

Government WORLD

Autumn 2007 Edition

A wide-angle photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, several cows of different colors (white, brown, black) are scattered across a lush green field. Some are standing, some are lying down. In the middle ground, there are a few clusters of trees, notably a large, leafy tree on a slight rise. The background consists of rolling hills that fade into a hazy, light blue sky.

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The Cemetery Village[©]

What is a cemetery village? Before you read this article you may think it a morbid and distasteful term, but you may also think it a very natural way to describe places where loved ones are interred.

For some, cemeteries are something to be ignored, or thought of as 'spooky' places for the dead, where overgrown ivy creeps and smothers the old and twisted memorials of another time.



But, as Chuck Palahniuk says in 'Fight Club': "On a large enough time line, the survival rate for everyone will drop to zero." and in a world of instant gratification and short attention spans, a place that reminds us of those that lived before, can increase our sense of place in the world and our appreciation of it.

The aim of the Cemetery Village is to provide for the needs of the bereaved, whether it be burial or cremated remains interment, offering a wide range of choice and services to make a difficult time, less difficult. The day of the funeral is experienced by many people as 'the day they can begin to grieve'. The Cemetery Village is there for them at this

time and it will be there in the years to come when the grieving process is less painful and the visits become ones of consolation and peaceful contemplation.

This leads on to the subject of the *environment* of the Cemetery Village; as mentioned at the start of this article, cemeteries can be thought of as 'spooky' places for the dead, and it's not surprising considering some of the appalling conditions within which many of our cemeteries and churchyards now languish - and these aren't closed and forgotten graveyards as seen in a multitude of horror films - these are fully working places, still carrying out interments!

It is said that you can measure how civilised a country is by the way it treats its dead. Indeed, additional to this is the way the living are also treated and this is at the heart of the Cemetery Village ideal; creating living environments which embrace wildlife havens of peace and tranquillity



more of a forgotten one. The average municipal cemetery was created over 100 years ago to relieve the overcrowded and unhealthy churchyards, unable to cope with the massive growth in population density brought about by the industrial revolution. These new 'modern' cemeteries were created outside the bustling cities in the then countryside and were landscaped and designed as attractive cemetery parks which immediately became a source of attraction to people wanting a break from crowded city life. Families would take picnics and sit on the neat lawns and grand monuments were erected in memory of the dead.

This close relationship between the living and the dead was a natural and healthy one and the experience of the Cemetery Village, as a place for the spiritual health of the community, encourages this today.

Comments to:
bereavementservices@government-world.com



£50m funding for cleaner hospitals

Directors of nursing to get funds for improvements as infection improvement teams double in size

Secretary of State for Health Alan Johnson has announced £50 million extra funding to tackle healthcare associated infections (HCAs) such as MRSA and C.difficile.

Bug-busting infection Improvement Teams will double in size so that any Trust that is not on course to meet the 2008 MRSA target or has a significant number of patients with C.difficile, will have access to a team of experts to help them reduce infection.

Health Secretary, Alan Johnson, said:

"Tackling MRSA and other healthcare associated infections is one of my immediate priorities.

"NHS staff have worked hard to slow the increase in C.difficile reports from 17 per cent to 8 per cent, whilst reducing MRSA bloodstream infections in the three months to December last year by 20 per cent, compared with 2003-04. This is a step in the right direction but clearly more must be done to improve the quality of care and patient safety.

"I am therefore asking each Director of Nursing in every Strategic Health Authority to make sure that frontline clinicians are supported in the work they do to reduce infection and to provide a clean, safe environment.



Secretary of State for Health
Alan Johnson



"On top of this I am doubling the size of the DH infection Improvement Team so that all Trusts struggling to reduce infections can have access to experts in prevention and control of infection."

Since last February, the Department's Improvement Teams have successfully helped around 70 NHS Trusts to identify and implement changes to bring their infection rates down. Most trusts visited have seen significant improvements with reductions in MRSA rates of between 16 and 34 per cent. The teams have recently extended their work to cover C. difficile infections.

The Improvement Teams are groups of experts such as doctors, nurses, microbiologists, infection control practitioners and service improvement experts who work with NHS organisations to:

- Diagnose the issues which need to be tackled if there is to be better prevention and control of MRSA bloodstream infections and C. difficile infections
- Develop action plans with realistic implementation timescales
- Implement agreed plans and put in place management and support arrangements that facilitate sustained improvement
- Act as a catalyst for other Trusts and demonstrate that by adopting best practice rates can be reduced to lower levels at a faster rate.

Church of England should enter into the 'Spirit'

Is Health and Safety legislation being ignored by the Church?

The Church of England is in the most fortunate position of being able to hand over certain management and maintenance responsibilities to Local Authorities and therefore to the tax payer in respect of Churchyards which it deems to be 'closed'. These are generally closed for burial but normally open to the public for visitation or access.

The Local Authority is controlled by Health and Safety Legislation to risk assess and respond under controlled criteria and yet the 'Church' through its own lawful instruments can refuse, delay or condition a 'faculty' which the Local Authority would normally apply for in causation of its work programme.

Diocesan Chancellors are delaying response and decision making. In some cases, Chancellors are requesting that the Local Authority liaise with individual incumbents, all of which will have differing opinions, requirements and interest or otherwise in proper and expeditious resolution of the project in hand. The increased burden of cost to the tax payer is unacceptable and the risk of accident substantially increased.

The Church, one would have thought, would be extremely appreciative of the fact that it does not have to care for and pay for the cost of its own Burial ground and enter into a 'Spirit' of co-operation with all those who are working hard to do that which is appropriate and lawful. The interference with a Health and Safety process is a criminal offence.

Comments to:
churchofenglandchurchyards@government-world.com

Flood Plain Development

The Government's plans to build 3 million homes by 2020. By 2010-11 more than 70,000 affordable homes a year would be built, of which 45,000 would be social homes and the rest shared ownership. This is indeed good news as we do need new homes, especially more affordable housing to stabilise house prices. Unfortunately, many of these new homes are to be built in flood risk areas, and the risk of flooding is only going to get worse in the future, if we are to believe the forecasts of climate change.

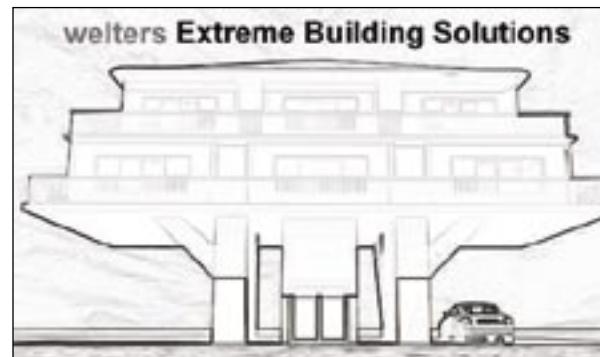


But is incorporating traditional flood defence measures enough to cope with this new building challenge? It is important that we act now to build an understanding of severe flood risk into the planning for these new houses at the earliest stage and this must include housing design as well.

We all know how traditional building structures were drastically inadequate at preventing water ingress, resulting in massive damage in personal and financial loss. Insurance companies not surprisingly now include flood risk as an increasingly important factor in underwriting and pricing.

The floods caused by the wettest June on record have been estimated to cost the insurance industry over £3 billion; as an example, the Association of British Insurers (ABI) says the Thames Gateway developments will be uninsurable unless special measures are taken to minimise the flood threat. They have said that the government's plans to build 85,000 homes must be modified to include safeguards such as only occupying homes above first-floor level due to the high risk of flooding, which is an unprecedented step.

