

# The pound rises against the Euro and dollar

Good silence from the anti Brexit commentators over recent rises in the pound as we get closer to the date to leave the EU.

They are none too noisy about the latest IMF forecast either where the IMF think the UK will grow faster than Germany this year.

That's the magic of Brexit!

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## Project Fear takes another hit – employment and wages carry on rising

The latest employment figures are good. Unemployment has fallen to 4%, with strong jobs growth continuing. Vacancies are also at good levels, implying no immediate fall off in employment in prospect. Average earnings hit £27,500 a year as we go into 2019, with real wages now growing at around a 1% annual rate.

This means over the two and a half years since we voted to leave, the economy has continued to generate a lot of extra jobs, bringing unemployment down. Most of these jobs are full time, and many are well paid, boosting average earnings. That is the opposite of the recession allied to big job losses we were told by the Treasury and Remain experts to expect after the referendum decision.

Many in Parliament wish to increase the uncertainties and carry on portraying a gloomy outlook from their own pessimistic imaginations. Many of them now are desperately searching for a delay to Brexit so they can prolong the uncertainty and spend many more months rowing over what kind of Brexit they want or will allow, regardless of the views of the voters and regardless of what the EU might agree to. It is particularly cheering that employment has grown so well recently, when the national conversation has been dominated by gloomy Remain MPs telling us the future is dreadful, and when the chances of us just leaving without signing the Withdrawal Agreement have risen thanks to the huge defeat of the Agreement in the Commons.

It also shows that the authorities attempts to slow and damage the economy with a series of tax attacks on homes and cars, and with the slowing of credit, have not been sufficient to stop overall jobs and wage growth, though they have of course done damage to the targeted sectors.

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## My letter to the Post Office Ltd regarding their proposal to move the Wokingham Post Office to commercial premises

I have written to the Post Office regarding their proposal to move the Wokingham Post Office to commercial premises citing my reservations about the move. They are currently running a consultation and I would encourage residents to contribute to the consultation to make their views known. You can find the consultation at: <https://www.postofficeviews.co.uk/national-consultation-team/wokingham-rg40-1aa-008939/>.

I, along with Wokingham Councillors, will be meeting with Mr Gale next month.



THE RT HON JOHN REDWOOD MP

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17 January 2019

Dear Mr Gale

Thank you for your letter concerning the Post Office in Wokingham. You do not explain why you think there needs to be a new retail partner and why these important local services have to be absorbed into a different kind of shop. People are used to the range of services the Post Office offers, and to the location of their main Post Office on Broad Street. It would be possible to improve the internal configuration of this property, by adding more counters and using the full width of the building for customer service. It also has the advantage of keeping collection of undelivered items in the same location as an important part of the modern postal service.

As you should know the Wokingham area is expanding rapidly with the construction of new homes. The current counters of the Post Office are insufficient often leading to delays and queues. Cutting back to just three positions at the rear of the WH Smith store is going to make this problem worse, when you should be planning for expansion.

Placing the Post office at the back of the WH Smith store makes it more difficult for people to get access, requiring them to get past shoppers browsing between the Smith displays and avoiding the till queues which are also a feature of WH Smith at busy times of day. It will be particularly difficult for people with pushchairs, wheelchairs and walking frames. The only gain for customers is the longer week-end opening hours which could be accommodated at your existing premises.

Yours sincerely

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# The revolt of the motorists

The French gilets jaune movement has in part been a protest against the attempts of the elite to limit people's uses of cars and vans. The movement began with demands to cut the taxes on petrol and diesel, and to resist more moves to make motoring ever dearer. Some of the protesters then went on to damage or obscure the cameras checking car speeds on French highways, rapidly taking a majority of them out of use.

The car to many is not merely an important symbol of personal freedom, but a vital means of getting to work, going to the shops, taking children to school and enjoying leisure time away from home. Many people want to learn to drive and acquire a car as soon as they are able, recognising how much more scope they will have to do as they wish in their lives if they have their own transport. The establishments of Europe see the car instead as an enemy of their vision of the future. They impose high taxes to reduce use of vehicles and to price people on lower incomes off the road altogether. They impose tougher regulations to limit the use of certain vehicles in certain places and at certain times. They are now threatening the whole car park of diesel and petrol cars, wanting to push people into owning an electric vehicle or giving up on personal transport altogether. They seem to think people can and should take the bus or train even when they live in rural areas with little or no access to such services.

Of course governments need to impose some rules on car drivers to ensure safer roads. It is sensible to have a testing regime for drivers and vehicles, and sensible to have road markings and road rules to avoid collisions. No-one disagrees with good measures to keep us safe. The problem comes when the rules and requirements multiply to the point where they can be a distraction or a problem for the safe driver, and where the whole exercise is one large attempt to take more money off the motorist with tax placed on tax to drive, own, buy and operate a vehicle.

The intervention in the market by the EU and member state governments to get more people to buy diesel cars worked well, only for the EU then to change its mind and tell us we had been wrong to follow their advice. Now they wish us to believe that if we take on an electric car we will in future be subsidised or taxed a lot less. People are very sceptical, fearing that if electric cars become popular then the subsidies will end and new taxes will be imposed as governments will want to replace the huge lost revenue from taxes on diesel and petrol. They also worry lest some unseen environmental problem with batteries emerges as emission issues arose late in the day with diesels.

In this vexed area of policy the car and van using public see hypocrisy from those who govern them. They seem to have plenty of access to prestigious cars without a thought for the cost as they are provided by the state. If cars are

good enough for Mr Macron to get around in, aren't they also necessary for French men and women as they go about their work?

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## 67 days to Independence Day

Let's countdown to Independence and get ready to celebrate our exit.

There are only 36 days left when Parliament is in session and able to try to mess up or delay our passage to Independence.

Write to your MP today if they are showing signs of wanting to stop Brexit and remind them of their Manifesto promises and the result of the referendum and General Election.

The government should be discussing how we commemorate one of the great days of UK history, the day we restore an independent self governing democracy to these islands.

The government should also be publishing our tariff schedule, getting its Brexit bonus budget ready for March, taking back control of our fishing grounds and setting out a food and farming policy that is good for the UK.

When we joined the EEC there were commemorative stamps and coins. There were more coins for the 25th anniversary of our membership. What should we do for March 29 2019?