



Government *WORLD*™

July - September 2024 British Edition

Government *WORLD*™

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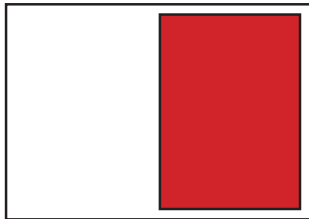
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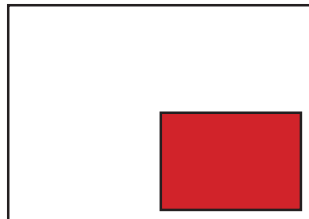
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ISSN 1744-6996



A little local owl stops for a rest



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

The country went to vote in the UK general election. Labour came out on top with Keir Starmer becoming the new Prime Minister ending 14 years of Conservative rule. The Conservative party took heavy losses, as expected, with former Prime Minister Liz Truss



losing her seat in Norfolk. Former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was re-elected as an independent MP. Finally, Nigel Farage, from the Reform party, was elected as an MP for the first time in

Clacton. Rachel Reeves was appointed the Chancellor of the Exchequer becoming the first female to hold the role.

A stabbing attack in Southport claimed the lives of three young girls and injured several others. 17-year-old Axel Muganwa Rudakubana was arrested and charged, but misinformation online falsely linked the crime to a Muslim immigrant. The disinformation fuelled far-right protests, which escalated into violent riots, including targeting Southport's mosque.



The presidential candidate and former US President Donald Trump suffered minor injuries in an attempted assassination. The Republican candidate was described as “fine” after the incident which injured two and killed one. The suspect was shot dead at the scene.

The Russia-Ukraine war saw intensified fighting, particularly in eastern and southern Ukraine. The Donetsk region experienced some of the heaviest combat, with Russia



claiming control of strategic areas like Pivdenne, near Toretsk. Both sides continued to use drones for strikes and surveillance, as the conflict increasingly used technology. Ukraine carried out several counterattacks, including drone strikes targeting Russian infrastructure. Meanwhile, Russia launched significant missile and drone offensives on Ukrainian cities, exacerbating civilian casualties and infrastructure damage. Ukrainian air defences intercepted many attacks, but many urban areas were badly hit.

Keir Starmer officially cancelled the Rwanda asylum plan previously proposed by former prime ministers Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak. It was



one of his first actions as Prime Minister.

The parent company of Saks Fifth Avenue, Hudson's Bay Company, completed a merger and purchased luxury department stores Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman for \$2.65 billion.

The Australian government raised the visa fee for international students to A\$1,600 to attempt to reduce the



record levels of migration and reduce the pressure on the Australian housing market.

Apex, a fossilised stegosaurus skeleton, was auctioned for \$44.6 million (£34 million) at a Sotheby's auction in New

York City, United States. At the time of writing, it is the most ever paid for a fossil.

July Sports Review

England were narrowly beaten 2-1 by Spain in the UEFA European Championship final. The win meant



that Spain have now won the title the most times with four wins. Their other victories were in 1964, 2008 and 2012.

In tennis, Barbora Krejčíková defeated Jasmine Paolini 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 in the Wimbledon women's final. On the men's side of the draw, Carlos Alcaraz beat Novak Djokovic 6-2, 6-2, 7-6(7-4) to claim his second Wimbledon title and his fourth overall.

The International Olympic Committee announced that the inaugural Olympic Esports Games will be hosted in Saudi Arabia in 2025.

Yaroslava Mahuchikh broke the world record in the women's high jump. The Ukrainian beat the record which had stood for 37 years.



The Olympics

The 2024 Summer Olympics, was held in Paris from July 26 to August 11. The event saw impressive performances from Team GB, achieving a total of 65 medals: 14 gold, 22 silver, and 29 bronze. This was the third-highest overall medal count in the Games, trailing only the United States and China. Although the number of gold medals was lower than in recent Olympics, placing Team GB seventh in the final medal standings.

Rowing and cycling emerged as



standout disciplines for GB. Rowing delivered three gold medals while cycling secured a total of 11 medals across all the events. Notable moments included a historic gold in the men's 4x200-meter freestyle swimming relay, with the same quartet replicating their Tokyo 2020 success.

Other highlights included first-ever British medals in sport climbing (Toby Roberts winning gold) and artistic swimming (a silver for Kate Shortman and Isabelle Thorpe). Equestrian



athletes also shone, collecting five medals, including gold in team events. Finally, Bryony Page won gold in the women's trampoline event.

This stellar performance underlines Team GB's resilience and adaptability, maintaining a consistent presence in the top ranks of global sport.

August News Review

Disinformation from the Southport stabbing led to further riots. Violent clashes in several cities occurred, including attacks on mosques and hotels housing asylum seekers. The unrest highlights the dangers of unchecked online narratives and was further exacerbated by organised efforts from extremist groups.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict saw continued escalation as Ukraine launched a high-profile drone attack on Moscow. Meanwhile, Russia intensified missile strikes on Odesa and Mykolaiv, targeting Ukraine's grain export infrastructure.



Diplomatic tensions flared, with NATO countries bolstering military aid to Kyiv.

The Brazilian government reported that deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest is at its lowest level since 2016 and was down 46% on the previous period. The news comes as President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva pledged “deforestation zero” by 2030.



Republican presidential candidate and former president Donald Trump went back to X (formerly Twitter) for a two-hour interview with its owner Elon Musk, mainly focusing on Trump’s 2024 presidential re-election campaign.

Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland formed an international police hub in Stockholm.



The hub has been created to prevent escalating Swedish gang crime and criminal networks from spreading to other Nordic countries.

NASA’s InSight lander confirmed liquid water is present at depths of 10–20 km 6.2–12.4 mi (10–20 km) below the surface of Mars, based on a new data analysis.

A prolonged heat wave persisted over Antarctica, with temperatures reaching a record 28C (50F), much higher than average during the middle of winter.

August Sports Review

The 2024/25 Premier League season

began with defending champions Manchester City beating Chelsea 2-0. Their rivals, Manchester United, also opened their campaign with a win over Fulham. Promoted Leicester City, marked their Premier League return with a draw against Tottenham Hotspur. Arsenal, Newcastle and Liverpool also secured victories for the opening weekend.

Paralympics

The 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris began and were a great games for Team GB, who secured a top-five finish in the medal standings. British athletes competed in several sports, amassing medals across athletics, cycling, swimming, and wheelchair tennis. Notable individual performances included



Hannah Cockroft and Sophie Hahn, who continued their dominance with golds in sprint events, and veteran David Weir, who concluded his illustrious Paralympic career with strong showings in the marathon and middle-distance races. Team GB also shone in wheelchair rugby, cycling and many others delivering medals.



The House of Commons voted 348–228 to end the Winter Fuel Payments for 10 million pensioners in England and Wales. Prime Minister Keir Starmer stated the scheme was no longer affordable to be applied universally. The news was met with strong opposition with some saying that it could endanger lives.

An expedition to the shipwreck of the RMS Titanic revealed substantial



deterioration of the bow. The journey also rediscovered the bronze Diana of Versailles replica, which had not been seen since the initial survey of the wreck in 1986.

The British government announced that junk food advertisements would be banned on television before 9 PM. The ban will come into force in October 2025 as part of plans to tackle childhood obesity.



A previously unknown piece composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was discovered in a library in Leipzig, Germany. The piece, *Ganz kleine Nachtmusik*, is seven miniature movements for a string trio and was likely composed in the 1760s when Mozart was only a teenager.

September News Review

His Majesty's Prison Service began to release thousands of prisoners in England and Wales early. The decision, which was unpopular for many, came about due to a record-high prison population and a shortage of prison cells for new inmates.





The coalition government of Germany announced border restrictions on all its national land borders, including those with other EU nations. Restrictions are due to be enforced for at least six months and are in place to combat irregular migration from asylum seekers.

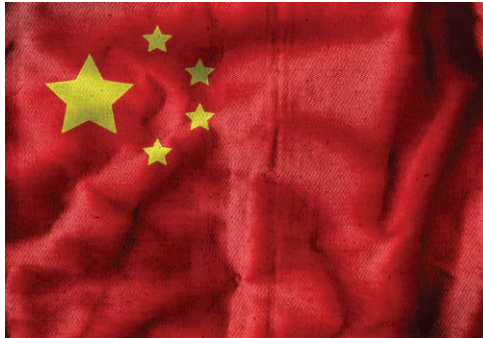
Google was fined €2.4 billion (US\$2.7 billion) by the Court of Justice of the European Union. It came after the court found that Google had favoured its own



shopping search results over those of its competitors.

Tickets for the Oasis reunion were released with huge demand. The UK Competition and Markets Authority later announced it would investigate Ticketmaster over its dynamic pricing the tour tickets led to many paying far more than the original price.

China opened the world's largest indoor skiing resort in Pudong, Shanghai. The



resort is a 90,000 square metre (970,000 sq ft) skiing area and a total area of 350,000 square metres (3,800,000 sq ft).

September Sports Review

In tennis, Aryna Sabalenka beat Jessica Pegula in the final of the US Open Women's singles tournament. It was Sabalenka's first US Open title win and her second Grand Slam title overall. On the men's side of the draw, Jannik Sinner defeated Taylor Fritz in the final of the US Open Men's Singles tournament. Like Sabalenka, it was the Italian's first US Open title and his second Grand Slam title. Sinner also became the first Italian man to win the US Open.



End

Independent investigation ordered into state of NHS

July

From: Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP

- Report will provide ‘raw and honest assessment’ of issues facing health service
- Work will be led by Rt Hon Professor Lord Darzi, OM, KBE, a lifelong surgeon

and innovator, independent peer and former health minister

- Findings will feed into government’s 10-year plan to radically reform the nation’s health service

Health and Social Care Secretary, Wes Streeting, has ordered a full and independent investigation into the state

of the NHS, to uncover the extent of the issues facing the nation’s health service.

Mr Streeting says he wants a ‘raw and honest’ assessment that will deliver ‘the hard truths’.

Today (11 July 2024), he has appointed Professor Lord Darzi, a lifelong surgeon and innovator, independent peer and former health minister, to lead the rapid assessment, which will be delivered in September.

Its findings will provide the basis for the government’s 10-year plan to radically reform the NHS and build a health service that is fit for the future.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Wes Streeting, said:

“Anyone who works in or uses the NHS can see it is broken. This government will be honest about the challenges



facing the health service, and serious about tackling them.

This investigation will uncover hard truths and I've asked for nothing to be held back. I trust Lord Darzi will leave no stone unturned and have told him to speak truth to power.

I want a raw and frank assessment of the state of the NHS. This is the necessary first step on the road to recovery for our National Health Service, so it can be there for us when we need it, once again."