So, why are the developers still building standard housing models in these high risk areas? Why is the government approving developments on these high risk areas without insisting on liaising with expert design teams such as **welters organisation worldwide** who have investigated and developed solutions for building systems in extreme risk areas? It is time for a new approach and a new building ethos that will realistically provide protection from the inevitability of the flood waters and the damage and loss of life that result.



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Long term Incapacity benefit gets worse

Chris Grayling, MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, "This is a depressing demonstration of the failures of the Government's welfare to work programme. We keep hearing grand announcements about helping people off Incapacity Benefit back into work but when you read the small print in the statistics you find it's just not happening. Once again, you just can't trust what this government is saying".

- More than half of the people claiming incapacity benefit have been doing so for more than five years.
- Nearly quarter of a million more people have been receiving incapacity benefit for more than five years.

Year Total claims (000) Claims older than five years (000) Percentage of claims

Feb 01 2415 998 41%
Feb 03 2493 1121 45%
Feb 05 2503 1195 48%
Feb 07 2433 1231 51%

Gove: Government responsible for failure on literacy

Responding to Ed Balls' comments on promoting literacy, Shadow Children's Secretary Michael Gove said:

"There is a serious crisis in British schools. The gap between school standards for rich families and for the rest is getting wider. British children are falling behind other countries."

"About half the children leaving primary school at 11 can't do basic reading, writing, and maths, and one in five school-leavers still can't do basic reading, writing, and maths. The Government is responsible for the failure of so many schools to teach children to read properly."

Government Policy 'U' Turn

Remember the days when United Kingdom food production was of prime importance even to the exclusion of wildlife habitat?

The landscape was destroyed and food mountains emerged throughout E.E.C control.

Farmers were paid to remove hedgerows and increase cultivation areas and incentives were paid encouraging the use of vast quantities of chemical fertiliser, which along with pesticides, oil and other contaminants have damaged the water courses and ancient aquifers across Britain.

Now, - Yes, not difficult to guess - farmers are being paid to plant new hedgerows, which often reappear in the exact location of the original hedges.

Farmers are also being paid not to farm land under varying criteria and Food Production is no longer a priority. Cheaper and often poorer quality food is to be imported from sources often thousands of miles away.

But alas, the 'civil service' machine trundles on whilst all working citizens continue to pay the Inland Revenue directly and indirectly higher percentages of income to compensate for policy and operational error.

welters organisation worldwide have for many years been designing and producing environmental solutions, many of which have prevented the need for air born emissions and also the pollution of water courses.

welters are now making a bold statement of policy and commitment in support of Environmental Awareness. In March 2007 **welters** acquired Ellery Hill in Cumbria. Yes, the fencing and 'long gone' ancient hedgerows are being re-established but additionally a Galloway herd of 'Green' single suckler cattle, outlying and feeding from not only natural grasses but

heathers, mosses and water meadow plants have been introduced.

This is indeed an Agricultural food production policy for Beef which is not encouraged by Government Policy. Quite predictably, the Ellery Hill model will become an example from which Government Policy will be changed in around fifteen years time!!

Comments to:
agriculture@government-world.com

Competition regime not working, says Consumer Watchdog

A survey by the Consumer Council for Water and Ofwat detailing business customers' views of competition in the water industry has revealed that the water competition regime is not providing businesses with a workable framework in which they can change their water supplier.

Despite interest from business customers, more than 18 months after the launch of competition, none has actually switched their water supplier - and the results of the survey indicate this is likely to remain the case, at least in the short term.

Responding to the business community's frustrations with the competition regime, the aim of the survey was to help the Consumer Council for Water to gain a greater understanding of business customer views and expectations regarding competition. The research will also be taken in to account by Ofwat in its ongoing review of competition. The next step will be a wider consultation this month.

The findings reveal a clear indication that the

existing competition regime is failing to meet the needs of the businesses it was designed to serve, with most dissatisfaction and interest in competition revolving around the question of price.

The introduction of competition into the water industry in December 2005 gave more options to large business users (around 2,200 businesses likely to buy more than 50 megalitres of water per year) to change supplier in order to reduce cost and negotiate tailored service levels.

Most business customers (84%) are supportive of competition in principle, but only 30% are confident that the current regime will deliver benefits to customers. Nearly two thirds of customers were likely to switch in the right circumstances, but about the same number think the competition regime for the water industry compares unfavourably with other utilities.

The survey revealed that only 28% were satisfied or very satisfied with the level of their current bill, so it is no surprise that 93% would switch if offered lower bills. Around half (49%) would switch if a betterservice was offered by a new supplier, while 43% wanted a guaranteed switchback.

Sir James Perowne, Deputy Chair of the Consumer Council for Water, said: "Dealing with the issues raised in this research will be a matter for government, sector regulators, and the Consumer Council for Water, working with the water industry. "There are a number of barriers which are stopping the new regime from working. These need fixing. The market also needs to be bigger with more customers having a choice."

"We need to be clear where the water industry is going in terms of competition and over what time scale. If some customers will not be allowed a choice, it is important that they are not disadvantaged by the extension of the regime." The full report is available on the Consumer Council for Water website at <http://www.ccwater.org.uk>

welters environmental commitment

welters organisation worldwide, the creators of the **welters cemetery village®** Systems which embrace the best use of land and environmentally sensitive solutions for full body burial and cremated remains interment, now announce their most progressive commitment to global environmentalism yet.

Not only will **welters** maintain free of charge a commemorative register and password protected virtual cemetery for 'rights owner' use, but **welters** make an absolute commitment to plant and maintain one tree for every 'burial rights owner' or deceased within 6 months following the date of interment into a **welters** facility or registration which ever is the later.

Tree planting schemes are currently in the Scottish Borders and Cumbria. In addition to the commitment to plant the renewable tree resource, **welters** will also stock the burns and becks within the tree planting scheme areas with Brown trout smolt and parr thus protecting this most important British indigenous species.

Comments to:
bereavementservices@government-world.com



MoD responds to MPs' report on Armed Forces recruitment and retention

Defence Minister Derek Twigg recently gave his reaction to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee report on recruitment and retention in the Armed Forces.

Under Secretary of State, Derek Twigg, said:

"We welcome the Public Accounts Committee report and will look at the recommendations and respond to them fully in due course. We will consider the report carefully, however, there are a number of points that I want to make in advance of a more detailed response.

"The Government recognises that the current high tempo of operations is putting pressure on our people, but they are responding magnificently and I thank them for that. Since this Committee heard evidence last November, the Chief of Defence Staff himself has said that the Armed Forces are very stretched but can sustain what they are currently doing. With the drawdown of troops in Bosnia, Northern Ireland and the reductions already made possible in Iraq, some of the pressure should soon start to ease.

"I accept that there are manning challenges and shortages in some specific areas, but we are taking action. We have a Service Personnel Plan to deal with key issues affecting recruitment and retention, and we are adjusting our policies accordingly.

"The significant steps we have taken include the recently increased Operational Bonus of £2,320, the pay rise of 9.2 per cent for junior rank - the biggest rise in the public sector, Financial Retention



Under Secretary of State,
Derek Twigg

Initiatives, and the Rebalancing Lives Schemes, all of which seek to improve working lives and help us recruit the right people. I am committed to ensuring their our efforts in these areas will result in future improvements in recruitment and retention.

"Recent independently verified manning statistics show that recruitment into the Armed Forces remains strong against a buoyant economy, particularly for the Army Infantry. The latest Army figures show a 12 per cent increase in Army recruits since last year. The National Audit Office report last year highlighted that the Armed Forces have recruited 98% of their target since 2000. It is not the case that there are increasing shortages of personnel. In 1997 there was a 4.2% shortage compared with today's figure of 3%. It is also inaccurate to say that more people are leaving and that we are experiencing a "peak" in outflow. The number of people leaving has remained broadly stable and compares favourably with the retention rates in the public and private sector.

