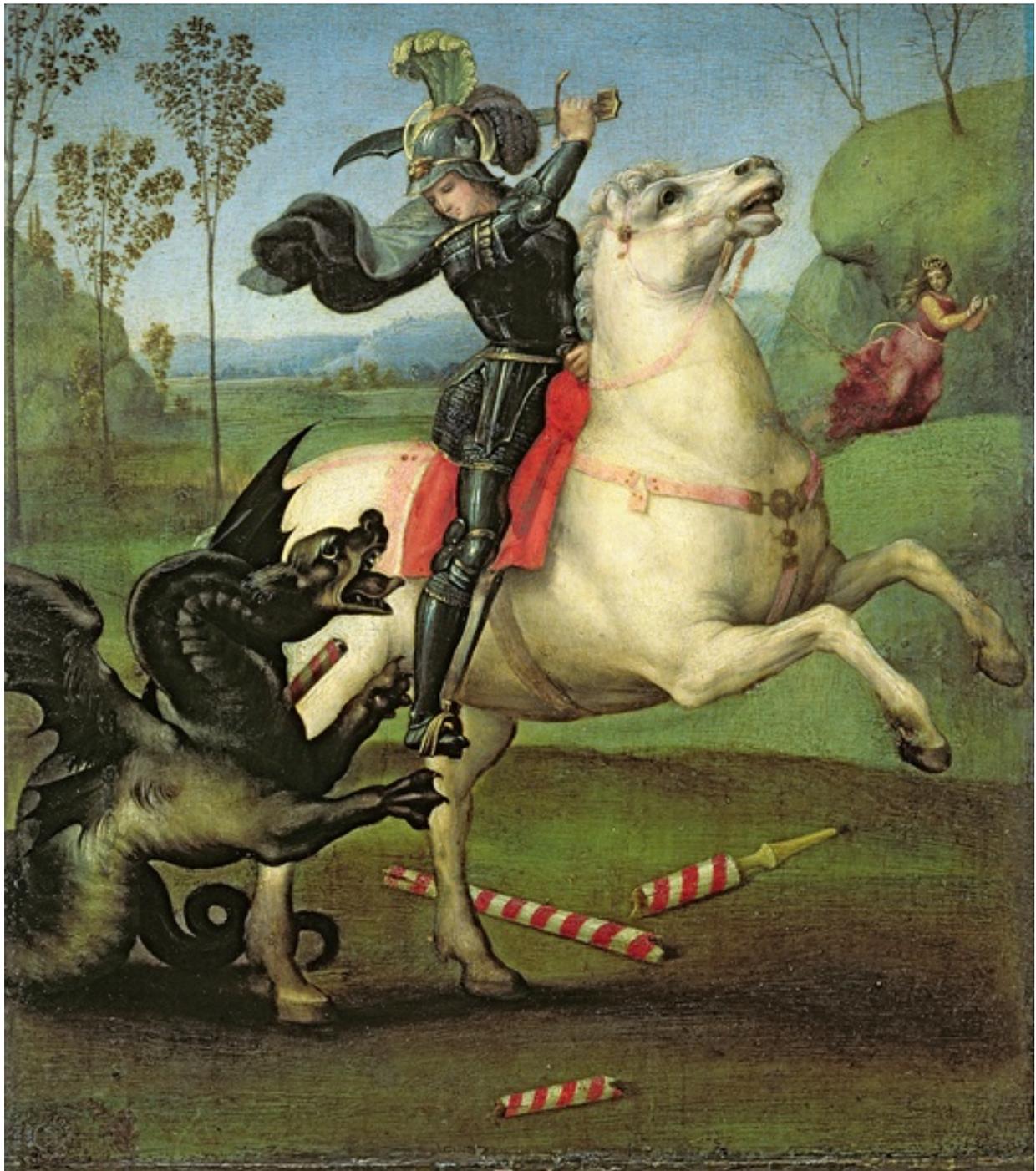


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**Campaign for an English Parliament**

# **Think of England Number 114: April 2021**



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Number 114 April 2021

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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:** You may like to register for the CEIP webinar. Judging by the invitees I doubt the subject of Englishness will get much support and why is there no stated person to represent England?



I often have great difficulty in reducing the size of the newsletter and consequently articles I would like to include get left out. This month, therefore, I include an article by John Denham from 2018.

Smart motorways imposed on England do not have sufficient safety mechanisms but are imposed for financial reasons and are then treated to the ridiculous, childish and patronising advertisements that imply that we do not know how to access a safe refuge now that the safe refuge of the hard shoulder has been ripped away. Many breakdowns do not allow for such decision making indeed one car your editor had would shut its engine off at intervals. Moreover it is illegal to drive on a flat tyre a more frequent occurrence.

The plan to move more jobs to Scotland receives the approval of the Scottish Secretary. A Secretary of State for England might have had a different opinion.

Jeremy Warner mentions the 'north east' in his article but fails to state of where. He postulates that we should forgive Scotland's national debt but we did that in 1707. If they want independence they should pay that back and no consideration given to throwing good money after bad.

With the looming Scottish elections the recent spate of articles on the future of the UK and the position of England in it may well continue.

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Raphael.

