



in their nets as a byproduct. The possibility of bycatch increases dramatically with overfishing.

Overfishing infographics “20% fish in the USA lost in the supply chain”

- **Waste:** Overfishing creates waste in the supply chain. Approximately 20 percent of all fish in the United States is lost in the supply chain due to overfishing. In the Third World this rises to 30 percent thanks to a lack of available freezing devices. What this means is that even though there are more fish being caught than ever, there is also massive waste of harvested fish.

- **Mystery Fish:** Because of overfishing, there are a significant amount of fish at your local fish market and on the shelves of your local grocery store that aren't what they are labelled as. Just because something says that it's cod doesn't mean that it actually is. To give you an idea of the scope of this problem, only 13 percent of the “red snapper” on the market is actually red snapper. Most of this is unintentional due to the scale of fishing done today, but much of it is not, hiding behind the unfortunate realities of mass scale fishing to pass off inferior products to unwitting customers. So why is overfishing happening? There are a variety of factors driving overfishing that



we will delve into here, the bird's eye view is below.

- **Regulation:** Regulations are incredibly difficult to enforce even when they are carefully crafted, which they often are not. The worst offenders have little regulations in place and none of these regulations apply in international waters, which are effectively a Wild West.

- **Unreported Fishing:** Existing regulations force many fisherman to do their fishing “off the books” if they wish to turn a profit. This is especially true in developing nations.

- **Mobile Processing:** Mobile processing is when fish are processed before even returning to port. They are canned while still out at sea. Canned fish is increasingly taking up the fish consumption market at the expense of fresh fish.

- **Subsidies:** Anyone familiar with farm subsidies knows that these are actually bad for the production

of healthy food. Subsidies for fishing are similar. They don't generally go to small fisherman whom one would think are most in need, but rather to massive vessels doing fuel-intensive shipping.

What's more, subsidies encourage overfishing because the money keeps flowing no matter what — the more fish you catch, the more money you get, with no caps influenced by environmental impact fishing regulation.

Indeed, according to the World Wildlife Fund, subsidies drive illegal fishing, which is closely tied with piracy, slavery and human trafficking. The University of British Columbia conducted a study that found that \$22 billion (63 percent of all fishing subsidies) went toward subsidies that encourage overfishing.

Of these, the main driver of overfishing is, predictably, government subsidies. So it is worth taking a few minutes to separate that out from the rest of these issues and give it some special attention.

More on Overfishing and Government Subsidies

Overfishing - "Fishing boats on the water with Asian writing on the sides"

The subsidies that drive overfishing are highly lucrative: The governments of the world are giving away over \$35 billion every year to fishermen. That's about 20 percent of the value of all the commercially caught fish in the world every year. Subsidies are often directed at reducing the costs for megafishing companies — things like paying for their massive fuel budgets, the gear they need to catch fish, or even the vessels themselves.

This effectively allows for large commercial fishing operations to take over the market or recapitalize at rates significantly below that of the market, disproportionately favoring them over their smaller competitors.

It is this advantage that drives large mega fishing companies into unsustainable fishing practices. The end result of this is not just depleted stocks, but also lower yields due to long-term overfishing, as well as lowered costs of fish at market, which has some advantages for the consumer, but also makes it significantly harder for smaller operations to turn a profit.

Such government subsidies could provide assistance to smaller fishermen, but are generally structured in a way that favors consolidation of the market and efforts



counterproductive to conservation efforts.

What Role Do Farmed Fish Play?

Farmed fish is a phenomenon that we take for granted today, but is actually a revolutionary method of bringing fish out of the water and onto our dinner tables. Originally, it was seen as a way of preserving the population of wild fish. The thinking was this: We could eat fish from fish farming while the wild stock replenished itself.

At the same time, communities

impacted by overfishing would find new ways to get income in an increasingly difficult market. Third world countries would have their protein needs met in a manner that did not negatively impact the environment. It was considered a big, easy win for the entire world.

The reality, as is often the case, turned out to be a little different. Crowding thousands of fish together in small areas away from their natural habitat turns out to have a number of detrimental effects. Waste products, primarily fish poop, excess food and dead



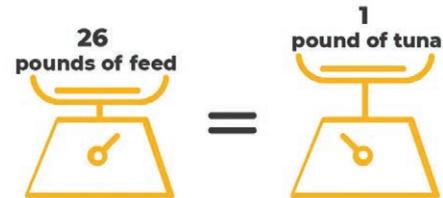
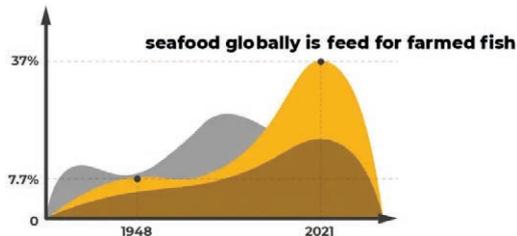
fish, begin to contaminate the areas around fish farms. What's more, like other factory farms, fish farms require lots of pesticides and drugs thanks to the high concentrations of fish and the parasites and diseases that spread in these kinds of areas.

