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*October - December 2024 British Edition*

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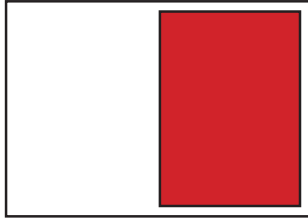
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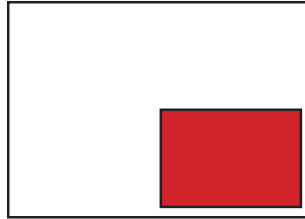
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*Early morning frost on a stone memorial*



# News Roundup

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

By Paul G Bazeley for Government World

## October News Review

Chancellor Rachel Reeves delivered the Autumn budget. It introduced substantial tax increases, amounting to approximately £40 billion to fund



key public services. Major measures included increases in employer NICs, capital gains tax, and inheritance tax changes – including taxing farms, alongside the planned abolition of the non-domiciled tax regime by 2025. Significant investments targeted healthcare, education, housing, and green initiatives. Defence spending also increased along with £3 billion allocated

to Ukraine. The budget was met with a mixed response with many stating they elevate the tax burden and raise concerns about economic growth and operational costs for businesses.

The US claimed it had seen evidence that North Korea had sent soldiers to Russia for possible deployment to Ukraine. Later in the month, NATO chief Mark Rutte confirmed that North Korean troops had been deployed to Kursk Oblast, and the Pentagon reported an



increased number of North Korean soldiers sent to train in Russia and fight in the war.



The British government announced that single-use vapes will be banned in England and Wales beginning 1 June 2025. The ban is to try to prevent environmental damage and protect the health of children.

A man was arrested outside a rally in California for former president Donald Trump. The suspect was said to be carrying loaded firearms, a fake license plate and several passports. It's believed to have been

an attempted assassination.

Switzerland joined the European Sky Shield Initiative to contribute to building



a pan-European air and missile defence system. It also allows the mostly neutral nation to train and purchase military systems with other European nations.

Tommy Robinson, the British far-right activist, was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment for contempt of court and repeating false allegations about a Syrian refugee.

In their annual Living Planet report, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)



estimated that wild populations of animal species have decreased by over 70% since

1970. It also claimed that in some high-biodiversity areas, the number could be up to a 95% decline.

North Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) toward the Sea of Japan. The Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani said it was the longest-ever launch of a North Korean ICBM, lasting 87 minutes, a large progress in range compared to previous tests.

In Mexico, Claudia Sheinbaum was inaugurated as the 66th president of Mexico, she became the first female Mexican president.

Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine “for the discovery of microRNA and its role in post-transcriptional gene regulation” American physicist John Hopfield and British Canadian computer scientist Geoffrey Hinton were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics “for foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks”

The Nobel Prize in Chemistry was jointly awarded to British computer scientist Demis Hassabis and American



chemist John M. Jumper for their work on protein structure prediction, and also to American biochemist and computational biologist David Baker for his work on computational protein design.

South Korean writer Han Kang was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature “for her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life”.

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Japanese atomic bomb survivors group Nihon Hidankyo for “its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again”.

## **October Sports Review**

The Wimbledon Tennis Championships announced it will replace line judges with an electronic line judge system starting in 2025. It ends the 147-year tradition.



The Spanish players Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí win the Ballon d'Or and the Ballon d'Or Féminin, respectively.

Ruth Chepng'etich, the Kenyan runner ran 2:09:56 at the Chicago Marathon to break the world record for the women's marathon by 1 minute and 57 seconds.

In baseball, the Los Angeles Dodgers won the World Series, after defeating the New York Yankees in 5 games including a comeback victory in Game 5 at Yankee Stadium.



## **November News Review**

The Republican candidate and 45th U.S. president Donald Trump and U.S. Senator JD Vance were elected as the 47th U.S. President and 50th U.S.



Vice President respectively. Trump will become the first person since Grover Cleveland in 1892 to serve non-consecutive terms. He'll also be the oldest presidential candidate and the first convicted felon to be elected

president. Meanwhile, Vance is the first millennial to be elected U.S. Vice President.

Thousands of farmers protested at the Houses of Parliament in London, against a new inheritance tax on land ownership that includes farms.



Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner dismissed the concerns around farmers and new agricultural inheritance taxation policies as “scaremongering”.

A coalition of opposition groups called the Military Operations Command launched an offensive against the Syrian Army and other pro-government forces. It was followed by other rebel offensives from the other opposition groups which began seizing Syrian government territory in the south and east of the country. Later in the month, rebel forces entered Aleppo as Syrian Army positions collapsed

across the country. Rebel forces then entered Damascus and the following day, Bashar al-Assad was reported to have fled the capital. The Syrian Army soon confirmed Assad was no longer in power and had fled the country. This resulted in the collapse of the Assad regime. Assad and his family are said to have fled to Moscow and been granted asylum in Russia. The Syrian Salvation Government then established a transitional government in Damascus.

China revised regulations for foreign investors in its listed companies, seeking to attract more such investment



by expanding eligibility criteria and easing financial requirements. With the new regulations, China will now allow foreign individuals to invest strategically in listed companies.

Vladimir Putin, the Russian President, signed the North Korean–Russian

Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership into law. The treaty is seen as a mutual defence pact with North Korea.

Kemi Badenoch was elected leader of the Conservative Party of the UK, following the resignation of Rishi Sunak.

The House of Commons voted 330–275 to pass the Terminally Ill Adults Bill.



It marks the first time Parliament has voted in favour of assisted dying. The bill will now go through several further stages before it can become law.

A study published in The Lancet reported that the number of adults with



diabetes globally has increased from 200 million people in 1990 to around 800 million people in 2022. It also reported that around 40% of adults with diabetes are not receiving treatment.

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury resigned over his handling of barrister John Smyth's sex abuse scandal.

Researchers at Kyoto University, Japan launched LignoSat, the world's first wooden satellite constructed without screws or glue, into space. It is planned to orbit Earth for six months.



Thieves stole two paintings from Andy Warhol's Reigning Queens collection and damaged two others at the MPV Gallery in the Netherlands.

The Most Mysterious Song on the Internet, an unidentified song recorded from a German station in 1984, was finally identified as

“Subways of Your Mind” by the band FEX.

The English novelist Samantha Harvey won the Booker Prize for her novel *Orbital*.

### **November Sports Review**

In tennis, Jannik Sinner beat Taylor Fritz, 6–4, 6–4 to win his first ATP Finals singles title.



Max Verstappen of Red Bull wins his fourth consecutive Formula 1 World Drivers’ Championship at the Las Vegas Grand Prix.

### **December News Review**

Brian Thompson, the CEO of

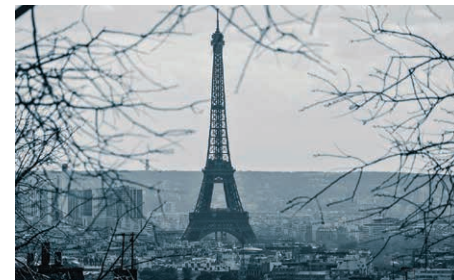
American health insurance company UnitedHealthcare was assassinated by a masked gunman while attending a business conference in New York. A suspect, identified as Luigi Mangione, was later arrested in Pennsylvania for the murder. Later in the month, a U.S. grand jury indicted Luigi Mangione for the assassination.

On December 3, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol declared martial law, accusing the Democratic Party (DPK) of collaborating with North Korea to create a “legislative dictatorship.” This meant the suspension of political activities and free press and led to arrests of political opponents. The move was condemned as an attempted self-coup and sparked protests and a unanimous vote in the National Assembly to lift martial law



within hours, despite attempted military interference. Following public outcry, Yoon later apologized but then defended his actions days later as necessary governance. Days later Yoon was impeached and suspended from office, with Prime Minister Han Duck-soo briefly serving as acting president before also being impeached. At the time of writing, the Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok was acting president.

French Prime Minister Michel Barnier was ousted in a no-confidence vote, the first since 1962,



prompted by budgetary disputes. Barnier formally resigned from office making him the shortest serving prime minister in the Fifth Republic. Macron then appointed Democratic Movement leader François Bayrou as Prime Minister. Sources suggest the appointment of Bayrou was



decided at the last minute. It is believed Macron originally told Bayrou that he would not be named Prime Minister and was then forced to appoint Bayrou shortly afterwards after Bayrou threatened to pull his support from Macron. Following the appointment, Moody's Ratings cut the French credit rating, saying that it was "our view that the country's public finances will be substantially weakened over the coming years".

Five people were killed and over 200 others were injured in a vehicle attack at a Christmas market in Magdeburg, Germany. The suspected perpetrator was arrested at the scene and the investigation was continuing at the time of writing.



The Office for National Statistics announced that the UK economy had shown no growth in the 3rd quarter of its current fiscal year, following downward revisions.



Hundreds of tractors, farmers and supporters blocked Whitehall in the City of Westminster in protest after the Labour government budget changed the agricultural inheritance tax.

Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, France, reopened after it suffered structural fire damage to the building and the spire was destroyed. The Cathedral also held its first public mass in five years with French President Emmanuel Macron and dozens of world leaders attending the reopening ceremony.



Two people were killed by falling trees in England and more than 1.5 million

people experienced power outages in Ireland and the United Kingdom as Storm Darragh battered the British Isles.

The British Antarctic Survey reported that A23a, the world's largest iceberg, had begun to drift further north through the Southern Ocean after exiting the Taylor column.

The former U.S. President, Jimmy Carter died at the age of 100 in Georgia, United States.

The United States President-elect Donald Trump was named the Time Person of the Year by Time magazine.

