

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US



Campaign for an **E**nglish **P**arliament
The Voice of England

Think of England

Number 87 : January 2019



**Championing England
& Challenging Prejudice**

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

Number 86 December 2018

Contents:

Editorial

Campaigning for England : The Centre for English Identity and Politics Winchester event

Current English Affairs and English politics: Student fees, policing

England's heroes/heroines: James Wolfe

England's history: Samuel Pepys' diary

English culture: Mummings plays

Promotion: Brussels Sprouts

Recipe: Bubble and Squeak

RECOMMENDED READING: Ancient Oaks in the English Landscape by Aljos Farjon Kew Publishing ISBN 978182466407



Campaign for an English Parliament Aims, Principles and Policies.

We campaign for an English Parliament, meaning a parliament for the people of England, for whom England is their chosen or inherited home and who are legally entitled to vote.

We campaign for an English Parliament with powers at least as great as those of Scotland's, i.e. a Parliament and Executive (Government) that can make Acts (primary legislation) on the same domestic issues (e.g. health, welfare & education) that are devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

The CEP works with academics, business groups, trades unions, think tanks and the media to create the conditions whereby UK MPs see that there is no alternative to the re-establishment of the English Parliament.

The CEP is a pressure group. It is not a political party. It does not contest elections.

The CEP is not and will not be affiliated to or formally linked with any political party

Editorial: A very prosperous and successful New Year to all. We hope that our tireless campaigning will lead to the further advancement of our cause. Please endeavour to come to the event in Winchester this month—a



great start to the new year of campaigning. Our role is to work with academics, business groups, trades unions, think tanks and the media to create the conditions where MPs see that there is no alternative. We have had a number of successes over the years with regards to MPs and academics and continue to engage with the media and business. Please also continue to write to the media and other organisations and challenge their misconceptions and prejudices. In particular the Times reported this month continues to conflate England and Britain with regards to university tuition fees. It is a tax on English graduates that the UK Government can use to keep them in perpetual state bondage by varying the interest rates and imposing the cost of defaulting foreign and emigrant graduates. Those challenges are the way we can let the British elite know that we are not to be fooled forever.

This month I have rounded up news from last year about student (graduate) debt and problems with policing in England. Policing is an issue which will never go away. After being told that crime is going down (did we ever believe that?) we now discover that it is essentially out of control. Previous editions of the newsletter have reported how our countrymen and women have had to resort to private policing with all the dangerous issues such as vigilantism that implies.

Please sign up on the website via the dialogue box shown below and increase our follower numbers.

Follow the CEP via Email

Enter your email address to follow this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join other followers

Follow

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

Campaigning for England : Routes to an English Parliament?

by [The Centre for English Identity and Politics](#)

DATE AND TIME:	LOCATION
Fri, January 11, 2019	The Paul Woodhouse Suite/Refectory
9:30 AM – 5:00 PM GMT	Visitors Centre
	Winchester Cathedral
	The Close



Free event

For 20 years, most English residents have said that laws that only affect England should only be made by English MPs. Recent polling shows majorities for an English Parliament and radical devolution within England.

But is there a plausible route to an English Parliament? When might passive public support become an active demand for change? Should reform to Westminster be radical or evolutionary, who should decide, and how might the people be engaged? How would an English Parliament sit with devolution within England and reform across the union?

This seminar will bring together experts in constitutional reform, political science, local government and public engagement with activists and campaigners to address these and other related questions.

Speakers include: Prof Dan Wincott (Cardiff), Stuart White (Oxford), Jane Suiter (Dublin), John Stanton (City), Sir Paul Silk (Constitutional Reform Group), Jack Sheldon (Constitution Unit, Cambridge), Mark Sandford (House of Commons Library), Craig Prescott (Winchester), Prof Mike Kenny (Cambridge), Arianna Giovannini (de Montfort), Jessica Garland (Electoral Reform Society), Prof John Denham (Winchester) Scilla Cullen (Campaign for an English Parliament), Prof Colin Copus (de Montfort), Elin Weston (King's College London).

From St George for England journal of the Royal Society of St. George (Dec 2018)

Dear Sir,

Northern Ireland is reported to be 'the nation that has had the longest period without its own elected government'. Surely a stronger contender for this accolade would be England?

The English have had to sit by and watch the devolution of powers from the United Kingdom to the newly-created Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish parliamentary assemblies and executive governments over the last twenty years, but there has been no equivalent opportunity for England to gain her own national parliament or government. We are still without these essential attributes of nationhood. It is time to end this constitutional injustice.

Yours faithfully

Andy Smith (a member)

From another member: Noted in Lidl the other day - Welsh cheddar with dragon flag, Scottish cheddar with saltire, Somerset cheddar with British flag.

English Affairs and English Politics are issues that should be decided only by an English Parliament

English Affairs and English Politics

Throughout last year concern was expressed about student loans or as we prefer to call it 'English graduate perpetual debt bondage' in the hands of the Scottish based Student Loan Council and the UK HMRC. Full fees only apply to England, they are subsidised in Wales and Northern Ireland and tuition is free in Scotland. Ed.

