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**C**ampaign for an **E**nglish **P**arliament  
*The Voice of England*

# **Think of England**

## **Number 76 : January 2018**



**Championing England  
& Challenging Prejudice**

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**RECOMMENDED READING:** I never knew that about England by Christopher Winn, published by Ebury: This is the ultimate journey around England, to see where history happened.



## 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 happy and successful New Year to all our members, supporters and readers. May the new Year bring recognition of the CEP by the British Academy. In the second year of their



Governing England (piecemeal) project, two particularly pressing issues will be explored: The funding of sub-national government in England and the devolution of public services. Notably one of their contributors is German-born MP Gisela Stuart who notoriously claimed in 2005 that people acknowledging that they were English worried her. She said "*British identity is based on and anchored in its political and legal institutions and this enables it to take in new entrants more easily than it would be if being a member of a nation were to be defined by blood. But a democratic polity will only work if citizens' identification is with the community as a whole, or at least with the shared process, which overrides their loyalty to a segment.*" in these few words she denies England a polity and a people. Something she would never do to any other nation. A new term of note in the British Academy's report is "area patriotism". (LOL)!

Three months ago the Lords recommended that it should reform. Has anything happened? The Lords then debated a number of English affairs, which they do not do for the rest of the UK. A privilege we in England can do without as much as they can in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The lords should be a Senate in the vision of Frank Field. The Commons debated Local Authority scrutiny, does this apply to the so-called devolved institutions?

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### Campaigning for England : British Academy, Frank Field

*Excerpts from the fourth newsletter from the British Academy's 'Governing England' programme are below. The CEP has not been invited to any of these deliberations nor have we sight of any previous newsletters. Their project should be called 'Governing England Piecemeal'! Ed.*



"This newsletter summarises the Governing England conference, discusses what has been learnt by the project so far and outlines which areas will be explored in the second year.

On 5 July, we held a conference 'Devolution and Identity in England' as part of our Governing England project. This conference explored the reality of metro mayors in England, discussed an English parliament, that Whitehall has attempted to maintain rather than devolve control, and that English identity remains diffuse and elusive.

**The all-day conference** was co-chaired by **Professor Iain McLean FBA FRSE** (University of Oxford) and **Professor Michael Kenny** (University of Cambridge). The event included **Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield FBA** and **Professor Sir David Cannadine FBA FRSL FSA FRHistS** in conversation. Other panellists and speakers included: **Lord O'Neill of Gatley**, **Sir Peter Soulsby**, **Professor Tony Travers**, **Rt Hon Frank Field MP**, **Professor Lord Norton of Louth**, **Professor Vernon Bogdanor**, **Dr Jo Casebourne**, **Sir John Elvidge**, **Professor Rt Hon John Denham**, **Professor Rob Ford**, **Professor John Curtice**, **Sunder Katwala**, and **Rt Hon Gisela Stuart**.

Before the general election of June 2017, it appeared that the way that local government in England is funded was set to change, primarily a move to the 100% retention of business rates. Since the general election this policy appears to have stalled, though councils are now being invited to bid to central government to retain the growth in business rates in their areas.

**Greater Manchester** has led the way in having powers over both health and social care devolved to the region, but other services look set to be devolved. In August, a £35 million scheme for helping people into work was announced. This scheme is to be administered by six combined authorities in partnership with the government. As more services in England are devolved, long running questions around how to ensure universal standards according to need will gain prominence, and the British Academy is working to answer these questions.

**Recent political developments** have led to a greater focus on the governance of England and its place within the United Kingdom. The question of English identity has become a particular focus for debate, partly due to the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union.

**The first session** of the conference discussed how metro mayors have been established to help economic growth, but that they might also play a role in terms of renewing political and democratic engagement, and fostering a sense of 'area patriotism'. Metro mayors and the combined authorities have been set up on a bespoke basis and the governance of England is now a patchwork with some areas administered by combined authorities and others not, while the powers of these newly created authorities vary considerably. Questions arising from these developments include whether these changes will prove popular in the long term and whether devolution will be extended in future.

**The second session** of the conference addressed the issue of the representation of England within political institutions, primarily Parliament. The panel discussed the English Votes for English Laws reform, and whether that or other alternatives address how those who identify as English wish to be represented. While English Votes for English Laws is an attempt to allow English MPs to veto legislation affecting England only, with which they do not agree, it does not provide a visible institution or mechanism which can be said to 'speak' for England.

**The third session** showed that political parties have largely struggled with the issue of identity, although the Conservative party has been more successful at securing the support of those who identify as English, and Labour with those who identify as British. National identity becomes more important as more people cast their vote in line with others who share their identity, rather than class or age. Political parties are vehicles to express identity and political preference, and they appear to be evolving as they seek to articulate both.