"It's important to recognise that future restructuring plans aim to deliver improved capability and flexibility in our Armed Forces and will mean that we need fewer people. We are working hard to ensure that current or improved rates of recruitment and retention will meet future requirements.

"Our Armed Forces have magnificently risen to the challenge. I want to re-emphasise that the Government is committed to listening to our people, responding to their concerns and recognising and rewarding their considerable talents and efforts."



LUCAS likens climate change scepticism to Holocaust denial

GREEN MEP Caroline Lucas has hit out at the media after a poll revealed that a majority of people in the UK believe that scientists aren't agreed about the facts of climate change - or that it is being caused by human activity.

According to latest figures by pollsters Ipsos-MORI, some 56 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement: "Many leading experts still question if human activity is contributing to climate change". Just 22 per cent disagreed. Dr Lucas, who is a member of the European Parliament's Environment and Climate Change committees, said: "This is very worrying.

Politicians will never take the steps necessary to cut emissions unless voters demand that they do so, and they won't demand it if they remain sceptical about their role in changing the climate in the first place.

"The media are, at least in part, to blame: their obsession with appearing to be balanced means discussions of climate change tend to have a naysayer arguing either that climate change isn't happening, or that it isn't manmade, as though there is a serious ongoing scientific debate about this.

"But the fact is that there is an overwhelming scientific consensus on climate change: almost every scientist in the world agrees that climate change is happening, that it is being fuelled by human activity, and that our best chance of ameliorating its worst impacts lies in dramatically cutting global greenhouse gas emissions.

"By suggesting otherwise the media is, albeit

inadvertently, promoting dangerous scepticism about climate change - and undermining our chances of doing anything about it."

Dr Lucas, who was named Politician of the Year in the recent Observer Ethical Awards 2007, likened climate change scepticism to holocaust denial.

"The media's attempt to seem balanced is in fact distorting the public's understanding of perhaps the most pressing issue facing us all today - and it's tragic. It doesn't make any sense: would the media insist on having a holocaust-denier to balance any report about the second world war? Of course not - but by insisting on giving so much airtime to climate change deniers, it is doing exactly the same thing."

Source: <http://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/3059>

Doing the rounds on the internet...

Something to think about!

A worldwide survey was conducted by the UN. The only question asked was:

"Would you please give your honest opinion about solutions to the food shortage in the rest of the world?"

The survey was a huge failure...

In Africa they didn't know what "food" meant. In Eastern Europe they didn't know what "honest" meant.

In Western Europe they didn't know what "shortage" meant.

In China they didn't know what "opinion" meant. In the Middle East they didn't know what "solution" meant.

In South America they didn't know what "please" meant.

And in the US they didn't know what "the rest of the world" meant.

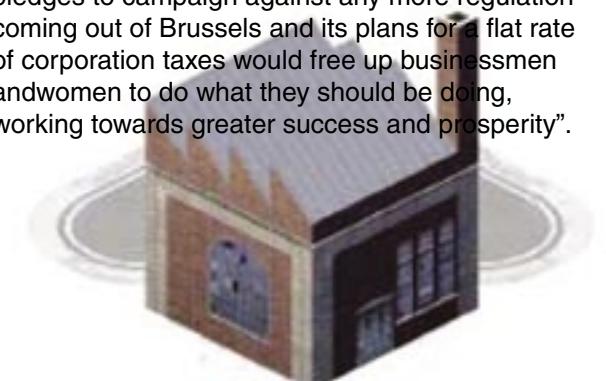
Whitehall and Brussels conspire to destroy small business

"I am amazed that anybody sets up a business in the current climate" said Godfrey Bloom MEP today. He was talking after David Frost of the British Chambers of Commerce had singled out over regulation as the key factor that harms small business, and Alastair Darling, the Trade and Industry Secretary had supported increase in corporation tax on the same small businesses, Mr Bloom went on, "Regulation is cooked up in Brussels, and then the Government hit people with more tax.

Can it be possible that these people actually want business to succeed?"

"Over 80% of people working in Britain work in small and medium size businesses. They are the lifeblood of our economy. If you want to encourage entrepreneurs, and stimulate employment growth then they are the key sector".

"Why do those who claim to govern us in Brussels and London so hate enterprise? What have they got against the little guy? The UK Independence Party pledges to campaign against any more regulation coming out of Brussels and its plans for a flat rate of corporation taxes would free up businessmen and women to do what they should be doing, working towards greater success and prosperity".



The forecast for 2014...

Climate scientists at the Met Office Hadley Centre will unveil the first decadal climate prediction model in a paper published 10 August 2007 in the journal Science. The paper includes the Met Office's prediction for annual global temperature to 2014.

Over the 10-year period as a whole, climate continues to warm and 2014 is likely to be 0.3 Degrees C warmer than 2004. At least half of the years after 2009 are predicted to exceed the warmest year currently on record.

These predictions are very relevant to businesses and policy-makers who will be able to respond to short-term climate change when making decisions today. The next decade is within many people's understanding and brings home the reality of a changing climate.

The new model incorporates the effects of sea surface temperatures as well as other factors such as man-made emissions of greenhouse gases, projected changes in the sun's output and the effects of previous volcanic eruptions - the first time internal and external variability have both been predicted.

Team leader, Dr Doug Smith said: "Occurrences of El Nino, for example, have a significant effect on shorter-term predictions. By including such internal variability, we have shown a substantial improvement in predictions of surface temperature." Dr Smith continues: "Observed relative cooling in the Southern Ocean and tropical Pacific over the last couple of years was correctly predicted by the new system, giving us greater confidence in the model's performance".

Total global warming on a decadal average is 0.8 Degrees C since 1900 (IPCC 2007). 1998 is the current warmest year on record with a global mean temperature of 14.54 Degrees C.

Cremation is bad for your health

According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, crematoriums will become the single biggest mercury polluters in the UK, unless urgent action is taken.

By 2020, it is predicted they will account for more than 25 to 35 per cent of mercury emissions, three times the levels from burning coal.

Mercury is toxic, accumulates in the air and water, and can harm the brain, kidneys, nervous system and unborn children. Up to 16% of all mercury emitted in the UK comes from crematoria because of the fillings in teeth.

Emissions of mercury from all sources have decreased by 89% from 1970 to 2004. They are expected to reduce further up to 2020 as a result of other measures. The increase in crematoria emissions is caused by a generation which is more likely to have retained all its teeth, but has more fillings because it did not benefit from advances in oral hygiene.

The aim in the UK is to cut emissions of mercury from crematoria by half by the end of 2012. This figure was determined after extensive consultation to achieve a balance between costs to the sector and environmental benefits.

All new crematoria are required to fit mercury control equipment but those conducting fewer than 750 cremations a year have till 2012 to do this. The Federation of British Cremation Authorities (FBCA) has proposed sharing the burden of cost.

Under its scheme, all cremation authorities will pay an annual fee to the Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation, which will

redistribute its income to crematoria that have installed new equipment.

Another possibility is to remove filled teeth from dead people before bodies are cremated. Pacemakers are already removed before cremation as they explode when subjected to high temperatures.

The improvements in mercury abatement are expected to put between £25 and £40 on the cost of a funeral by cremation. According to a 2006 Survey of Funeral Costs commissioned by life insurance company American Life, the average cost of a funeral including cremation today is around £1,954. Nearly 500,000 cremations are carried out by the industry per year.

Comments to:
bereavementservices@government-world.com



Memorial Safety message not getting through?