## Campaigning for England :

There is a webinar organised by Prof John Denham, Director, Centre for English Identity and Politics (CEIP) on 'Englishness – the political force transforming Britain' On 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, 13:00 – 14:30

With: **Prof Ailsa Henderson, University of Edinburgh; Prof Richard Wyn-Jones, University of Cardiff; Martin Kettle, The Guardian**

Since the Brexit referendum many commentators have talked loosely of 'English nationalism' as a driving force of political change, but few have taken care either to describe Englishness with care or to define what they mean as 'nationalism'.

*Ailsa Henderson* and *Richard Wyn-Jones* are leading members of the Future of England Survey that has been tracking the attitudes and aspiration of English voters for a decade. In their new book 'Englishness' (OUP) they argue that English nationalism combines a sense of grievance about England's place within the United Kingdom with a commitment to a particular vision of Britain's past, present and future.

*Martin Kettle* is a columnist with the Guardian who has written regularly about England and the Union.

You can register for this webinar here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gPxHLHCIRzeN3sOGkPCPvw)

WN\_gPxHLHCIRzeN3sOGkPCPvw



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## 2018: New Statesman: by John Denham

The idea that "English nationalism" caused Brexit is now embedded deeply in the national conversation, but it's had too little serious discussion. Commentators and academics alike slip easily into the nationalist explanation, whether they're writing from a sympathetic or hostile viewpoint. It's a lazy analysis that was a threat to attempts to argue a pro-EU case.

The *Observer* writer and academic Will Hutton called for a "popular front" to resist "English nationalism". For leading pro-EU campaigners, it seems that the English must be made into the enemy. Such lazy anti-English prejudice helped fuel Brexit in the first place: Remain campaigned as Scotland Stronger in Europe, Wales Stronger in Europe but, in England only, as Britain Stronger in Europe. The English were not worth talking to. Anti-Englishness was a risk to any effective campaign either to remain in the EU or to achieve a soft and collaborative Brexit. It may be telling that there was no mention of England or the English on the People's Vote website.

It's perfectly true, of course, that the bulk of the Brexit vote came from England, and England outside London in particular. "English identifiers" were much more likely to vote Leave (70 per cent of them) than "British identifiers" (over 70 per cent voted Remain). But it is a huge and unsustainable leap to claim this was political nationalism at work.

If the English vote for Leave was a product of English nationalism then, by the same logic, the strong British vote for Remain must surely have been the product of British nationalism? That's not an argument anyone seriously makes, not least because the Leave campaign was far more likely to appeal to ideas of British insularity than English, and few Remainers based their case on appeals to British identity.

As we know from both Scotland and Wales, it is a mistake to equate a strong national identity with political nationalism. Both have movements and parties that reflect their national identity and claim to advance their nation's interests, but only some of that politics is expressed as nationalism. England, on the other hand, lacks almost all every expression of a political nationalism. It has no mainstream nationalist party and no public intellectuals who would call themselves nationalists. The cultural expression of Englishness is patchy and inconsistent and is not linked to a national politics. Demands for political recognition, through English Votes on English Laws or an English parliament, have more support than is often appreciated but are hardly urgent, vibrant, popular demands. While unionist parties in Scotland and Wales see it as essential to talk to national identity, mainstream parties in England are marked by how rarely they speak the nation's name. There are small fringe groups: but they are just that. English people have a strong sense of national identity, but this does not mean they are driven by nationalism.

Englishness and Britishness have diverged, at least in part, because different world views make more sense to different people. Britishness sits most comfortably on those for whom the world – education, work, Europe – works (or at least offers the chance of success). Englishness has become associated with those who feel they don't have a voice, with those who have seen economic and social change work against their interests over the past 30 years. Those of us who live in the UK's largest constituent country are not a nation of two tribes; most of us are strongly English and strongly British and feel comfortable mixing both identities. But we may experience this as conflicting views of the world, not because we think the two are

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the same.

Understood like this, the English vote for Brexit was more a cry from the disenfranchised (hence “take back control”) than English nationalism writ large. Yet, despite the evident weakness of any genuine English nationalism, the “English nationalist” bogey has a powerful propaganda value. It quickly becomes a reason to marginalise the English, rather than listen to and engage with them. If all Englishness can simply be written off as nationalism, then the fears, experiences and aspirations that go with it can be ignored. Yet, if the English do feel that things have gone against them for a long time, surely the priority should be a politics that listens, responds and offers a better future?



The leaders of the Brexit campaign understood the world view of the English so much better than the Remainers. While none were English nationalists, nor did they use English symbolism, they did claim to offer representation to people who felt ignored.

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### AN Wilson: **The Times** 2019

One of the few old chestnuts not quoted in the book is GK Chesterton’s “we are the people of England and we have not spoken yet”. The weird thing about Brexit was that, for the first time since the Chartists, we heard “the people” speak directly, rather than through the fog of the party system. Their voices were pretty unambiguous and they were quite distinct from the voices of the people of Scotland and Northern Ireland. The shock was palpable, and when Those Who Knew Best had recovered from the shock, they devoted all their energies — from the benches of the House of Lords, from the Supreme Court and from the High Tables of Cambridge — to telling the people of England to shut up.

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### **Letter from a member and former member of the National Council:**

news@keswickreminder.co.uk <news@keswickreminder.co.uk>

**Subject:** Future of the United Kingdom

When considering the future it is necessary to have an eye on the past and the present.