**The fourth session** of the conference heard that the government's commitment to devolution within England appears to have waned since the EU referendum, as well as concerns expressed that Whitehall had yet to adapt sufficiently and was still inherently sceptical about relinquishing control of major public services. It was also pointed out that, given the long history of centralisation within England, the significance of the progress made in recent years toward devolution to city regions and other parts of the country should not be discounted, even if most of the country remains outside of areas with devolution deals.

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**The fifth and final session** discussed Englishness, and what kind of national identity it constitutes. Identity is changing and evolving, with many different elements playing their part. English identity is no different, and it seems to now be emerging as multiculturalism and immigration have prompted many in England to consider their identity as never before. However, English identity is still ill-defined, so many are struggling with how to best represent England and the English, and English identity is often seen more negatively than other, more inclusive, national identities such as Britishness.

**The issue of identity** ran through each session. English identity may be felt by many people to be difficult to define and articulate, but identity is central to questions of governance. Many of the institutions of English and British politics are being reshaped in order to better take account of, or capture, English identity, without general acceptance of who the English are and what they want.

*The only person allowed to make the case for an English Parliament was Frank Field:*

<http://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/834711/frank-field-english-parliament-constitutional-reform-brexit>

**Let us rule our England with an English parliament, says FRANK FIELD MP**

**Labour MP for Birkenhead:** An English parliament should sit in place of the House of Commons. But just as it took much political heaving to get through the first devolution bill, the passage to establish an English parliament will be further hindered by Brexit fallout. Politicians are scared of the constitutional changes that were set afoot by Scottish devolution. They should give up worrying. Brexit will drive reform on the constitutional front, just as it will do through much of public life.



Once the Blair government began the process of devolution, particularly to Scotland, but also to Wales and Northern Ireland, we faced what was called the “West Lothian Question”. The then MP for West Lothian, the late Tam Dalyell, posed the question thus: should MPs from Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland be able to vote on matters which affect only England? Politicians have since sought to answer Tam’s question but with little success.

What has not been posed is a new question, but here it is: Isn’t the answer to the West Lothian question to establish an English parliament? The only rational conversation I had with Gordon Brown was when he questioned if I genuinely believed in an English parliament. I replied that I did. “But how do you get over the size?” Gordon enquired. “England is so dominant that it makes devolution for England impossible.” It is the size of England that makes devolution more, not less, important. But England’s size does put a price on success. England, yet again, needs to be generous in establishing the new constitutional order. There’s no problem with establishing an English parliament. The House of Commons as we know it today would be abolished. In its place would be the election of MPs to an English parliament that would sit in the House of Commons. A Common Senate could replace the House of Lords.

The English Parliament would therefore be on a par with parliaments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A second move would be to abolish the House of Lords. We have a bigger second chamber than China, although our population of 65 million is dwarfed by China’s 1.3 billion.

In place of the Lords should be a “Common Senate” to which the Northern Irish, Welsh, Scottish and English parliaments would send legislation for scrutiny, just as now with the Commons sending its legislation to the Lords.

The Senate should be elected, but not by giving party whips the chance to stack it full again with their candidates who failed to get elected to the Commons. Elections there will be but the establishment of the Senate will reflect those great organisations – the professions, arts and culture, industry, including both employers and trade unions – which would get to elect one or two senators for a fixed term of 10 years. Likewise, there would be elections of another group of senators based on geography.

Election to the English parliament would be on a constituency basis. British representation has always had a strong local basis. Again, these senators would be elected on a regional basis and would serve a 10-year term. The 10-year term would limit the power of any whipping system trying to control the business of the Senate.

Only the feeble-minded who managed to squeeze through the new devolved electoral system would be easy meat for the whips. The legislation from the English parliament, and those from the other three parliaments, would be considered, revision offered, but the Senate would not have powers of outright rejection.

Sovereign constitutional powers would reside in each of the four UK parliaments. English senators would have to work with other senators on major pieces of business.

The Senate would decide taxation, foreign affairs and defence, with all three shared between the four UK

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powers. Division of seats would ensure that English senators would succeed only if they had the support of other countries' senators.

Election to the English parliament would be on a constituency basis, just as now. This constitutional change would not only empower voters but it would reduce the bill.

The Lords cost taxpayers £108million in 2015-2016. Cut to a third of its size its cost would similarly fall.

While the cost would fall, the effectiveness would increase.

It would attract people who head their own sections of public life. Likewise, each senator would know that their term was limited, a move that should increase their sense of value and independence.