## **December Sports Review**

In Formula 1, McLaren won the World Constructors' Championship at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. It is the first title the team has won since 1998.

FIFA announced that Saudi Arabia will host the 2034 FIFA World Cup.

**End**

# Millions to take home more cash as Tipping laws come into force

October

From: Department for Business and Trade and Justin Madders MP

Workers will now keep 100% of their tips, gratuities and service charges following new act coming into effect.

- Laws to ensure workers keep all of their hard-earned tips comes into effect
- Changes expected to boost wages by putting £200 million back in the pockets of workers
- Comes ahead of employment rights bill which will go further to strengthen workers' rights and make work pay

From today [Tuesday 1st October], millions of hard working and dedicated workers will benefit from new laws which will ensure they keep 100% of the money they have earned through tips.

Introduced through a Private Members'

Bill last year, the Employment (Allocation of Tips) Act and the statutory Code of Practice on fair and transparent distribution of tips came into force today.

These changes will require employers to pass all tips, gratuities, and service charges on to workers, without deductions.

From today, if an employer breaks the law and retains tips, a worker will be able to bring a claim to an employment tribunal.

Most employers already pass on tips to the staff who earn them; however these laws will crack down on the minority of businesses who continue unacceptable tipping practices.

Employers in the wrong could be made to pay fines or compensation to staff, with workers able to hold bosses fully accountable through employment tribunals.

The Department for Business and Trade estimates that today's changes will mean around £200 million will be received by workers that would





# UK Councils invited to join and shape new initiative to improve access to nature and green space for millions of urban residents

October

From: National Lottery Heritage Fund and Natural England

Goal to enable 100 towns and cities to transform access to green space in urban areas so everyone can enjoy time spent outdoors in nature, close to home.

- Local authorities and community partners across the UK invited to apply for grants totalling £15 million.
- Councils will be supported to put green infrastructure at the heart of their plans and priorities, improving the climate resilience of their places and enabling access for all.
- Initiative backed by a new partnership between the National Trust, The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Natural England, working closely with NatureScot, Natural Resources Wales and the Northern Ireland Environmental Agency.

• Seeking further investment to help Councils and communities achieve their ambitions to create greener, fairer, connected neighbourhoods that give communities pride in their place.

A new initiative announced today will enable at least 100 towns and cities across the UK to become better places

to live and work, by putting nature and green spaces at the heart of their plans and priorities. The initiative is starting in 'beta phase' to enable Councils, communities, partners and funders to shape it together. It aims to attract further investment and support for greener and fairer urban communities, improving people's



health and wellbeing, creating better connected and more climate-resilient neighbourhoods. It will focus on those currently lacking nature and access to parks and open green space.

Pressure on budgets and competition for urban space has meant that nature, historic parks and green spaces have been neglected or lost from many neighbourhoods over the last few decades. Many urban communities are suffering the effects – limited outdoor spaces to play, relax or socialise and streets that can be too hot, with polluted air or higher flood risk. Latest government data reveals well over 40 million people don't have access to a green space a short walk from home.

Nature Towns & Cities, a new initiative set up by The National Trust, The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Natural England aims to help Councils and communities tackle this by bringing nature and green space into their urban communities and places. The three organisations are also working closely with NatureScot, Natural Resources Wales and Northern Ireland Environment Agency to take the initiative UK-wide.

Local authorities and their partners, including community and other civic

organisations, are invited to apply for capacity-building grants as part of the initiative. From early next year there will also be the opportunity to join a peer network to share learning and practical solutions and take advantage of schemes to attract new investment.

Nature Towns & Cities builds on the legacy of the Future Parks Accelerator, a previous partnership between The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the National Trust, as well as closely aligning with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework and standards. It will also help local authorities to develop and implement Local Nature Recovery Strategies, identifying the best opportunities to recover nature in their urban areas.



From 1 October, local authorities and their community partners will be able to apply for grants of between £250k to £1million, with The National Lottery Heritage Fund making £15m in funding available UK-wide. Grants have been designed to provide organisations with capacity and headspace to think and plan their urban green space for the long term. Grants will help to develop partnerships, leadership and capability and build the foundations for change, help to attract new income and investment for delivery and sustainability.

From early 2025, organisations will also be able to connect to a UK-wide network of peers working on similar challenges, sharing answers and expertise to tap into best practice, and unlock the benefits of green spaces and nature for residents and communities. The network will serve local government, community organisations, charities and professionals across the UK, with access to a programme of events and training, a library of resources and tailored support.

Linda Anglin, Edinburgh City Council, said:

“Rethinking our parks, green spaces and the ways they connect across the city has been transformational in Edinburgh over the last 5 years. We were part of the Future Parks Accelerator programme, a precursor to this Nature Towns and Cities initiative, which helped us find new ways of maximising nature’s contribution to the wellbeing of our communities. We are now pioneers of Scotland’s first Nature Network. With over 200 actions identified to manage, restore and enhance the urban landscape in Edinburgh, we’ve seen tangible changes on the ground which are making a difference for both people and nature.”

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, says:

“We are delighted to be part of this partnership initiative to ensure nature is championed across our urban environments and across the UK. It fits with our ambitions to increase our support for strategic projects that help habitats and species thrive, reducing and mitigating the impacts of climate change, while helping people and communities connect to our unique natural heritage and supports our vision for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future.”

Hilary McGrady, Director-General of the National Trust said:

“There is overwhelming evidence that access to green space improves our mental and physical health and wellbeing. Yet in England well over 40 million people don’t have access to green space close to home. Councils are uniquely placed to tackle this, working with their communities and local partners. We understand the difficulties caused by long term cuts to budgets and capacity, and we hope this initiative gives them the inspiration and support they need to improve everyday access to nature and the outdoors for all.

“We have seen from our work over the last decade what amazing results can be achieved by Councils working with their communities and civic partners to bring nature into neighbourhoods and across their towns and cities. We know many other places have similar ambitions to enhance the lives of their residents, bringing hope and aspiration for their futures and we want to help make these a reality.”

Marian Spain, Chief Executive, Natural England said:

“Everybody should be able to connect

with nature in their neighbourhood, and that includes people living in urban areas. Improved access to green spaces at the heart of our towns and cities creates healthier and better places to live which are resilient to climate change, and it provides huge support for people’s mental and physical wellbeing.

“Nature Towns and Cities will offer local authorities and community groups the resources and expertise that they need to bring people closer to the natural environment and give them more opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors.”

For further details on Nature Towns & Cities, please visit [naturetownsandcities.org.uk](http://naturetownsandcities.org.uk). Find out more about applying for a grant on the Heritage Fund website.



# More action needed to protect future water resources

October

From: Environment Agency, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP

Additional 5 billion litres of water needed every day by 2050.

Almost a fifth (19%) of water supplies are lost by water companies before reaching customers' taps, a new report from the Environment Agency has found.

The new report published today (Monday 7 October) assesses water companies' annual performance data against their Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs), which include steps to reduce leakage, install meters and develop new additional supplies. The report highlights some progress has been made, but it also reveals areas of significant under-delivery, meaning improvements are needed in order to manage water resources efficiently and sustainably.

As part of the Environment Agency's drive

to be a more transparent regulator, this year's report has been made public to shine a light on this issue, and to call for urgent and sustained action by water companies to implement these plans. By 2050, in order to support a growing population, the economy, food production and protect the environment, an additional 5 billion litres of water will be needed every day.



The Environment Agency requires water companies to produce plans to ensure secure and sustainable water supplies, which has driven the industry to set out ambitious new plans for the future. If implemented fully, these plans would lead to improved resilience against extreme drought, protect the environment and support the wider economy.

Key findings of the report include:

- **Leakage:** Despite a commitment by the water industry to halve leakage by 2050 and a reduction in leakage by 10% from 2017-2018 levels, it remains too high with 19% of water supplies still being lost before reaching consumers. The report breaks down water loss data by water company, with Thames Water and United Utilities identified as the worst performers for leakage per person. The industry must deliver a sustained reduction in leakage, particularly in the face of climate

change, when extreme temperatures will make pipes more prone to bursts.

- **Drought preparedness:** While a year of wet weather meant there were no drought issues in 2023/24, some water companies still would not have sufficient water supply in some areas in the event of a drought. As extreme weather becomes more frequent, urgent action is needed to deliver new supply schemes and ensure they are ready for severe droughts.

- **Demand reduction:** The Environment Act set a target to reduce water use in England by 20% per head of population by 2037-38 from 2019-2020 levels. As of this year, there has been a 3.6% reduction. Metering plays a key role in influencing consumer behaviour and reducing household water use. Currently, water meters have been installed in approximately 60% of households.

Alan Lovell, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

“In the face of the enormous challenges on water resources, we have to tackle both sides of the equation – reducing demand and increasing supply. While we’ve seen some progress by companies, it’s clear that more planning, resources and investment are needed, particularly on leakage.

We expect water companies to accelerate their plans to increase water efficiency, reduce leakage and prepare for future droughts. We will continue to work closely with Ofwat and Defra to hold water companies accountable and ensure they deliver on their commitments to protect our environment and secure our water supply for future generations.”

Water Minister Emma Hardy said:

“This report is a damning indictment of the sheer volume of water that is wasted by water companies across England.

As the climate crisis worsens and more pressure is placed on our water systems, we must fix our broken water infrastructure to ensure we have a resilient future water supply.

We have taken immediate action to reset the water industry including introducing our new Water (Special Measures) Bill to strengthen regulation and give the water regulators sweeping new powers to hold companies accountable. We are also putting customers at the heart of our approach by doubling compensation when supplies are disrupted.”

