

Government *WORLD*TM

Spring 2014 Edition



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Cover picture:
Early morning rush hour over London

National News Headlines March 2014

1st March

- Record rise in house prices
- Three week wait to see doctor
- Anti-terror laws to block foreign crime bosses

2nd March

- Health chief slams statins
- Islamist threat in uk playgrounds 9-year-old schoolboy 'is jihadi extremist'
- Ukraine vows to fight after Russia says yes to invasion

3rd March

- Pensions blow for millions
- Europe's peace at risk in 'new Cold War'
- Children of Islamist radicals should be in care, suggests Boris

4th March

- Take statins to save your life
- Britain shies away from sanctions against Putin
- Childcare 'costs more than mortgage'

5th March

- Now EU tells Britain: Give us extra £ 2.4bn
- 'Huge concessions' needed for 2016 Independence Day
- Government health Tzar calls for tax on sugar

6th March

- Fatty food is good for you
- Unite slashes cash for Labour by 50%
- Shell boss: Scots should stay in UK



National News Headlines March 2014

7th March

- UK hotter than Greece
- Forty years of rising prices
- New three-point plan to tackle 'barbaric' FGM

8th March

- Open door for new immigrants
- Forty years of rising prices
- NHS hospitals are on brink

9th March

- Extra £140m to repair damaged roads
- Terror attack clue as 239 die in jet plunge
- Co-op Group to boost executive pay

10th March

- Breakthrough blood test that can predict start of Alzheimer's
- School head forced out by fanatics
- Economy 'to hit 2008 peak by summer'

11th March

- Soft courts fail to jail 3 in 4 serious offenders
- Co-op boss offers his resignation
- Russia 'invited' to discuss Ukraine

12th March

- Fury as prescription charges rise to £ 8.05
- Miliband 'rules out' an EU referendum
- Every home pays £25 to wind farms



National News Headlines March 2014

13th March

- £ 148billion... the true cost of immigration
- Universities call for 'legal certainty' on tuition fees from SNP
- NHS told to spend billions on reform or face oblivion

14th March

- NHS strike threat as wage deal is refused
- Hunt for missing airliner descends into farce
- PM's adviser tells him: it's time for GM crops

15th March

- 'Hijackers flew jet towards remote island
- The £13bn failure of justice system
- Left-wing radical Tony Benn dies at 88

16th March

- Prison overcrowding crisis surges 'close to the brink'
- Cameron has abandoned the North, says Labour
- Doomed airliner pilot was political fanatic

17th March

- PM: Britain will end up in United States of Europe if we don't act now
- Build HS2 more quickly, says boss
- Anger over plan to axe legal checks for overseas teachers

18th March

- Migrant child rapist sues UK for breach of his 'human rights'
- Four in 10 voters 'could be reachable by Yes camp'
- Climate change: the official prophecy of doom



National News Headlines March 2014

19th March

- Eat less and live longer
- Crimea 'could spark a new Cold War'
- £1 Coin is to be scrapped

20th March

- Pensions and savings joy for all
- Lung cancer rates up among UK women
- Osborne goes for the grey vote as Budget row erupts over oil

21st March

- Missing jet: the final moments
- Petrol prices at three-year low
- Miliband in vow to make positive case for keeping the Union

22nd March

- 10 Great War heroes are identified at last by DNA
- The death knell for tv licence
- We're Putin freeze on Russia but Vlad mocks sanctions threat

23rd March

- 'Family doctor service on brink of extinction' – new GP leader
- Gang girls 'leading desperate lives'
- Hague warns of Russia 'isolation'

24th March

- Budget boost leaves Tories neck and neck with Labour
- 200,000 homes will be built on Green Belt land
- Voters doubt PM can get better EU deal



25th March

- Tories pledge to slash hated inheritance tax
- Universities call for 'legal certainty' on tuition fees from SNP
- NHS told to spend billions on reform or face oblivion

26th March

- Calls to scrap death tax as bill hits £ 24bn
- Classes disrupted as teachers strike
- Putin still defiant

27th March

- Watchdog calls for benefits shake-up following suicide
- CBI chief says staying in UK would be better for business
- Inflation falls to new low as house prices soar by 13%

28th March

- Bigger pension payouts on way
- Four cat owners catch tb from their pet
- The truth about Britain's bogus foreign students

29th March

- Bigger pension payouts on way
- Four cat owners catch tb from their pet
- The truth about Britain's bogus foreign students

30th March

- 100 Tory rebels to defy Cameron on EU
- I now pronounce you wife and wife: same-sex couples can marry at last
- Labour support at lowest since 2010

31st March

- £ 10- a- month fee to use nhs
- UK's walking tall again says Osborne
- Biggest house price bubble ever



National News Headlines April 2014

1st April

- Air pollution: High levels to spread across England
- Nigel Farage ready for 'ding-dong' in Nick Clegg TV debate
- House prices: gap between London and the rest of the UK 'widest in 40 years'

2nd April

- Helmand Handover: Britain's role in Afghanistan ends with a handshake
- Saharan dust to cause 'very high' air pollution levels in the coming days
- Labour funding could be stopped if party loses next election

3rd April

- Cameron: Clegg and Farage both on 'extremes' of EU debate
- Just Eat flotation delivered with £1.5bn valuation
- London house prices rise 18% in year fuelling fears of bubble

4th April

- UK house prices fall in March, annual growth still robust
- Afghan elections: two foreign journalists shot on eve of polls
- Clegg 'delighted' with outcome of debates with Ukip

5th April

- Chinese fuel UK housing shortage
- Killer spiders invade nursery school
- Vatican sex crimes prosecutor investigates shamed Cardinal

6th April

- Signals heard in Indian Ocean could be MH370's black box
- Davis tells Tories: Get ready to quit EU now
- Revealed: Gove's bid to limit fallout from failing free schools



National News Headlines April 2014

7th April

- Britain to sizzle in 6-week scorchers
- Tax evaders face court action in crime blitz
- Fraud swoop on Tower Hamlets

8th April

- No 10 plans new curbs on betting machines
- Royal trio touch down in New Zealand
- Irish terrorist murders 'should be left unsolved'

9th April

- Maria Miller resigns as Culture Secretary
- Pc Keith Blakelock murder trial: Nicky Jacobs found not guilty
- Scottish independence dealt another blow with £143bn debt burden

10th April

- Tamiflu & Relenza: how effective are they?
- Labour plans to jail mean bosses
- British Gas fined £5.6m for blocking businesses from switching

11th April

- West struggles as Russia moves to dominate old USSR
- Co-op bank reports £1.3bn loss and halts payments to former bosses
- National Trust calls for urgent action to save battered coast

12th April

- Salmond says vote 'not about SNP'
- Putin: I'll turn off your gas
- Scotland has half of UK wind farms



National News Headlines April 2014

13th April

- Who cut off pilot's final call?
- Salmond's dramatic bid to clinch Yes vote with plea to women
- UN urges huge increase in green energy to avert climate disaster

14th April

- Clegg wants three garden cities in wealthy South
- Malaysia Airlines search heads deep underwater in new phase
- Interest Rates 'Stay Low Until End Of 2015'

15th April

- House prices to keep soaring
- 40,000 families lose handouts in benefits war
- Heart deaths plunge as we eat less salt

16th April

- South Korea: 293 Missing After Ferry Sinks
- Tesco boss defiant despite 6% fall in profits
- Ukraine Uses Military Force for First Time

17th April

- Ukrainian Security Forces Kill 3 Pro-Russian Protesters
- Co-op group posts record £2.5bn loss in 'disastrous year'
- S Korea ferry: Bad weather hampers search for survivors

18th April

- Hamza waged terror from a mosque
- Bloated Co- op vows ' wholesale reforms' after £ 2.5bn
- £10M cost of gagging an NHS whistle blower



National News Headlines April 2014

19th April

- Gas staff paid bonus for giving customers a bad deal
- Ukraine peace deal on brink of collapse
- Hunt to warn of schools extremism

20th April

- Thousands get energy refund
- Ukraine peace deal on brink of collapse
- PM hired bankrupt crony to run £60bn quango

21st April

- Economic recovery 'will give families an extra £600 a year
- More CBI members to resign as No vote row escalates
- London gangs exploit law to get guns

22nd April

- Pension shock for millions
- How number of 40p taxpayers rose by 400%
- Organised crime link to payday loan trade

23rd April

- 1000 Children Caught With Weapons in School in Past Three Years
- Scottish independence: Cameron and Salmond make appeals on St George's Day
- UK borrowing falls sharply in March

24th April

- Barclays Shareholders Vent Frustration Over Bonuses
- Syria conflict a 'magnet' for British youngsters, Met warns
- Cornish nationalists celebrate start of parity



25th April

- Miliband's extra rights for zero-hours contract workers
- London skyscraper The Gherkin goes into receivership
- Claims thousands of pounds not distributed to charities

26th April

- Osborne stops RBS paying out 'double your wage' bonuses
- Car insurance costs 'fall sharply'
- Tube strike is unacceptable

27th April

- Treasury challenge to Nationalists
- Labour jumps aboard HS2
- Top doctor slams school meals policy for fuelling child obesity epidemic

28th April

- David Cameron's Conservative MPs rebel in HS2 vote
- Home buyers 'paying 97pc of asking price'
- E-cigarette users in UK have 'tripled' since 2010

29th April

- Millions caught up in inheritance tax trap
- UK economy grows by 0.8% in quarter
- Should all schools be screening their pupils for weapons?