Professor Lord Darzi said:

"As every clinician and every patient knows, the first step to addressing any health problem is a proper diagnosis.

My work will analyse the evidence to understand where we are today - and how we got to here - so that the health service



can move forward.

This is an important step to re-establishing quality of care as the organising principle of the NHS."

Amanda Pritchard, NHS Chief Executive, said:

"Frontline NHS staff are doing an incredible job, despite the huge pressures they face, to deliver care to over a million people every day, but we know that they face huge struggles and patients are not always getting the timely, high quality care they need.

We will work closely with the government, independent experts and NHS staff to take a detailed look at the scale of the challenges and set out plans to address them - this comprehensive analysis will be an important step in helping us to build an NHS fit for the future."

The Health and Social Care Secretary's promise to fix the broken NHS was backed by action this week as he met with key figures across the health service.

This included meetings with junior doctors to discuss ending the strikes, and talks with the British Dental Association about rebuilding NHS dentistry. He also visited

a GP surgery in north London to see first-hand how the practice is delivering a patient-led service providing continuity of care - a key pillar of the government's ambition to improve primary care.

Mr Streeting also set out his wider commitment to support the government's growth mission by improving the health of the nation.

The aims are based on 3 key steps:

- cutting waiting times to get people back to work
- making the UK a life sciences and medical technology superpower
- creating training and job opportunities through the NHS to deliver growth up and down the country



Environment Agency urges farmers to start preparations for winter slurry storage

July

From: Environment Agency

The Environment Agency is stepping up to support farmers facing slurry storage issues through another potentially difficult winter season.

The Environment Agency (EA) is urging farmers to start their preparations now for winter slurry storage, and to contact the EA if they have any concerns.

Wet weather throughout the year has already put pressures on farms' storage and if this continues, it is important to have enough storage and a robust back up plan in place.

The EA's Winter Ready campaign will support farmers across the country facing slurry storage issues.

The EA is encouraging farmers to start their preparations now, and to contact them for advice if necessary. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your local EA Officer or call the EA's National Customer Contact Centre hotline on 03708

506 506.

Some simple steps and solutions to tackle slurry storage issues include:

- Ensuring you have adequate storage to see you through winter without the need to spread. The EA recommends having six months of storage to help comply with the requirements of the Farming Rules for Water to spread only according to crop and soil need.
- Covering slurry tanks, lagoons and pits and using the summer months to fix draining and clear guttering to ensure separation of clean

and dirty water, meaning less rainwater mixes with slurry to increase its volume.

- Refraining from taking sludge, digestate or other materials if you don't have an immediate need for them. Even if you are contracted to take these materials, all producers have a responsibility to ensure bi-products and waste are properly disposed of.

Environment Agency Deputy Director for Agriculture, Nicola Riley said:

"We know the profound impact that wet weather can have on farmers and



their slurry storage. It is important that we help farmers to get ready ahead of time by supplying guidance and practical solutions.

That's why we're urging farmers to start their preparations now, with the Environment Agency on hand to help farmers find the right solutions that work for them."

Defra has already offered a Slurry Infrastructure Grant which is designed to help farmers improve or expand slurry storage capacity and improve the use of organic nutrients on their farm.

Other support includes a range of capital items available through Countryside Stewardship Capital Grants that can support farmers to reduce the amount of slurry generated on their farm. This includes slurry store covers, roofing, concrete yards and drainage systems. A Catchment Sensitive Farming advisor can visit farms and provide advice on how these can best be utilised.

A wet winter and spring has put pressure on slurry stores already, with many farmers reporting concerns around managing volumes as the increased rainfall meant that they were both accumulating more slurry and unable to spread it on their fields. Even those who put preparations in place last year still faced storage issues, which is why the EA is stepping up to support farmers through another potentially difficult winter season.

£10.9 million boost for Scottish space sector

July

From: Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland, UK Space Agency and The Rt Hon Ian Murray MP

Five projects funded by the UK Space Agency across Scotland have been announced on the opening day of the Farnborough International Airshow, providing over £10.5 million in Scottish investment.

The projects come from the National Space Innovation Programme (NSIP) –

designed to invest in high-potential technologies and drive innovation and growth in the space sector across the UK.

Two Scottish projects will receive £8.5 million of the total funding for UK Major Projects. These include funding for a sub-orbital rocket test by HylImpulse (Glasgow) from SaxaVord spaceport in Shetland.

A project led by Spire Global



(Glasgow) will further develop technology to supply unique weather forecasting data to global numerical weather prediction centres.

Not only will the funding support the growth of UK space businesses and create new jobs, but it will enhance Scotland's offering of space capabilities and services to international investors and major space players.

An additional three 'Kick Starter' projects



across Scotland will receive £2.4million between them. These projects are designed to support technologies and applications that are in an earlier stage of development and increase their readiness for use in commercial and scientific endeavours.

These projects include a partnership between University of Strathclyde, UK Atomic Energy Authority and SJE Space, for a feasibility study into whether terrestrial directed energy drilling (plasmas/microwaves) could be adapted for space applications, specifically lunar exploration.

Speaking at the Farnborough International Airshow where he met with a number of Scottish exhibitors, Scottish Secretary Ian Murray said:

“This is an exciting time for the Scottish space sector as we look forward to the first satellite launch from SaxaVord in Shetland later this year. The burgeoning industry plays a vital role in our economy and employs thousands of people across the country. It was fantastic to meet with some of them here and hear about their pioneering plans which could be a key driver for growth, jobs and investment in Scotland.

Scotland is a major player in the international space industry and I am delighted the UK Government is continuing to back the sector with £10.9 million in funding for these five Scottish projects.”

Dr Paul Bate, CEO of the UK Space Agency, said:

“These new projects will help kickstart growth, create more high-quality jobs, protect our planet and preserve the space environment for future generations. They go to the heart of what we want to achieve as a national space agency that supports cutting-edge innovation, spreads opportunity across the UK and delivers the benefits of space back to citizens on Earth.”

Chair of the UKspace trade association, John Hanley, said:

“This investment into the space industry demonstrates the importance of funding through a national programme to unlock innovative collaborations in all parts of the UK. We hope this will further strengthen the sector and build upon the growth we have seen in recent years.”

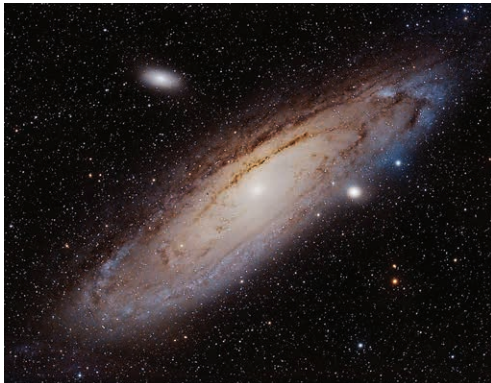
Project Summaries:

Major Projects

- SHARP – Sustainable Hybrid: Accelerated Rocket Programme

Funding: £4,995,000

This project will set out to conduct a vertical launch of a sounding rocket in the UK with the final goal being the build completion of the second stage of the orbital rocket ready for testing. Hylmpulse, in partnership with Cranfield University, Birmingham University and the AVICON Partnership, intends to provide a fully vertically integrated launch service for a low-cost, fast, flexible, and reliable deployment of small satellites to low earth orbits.



- Operational Hyperspectral Microwave Sounder-Satellite (OHMS-Sat)

Funding: £3,524,000

Led by Spire Global in partnership with STAR-Dundee Ltd, the Met Office and RAL Space (UKRI STFC), this project will build on the prior developments of the Hyperspectral Microwave Sounder (HYMS) to move it towards an operational mission to supply weather forecasting data to global numerical weather prediction (NWP) centres and create unique weather products.

Kick Starter Projects

- DIGGER – Drilling and Integrated GigaHertz-Generated Energy Resource for Lunar and Asteroid applications
Funding: £845,000

In partnership with University of Strathclyde, UK Atomic Energy Authority and SJE Space, DIGGER is a feasibility study into whether terrestrial directed energy drilling (plasmas/microwaves) could be adapted for space applications, specifically lunar exploration.

- Direct Detection Receivers for Millimetre Wave Radiometry

Funding: £827,000

Led by UKRI / STFC / RAL Space in partnership with University of Glasgow and Spire Glasgow, the project will develop the critical low noise amplifier and detector technology which will be at the core of the next generation of atmospheric remote sensing instrumentation. This technology will go beyond gathering data for weather prediction, with use cases being developed in emerging fields such as security imaging, and theft prevention.

- TARS-IOD: Flight-ready model for In-Orbit Demonstration of Tomorrow's Astro-Robotic System

Funding: £804,000

Lodestar Space Ltd. will develop a platform-agnostic modular robotic arm to perform contact dependent dynamic space operations. Intended for flight on Momentus' Vigoride platform, the partnership also involves Growbotics and the University of Glasgow to equip the UK with sovereign capabilities for inspecting, protecting, and repairing vital assets beyond Earth.

New Great British Energy partnership launched to turbocharge energy independence

July

From: Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Great British Energy, The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP and The Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP

- Prime Minister and Energy Secretary announce first major partnership between Great British Energy and The Crown Estate to unleash billions of investment in clean power
- Great British Energy Bill to be

introduced today to enable a company owned by the British people, delivering for the British people, backed by £8.3 billion of new catalysing investment over this Parliament

- Juergen Maier, former CEO of Siemens UK, announced as Chair of Great British Energy

The Prime Minister and Energy Secretary today announced a new unprecedented partnership between Great British Energy

and The Crown Estate, which has the potential to leverage up to £60 billion of private investment into the UK's drive for energy independence.

Great British Energy will be at the heart of the government's mission to make Britain a clean energy superpower. The company will be owned by the British people, for the British people, backed with £8.3 billion of new money over this Parliament to own and invest in clean



power projects in regions across the UK.

It comes soon after the Energy Secretary has scrapped the ban on onshore wind and unblocked the production of cheap solar energy. Today's announcement is yet more evidence of the Energy Secretary rolling up his sleeves to deliver clean energy and kickstart economic growth, so British bill payers and communities reap the benefits of clean, secure, home-grown energy.

Great British Energy's first major partnership will be between two national institutions for the benefit of the British people. The Crown Estate, which has a £16 billion portfolio of land and seabed, operates independently and returns its profits to the government, brings long-established expertise to the partnership, and new investment and borrowing powers recently announced by government. Great British Energy will bring the critical strategic industrial policy that the state can provide, as well as its own ability to invest.

The Crown Estate estimates this partnership will lead to up to 20-30GW of new offshore wind developments reaching seabed lease stage by 2030, enough power for the equivalent of almost 20 million homes.

