

# Germany to restart coal power stations

Move to end dependency on Russian gas comes as leadership rival urges PM to cut energy taxes

By Louis Ashworth and Louise Moon

GERMANY is to reopen mothballed coal power plants to combat high gas prices, piling pressure on Boris Johnson to cut taxes on household energy bills.

The German government will pass emergency laws to reactivate the coal plants as Europe takes steps to deal with reduced energy supplies from Russia.

Other measures announced yesterday included new incentives for companies to use less natural gas.

It prompted Tom Tugendhat, the chairman of the Commons foreign affairs committee and a potential leadership rival to Boris Johnson, to call for a reduction in energy taxes.

Mr Tugendhat said: "And we're still charging people extra tax on heating bills. Taxing families when Germany, China and many more simply burn more coal is incoherent. We need to work together and not just reduce emissions at home."

Alarm has grown over the prospect of fuel reserves running out as countries cut ties with Russia over the war in Ukraine. Last week, the Kremlin reduced flows through the Nord Stream pipeline to Germany by 60pc, as part of an escalating pressure campaign.

Yesterday, Robert Habeck, Germany's economic minister, said: "To reduce gas consumption, less gas must be used to generate electricity. Coal-fired power plants will have to be used more instead."

He added that bringing back coal power plants was "painful, but it is a sheer necessity". It comes as Britain

faces soaring energy bills, which are due to increase again later this year with a further rise in the price cap just as the cost of living crisis bites.

The Prime Minister has come under criticism for breaking a pre-Brexit promise to cut the 5pc VAT on energy bills paid by households.

Energy bills are on course to surge to as much as £3,000 by the end of the year when the price cap is reset in October to factor in wholesale gas prices up to August.

Last month, the Government enforced a 25pc windfall tax on oil and gas companies to fund support for households.

Analysts at Wood Mackenzie, an oil and gas consultancy, predict Europe could run out of gas supplies by January if the Kremlin turns off the taps.

Prior to the invasion, Russia supplied Germany with just under a third of its gas. Britain relied on Moscow for less than 4pc of its total gas supply in 2021.

Under the plans, Germany will rely more on its coal plants to produce electricity, with a bill to be discussed in the upper house of the country's parliament in early July.

It is expected to quickly enter law afterwards.

Mr Habeck said that the German government was prepared to take further action if needed.

He added: "We must and we will do everything we can to store as much gas as possible in the summer and fall."

The move comes after Siegfried Russwurm, president of Germany's BDI lobby group, said in an interview on Saturday that Germany needed to get coal-fired plants out of reserve "immediately".

Meanwhile, a new auction system will be introduced to encourage industrial companies to save fuel, which can then be transferred to storage.



# English language reinforces 'white superiority', academics told

Open University course designed to counter unconscious bias is 'ignorant', says historian

By Craig Simpson

THE English language upholds the notion of "white superiority", an Open University training course informs academics.

The "anti-racist" Union Black course teaches university staff that the idea of "white hegemony" has been "covertly weaved" into people's minds.

This sense of superiority is ingrained in the "cultural psychology of the English language", according to course material studied by academics at almost 100 UK universities.

Material in a module entitled "What is whiteness?" states: "Along with religion, politics, laws and customs, white superiority is embedded in the linguistic and cultural psychology of the English language. Consequently, given the global reach of the English language, the assumption of white hegemony has been covertly weaved into the consciousness of white people, black people and people of colour."

The programme of study was drawn up by Open University diversity experts, backed by a £500,000 investment from the Santander banking group. It has been taken up by universities including Leeds, Liverpool, Bristol, Birmingham, and Imperial College London.

The material does not advise how to address "white hegemony" upheld by the English language, but calls on university staff taking the course to address unconscious biases which people are

either "unaware of" or "in denial about". The course, launched last year, argues that: "Historically, British politics has maintained white hegemony, making immigration an existential threat to white Britons."

It adds the debated claim that: "In 1955, the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, won a general election with a 'Keep England White' theme."

The Open University course defines "whiteness" as "the systemic and structural domination and oppression of 'non-white' peoples", adding that "'white' people only exist in opposition to 'black' people, both of which are socially constructed ideologies".

A module on the course titled "Who can be racist?" suggests that white European people have been the most successful in this regard.

It states: "No other ethnic or so-called racial group has so successfully ideologically and economically imposed racialised ideas and practices on the collective psyche of their own and other groups comparative to white Europeans."

Dr Zareer Masani, a historian of the British Empire, said the Open University course's claims about race and the English language were "ignorant".

He said: "It is an alarming sign of how wokeism is taking over academia. It's unhistorical, it's ignorant, and it's illiterate. It completely ignores non-white contributions to the English language and totally dismisses the role of people ranging from Achebe to Rushdie who have enriched English by writing in English."

Santander has said the Union Black course was conceived in response to a report highlighting the racial inequality in higher education, and that feedback has been positive.

## Downers more popular



# European judges halt migrant flight to Rwanda

By Charles Hymas, Phoebe Southworth and Jack Hardy in Kigali

THE first flight to deport migrants to Rwanda was halted after European human rights judges made an eleventh-hour intervention.

The European Court of Human Rights granted an urgent injunction to one of the asylum seekers to remove him from the flight, just hours after the UK Supreme Court had rejected his plea.

The remaining six other migrants facing deportation then secured similar injunctions and the £300,000 Boeing 747 charter flight waiting at MoD Boscombe Down in Wiltshire to take them to Rwanda was grounded.

It could mean all deportation flights to Rwanda are halted for weeks, until a judicial review, due by the end of July, has ruled whether the policy is lawful.

It also raises the prospect that ministers could reconsider membership of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to ensure the scheme can go ahead.

"European judges grounded the whole thing despite the Supreme Court, High Court, and Court of Appeal ruling in favour of the Government. It is appalling," said a government source.

Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, said she was "disappointed" and "very surprised" at the European courts intervention despite "repeated earlier success in our domestic courts".

Pledging that she would not be "deterred from doing the right thing", she said: "Preparation for the next flight begins now."

More than 130 migrants had been originally selected for deportation to Rwanda but only seven remained as of yesterday morning after the rest successfully lodged appeals against their deportation, claiming breaches of their human right to a family life or that they have been victims of modern slavery.

The UK has remained a signatory of

the ECHR, which is policed by the European court, despite leaving the EU, but yesterday Boris Johnson warned that he would change laws if necessary to curb legal challenges and left open the possibility of leaving the convention.

Asked on a visit to Staffordshire whether the UK would have to leave the ECHR to avoid the kind of legal battle he faced over the Rwanda policy, he said lawyers were "very good at picking up ways of trying to stop the Government from upholding what we think is a sensible law".

He added: "Will it be necessary to change some laws to help us as we go along? It may very well be and all these options are under constant review."

At the start of Cabinet, Mr Johnson had also accused lawyers of "abetting the work of the criminal gangs" by blocking a policy to deter migrants from making dangerous and unnecessary journeys across the Channel facilitated by people smugglers. More than 400 crossed the Channel yesterday.

The Government is replacing the Human Rights Act with a Bill of Rights which will restrict claims for breaches of the right to a family life, but until now has maintained the UK will remain a signatory of the ECHR, which allows European Court of Human Rights appeals.

The initial appeal to the European court was lodged on behalf of an Iraqi asylum seeker, known as KN, after the Supreme Court had rejected his appeal to ground last night's Rwanda flight.