30th April

- Migrants pay just £1 a week in tax
- Let couples get quickie divorce at register office
- Police visit UK airports to warn of FGM cases abroad



National News Headlines May 2014

1st May

- Millions to suffer as NHS is 'about to run out of cash'
- Gerry Adams is arrested over widow's murder
- Police failing to record one in five crimes

2nd May

- Record rise in house prices
- Greater resolve to vote Yes could prove decisive in poll
- Plan to control rents comes under attack

3rd May

- Exercise does beat arthritis
- Day of death brings Russia and Ukraine closer to all-out war
- Adams spends third night in custody

4th May

- Bring rail under state's control to win back power, Miliband is told
- Crime gangs expand into food fraud
- Archbishop defends faith schools

5th May

- Millions set for pensions windfall
- Adams goes free after 4 days but may still be charged over murder
- Middle classes blamed as bill for care home fraud doubles

6th May

- 'Adams warned of a backlash if killer identified'
- One in 7 hospital patients diabetic
- Rip-off energy firms hang on to your cash



National News Headlines May 2014

7th May

- Police dig in new hunt for Maddy
- Half Ukip's Euro vote to stay loyal to Farage in 2015
- Carer recruits 'must speak English'

8th May

- 60Mph gales to batter Britain
- Shamed Co- op boss is fined over cocaine
- Millions are eating halal food without knowing it

9th May

- Taxman to raid joint accounts
- Labour's class war TV ad divides party
- Farage warns over repeat of 'racist' protests on Scots visit

10th May

- MSPs rebel over claim new police force will save £1.1bn
- Boris hints he could stand as MP at election
- BPutin cannot control forces he unleashed, warns Hague

11th May

- Separatist vote 'will destroy Ukraine'
- Coalition row over school funding
- Bank boss 'understands' pay concern

12th May

- 75F! Summer is on its way
- MPM: We'll have EU vote even if reform fails
- UK troops could help to rescue kidnapped girls



National News Headlines May 2014

13th May

- Tories back in front for first time in two years
- Darling sidelined in fight with SNP
- Mayor urged to seize land left idle by builders

14th May

- Scroungers on £ 85,000 a year benefits
- 'Absurdly complex' tax system savaged by top economists
- UK unemployment rate falls to 6.8%

15th May

- 81°F heatwave to blast Britain
- Loopholes 'leave the new benefit system more open to fraudsters'
- Numbers in work rocket to a record 30m high

16th May

- Official: statins are safe
- We will still win, insists Farage as Ukip dips in poll
- Clegg: Anti- EU Britons are not patriotic

17th May

- Asylum seekers in 4-star hotels
- Co-op Group to vote on restructure
- Miliband gets tough on jobless migrants

18th May

- Now America loses Blair's 'I'll back Iraq war' letter to Bush
- Bank chief warns over housing market
- Migrants must learn English - Javid



National News Headlines February 2014

19th May

- Battle to halt house boom
- Murderer on run from jail for the fourth time
- Britain to bake in SIX-week heatwave - record summer on way

20th May

- 100 danger prisoners are let out every day
- Farage defiant in Romania row
- UK inflation rate rises to 1.8%

21st May

- Millions abandon price- hike Lottery
- Charles: Putin is behaving just like Hitler
- Osborne: Ukip is a threat to UK'S free market economy

22nd May

- Britain's on flood alert
- Reform or else, May tells stunned police
- Shoppers' spree sees best growth in sales for a decade

23rd May

- Migration is out of control
- Billions of barrels of oil found below Sussex, Hampshire and Kent
- UKIP now 'serious players'

24th May

- Moscow taunts Royal Family over its 'links' to Hitler and the Nazis
- NHS errors kill 12,500 every year
- Salmond's childcare plan 'doesn't add up'



National News Headlines February 2014

25th May

- Lib Dem MPs in bid to oust Clegg
- BAdmiral unleashes a broadside at our broken-down Navy
- Triumphant Ukip draws up hitlist of 20 key seats to storm Commons

26th May

- We will get vote to quit the EU
- Interest rates may hit 3pc by 2017 says Bank
- Farage hails 'historic' Euro win

27th May

- Schools hit by 150,000 rise in migrant pupils
- Lloyds Bank announces TSB flotation
- Labour and SNP in bitter war of words over Ukip seat win

28th May

- Lib- Dems in turmoil over Clegg leadership
- House prices will face 'correction'
- French police move into Calais camps



NAO report delivers damning verdict on Tory-led government's botched Royal Mail fire sale - Chuka Umunna

Chuka Umunna MP, Labour's Shadow Business Secretary, commenting on the National Audit Office's report on the privatisation of Royal Mail, said:

"This report delivers a damning verdict on the Tory-led government's botched Royal Mail fire sale, leaving the taxpayer disgracefully short changed by hundreds of millions of pounds. At the same time, stamp prices have shot up by 30 per cent and vital services have been put at risk at a time when families are already being hit by a cost-of-living crisis.

"We now know definitively that far better value for taxpayers could have been possible had Ministers adopted a different

timetable for the sale. The NAO could not be clearer: the inflexible timetable set by Ministers for Royal Mail's privatisation resulted in the public losing out. Labour raised concerns that the full value of Royal Mail's property portfolio was not being reflected – the government dismissed this at the time, but today's report shows we were right.

"When Royal Mail was privatised, Vince Cable described the huge rise in its share price as 'froth', but since then it has continued to rise. He and David Cameron have serious questions to answer on the hundreds of millions of pounds they have lost British taxpayers and cannot duck responsibility for what has happened."

David Cameron welcomed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan to Downing Street for his first official bilateral visit since taking office.

Following the meeting on 30th April, a Downing Street spokesperson said: "The visit continued the development of the close relationship between the two countries and Prime Minister Sharif thanked the PM for being the first foreign leader to visit him following his election last year."

There was also a discussion on regional issues, including the positive progress of the ongoing Afghan elections. PM Sharif stressed his determination to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan and never allow his country to be used to launch an attack against Afghanistan or anywhere in the world. They also agreed on the importance of Pakistan continuing to build its relationship with India and discussed recent blasphemy cases in Pakistan, as well as prospects for reforms of these laws.

They noted the significant impact UK development support is having in the country, particularly with health and education initiatives. PM Sharif also outlined the progress his government has made in increasing tax take and the PM offered further UK support and advice towards a target of 15%. PM Sharif also set out plans to improve domestic energy supplies, the PM again offered UK support but stressed the importance of maintaining good relationships with the industry. PM Sharif was enthusiastic in his support for the agreement to open a new Deputy High Commission in Lahore, and thanked the UK for its support on improving market access with Europe.

Fisherman can claim back 80% of replacement costs under new scheme

The Minister announced he would develop a scheme to support fishermen back in early March, following a sustained period of high tides and heavy rain that badly affected some parts of Wales' fishing industry.

The Minister has announced that under the new scheme fishermen will be able to claim 80% of the costs to replace any shellfish pots lost or damaged in the storms. Where equipment can be repaired, fishermen will be able to claim 20% of the replacement value towards that repair cost.

Alun Davies said:

“The severe weather that we experienced this

winter badly affected a range of businesses in Wales, including our fishing industry. As a government we have been working hard to assess the damage and to target support at those that need it most.

“Within the fishing industry it was clear that the main issue was the loss and damage to the pots used to catch shellfish around the Welsh Coast.

“In developing our support scheme we have worked closely with the Welsh Fishermen's Association and I would like to thank them for their very valuable input. I am confident that the resulting scheme is fair and equitable and offers a generous level of support to the industry.

“We know that small crab and lobster boats form the core of the Welsh fishing industry. It is imperative that we help those fishermen to get back on their feet and this scheme is designed to do just that. With that in mind I would now invite fishermen who lost static gear as a result of the storms to get in touch with us and make the most of the support that is on offer.”