As Geoffrey Graham points out “money is the glue which holds the Union together, and not sentiment”. In 1979 during the last throes of the Labour Government an Independence Referendum in Scotland was held and Joel Barnett Chief Secretary to the Treasury produced a financial formula designed to stop a positive result; it worked, by providing additional resources for Scotland per capita of population compared to England. The Barnett formula still exists today providing additional resources in Scotland. The formula has been used for over 40 years and is now past its sell by date. A new formula based on needs, rather than population only is crucial.

In 1998 the Labour Government established the Scotland Act, following a second referendum which established a devolved parliament, the prime movers being Gordon Brown, then Chancellor of the Exchequer and Donald Dewar. It was Gordon's obsession but the Prime Minister, Tony Blair although going along with it, was terrified that there will be a separation.

Meanwhile Scotland benefitted through the Barnett formula. Contrast the difference those living in Annan, north of the border and those who inhabit Carlisle.

Now Gordon Brown expresses his opinion that the U.K risks becoming a failed state without major reforms. For 13 years the Labour Government had opportunities to undertake reform of the House of Lords, electoral reform and a devolved English Parliament, all of which were ignored.

Now the present incompetent, inadequate, Conservative Government and its implementation of the withdrawal agreement from the European Union led by an unpopular Prime Minister in Scotland has encouraged the SNP to seek another Independence Referendum.

Gordon Brown now on the sidelines, his previous political strategy otiose comes to the rescue of the Union but with little credibility.

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**<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/02/06/will-take-flags-mask-labours-deep-rooted-aversion-british-patriotism/>**

6 February 2021 : Madeline Grant

It will take more than flags to mask Labour’s deep-rooted aversion to British patriotism. Voters can tell in a heartbeat who actually loves their country, and many of Keir Starmer’s activists and colleagues transparently do not. It is the hypocrisy that really grates. Many who deplore St George’s crosses adorning apartment blocks or white vans would happily applaud French town halls flying the Tricolore.

Englishness as a concept is scarcely mentioned, and not just by the Left. Certainly the only St George’s Day

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tradition I observe is a mechanical yawn at the annual smug “revelation” that the dragon-slaying national saint was actually Turkish. We have no national dress – Morris dancers, Beefeaters or Pearly Kings and Queens are probably the closest approximation.

Some claim that the silence around Englishness is, in itself, a sign of confidence, reflecting England’s dominance within the UK. Yet the English have been almost gaslit into viewing any visual representation of Englishness as extremist jingoism. While being “proudly” Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish is acceptable, even encouraged, most English people will only call themselves “British” for fear of retaliation. Labour demonstrates this squeamishness more than any other party. The only institution, British or English, they seem genuinely comfortable embracing is the NHS. Ironically, if they did so they would find a rich tradition of English radicalism to draw on; encompassing Levellers, Suffragettes, Chartists, Milton, Paine and Orwell. But these people and movements were all decidedly democratic

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**Current English Affairs:** Roads and Transport, Health and Welfare, Police and Courts.

### **Half of smart motorway safety cameras not yet fully operational**

Graeme Paton, Transport Correspondent Wednesday March 03 2021, 12.01am, The Times  
Highways England has admitted that the camera network will not be fully upgraded until July 2023, despite mounting fears over the threat of high-speed crashes. Many cameras cannot therefore be used by police to issue penalties. Last night the disclosure prompted new concerns over safety on smart motorways where the hard shoulder has been stripped out to create an additional vehicle lane, leaving motorists stranded if they break down without reaching a junction or lay-by.

The revelation comes a week after MPs on the cross-party transport committee announced a new inquiry into smart motorways, warning that major changes may be needed. Currently, the permanent hard shoulder has been removed on about 350 miles of motorway, including large sections of the M1, M6 and M25. Lay-bys are positioned up to 1.5 miles apart and “red X” signs are displayed on overhead gantries to close lanes in the event of a breakdown or accident. Motorists can be fined £100 and issued with three penalty points for ignoring the red X. It can pose a major safety hazard because of the potential of colliding with a broken-down vehicle in the road ahead.

In June 2019 new legislation — the Road Traffic Offenders Order — came into force that allowed police forces to use existing speed cameras on smart motorways to enforce red X violations. It is seen as a key weapon in the government’s armoury to improve safety on smart motorways. However, despite the change Highways England’s “Hadecs 3” cameras still need to be upgraded to allow automatic enforcement. Yesterday, it admitted that “around half” were capable of detecting red X violations and the rolling upgrade programme would be completed “by July 2023”. The process involves changes to the cameras and software as well as police processing systems.

### **March 22 2021: Smart motorway radars fail to spot broken down cars**

Ministers faced calls last night to suspend the smart motorways programme as it emerged that new safety technology installed to detect broken down cars may fail to spot at least one stranded vehicle in seven. Trials of the much-hyped radar system showed that some vehicles were not picked up when stationary on the motorway because of “blind spots” and shadows caused by obstacles.

Highways England admitted that around 15 per cent of vehicles were not identified by the technology, which is now being installed on a new generation of smart motorways without a hard shoulder. A report published by the company said that low vehicles such as the Mazda MX5 sports car were a particularly “testing target” for the system. An analysis by *Highways Magazine* indicated that the actual failure rate may be more than twice as high — 35 per cent — because some results were misclassified. The AA called for an immediate halt to the smart motorway programme until the safety of the system could be guaranteed. Smart motorways are intended to boost capacity on the network by removing the permanent hard shoulder to create an extra lane. Refuge areas allowing cars to pull over in an emergency are built up to 1.5 miles apart, variable speed limits are used to keep traffic flowing and lanes are closed with a red X on overhead gantries if a vehicle breaks down.



