

News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

15th Apr 2019

News Highlights

Welcome to the Brexit Cliff Edge

British Steel goes cap in hand

- [British Steel is no longer eligible for a free EU carbon trading permit](#) as these have been suspended until the Brexit withdrawal deal has been ratified. Therefore, it has been forced to ask the UK government for a £100m loan into to meet EU emission rules

The European Safety Gate could swing wide open

- [The public will be at risk from delays in identifying unsafe goods if the UK leaves the European safety system.](#) Dangerous cars, electrical goods and toys could flood the UK market if the government fails to reform the current UK safety enforcement system - according to a study by Consumer Group Which

The Home Office turns itself in

- [The Home Office](#) has had to report itself to data watchdogs, as it accidentally shared the emails of hundreds of EU citizens applying to stay in the UK after Brexit

Drugmakers stockpiling for Brexit ask how long do we have to wait?

- [Drugmakers are asking for an end to Brexit uncertainty.](#) They want to know how long they need to be overstocked for. There is a certain level of balance sheet pressure that comes into play when this question is answered. Similarly, what if the EU offers up another Brexit extension

Brexit continues to drain confidence from the housing market

- [The latest residential market survey from RICS](#) said demand remained in negative territory in March and new property coming onto the market continued to decline

Corbyn asked to back 'Remain, Reform, Rebel' for the European Elections

- [A manifesto penned by Corbyn allies](#) and endorsed by every sitting Labour MEP, who intends to contest their seat, should a poll be triggered, includes a proposal for an EU-wide Green New Deal and a pledge to make the continent 100% served by renewables by 2050

Cross-party talks testing out ideas, says Liddington

- [Cabinet minister, David Liddington, said talks between Labour](#) and the Conservatives will continue as they test out each others' ideas in the search for a solution to the Brexit deadlock.

People's Vote campaigns vow to overhaul Project Fear image

- [A new report concludes that a new pro-EU campaign must address the underlying causes](#) of the 2016 leave vote and offer credible solutions, as well as avoiding overinflated rhetoric. it should focus on the positive difference the EU can make to jobs and rights for workers

Tories are dreading the Euro Elections

- [An Opinium poll suggests that the Conservative Party](#) is heading for a result at the election that is so bad that it is without historical precedent. Among voters who say they are certain to participate in the elections only 17% say they intend to vote Conservative.

UK government puts No Deal contingency planning on hold

- [Whitehall officials confirmed that Operation Yellowhammer](#) had been put on hold by the government. To date, the government has spent £2bn on plans to mitigate the effects of the UK crashing out of the EU and thousands of civil servants had been assigned to the project

Bercow plans to stay to kill off Brexit

- [The Daily Mail reports that many MPs have put pressure](#) on John Bercow to stay on a bit longer to see Brexit sorted. Some people close to Bercow, such as Ken Clarke, were particularly decisive, arguing it was his duty to stay

Pro-EU parties plan to use the European elections as a 'soft referendum'

- [Pro-EU parties are planning to use the poll](#) as a soft referendum to demonstrate a surge in support for the remain cause. The Lib Dems, in particular, are seeking to capitalize on the local election results as a platform for further success in the Euro elections, if the EU election proceed

Rory Stewart - Brexit could kills moderate Conservatism

- [The prisons minister, Rory Stewart, spoke to Prospect Magazine](#) about the dominance and strength of the right wing of the Conservative Party, its fixation on Brexit, and the sense infiltration is driving moderate Tories out of the party

End the DUP confidence and supply deal

- [Shrewsbury MP Daniel Kawczynski](#) said he would prefer the prime minister to call a fresh Westminster election rather than renew his party's confidence and supply arrangement with the DUP, who he feels are holding the party to ransom over Brexit

Leavers should be demanding a new vote too

- [The end game for a Theresa May deal appears to be a Brexit in Name Only](#) type deal, so leavers should see the benefit of another vote as that of strengthening their negotiating hand going forward, should they win

Signs of Tory Party panic setting in

- [Hard Brexit would be suicide, top Tories warn](#)
- [Boris Johnson could lose his seat due to a surge of younger voters](#)
- [Brexit cannot define us, says PM May's deputy, as Tory poll ratings dip](#)
- [Tories hit by new defections and slump in opinion polls as party divide widens](#)
- [Conservatives face European elections drubbing as support slumps to lowest point in six years](#)
- [Tory Brexiteer Boris Johnson will refuse to campaign in the European elections](#)
- [Leave voters have lost faith in the Tories ability to deliver Brexit](#)
- [The Conservatives are stuck in a Brexit bedlum that they cannot seem to find a way out of](#)

Still no signs of a cross-party agreement on Brexit

- [Brexit talks will stall unless May shifts on a customs union](#)
- [Jeremy Corbyn blasts Theresa May's scandalous failure to seek earlier Brexit talks](#)
- [Corbyn tells May to abandon her Brexit red lines to get an agreement](#)

Nigel Farage's Brexit Party launched in Coventry

- [Theresa May cancels Easter break for her Brexit negotiators](#) as she sees an urgency in the talks if she is to fight the resurgence of Nigel Farage
- [Farage came under a bit of fire from the BBC](#) over where he has got funding for his new party from
- [Farage accused the government of ignoring democracy](#) by not implementing Brexit

Jobs at Risk

Brexit: British Steel seeks £100m government loan to meet EU rules

British Steel is seeking a £100m loan from the government in order to meet EU emission rules. Previously, the company could have used EU-issued carbon credits to settle its 2018 pollution bill. However, the steel maker has been affected by a European Union decision to suspend UK firms' access to free carbon permits until a Brexit withdrawal deal is ratified. The company is in talks with Department for Business about financial help. The Department for Business, Energy and Industry Strategy told the BBC: "As the business department, we are in regular conversation with a wide range of sectors and companies." British Steel has until 30 April to comply with EU emission rules.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47921375>

Administrative Fall Out

Dangerous products could swamp UK after Brexit, warns Which?

The public will be at risk from delays in identifying unsafe goods if the UK leaves European safety system. Dangerous cars, electrical goods and toys could flood into the UK after Brexit unless the government urgently reforms the current "failing" safety enforcement system, a consumer group warned on Monday. Which? says the public will be vulnerable to delays in spotting and dealing with unsafe products unless continued access to the European Safety Gate system is negotiated. Its new analysis shows the scheme, under which 31 European countries alert each other to products with serious safety problems, issued 34% more notifications in 2018 than a decade ago

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/15/dangerous-products-could-swamp-uk-after-brexit-warns-which>

EXCL Home Office reports itself to data watchdog after Settled Status emails breach

The Home Office has been forced to report itself to data watchdogs after it accidentally shared the emails of hundreds of EU citizens applying to stay in the UK after Brexit.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/home-affairs/immigration/news/103196/excl-home-office-reports-itself-data-watchdog-after>

A major bridge is closed 'indefinitely' because no one can pay to fix it. Welcome to modern Britain

One of the major arteries into our capital was rammed due to the closure for "safety reasons" of Hammersmith Bridge, one of the few Thames crossings. It's closed "indefinitely" because, apparently, no-one can afford to repair it.