The Minister also paid tribute to the Fishermen's Mission for the action they had taken to support Welsh fishermen and their families following the storms.

Labour make a promise they know they can't and won't keep

The choice between the Conservatives and Labour on the economy couldn't be clearer.

Today Parliament voted on Conservative plans to reduce the deficit and cap welfare, in order to build a stronger economy and stand up for people who work hard and play by the rules.

But Labour are all over the place. On the one hand, they voted in favour of our plans; on the other, they say they want to restore the spare room subsidy and increase other welfare spending. They made a promise they know they can't and won't keep.

It's the same old Labour. They have no plan and would wreck the economy with more spending and more borrowing.

Only the Conservatives are committed to reducing the deficit and capping welfare – only the Conservatives have a long-term economic plan to secure Britain's future.

Offensive weapon offences down by 60%

The SNP has welcomed new figures showing that crimes of carrying an offensive weapon have fallen by 60% in Inverclyde since the introduction of the No Knives Better Lives campaign in the area in 2009.

The No Knives Better Lives scheme looks to educate young people about the dangers of carrying a knife through activities held in schools and communities – and makes clear the devastating consequences of knife crime.

After an original pilot in Inverclyde in 2009, the scheme has since been rolled out to eleven different areas – with the handling of offensive weapons reducing significantly in all of them.

Commenting, West Scotland MSP Stuart McMillan said:

“Knife crime has absolutely appalling consequences for communities across the country and so it is very welcome to see such a huge reduction in Inverclyde. The No Knives Better Lives campaign is delivering excellent results – and the scheme is now being rolled out across the country.

“That we have seen a 60% fall in the handling of offensive weapons is testament to the value of education and prevention in reducing knife crime – helping young people to make positive, informed decisions and reject knife crime.

“While this is clearly significant progress in stamping out knife crime, it is essential that we continue our preventative efforts and bring about a change in culture – making clear that knife crime simply will not be tolerated in our communities.



Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson MSP

No campaign united with UKIP

Commenting on the speech from George Lyon MEP at the Liberal Democrats' conference in Scotland, the Scottish National Party have said the Lib Dems struggle with being united with UKIP in working for a No vote in September.

Aileen McLeod MSP said: "The reality is that Scotland will negotiate our position as an EU member state from within, in the period between a Yes vote and becoming independent in March 2016 - a position endorsed by European experts such as Graham Avery, a senior EU negotiator and honorary Director-General of the European Commission.

"The irony is that the Liberal Democrats are standing shoulder to shoulder with the Europhobic UKIP in both seeking a No vote in Scotland's referendum. It may be very embarrassing for the parties in the No campaign, but at the end of the day UKIP are on their side, and working for a No vote in September."

Separate Scotland would face security intelligence disadvantage



Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson MSP

A separate Scotland would have significantly reduced access to defence intelligence and security monitoring, a new report has warned.

The respected Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) said that, in the event of independence, Scotland would face huge challenges in resourcing, capability and

legislative hurdles when it came to establishing an intelligence agency.

The experts added it would not have the automatic access to the “five eyes” currently enjoyed as part of the UK, while short-term vulnerabilities would be created due to the length of time it takes to set-up such an organisation.

That would put the rest of the UK on a weaker footing, with the potential for an independent Scotland being targeted by those seeking to do harm from a more relaxed environment.

The report concludes that those issues could lead to tensions between the governments of a separate Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson MSP said:

“The experts at RUSI have confirmed what we already know – that Scotland is safer as part of the UK.

“Each of the four home nations would be less secure if there was to be an independent Scotland.

“The safety and security of a nation is the first responsibility of a government, but Alex Salmond is willing to risk that security for his obsession with independence.”

Recording of Crime

Yvette Cooper MP, Labour’s Shadow Home Secretary, responding to a report by HMIC on the recording of crime, said:

“Though only an interim report, the Inspectorate’s findings are extremely serious.

“HMIC’s initial research suggests 20 per cent of crimes ‘may be going unrecorded.’ And they expose clear abuse of so-called Community Resolutions being handed out for inappropriate crimes and without the say of victims.

“Labour has long called for the Government to step in and stop Community Resolutions being used for serious crimes. This report makes it clear the Government should act now.

“Some forces have established root-and-branch reviews of their crime-recording, and duly begun recording more of the crimes reported to them. The Government should ensure all forces are working with HMIC right now to improve their systems.”

Foreign truck firms set to pay to use UK roads for first time

Foreign hauliers will be charged to use UK roads for the first time from 1 April 2014 Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin has announced.

UK truck drivers working in Europe currently pay tolls and levies when delivering goods abroad. But foreign trucks operating in the UK have not been required to make a similar payment.

The HGV road user levy – which is being brought in nearly a year ahead of schedule – introduces a charge that ensures British hauliers are better able to compete with their foreign counterparts.

The levy has long been called for by the UK haulage industry and creates a fairer system

by removing some of the inequality UK hauliers feel when paying to use many roads abroad.

Patrick McLoughlin said:

The HGV levy will provide a massive boost for the UK haulage industry. It will create a level playing field across Europe, giving UK firms a much better opportunity to win business.

This is yet another example of how we are taking positive action to back British business and build a stronger, more competitive economy.

Find out what else the government is doing to support and grow the UK economy.

The levy is part of the

coalition's promise of a fairer deal for UK hauliers. Duty on standard diesel is now lower than it was in October 2010 and there has been no increase in HGV vehicle excise duty (VED) during this Parliament.

The government is also investing £3.3 billion in major road schemes which will provide over 500 miles of additional lane capacity to the strategic road network and £10.7 billion to add at least 400 miles of capacity on the busiest motorways.

The levy affects all HGVs of 12 tonnes or more that drive on UK roads, irrespective of country of registration.

The levy is structured in a series of bands which reflect vehicle type, weight

and number of axles. UK operators will pay the levy at the same time as VED in one transaction for administrative ease. At the same time as introducing the levy, the government is reducing VED, such that more than 9 out of 10 UK vehicles will pay no more than now.

Foreign operators must pay the levy before using UK roads. Discounts are available for longer periods with charges varying between £1.70 and £10 per day or £85 to £1,000 per year.



IPCC Climate Report: Climate change is here and we need to act now

THE Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report's stark warnings of the dire consequences of our continuing failure to tackle climate change on planet and people must act as a wake-up call, says the Green Party, the only party with workable policies in place to mitigate the threat and adapt for a sustainable future.

Climate change has already cut into the global food supply and is fuelling wars and natural disasters, but governments are unprepared to protect those most at risk, says the report 31 March 2014 from the UN's climate science panel.

Commenting on the publication today, Natalie Bennett, Green Party

Leader, said:

"The scientific debate is over. Climate change is a reality, here, with us today. Its threat is enormous and can no longer be ignored.

"On climate change, governments are taking too little action too slowly in part because they are overly and unduly influenced by oil, coal and gas big business interests. In Britain, we also have a government that is incapable of understanding that the old economic model is broken and needs to be radically changed, as it is not only incompatible with dealing with climate change, but also failing to meet people's basic needs.

"The Coalition Government's flag-waving

for fracking, which will only accelerate global warming, is the latest in a long line of destructive decisions driven by corporate interest with scant regard for the negative impact on people and planet.

"Climate change and the state of our environment is going to be one of THE issues of the European election on May 22 – and it's only the Green group, already the fourth largest in the European parliament – who are going to put it truly front and centre.

"Greens are going to hold firm on fighting for a national renewables target for each European state, demanding that Europe provide global leadership in setting a target of provide global leadership in setting a target of at

THE VERY least a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and demanding high, binding energy efficiency standards."

A Green government will take bold, responsible and scientifically credible action to avoid catastrophic climate change. We will apply a contraction and convergence strategy to reduce emissions to a safe and equal per-capita level. Pursuing the necessary annual reductions of around 10% will create many jobs. We will provide free monthly carbon emission allowances and people wanting to use more than their fair share could trade allowances. Total emissions will be capped and will reduce each year in line with our 2030 emission reduction target of 90% on 1990 levels.



New guide to UK creative excellence in visitor attractions



The new brochure produced by UKTI in partnership with the British Council, showcases the UK's global leadership in the experience economy.

The UK is home to many world-class visitor attractions whose success is built on imagination, ingenuity and expertise – skills which UK companies are keen to offer attraction developers all around the world.

The brochure shows how UK companies have used

these skills internationally in a range of different ways:

- from directly expanding their own attractions portfolio overseas
- to providing visioning, planning and design services for projects ranging from:
 - developing a new cultural district in Dubai
 - design of the Hong Kong Maritime Museum
 - character costume design for ski resorts in Sweden

It also shows a small snapshot of what the UK can offer helping to illustrate the country's leading status in this fast-growing sector.