The partnership will boost Britain's energy independence by investing in homegrown power, and with accompanying reforms to policy, cut the time it takes to get offshore wind projects operating and delivering power to homes by up to half.

This partnership will see the public sector taking on a new role undertaking additional early development work for offshore wind projects. This will ensure that future offshore wind development has lower risk for developers, enabling



projects to build out faster after leasing and crowding in private sector investment. It will also help boost new technologies such as carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, wave and tidal energy.

It comes as the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has published details of the company's objective. Families across the country have suffered during the cost-of-living crisis, as the UK's over-reliance on fossil fuel markets was exploited by Putin. Great British Energy is part of the government's plans for clean power by 2030, so families and businesses are never left vulnerable again to spiking global prices.

The Prime Minister has confirmed that Great British Energy will be headquartered in Scotland and will back energy generation projects in the UK, bringing profits back to the British people. The UK Government is in discussions with the Scottish Government and Crown Estate Scotland on how Great British Energy could help to support new development and investment within Scotland.

The government is already legislating

to give both Great British Energy and The Crown Estate the powers they need to rapidly deliver, with two Bills being introduced in Parliament today.

Today the Energy Secretary also confirmed that leading captain of industry Juergen Maier, former CEO of Siemens UK, will be the Chair of Great British Energy, driving forward this new company.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said:

“My government is laser focused on delivering change, to make people better off.

This innovative partnership between Great British Energy and the Crown Estate is an important step toward our mission for clean energy by 2030, and bringing down energy bills for good.

This agreement will drive up to £60 billion in investment into the sector, turbocharging our country toward energy security, the next generation of skilled jobs, and lowering bills for families and business.

My mission led government is rolling up our sleeves to deliver for Britain.”

Energy Security and Net Zero Secretary

Ed Miliband said:

“Great British Energy comes from a simple idea - that the British people should own and benefit from our natural resources. Investing in clean power is the route to end the UK’s energy insecurity, and Great British Energy will be essential in this mission.

The agreement with The Crown Estate will lead to more investment, cleaner power, more energy security, and is a statement of intent that it will be a permanent and transformative institution for our country.”

Chief Executive of the Crown Estate Dan Labbad said:

“The Crown Estate exists to serve the national interest, including stewarding our natural resources to deliver a decarbonised, energy secure and sustainable future.

With new powers and by partnering with government, we can drive greater investment into this future for our country, and with it support nature recovery and job creation.”

Juergen Maier CBE, Chair of Great British Energy said:

“Great British Energy will be a publicly-owned national clean energy champion, ensuring British people



reap the benefits of clean, secure, home-grown energy.

I'm excited to lead this company and work with the private sector and communities to rapidly expand skilled jobs and investment across the country."

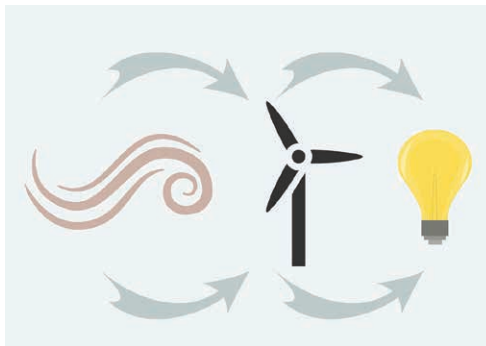
Great British Energy will have five key functions

- **Project development** - leading projects through development stages to speed up their delivery, whilst capturing more value for the British public
- **Project investment** – investing in energy projects alongside the private sector, helping get them off the ground
- **Local Power Plan** – supporting local energy generation projects through working with local authorities, combined authorities and communities
- **Supply chains** – building supply chains across the UK, boosting energy independence and creating jobs
- **Great British Nuclear** – exploring how Great British Energy and Great British Nuclear will work together, including considering how Great British Nuclear functions will fit with Great British

Energy

The Crown Estate has already helped the UK to become a global leader in the offshore wind sector, and is currently running one of the world's largest commercial scale floating wind leasing programmes in the Celtic sea. This partnership will accelerate that leadership even further.

The Great British Energy Bill, which is being introduced in the House of Commons today, will support the creation of the new publicly owned company by setting out its objectives and ensuring it has access to necessary finances. The Secretary of State will also have the ability to set Great British Energy's strategic priorities to ensure it remains focussed on the government's aim to accelerate the delivery of homegrown



clean energy power in the UK.

The Crown Estate Bill will modernise The Crown Estate by removing outdated restrictions on its activities so it can, for example, invest in digital technologies that will further enhance its award-winning spatial mapping of the seabed. The Bill will also expand The Crown Estate's investment powers and grant borrowing capabilities, unlocking significant investment in public infrastructure. This includes essential marine investment to help support the acceleration and growth of offshore wind capacity by 2030 alongside supporting the regeneration of urban centres, such as its most recent example of a new Life Science partnership in central Oxford and nature recovery across its portfolio. These reforms will secure the continued future success of the Crown Estate business and maximise the returns it generates for the public.

The announcements follow the government's rapid action to set up a new Mission Control at the heart of government to deliver clean power by 2030, headed up by former Climate Change Committee chief executive Chris Stark.

Young aviators encouraged to Reach for the Sky in skills and outreach programme

July

From: Department for Transport and Mike Kane MP

- Aviation Minister rallies industry to get more people to choose a career in aviation through skills and outreach scheme
- latest funding adds to £1.5 million funding for skills training, with wider outreach having already propelled 100,000 young people into the sector
- recipients include 18-year-old aspiring pilot from north London making his dreams of becoming a commercial pilot a reality

Young people from underrepresented groups will be able to pursue a career in aviation thanks to new government funding for an aviation skills and outreach programme.

Launched today (26 July 2024) by Aviation Minister, Mike Kane, this latest round of funding for the skills and outreach

programme, Reach for the Sky, serves as a way for young people aged 4 to 18 from under-represented groups that may not otherwise have had the opportunity to pursue a career in aviation, to do so.

Now in its third year, organisations can from today apply for a share of £750,000 that will help them deliver outreach programmes which will provide events, taster days, mentorship schemes and educational initiatives with schools and universities – building on the government’s



promise to secure the long-term future of aviation and give young people the opportunities they deserve.

Aviation Minister, Mike Kane, said:

“Our aviation industry is one of the best in the world and it’s the talented people within it that makes it so successful – the primary purpose of leadership is to create new leaders.

Having a diverse workforce that can effectively address future challenges – from growing passenger demand to decarbonisation – is crucial and our Reach for the Sky Challenge Fund is inspiring the next generation to be part of this ever-growing travel sector.”

Several barriers hinder people from joining the aviation industry – including limited access to further education, financial constraints, and lack of exposure to career pathways.

With only 5% of pilots being women, fewer black young people being exposed to aviation opportunities than their white peers, and almost three quarters of airline staff based in London and the South East, both government and industry are working together to ensure the industry is open to everyone.

Reach for the Sky brings fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to the table, and this new pot of funding will add to the £1.5 million already provided. Outreach programmes supported by the Department for Transport (DfT) have already helped over 100,000 young people discover a career in aviation.

Previous recipients of DfT-funded schemes include 18-year-old aspiring pilot Joshua Merchan-Nicholls from Finchley, North London. Since 2021, he has been tirelessly working towards a career as a commercial pilot – a dream he’s had since he was 7 years old – and was recently awarded a gliding scholarship from the Air League as part of the DfT-funded Soaring to Success programme.

The Air League, aimed at breaking down barriers into the aviation industry, offers a range of scholarships, volunteering programmes and events for people of all backgrounds, and has recently celebrated

its 12,000th recipient. Not only is Joshua hoping to start a pilot training course, but he has also set his heart on helping young people from similar backgrounds achieve rewarding careers in aviation.

Joshua Merchan-Nicholls said:

“I was 7 when I first imagined myself as a pilot and I’ve followed this dream ever since. Thanks to the Air League, I received a gliding scholarship in 2022, which gave me my first experience of solo flying and made me even more enthusiastic!

I’m grateful that these organisations exist because they open opportunities for people like me who always wanted

to fly and they show the possibility of a career to people who hadn’t considered it before. It’s great that the government is supporting young people like this.”

Claire MacAleese, Chair of the Air League, said:

“For 115 years the Air League has been inspiring the aviators of tomorrow. The Department for Transport’s Reach for the Sky programme is an important part of keeping that momentum going. Reach for the Sky has been pivotal to our Soaring to Success programme over the past 2 years and more than 20,000 state school students have



engaged in learning about a career in aviation and our flying days as a result.”

As the industry undergoes a revolution driven by technology, decarbonisation and passenger experience, creating a more inclusive and accessible pathway into the exciting world of aviation is crucial to its continuing success.

Sophie Jones, Head of Organisational Capability and STEM Sponsor at UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said:

“The aerospace sector will stall without young people with new ideas and innovations joining it.

The Reach for the Sky Challenge fund brings in people from diverse backgrounds to gain skills and pursue fantastic careers in aerospace.

As the regulator we are committed to inspiring the next generation to get their feet off the ground and Reach for the Sky helps fund our extensive STEM program.”

Applications for the fund are now open until September 2024 and decisions will be agreed upon by a joint panel of DfT and the CAA – which administers the fund on DfT’s behalf.

Government confirms above inflation pay award for teachers

July

From: Department for Education and The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP

School teachers and leaders will receive a fully funded 5.5% pay award, reflecting the vital contribution they make to children’s life chances.

The decision means the recommendations of the School Teachers’ Review Body (STRB) have

been accepted in full.

Schools will receive almost £1.2 billion in additional funding to cover their costs, fully funding the pay award for teachers and support staff in financial year 2024 to 2025 at a national level.

The investment marks an important step on the path towards the government’s pledge to recruit 6,500 new teachers.

As the Chancellor has set out, the poor position of the public finances means that a number of programmes must be cancelled across government – including the Advanced British Standard.

Today’s pay award reflects the value the government places on the country’s 6 million public servants, and the cost to the country of not



accepting public sector pay awards.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson said:

The Chancellor has laid out a grim picture – our public finances are in a devastating state and tough choices need to be made to help rebuild the foundations of the economy.

But while the impact teachers have on children and young people's life chances can't be measured in pounds and pence, those working in education must be in no doubt about their value.

Teachers lay the foundations of children's lives. An investment in them is an investment in the next generation, and this government is determined to make sure every child - whatever their background - has the opportunity to succeed.

The Education Secretary has recognised the delay in confirming pay and funding arrangements for next year due to the timing of the general election.

The 5.5% award will apply from 1 September and is equivalent to an increase of over £2,500 for the average teacher, which would take the median

salary for 2024 to 2025 to over £49,000.

The pay award applies to maintained schools, with academies continuing to have freedom over their pay and conditions.