The European judges ruled that the migrant should not be deported until the judicial review next month had found whether the Rwanda policy was lawful.

They said they upheld his plea for an injunction because of the risk that he could suffer ill-treatment in Rwanda, because of the absence of a legally enforced mechanism for him

*Continued on Page 4*

*Editorial Comment: Page 15*

MIKE EGERTON/PA

# Vegan veterinary nurse fired for 'liberating' turkey in flat

By Daily Telegraph Reporter

⑦ A VEGAN activist was sacked by the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) after she "liberated" a turkey and kept the bird at her university flat, an employment tribunal heard.

⑩ Shakira Free Miles, a veterinary nurse, had rescued the ailing bird, named Dorothy, and took it to an animal hospital two days after Christmas Day in 2018, the hearing was told.

⑪ Two months later the turkey was discovered by police during a raid at her university accommodation while she was being investigated for suspected involvement in the militant Animal Liberation Front.

The panel was not told that Ms Free Miles, who joined the RVC in 2015 and was stationed at its Beaumont Sainsbury Animal Hospital in Camden, north London, obtained Dorothy.

When alerted by police, the RVC suspended Ms Free Miles and later sacked her for breaching its "no pet policy". Dorothy was taken into care by the RSPCA after the animal was found to be incapable of standing up.

⑫ "She knew that she was not allowed to have animals in her flat but had felt she had to do something as otherwise the turkey would have died," the tribunal was told.

The dismissal was also made on the

grounds of Ms Free Miles's association with illegal activities carried out by extreme animal rights groups.

Describing herself on Facebook as a "liberation activist" and "ethical vegan", Ms Free Miles attempted to sue the RVC claiming she had been discriminated against for her ethical veganism beliefs and that she had been unfairly dismissed.

⑬ But the panel found that her trespassing and removing animals in an attempt to reduce their suffering was not a philosophical belief and dismissed her claim.

A university investigation found social media posts where Ms Free Miles was holding a piglet in Barcelona with the caption "Meat the victims - one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws".

It also discovered she had treated a rabbit that had been taken during a raid on a farm and featured in the Channel 4 documentary *How to Steal Pigs and Influence People*, the panel was told.

Employment Judge Harjit Grewal concluded: "[Her] belief that she was morally obliged to take positive action to prevent or reduce the suffering of animals, which included trespass and removal of animals and its manifestation was not a philosophical belief."

*The Daily Telegraph* has contacted the RVC for comment.

Shak



# Pea-sized robot sets course for pinpoint drug drop inside body

Tiny device could be used to target tumours and ferry high-concentration doses, instruments and cameras

By Sarah Knapton SCIENCE EDITOR

A TINY amphibious robot that can swim through fluids in the body and navigate obstacles to deliver drugs wherever needed has been developed by scientists.

Stanford University has released footage showing its pea-sized millibot jumping over hurdles, leaping through the air before plunging into a tank of water to collect a small piece of cargo.

The wireless cylindrical robot, which is a third of an inch (7.8mm) wide, was shown swimming to an area and depositing its shipment before climbing a small flight of steps out of the tank.

The robot was also tested in a pig stomach, where it was filmed moving easily around ripples of muscle, before reaching an area where it delivered a consignment of blue dye (standing in for liquid medicine) using an internal pump.

Scientists hope that a similar strategy could be used to place high-concentration drugs exactly where they need to be in the body.

When people swallow a drug or have it injected, it spreads throughout the system, which limits how powerful treatments can be. But if a robot can deliver a drug to a precise location, it could allow potent medicines to be deployed where they would do the most good.

Dr Renee Zhao, assistant professor of mechanical engineering at Stanford, said: "This is the most robust and multifunctional untethered robot we have ever developed. It reaches the tar-

get, and then releases a high-concentration drug."

Placing tiny robots in the body is a popular theme in science fiction. In the 1987 comedy *InnerSpace*, Dennis Quaid and a submersible pod were shrunk to microscopic size and injected into a grocery worker.

Similarly, in the 1966 film *Fantastic Voyage*, a submarine crew were shrunk and placed into the body of an injured scientist to repair his brain.

While over-the-counter pills have cured many ailments for decades, biomedical researchers have only recently begun exploring how to improve targeted drug delivery for more complicated medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease or cancer.

Chemotherapy can be extremely damaging to healthy organs, so finding a way to directly target tumours could radically improve outcomes.

The robot is built from a shell which has been folded into Kresling origami patterns – triangular shapes which have a similar effect as propellers, enabling it to roll, flip and spin when the material is folded or unfolded in specific ways.

It can also squeeze up like an accordion to create a pumping action which allows liquid to be shot out. It can be manoeuvred remotely, using magnetic fields which can be altered in strength and orientation.

A hole in the robot's centre helps it swim while also providing a suction area to allow cargo, such as pills or liquid medication, to be transported.

The team believe the bot could be used to carry instruments or cameras into the body. They are also hoping to continue to scale down the machine before testing in animals and humans.

The research was published in the journal *Nature Communications*.



# Schools urged not to let rail strikes disrupt crucial exams

Headteachers and officials draw up plans to ensure students will still be able to sit GCSEs and A-levels

By Camilla Turner  
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

19 THE UK's largest headteacher union has said it is "concerned" about the impact on pupils' exams from the forthcoming rail strike.

The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) voiced its misgivings about the effect the industrial action is likely to have on students taking their GCSE and A-levels next week.

Huge swathes of Britain will be without any rail services on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, when 40,000 members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers union (RMT) go on strike in a dispute over pay and jobs.

Seventeen GCSE and 22 A-level exams are scheduled to take place on Tuesday and Thursday next week, including maths, science and history, which are sat by hundreds of thousands of pupils.

Julie McCulloch, ASCL's director of policy, said she is concerned about the potential impact of the strikes on exam students who depend on trains to get to school.

22 "It is important that families are conscious of the industrial action and make alternative arrangements where students are reliant on train services," she said. "We would urge anybody who is concerned about their ability to

attend an exam to talk to their school or college at the earliest opportunity to discuss the options that are available."

The National Education Union (NEU), which represents rank-and-file teachers, refused to condemn the strikes.

Kevin Courtney, the union's joint general secretary, declared his "solidarity" with the RMT when they announced they had a mandate for industrial action.

On May 25 - which was before the dates of the strike had been made public - he tweeted: "Working people need pay rises and are right to fight for them."

Schools may need to move pupils to alternative premises to ensure exams can take place next week. Headteachers have been told that A-levels and GCSEs should go ahead even if this means "relocating" to another venue, according to the Government's contingency planning document.

Exam board chiefs have written to all head teachers in the country to advise on how to manage disruption caused by the rail strikes.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), the umbrella body which represents the UK's largest exam boards, has told schools that they can start exams up to half-an-hour late without having to seek permission from the board.

The JCQ has also sent schools the Government's official contingency planning document which explains that exams should go ahead unless they have been told otherwise by the relevant exam board.

"You should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes

21  
RMT  
Lyn  
unic  
hea



# Migrants at US border will be sent to Spain under Biden deal

President discussing resettlement scheme that would allow Madrid to tackle labour shortage

By Jamie Johnson in Washington

PRESIDENT Joe Biden is poised to agree a deal to send migrants at America's southern border to Spain.

The proposals, which officials stress are still under discussion, could be announced at next week's Summit of the Americas, as Mr Biden seeks global cooperation on the migrant crisis which has ballooned during his presidency.

