

UK Headlines — 17 Sep 2026

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Thursday 17 September 2026 · UK-wide sweep

? Top Story

Palace and Earl Spencer in open war of words over Diana book

Buckingham Palace has issued an unusually blunt public statement hitting back at Earl Spencer over claims in his forthcoming memoir, *Swan Song: Diana, My Sister*. Spencer alleges that, days after Diana's death in 1997, the then-Prince of Wales told him: **"Rest assured, we'll forget her soon enough."**

The Palace countered that grief can "colour memory", saying: *"pain of fraternal grief can cloud reason, affect judgment and colour memory in ways others do not recognise, even many years after such a loss."*

- The row dominates today's front pages — Times, Mail, Telegraph, Sun, Independent, Mirror, Express.
 - Spencer also claims Charles subjected him to a "stream of anger" after he insisted William and Harry should not walk behind the coffin.
 - A source close to the King says the alleged remark was "just not in his nature", particularly when he was "absolutely grief-stricken".
 - The row threatens to overshadow a crowded day for the royals — the King and Princes William and Harry all have engagements.
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?? Politics

Burnham rejects "tax and spend socialist" jibe as Budget looms

PM **Andy Burnham** has rejected a claim by former Bank of England chief economist **Andy Haldane** that markets now see his government as "a traditional tax and spend socialist government with better TikTok videos".

- Burnham insists he is prepared to take "difficult decisions" and "will not take risks with the economy".
- Haldane says the PM faces a "straight choice" between tax rises and spending cuts at the Budget on **28 October**.
- Chancellor **John Healey** is widely tipped to raise capital gains tax (i Paper).
- Rising UK borrowing costs have worsened the government's options; petrol and diesel prices helped push inflation to **3.1%** in the year to August — a five-month high.
- **Kemi Badenoch** used an Express column to argue Burnham will "drag Britain back into the 1970s".

Reform UK's mega-donations row rumbles on

- MPs and watchdogs are pressing on the record donations to Reform UK; **Farage** insists he has "broken no rules" and that donations are "100% compliant with the law today".
- BBC's Chris Mason: "Row over Reform's mega donations has mileage in it yet."
- Guardian reporting: at least five Reform councillors joined a Facebook group linked to the far-right **Patriot Platform**.
- Labour held a No 10 drinks party for donors amid growing cross-party calls for a donations cap; **Gordon Brown** warned big-money donations "poison British politics".
- A UK entrepreneur made a **£500,000** donation to **Restore Britain**.

Other Westminster lines

- **Prisons crisis:** leaked documents (Guardian) show plans to "double up" prisoners in prefab cells built for one person — adding ~476 places in England and Wales. MoJ says it is "pulling every lever available".
- **Union demands:** calls to raise tax thresholds ahead of the Budget; TUC-aligned pressure on the Treasury.
- **Doxxing:** **Lisa Nandy** pledges a crackdown after RNLI volunteers' personal details appeared online.
- **Lib Dems:** Ed Davey says Brexit is to blame for small-boat crossings.
- **Defence:** UK in talks to join a global defence bank led by Canada.
- **Gambling:** peers call for a tobacco-style ban on gambling advertising.
- **Climate finance:** Parliament's watchdog says the government is "cutting corners" on international commitments as El Niño approaches.

- **Heathrow:** the Climate Change Committee says expansion cannot proceed without the aviation industry cleaning up its emissions.
- **An English village has voted to leave the UK** in protest at a migrant housing plan.

Law & justice

- **Lucy Letby inquiry** — findings and recommendations published; families react.
 - **Eleanor Donaldson trial** — a review of the legal framework has been launched in its wake.
 - **Tate brothers** — UK prosecutors file for extradition from the US.
 - **Terrorism arrests:** almost half of all terrorism arrests in Great Britain since 9/11 have come in the past year.
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? World

US Federal Reserve hikes rates for first time in three years

The Fed raised interest rates for the first time since 2023 in a unanimous vote — defying President Trump's calls for lower borrowing costs. The **Bank of England held** rates the same day, facing "tough choices".

Middle East & the Iran war

- Leaked photos reveal **widespread damage at US bases in the Gulf** from Iranian attacks.
- The Pentagon inspector general confirms the Iran war has caused **US munitions shortfalls**.
- A **satellite image reveals major damage that shut a crucial Saudi oil pipeline**; Riyadh is reportedly seeking help from France, Britain and Pakistan against the Houthis.
- In Gaza, **eight children were among 21 killed** when a war-damaged building collapsed, rescuers say.

Trump, trade and tariffs

- Trump branded the EU's offer of "**associate membership**" to **Canada** "laughable" and threatened "serious tariffs" — hours after EU chief Ursula von der Leyen backed the plan.
- Trump paused a Canada tariffs threat and hinted at reviving **Keystone XL**.

- US lawmakers passed a bill giving Trump **more power to sanction Russia** and its enablers.
- US deports 20 people to **Liberia** — the first of 1,200 under a Trump deal.

Russia & Ukraine

- A Russian general **decorated by Putin for a false victory claim** was killed in a Ukrainian drone strike.
- Western officials say Russia is ramping up rhetoric but **wants to avoid war with Nato**, while continuing "hybrid activity".
- Russia's elections are under way with few surprises expected — but they matter to the Kremlin.

