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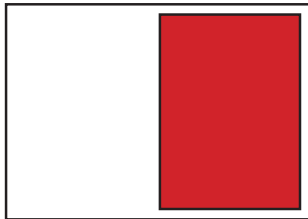
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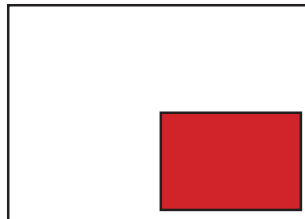
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Contents

News & Sports Roundup _____	4
TRA helps preserve critical steel supplies to the UK _____	8
Thousands of rural primary schools to get huge broadband upgrade _____	10
Bears, chimpanzees and pangolins to be better protected after new funding boost for world's most endangered animals _____	14
Illicit drug users to face tougher consequences _____	18
Over 100 new and revamped parks to level up towns and cities across the UK _____	21
New funding to boost UK business exports abroad through the recognition of professional qualifications _____	24
Cheaper broadband for struggling families _____	26
Brand new pension scheme launches in Great Britain _____	30
Self-driving revolution to boost economy and improve road safety _____	31
Folic acid added to flour to prevent brain and spinal conditions in foetuses _____	35
£3.3 million boost for next generation nuclear technology _____	36
Plans for public to watch Her Majesty The Queen's funeral announced _____	38
£150 Disability Cost of Living Payments to begin this month _____	41
Prime Minister to tell UN General Assembly: I will lead a new Britain for a new era _____	42
World's first International Plant Health Conference to set global agenda on biosecurity and address challenges in plant health _____	45

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This fox just wanted to say 'hello'



News Roundup

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

By Paul G Bazeley for Government World

July News Review

Rishi Sunak and Sajid Javid, along with many other cabinet members, resigned from the government over the course of a week, citing that they no longer have faith in Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Calls for the PM to



resign continued to build until Boris Johnson announced he would resign as Conservative Party leader. He stated he would continue as Prime Minister until a new leader was elected. A leadership contest for the new Conservative Party leader began. By the

end of the month, the candidates had been whittled down to Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak.

A heatwave swept across much of Europe, with British authorities issuing a red warning for extreme heat, the first time it has ever been given. On the 19th July, 40.3 degrees Celsius was recorded in Coningsby, the hottest temperature ever recorded in England. The previous record was 38.7 degrees Celsius recorded in Cambridge in 2019. Spain and France both experienced wildfires due to the soaring temperatures.



Croatia was formally accepted into the Eurozone by the European Union. They became the 20th member and will adopt the Euro in 2023. Shortly after, it was announced that negotiations on the accession of Albania and North Macedonia to the European Union had begun.

The last city under Ukrainian control in Luhansk, Lysychansk, fell to Russia after weeks of fighting. The Russians made minimal progress in the Donbas in the following weeks as the Russian invasion



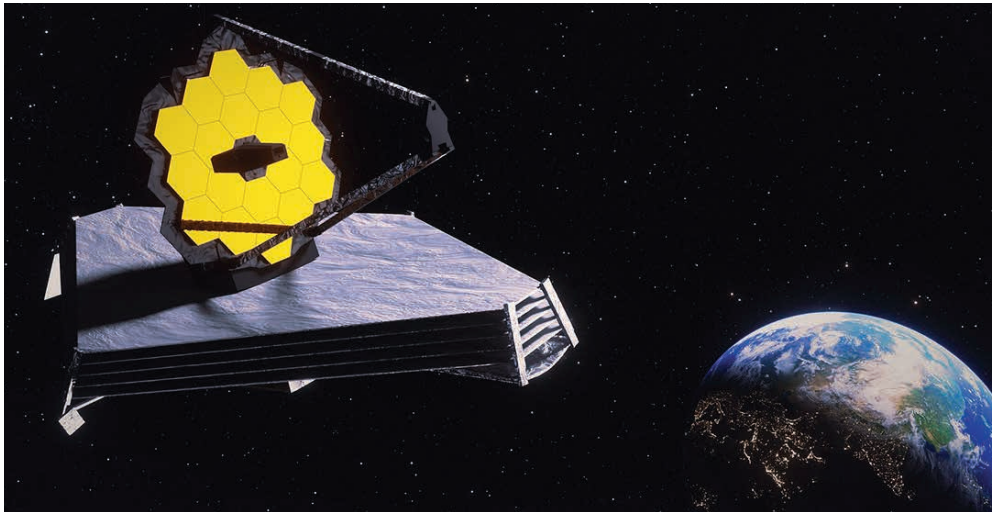
would host the 2023 Eurovision song contest. The UK finished second behind Ukraine's Kalush Orchestra. Ukraine will still have an automatic qualification to the grand final.

Shinzo Abe, the former Japanese Prime Minister, was assassinated while speaking at a political event. He was shot from behind at close range using a homemade firearm. A 41-year-old was arrested at the scene.

NASA released the first full-colour image taken by the James Webb Telescope. The picture shows a galaxy cluster segment 4.6 billion light years away from Earth.

in Ukraine continued.

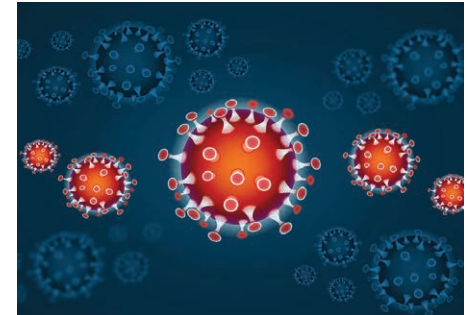
Due to the ongoing invasion of Ukraine, it was announced that the United Kingdom



Three European Bison were reintroduced to a pine forest in Kent, England. It's the first-time wild Bison have been in the United Kingdom in over one thousand years.



The number of COVID-19 deaths in the United Kingdom surpassed 200,000 after cases saw a slight increase compared to previous months.



Google Street View launched in India 11 years after being banned by the country over security concerns.

July Sports Review

England women's team defeated Germany 2-1 in the Women's Euro 2022 tournament. It's the first time the England Women's side has won a major football championship.



Elena Rybakina from Kazakhstan won her first Grand Slam title after beating Ons Jabeur from Tunisia 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 in the Wimbledon women's final. Rybakina was the first Kazakh player to win a Grand Slam singles title.



In the men's final, Novak Djokovic defeated Nick Kyrgios 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7-3) in the Wimbledon men's final. The win took Djokovic's Grand Slam titles to 21 in total.

August News Review

The Bank of England raised its benchmark interest rate from 1.25% to 1.75%, the most significant single rate hike since 1995. The rise was expected due to the surge in energy prices from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As a result, many experts said the country should prepare for a prolonged recession.



Salman Rushdie was attacked in New York during a public event. The writer was

stabbed multiple times and sustained wounds to his neck and abdomen. The suspect was arrested at the scene by police officers and charged the following day. Rushdie lived in hiding for years after his *The Satanic Verses* was published, and a fatwa calling for his assassination was issued.



Ukrainian forces attacked a Russian air base in Crimea. Ukraine also launched a counter-offensive in the Kherson region, having been supplied with new missile systems from America and other Western countries.

The United Kingdom's inflation rate increased to 10.1% due to rising food and fuel prices. It's the highest level since 1982.

The Environment Agency in England declared a drought due to the continuing heatwave in eight of the fourteen areas.



New Zealand opened its international borders after two years following the COVID-19 pandemic. It was the last Western country to open to tourists.

August Sports Review

David Popovici, the Romanian swimmer,



broke the 100m freestyle world record with a time of 46.86 seconds. The previous record had stood for 13 years.

September News Review

Buckingham Palace announced that Queen Elizabeth II died at the age of 96 at Balmoral Castle, Scotland. Charles III was proclaimed King of the United Kingdom after his mother's death. A state funeral of Elizabeth II was held on the 19th September in London.



Liz Truss was elected as the new leader of the Conservative Party after beating Rishi

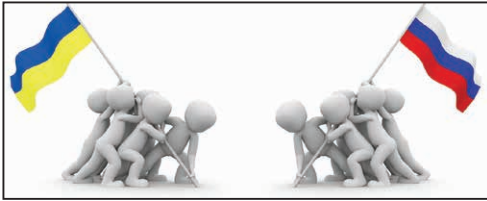
Sunak in the leadership election. Truss succeeded Boris Johnson as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on the 6th September.

Kwasi Kwarteng, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom Liz Truss appointed, announced a 'mini-budget'. The mini-budget received a negative response, especially for the proposed abolition of



the 45% higher tax rate and an increase in corporation tax; both were scrapped within ten and 21 days, respectively. A few days after the mini-budget, the Bank of England bought 65 billion pounds of bonds to stabilise the UK economy.

Ukraine continued their offensive and recaptured large amounts of the Kharkiv region in the northeast of the country. The advancement included the city of Izium, which had been a Russian



logistics hub. The victory was a significant victory for Ukraine and likely signalled a shift in momentum in the war.

The Phantom of the Opera, which has been the longest-running Broadway show, announced it would end production in February 2023. They cited that a decline in attendance caused by the COVID-19 outbreak made them unable to recoup weekly costs.



September Sports Review

UEFA announced that Russia will continue to be suspended, meaning the team will miss the Euro 2024 qualifying draw

End

TRA helps preserve critical steel supplies to the UK

July

The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) has recommended changes to the tariff rate quotas (TRQs) on imports of certain steel products from Russia and Belarus.

In light of current UK sanctions on imports from Russia and Belarus, the TRA initiated a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) review of steel imports covered by the UK's safeguard trade remedy measure. The TRA assessed whether the quotas for these countries should be re-allocated to avoid a potential shortage of steel in the UK. The Secretary of State for International Trade has accepted the TRA recommendation and the HMRC notice detailing the changes was published on Thursday 30 June. The tariff rate quotas (TRQs) will change from 1 July 2022.

Avoiding a shortfall in critical steel supplies to the UK

As with any safeguard measure, the UK has set quotas for different countries or

regions to import a certain amount of steel tariff-free into the UK. Once their quota is exhausted, they have to pay a higher tariff rate. Russia and Belarus between them accounted for around 22% of the UK's supply of rebar. The TRA has recommended reallocating the Russia and Belarus quota to other countries and regions including Ukraine, the EU, Turkey and Taiwan.

TRA Chief Executive Oliver Griffiths said: "We have responded to changes in the international steel market following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Reallocating quotas currently held by Russia and Belarus will provide UK firms in the construction, engineering and automotive sectors with access to higher volumes of duty-free steel."