Water company performance on matters such as leakage and drought preparedness and their wider delivery against water

resources aspects of their business plans is one of areas considered in Ofwat’s annual Performance Reports. In the event that a company has not delivered against these plans they are asked to return money to customers through bill reductions.

The Environment Agency and Ofwat are urging water companies to focus attention and resources to improve the resilience of their water supply. The Environment Agency and Ofwat will be issuing letters to several water companies expressing concerns over their management of water supplies. These letters will be published on Ofwat’s website.





# UK sanctions Russian troops deploying chemical weapons on the battlefield

October

From: Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, The Rt Hon David Lammy MP and The Rt Hon John Healey MP

Russian troops involved in the abhorrent use of inhumane chemical weapons on the battlefield in Ukraine have been targeted by new UK sanctions.

- Russia's Radiological Chemical and Biological Defence (CBR) troops and their commander have been sanctioned for the deployment of barbaric chemical weapons in Ukraine

- UK calls out Russia's flagrant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and urges Russia to immediately cease all such activity

- action continues the Foreign Secretary's personal mission to target the full spectrum of the Kremlin's malign activity through our arsenal of sanctions Russian forces have openly admitted to

using hazardous chemical weapons on the battlefield, with widespread use of riot control agents and multiple reports of the use of the toxic choking agent chloropicrin – first deployed on the battlefields of WW1.

Russia's flagrant disregard for the Chemical Weapons Convention is a serious violation of international law. Agents of Putin's mafia state were also responsible for deploying the deadly nerve agent Novichok on the streets of Salisbury in 2018, and against opposition leader



Alexei Navalny in 2020.

Among those sanctioned today are the Radiological, Chemical and Biological Defence Troops of the Russian Armed Forces and its leader Igor Kirillov, responsible for helping deploy these barbaric weapons. Kirillov has also been a significant mouthpiece for Kremlin disinformation, spreading lies to mask Russia's shameful and dangerous behaviour.

Foreign Secretary, David Lammy said:

“The UK will not sit idly by whilst Putin and his mafia state ride roughshod over international law, including the Chemical Weapons Convention. I have made it my personal mission to challenge this malign activity, and I will not back down.

Russia's cruel and inhumane tactics on the battlefield are abhorrent and I will use the full arsenal of powers at

my disposal to combat Russia's malign activity.

Let me be clear; Putin and those who carry out his will have nowhere left to hide. We will continue to use sanctions to directly target and counter the Kremlin's attempts to sow fear, division and disorder."

Defence Secretary, John Healey said:

"Our message to Putin and his regime is clear: you cannot break international law without facing the consequences.

We will not allow such blatant violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention and rules-based international order to go unpunished.

The UK is cracking down on those responsible for these horrific chemical attacks in Ukraine. Our support for Ukraine is ironclad and will continue for as long as it takes."

Also sanctioned today are two Russian Ministry of Defence laboratories for providing support for the development and deployment of these inhumane weapons for use on the frontlines.

The UK is steadfast in supporting Ukraine's fight for freedom, liberty and

victory in the face of these barbaric attacks. We have provided Ukraine with vital equipment and training to protect its people against chemical weapons.

The UK has also committed to delivering £3 billion of military aid to Ukraine every year for as long as they need. The UK's military, financial, diplomatic and political support for Ukraine is iron-clad. We cannot and will not let aggressors like Putin succeed.

### Background

Today's action comes as the UK delivers a statement to the Organisation's Executive Council laying out the UK's commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW in the face of those who act to undermine it. The full speech can be found here.

Those sanctioned today are:



- the Radiological Chemical and Biological Defence Troops of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation

- Igor Kirillov, Head of the Radiological Chemical and Biological Defence Troops of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation

- the Russian Ministry of Defence 27th Scientific Centre

- the Russian Ministry of Defence 33rd Central Scientific Research and Testing Institute

These targets have been designated under the UK's Chemical Weapons (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. The individual will be subject to an asset freeze and travel ban, and entities subject to an asset freeze. The asset freeze will apply to all persons within the territory and territorial sea of the UK and to all UK persons, wherever they are in the world. It also prevents funds or economic resources being provided to or for the benefit of the designated person. An individual subject to a travel ban must be refused leave to enter or to remain in the United Kingdom.

# First UK-US online safety agreement pledges closer co-operation to keep children safe online

October

From: Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP

Statement between the UK and US will bring countries closer on joint priority of creating a safer online world.

- First joint statement on online safety between the UK and US governments calls for platforms to go “further and faster” to protect children



- Closer co-operation will include a new joint government working group on children’s online safety

- With smartphone ownership near universal amongst UK-US teens, the countries will share expertise on safety technologies, promote greater platform transparency and consider the impact of new tech including generative AI

Global efforts to keep children safe online will be boosted under a new UK-US statement agreed by UK Technology Secretary Peter Kyle and US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo.

To improve the sharing of expertise and evidence, the UK and US governments will set up and launch of a new joint children’s online safety working group.

Currently there is limited research and evidence on the causal impact that social media has on children and young people.

Once established, the group will work on key areas including promoting better transparency from platforms and consider researcher’s access to privacy-preserving data on social media, helping better understand the impacts and risks of the digital world on young people, including new technologies like generative AI.

This will build on the work between the UK and international partners to help ensure safety is built into technology from the start to help deliver a more secure digital world for young people.

Technology Secretary Peter Kyle said:

“The online world brings incredible benefits for young people, enriching their education and social lives. But these experiences must take place in an environment which has safety baked in from the outset, not as an

afterthought. Delivering this goal is my priority.

The digital world has no borders and working with our international partners like the US - one of our closest allies and home to the biggest tech firms - is essential. This joint statement will turn our historic partnership towards delivering a safer online world for our next generation.”

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo said:

“As more children across the U.S. and around the globe have access to online platforms for online learning and social media, there is also increased risk to this exposure. That is why we are taking the necessary steps in the United States, and with our UK partners, to protect children’s privacy, safety, and mental health.

We remain committed to combating youth online exploitation and this historic



agreement will help us expand resources to support children and young people thrive online at home and abroad.”

The statement outlines both countries’ commitment to ensuring the benefits of technology can be maximised for society, as well as social media companies’ responsibility to respect human rights and deliver safe experiences, especially for children.

Both the UK and US are spearheading international approaches on children’s online safety. New figures from a UK government research report released today show the countries are leading efforts globally in ‘safety technology’ which is focused on creating safer online experiences for users, from helping platforms to filter out and block harmful content, to detecting and removing fraudulent advertisements. The safety technology sector in the UK is second only in size to the US, and companies contributed over £600 million to the UK economy in the last year.

The UK’s Online Safety Act places duties on online platforms to protect children’s safety and put in place measures to mitigate risks. Platforms will also need to proactively tackle the most harmful illegal content and activity.

The UK government is committed to working with the regulator to get the Act implemented swiftly and effectively to deliver a safer online world. The Technology Secretary met with Ofcom Chief Executive Melanie Dawes earlier this week to receive an update on how the regulator is progressing with getting the Act’s protections in place.

In the US, the government’s Kids Online Health and Safety Taskforce is advancing the health, safety and privacy of children online.

The statement also commits both countries to working with international partners on the joint priority, promoting the statement’s principles and common solutions to champion a safer online world for children.



# Public urged to prepare for floods after wettest 18 months on record

October

From: Environment Agency, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Emma Hardy MP

The Environment Agency is urging the public to ensure they are prepared for a flood as the nation marks the annual 'Flood Action Week', which this year runs from 14-20 October.

This year's awareness campaign coincides with the one-year anniversary of Storm Babet, which brought significant flooding across the country.

According to the Met Office, Storm Babet saw the third wettest three-day period in a series for England and Wales since 1891.

Nearly 96,900 properties were protected by the Environment Agency during Storm Babet, though sadly around 2,150 were flooded.

As climate change brings more extreme

weather, there has already been flooding this autumn. Only last month, heavy rainfall led to the first major incident of the season with almost a thousand properties flooded. It followed the wettest 18 months on record in England up to February 2024.

This campaign is all about showing people that they can easily take a few steps to reduce the devastation caused by floods to their homes and businesses, with around 5.5 million properties in England at risk from flooding. Recent data

suggests that nearly half the country is unsure of how to find information on local flood risks, making this campaign all the more important.

The best way to protect yourself from flooding is early preparation and knowing what to do in advance. Some of the actions people can take to reduce the dangers are:

- Check your long-term flood risk. You can use this free service to find out the long-term flood risk for an area in



England, the possible causes of flooding, and how to manage flood risk.

- Sign up for flood warnings by phone, text or email
- Taking steps to protect yourself from future flooding – including storing important documents in a secure, waterproof location, taking rugs and small furniture upstairs, checking how to turn off your electricity and water, preparing a flood kit.

The Environment Agency and its partners are continuing to help communities become more resilient to extreme weather and rising sea levels, but authorities can never stop all flood impacts.

Caroline Douglass, Environment Agency Executive Director of Flood and Coastal Risk Management, said:

“Climate change means extreme weather events are happening more frequently, and we have already seen an unusually wet September this year.

We can't always predict where the rain will fall or where flooding will occur, but we do know which areas are at risk.

That is why it is essential we all do our part by checking our flood risk and signing up for flood warnings this Flood Action Week. While we at the Environment Agency are stepping up our preparations to increase the nation's resilience to flooding as we head into the winter, taking small steps today can immediately improve your own readiness.”

Following the flooding caused by Storms Ciara and Dennis in 2020, it was estimated that the average insurance claim per household was £32,000.