In February the Times' Rachel Sylvester wrote: This muddle is as bad as the dementia tax:

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, has said that he wants universities to charge different amounts for different subjects, depending on a course's perceived usefulness to the student or society. Arts and humanities degrees could, as a result, cost less than science or engineering courses that are more expensive to run. There might also be a link between the tuition fees an institution can charge and the salary that a graduate may expect to earn. But who is going to decide the true "value" of computer sciences relative to

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

classics, or medicine to modern languages, and how can that ever be properly assessed? The more you think about this plan the more incoherent it seems. The country (*the Times means England. Ed.*) needs to boost the number of scientists and engineers, so the government should be encouraging people to take those courses rather than slapping a premium on them.



Lord Willetts, the former Conservative higher education minister, says: Cutting tuition fees, as floated by No 10, would disproportionately benefit the wealthiest graduates since low earners never pay off their student loans. According to an analysis by the business consultancy London Economics, reducing fees from £9,250 to £6,000 a year would leave a £3 billion black hole in universities' finances that would barely be touched by cutting vice-chancellors' pay. Maintenance grants should be restored for low-income students and the usurious interest rate charged on student loans reduced.

~~~~~

### **In June the Lords reported that Students needed a new fairer deal for studying after school:**

The 2012 reforms to university financing have failed to create an effective market allowing undergraduate degrees to dominate when this might not be in the student or the country's best interest. They have also led to a collapse in flexible and part-time learning, with student numbers decreasing over the last six years by 60 per cent. Careers for life are disappearing and the ability to retrain will become increasingly necessary to succeed in the modern economy. Compared with other countries, England is producing far fewer people with A-Level equivalent qualifications, and not providing the skills employers in the UK need.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean, Chairman of the Economic Affairs Committee, said: The means-tested system of loans and grants that existed before 2016 should be re-instated, and total support increased to reflect the true cost of living. "The accounting trickery attempted by the Government in 2012, in which the high rate of interest on student loans created the fiscal illusion that Government borrowing is lower than it actually is, has had a devastating effect on the treatment of students in England." "We recommend that the interest rate charged on post-2012 student loans should be reduced to the level of the ten-year gilt rate. This would mean reducing the interest rate from around about 6 per cent today, to 1.5 per cent. No student should incur interest while studying." The national accounts mask the true cost of higher education. The Government expects that around half of the value of student loans being issued currently will never be paid back. These write-offs will not appear in the national accounts for more than 30 years. A recognition of this by including projected write-off in public spending at the time the loan is issued would allow for a better discussion of where public money in post-school education should be directed. The Government claims the high level of interest charged on student loans makes the system progressive, but it is middle-earning graduates who end up paying back most in real terms.

### **The Commons Public Accounts Committee reported that there was no evidence that greater competition between providers will improve quality of education they provide.**

The Committee spoke to the Office for Students at its inception and hope that it will set a clear marker that it really is acting in the interests of students from day one. It is still unclear how it will gauge the real concerns of students and ensure that institutions deliver and are sanctioned when they let students down.

**The Sale of Student Loans engendered an inquiry:** In December 2017, the Government sold part of its student loans book. The value of outstanding student loans was £102 billion in March 2018; this is expected to reach £473 billion by 2049. A recent National Audit Office (NAO) report found that the Government had sold loans with a face value of £3.5 billion for £1.7 billion—roughly 48p for every £1 in value. The NAO also found that the Department for Education (which owns student loans policy) had a different way of estimating the loans' value from HM Treasury. NAO was also concerned that HM Treasury's key incentive for selling loans was to reduce Public Sector Net Debt—a metric that has been queried by the International Monetary Fund, the Office for Budget Responsibility, and Committees in Parliament. It could also be difficult to establish the exact value of student loans to investors who have bought them. For example, returns to investors would increase if more student loans are paid back than the Government expects.

~~~~~

In October the Times commented: Universities have become graduate factories, just ones that care little about their output: Imagine a 17-year-old sports nut who has a fine turn of phrase and will soon sit his A levels. He is thinking about university and a life spent reporting about his heroes. So he looks up degree courses and discovers that 25 universities in the UK offer a BA in sports journalism. The

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

unfortunate odds are that the 17-year-old's dreams will be dashed because the jobs were never there. The jobs are in Derby and other engineering hubs. So many, in fact, that Engineering UK, the industry body, said this year that there was "a critical shortfall in engineering skills . . . of between 37,000 to 59,000". Within that, the graduate-level shortfall was estimated to be "at least 22,000 per year". Which means the UK needs to double the number of engineering graduates from the 23,850 produced in 2017. It's not just manufacturing that is crying out for more skills but computing and nursing, to name two others with acute problems. Yet, despite what the skills shortages might suggest, there has been a revolution over the past 20 years in the number of graduates but there is a skills mismatch. Universities have become graduate factories, just ones that care little about their output.