What this means for importers and users of steel in the UK

There are two product categories affected by the re-allocation. Category 1 (non-alloy and other alloy hot rolled sheets and strips) are used in yellow goods, construction, tube-making and the production of downstream steel products. Category 13 (rebars) are used in construction, the automotive industry, engineering and white goods manufacture. New tariff rates may apply to imports of steel in these categories, depending on which country they come from.

Wider changes to the steel safeguards measure

The Government confirmed this week in a statement that it plans to maintain steel safeguard tariffs on 15 categories of steel

imports for two further years, to 2024. The Trade Remedies Authority completed its analysis of the measure under Government direction after the work was called in by the Secretary of State for International Trade. The TRA's final Report of Findings is available on its public file.

The TRA has also completed two further TRQ reviews related to the steel safeguard measure. These assess:

- whether imports from developing countries exceed 3% of total UK imports, which is the threshold for developing countries to be subject to the safeguard measure
- updates to HMRC data in relation to a small subset of steel product categories.

The TRA's Recommendations on all three TRQ reviews are incorporated in the final TRQ allocations for the safeguard measure and are confirmed in the taxation notice which takes effect from 1 July.

Background information

- The Trade Remedies Authority is the UK body that investigates whether trade remedies measures are needed on imports. Trade remedy investigations were carried out by the EU Commission on the UK's behalf until the UK left the EU.
- Safeguard measures are one of the three types of trade remedies – along with anti-dumping measures which counter goods being 'dumped' into countries at prices below their normal price in their country of origin and countervailing measures against countervailable subsidies – that are allowed under World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.
- Forty-four EU trade remedies measures that were of interest to UK producers were carried across into UK law when the UK left the EU and the TRA needs to review each one to



check if it is suitable for UK needs.

- As part of this process, the TRA reviewed a safeguard measure on certain steel products, reporting its recommendation in June 2021. The TRA recommended that measures should be extended on some steel products but removed on others, where they were not needed. The TRA was subsequently asked to reconsider this decision. The reconsideration was 'called in' by the Secretary of State for International Trade. The TRA completed the reconsideration under her direction.

- Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQs) are part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework. They specify how much of a product can be imported from a country before its imports are subject to higher tariffs. The UK's trade remedies system follows WTO rules and is designed to make sure UK industries are not damaged by unfair trade practices or unexpected surges in imports.

- The UK has the power to review its Tariff Rate Quotas on imports covered by safeguard measures to make sure its safeguard measures remain up to date and useful. This is not part of the reconsideration process.

Thousands of rural primary schools to get huge broadband upgrade

July

- £82 million investment will help an estimated half a million primary school children

- Scheme will also encourage roll out of better broadband to surrounding rural homes and businesses

Hundreds of thousands of pupils living in the countryside will enjoy lessons powered by better digital connections as the government invests to level up internet access in rural primary schools.

A joint £82 million investment from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Department for Education (DfE) announced today will mean pupils in classrooms from Cornwall to Cumbria will reap the benefits of full fibre broadband capable of delivering up to 1,000 megabits per second.

This means an estimated 500,000 primary school pupils will be able to use the internet with no interruptions, even if multiple

classes are using it at the same time. They will benefit from being able to link up with others anywhere in the world to learn from one another, with access to an ever-growing library of online tools designed to make lessons more fun and engaging.

Over the next three years, up to 3,000 eligible schools will be able to embrace efficiencies through modern ways of working - generating cost savings and reducing workload for frontline professionals. The programme will cover the costs of connecting rural schools not likely to be connected by commercial rollout currently stuck on outdated copper cables.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

"Children's opportunities in school should not be pre-determined by where they grow up.

Today we're announcing millions of

pounds to get lightning fast broadband connections to rural schools and level up children's access to the best possible teaching.

Teaching has been revolutionised by digital technology and we need to make sure all pupils can benefit from the opportunity it brings.”

Schools Minister Robin Walker said::

“High speed, reliable internet is crucial to helping schools provide the best possible experience for pupils. This investment will open a whole world of possibilities for schools and teachers in hard-to-reach areas, whether that is through more access to online resources for children, or fast, top quality video streaming.

It is more important now than ever for schools to be connected and this welcome



investment comes on top of the programme of upgrades to connectivity and Wi-Fi that we are delivering through our Priority Education Investment Areas.”

Russell David, Head of The Acorns and Whitley Village Federated School in Ellesmere Port, which has already been connected to gigabit broadband through Project Gigabit, said:

“Our pupils now feel more connected to each other, their teachers and our community than ever before.

Fast, reliable connectivity is vital in today's classrooms and gigabit broadband, along with the fantastic new WiFi provided through the Connect the Classroom programme, has allowed us to transform how we teach using the latest educational tech, giving pupils and staff access to a huge library of new tools and resources to thrive and engage with the curriculum.

Our remote location is no longer a constraint to our participation with the rest of the Rowan Learning Trust in our exciting journey.”

Funding for up to 2,000 schools will be from the DCMS GigaHubs programme, which is part of Project Gigabit, the government's £5 billion programme to deliver lightning-fast, reliable broadband in hard-to-reach areas

of the UK. The scheme is set to connect up to 7,000 rural public sector buildings including schools, GP surgeries, libraries and other public buildings.

The new infrastructure will bring gigabit-capable connections (1,000 megabits per second) to the heart of communities, incentivising more investment in hard-to-reach areas and providing ‘hubs’ from which the commercial sector can connect surrounding homes and businesses.

An additional 1,000 schools will be funded by DfE as part of their mission to enable every school in England to access high-speed internet by 2025.

To ensure teachers and schools can make the most of these connections in the classroom, DfE is also investing £30 million in the pilot project ‘Connect the Classroom’, which aims to upgrade technology in thousands more schools in priority areas, meaning pupils will benefit from fast Wi-Fi and cloud services and will be able to link up with peers, experts and specialists in countries from around the world via live video calling.

The government is investing in ‘Connect the Classroom’ in its Priority Education Investment Areas, 24 areas of the

country where education outcomes are weakest and support is being targeted.

The delivery of new gigabit connectivity also underpins the government's net zero ambitions - helping schools to move away from inefficient locally-hosted servers and embrace more efficient and secure cloud data storage, services and devices.

ENDS

A regional breakdown of the number of schools to benefit will be determined at the time of procurement, with costs also determined by local factors established at the project's next stage. An engagement exercise will take place over the coming months with all eligible schools, and procurement will begin in the autumn term.

This announcement of £82m has been



calculated using the average site cost from the Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme, a precursor to GigaHubs. The programme connected around 1000 sites of which 530 were rural English schools.

The potential number of sites included in the project (up to 3,000) has been calculated by comparing a DfE list of rural schools supplied to DCMS GigaHubs eligibility criteria - this provides DCMS-funded project numbers of around 2,000 schools, while DfE will be funding around 1,000 further sites.

Project Gigabit

Project Gigabit is the government's flagship £5 billion programme to connect hard-to-reach communities unlikely to be connected through commercial rollout, meaning families no longer having to battle over bandwidth and people in rural areas can have the freedom to live and work more flexibly, helping businesses to grow and vital public services to thrive.

The faster connections delivered by the scheme have been levelling up rural communities across the UK: enabling businesses to grow by using digital technology to boost their productivity and giving people living in more remote areas better access to good jobs.

GigaHubs

Over the next 3 years, up to £110m of government funding will be invested into providing gigabit connectivity to up to 7,000 rural public sector buildings including schools, GP surgeries, libraries and other public buildings. This will deliver a range of benefits, such as enabling clinicians to provide remote video consultations and allowing whole classes of schoolchildren to be online, at once, with no interruptions.

The GigaHubs model works by providing funding towards infrastructure build for eligible public sector buildings which meet qualifying criteria set by BDUK and where investment cases are clear.

Priority Education Investment Areas - 'Connect the Classroom'

The government's Priority Education Investment Areas are: Blackpool, Bradford, Derby, Doncaster, Fenlands and East Cambridgeshire, Halton, Hartlepool, Hastings, Ipswich, Knowsley, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire Coast, Norwich, Nottingham, Oldham, Portsmouth, Rochdale, Salford, Sandwell, Stoke-on-Trent, Tameside, Walsall, West Somerset.

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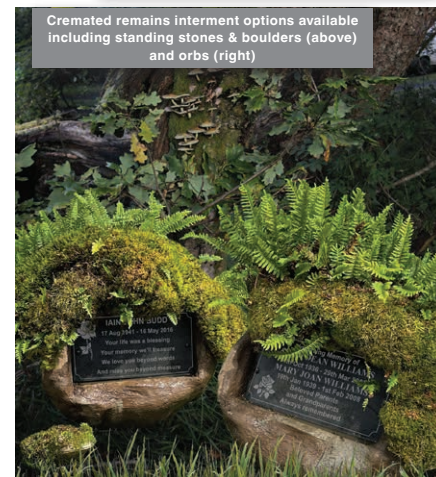
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Bears, chimpanzees and pangolins to be better protected after new funding boost for world's most endangered animals

July

- Tackling the illegal wildlife trade is essential to halting biodiversity loss and protecting some of our most threatened and endangered species

- Illegal wildlife trade also fuels corruption, creates instability, is linked to organised crime, and can increase the risk of the spread of zoonotic diseases

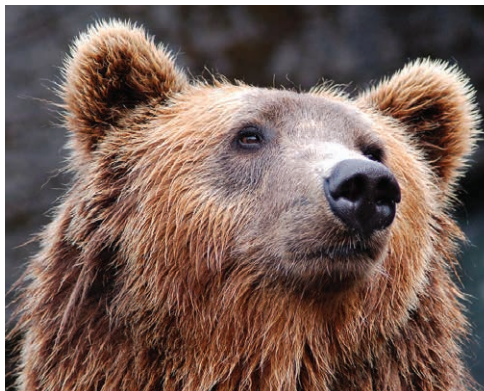
Endangered and threatened plants and animals, including bears, chimpanzees and pangolins, are set to be better protected thanks to new funding to tackle the illegal wildlife trade announced by the UK Government today (Friday 01 July), further cementing our position as a leading contributor to the end of this devastating illegal trade.

The illegal wildlife trade not only threatens species with extinction, fuels corruption, creates instability and deprives some of the world's poorest communities of sustainable livelihoods, but is linked to

organised crime and zoonotic disease outbreaks.

Grants of up to £1.5 million will be made available to environmental organisations across the world which tackle the vile and devastating illegal trade in animals.

Beneficiaries include two projects in Liberia which are working to reduce the demand for chimpanzee bushmeat and improve wildlife law enforcement, and a



project in Laos which will boost the capacity of law enforcement agencies to tackle the trafficking of wild bears by criminal gangs and support wildlife sanctuaries to create livelihood and educational opportunities.