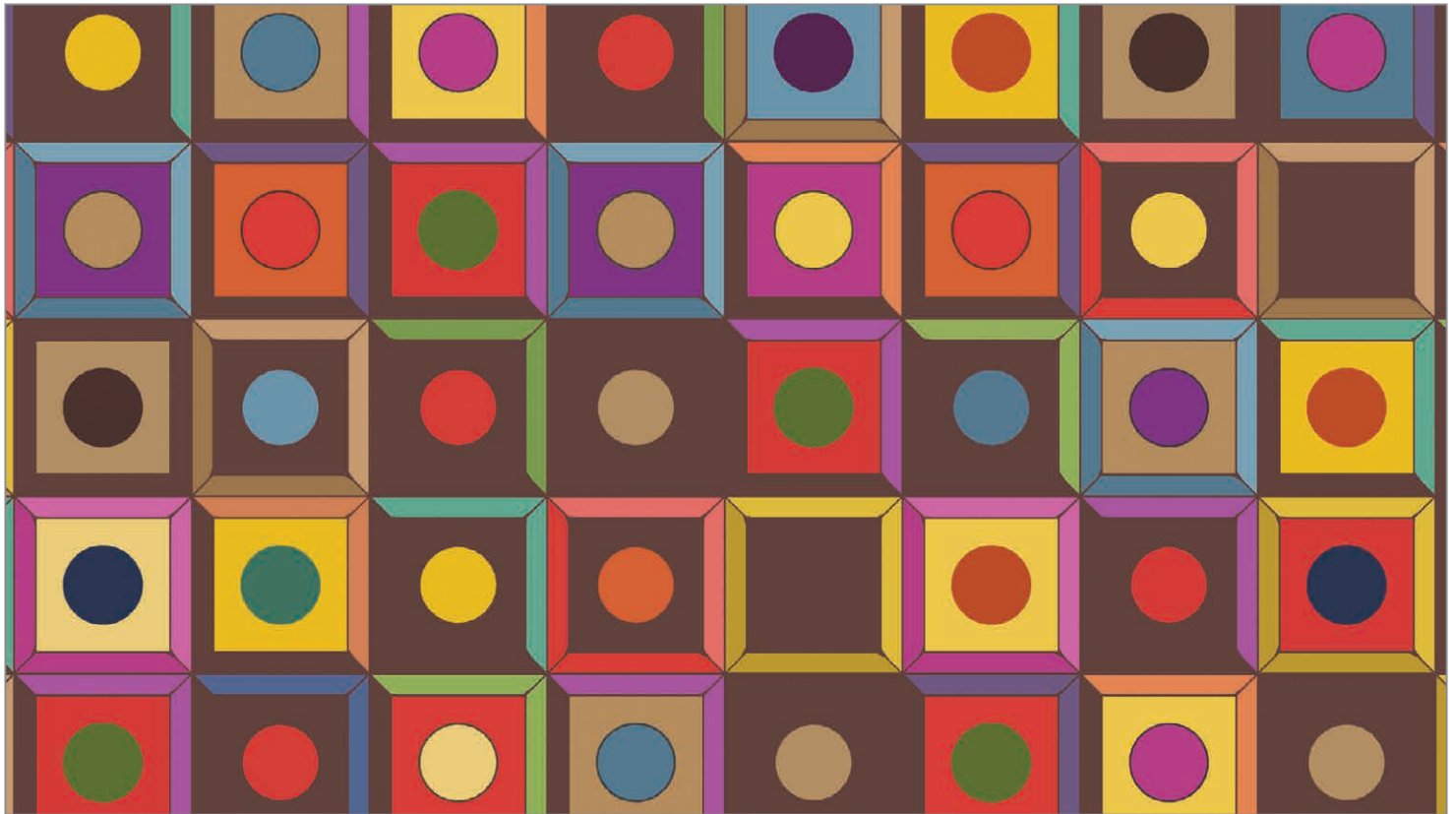
The government is also today announcing further steps to reduce teachers' workload, reset relations with the sector and make teaching an attractive profession again.

Alongside the pay award, the requirement for schools to use the performance related pay system – which can lead to schools and teachers going through an overly bureaucratic process to agree individual teachers' pay rises – will be removed from September.

The government will also clarify that teachers can carry out their planning time at home, improving flexible working for staff.

Today's award builds on the Education Secretary's work to reset the relationship with education workforces since taking up post, including a letter to all education workers in week one in the role, a reception with almost 200 stakeholders, and a webinar with up to 14,000 front line staff.





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Over 1,000 more GPs to be recruited this year

August

From: Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP

- Government acts to fix front door to NHS and deliver more appointments
- Slashing burdensome red tape to boost capacity in surgeries and hire over 1,000 more newly-qualified doctors
- Government listening to sector to help end scandal of patients struggling to see a doctor

More than 1,000 newly qualified GPs will be recruited thanks to government action to remove red tape currently preventing surgeries from hiring doctors.

Bringing back the family doctor is central to the government's plan to rebuild the health service, and the changes being made to cut through the current rules will help more patients get access to GPs and

ensure more GPs are able to find roles, so that people in communities across England will receive the timely care they deserve this year.

Currently, under a scheme known as the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme, primary care networks (PCNs) can claim reimbursement for the salaries (and some on-costs) of 17 new roles



within the multidisciplinary team - meaning more specialists are available to treat patients.

They are selected to meet the needs of the local population, but are currently prevented from using this to recruit additional GPs. The changes announced today (1 August 2024) mean that newly qualified GPs can quickly be recruited into the NHS through this scheme in 2024 to 2025.

It's thought hundreds of newly qualified GPs could be without a job this summer in England. But thanks to this intervention, they will be able to be hired by the end of the year.

The government is listening to GPs, and this has been hard fought by the British Medical Association (BMA), the Royal College of General Practitioners and many other groups who petitioned for it, receiving over

11,000 signatures.

It comes as the government accepts recommendations of the pay review bodies in full, increasing GPs' pay by 6% - their first meaningful pay rise in years.

Health and Social Care Secretary Wes Streeting said:



“It is absurd that patients can’t book appointments while GPs can’t find work.

This government is taking immediate action to put GPs to work, so patients can get the care they need.

This is a first step, as we begin the long-term work of shifting the focus of healthcare out of hospitals and into the community, to fix the front door to the NHS.

I want to work with GPs to rebuild our NHS, so it is there for all of us when we need it.”

Dr Amanda Doyle, National Director for Primary Care and Community Services, said:

“With hard-working GP teams delivering millions more appointments a month compared to before the pandemic, it is vital they are given the resources to manage this increase in demand.

Adding GPs to the scheme is something that the profession has been calling for in recent months to make it easier for practices to hire more staff - so I welcome this measure which is an important first step to increasing GP employment in the

long term.

We will continue to work with GPs, the BMA and the government to avert any potential action, but in the meantime the NHS has a duty to plan for any possible disruption to ensure services continue to be provided for patients - so the public should continue to come forward for care in the normal way if collective action does go ahead.”

This is an emergency measure for 2024 to 2025 to ensure patients are able to access GPs and GPs are able to find roles, while the government works with the profession to identify longer-term solutions to GP unemployment and general practice sustainability as part of the next fiscal event.

The government will ensure the NHS has the funding it needs to deliver this, paid for by £82 million from the existing department budget.

In expanding general practice capacity, the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme improves access for patients, supports the delivery of new services and widens the range of offers available in primary care.

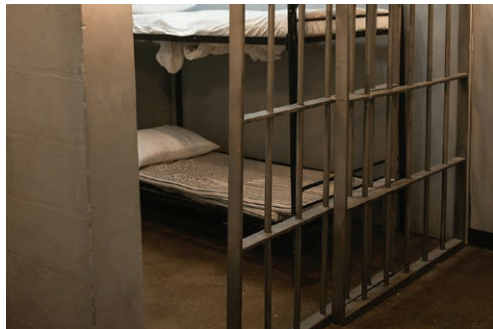
Heinous killers banned from marrying in prison

August

From: Ministry of Justice and The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP

- Whole Life Order prisoners now blocked from marrying behind bars
- Government enacts new law to end torment for victims and their families
- Marriage and civil partnership ban comes into force today

Prisoners serving whole life orders – which means they will never be released – will



now be automatically blocked from getting married or entering a civil partnership after the new Lord Chancellor signed a measure in the Victims and Prisoners Act into law.

This will deny the most heinous criminals from enjoying the important life events they callously took from their victims, while preventing families from the trauma of seeing them getting married or entering civil partnerships.

It will also ensure that their horrific crimes are treated with the severity they deserve and maintain confidence in the justice system.

Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, said:

“Victims should not be tormented by seeing those who commit the most depraved crimes enjoy the moments in life that were stolen from their loved ones.

That is why I have acted as soon as

possible to stop these marriages and give victims the support they deserve.”

Prior to these new laws coming into force, these prisoners could make a formal application for marriage or a civil partnership and could only be refused by a prison Governor on the grounds of security concerns.

The measure is part of the Victims and Prisoners Act which strengthens oversight of how criminal justice agencies treat victims and enshrines the principles of the Victims’ Code into law.

The Lord Chancellor will retain the right to permit ceremonies in the most exceptional circumstances.

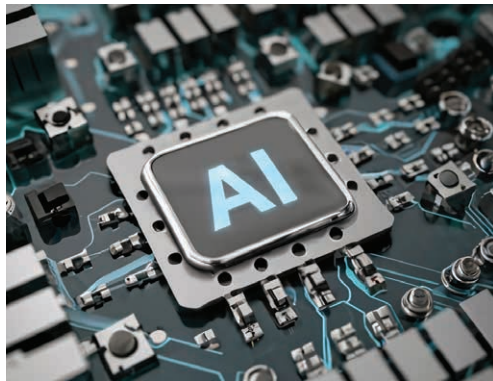
Whole life orders are reserved for exceptionally serious offences, such as serial or child murders which involved a substantial degree of premeditation or sexual or sadistic conduct.

AI to reduce train delays, speed up NHS prescriptions and train construction workers gets £32 million boost

August

From: Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, UK Research and Innovation and Feryal Clark MP

- Government forges ahead with plans to improve the lives of working people with cutting-edge technology, supporting 98 AI projects with a share of £32 million.
- New technology innovations set to improve efficiency of prescription deliveries, reduce train delays and help



ensure the UK has a skilled construction workforce.

- Winning projects span the UK, and funding will benefit over 200 businesses and research organisations.

Companies developing artificial intelligence (AI) to improve safety on construction sites, reduce time spent repairing the railways and cut emissions across supply chains are amongst a number of projects set to receive a share of £32 million in UK Government funding.

Announced today (7 August), almost 100 ground-breaking projects have been awarded financial backing as the government continues its mission to boost productivity and kickstart growth across the economy through AI so everyone is better off.

