

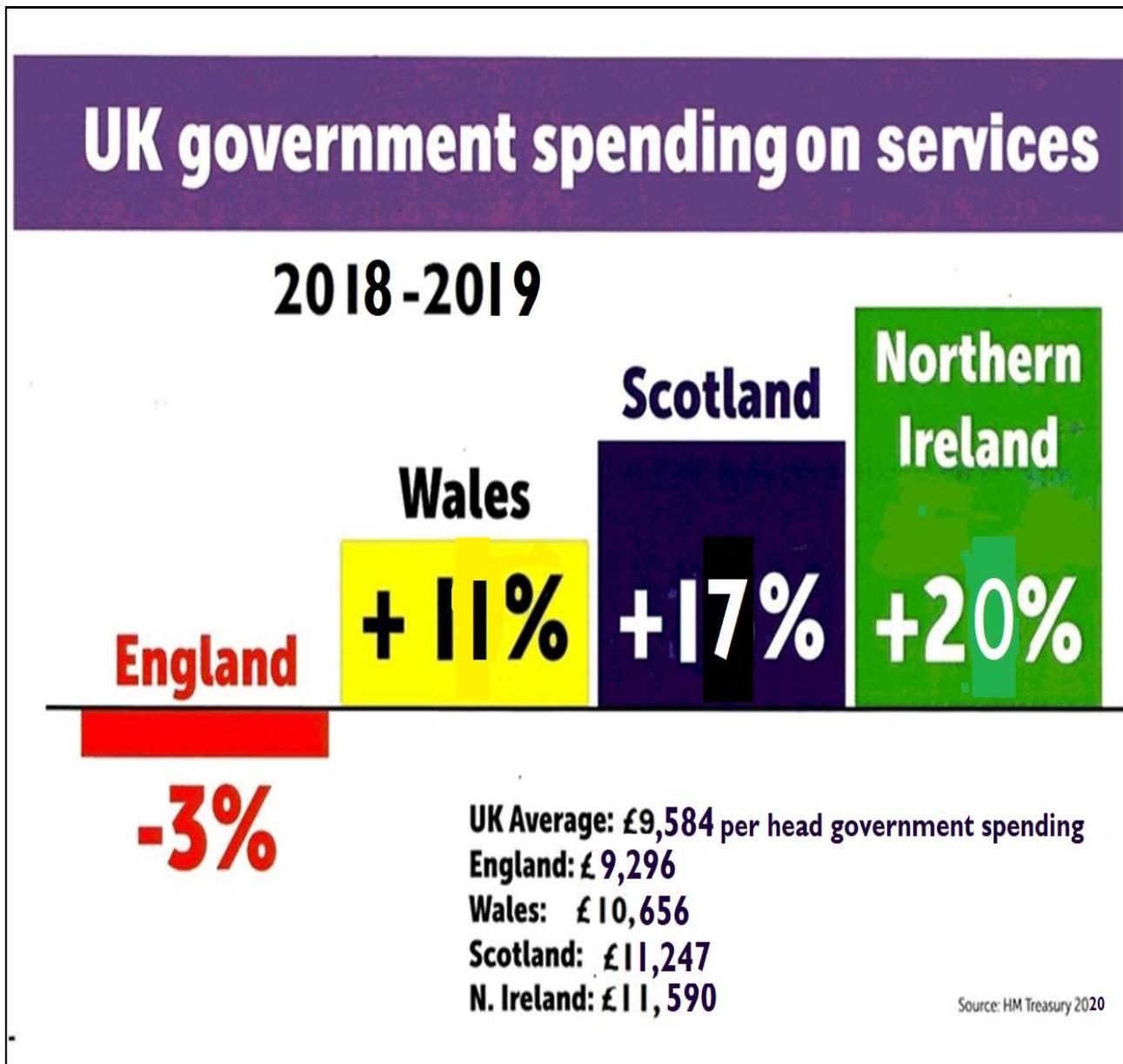
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Campaign for an **E**nglish **P**arliament

Think of England

Number 106: August 2020



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Number 106 August 2020

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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: The pandemic has highlighted the dysfunctional UK constitution. MPs and Ministers of the UK government seem to have little knowledge of devolution. MPs and Ministers still refer to 'the nation', 'this country',



'Britain' and 'the regions' when they mean England. This got BJ into a lot of trouble with Sturgeon. Ever more commentators, particularly Scottish, are pointing it out. Of course the criticisms are always from the devolved nations point of view with an occasional mention of England. BJ's planning laws apply only to England, but you would hardly know it from the Times' reports. These new laws are intended to make it easier to concrete over our country to accommodate our ever increasing population at the expense of resources such as water and infrastructure such as rural roads.

The Tory plans to 'revolutionise' devolution have no place for England at the table. Meanwhile Scotland demands more money, not satisfied with the Barnett consequential which ensure a bonus for the rest of the UK when the UK government invest in England, but there is no reciprocal bonus when the UK government invests in the rest of the UK.

Now that Scotland must charge EU students will the British government continue to allow them loans for tuition fees? There is no mechanism for ensuring that these loans are repaid via the graduate tax if EU graduates return to their own countries and default. The burden of unpaid loans is met by the British taxpayer and we know where most of them live.