Spain is facing a labour shortage despite having the highest unemployment rate in the EU at 13.5 per cent.

There are more than 100,000 vacancies in the key tourism sector, while the country is short of at least half a million building workers, according to unions and companies.

The initial number of refugees resettled by Spain would be "modest" but "symbolically important", according to documents seen by Axios website.

It reported that Spain is also expected to agree to double or triple the number of temporary workers from Central America accepted through an employment-based migration programme.

Yesterday, it was unclear whether those whom Spain might resettle would be required to apply at US embassies and consulates outside the US or whether those who had crossed the border already would be allowed to apply.

Spain has long been a favoured destination for people from Latin America, given the shared language. Late last year, there were at least 1.5 million Latin Americans (excluding Brazilians) residing in Spain, of which 626,000 were born in Central America and the Caribbean, official figures show.

Canada, which has a long tradition as a safe-haven country, is also weighing whether to take in larger numbers of regional refugees and also to increase the number of Haitian workers it allows in, according to the documents.

Between 2015 and 2022, it welcomed only 1,500 migrants from the region, but they could announce a new target of 5,000 over a number of years.

One Canadian government official told Axios: "Conversations are ongoing and no decisions have been taken regarding specific commitments on migration at next week's summit."

The US is still hammering out a final guest list ahead of next week's meetings in Los Angeles, officials said on Wednesday, after weeks of tension around several countries expected to be excluded.

Summit preparations have been clouded by the threat of an embarrassing boycott by regional leaders, including Mexico's president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, if Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua are not invited.

"We still have some final considerations, but we will inform people publicly soon," Juan Gonzalez, a White House adviser on Latin America, said.

Mr López Obrador, who received an invitation last week, has yet to say whether he will attend.



# House buyers face missing out on mortgages due to backlogs

By Melissa Lawford  
PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

HOMEBUYERS face being forced onto higher mortgage rates, as backlogs caused by the housing market boom see record numbers of offers expire.

Mortgages are becoming increasingly expensive as interest rates rise, meaning borrowers whose offers run out will have to pay hundreds of pounds more per month or lose the property.

The share of mortgaged property transactions taking more than six months to complete has nearly tripled since 2019 to hit a record high of 13.9 per cent this year, according to analysis by Hamptons, the estate agents.

This means that one in seven buyers is unable to complete before the six-month expiry date of their offers.

There were 71,000 mortgage approvals for home purchase in December 2021, according to data from UK Finance, a lender trade body. Nearly 10,000 buyers will therefore this month be left scrambling to find new mortgage offers so that they can proceed with their home purchases.

If the rate continues over the next 12 months, more than 100,000 purchasers will be left in the lurch.

The delays will cost home buyers thousands of pounds more per year on their mortgage bills.

Since December, the Bank of England has made five consecutive increases to the Bank Rate, which rose to 1.25pc on Thursday.

This has pushed up mortgage costs dramatically. Even before the most recent rise, the average rate on a five-year fixed-rate mortgage deal had jumped from 1.5pc to 2.6pc in six months. A buyer purchasing an average priced home whose mortgage offer

expired last month would therefore see their monthly payments jump from £730 to £847 – an extra £1,404 per year.

Joseph Griffiths (not his real name), 52, had an offer accepted on a house in Billingshurst, West Sussex, six months ago, but he has since been hit hard by a combination of the supply crunch and interest rate rises.

The sellers in Billingshurst are downsizers and have been unable to find anywhere to move to because of the extreme shortage of properties for sale. The delays mean Mr Griffiths' mortgage offer has now expired.

Mr Griffiths secured his original offer – of just 1 per cent – before the Bank of England started to raise interest rates in December 2021. His new offer, which he secured before the Bank's rate rise on Thursday, was at a rate of 2.49pc. "It means we are paying an extra £400 per month," he said.

Moving chains have become increasingly crippled by the supply crunch as sellers have struggled to find properties to move to, while the enormous volume of transactions in the wake of the pandemic has brought logistical delays to the conveyancing process.

Aaron Strutt, of Trinity Financial mortgage brokers, said that the new-build sector, where completions have been delayed by materials and labour shortages, is particularly problematic.

David Hollingworth, of L&C mortgage brokers, said: "Some mortgage rates have tripled since October."

While interest rates are still low historically, the rises will be a shock for buyers who have only ever known a low interest rate environment, said Mr Hollingworth. "When you add the increases to the impact of the rising cost of living, it will be a real squeeze."



# Weinstein facing charges over two historical UK sex assault claims

By Martin Evans  
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

27 HARVEY WEINSTEIN, the disgraced Hollywood movie mogul, is facing sex assault charges in the UK dating back more than 25 years.

Prosecutors have authorised the Metropolitan Police to charge the 70-year-old with two counts of indecent assault that allegedly took place against a woman in London in August 1996. Now in her 50s, she was one of seven alleged victims who went to UK police in 2017 in the wake of the MeToo campaign.

28 Dozens of Hollywood actresses, including Uma Thurman, Salma Hayek, Rose McGowan and Gwyneth Paltrow, also came forward to make complaints against the producer.

Thurman, the star of films such as *Pulp Fiction* and *The Avengers*, gave an interview to *The New York Times* in which she accused Weinstein of attempting to sexually assault her in his suite at the Savoy hotel in London in the mid 1990s.

Lysette Anthony, a British actress, also waived her anonymity to accuse Weinstein of carrying out a "pathetic, revolting" attack on her at her London home in the late 1980s. She reported the incident to the Met in 2017.

In May 2018, Weinstein was charged with rape and numerous other sex offences in the US and was convicted the following year by a jury in New

York. The decision by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to approve charges in the UK follows a review of the evidence gathered by Scotland Yard as part of its 2017 investigation.

But the chances of Weinstein facing justice in the UK are extremely slim given that he is serving a 23-year prison sentence in the US and is not eligible for parole until 2039, when he will be 87. He is also facing further charges in California and earlier this month lost an appeal against his conviction and sentence in New York.

Rosemary Ainslie, head of the CPS's Special Crime Division, said in a statement: "The CPS has authorised the Metropolitan Police to charge Harvey Weinstein with two counts of indecent assault against a woman in August 1996."

Weinstein was one of Hollywood's most powerful figures for more than two decades and was married to Georgina Chapman, the British fashion designer and actress. Their divorce was finalised before his conviction. In 2004 he was made an honorary CBE for his contribution to Britain's film industry, but was stripped of the honour in 2020.

Last month prosecutors also approved charges against Kevin Spacey, the Oscar-winning American actor, who has been accused of four sex assaults against three men dating back to 2005. He denies the claims and has vowed to prove his innocence.



# Stage is set for Eurovision held in UK after war rules out Ukraine

Contest bosses begin talks with BBC as this year's winner 'unable' to host 2023 song competition

By Craig Simpson

29 THE UK is poised to host Eurovision next year after broadcast bosses ruled that Ukraine, this year's winner, was unable to stage the next contest, with the BBC in talks about organising the event.

The competition is ordinarily hosted by the previous winner, but the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) found that because of the war in Ukraine, the nation could not host "one of the most complex TV productions in the world".

30 The UK coming second in the 2022 song contest with its entrant, Sam Ryder, meant it had been earmarked as the host nation for 2023.