A total of 98 projects from Southampton to Birmingham and Northern Ireland will receive funding, involving more

than 200 businesses and research organisations spanning a range of sectors including public services, driving efficiencies and reducing administrative tasks.

Minister for Digital Government and AI Feryal Clark said:

“AI will deliver real change for working people across the UK – not only growing our economy but improving our public services.

That’s why our support for initiatives like this will be so crucial – backing a range of projects which could reduce train delays, give us new ways of maintaining our vital infrastructure, and improve experiences for patients by making it easier to get their prescriptions to them.

We want technology to boost growth and deliver change right across the board, and I’m confident projects like

these will help us realise that ambition.”

Among the projects is V-Lab Ltd, which has received £165,006 to further develop software powered by AI to help people train in the construction sector. Their system offers immersive, scenario-based virtual simulations of real construction sites to efficiently train workers on risk assessments and safety protocols – helping to ensure the UK has a skilled workforce to deliver the infrastructure the country needs.

As part of the government's mission to build an NHS which is fit for the future, pharmacies that deliver prescriptions across the country are also set to benefit from this new financial support. A project led by Nottingham-based Anteam will see them working alongside retailers and the NHS to improve the efficiency of their deliveries using AI algorithms. This technology will match the delivery needs of retailers and hospitals to existing delivery journeys, unlocking under-utilised capacity, cutting carbon emissions and delivering a better experience for patients.

In a transformational change to how our railway network is maintained and inspected, Hack Partners will also lead on the development of an entirely

autonomous system which can monitor, manage, and identify defects on rail infrastructure across the country. This represents a significant step forward for the British public, boosting the efficiency and safety of our railway network to deliver a better service for rail users.

The funding announced today will specifically support solutions in ‘high growth’ industries, ensuring AI is at the heart of driving forward greater productivity and efficiency across key areas of the economy. Cambridge-based Monumo are part of a team awarded £750,152 to develop improved designs for motors in electric vehicles – their 3D Generative-AI Tool is set to improve sustainability across sectors spanning commercial transportation, flight and power generation.



Work on bringing these new innovations to life is already underway as the winning teams begin to develop their solutions to deliver the cost-cutting, efficiency boosting benefits across the UK.

In the field of logistics, Robok Limited are setting to work on their SeeGul AI tool, which uses AI to monitor efficiency, improve resourcing, and identify bottlenecks which hamper productivity for businesses operating warehouses and storage facilities. Meanwhile, Kelp Technologies are collaborating with fashion retailers Depop and Selfridges to develop real-time pricing and market trend analysis to address the complexity of pricing second hand apparel. The results of the project will save time and money for retailers and play an important role in growing the second-hand clothing market, reducing waste and greenhouse emissions.

Dr Kedar Pandya, UKRI Technology Missions Fund Senior Responsible Owner and Executive Director of Cross-Council Programmes at UKRI's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council said:

“These projects will drive AI innovation and economic growth in a diverse range of high-growth industry sectors in all nations of the UK.

They complement other investments made through the UKRI Technology Missions Fund, which are already helping to boost growth and productivity across the UK by harnessing the power of AI and other transformative technologies.”

The support announced today places UK AI innovation at the heart of the government’s plans to spark economic growth through a productivity revolution. The winning projects are funded through the UKRI Technology Missions Fund to secure the UK’s global leadership in emerging and future AI technologies. The projects are delivered through the Innovate UK BridgeAI programme, whose additional support also includes access to training and scientific expertise, expert AI advice and guidance, and greater collaboration between businesses and developers.

It follows the King’s Speech where the government committed to ‘take the brakes off Britain’ through a raft of new Bills, including generating sustainable growth by encouraging investment in industry, skills and new technologies.

UK to receive earlier flood and drought warnings using high-tech sensors and real time monitoring

August

From: Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, UK Research and Innovation and The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP

- Researchers across the UK to use latest tech and major data bank to better predict where devastating floods and droughts will strike
- innovators will also pioneer new ways of tackling the worst of extreme weather to halt damage and cut eye-watering cost to the economy
- sensors in UK rivers and real time monitoring will gather priceless data that goes towards modelling the potential impact and likely flashpoints

Predicting where future flooding and droughts will strike next in the UK will be made easier under a new project for scientists using the latest tech and real-

time data, Science and Technology Secretary Peter Kyle has announced today (Saturday 31 August).

It will help key bodies, like local authorities and the Environment Agency, to stem the worst of extreme weather’s impact on communities, saving lives, homes, and businesses, and helping to cut the devastating cost of such events to the UK economy, estimated at £740 million a year.

The Floods and Droughts Research Infrastructure, led by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) and backed by £40 million, will be the first UK-wide network focused on understanding the impact of extreme weather conditions across the country, pinpointing where incidents are likely to occur and planning to limit

their impact.

The complexity of Earth's climate makes forecasting floods and droughts a major challenge, with climate change only further complicating the picture. Researchers will use the latest technologies including sensors and real time computer monitoring, plus a huge bank of data including river profiles and near real-time monitoring of information including on atmospheric, ground saturation, water movement, abstraction and storage – taken together, this will form a clearer impression of where and when extreme weather will strike.

Floods wreak havoc on communities by destroying homes, public infrastructure, and livelihoods like farming which in turn

costs consumers. Similarly, droughts have a major impact on the water supply and UK eco-system, harming wildlife and their natural habitats which rely on regular rainfall.

Researchers will be based at UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology's offices throughout Great Britain, with further input from researchers in the British Geological Survey, University of Bristol and Imperial College London.

Findings from the project will be shared with key bodies like the Environment Agency to steer the UK response to extreme weather. It will also act as a hub for researchers to pursue new innovations with discoveries shared across the world and marking the UK as a leader in the

field.

Science and Technology Secretary, Peter Kyle, said:

"Flooding and droughts can devastate UK communities, from leaving people stranded, to destroying homes, gardens, roads and businesses, and even claiming lives.

With climate change sadly making extreme weather events more common and adding an eye-watering cost to the economy, there is no time to waste in backing our researchers and innovators to ensure we are better prepared for floods and droughts striking.



This project will help drive that progress, with dedicated teams using the most advanced tech to crunch data gathered from our rivers and paint a clear picture of its likely impact – using the power of science and tech to keep the public safe.”

The new measures build on £5.6 billion of government investment into flooding from 2021 and 2027, with over 100 and coastal risk management projects helping to better protect thousands of people and properties from flooding from the sea, rivers and reservoirs.

We will also shortly launch a new Flood Resilience Taskforce to turbocharge the delivery of new flood defences, drainage systems and natural flood management schemes, which will ensure we’re prepared for the future and help grow our economy.

Floods Minister Emma Hardy said:

“In the case of extreme flooding and drought, preparation and prediction are everything.

Our new institute will bring together a team of world-leading researchers and the latest technology to ensure our communities, businesses and farms are protected from these devastating events.”

Today’s funding also builds on wider UKRI projects tackling extreme weather in the UK and abroad, including support for businesses to ensure against its risks.

It includes a project sponsored by the NERC linking the frequency and intensity of storms over Northern Europe using mathematical models that enable more accurate pricing of storm-related risks. Meanwhile the Lisflood-FP computer model developed by the University of Bristol has helped over one million Zambian farmers to insure themselves against drought risk through daily rainfall estimates for the continent of Africa.

Another team at Bristol has pioneered the development of high-resolution flood prediction models, which has resulted in Fathom: a spin-out company with an annual turnover of more than £4



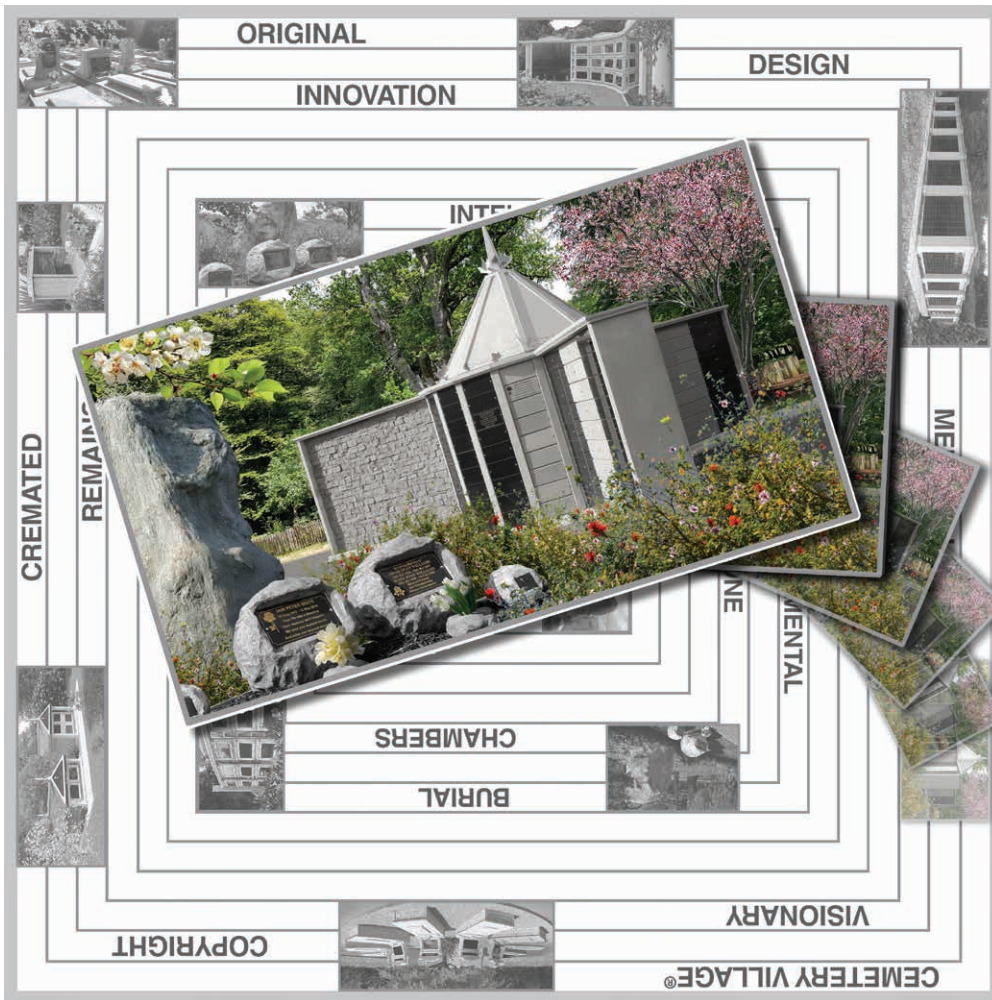
million. Its work includes protecting infrastructure valued at over \$1 trillion, thanks to improved flood risk management in the UK and across the world.