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

#### Current English Affairs: Localism, Railways

<http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2017/11/scrapping-english-district-councils-could-save-economy-billions>

#### Scrapping English district councils 'could save economy billions'

By: **Anthony Barej**; 22 Nov 17

Scrapping 201 district councils in England and giving the rest London-style powers could boost the economy by £31bn over five years, ResPublica has stated.

**The think-tank** has said counties should abandon the two-tier system of local government, which currently sees 27 county councils working in areas with 201 smaller district councils. Councils should instead adopt 'streamlined local government' with single unitary authorities, according to ResPublica's report Devo 2.0: The Case for Counties, which was launched on Monday.

**Researchers said** getting rid of the two-tiers and devolving greater powers to these new unitary councils would generate billions for the economy through savings (£2.9bn) and growth (£11.7bn).

**The think-tank** said investors were "confused and frustrated" by "parochial decision making on important strategic issues" but their proposed reforms would offer a consistent framework for regulations, and clear input to strategic planning. Phillip Blond, director of ResPublica, said: "The needless confusion that frustrates the ambitions of business and government alike in our county areas must end now. "With Brexit on the horizon and our city-regions already benefitting from devolution, we can't afford the waste and complication that the current system creates."

**Blond said** single councils on a county scale were the "future". This comes as areas like Dorset and Buckinghamshire having submitted plans to the government to move towards systems of that kind. Jane Scott, County Councils Network reform spokesperson and leader of Wiltshire Council, said the authority's move to a unitary system has been a "huge success" for Wiltshire.

**"ResPublica's report** highlights that streamlining counties will contribute billions to the national economy and will be good for business; but the real winners are local residents who will benefit from improved public services, less bureaucracy, and access to more housing and facilities that meet local need and demand," she said.

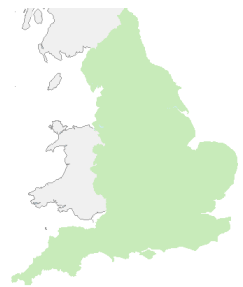
**However, the District Councils Network (DCN)** was critical of ResPublica's study with the network's chair John Fuller claiming it promotes "a sterile and rather tiresome debate" about structures but fails to focus on the needs of local people and local geography. He said: "Districts have long demonstrated their appetite for increased devolution and the transformation of local government in localities." Fuller argued that it was the DCN's long-held position was that local government transformation should be driven by "bottom up solutions". He said these solutions can operate at a scale which makes sense to residents and can drive growth and improve people's lives.

#### Rail lines axed by Beeching will reopen to tackle overcrowding crisis

The Times, 29/11/17: Graeme Paton Transport Correspondent

Richard Beeching's efforts to streamline Britain's rail network led to the closure of several lines, including the scenic route between Bristol and Portishead. Hundreds of miles of rail lines shut under the notorious Beeching cuts 50 years ago will be reopened as part of plans to tackle overcrowding and boost capacity on the network.

The Department for Transport will announce today that bids will be invited from metro mayors to resurrect some of the 5,000 miles of tracks closed in the late 1960s. Chris Grayling, the transport secretary, said talks had already begun to reopen five commuter lines to ease pressure on a network "bursting at the



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seams". Many are freight lines that will be redeveloped for passengers.

This includes the lines from Okehampton to Exeter and from Portishead to Bristol, a new passenger route through Birmingham and a new link from Ashington and Blyth into Newcastle. The reopening of the Varsity line between Oxford and Cambridge - is scheduled for the mid-2020s.



In an interview with The Times Mr Grayling said lines would be prioritised that unlocked new housing development, triggered business growth or eased pressure on crowded routes. Passenger services could be reintroduced between Skipton, North Yorkshire, and Colne, Lancashire, and on the Wisbech line in Cambridgeshire, funded by a combination of infrastructure spending unveiled in the budget, contributions from housing developers and cash set aside to upgrade the railway between 2019 and 2024.

The plans are part of sweeping reforms designed to shape the future of **England's** rail network,

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### **RAILWAY lines and stations lost during the Beeching cuts could be reopened to drive housebuilding.**

Daily Mail, 29/11/17: Claire Ellicott Political Correspondent

The Transport Secretary said yesterday that reversing some of the 1960s closures would provide homes, boost the economy and ease overcrowding.

Chris Grayling's ministry will today announce it is to accelerate plans announced in the Budget to reopen a rail link between Oxford and Cambridge. Other lines in Bristol, Devon and the West Midlands could be reinstated, along with the building of four stations in West Yorkshire.

Chancellor Philip Hammond hopes new infrastructure will allow him to deliver on his vow in the Budget last week to build 300,000 homes a year.