The EBU said Ukraine would not be a suitable host because the production requires "thousands working on, and attending, the event and 12 months of preparation time".

A statement from organisers of the Eurovision Song Contest added that "the EBU will now begin discussions with the BBC, as this year's runner up, to potentially host the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest in the United Kingdom".

A statement from the BBC said: "We have seen the announcement from the EBU. Clearly these aren't a set of circumstances that anyone would want."

"Following their decision, we will of course discuss the BBC hosting the Eurovision Song Contest."

The BBC has played a key role in the UK's efforts in the contest, providing

television coverage of the competition and aiding the selection process for British entries.

The latest entry was *Space Man* by Sam Ryder, which came second despite the UK historically fairsing poorly in the contest. Many credited the UK's support of Ukraine for swinging scores in Ryder's favour.

Ukraine won the 2022 competition, held in Turin, with rap group Kalush's song *Stefania* earning 631 points compared with the UK's score of 466.

This victory and the war in Ukraine will be "reflected in next year's shows", the EBU has said.

Downing Street welcomed the possibility of the UK hosting Eurovision if Ukraine cannot, pledging to ensure it "overwhelmingly reflects Ukraine's rich culture, heritage and creativity".

A No10 spokesman said: "If the EBU decides the competition can't go ahead in Ukraine we would of course welcome the opportunity to work closely with Ukraine and the BBC to host it here in the UK."

"But we would be committed to ensuring it overwhelmingly reflects Ukraine's rich culture, heritage and creativity, as well as building on the ongoing partnership between our two countries."

Asked if the Government would help the BBC with the costs, a spokesman said "we're slightly getting ahead of ourselves in terms of the process".

The UK's resurgent popularity with the European voting public in Eurovision could place it among the favourites for the competition next year. The UK has won the contest five times in its 66-year history, and has been a runner up on 16 occasions.



# More children cross Channel as Patel launches social media plea

Charities claim emphasis on males in Rwanda policy is encouraging increase in perilous migrant boat trips

By Charles Hymas  
and Rebecca Rosman in Calais

RECORD numbers of children are making the perilous Channel crossing in small boats, figures show, as Priti Patel today launches an advertising blitz to deter the migrants.

Charities believe more children and women may have been encouraged to make the 21-mile journey in the belief that they will not be deported to Rwanda, a policy that has been primarily targeted at young male migrants.

They include around 1,000 unaccompanied children who have crossed the Channel in the first five months of this year. There have been 115 unaccompanied children already in June.

It comes as the Home Secretary launches a social media campaign to warn migrants in northern France and Belgium that even if they survive the dangerous crossing and reach the UK, they "could be leaving for Rwanda".

Officials have said only unaccompanied children will be exempt.

Pierre Roques, from the charity l'Auberge des Migrants said the warm sunny weather and calm seas were also behind the surge in the numbers of women and children crossing.

At least 900 migrants have crossed the Channel this week, taking the total this year to 11,000, double last year's at the same point.

"Given the period of the year we're entering with the nicer weather, there are a lot more people arriving in the camps [in Calais].

"We're of course going to be expecting more families to cross during this time," he said.

He said the migrants had been "following the Rwanda situation closely" and said it was "possible" the increase in

women and children had "to do with the fact they feel like they won't get sent to Rwanda".

At midnight on Wednesday 43 migrants including at least a dozen children aged under 10 and a baby arrived on Dungeness beach after being rescued by an RNLI lifeboat.

A witness said they were "well dressed", suggesting the route is becoming normalised with wealthier migrants. One woman refused to leave the boat which had to be dragged up the beach to the boathouse for her to do so. She said she did not want to be photographed as a potential deportee.

The Home Office campaign aims to counter claims by people-trafficking gangs that the arrangement with Rwanda is nothing but a "scare tactic".

It follows Tuesday's intervention by the European Court of Human Rights which grounded the first flight to

*'We have a duty to warn people of the risks of these journeys, and expose the lies of inhumane smugglers'*

Rwanda after it backed a legal challenge by a 54-year-old Iraqi asylum seeker who came to Britain by small boat less than a month ago.

The adverts on Facebook and Instagram will target migrants in their native languages of Arabic, Kurdish, Pashto, Vietnamese and Farsi.

A Home Office spokesman said: "We have a duty to warn people of the risks of these journeys, and expose the lies sold to vulnerable people by inhumane smugglers."

Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council, said: "It is extremely worrying to hear that so many of those crossing the channel are women and children.

"It's time for our Government to start having a grown-up conversation with France and the EU about sharing responsibility."

STEVE FINN

A migr



# World will be forced to tap 'dwindling' oil supplies

Russian boycott and rising demand in China will keep petrol prices high, warns energy agency

By Rachel Millard

34 OIL producers will be forced to tap into "dwindling" spare capacity as supply runs short, the world's leading energy authority has warned, leaving countries perilously exposed to potential shocks.

Supplies may "struggle to keep pace with demand" next year as China emerges from the pandemic and sanctions on Russia grow, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said.

The United States and other producers outside of the Opec+ coalition are expected to help, but Opec+ members – who include Saudi Arabia – will also need to do more, it indicated.

State owned entities such as Saudi Aramco and the UAE's Adnoc will need to call on spare capacity, usually reserved for coping with outages and other surprise shocks, to ensure enough oil is pumped to meet demand.

"Global oil supply may struggle to keep pace with demand next year, as tighter sanctions force Russia to shut more wells, and a number of producers bump up against capacity constraints," the IEA said.

"Non-Opec+ producers, led by the US, will add 1.9m barrels a day (mb/d) of supply in this year and 1.8mb/d next year.

"Nevertheless, to keep the implied balance from tipping into deficit Opec+ would have to further tap into its dwindling capacity cushion, reducing it to historic lows of just 1.5mb/d."

Spare capacity helps dampen potential price spikes by allowing producers to respond to unplanned outages.

Running down such buffers leaves the market dangerously exposed to surprise shocks and could lead to more volatile prices.

The IEA's warning in its monthly oil outlook is a blow to motorists struggling with record pump prices following a 50pc jump in crude oil prices since the start of the year.

Pump prices rose by a further 1p a litre on Tuesday, with diesel now selling at an average price of 192.48p a litre and petrol about 186p a litre.

That is a more than 40pc increase on the same time last year, with the Government under growing pressure to extend the 5p fuel duty cut it introduced in March.

It now costs £103 to fill up a 55-litre petrol car and £106 to fill up a 55-litre diesel car, with £11 added to the cost of a tank in just over the last month.

Simon Williams, fuel spokesman at the RAC, said: "Drivers appear to be up against the wall when it comes to high fuel prices.

"We hope the Government will now accept that it is the dramatic rise in wholesale prices that has led to forecourt misery for millions and act to ease their financial pain."

## 50pc

The jump in crude oil prices since the start of this year which has led to pain at the petrol pump for motorists

Exchange rates and refining costs also make a big difference to what drivers pay at the pumps, on top of crude oil prices.

The IEA said oil markets should rebalance this year, but warned the situation "might prove short-lived".

Oil demand is expected to hit 101.6m barrels a day next year, it said, higher than pre-pandemic levels, driven by demand in China.

Meanwhile, the EU is planning to restrict Russian oil imports from December and other sanctions are likely to tighten.

It added that limited global refining capacity means supplies of diesel are of particular concern and "could cause more pain at the pump".