Predictably, the chemicals used in making

farmed fish possible are not contained in the areas where they are initially used. They spread into the surrounding waters and then simply become part of the water of the world, building up over time. In many cases, farmed fish are farmed in areas that are already heavily polluted. This is where the admonition to avoid eating too much fish for fear of contaminants like mercury has come from.

What's more, the fish that we eat are not the only fish that are living at the fisheries. Often times, the preferred fish of the human consumer are carnivores that must eat lots of other fish to get up to an appropriate size to be part of the market. These fish, known as "reduction fish" or "trash fish" require the same kind of treatment that the larger fish they feed do.

All told, it takes 26 pounds of feed to produce a single pound of tuna, making farmed fishing an incredibly inefficient way of bringing food to market. Indeed, 37 percent



of all seafood globally is now fed for farmed fish, up dramatically from 7.7 percent in 1948.

Perhaps worst of all, farmed fish simply do not have the same nutritional value as their wild counterparts, losing almost all of the Omega-3 fatty acids that make fish such a prized part of the modern diet.

Salmon, for example, is only healthy when it is caught in the wild. Farmed salmon is essentially a form of junk food. This is in large part due to the diet that the fish eat in fish farms, which is high in fat and uses soy as a primary source of protein. Toxins at the farms concentrate in the fatty tissue of the salmon. Concentrations of the harmful chemical PCB are found in concentrations eight times higher in farmed fish than traditionally caught wild salmon.

The pesticides, of course, are not used for no reason, but because of the proliferation of pests due to the high concentrations of fish in the fisheries. Sea lice are one example of such pests, which can eat a live salmon down to the bone.

These pests do not stay in the fisheries, but quickly spread to the surrounding waters and infect wild salmon as well as their farmed counterparts. The pests aren't the only ones escaping: Farmed fish often escape from their habitats and compete with the native fish for resources, becoming an invasive species.

Subsidies vary from one country to another and specific statistics about how much goes to fish farms is generally not forthcoming. But fish farms effectively move the problem of overfishing from the wild oceans and into more enclosed areas. This does not solve any of the problems of overfishing. It merely creates new ones with no less impact on the environment.

Which Countries Are Overfishing?

As stated above, the main offenders with regard to overfishing tend to not be developed Western countries, but countries from the undeveloped world and parts of

Asia. Sadly, the United States is the only Western nation that appeared on a "shame list" put out by Pew Charitable Trusts. This is known as the Pacific Six. The other



members include Japan, Taiwan, China, South Korea and Indonesia.

The list only refers to overfishing with regard to bluefin tuna, but it provides a snapshot of the face of overfishing internationally. Overfishing facts say that these six countries are fishing 80 percent of the world's bluefin tuna. These countries took collectively 111,482 metric tons of bluefin tuna out of the waters in 2011 alone.

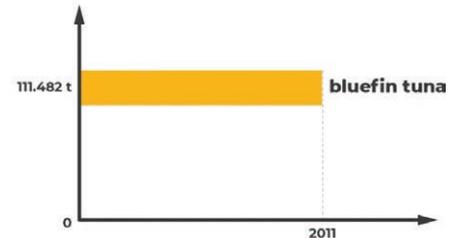
However, when it comes to harmful subsidies there is a clear leader: China.



A University of British Columbia study found that China provided more in the way of harmful

subsidies encouraging overfishing than any other country on earth — \$7.2 billion in 2018 or 21 percent of all global support. What's more, subsidies that are more beneficial than harmful dropped by 73 percent.

The negative effects of overfishing are not taking place far away and in very abstract ways. They are causing communities right here in the United States to collapse. In the early 1990s, overfishing of cod caused entire communities in New England to collapse. Once this happens, it is very difficult to reverse. The effects



are felt by the marine ecosystem but also by the people whose livelihoods depend on fishing.

Another example of economic instability is the Japanese fish market. Japanese fishermen are able to catch far less fish than they

used to, meaning that the Japanese are now eating more imported fish, often from the United States, than ever before. This creates a perverse situation where America exports most of its best salmon to other countries, but consumes some of the worst farmed salmon in the world today.

Just How Bad Is Overfishing?

Surely overfishing can't be that bad, right? The seas are just filled with tons of fish and it would take us forever to overfish to the point that they began to disappear entirely, right?

Think again. Overfishing is happening at biologically unsustainable levels. Pacific bluefin tuna, the type of fish discussed in the section above, has seen a 97 percent decline in overall population. This is important because the Pacific bluefin tuna is one of the most important predators in the ocean food chain. If it goes extinct the entire aquaculture will be irreparably disturbed.