It is thanks to the decisive action taken by this Government that the UK is tackling the illegal wildlife trade head on and leading efforts to bend the curve on biodiversity loss around the world, including through the commitment to halt and reverse global biodiversity loss as set out in the world leading Environment Act.

There are 22 successful projects in total. Other projects being awarded funding today include:

Dismantling illegal pangolin trade in Vietnam

- Building on past successes in three

key pangolin habitats, this project will strengthen law enforcement and improve livelihoods to reduce the demand for critically endangered pangolins. (Save Vietnam's Wildlife)

Preventing the extinction of Bolivia's critically endangered red-fronted macaw

- The project will fund teams of local farmer stewards to patrol nest sites and help prevent the trafficking of eggs and chicks which threaten the survival of Bolivia's critically endangered red-fronted Macaws. (Fundacion Natura Bolivia)

Demand reduction for threatened freshwater turtles and tortoises in Bangladesh

- The project will identify freshwater turtle and tortoise consumption and trade hotspots and then conduct a targeted behaviour change campaign to reduce demand for products linked to these species. (Wildlife Conservation Society)

Harnessing technology to end the illegal trade in succulent plants

- This project will address the supply and sale of illegally trade South African succulent plants to stop their

extinction. Development of chemical fingerprinting and marking techniques will enable traceability and transparency in trade, while aiding the reintroduction of confiscated plants. (Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and TRAFFIC)

International Environment Minister Lord Goldsmith said:

“Biodiversity loss is one of the greatest challenges humanity faces today. The illegal wildlife trade threatens wild animals and plants with extinction, destroys precious ecosystems and increases the risk of zoonotic diseases spreading.

The UK is leading calls to halt and reverse global biodiversity loss and the funding announced today comes less than six months ahead of the crucial COP15 Biodiversity Summit, where we will be leading a coalition of high ambition countries committed to agreeing a new global biodiversity framework with targets for 2030.”

Independent Chair of the Illegal Wildlife Trade Advisory Group John Scanlon said:

“Illegal wildlife trade drives many species towards extinction. It is also highly destructive to entire ecosystems,

including their ability to sequester carbon, and is disrupting their ability to support local and indigenous communities. Preventing and combating these serious crimes is one of the biggest environmental challenges we face today.

The UK Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund is a unique and highly valuable source of funding dedicated to preventing and combating wildlife crime. Its well-targeted projects – such as reducing the demand for endangered pangolins, protecting the iconic red-fronted macaw and using technology to end the illegal trade in succulent plants – will help ensure that wild animals and plants are not plundered by organised criminals, thereby ensuring their many benefits



can flow to the local and indigenous peoples of source countries and the global community.”

To date, the IWT Challenge Fund has supported 136 projects in over 60 countries to a value of over £43 million. Previously supported projects have included efforts to protect the endangered Royal Bengal Tigers in Nepal by building capacity in park rangers and strengthening wildlife enforcement, as well as protecting elephants along the Nigeria-Cameroon transboundary Green Corridor by improving co-operation between agencies tasked with conserving this iconic species.

Round 9 of the IWTCF is now open for applications. For more information on previous projects as well as how to apply please visit: <https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/>

Combating illegal trade of bears and diversifying livelihoods in Laos (Free the Bears Fund Inc)

- The placement of confiscated wildlife remains a major obstacle to effective law enforcement in Laos.
- By increasing capacity to house confiscated bears, this project will enable

government agencies to effectively implement legal deterrents in order to end the trafficking of bears in Laos and help maintain the ecological intactness of forest ecosystems.

- Additionally, it will demonstrate the role that well-run wildlife sanctuaries can play in poverty reduction through the creation of diverse livelihood and educational opportunities.

Successful Round 8 Applicant and regional director of Free the Bears, Brian Crudge, said:

“Bear bile farming and illegal trade are major threats to the survival of sun bears and Asiatic black bears in Southeast Asia. With limited possibilities for



returning animals to the wild, rescue facilities are necessary to allow for confiscation and rehabilitation of threatened species.

With support from the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, Free the Bears is supporting the efforts of the Government of Laos to tackle the issue of wildlife farming and illegal trade through the development of sanctuaries which provide space for confiscated animals as well as providing forest-edge communities with sustainable livelihood opportunities.”

Increasing chimpanzee guardianship values to reduce the illegal wildlife trade in Liberia (PCI Media Impact)

- Illegal trade of endangered Western Chimpanzees in Liberia is a complex issue driven by poverty, systemic development challenges, and insufficient management of demand.
- This project aims to reduce demand for chimpanzees by fostering guardianship values among urban consumers.
- It will work with a coalition of local

partners to design an effective Social and Behaviour Change Communications strategy model that drives the revival and cross-ethnic expansion of existing chimpanzee guardianship values, ultimately reducing IWT.

Successful Round 8 Applicant and project lead at the Livable Plant Program, Brett Matulis, said:

“Even though trade in chimpanzees is illegal, the demand for bushmeat and household pets is driving a decline in this iconic species – with only about 35,000 Western Chimpanzees remaining.

Our project in Liberia will tackle this demand by forging a coalition of environmental, gender equity, and poverty alleviation charities with an aim to reduce the consumption of chimpanzee meat and foster local guardianship values for this critically endangered species. If successful, this could be scaled up across Liberia and the region to protect even more animals. The funds we have received today will play a key role in achieving this.”

IWTCF schemes expanded:

This latest round is the first time we have introduced ‘evidence’ and ‘extra’

schemes, expanding the eligibility criteria for both the grant size and length. The criteria for all three schemes are:

- **Evidence** – Projects which gather evidence to design an intervention will be funded between £20,000 and £100,000.
- **Main** – Projects which test new and innovative interventions to provide proof of intervention on a smaller scale will be funded between £100,000 and £600,000.
- **Extra** – Projects which have already demonstrated success and can have a bigger impact at a larger scale will be funded between £600,000 and £1.5 million.

These new schemes will help better support projects at different points in their development.

Launch of Round 9 of IWTCF

- Today’s announcement also marks the launch of Round 9 of IWTCF funding for projects working to tackle the illegal trade of any species of flora, fauna and fungi in sub-Saharan Africa, East and South-East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. Applicants have until 22 August to submit their Stage 1 application.

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Illicit drug users to face tougher consequences

July

So-called recreational drug users will face a fine and could have their passports and driving licences seized under new proposals announced today (Monday 18th July).

The tougher penalties will help tackle the scourge of substance abuse in society which devastates lives and tears communities apart, as well as make our streets safer.

The government is committed to reversing the rising trend of drug use in society, protecting vulnerable people from harm and exploitation. These measures are a step towards changing the damaging culture of drug use and the consumption of drugs such as cannabis and cocaine.

The proposals have been published in a white paper entitled 'Swift, Certain, Tough. New Consequences for Drug Possession'. The escalating tougher penalties that so-called recreational drugs users in England and Wales could face include:

- first-time offenders required to pay for and attend a drug awareness course or, if they don't, pay an increased fixed penalty notice or face prosecution
 - those found using drugs for a second time given a caution, sent on a further drug awareness course and face a period of mandatory, random drug testing for a period of up to three months
 - offenders caught for a third time would likely be charged for their offence, and upon conviction, as part of a civil court order, could be subject to an exclusion order banning them from a specific location, such as a nightclub
- They could also be given a drug tag monitoring their usage, and have their passports and driving licences



confiscated.

The measures follow the publication of the 10-year drugs strategy in December and come after statistics which show over three million people in England and Wales in 2019 to 2020 reported using drugs in the last year, putting themselves at risk and handing lucrative profits to criminals running a violent and exploitative supply chain.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

“Drugs are a scourge across society. They devastate lives and tear communities apart.

Drug misuse puts lives at risk, fuels criminality and serious and violent crime and also results in the grotesque exploitation of young, vulnerable people.

We are cracking down on drug use with tougher consequences for so-called recreational drug users who will face the consequences of their actions through sanctions including fines and conditions to attend rehabilitation courses, while drug offenders could have their passports and driving licences confiscated.

In line with our strategy to tackle the harmful consequences of drugs, we aim to reverse the rising trend of substance use in society, to protect the public from the harm and violence of drug misuse.”

The proposals will now be subject to a 12 week public consultation.

More people die every year as a result of drug misuse than from all knife crime and road traffic accidents combined. The total cost to society and taxpayers in today's prices is nearly £22 billion.

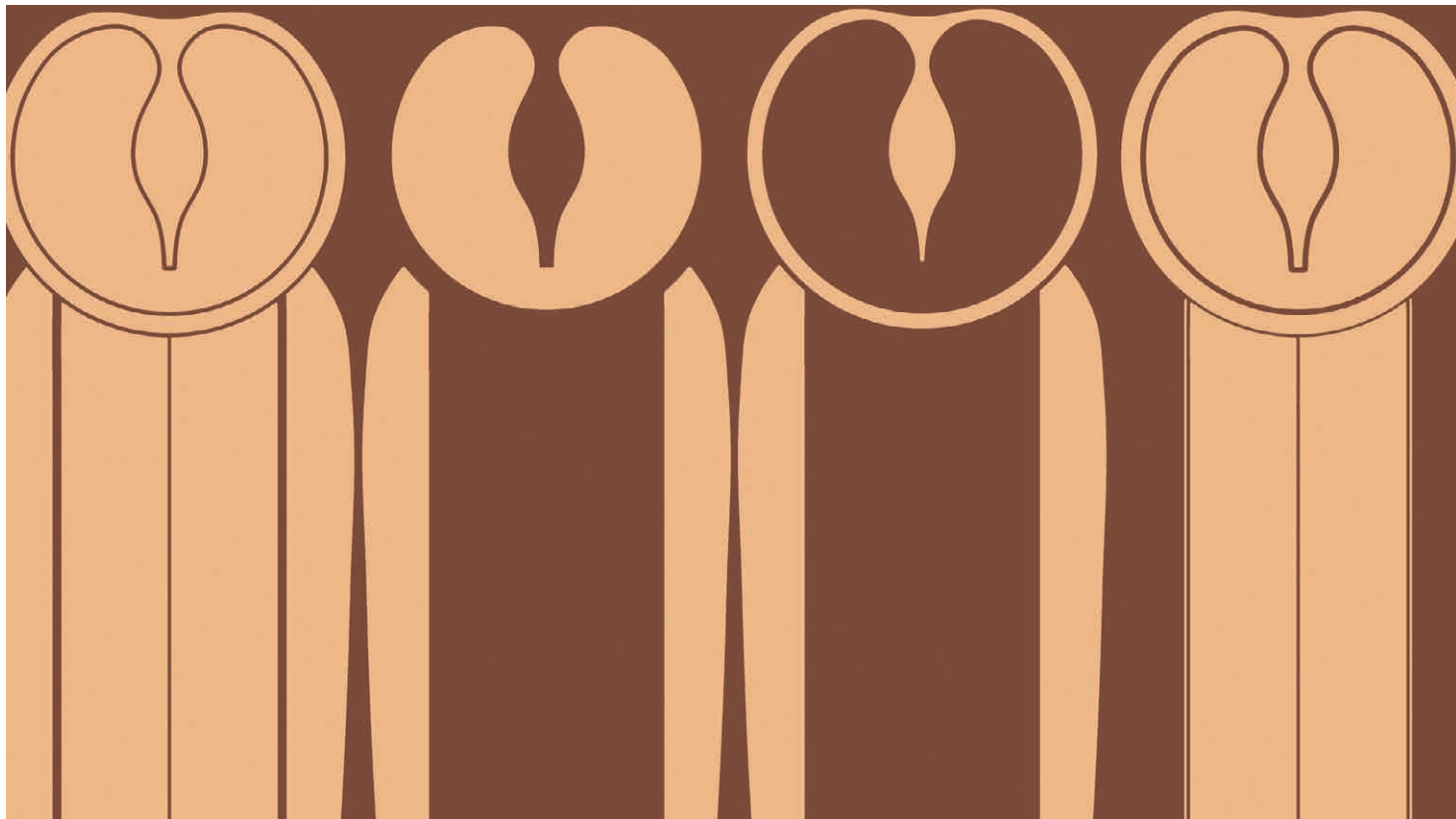


Overall prevalence of drug use has increased since 2012 to 2013 with drugs being used by a higher percentage of young adults and children.