Goldman Sachs earlier this month raised its Brent oil price forecasts by \$10 to \$135 a barrel for later this year and the first half of next, also warning about the effect of increased demand in China as lockdowns end.



# Ukraine takes first step to joining EU in blow to Putin

Country's leader says move will bring victory closer, as European Commission backs candidate status

By James Crisp EUROPE EDITOR

UKRAINE yesterday came a step closer to joining the EU after the European Commission recommended it be granted candidate status to join the bloc.

The boost to Ukraine's hopes is laden with meaning in a country that turned defiantly westwards during the 2013 Euromaidan protests that toppled its pro-Russian president.

It is also a blow for Vladimir Putin, whose illegal invasion was an attempt to force Ukraine back into Moscow's sphere of influence.

"It's the first step on the EU membership path that'll certainly bring our victory closer," Volodymyr Zelensky, the Ukrainian president, said.

"Ukraine has clearly demonstrated the country's aspiration and the country's determination to live up to European values and standards," said Ursula von der Leyen, the commission president, in Brussels. Ukrainians are ready to die for a European perspective. We want them to live with us, the European Union," she said, wearing a shirt and blazer in the blue and yellow colours of Ukraine's flag.

Mrs Von der Leyen said that candidate status was given on "the understanding that the country will carry out

a number of further important reforms" in areas such as anti-corruption.

Addressing Ukraine's bid for EU membership yesterday, Mr Putin said: "We have nothing against it, this is not a military bloc."

Maria Zakharova, Russia's foreign ministry spokesman, said Ukraine "is not getting a bright future, for some reason, despite the promises becoming more and more sweet and alluring".

The commission gave its opinion on Ukraine's readiness for candidate status, which must now be approved by all the 27 member states.

On a visit to Ukraine on Thursday, the leaders of France, Germany, Italy and Romania said that they supported

*'Ukrainians are ready to die for a European perspective. We want them to live with us, the European Union'*

Ukraine being granted "immediate candidate status".

EU leaders are expected to approve Ukraine's status at next week's European Council summit, but with strict conditions. That decision will pave the way for years or even decades of complicated negotiations and reforms before Ukraine can join the bloc.

"The entire process is merit based. So it goes by the book, and therefore progress depends entirely on Ukraine," Mrs Von der Leyen said.

Kaja Kallas, the prime minister of Estonia, said she "strongly" welcomed

the commission's recommendation. "Europe isn't just geography. It's a set of values and Ukraine is fighting for them. Let's use the momentum. Ukraine needs hope and our support," she said.

The EU will demand sweeping institutional and democratic reforms as part of the four step process to join the bloc.

When a country completes the reforms, membership is then put to a final vote of the existing member states, who must unanimously support it.

Some EU members fear it will take years before Ukraine meets the criteria to join and have warned against giving Kyiv false hope.

Emmanuel Macron has suggested it could take a decade before the country is ready to join.

Ukraine, with a GDP per capita below £3,428, is poorer than the poorest member state and would become the largest beneficiary of EU funding.

One diplomat said Ukraine would be "a bottomless pit" unless funding methods such as agricultural subsidies were adapted.

EU member states are divided over how quickly Ukraine should be allowed to join, with Denmark and the Netherlands the most reluctant.

Some governments are anxious Kyiv is not seen as jumping ahead of Western Balkans countries who are already candidate countries.

Realistically, the war will have to be over before EU talks can begin because, among other reasons, it is unclear at the moment what the country's borders will finally be.

## Ex-US soldiers held captive in mystery video

By Colin Freeman and James Kilner

FEARS that two ex-US servicemen have been captured by Russian forces in Ukraine grew last night after footage appeared to show the pair in custody.

Alexander Drueke, 39, and Andy Huynh, 27, who were fighting as volunteers with Ukrainian forces, went missing in action during fierce fighting outside Kharkiv last Thursday.

Two videos posted on YouTube last night showed each man sitting alone in a bare-walled room. Both spoke only

briefly, giving their names and then saying "I am against war" in Russian.

They appeared to have trouble speaking the Russian phrase, suggesting they had been coached to say it.

It was not clear where the footage had come from. However, it followed another social media post on Thursday night, apparently showing the two men sitting handcuffed in the back of an army truck.

It was accompanied by a screen grab from a *Daily Telegraph* article that broke the news of their capture two

days ago. It appeared on a Telegram channel called The V, run by a man called Timofei Vi, who appears to have a direct link to the Kremlin.

According to Russian reports from 2020, he was hired to set up a non-profit organisation called Dialog, to counter what Moscow called "fake news".

Under the pictures of the captured US soldiers, he wrote: "Jogging through the forest ended sadly, as did the trip to Ukraine for easy money."

A comrade of the pair said: "We are relieved to see that they are still alive."



# SNP policy led alcoholics to forgo food and borrow money

Research shows minimum unit pricing had negative effect later condemned as a 'failed experiment'

By Max Stephens

A FLAGSHIP SNP health policy failed to curb problem drinking but forced alcoholics to go without food, a major study has found.

Scotland became the first country in the world to introduce minimum unit pricing (MUP) for alcohol in May 2018, currently fixed at 50p per unit.

But in a report on the effectiveness of the policy, researchers from Sheffield and Newcastle universities found "no clear evidence" it dissuaded alcoholics from drinking.

In some cases, heavy drinkers spent up to 29 per cent less on food, utility bills and other items, according to data from 100,000 participants. The average total spending on alcohol in this group increased by nearly 30 per cent, from £83 to £107 per week.

Findings from 170 interviews showed the policy drove alcoholics to borrow money from family and friends, pawn possessions, run down savings and rely on food banks or other forms of charity.

In 2016, Nicola Sturgeon called the policy "a vital public health measure", "with strong support from those who work in frontline of alcohol misuse".

"It will save lives," the First Minister wrote on Twitter the day after Scottish courts agreed to back the policy, after four years of legal challenges from the Scotch Whisky Association.

The report, published by Public Health Scotland, said those with alcohol dependence "received little support or information before the policy was rolled out". Its conclusions read: "There is no clear evidence that this [MUP] led to reduced alcohol consumption or changes in the severity of alcohol dependence among people drinking at harmful levels. There is some evidence

it increased financial strain among some economically vulnerable groups."

The report said there was no "clear evidence" the policy led to an increase in criminality and drug use.

The Institute of Economic Affairs, a free market think tank, said the findings would be the "final nail in the coffin of minimum unit pricing". Christopher Snowden, the institute's head of lifestyle economics, said: "The Scottish Government will try to put a brave face on it, but there is now little doubt that minimum pricing has been a failed experiment that has cost Scottish consumers £270 million."

Prof John Holmes, from the University of Sheffield, who led the overall study, said although MUP was effective in reducing overall sales, those with alcohol dependence responded "in very different ways".

He added: "Some reduced their spending on other things but others switched to lower strength drinks or simply bought less alcohol."

"It is important that alcohol treatment services and other organisations find ways to support those who do have financial problems, particularly as inflation rises."

Helen Chung Patterson, public health intelligence adviser at Public Health Scotland, said the research "develops our understanding of and insights into this important population and how they have responded" to MUP.

"People who drink at harmful levels, and particularly those with alcohol dependence, are a diverse group with complex needs who often experience multiple interacting health and social problems," she said.

A Scottish Government spokesman said they would "carefully consider the findings". They said in the year after MUP was introduced, there was a 2 per cent decrease in off-trade alcohol sales and a 10 per cent decrease in alcohol specific deaths in 2019.