Executive Chair of NERC, Professor Louise Heathwaite, said:

“Earth’s changing climate means the number of extreme floods and droughts will increase in the UK, impacting homes, businesses and services. But predicting their location and measuring their intensity and impact needs the sort of scientific advances that this programme will bring to overcome the data and analytical constraints that are currently very challenging.

The project will transform the way we understand the impact of these events by building a significant bank of data and improving our monitoring capability, and so helping to protect those affected.

This is an example of how NERC is responding to climate challenges with research and innovation investments that will accelerate the green economy and deliver solutions to national priorities.”



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Whooping cough cases rise to over 10,000

August

From: UK Health Security Agency

New whooping cough data published today by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) shows laboratory confirmed cases rising to over 10,000. UKHSA urges pregnant women to get vaccinated to protect their babies from birth onwards.

The latest data for England shows cases

of whooping cough peaked in May but continue at high levels, with 2,427 cases reported in June. This follows 555 cases in January 2024, increasing to an updated figure (1) of 3,052 in May – bringing the total number of laboratory confirmed cases from January to June 2024 to 10,493.

Confirmed cases in the second quarter (April to June) of 2024 are very high, exceeding those in any quarter of the last major 2012 outbreak year.

Sadly, there has been one further infant death in June, bringing the total to 10 since the current outbreak began in November last year (one in December 2023 and 9 between January to end June 2024).

Young babies are at highest risk of severe complications and death from whooping cough. Evidence from England shows that vaccination at the right time in

pregnancy is highly effective, giving 92% protection against infant death.

From January to June 2024, while most cases (55%, 5,769) were in those aged 15 years or older who usually get a mild illness, high numbers (328) continue to be reported in babies under 3 months of age who are at greatest risk from the infection.

Whooping cough cases have been at high levels across all regions in England, as well as in many other countries, since late 2023 due to a combination of factors. Whooping cough is a cyclical disease that peaks every 3 to 5 years. The last cyclical increase occurred in 2016 following an earlier outbreak in 2012. However, in common with other diseases, cases fell to very low numbers during the pandemic due to restrictions and public behaviours. A peak year is



overdue and the impact of the pandemic also means there is reduced immunity to whooping cough in the population.

The latest uptake data for the vaccination offered to pregnant women to protect newborn infants against whooping cough continues to decline - with coverage in March 2024 at 58.9% compared to the peak coverage (72.6%) in March 2017.

Timely vaccination in pregnancy and in childhood are both important to protect



vulnerable young infants from serious disease. It is particularly important for pregnant women to get vaccinated against whooping cough, as this allows protection to pass to their unborn baby in the womb so that babies are protected from birth in their first months of life.

All babies are given 3 doses of the 6-in-1 jab at 8, 12 and 16 weeks of age to protect against whooping cough and other serious diseases such as diphtheria and polio, with a pre-school booster offered at 3 years 4 months.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Director of Immunisation at UK Health Security Agency, said:

“Vaccination is the best defence against whooping cough and it is vital that pregnant women and young infants receive their vaccines at the right time. Pregnant women are offered a whooping cough vaccine in every pregnancy, ideally between 20 and 32 weeks. This passes protection to their baby in the womb so that they are protected from birth in the first months of their life when they are most vulnerable and before they can receive their own vaccines.

With cases continuing to rise and, sadly, 10 infant deaths since the outbreak

began last November, ensuring women are vaccinated in pregnancy has never been more important. Our thoughts and condolences are with those families who have so tragically lost their baby.”

Whooping cough, clinically known as pertussis, is a bacterial infection which affects the lungs. The first signs of infection are similar to a cold, such as a runny nose and sore throat, but after about a week, the infection can develop into coughing bouts that last for a few minutes and are typically worse at night. Young babies may also make a distinctive ‘whoop’ or have difficulty breathing after a bout of coughing, though not all babies make this noise which means whooping cough can be hard to recognise.

If anyone in your family is diagnosed with whooping cough, it’s important they stay at home and do not go into work, school or nursery until 48 hours after starting antibiotics, or 2 weeks after symptoms start if they have not had antibiotics. This helps to prevent the spread of infection, especially to vulnerable groups, including infants. However, vaccination remains the best protection for babies and children.

Government commits to a genuine living wage for working people

August

From: Department for Business and Trade, The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP and The Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP

- Government takes first step to deliver on the promise of a genuine living wage for working people.
- Ministers overhaul the Low Pay Commission's remit to factor in the cost of living when recommending minimum wage rates.
- Discriminatory age bands set to be removed so that all adults can benefit as work gets underway on the plan to Make Work Pay.

In a move to put more money in working people's pockets, the government has today [Tuesday 30th July] overhauled the remit of the Low Pay Commission (LPC).

This will, for the first time, ensure the independent body takes into account the cost of living when it makes future

recommendations to government on the minimum wage.

The Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds said:

"For too long working people have faced the worst of the cost of living crisis, but this Government is taking bold action to address it and make work pay.

The new remit to the LPC is the first of many vital steps we will take to support more people to stay in work and improve living standards.



Our focus remains on putting more money in working people's pockets and boosting economic growth."

The Business and Trade Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister have also instructed the LPC to narrow the gap between the minimum wage rate for 18–20-year-olds and the National Living Wage. This will be the first step towards achieving a single adult rate.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves said:

"Economic growth is our first mission, and we will do everything we can to ensure good jobs for working people. But for too long, too many people are out of work or not earning enough.

The new LPC remit is an important first step in getting people into work and keeping people in work, essential for growing our economy, rebuilding Britain and making everyone better

off.”

The advent of the minimum wage has been one of the most effective and successful policy interventions of the last 25 years, and this announcement is the next step in achieving the promise of a genuine living wage for working people.

In addition to the cost of living, the remit of the LPC will continue to also consider the impact on business, competitiveness, the labour market and the wider economy.

TUC General Secretary Paul Nowak said:

“Hard work should pay for everyone. These are significant first steps towards making the minimum wage a real living wage and will make a difference to millions. We welcome the Government’s decision to ask the Low Pay Commission to be more ambitious next year and into the future.

We also support the Government’s commitment to ending discriminatory age bands for minimum wage workers. Young people face the same cost of living pressures as other adult workers and will welcome their pay being brought into line.”

The Secretary of State and Deputy Prime Minister have written to the Chair of the Low Pay Commission. The letter and the

full remit can be found here.

This builds on the Government’s Plan to Make Work Pay, which sets out a significant and ambitious agenda to ensure workplace rights are fit for a modern economy, empower working people and deliver economic growth.

These changes are the first steps in realising the Government’s mission to grow the economy and raise living standards across the country.

Peter Jelkelby, Chief Executive and Chief Sustainability Officer, IKEA UK & Ireland:

“People are at the heart of IKEA’s success, and we recognise the challenges they face from inflationary pressures and rises in the cost of living. IKEA are committed



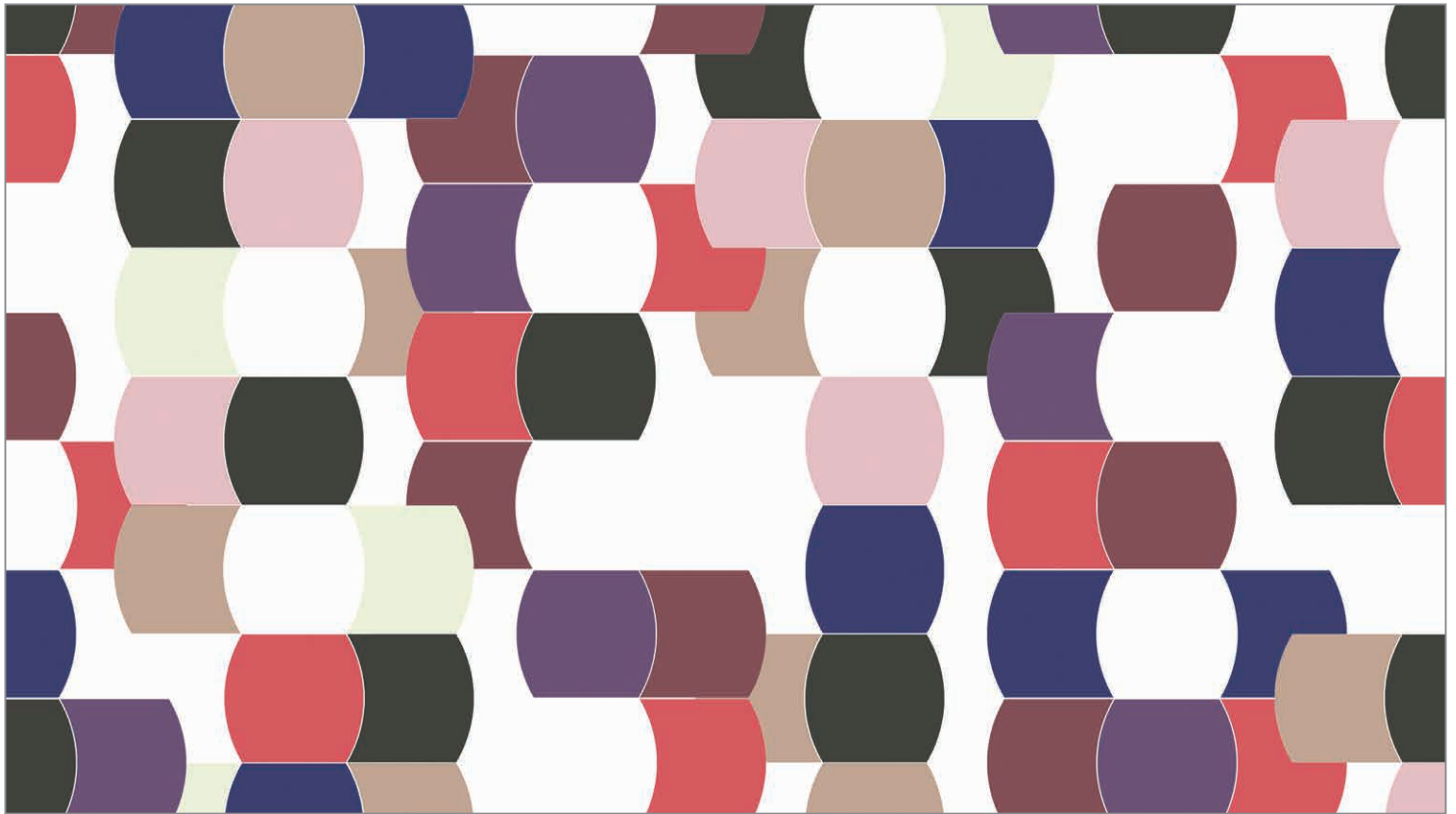
to paying a fair, sustainable rate of pay based on the true cost of living and what’s happening in the wider economy.