The first fish that disappear from an ecosystem are larger fish with a longer lifespan and reach reproductive age later in life. These are also the most desirable fish on the open market. When these fish disappear, the destructive fishing operations do not leave the area: They simply move



down the food chain to less desirable catches like squid and sardines. This is called “fishing down the web” and it slowly destroys the entire ecosystem removing first the predator fish and then the prey.

There are broader effects on the ecosystem beyond just the fish, effects that resonate throughout the entire Atlantic and Pacific ocean. Many of the smaller fish eat algae that grows on coral reefs. When these fish become overfished, the algae grows uncontrolled and the reefs suffer as a result. That deprives many marine life forms of their natural habitat, creating extreme disruption in the ocean ecosystem.

What Are Some Alternatives to Government-Driven Overfishing?

While there are certainly policy solutions

to rampant overfishing, not all solutions will come from government. For example, there are emerging technological solutions that will make bycatching and other forms of waste less prevalent and harmful.

Simple innovations based on existing technologies, such as Fishtek Marine seek to save sea mammals from the nets of commercial fishermen while also increasing profit margins for these companies in a win-win scenario. Their device is small and inexpensive and thus does not present an undue burden to either the large-scale commercial fishing vessels or small fishermen looking to eke out a living in an increasingly difficult market.



We must also recognize that current regulations simply do not work. In one extreme case, governments restricted fishing for certain forms of tuna for three days a year. This did absolutely nothing for the population of tuna, as the big commercial fishing companies simply employed methods to harvest as many fish in three days as they were previously getting in any entire year.

This, in turn, led to a greater amount of bycatch and waste. Because the fishing operations didn't have the luxury of time to ensure that they were only catching what they sought to catch, their truncated fishing season prized quantity over quality with predictable results.

Quotas, specifically the "individual transferable quota" scheme used by New Zealand and many other countries does not seem to work as intended for a number of reasons. First, these quotas are, as the name might suggest, transferable. This means that little fishermen might consider it a better deal to simply sell their quota to a large commercial fishing operation rather than go to work for themselves and we're back to square one.

More generally speaking, quotas seem to be a source of waste. Here's how they work: A fishing operation is given a specific tonnage of fish from a specific species that they can catch. However, not all fish are created equally. So when commercial fishing operations look at their catch and see that some of it is of higher quality than others, they discard the lower-quality fish in favor of higher-quality fish creating large amounts of waste. These discards can sometimes make up 40 percent of the catch.

An alternative to the current system is one that balances the need for fish as a global protein source with a long-term view of the ecosystem, planning for having as many fish tomorrow as there are today and thus, a sustainable model for feeding the world and providing jobs. One way to do this would be to tie subsidies to conservation and sustainability efforts, rather than simply writing checks to large commercial fishing operations to build new boats and buy new equipment. Such a scheme would also prize smaller scale operations over larger ones. A more diversified source of the world's fish would also be more resilient.

One such alternative is called territorial use rights in fisheries management (TURF). In this case, individual fishermen or collectives

of them are provided with long-term rights to fish in a specific area. This means that they have skin in the game. They don't want to overfish the area because to do so would be to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. So they catch as many fish as is sustainable and no more. They have a vested, long-term interest in making sure that there is no overfishing in the fisheries that have been allotted to them.

Not only does this make sustainable fishing more attractive, it also means that there is less government bureaucracy and red tape involved. Fishermen with TURF are allowed to catch as much as they like. It is assumed that sustainability is baked into the equation because the fishermen with rights want to preserve the fishing not just for the next year, but for the next generation and the one after that. This model has been used successfully by Chile, one of the most economically free countries in the world (more economically free, in fact, than the United States), to prevent overfishing and create sustainability. It is a market-driven model that prizes

small producers with skin in the game over massive, transnational conglomerates with none.

Belize, Denmark and even the United States are other countries who have used TURF, with significantly positive results.

While it's nice to support the little guy over Big Fishing and we certainly support sustainability and conservation efforts, there's another, perhaps more important and direct reason to support reforms designed to eliminate overfishing: food security. When bluefin tuna, for example, goes extinct, it's not coming back. That means no more cans of tuna on the shelves of your local supermarket.

That's a big deal for people in developed, first world countries, but a much bigger deal in developing countries. When major protein sources are depleted forever, there will be intensified competition for the resources that remain. This also creates unrest in the countries that are less able to compete in a global market due to issues of capital and scale. Even if you're not concerned with overfishing, overfishing and the problems it creates will soon be on your doorstep unless corrective measures are taken before it's too late.

Animals to be formally recognised as sentient beings in domestic law

May

- Government introduces Bill to formally recognise animals as sentient beings
- Animal Sentience Committee will put animal sentience at heart of government policy
- Bill introduced as part of government's first of a kind Action Plan for Animal Welfare

Vertebrate animals will be recognised as sentient beings for the first time in UK law thanks to the introduction of the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill, introduced in Parliament today.

The legislation will also ensure that animal sentience is taken into account when developing policy across Government through the creation of a Animal Sentience Committee which will be made up of animal experts from within the field.