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Campaigning for England: English independence: 49% of Tory voters in England back the idea

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/18551000.english-independence-49-tory-voters-england-back-idea/30th June>

By Martin Hannan Multimedia Journalist

In what could be a seminal moment for the future - or lack of it - of the United Kingdom, a shock new poll published today shows that Conservative supporters in England are split down the middle on whether they want the Union to continue.

The independent YouGov poll organised by YesCymru, the non-party campaign for an independent Wales, suggests more than a third of people in England do not want the Union of the United Kingdom to continue. With don't knows and those who refused to answer removed, the polling has shown 35% of people in England now favour English independence – in line with several surveys of English opinion in recent years. Yet the most devastating finding in today's new poll is that people in England identifying as Conservative supporters are evenly split on the subject with 49% saying they support independence against 51% who were opposed.

Political scientist Dafydd Trystan commented: "The polling evidence shows that a considerable minority of voters in England would vote to bring the United Kingdom to an end. "The picture is even more interesting when one looks at the voters of different parties. Conservative and Unionist voters split evenly on the future of the UK with almost half being proponents of England going it alone. While support in London remained relatively low at 25%, the north and midlands saw the number of those in favour hit 38%. Independence for England is the political elephant in the living room of British politics. Welsh independence is a way out for Wales."

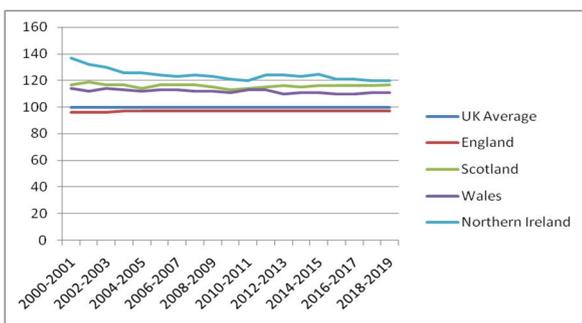
The total sample size in the online poll was 1384 adults, with the fieldwork undertaken between June 17 and 18. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). All figures quoted are with don't knows and those who refused to answer excluded.



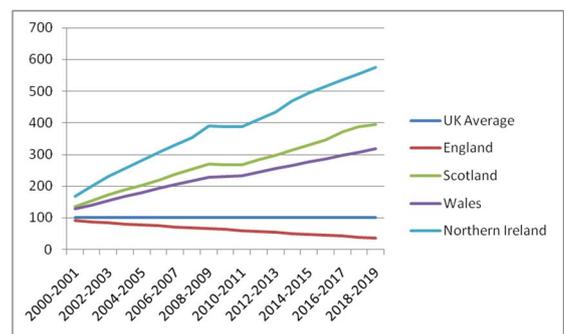
Current English Affairs: FUNDING: National Statistics: Every July the Office for National Statistics publishes its Public Expenditure Statistical analysis. Every year the least is spent per head on the people of England nationally. Many MPs and academics, with vested interests, try to hoodwink us with comparisons between cities or regions in the UK. The truth is that the cake is divided along national lines according to the discriminatory and discredited, 'temporary' but seemingly eternal Barnett formula. The graphs below have been drawn up to show the current deficit to us in England and the cumulative effect of this discrimination. The sums spent by the governments of the UK on services by country per head are as shown in the frontispiece..

Spending per head of population

% Current and historic deficits/benefits.



% Cumulative effect



Environment:

Steven Swinford, Deputy Political Editor | Eleni Courea, Political Reporter: July 01 2020, The Times

Boris Johnson: Overhaul of planning to put homes on high streets

Boris Johnson has proposed to revive high streets by making it easier to turn vacant shops into houses and offices as part of the "most radical reforms to our planning system" since the Second World War.

The prime minister announced that developers would be able to switch shops to homes without a planning application in an attempt to "build faster" and encourage development on brownfield sites.

Builders will also be able to demolish vacant shops and build homes in their place without planning permission under new legislation that the government wants in place by September. Ministers believe that the

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changes will help to reinvigorate high streets by bringing people back to town centres to live and work while reducing the number of boarded-up buildings.

The prime minister announced a £5 billion plan to “rebuild Britain” (*He means England. Ed.*) by borrowing and investing heavily in public services, including transport and schools. The government’s package includes £1.5 billion to build new hospitals this year and maintain existing ones. More than £1 billion will be spent on a ten-year school building programme scheduled to begin in September 2021, while £560 million has been earmarked to repair and upgrade existing schools.

Every young person will have the chance to take up an apprenticeship or work placement, Mr Johnson promised. He said this would help young people build skills and confidence to find a job that is right for them. Mr Johnson set out his aim to “build up people” and redress inequality of opportunity between London and other parts of the country (*He means England. Ed.*). He said a pupil from a London state school was 50 per cent more likely to go to a top university than a pupil from a state school in the West Midlands. “That is not only unjust, it is such a waste of human talent.”