The new emergency area sign being trialled on smart motorways

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### **English battalions are set to bear the brunt of cuts because "politics" means the Government won't touch troops in Scotland.**

Daily Telegraph: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 By Danielle Sheridan, political and defence correspondent

General Lord Richard Dannatt, the former Chief of the General Staff, has hit out at the reduction in troops

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set to take place over the next decade as part of the integrated defence review. Plans being considered are looking to reduce the army by nearly 10,000 troops, cutting the number of full-time posts from 82,000 to 72,500. However, Lord Dannatt said it was inevitable that to achieve that reduced figure the Ministry of Defence is “going to have to get rid of four English battalions”, despite the “low” operational capability of Scottish battalions. “The politics overrides the logic,” he said. “For the last two defence reviews Scottish battalions should have been disbanded but politically that’s not acceptable.”

He added that with “Ms Sturgeon rampant north of the Border and the Union under threat” there was no chance Westminster would “touch Scottish battalions”. “At the very least one Scottish battalion should go to show equity across the country,” “Don’t take four English battalions and no Scots battalions when everyone knows the Scots battalions are undermanned.”

Ben Wallace, a former Scots Guards captain as well as a former member of Scottish parliament, will publish the integrated review later this month. Last week The Telegraph revealed that senior defence sources close to the review had warned that battalions within the Yorkshire Regiment could be axed, while other battalions that could be under threat include those from the Rifles, Mercians and Royal Anglians. Lord Dannatt added that there will be a “political fuss” if only English battalions are cut. “The emotive thing about cutting infantry battalions is that they are looking to all parts of the country as the infantry battalions are geographically linked,” he said.

Robert Clark, a defence fellow at the Henry Jackson Society, said it had long been considered that the Royal Regiment of Scotland “are immune from the imminent defence cuts due to purely political reasons”. He said: “Despite being amongst the most undermanned infantry units in the British Army, the Government is willing to reduce better-manned English battalions in order to appease the SNP. The only outcome of this policy will be to have a noticeably reduced operational capability for the British Army at a time of ever increasing global commitments.”



Cap badge of The Yorkshire Regiment  
(14th/15th, 19th and 33rd/76th Foot)

### **We’re close to cutting care, N(English)HS chiefs warn**

Chris Smyth, Whitehall Editor Monday March 08 2021, 12.01am, The Times

NHS chiefs have warned that they will have to start cutting patient care unless Rishi Sunak finds £8 billion this week for extra Covid-19 costs and that patients already on record waiting lists will face longer delays for treatment because the Treasury has toughened its line on NHS spending since the budget.

Hospitals accuse Sunak of “robbing NHS budgets” by refusing to meet the full cost of treating 8,021 coronavirus patients in hospitals at present after ministers offered a lower-than-expected 1 per cent pay rise to frontline staff. Ministers are themselves fighting the health service on two fronts this morning, with the talks on additional coronavirus funding stalling as unions prepare for strike action over pay.

Chris Hopson, chief executive of the hospitals’ group NHS Providers, which represents chief executives of hospital and ambulance trusts, said that’s the clear signal sent by the decision to drop the agreed assumption of a 2.1 per cent pay rise for NHS staff.”

Treasury sources say that there are no plans to make the NHS pay for Covid out of pre-pandemic budgets, pointing to more than £18 billion left in Covid reserves that has yet to be allocated. Hopson said, however, that if support was not agreed, hospitals would have to cut services from April. There are 4.5 million people on NHS waiting lists, including 224,000 who have been waiting longer than a year, 150 times more than before the pandemic. Health managers warned separately yesterday that a further six million people needing treatments, such as hip replacements and cataract removal, could be on “hidden” waiting lists.

Referrals from GPs dropped by 30 per cent last year, meaning an estimated 5.9 million needing care who are yet to come forward. Danny Mortimer, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, which represents senior managers from across the health service, said that ministers needed to “level with the public”, warning: “The government faces the politically unacceptable legacy of hundreds of thousands of patients left with deteriorating conditions for the remainder of the parliament.”

Tens of thousands of cancer patients are also thought to have missed out on treatment over the past year. Research found that almost half of those with red-flag symptoms did not see a GP during the pandemic. After handing £18 billion to the NHS in **England** last year to deal with Covid, and promising £3 billion to start cutting waiting lists, Sunak largely left the health service out of his budget. Treasury officials have said that they are willing to give the NHS more but need to scrutinise spending demands. They have been in talks with health chiefs about a further bailout to cover the cost of treating Covid patients in 2021-22. But

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NHS chiefs are unnerved that the Treasury tone has hardened since the budget and say it is now resisting meeting extra costs in full.

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### **More than 1,000 civil servants to move from London to Scotland, Tories reveal as part of a drive to shore up support for the Union.**

Marc Horne Monday March 15 2021, 12.01am, The Times

It was confirmed at the weekend that at least 500 workers in the Cabinet Office will be relocated to Glasgow by 2024, with ministers pledging to spend “some time” north of the border. It was also announced yesterday that an additional 500 staff will be employed at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in East Kilbride, South Lanarkshire.