They added that statistics for 2020 showed alcohol-specific deaths had increased by 17 per cent in Scotland.



# Two thirds of rural phone boxes face closure

Communities at risk of being cut off as new Ofcom rules let operators remove thousands of kiosks

By Gareth Corfield

TWO thirds of rural phone boxes could face destruction under new Ofcom rules, adding to fears that isolated communities risk being cut off following extreme winter storms.

Ofcom, the telecoms regulator, will only safeguard 1,400 call boxes across the country, putting at risk the rest of Britain's 21,000 telephone kiosks.

Rules announced by the regulator yesterday will allow BT and KCom, the country's two regulated landline providers, to scrap unused phone boxes and save on maintenance costs.

Selina Chadha, Ofcom's director of connectivity, said: "Our new rules will ensure that many thousands of phone boxes will be protected for as long as they are needed."

A further 3,600 boxes are at risk of closure unless they are used at least once a week or are near accident blackspots or frequently-used suicide locations. About 150,000 emergency calls were made from public phone boxes during the year to May 2020.

BT has been closing and selling off phone boxes thanks to shrinking revenues and lower use as mobile phones replace them among younger generations.

The one-time state monopoly currently has 21,000 phone boxes dotted around Britain, about a fifth of the 92,000 that formed its network in 1992.

Around 60,000 of the red K6 telephone kiosks beloved of tourists were made between the 1930s and 1960s, with 11,000 surviving today in a mixture of current use and in private hands.

Ofcom's demands to prevent BT from shutting phone boxes in areas poorly served by mobile networks come after Storm Arwen left rural communities cut off for days in November last year.

So-called coverage not-spots, areas where the four main mobile phone providers do not all serve a given area, have been decreasing as 4G and 5G mobile

installations progress through the country.

Yet some blackspots remain, with Ofcom highlighting public safety implications for the removal of phone boxes from areas where the mobile signal is weak or non-existent. About 1,400 boxes will remain in locations with weak mobile phone coverage.

The regulator said retained phone boxes must have back-up batteries in case extreme weather causes blackout. Batteries in modernised call boxes only need to last for three hours, however.

Storm Arwen led to widespread mobile phone outages across the UK last year as electricity cables were blown down by high winds, leaving mobile phone masts without power.

Areas such as the Lake District were particularly badly hit, prompting local petitions to halt the rollout of new land

*'Technology is improving, but many lack adequate network coverage and rely on a public phone box'*

line phone technology that needs a separate mains power supply.

Around 96pc of British adults own a mobile phone.

Sarah Lee, director of policy for the Countryside Alliance, said the new rules were a "sensible solution".

She added: "While times are changing and technology is improving, it still remains the case that there are many who lack adequate network coverage and rely on a public phone box to make emergency calls."

Current public telephone networks have their own power supply, meaning they are largely insulated from external power cuts. However, a nationwide shift to broadband-style technology means future landlines need main power to operate.

A BT spokesman said: "We will now review the specific changes and an impact this will have on the payphone service we offer. BT takes its regulator obligations seriously in providing a public payphone service and will adhere to Ofcom's new guidelines around the removal of any phone boxes."



# Rail union threat to strike for six months

As RMT plots new walk-outs, Network Rail admits dispute may lead to war of attrition

By Robert Mendick CHIEF REPORTER

RAIL unions last night threatened to continue striking until just before Christmas ahead of the biggest shutdown of the train network in almost 30 years.

As last-ditch talks aimed at averting the walk-outs failed to make progress last night, the RMT union stressed it had a "mandate" for six months of industrial action.

On the other side of the negotiations, rail bosses told *The Daily Telegraph* they were preparing for a war of "attrition" which could last for months, and revealed they were drawing up plans to offer cash bonuses to signallers to cross picket lines.

More than 40,000 rail workers will walk out from tomorrow, crippling Britain's transport network and threatening GCSE and A-level exams and hospital appointments.

Economists have warned that the strikes - also called for Thursday and Saturday - could knock 0.3 to 0.4 per cent off gross domestic product for June, with up to one in 20 people unable to go to work.

Other public sector unions are threatening to follow the rail workers and take action, with teachers preparing to ballot for a strike if they do not receive a pay settlement close to the rate of inflation.

The National Education Union said that unless it received a pay offer closer to inflation by Wednesday it would be informing Nadim Zahawi, the Education Secretary, that it plans to ballot 450,000 members.

NHS workers could also walk out if a pay rise due to be announced this week does not keep pace with inflation - expected to reach 11 per cent this year.

Christina McAnea, the head of Unison, the country's biggest union which counts NHS staff among its members, warned the Government that it faced a choice - make a "sensible pay award... or risk a potential dispute".

It is understood that the RMT's national executive will begin plotting

of the week. A union source said: "We have a mandate for strike action for six months. The National Executive Committee will decide what to do next. They will only meet after this week and then need to give the employers two weeks' notice."

The RMT can call strikes with only a fortnight's notice up until the end of November, six months after the ballot results were returned at the end of May. Further industrial action after that would require a fresh vote.

The two sides in the rail dispute remained poles apart last night, with further talks due to take place today. *The Telegraph* has learnt that Network Rail offered an initial two per cent pay rise and a demand for job cuts, while Mick Lynch, the RMT's general secretary, yesterday revealed he was demanding a rise of at least seven per cent.

Asked if passengers should expect a "long fight", Mr Lynch told the *i* newspaper: "That may have to be the way it is. I hope that's not the case, but there doesn't seem to be much evidence at the moment that it's going to go any other way."

Network Rail said the company was now digging in for "a battle of attrition" with echoes of the miners' strike of the mid-1980s. A source said: "It is very unlikely these strikes will be a one-off. The RMT will meet after the strikes and decide what comes next and we assume there will be more disruption and more strike days. Then that moves the dispute into a battle of attrition."

The source added: "We are looking at paying RMT signallers extra money to break the strike. Nothing has been decided but there have been discussions about doing that."

The size of the potential inducement is unclear, but Network Rail recognises that it would be a drastic step. The source said: "The risk of breakaway signallers being branded scabs and being targeted is very alive today. Offering

*Continued on Page 2*

E1

Matt  
122nd

N

By B  
HOM

POL  
burg  
near  
three  
Daily

Of  
hood  
per  
cases  
no su  
Al  
- eac  
dent  
ries  
Sheff  
any c  
De



# Britain's manufacturing heartland at crisis point

Supply chain crunch heaps misfortune on a once brisk trade, writes *Tim Wallace*

46 **T**im Squires has plenty of work to do, making steel parts for his customers who manufacture cars, trailers and machinery.

But one big problem is getting in the way: it is extremely hard to acquire the steel he needs.

"There is certainly not a lack of orders at the moment. The problem we're facing is getting raw material," says the commercial director of Squires Gear and Engineering in Coventry.

47 "We have had to turn down inquiries for jobs because we haven't been able to secure a price for the steel. We have never ever known it like this before."

Even when quotes do come back from suppliers, they are two to three times more expensive than a year ago – and the end customer has to accept the figure almost immediately.

48 "If the customer doesn't make their mind up very quickly, either that steel has been taken by somebody else, or the price has now changed again. It is very difficult to do business," says Squires.

He is working at a sharp end of the crunch in global supply chains and is far from alone: the West Midlands is a major British manufacturing hub, particularly for vehicles. It is a heartland in crisis as shortages cripple local production, with the impact rippling into the wider economy.