Whether a project calls for feasibility, architecture, construction, exhibit design, interpretation, equipment supply or management consultancy, the UK has companies with the capabilities, experience, know-how and cultural sensitivity.

The brochure launched at a reception at the London Dungeon, organised by TiLEzone.

TiLE (Trends, Technology & Design in Leisure & Entertainment), holds a range of international events bringing together senior executives from across the experience economy sector including museums, galleries, science centres, heritage sites, zoos and theme parks.

Energy probe

Energy Minister Fergus Ewing has welcomed news that regulator Ofgem will investigate whether the "big six" UK energy suppliers prevent effective competition in the UK energy market.

Mr Ewing said:

"I welcome this planned investigation into the 'big six' UK energy suppliers. This is the first coherent plan that has been put forward to challenge the issue of rising energy bills.

"However any investigation must look at the implication of the plans for a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point for energy bills.

"I note that the planned nuclear subsidy is double the wholesale price and as SSE rightly said yesterday this will impact on energy bills for consumers over the next 35 years."

Vivienne Westwood supports Caroline Lucas MP against fracking charges

Dame Vivienne Westwood, the English fashion designer who played an instrumental role in bringing punk and new wave clothing fashions into the mainstream, has sent a message of support to Caroline Lucas, the MP for Brighton Pavilion.

Caroline is facing charges at Brighton Magistrates this week for obstructing the highway and failing to comply with police conditions imposed on a peaceful protest last summer in Sussex against hydraulic fracturing (also known as fracking).

Fracking is a controversial process where a mixture of water, sand and chemicals are pumped underground, under high pressure, to

force fossil fuels from rock layers.

Climate scientists agree that we must take action now to avert irreversible climate change and experts say that 60 to 80 per cent of unexploited fossil fuels will have to remain in the ground to avoid the worst of climate change.

Vivienne said, "Caroline Lucas is the only parliamentary member for the Green Party; if their economic policies were put into practice by all governments globally, the world would be saved from climate change and the current failing economic system.

"People who know the dangers of fracking like

Caroline Lucas and myself must do everything in our power to stop it being implemented until the public is informed of the true facts."

Caroline said, "Working to address the threat of climate change has been a priority for me throughout my political life.

"I know too that this is very important to large numbers of my constituents, because so many of them have written to me about the environmental risks posed by fracking, and the urgency of tackling climate change."

Vivienne's climate campaign site: <http://climaterévolution.co.uk/wp/>

Hilary Benn comment on latest official Council Tax figures

Hilary Benn, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, commenting on the latest official figures on Council Tax for 2014/15, said:

"Despite David Cameron's claims to be freezing Council Tax, more than a quarter of his own Tory-controlled councils are putting it up.

"Many people on the lowest incomes are having to pay far bigger Council Tax bills under this Government because of the reduction they have made to the Council Tax Support given to local authorities to keep bills down for those most in need.

"The truth is that while the Tory-led Government cut the top rate of tax for people earning over £150,000, everyone else is on average £1,600 worse off. This is a Government that stands up for the wrong people."

Government reduces its stake in Lloyds Banking Group to below 25%

Government sells 7.8 per cent of shares in Lloyds Banking Group, at 75.5p per share.

The government has today (26 March 2014) sold another part of its shares in Lloyds Banking Group. It has sold 24 per cent of its remaining shares in the bank, at a price of 75.5p per share. This takes the government's holding in the bank to less than a quarter.

The sale has secured further value for the taxpayer and will be used to pay down the national debt. It is part of the government's long term economic plan to build a stronger and safer banking sector.

The Chancellor received advice from UK Financial

Investments yesterday (25 March 2014) that it would be appropriate to sell part of the government's shareholding in Lloyds. The Chancellor agreed with that advice and authorised the process to begin.

The government has now sold 36 per cent of its original stake in Lloyds, which now stands at 24.9 per cent.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne MP, said:

I can confirm this morning that we have sold a further £4.2 billion of shares in Lloyds Banking Group at 75.5p a share, taking the taxpayer's stake down to below a quarter of the bank. This represents good value for the taxpayer and the

money will again be used to reduce the national debt.

This is another step in the government's long term economic plan to deliver a more secure and resilient economy. It is another step in repairing the banks, in reducing our national debt and in getting the taxpayer's money back.

**LLOYDS
BANKING
GROUP**



Revealed: scandal of Councillors in establishment parties you may not have heard about

The national media are clearly keen to run stories about local politicians; so we have collated a number of interesting stories about sitting Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative councillors, since the start of the year, which unaccountably don't seem to have achieved the national blanket coverage they deserve. Some of these stories can be seen below but we have dozens of other stories too.

Meanwhile, UKIP thanks to the national media, all other political parties and various trade union- and government-funded lobby groups for the immense amount of work they have put in, to undertake the Stasi-style 'scrutiny' of the Facebook pages and Twitter feeds of UKIP's 2,200 local election candidates – a substantial task which must be costing someone a bundle – and assures them that every offensive remark reported to us will be considered seriously by our National Executive Committee's disciplinary committee.

Farmland ownership

Surveys are being sent to land owners who rent out agricultural land in Scotland to ask about their experience and views on the future of Scottish farming.

It is the second phase of a major piece of research that will inform the work of the Ministerial-led Review of Agricultural Holdings Legislation to identify how to get the best from Scotland's land and the people farming it. The review is considering, among other issues, absolute right to buy for traditional secure 1991 agricultural tenancies.

In the first phase of the research, questionnaires were completed by about 3,000 tenant farmers.

Rural Affairs Secretary

Richard Lochhead said:

"This research is vital to the review of Agricultural Holdings Legislation I am leading, as responses will influence our findings and the future of Scottish farming.

"The survey of tenant farmers has had a great response and we now need to hear from as many land owners as possible. This means everyone who rents out agricultural land in Scotland on all types of lets and leases, and may include farmers who also rent-in land and have already completed the tenant farming survey.

"Although this is a busy time in the agricultural calendar, the questionnaire will take less than half an hour to complete and

I urge everyone to take full advantage of the opportunity to help us create a vibrant tenant farming sector in Scotland.

"Copies of the survey are being sent to landowners and can be obtained directly from Ipsos MORI Scotland. It is important to use only original forms as duplicates will be not accepted. All responses will be treated in the strictest confidence."



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Design and Innovation

New Cremated Remains Products

welters[®] are also leading the way in developing new and innovative products for cremated remains interment and commemoration with their Majestic Memorial Mausoleums and Memorial Orb range.

The Majestic's compliment a more formal setting and the orbs are ideally suited for naturalised, woodland and memorial garden areas or private grave placement.



Legal highs caused the deaths of 36 people



Scottish Conservative health spokesman Jackson Carlaw MSP

Legal highs were present in 36 drug-related deaths in 2012, a study published today has revealed.

The analysis of nearly 500 fatalities found a growing incidence of “new and novel” substances being found in the deceased individual’s system.

ISD Scotland said the rising problem of legal highs like mephedrone was of

“increasing public health concern”.

The Scottish Conservatives revealed earlier this year how hundreds of people have been admitted to hospital over the last four years because of the emergence of these new substances.

The National Drug-Related Deaths Database also revealed 52 of the deaths were as a result of suicide, while more than a third of those who died in 2012 were a parent.

Nearly all of the drug-deaths studied involved the taking of more than one substance.

Half of those had taken methadone, while almost the same number had consumed alcohol or

antidepressants.

The majority of those who had taken methadone had been on a prescription for more than a year.

It also emerged today that the cost of prescribing methadone in community pharmacies rose last year by nearly £4 million to £22.4 million.

Scottish Conservative health spokesman Jackson Carlaw MSP said:

“It is clear legal highs are now presenting a challenge for which we as a society are unprepared.

“It’s a problem that’s getting worse, and that is clear not only from these drug-death figures today, but the number of those who are being hospitalised as a

result.

“And what might make things more difficult for the NHS and Scottish Government is that those likely to try legal highs may not be the same people typically known to NHS or social services

“Scotland already has a massive headache caused by drugs and alcohol, and we can’t allow this new phenomenon to get out of control.

“We need to get ahead of the game to ensure these statistics don’t get worse in future.”



The Art of Manufacturing

Part 3

The Art of Manufacturing has been produced by Keith Walters to promote and encourage the desire to make manufacturing a prolific career path and enterprise within the UK.



Keith Walters is a leading UK manufacturer

Since the war, there has been a steady decline in manufacturing employment but a continuing rise in manufacturing output. Growth in technological advancement has enabled

greater production using fewer workers who are generally more highly skilled.