Alister Jack, the Scottish secretary, praised the plan as he spoke at the Scottish Conservatives’ pre-election conference. Scotland will play an important part in the UK’s economic recovery from Covid-19, the chancellor has insisted. “The move will build on the presence of the COP26 team, the major international climate change conference, and will include officials from a range of civil service functions. Jack said: “It is great news that hundreds more UK government civil service jobs will be moving to Scotland, along with the creation of a second UK government base.

Meanwhile, Rishi Sunak said he had plans to “rebuild the economy of Scotland and the whole of the UK” as the country sought to “recover from the devastating impact of coronavirus”. He said his budget, announced this month, would help “support the United Kingdom’s recovery”. Sunak, speaking at the Scottish Conservative conference, said that it was a “recovery which Scotland will play an important part in”.

The chancellor said the UK government was accelerating growth deals in Ayrshire, Argyll & Bute and Falkirk, and that the fuel duty freeze was “saving the average Scottish driver £1,600”.

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### **The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill explained: how will it change protests?**

*(Criminal justice is largely a devolved in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Therefore, most of the Bill’s provisions apply to England and Wales only. Ed.)*

Daily Telegraph: By Tony Diver, political correspondent 17 March 2021

MPs have voted through the Government’s Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which caused a stir in Parliament in the wake of the Met Police crackdown on a vigil in Sarah Everard’s memory.

The Labour Party had originally planned to abstain on the legislation but voted against it, arguing that some of its measures to give police powers to deal with protesters could be applied to similar vigils and peaceful events in the future, threatening the right to protest.



The Bill is 300 pages long, and contains dozens of new measures to increase sentences for child killers and other violent criminals, toughen penalties for attacks on police officers and change sexual offences legislation to tackle abusive adults in positions of trust. But the most controversial part of it will reform the rules on political protests. If the legislation passes through readings in both Houses, police will be handed new powers to control the length of protests, impose maximum noise levels and prosecute activists for causing “serious annoyance” – a concept opponents argue has not been clearly defined.

The anti-protest measures in the Bill have been designed to tackle organised protesters like Extinction Rebellion, who ground London to a halt in the summer of 2019 by gluing themselves to Tube trains, towing large boats onto busy traffic junctions and lying in the road. Since then, Extinction Rebellion have blockaded a printworks, stopping newspapers from reaching readers and defaced Government buildings. Ministers say no one should have their lives “seriously disrupted” by protesters. Opponents of aspects of the Bill, including many on the Conservative benches, worry that it restricts the right to free protest, which has also been reduced by measures in the Coronavirus Act that prevent large gatherings.

Paul Shevlin, head of professional misconduct and criminal law at Thompsons Solicitors, comments on the Bill - and the impact that will have on disadvantaged groups. “The Bill covers a wide array of areas of policing, such as increasing sentences for those who assault emergency workers, life sentences for killer drivers, and making it illegal for sports coaches and religious leaders to engage in sexual activity with 16 and 17-year-olds in their care. However, buried amongst these positive reforms are a number of measures that will curtail people’s right to protest, create a situation where damaging a statue could be deemed a more ‘serious’ offence than assaulting a woman, and criminalise Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

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### Social care reform to be announced in Queen's speech, hints Boris Johnson

Simon Murphy, Oliver Wright Thursday March 25 2021, 12.01am, The Times

The sector requires additional support to remain financially viable, according to a new report from government auditors. Ministers hope to bring forward plans to reform social care as early as May, Boris Johnson suggested yesterday. The prime minister pledged on his first day in Downing Street in July 2019 to "fix" the social care crisis and has come under sustained pressure to reveal the government's solution.

Giving evidence to the Commons liaison committee, Johnson offered the closest indication yet of when reforms might be announced, saying it was "highly likely" social care would be featured in the Queen's speech on May 11. He told the committee: "One of the problems that we have is the gulf between the (English) NHS and (English) social care into which many people fall, and that's a problem we need to fix. If you ask me, 'Do we need a plan to do it, a long-term plan, a ten-year plan?' Then the answer is yes."

The prime minister's comments come as a new critical report from government auditors warned that the sector was facing a fresh cash squeeze. The National Audit Office (NAO) found most local authorities were paying care providers below a "sustainable rate" for the residents in their care, while occupancy rates had also fallen significantly. It said that the sector would require additional support to remain financially viable in the short term, while in the longer term there would be increasing pressures on care services.

Meg Hillier, the chairwoman of the Commons public accounts committee, said: "Despite government's repeated promises that it had a clear plan for tackling the social care crisis, today's NAO report shows this is simply not the case. This unsustainable situation can't go on government must get a grip now."

The Department of Health and Social Care said: "We are providing councils with access to £1.5 billion in additional funding for social care in 2021-22, on top of a further package of support worth £3 billion to support local authorities and help address the additional pressures, including on adult social care, during the pandemic."

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<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2021/03/27/englands-giant-subsidy-scotland-just-sturgeons-nats-like/>

### England's giant subsidy to Scotland is just how Sturgeon's Nats like it

Jeremy Warner 27 March 2021 • 4:00pm



The Scottish government certainly behaves as if it is running an entirely independent country, an impression further underpinned by the pandemic, where Scotland maintains a largely independent containment policy. Call it devolution if you like, from the outside, it looks like more. Across multiple fronts, public policy is now so divergent from the rest of the UK that Scotland might as well be fully sovereign.