<https://inews.co.uk/opinion/hammersmith-bridge-closure-crumbling-infrastructure/>

A curse on Brexit and those who created this crisis - Joyce McMillan

Another dangerous corner, another handbrake swerve, another delay to Brexit; and I guess I am not the only Remain supporter now looking forward to the next seven months with relief, yes, but also with a sense of absolute dread. Already, almost before the new "flexible" Brexit extension has been

announced, the sound of people digging themselves further into their entrenched positions is loud in the land.

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/a-curse-on-brexit-and-those-who-created-this-crisis-joyce-mcmillan-1-4906070>

Brexit: How the new delay has hit four businesses

It was an early-hour announcement that allowed many of the UK's business owners to finally get a few hours of restful sleep. In Brussels on Thursday, the EU granted the UK a six-month extension, thus eliminating the immediate threat of a no-deal Brexit. But for companies that have been preparing for a sudden exit, it was no more than a temporary reprieve. "It's a bit of uncertainty that isn't helpful," says Andrew Graham. His 70-year-old company, Graham and Brown Wallpaper, has been stockpiling raw materials for months at its factory in Blackburn. "Quite frankly, we could do with knowing where we're going," he told the BBC.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47902542>

Drugmakers Stockpiling for Brexit Ask, How Long Do We Wait?

Bracing for possible border delays in the event of a messy, no-deal Brexit, pharma companies are trying to ensure the steady flow of vital medicines to patients. After U.K. and European Union leaders agreed to push Brexit back to the end of October, drugmakers are sharing the pain of another six months of uncertainty that's hitting British companies across the board. "How long are we going to be overstocked?" said Hugo Fry, managing director of French drugmaker Sanofi's U.K. business. "There's a certain level of balance sheet pressure that comes into play. How long do we wait? In theory, the European Union could give another extension." Among other Brexit preparations, Sanofi has augmented its U.K. supplies to about 16 weeks on average. If principal routes are disrupted, the French drugmaker will have to fly its flu vaccine into the U.K., a costly step, Fry said. Novo plans to keep stockpiles at roughly 18 weeks, while it has pushed back access to space that it reserved on airplanes to move its products.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-04-13/drugmakers-stockpiling-for-brexit-ask-how-long-do-we-wait>

Brexit: Welsh resorts to 'benefit' from EU exit uncertainty

Holidaymakers look set to embrace staycations in Wales this year as Brexit sparks nervousness about European holidays, tourism chiefs say. The Easter holidays were due to be the first break after Britain left the European Union, before the government delayed the initial 29 March deadline. Tourism bosses say the weak pound and uncertainty could add to the 10 million annual overnight trips to Wales. The Wales Tourism Alliance is positive there will be a "Brexit bounce".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-47897427>

'Biggest' UK tulip grower stockpiles bulbs over Brexit

The UK's biggest outdoor commercial tulip grower has said it has been stockpiling bulbs as uncertainty over Brexit continues. Belmont Nurseries, near King's Lynn, said the future of the UK's relationship with the European Union (EU) was a cause of major concern. "We're very much UK based, but we do also sell to Europe," nursery director Mark Eves said. "If the lorry is held up at port for any length of time the bulbs simply won't get the fresh air they need blown across them during transport which means they won't flower - basically, they'd be ruined." The EU has granted the UK a six-month extension, eliminating the immediate threat of a no-deal Brexit.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-norfolk-47912881>

Calais boss lets loose: Brexit voters 'given WRONG information - Brussels is a necessity'

Jean-Marc Puissesseau, who is also deputy mayor of the French city, revealed his frustrations to Express.co.uk within Calais over Brexit saying he was not sure how an extension would help when the UK has already had three years to negotiate. He accused Brexiteers of giving UK voters the "wrong information" which led them to vote Leave in the 2016 EU referendum. As he revealed Port

Boulogne Calais' new €6million (£5.17million) facilities, which have been set up as part of preparations for a no deal Brexit, the French boss said he was surprised at Britain's decision to unshackle itself from the bloc because "Europe is a necessity".

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1112948/brexit-news-calais-port-no-deal-brexit-latest-jean-marc-puissesseau-theresa-may>

Why Brexit has driven thousands back to their allotments

Even though the threat of a no-deal Brexit receded last week – until October, at least – I hope that our interest in allotments won't do the same. It's use them or lose them, and periods of indifference lead to allotment provision being chipped away, usually irreversibly, as they are filled in with new housing developments. What this last couple of years shows is that crises will always come along, and that when they do we turn to allotments and to our ability to grow our very own basil, spring greens, spinach, sage and lavender.

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/apr/13/how-brexit-made-the-allotment-cool-again>

'Incompetent, self-interested s**': Fear and loathing on the doorstep over Brexit**

"We are struggling to get anyone to deliver leaflets, even members of our executive don't want to go out." This theme of Conservatives being unable to turn out their own members was commonplace across the country. One exasperated Tory councillor told me: "Every association I've spoken to are struggling to get their members out. "Members are saying, why should I get s*** on the doorstep and doors slammed in my face when I'm as angry as they are?"

<https://news.sky.com/story/brexit-backlash-party-activists-fear-hostility-could-turn-sinister-11691211>

Brexit continues to impact the UK housing market

Demand from buyers remained in negative territory in March and sales and new property coming on to the market continued to decline, according to the latest residential market survey from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Respondents still envisage a modest improvement in activity 12 months ahead but modest fall in house prices at a UK level are expected over the next couple of quarters, although the regional picture remains mixed. The market report also shows that in March, enquiries from new buyers saw the eighth negative reading in a row, with 27% of respondents seeing a fall in buyer demand and that demand falling across all parts of the UK

<https://www.propertywire.com/news/uk/brexit-continues-to-impact-the-uk-housing-market/>

Political Shenanigans

Exclusive: Jeremy Corbyn Handed 'Remain, Reform, Rebel' Manifesto For European Elections

Calls for Jeremy Corbyn to back remain at the European elections have intensified as a strongly pro-EU manifesto penned by left-wingers was passed to the Labour leader. Titled "Remain, Reform, Rebel", the document was penned by Corbyn allies, including his ex-economic advisor Ann Pettifor, and has been endorsed by every sitting Labour MEP set to contest their seat should the Brexit deadlock trigger the May 23 poll. It demands an EU-wide Green New Deal – similar to that advocated in the US by Democrat politician Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez – to include a "European super-grid" and pledges to make the continent 100% served by renewables by 2050.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/exclusive-jeremy-corbyn-handed-remain-reform-rebel-draft-manifesto-for-euro-elections_uk_5cb1fc71e4b098b9a2d44fd0

Brexit: Cross-party talks 'testing ideas' says Lidington

The government and Labour are "testing out" each other's ideas as they try to resolve the Brexit deadlock, cabinet minister David Lidington has said. He told the BBC they had a "fair bit in common" over future customs objectives but further compromise was needed. While there was no deadline, he said the sides would "take stock" in 10 days and the process could not drag out.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47924023>