Graduate skills are being decided by student demand. If a student wants a degree in sports journalism, the university will provide it. The funding model even encourages it. Universities have had every financial incentive to increase their intake, particularly in the soft subjects where the returns are richest.

A humanities degree is said to cost about £2,000 per student a year to run, while engineering costs £12,000 and medicine roughly £18,000. As student numbers have surged so have university revenues. The original plan was for universities to compete for students on price. Instead, they compete for fresh intake with new courses and lower standards, as grade inflation and the surge in unconditional offers suggest. There is something logically inconsistent about having student demand determine one of the most essential outputs on the supply side of the economy: the skills the nation needs.

For universities to give students false hope, making a fortune while lumbering them with thousands of pounds of debt, is a betrayal bordering on scandal. The reality is that many vocational degrees don't lead to jobs in the chosen careers. Half the places for trainee solicitors at the top law firms are reserved for graduates who didn't study law, and fewer than a quarter of graduates joining the Big Four accounting firms studied anything to do with accountancy, finance or business, according to Martin Birchall, managing director of High Fliers Research. Traditional generalist courses from good universities are the safest training grounds.

Of course, the pay premium is a big draw. The average salary for graduates last year was £33,000 compared with £23,000 for non-graduates, according to Universities UK. But it is not universal. Analysis suggests that the median earnings of men from the bottom 23 universities were less than the median earnings for non-graduates.

~~~~~

**In December the Times Economics editor, Philip Aldrick reported: Student loan interest 'must be scrapped':** Lord Willetts, the scheme's architect, said that interest payments on student loans should be scrapped to slash graduate repayments and help Britain's (*The Times means England! Ed.*) controversial university funding system to survive. He also called for the reintroduction of means-tested grants, which were replaced with loans in 2016.

Students today leave university with about £50,000 of debt, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Of that, £27,750 covers fees, £18,000 is in maintenance loans and £6,000 is interest accrued over the three years of study. The interest rate has become controversial because it is set at the retail prices index of inflation plus 3 per cent, currently 6.3 per cent. For the most successful graduates, interest adds more than £90,000 to repayments over their lifetime.

The Office for National Statistics will rule on how to account for student loans in a decision that may have repercussions for the government. At the moment the loans, which total just over £100 billion, do not show up as borrowing, but interest is recorded as income, which reduces the accounting deficit even if it is not paid.

Should the ONS change the arrangement, it would add more than £6 billion to borrowing in 2021, almost halving the chancellor's £15.4 billion of headroom and putting his fiscal rules at risk. The ONS has said that it will give the government a year to respond to get the loans back off the books. Lord Willetts said that the problem had been caused by raising the salary repayment threshold from £21,000 to £25,000. In doing so, forecast write-offs on the loan book rose from 29 per cent to 45 per cent. It increased the write-offs of loans so much that it opened up the whole question of how they are accounted for. It should be a genuine graduate repayment scheme and so not treated in the national accounts.

Removing interest payments would make tuition fees less progressive as the salary repayment threshold would have to be reduced to bring the write-off rate below 40 per cent. At the moment about half of graduates are not expected to pay any interest at all.



**PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE**

## IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

### The Times, 18/12/18: Student loan debt blows £12 billion hole in government finances

Rosemary Bennett, Gurpreet Narwan

The 45 per cent of students loans that will never be paid back will be taken into account for the first time. A £12 billion hole has opened up in the public finances after student loans were moved into the government deficit for the first time to reflect the fact that many will never be paid off.

The Office for National Statistics has ruled that student loans can no longer be treated as assets. It means the government must now add an extra £12.3 billion to the annual deficit for this year, a figure that will swell to £14.4 billion by 2020-2021. It will also have significant implications for the future of student loans and tuition fees. The Treasury will be keen to ensure that the amount of unpaid debt is as low as possible. No graduate has to pay back a penny of their loans until they earn £25,000. At that point repayments are modest, rising gradually as earnings increase. In addition, graduates who fail to earn enough to repay their debts can look forward to them being written off after 30 years.

These terms will now come under scrutiny with Philip Hammond, the chancellor, likely to push for a tougher regime to make sure as much as possible is repaid. (*foreign students and those who emigrate will never pay this debt, it will fall entirely on English graduates. Ed. The CEP foretold this in 2011*)

A review of university funding in England, led by the banker Philip Augar, is already under way and is likely to recommend a cut in the current levels of tuition fees from £9,250 a year to perhaps as low as £6,500. Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute, said the consequences of the ONS ruling would be a concern for students and universities. "Students are likely to get hit because they suddenly look much more costly to taxpayers, while the extra income tax they will pay as graduates continues to be ignored,"

~~~~~  
Police funding both by central and local government has also been debated and in the news last year:

In February the Commons debated a number of motions relating to funding. The Motion: "That the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) for 2018-19 (HC 745), which was laid before this House on 31 January, be approved." This motion was subject to double majority voting (EVEL). It was passed by 295 to 239, and 275 to 229 by Members from England and Wales.