The government is committed to reversing this trend and making our streets safer by stamping out drug supply in its 10-year drugs strategy, which is backed by an additional £900 million of funding for enforcement, treatment and recovery, taking the total investment on combating drugs over the next three years to £3billion.

Published last December, the strategy focuses on three key priorities – reducing demand for drugs, delivering a world-class treatment and recovery system and breaking drug supply chains. Today's proposals are a core part of delivering this strategy.

Police activity funded by the Home Office's County Lines Programme has already closed over 2,400 lines, made over 8,000 arrests and engaged over 9,500 individuals through safeguarding interventions since November 2019.



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Over 100 new and revamped parks to level up towns and cities across the UK

August

- People in urban areas set to benefit from initiative backed by £9 million of government funding
- Parks to be created in neighbourhoods most deprived of green spaces
- £2 million of total investment to support tree planting in new parks

People in towns and cities across the UK will benefit from over 100 new and improved green spaces on their doorstep through £9 million in government funding.

The Levelling Up Parks Fund will create new and improved parks in urban areas, helping communities to come together and enjoy the outdoors.

Launching the fund during Love Parks Week, the government hopes each new or improved green space will be an oasis for the local community, boosting

creativity and positive mental health whilst also contributing to net zero ambitions.

In England, the cash will be given to councils to create or significantly revamp existing parks in 85 neighbourhoods most deprived of outdoor space. Areas set to benefit include Liverpool, Birmingham, Carlisle and 16 London boroughs.



The new parks will significantly increase access to quality green space for those who need it most, particularly supporting people without a garden to spend time with friends and family in the natural world.

From community gardens to formal greens and town parks – councils will be able to choose the nature and location of the new or improved parks in their local area, meaning that each green space will be as unique as the community it serves.

Secretary of State for Levelling Up Greg Clark MP said:

“Parks and green spaces are at the heart of our communities, providing sanctuary from the bustling streets of our towns and cities and spaces for people to relax and come together.

Over the past few years, the importance of spending time with loved ones and getting outdoors has become even more apparent, and this latest government funding will help people living in urban areas do just that.

I look forward to seeing the new parks come to life and making a real difference to people's daily lives for years to come."

In a further boost to make the UK a greener place to live, £2 million of the total investment will support tree planting on the park sites, helping to combat CO2 emissions and make the air cleaner for people and wildlife. It also supports the government's commitment to treble tree planting rates over the course of this Parliament.

Instead of a competitive bidding process, the fund allocates grants to places that the government has identified as most in need of quality green space, supported by data from Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework mapping.

The UK government has allocated over £1 million from the fund to the devolved administrations and we continue to work

closely with them to consider how we can best use the funding to support green spaces in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Forestry Minister, Lord Zac Goldsmith said:

"This funding will ensure that people from all backgrounds have access to nature by supporting tree planting within public green spaces in our urban communities – where tree cover is often the lowest.

It will help us meet our tree planting ambitions – as well as making our towns and cities healthier, better insulated to a changing climate, and generally more

pleasant places to be."

Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England said:

"Big or small, green areas help us to connect with nature and support the health of our communities. Our research showed that 4 in 10 people said visiting green and natural spaces had been even more important to their wellbeing since the pandemic began.

This investment will create new habitats for our precious wildlife and build beautiful places for everyone to enjoy, with our data and expertise supporting the development of green



spaces in areas where communities say they are needed the most.”

Levelling Up Parks Fund prospectus for eligible councils.

In England, data from Natural England is used to determine the eligible areas. The eligibility criteria consider the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and low proximity to green spaces.

As part of the Levelling Up Parks Fund, £2 million of ‘tree uplift’ funding will be provided from the government’s landmark Nature for Climate Fund, announced as part of the 2020 Budget. This will cover the cost of preparation, purchase, planting, or ongoing maintenance of trees in any of the urban green spaces within scope of Levelling Up Parks Fund projects, reflecting the important role that trees play in urban communities. They provide shade, improve air quality, enhance biodiversity and boost health and wellbeing.

The Levelling Up Parks Fund is one of a number of projects, including the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, supported through the Nature for Climate Fund that aim to increase the number of trees in our towns

and cities.

The 85 areas in England to receive funding are:

Region	Council
East Midlands	Bassetlaw, Derby, East Lindsey, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, West Lindsey
East of England	Basildon, Castle Point, Fenland, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, Luton, Norwich, Peterborough, Southend-on-Sea, Tendring
London	Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Brent, Camden, Croydon, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Westminster
North East	County Durham, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, South Tyneside, Stockton-on-Tees, Sunderland
North West	Barrow-in-Furness, Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Bolton, Carlisle, Halton, Hyndburn, Knowsley, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Pendle, Preston, Rochdale, Salford, Sefton, Tameside, Wigan, Wirral
South East	Eastbourne, Hastings, Havant, Medway, Portsmouth, Reading, Rother, Southampton, Swale
West Midlands	Birmingham, Dudley, East Staffordshire, Redditch, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton
Yorkshire and the Humber	Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Doncaster, City of Kingston upon Hull, Leeds, North East Lincolnshire, Sheffield

New funding to boost UK business exports abroad through the recognition of professional qualifications

August

- Government to fund professional bodies and regulators to agree deals to support the recognition of professional qualifications with overseas counterparts
- grants worth up to £75,000 each to acquire new staff or hire consultants to help secure the recognition of UK professional qualifications in their respective fields
- will help to ensure British accountants, lawyers, architects and others are free to use their qualifications globally

UK professionals looking to work abroad will benefit from new funding for regulators and professional bodies, the government has announced today (Wednesday 3 August).

The Recognition Arrangements Grants Programme will provide grants

of up to £75,000 to UK regulators to develop recognition arrangements with their international counterparts and ensure British professionals have their qualifications recognised overseas.



Act, the UK government can ensure regulators have the ability to agree recognition arrangements with overseas counterparts. These recognition arrangements can make it easier for British professionals to have their qualifications recognised overseas, without the need to requalify with additional qualifications.

The UK is the second largest exporter of services in the world and this new funding will help to boost our advantage in trade in services.

Business Minister Lord Callanan said:

“The UK’s professional qualifications are rightly widely recognised as a gold standard for diligence, professionalism, and proficiency

around the world.

By creating our Recognition Arrangements Grants Programme, we are supporting regulators to build on this well-deserved reputation for excellence by agreeing recognition of professional qualifications with countries across the EU, ultimately making it easier for our lawyers, surveyors, accountants, and others to work in the EU and elsewhere.”

For example, the newly available funding may be used by accountancy professional bodies to agree deals which ensure that UK-qualified accountants will have their credentials recognised by regulators in countries such as Australia and New Zealand. This will enable them to practise their profession overseas, and will be able to access many new business opportunities.

Accounting organisations such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), who offer industry specific qualifications like the ACA, could use the grant funding to work with equivalent organisations in other countries to establish mutual recognition of both their certifications and those of the other nation.

An ICAEW spokesperson said:

“We warmly welcome the announcement by BEIS of this new round of funding.

It will prove extremely useful for UK professional bodies working towards international recognition arrangements as part of the ‘Global Britain’ agenda.

BEIS’ pilot scheme was very helpful supporting aspects of ICAEW’s international recognition work and because of this we intend to bid again.”

This scheme is the latest step as the UK builds on its role as a global centre for business, commerce, and trade after leaving the EU.

Building on the international prestige of British qualifications, the new resources will help lawyers, accountants, engineers, and others to continue to work or grow their businesses abroad as well as at home.



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Cheaper broadband for struggling families

August

- New system allows customers to give permission to broadband providers to confirm their eligibility for cheaper deals
- Plans come alongside further deals secured by Cost of Living Business Tsar and former Just Eat boss, David Buttress, as part of the Government's Help for Households campaign
- Further series of cost of living deals will provide extra support to families as kids return to school

Broadband bills could be cut for millions of low-income households under Government plans to encourage 'social tariffs'.

A new service, which will go live next week and be run by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), will allow internet service providers to verify – with customers' permission – whether they are in receipt of a relevant

benefit and therefore eligible for extra financial support.

The Government has called on all broadband providers to offer and promote social tariffs – discounted broadband and mobile deals for people on Universal Credit and other benefits –

with statistics showing only 1.2% of those eligible have taken advantage of such a package.

The scheme is already supported by Virgin Media O2 who, following discussions with Government, has announced today that they will use



the system to verify eligible customers signing up to their Essential Broadband tariff. The company will also waive early termination fees for those moving from existing tariffs.

Customers on social tariffs could in some cases save over a hundred pounds a year. The new system will also simplify the process by removing the need for customers to prove their entitlement to broadband providers as regularly as every month. Social tariffs are available to eligible customers in 99% of the country following Government-led negotiations with broadband companies.

The Government's Cost of Living Business Tsar, David Buttress, has welcomed the new scheme and committed to continue working with industry to scale up and promote existing social tariffs, as well as encourage all providers to offer a discounted tariff.

Cost of Living Business Tsar, David Buttress, said:

"Times are tough and families across the country are feeling the pinch, so we're making it easier for companies to reduce phone and broadband bills for struggling families.