The impacts of flooding to mental health can be equally as harmful as the physical damage and disruption. People whose homes have been damaged by extreme weather are more likely to have poor mental health than the rest of the population.



Floods Minister Emma Hardy said:

“Flooding can be a destructive force that puts everything in life on hold. I've seen the impacts firsthand and am determined to ensure as much as possible others do not.

Through the recent launch of our Floods Resilience Taskforce, this government is taking decisive action to accelerate the development of flood defences and bolster the nation's resilience to extreme weather.

But this Flood Action Week, we must be all be proactive in taking steps to protect ourselves by checking our flood risk and signing up for flood warnings.”

Last winter, Storm Babet was followed in quick succession by Storms Ciaran and Henk, which each led to more significant flooding, though flood defences operated well overall. While around 5,000 properties were sadly flooded, around 250,000 properties were protected thanks to the investments the Environment Agency has made in flood and coastal defences.

In the year since Storm Babet, the Environment Agency has undertaken a thorough assessment of the condition of flood defense assets across the country to ensure they are up to the required standard.

It has conducted over 200,000 checks on the state of assets in the past year – up from 150,000 in an average year – and increased our spend on asset maintenance and repair to £236 million, up from £200 million.

Pumps have been pre-emptively deployed at seven strategic depots in vulnerable regions around the country to ensure they can be rolled out rapidly as and when required.

The public are also urged to explore the longer-term Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures they can adopt to protect their own homes. The Environment Agency estimates nine out of 10 properties fitted with PFR in England saw the measures delivered via its flood and coastal risk management investment programme, ensuring better protection.

Flood Re is a joint initiative between the Government and insurers aiming to make the flood cover part of household

insurance policies more affordable. Its Build Back Better initiative enables householders to install property flood resilience measures up to the value of £10,000 when repairing their properties after a flood.

Flood Re Interim CEO Stuart Logue said:

“One year on from Storm Babet and we are seeing yet more severe weather and flooding across the country, causing not only physical devastation to homes, but also placing a unique burden on the mental health and wellbeing of families who are affected.

This acts as a stark reminder of the importance of our Build Back Better scheme where householders can access up to £10,000 to build resilience into their homes when carrying our flood repairs.

Householders can find out which insurance providers are part of the scheme on our website by searching Flood Re Build Back Better.”

During a flood, it is especially important that drivers take particular care on roads, stay away from swollen rivers and do not drive through flood water, just 30cm of flowing water is enough to move your car.

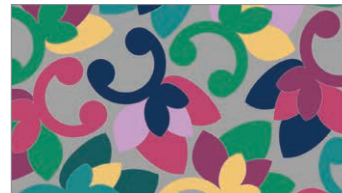


The advertisement features a collage of historical exhibition posters at the top. On the left is the 'NORTH BANK EXHIBITION' poster from 1883, and on the right is the 'THE GREAT WYCOMBE AND DISTRICT FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS' exhibition poster from 1884. Below these is a small 'WELTERS of Wycombe' logo. To the right of the posters is a graphic of concentric squares. The main text area has a dark background with 'Keith Welters' in a stylized font and 'FURNISHING' in a smaller font. Below this, the text reads 'welters® ORGANISATION WORLDWIDE Design and Innovation' and 'www.welters-worldwide.com'. At the bottom right is a detailed bronze sculpture of an elephant.



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# Chancellor welcomes £50m boost for medicines manufacturing

November

From: HM Treasury, The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP and The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP

A multi-million-pound investment to build a new facility that manufactures lifesaving medicines for the NHS has been confirmed by the Chancellor today.

- £50 million investment secured to continue producing and supplying lifesaving medicines to the NHS
- Investment is a boost for manufacturing in Newcastle and supports UK supply chain
- Follows £100bn investment in capital spending announced at Budget to attract private investment and rebuild Britain's infrastructure

On a visit to the Newcastle, Rachel Reeves will welcome the £50 million deal with Accord – one of the largest suppliers of chemotherapy products in Europe - to build a state-of-the-art medicines

manufacturing facility that incorporates the latest automation technology. The investment will create over 50 skilled jobs and safeguard the site's long-term future.

Investment will be a vital part of addressing the growth challenge and Accord's commitment to the UK is just the kind of partnership investment that will grow our economy, and shows that Britain is open for business.

Backed by government investment,



the deal will enable Accord to continue producing and supplying lifesaving medicines for oncology and autoimmune diseases treatments to the NHS alongside health systems and patients across Europe.

The investment will also support efforts to shore up the UK's supply chain of critical medicines and boost UK health resilience, with the site's capabilities also expected to be highly valuable in the event of a future pandemic.

The Chancellor welcomed the investment just two days after delivering a Budget to fix the foundations to deliver on the promise of change after a decade and a half of stagnation.

The Budget will help rebuild Britain with over £100 billion capital investment over the next five years to attract private investment in key industries of the future.

As a central part of the Growth Mission, the Budget confirmed the Industrial Strategy will deliver the certainty and stability businesses need to invest in the UK's growing and high potential sectors.

This includes up to £520m for a new Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund to drive growth and build resilience for future health emergencies. The new Fund is expected to leverage £3.7 billion investment, creating and safeguarding 13,599 high skilled jobs as well as £1.7 billion of R&D spillover benefits.

Visiting Accord Healthcare today, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves said:

“No one should be in any doubt that it is my number one mission to grow our economy.

“The £100bn capital investment in my Budget this week helps us achieve that by attracting private investment. It's that partnership model that will grow our economy and restore stability, whilst delivering better jobs and driving prosperity across all corners of the country.”

Science and Technology Secretary Peter Kyle said:

“Medicines manufacturing is a UK success story. Partnerships between government and industry are crucial in taking groundbreaking new treatments from research labs to treating patients.

“Investments like this will help secure the manufacture of next generation life-saving medicines and support our resilience to future pandemics.

“This joint public-private investment in Accord Healthcare's site will retain and create highly skilled jobs in Newcastle, ensuring we reap the benefits of the talent in every corner of our country while growing our local and national economies.”

Welcoming the announcement Paul Tredwell Executive Vice President of Accord Healthcare, EMENA said:

“Accord is delighted to have worked with the government to unlock this £50 million investment to continue supplying affordable, high-quality medicines to the NHS. Today's announcement is positive news for the medicines manufacturing industry across the UK and signals that government is squarely behind this business sector.

“For us at Accord, it has meant that we have been able to confidently invest in

our production facility in Fawdon, Newcastle upon Tyne where we have been able to significantly increase production of a range of innovative, lifesaving medicines for patients across the UK and Europe. This Government investment has allowed us to invest further in our people allowing us to grow our presence in the UK, whilst simultaneously playing a significant part in reducing medicine shortages in the UK and shoring-up our ability to respond well in future public health emergencies.”



Today's news follows £63 billion of private investment committed around the government's International Investment Summit earlier this month, which saw 38,000 jobs committed to the UK in infrastructure, renewables and life sciences sectors, turbocharging growth and innovation across the country.

This also builds on the life sciences announcements secured including Eli Lilly and Company which is collaborating with government through a memorandum of understanding which will see the pharmaceutical giant intending to commit £279 million to tackle significant health challenges – including obesity.

The Life sciences sector employs 304,000 people across nearly 7,000 companies, 80 per cent of which are SMEs with the sector seeing over £108.1 billion turnover in 2021/22.

This week's Budget confirmed an additional £22.6 billion for day-to-day spending over two years for the Department of Health and Social care, supporting the NHS to deliver an extra 40,000 elective appointments per week, delivering on one of the Government's first aims in office to reduce waiting times in the NHS.

# UK to create world-first 'early warning system' for pandemics

November

From: Department of Health and Social Care, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, UK Health Security Agency and The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP

The government is set to partner with Oxford Nanopore, which uses technology to rapidly diagnose a range of cancers, along with rare and infectious diseases.

- New partnership with cutting-edge life sciences company Oxford Nanopore will lead to better scientific research and could create tests and treatments for patients, saving lives
- Patients suspected of having severe acute respiratory infections will be diagnosed within 6 hours, supporting the establishment of a new diagnostic system
- Technology will allow potential outbreaks of bacterial or viral diseases to be monitored alongside antimicrobial resistance, shifting NHS from analogue to digital as part of 10 Year Health Plan

The UK will create the world's first real-time surveillance system to monitor the threat of future pandemics, prevent disease and protect the public.

Plans have been announced to form a new partnership between the government, Genomics England, UK Biobank, NHS England and Oxford Nanopore - a UK-headquartered, world-leading life sciences company.

Oxford Nanopore uses long read sequencing technology to analyse genes and pathogens to rapidly diagnose a range of cancers, along with rare and infectious diseases. The technology can sequence long strands of DNA or RNA in one go, without breaking it up into smaller fragments.

In infectious diseases, Oxford Nanopore's technology will help to create an early warning system for future pandemics and potential biological threats, both preventing

disease and protecting the public.

It will be used in the expansion of NHS England's Respiratory Metagenomics programme, being led by Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. It uses samples from patients with severe respiratory infections and rapid genetic testing to match those patients with the right treatments within 6 hours.

This novel and world-leading application, developed in partnership with the NHS, will allow potential outbreaks of bacterial or viral diseases to be monitored alongside antimicrobial resistance across the country.

Following an initial successful pilot at St Thomas' Hospital, the technology will now be rolled out from 10 to up to 30 NHS sites



to address the current time lag between new pathogens emerging in the UK and action being taken to both treat affected patients and to prevent their spread, which will benefit people everywhere.

Health and Social Care Secretary Wes Streeting said:

“If we fail to prepare, we should prepare to fail. Our NHS was already on its knees when the pandemic struck, and it was hit harder than any other comparable healthcare system.