The mass employment of workers performing labour-intensive and repetitive tasks has largely been replaced by machines or outsourced to 'offshore resources' such as China and India where manpower, products and components can be cheaply supplied.

Whilst it could be argued that it's 'all built in China now', the UK still maintains its lead as a high-end manufacturer and is the sixth largest manufacturer in the world. The danger lies in these offshore resources 'squaring the circle' by producing highly skilled workers manufacturing high-end products of their own.

It is in fact the initiation and control of the full process that we need to pass on to future generations in order for the UK to continue to maintain and grow its skill base. Outsourcing will be detrimental to the future of our trades if it means using the skills of trained workers elsewhere, leading to the inevitable brain drain as home grown talents are forced to seek opportunities abroad.

This serialisation highlights the importance of training in trade skills to create the manufacturers of tomorrow.

In this third instalment we look at the evolution of design and assembly line development.

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WORLDWIDE
Design and Innovation



Evolution

Many designs maintain their original identity but evolve over time, reflecting the modernity of each reincarnation. Classic examples of this are the Mini and the Volkswagen Beetle motor cars.



Although there is very little of the original carried through in respect of component design, and materials; the identity is maintained and the brand is instantly recognisable. This 're-imagining' of well known products can maintain their popularity and connection with the heritage of the original design and also reintroduce them to new users. This is especially prevalent in car manufacturing where a range of styles can be introduced around the same 'classic' model design during the assembly line process.

The Art of Manufacturing - welters®

Get in Line

The principles of assembly line manufacturing and the division of labour to create interchangeable components was not a new concept and has been redeveloped throughout history.



There is evidence that the Terracotta Army, a collection of about 8000 life-sized ceramic soldiers and horses buried with the emperor Qin Shi Huangdi in 209 BC had their separate body parts manufactured by different workshops that were later assembled to completion.



By the end of the 19th Century, manufacturing was beginning to move from mainly hand built products to take the form we think of today. Developments in electricity enabled smaller machines to run much more efficiently than steam powered ones leading to further innovations and progress.



Good designs work

Henry Ford famously developed his assembly line technique for mass production with the Model T motor car during 1908 - 1913.

This form of conveyor belt mass production was designed to optimise the productivity of the assembly worker ensuring each component worked on would be completed and passed down the line as quickly as possible.



The advent of the First World War saw rapid advances in the efficiency of mechanised mass production with huge manufacturing plants working day and night to maintain the war effort.



Bauhaus

It was at this tumultuous time in Germany that a school for art and architecture was founded called Staatliches Bauhaus. The schools proclamation was: "to create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist."



Bauhaus focused on utility using clean lines and function to replace the embellishment and ornamentation of the past. The movement became influential in the rebuilding programmes after the end of World War One and proceeded to influence architecture worldwide.



The Bauhaus principals in structural design was encouraged across a range of disciplines. For the first time, architects began designing objects for the home...



...applying their design techniques to domestic items such as furniture, lamps, radios and other household items.

Influences of nature were still drawn upon but used abstractly using less organic shapes.



Education begins at home

The campaign, called Education begins at home, will encourage parents to get involved in their child's education by showing them how little things can make a big difference.

Things like waking them up early for school; making sure they get a good night's sleep; making time to read with them; helping with number work; going to parents evenings and asking them about school will all help them do so much better at school.

The Minister will formally launch the campaign today with parents at Herbert Thompson Primary School in Ely. The campaign advert and information on how to get involved are all available on our Facebook page.

Huw Lewis said:

"I want to see standards and performance in Welsh schools improve across the board.

"It's clear that parents have an integral role in making this happen. We can't do it without their support, and as a Dad, I know it's the little things we do as parents which make a real difference to our children's school day.

"When we look to the international testing, there's some evidence to show it's the countries where parents get involved in the children's education which are the most successful. If we're to improve our standing internationally that's got to happen in Wales as well.

"It's not complicated, it's as simple as making sure they have enough sleep

and give support and encouragement at home. Helping with reading, numbers and homework is really important; but just taking an interest and showing you care about what happens to them during school can help them in the long run.

"We all want the best for our children so let's go the extra mile. They may not thank you now - but what you do today will help them do so much better in the future."



Morecambe Bay Investigation: interview of John Woodcock MP

The Investigation will start its interview programme on Friday 2 May when the Panel interviews John Woodcock, MP for Barrow and Furness.

Only family members will be able to observe any of the interviews conducted by the Investigation Panel and details of the arrangements for this interview have been sent directly to the families.

It is expected that further interviews will take place later in May. Details of future interviews will be announced on this website on Fridays. Interviews will take place at the Investigation's office at Park Hotel in Preston and, when practical to do so, they will take place in Barrow to assist both interviewees and family members who wish to attend.

A short description of each interview will be placed on this website within a week of them taking place.

Helping those written off by Labour

Our Help to Work scheme, which launched in April provides more support than ever before to help the long-term unemployed get into work.

1.4 million people spent most of the last decade under Labour on out-of-work benefits. But a key part of our long-term economic plan is making sure that everyone who can work is in work. So we're providing new opportunities and responsibilities to the people who Labour abandoned.

Claimants on the Help to Work scheme will attend the Jobcentre every day to search for work, work for their benefits out in the community to gain the skills they need to secure a full-time job or receive intensive

coaching from Jobcentre advisers if they face particularly severe barriers to work, like mental health problems or addiction.

We're seeing record levels of employment in Britain as more and more people move to the security of a job – and we're determined to support those who have been stuck on benefits for a number of years.

So while Labour wrote off the long-term unemployed, we're helping them get into work and get on in life.



RBS - Osborne is in a terrible muddle over bankers' bonuses - Cathy Jamieson

Cathy Jamieson MP, Labour's Shadow Treasury Minister, responding to reports about bonuses at RBS, said:

"George Osborne is in a terrible muddle over bankers' bonuses. He is spending taxpayer's money on a legal fight in Brussels against the bonus cap and yet imposing the minimum cap at RBS.

"The Government has bowed to pressure on RBS and finally admitted that bonuses of two times salary would be unacceptable at what remains a Bank in Government ownership. They voted against Labour's motion to impose the minimum cap at RBS in January, but have now

been forced to reverse their position.

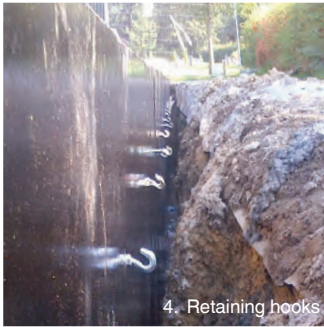
"But confusingly at the same time the Chancellor is supporting higher bonuses in Lloyds Bank and elsewhere.

"People who are facing a cost-of-living crisis are rightly angry about excessive rewards for failure in banking over recent years. The Chancellor should accept the logic of today's announcement and drop his legal action to block the bonus cap.

"And he should heed Labour calls to implement existing legislation on transparency in pay at the top and repeat the tax on bankers' bonuses to pay for a Compulsory Jobs Guarantee for young people out of work for a year or more."



3. Bolted to concrete foundation



4. Retaining hooks



5. Rebar attached to hooks



2. Sealant applied underside



1. Bituminous coating applied



6. Cement pour around excavation completes the installation

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Design and Innovation

Extreme Weather Solutions **Optional specification burial chamber** **upgrade and high watertable** **installations**

This method ensures where required that burial chambers remain secure and free from water ingress during extreme conditions.

- The burial chambers are given a bituminous coating and a continuous bead of polyurethane concrete sealant is applied to the underside of each chamber.
- The chamber is then bolted to a reinforced concrete foundation.
- External anchor hooks are then fixed to the external chamber sides and rebar attached to the hooks.
- A cement pour around the edge of the excavation completes the installation providing a sealed interment facility impervious to water ingress.

*Higher specification waterproof burial chambers are also available and manufactured to comply with BS 8102:2009 Type B construction.

Human trafficking: Karen Bradley sees how modern slavery survivors are supported

Modern Slavery and Organised Crime Minister, Karen Bradley, visited the safe houses which are run by Ashiana and City Hearts - organisations which provide support to adult victims of human trafficking. There she met a number of specialist support workers and slavery survivors.

The visit comes as the government is taking a wide range of action to end modern slavery and protect victims through legislation and non-legislative work.

Human trafficking

Karen Bradley said:

At the heart of everything we do is the need to protect victims and prevent further men, women and children falling prey to this particularly evil crime.

We are taking action on a number of fronts. The Modern Slavery Bill, the first of its kind in Europe, will strengthen the punishment of offenders and the protection of victims. Through the National Crime Agency and police forces we are stepping up enforcement against the criminal gangs behind much of modern slavery.