Over the past several years Burial Authorities have been implementing large scale memorial safety audits of their cemeteries. The purpose of these audits is to identify any possible risks to health and safety from neglected, old or poorly installed memorials.

Each memorial is the property and responsibility of the grave owner. Where possible, families would be contacted and advised to instruct a Memorial Mason to carry out the appropriate repairs in making the memorial safe in accordance with modern standards and guidelines. Where no family can be traced, the memorial is typically laid down as this is generally the cheapest option for cash strapped councils.

This process can take many months to complete and is a huge drain on resources as even a small cemetery can contain thousands of memorials.

Much of the causes for memorial failure are the result of poorly constructed and installed headstones common in most modern cemeteries. This has been compounded by a lack of monitoring by the Burial Authority and more importantly, a lack of many Memorial Masons to provide a professional standard of fixing. Too often plonking a memorial on a grave with barely a dowel and a slap of cement to hold it in place.

To try and regulate the industry, NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) and ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management) have produced standards and



Poorly installed memorials

procedures of best practice which their members are expected to adhere to and in theory should prevent any more unsuitable memorial installations. Unfortunately it appears that in some cemeteries this message is still not getting through.



The above example is arguably an accident waiting to happen. The memorial bases are clearly too thin for the height and they are laid on a thin raft of concrete which is already failing.



Most Memorial Masons still produce the same flawed designed, adapted or retro-fitted with dubious forms of stabilising in an attempt to meet safety requirements.

welters organisation worldwide produce a wide range of industry leading memorials designed specifically to exceed all health and safety specifications. These innovative memorials are now being installed by responsible councils across the UK.

Comments to:
bereavementservices@government-world.com



welters safe memorials



THE NEW MEMORIAL SAFETY RETRO-FIT ANCHOR SYSTEM - BETTER CALL WELTERS...

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Doing the rounds on the internet...

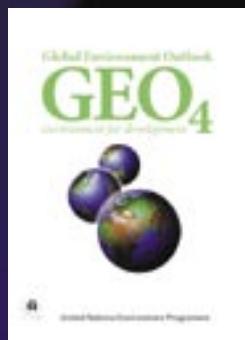


Sustainable Development - are we bleeding our planet dry?

It's currently the most detailed study of mankind's impact upon our planet, 572 pages compiled by hundreds of researchers from a vast area of disciplines covering not just the well trodden subject of climate change but also equally important issues like fresh water supplies, forestry, agriculture, biodiversity and the reduction of fertile land.

The culmination is the United Nations Geo-4 Global Environment Outlook Report which examines the whole range of environment issues and the connections between them.

In the words of the Geo 4:



"GEO-4 aims to provide a comprehensive, reliable and scientifically credible, policy-relevant, up-to-date assessment of, and outlook for, the state of the global environment."

The United Nations Environment Programme and the Global Environment Outlook process have over the past 10 years produced a series of global integrated environmental assessment reports on the interaction between environment and society.

This latest GEO-4 is the first of the GEO series of comprehensive reports to enter into a five-year production cycle.

The report indicates that there are declines in nearly all aspects of Earth's natural environment almost all as a direct result of humankind's activities.

The world's population has grown at an unprecedented rate, doubling to 6.5 billion since 1960 and is forecast to be over 8 billion in thirty year's time. With increases like this it is hardly surprising our environment is starting to feel the strain and could be critical by the middle of the century.

Some damning conclusions state:

- There is "visible and unequivocal" evidence of the impacts of climate change
 - Many farming systems have reached their limits of production
 - Warmer temperatures and ocean acidification threaten food supplies
 - 1.8 billion people face water shortages by 2025
 - Three-quarters of marine fisheries exploited to or beyond their limits
 - Exposure to pollutants causes 20% of disease in developing nations
 - Pollution being "exported" to developing world
 - There is "visible and unequivocal" evidence of the impacts of climate change
 - Many farming systems have reached their limits of production
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 - Three-quarters of marine fisheries exploited to or beyond their limits
 - Exposure to pollutants causes 20% of disease in developing nations
 - Pollution being "exported" to developing world
- About 60% of "ecosystem services" are degraded

The few positives such as the slowing down in the destruction of the rain forests and cleaner air quality over Western Europe are greatly overshadowed by the downward slide.

In our corner of the globe, the greater prosperity and growing number of individual households are contributing to unsustainable patterns of production and consumption.

Sustainable Development refers to the ability to progress and grow within a replenishing environment and according to the report: The world as a whole is living far beyond its means. The human population is now so large that "the amount of resources needed to sustain it exceeds what is available... humanity's footprint [its environmental demand] is 21.9 hectares per person while the Earth's biological capacity is, on average, only 15.7 ha/person..."

For some of the world's persistent problems the damage may already be irreversible. GEO-4 warns that tackling the underlying causes of environmental pressures often affects the vested interests of powerful groups able to influence policy decisions.

The only way to address these harder-to-manage problems requires moving the environment from the periphery to the core of decision-making: **environment for development, not development to the detriment of environment.**

You can download the report from the UNEP website
<http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/index.asp>



Leaked documents expose Labour's broken promises on climate change



The Green Party has responded to news of Labour's plans to abandon their renewables targets.

Leaked documents suggest that Ministers are planning a U-turn on Britain's pledges to combat climate change that "effectively abolishes" its targets to rapidly expand the use of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power.

John Hutton, the Secretary of State for business, is expected to tell the Prime Minister that Britain should work with Poland and other governments sceptical about climate change to "help persuade" German chancellor Angela Merkel and others to set lower renewable targets, before binding commitments are framed in December.

He will say that the current target of 20 per cent of all European energy to come from renewable sources by 2020 is, expensive and faces "severe practical difficulties".

Green Party Principal Speaker Caroline Lucas, who is also the Green Euro - MP for the South East, said:

"The Government has failed to show any real

commitment on targets set by the EU, so the contents of these leaked papers sadly come as no surprise.

"Current government policies in support of renewable energy are confusing, piecemeal and inadequate, and now seem to be in complete disarray.

"This consistent failure of political will to do what is necessary to substantially increase investment in renewable energy is shameful, particularly at a time when scientists are reporting that carbon emissions are accumulating in the atmosphere far more quickly than predicted.

"Moreover, to object to the renewable target on the grounds that it could undermine the EU's carbon trading scheme is an extraordinary argument, which suggests that the Government has forgotten that the primary aim of emissions trading is to reduce emissions.

"The UK has a real opportunity to lead the way in the development of alternative sources of renewable energy, such as wind and solar power, yet the Government prefers to hold on to its ambition of introducing more dirty, dangerous and expensive nuclear power instead.

"Radical reforms are urgently needed to the way renewable energy technology development is supported in the UK. Government grants are derisory and the private sector currently invests just £250m a year in renewable energy technology when to significantly boost this industry we need to see more like £2.5 billion going into new projects.

"Capital grant schemes, such as the Low Carbon

Buildings Programme, which has been massively oversubscribed despite being under-promoted, need a proper level of funding. The UK's record is derisory compared to much more rapid investment in other countries including Germany, Denmark and Japan."

The Green Party believes that seriously tackling climate change requires a radical policy shift at the heart of government. We would:

- Replace the Renewables Obligation by phasing in "Feed in Tariffs" - a simple framework of guaranteed prices for exported renewable energy. 'Feed-in tariffs' have been a runaway success in Germany and other countries, stimulating both large- and small-scale projects and kick-starting a profitable industry that supports many thousands of jobs.
- Apply a resources tax to fossil fuels to expand funding for energy conservation and renewables
- Expand the capital grants scheme for renewables
- Introduce a low-cost loan scheme for individuals and businesses
- Create a more favourable planning policy framework for renewable energy

In this way we would massively invest in renewables, creating thousands of jobs and allowing us to switch from carbon-based to a renewables economy.