Some of the biggest network operators have already committed to take advantage of this new scheme and we want to see other providers follow their lead so that everyone eligible for a social tariff can access one.

This is just one of the ways that we're working with businesses to offer help through our Help for Households campaign, building on the comprehensive £37 billion package of support already being provided by Government."

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey, said:

"It's more important than ever that people



get the financial support available to them, including cheaper broadband for benefit claimants, and this change makes these social tariffs even easier to access.

I'd like to thank those providers leading the way in moving customers over to discount rates, and I encourage others to follow suit to help millions of households to cut bills."

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries, said:

"Social tariffs are vital for families struggling with bills, keeping them connected even in tough times.

Our discussion with broadband companies led to the range of social tariffs on the market today and we've secured a raft of new cost-of-living commitments from them to ensure help is available for anyone that needs it.

I urge anyone concerned about falling behind on payments to contact their supplier to see what support is available."

Internet service providers will be required to gain customers' consent before speaking to DWP about their eligibility. DWP will minimise the

information provided, sharing nothing other than confirmation that the person is entitled to a qualifying benefit at the time of contact. This ensures that claimants' data remains as safe as possible.

Alongside the launch of today's scheme, the Government's Cost of Living Tsar, David Buttress, has also announced a further series of cost-of-living deals and discounts as part of the Government's Help for Households campaign.

The deals have been negotiated with some of the UK's largest businesses and follow those already announced last month to access the full range deals.

The new deals include:

- A bespoke new deal with the publishing firm Scholastic, who are offering 20% off children's books. Scholastic will also donate an additional 20% of all order

values over £10 in Rewards to local schools for them to spend on books and resources to help stock libraries and classrooms.

- A curated set of Back to School deals from Amazon, with discounts ranging from backpacks and school uniforms, including up to 30% off Clarks School Shoes, to deals on stationary essentials from BIC, Staedtler and Papermate. Amazon Fresh is also offering savings, from lunchbox essentials to laundry detergent.

A number of other Help for Households partners, including Marks & Spencer, Primark, Shoezone, ZSL and Go-ahead have also agreed to promote their existing support schemes under the Help for Households campaign to raise awareness. For example, ZSL are offering new £3 tickets for London Zoo and Whipsnade.

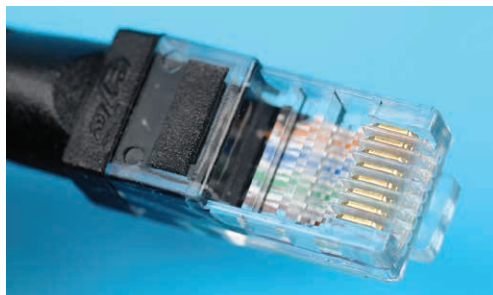
Lutz Schüler, Chief Executive Officer of Virgin Media O2, said:

"Connectivity is a lifeline people can't go without, and as one of the first providers to have introduced a social broadband tariff in 2020, we are committed to making it as easy as possible for customers to get support with the cost-of-living crisis.

We're working to implement the API as soon as possible making it faster and easier to sign up for our social tariff as part of a comprehensive plan to boost the awareness, availability and attractiveness of Essential Broadband."

Catherine Bell, Co-group Managing Director, Scholastic UK said:

"We're delighted to be part of the Government's Help for Households campaign. We recognise the pressures that the current cost of living crisis is bringing and understand that back to school can be a very expensive time for parents. We firmly believe that reading for pleasure for children is more important now than ever and through our school Book Clubs we are pleased to offer a huge range of books with a special Help for Households discount for September that parents can access via their school organiser or by visiting our Book Clubs website. Every Book Club purchase comes with the added benefit that Scholastic will donate an additional 20% of all order values over £10 in Rewards to your local school for them to spend on books and resources to help stock libraries and classrooms."



Kathryn England, Chief Operating Officer of ZSL London Zoo said:

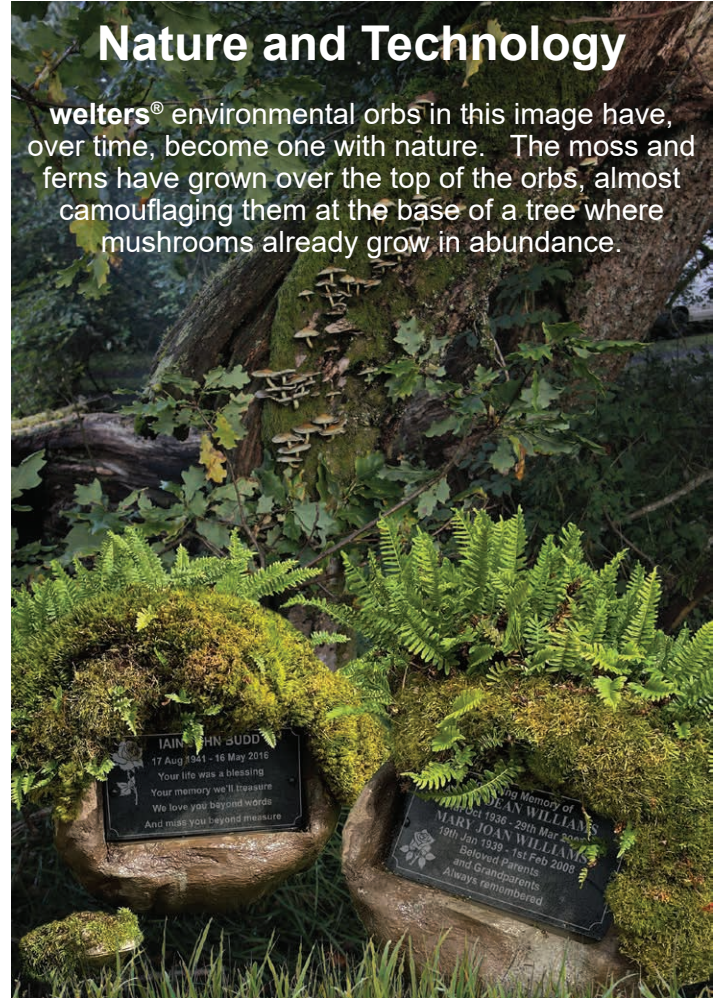
“The thrill and awe of a visit to ZSL London or Whipsnade Zoo is something that we want as many people as possible to experience. Our Community Access Scheme ensures that cost isn’t a barrier to that. In partnership with the UK Government’s Help for Households scheme, every day for the rest of the school summer holidays (until Sunday 4 September) we are providing additional tickets to either London or Whipsnade Zoo, from as little as £3 per person – helping us to introduce even more people to the wonders of the animal kingdom. Our zoos help to inspire a life-long love of wildlife. Home to endangered species from all over the world, we aim to empower every person who visits our zoos to help us protect these animals. Now, more than ever, it’s so important that everyone has a better understanding of nature and the role we can all play in helping to protect our precious planet. Just visit www.zsl.org/CAS to find out more.”

The government’s Cost of Living Business Tsar is working to secure further deals under the Help for Households campaign which will be announced over the coming weeks and months.



Nature and Technology

welters® environmental orbs in this image have, over time, become one with nature. The moss and ferns have grown over the top of the orbs, almost camouflaging them at the base of a tree where mushrooms already grow in abundance.



Brand new pension scheme launches in Great Britain

August

Collective Defined Contribution pension schemes, or CDCs for short, will offer an alternative to the UK's two primary pension scheme models, Defined Contribution (DC) and Defined Benefit (DB).

CDCs have the potential to provide improved retirement returns for savers, with more predictable costs for employers. Both employers and employees contribute to a collective fund from which individual retirement incomes are drawn, with trustees responsible for oversight to ensure schemes are viable and can meet their legal requirements and commitments to members.

Minister for Pensions, Guy Opperman, said:

"CDC schemes have the potential to transform the UK pensions landscape.

We have seen the positive effect of these schemes in other countries and it is abundantly clear that, when well designed and well run, they have the potential to provide a better retirement outcome for members, and can be resilient to market shocks.

I have no doubt that millions of pension savers will benefit from CDCs in the years to come."

The new schemes were made possible



following the passage last year of the landmark Pension Schemes Act 2021.

Regulations currently provide for single or connected employer CDC schemes.

Some parties have already expressed an interest in expanding CDC models, including multi-employer CDC schemes, as well as the potential for CDC schemes which offer "decumulation only" – when pension savings are converted to retirement income.

Nigel Peaple, Director Policy & Advocacy, PLSA, said:

"The PLSA supports innovation within the pensions sector where it improves people's retirements. CDC blends some of the desirable elements of Defined Benefit (DB), such as clearer target outcomes for the saver, and

of Defined Contribution (DC) schemes, such as predictable contributions for the employer and member. By pooling longevity risk and the ability to invest money over a longer period, CDC has the potential to provide new and better approaches for benefit provision.

There are, of course, challenges, including how to ensure savers understand the variability of benefits, and ensuring new models can deliver in practice once reserving and regulation is in place. Nevertheless, we are confident that this ambitious proposal will provide the incentive and momentum to overcome them.”

The DWP plans to consult later this year on a package of prospective design principles and approaches to accommodate new types of CDC schemes. This will bring the potential benefits to more savers in the UK, while also capitalising on the enthusiasm shown for innovation in this area.

CDC authorisation and ongoing supervision will be administered by the Pensions Regulator who have produced detailed practical support for schemes through operational guidance and a Code of Practice.

Self-driving revolution to boost economy and improve road safety

August

- government unveils plan to rollout self-driving vehicles on UK roads, sparking a transport revolution to improve road safety and better connect communities

- estimated 38,000 new jobs could be created in the UK from predicted £42 billion industry

- backed by £100 million to support industry investment and fund research on safety developments

UK roads could see self-driving vehicles rolled out by 2025 thanks to new government plans – backed by £100 million – which prioritise safety through new laws and create thousands of new jobs in the industry.

Some vehicles, including cars, coaches and lorries, with self-driving features could be operating on motorways in the next year, and today's (19 August 2022) plans set out new legislation which will

allow for the safe wider rollout of self-driving vehicles by 2025. This enables the UK to take full advantage of the emerging market of self-driving vehicles – which could create up to 38,000 jobs and could be worth an estimated £42 billion.

The government's vision for self-



driving vehicles is backed by a total of £100 million, with £34 million confirmed today for research to support safety developments and inform more detailed legislation. This could include researching the performance of self-driving cars in poor weather conditions and how they interact with pedestrians, other vehicles, and cyclists.

The government is also today confirming £20 million, as part of the overall £100 million, to help kick-start commercial self-driving services and enable businesses to grow and create jobs in the UK, following an existing £40 million investment. Successful projects could help see, for example, groceries delivered to customers by self-driving vehicles, or shuttle pods assisting passengers when moving through airports. £6 million will also be used for further market research and to support commercialisation of the technology.