IKEA has been a proud member of the Living Wage Foundation since 2016 and is the largest accredited retailer. Our business relies on a skilled, engaged, and committed workforce, so ensuring that living wages reflect the true cost of living is a powerful route to providing security and stability for our co-workers and their families.”

Emma Jones, CBE, founder and CEO of small business support platform and membership community, Enterprise Nation, said:

“Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and we know they are facing unprecedented pressures. We wholeheartedly support the principle of a living wage for all workers and look forward to continuing to work with the Government to recognise the unique challenges faced by micro-businesses.

We want to create an environment where both businesses and workers can thrive and will continue to advocate for a balanced approach that will ensure the survival, growth and success of small enterprises.”



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Cutting-edge flooding programmes deliver big results for communities and environment

September

From: Environment Agency

Innovative approaches to flood and coastal resilience taken by the Environment Agency, local authorities and local partners are helping to unlock significant wider social, economic and environmental benefits for people, places, and wildlife.

The Environment Agency has published its mid-programme report for its £200 million Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes. The report details what has been achieved so far and the lessons learnt.

At this midway point, the achievements of these programmes include:

- 97 new natural flood management schemes delivered, using natural processes to slow the flow of floodwaters through techniques such as leaky dams, wetland ponds and enhanced marine

habitats;

- Almost 600 new monitoring sensors around the country to measure river levels and provide accurate and timely warnings ahead of flooding;
- 25 PhD positions funded to train the next generation of flood experts and develop new approaches to the challenges of climate change and extreme weather.

It is clear the impacts of climate change are already being seen here in the UK and around the world. Rising sea levels and more extreme weather are likely to lead to more frequent and severe flooding and storm surges. This is why the Environment Agency is acting now by encouraging innovation in flood and coastal resilience.

Julie Foley, Director of Flood Risk Strategy & National Adaptation at the

Environment Agency, said:

“We need to combat climate change through innovation. That is the very reason why we established the £200 million Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes. The 35 projects are already delivering social, economic and environmental benefits for people and wildlife which is hugely encouraging.

The learning and best practice gathered will help us to meet our



vision for a nation better ready for, and more resilient to, flooding and coastal change.”

Hannah Bartram, Chief Executive of the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT), said:

“ADEPT is delighted to be working with the Environment Agency on the flood and coastal innovative programmes, including raising awareness and understanding of the adaptation pathways approach.

As part of this work, we recently held three Rapid Adaptation Pathways Assessment workshops across the country, helping those local authorities assess their future flood risks and build adaptive strategies. This highlighted the importance of collaborative and innovative forward-thinking to safeguard communities and ensure the resilience of key assets.

The commitment shown by the local authorities involved demonstrates that when given the space and freedom to innovate, local authorities truly thrive in addressing complex environmental challenges.“

Andrew Cook, Executive Director for

Growth, Highways and Infrastructure at Suffolk County Council, said:

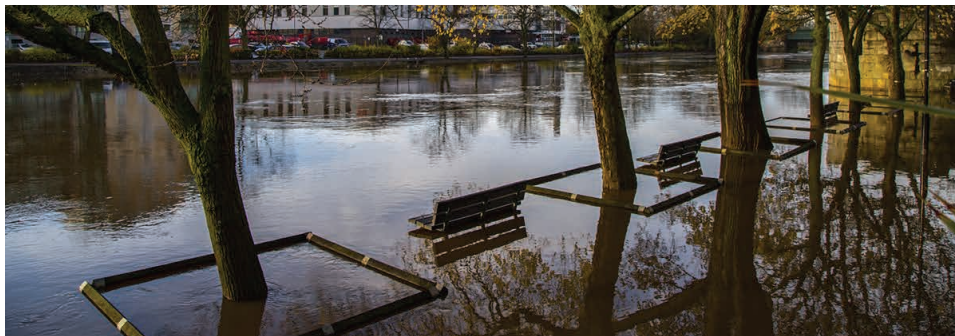
“The challenges we all face to effectively manage flood risk and coastal erosion are significant, and only going to increase with impacts of climate change.

This is why the Environment Agency’s Flood & Coastal Innovation Programmes are so important, for giving practitioners in local authorities across England the opportunity to test new approaches, challenge preconceptions and collaborate to collect the evidence that can inform the new policy and practice.

I am very encouraged by the progress being made at this mid-way point and excited to see the results for projects like Suffolk’s Reclaim the Rain as they work towards completion.”

Some examples of individual initiatives supported through these programmes include:

- The Action for Silk Stream project team in Watling Park in the London Borough of Barnet has partnered with the police to align its sensitive landscape design with public realm improvements. The aim is not only to reduce flood risk, but to create safer and more accessible public spaces by tackling anti-social behaviour and crimes, especially those against women.
- Elsewhere, the Resilient Roch project in Rochdale is combining property flood resilience and energy efficiency measures to retrofit social housing targeted at disadvantaged communities in Littleborough and



Wardleworth. The local authority has aligned funding from a package of energy efficiency measures of around £3 million with Ovo Energy to provide practical flood resilience and energy efficiency advice, helping to boost resilience and save money for householders.

And, the projects have also found ways of maximising the benefits of nature-based solutions to deliver wider benefits to the environment and support the local economy by using nature to safeguard tourism and enable new industries.

- In South Tyneside, the Stronger Shores team are embracing nature-based solutions by establishing seagrass meadows, kelp forests, and oyster reefs. In certain conditions, kelp forests can lower wave energy by up to 50%, reducing the erosive power of wave action at the shore. They also have carbon sequestration benefits. The team is partnering with academia to understand how such measures can reduce coastal erosion and deliver local economic benefits from an improved marine environment.

The £200m fund was launched in 2020 to meet the aims of the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for England.

Over 130,000 people to benefit from life-saving health checks

September

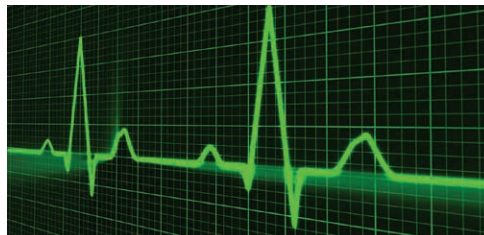
From: Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and Andrew Gwynne MP

- Life-saving health checks being rolled out to more than 100,000 people across the country

- NHS Health Check could save hundreds from preventable deadly diseases, along with freeing up NHS appointments to cut waiting lists

- Local authorities in Norfolk, Medway and Lambeth selected as pilot sites to trial digital checks at home

More than 130,000 people across the



country will be better protected from diseases such as heart disease, kidney disease and diabetes, as the government today (30 August 2024) rolls out a life-saving health check programme to workplaces across the country for the first time.

The checks, which can be completed quickly and easily for employees at work, record a range of information about each patient, which is then used to determine their cardiovascular risk.

Employers from a range of professions will take part in the programme including those from the building, hospitality and transport sectors, and social care.

Today's announcement is part of the Health and Social Care Secretary's commitment to supporting the government's mission to boost economic growth by improving the health of the nation.

With every check providing the equivalent of an NHS appointment, these checks will save thousands of hours of valuable NHS time, helping to cut waiting lists and rebuild the NHS.

Andrew Gwynne, Minister for Public Health and Prevention, said:

“We know so many deadly diseases can be avoided if we seek help in enough time. That’s why we’re working to improve access to treatment while also taking steps to address the preventable causes of cardiovascular disease.

This innovative new programme is an important step towards community-focused healthcare and supporting economic and productivity through improving health, shifting the focus from treatment to prevention, easing the strain on the NHS and helping people to live well for longer.”

Over 16 million people are eligible for an NHS Health Check, but current data shows that only around 40% of those invited went on to complete one. This is especially true for men, who are less likely to get early help but who are more likely to develop cardiovascular disease at an earlier age than women. This new programme aims to reach more people through their place of work and make it more convenient for people to understand and improve their

cardiovascular health.

NHS National Clinical Director for Stroke, David Hargroves, said:

“Convenient and efficient NHS checks in the workplace could spot thousands of people at risk of a range of cardiovascular diseases, and with high blood pressure the biggest risk factor for stroke, early detection will undoubtedly save lives.

This new programme shows the NHS is committed to preventing ill health and I would urge anyone invited for a check to come forward and get support to improve their cardiovascular health.”

Councillor Louise Gittins, Chair of the Local Government Association, said:

“Health checks can save lives. They can



prevent people from developing largely preventable diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes and liver disease.

Councils are exploring new ways to boost uptake, targeting individuals or communities at increased risk, and using proactive outreach programmes to get into those communities who are less likely to attend their general practice.

However, there is more that can be done, and by partnering council and employers, we can make sure more people get a health check and hopefully prevent illness later on.”

Jaguar Land Rover Chief Medical Officer, Dr Steve Iley, said:

“Jaguar Land Rover is investing £15 million a year in its global health and wellbeing programmes because we know that healthy and happy colleagues help us to deliver high-quality products and ensure a positive future for our business. Health checks are a fundamental part of prevention and therefore feature in many of our programmes.

Our collaboration with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council on the

workplace cardiovascular disease checks pilot presents a unique opportunity to work together on providing awareness and signposting for our employees.

We are excited to provide these vital checks to approximately 4,500 of our Solihull employees before the end of this financial year, thus supporting the great work of our NHS.”

In addition, the government has today also announced the development of a new digital version of the NHS Health Check which will be ready for testing early in 2025.

The service will be available through the NHS App, meaning users can undertake their health check at home and have the results automatically written back into their GP electronic health record, within a few clicks.

Local authorities in Norfolk (East of England), Medway (South East) and Lambeth (London) have been selected to pilot the new digital health checks in early 2025.

The digital programme will deliver around one million checks in its first 4 years. Plans are being put in place to make digital NHS Health Checks available nationally, alongside the face-to-face programme to give patients more choice.

Government support extended to help struggling households with bills and essential costs over winter

September

From: Department for Work and Pensions and HM Treasury

- £421 million boost for local authorities in England to help people most in need with the cost of their energy, food and water, with £79 million for devolved administrations

- Immediate support comes alongside the government's growth mission to rebuild Britain and make every part of the country better off



Vulnerable households will receive support for the cost of essentials this winter, as the Work and Pensions

Secretary Liz Kendall announces an extension to the Household Support Fund for the next six months.

The £421m extension gives certainty to Local Authorities across England over the winter months – up until April 2025 – as they work to help those struggling with the cost of energy, food, and water.

Pensioners and others struggling to heat their homes or afford other essential items over the colder months should contact their local council to see what support may be available to them. Details on the latest scheme for local authorities and councils will be communicated in the coming weeks.