UK's Lidington says Brexit talks with Labour to continue, will not last months

The British government's talks with the opposition Labour party on a Brexit compromise will continue, but will not "drag out" for months, Cabinet Office minister David Lidington told the BBC on Sunday. "They're not going to go on for months, they're certainly going to continue next week," Lidington said. "I don't think this question can be allowed to drag out for much longer, I think the public rightly wants politicians to get on and deal with it."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-lidington-idUSKCN1RQ08Z>

People's Vote campaigners vow to overhaul 'project fear' image

More than 80% said Brexit had "turned out to be much more complicated than we were told in the referendum". The report concluded that a new pro-EU campaign must address the underlying causes of the 2016 leave vote and offer credible solutions, as well as avoiding overinflated rhetoric. Most importantly, it must reject a "project fear" narrative and make a positive case, the report found, a tactic that was "castigated by everyone we spoke to, it remains a complete turnoff to voters". It found that voters "simply do not believe that leaving the European Union will cause immediate and significant harm to them and their families" and that any new campaign should be centred on the positive difference the EU can make to jobs and rights.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/14/future-remain-campaign-will-be-better-than-in-2016-say-mps>

The Observer view on giving voters their say on Brexit

Now there is a firm deal, it would be unthinkable for parliament to ratify it without putting it back to voters, particularly given the gulf between what they were promised and what has been achieved. The reality of Brexit, with all its tough trade-offs – and the fact that there is no way of achieving a clean break from the EU that respects the Good Friday agreement – is embodied in May's withdrawal agreement. The idea that voters should not get a say on the terms and conditions of the most important postwar decision facing Britain is preposterous. If the merits of that principled argument are not, in themselves, enough to convince, the pragmatic case becomes stronger with each passing week: there is clearly no other resolution to this gridlock in sight. Before the European elections, Labour will have to decide whether it is in favour of a soft Brexit compromise or confirmatory referendum.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/14/observer-editorial-need-to-give-voters-their-say>

Alyn Smith: European elections are Scotland's big chance to shine

Along with my team – Laura, Adam, Clyn, Ciarán and Patrick – we've had a fair bit of personal uncertainty to navigate as well! I should have been unemployed on March 29, then again on Friday, yet somehow have survived and face next week my last Strasbourg session having already given my last speech where I asked them to leave a light on for us. I've had more goodbye gigs than the Rolling Stones.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17572112.alyn-smith-european-elections-are-scotlands-big-chance-to-shine/>

Learning from referendum failure is key to success, says leading Remain figure

A future campaign to keep Britain in the European Union will face defeat unless it learns the lessons of the first failed Remain campaign, one of its leading figures has warned. Andrew Cooper, a Tory peer and David Cameron's former pollster, said that the "dry economic projections" of the Remain campaign had been easily dismissed as "project fear", while advocates of EU membership failed to make "an emotionally resonant or positive case" for staying in. Cooper makes the plea for a different strategy in the event of a second referendum in a new report by the People's Vote campaign, as it attempts to find a way of convincing voters that staying in the EU would actually help deal with some of the underlying reasons for the original vote to leave.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/14/remainers-learn-2016-referendum-lessons-or-face-defeat-second-v>

[ote](#)

Of course the Tories dread Euro elections. They will be marmalised

Our Opinium poll suggests that the Tories are heading for a marmalising so bad that it is without historical precedent. Among voters who say they are certain to participate in the elections, only 17% choose the Conservatives. This poll doesn't claim to be a precise prediction of what will happen at the end of May, but it does point to a shockingly bad outcome for the Tories. This vote share is six points down on their previous record low in Euro elections, which was in 2014. The sage of electoral history, David Cowling, tells me that the Conservatives have never scored as badly as 17% in any UK-wide election from 1832 onwards. No wonder the Tories are desperate to avoid these elections. This they could do, but only by ensuring that Britain has exited the EU before polling day, a task that the government has repeatedly proved incapable of fulfilling.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/14/of-course-tories-dread-euro-elections-they-will-be-marmalised>

Let's use this time to push the case for a Yes vote

Nicola Sturgeon says wait and the Greens, along with others, say: "now is the time". If this is what the wider Yes movement believe, than why not use this waiting period to keep the conversation going? If we use this time productively we can win the argument before the date of the next independence vote. Now is the time to talk with, listen to and work out ways of persuading those not fully convinced of independence for whatever reason. To be truthful I think much depends on how the SNP vote at their spring conference on the independence discussions, on a Scottish currency and the adoption of the Growth Commission.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17573321.lets-use-this-time-to-push-the-case-for-a-yes-vote/>

Brexit news latest: Chancellor Philip Hammond says second referendum 'very likely' to be put to Parliament again

The Chancellor has said the idea of a second Brexit referendum is "very likely" to be put before Parliament again. Philip Hammond said on Friday that he hoped MPs would pass a deal by the end of June, breaking the Brexit deadlock. He added that there was a "good chance" of a breakthrough in talks with the Labour party. "I remain optimistic that over the next couple of months we will get a deal done," Mr Hammond told reporters in Washington where he is attending meetings at the International Monetary Fund.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-news-latest-chancellor-philip-hammond-says-second-referendum-very-likely-to-be-put-before-mps-a4117041.html>

The Conservatives are stuck in a Brexit bedlam that they can't seem to find a way out of

The Parliamentary Conservative Party notoriously has two default settings: complacency or panic. The pressure of the Brexit process has moved the dial significantly towards the latter, although one should never underestimate the capacity of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership skills to encourage Conservatives into the former. For anyone who thinks long-term, though, the departure of colleagues with stinging remarks about destroying the Conservative Party should be worrying.

https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/brexit-conservative-party-future-latest-damian-green-policy-may-david-cameron-a8856626.html

Brexit Exposes Painful Disconnect Between England and Britain

The England-Britain split can be traced back to the Blair government's election in 1997 on a commitment to parcel out powers.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-04-12/brexit-exposes-painful-disconnect-between-england-and-britain>

Brexit delay: Halloween extension feels like the final nail in Theresa May's coffin

It was the weekend after Theresa May's disastrous snap general election in 2017 that former chancellor George Osborne rather brutally described the prime minister as a "dead woman walking". Fitting then, that the EU27 have agreed to a Halloween Brexit - setting 31 October as the new deadline for the UK to leave the EU with a review point in June - given it is this Article 50 extension that could finally kill off her premiership.

<https://news.sky.com/story/brexit-delay-halloween-extension-feels-like-the-final-nail-in-theresa-mays-coffin-11690256>

UK government puts no-deal Brexit contingency plans on hold

Contingency plans to cope with a no-deal Brexit have been put on hold by the government as the risk of the UK crashing out of the EU without an agreement has subsided. Whitehall officials confirmed on Friday that Operation Yellowhammer — a national strategy aimed at preventing a run on food, fuel and the banking system in the event of a no-deal Brexit — had been paused by the government. The government has spent £2bn on plans to mitigate the effects of the UK crashing out of the EU without an agreement, and thousands of civil servants were assigned to the project. Businesses have also spent substantial sums to cope with the scenario. But the government has relaxed its contingency plans after EU leaders on Thursday agreed to push back the date of Brexit to as late as October 31.