Self-driving vehicles could revolutionise public transport and passenger travel, especially for those who don't drive, better connect rural communities and reduce road collisions caused by human error. Further in the future, they could, for example, provide tailored on-demand links from rural towns and villages to existing public transport options nearby.

They could also provide more direct and timely services that enable people to better access vital services such as schools and medical appointments.

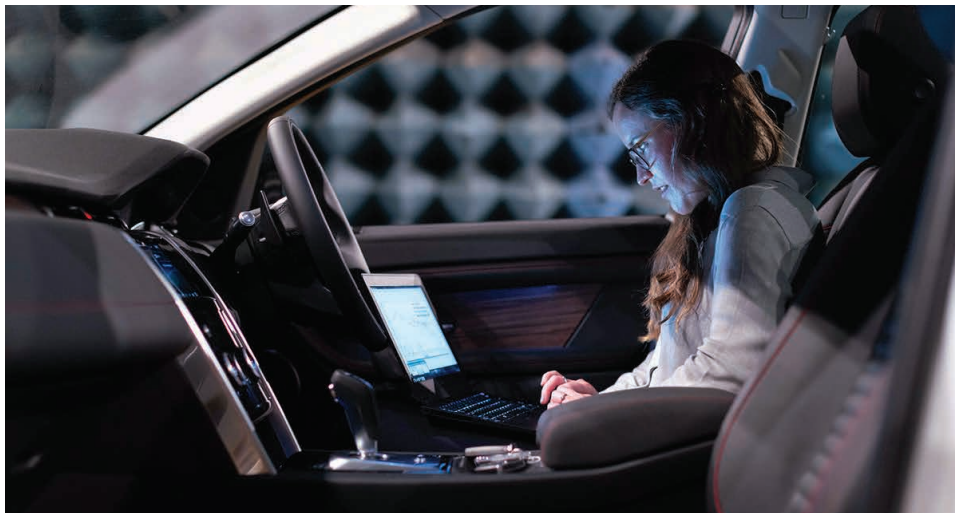
Vehicles that can drive themselves on motorways could be available to purchase within the next year, which users would need a valid driving licence for, so they can drive on other roads. Other self-driving vehicles, for example used for public transport or delivery, expected on the roads by 2025, would not need anyone onboard with a driving licence because they would be able to drive themselves

for the whole journey.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

“The benefits of self-driving vehicles have the potential to be huge. Not only can they improve people's access to education and other vital services, but the industry itself can create tens of thousands of job opportunities throughout the country.

Most importantly, they're expected to make our roads safer by reducing the dangers of driver error in road



collisions.

We want the UK to be at the forefront of developing and using this fantastic technology, and that is why we are investing millions in vital research into safety and setting the legislation to ensure we gain the full benefits that this technology promises.”

The government is today consulting on a ‘safety ambition’ for self-driving vehicles to be as safe as a competent and careful human driver. This ambition would inform standards that vehicles need to meet to be allowed to ‘self-drive’ on the roads, and organisations, such as manufacturers, could face sanctions if standards are not met.

The new laws for the safe rollout of self-driving vehicles by 2025 will be brought forward when parliamentary time allows.

The legislation will build on existing laws, and state that manufacturers are responsible for the vehicle’s actions when self-driving, meaning a human driver would not be liable for incidents related to driving while the vehicle is in control of driving.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

“Self-driving vehicles have the potential to revolutionise people’s lives, particularly by helping those who have mobility issues or rely on public transport to access the jobs, local shops and vital services we all depend on.

This funding will help unlock the incredible potential of this industry, attracting investment, developing the UK’s growing self-driving vehicle supply chain, and supporting high-skill jobs as these new means of transport are rolled out.”

AA president, Edmund King, said:

“The automotive world is changing rapidly and so the government is right to embrace the positive changes offered by this new technology and back it by funding research and putting forward legislation. Assisted driving systems, for example, autonomous emergency braking and adaptive cruise control, are

already helping millions of drivers stay safe on the roads.

It is still quite a big leap from assisted driving, where the driver is still in control, to self-driving, where the car takes control. It is important that the government does study how these vehicles would interact with other road users on different roads and changing weather conditions. However the ultimate prize, in terms of saving thousands of lives and improving the mobility of the elderly and the less mobile, is well worth pursuing.”

Today also sees the publication of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation’s (CDEI) Responsible Innovation in Self-Driving Vehicles report, which sets out proposals for a trustworthy approach to the regulation and governance of self-driving vehicles.





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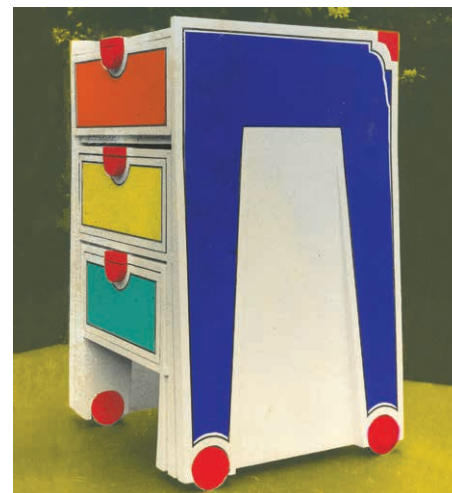
Design and Innovation

Throughout history, beautiful colours have been used extensively in magnificent architectural buildings, both internally and externally. Examples can be found in ancient Greek, Egyptian and Roman structures, amongst many.

The use of colour in architecture has, unfortunately, diminished over time.



welters® has developed specific expertise in the iconic colour of, not only our contemporary design projects (for example, this bright speaker cabinet which was ahead of its time at its conception 30 years ago), but of our structural and decorative stonework (example above). We intend to introduce these colour options into our standard catalogue of products.



Folic acid added to flour to prevent brain and spinal conditions in fetuses

September

- Defra launches UK-wide consultation on the Bread and Flour Regulations on the amount of folic acid to be added to flour
- Under the government's proposals, pregnancies affected by neural tube defects could fall by more than a fifth

The number of pregnancies affected by life-threatening issues such as spina bifida could fall by more than a fifth as the government moves one step closer to actively adding folic acid to non-wholemeal flour.

Following a consultation with industry and stakeholders on whether to add folic acid to non-wholemeal flour, a public health policy which has already been successful in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, today the government is consulting on its proposal to add 250 micrograms of folic acid per 100 grams of flour.

The proposal on the amount of folic acid to be added to flour is part of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

(Defra) consultation on the Bread and Flour Regulations, which aims to ensure the regulations are consistent with other food standards legislation.

Neural tube defects are a rare developmental condition which occurs very early in pregnancy and affects around 1,000 pregnancies each year in the UK. This occurs when the brain, spine, or spinal cord do not develop properly in the womb and can cause life-threatening health issues.

Women are advised to take a daily 400-microgram folic acid supplement before conceiving and up to the 12th week of pregnancy as it reduces the risk of neural tube defects affected pregnancies. However, as pregnancies may be unplanned or women in the first few weeks of pregnancy may not know they are pregnant, many women may be unaware of this recommendation.

Adding folic acid will mean foods made with flour, such as bread, will actively help avoid around 200 neural tube defects each year -

around 20% of the annual UK total.

Defra Food Minister Victoria Prentis said:

"It is vital that we consult on this issue to understand views on all of our proposed amendments to bread and flour regulations.

Folic acid fortification is an example of how we can ensure the public receive



the nutrition we require through everyday food products.”

The government’s Bread and Flour Regulations consultation proposes adding 250 micrograms of folic acid per 100 grams of non-wholemeal flour.

Minister for Public Health Maggie Throup said:

“Neural tube defects can have a devastating impact on life expectancy and quality of life.

This simple step will ensure more women who might be pregnant, or who are trying to conceive, will have increased intakes of folic acid, leading to a large reduction in the number of fetuses affected by NTDs each year.

I want to encourage anyone with an interest in this issue to participate in the consultation and help us deliver life-saving changes.”

The proposal forms part of a UK-wide consultation on the Bread and Flour Regulations which aims to support UK industry, help lead to improved public health outcomes, assist enforcement authorities and protect UK consumers. It will ensure the regulations are consistent with other food standards legislation, covering the specifications of vitamins and minerals added to foods.

£3.3 million boost for next generation nuclear technology

September

- Government’s nuclear ambitions backed with £3.3 million funding to support advanced nuclear technology

- projects across the UK will benefit, helping support research to develop a UK Advanced Modular Reactor (AMR)

- funding is a further boost for new homegrown nuclear to protect the UK’s energy independence

Cutting-edge nuclear technology projects across the UK have today (Friday 2 September) received government backing to help develop the next generation of nuclear reactors. The funding will support the early-stage innovation for 6 winning projects, helping attract private investment and supporting the creation of new, highly-skilled green jobs.

This £3.3 million funding through the Advanced Modular Reactor Research,

Development and Demonstration (AMR RD&D) programme, will support the development of cutting-edge nuclear technology in the UK such as high temperature gas reactors (HTGRs), helping revolutionise the way the UK gets its energy.

The innovative projects being backed by the government include National Nuclear Laboratory Ltd in Cheshire, who are coordinating a UK-Japan



team to design an innovative HTGR, and U-Battery Developments Ltd in Slough, for a study to determine the optimum size, type, cost, and delivery method for a U-Battery AMR suitable for demonstration in the UK.

The AMR funding represents another key step in the government's plans to accelerate homegrown nuclear power to strengthen the UK's energy security.

Energy Minister Greg Hands said:

"This investment will help unlock the potential for new nuclear reactors in the UK, as we drive forward plans to boost clean, cutting-edge, homegrown technologies for our energy security, while driving down bills in the long term."

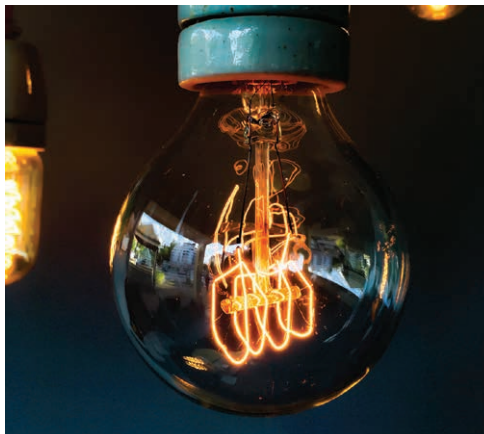
£2.5 million in funding is going to 6 projects seeking to develop Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs) in the UK. These reactors use novel and innovative fuels, coolants, and technologies to generate high-temperature heat for industrial use, as well as electricity.