Around 5,000 miles of track and 2,363 stations were closed between 1964 and 1970 following a report by British Railways chairman Richard Beeching. The railways were losing millions of pounds a year and the former businessman and engineer was given the job of making them profitable again.

His 1963 report, the Reshaping of British Railways, recommended closing down parts that were losing money - about a third of the network. Tens of thousands of jobs were lost, making Dr Beeching a villain to many.

The Department for Transport will pledge to reverse some of those decisions to cater for a growing number of train passengers putting the network under strain. Last week the Treasury confirmed funding for phase two of the western section of the East West Rail link between Oxford and Cambridge. The line, which runs from Bicester to Bedford and Milton Keynes to Princes Risborough, will be completed by 2023.

An independent East West Rail Company will be set up to deliver the central section between Bedford and Cambridge to open in the mid-2020s. More than 100,000 homes will also be built in Oxfordshire by 2031 as part of this investment in the region.

The Government hopes that the line will help create a hub for technology and science.

Other proposed openings include lines from Bristol to Portishead and Bristol to Henbury. Further plans have been submitted to restore connections in Devon between Exeter and Okehampton and Bere Alton and Tavistock.

Further 'opportunities' to reopen lines are being considered - around Birmingham according to the Government rail strategy. The four new stations being considered for West Yorkshire are Elland, Thorpe Park, White Rose and Leeds Bradford International Airport Parkway.

Local authorities have to submit business cases to apply for central government funding.

The DfT said 5,500 new carriages will be on the network by 2021, which is busier than at any time since 1919 - despite being much smaller. Mr Grayling said: 'We need a new way of working to help our railway deal with the challenges it faces.'

'We need to expand our network to unlock jobs and housing growth across the country.'

Labour said the Government was failing to tackle fare rises and accused it of scrapping millions-in promised rail investment.

Party leader Jeremy Corbyn has put forward plans to renationalise the railways but has not set out how this would be funded. Andy McDonald, Labour's transport spokesman, said: 'These flimsy-re-announcements and unfunded proposals come as fares have risen at twice the rate of wages since 2010 and follow the decision to scrap hundreds of millions of pounds of promised rail investment.'

The announcement comes amid reports that the DfT will overhaul rail franchises and reform Network

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Rail.

Other stations which could be reopened if funding requests are granted

Half-hourly passenger services suggested on the Beeching axed line between Ashington and Newcastle, with new stops at Bedlington, Bebside, Choppington, Newsham in Blyth, and Seaton Delaval.

### English politics: Lords' reform, countryside access, LA scrutiny, & finance, policing, Tenant Fees (England) Bill

#### 31 October 2017: Reduce House of Lords to 600 Members, says committee

The Lord Speaker's committee on the size of the House of Lords has recommended the House be reduced to 600 Members, and its size capped at that number, in a move that would - for the first time in history - establish a maximum size of the House of Lords and link its composition to general election results.

The committee believe this system, which is driven by the House's desire to reduce its numbers, would result in the House making an even more effective contribution to the work of Parliament. The Committee was chaired by Lord Burns and had members from all parties and the crossbenches.

**Action plan:** The committee sets out an action plan that would allow the House of Lords to achieve these outcomes without legislation. Key elements include:

New Members would be appointed on 15 year terms and give an undertaking to leave the House after that period. Failure to do so would be a breach of the Code of Conduct.

No party would be allowed an absolute political majority and a minimum of 20% of seats would be reserved for independent crossbench Members largely appointed by the House of Lords Appointment Commission.

Political appointments should be shared between the parties in line with the result of the previous general election, defined as an average of the parties' share of the national vote and of the seats won in the House of Commons. The combination of this formula and the 15 year term limit would ensure the future make-up of the House of Lords reflected the political views of the country over the medium term.

An accelerated 'two-out, one-in' programme of departures until the House reached the target size of 600, with half of the departures contributing to the reduction and the other half being replaced with new appointments. Each party would be asked to contribute the same proportion of its current membership each year towards the target.

**Lord Speaker's comment:** Welcoming the report Lord Fowler, who as Lord Speaker set up the Committee, said:

"This is the House of Lords reforming itself. It is being done without the benefit of legislation and relies on the agreement of members of the House. The inquiry itself was set up after a debate on the floor of the House which called for a reduction in the number of peers. The committee itself has members from all three parties and the crossbenches and was unanimous. "The House of Lords carries out vitally important work in holding the government of the day to account. However with over 800 members - about 150 more than the Commons - we are too large.

"This report presents the Lords with an important opportunity. A smaller, more effective house will be able to build public confidence and support for its crucial constitutional role in checking bills before they become law and in reviewing policy through their hard working select committees.