By enshrining sentience in domestic law in this way, any new legislation will have to take into account the fact that animals can experience feelings such as pain or joy. The

Bill will underpin the Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare, which launched yesterday and sets out the government's plans to improve standards and eradicate cruel practices for animals both domestically and internationally.

The Bill's introduction, fulfilling a key Manifesto commitment, will further the UK's position as a world-leader on animal welfare. Now that we have left the EU we have the opportunity to remake laws and go further to promote animal welfare by making sure that all Government departments properly consider animal sentience when designing policy, covering all vertebrate animals from farm to forest.

The Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill will:

- formally recognise animals as

sentient beings in domestic law

- establish an Animal Sentience Committee made up of experts to ensure cross departmental government policy considers animal sentience
- ensure Government Ministers update parliament on recommendations made by the Animal Sentience Committee

Launching the Bill, Animal Welfare minister Lord Goldsmith said:

“The UK has always led the way on animal welfare and now that we’ve left the EU we are free to drive for the highest standards of animal welfare anywhere in the world.

Formally recognising in law that animals are sentient and experience feelings in the same way humans do is just the first step in our flagship Action Plan for Animal Welfare which will further transform the lives of animals in this country and strengthen our position as a global leader.”

Claire Bass, Executive Director of Humane Society International/UK said:

“45 of the UK’s most respected animal protection organisations have been united in calling for this Bill, which recognises that animals have the ability to experience feelings, including pain, joy and fear, and that their emotions and welfare deserve

consideration and protection when laws are made.

The formation of an Animal Sentience Committee is a very welcome step; it must though be designed with the right expertise, independence, resourcing and access to information to enable it to provide robust and constructive scrutiny. We hope that it will support government’s delivery of a progressive welfare strategy built on respect for the needs of sentient animals, who enrich and improve our lives in so many ways.”

James West, Senior Policy Manager, Compassion in World Farming, said:

“Compassion in World Farming warmly welcome today’s publication of legislation that recognises animals as sentient beings – capable of experiencing joy, pain and suffering. We applaud this initiative that will apply to policies being developed across all UK Government departments.

We look forward to the newly established Committee being effective in ensuring that Ministers pay all due regard to animal sentience when formulating and implementing policy. As a nation of animal lovers, we should not expect anything less than granting sentient beings the legal recognition they unequivocally deserve.”

The UK has a long history of improving the lives of animals, being the first country in the world to pass legislation to protect animals in 1822 with the Cruel Treatment of Cattle Act and later the landmark Protection of Animals Act in 1911.

The Government has continued to uphold this tradition of high welfare standards over the years through many reforms, ranging from banning the use of battery cages for laying hens and introducing compulsory CCTV in slaughter houses and most recently raising the maximum sentence for animal cruelty from six months to five years.



Over 300,000 homes sold with Help to Buy

May

Sam Legg, 19, from Asfordby, bought the 300,000th Help to Buy home and is now urging others to join the government scheme.

The official Help to Buy statistics released today (13 May 2021) reveal:

- 313,043 households have now bought a home with the support of the Help to Buy: Equity Loan Scheme since its launch in 2013
- In the 3 months up to December 2020, there were 21,026 completions, the highest quarterly annual total ever and 40% higher than the same period in 2019
- Most of the home purchases in the Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme were made by first-time buyers, accounting for 257,520 (82%) of total purchases

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

“Helping people get a foot on the housing ladder is central to the mission of this government.

Today’s figures show over 300,000 homes have been sold through our Help to Buy scheme which hugely benefits first time buyers. Alongside other measures such as the stamp duty cut and new mortgage guarantee scheme, Help to Buy will continue to help more and more people to have a home that is truly their own.”

Chair of Homes England Peter Freeman said:

“Today’s milestone underlines how successful the scheme has been in helping people buy their own home. With the original Help to Buy scheme, and the new scheme aimed specifically at first time buyers, we look forward to helping more people like Sam achieve their dream of home ownership.

Sam Legg is Help to Buy’s 300,000th customer having recently bought his first home in Asfordby, Leicestershire living with his girlfriend Megan and dog Del Boy.

Sam, who works as a farmer locally, said:

“I am very happy to have bought my first home which would not have been possible without Help to Buy. The whole process went very smoothly, and I hope many more people can be helped to buy their



first home in the same way.”

The new Help to Buy: Equity Loan for first time buyers started on 1 April and will continue to increase the supply of new homes over the next two years and help thousands more people own their home.

The government recently announced a further two-month extension for Help to Buy customers following delays caused by the pandemic. The extension will run to 31 May, allowing homebuilders to complete the build and buyers to legally complete their purchase.

Purchasers can borrow up to 20% of the cost of a new build (40% in London), funding the balance via a mortgage and repaying the loan when they sell.



COVID-19 vaccines: 11,700 deaths prevented

May

New Public Health England (PHE) analysis indicates that the COVID-19 vaccination programme prevented 11,700 deaths in those aged 60 and older in England up to the end of April – an additional 1,300 since the previous update.