The AMR RD&D programme, part of the £385 million Advanced Nuclear Fund, focuses on developing high temperature gas reactors (HTGRs), with an ambition for a demonstrator by the early 2030s,

as they optimise opportunities for decarbonising industrial heat to support the UK's target of reaching net zero by 2050.

AMR technology could be a cost-effective solution for decarbonising industry, typically having higher temperature outputs than conventional reactors. The low carbon, high temperature heat from AMRs could be used for hydrogen production, process heat for industrial and domestic use, as well as electricity generation.

In addition, the government is providing up to £830,000 to the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency to develop their capability and consider



innovative regulatory approaches to high temperature gas reactors (HTGRs). This will help support the government's plans to have a UK-based HTGR demonstration by the early 2030s. BEIS will work with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and their wider estate to explore how to leverage their knowledge, sites and operational experience to inform the development, deployment and operation of the demonstration and to support BEIS policy objectives in this area.

The winners announced today

- U-Battery Developments Ltd in Slough is receiving £499,845 for a study to determine the optimum size, type, cost, and delivery method for an U-Battery AMR suitable for demonstration in the UK
- EDF Energy Nuclear Generation Ltd in Gloucester and Hartlepool is receiving £499,737 focusing on end-user requirements to determine the reactor design characteristics most suitable for a HTGR demonstration in the 2030s. EDF proposes the Hartlepool Heat Hub as a host site for the UK's first HTGR demonstration

- Ultra Safe Nuclear Corporation UK Ltd in St Helens, Merseyside is receiving £498,312 for a project that will build on USNC's existing micro modular reactor (MMR) design as a foundation to develop and demonstrate a modified MMR+ design best suited to UK industry's current and projected future process heat demands. This includes a demonstration of hydrogen and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) production

- National Nuclear Laboratory Ltd in Cheshire is receiving £497,495 for a project that coordinates a UK-Japan team (NNL, Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) and Jacobs) to leverage a proven HTGR baseline from Japan and adopt an innovative approach in its design, build, construction and operation

- Springfields Fuels Ltd in Salwick, Lancashire is receiving £243,311 for a project, in collaboration with Urenco Limited, to support the range of potential HTGR technologies which may come forward in the UK

- National Nuclear Laboratory Ltd in Cheshire is receiving £250,000 under the Lot 2 Phase A funding, for a project that aims to deliver a domestic commercial fuel supply starting with the first fuel load for the HTGR demonstration

Plans for public to watch Her Majesty The Queen's funeral announced

September

- Opportunity for public to line routes in London and Windsor for The Queen's final journey

- Big screens will be put up across the country for people to watch the ceremony

- The funeral, on Monday 19 September, will also be broadcast live on BBC, Sky and ITV

- National Moment of Reflection will be held on Sunday 18 September

The funeral takes place on the morning of Monday 19 September alongside processions in London and Windsor, with public viewing areas and big screens in both locations.

Across the country big screens will be put up, including in London's Hyde Park, Sheffield's Cathedral Square, Birmingham's Centenary Square, Carlisle's Bitts Park, Edinburgh's Holyrood Park and Coleraine Town Hall in Northern Ireland. Cinemas across the UK are also opening their screens to show the funeral - bringing together local communities to commemorate.

The funeral service and processions will be shown live on BBC One, ITV and Sky for those who wish to watch at home.



At 10.44am, The Queen's coffin will be moved from the Palace of Westminster to Westminster Abbey for the state funeral. Two thousand guests are expected to attend the service, which will begin at 11am and followed by a national two-minute silence at 11.55am.

A public procession will begin at 12.15pm as Her Majesty's coffin travels from Westminster Abbey to Wellington Arch in London.

The procession, which will proceed in seven groups and be supported by a service band, will travel along Broad Sanctuary, Parliament Square, Whitehall, Horse Guards Parade, Horse Guards Road, The Mall, Constitution Hill and end at London's Wellington Arch.

Space dedicated for those with accessibility requirements is available at the Green Park side of The Mall and the St James's Park side of The Mall. The Albert Memorial viewing areas will have British Sign Language interpreters and a hearing loop.

Her Majesty's coffin will then be carried from Wellington Arch by the State Hearse to Windsor where The Queen will be laid to rest.

The hearse is due to arrive in Albert Road and, at 3.10pm, it will travel in procession along Albert Road and the Long Walk before arriving to St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle ahead of the committal service, where The Queen will be buried next to the Duke of Edinburgh, which is not open to the public.

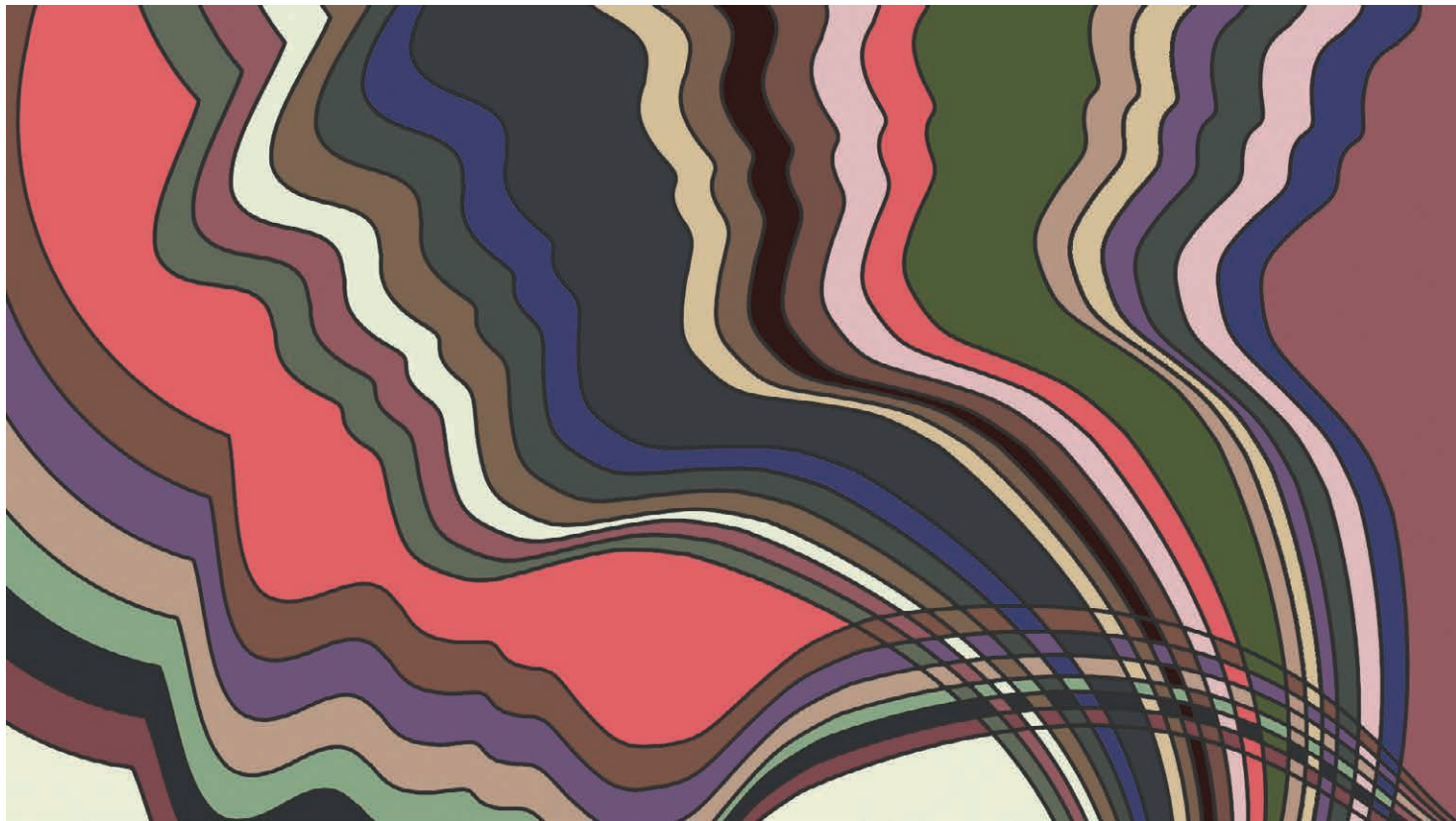
There are a limited number of public viewing areas on The Long Walk, including a number of viewing spaces for those with accessibility needs, and there will be big screens for people to watch the

services and procession from London.

Those wishing to line the processional route are encouraged to plan ahead and prepare for delays to travel.

A National Moment of Reflection will take place at 8pm on Sunday 18 September. Community groups, clubs and other organisations, as well as people at home are being encouraged to mark this moment in the form of a one-minute silence.





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£150 Disability Cost of Living Payments begin this month

September

From today (20 September) around six million disabled people in the UK will start to receive their one-off £150 Disability Cost of Living payment

- Six million people who are paid certain disability benefits will begin to receive a one-off payment of £150 from today
- Payments are part of the government's wider £37 billion support package,



Department for Work & Pensions

including the Energy Price Guarantee and cost of living payments totalling £650

Those who had confirmed payment of their disability benefit for 25 May will receive the £150 automatically, with the vast majority to be paid by early October.

The payment will help disabled people with the rising cost of living, acknowledging the higher disability-related costs they often face, such as for care and mobility needs.

The cost of living payments from the government are part of a £37 billion package of support, which will see millions of households receive at least £1,200 this year to help cover rising costs, and follows the Prime Minister's announcement of a new Energy Price Guarantee for the next two winters saving households on average £1,000 a year on their energy bills.

Work and Pensions Secretary Chloe Smith said:

"We know disabled people face additional costs and this government is listening and taking decisive action to protect the most vulnerable in our society.

In addition to the £150 Disability Cost of Living payment, households will save an average of £1,000 a year through our new Energy Price Guarantee and the lowest-income households will receive at least £1,200 to help with the rising cost of living this year.

This multi-billion-pound package of support reinforces our commitment to help UK households, particularly those with disability challenges, through the tough times ahead."

UK Chancellor of the Exchequer

Kwasi Kwarteng said:

“The government is providing vital support to shield the most vulnerable from rising prices caused by global economic challenges.

From today, a one-off £150 payment will automatically land in over six million disabled peoples’ accounts. This is in addition to the decisive action we took last week to hold down energy bills over the next two years, saving the average household £1,000 a year.

The government is standing behind people this winter, and in the longer term we are focusing on driving economic growth – the only way to permanently boost everyone’s living standards.”

Additional information

- The Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) will apply from 1 October and will discount the unit cost for gas and electricity use. This guarantee, which includes the temporary suspension of green levies, means that from 1 October a typical household will pay no more than £2,500 per year for each of the next two years. This is in addition to the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme.