"I should emphasise that if the system the committee proposes is to succeed it will require political agreement from the main parties and of course the Prime Minister herself. I very much hope that will be forthcoming after everyone concerned has had the opportunity to study the report. My hope is that there will be a "take note" debate before Christmas and more detailed consideration of the specific measures in the New Year.

**Lord Burns, Chairman of the committee said:** "The committee has proposed a radical yet achievable solution to the excessive size of the House of Lords, which the House itself agreed needed to be tackled urgently.

"This is one of the most complicated issues that my fellow members and I have ever faced. While no set of proposals will ever be perfect, we believe that ours would provide a fair solution which could prove sustainable for as long as this remains an appointed chamber.

"I urge the Prime Minister, the party leaders and all Members of the House of Lords to engage with what we have proposed and seize this realistic opportunity to tackle a problem which has defied resolution for so long."



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The committee has deliberately made recommendations that can be achieved without legislation. All the changes it proposes can be delivered by the House and the Prime Minister, with the cooperation of the political groups in reducing their number of Members.

*(Don't hold your breath! Ed.)*

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### **Countryside access considered by Committee: 21 November 2017**

The Lords Select Committee on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 continues its inquiry with three sessions discussing countryside access and rights of way. The sessions consider the role played by Natural England in promoting access, and the effect of Part 6 of the 2006 Act, which reduced access rights for motor vehicles on a number of country routes.

#### **Areas of discussion:**

Whether the approach towards access adopted in the NERC Act struck an appropriate balance between the needs of motor vehicle users and those of other groups who use public rights of way.

Whether the current legal framework strikes the right balance between countryside access and nature conservation.

How well Natural England is performing its objective of promoting access to the countryside and open spaces.

The impact of government funding reductions—and continuing funding uncertainty—on England's National Trails network.

The work that Natural England has done to establish and promote the England Coast Path

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### **Lords debates the number of vulnerable children in England :15 December 2017**

Members of the Lords, including a vice president of Barnardos and the shadow spokesperson for education and health, debated the report by the Children's Commissioner for England 'On measuring the number of vulnerable children'.

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### **Duty of care to prisoners needs urgent action: 13 December 2017**

The Commons Public Accounts Committee report says record levels of self-inflicted deaths and self-harm in prisons are a damning indictment

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### **06 November 2017: Minister questioned on local authority overview and scrutiny**

The Commons Communities and Local Government Committee hears from Local Government Minister Marcus Jones in the final session of the inquiry on local government overview and scrutiny.

The inquiry has previously heard from councillors and other scrutiny practitioners on the effectiveness of local authority overview and scrutiny committees, the political independence of chairs and whether committees have the resources to carry out effective scrutiny

### **15 December 2017 : Local authority culture change needed to ensure effective scrutiny**

The Government must encourage a culture change at local authorities to ensure overview and scrutiny is truly independent of the executive and can properly contribute to improving services for taxpayers, the Commons Communities and Local Government Committee concludes.

**Lack of constructive challenge :** The Committee's report on overview and scrutiny in local government, warns that scrutiny is often not held in high enough esteem, leading to a lack of constructive challenge to improve services for residents.

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### **Statement: Policing: 19 December 2017**

Minister of State for the Home Office, Nick Hurd, made a statement in the House of Commons on policing and informed the House on the Government's provisional police funding settlement, detailing how much money each police force in England and Wales will receive in 2018-19.

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### **Statement: Local government finance settlement: 19 December 2017**

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid, made a statement in the House of Commons on funding for local authorities in **England** next year in relation to the local government finance settlement.

The Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Andrew Gwynne, responded on



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behalf of the Opposition and stated that Councils were still without a sustainable plan or a vision for how the sector will be funded in the future.

### ~~~~~ **Scrutiny of Government plans to ban landlord and letting agents fees: 16 November 2017**

The Commons Communities and Local Government Committee conducts pre-legislative scrutiny of the Government's proposals to ban letting fees imposed by landlords and letting agents on tenants.

**The draft Tenant Fees Bill (PDF 716 KB)** was published on 1 November and according to the Secretary of State aims to deliver 'a fairer, more competitive, and more affordable lettings market where tenants have greater clarity and control over what they will pay and where the landlord is the primary customer of the letting agent'.

The Bill would prohibit all payments to lettings agents and landlords (aside from rent, security deposits, holding deposits and tenant default fees), cap deposits and introduce new civil and criminal offences for breaching the ban.

The Committee plans to hold a series of oral evidence sessions in the New Year with experts, tenant, letting agent and landlord associations, and trading standards authorities. These will be held in tandem with the sessions for the Committee's existing inquiry into the Private Rented Sector.