Many councils also use the Fund beyond emergency support, including working with local charities and community groups to provide residents with key appliances, school uniforms, cookery classes, and items to improve energy efficiency in the home.

An estimated £79 million will also be given to Devolved Administrations via the Barnett formula as the government leaves no stone unturned in ensuring every person – in every part of the country – has the foundations they need to be financially secure. Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can choose how to allocate this additional funding, as the UK government continues to work closely with them to help support vulnerable people.

Given the dire economic inheritance, we had to take difficult decisions to put our public finances on a sustainable footing as we tackle the £22 billion black hole.

1.3 million more people have fallen into poverty since 2010/11, with living standards falling by the largest year-on-year drop since records began in 2022/23. For over a decade people have also been denied the security and dignity that good work affords with more than a near record 2.8 million people out of work due to sickness.

As we continue our work to deliver growth, make work pay and develop our child poverty strategy in the long term, the extension of the Fund prevents councils and vulnerable households experiencing an immediate cliff edge of support with a tough winter ahead.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves MP, said:

“The £22 billion blackhole inherited from the previous governments means we have to take tough decisions to fix the foundations of our economy.

But extending the Household Support Fund is the right thing to do - provide targeted support for those who need it most as we head into the winter months.”

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Liz Kendall MP, said:

“We are extending the Household Support Fund for the next six months because it is a lifeline for people who are struggling with the cost of living.

The dire inheritance we face means more people are living in poverty now than 14 years ago – and this Government is taking immediate action to prevent a cliff edge of support for the most vulnerable in our society.

At the same time, we are taking action to fix the foundations of our country through our plans to grow the economy, make work pay, and Get Britain Working again.”

The government is exploring options around how best to provide sustainable

support to vulnerable households in the longer term while the ministerial Child Poverty Taskforce develops an ambitious strategy to tackle the root causes of poverty, and the Get Britain Working White Paper, to be set out in the Autumn, will develop measures to reduce inactivity and help people to find better paid and more secure jobs.

By growing the economy and unlocking investment through the National Wealth Fund; launching Great British Energy to drive home-grown clean energy and lower bills; making work pay and developing a new Child Poverty Strategy to give children the best start in life – the Government is looking at all levers available to unlock the potential of millions across the country and give them the platform they need to thrive.



UK National Memorial to Queen Elizabeth II to be located in St James's Park, London

September

From: The Queen Elizabeth Memorial Committee

- St James's Park, London announced as location for the UK's national memorial to Queen Elizabeth II
- The site was chosen due to its historical significance and personal connection to the late Queen, as well as its proximity to the ceremonial route of The Mall
- The memorial will reflect Queen Elizabeth II's extraordinary life of service and provide a space for pause and reflection

The site for the new national Queen Elizabeth II Memorial has today (7th September 2024) been announced as St James's Park, London.

The memorial site will include the area of St James's Park adjacent to The Mall at Marlborough Gate, and land surrounding

the pathway down to the lake, including the Blue Bridge.

The site was chosen because of its close proximity to the ceremonial route of The Mall, its historical and constitutional significance and personal connection to Queen Elizabeth. It is close to Buckingham Palace - the Monarch's

official residence - the Commonwealth headquarters, and statues of her parents King George VI and Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

The Committee – established by the UK Government and Royal Household in 2023 – considered various options for the location and engaged with the



wider public and with key stakeholders and experts across the four nations of the UK to ensure their feedback was considered.

The UK Government will support the successful proposals, and will work closely with the Committee as plans develop. In recognition of the impact Her late Majesty had across the UK, the UK Government will also make available funding for memorial projects in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Further details on how this will be taken forward will be available in due course.

The memorial is intended to provide not only a fitting monument but also a space



for contemplation and community, and will be of an appropriate scale and ambition to match the impact of Queen Elizabeth II on national life, The Commonwealth and indeed the rest of the world.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer said:

“Queen Elizabeth II’s enduring legacy of service and devotion to our country will never be forgotten.

The national memorial will be located in St James’s Park, right in the heart of the capital, providing everyone with a place to honour the Late Queen and connect with the shared history we cherish.”

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Rt Hon Pat McFadden, said:

“Queen Elizabeth II was our longest reigning monarch, and gave her life in service to our nation. It is only right that the memorial is situated in a location that represents the scale of Her role at the heart of British society, and provides a place of reflection for the public.”

CDL Pat McFadden announces St James’s Park as Queen Elizabeth Memorial location

The UK has a proud tradition of

memorialising its monarchs and other significant historical figures, from the Royal Albert Hall and the Victoria Memorial, to Millicent Fawcett. London hosts permanent memorials to recent monarchs including George V, George VI, as well as Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. The creation of a permanent memorial to Queen Elizabeth II will continue this tradition. The announcement of the final design will coincide with what would have been Queen Elizabeth’s hundredth birthday year in 2026.

Later this year the design phase of the memorial will be launched, when architects, artists and designers will be invited to submit design proposals for the memorial.

Lord Janvrin GCB GCVO PC, Committee Chair and former Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth said:

“The Mall and St James’s Park at the ceremonial heart of our capital provides a location closely identified with so many events of the late Queen’s life. It is a fitting site for the national memorial in her honour to remember and celebrate her extraordinary contribution to our lives throughout her long reign.”

Baroness Amos LG CH PC, Committee member and former Lord President of the Council said:

“As Lord President of the Council I met the late Queen regularly. As our Head of State she played an important global leadership role over many decades. She understood the importance of integrity, understanding and values in decision making. She also knew how to connect to people and bring communities together. I admired her resilience and steadfastness, her belief in the people of Britain and the Commonwealth, her quiet diplomacy, her subtle use of power and ‘common sense’ approach.”

Alex Holmes, Committee member and Queen’s Young Leader, said:

“When I met her I was struck by Queen Elizabeth’s ability to connect with so many people - young and old, here and abroad. Her memorial, sitting in the heart of London, will create a lasting legacy and celebrate her long life of public service.”

The Queen Elizabeth Memorial Committee is tasked with the responsibility to present formal recommendations for a UK national memorial and legacy programme to

commemorate Queen Elizabeth II. The Committee comprises eight senior figures from across British public life, selected for their expertise, and chaired by the late Queen’s former Private Secretary Lord Robin Janvrin. The Committee is also continuing its work to develop proposals for a UK-wide legacy programme to commemorate Queen Elizabeth. The Committee is expected to report final design and legacy programme recommendations to the Prime Minister and His Majesty The King in 2026.

Andrew Scattergood CBE, Chief Executive of The Royal Parks, said:

“We are honoured that St James’s Park has been chosen as the location for the national memorial to Queen Elizabeth II. The park is steeped in rich Royal history, renowned worldwide for hosting spectacular Royal and ceremonial events, so it feels fitting that the memorial should be situated here, close to where our longest-reigning monarch spent a great deal of time. With a peaceful lake at its centre, the park enjoys an outstanding view of Buckingham Palace and provides a wonderful natural haven for wildlife in the centre of London. We hope that the memorial area will provide people with a tranquil space for reflection and contemplation.”

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.



New bill introduced in Parliament to clarify crypto's legal status

September

From: Ministry of Justice and Heidi Alexander MP

- Bitcoin and other digital assets can be considered personal property under new draft law introduced in Parliament today (11 September 2024)
- Owners to benefit from increased legal protection
- Changes will keep English and Welsh law at the forefront of the global tech industry



The Property (Digital Assets etc) Bill, introduced in Parliament today, will mean that for the first time in British history, digital holdings including cryptocurrency, non-fungible tokens such as digital art, and carbon credits can be considered as personal property under the law.

The Bill will also ensure Britain maintains its pole position in the emerging global crypto race by being one of the first countries to recognise these assets in law.

Previously, digital belongings were not definitively included in the scope of English and Welsh property law – leaving owners in a legal grey area if their assets were interfered with.

The new law will therefore also give legal protection to owners and companies against fraud and scams, while helping judges deal with complex cases where digital holdings are disputed or form part of settlements, for example in divorce cases.

Justice Minister Heidi Alexander said:

“Our world-leading legal services form a vital part of our economy, helping to drive forward growth and keep Britain at the heart of the international legal industry.

It is essential that the law keeps pace with evolving technologies and this legislation will mean that the sector can maintain its position as a global leader in cryptoassets and bring clarity to complex property cases.”

Today's news also means the UK legal sector will be better equipped to respond to new technologies, attracting more business and investment to the legal services industry which is already worth £34 billion a year to the economy.

It is estimated that English law governs £250 billion of global mergers and acquisitions, and 40 per cent of global corporate arbitrations, so keeping the law up to date is vital to ensuring that the UK remains the law of choice internationally.

Settlement fees waived for bereaved partners facing destitution

September

From: Home Office, Ministry of Defence, Seema Malhotra MP and Alistair Carns OBE MC MP

People dealing with the death of their partner and facing financial hardship will soon be able to apply to have the application fee for settlement waived, under new rules laid in Parliament today.

Currently, people who wish to apply for settlement in the UK following the death of their partner are required to pay a £2,885 fee. This is despite the sudden change in financial circumstances that often occurs following a loss.

The policy change forms part of a fairer and more compassionate approach to those



wishing to stay in the UK and facing acute financial vulnerability during times of grief.

From 9 October, those who qualify include partners on a family visa who meet the criteria for destitution, if their partner either had:

- been a British citizen
- indefinite leave to remain in the UK
- been from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and had pre-settled status

Bereaved partners of members of HM Armed Forces, Gurkhas or Hong Kong military unit veterans (discharged before 1 July 1997) may also benefit from this fee waiver.

Minister for Migration and Citizenship, Seema Malhotra MP, said:

“Losing a loved one is a deep and unimaginable pain, all too often compounded by the immense financial strain faced by those left behind.

Widows, widowers, and their dependent

children who had become integral parts of our communities can now apply for a fee waiver if facing destitution, in order to settle and keep the life they have built.

This marks a fairer and more compassionate approach to those unable to afford the settlement fees, but who have often worked, paid their taxes and contributed to life here in the UK, including the partners of our military veterans.”

Minister for Veterans and People, Alistair Carns OBE MC MP, said:

“We are committed to supporting our Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families who have made extraordinary sacrifices to ensure we are secure at home and safe abroad.

Whilst we cannot lessen the pain of losing a loved one, this measure will lessen the financial burden on the Armed Forces community, giving families the support they rightly deserve to continue building their life in the UK.”

Forthcoming articles under consideration

- Can we do something to stop rising sea levels or is it too late?
- Who will win the American Presidency and how will it affect Britain?
- Do flood protections work?
- With an ever increasing population, are we at risk of running out of water?
- Climate change. What part can we play, individually and as businesses, in the UK and globally, to slow climate change?



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

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