Social care: Ministers are “finalising” plans to reform the social care system in England, Mr Johnson said. He promised to build cross-party consensus on the issue, which he said “every government has flunked for the last 30 years”. Ministers are looking at various options in the spring. The German model, where workers over the age of 40 would have to pay a fixed levy towards the cost of their care in old age, is said to be the health secretary’s preferred option.

Planning proposals a ‘race to the bottom’

Emma Yeomans: Monday July 20 2020, 12.01am, The Times

Conservationists warn that Boris Johnson’s proposed planning laws could be a “deregulatory race to the bottom” with more changes due to the way that the impact on green areas is assessed.

Eighteen charities, including the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Friends of the Earth, Woodland Trust and RSPB, have written to the prime minister.

The letter says: “Further deregulation of the planning system would erode the foundations of any green and just recovery long before the first brick is laid. Nowhere else in the world is such a deregulatory race to the bottom being considered. “It would be completely out of touch with the public mood, when two thirds of people reported wanting to see greater protection and investment in local green spaces after lockdown.

In a speech George Eustice, the environment secretary, announced changes to the environmental impact assessment system, which is part of the planning process. He said: “Nature rightly deserves protection, so if we are to protect species and habitats and also deliver biodiversity net gain, we need to properly understand the science to inform crucial decisions. “We should ask ourselves, for example, whether the current environmental impact assessment processes are as effective or efficient as they could be. We can set out which habitats and species will always be off limits, so everyone knows where they stand. A government source said: “It’s not a deregulatory agenda but just about building better, faster and greener.”

Crispin Truman, chief executive of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, said: “Environmental impact assessments are the foundations for this, protecting not only vulnerable wildlife and nature but landscapes, our built heritage and our health. “Critically, they are the means of scrutinising the potential air quality impact of proposed developments. They give planners the evidence to refuse schemes that would make air quality problems worse”. He said that the public were getting too many developments that left families dependent on cars and created more air pollution. He added: “Access to green space and low carbon travel like walking and cycling are a mere afterthought. Any new environmental impact assessment process must be stronger, not weaker, than what we already have.”



Green space the size of Cornwall lost to development since 1990

Ben Webster, Environment Editor: Thursday July 09 2020, 9.00am, The Times

An area of countryside and green space almost the size of Cornwall has been lost to development over 25 years, a study has revealed. Researchers used high-resolution satellite images to produce the most accurate analysis to date of how the UK landscape has been altered by new housing, roads, industrial facilities, solar farms and other development.

Kent had the largest increase in built-up area, with 136km² (52.5 square miles) developed between 1990 and 2015. Essex had the second biggest rise, gaining 113km² of urban area, followed by West Yorkshire

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with 110km² and Surrey 100km².

The built-up area in Great Britain increased by 3,376km² over the 25-year period, according to the study by the UK Centre of Ecology & Hydrology. The vast majority of the newly urbanised area was in England, with 2,639km² developed, compared with 440km² in Scotland and 298km² in Wales. The proportion of Great Britain that is built up rose from 5.8 per cent in 1990 to 7.3 per cent in 2015.

Researchers calculated overall changes in land use and found that there had been a net reduction of 7,689km² — 1.9 million acres — in the amount of grassland and playing fields. Trees covered 10.3 per cent of Great Britain in 1990 and 12.5 per cent in 2015. This is still only a third of the EU average of 38 per cent. The data show the scale of grassland loss in Great Britain not only to make way for urban development but also woodland expansion. This information on how land cover in Great Britain has altered is crucial for understanding the impact of these changes on our environment, and helping us plan for the next 25 years.

Tom Fyans, campaigns and policy director at the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) said that it was “worryingly easy” for developers to build low-density housing estates “that unnecessarily gobble up our precious green belt, local green spaces and grasslands”.

Hilary Newport, director of the Kent branch of CPRE, said that the government was focusing too heavily on the southeast to meet its housing targets despite the region already being at risk of water shortages.

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Government car park sale could free land for 110,000 new homes

Carol Lewis, Deputy Property Editor: July 15 2020, 12.01am, The Times
Selling 15 per cent of parking space owned by the government could raise £6 billion and free land for 110,000 new homes, a study has found.

The first detailed mapping of all surface car parks in England — those that are not multi-storey — shows that there are 103,000 in total, 35,000 of which are owned by the public sector. Some of that is freehold and some is sub-let for peppercorn rents. Many of the car parks close to town centres, shops and railway stations could be developed into desirable places to live, according to the study commissioned for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).



Ian McGuinness, head of geospatial research at Knight Frank, who carried out the research, identified 4,700 car parks owned by the Ministry of Defence, Department for Work and Pensions and MHCLG which could be suitable for development. He said: “Some councils had the equivalent of half the land they owned covered in car parks. In another case there was the equivalent of 200 football pitches. In many cases these lie empty. Some 70 per cent of sites we identified as suitable for development are in the south, in areas where housing is deemed unaffordable for many.”

If all the public-sector car parks were sold, 2.1 million homes could be built on the land — seven years’ supply of housing at the government’s stated target of 300,000 new homes a year. The first tranche identified as suitable could be used to build 110,000 flats, including up to 50 per cent affordable homes, if the government decides to go ahead with the recommendation. The money raised could cover the money the Treasury is set to lose — an estimated £3.8 billion — by axing stamp duty on property below £500,000 for nine months until March next year.