We cannot let history repeat itself. That's why this historic partnership with Oxford Nanopore will ensure our world-leading scientists have the latest information on emerging threats at their fingertips.

As we embrace the technological revolution, our 10 Year Health Plan will shift the NHS away from analogue to digital, saving countless more lives.”

Science and Technology Secretary Peter Kyle said:

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw the power of the UK life sciences sector very clearly, from the Oxford-Astra Zeneca vaccine that saved so many lives, through to operating one of the world's most effective COVID-19 surveillance systems,

which spotted several emerging variants of the disease.

This partnership will build on that expertise to monitor emerging diseases as they arise, putting our scientists and decision-makers one step ahead and providing the information they need to make informed decisions.

Together with the ability to better diagnose cancers and rare diseases, we are leveraging UK life sciences to protect the public and ultimately save lives.”

Professor Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Advisor at the UK Health Security Agency, said:

“Early detection is absolutely crucial in enabling us to respond effectively to any emerging pathogen. The UK already has a wealth of expertise in genomic surveillance, and this programme will build on that expertise and enable us to bring our resources and capability to tackle developing threats at greater speed. Enhancing the capacity for the NHS to determine new and emerging pathogens causing severe acute respiratory infections will improve the detection and emergence of infections.

As part of the 100 days mission, this will enable the development of effective diagnostics for novel pathogens and enhance our pandemic preparedness.”

Oxford Nanopore CEO Gordon Sanghera said:

“The UK has a remarkable life science ecosystem, and we are delighted to be working more closely with the UK government and the NHS in this collaboration.

The world-renowned Genomics England and UK Biobank have led the way in scaling genomics discovery and translating these advances into patient impact.

By working alongside our partners on shared goals of improved patient outcomes - whether in cancer, genetic disease or infectious disease - and pandemic preparedness, we believe we can deploy our unique DNA sequencing technology in ways that are most impactful for the people of the UK.”

Professor Dame Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer for England and Senior Responsible Officer for Genomics in the NHS, said:

“This strategic partnership will build upon our expertise in infectious disease genomics, representing a significant leap

forward in our ability to protect public health and save lives.

By integrating cutting-edge technology into 30 NHS sites across the country, we are not only enhancing our capacity to rapidly diagnose and treat severe respiratory infections, but also creating a crucial early warning system for new and emerging infectious diseases.

As part of our 10 Year Health Plan we will go even further in taking a digital-first approach, so we can detect potential threats earlier and respond more swiftly, and ultimately provide better care for patients across England.”

Professor Ian Abbs, chief executive of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation



Trust, said:

“We’ve been working on the respiratory metagenomics programme for over 4 years and have clearly seen the benefit to our patients. It’s a momentous day now that we can ensure other hospitals, and more patients, can also benefit from faster and more accurate treatment for severe respiratory conditions thanks to new genomic technology.”

As part of the expansion to the metagenomics programme, the data gathered using Oxford Nanopore’s technology will be provided to the UK Health and Security Agency, allowing quicker detection and action on emerging infectious diseases to be taken.

The collaboration between the government and Oxford Nanopore - which will also join up Genomics England and UK Biobank with NHS England - is another key vote of confidence in the UK’s life sciences sector, which will help kickstart economic growth and support the 10 Year Health Plan’s ambition to shift the health service from analogue to digital and from sickness to prevention, helping keep patients out of hospital.

Genomics England will work strategically with Oxford Nanopore to further insights from the data they hold, including on cancer and rare diseases, to enable future breakthroughs in identifying genomic mutations that may be treatable and preventing these devastating conditions. UK Biobank will also continue to work with Oxford Nanopore and the government to improve the insights from their data and translate these into impact for NHS patients.

Along with the vast benefits to patients, this work will drive economic growth, supporting the expansion of one of our most promising life sciences companies.

This partnership comes hot on the heels of the Budget, where the government announced investment of £40 million over 5 years in a Proof of Concept Fund for spinouts, companies formed based on academic research generated within and owned by a university.

This will build on the excellent example set by Oxford Nanopore, one of the UK's most successful spinout companies, having been founded at Oxford University in 2005. This fund could help to unleash a raft of innovative new spinouts like Oxford Nanopore, helping to drive job creation and economic growth.

# Emergency fund launched for rough sleepers this winter

November

From: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP

The funding boost will save lives by ensuring rough sleepers have access to a safe and warm bed.

An emergency £10 million fund has been launched by the Deputy Prime Minister to protect rough sleepers from cold weather this winter.

The money will go direct to councils in the highest need and support thousands of the most vulnerable people in society. Last year, a



devastating 155 people died sleeping rough on our streets.

Last week in the Budget, it was announced an additional £233 million will go to tackling all forms of homelessness, taking total spending on reducing homelessness to nearly £1 billion in 2025-26. This money will directly fund critical services to prevent homelessness and support people into secure, stable housing - helping those at risk of homelessness to pay deposits and negotiate with landlords, reducing the overall need for temporary accommodation.

Today the Deputy Prime Minister is chairing the first cross-government group on tackling homelessness. During the meeting the Deputy Prime Minister will pledge to end “sticking plaster” measures, and instead tackle the root cause of the problem.

This action follows a sharp rise in rough sleeping, which is nearing record levels. Unprecedented numbers of children are in temporary accommodation and almost 360,000 households approached their council for help with homelessness in the last year.

The taskforce is one of the first steps

in the government's plan to develop a long-term strategy to tackle all forms of homelessness, bringing together the healthcare, justice and education systems.

Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, said:

“Anyone forced to sleep rough on our streets represents a complete failure of the broken system we’ve inherited. It’s a national disgrace, and we can’t keep sticking plasters on it.

“We are approaching the harshest months of the year which is why we are taking immediate action to reach anyone sleeping rough and help them off the



streets this winter.

“Bringing together Ministers across government is a crucial step to tackle this crisis at its root and ensure everyone has access to the basic right of safe and secure housing.”

These measures come alongside the government reinvesting in the NHS, increasing wages for the lowest earners and building an economy that will grow to create opportunity for all.

This funding is just one branch of the government’s wider drive to fix the housing crisis. Section 21 ‘no fault’ evictions will be abolished through the Renters’ Rights Bill, immediately putting an end to one of the leading causes of homelessness.

Alongside this, the government will deliver the biggest boost in social and affordable housing in a generation, with £500 million in new funding for the Affordable Homes Programme delivering up to 5,000 new social homes. Councils will also be able to keep 100% of receipts from all Right to Buy sales, enabling them to re-invest in more social housing available for families.

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# Prime Minister unveils game changing investment to tackle national security threat from people smuggling gangs

November

From: Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP

The Prime Minister is set to announce an additional £75 million to boost border security, bringing the investment in the Border Security Command over the next two years to £150 million.

- PM to outline major investments to smash criminal smuggling gangs at INTERPOL General Assembly in Glasgow
- New capabilities for Border Security Command from £150 million funding pot to drive down Organised Immigration Crime both at home and overseas
- New additional funding will cover state-of-the-art tech and information centres, boosts to enforcement and intelligence resourcing and expanding CPS capacity

The Prime Minister is set to announce an additional £75 million to boost border

security, bringing the investment in the Border Security Command over the next two years to £150 million.

Marking the first time the INTERPOL General Assembly has been hosted in the UK in over 50 years, Keir Starmer will today (4 November) open the Assembly in Glasgow by setting out his personal mission to smash the people smuggling gangs by resetting the UK's whole approach to this challenge and intensifying international collaboration to meet the global scale of the threat.

The General Assembly is INTERPOL's supreme governing body and comprises senior ministerial and policing leads from the organisation's 196 member states.

In his speech, the Prime Minister will set out his plans to draw on his experience of bringing together agencies to tackle international terrorist and drug smuggling gangs during his time as Director of Public Prosecutions to dismantle the people

smuggling gangs who drive illegal migration, profit from human misery and represent a serious threat to global security.

He will also set out how the £150 million will provide additional specialist investigators and state of the art surveillance equipment to ensure those behind this criminal activity are stopped and brought to justice.

This major funding boost for the government's new Border Security Command will initially be directed towards a range of enforcement and intelligence activity, including:

- Investing heavily in NCA technology and capabilities, delivering advanced data exploitation and improvements to technologies to boost collaboration with European partners to investigate and break people smuggling networks.
- 300 staff for the new Border Security

Command, who will strengthen global partnerships, deliver new legislation and lead the system through investment and strategy.

- 100 specialist investigators and intelligence officers for the NCA, dedicated to tackling criminals who facilitate people smuggling.
- Creating a new specialist OIC Intelligence Source Unit which will cohere intelligence flows from key police forces.
- Boosting the Crown Prosecution Service's ability to deliver charging decisions more



quickly on international organised crime cases.

The Border Security Command, led by Martin Hewitt CBE QPM, will be provided with enhanced powers – through a new Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill - to tackle organised immigration crime whilst providing for strong and effective border security.

New measures will make it easier to detect, disrupt and deter those seeking to engage in and benefit from organised immigration crime. The Command will also coordinate the work of intelligence agencies and law enforcement, who lead joint investigations with European counterparts to ensure we can bring those responsible to justice.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer is expected to say:

“The world needs to wake up to the severity of this challenge. I was elected to deliver security for the British people. And strong borders are a part of that. But security doesn't stop at our borders.

“There's nothing progressive about turning a blind eye as men, women and children die in the Channel.

“This is a vile trade that must be stamped out – wherever it thrives. So we're taking our

approach to counter-terrorism - which we know works, and applying it to the gangs, with our new Border Security Command.