<https://www.ft.com/content/5f58ebfe-5d38-11e9-9dde-7aedca0a081a>

Amidst the Brexit chaos, MPs are on the verge of mental breakdown

Louise Rubin's job usually involves lobbying parliamentarians and arranging campaigns to promote good mental health legislation. Until this week, when Rubin saw various newspaper articles about the collective mental breakdown in parliament. Rubin read stories about MPs crying in the toilets, of rapid weight loss and weight gain, and of a general feeling of utter exhaustion. Most MPs, of course, attributed the stresses and strains to the never-ending turmoil of the Brexit process. "That's when we decided it was time to step in and offer our support and advice," Rubin says. Mind sent a letter to all 650 MPs providing them advice on how to best manage their wellbeing. Rubin called this "a low-level intervention". "We can't solve the Brexit crisis," she says. "We're only suggesting people are aware of their mental health, and seek help if they do need to."

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/brexit-mental-health>

Brexit has broken the system - prepare for a European-style realignment of politics

Watching our exasperating Brexit dispute from the safe distance of Vienna, where I was staying for the past month, it struck me how strangely Europeanised our party politics has become, with the prospect of it becoming even more so as our party system reconfigures. In one respect, however, we remain proudly uncontinental. Talking to Austrian friends about the great Brexit "mess", I detected, along with a fair amount of Schadenfreude, a sneaking admiration for the democratic theatrics that the House of Commons has been providing

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/13/brexit-has-broken-system-prepare-european-style-realignment/>

Bercow stays to 'kill off Brexit'

The source said: 'The MPs have put him under huge pressure not to leave the Chair until Brexit is sorted. He is now unlikely to give any hint of his going until after the summer recess at the earliest - and may well wait to see if the new October 31 deadline is met before hanging up his boots. 'Ken Clarke - who John listens to more than any other MP - was a particularly decisive voice, telling him that it was his duty to stay.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6919475/Bercow-stays-kill-Brexit.html>

Brexit: pro-EU parties to use European elections as 'soft referendum'

Pro-EU parties, including the Liberal Democrats, the Greens and the Independent Group, will not form pacts or alliances at the forthcoming EU elections, hoping to use the poll as a "soft referendum" to show a surge in support for remain. If no Brexit deal is passed by parliament, the UK

will be required to hold the poll on 23 May. The Lib Dems, the mainstream party hoping to capitalise most on anti-Brexit discontent, has almost finalised its manifesto and plans a huge operation of ground campaigning targeting remain voters. "We want to use the momentum from the locals, which very few other parties will have, as a springboard for European elections," a party source said. "Voters across all of Great Britain want to vote for a pro-remain party. We're going to give them all the chance to vote Lib Dem."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/13/pro-eu-parties-to-use-european-elections-as-soft-referendum>

Additional sources: ([The Irish Times](#))

Brexit is losing its media support as People's Vote and Revoke grab the momentum

These papers played a crucial role in 2016. Years of stories on Brussels bureaucracy (and immigration), set the scene for Vote Leave's 'Take Back Control' campaign on Facebook. Today's UK news output is a drumbeat of Brexit stalemate and delay. It is corrosive to the Leave cause, undermining the sense of empowerment felt by its supporters three years ago. The media momentum is now with Remainers. While the Brexit press once rallied readers with calls to break the status quo, it is social media hashtags demanding a #PeoplesVote or #RevokeArticle50 that now benefit from a sense of taking action. There is a new Twitter hashtag #RemainerNow for those who have switched sides. And it celebrates Osborne and Ferrari's change of heart because it knows that, 'people's vote' or not, there are many who look to media opinion formers for their lead.

<https://inews.co.uk/opinion/columnists/brexit-losing-its-media-support-as-peoples-vote-and-revoke-grab-the-momentum/>

Sinn Féin select European election candidate as Northern Ireland prepares to vote despite Brexit

Sinn Féin has confirmed that its current MEP in Northern Ireland will run again for her seat. Elections to the European Parliament are going ahead in May despite the United Kingdom's imminent exit from the European Union. Martina Anderson, who has been one of Northern Ireland's three MEPs since 2012, said she is proud to lead her party's team in Europe.

<https://www.breakingnews.ie/ireland/sinn-fein-select-european-election-candidate-as-northern-ireland-prepares-to-vote-despite-brexit-917536.html>

Britain can now change its mind about Brexit

Extra time, however, presents parliament — and the country — with an opportunity. Britain can change its mind about Brexit. MPs can and should agree to put any proposed settlement with the EU27 to a confirmatory referendum. The country could then be presented with the vote it was denied in 2016 — a choice between Remain and the best deal that parliament considers available to Britain outside the union. The trade-offs between prosperity and security and notional sovereignty would be there for all to see. The Kamikaze Brexiters who complain this would flout what they call "the will of the people" mistake democracy for the majoritarianism beloved of despots and demagogues. True democracy embeds the right of citizens to change their minds. As for Mr Macron, he would surely join Ms Merkel and Mr Tusk in applauding a victory for Britain's Europeans.

<https://www.ft.com/content/c68a235e-5ba5-11e9-939a-341f5ada9d40>

Can the Tories and Labour agree on Brexit?

Cross-party talks are continuing in Whitehall, amid parliamentary deadlock over Theresa May's Brexit deal. So what are the sticking points and can Labour and the Conservatives reach an agreement? Public statements on the talks have tended to be bland, ranging from "constructive" and "serious" to the slightly more negative: "We have some way to travel." Behind the scenes, the prospect of a deal, while difficult, is not impossible. There is a big incentive for both sides to reach agreement: the avoidance of next month's European elections.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47911720>

Weary frustration and cynicism take hold in UK's Brexit heartland

Sunderland hosts the largest Nissan factory in Europe — one reason why its vote to leave caused so much attention. A good number of workers at the facility, which employs 6,000 people from across the north-east, celebrated the referendum victory in 2016. But several leaving the plant on Thursday said there was real anxiety now about potential job losses. Nissan has already announced it will not produce a promised new sport utility vehicle at Sunderland, partly because of concerns about future ties with the EU. "Brexit needs to be sorted out properly. It is causing a lot of division and unrest," said one Nissan employee smoking outside the plant, who declined to give his name. "The problem is that nobody seems to know what sorting it out means."

<https://www.ft.com/content/9dd2aef6-5d15-11e9-9dde-7aedca0a081a>

Britain's post-Brexit future is still shrouded in fog

Is six months long enough for everyone to calm down and think through the Brexit decision? The day after the EU Council granted the UK an extension to the date on which we leave the bloc, Prime Minister Theresa May still seemed bent on driving through a version of her "deal" as fast as possible. But the extra time will be worth having if it engenders more honesty about the trade-offs at the heart of Brexit. Unless the true price of any eventual decision is fully understood by the public, the blame game will never end. Without truth, there will be no reconciliation — whichever way this goes.