The factories that Squires serves assemble a huge array of parts to make, for instance, sports cars. If they cannot get even one part, then the vehicles cannot be produced, hitting orders for all other components, hurting suppliers, workers and, in turn, local shops, pubs and the wider economy.

Prof David Bailey, of the Birmingham Business School, says the aerospace industry has been hit particularly hard by cancelled orders for aircraft through Covid, while the car sector was knocked first by lockdowns and then supply chain problems – only exacerbated by the war in Ukraine.

49 "When Covid hit, the car industry basically shut down. Many companies cancelled microchip orders. They restarted production again much more quickly than they had anticipated, but by that point they were at the back of the queue," he says.

"More recently, the war in Ukraine has had an impact on energy prices, and some key components for the industry as well like wiring harnesses."

The concentration of these sectors in the West Midlands means the

economy is struggling more than any other part of the country to get back to its pre-pandemic size.

By the autumn, the region's output was still around 8pc below its pre-Covid level, according to the ONS.

Within that, manufacturing was down around one quarter. That sector is unusually large relative to its share of the national economy, with more than 40pc of UK automotive output coming from the West Midlands, according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

UK car production fell almost one third in 2020, followed by 7.5pc in 2021 – a disaster for the region.

ONS models indicate West Midlands output was down more than 10pc in the first quarter of 2022 compared to the final quarter of 2019, as omicron, China's lockdowns and the war in Ukraine sent things into reverse.

Andy Street, mayor of the West Midlands, says the region has gone from "hero to zero" in terms of growth as a strong decade following the financial crisis turned into a painful crunch.

"Our real strength has been automotive manufacture and that sector is still hugely down on where it was in 2019, which is a combination of different things – the demand issues and production challenges through Covid, secondarily the reduction in exports partly as a result of the Brexit terms of trade, and the supply chains," he says. Other industries' fortunes are also tied to the factories as so much of the local economy is geared to serving manufacturers.

According to Paul Forrest, at the West Midlands Economics Forum, manufacturing alone is around 13pc of the regional economy, but once other industrial production and the services that support it are included, it rises to one third.

"It is the engineering consultancies, architectural services, prototype sectors, the whole range," he says.

The business and professional services sector has also been affected, says Street, adding that "a lot of the demand for that sector is produced by manufacturers. There are all sorts of knock-ons".

Footfall in Birmingham is down almost one quarter from before Covid, according to the Centre for Cities, behind every city except London – reflecting working from home's blow to office commutes. Coventry is the fourth-worst performer, down more than 20pc.

It indicates manufacturing's woes



# Police failures leave burglary victims scared in own homes

Ar

Case

Bur

☐ So

☐ Ne

☐ Ne

Shock figures show extent of police failings with more than a million break-ins unsolved in past six years

By Charles Hymas HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR and Ben Butcher

Mavis is not surprised to be told her neighbourhood in the north of Sheffield has more unsolved burglaries than any other in England and Wales in the past three years.

The 76-year-old widow and retired school cook saw her home in Parson Green ransacked by thieves who stole cash, jewellery and a laptop after smashing a back window during an evening raid.

It has left her feeling nervous about being home alone and too frightened to give her full name in an area on the outskirts of Sheffield that has a reputation for anti-social behaviour and drug-taking.

Parson Green is one of more than 14,000 neighbourhoods where not a single burglary has been solved in the past three years. That accounts for nearly

half of the 32,000 neighbourhoods across England and Wales.

But the burglary – one of 104 unsolved break-ins in Parson Green since 2019 – is more than a statistic for Mavis. Recalling the moment she came home to find the smashed window and her belongings gone, she said: “It’s a violation, a horrible thing to happen but I got no sympathy from the police.”

The OAP, who lives alone, said an officer came to visit her three days after she called police, advising her to install security cameras and telling her: “This is happening day in day out across the city.”

She said the young PC appeared “disinterested” in her crime. Although it was logged, she believes nothing was done to find the perpetrators. “The police did nowt,” she said.

“They should be out there catching criminals. I’m not surprised there’s so many unsolved burglaries in my neighbourhood. It’s shocking. It’s probably the same gang coming back time and again.”

It is a refrain that has become increasingly familiar despite the falling number of burglaries. Home Office data show police have failed to solve more than one million burglaries in the past six years. The charge rate has

fallen by 40 per cent in five years from one in 15 (6.3 per cent) burglaries in 2016 to one in 25 (4.5 per cent) last year.

Burglary is a touchstone crime: It is well recorded as most victims report it for insurance purposes. But it is also one where there may not be physical injury, reducing the need for an “emergency” response even though everyone including the police accepts it can have a devastating impact.

Dame Vera Baird, the victims’ commissioner, said: “Burglary can be a high-impact crime, victims can feel violated by the experience and their sense of security severely shaken.

“The theft of a bike can leave victims without essential transport. And if a family has saved to buy a child a bike and then it is stolen it can be deeply upsetting if, as will often be the case, there is no money to replace it.”

Despite this, burglary has not been regarded as a policing priority, with some forces no longer routinely dispatching an officer to investigate the crime. Some have instead introduced schemes to “screen” crimes to decide if they are likely to be solved. If not, they are not fully investigated.

These have ranged from the apparently bizarre where one force – Leicestershire – did not fully investigate break-ins at odd-numbered houses to save money, to the more sophisticated – Norfolk – which used AI (artificial intelligence) to assess “solvability” based on 29 factors such as forensics, CCTV and location.

It means that if there is no CCTV or forensic evidence readily available the case will often be closed within hours, leaving victims with no prospect of justice and little chance of recovering treasured personal items.

There is, however, a growing move – as the Government’s recruitment of 20,000 extra officers gathers pace – for every burglary to be visited by police, a move sanctioned by the Government and Andy Cooke, the new HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, and the former chief constable of Merseyside.

Mr Cooke believes there has been a “loss of focus” on “proactively targeting” criminals which includes getting to crime scenes quickly and preserving forensic evidence.

“There has been a focus lost in relation to making sure processes run alongside [proactively targeting criminality] from the first call when it comes in, preserving evidence at that point, to making sure the response is swift so that evidence can be gained and that every burglary is visited so

Pro

All

Rur

Urb

Data  
suppl  
given

It's  
vio  
a h  
thin  
hap  
I gc  
syn  
fro  
pol  
did



# Lord Geidt resigns as Johnson's ethics chief

Adviser previously said PM's partygate fine may represent a breach of ministerial code

By Ben Riley-Smith  
and Christopher Hope

55 BORIS JOHNSON'S ethics adviser resigned last night, a day after saying the Prime Minister may have breached the ministerial code over partygate events that led to him being fined.

Lord Geidt, who had only been in post for 14 months, announced the news via a short statement on the Government's website that gave no reason for his decision.

"With regret, I feel that it is right that I am resigning from my post as Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests," the crossbench peer said.

56 In recent weeks, Lord Geidt had made clear in public his discomfort over the lockdown-breaking parties in Downing Street that led to at least 126 fixed penalty notices being issued.

57 Lord Geidt had previously considered resigning last December over the Downing Street flat refurbishment row, after it emerged relevant texts from the Prime Minister had not been handed to him. He indicated he had considered resigning over partygate in a foreword to his annual report two weeks ago and then again in a parliamentary committee appearance on Tuesday.