“We're ending the fragmentation between policing, Border Force and our intelligence agencies.”

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said:

“Criminal smuggler gangs profit from undermining our border security and putting lives at risk and they have been getting away with it for far too long.

“Our new Border Security Command, with the investment set out today, will mean a huge step change in the way we target these criminal gangs. People smugglers and traffickers operate in networks across borders, that's why we have launched a major boost to our cooperation with international partners including other European countries, the G7 and Europol, and why we are so pleased to be hosting the INTERPOL conference on tackling international crime in Glasgow today.”

The Prime Minister will also announce that the UK Government has increased its in-year support for INTERPOL's global operations through a £6 million investment which harnesses the

organisation's unique capabilities to tackle serious organised crime affecting the UK.

Addressing the General Assembly, the Prime Minister will say that closer cooperation with international partners is key as he details how the gangs' operations span from the money markets in Kabul through to the Kurdish region of Iraq and right across Europe and into the UK.

He will stress the government's ongoing commitment to strengthening security agreements to facilitate greater sharing of intelligence and more joint operational work, in particular through Europol.

The Home Office will also invest £24m in the new financial year to tackle international serious organised crime affecting the UK including drugs and firearms, fraud, trafficking and exploitation. Funds will in part be used to bolster work done by special prosecutors and operational partners in the Western Balkans.

There were more than 5,000 drug related deaths in 2023, with most of the illegal drugs causing these coming from overseas or facilitated by transnational gangs. ISOC funding will also be used to tackle drug smuggling upstream and at the UK border, building on recent successes, such as the effective collaboration with the US and Ecuador, which has resulted in the seizure

of 19 tonnes of cocaine.

National Crime Agency Director General Graeme Biggar said:

“Serious and organised crime causes more harm, to more people, more often than any other national security threat. And almost all of serious and organised crime now has an international nexus. Distance, borders and languages are meaningless to criminals. This is why collaborations with INTERPOL have never been as important as they are today.

“Tackling organised crime, and especially immigration crime, remains a top priority for the NCA. We are currently leading around 70 investigations into the gangs or individuals involved in the highest echelons of this type of criminality, and we are devoting more resources to it than ever before.

“We have built up our intelligence sharing effort with law enforcement partners across Europe and beyond, including having more NCA officers based overseas, sharing intelligence and working side by side on joint investigations. This approach is bringing operational results with arrests and prosecutions, but we are also we are seeking to disrupt the people smugglers' business model, through targeting their social media offering, their supply routes for

equipment, and their financial flows.

“We are determined to do all we can to disrupt and dismantle these networks, wherever they operate.”

The announcement comes just a month after Britain joined up to a new G7 anti migrant smuggling action plan which included pledges to bolster border security, combat transnational organised crime, and protect vulnerable individuals from exploitation by smugglers.

The plan includes new, intelligence-led joint investigative actions to target criminal smuggling routes, working with social media platforms and internet providers to remove harmful content promoting illegal migration services or advertising fake job opportunities, and strengthening capabilities to monitor and anticipate irregular migration flows at both global and regional levels.



# COP 16 concludes: UK back on the global stage urging action on nature recovery and supporting 30by30 goals

November

From: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Natural England, Mary Creagh CBE MP and The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP

The UN Biodiversity Summit (CBD COP 16) being held in Cali, Colombia concluded over the weekend.

Progress was made on several fronts at COP 16, including on the protection of 30% of land and ocean by 2030 with the government publishing new criteria to meet our domestic 30by30 targets in England .

Attendees at the summit in Cali, which included Environment Secretary Steve Reed, Nature Minister Mary Creagh and Natural England Chair Tony Juniper, agreed a deal on Digital Sequence Information (DSI), whereby genetic information that has been sequenced from the natural world can be made available online.

These DNA codes can then be used by scientists for important research in medicine, agriculture, conservation and public health. Businesses now have the option of voluntarily contributing to a new fund – known as the Cali Fund – if they use this genetic information from nature.



A New Finance Trends dashboards was also launched to increase transparency in nature finance, as well as a new framework to support a high-integrity biodiversity credits market.

COP16 significantly agreed the establishment of a new permanent body for Indigenous Peoples and local communities to empower them and increase their input into formal decision-making. As well as supporting further conservation, the Cali Fund will also see a significant proportion of the finance flowing back to these local groups.

The role of fungi was also elevated as the UK and Chile collaborated on a pledge to give fungi the same protection as plants and animals, noting their vital role in addressing the environmental crisis.

The UK was, however, disappointed that COP16 concluded before reaching an agreement on international strategies for mobilising nature finance and a framework for monitoring progress against international targets.

Nature Minister Mary Creagh said:

“The UK was back on the global stage in Cali, driving progress on nature recovery both at home and across the world.

“It’s never been more important to tackle the nature and climate crises, and so the progress made is important.

“But it’s clear there is more work to do internationally, and we will continue to work with countries and environmental

groups to drive further progress.

The UK will continue to press for concerted action to resolve these outstanding issues and for the full implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Chair of Natural England, Tony Juniper said:

“It has been a privilege to partake in COP16 and hear from voices around the world, particularly those from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, about how we can strive to protect our precious natural world.

“Colombia is home to incredible species of birds, orchids & butterflies – hosting the conference in this biodiversity hotspot added a huge sense of energy to discussions we had here about the global nature recovery effort.

“As delegates return home, we have much work ahead to ensure that the energy of COP16 translates into action within countries. Time to act is now rapidly running out fast and far greater determination is going to be needed to ensure the Global Biodiversity Framework is upheld.” additional £75 million to boost border

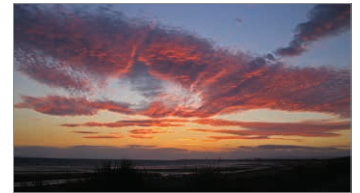


## Nature and Technology

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.



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Visit Keith Welters' shop on SHUTTERSTOCK to view and purchase images (a few examples shown above). Visit [www.shutterstock.com/g/Keith+Welters](http://www.shutterstock.com/g/Keith+Welters) or click on the QR code above.

# Seven million more potholes to be filled next year as public urged to report roads in need of repair

December

From: Department for Transport, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, Heidi Alexander MP and The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP

Councils will receive £1.6 billion in funding to repair roads and fill potholes to start to reverse a decade of decline on our roads.

- Transport Secretary announces nearly £1.6 billion to fix potholes across England for next year and clamps down on disruptive street works



- funding goes well beyond manifesto pledge, helping councils fix the equivalent of 7 million extra potholes next year and saving drivers hundreds of pounds in repairs

- England's roads have been plagued by potholes for too long and the government is investing to boost infrastructure as part of its Plan for Change

With the drive home for Christmas about to begin, millions of people will benefit from safer roads thanks to a record £1.6 billion investment to fill potholes and repair roads, announced by the government today (20 December 2024).

In a Christmas boost for drivers, the landmark investment – an increase of nearly 50% on local road maintenance funding from last year – goes well beyond the government's manifesto pledge and is enough to fix the equivalent of over 7 million extra potholes in 2025 to 2026.

Across England, local highways authorities will receive a £500 million uplift in funding as the government looks to rebuild Britain, as part of its Plan for Change. Fixing our roads and filling potholes not only makes roads safer, but they also improve journey times and save drivers money from avoidable repairs.

It comes as figures from the RAC show drivers encounter an average of 6 potholes per mile in England and Wales and the cost of pothole damage to vehicles is around £500 on average, with more severe repairs costing considerably more. According to the AA, fixing potholes is a priority for 96% of drivers.

The public is also being encouraged to report potholes in their area to their local council.

The government is today announcing how much each local authority is

being allocated. Each local authority can use its share of the £1.6 billion for 2025 to 2026 to identify which of their roads are in most need of repair and to deliver immediate fixes for communities and raise living standards across every area of the country. The allocations include:

- over £327 million for local authorities in north west, north east and Yorkshire and Humber
- over £372 million for local authorities in East Midlands and West Midlands
- over £244 million for local authorities in the East of England
- over £322 million for local authorities in the south east and London
- over £300 million for local authorities in the south west

To further protect motorists given continued cost-of-living pressures and potential fuel price volatility amid global uncertainty, the government has frozen fuel duty at current levels for another year to support hardworking families and businesses, saving the average car driver £59.

This government is delivering its Plan for Change with investment and reform to deliver growth, improve living standards by

putting more money in people's pockets and rebuild Britain.

Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, said:

“Broken roads can risk lives and cost families hundreds if not thousands of pounds on repairs. That’s a cost that can easily be avoided by investing properly in our roads.

Through our Plan for Change we’re determined to put more money back into the pockets of hardworking people and improve living standards. That’s why we’re giving councils funding to repair our roads and get Britain moving again – with a clear expectation that they get on with the job.”

Transport Secretary, Heidi Alexander, said:

“Potholes have plagued motorists for far too long, but today’s record investment will start to reverse a decade of decline on our country’s roads.

Millions will drive home for Christmas today, but too many will have to endure an obstacle course to reach their loved

ones. Potholes damage cars and make pedestrians and cyclists less safe. We are investing £1.6 billion to fix up to 7 million more potholes next year.

This government is firmly on the side of drivers. Every area of England will get extra cash to tackle this problem once and for all. We have gone beyond our manifesto commitment to back motorists and help raise living standards in every part of the country.”

The government is also making sure authorities spend the money wisely, collect the right data and deliver proactive maintenance before potholes start to form. The funding has built-in incentives, with 25% of this uplift held back until authorities have shown that they are delivering.

Today, the government is also announcing that at least 50% of surplus lane rental funds will be reinvested into highway maintenance, so that even more roads can be improved. Lane rental schemes allow local highway authorities to charge companies for the





time that street and road works occupy the road.

