

## Theresa May breaks her promise on special advisers' pay

**Theresa May breaks her promise on special advisers' pay as Downing Street continues David Cameron's legacy of lavish salaries for top aides**

- Theresa May has broken her own promise to introduce a salary cap of £72,000 on salaries for special advisers, as new figures reveal the Government employs 25 special advisers with salaries above £72,000.
- The combined salaries of all special advisers above the threshold set by May amounts to over £2.3m.
- The number of Special Advisers employed by the Government is up, with 88 employed as of December 2017, compared to the 83 listed in the December 2016 release.
- The new figures also reveal that seven Cabinet Ministers employ more special advisers than the maximum set out by the Ministerial Code.

**Jon Trickett MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office, said:**

"Theresa May's hypocrisy is galling. She promised a salary cap for special advisers but has instead rewarded political appointees with bumper pay deals. The public is paying for more special advisers and to make matters worse has had to pick up the tab for Theresa May's election failure, with a huge severance bill for outgoing advisers.

"These figures will be hard to take for millions of taxpayers who are struggling to make ends meet under this Tory Government. It's yet more proof that the Tories always put their own interests before those of the many."

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## Barry Gardiner responds to failure to reach agreement at the WTO Ministerial Conference

**Barry**

**Gardiner MP, Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade**, commenting on the failure to come to an agreement at the 11th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, said:

"We deeply regret that the Buenos Aires ministerial conference ended without a substantial agreement.

"Some countries are less willing to play by the rules based system than

others. The Trump administration has shown its true colours. They are taking an America first stance in trade, as we saw with the Bombardier case.

"Liam Fox needs to reassess his hopes for a transatlantic trade deal with the US. The USA is only interested in bilateral deals in which they can dictate the terms. He must show leadership in the multilateral rules based system in addressing unresolved issues such as food stock piling and fisheries subsidies."

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## End of an era for Murdochs who after decades of aggressive empire expansion are now in retreat – Watson

**Tom Watson MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport**, commenting on the news that Disney are to buy most of 21st Century Fox, said:

"This is the end of an era for the Murdochs who after decades of aggressive empire expansion are now in retreat.

"The decision to sell off key assets follows their UK business being engulfed in a phone hacking scandal, and ongoing revelations about sexual harassment at Fox News in the USA – scandals which have been in sharp focus recently thanks to the Murdochs' attempted takeover of Sky.

"It's important for Disney, a highly respected global media brand, that they do not allow the toxic corporate culture we have seen in the Murdoch empire to contaminate their business and tarnish their reputation.

"We hope that the company will ensure that no one who still has questions to answer over criminal conduct or corporate governance failure in the Murdochs' businesses is allowed into the new entity.

"We wait to see what impact this proposed merger will have on the attempt by 21st Century Fox to buy Sky, but the Competition and Markets Authority needs to continue its investigation and ensure that the proposed deal does not threaten media plurality or broadcasting standards."

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# **Shocking impact of cold snap revealed with 27% increase in patients stuck in ambulances for over an hour**

## **Labour**

**reveals “shocking” impact of cold snap with 27% increase in patients stuck in ambulances for over an hour**

Labour’s

analysis of the latest weekly winter data (4 December to 10 December) released

today by NHS England reveals almost 2,500 patients were stuck in ambulances for

over an hour in just one week.

Labour’s

analysis of the latest NHS England combined performance data also reveals a shocking 62% increase in the number of patients waiting longer than 18 weeks for operations in just seven years.

## **Jonathan**

**Ashworth MP, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary,** responding to the latest NHS Weekly Winter and Monthly Combined Performance statistics, said:

“Last

week’s cold snap demonstrated once again the crisis facing our NHS this winter

and Government inaction will only make the challenge facing the NHS that much harder.

“Patients

will be deeply concerned that despite the heroic efforts of our brilliant NHS staff, there was a shocking 27% increase in the number of patients stuck for over an hour in the back of an ambulance in just one week.

“Despite

the pressures which all frontline NHS staff were warning of, the winter fund announced in the Budget has still not been fully allocated to struggling Trusts. Patients expect ministers to urgently get a grip.”

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# The scale of rising homelessness should shame all of us and Conservative Ministers most of all – John Healey

**John**

**Healey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary for Housing**, responding to the latest quarterly statistics on homelessness, said:

"The scale of rising homelessness should shame all of us, and Conservative Ministers most of all.

"Homelessness fell at an unprecedented rate under Labour, but after seven years of failure on housing under the Tories, the number of rough sleepers has more than doubled and 121,000 children will be without a home this Christmas, up 70 per cent since 2010.

"This is a direct result of decisions made by Conservative Ministers: a steep drop in investment for affordable homes, cuts to housing benefit, reduced funding for homelessness services, and a refusal to help private renters.

"The next Labour government will end rough sleeping within a Parliament and tackle the root causes of rising homelessness with more affordable homes and stronger rights for renters."