**Scrutiny of policy objectives, key provisions and impact of draft Bill:** During these sessions the Committee will scrutinise the policy objectives, key provisions and likely impact of the draft Bill. This will include assessing:

Do the provisions of the draft Bill enable this objective to be achieved?

Are the draft Bill's provisions necessary, clear and workable?

What are the resource implications for local authorities?

What is the likely impact of the legislation on key stakeholders including tenants, letting agents and landlords?

### **Annex A - Territorial extent and application in the United Kingdom**

The territorial extent of this Bill is England and Wales only. The Bill will apply to **England** only.

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**England's heroes/heroines: Thomas Paine (or Pain; February 9, 1737– June 8, 1809)** The son of a Norfolk Quaker smallholder, he emigrated to Philadelphia where he settled as a radical political journalist, famed for his "Give me liberty or give me death" speech in pre-revolutionary America. He was an English-born American political activist, philosopher, political theorist, and revolutionary. One of the Founding Fathers of the United States, he authored the two most influential pamphlets at the start of the American Revolution, and he inspired the rebels in 1776 to declare independence from Britain. His ideas reflected Enlightenment-era rhetoric of transnational human rights. He has been called "a corsetmaker by trade, a journalist by profession, and a propagandist by inclination."



Born in Thetford, Norfolk, Paine migrated to the British American colonies in 1774 with the help of Benjamin Franklin, arriving just in time to participate in the American Revolution. Virtually every rebel read (or listened to a reading of) his powerful pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776), proportionally the all-time best-selling American title, which crystallized the rebellious demand for independence from Great Britain. His *The American Crisis* (1776–83) was a pro-revolutionary pamphlet series. *Common Sense* was so influential that John Adams said, "Without the pen of the author of *Common Sense*, the sword of Washington would have been raised in vain."

Paine lived in France for most of the 1790s, becoming deeply involved in the French Revolution. He wrote *Rights of Man* (1791), in part a defence of the French Revolution against its critics. His attacks on Anglo-Irish conservative writer Edmund Burke led to a trial and conviction *in absentia* in 1792 for the crime of seditious libel. In 1792, despite not being able to speak French, he was elected to the French National Convention. The Girondists regarded him as an ally. Consequently, the Montagnards, especially Robespierre, regarded him as an enemy.

In December 1793, he was arrested and was taken to Luxembourg Prison in Paris. While in prison, he continued to work on *The Age of Reason* (1793–94). Future President James Monroe used his diplomatic connections to get Paine released in November 1794. He became notorious because of his pamphlets. *The Age of Reason*, in which he advocated deism, promoted reason and free thought, and argued against institutionalized religion in general and Christian doctrine in particular. He also published the pamphlet *Agrarian Justice* (1797), discussing the origins of property, and introduced the concept of a guaranteed minimum income. In 1802, he returned to the U.S. where he died on June 8, 1809. Only six people attended his fu-

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neral as he had been ostracized for his ridicule of Christianity.



**England's history: Traveller's cheques** were first issued on 1 January 1772 by the London Credit Exchange Company for use in 90 European cities, and in 1874, Thomas Cook was issuing 'circular notes' that operated in the manner of traveller's cheques.

American Express developed a large-scale international traveller's cheque system in 1891, to supersede the traditional letters of credit. It is still the largest issuer of traveller's cheques today by volume. American Express's introduction of traveller's cheques is traditionally attributed to employee Marcellus Flemming Berry, after company president J.C. Fargo had problems in smaller European cities obtaining funds with a letter of credit.

Between the 1950s and the 1990s, traveller's cheques became one of the main ways that people took money on holiday for use in foreign countries without the risks associated with carrying large amounts of cash. Several brands of travellers cheques have been marketed; the most familiar of those were Thomas Cook Group, Bank of America and American Express. They are a medium of exchange that can be used in place of hard currency. They can be denominated in one of a number of major world currencies and are pre-printed, fixed-amount cheques designed to allow the person signing it to make an unconditional payment to someone else as a result of having paid the issuer for that privilege.

They were generally used by people on vacation in foreign countries instead of cash, as many businesses used to accept traveller's cheques as currency. The incentive for merchants and other parties to accept them lay in the fact that as long as the original signature (which the buyer is supposed to place on the cheque in ink as soon as they receive the cheque) and the signature made at the time the cheque is used are the same, the cheque's issuer will unconditionally guarantee payment of the face amount even if the cheque was fraudulently issued, stolen, or lost. This means that a traveler's cheque can never 'bounce' unless the issuer goes bankrupt and out of business. If a traveler's cheque were lost or stolen, it could be replaced by the issuing financial institution.