A Question of Design

CEO of welters organisation worldwide

Keith Welters talks about the importance of design

"As a designer, my job and totally rewarding privilege is to find answers to questions"

That statement is, of course, a gross oversimplification. What I really seek is vital and progressive solutions to the problems faced in manufacturing high quality products. The product could be sculpted with great skill from the only available piece of bog oak or produced by a developing manufacturing technique from an advanced man-made material. Both the material and method of production therefore will form together the eventual product.

There are many aspects, obvious, but worth underlining. For example, the product needs its innovator and its manufacturer. The innovator and the craftsman may be one or the craftsman may interpret the concepts of the designer. In volume production, the manufacturing organisation is required to produce the product competitively. Viability has to be established both in quality and cost. It is futile to spend 12 months producing a beautifully timber-engineered salad serving spoon when in three years a cathedral roof could be restructured by loving care, dedication and extreme skill.

The owner and the environment

One aspect often forgotten - the product needs an owner. Without one, the dreams of the designer never become reality. The concepts may be sufficiently insensitive to be of no interest or they may be unaffordable. It has been reported that at one time, the



administration of a significant design college in Britain held the bizarre view that to expose its students to commercial pressures would inhibit the process of education. In my submission the designer is totally ineffective, like a fish without water, if he is unable not only to survive but to thrive upon his environment. If he should hold a view that his relationships with owners and customers (his 'environment') constitute pressure, then he should change profession or submit to a more pertinent education.

The outstanding omission

I have effectively been speaking about the plant and the flower without the seed. The seed is the 'question'. For me the most exciting part of all is to investigate a number of questions. The solutions develop through the design experience.

If we are to progress, the 'certain and relevant' aspects of the questions must be isolated from the



'uncertain and irrelevant' For example, it is written that God said "Let there be light" and there was light; and also "Let there be darkness" and there was darkness.

These writings through distance are difficult to analyse and yet the question of light and darkness is no longer consciously debated. Countless designers work away developing sunblinds, sunglasses, tinted windows and on the other hand controllable lighting systems.

Our awareness of light and darkness is real, but the world changes daily. We need to be aware of the wide-ranging and ever increasing format for our questions. Jimmy Savile, for example, once told us that this is the age of the train! A definitive statement, but however 'marvellous' the rail network was at the time, the statement raises questions.

A pilot may well contend this is the 'age of flight' although conversely the 'age of supersonic flight' for civilians ended in 2003 with the retirement of Concorde, this event has also been called the end of the 'first space age' because Concorde first took to the skies in 1969 - the same year that man first walked on the moon.

Nobody contests mechanised transportation systems are part of our lives. We all have them and use them, although we have different designs and styles and different methods of using them. It is a fairly recent innovation for architects to consider the place to put the car as an integral part of buildings design. For many years, buildings were built with no regard to this. A simple example of designers not asking the correct questions at the appropriate time.

Comments to:
design@government-world.com



Think before you sign - Healey issues flood insurance warning to people in Severn, Avon and Thames Valleys

Floods Recovery Minister John Healey today urged people in communities hit by the July floods to seek free and impartial insurance advice before signing up with third parties who offer to help settle insurance claims.

The July floods affected people particularly along the rivers Severn, Avon and Thames.

Publishing information setting out how people can access free insurance advice he warned that accepting help from third parties could mean people are left short of the money they need to fully repair their damaged homes and replace prized possessions.

His advice includes:

- * You can make a claim directly and free of charge direct to your insurer
- * You don't need to pay a 'middleman'
- * If you choose to accept help from third parties



check they are regulated by the Financial Services Authority

- * Free, independent advice is available from your local Citizen's Advice Service

Having visited a number of affected areas John Healey's top priority is for life in communities to get back to normal as quickly as possible. Key to this is people being able to repair their homes and replace their possessions at the earliest opportunity. So access to free insurance advice is essential. He has met with the insurance industry and heard how they are putting extra resources into speeding up the claims process

Flood Recovery Minister John Healey MP said: "I've visited a number of communities affected by the floods and have spoken with people whose homes have been damaged and have lost much of their belongings. I know a lot of people are very upset and feel vulnerable at this difficult time.

"That's why our top priority is for life to return to normal as quickly as possible. I have been working with the insurance industry to ensure that claims are being dealt with swiftly so people can start making repairs to their homes and replace possessions. "It is important people know where to access free and impartial advice so I'm arranging for practical information to be made available in flood affected communities.

"So there is no need to use a 'middleman' who might offer to settle claims in return for a cut of the payout. But where people choose to do this it is important they understand this could leave them short of the money they need to fully repair their damaged homes and replace prized possessions. "My message is clear - if in doubt speak to the Financial Services Authority, Association of British Insurers or the Citizen's Advice Service. They are there to help."

£46million of support has been announced

for floodhit areas and on top of that local authorities have the special Bellwin scheme to help compensate them for their costs. The Government is working with local authorities so money can be released to help those most in need as quickly as possible.

Specialist central government officials from areas including transport, schools and housing are also working with authorities to get a clear assessment of the costs and consequences of the floods so further targeted help can follow.

Further information is available via Government Offices and local authorities in flood-affected areas.

Call 101 to shop stores selling alcohol to underage children

101 - councils and police in partnership
across Northumberland and Tyne & Wear

Concerned residents are being asked to call 101 if they know of any shops selling alcohol to underage children.

The non-emergency number is best known for helping deal with issues of anti-social behaviour such as threatening and abusive behaviour, vandalism and graffiti, drunken and rowdy groups and noisy neighbours.

However 101 advisers are also able to take call from people worried about off-licenses or local shops who are knowingly selling alcohol to under 18s.



New licensing laws, which came into effect in November 2005 increased the maximum fine for selling alcohol to under 18s from £1,000 to £5,000. Personal licence holders who sell alcohol to under 18s can have their licence suspended on the first offence and a premise licence can be reviewed, suspended or revoked if a venue is found to be persistently selling to under 18s.

Peter Coates,
Northumbria 101

Operations Manager, said: "Children who manage to buy alcohol usually end up drinking it on the streets and in parks and public places which can lead to rowdiness, anti-social behaviour and threatening or intimidating behaviour, all of which we get calls about from members of the public. We also receive calls about the consequences of underage drinking such as litter and vandalism.

"Reporting shops who knowingly sell alcohol to under 18s may help to prevent a raft of anti-social behaviour in our communities and we are urging members of the public to call 101 to report offences of this nature."

Anyone under 18 should also be aware that it is an offence to 'attempt to buy' alcohol and both police and local authority trading standards officers work together and are ready to respond.

Government refuses to disclose amount of tax credit paid to migrants' children living overseas

By Philip Hammond MP
Member of Parliament for Runnymede & Weybridge
Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury

On the day of the annual deadline for tax credit applications, the Conservative Party reveals that Treasury Ministers are refusing to disclose the amount of tax credits and child benefits paid in respect of migrants' children living abroad.

Current benefit rules allow migrants working in the UK to claim Child Tax Credit and Child Benefit in respect of children living abroad.

Commenting, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Philip Hammond, said:

"Child Tax Credits and Child Benefit are key weapons in the fight against child poverty.

The Government is already losing this battle, with child poverty rising last year by 100,000 before

housing costs and by 200,000 after housing costs.

"It is vital that Gordon Brown now comes clean and tells us how much tax credit and child benefit money is going abroad to children who do not live in this country and who may never even have visited the UK."