So divergent, in fact, that you begin to wonder whether it is not the first minister, Nicola Sturgeon, rather than Boris Johnson, who these days calls the shots for the union as a whole. Her offer of a 4pc pay rise to its NHS workers, snuck out on the

very eve of pre-election purdah - a vote buying initiative if ever there was one - has had the real Prime Minister down in Westminster scurrying off shamefacedly to reconsider his stingy 1pc plan for NHS workers in England.

How is it, you may well ask, that 4pc is deemed affordable in Scotland, but unaffordable down south, which to the extent that anywhere in the UK these days generates a fiscal surplus is where it tends to occur? It's called the Barnett formula, after the former Labour chief secretary to the Treasury, Joe Barnett, and it works like this. Every year, the budget of the devolved administrations is set by taking the previous year's spending and adding a pro rata share of whatever increase there has been for the UK as a whole. Last financial year, the Barnett block grant to Scotland amounted to £32bn.

The effect is that historic differences in spending are preserved in aspic regardless of whether any longer justified. A further distortion arises because Scotland's population has been shrinking relative to England's, which boosts nominal spending per head over time such that it is today more than 20pc higher than England. If you want to know why Scotland can "afford" free higher education, social care, and prescriptions, a 4pc pay rise for its NHS workers, and the rest, but England can't, ask the late Joe Barnett.

As it is, the only parts of the UK that in normal times generate a fiscal surplus - in the sense that they raise more in tax than they (are allowed to Ed.) spend - are London, the South East and East (of Ed.) England. The rUK spends more than they raise in tax. For Scotland, the shortfall in 2019 was £2,482 per head. Actually, this is not particularly high by the standards of some UK regions. For instance, the North East (of where? Ed.) spends £4,064 per head more than it raises in tax, according to the latest ONS data.

But here's the point. Scotland is by no means a poor part of the UK; actually, average earnings are roughly the same as the UK as a whole. It follows that Scotland's per capita contribution to tax revenues is also

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roughly the same. Scotland's slightly higher top rates of income tax make only a marginal difference. Revenues from North Sea oil have also ceased to offer much by way of offset.

It is also why the Scottish National Party opposes anything by way of meaningful reform. Despite the distortions, they will not be backing the "needs based" system sometimes proposed. The UK Government also guaranteed continuation of the Barnett formula when campaigning against Scottish independence in the 2014 referendum. Indeed, the only way it could plausibly be changed is ironically via a vote for independence in the second referendum Sturgeon threatens to demand should she win an overall majority in the Holyrood elections.

The question of who pays remains. Europe is not going to be exactly rushing to fill the vacuum in Scotland's finances left by removal of the English teat. Some part of the shortfall could be met by cancelling Scotland's share of UK defence spending, yet that would only further undermine the economy by rendering the country's role as a major UK defence contractor and home to Britain's independent nuclear deterrent obsolete.

Even if Scotland is forgiven its share of Britain's national debt - a degree of magnanimous generosity rarely seen before when countries go their separate ways - massive tax hikes and spending cuts would be required to put Scotland's public finances on a sustainable footing. For a country that still feels badly wronged by years of Tory austerity, that's quite an ask.

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### Governing England:

#### Children in care homes: Education Committee launches call for written evidence

15 March 2021: Education Committee/UK Parliament/Business/Committees/ Education Committee/Children's Homes: Inquiry

The inquiry will examine a number of areas including educational outcomes and destinations, the quality of support provided by children's homes, unregulated provision, rates of criminalisation, the sufficiency of children's home places, and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The inquiry is examining issues around attainment and employment outcomes for young people in children's homes, as well as the support available and regulation of the sector. It is part of the Committee's continuing work examining the issues faced by left behind groups.



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#### A plan for an adult skills and lifelong learning revolution: Education Committee publishes Government response to report

12 March 2021: The Education Committee has today published the Government response to its report on adult skills and lifelong learning. It called for an ambitious and long-term strategy and identified four key pillars to revolutionise the adult education system.

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Committee, said: This is a huge step forward. We now urge the Government to build on the work it is doing already and to be bolder and more imaginative by providing a community learning centre in every town, introducing lifelong learning accounts and committing to a skills tax credit to encourage businesses to provide the skills our country needs.

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#### Department's White Paper on health and social care

UK Parliament/Business/Committees/Health and Social Care Committee: Call for evidence

This inquiry will examine the proposals in the White Paper *Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care*, and the extent to which the proposals will deliver integrated health and care services throughout **England**. The inquiry will also consider the extent to which the White Paper delivers the necessary long-term plans for social care and the health and social care workforce; and the proposals to confer additional powers on the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

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#### UK Parliament/Business/Committees: Justice Committee

8 March 2021: The Committee examines the findings by government inspectors.

On 10 December 2020 an official inspection of Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre, which holds detained children between 12 and 17 years old, said that some newly admitted children were locked in their rooms for 23.5 hours a day for up to 14 days.

The inspectors (a combined team from HM Inspectorate of Prisons, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission) also reported that one boy had a total of four hours outside his room between 26 November 2020

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and 10 December 2020; Childrens' daily experiences were "bleak", with a "spartan routine". The report said "most remained in bed for much of the morning";

Senior managers were unaware of the regime being implemented by staff.