Local Government Finance Reports: This followed the debate on the Police Grant Report.

Motions for debate: "That the Report on Local Government Finance (England) 2018-19 (HC 791), which was laid before this House on 5 February, be approved." This motion was subject to double majority voting and passed by the House by 287 to 223, and 263 to 188 by Members from England and Wales.

"That the Report on Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) 2018-19 (HC 792), laid before this House on 5 February, be approved." This motion was passed without division.

"That the Report on Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Alternative Notional Amounts) (England) 2018-19 (HC 790), which was laid before this House on 20 February, be approved." This motion was passed without division.



~~~~~  
**In June** the Commons Home Affairs Committee questioned the Minister for Policing, Chief Inspector of Constabulary and the CEO of the College of Policing about the key challenges facing policing, effective responses to changing demands, and the extent to which the current arrangements for police funding, leadership and reform are enabling them to provide the best possible service to the public. Topics covered were: Police funding and resources; Serious violent crime; Child Sexual Abuse; Online fraud; The role of the Home Office in policing; Police workforce issues; Policing structures and barriers to reform.

~~~~~  
There was an inquiry by the Commons Public Accounts Committee into the financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales: Total police force funding has fallen by over £2 billion compared to 2010-11. Police forces have had to reduce their workforce size to respond to financial pressures, with the number of police officers falling from around 244,500 to 199,800 between 2010 and 2018. While the Crime Survey for England and Wales found that crime decreased by over a third between 2011 and 2018, police forces have faced a recent increase in the reporting of low volume and high

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

harm crime, as well as an increased threat of terrorism.

A recent National Audit Office report has found early signs that financial strain is making it harder for forces to deliver effective services to the public. There have been fewer breathalyser tests and convictions for drugs trafficking and possession, and the time it took to charge an offence increased by four days between 2016 and 2018. The report concludes that the Home Office's decision to take a light touch approach to overseeing police forces means that it does not understand the impact of cuts on local policing. It calls on the Home Office to improve its understanding of national and local demands to ensure that forces are financially sustainable. The Committee explored how the police funding formula, which the Home Office pledged to reform in 2015, can better account for forces' local circumstances. It will consider how the Home Office can monitor emerging signs of financial stress to ensure forces meet the growing and changing demands they are facing.



~~~~~

**In October** the Commons Home Affairs Committee warned of “dire consequences” without extra police funding. It urged the Government to prioritise policing in the Autumn Budget and the next Comprehensive Spending Review, warning that without additional funding for policing, there will be dire consequences for public safety and criminal justice.

In a wide-ranging "Policing for the Future" report looking at the changing demands on policing, the Committee found that forces are struggling to cope in the face of changing and rising crimes, as a result of falling staff numbers, outdated technology, capabilities, structures, fragmentation and a failure of Home Office leadership. It recommended major changes to the police response to new and growing crimes and warned that the Home Office cannot continue to stand back while police forces struggle.

**The findings included:** New data gathered by the Committee showed neighbourhood policing has been cut by over 20% since 2010, and some forces have lost more than two thirds of their neighbourhood officers. Recorded crime is up 32% in 3 years – including steep rises in robbery, theft and vehicle crime - but charges and summons are down 26%, and police forces are overstretched.

**'Traditional' crime and neighbourhood policing:** Many 'volume' crimes, including robbery, theft from the person, and vehicle-related theft, are now increasing at an alarmingly steep rate, after a long period of decline. Recorded crimes have risen but the number of arrests, charges and summons are down. If these trends continue, the service risks a serious decrease in public safety and in confidence in the police and the wider justice system.

The erosion of neighbourhood policing is a significant loss to communities. Cuts to neighbourhood policing are a false economy. Forces must start to rebuild community capacity and the Government should take action to support core neighbourhood policing in all forces.

**New and growing demands:** The proportion of online fraud cases being investigated is shockingly low, with evidence to the Committee showing less than 3% of Action Fraud reports lead to a charge or summons. The policing response to online fraud needs a complete overhaul, with all investigations undertaken at a national or regional level while local forces focus on victim support.

The growth of online indecent images of children (IIOC) is one of the most disturbing by-products of the digital age, but there is just one arrest for every ten recorded incidents, and the number of charges fell last year. The Committee is deeply concerned about the collective failure to protect children. The police response to online child sexual abuse is nowhere near the scale needed, and forces are woefully under-resourced for investigations. The Government should appoint a Commissioner for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse, to work across departments and agencies and produce a bold and comprehensive cross-Government strategy on child protection and the prevention of child sexual abuse.

Tackling new online crimes cannot be done by the police alone. The private sector needs to contribute to funding online law enforcement, and regulation of the internet companies should include new requirements on tackling online child sexual abuse.

In too many areas, the police are the only emergency service for those in mental health crisis, and they are being used as a gateway to healthcare for those in desperate need of help, which is completely inappropriate for patients and is overstressing the police. The Government should use the recently-announced NHS funding uplift to support mental health work, rather than leaving this work to the police service. Police officers also need more training in mental health.

**Technology:** Police officers are struggling to do their jobs with out of date technology. Lack of digital

**PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE**

## IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

capability is now a systemic problem. The biggest failing on technology is not funding, but a complete lack of coordination and leadership on upgrading technology over many years.

The Home Office needs to show national leadership on technology, making it a clear and stated aim to unify all police databases and communications systems, according to a clear timetable, with requirements on forces. It must develop plans for a National Digital Exploitation Centre for serious crime, similar to the model for counter terrorism policing.

**The role of the Home Office:** Above all, policing is suffering from a complete failure of leadership from the Home Office. As the lead department for policing, it cannot continue to stand back while crime patterns change so fast that the police struggle to respond. Many of the actions needed to respond to changing crimes cannot be done by forces alone. The Department needs to drive reform in key areas, such as data-sharing between public services, the negotiation of national technology contracts, building partnerships with the NHS or other Government departments, and the regulation of internet companies.

The Home Office should launch a transparent, root-and-branch review of policing, publishing proposals by the end of February, focusing on the allocation of responsibilities and capabilities at a local, regional and national level. Neighbourhood policing must be the bedrock of local policing. At a national and regional level, forces need to pool resources and capabilities to a far greater extent, particularly for online crimes, but also in complex areas where crimes often cross force borders, such as organised crime, county lines and modern slavery.

The Government should create a National Policing Council, chaired by the Home Secretary and comprising representatives of the APCC, NPCC, officer/staff associations, College of Policing and HMICFRS, and a National Police Assembly comprising all PCCs and Chief Constables.

**Funding:** Given the complex challenges outlined in this report, failure to provide a funding uplift for policing would have dire consequences. Without extra funding, something will have to give, and the police will not be able to fulfil their duties in delivering public safety, criminal justice, community cohesion and public confidence.

The current model for police funding is not fit for purpose, and should be fundamentally revised and re-structured. Heavy reliance on the council tax precept for additional funding is also unsustainable. It is time to stop kicking this problem into the long grass, and create a funding settlement for forces that is fit for the 21st century, recognising the true cost of policing. The Government also should move to a longer-term funding structure, to enable the service to frontload investment in the technology that will enable it to make the best use of its resources and assets