We are urging businesses to take responsibility for ensuring their suppliers are not involved in trafficking and exploitation and we are working with high risk countries to try and stop victims falling prey to traffickers in the first place.

All this is a good start, but we need everyone to play a part, at local as well as

national level, and to raise awareness of the issues involved. I am grateful for the vital work being carried out by Ashiana and City Hearts in Sheffield to help consign slavery to the history books where it belongs.

Modern slavery

City Hearts also works

with local businesses in Sheffield to help survivors find employment opportunities once they leave the safe house as part of their 'move on' scheme. Outside of its work with victims, Ashiana runs a development project which delivers training to multi-agency groups.

The Salvation Army sub-contracts support services and accommodation for potential victims of human trafficking to 11 local partner organisations, including Ashiana and City Hearts, through a network of safe houses and outreach services across England and Wales.



Modern Slavery and Organised Crime Minister, Karen Bradley, visited the safe houses which are run by Ashiana and City Hearts - organisations

Cemetery chapel restoration and reactivation



Disused cemetery chapel

It is a sad fact that many of our cemeteries and churchyards have, due to infrequent use and rising maintenance costs become dilapidated and unfriendly places to visit.

The buildings contained therein usually require extensive work or are closed and boarded up with little or no funds to make good.

Even when dereliction has set in and disuse effective, it is not too late to find solutions and investment to achieve a balance between recommissioning for original function and the provision of new services and facilities to meet the challenges of "today".

Redundant Churches, Cemetery Chapels and many other interesting and historic buildings can receive a new lease of life by re-defining their role in serving present day needs. Effective facilities can emerge in the service of the community.

The demolition of historic buildings, especially churches is quite commonplace. This tragic reality is almost certainly unnecessary if pre-emptive thought and action is applied.

Revenue generating schemes can fund restoration and buildings can be saved and made to provide a relevant service, and the environment created will enhance and serve the people of the community.

Reviving disused chapels and other vacant properties within existing local

cemeteries and churchyards for the purpose of cremated remains interment creates a viable and valuable asset, not only for the community it serves but also for the burial authority as a long-term revenue stream.

welters® experience in joinery and cabinet making spans four generations and this specialist division, founded in 1912 continues today creating high quality crafted memorials and furnishings.

welters® repository niche systems can be installed to compliment existing niche units or create brand new facilities to extend your service to the bereaved.

Whether it be a change of function or rooms or buildings to incorporate niche systems or a purpose built repositoria, **welters®** can provide for all your needs from the initial consultation through

to design, building and installation including full service support for inscriptions, record keeping and maintenance.



Restored chapel as repositorium for cremated remains

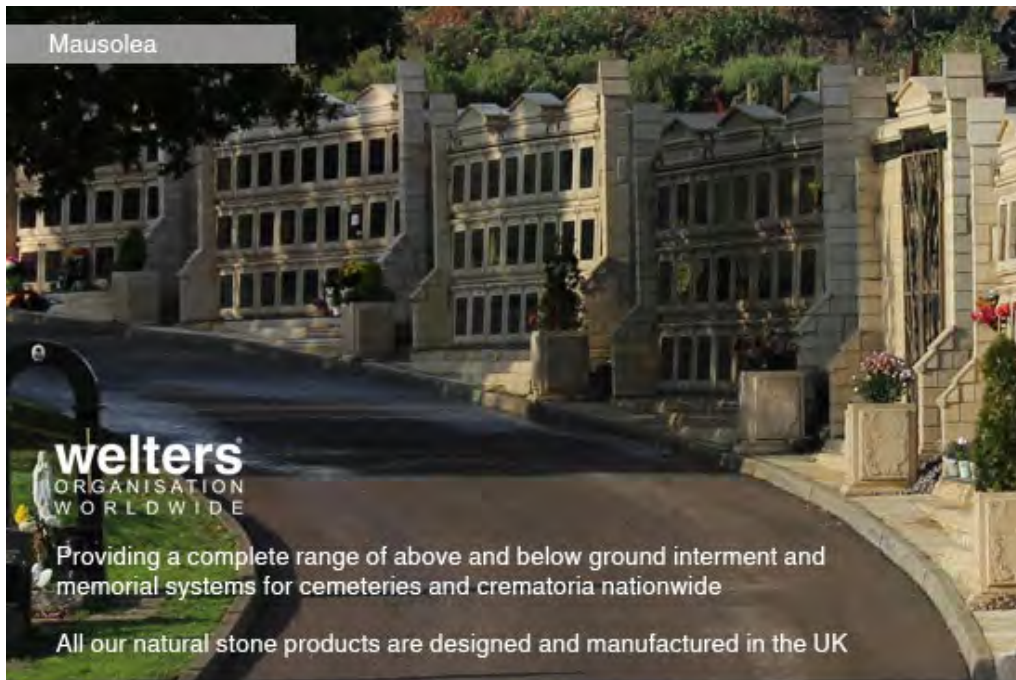
Commemorative tablets can be inscribed in various ways or bronze applied lettering can be used. In this memorial hall tablets are either solid oak, french polished by hand, white marble or tinted glass.

The niches are normally available in two sizes to suit either individual or family requirements and whilst lining is usually standard, customized fitting and lining can be designed and provided by consultation.

All tablets are interchangeable so that the installation management can respond to the requirements of the bereaved or niche grant owners.

www.welters-worldwide.com

Mausolea



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Providing a complete range of above and below ground interment and memorial systems for cemeteries and crematoria nationwide

All our natural stone products are designed and manufactured in the UK

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Design and Innovation

The Leading UK Innovator in Memorial and Interment Systems

With over 25 years of proven experience in the industry welters[®] are continuing to push forward with real-world solutions for safe, affordable year-round interment and memorial provision.

Working from a UK design and manufacturing base welters[®] are able to serve a nationwide network of clients with high quality products and full customer care support.

In addition there are installation experts and interment support teams travelling the country ensuring their services remain at the forefront of industry expectations.

Contact us today
www.welters-worldwide.com



Burial chamber and memorial systems



Cremated remains products

Climate Change Commitment



Following the news reports of cemeteries delaying grave digging operations because of the hazardous saturated ground conditions during the winter, welters® is calling upon all working cemeteries to begin planning for alternative dry interment provisions under their Climate Change Commitment to ensure burials can continue whenever earthen burials are not possible or desirable.



Keith Welters MD said: "It is sad to learn of cemeteries struggling to provide such an essential service to the bereaved when our systems can offer an alternative that's safe and accessible for both staff and visitors on a year-round basis.

"These past few months should be a wake-up call for burial authorities to put in place climate change contingencies for wet weather burial provision and at the same time they will be offering more interment choice to the bereaved.

"I urge all burial authorities to get in touch to discuss how we can help them"

www.welters-worldwide.com

Quiet deliveries to reduce road congestion

New guidance published by the government could help reduce traffic jams by enabling freight operators to make more out-of-hours deliveries, Transport Minister Stephen Hammond has announced.

‘Quiet deliveries’, which has been published on GOV.UK, was developed following successful trials held by local councils before and during the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Stephen Hammond said: The London 2012 Games were extremely successful and proved that with the right planning, we could reduce the number of delivery vehicles on the road at key times when roads are likely to be more congested, such as rush hour.

The guidance helps freight

operators and retailers plan their deliveries using techniques to minimise disturbance to residents and will help to free up peak time road space for other road users and reduce congestion. It will also help reduce the impact of carbon emissions and lead to more reliable delivery schedules.

Trials of out-of-hours deliveries were held by local authorities in 2010 and a temporary code of practice issued in 2012 by Transport for London for the Olympic Games.

The new guidance builds on that by setting out the benefits from quiet deliveries and provides a comprehensive guide to establishing a scheme. It consists of separate sections for retailers, hauliers, local authorities and construction firms.

A further section for community groups will follow shortly.

The new guidance, which fulfils a commitment in the Logistics Growth Review of 2011, is available on GOV.UK.

Prime Minister visits infrastructure projects in Thames Valley

The Prime Minister was in the Thames Valley region today (24 April) to highlight the government’s commitment to upgrading Britain’s rail infrastructure as part of our long-term economic plan.

On a visit to one of the Great Western upgrade projects in Berkshire, the Prime Minister saw for himself the latest works to remove a bottleneck near Reading station. The

Reading Elevated Railway is a part of the £850 million improvements to the Reading network, which is one of the busiest in the country.

As well as improving train journeys for hundreds of thousands of hardworking people, it will also help local businesses by stimulating economic growth.

The 2 kilometre long elevated railway project, which has a workforce of 400 people, is running a year ahead of schedule and under budget. It will help make journeys quicker and more comfortable for hundreds of thousands of hardworking people and businesses as well as increasing capacity to meet the expected rise in passenger numbers in the future.