The Inspectors noted that Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre had been judged at four previous Annual Inspections to "require improvements to be good".

On 18 December 2020 the inspectors invoked a rare procedure known as an 'Urgent Notification' which is designed to notify the Secretary of State of "significant concerns with regard to the treatment and conditions of those detained".

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### Common Frameworks

Business/Committees/Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee: Inquiry

The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union will result in a number of powers that are currently held by the EU being returned to the UK. Many of these powers currently intersect with the competencies of at least one of the Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish governments.

Common Frameworks are a mechanism for the UK and devolved governments to mutually agree some amount of regulatory consistency for policy areas where returning EU powers are within devolved competence. They are sector-specific and agreed between the UK Government and Devolved Administration(s).

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### Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

Government Bill: Originated in the House of Commons, session 2019-21

Last updated: 17 March 2021 at 20:52

Report stage

A Bill to make provision about the police and other emergency workers; to make provision about collaboration between authorities to prevent and reduce serious violence; to make provision about offensive weapons homicide reviews; to make provision for new offences and for the modification of existing offences; to make provision about the powers of the police and other authorities for the purposes of preventing, detecting, investigating or prosecuting crime or investigating other matters; to make provision about the maintenance of public order; to make provision about the removal, storage and disposal of vehicles; to make provision in connection with driving offences; to make provision about cautions; to make provision about bail and remand; to make provision about sentencing, detention, release, management and rehabilitation of offenders; to make provision about secure 16 to 19 Academies; to make provision for and in connection with procedures before courts and tribunals; and for connected purposes.

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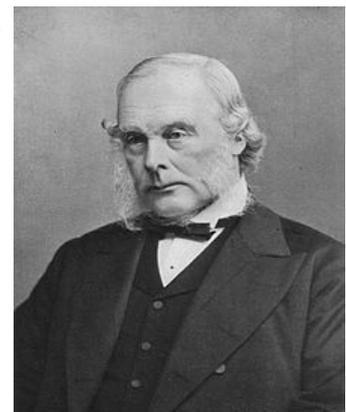
**England's hero: Joseph Lister, 1st Baron Lister** OM, KCVO, PC, PRS, FRCSE, FFPS (5 April 1827 – 10 February 1912) was an English surgeon and a pioneer of antiseptic surgery. From a technical viewpoint, Lister was not an exceptional surgeon, but his research into bacteriology and infection in wounds raised his operative technique to a new plane where his observations, deductions and practices revolutionised surgery throughout the world.

Applying Louis Pasteur's advances in microbiology, Lister championed the use of carbolic acid as an antiseptic, so that it became the first widely used antiseptic in surgery. He first suspected it would prove an adequate disinfectant because it was used to ease the stench from fields irrigated with sewage waste. He presumed it was safe because fields treated with carbolic acid produced no apparent ill-effects on the livestock that later grazed upon them.

Lister's work led to a reduction in post-operative infections and made surgery safer for patients, distinguishing him as the "father of modern surgery".

The widespread introduction of antiseptic surgical methods followed the publishing of Lister's *Antiseptic Principle of the Practice of Surgery* in 1867

Lister was born to a prosperous Quaker family in the village of Upton, West Ham, Essex.



Lister in 1902

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**England's history: The mutiny on the Royal Navy vessel HMS Bounty** occurred in the South Pacific Ocean on 28 April 1789. Because the vessel was rated only as a cutter, Bounty had no officers other than Bligh (who was then only a commissioned lieutenant), a very small crew, and no Marines to provide protection from hostile natives during stops or to enforce security on board ship.

To allow longer uninterrupted sleep, Bligh divided his crew into three watches instead of two, placing his

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protégé Fletcher Christian—rated as a Master's Mate—in charge of one of the watches. Eighteen crewmen, led by Fletcher Christian, seized control of the ship from their captain, Bligh. The mutineers had seized firearms during Christian's night watch and surprised and bound Bligh in his cabin. They set him and 18 loyalists adrift in the ship's open launch.

The mutineers variously settled on Tahiti or on Pitcairn Island.

Despite being in the majority, none of the loyalists put up a significant struggle once they saw Bligh bound, and the ship was taken over without bloodshed.

The mutineers provided Bligh and eighteen loyal crewmen a 23-foot launch (so heavily loaded that the gunwales were only a few inches above the water). They were allowed four cutlasses, food and water for perhaps a week, a quadrant and a compass, but no charts, or marine chronometer. Most of these were obtained by the clerk, Mr Samuel, who acted with great calm and resolution, despite threats from the mutineers.

Bligh and his crew first made for Tofua, only a few leagues distant, to obtain supplies. However, they were attacked by hostile natives and John Norton, a quartermaster, was killed. Fleeing from Tofua, Bligh did not dare to stop at the next islands to the west (the Fiji islands), as he had no weapons for defence and expected hostile receptions. Bligh completed a voyage of more than 3,500 nautical miles (4,000 mi) to in the launch to reach safety in the Dutch East Indies and began to bring the mutineers to justice.