<https://www.ft.com/content/cb76bcc2-5c74-11e9-9dde-7aedca0a081a>

Rory Stewart: Brexit could kill moderate Conservatism

Shortly before the referendum, I recall reading Matthew Parris in the Times arguing that a Leave vote would "destroy" moderate conservatism in this country. At the time, this struck me as columnist's hyperbole. This week, however, I met with prisons minister, one-nation Tory and the unlikely star salesman for Theresa May's Brexit deal, Rory Stewart, and found him gripped with a very real fear that something like the Parris prediction could soon come to pass.

<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/politics/rory-stewart-how-brexit-could-kill-moderate-conservatism-interview-profile-westminster>

DUP 'holding Conservatives to ransom' over Brexit, Tory MP says

A Conservative MP has accused the DUP of holding his party to ransom over Brexit. Shrewsbury MP Daniel Kawczynski said he would prefer the prime minister to call a fresh Westminster election rather than renew his party's confidence and supply arrangement with the DUP. Referring to the DUP, Mr Kawczynski said he does not "want the tail to wag the dog any longer".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-47913254>

MP Heidi Allen 'shaken to core' by 'Brexit hate mail'

An MP who was sent death threats "related to Brexit" said the messages had "shaken her to the core". Heidi Allen, South Cambridgeshire MP and interim leader of the Independent Group, was one of seven MPs targeted by Jarod Kirkman. It made her feel "very vulnerable", she said, but did not cause her to question her role as an MP, adding: "I will not be bullied." Kirkman has admitted sending malicious communications and awaits sentencing. Ms Allen, who quit the Conservatives to join the Independent Group in February, said Kirkman's threats were not the only abusive messages she had received.

https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/660/cpsprodpb/122C/production/_106425640_capture.jpg

Leavers should be demanding a new vote | Comment

The limbo in which we now sit until November, and which everyone calls humiliating, is a trial run for a Brino (Brexit in name only) Brexit. Adherence to the rules, no United Kingdom veto, no vote in the selection of European commissioners. Our first taste of vassalage, and the response has not been encouraging. We keep the benefits of membership at the whim of the "proper" members of the EU and the twitch of a French president's eyebrow. This "humbling" of Britain which the news media

now lament mirrors the status to which those MPs and commentators who call themselves compromisers and “reachers-out”, those who would “split the difference” between Leave and Remain, aim to reduce us. For the next six months we are rule-takers, not rule-makers. Now we know what Theresa May’s “implementation” period, and (probably trapped by the Irish backstop) beyond it, will feel like.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/leavers-too-should-demand-to-vote-again-wb32cz529>

Political Setbacks

Tories fall seven points behind Labour in new poll as support for Theresa May's party plunges to lowest level in years

The Tories have plunged seven points behind Labour in a new opinion poll. The survey, by Opinium, shows Labour climbing one point to 36 per cent, with the Conservatives dropping six points in the past two weeks to 29 per cent. Britain Elects, a poll analysis service, said it was the Tory Party’s lowest rating in four years – but not as bad as its 23 per cent score in 2013. It comes after a week in which Conservative Brexit divisions resulted in open Commons mutiny against Prime Minister Theresa May, with hardliner Bill Cash calling for her to resign.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/tories-plunge-seven-points-behind-labour-in-new-opinion-poll-a4117411.html>

Jeremy Corbyn faces an interesting choice - will he demand that the people decide?

For many months Labour's leaders have hedged and fudged and dodged on the subject of a new referendum on Brexit. Now Jeremy Corbyn must make a decision to commit to a second referendum. There are arguments of principle and tactics for making the promise clearer and more emphatic. The argument of principle is that a new referendum is the only democratic way to resolve the Brexit morass. Parliament and the nation are now divided three ways, between leaving the EU with a deal, leaving without a deal, or not leaving at all.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/jeremy-corbyn-brexit-referendum-european-elections-tig-change-uk-farage-party-a8868591.html>

Hard Brexit leader would be suicide, top Tories warn

Senior Tories have launched a “stop Boris” campaign, warning that handing the keys to No 10 to a hard Brexiteer such as Boris Johnson or Dominic Raab would be electoral “suicide”. Sir Patrick McLoughlin, the former party chairman who is backing Jeremy Hunt to succeed Theresa May, today launches a broadside at Brexiteer candidates, warning that their “ideological” attachment to a no-deal Brexit is “reckless”. Writing in The Sunday Times, he says: “Defining ourselves as the Brexit party, pursuing the hardest form of Brexit with a parliament that will not deliver it, is a recipe for paralysis in government and suicide with the electorate. We are and must remain the Conservative Party, not the Vote Leave party.”

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/hard-brexit-leader-would-be-suicide-top-tories-warn-59vq2nppg>

New Brexiteer mutiny: Ringleader Iain Duncan Smith says Tories could boycott EU elections

Former Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith says local Conservative associations could boycott the EU elections if the UK is still a part of the bloc next month. The Chingford and Woodford Green MP slammed the Conservative leadership for not following through on its promise to leave on March 29, calling it a 'disaster' for party support. Mr Duncan Smith said the elections are 'impossible to justify'. He ridiculed the notion of campaigning for the May 23 election while at the same time saying British MEPs won't exist in a few months.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6920561/New-Brexiteer-mutiny-Ringleader-Iain-Duncan-Smith-says-Tories-boycott-EU-elections.html>

As nationalists grip the Tories, I now support Change UK

Both Labour and Conservative frontbenches have colluded in the same conspiracy to “respect the result of the 2016 referendum” (that is, to conceal the truth about its consequences) because they rightly fear that their party duopoly will not survive a more honest engagement with voters. The European election could give UK voters the voice Westminster has denied them

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/14/nationalists-grip-tories-i-now-support-change-uk-brexit-european-elections>

Judge orders Ukip to reveal Brexit referendum data use

Ukip has been ordered to fully reveal details of how it used nearly £300,000 of political data services in the run-up to the Brexit vote and the 2015 general election after the party lost a two-year legal battle to block disclosure. An appeals tribunal found the political party, led at the time by Nigel Farage, failed to properly answer the information commissioner’s questions. It is now legally obliged to provide detailed answers to questions about how it spent political donations and used polling companies and data. The ruling is the latest watchdog finding to cast a shadow over the 2016 EU referendum and to raise concerns about the use of political and social media data.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/14/judge-orders-ukip-reveal-brexit-referendum-data-use>

Chris Johns: Fantasy no-deal Brexit has cost UK equivalent of 22 hospitals

Brexit planning has so far cost the UK government £4 billion. Much is made of this figure because it represents hard cash actually spent. These are direct costs. But it’s the invisible damage that is much bigger – and gets far less attention. Goldman Sachs, for example, estimates that Brexit has resulted in £600 million of lost GDP per week since the referendum. My own calculations suggest that the implied loss of £85 billion to the economy maps to £28 billion of tax revenue gone missing. So far. That £4 billion in Brexit planning spending makes the headlines but the loss of £28 billion in taxes obviously hurts a lot more. Leading Brexiteer Daniel Hannan once claimed that seven state-of-the-art hospitals could be built for £10 billion. On that kind of arithmetic, I reckon that the UK has 22 hospitals gone missing as a result of Brexit.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/chris-johns-fantasy-no-deal-brexit-has-cost-uk-equivalent-of-22-hospitals-1.3860125>

Tory Boris Johnson could lose his seat due to 'influx of young voters'

Boris Johnson could be at risk of losing his seat due to a surge in younger voters, research has revealed. The former foreign secretary’s seat in Uxbridge and South Ruislip has been listed as ‘vulnerable’ in the 2022 election by Onward think tank. Analysis shows the ratio of younger residents, aged 20 to 39, to older votes, aged 60 and over, is currently above 1.1 – meaning the Tory candidate would likely lose.