- On top of the EPG and £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment, there is an extra £150 for properties in Council Tax bands A-D in England. On top of this, disabled people on low incomes may also be eligible for the other Cost Living payments totalling up to £650 – households in receipt of a means-tested benefit received the first of the two automatic Cost of Living payments of £326 from 14 July. The second means-tested payment of £324 will be issued later this year.

Eligibility

- Those who receive the following disability benefits may be eligible for the one-off payment of £150 in September: Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance, Scottish Disability Benefits (Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment), Armed Forces Independence Payment, Constant Attendance Allowance and War Pension Mobility Supplement.
- Those who had confirmed payment of their disability benefit for 25 May are expected to be paid shortly after the payment window opens. For those awaiting confirmation of their disability benefits on 25 May, or who are waiting to be assessed for eligibility to receive

disability benefits, the process may take longer but payments will still be automatic.

- You must have received a payment (or later receive a payment) of one of these qualifying benefits for 25 May 2022 to get the payment.

Cost of living support

- You can read more about the government’s cost of living support on the Help with the cost of living page.
- The Government has also expanded the Household Support Fund in England – which helps people with food and energy bills – with an extra £421 million – for October 22-March 23, and topped up funding by £79 million for devolved nations; the total value of this support now stands at £1.5 billion.
- This is all in addition to changes to the Universal Credit taper rate and work allowances worth £1,000 a year on average for 1.7 million working claimants, a rise in the National Living Wage to £9.50 an hour, and a tax cut for around 30 million workers through a rise in National Insurance contribution thresholds.

Prime Minister to tell UN General Assembly: I will lead a new Britain for a new era

September

- In UN address the PM will call on democracies to harness the power of cooperation seen since Putin's invasion of Ukraine to constrain authoritarianism.
- PM will argue the free world must prioritise economic growth and security – including ending dependency on authoritarians – to win the new era of strategic competition.
- UN speech will also stress the need to properly invest in our physical security and will recommit to spending 3% of UK GDP on defence by 2030.

Prime Minister Liz Truss will use a speech in New York today (Wednesday) to warn fellow democratic leaders against any complacency when it comes to defending our values and preserving a world order that rewards freedom.

At the first ever session of the UN General Assembly held in the shadow of a large-

scale war of aggression in Europe, the Prime Minister will highlight the threat from authoritarian states working to undermine security and stability around the world.

She will outline her vision for this new, more competitive era, which will require likeminded democracies to fight to defend our ideals. This fight begins with ensuring the UK and its partners have the strong economic foundations they need to constrain authoritarianism.

The Prime Minister will outline her plans to build a British economy which attracts growth by rewarding innovation, championing investment and enterprise, and welcoming the best talent around the world.

She will also set out the steps the Government is taking to ensure the British economy is free from malign interference. This includes increasing our energy

independence and safeguarding the security of our supply chains.

In her speech, the Prime Minister is expected to say:

“The commitment to hope and progress must begin at home – in the lives of every citizen that we serve...

...We want people to keep more of the money they earn, because we believe that freedom trumps instruction...



...We are reforming our economy to get Britain moving forward once again. The free world needs this economic strength and resilience to push back against authoritarian aggression and win this new era of strategic competition...

...We will no longer be strategically dependent on those who seek to weaponise the global economy."

As the UK boosts the dynamism and resilience of our own economy, the Prime Minister will also make the case for democracies working together to protect one another's economic security.

The strength of democratic economies, rooted as they are in the aspirations of their people, is a clear counterpoint to autocratic states, which sow the seeds of their own demise by stifling aspiration and

creativity.

The Prime Minister will make the case for harnessing that strength and denying authoritarian states the opportunity to manipulate the global economy.

She will tell the UN General Assembly that the G7 and other likeminded partners must act as an economic NATO, collectively defending our prosperity and coming to the aid of any partner targeted by an aggressive regime.

This economic security goes hand in hand with physical security. The Prime Minister will therefore reiterate her commitment to protecting the UK and our allies, including by increasing defence spending to 3% of UK GDP on defence by 2030.

The Prime Minister is expected to say:

"Just as we are building a plan for growth at home, we are also developing a new blueprint for our engagement with the world.

We will build resilience and collective security – because they are vital for freedom and democracy. We will be a reliable, trustworthy and dynamic partner."

To ensure the UK's diplomatic, military and security architecture is keeping pace with evolving threat posed by hostile nations, the Prime Minister has commissioned an update to the Integrated Review.

The UK's Integrated Review of security, defence, development and foreign policy was published in March 2021 – before Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine created the greatest security challenge ever experienced by NATO.

Professor John Bew, the Prime Minister's special adviser for foreign affairs and defence, will lead a Downing Street process to update the review.

The refreshed strategy will ensure we are investing in the strategic capabilities and alliances we need to stand firm against coercion from authoritarian powers like Russia and China. The update is expected to be published by the end of this year.

By properly investing in defence, the Prime Minister will ensure that the UK maintains our position as the leading security actor in Europe, so that we are ready to stand up for peace,



prosperity and freedom across the world – just as we have done in Ukraine.

The Prime Minister will highlight these efforts in her speech. She will pay tribute to the bravery and determination of the Ukrainian people, and commit to continue standing up for human rights and democracy around the world.

The Prime Minister is expected to say:

“This is a decisive moment in British history, in the history of this organisation, and in the history of freedom.

The story of 2022 could have been that of an authoritarian state rolling its tanks over the border of a peaceful neighbour and subjugating its people.

Instead, it is the story of freedom fighting back... But this must not be a one off....

...Britain's commitment to this is total.

Together with our friends and allies around the world, we will continue to champion freedom, sovereign and democracy.

And we will define this new era as one of hope and progress.”

World's first International Plant Health Conference to set global agenda on biosecurity and address challenges in plant health

September

The world's leading authorities on plant health and biosecurity will come together for the world's first ever International Plant Health Conference (IPHC), co-organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and Defra.

More than 500 policymakers, academics and experts from over 74 countries will convene at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London to address current and future plant health challenges, including the impacts of climate change, food security, environmental protection, facilitating safe trade, and new pest and disease pathways, such as e-commerce. Held on 21-23 September, delegates will share knowledge and discuss global scientific, technical and regulatory issues, alongside actions to tackle these existential threats to our society, economy and environment.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations estimates that each year up to 40 percent of global crop production is lost to plant diseases, costing the agricultural trade over USD 220 billion, whilst invasive

insects cause losses of at least USD 70 billion. The risks to food security, international trade, biodiversity and our precious natural environment as a result of current and future outbreaks are all too real. Strengthening global standards of biosecurity, applying the IPPC and international plant health standards, as well as fostering greater international collaboration and raising public awareness and engagement with these challenges will be paramount to safeguard the global economy and environment for generations to come.



Nicola Spence, United Kingdom Chief Plant Health Officer, said:

“Plant health and biosecurity are fundamental to life on Earth. Plants provide 80 percent of the food we eat and 98 percent of the oxygen we breathe. In a changing climate, ensuring their continued health and vitality will be critical to safeguarding food security, safe international trade and a thriving natural environment for future generations.

The United Kingdom upholds amongst the highest standards of biosecurity in Europe but there is much more to do to secure our future resilience - here and around the world. I look forward to coming together with international experts from a range of disciplines to discuss how to tackle the varied and mounting challenges facing our precious plant life.”

Jingyuan Xia, Director of Plant Production and Protection Division said:

“Climate change and human actions have altered ecosystems and created new niches where plant pests and diseases can thrive. When combatting pests and diseases, farmers should adopt, and policymakers should encourage the use of, environment-friendly methods such as integrated pest management.

Applying international plant health standards helps reduce the use of pesticides and poisonous substances, which kill pollinators, natural pest enemies and organisms crucial

for a healthy environment. These result in healthier crops with less residues, leading to better human, plant and animal health.”

Osama El-Lissy, Secretary, International Plant Protection Convention, said:

“The first International Plant Health Conference is an important advancement of our work in protecting plants from pests and diseases. We are very pleased to partner with Defra who shares FAO’s and IPPC’s common goals. We cannot underestimate the impact that plant pests and diseases have on global food security, livelihoods, the environment and economies.

To achieve our goals and contribute to food security, protect the environment and facilitate safe trade, I encourage donors and governments to invest in building plant health capacity, research and outreach. Let us keep our collective efforts going and take bold action to sustain the momentum. When we protect plants, we protect our health and our lives.”

Across the three days of the IPHC, plenary sessions will explore a range of scientific, regulatory and technical issues, including:

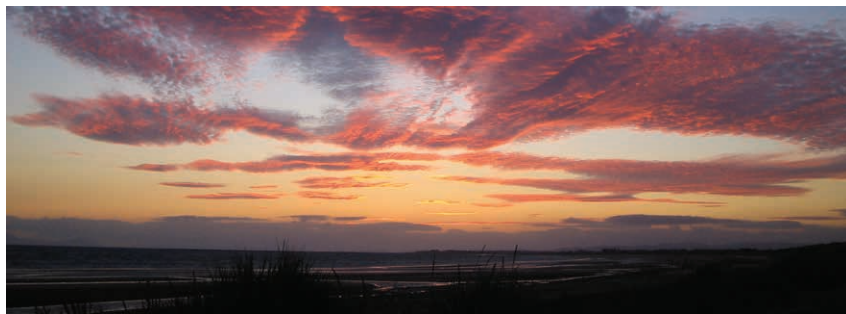
- Regional perspectives on tackling ongoing pest and disease outbreaks, including *Xylella fastidiosa*, fall armyworm and coconut rhinoceros beetle.
- How to increase the use of electronic phytosanitary certificates to make trade safer,

faster and cheaper.

- The development and adoption of early warning systems for pests and diseases to increase vigilance and preparedness for future outbreaks.

Moreover, the IPHC aims to promote positive behavioural change through greater public engagement with biosecurity issues. For example, the importance of not bringing home plants, trees, fruit and seeds from overseas, as doing so could inadvertently cause pests, diseases and invasive species to be introduced or to spread in new areas. This aligns with the United Kingdom Government’s long-running ‘Don’t Risk It!’ campaign, which featured on the Animal and Plant Health Agency’s Gold Medal-winning stand at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2022.

Protecting plant health is critical in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Healthy plants contribute to achieving food security for all (SDG 2 Zero Hunger) and promotes responsible food consumption and production (SDG 12). Protecting plants helps protect biodiversity and the environment from the impact of plant pests (SDG 13 and 15), and facilitates safe trade, in turn providing decent work and boosting economic growth (SDG 8). The International Plant Health Conference supports the delivery of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030.



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