



THE PRIORY ACADEMY

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# Environmental News

Rachel Ballantyne

## **New urban oasis in London**

Canary Wharf is a subsection of London, defined as a central business district of the capital city. London itself has made strides to maintain green spaces; it is now circled by a 'green belt' of protected natural land to prevent urban sprawl encroaching on natural land, and keeping approximately 20% of the city as public green space. Canary Wharf hasn't historically been designed as a particularly green space, and was kept as a heavily developed urban area until recently. The local government, having partnered with charity the Eden Project, released the newly developed Eden Dock in the middle of the Docklands development. It involves floating gardens, boardwalks, and aquatic habitats in what is described as 'The Green Spine' of the area. It aimed to improve quality of life for locals, with studies showing that around 70% of office workers prefer to work in areas near green spaces, and feel more creative when near such places. The project will also have the benefit of increasing biodiversity (by creating homes for species such as bees, eels, songbirds and waterfowl) something that is decreased in urban areas. It acknowledges the need and desire for city life, and the fact that it should be able to function alongside greener spaces. This is represented by the large shrub sculptures of people in the green space, of which there are over 20. The prioritizing of nature for the benefit of people and the wildlife itself is brilliant to see, and hopefully not the last of such projects that will be seen in the UK!

# Space News

Ellie-Rose O'Callaghan

## Rescue mission to bring astronauts home

A space capsule has docked at the International Space Station on its mission to rescue two stranded astronauts. NASA'S Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams were left stranded in June when their space craft suffered a malfunction from its thrusters and had significant helium leaks. Their spacecraft returned without a crew after NASA decided it was too risky to bring them home with the ship's failures. Thankfully, a SpaceX Dragon Capsule lifted off from Cape Canaveral in Florida USA this week to bring the astronauts home with two empty seats in their aircraft for them. However, this journey back to Earth won't be completed until next year so the pair will be staying up there through Halloween and Christmas. The two of them will be supplied with food and clothes to help them live through the next few months. They will land back on Earth next February.

The pair of them have said that it was hard to watch their malfunctioning craft depart the International Space Station but that they're happy and trained to expect the unexpected.

# Media News

By Gregor Wallace

## Mr Beast Lawsuit and Allegations

Jimmy Donaldson, aka 'Mr Beast' is a youtuber who mainly focuses on philanthropic work to reel in his audience, and he has currently the single most subscribed YouTube channel in history. However, recently his company has been served with a lawsuit in the creation of his TV show 'Beast Games'. Reportedly, the conditions at the film studio have been absolutely appalling. There have been many hospitalizations, late medications and irregular patterns in meals. One contestant said they had gone over 20 hours without any food at all.

Looking further back in this series of events, a member of his crew has been accused of grooming allegations. Ava Kris Tyson, a childhood friend of Jimmy's, has been found to have sent inappropriate messages to minors when she was 20. This saga doesn't end here, as he recently has partnered with influencer KSI and Logan Paul to create a Lunchables-style lunchbox, called 'Lunchly'. However, this hasn't come without controversy. Popular Youtuber Dan-TDM has called this a shady business and highlighted the fact that Mr Beast is trying to make money from his mainly child-based audience, whilst trying to promote that his chocolate is 'healthy'. In my personal opinion the 'Lunchly' thing sounds like just more of a scam and a possible final cash-grab. Is the Mr Beast Empire Collapsing?

# World News

John Hutchings

## Germany holds Chinese woman for spying on arms firm

A Chinese woman (Yaqi X, 38) has been arrested for passing information about the Leipzig/Halle airport to Chinese intelligence. She had been working for a company that provided logistic services at the airport, German prosecutors say. They have also said she had been sending details on flights, passengers and military cargo to Chinese intelligence. The airport was considered important due to it being involved in defence exports, mainly to Ukraine. Earlier this year, a second man (Jian G) was detained; he worked as an aide for a member of the European Parliament from Germany's far-right AfD party.

Yaqi X had her home and work searched while she remained in custody. Information about people linked to an unnamed German arms company and the transport of Military equipment were – prosecutors allege - given to Jian G. Her case appears to have been linked to one last April, also for spying.