Their use has been in decline since the 1990s. Around this time, a variety of more convenient alternatives, such as credit cards, debit cards, and automated teller machines, became more widely available and were easier for travelers to use. Traveler's cheques are no longer widely accepted and cannot easily be cashed, even at the banks that issue them. Other factors that have led to a decline in traveler's cheques include the fees charged by the issuer and agent, as well as the less favourable foreign exchange rate commonly used on traveler's cheques, especially compared to those on credit card transactions.

### English culture: Wassailing and Yulesinging

Traditionally, the wassail is celebrated on Twelfth Night (variously on either January 5 or 6). Some people still wassail on "Old Twelvey Night", January 17, as it would have been before the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar in 1752. In the middle ages, the wassail was a reciprocal exchange between the feudal lords and their peasants as a form of recipient-initiated charitable giving, to be distinguished from begging. This point is made in the song "Here We Come A-Wassailing", when the wassailers inform the lord of the house that 'we are not daily beggars that beg from door to door, But we are friendly neighbours whom you have seen before'.

The lord of the manor would give food and drink to the peasants in exchange for their blessing and goodwill, i.e. 'Love and joy come to you, And to you your wassail too; And God bless you and send you a Happy New Year'

This would be given in the form of the song being sung. Wassailing is the background practice against which an English carol such as "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" dating back to sixteenth century England, can be made sense of. The carol lies in the English tradition where wealthy people of the community gave Christmas treats to the carollers on Christmas Eve such as 'figgy puddings'.

Although wassailing is often described in innocuous and sometimes nostalgic terms - still practiced in some parts of Northern England on New Years Day as "first-footing", the practice has not always been considered so innocent. Wassailing was associated with rowdy bands of young men who would enter the homes of wealthy neighbours and demand free food and drink (in a manner similar to the modern children's Halloween practice of trick-or-treating). If the householder refused, he was usually cursed, and oc-



Sharing the Wassail Bowl

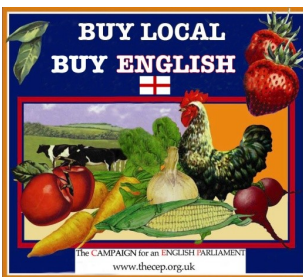
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## IF YOU AGREE WITH US-JOIN US

asionally his house was vandalized. The example of the exchange is seen in their demand for "figgy pudding" and "good cheer", i.e., the wassail beverage, without which the wassailers in the song will not leave; "We won't go until we get some, so bring some out here".

**Wassail bowls** generally in the shape of goblets, have been preserved. The Worshipful Company of Grocers made a very elaborate one in the seventeenth century, decorated with silver. It is so large that it must have passed around as a "loving cup" so that many members of the guild could drink from it. In the English Christmas carol "Wassail, Wassail, All Over the Town", the singers tell that their "bowl is made of the white maple tree, with a wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee". White maple is a completely flavourless wood, commonly used even today to make some kitchen utensils, and was probably what many simple peasant wassail bowls were made from. Variants may be sung where the Wassail bowl is made of other woods, e.g. "Sycamore tree", "grand old Oak tree", and so on.

There are surviving examples of "puzzle wassail bowls", with many spouts. As you attempt to drink from one of the spouts, you are drenched from another spout. The drink was either punch, mulled wine or spicy ale.



**Promotion: English seasonal food** <http://www.smithsfarmshop.co.uk/>

*seasonal-calendar*

Savoy Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Leeks, Parsnip, Turnip, Shallots, Squash, Forced Rhubarb.

**Parsnip Enterprise:**<http://www.strawsons.com/parsnips.php>*Parsnips*

Our parsnip production area spans Suffolk, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. The Early crops are covered in polythene to produce a faster growing early crop, ready to be harvested the early part of July. Sourcing the right land is our key focus to enabling good quality skin finished parsnips, throughout the

year.

**Huntapac Produce Ltd** was established in 1942 and is based in Tarleton, Lancashire. It is a fourth generation family owned and managed business and has become one of the UK's leading growers of carrots & parsnips and supplies them to retailers and markets across the country and into Europe. We operate a National growing operation which enables 52 weeks supply of UK carrots & parsnips to all our customers.