<https://metro.co.uk/2019/04/14/boris-johnson-lose-seat-due-influx-young-voters-9199047/>

Additional sources: (The Sun)

UKIP leader Gerard Batten defends European Parliament candidate's rape tweet 'satire'

The leader of UKIP has defended an election candidate who said they “wouldn’t even rape” Labour MP Jess Phillips. Gerard Batten called the comment “satire” and praised Carl Benjamin, who was last week picked as an MEP candidate for the South West region. Mr Benjamin had previously written in a tweet to Ms Phillips: “I wouldn’t even rape you.” Mr Batten defended the post, telling the BBC’s Andrew Marr Show: “I think this was satire.”

<https://news.sky.com/story/ukip-leader-gerard-batten-defends-european-parliament-candidates-rape-tweet-satire-11693819>

Additional sources: (The Guardian)

UK fears Brexit could hurt global hunt for new BoE governor

British finance minister Philip Hammond has fired the starting gun for the race to succeed Bank of

England Governor Mark Carney, but concerns about Brexit may keep some potential contestants on the sidelines. The next BoE governor will have to reckon with a sharply divided political backdrop on top of the obvious challenges that Brexit poses as regards short-term growth and longer-term regulatory relations with the EU. "There may be some candidates who might be deterred from an application because of the political debate around Brexit, which inevitably the governor of the Bank of England can't avoid being part of," Hammond said in Washington. Carney has been criticised by members of the hardline pro-Brexit faction of the Conservative Party. Jacob Rees-Mogg last year labelled Carney a "wailing banshee" and a "failed second-tier politician" who gave unfairly negative forecasts of the economic impact of Brexit. Boris Johnson, when foreign secretary, was dismissive of BoE predictions of Brexit damage.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-boe-analysis/uk-fears-brexit-could-hurt-global-hunt-for-new-boe-governor-idUKKCN1RQ0NH?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews>

Brexit cannot define us, says PM May's deputy as ratings dip

Britain's ruling Conservative Party cannot let itself be defined solely by Brexit, Prime Minister Theresa May's de facto deputy said on Sunday, as polling showed failure to leave the European Union on schedule has badly damaged its support. May's authority has been shattered by her three-time failure to get an exit deal approved by parliament and a pledge to quit once Brexit is delivered, driving speculation about her successor and a possible national election. The once-prized stability of British politics has disappeared, threatening to break apart both the Conservatives and their main opponents Labour, and leaving the world's fifth-largest economy facing an uncertain future. Without any consensus in parliament, reflective of a deeply divided population, all outcomes remain possible in the coming weeks and months: leaving the EU with a deal, a disorderly exit without a deal, or another vote on whether to leave at all.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu/brexit-cannot-define-us-says-uk-pms-deputy-as-ratings-dip-idINKCN1RQ0EA>

Brexit talks 'will stall unless May shifts on customs union'

Talks between Labour and the government are unlikely to advance much further in the coming week unless Theresa May moves on her red lines over a future customs union, sources close to the talks have suggested. David Lidington, who is leading the government's talks with Labour, said a compromise would have to be reached but played down suggestions that a government shift was imminent and added that Labour would also have to move. Labour has suggested the ball is in the government's court and, while the opposition will engage on other topics including workers' rights and security, the key question on customs arrangements remains unresolved. "She needs to take a political decision to move off her red lines - or not," one source said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/14/brexit-talks-will-stall-unless-may-shifts-on-customs-union>

Tories hit by new defections and slump in opinion polls as party divide widens

The bitter fallout from Brexit is threatening to break the Tory party apart, as a Europhile former cabinet minister Stephen Dorrell on Sunday announces he is defecting to the independent MPs' group Change UK, and a new opinion poll shows Conservative support plummeting to a five-year low as anti-EU parties surge. Writing in Sunday's Observer, Dorrell, who was health secretary under John Major, says he can no longer continue in a party that "has fallen progressively under the influence of an English nationalist outlook" and turned its back on the traditions of many of its greatest former leaders. Arguing that neither the Conservatives nor Labour now represent mainstream opinion in the UK, Dorrell says that the current two-party system no longer serves the interests of the electorate. He writes: "I shall continue to describe myself, as I always have, as a liberal Conservative but I shall do so in future as a supporter of Change UK - The Independent Group, which I believe has become the natural home of those who regard themselves, as I do, as the heirs of Disraeli, Churchill, Macmillan and Heath."

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/apr/14/stephen-dorrell-defection-change-uk-tory-poll-five-year-low>

Brexit news: Conservatives face European elections drubbing as support 'slumps to lowest point in six years'

The Conservatives are facing a humiliating defeat at the European elections next month after support for the party slumped to its lowest level since 2013, according to a new poll. The survey shows the Tories on just 28 per cent when it comes to general election voting intention – a four-point fall which leaves them trailing Labour on 32. When voters were asked which party they will vote for at the European elections, Theresa May's party languished on 16 per cent, eight points behind Labour on 24

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-latest-conservatives-poll-low-european-elections-labour-lead-latest-a8868206.html>

Brexit news latest: Jeremy Corbyn blasts Theresa May over 'scandalous' failure to seek earlier talks

Jeremy Corbyn has said it was "scandalous" that Theresa May didn't seek earlier Brexit talks with Labour. It came as he insisted the Prime Minister must compromise on her red lines if a cross-party deal is to happen. And the Labour leader said Mrs May should not use the delay of Brexit until October 31 as a chance to put her Withdrawal Agreement to the Commons again. It has already been rejected three times.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/jeremy-corbyn-blasts-theresa-may-over-scandalous-failure-to-seek-earlier-brexit-talks-as-labour-a4117356.html>

Brexit: Germany's Steinmeier hopes UK leaves before EU elections

The German president has warned that Britain's exit from the European Union "cannot become an endless horror story." Concerns are growing that pro-Brexit parties could disrupt next month's EU parliamentary elections and that Brexit still rumbling on will help them

<https://www.dw.com/en/brexit-germanys-steinmeier-hopes-uk-leaves-before-eu-elections/a-48315650>

Corbyn tells May to abandon Brexit red lines

Jeremy Corbyn has insisted Theresa May must compromise on her Brexit red lines if cross-party talks on EU withdrawal are to succeed. The Labour leader said it is "scandalous" the Prime Minister did not seek dialogue with Labour on Brexit earlier.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/corbyn-tells-may-to-abandon-brexit-red-lines-38011993.html>

Anti-racism groups issue warning to new Brexit Party and urge against divisive politics