In the Greater London area (including adjoining built-up areas such as Watford) 759 car parks could be turned into 14,915 homes. In Greater Manchester and adjoining areas, meanwhile, there are 144 car parks that could be turned into 4,687 homes. In the West Midlands 79 car parks could make way for 3,732 homes; in south Hampshire 152 car parks for 3,239 homes; and in Bristol 78 car parks for 2,289 homes.

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Roads and Transport:

Beeching reversal: Fifty disused rail lines on track to reopen

Graeme Paton, Transport Correspondent: Wednesday July 01 2020, 12.01am, The Times

The reopening of up to 50 disused railway lines or stations will be considered as part of a reversal of the infamous Beeching cuts, half a century ago, it was announced. At present many of the disused lines are used as cycle or walking tracks while some remain as heritage lines staffed by volunteers, or as dedicated freight routes. A government panel will assess the viability of reintroducing passenger services to lines in England and Wales. Ministers said that the plans would be considered as part of a wider drive to “level up” regional economies and improve access to jobs and education.

They include reopening the line between Bolton and Bury in Greater Manchester, creating a 12-mile link

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between Consett in Co Durham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne and restoring the King's Lynn to Hunstanton line in Norfolk which runs close to the Queen's Sandringham estate. Other shortlisted bids include reinstating the Beverley to York line in East Yorkshire, reopening the Upper Wensleydale railway in North Yorkshire, reopening the line between Stratford-upon-Avon and Honeybourne to connect into the existing Worcester to Oxford line and rebuilding the Newquay Line in Cornwall.



Health and Social Care:

Would you pay more tax to solve social care crisis?

David Byers: Saturday July 18 2020, 12.01am, The Times

The rapid spread of coronavirus through care homes has boosted calls for a new unified system for providing and funding social care. Changes to the existing system have been mooted, then delayed and delayed again, by various governments that have been unable to stomach the scale of reform required.

At it stands, anyone in England or Northern Ireland with assets worth more than £23,250 is expected to pay for some or all of their care costs, whether they require residential care or assistance in their own home. You will not, however, be expected to sell your home to pay for care while you still live in it. If you move into a care home, you will be expected to use equity from your home to pay the fees.

In Scotland, the system works differently. If you have capital of more than £26,250 you will not get any help with accommodation and food in a care home, but you may still be entitled to financial help with personal and nursing care from your local council.

In Wales, the savings threshold above which you will pay for residential care is £50,000.

If you need additional nursing or medical care while you're in a care home, or at home, you might be entitled to NHS continuing healthcare. In England you can have this arranged by the NHS. Alternatively you may receive a stipend payment to do it yourself through a personal health budget. This option is not available in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. You need an assessment from a GP or social worker to check if you're eligible, and the criteria for this are quite strict.

Care services are stretched as a result of years of funding cuts from government and growing demand linked to an ageing population.



Education:

EU students to pay tuition fees in Scotland: U-turn on Brexit pledge to protect education

Mark McLaughlin, Scottish Education Correspondent | Kieran Andrews: July 10 2020, 12.01am, The Times
European students will be charged for university tuition in Scotland for the first time in over a decade after ministers moved to ease the sector's cash crisis. It is a significant policy change for the SNP, coming four years after John Swinney, the deputy first minister, vowed to protect free education for EU students after Brexit.

The Scottish government was compelled to give free tuition to Europeans under EU law, which enshrines the same rights for its citizens regardless of the member state they are in. Students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland have always paid fees in Scotland, because the EU regulates discrimination between member states, not variations within states.

Politics: Devolution

Conservatives planning to revolutionise devolution

Kieran Andrews, Scottish Political Editor: Wednesday July 01 2020, 12.01am, The Times

British ministers are considering revolutionising Whitehall's approach to devolution by creating new UK-wide economic and security bodies as part of an effort to strengthen the Union. A new cabinet group has been set up to promote Boris Johnson's agenda and devise policies that will enhance the UK government's standing in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Crucial to this will be establishing UK-wide frameworks and making clear what responsibilities are reserved to Westminster. It is understood that Tory ministers are preparing to be more "robust" with their SNP counterparts in taking responsibility for macroeconomic and security issues.

Ideas will be brought forward by the Union Policy Implementation committee, which will be chaired by Michael Gove, the Cabinet Office minister, and includes Rishi Sunak, the chancellor, in its membership.

The group, which also includes the secretaries of state for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, has held its first informal meeting. Its mission is defined as being "to support the delivery of the government's priorities in relation to the Union of the United Kingdom". The main aims are to change the culture of

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“devolve and forget” within Whitehall and to develop policies that will work across the whole of the UK. Senior figures in the UK government believe it represents a shift from Theresa May’s administration and will see Downing Street be far more willing to engage with devolution, including pushing for change where the system is seen as “dysfunctional” and learning lessons from where it works well.