For the first time, analysis also suggests that at least 33,000 hospitalisations were prevented in those aged 65 and older in England, in the same time period.

The work compared the observed number of deaths with the number of deaths that would have been expected if the vaccine hadn't been given during this time period.

Using this method, PHE estimates that around 11,700 deaths were prevented by the end of April – 9,900 in those aged 80 and over, 1,500 in those aged 70 to 79 and 300 in those aged 60 to 69.

Expected deaths with COVID-19 were

estimated using real-world data on how effective the vaccines are at preventing death and vaccine uptake.

New analysis also shows further evidence that the vaccine is highly effective in preventing hospitalisations, especially in older age.

Up to the end of April, approximately 3,900 hospital admissions were prevented in those aged 65 to 74, 13,100 in those aged 75 to 84 and



16,000 in those aged 85 and older.

The number of hospitalisations prevented can be estimated by considering vaccine effectiveness against hospitalisation, vaccine coverage and observed hospitalisations, as well as through modelling.

The work takes into account the direct effects of vaccines. There is now clear and increasing evidence that vaccines help to reduce transmission, therefore it is likely that an even higher number of deaths and hospitalisations have been prevented by the vaccination programme.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

In only a few short months, our COVID-19 vaccines have saved the lives of over 11,700 people and stopped over 33,000 from being hospitalised. After a heart-breaking and difficult year, that is remarkable.

That's tens of thousands of parents, children, siblings, friends and loved ones saved – and millions more who haven't had to feel the impact of that horrible loss too.

This is further proof that getting a vaccine is

one of the most important things you will be asked to do in your lifetime – when offered the jab, don't hesitate in securing this protection for yourself and others.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at PHE, said:

The vaccine has already saved so many lives and we can now see the huge impact it has had on preventing people becoming seriously ill and therefore also protecting our hospitals.

As these figures highlight, getting your vaccine could save your life or stop you becoming seriously ill from COVID-19. It will also significantly reduce your chances of getting infected and infecting others. It is vital to get both doses of your vaccine when you are offered it.

Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Nadhim Zahawi said:

The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues at its record-breaking pace and it's fantastic to see the incredible impact it's having on the country already.

Wherever you come from, whatever your religion, ethnicity or background, make sure to book in your vaccine when the time

comes. It's an easy way in which you can play a part in our journey out of the pandemic once and for all.

The data presented is as a result of people receiving their first dose of the vaccine.

Separate analysis indicates that the protection against hospitalisation and death from COVID-19 increases further following the second dose.

As more individuals are vaccinated and develop an immune response to the second dose, future analyses will include the impact of the second dose.





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Government gears up for roll out of greener fuel with national awareness campaign

June

- government launches national advertising campaign ahead of the rollout of greener E10 petrol
- petrol blended with up to 10% renewable ethanol could cut carbon emissions equivalent to taking 350,000 cars off the road every year
- E10 petrol rollout could also create up to 100 jobs in the north east of England as we build back greener

Fuel pumps up and down the country will look different this summer as a nationwide information campaign on the introduction of E10 petrol kicks off.

Aimed at raising awareness of the greener fuel and how its rollout will help the UK to build back greener, the campaign – which will begin in mid-June – will be seen on fuel pump labels and in targeted digital, radio and social media advertising.

As well as promoting the benefits of E10

– which is petrol blended with up to 10% renewable ethanol, making it greener than existing petrol – the campaign will encourage motorists to check their vehicle is compatible with the fuel.

The campaign launch comes ahead of the introduction of E10 across all UK petrol stations in Great Britain from September, potentially cutting transport CO2 emissions by 750,000 tonnes a year – equivalent to the annual uptake of a forest the size of the Isle of Wight.

Transport Minister, Rachel Maclean, said:

“The rollout of E10 is the latest in a string of measures we’re taking to cut road emissions, reduce pollution and keep us on track to meet our ambitious net zero by 2050 target.

This campaign will not only make drivers aware of the changes we’re making, but

will also show millions of motorists how E10 introduction plays a part in helping reduce carbon emissions and build back greener with every tank of petrol.”

As well as playing a part in the UK’s ambitions to decarbonise transport and hit net zero, the rollout of E10 petrol will boost job opportunities across the country. So far, securing up to 100 jobs in the north east of England, following the reopening of AB Sugar’s Vivergo plant, and



increasing production at existing biofuel plants, such as Ensus.

The introduction of E10 will see renewable ethanol in petrol double from the current petrol blend E5, which contains no more than 5% ethanol, further reducing emissions from millions of cars in line with our climate change targets.

A small number of older vehicles, including classic cars and some from the early 2000s, will continue to need E5 fuel, which is why supplies of E5 petrol will be maintained in the super petrol grade. We are advising motorists to use the new E10 compatibility checker to see if their vehicle is compatible.