~~~~~

Times, 1/12/18: Council tax rise to boost cash-strapped police

Sam Coates, Deputy Political Editor | Esther Webber, Red Box Reporter |

Fiona Hamilton, Crime Editor | John Simpson, Crime Correspondent

More than 20,000 frontline police officers have been lost since 2010 and Council tax is set to rise as part of a £700 million police funding boost to be announced within weeks. The cash injection comes after years of warnings from forces about increases in violent crime and reductions in officer numbers across the country. Bills could go up by as much as £24 a year for each household in England and Wales.

About £200 million of the new police funding will come from the Treasury, with the rest dependent on whether local authorities choose to use the new freedom to raise council tax, taking the extra cash for the police to about £700 million. On top of this, £160 million was allocated in the budget for counter-terrorism policing in 2019-20, meaning that the package for the police is £900 million.

The cash will be provided against a backdrop of warring gangs and rising domestic violence. More than 20,000 frontline officers have been lost since 2010. Knife crime, other violent crime and murder rates have risen every year for the past four years. Last month the National Police Chiefs' Council said that there had been a real-terms reduction in police budgets of 19 per cent since 2010, ranging between 11 and 25 per cent across forces. Central government funding to police in England and Wales has fallen by 30 per cent in real terms since 2010-11 to £7.7 billion in 2018-19. Police were facing a shortfall because of an overhaul of pensions, which they said amounted to a £165 million bill in 2019-20. This would risk more cuts of 10,000 officers.

The move will be regarded as astute because it will place the onus on elected police and crime commissioners to raise their council tax precept and persuade their voters. The Home Office and Treasury said that no decisions had been finalised.

~~~~~



**PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE**

# IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

## 13/12/18: Police funding settlement announced by Government

Following a delay due to the 'meaningful vote' debate, Nick Hurd, the Minister for Policing, made a statement announcing the police funding settlement. Speaking in the Chamber, the Minister announced an increase in funding had been agreed, allocating up to £14 billion to the police for 2019/20. This represents an increase of up to £970 million on this year's funding.

Mr Hurd concluded his statement by thanking the police force for their service and saying, "This government's priority is the safety of the public. We understand that our police are facing increased demands. We are determined to respond to the threats from terrorism, organised crime and serious violence. We are today announcing a major investment in the capabilities the police need to respond, and we are rightly challenging the police to spend that money well and continue on the path of reform and modernisation."

Shadow Minister for Policing, Louise Haigh responded by saying, "Today's settlement represents a ninth consecutive year of real terms central government cut to the police. In September the Government announced that changes to the police pension valuation would mean an additional £165 million cost to forces in 2019-20 increasing to £417 million in 2021. Why then does today's settlement only cover £150 million of that cost and why does it provide no certainty for the following year?"