The committee is being supported by No 10’s “Union unit” and a new resource within the Cabinet Office, which will involve more than 20 officials working on policies. The committee is expected to discuss how the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which replaces funding controlled by the EU, will be used to “bind” the UK nations. This will involve branding to mark the UK government’s contribution at investment sites in the same way that investment from the EU is promoted.

The group will consider how the UK government can invest more on infrastructure projects in each of the devolved nations, including in transport. The prime minister said that now was the time “to strengthen that incredible partnership” of the four nations. “I believe the Union has more than shown its worth and a prosperous and united kingdom must be a connected kingdom,” he said.

UK officials were unable to say whether any extra money would come to Holyrood after the announcements.

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Times letters: Saturday July 25 2020, 12.01am, The Times

### **Johnson’s battle to show merits of the Union**

Sir, Your leading article (Northern Approach, Jul 24) mentioned constitutional settlement in the UK so subtly I almost missed it, but it was probably the most telling point. The Covid-19 crisis has made it clear that Whitehall does not know the difference between the UK and England but those living under devolved governments are acutely aware of it.

The issue that stands out to me is that England requires devolution. Its nature and form should be mirrored across the UK, giving the assemblies similar powers. The overarching British government should speak for the UK, not England, and treat the devolved countries equally.

**Angus MacEachran, Aberdeen**

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TELEGRAPH VIEW 25 June 2020 • 7:00am

One of the many oddities of pandemic politics is how Boris Johnson has faced hostile questioning from MPs from Scotland and Wales even though these matters are devolved. Ian Blackford has taken it upon himself to demand action from the Prime Minister when the policy in Scotland is decided by Nicola Sturgeon and the administration at Holyrood. What happens in England is not a matter for the Westminster leader of the SNP. Indeed, he is not accountable for what happens north of the Border, either.

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### **Anger as Boris Johnson declares: there is no border between Scotland and England**

Kieran Andrews Thursday July 02 2020, 12.01am, The Times

Boris Johnson has provoked an outcry by wrongly insisting “there is no border between England and Scotland” during a row over coronavirus quarantines. The prime minister was reacting to Nicola Sturgeon’s refusal to rule out border checks on English visitors if the virus began running out of control. He described her stance as “absolutely astonishing and shameful”.



Ms Sturgeon has said that there are no plans to introduce the measures but that she would act to control the virus if the public health advice changed. At prime minister’s questions, Mr Johnson said the boundary delineates the territory of Scotland, the jurisdiction of the Scottish courts and the application of Scottish laws. It is not an international border and under the 1707 Act there is no implication of restrictions on movement of people or trade.

A border also exists in the North Sea to divide territories that belong to Scotland and England respectively. This was redrawn in 1999 to the line of equidistance, meaning that points on the line are equally far away from the English and Scottish coastlines.

Ms Sturgeon accused UK ministers of “frankly disgraceful” and “shameful” attempts to turn the issue into a constitutional row. The first minister said that the claim the border did not exist was “such an absurd statement”. Ms Sturgeon said yesterday that she would “not be doing my job properly” if she ruled out the quarantine of visitors from other parts of the UK. “ake,” she said.

The border exists today both as a physical divide and in terms of the different public services available in Scotland and England.

Education and health care are two of the dividing lines: Scotland has no upfront tuition fees for home uni-

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versity students, while English universities can charge up to £9,000 per student each year. North of the border, free personal care is available for those who are assessed by their local authority as needing it, while in England most people pay some or all of the costs.

### Coronavirus in Scotland: The Times

Kieran Andrews, Scottish Political Editor: July 08 2020: **Rishi Sunak to snub call for more devolved powers:** Rishi Sunak will resist calls to give more borrowing powers to the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish governments when he unveils plans to tackle the Covid-19 economic crisis. Finance ministers from the devolved administrations have jointly pushed for more fiscal powers from the Treasury.

Policies will be unveiled today that have a direct impact on Scotland and provide additional money for Holyrood through the Barnett formula.

July 15 2020: **I don't have an anti-English bone in my body, claims Nicola Sturgeon:** Nicola Sturgeon has insisted she does not have "an anti-English bone in my body", amid warnings that protests on the Scottish border and talk of quarantine may deter English visitors. The first minister said that any decision on quarantining people from elsewhere in the UK would be based on public health and that it would be "plain wrong" to suggest any political motivation behind such a move. Last weekend a group of protesters dressed in hazmat suits held signs at the side of the A1 near Berwick urging motorists from England to "stay out". Ms Sturgeon said she "did not condone" the demonstration but refused to say whether any of those taking part would be disciplined by the SNP.

Greig Cameron, Kieran Andrews July 16 2020: **Economy 'needs ten years and UK support' to recover:** The Scottish economy may take a decade to recover from the coronavirus and will need financial help from Westminster, according to an adviser to the first minister.

Craig Paton: July 23 2020: **Your slogans caused confusion, PM told:** Boris Johnson told people on May 10 to stay alert against the virus, rather than telling them to stay home. The message was broadcast across the UK despite no changes in the devolved administrations. The Scottish affairs committee said: "The UK government has failed to make clear when its messaging applies only to England, causing unnecessary confusion in the devolved nations."



