

# Recording of the week: the Curlew's Lament

*This week's selection comes from Richard Ranft, Head of Sound and Vision.*

Around this time of year as winter takes its hold, and into spring that follows, a daytime walk around one of Britain's more remote coastal estuaries and mudflats, or over inland moorlands and heathlands will likely bring about an encounter with a Curlew, the largest of all waders. Its soulful voice carries far across flat and rolling landscapes, adding a magical and haunting feel to wild places. And in early English folklore, it was a harbinger of death, or for the poet WB Yeats, it spoke of a love lost:

*"O Curlew, cry no more in the air,  
Or only to the water in the West;  
Because your crying brings to my mind  
passion-dimmed eyes and long heavy hair  
That was shaken out over my breast:  
There is enough evil in the crying of wind"*



This particular Curlew recording was made in southern England as long ago as 1937 by the pioneer bird sound recordist, Ludwig Koch (1881-1974). It comprises several takes that illustrate the bird's varied notes. The recording was used for many years to introduce *The Naturalist* radio programme, broadcast by the BBC Home Service.

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# A vision for an independent democratic UK

The Cabinet this week debates what kind of a country we wish to be, and how we should be governed once we leave the EU.

The vision of Leave was uplifting. We want to belong to an independent democratic country.

We want to take back control of our laws, our borders and our money.

The people reasserted their sovereignty. They now wish their Parliament to

act in their interests. They want the UK Parliament to spend the taxes raised on our priorities. They want the UK Parliament to pass wise and humane laws. They want the UK government to have a confident global vision, acting in the best interests of our country and acting for the wider good.

We did not vote to be some minor state following meekly the EU's laws and policies. We voted for our country to regain its vote and voice in global bodies. We voted to be friends and trading partners with the EU, but not to be part of its legal system and budgets.

This vision means, as the PM says, leaving the EU and its single market and customs union on 29 March 2019 in accordance with the Treaty.

It means from that date being able to pursue our own agenda in world councils, and to negotiate our own trade deals and partnerships.

It means seeking the best possible access to the EU's single market, knowing we can have general access through our membership of the World Trade Organisation, where the EU also is a member and accepts its rules .

It means being able to amend and improve our laws whether the EU is doing so or not.

It means welcoming EU students, tourists, investors, people coming to jobs with permits, people wishing to live here on their own resources.

It means having our own fair policy for the whole world on access to benefits and work.

It means having our own fishing and farming policies, seeking to rebuild home output for the home market.

It means spending our money on priorities at home, and on helping those most in need elsewhere in the world.

It means being a force for the good in the world, using our soft power and military capability to promote peace, free trade, democracy and greater prosperity.

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**[Monday 18 December: MolenGeek coding school goes European – press point with Vice-President Ansip and Belgian](#)**

# Deputy Prime Minister De Croo

## **The news:**

On **Monday 18 December**, [MolenGeek](#) coding school organises a press point to present their plan to scale up in Europe, with a first project in Italy: “The Padua Tech Station by MolenGeek”.

European Commission Vice-President Ansip, in charge of the [Digital Single Market](#), and Belgian Deputy Prime Minister De Croo, responsible for the [Digital Agenda](#), support this initiative and will present action taken at European and Belgian levels to encourage startups to scale up and promote digital skills for all.

## **The background:**

MolenGeek was founded two years ago by five young entrepreneurs. It is led by Julie Foulon and Ibrahim Ouassari. It offers a wide range of activities for young people to be develop digital and entrepreneurship skills.

MolenGeek receives financing from the Belgian Digital Agenda and private partners. The organisation participates in European projects such as the [European Startup Prize for mobility](#), [Startup Europe](#) and activities related to the [Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition](#).

## **More information:**

When: **Monday 18 December – 14:00 to 14:30**

Where: **MolenGeek, [Place de la Minoterie 10, 1080 Molenbeek-Saint-Jean](#)**

Registration mandatory: [Julie Foulon](#)

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# Hundreds of thousands of part-time and temporary workers excluded from workplace pension – Debbie Abrahams

**Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary,**

commenting on the Government’s announcement to extend auto-enrolment to workers

aged 18, said:

“The Government’s announcement to

extend auto-enrolment to workers aged 18 is a small step in the right direction. However, it is worrying that the income threshold still means people on the lowest incomes are not automatically included and enrolled in a workplace pension, excluding hundreds of thousands of part-time and temporary workers.

“Given that plans will also not be in place until the mid-2020s, coupled with the fact that people under 25 receive a lower living wage, many young people will continue to miss out both now and in their retirement.

“Labour will restore confidence in the workplace pension system ensuring it benefits the many not the few.”

Ends

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## [Senior Tories want to use Brexit to rip up workers' rights – Rebecca Long-Bailey](#)

**Rebecca**

**Long-Bailey MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**, commenting on reports today that Brexit ministers urge Theresa May to scrap EU working directive, said:

“This yet more evidence that senior Tories, including Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, want to use Brexit as an excuse to rip up workers' rights.

“Theresa May must publicly reject this approach and condemn it in this week's Cabinet meeting. If she fails to do so then she will have turned her back on British workers. The directive offers protection to millions of workers who without it will be vulnerable to exploitation from unscrupulous employers.

“It is becoming increasingly clear that a Conservative Brexit will weaken workers' rights, deregulate the economy and slash corporate taxes. Labour will protect workers' rights and ensure that everyone gets a fair deal at work.”

Ends