The ongoing work to upgrade a section of the Great Western represents just one part of a £7 billion programme of investment in the line which is the highest of any rail route in the UK.

The Prime Minister also visited a road repair site in the region to highlight government support to local authorities in repairing potholed and damaged roads, helping to improve journeys for road users. In the Budget 2014, the government announced a £200 million Pothole Fund for 2014 to 2015.

Urgent action needed on smog

LONDON'S Green Party MEP Jean Lambert has called for urgent action to clean up South London's polluted air.

She made her comments during a visit to Crystal Palace to see for herself one of the capital's many smog 'hotspots' that breach EU health limits.

The visit came hot on the heels of latest opinion polling showing 81% of Londoners support the Green Party's policies on tackling air pollution (1).

Speaking on the corner of The Triangle (2), an area on the borders of five of the most-polluted London boroughs: Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Bromley and Croydon (3), she said:

"The latest figures show

that almost 3,400 people a year are dying because of London's dirty air – across England as a whole it's more than 25,000 people.

"Urgent action is needed now: smog isn't just unpleasant, it's killing almost one in 12 Londoners."

Ms Lambert, who is a founder supporter of Clean Air in London (4), went on to say:

"We need to radically rethink the way they are dealing with air pollution. To protect people's health we need both the UK Government and the Mayor of London to be bold in tackling air pollution – and stop trying to water down the rules.

"We need a 'very low

emissions zone', cleaner buses, a strategy to reduce pollution from taxi exhaust, 20mph speed limits as standard in residential areas, and more steps to encourage walking and cycling.

"It's time we recognise that air pollution is a political issue. We can clean up our air, but we need to force politicians to take the issue seriously."



Paterson confirms Government will extend badger cull

Responding to the admission today by Environment Secretary Owen Paterson that he intends to extend the Government's badger cull, Shadow Environment Secretary Maria Eagle MP, said:

"Owen Paterson has let it slip in his local newspaper that he intends to roll out the government's discredited badger cull across the country.

"An Independent Expert Panel concluded that the current pilot badger culls in Somerset and Gloucestershire were ineffective and inhumane yet David Cameron's government is determined to waste more public money on them.

"Bovine TB is one of the most important issues facing farmers today. It is a scourge and a threat to their livelihoods but rather than work in a bi-partisan way and focus on a science-based solution to the problem the Government is determined to press ahead with a failed strategy that has let farmers down."

Labour calls for urgent action on 999 response times

Andy Burnham MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, has today written to Jeremy Hunt to demand urgent action on ambulance response times.

Figures from NHS England reveal a significant deterioration in 999 response times across England over the last two years. In eight out of 10 regions in England, ambulances are taking longer to reach the most serious Category A calls. These include patients suffering strokes or cardiac arrest where the speed of an ambulance arriving often makes the difference between life and death.

Patients in the East of England now wait two minutes longer for an ambulance to respond to a Category A call, whilst

patients in the North East and the West Midlands wait 36 seconds longer. These figure represent an average across thousands of calls – the figures show that in some cases seriously ill patients will have waited in excess of 30 minutes for an ambulance.

Labour has called on Jeremy Hunt to provide an explanation and urgent action to halt the slump in standards.

Andy Burnham MP said:

“These alarming new figures raise real concerns that lives are being put at risk by the increasing chaos in the NHS.

“Too many ambulances are trapped in queues at over-stretched A&Es, unable to

hand over patients. This, in turn, is seeing a worrying deterioration in ambulance response times across many regions of the country. It explains why many people who are calling 999, particularly in rural areas, are facing longer, agonising waits for help to arrive.

“In life-threatening situations, every single second counts and that is why this slump in standards simply cannot go on. Urgent action is needed from the Government to turn things around.

“Slower 999 response is yet another sign of an NHS heading in the wrong direction under this Government. Their failure to get a grip on the A&E crisis is now having a knock-on effect of the safety of our ambulance services. It is more proof that David Cameron simply can't be trusted with the NHS.”

First World War Centenary cathedral repair fund opens

Grants from the £20 million fund, which was announced by the Chancellor at Budget 2014, will allow cathedrals to undertake urgent repair work, including keeping the building wind-proof, weather-tight, safe and open to the public, and preventing further deterioration of the building.

Cathedrals are powerful symbols of Britain's shared history and will be especially important as the nation comes together to commemorate the centenary of the First World War.

Culture Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Our cathedrals are a unique part of England's heritage. The Cathedrals Repair fund will ensure investment in their upkeep for the First World War centenary commemorations and beyond, ensuring they continue to play a pivotal role in our communities.

Sir Paul Ruddock has been appointed as the independent Chair of the Expert Panel who will assess all the bids. Currently Chair of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Sir Paul is involved with ChurchCare and a supporter of the 100 Church Treasures initiative.

Councils should have final say on windfarms

Councils across Scotland should have the final say on whether or not controversial onshore windfarms are approved, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

The move would follow an announcement today revealing that the next Conservative government in Westminster would give local authorities south of the border the ultimate decision on applications.

It was also announced that any additional subsidy for onshore wind would be ended.

Last year, the Scottish Conservatives announced a major energy policy review calling for subsidies to be phased out in Scotland, while the party has often criticised the Scottish Government for overruling councils when

windfarm applications have been initially refused.

It was revealed last year that the SNP had overturned a third of windfarm refusals, after developers had submitted an appeal.

And earlier this month, Scottish Conservative research showed Scotland now plays host to more than half of the UK's operational windfarms.

Scottish Conservative energy spokesman Murdo Fraser MSP said:

"This is a welcome commitment, and one that should be adopted by the Scottish Government too.

"Windfarms have a place, but that has been wildly overstretched by an SNP government obsessed

by unrealistic renewable energy targets.

"It's completely unacceptable for a council to make an informed decision on a windfarm application after consulting experts and local communities, only to be overruled by ministers in Edinburgh.

"Last year, the Scottish Conservatives committed to phasing out windfarm subsidies.

"Scotland already more than pulls its weight with onshore wind energy, and it's now time to put an end to the incredible march of turbines across our countryside."

David Cameron promised 3,000 more midwives, but he's failing to deliver them - Andrew Gwynne

Andrew Gwynne MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, responding to reports of an acute shortage of midwives in maternity departments in hospitals, said:

"David Cameron promised 3,000 more midwives, but he's failing to deliver them.

"Across England, too many maternity units are operating without enough staff - unable to keep up with demand - whilst others are facing closure or downgrading.

"Experts have warned the Government about high vacancy levels and staff shortages, but Ministers continue to ignore them. Labour is committed to safe staffing levels based on expert advice.

"This is yet more proof that you can't trust the Tories with the NHS."



Young sparrow in urban garden

Living wage commitment strengthened

The Scottish Government is to propose two important amendments to the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Bill that will further strengthen its commitment to the living wage, the Deputy First Minister has announced in a parliamentary debate.

The Bill already contains provisions which will allow the Scottish Government to issue statutory guidance on workforce matters - which would include remuneration - in procurement. The first amendment announced by the Deputy First Minister will put an explicit reference to the living wage on the face of the Bill and make it clear that one of the factors that authorities will require to evaluate, where it is relevant to the performance of the contract, is a

contractor's approach to pay and the living wage.

This means that for contracts where low pay is traditionally an issue, bidding companies will have their approach to managing, rewarding and engaging with their workforce, including payment of the living wage, evaluated as part of the procurement process.

The second amendment will require public authorities to set out, in their procurement strategies, what their policy is in relation to ensuring that the companies they contract with pay the living wage.

These amendments will strengthen the Bill and help to ensure that payment of the living wage gets the

priority it deserves – but without breaching EU law.

Ms Sturgeon said:

“The proposed amendments to the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Bill highlight this Government’s commitment to doing as much as possible to tackle pay inequality.

“We are the first Scottish Government ever to pay the living wage to all of our employees and to everyone who works in the NHS.

“Our proposed changes will send a very powerful message to businesses wanting to work on public sector contracts that they will have to demonstrate how they reward and motivate staff.

“Our hands are tied by EU legislation in relation to making the living wage

a mandatory condition of contract. However, we can ensure the procurement processes encourage and support payment of the living wage and that is exactly what the Bill will do.

“With independence, we will also be able to ensure that the National Minimum Wage rises every year, at least in line with inflation and never again falls behind the cost of living, as it has done every year since 2008.”



UK acts to stop sexual violence in conflict

On April 17, 2014, the British Embassy held a press-briefing at the Institute of Public Policy (IPP) to launch a poster competition as a part of the “End Sexual Violence in Conflict” initiative.