**The "King of Carrots"** Clem Tompsett of Tompsett Burgess Growers, has been farming carrots for over 50 years. The family company produces over 75,000 tonnes of carrots and 9,000 tonnes of parsnips a year. TBG is based at Whitehall Farm, Isleham near Ely, Cambridgeshire. Their land base is Suffolk, Norfolk and the fens of Cambridgeshire

**Alfred G Pearce** is a family business started by Alfred Pearce in 1959, and has grown rapidly under the direction of his sons Simon and Jonathan Pearce. The east coast of the England has historically been a very good area for growing carrots – from Suffolk and Norfolk right up to East Yorkshire, mainly due to the lighter soils and the lower frost temperatures provided by the coastal areas. Nowadays, over 80% of the carrots grown for Alfred G Pearce are within a 60 mile radius of the production unit. Carrots are harvested, graded, washed, cut and packed through the production unit near Kings Lynn, Norfolk

**Freshgro**, a growers' co-operative, formed in 1998, based in Nottinghamshire, pioneered the return of the wartime favourite, Chantenay carrots, and is now the world's leading supplier. In total, the group, led by managing director Martin Evans, produces over 40,000 tonnes of carrots a year and controls over 90 per cent of the Chantenay market. Freshgro has a farming base of over 20,000 acres and also produces asparagus, parsnips lettuce and other root crops.

**R & RW Bartlett Ltd**, Shenstone Park, Park Lane, Little Hay, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS14 0PZ

R&RW Bartlett Ltd is a farming company in the heart of the Midlands. We grow and pack parsnips and carrots.

**JCM Glassford Ltd** is a privately owned farming company based at Apley Head Farm, Clumber, Worksop, Nottinghamshire. They have three fully irrigated sand land farms and 3 heavy land farms 25 miles away near Lincoln totalling 2500 Acres and all run as one business. They have been expanding the vegetable side of the operation over the last 10 years and along with the main crop carrots they also grow leeks and parsnips

**Rodger Hobson:** Yorkshire based Rodger Hobson has been farming carrots for over 20 years on Naburn Hill Farm

**RG Abrey Farms** fresh produce site is located in the heart of the Brecklands. The business was started in 1939 by the late Russel Gordon Abrey in the Box Valley, Suffolk. It is now a 3rd generation family farm-

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ing business growing combinable crops, sugar beet and specialising in early new season root vegetable production with modern storage for year round supply. **Elveden** is a 22,500 acre country estate, of which over 10,000 acres is farmland. This makes it the largest ring-fenced arable farm in lowland England. The farm specialises in the production of vegetables especially potatoes, onions, carrots and parsnips which dominate their farming.

**The Paget family** have been producing high quality vegetables at Stills Farm for almost 100 years. Stills Farm is situated in the traditional market gardening village of Bromham in Wiltshire, known for its sandy soils and early season vegetables.

**Bridge Farm** is a family run farm located in Yorkshire, between Skipwith and Escrick. The family work hard to produce top quality carrots, red beet (beetroot), parsnips, potatoes, barley, wheat, oats, oil seed rape and pigs.

**MH Poskitt** is a family owned farming business based in the East Riding of Yorkshire specializing in the growing of root vegetables for leading supermarkets.

**Suffolk Produce Ltd** is a co-owned cooperative of 11 family farms all based in East Suffolk. Working together they supply the UK fresh market with vegetables, specialising in onions, carrots, parsnips and swede,

### Recipe: Swede and Parsnip Bake

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/893654/swede-and-parsnip-bake>

#### Ingredients:

1 medium swede, (about 600g), peeled and cut into chunks	500g parsnips; peeled and cut into chunks
25g butter, plus a little extra	4 tbsp golden syrup
200g fresh breadcrumbs	2 eggs lightly beaten
1 tbsp olive oil	2 thyme sprigs, leaves stripped



#### Method:

Bring a large pan of water to the boil, and add the swede chunks. Boil for 3 mins, then add the parsnips and boil the lot for 12 mins more or until tender. Drain well, then tip both together into a pan or bowl and mash well with the butter. Stir in the golden syrup, three-quarters of the breadcrumbs and the eggs with plenty of seasoning. Transfer to a baking dish and smooth the surface. Toss the remaining breadcrumbs with the oil, seasoning and thyme leaves, then scatter over the mash. Dot with a few knobs of butter. *The dish can now be covered and chilled for up to 48 hrs, or frozen for up to a month – defrost completely before baking.*

To serve, heat oven to 200C/180C fan/ gas 6 and bake for 40 mins or until piping hot and the crumbs are crisp. *Recipe from Good Food magazine, December 2010*

**Comment:** Gordon Brown's version of Britishness gives some credence to critics and cynics with his 2007 Fabian Society pamphlet, published on the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Union, failing to mention 'England' (Brown and Alexander 2007; Hassan 2009).

**OUR PRECIOUS UNION! Theresa May June 2017**  
**(Sucking England dry)**

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