Report highlights failure of BBC reform

Report by Lib Dem MP Don Foster

commenting on the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications report, which criticises the way that BBC chairmen are appointed, Liberal Democrat Shadow Culture, Media and Sport Secretary, Don Foster MP said:

"This report highlights the failure of the government's post-Hutton attempts to reform the BBC. There is now real confusion as to who ensures the BBC remains independent from political interference and who is representing the interests of the licence fee payer.

"The Liberal Democrats pointed out to the Government over three years ago that the role they were creating was ill-defined, and that the Trust was the wrong body to fulfil the task it had been charged with. It's impossible for the Trust to act as both 'flagwavers' and regulator.

"The fact that Michael Grade was able to leave at a moment's notice to ITV, a main competitor, left the BBC without leadership at a vital time in its history and raises very serious concerns about a possible conflict of interest. The Government must take note of the committee's recommendations if we are to prevent this from happening again.

"While the committee has made a number of insightful recommendations, only a fully independent Public Service Broadcasting Regulator will ensure the BBC continues to be a high quality benchmark for the media."

HSC says don't overcomplicate health and safety

As a part of the Government's Better Regulation Agenda the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have initiated a dedicated project to help small and medium size businesses (SMEs) to fulfil their health and safety requirements as outlined by law. With this initiative HSE aims to reduce the cost of risk assessment to most business by a third.

Speaking at an event that announced a number of government better regulation initiatives HSC Chair Sir Bill Callaghan said, "What has come to be known as 'elfandsafety' can be a frustrating business. In part it's frustrating because so many of the stories you hear are based on misinterpretations of the law, or the misguided actions of a few individuals. In reality much health and safety law is flexible, but it can be intimidating if you are not sure what is required."

Building on HSE's sensible risk campaign Sir Bill announced the launch of three more of HSE's example risk assessments to help businesses. He continued, "We are saying you don't need to overcomplicate things, keep your risk assessment fit for purpose, make it a living document and act on it. Risk assessment should be about what practical steps you need to take to protect people, not paperwork for its own sake. By itself, filling in a form never saved a life. It should be a means to an end - sensible risk management."

HSE has been working closely with stakeholders to develop industry-specific concise and practical example risk assessments that will help businesses with the information they need to make informed decisions, and make significant impact on the amount of time and money they feel they need to spend managing the risks in their workplaces. This project will help SMEs understand what a 'good enough' risk assessment looks like.

Examples on risk assessment can be viewed on the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk/risk/examples.htm

'Prehistoric' dinosaurs in Crystal Palace park upgraded to grade 1 listing

Culture Minister, Margaret Hodge, has announced that she is upgrading the Victorian prehistoric animal sculptures in Crystal Palace Park from Grade II to Grade I, and also amending the listing to include the geological strata and lead mine on the site.

The 1850s animal sculptures and surrounding landscape, known as the Dinosaur Court, were constructed in the grounds of the Crystal Palace after it was moved from The Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. The sculptures were listed Grade II in 1973.

The sculptures will now join the exclusive 2.5 per cent of list entries which are Grade 1 - which include the Royal Albert Hall, Buckingham Palace and the Cenotaph on Whitehall.

Margaret Hodge said:

"The prehistoric animal sculptures and associated geological formations provide an insight into the mid-19th



Century reconstruction of dinosaur species that had only recently been discovered. They are believed to be unique and are clearly of exceptional historic interest in a national and probably international context. I am delighted to upgrade their list entry to reflect their importance."

English Heritage describes the sculptures as "the first attempt to accurately reconstruct the three dinosaur species known to the scientific world in the 1850s within their geological environment". They were designed by Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins and were built out of brick and artificial stone on a framework of iron rods. The geological strata and lead mine were constructed at the same time, by James Campbell an engineer and mineralogist and were an "integral part of the original scheme". The strata were constructed from geological rocks.

Vegetation concealed much of the geological strata at the time of the re-survey of the London Borough of Bromley in the late 1960s. This meant the degree of survival of the original landscape would not have been apparent at the time when the original decision to list the sculptures was made in 1973. But following a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the London Borough of Bromley and its partners (including the University of Greenwich) to completely restore the Dinosaur Court in 2002 further investigation was undertaken.

Govt must heed findings of EU Foot and Mouth Inquiry

Caroline Lucas calls for vaccination

THE VICE-PRESIDENT of an EU inquiry into the Government's handling of the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) epidemic has warned Gordon Brown he must heed the warnings of the inquiry - even though Labour MEPs tried to block it in the first place.

Caroline Lucas, South-East England's Green Party Euro-MP and Vice-President of the European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry into the epidemic, said she hoped the current outbreak would be isolated and contained quickly, but that if it isn't, the Government should vaccinate healthy animal instead of needlessly slaughtering them.

Specifically, the Government must protect and prioritise the manufacture of effective vaccination stocks whatever the outcome of investigations into whether the latest outbreak has originated from a laboratory manufacturing the vaccine, she added. "In 2001 as many as 11 million healthy animals were needlessly slaughtered in a knee-jerk Government response that saw the British countryside closed for business and brought farmers and rural communities to their knees.

"Despite the efforts of British Labour MEPs to block it, the European Parliament quickly investigated what went wrong - and concluded that vaccination must replace slaughter in any future outbreak to avoid a repeat of the economic, environmental and humanitarian crises that dogged Labour's response in 2001.

"Now, alas, the time has come for the Government to listen and adopt the committee's final recommendations."

The 2002 report, which was warmly received by most farmers, their families and wider rural

communities, reads like a damning indictment of the Government.

"It's obsession with protecting its agricultural export markets at all cost brought financial ruin to much of rural England," said Dr Lucas.

"Our inquiry has found that this was a massive dereliction of duty and that vaccination should be the first response. Of course the welfare and livelihoods of rural communities - to say nothing of the lives of up to 11 million animals - should come before the interests of the globalisation agenda."

The British Government opposed the establishment of the inquiry, just as it opposed any public, independent and comprehensive inquiry into the outbreak at a domestic level.



Foot and mouth: time to act

UKIP leader Nigel Farage reports that the application of EU rules is hampering the fight against foot and mouth disease.

Following the outbreak of the disease in 1967, the Duke of Northumberland urged that carcasses should not be burnt on site as this just

spreads the infection. He also said that they should not be transported from the death site.

But, said Mr Farage, "forty years later, another outbreak and what are we doing? Transporting carcasses by road potentially increasing the spread of the virus. And why? Because of the EU Animal By-Products Regulations introduced in May 2003.

"These ban on-farm burial, the method traditionally used by farmers and recommended in the Northumberland Report. Infected animals should be killed on site and quickly buried in quicklime.

"The Regulations include provision for emergency exceptions from the ban including where transportation of carcasses poses the threat of spreading the disease. It plainly does and it is time for good farming sense to prevail."

Meanwhile, a former presenter of BBC television's One Man and his Dog has called for cattle to be vaccinated against foot and mouth disease. Robin Page, who is chairman of the Countryside Preservation Trust, described vaccination as "the answer."

"We do not want to see funeral pyres lighting up Britain again. If in the near future France and the rest of the EU decide not to take our vaccinated beef we can organise a tit for tat embargo," said Mr Page, who is also a senior member of the UK Independence Party.

"Before EU regulations came into force, farms had a traditional way of dealing with diseased stock. They would kill the beasts on the land and bury them in quicklime.

"The old ways were best and did not involve moving cattle off land to be slaughtered. Burning them spreads infection.

"We should let farmers get on with the traditional methods which have worked for centuries," said Mr Page.

Mini fridges costing the earth - Huhne

Mini-fridges use huge amounts of power, often more than four times as much as standard models, according to research from the Liberal Democrats.

