UK Headlines — 03 Oct 2026

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Saturday sweep — UK, world and Wales. Compiled 08:30 BST.

? Top Story

Widdecombe suspect charged with terror plot against Farage. Joshua Kerry, the man already charged with the murder of former minister Ann Widdecombe (78), has now been charged with engaging in conduct in preparation of acts of terrorism — including a plot targeting Reform UK leader Nigel Farage. Counter-terror police say the alleged activity ran between May 2024 and July 2026, following a "hugely intensive and complex" investigation. Farage responded via the Daily Telegraph. *(BBC, Guardian, Reuters, Telegraph)*

RAF Fairford probe: Iran link under investigation. Counter-terror police are examining whether Iran is connected to the suspected bomb plot near RAF Fairford — the Gloucestershire base used by US bombers in operations against Iran. Five British men in their 20s were arrested after three vans carrying explosives were found 400m from the base; the village of Whelford was evacuated. A dual UK-Iranian national, 27, has since been arrested in Westminster. Iran denies involvement; the Revolutionary Guard had warned Britain in July not to host US strikes. The five men arrested near the base have been released on bail. *(Sky News, Guardian, Telegraph, Daily Mail, CNBC)*

?? UK Politics

- **Megapoll: half of UK backs EU rejoin.** Andy Burnham's personal preference to seek EU re-entry after the next election is supported by almost half of all voters, a new Guardian megapoll finds — and backing it could drive up Labour's vote. Cabinet ministers worried about reopening Brexit divides are privately urging caution. *(Guardian, 3 Oct)*
- **First wave of early prisoner releases begins.** Around 700 prisoners were freed across England and Wales on Thursday (1 Oct) under the early release scheme aimed at easing overcrowding, with ~5,000 due out in stages. Reform UK has attacked the scheme, claiming "dangerous sexual abusers" among 4,500 early releases — the government disputes the characterisation. Front pages led on the story. *(Mirror, Metro, IBTimes, Newsworks)*

- **Bluetongue: worst outbreak on record.** British farmers are facing the worst bluetongue season ever recorded, with cases surpassing the previous three years combined. The midge-borne virus affects sheep and cattle; the long hot spell has been blamed for ideal midge conditions, and vets have warned of a vaccine shortage. A temporary control zone is in place in South West Scotland after a fifth BTV-3 case. *(Guardian, BBC, GOV.UK)*

? World / International

- **Iran offers Hormuz deal; Trump rejects it.** Iran has proposed reopening the Strait of Hormuz within seven days if the US lifts its naval blockade, waives oil sanctions and observes a ceasefire including Lebanon. Trump called the proposal "unacceptable" and said renewed strikes after the 3 November midterms are "possible"; Rubio reportedly ordered Iran's delegation out of New York. Day 217 of the Iran war. *(AP, PBS, BBC, GlobalSecurity)*
- **Russia hits Kyiv's bridges — new disruption tactic.** Russian aerial strikes forced full or partial closure of three of Kyiv's six road bridges over the Dnipro on Friday, causing massive traffic logjams — a new tactic in the campaign to grind down city life. Meanwhile Ukraine's foreign minister says separate partial-truce proposals (halting energy infrastructure attacks) have arrived from the US, India, Turkey and Egypt. *(AP/ABC, Washington Times)*
- **France school protests turn violent.** Riot police clashed with high-school students across France on Friday; ~400–500 of 3,700 secondary schools closed and hundreds have been arrested as protests over overcrowded classrooms, teacher shortages and crumbling buildings spread, with fires in Aubervilliers and elsewhere. Unions have called teacher strikes; the interior ministry says the unrest "no longer has anything to do with" legitimate protest. *(Le Monde, Reuters, BBC, TIME, RFI)*
- **EU 'return hubs': five nations plan third-country deportations.** Five EU countries are moving ahead with plans to deport rejected asylum seekers to third countries — potentially in Africa — after the EU approved new "return hub" rules this week, following the US model. *(CBS News)*
- **Gaza:** the post-ceasefire death toll keeps rising — Palestinian authorities say over 1,420 have been killed since the October 2025 truce took effect, amid continuing violence and West Bank settlement expansion flagged at the UN Security Council. *(QNN/Countercurrents, UN)*

??????? Wales

- **'New Deal for Wales' demanded of Burnham.** First Minister Rhun ap Iorwerth has written formally to PM Andy Burnham demanding a "new deal" putting Wales on an equal footing with Scotland — devolution of policing and justice, rail infrastructure, the Crown Estate, welfare powers and funding flexibilities. In his first Plaid Cymru conference

keynote as FM (Llandudno, Venue Cymru), he said Wales' interests will "never be served" by Westminster. *(BBC, Guardian, Nation.Cymru, ITV Wales, The National)*
- **Morgan's parting shot.** Outgoing FM Eluned Morgan — who made history by losing her seat while in office in May — told the conference she had looked Burnham "in the eye" and said "do not undermine Wales as a nation, do not bypass our Senedd". *(Nation.Cymru, BBC)*
- **Plaid economy push.** Plaid Cymru unveiled "Scaling Up", a set of ambitious new targets for the Welsh economy (3 Oct), days after the Senedd backed a motion on Wales' right to decide its own future. *(partyof.wales)*
- **Football misery continues.** Wales were swept aside by Denmark and remain without a win in 2026. *(WalesOnline)*

?? Crime & Justice

- **River Wear tragedy: tributes paid.** The family of a 16-year-old girl killed with two friends when their black Audi A3 plunged into the River Wear at Panns Bank, Sunderland (Tuesday) have paid tribute to their "beautiful girl". The 17-year-old boy who escaped the car was arrested and has been released on bail. Three teenagers died in total. *(Metro, BBC, Sky, Chronicle Live)*

?? Weather

No Met Office warnings in force for Sat 3 – Tue 6 Oct. Outlook: fine and dry start to the period, turning warm and windy Tuesday with coastal gales and heavy blustery rain in the west; Atlantic systems moving in towards the following weekend. *(Met Office)*

? Feel-Good Roundup

- **Dame Esther Rantzen tributes continue** after the death of the "inspirational" Childline founder — remembered for making sure children across the UK "had somewhere to turn when they were in need of help". *(BBC)*
- **Keynsham cardiac arrest reunion:** Edd Pocock, 43, was reunited with the ambulance crew who saved his life after a sudden cardiac arrest at home. *(Good News Post)*
- **From cigarettes to The Voice UK stage** — Diogo's turnaround feature on the BBC's Uplifting Stories strand. *(BBC)*

? Quick Summary

Story	Status	Source

Widdecombe suspect charged with Farage terror plot	Charged (2 Oct)	BBC/Guardian/Reuters
RAF Fairford bomb plot — Iran link	Under investigation; Iran denies	Sky/Guardian/Telegraph
EU rejoin megapoll	~50% support; Burnham cautious	Guardian
Early prisoner releases	First wave (~700) out 1 Oct	Mirror/Metro
Bluetongue outbreak	Worst season on record	Guardian/GOV.UK
Iran–US Hormuz deal	Offered; Trump rejects	AP/PBS/GlobalSecurity
Kyiv bridge strikes	3 of 6 bridges hit Fri	AP
France school unrest	~400–500 schools closed; riots	Reuters/Le Monde
EU third-country deportations	5 nations moving ahead	CBS
Wales 'New Deal' demand	Letter sent to Burnham	BBC/Guardian
River Wear teen deaths	3 dead; boy bailed	BBC/Sky

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