Government sets out marine commitments to mark World Ocean Day

June

Under UK leadership, 80 countries have now signed up to an international target to protect at least 30 per cent of the world's ocean by 2030.

Today on World Ocean Day (8th June 2021), countries from all four corners of the world - from India to Guyana, South Korea to Austria have pledged to support the '30by30' commitment which is being championed by the UK-led Global Ocean Alliance and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, co-chaired by the UK, Costa Rica and France.

This next milestone follows a successful meeting of the G7 Climate and Environment ministers, during which all members agreed to champion the global '30x30' target to conserve or protect at least 30 per cent of the world's land and at least 30 per cent of the world's ocean by 2030, as well as committing to '30x30' domestically.

Environment Secretary, George Eustice,

said:

“The UK is a global leader in marine protection, and we are leading the way internationally to deliver healthy and sustainable seas. We must strike a balance in supporting sustainable industries while increasing protections for our seas to ensure a healthy, resilient and diverse marine ecosystem and we will work with others as we develop future protections.”

The UK has also launched plans to increase protections for England's waters through a pilot scheme to designate marine sites in England as “Highly Protected Marine Areas”. The selected sites would see a ban on all activities that could have a damaging effect on wildlife or marine habitats.

This follows the independent Benyon Review, which recommended that

Highly Protected Marine Areas would have an important role in helping the marine ecosystem recover. The review was commissioned in 2019 to look at how these areas could be introduced and the Government has today published its response to the review. As well as helping drive marine recovery, the review also highlighted other potential benefits of the sites, including increased tourism.

The sites to be piloted could be in or outside of existing Marine Protected Areas where they would benefit from a substantially higher level of protection. They will be identified by Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee with input from stakeholders with a formal consultation set to launch next year.

Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England, said:

“I am delighted that the Government has committed to implement Highly Protected Marine Areas with a number of pilot sites. Natural England’s evidence based advice has been instrumental in determining the need for special protection for our most vulnerable marine wildlife.

We look forward to working closely with Defra to identify pilot sites and use this great opportunity to explore how highly protected

areas can mitigate the impact of human activities on the ocean, support its recovery to a more natural state, and enhance vital marine ecosystems.”

This comes as Defra and the Ocean Conservation Trust publish the results of the largest ever survey in England and Wales on public attitudes to our oceans. The survey finds that 85% of people consider marine protection personally important to them. Of those who had visited our coastlines last year, 80% said it was good for their physical health and 84% said it was good for their mental health.

The findings also show that when asked about the greatest threats to the marine environment, participants were most concerned about pollution, with overfishing, climate change and loss of marine habitats also ranking highly.



Professor Michel Kaiser, HPMa Review Panel member and Chief Scientist and Professor of Fisheries Conservation at the Lyell Centre, Heriot-Watt University said:

“The implementation of a trial of HPMAs provides a landmark opportunity to understand how marine habitats and life will respond in the absence of damaging activities, setting our ambition for healthy oceans of the future.”

Joan Edwards, Director of Policy and Public Affairs at The Wildlife Trusts, said:

“This new type of marine protection will be the gold standard for rewilding parts of the sea. It’s a fantastic step-forward, one which The Wildlife Trusts and over 10,000 of our supporters have been waiting for – we’re absolutely delighted!

The removal of all harmful activities – from fishing and trawling to construction – has never been attempted in UK waters before. This is an historic moment and we’re certain that HPMAs will help our seas become healthier and that

degraded underwater habitats will be better able to recover.

This special form of protection is vitally needed. Decades of overexploitation and pollution have left our precious seas damaged and the wealth of wildlife that once lived there is much diminished. Existing Marine Protected areas are limited in their ability to restore nature as they only go as far as conserving its current, sometimes damaged state. HPMA's will allow us to see what truly recovering seas look like. They will set a new bar against which other protected areas could be measured."

The UK has also further advanced its role as a global leader in ocean protection by moving to full membership of the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA). The Alliance brings together the financial sector, governments, non-profit organisations to pioneer innovative ways of



driving investment into critical ecosystems like reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, wetlands and beaches that provide the nature-based-solutions to build resilience against climate change.

The UK has also become a co-leader of The International Partnership on Marine Protected Areas, Biodiversity and Climate Change which will work with other countries to ensure they have the information and tools they need to understand the important role that Marine Protected Areas play in helping to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change on the world's oceans, and the biodiversity they protect.

The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) has also today published its annual 'Blue Belt' assessment which reveals this year the UK Government's Blue Belt Programme exceeded its target of protecting and enhancing over 4 million square kilometers of marine environment around five UK Overseas Territories.

The commitments made today represent another step forward for the UK's efforts to step up action on climate change in the run up to the G7 Summit taking place in Cornwall this week and international climate conference COP26, to be hosted in Glasgow later this year.