**'Wear masks in shops,' Boris Johnson tells Britain** (*He means England. Ed.*): PM set to make indoor face coverings mandatory as he urges nation (*He means England. Ed.*) to go back to work

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor | Francis Elliott Political Editor: Saturday July 11 2020, 12.01am, The Times

### Only a united kingdom will get us on the road to economic recovery

Alf Young, a visiting professor at the University of Strathclyde: July 08 2020, 12.01am, The Times

In a devolved United Kingdom, the chancellor can set the scale of stimulus for all four parts of these islands, but he can prescribe how that money is spent only in England. Now Mr Sunak's arts package is about to generate Barnett consequentials totalling £97 million for Scotland's creative sector.

### Rishi Sunak has offered little to address Scotland's needs

Kate Forbes, the Scottish finance secretary: July 13 2020, 12.01am, The Times

The Treasury's calculations confirm that despite the economic recovery package totalling up to £30 billion, it will generate just £21 million in consequential payments to the Scottish government.

Another reason is that, under the Barnett formula, consequentials only apply on new, non UK-wide spending. Consequential funding is not generated when money already in the UK government budget is just moved about, as was the case with several of the chancellor's England-only initiatives.

The result is that there is very little additional funding to tailor an economic response that meets Scotland's needs.

### Sample of tone of blog comments underneath the article in Times online. Ed.

*In summary; we have a bigger share of the cake because we are special. As the relative wealth reduces we want a bigger share because we really are special. Despite what we said it appears we have no resources of any kind to do anything ourselves. But let me reiterate. We are special. Why else would we have different rules for Covid. We are, above all, very, very special. But also a wee bit greedy and grabby*

*As the Scottish finance secretary says Scotland wants more. She is not satisfied with all the money the UK government pumped into schemes to maintain jobs and living standards like the furlough scheme. She complains that Scotland has only received a measly £21 million more than anyone else. To most people the question is - "why*

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should they be given £21 million more?



## **Scottish independence: Threat to boycott Westminster if referendum request is refused**

Katrine Bussey: Wednesday July 01 2020, 5.00pm, The Times

The SNP could withdraw from UK institutions — including the Commons — if Boris Johnson’s government continues to block a second Scottish independence referendum, one of the party’s most senior MPs has suggested.

Both Mr Johnson and Theresa May, his predecessor as prime minister, have rebuffed calls from Nicola Sturgeon for a Section 30 order to be granted, transferring powers for a referendum to Holyrood. .



## **New Brexit trade agreements ‘may harm Scotland’s interests’**

Greig Cameron Monday July 13 2020, 12.00am, The Times

A committee headed by Lord Goldsmith is looking at non-European Union treaties and has warned these could “impinge” on the interests and competencies of devolved nations.

Mike Russell, Scotland’s constitutions secretary, has pushed for the role of devolved nations in trade talks to be enshrined in law and warned the UK Trade Bill does not protect Scottish interests. The International Agreements Sub Committee at the House of Lords found even though there are representatives from Scotland and other devolved nations in the UK parliament, it did not automatically mean they would be fully involved in the scrutiny of treaties.

A UK government spokesman said: “Trade is reserved to Westminster and it is the role of Scottish MPs from all parties to question, challenge and vote on trade policy.



## **Peers will referee battle over post-Brexit food standards**

Kieran Andrews, Scottish Political Editor: Wednesday July 15 2020, 12.00am, The Times

The House of Lords is set to referee a war between the UK and Scottish governments over standards on food, the environment and animal welfare.

Tory ministers plan to force the devolved administrations to accept standards set by Whitehall as part of new legislation. This will underpin an

“internal market” in the UK when the Brexit transition period ends on December 31. It includes a “mutual recognition” regime designed to ensure that goods flow freely within the UK even if Scotland or Wales choose to impose their own standards.

Members of the Lords are discussing forming a committee to examine all the common frameworks proposed and ensure that they are fair to all parts of the UK. Its proposed membership is unclear but it is understood that it would be balanced between the parties that sit in the revising chamber and that efforts would be made to represent the views of the SNP and Sinn Fein, who refuse to take seats in the Lords.



## **SNP minister Mike Russell accuses Tories of lying about devolution**

Kieran Andrews: Friday July 17 2020, 12.01am, The Times

Mike Russell, the Scottish constitution secretary, said last night that the Scottish parliament would withhold consent for new laws aimed at ensuring the free flow of goods and services after Brexit. . Any law passed in the Houses of Parliament that affects devolved areas requires legislative consent from the respective parliaments.



## **Civil servants told to get out of the capital**

Steven Swinford, Deputy Political Editor: Wednesday July 08 2020, 12.01am, The Times

Civil servants will be told to “get out of London” so they can be more closely connected to the impact of the policies they implement, a minister has said. Lord Agnew of Oulton, the Cabinet Office minister charged with overseeing the relocation of civil servants, said that decisions should be made “in the places that the people are affected”.

Rishi Sunak, the chancellor, is expected to announce further plans to relocate civil servants to the north of England in his budget today.