Groups campaigning for an end to racism and discrimination have issued warnings about divisive politics amid the launch of the Brexit Party, headed up by former Ukip leader Nigel Farage. Mr Farage spoke at an event launching the party's campaign for the May EU elections on Friday, during which he introduced five new candidates including the sister of Brexiteer Jacob Rees-Mogg. He quit Ukip over its veer towards the "far right" and affiliation with anti-Muslim campaigner Tommy Robinson, saying that it had "descended into yobbery". Mr Farage described the new party as being "deeply intolerant of intolerance" but it has already run into controversy after two senior figures were forced to step down from their roles due to racist social media posts.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-party-nigel-farage-warning-anti-racism-campaign-group/>

May must use Brexit delay to tear up hated Irish backstop and finally seal a deal, DUP blasts

Theresa May is today under fresh pressure to rip up her Brexit deal and scrap the hated Irish backstop. DUP boss Arlene Foster called on the PM to use the six-month delay to Brexit to start talks again and push the EU into compromising. She warned that if Brussels doesn't shift its position, the EU will be responsible for triggering a No Deal scenario. Ms Foster's demand was echoed by Boris

Johnson - and his father Stanley, who is planning to stand as a Tory candidate in Euro elections.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/brexit/8843925/may-must-use-brexit-delay-to-tear-up-hated-irish-backstop-and-finally-seal-a-deal-dup-blasts/>

So now Brexit could fall on Halloween. How very ... appropriate

The so-called Project Fear mounted during the EU referendum campaign is associated with remainers, but the Brexiteers have their own version of it, so they may welcome the fact that the new opportunity to jump off the cliff coincides with Halloween. Here's Jacob Rees-Mogg, speaking at the London Palladium recently: "If we try to stay beyond the European elections, there will be only one winner from that, and that would be Tommy Robinson." And last year at the Tory conference, Boris Johnson said, "The ultimate beneficiary of the Chequers deal will be the far right." It really is deeply irritating when a multimillionaire Old Etonian says, "I'm going to get my mates from the working class to beat you up."

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/12/brexit-halloween-rees-mogg-fear-far-right>

'We're fed up of Brexit, yet we can't get enough of it'

Six more months. Here's a paradox: we are all fed up to the back teeth of hearing about Brexit, and yet we cannot get enough of it. Brexit related twists-and-turns predictably dominate the airwaves, rightly or wrongly monopolising the attention of our politicians and political commentators. And it has been relentless. But like a wart or a cold sore, we just can't leave Brexit alone. We keep thinking about it, going back to it, examining it. We hate it and yet we are drawn to it.

<https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2019/0412/1042195-brexit-fed-up-of-it-cant-get-enough-of-it/>

When it comes to Brexit, politicians are only respecting the 'will' of the white people

Missing from almost all the coverage and debate are those voices of ethnic minorities. It's ironic given that we were one of the biggest dissenting voices against Brexit. In the 2016 referendum 73 percent of Black and 67 per cent of Asian voters opted to Remain. Given that the 7.5 million people from ethnic minorities represent a larger population than Scotland and Northern Ireland combined, it is high time that these voices are no longer marginalised. Unfortunately, as is usually the case, it is the will of white English people that is being represented as that of the nation.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-extension-theresa-may-brussels-eu-race-bame-peoples-vote-a8865346.html>

Real divide is wealth not Brexit, says Jeremy Corbyn

The real divide in society is between rich and poor and not Brexit, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has told party members in Llandudno. At Welsh Labour conference Mr Corbyn said his party is trying to end the Commons deadlock on the issue. He said he did not want to pit remain voters in one part of the country against leave voters in another. Meanwhile Welsh Labour leader Mark Drakeford said Brexit should not be used to "short-change" Wales. He also announced £2.3m to offer sanitary products to all learners in schools and colleges.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-47916058>

Former Tory leader outlines plan to save Brexit that is sure to infuriate Brussels

Lord Howard claimed the House of Commons would support Prime Minister's deal on the condition she renegotiates the Northern Ireland backstop. He wrote the Daily Telegraph: "Achieving this would not just win the support of Parliament but also create a coherent position around which a Conservative Party that appears dangerously disunited could begin to coalesce. The problems with the backstop arise solely out of the EU's refusal to countenance any change to the wording of the Withdrawal Agreement

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1113692/brexit-news-latest-irish-backstop-leave-eu-no-deal-michael-howard-theresa-may>

If Tory MPs wish to change the 1922 committee no confidence vote rules there is nothing standing in their way

Two former chairs of the influential Conservative Party 1922 Committee give their opinions that If Tory MPs wish to change the 1922 committee no confidence vote rules there is nothing standing in their way

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/13/tory-mps-wish-change-1922-committee-no-confidence-vote-rules/>

Tory Brexiteer Boris Johnson 'will refuse to campaign in European elections'

A source close to Mr Johnson told The Times: "Boris won't campaign in European elections. "He believes the prospect of the UK fielding candidates is utterly preposterous." The intervention comes after Chancellor Philip Hammond admitted that taking part in the fresh elections to the European Parliament, where Britain holds 73 of 751 seats, would be "pointless".

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/foreign-affairs/brexit/news/103229/tory-brexiteer-boris-johnson-will-refuse-campaign>

Death threats leave TIG MP Sarah Wollaston too afraid to advertise public meetings

"What's angered me is that I have had to change the way I operate as an MP. I can no longer advertise on social media my public meetings, for example. I used to hold surgeries in public places and tell people I'd be there, I can't do that any more. And so I think there is something leading to a diminution of our very open access. It's a shame, and I think it's a loss." She said comments made by members of the Brexit-backing European Research Group about Theresa May had encouraged a culture of hostility from right-wing extremists. "I think MPs routinely come under the most extreme sort of threats from the far right," Ms Wollaston said. "What we have seen is a normalisation of threats of violence that was never there when I first went into politics.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sarah-wollaston-brexit-erg-abuse-politicians-a8856961.html>

Leadership rivals target ex-soldiers with 'dirty tricks'

Tory Whips were at the centre of a growing dirty tricks storm last night after it emerged that a second former Army officer tipped for party leadership is having his past mysteriously probed. On Thursday, war hero turned Plymouth MP Johnny Mercer took to social media to accuse an anonymous Tory enforcer of attempting to 'dig up dirt' about his military career. The accused is understood to be Deputy Chief Whip Chris Pincher. Now The Mail on Sunday has learnt that similar enquiries have been made to former Army colleagues of Tory MP Tom Tugendhat - who served in the Intelligence Corps - who last week ruled out a tilt at No 10.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6919497/Leadership-rivals-target-ex-soldiers-dirty-tricks.html>

Theresa May cancels Easter break for Brexit negotiators to fight Nigel Farage

A Downing Street source said: "These talks have been constructive and serious and both sides want to see further progress over the Easter recess. "If we can keep up the pace of negotiations, we can get a deal over the line and avoid having European elections." The negotiating teams have split into working groups. Greg Clark and Rebecca Long-Bailey will look at services and consumer and workers' rights. Michael Gove and Sue Hayman will work on environmental protection. And Steve Barclay and Keir Starmer will discuss security. But Labour sources insist little progress can be made without movement from the PM. One said: "We need her to make serious commitment to moving her red lines. Until then it's impossible to see these talks going anywhere."