The peer told MPs he felt "frustration" over partygate and said it was "reasonable" to suggest Mr Johnson may have breached the ministerial code by attending a birthday gathering in breach of Covid laws.

It is the second time an independent adviser on ministers' interests has quit in three years.

Sir Alex Allan resigned in November 2020 after Mr Johnson rejected his findings that Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, had bullied civil servants. Lord Geidt, a former private secretary to the Queen, had been appointed in April last year, as Mr Johnson sought to reassure the public of his propriety after a string of scandals.

Senior Downing Street and Cabinet

Office figures were blindsided by his resignation late yesterday, with many learning of the news from media reports. A senior No10 source said it was unexpected and claimed that Lord Geidt had only this week indicated he wanted to stay in the post for another six months.

The source said: "This is a total surprise and a mystery to the Prime Minister. Only on Monday Lord Geidt asked if he could stay on for six months."

58 "And in hours of questioning in Parliament [on Tuesday] there was no hint that he'd even considered resignation. On the contrary."

A government spokesman said Lord Geidt this week had been "asked to provide advice on a commercially sensitive matter in the national interest" - an apparent indication that he showed no sign of resigning until yesterday.

The 60-year-old's committee appearance had prompted some public ridicule on social media over his convoluted explanation as to whether he had considered resigning.

59 The development risks reigniting the split in the Conservative Party over Mr Johnson's leadership, which Downing Street was optimistic had been settled for the foreseeable future.

Mr Johnson's allies have privately been delighted with how quickly calls for him to quit have receded after he won a confidence vote among Tory MPs by 211 votes to 148. But prominent Tory rebels joined Labour and Liberal Democrat figures yesterday in reissuing criticism of the Prime Minister on the back of Lord Geidt's departure.

William Wragg, the Tory chairman of public administration and constitutional affairs select committee, who has called for Mr Johnson to quit, praised Lord Geidt after the news broke.

Mr Wragg said: "Lord Geidt is a person of great integrity, motivated by the highest ideals of public service. For the PM to lose one adviser on ministers'

Continued on Page 2

DAVID MCHUGH / BRIGHTON PICTURES FOR THE TELEGRAPH

V  
o  
-  
]  
E  
a  
R  
"  
ti  
p  
7  
a



# Sizewell plan to halt China's nuclear aims

Ministers to cut Beijing's involvement in Suffolk plant with proposals for 'special share' for the UK

By Helen Cahill

THE UK is poised to snub China's role in its nuclear ambitions under plans that will grant ministers the power to intervene in project decisions that pose a risk to national security.

Kwasi Kwarteng, the Business Secretary, is pushing ahead with proposals that will grant the Government a "special share" when it takes a 20pc slice of the planned Sizewell C station in Suffolk. It is understood that the Government is likely to demand similar national security powers in all future nuclear plants built in Britain under a new funding model.

China General Nuclear has provided substantial investment for Britain's nuclear power stations alongside France's EDF. But the Government wants to end the use of Chinese state companies through a new funding model, which it hopes will incentivise private investors to put forward finance.

Documents published by the Government yesterday outline that its shareholding powers at Sizewell C will be "complementary" to the takeover rules that allow ministers to block acquisitions from hostile states.

The documents said: "The rights attached to the special share are subject to approval by the Secretary of State but will likely be limited to protecting national security interests with respect to the proposed nuclear project."

The Government announced its plans for a special share as it approved Sizewell C for funding under the new regulated asset base (Rab) model for

nuclear projects. The Rab model will mean consumers pay indirectly towards the construction of new plants through a small rise in their energy bills.

A government source said the powers it gains through the special share are yet to be decided and will be determined "on a case-by-case basis depending on the sensitivity of the project".

The source said: "The deal is now that if a nuclear project is funded through the Rab model, the Government retains the right to insist on a special share in the company."

"It could mean ministers scrutinise outside investment above a certain threshold, or take any appropriate action in the interests of national security."

EDF and CGN currently own 80pc and 20pc of Sizewell C respectively. The investors have funded the initial development phase of the project to get regulatory approval.

But the Government is now planning to kick out China for the construction phase of the plant by taking a 20pc stake in a joint venture with EDF and private investors.

Tom Greatrex, chief executive of the Nuclear Industry Association, said: "The Rab model is an important part of cutting financing costs so the UK can get on with building brand new nuclear power stations."

"It will help enable Sizewell C, Britain's next big green energy project, as well as further large and small projects, and it sends a clear message to investors that Britain backs nuclear."

Julia Pyke, director of Sizewell C financing at EDF Energy, said: "We're really pleased at the progress the Government is making towards a decision on Sizewell C, and its preliminary assessment that the project represents value for money and would strengthen Britain's energy security."

Brist

I  
p.

By B

ITV  
bigg  
ral f



# Hospitals at odds over dropping of mask rules

Face coverings may no longer be compulsory but some healthcare providers want to continue their use

By Laura Donnelly HEALTH EDITOR

A NUMBER of hospitals have vowed to insist on patients continuing to wear masks despite instructions from NHS chiefs to drop the rules.

National guidance which insisted on face coverings has now been axed, with health officials leaving it to local organisations to draft their own policies.

But several hospitals have called on patients and staff to continue to wear face coverings.

The Health Secretary Sajid Javid has repeatedly called on NHS trusts to drop restrictions in hospitals which are limiting operational capacity.

In a letter to all local health bodies, NHS England highlighted new infection control guidance set out by the UK Health Security Agency. The letter says patients visiting Accident & Emergency departments, hospital outpatient appointments and GP surgeries no longer need to wear masks "unless this is a personal preference".

But some hospitals intend to continue to insist on masks.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals in Yorkshire issued a notice saying: "We are still asking patients, visitors, staff and anyone working at one of our sites to continue to wear a mask, gel hands and [maintain] social distance to keep vulnerable people as safe as possible."

Similar calls came from Bradford Teaching Hospitals and Croydon Health Services.

But a different approach has been taken by Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals in Surrey.

"Visitors and those accompanying patients to outpatient appointments or the emergency department are no longer required to wear a face mask. You may wear a face covering if it is

your personal preference to do so," it said in a statement.

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust said: "The requirement to wear masks in healthcare settings will end. There are some exceptions, including Oncology & Haematology inpatient/ outpatient areas, Covid-19 cohort areas and any wards with Covid outbreaks."

The national guidance says patients with respiratory symptoms – such as a cough – should continue to wear face masks or coverings "if tolerated".

Those admitted to hospital with Covid-19 or suspected to have Covid should also be provided with a face

*'We are still asking people to wear a mask and gel hands to keep vulnerable people as safe as possible'*

mask when they are admitted to a ward or in a communal area "if this can be tolerated".

Hospital patients who do not have Covid do not need to wear a face mask unless it is their "personal preference", the letter adds. But they may be asked to in some high risk areas such as cancer units, blood disorder treatment services or elderly care wards.

With regards to health and care staff, mask use is still advised in high risk areas but the rules should be "guided by local assessment". Staff who could come into contact with someone with Covid-19 should also wear masks as part of their personal protective equipment (PPE). This could include Covid wards, A&E departments and GP surgeries.

The letter also suggests that most rules for visitors should revert to pre-pandemic policies.

Visitors may be asked to wear face masks in high risk areas but won't be routinely asked to wear masks when accompanying patients to other areas of hospitals, the letter adds.

Drive of working from