Additionally, the department is also consulting on devolving powers to approve lane rental schemes, which are currently with the Secretary of State, to local mayors. This will support the delivery of more lane rental schemes and put power back into local hands.

On top of this funding, the Transport Secretary is announcing a clampdown on disruptive street works, doubling fixed penalty notices for utility companies who fail to comply with rules and extending charges for street works that run into the weekend.

RAC head of policy, Simon Williams, said:

“This is the biggest one-off road maintenance funding settlement councils in England have ever been given, so we have high hopes it’s the turning point that ends the degradation of our roads and finally delivers fit-for-purpose, smooth surfaces for drivers and all other road users.

What’s particularly positive is that this announcement is not just about giving councils money to fix dangerous potholes, it comes with the important caveat of using the money wisely by carrying out preventative maintenance to stop more potholes appearing in the future. It’s also

good to see the government proactively encouraging drivers to report potholes, requiring councils to collect the right data to capture the true state of their road networks and incentivising authorities that use the money to good effect.”

Edmund King, AA president, said:

“Drivers and riders across England will be pleased to see this significant cash injection into smoothing out the local road network. With most journeys starting and ending on local roads, it is vital to restore the structural integrity of the streets we live on.

We urge councils to focus on permanent and innovative repairs rather than adopting a ‘patch and run’ approach. Better maintenance of the road network is the number one concern of drivers as damage costs a fortune and potholes can be fatal for those on two wheels.

Clamping down on poor works carried out by utility companies and overrunning roadworks is sorely needed, and we are pleased to see action being taken here. Widening lane rental approval to local mayors should reduce red tape and we hope it means more roads can be opened in first class condition.”

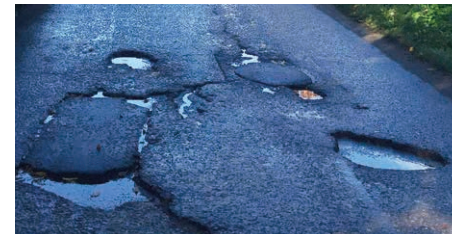
Andy Turbfield, Head of Quality, Halfords, said:

“Roads need to be well-maintained to keep traffic flowing and to help motorists to stay safe, and potholes can be both dangerous and costly.

More than a quarter of drivers experienced potholes damaging their vehicle over the last year, causing an average of £718 worth of damage to their suspension, wheels and tyres.

It is encouraging to see government make a start on fixing the 11 million potholes causing so much disruption up and down our country.”

Today’s road funding announcement builds on the wider support we’re giving to councils to deliver core services and serve their communities. £69 billion of funding will be injected into council budgets across England to help them drive forward the government’s Plan for Change through investment and reform and to fix the foundations of local government.



# Homegrown seed to kickstart new generation of Douglas fir trees

December

From: Forest Research and Forestry Commission

Groundbreaking breeding programme to develop new generation of British grown Douglas fir trees after decades of research.

Douglas fir is native to North America and has been used in British forestry for over 100 years. Demand is rising rapidly and currently; we import much of our seed from the USA or France and there is a need to develop a strain that is specialised for British conditions.

For decades there have been incomplete attempts to develop British Douglas fir seed sources suited to our conditions, but now a government funded project led by the Conifer Breeding Cooperative has overcome this and will grow the next generation of Douglas fir from British tree seeds.

The project involved the selection of 200 visually superior trees from the best Douglas fir plantations in Britain, as well as 40 genetically superior trees from long-term experiments managed by

Forest Research.

This selection of outstanding Douglas firs will now be used by the Conifer Breeding Cooperative and Forest



Research as breeding stock to produce British Douglas Fir seed. The chosen trees will be copied by grafting cuttings onto rootstocks, after the grafted plants will go into seed orchards. In several years, once seeds are available, they will be supplied to forest nurseries to grow the first genetically improved British Douglas fir trees.

Richard Whittet, Head of Tree Breeding at Forest Research and Chair of the Conifer Breeding Cooperative, said:

“We have selected a new generation of Douglas fir trees for breeding, based on their adaptation to the British climate and timber properties which is an important step forward for the resilience of our nation’s trees.

“This achievement is the result of decades of work by Forest Research and our domestic and international partners. Collaboration has enabled us to get things done on the ground and harness new technologies, such as the low-cost DNA marker array for quality assurance.”

Sir William Worsley, Chair of the Forestry Commission, said:

“We are facing a changing climate and biodiversity decline, with trees playing a

significant role in mitigating some of the worst impacts.

“We rely too heavily on timber imports in the UK and if we are to strengthen our own domestic supply then this type of science will play a huge role in the future. Therefore, there has never been a more crucial time to invest in domestic tree-planting”.

A DNA fingerprint – which shows the genetic make-up of each tree – has also been taken of each tree by Oxford University. This is the first time this technique has been used at such an early stage of a tree breeding programme in Great Britain. The DNA fingerprint is used



as a quality-control tool to track and evaluate the tree’s parentage and enable traceability. This important data will help advance the project.

Douglas fir is a desirable timber-producing tree for Britain and this step forward to develop a resilient British population will ensure better yield for our domestic timber industry. Fast growing conifers such as this sequester carbon more quickly than slower growing species. Using timber in construction, in place of other non-renewable materials, is one of the best ways to reduce emissions from buildings. It also ensures that carbon is locked up long-term.

Today’s development will help bolster the domestic timber industry as part of the Government’s critical mission to make the UK clean energy superpower and ensure we are resilient to a changing climate. This is the latest government innovation in the fight to protect our nation’s trees and woodlands.

The project partners involved are Conifer Breeding Coop, University of Oxford, and Forestart and it has been funded by the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

# First train services to return to public ownership revealed

December

From: Department for Transport, DfT Operator Limited, DfT OLR Holdings Limited and Heidi Alexander MP

Services across England will return to public control, transforming our railways into a more reliable, affordable and accessible system.

- South Western Railway's train services to be the first to come under public control after landmark rail Bill receives Royal Assent
- c2c will follow suit with its services expected to transition by July 2025, before Greater Anglia's in autumn 2025
- move delivers on manifesto commitment to bring railways under public ownership and puts passengers back at the heart of services after 30 years of privatisation

Plans to overhaul the rail network and put passengers first have been announced today (4 December 2024) as the Transport

Secretary reveals South Western Railway's services will be the first to transfer into public ownership next year.

The move comes just days after one of the government's first major pieces of legislation, the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act 2024, received Royal Assent, paving the way for a major shake-up of Britain's railways.

The transition to a publicly owned railway will improve reliability and support the government's number one priority of boosting economic growth by encouraging more people to use the railway.

It will also clamp down on unacceptable levels of delays, cancellations and waste



seen under decades of failing franchise contracts and will save up to £150 million a year in fees alone by ensuring every penny is spent on services rather than private shareholders, all while coming at no additional cost to the taxpayer.

Today's announcement will see services across a wide area of southern England and East Anglia come back into public control by autumn 2025 and delivers on manifesto commitment to bring contracts with existing operators into public ownership as they expire without costing taxpayers a penny in compensation.

This government is fixing the foundations and delivering change with reform and investment to deliver growth and rebuild Britain. By bringing train operating companies into public ownership the government will turn the page on decades of delays, fragmentation and failure.

Transport Secretary, Heidi Alexander, said:

“For too long, the British public has had to put up with rail services that simply don’t work. A complex system of private train operators has too often failed its users.

Starting with journeys on South Western Railway, we’re switching tracks by bringing services back under public control to create a reliable rail network that puts customers first.

Our broken railways are finally on the fast track to repairing and rebuilding a system that the British public can trust and be proud of again.”

The Transport Secretary has also today announced that publicly run services will be managed by DfT Operator Limited – previously known as DfT Operator of Last Resort Holdings Limited (DOHL) – whose functions will eventually be integrated into Great British Railways (GBR). DfT Operator Limited will continue to focus on transforming Britain’s railways into a more reliable, affordable and accessible system.

While today’s announcement marks a major change, the government’s first priority is ensuring the transition process is thorough and delivers the best outcomes for passengers. Allowing several months lead-in to each transfer will ensure there will

be no adverse impact on passengers during this time, who will still be able to purchase their tickets as before, with railway staff assisting as usual.

The department expects the transfer of all passenger services operated under contracts with the Department for Transport (DfT) to complete over the next 3 years.

Railway Industry Association (RIA) Chief Executive, Darren Caplan, said:

“Today’s announcement is an important milestone on the journey to a restructured railway. The UK supply chain will work with and support the government’s plans to deliver improved rail performance and reliability, as we together develop world-class rail, both track and train.

There is now a real opportunity to provide more certainty and visibility over work plans, which will help a reformed railway be a catalyst for boosting growth and connectivity across the nations and regions of the UK, with better services for rail customers – passengers and freight – and ultimately ensure enhanced value for money for the taxpayer.”

CEO of Campaign for Better Transport, Paul Tuohy, said:

“This is the first real step towards the

government’s plan to bring the railways under public control. There is an urgent need for action to give more people access to an affordable, reliable rail network. The government must work collaboratively across the sector and continue prioritising passengers by keeping them front and centre of its plans.”

Under the government’s broader plans to reform the railways, GBR will bring track and train together under one directing mind, with a relentless focus on improving services for passengers and customers. Until legislation for this is in place, Shadow GBR will make progress on ensuring the sector works together better under a publicly owned railway.



In the new year, the government will be setting out plans for how Shadow GBR will be delivering on its initial priorities, including how it will be moving the network towards greater financial sustainability and delivering for passengers.