The reasons behind the mutiny are still a subject of debate. Some sources report that Bligh was a cruel tyrant whose abuse of the crew led them to feel that they had no choice but to take over the ship. Other sources argue that Bligh was no worse (and, in many cases, objectively gentler) than the average captain and naval officer of the era, and that the crew—inexperienced and unused to the rigours of the sea—were corrupted by the freedom, idleness and sexual licence of their five months in Tahiti, finding themselves unwilling to return to the "Jack Tar's" life of an ordinary seaman.

This view holds that most of the men supported Christian's prideful personal vendetta against Bligh out of a misguided hope their new captain would return them to Tahiti and allow them to live out their lives in hedonistic peace, free from Bligh's acid tongue and strict discipline.

The mutiny is made more mysterious by the friendship of Christian and Bligh. Christian was well acquainted with the Bligh family. As Bligh was being set adrift he appealed to this friendship, saying "you have dandled my children upon your knee".



Fletcher Christian and the mutineers sent Lieutenant William Bligh and 18 others adrift; 1790 painting by Robert Dodd.

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### English culture: The worldwide veneration of St George

According to the church history of Eusebius a titular church built in Lydda during the reign of Constantine the Great (reigned 306–37) was consecrated to "a man of the highest distinction", the name of the *titulus* "patron" was not disclosed, but later he was asserted to have been George.

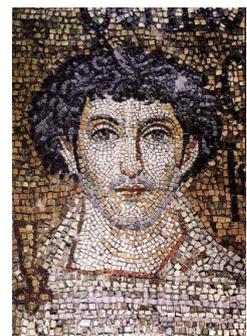
The veneration of George spread from Syria Palaestina through Lebanon to the rest of the Byzantine Empire and the region east of the Black Sea. By the 5th century, the veneration of George had reached the Christian Western Roman Empire, as well: in 494, George was canonized as a saint by Pope Gelasius I, among those "whose names are justly revered among men, but whose acts are known only to [God]." The early cult of the saint was localized in Diospolis (Lydda), in Palestine.

By the time of the early Muslim conquests of the mostly Christian and Zoroastrian Middle East, a basilica in Lydda dedicated to George existed. The church was destroyed by Muslims in 1010, but was later rebuilt and dedicated to George by the Crusaders. In 1191 and during the conflict known as the Third Crusade (1189–92), the church was again destroyed by the forces of Saladin, Sultan of the Ayyubid dynasty (reigned 1171–93). A new church was erected in 1872 and is still standing,

In England, he was mentioned among the martyrs by the 8th-century monk Bede.

The *Georgslied* is an adaptation of his legend in Old High German, composed in the late 9th century. The earliest dedication to the saint in England is a church at Fordington, Dorset, that is mentioned in the will of Alfred the Great. Edward III of England put his Order of the Garter under the banner of George, probably in 1348. The chronicler Jean Froissart observed the English invoking George as a battle cry on several occasions during the Hundred Years' War.

George did not rise to the position of "patron saint" of England, however, until the 14th century, and he



Early 5th century mosaic in the Rotunda of St George, Thessaloniki possibly the earliest depiction of St George. <https://insearchofsaint-george.com/about/>

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was still obscured by Edward the Confessor, the traditional patron saint of England, until in 1552 during the reign of Edward VI all saints' banners other than George's were abolished in the English Reformation. In the wake of the Crusades, George became a model of chivalry in works of literature, including medieval romances. The establishment of George as a popular saint and protective giant in the West, that had captured the medieval imagination, was codified by the official elevation of his feast to a *festum duplex* at a church council in 1415, on the date that had become associated with his martyrdom, 23 April. When the George is renowned throughout the Middle East, as both saint and prophet. His veneration by Christians and Muslims lies in his composite personality combining several Biblical, Quranic and other ancient mythical heroes. J. E. Hanauer in his 1907 book *Folklore of the Holy Land: Muslim, Christian and Jewish* "mentioned a shrine in the village of Beit Jala, beside Bethlehem. Deranged persons of all the three faiths are taken thither and chained in the court of the chapel, where they are kept for forty days on bread and water, the Eastern Orthodox priest at the head of the establishment now and then reading the Gospel over them." In the 1920s, according to Taufiq Canaan's *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine*, nothing seemed to have changed, and all three communities were still visiting the shrine and praying together."

**English Produce: New potatoes** have thin, wispy skins and a crisp, waxy texture. They are young potatoes and unlike their fully grown counterparts, they keep their shape once cooked and cut. They are also sweeter because their sugar has not yet converted into starch, and are therefore particularly suited to salads. You don't need to peel new potatoes; just scrub gently with a soft brush or cloth, then rinse to remove any dirt and cook whole. To boil, put the potatoes into a pan of lightly salted water, bring to the boil, simmer until tender (about 10 minutes) and drain. Dress new potatoes as soon as they are cooked to help them absorb the flavour of the butter or oil (this way you will also use less).



There are growers throughout England. Growers in Kent, Norfolk, Dorset, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Suffolk, Shropshire, Nottinghamshire and Essex are members of the British Potato Trade Association

### Recipe: Crunchy new potatoes

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/crunchy-new-potatoes>

By Mary Cadogan

Preparation and cooking time 30 mins

#### Ingredients

12-16 small-medium new potatoes, unpeeled  
1 tsp paprika

2 tbsp olive oil



**Method:** Heat oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Boil the potatoes for 10 mins, then drain well. Arrange on a baking sheet, then crush each one lightly with a potato masher. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with paprika, sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Bake for 20 mins until crispy.

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

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