~~~~~

The Times, 14/12/18: Council tax rise of 5% to fund police and social care

Kate Devlin, John Simpson

Police budgets have endured a series of cuts since 2010 and millions are facing council tax rises of more than £100 after ministers raised the amount town halls can charge. Councils will be able to increase the tax by 3 per cent and some can add another 2 per cent for social care. Taxpayers will also pay for more than half of a new £1 billion police funding boost set to push up bills by £24 in some areas. It could mean a total rise of more than £100 on a Band D council tax bill of £1,671.

James Brokenshire, the communities secretary, said that from April local authorities would have the flexibility to increase council tax by 3 per cent without a referendum. Some can add a further 2 per cent for social care, if they had not increased the part of the bill allocated for that by 6 per cent over the past two years. He also announced that local authorities would share an additional £1.3 billion under the provisional local government finance settlement.

Lord Porter of Spalding, chairman of the Local Government Association, said: "Many councils will be forced to take tough decisions about which services need scaling back or stopped to plug funding gaps." Sajid Javid, the home secretary, also announced a £970 million rise in overall police funding for 2019-20. He boasted that the funding rise for next year was the largest overall increase since 2010, but rank-and-file officers said it was a "sticking plaster solution".

Under the deal police and crime commissioners will be able to ask for an extra £2 a month from band D households. If they all do so, this would generate about £510 million, the Home Office said.

How the tax is likely to rise

Band	2017-18	2018-19	Increase
A	£1,114	£1,186	£72
B	£1,300	£1,384	£84
C	£1,485	£1,580	£95
D	£1,671	£1,778	£107
E	£2,042	£2,173	£131
F	£2,414	£2,569	£155
G	£2,785	£2,964	£179
H	£3,342	£3,557	£215

England's heroes/heroines:

James Wolfe (2 January 1727 – 13 September 1759) was an English officer in the British Army, known for his training reforms and remembered chiefly for his victory in 1759 over the French at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in Quebec as a major general. James Wolfe was born at the local vicarage on 2 January 1727 at Westerham, Kent, the older of two sons of Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Edward Wolfe, a veteran soldier, and the former Henrietta Thompson. His uncle was Edward Thompson MP, a distinguished politician. His relatively humble birth marked him out from many army officers at the time, who were disproportionately drawn from the nobility or gentry. Wolfe's childhood home in Westerham, known in his lifetime as Spiers, has been preserved in his memory by the National Trust under the name Quebec House.



He had received his first commission at a young age and saw extensive service in Europe where he fought during the War of the Austrian Succession. His service in Flanders and in Scotland, where he took part in the suppression of the Jacobite Rebellion, brought him to the attention of his superiors. The advancement of his career was halted by the Peace Treaty of 1748 and he spent much of the next eight years on garrisons.

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

son duty in the Scottish Highlands. A brigade major at the age of 18, he was a lieutenant-colonel by 23. In 1756, with the outbreak of open hostilities with France, the Seven Years' War, Wolfe was promoted to Colonel. He was initially stationed in Canterbury, where his regiment had been posted to guard his home county of Kent against a French invasion threat. In 1757, Wolfe participated in the British amphibious assault on Rochefort, a seaport on the French Atlantic coast.

His part this led William Pitt to appoint him second-in-command of an expedition to capture the Fortress of Louisbourg. Following the success of the Siege of Louisbourg he was made commander of a force which sailed up the Saint Lawrence River to capture Quebec City. After a long siege Wolfe defeated a French force under the Marquis de Montcalm, allowing British forces to capture the city. Wolfe was killed at the height of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham due to injuries from three musketeers.

Wolfe's part in the taking of Quebec in 1759 earned him lasting fame, and he became an icon of Britain's victory in the Seven Years' War and subsequent territorial expansion. He was depicted in the painting *The Death of General Wolfe*, which became famous around the world. Wolfe was posthumously dubbed "The Hero of Quebec", "The Conqueror of Quebec", and also "The Conqueror of Canada", since the capture of Quebec led directly to the capture of Montreal, ending French control of the country.

England's history: January 1, 1660 - Samuel Pepys began his famous diary in which he chronicled life in London including the Great Plague of 1664-65 and the Great Fire of 1666

He recorded his daily life for almost ten years. This record of a decade of Pepys' life is more than a million words long and is often regarded as England's most celebrated diary. Pepys has been called the greatest diarist of all time due to his frankness in writing concerning his own weaknesses and the accuracy with which he records events of daily English life and major events in the 17th century. Pepys wrote about the contemporary court and theatre (including his amorous affairs with the actresses), his household, and major political and social occurrences.

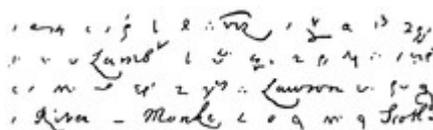
Historians have been using his diary to gain greater insight and understanding of life in London in the 17th century. Pepys wrote consistently on subjects such as personal finances, the time he got up in the morning, the weather, and what he ate. He talked at length about his new watch which he was very proud of (and which had an alarm, a new accessory at the time), a country visitor who did not enjoy his time in London because he felt that it was too crowded, and his cat waking him up at one in the morning. Pepys' diary is one of the only known sources that provides such length in details of everyday life of an upper-middle-class man during the seventeenth century.