Meanwhile, the government has already made major strides towards improving performance and services for passengers. Since July 2024, the department has brought an end to long-running national and local industrial disputes and LNER cancellations due to train driver shortages have dropped to near zero.

The department is also working on plans with operators and Network Rail to display performance information at stations – this will provide passengers with transparency and will allow the public to hold the rail industry and the department to account for delivery.

Immediate improvements have also been delivered at Euston Station through a 5-point plan to reduce overcrowding and deliver a better experience for passengers. This has included a review into passenger information, including the shutdown of overhead advertising boards and a trial of early boarding of services – with more updates to come later this month.

# Diamonds are forever? World-first carbon-14 diamond battery made

December

From: UK Atomic Energy Authority

The world's first carbon-14 diamond has been produced with the potential to provide power for thousands of years.

Scientists and engineers from the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) and the University of Bristol have successfully created the world's first carbon-14 diamond battery.

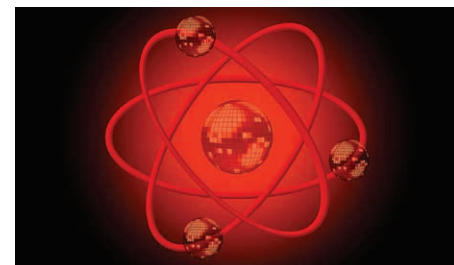
This new type of battery has the potential to power devices for thousands of years, making it an incredibly long-lasting energy source.

The battery leverages the radioactive isotope, carbon-14, known for its use in radiocarbon dating, to produce a diamond battery.

Several game-changing applications are possible. Bio-compatible diamond batteries can be used in medical devices like ocular implants, hearing aids, and pacemakers, minimising the need for replacements and distress to patients.

Diamond batteries could also be used in extreme environments – both in space and on earth – where it is not practical to replace conventional batteries. The batteries could power active radio frequency (RF) tags where there is a need to identify and track devices either on earth or in space, such as spacecraft or payloads, for decades at a time, thus reducing costs and extending operational lifespan.

“Diamond batteries offer a safe, sustainable way to provide continuous microwatt levels of power. They are an emerging technology that use a



manufactured diamond to safely encase small amounts of carbon-14,” said Sarah Clark, Director of Tritium Fuel Cycle at UKAEA.

The carbon-14 diamond battery works by using the radioactive decay of carbon-14, which has a half-life of 5,700 years, to generate low levels of power. It functions similarly to solar panels, which convert light into electricity, but instead of using light particles (photons), they capture fast-moving electrons from within the diamond structure.

Professor Tom Scott, Professor in Materials at the University of Bristol, said: “Our micropower technology can support a whole range of important applications from space technologies and security devices through to medical implants. We’re excited to be able to explore all of these possibilities, working with partners in industry and research, over the next few years.”

A team of scientists and engineers from both organisations worked together to build a plasma deposition rig, a specialised apparatus used for growing the diamond at UKAEA’s Culham Campus.

This development is the result, in part, of UKAEA’s work on fusion energy.

The expertise gained in fusion research is helping to accelerate innovation in related technologies.

# More bobbies on the beat as PM puts people’s priorities first

December

From: Prime Minister’s Office, 10 Downing Street, The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP and The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP

Every neighbourhood will have a named, contactable police officer in their community, dealing with local issues, as PM puts more police on the street at the heart of his mission to tackle crime.

- Named, contactable police on the streets as Prime Minister unveils plan to fundamentally reform how the government delivers.

- Local teams will be more responsive to neighbourhood issues as PM unveils landmark Plan for Change.

- Plan will put the priorities of working people at the heart of government decision making, and will set out milestones on growing the economy, health, safer streets, children’s readiness for school and secure energy.

Every neighbourhood will have a named, contactable police officer in their community, dealing with local issues, as PM puts more police on the street at the heart of his mission to tackle crime.

In a major speech today unveiling his Plan for Change, the Prime Minister will tell communities that they can expect to have a visible and responsive policing presence that will reconnect with the communities they serve.

Confidence in policing has declined



in recent years and community policing has been diminished, with neighbourhood officers pulled off the beat to plug shortages elsewhere, weakening connections with communities. Since 2010, the proportion of people who see a police foot patrol more than once per week has more than halved, and the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) has halved.

The Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee sets out what communities should expect from their neighbourhood policing team. Every neighbourhood will have a named, contactable officer, and residents and businesses will be given a voice to shape their local police priorities. In addition, every force will have a dedicated anti-social behaviour lead who will work with their communities to develop action plans that tackle the concerns seen on their streets every day.

To support this, the milestone over this Parliament is to have 13,000 additional neighbourhood policing officers, PCSOs and special constables in dedicated neighbourhood policing roles. These officers must demonstrably spend time on visible patrol and not be taken off the beat to plug shortages elsewhere.

The government is boosting the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee with £100 million, which will place a renewed

focus on preventing the criminality plaguing the streets - particularly in town centres - with visible, accessible officers that will deter offending and reassure locals they will be kept safe.

As part of the drive to raise standards and improve accountability, the Safer Streets Mission includes a programme of police reform. This is important to deliver on the ambition to halve violence against women and girls and knife crime, as well as drive up confidence in the police, which has diminished in recent years.

The Prime Minister will say:

“The Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee will deliver 13,000 extra neighbourhood police, visible on your streets, cracking down on anti-social behaviour. A named, contactable officer in every community. A relief to millions of people scared to walk

their streets they call home.

But it’s a pledge that is only possible because we are matching investment with reform; standardising procurement, streamlining specialist services like forensics, and ending the madness of 43 forces purchasing their own cars and uniforms.”

The Home Secretary said:

“Our Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is about more than just increasing numbers. It’s about rebuilding the vital connection between the public and the police.

This marks a return to the founding principles of British policing - where officers are part of the communities they serve.

Through this visible, responsive police presence in every neighbourhood, we will restore the trust and partnership that lies at the heart of keeping our communities safe.”

The Prime Minister will outline his plan for doing government differently today; driving forward his Mission-led government with a relentless focus on what matters most to working people, galvanising the government machine





to focus its resources to deliver on the milestones he will set out.

The milestones he will set out today are the next phase of Mission delivery. They will be purposefully ambitious and will give Britain the stabilising certainty of a clear destination for the next five years. They will focus on raising living standards, rebuilding Britain, ending hospital backlogs, putting the police back on the beat, giving children the best start in life, and securing home-grown energy.

They will be underpinned by the foundations of good government; economic stability, border security, national security.

The Plan for Change will be accompanied by an ambitious public sector reform programme that will drive forward a more innovative, dynamic and decisive state.

It will allow the public to hold the government to account on delivering on their priorities and will reinstate public trust in politics being a force for good that can improve their lives.

The Prime Minister will say:

“My government was elected to deliver change, and today marks the next step. People are tired of being promised the world, but short-term sticking plaster politics

letting them down.

Hard-working Brits are going out grafting every day but are getting short shrift from a politics that should serve them. They reasonably want a stable economy, their country to be safe, their borders secure, more cash in their pocket, safer streets in their town, opportunities for their children, secure British energy in their home, and an NHS that is there when they need it. My Mission-led government will deliver.”

The government has already made significant progress since July; fixing the foundations of the country and kicking off the first steps to deliver real change.

It has made significant progress against the first steps already:

- Prioritising economic stability through the Autumn Budget and prioritising the Budget Responsibility Act as the first bill passed by this government.
- Providing the largest NHS funding settlement since 2010, outside of Covid, to deliver an additional 40,000 extra elective appointments a week – and we are reforming the way the NHS works to do so.
- Setting up Great British Energy in Aberdeen, with £125 million to start investing in clean-energy projects. We have

overturned the ban on onshore wind, approved more nationally significant solar than was delivered under the past 14 years, and seen a record breaking round of renewable projects delivered.

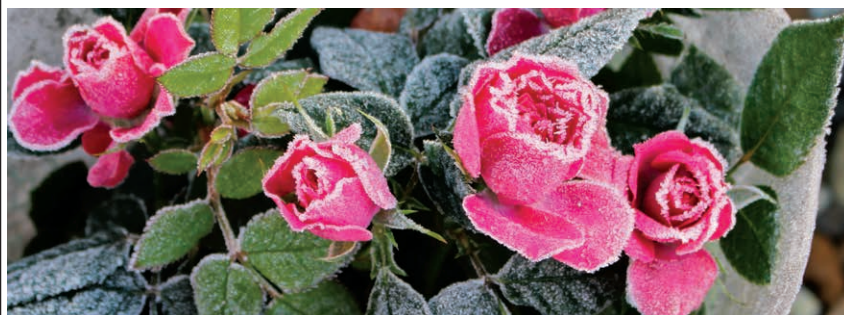
- Establishing a new Border Security Command to smash the gangs, with £150 million in their first year. We have already returned 9,400 people with no right to be here.
- Supporting the recruitment of 6,500 new teachers in England, through increasing the core schools budget of £2.3 billion.
- Cracking down on anti-social behaviour, announcing new Respect Orders and providing funding to support the recruitment of an additional 13,000 officers, PCSOs and special constables in neighbourhood roles.



## Forthcoming articles under consideration

- Rising cost of public transport. What can be done to make it more affordable?
- What is quantum technology and what can it be used for?
- Is it possible to cut NHS waiting lists? How can it be achieved?
- How is the UK contributing to our understanding of space and our own galaxy?
- Climate change. What part can we play, individually and as businesses, in the UK and globally, to slow climate change?

Watch out for the Oct-Dec 2024 edition of *Welters World* which will follow shortly...



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

# COVER OPTIONS

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