An advertisement for Keith Welters Furniture Manufacturers. The top section features a collage of images: a poster for the 'SOUTH BANK EXHIBITION' at the 'FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN' in London, a circular logo for 'THE HIGH WYCOMBE AND DISTRICT FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS SOCIETY', and a tag that says 'WELTERS of Wycombe'. Below this is a dark grey banner with 'Keith Welters' in a stylized font and 'FURNISHING' in a smaller font. Underneath the banner, the text reads 'welters® ORGANISATION WORLDWIDE Design and Innovation www.welters-worldwide.com'. At the bottom right is a bronze sculpture of an elephant standing on a white base.

End of halogen light bulbs spells brighter and cleaner future

June

- Halogen light bulbs to be banned from this September – with fluorescent light bulbs to follow suit
- shift to LED bulbs will cut 1.26 million tonnes of CO2 – the equivalent of removing over half a million cars from UK roads
- new rules part of tighter energy efficiency standards for electrical appliances as the UK builds back greener, helping save British consumers £75 a year on their energy bills

The government has announced plans today (Wednesday 9 June) to end the sale of halogen light bulbs from this September, as part of the UK's wider efforts to tackle climate change.

Legislation being brought forward this month will also include the removal of fluorescent lights from shelves from September 2023.

Currently, around 2 thirds of bulbs sold

in Britain are LED lights, making a considerable impact in improving the energy efficiency of the country's buildings. They last 5 times longer than traditional halogen lightbulbs and produce the same amount of light – but use up to 80% less power.

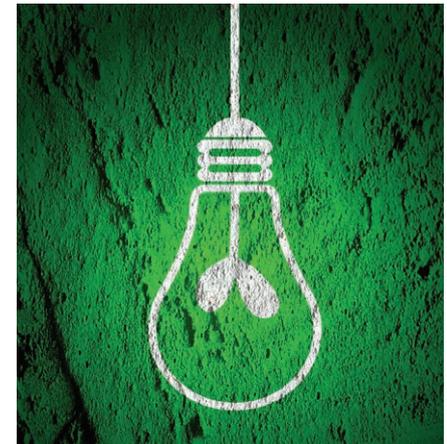
The UK began phasing out the sale of higher-energy halogen lightbulbs in 2018. The new legislation would mean retailers will no longer be able to sell the majority of halogen bulbs for general household use in the UK from 1 September.

To help people make the switch, ministers are also announcing that all light bulbs will start to feature new energy efficiency advice via 'rescaled' energy labels on their boxes. The labels will simplify the way energy efficiency is displayed on a new scale from A-G, doing away with the A+, A++ or A+++ ratings. The new labels will raise the bar for each class, meaning very

few bulbs will now be classified as A, helping consumers choose the most environmentally friendly bulbs.

This measure is expected to mean that LED light bulbs will account for 85% of all bulbs sold by 2030.

In addition, the government also plans to start phasing out the sale



of high-energy fluorescent lightbulbs, with a view to bringing an end to their sale from September 2023.

Taken together, these new rules will mark a significant shift to more energy efficient and longer lasting LEDs and will stop 1.26 million tonnes of carbon being emitted every year - the equivalent of removing over half a million cars from the UK's roads.

The move is part of a package of energy efficiency improvements to electrical appliances, which will save consumers an average of £75 a year on energy bills.

Energy Minister, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, said:

“We're phasing out old inefficient halogen bulbs for good, so we can move more quickly to longer lasting LED bulbs, meaning less waste and a brighter and cleaner future for the UK.

By helping ensure electrical appliances use less energy but perform just as well, we're saving households money on their bills and helping tackle climate change.”

Today's plans also include a ban from September on the sale of lighting fixtures

with fixed bulbs that can't be replaced – meaning the fixtures have to be thrown away. Fixtures such as these account for 100,000 tonnes of electrical waste every year – out of a total 1.5 million tonnes of electrical waste each year.

Minister for Climate Change, Lord Martin Callanan, said:

“Flicking the off-switch on energy inefficient light bulbs is a simple way that households can save money at the same time as saving the planet.

Phasing out halogen bulbs in favour of LED



alternatives that last longer, are just as bright and cheaper to run, is another way that we are helping tackle climate change.”

Chief Executive of Signify UK, which owns Philips lighting, Stephen Rouatt, said:

“We welcome the UK government's next step in the transition towards more sustainable lighting products. Using energy-efficient LED equivalents for halogen and fluorescent lighting on an even broader scale will significantly help the UK on its journey to decarbonisation, as well as lowering the annual electricity bills for consumers.”

Overall, the government's package of energy efficiency improvements will also cut 8 million tonnes of carbon emissions in 2021 by reducing the amount of energy products consume over their life-time – the equivalent of removing all emissions from Birmingham and Leeds each year.

The government has published

its response to the consultation on updated Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Regulations for lighting products.

The sale of mains voltage halogen non-directional lamps were banned in the UK on 1 September 2018, meaning low voltage non-directional halogen lamps could continue, as long as they comply with eco-design requirements. The new regulations would phase out most remaining halogen lamps from September 2021 and the traditional fluorescent tube lighting, which are common in offices, from September 2023 onwards.