The research reveals:

Mini fridges use more energy than US style large fridge freezers, and more than four times as much as a standard fridge.

Mini fridges are sold by companies, including Tesco, without energy efficiency labels, despite being rated in the lowest 'G' category. The cost of running such a device is around £60 each year, often more than the purchase price. Each device produces 0.25 tonnes of carbon dioxide – 3% of a person's annual emissions.

If every household bought a mini-fridge, emissions would rise by 4% – 6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Commenting, Liberal Democrat Shadow Environment Secretary, Chris Huhne MP said:

"Retailers such as Tesco should be ashamed to be pushing the sale of mini-fridges which are so environmentally irresponsible. It leaves its claim to be a greener grocer in tatters."

"Defra has failed to clamp down on the loophole in regulations which has allowed manufacturers to dodge the rules."

"Anyone buying a mini-fridge just so they don't have to get up off the sofa during the big match surely needs to know the environmental damage these devices cause."



Chris Huhne MP

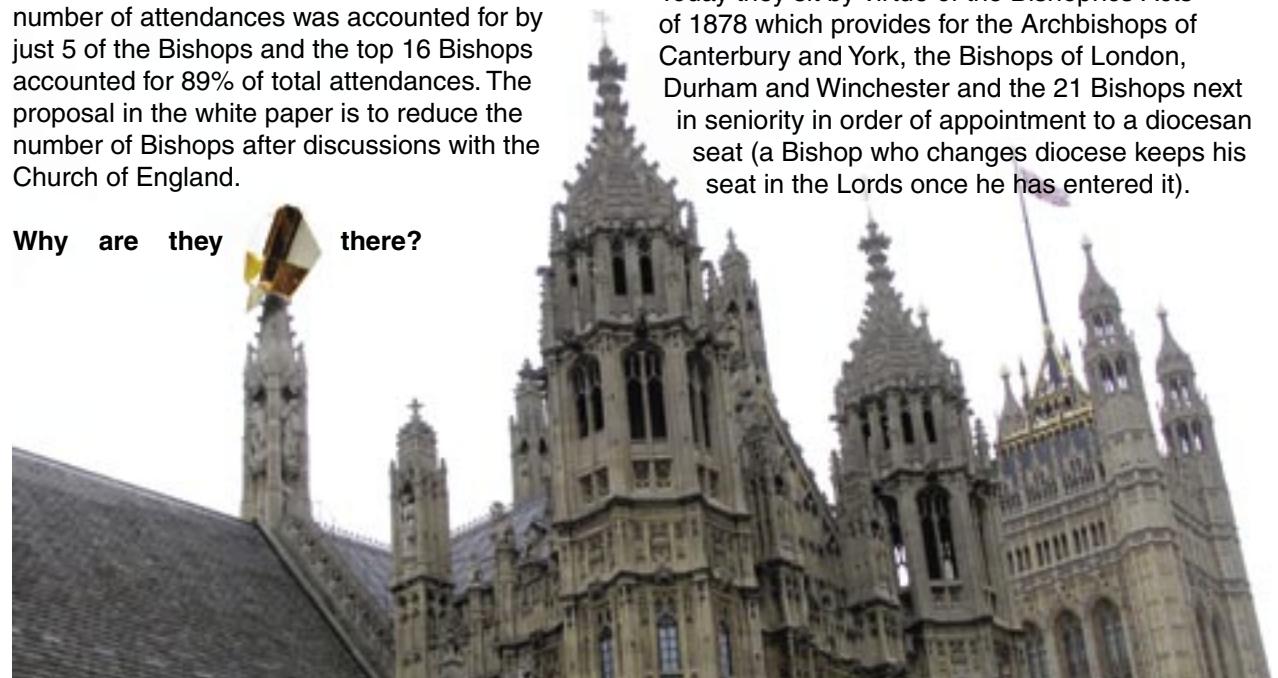
Bishops in the House of Lords?

Is there a place in modern Britain for religious representatives to sit unelected in our parliament?

Known as the 'Bench of Bishops' or the 'Lords Spiritual', there are 26 Church of England Bishops currently sitting in the House of Lords. Not one other Western democracy grants this privilege.

Jack Straw has argued that to remove the Bishops from the upper chamber would be tantamount to disestablishing the Church of England but the Church and the Lords can and should exist without the other. In fact Jack Straw's White Paper on reform of the House of Lords lamely recognises the fact that most Bishops are too busy to attend anyway. Between April 2005 and March 2006, 11 attended more than 25 times (out of a possible total of 134). 12 attended fewer than 20 times. 42% of the total number of attendances was accounted for by just 5 of the Bishops and the top 16 Bishops accounted for 89% of total attendances. The proposal in the white paper is to reduce the number of Bishops after discussions with the Church of England.

Why are they there?



To suggest that a secular Government is incapable of making moral and ethical choices on behalf of its citizens without the Bishops guidance is ridiculous. It could even be suggested that because of their high office, they are even more out of touch with the needs of society than the politicians they advise.

Unbelievably, the Government is also suggesting introducing more religious representatives from other faiths - where will it end? Who are they to represent and from which religions? You can't represent all faiths so which faith do you discriminate against?

Inevitably, the House of Lords will be an elected body and if any member of any faith wishes to represent their beliefs they should compete on the same basis as everyone else.

Historically, Bishops have been members of the House of Lords since the beginning, sitting as both major land owners and as the King's Counsellors. Today they sit by virtue of the Bishoprics Acts of 1878 which provides for the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of London, Durham and Winchester and the 21 Bishops next in seniority in order of appointment to a diocesan seat (a Bishop who changes diocese keeps his seat in the Lords once he has entered it).

Funding announced for authorised gypsy and traveller sites

Minister for Gypsies and Travellers Iain

Wright today announced the successful bidders for funding from the Gypsy and Traveller Grant. The funding will allow local authorities and registered social landlords to improve living conditions on authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites, and provide additional pitches to reduce unauthorised camping.

In London, Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant totalling £542,000 has been approved to support extension and refurbishment works at four sites.

Across England, the Government has approved £16 million of investment for 2007/8 that will provide 102 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, and refurbish 46 sites.



Up to £56 million is available through the grant between 2006-8 to provide new and refurbished sites, and tackle the problem of unauthorised camping. Schemes have been evaluated by both independent consultants and Regional Assemblies.

Iain Wright said:

"This funding is vital in delivering both new and improved sites, ensuring that Gypsies and Travellers have authorised, decent places to live. We look to local authorities to show real leadership in taking forward what can be a contentious issue on the ground. The grant supports local authorities and Registered Social Landlords to increase the number of authorised sites for Gypsies and Travellers."

The problem of unauthorised camping will only be tackled through sufficient site provision, coupled with effective enforcement. Providing more authorised sites reduces the cost to taxpayers of costly enforcement action, and makes it quicker and easier to take action where unauthorised camping does take place."

Conservative proposals to crack down on forced marriage

The Shadow Immigration Minister, Damian Green, has announced the latest Conservative immigration proposals to crack down on the scourge of forced marriage. Unveiling the proposals which include a requirement for spouses to register, before going abroad, the name of their potential husband or wife, the Shadow Minister said:

"The continuing existence of forced marriages in modern Britain is a stain on our social fabric. It is the extreme and unacceptable end of the clash of values between a plural democracy which values individual human rights and belief systems that regard women as second class citizens. Shockingly, forced marriages are not isolated events.

"The Government's Forced Marriage Unit does some good work but more effective action is needed.

The Conservative Party has a number of proposals which we are putting out to consultation this week to minimise the incidence of forced marriage." These policy proposals would introduce a requirement for a prerequisite declaration of intention to marry abroad and a time requirement before those who have been previously married to a spouse from overseas are allowed to bring in another spouse from overseas.