Lord Agnew told the public administration and constitutional affairs committee yesterday: “One of my jobs is to get civil servants out of London over the next five years. I want to see decision-making made in the places that the people are affected. “If you take my area, I come from Norfolk. It’s the grain basket of

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Britain. Defra [the department for environment, food and rural affairs] officials should be in Norfolk making decisions about agricultural policy. They are not closely enough connected to the impact of that policy.

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#### Whitehall looks north in plan to make York Britain's (Don't they mean England?) second city

Oliver Wright, Policy Editor: Saturday July 11 2020, 12.01am, The Times

Departments have been given two weeks to submit plans to move thousands of officials from the capital into regional hubs around the country. York has been identified as one of a number of potential sites to base senior civil servants as part of a renewed push to relocate the House of Lords in the city.

One source said "It's not just the House of Lords. Senior civil servants who are close to decision-making are already looking at Rightmove. Another source said that no final decisions had been made but ministers were intent on creating a number of regional "hubs" of civil servants that could combine policy specialisms from across Whitehall.

The idea to move the House of Lords to York was first mooted in January to some bemusement. Senior figures said it was still "very much on the agenda" and that the city could also see a significant Whitehall presence to complement parliament's second chamber.

"The Lords is a major thing. But there could be lots of stuff. You could put the Home Office there. The step change will be to move everything other than the secretary of state and private office or an entire directorate," a source familiar with the discussions said.

The Treasury is also looking at a new base on Teesside, which, together with York, would create a northern hub for policymakers. Other civil servants could move to the east and west Midlands, while there is also a push to ensure that some Whitehall work is relocated to the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales.

York is seen as attractive because it lies between London and Edinburgh, with good communication links. When HS2 is built it will be less than an hour and a half from London by train. It is also close to Leeds and Sheffield, which both have a big government presence.

A Whitehall source said: "Research shows that if you go into too small a place, the public sector drives out the private sector because of salary costs, whereas if you go into a bigger place you generate private sector jobs."

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#### Times Letters 13/7/20 LORDS OF THE NORTH

Sir, Having served over the past 55 years in Stormont, the European parliament, the House of Commons, Strasbourg and now the Lords I have always thought that the Lords was the best informed and provided the greatest checking of ministers. However, Covid-19 has highlighted that its continued existence may be unnecessary. It need not be relocated ("Whitehall looks north in plan to make York Britain's second city", July 11) as today only about half a dozen peers attend the chamber and more than 500 vote from home and benefit from an allowance of £162 per day. Many ministers avoid the chamber and do not make themselves available for questioning. It is no longer a chamber of great debate and is losing public respect. I regret that abolition of the Lords rather than relocation may increasingly be the suggestion.

Lord Kilclooney, House of Lords

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England's hero: Sir Godfrey Newbold Hounsfield CBE FRS (28 August 1919 – 12 August 2004)

was an English electrical engineer who shared the 1979 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine with Allan McLeod Cormack for his part in developing the diagnostic technique of X-ray computed tomography (CT).

Hounsfield was born in Sutton-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire. His father was a farmer from. As a child he was fascinated by the electrical gadgets and machinery found all over his parents' farm. Between the ages of eleven and eighteen, he tinkered with his own electrical recording machines, launched himself off haystacks with his own home-made glider, and almost killed himself by using water-filled tar barrels and acetylene to see how high they could be waterjet propelled. He attended the Magnus Grammar School (now Magnus Church of England School) in Newark-on-Trent and excelled in physics and arithmetic.

Shortly before World War II, he joined the Royal Air Force as a volunteer reservist where he learned the basics of electronics and radar. After the war, he attended Faraday House Electrical Engineering College in London, graduating with the DFH (Diploma of Faraday House). Before the advent of most university engineering departments, Faraday House was a specialist Electrical Engineering college that provided university level education that combined practical experience with theoretical study.



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In 1949, Hounsfield began work at EMI, Ltd. in Hayes, Middlesex, where he researched guided weapon systems and radar in 1949. At EMI, he became interested in computers and in 1958, he helped design the first commercially available all-transistor computer made in Great Britain. Shortly afterwards, he began work on the CT scanner at EMI. He continued to improve CT scanning, introducing a whole-body scanner in 1975, and was senior researcher (and after his retirement in 1984, consultant) to the laboratories. While on an outing in the country, Hounsfield came up with the idea that one could determine what was inside a box by taking X-ray readings at all angles around the object. He then set to work constructing a computer that could take input from X-rays at various angles to create an image of the object in "slices". Applying this idea to the medical field led him to propose what is now known as computed tomography. At the time, Hounsfield was not aware of the work that Cormack had done on the theoretical mathematics for such a device. Hounsfield built a prototype head scanner and tested it first on a preserved human brain, then on a fresh cow brain from a butcher's shop, and later on himself. On 1 October 1971, CT scanning was introduced into medical practice with a successful scan on a cerebral cyst patient at Atkinson Morley Hospital in Wimbledon, London. In 1975, Hounsfield built a whole-body scanner.