Maximilian Krah was Jian G's MEP (Member of European Parliament) who he had also worked for, but who dismissed him as his assistant. Krah's office in Brussels was searched by police; however ultimately nothing was found that linked him into the case. In 2002, Jian G had worked previously for dissident groups, and came to get his citizenship after coming to Germany. He was alleged to have spied on Chinese dissidents from Germany, and also to have passed information to Chinese intelligence about the European Parliament.

# Environmental News

Rachel Ballantyne

## Last UK coal plant closes

Coal power stations are one of the worst types of power for the environment – coal can be described as the ‘dirtiest’ fossil fuel as its combustion produces the most greenhouse gases. The UK has a long history of coal power, as it was where the first ever industrial-scale coal power plant opened in 1882. Coal is a very reliable fuel source, as it is easy to transport and store, which is part of why moving away from it is so difficult even as the negative impacts of it are better understood. But now, 142 years after the first power plant opened, the UK has motioned to close the last remaining industrial coal power plant on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2024. People will still be able to use coal individually; however the bulk of consumption of power comes from an industrial scale, so this is a big environmental win.

The UK still does use a significant amount of natural gas, with it accounting for 24% of energy in 2024 (coal, for context, was 1%, with fossil fuels at 25% overall). It is contextually one of the ‘cleanest’ fossil fuels in terms of the greenhouse gases it produces, which is why moving away from it is less of a priority. Although there is still a way to go, becoming free from coal on an industrial scale is a big step forwards in reducing emissions and the carbon footprint of the country; it could also come with the knock-on effect of more investment into renewable energy as new goals are established. Coming towards the end of another calendar year, it is a very positive change to have been made!

# Environmental News

Imogen Sinclair

## What is climate change?

Climate change is the process of our planet seeing shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, such as global warming. Scientists estimate that since the Industrial Revolution, human activity has caused the Earth to warm by approximately 1°C. While that might not sound like much, it holds big consequences for the people and wildlife around the globe.

## How does this affect us?

Extreme weather events such as floods and heat waves are becoming more frequent in the UK, and these are happening because of us! The impacts of climate change include: warming temperatures, changes in precipitation, increases in the frequency or intensity of some extreme weather events, and rising sea levels. These impacts threaten our health by affecting the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the weather we experience.

## How can we stop climate change happening?

- Save energy at home: much of our electricity and heat are powered by coal, oil and gas.
- Walk, bike or take public transport.
- Reduce, reuse, repair and recycle.
- Eat more vegetables instead of meat.
- Throw away less food.

How can you help to stop climate change?



# Geographical News

Isaac Eccles

## Aurora Borealis and Australis

The Northern Lights (or as they are scientifically named, the aurora borealis) have recently been seen in long exposure photos taken of the night sky in England. These lights are caused by the charged particles that are released by the sun and interact with the Earth's magnetic field. The lights are seen at both of the poles of the earth because the magnetic field pulls the particles to those places. However, because of recent stronger solar storms, they have recently been visible in the UK when long exposure photos are taken. A long exposure photo is needed because it adds the light levels together to create a more vibrant image and, luckily, most cameras can do long exposure photos. The recent sightings are mostly in the north of England such as Yorkshire, Birmingham, Carlisle and others. On some rare occasions however, we may be able to see them in Lincoln, so try it tonight!

# Weather News

Sara Stepien

## Hurricane Helene

Hurricane Helene was a natural disaster that hit the USA in late September, and is still having terrible knock-on effects. The terrible storm hit Weaverville, North Carolina cutting off electricity and it left people without drinking water for days. At least 35 people were found dead and 600 injured. The county set up a website where people can inquire about missing persons as an immediate response, and so far they have received 11,000 requests. North Carolina isn't the only place that we need to look out for after the hurricane, as plenty of states across the US including Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Tennessee were hit by the storm as well and are in need of help. Luckily, there has been news that the extreme weather has been calming down and people are starting to go back to their normal lives. Unfortunately, officials have said that at least 116 people were dead nationwide. One of the White House spokeswomen has said that around 2 million people are left without electricity, and president Joe Biden has said that the storm was 'history making'. The storm has closed down many shops, affecting local economies, and vans and cars having been floating around destroyed cities freely. Trees have fallen onto houses and lamp-posts have been dangerously hanging over the streets. A large number of communities have been wiped away by the horrendous storm. Hurricane Helene is an unfortunate example of how weather is becoming more extreme, in this case in relation to global warming raising sea temperatures, giving more energy to hurricanes. This allows them to develop more frequently and last longer.