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/theresa-cancels-easter-break-brexit-14309023>

Brexit battles are about to get much bloodier

This time, Farage will be able to use the single most divisive issue in the country to his advantage. Even if his party isn't as successful as he hopes, it's likely that a large chunk of the MEPs the UK sends will be euroskeptic. This should worry the EU. As a full member state, the UK will have voting rights and be able to frustrate the EU's plans as long as it remains inside the bloc. Jacob Rees-Mogg,

a Conservative MP and leader of the pro-Brexit European Research Group, says this belligerent behavior is entirely justifiable and necessary. "The EU has not been sincerely cooperative during the Brexit process, so I don't think we owe a duty of cooperation to the EU in return," Rees-Mogg said.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/04/13/uk/brexit-luke-mcgee-analysis-intl-gbr/index.html>

Leave voters have lost faith in the Tories' ability to deliver Brexit

The Conservatives' failure so far to secure Britain's withdrawal from the European Union is now at risk of costing them dearly. When the Prime Minister first unveiled her deal in mid-November, the party was largely still holding its own. After 5 months of non-stop Brexit debate its poll ratings are falling and the new Brexit Party ratings are rising, along with the Remain parties ratings

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/04/13/leave-voters-have-lost-faith-tories-ability-deliver-brexit/>

Halloween Brexit is a fitting outcome for the zombie prime minister

The EU summit became absurdist performance art as all agreed on something they did not want

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/apr/12/halloween-brexit-fitting-outcome-for-zombie-prime-minister>

Brexit: Boris Johnson 'wrong on no-deal polling claim'

Boris Johnson was wrong to claim there was polling evidence that a no-deal Brexit was the public's preferred option, the press regulator has ruled. Ipso ordered the Daily Telegraph to print a correction after finding the MP's column was inaccurate. The claim was made in a piece headlined "The British people won't be scared into backing a woeful Brexit deal nobody voted for" in January. The Telegraph had argued it was "clearly comically polemical"

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-47913555>

Row erupts as civil servants ordered to halt £4bn no-deal Brexit planning with 'immediate effect'

The decision to begin "winding down" the emergency preparations came after European leaders agreed to delay the UK's exit until 31 October. Since triggering Article 50 two years ago, some 16,000 civil servants have been moved to departments most likely to be impacted if the UK left the EU without a deal. Labour MP Hilary Benn, who chairs the cross-party Commons Brexit Select Committee said the estimated £1.5bn cost of halting the preparations was a result of Mrs May's refusal to rule out a no-deal Brexit sooner. He said: "It was important to plan for all contingencies, but this is the huge cost of the Prime Minister repeatedly saying: 'My deal or no deal' when she knew that leaving without a deal was not in the national interest. This is one example of how Brexit is proving to be very costly for our country."

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/government-and-public-sector/news/103211/row-erupts-civil-servants-ordered-halt-%C2%A34bn-no-deal>

Staying in a customs union after Brexit won't resolve the Irish border issue

The EU is unlikely to accept a request from the UK that it should have a say over the EU's trade agreements. Article 207 of the Lisbon treaty makes clear that the common commercial policy is exclusive to the EU's direction. Turkey, which is in a partial customs union with the EU, has to follow EU trade agreements with third countries but has no say on them. The reality is that in a customs union all the power would rest with the EU, with the UK as a follower.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/12/brexit-customs-union-labour-irish-border>

Brexit: Philip Hammond defends spending billions on no-deal preparations

The chancellor has defended spending billions of pounds preparing for a no-deal Brexit. Philip Hammond made his case after Sky News revealed the government was mothballing the team of civil servants responsible for no-deal planning. Over the past two years, the government had moved thousands of civil servants away from their normal jobs to prepare for the possibility that the UK would leave the European Union without a deal. Mr Hammond told Sky News: "It would have been

irresponsible not to prepare for no deal, so long as it was a real possible outcome. "Making preparations for events that we hope will not happen is an everyday part of government.

<https://news.sky.com/story/brexit-philip-hammond-defends-spending-billions-on-no-deal-preparations-11691557>

The Establishment Coup Against Brexit

Something profoundly unpleasant has happened in Britain over the past three years. It has come to a boiling point these past few weeks and will probably stay at this heat for a good many more. It can be summed up as a barely concealed dislike of democracy on the part of a considerable subsection of the elite, those who lost the referendum.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-establishment-coup-against-brexit-11555107537>

Faisal Islam bids farewell to Sky News after five years as political editor

"I fear politics has not learnt the lessons it needs to from the latter form of political terrorism. Unnecessarily aggressive personalised attacks on our politicians demean and endanger the entire process." Islam added that he finds the "weaponisation of betrayal politics... deeply troubling", adding: "There are senior politicians who should stop playing with fire."

<https://www.pressgazette.co.uk/faisal-islam-bids-farewell-to-sky-news-after-five-years-as-political-editor-beth-rigby/>

Farage tells BBC host 'NO' SIX TIMES during FIERY exchange over Brexit Party funding

Nigel Farage got into a fiery debate with BBC host Elizabeth Glinka after she repeatedly demanded to know whether businessman and political donor Aaron Banks would be funding the former Ukip leaders' new Brexit Party.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1113436/Brexit-news-Nigel-Farage-BBC-Politics-UK-EU-Theresa-May-no-deal-vote-latest>

Brexit: DUP threaten to PULL backing of May's government amid 'chat with Boris'

Theresa May's DUP allies have threatened to pull support for her government in a furious clash over Brexit. The party's 10 MPs have backed the PM since 2017 after being handed £1bn for Northern Ireland in a two-year deal. Asked if the DUP still had confidence in Mrs May after the extension, the DUP leader said: "The confidence and supply agreement that we signed was with the Conservative Party and whoever the leader of the party is we will work with. "We believe in national stability. We want to see Brexit delivered."

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brexit-dup-threaten-pull-backing-14289099>

Five key things we learnt from Nigel Farage's Brexit launch party

Nigel Farage arrived in Coventry to launch the Brexit Party today - promising it would not ignore democracy. He promised a "revolution" in British politics and unveiled some of the big names who had signed up to the party - including sister of leading Conservative Brexiteer MP Jacob Rees-Mogg, Annunziata Rees-Mogg. Speaking at the B.G Penny factory in the city after the government delayed Brexit for a second time, he said Coventry was chosen for the launch because it was the "heart of England".

<https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/nigel-farage-brexit-party-highlights-16121202>

Is Brexit the will of the people? The answer is not quite that simple

...there are several complicating factors. First of all, the majority was narrow. There were 17.4 million votes for Leave, 16.1 million votes for Remain, and 12.9 million abstentions. A further 18 million people living in the UK were not on the electoral register, including all young people below the age of 18 and many long-term residents who are not citizens, though they contribute to British society and have a stake in it. So, although 17.4 million is a large number, it is only a relative majority, not an absolute one.

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/04/11/is-brexit-the-will-of-the-people-the-answer-is-not-quite-that-simple/>