England's history: The Royal Observatory, Greenwich (ROG; known as the Old Royal Observatory from 1957 to 1998, when the working Royal Greenwich Observatory, RGO, moved from Greenwich to Herstmonceux) is an observatory situated on a hill in Greenwich Park, overlooking the River Thames. It played a major role in the history of astronomy and navigation, and because the prime meridian passes through it, it gave its name to Greenwich Mean Time. The ROG has the IAU observatory code of 000, the first in the list. ROG, the National Maritime Museum, the Queen's House and Cutty Sark are collectively designated Royal Museums Greenwich.

The observatory was commissioned in 1675 by King Charles II, with the foundation stone being laid on 10 August. The site was chosen by Sir Christopher Wren. At that time the king also created the position of Astronomer Royal, to serve as the director of the observatory and to "apply himself with the most exact care and diligence to the rectifying of the tables of the motions of the heavens, and the places of the fixed stars, so as to find out the so much desired longitude of places for the perfecting of the art of navigation." He appointed John Flamsteed as the first Astronomer Royal. The building was completed in the summer of 1676. The building was often called "Flamsteed House", in reference to its first occupant.



English culture: Lammas Day (Anglo-Saxon hlaf-mas, "loaf-mass"), also known as Loaf Mass Day, is a Christian holiday celebrated in some English-speaking countries in the Northern Hemisphere on 1 August. It is a festival to mark the annual wheat harvest, and is the first harvest festival of the year. The name originates from the word "loaf" in reference to bread and "Mass" in reference to the primary Christian liturgy celebrating Holy Communion.

On Loaf Mass Day, it is customary to bring to a Christian church a loaf made from the new crop, which began to be harvested at Lammastide, which falls at the halfway point between the summer solstice and autumn September equinox. Christians also have church processions to bakeries, where those working therein are blessed by Christian clergy.

August begins with Lammas Day, Loaf Mass Day, the day in the Book of Common Prayer calendar when a loaf baked with flour from newly harvested corn would be brought into church and blessed. It's one of the oldest points of contact between the agricultural world and the Church. The others were Plough Sunday in early January, the Sunday after Epiphany and the day before work would begin again in the fields after Christmas festivities, when ploughs would be brought to church to be blessed; and Rogation days in May, the days before Ascension Day, when God's blessing would be sought on the growing crops.

In The Church of England during the celebration of the Mass, "The Lammas loaf, or part of it, may be used as the bread of the Eucharist, or the Lammas loaf and the eucharistic bread may be kept separate."

The loaf is blessed, and in Anglo-Saxon England it might be employed afterwards in protective rituals: a book of Anglo-Saxon charms directed that the Lammas bread be broken into four bits, which were to be placed at the four corners of the barn, to protect the garnered grain.



Lammas loaf owl with salt eyes

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In many parts of England, tenants were bound to present freshly harvested wheat to their landlords on or before the first day of August. In the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, where it is referred to regularly, it is called "the feast of first fruits".

Promotion of English produce: Beetroot is the taproot portion of a beet plant, usually known as beetroot. It is one of several cultivated varieties of *Beta vulgaris* grown for their edible taproots and leaves (called beet greens); they have been classified as *B. vulgaris* subsp. *vulgaris* 'Conditiva' Group.

Besides being used as a food, beets have uses as a food colouring and as a medicinal plant. Many beet products are made from other *Beta vulgaris* varieties, particularly sugar beet. *Beta* is the ancient Latin name for beets, possibly of Celtic origin, becoming *bete* in Old English around 1400. *Root* derives from the late Old English *rōt*, itself from Old Norse *rót*.^[5]

Beets were domesticated in the ancient Middle East, primarily for their greens, and were grown by the Ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. By the Roman era, it is thought that they were cultivated for their roots as well. From the Middle Ages, beetroot was used as a treatment for a variety of conditions, especially illnesses relating to digestion and the blood.

In the UK, beetroot is grown on the fertile soils of the Cambridgeshire fens, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, the South Hams and Wiltshire. The fens offer the perfect combination of soil, sun and water to produce a sweet, full flavoured root. Beetroots need a lot of sunshine to get the sweet taste they are renowned for.



Recipe: Lentil, beetroot and hazelnut salad

<https://www.deliciousmagazine.co.uk/recipes/lentil-beetroot-and-hazelnut-salad/>

SERVES 4, HANDS-ON TIME 10 MIN, SIMMERING TIME 20 MIN

Ingredients

250g puy lentils, rinsed

3 cooked (unpickled) beetroot, cut into small cubes

2 tbsp hazelnuts, roughly chopped

Handful fresh mint, roughly chopped

For the ginger dressing

2cm piece fresh ginger, roughly chopped

6 tbsp olive oil

625ml filtered water (see tip)

2 spring onions, finely sliced

Handful fresh parsley, roughly chopped

1 tsp dijon mustard

1 tbsp apple cider vinegar



Method: Put the lentils in a medium saucepan and cover with the filtered water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until all the liquid has evaporated and the lentils are cooked with bite.

Transfer the lentils to a large bowl and leave to cool, or rinse under cold water in a sieve to cool quickly.

Once the lentils are cool, add the beetroot, spring onions, hazelnuts and herbs, then stir to combine.

To make the dressing, put the ginger, mustard, oil and vinegar in a bowl and whizz with a stick blender.

Season, then drizzle over the salad.

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