The UK's Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) was launched by UK Foreign Secretary William Hague with the Special Envoy of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Angelina Jolie, in May 2012. The Initiative aims to end the culture of impunity for sexual violence in conflict and to increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice both internationally and nationally.

The press-briefing at IPP launched a competition for citizens of Kyrgyzstan aged 15 years or over to

design a poster conveying one of the key messages of the campaign. The designers of the best posters will be awarded with valuable prizes and their works will be displayed during the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, which will take place in London in June, 2014. Upon completion of the contest there will be a nomadic exhibition at several universities of Kyrgyzstan.

The participants of the event included UK Ambassador Judith Farnworth, press officers of the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ombudsman's Office and NGOs, as well as experts in the sphere of sexual and gender-based violence. Aleksei Vysogorov, head of the art platform, Design.kg, told the audience about the rules of the poster contest.



Consultation launched on how science should benefit from funding

Giving you the opportunity to say how the new funding on science and research should be spent.

The consultation is seeking views from the science community so that it has the opportunity to say how this money should be invested; from refurbishing a university laboratory, to investing in a new major international project.

This follows the Chancellor's announcement on making a long-term commitment to invest in science and research infrastructure, increasing capital investment to £1.1 billion and growing it in line with inflation each year to 2020. This boost will also further support the UK economy

The research vessel will give UK science one of the biggest, most capable polar ships in the world. It should be ready to enter service in 2019, and will support scientists in both the Antarctic and the Arctic. It's hull will have incredible strength, allowing it to push deeper into pack ice than any previous British research vessel. It will be equipped with leading-edge technology to support oceanographic, marine ecosystem, geophysical and other research activities that will help determine the changing polar environments.

Deutsche Bank warns investors of Scottish separation risks

A report into the impact of Scottish independence by one of the world's leading banks has expressed a number of concerns.

Deutsche Bank's report on separation said that should there be a Yes vote in September there is a risk of "capital flight" as individuals and businesses move their money out of Edinburgh.

The document, 'Scotland: The independence question', stated uncertainty over currency and the question of whether or not a separate Scotland would take its fair share of national debt could lead to the financial exodus.

Deutsche Bank added in its findings that Scotland's rate of borrowing would be higher if it broke away from

the rest of the UK, and cast further doubt about a newly independent state gaining automatic EU admission.

And whatever currency option was settled on, the report said, it was likely some form of "sterlingisation" would have to occur as a "stop gap".

In a stern warning, economists at the bank said if the Scottish Government had got it wrong on its widely disputed oil projections, "the fiscal position could look more precarious than envisaged by authorities".

Scottish Conservative finance spokesman Gavin Brown MSP said:

"This is yet another highly respected international

organisation raising some very serious questions for the SNP's case for independence.

"The Scottish Government cannot resort to its usual tactic of accusing anyone who questions its plans as scaremongering or lacking impartiality.

"Deutsche Bank is a major firm with detailed knowledge of how finance works, and is completely detached from the independence debate.

"It is now incumbent on the Scottish Government to reflect carefully on these points and come up with some answers.

"The report states it is likely a separate Scotland would have higher borrowing

rates, an issue the SNP has been extremely vague on.

"People and businesses will also want to hear answers from the Scottish Government on the risk of capital flight should Scotland breakaway from the rest of the UK."





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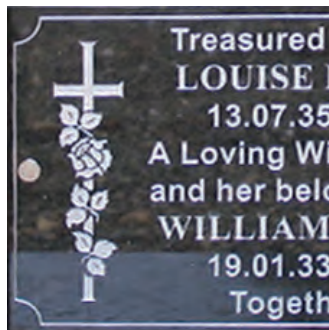
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Get ready for summer with PHE heatwave plan

The Heatwave Plan for 2014 is based around the Met Office Heat-Health Watch alert system which alerts the public and health and social care services to forecast and actual severe hot weather in different parts of the country, so that appropriate action can be taken.

It is a joint plan from Public Health England (PHE), NHS England, the Department of Health and the Local Government Association, with input from the Voluntary and Community Sector and other stakeholders. It details the actions that can be taken by health and social care professionals, the public and others before and during periods of hot weather.

Dr Angie Bone, head of the Extreme Events Section at PHE's Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards, said:

Although a hot summer might be welcomed by many people after all the rain this winter, it's important to remember that hot weather can have a harmful effect on health.

During the prolonged period of hot weather in July last year, PHE issued precautionary advice and reported small increases in heat related illnesses in line with seasonal expectations for the hot weather, using PHE surveillance systems including mortality data, consultation data from GPs and emergency department attendances.

This is why we release a Heatwave Plan each year, so that health and social care professionals and the public are as prepared as they can be to minimise the harmful effects of hot weather.

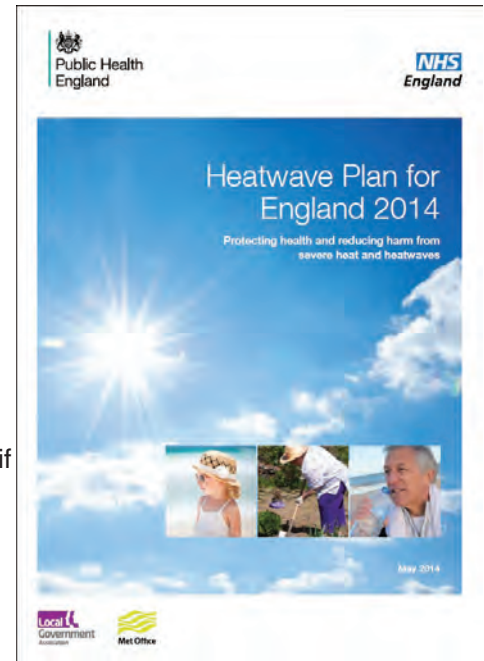
Dr Bone added:

Much of the advice that will help people during prolonged periods of hot weather is pretty common sense, such as drinking plenty of water, avoiding sun exposure between 11am and 3pm and planning strenuous activity for cooler times of the day, if possible.

But it's equally important that health and social care organisations, councils and those who work with

vulnerable people consider the potential impacts hot weather can have and carefully plan around that.

Our hope is that this plan will aid both professionals and the public so that we can all enjoy summer safely.



Air pollution: We need to force politicians to take the issue seriously

THE Green Party of England and Wales gives its backing to The Campaign for Air Pollution Public Inquiry and its aims to both identify why air quality strategies have failed throughout the UK and improve air quality in the future.

Throughout the UK, local Green Party groups have been tirelessly campaigning to clean up the UK's toxic air. From challenging the building of incinerators to calling for better reporting of air pollution, Greens are at the forefront of the fight for clean air in the UK and Europe.

Jean Lambert, the Green Party's MEP for London and a founder supporter of Clean Air in London, said:

"The fact that thousands are dying because of air pollution each year should be a source of shame for Ministers. Yet, despite the mounting evidence of this major public health threat, the Government is doing far too little to reduce air pollution.

In Ms Lambert's London constituency 3,389 deaths in 2010 were associated with air pollution. Public Health England's report estimates that 7.2% of deaths in London were attributable to air pollution

"With almost one in 12 deaths in my London caused by air pollution it is abundantly clear that action is needed.

"We need to radically rethink the way they are

dealing with air pollution. To protect people's health we need both the UK Government and the Mayor of London to be bold in tackling air pollution – and stop trying to water down the rules.

"We need more 'very low emissions zones', cleaner buses, a strategy to reduce pollution from taxi exhaust, 20mph speed limits as standard in residential areas, and more steps to encourage walking and cycling.

"It's time we recognise that air pollution is a political issue. We can clean up our air, but we need to force politicians to take the issue seriously."

www.cappi.org.uk

RBS - Osborne is in a terrible muddle over bankers' bonuses

Cathy Jamieson MP, Labour's Shadow Treasury Minister, responding to reports about bonuses at RBS, said:

"George Osborne is in a terrible muddle over bankers' bonuses. He is spending taxpayer's money on a legal fight in Brussels against the bonus cap and yet imposing the minimum cap at RBS.

"The Government has bowed to pressure on RBS and finally admitted that bonuses of two times salary would be unacceptable at what remains a Bank in Government ownership. They voted against Labour's motion to impose the minimum cap at RBS in January, but have now been forced to reverse their position.

"But confusingly at the same time the Chancellor is supporting higher bonuses in Lloyds Bank and elsewhere.

"People who are facing a cost-of-living crisis are rightly angry about excessive rewards for failure in banking over recent years. The Chancellor should accept the logic of today's announcement and drop his legal action to block the bonus cap.

"And he should heed Labour calls to implement existing legislation on transparency in pay at the top and repeat the tax on bankers' bonuses to pay for a Compulsory Jobs Guarantee for young people out of work for a year or more."