Aside from day-to-day activities, Pepys also commented on the significant and turbulent events of his nation. England was in disarray when he began writing his diary. Oliver Cromwell had died just a few years before, creating a period of civil unrest and a large power vacuum to be filled. Pepys had been a strong supporter of Cromwell, but he converted to the Royalist cause upon the Protector's death. He was on the ship that brought Charles II home to England. He gave a firsthand account of events, such as the coronation of King Charles II and the Restoration of the British Monarchy to the throne, the Anglo-Dutch war, the Great Plague, and the Great Fire of London.

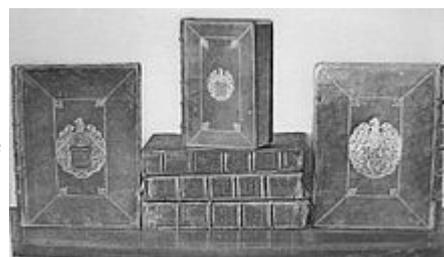
Pepys did not plan on his contemporaries ever seeing his diary, which is evident from the fact that he wrote in shorthand and sometimes in a "code" of various Spanish, French, and Italian words (especially when describing his illicit affairs). However, Pepys often juxtaposed profanities in his native English amidst his "code" of foreign words, a practice which would reveal the details to any casual reader. He did intend future generations to see the diary, as evidenced by its inclusion in his library and its catalogue before his death along with the shorthand guide he used and the elaborate planning by which he ensured his library survived intact after his death.

The women whom he pursued, his friends, and his dealings are all laid out. His diary reveals his jealousies, insecurities, trivial concerns, and his fractious relationship with his wife. It has been an important account of London in the 1660s. The juxtaposition of his commentary on politics and national events, alongside the very personal, can be seen from the beginning.

Pepys stopped writing his diary in 1669. His eyesight began to trouble him and he feared that writing in dim light was damaging his eyes. He did imply in his last entries that he might have others write his diary for him, but doing so would result in a loss of privacy and it seems



A facsimile of part of the first entry in the diary



The six volumes of the diary manuscript

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

that he never went through with those plans. In the end, Pepys' fears were unjustified and he lived another 34 years without going blind, but he never took to writing his diary again. However, Pepys dictated a journal for two months in 1669–70 as a record of his dealings with the Commissioners of Accounts at that period. He also kept a diary for a few months in 1683 when he was sent to Tangier, Morocco as the most senior civil servant in the navy, during the English evacuation. The diary mostly covers work-related matters.

English culture: Mummers plays

Mummers' plays are folk plays performed by troupes of amateur actors, traditionally all male, known as mummers or guisers (also by local names such as rhymers, pace-egggers, soulers, tipteerers, wrenboys, and galoshins). It refers particularly to a play in which a number of characters are called on stage, two of whom engage in a combat, the loser being revived by a doctor character. Mummers' plays should not be confused with the earlier mystery plays. Although the term mummers has been in use since the Middle Ages, no scripts or details survive from that era and the term may have been used loosely to describe performers of several different kinds. The word mummer is sometimes explained to derive from Middle English mum ("silent") or Greek mommo ("mask"), and *vermummen* ("to wrap up, to disguise, to mask one's face"), which itself is derived from or came to be associated with *mummen* (first attested already in Middle High German by a prohibition in Mühlhausen, Thuringia, 1351) but is more likely to be associated with Early New High German *mummer* ("disguised person").

Mumming is sometimes performed in the street but more usually during visits to houses and pubs. It was a way of raising money and the play was taken round the big houses. Most Southern English versions end with the entrance of "Little Johnny Jack his wife and family on his back". Johnny, traditionally played by the youngest mummer in the group, first asks for food and then more urgently for money. Johnny Jack's wife and family were either dolls in a model house or sometimes a picture.

Mumming is generally performed seasonally or annually, often at Christmas, Easter or on Plough Monday, more rarely on Hallowe'en or All Souls' Day, and often with a collection of money. Mummers and "guisers" (performers in disguise) can be traced back at least to 1296, when the festivities for the marriage of Edward I's daughter at Christmas included "mummers of the court" along with "fiddlers and minstrels". These "revels" and "guisings" may have been an early form of masque and the early use of the term "mumming" appears to refer specifically to a performance of dicing with the host for costly jewels, after which the mummers would join the guests for dancing, an event recorded in 1377 when 130 men on horseback went "mumming" to the Prince of Wales, later Richard II.

The characters may be introduced in a series of short speeches (usually in rhyming couplets) or they may introduce themselves in the course of the play's action. The principal characters, presented in a wide variety of manners, are a hero, most commonly Saint George, King George, or Prince George and his chief opponent, (known as the Turkish Knight in southern England), named Slasher elsewhere, and a quack Doctor who comes to restore the dead man to life. Other characters include: Old Father Christmas, who introduces some plays, the Fool and Beelzebub or Little Devil Doubt (who demands money from the audience).