HL R7 halogens will remain available on the market, and some fluorescents such as T5s.

Exemptions will be in place for lamps designed and marketed specifically for scene-lighting use in film studios, TV studios, and photographic studios, or for stage-lighting use in theatres or other entertainment events.

The wider package of energy efficiency measures include the right to repair, new energy labels and higher energy efficiency standards for white goods, TVs and other electrical appliances.

£50 million infrastructure upgrade to cement UK's status as science superpower

June

Research and innovation infrastructure in the UK is to receive a £50 million upgrade, furthering the government's aim to cement the UK's status as a science superpower.

The projects include a boost to the world's largest and most sensitive radio telescope network, carbon capture technologies, a state-of-the-art airborne research laboratory and a £17 million investment in digital research infrastructure.

The funding, which is supporting more than a dozen infrastructure projects and scoping studies, follows the Prime Minister's announcement of a new ministerial council and Office for Science and Technology Strategy. Both will provide strategic direction on the use of science and technology as the tools to tackle great societal challenges, level up across the country and boost prosperity around the world.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

"If the last year and a half has taught us

anything it's that new challenges can arise from anywhere at any time.

By investing millions in the UK's research infrastructure, we are putting science and innovation at the heart of our efforts to build back better while ensuring that we can respond to challenges now and in the future – from pandemic preparedness to tackling climate change."

Tackling problems such as climate change and antimicrobial resistance are immediate priorities reflected in the projects receiving funding, but this funding is equally designed to address the challenges and opportunities that may arise in the future.

By putting the infrastructure in place now, the UK will lead the world in developing innovative approaches to the challenges facing society, as well as enhancing the UK's long-term

research capability.

This investment will be delivered through grant funding and is the first to be delivered through UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Infrastructure Roadmap programme to bolster the UK's research and innovation capabilities.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser said:

"Infrastructure and the skilled people who design, build, maintain and operate it are vital to research and innovation. Projects such as the Square Kilometre Array Observatory and the UKRI Airborne Laboratory demonstrate the importance of investing in facilities that can help us answer some of the biggest questions and tackle the most pressing challenges.

This investment provides the foundation from which the UK will continue to play an important role in the advancement of scientific research and understanding around the world."

One of the largest increases in investment to be announced today is for the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO), which is an existing project which will receive £14.75 million of the £50 million announced for this financial year. SKAO, which will have telescopes in South Africa and Australia and has its HQ in Manchester, will have

the world's largest and most sensitive radio telescope network on Earth when constructed.

The SKAO telescopes will be able to image huge areas of sky with unparalleled sensitivity and on an unprecedented scale. Its image resolution quality will exceed the Hubble Space Telescope and it will lead the way for the UK in scientific discovery, helping to maintain our world-leading position.

Today's funding also provides £5.5 million to upgrade the UKRI Airborne Laboratory for this financial year, enhancing its world-leading research capability and enabling it to remain at the cutting-edge of atmospheric research.

This world-class aircraft is unique in the UK, is capable of being deployed anywhere in the world, and provides invaluable data that allows for climate modelling and weather prediction. The upgrades will provide new air pollution and aerosol equipment and will assess the impact of pollution on both the atmosphere and human health, ensuring continued capability to respond to airborne environment incidents that could impact society and the economy.

Further funding will be awarded to projects covering a broad spectrum of innovative work, including:

- £17 million to initiate a national Digital

Research Infrastructure to enable UK researchers to harness the full power of modern digital platforms, tools and techniques, including Net Zero computing

- a scoping study into developing a CO2 Storage Testbed that will de-risk carbon capture and storage on an industrial scale, positioning the UK as a global leader in clean growth
- funding to plan for infrastructure offering cutting-edge technologies to drive innovation in the UK's screen and performance industries
- investment to unlock the power of our rich population data to address key health issues and identify early markers for serious diseases
- £260,000 for a project to investigate the requirements for a new national Floods and Droughts Resilience Infrastructure, which would provide a world-leading observation network. With weather events increasing due to climate change, the aim is to reduce the impacts of floods and droughts in the UK by better understanding the water cycle

The government is committed to cementing the UK's status as a science superpower, putting the country on track to reach 2.4% of GDP being spent on R&D across the UK economy by 2027.



COVER OPTIONS

considered by our Editorial Department for the Spring
edition as alternatives to the final chosen cover

Forthcoming articles under consideration

(guest contributors welcome - please contact office@government-world.com)

- Space law - what agreements can be made internationally to ensure responsible behaviour in space?
- Cryptocurrency - what do we need to know?
- Mental health - helping to bring awareness to the issues of mental health and excessive drug and alcohol use
- UN Climate Change Conference (COP26)
- Coal Authority- applying a zero waste method to the disposal of its reed bed cuttings
- Branson & Bezos space flights - a brief overview



Acknowledgements

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