They would also require potential spouses coming

to the UK to take the 'Life in the UK' citizenship test. Damian Green added: "Our aim is that all those who come here to live will participate fully in British society, and that British society will be confident enough to allow diversity (as it always has) without losing its central values. One of those values is individual freedom over the key decisions in our lives. Choosing who to marry is one of those decisions, so there is no place in Britain for forced marriage."

This is the latest in a series of Conservative Immigration announcements under David Cameron. The Conservatives have already announced that they would introduce an explicit annual limit on the number of economic migrants who come to the UK to settle from outside the EU and would establish a dedicated UK border police to secure our borders and tackle immigration crime, human trafficking and illegal overstayers.

At the beginning of the year the Conservatives also revealed they would sign up to the European Convention on trafficking in Human Beings as part of a series of measures to combat human traffickers and assist the victims of human trafficking.

On the specific issue of forced marriages the Conservatives previously announced they would, for marriages from abroad, raise the age limit for both spouse and sponsor to 21 years of age and that the spouse must have a basic knowledge of English before they come to the UK.



How's your Nitrous Oxide Footprint?

Who's the bad boy of greenhouse gasses?

According to the worlds environmentalists its carbon dioxide (CO₂), the gas that's going to warm up the worlds oceans and melt the icecaps. The gas that we are all pumping out into the atmosphere every time we drive our cars or get on a plane or buy a piece of pre-packed meat, that's one step closer to Kevin Costner's Waterworld. Good old (CO₂).

But did you know that (CO₂) isn't the main Big Daddy of Doom? That accolade lies with another commonly known gas called Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) - which obviously uses a better press agent! In fact Nitrous Oxide is bad, 296 times as bad to be precise. Even worse, all of us who are doing our bit to go 'Green' and popping in to B&Q for a few bags of fertiliser to grow our organic veggies are contributing to the increase of this gas in our atmosphere. A prime growing soil must be rich in nitrates (plants absorb (N₂O) from the atmosphere where it eventually returns to the soil); spread a bit of fertiliser or even good old manure and the result is a microbial breakdown of those nitrates which generates the gas Nitrous Oxide. This may be great for speed freaks who want to give their cars an extra boost round town but not apparently for our climate.

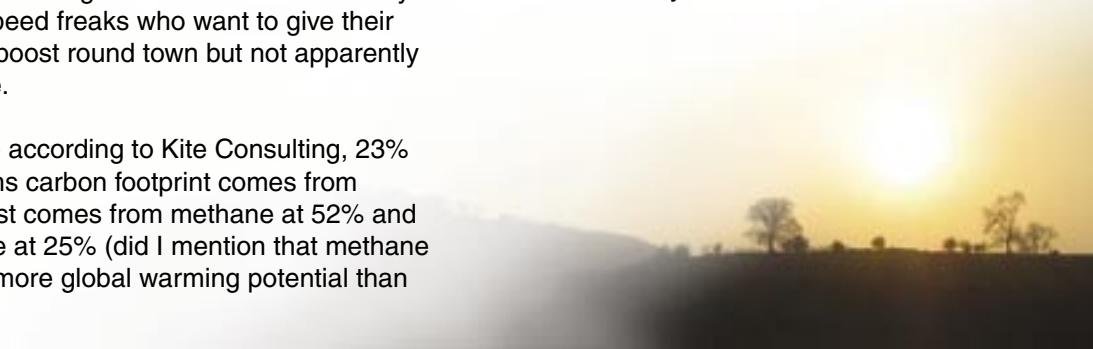
It gets worse - according to Kite Consulting, 23% of a dairy farms carbon footprint comes from (N₂O). The rest comes from methane at 52% and carbon dioxide at 25% (did I mention that methane has 20 times more global warming potential than (CO₂)?

Even though (N₂O) is estimated to be less than one-thousandth as abundant as carbon dioxide, the gas is nearly 300 times more effective at trapping heat than carbon dioxide and has one of the longest atmosphere lifetimes of the greenhouse gases, lasting for up to 150 years which could have a major impact over and above that of (CO₂).

Scientists at the University of Sheffield have recently discovered that stifling temperatures which existed 50 million years ago contained carbon dioxide levels no different than today's. Yet the planet was incredibly hot - much, much warmer than it is today concluding the reason was much more ozone, methane, and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere.

Should we be worried? Climate change is happening, and always will. Whether we are encouraging the effect will probably still be debated as the last iceberg melts into the boiling seas. Reducing the output of these gasses can only be a good thing, the bandwagon is well and truly rolling and our governments are rubbing their hands at the taxation possibilities.

Like the Millennium Bug, nothing probably would have happened if billions weren't spent on reconfiguring two digits on all time crucial systems, and nothing did - but was that because billions was spent on reconfiguring two digits on all time crucial systems?



Doing the rounds on the internet...

Euro Sense!

The European Commission have just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the EU rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5 year phase in plan that would be known as "EuroEnglish":

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c" .. Sertainly, this will make the civil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of the "k". This should klear up konfusion and keyboards kan have 1 less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with the "f". This will make words like "fotograf" 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterrent to akurate spelng. Also, al wil agree that the horible mes of the silent "e"s in the languag is disgrasful, and they should go away.

By the 4th yer, peopl wil be respektiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v". During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters. After zis fifz yer, ve vil hav a reli sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech ozer.

ZE DREM VIL FINALI KUM TRU !!



The pictures on the left are not pretty, but they are a common site across many of our cemeteries and as we move into autumn and winter, the ground conditions for earthen burials will become even more extreme and difficult.

It's about time your Local Authority contacted welters

welters
08702 416 422



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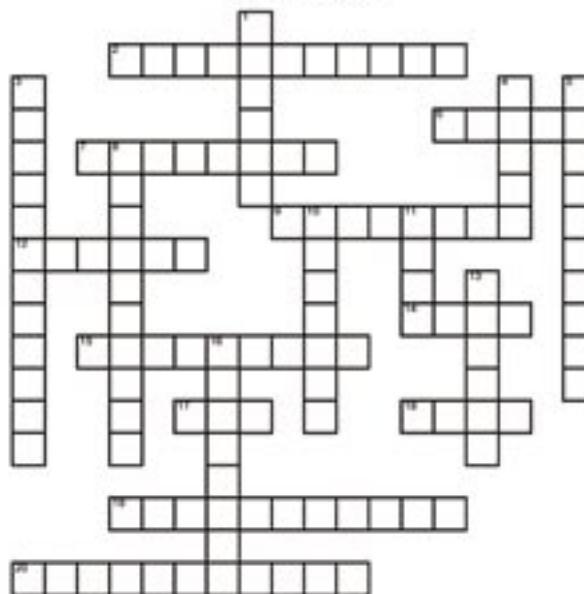
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The Crossword



Across

2. Our leader could be wrong or bond (anag)
6. You can't do this in pubs anymore
7. Major event in 2012
9. Who wasn't for turning?
12. Footprints are now made from it
14. M6 was the first motorway to get one
15. Tory in lab? Surely not! (anag)
17. This crime is on the increase
18. Estimated loss of rainforest every two seconds is one _____
19. U.S. Defense Secretary
20. First woman home secretary

Down

1. Would you hug one?
3. I am odd craven and leader of the opposition! (anag)
4. You can be one on polling day
5. Will we get one on Europe?
8. He likes his girl to be cheeky!
10. Yvette Cooper is the _____ Minister
11. Fishermen and voters do it standing up!
13. 45th U.S. Vice President on an environmental mission
16. Where is the EU HQ?

Answers in next issue
or email crossword1@welters-worldwide.com

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