Mumming groups often wear face-obscuring hats or other kinds of headgear and masks, some mummers' faces are blackened or painted. In 1418 a law was passed forbidding "mumming, plays, interludes or any other disguisings with any feigned beards, painted visors, deformed or coloured visages in any wise, upon pain of imprisonment". (*Similarly, today Mummers painting their faces black have been suppressed. Ed.*) Many mummers and guisers, however, have no facial disguise at all.



St. George slays the dragon, in a 2015 Boxing Day production, by the St Albans Mummers.

Promotion: The **Brussels sprout** is a member of the Gemmifera Group of cabbages (*Brassica oleracea*), grown for its edible buds. The leafy green vegetables are typically 2.5–4.0 cm (1.0–1.6 in) in diameter and look like miniature cabbages. Forerunners to modern Brussels sprouts were probably cultivated in Ancient Rome. Although native to the Mediterranean region with other cabbage species, Brussels sprouts first appeared in northern Europe during the fifth century, later being cultivated in the 13th century near Brussels, from which they derived their name. The first written reference dates to 1587. During the 16th century, they enjoyed a popularity in the southern Netherlands that eventually spread throughout the cooler parts of Northern Europe.

IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

Brussels sprouts grow in temperature ranges of 7–24 °C (45–75 °F), with highest yields at 15–18 °C (59–64 °F). Fields are ready for harvest 90 to 180 days after planting. The edible sprouts grow like buds in helical patterns along the side of long, thick stalks of about 60 to 120 cm (24 to 47 in) in height, maturing over several weeks from the lower to the upper part of the stalk. Sprouts may be picked by hand into baskets, in which case several harvests are made of five to 15 sprouts at a time, or by cutting the entire stalk at once for processing, or by mechanical harvester, depending on variety. Each stalk can produce 1.1 to 1.4 kg (2.4 to 3.1 lb), although the commercial yield is about 900 g (2.0 lb) per stalk. Harvest season in temperate zones of the northern latitudes is September to March, making Brussels sprouts a traditional winter-stock vegetable. In the home garden, harvest can be delayed as quality does not suffer from freezing. Sprouts are considered to be sweetest after a frost.



Brussels sprouts are a cultivar group of the same species as broccoli, cabbage, collard greens, kale, and kohlrabi; they are cruciferous (they belong to the Brassicaceae family; old name Cruciferae). Many cultivars are available; some are purple in color, such as 'Ruby Crunch' or 'Red Bull'. The purple varieties are hybrids between purple cabbage and regular green Brussels sprouts developed by a Dutch botanist in the 1940s, yielding a variety with some of the red cabbage's purple colors and greater sweetness. Brussels sprouts are grown throughout England and especially in Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Suffolk, Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire.

Recipe: Bubble & squeak by Paul Merrett

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/164622/bubble-and-squeak>

Serves 4, preparation time 10 minutes, cooking time 20 minutes

Bubble & squeak should be on everyone's radar come Christmas time - it's a great way of using up leftover mash, sprouts and cabbage



Ingredients:

1 tbsp duck fat, goose fat or butter

1 onion, finely sliced

15-20 cooked Brussels sprouts, sliced, or leftover boiled cabbage, shredded

4 rashers of streaky bacon, chopped

1 garlic clove, chopped

400g cold leftover mashed potato, or cold crushed boiled potatoes

Method

Melt 1 tbsp duck fat, goose fat or butter in a non-stick pan, allow it to get nice and hot, then add 4 chopped streaky bacon rashers. As it begins to brown, add 1 finely sliced onion and 1 chopped garlic clove. Next, add 15-20 sliced cooked Brussels sprouts or shredded boiled cabbage and let it colour slightly. All this will take 5-6 mins.

Add 400g cold mashed potato. Work everything together in the pan and push it down so that the mixture covers the base of the pan. Allow the mixture to catch slightly on the base of the pan before turning it over and doing the same again. It's the bits of potato that catch in the pan that define the term 'bubble and squeak', so be brave and let the mixture colour. Cut into wedges and serve.

OUR PRECIOUS UNION! Theresa May June 2017

(Sucking England dry)

Join at www.thecep.org.uk or send name and address with cheque for £20 (£15 concessions) made out to The Campaign for an English Parliament to Ms P Cullen, 9 the Meadows, Breachwood Green, Hitchin, Herts., SG4 8PR

The Campaign for an English parliament is a Company limited by guarantee, Registered in England number 03636739. It is a not-for-profit organisation with no shareholders and limited liability.

The views expressed in Think of England are not necessarily those of the editor or members of the National Council

Think of England is published online. Hard copies will cost £3.00 with £1 pp and may be obtained by contacting 0845 6346108 or emailing scilla.cullen@dsl.pipex.com

PLEASE PRINT OUT AND CIRCULATE