Asia-Pacific & Americas

- **Nepal-Tibet floods:** a new study finds climate change likely played a role in the disaster, which killed hundreds and left thousands missing. Nepal's foreign minister called for a "global effort" on climate change.
- **Assad regime planned US journalist Austin Tice's kidnap for weeks**, a BBC investigation finds.
- **China:** Evergrande founder **Hui Ka Yan jailed for life** for fraud, forfeiting all personal property.
- **North Korea fired 10 missiles**, a day after Trump curtailed US-South Korea joint drills. Kim Jong-un's sister cast doubt on claims of secret US-North Korea talks.
- **Brazil:** Lula launches a historic fourth-term bid, with a Bolsonaro son standing in his way.
- **Australia:** migration crackdown targets international students, "visa hoppers" and backpackers.
- US confirms **weapons in Earth's orbit** — warnings of a new space arms race.

Europe & Africa

- **Norway:** King Harald V has died; **Haakon VIII** gave his first speech as king, paying tribute to "my dear father".
- **Iceland** votes on whether to restart EU accession talks — polling too close to call.
- **Germany:** eight state premiers back Chancellor Merz amid speculation over his future.
- **DRC:** the Ebola outbreak is now the **deadliest in the country's history**.
- **Central African Republic:** more than **100 dead** after a goldmine collapse.
- **Kenya:** five Americans among seven killed in a safari helicopter crash in Kenya.
- **Spain** will allow 500 children in Ceuta to move to the mainland in an immigration U-turn.
- **Milo Yiannopoulos deported** from the US to the UK; he says he is "ashamed" of his support for Trump.
- White House chief of staff **Susie Wiles announces she is cancer-free**.

Tech & media

- **Snapchat** boss Evan Spiegel tells the BBC the company is open to daily **time limits for teens**.
 - Microsoft AI chief **Mustafa Suleyman** says treating AI like humans is "mistaken and misguided".
 - FT: tensions inside **Anthropic and OpenAI** over proposals to embed outside evaluators in labs.
 - A leaked LA news helicopter crash leaves charred wreckage in California.
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?? UK News

- **Noah Woods, 3** — a body has been found in a pond near where the toddler vanished in Suffolk. Police have confirmed the body of a child; thousands had joined the search.
 - **"Putney pusher"** — suspect **Nicholas Brandram** found dead at his home.
 - **Swiss Alps crash** — two Britons among three killed in a light aircraft crash.
 - **Health:** a life-extending breast cancer drug is now available on the NHS in England — "new hope" for patients.
 - **Shoreham:** a school says it is "deeply saddened" by the death of a family in the sea.
 - **Education:** the "relentless" GCSE resit cycle is "simply not working", school and college leaders warn.
 - **Manchester synagogue attack** — a man has been charged.
 - **People smuggling** — a man exposed by a BBC investigation has been arrested and charged.
 - **Sheffield** — five held by police after a newborn baby died from stab wounds.
 - **Stourbridge** — aerial footage shows flames and black smoke engulfing houses on a residential street.
 - **Emmy Awards:** Welsh actor **Matthew Rhys** lands a historic double win; Catherine Zeta-Jones calls "nepo baby" a "horrific term".
 - **Culture:** BBC DJ **Trevor Nelson** says his brain tumour surgery "went well"; Lena Dunham announces the birth of her first baby via surrogacy.
 - **Ed Sheeran** row: Robert Kraft says Sheeran asked him to donate \$2m in aid after Macklemore backlash.
 - **Health warning:** doctors warn vapes could lead to health harms in children.
 - **Dyson** launches a £420 toothbrush that films "live cleaning footage" inside your mouth.
 - A 13-year-old from Hertfordshire is the new voice of **Thomas the Tank Engine**.
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??????? Wales

Reform Wales in crisis

- **Dan Thomas** was arrested on 13 September on suspicion of **assault and controlling/coercive behaviour** (Gwent Police), and resigned as Reform UK's Welsh leader on 15 September.
- Reform's chief whip **Liŷr Powell** says the whip will **not** be removed — Thomas continues as a Reform MS.
- **Nation.Cymru** revealed Reform tried to **suppress coverage** of the arrest by warning outlets they would breach ECHR **Article 8** (right to private and family life).
- **Sarah Cooper-Lesadd MS defected to Plaid Cymru**, revealing she voted Remain and wants Welsh independence — calling Reform "falling apart at the seams".
- **James Evans** pulled out of the contest to lead Reform's Senedd group.
- **Nigel Farage** sent a message of support to the Senedd group.

Senedd & government

- **Plaid Cymru** governs as a **minority administration** under First Minister **Rhun ap Iorwerth**.
- **Welsh Labour leader Ken Skates** has made the Flying Start early-years programme a **red line** for supporting the budget. Plaid minister Dafydd Trystan Davies refused to guarantee the scheme survives in its current form — the childcare expansion needs £250m-£500m a year.
- **'Disgraceful'** — Senedd clash over the Welsh language response to an English question.
- A new **Cross-Party Group for the Welsh Language** has been established.
- A **Cardiff Agreement** — signed by the Welsh and Scottish leaders on 14 Sept — sets out formal collaboration; Welsh, Scottish and NI leaders said "Westminster's time is coming to an end".
- **Welsh Finance Minister to demand a review of the funding deal** with the UK Government, hosting finance ministers from across the UK in Cardiff today, pushing for a "VAT contribution".
- Welsh Government **consulting on a publicly owned clean energy company**.
- Welsh Government unveils a new plan to raise education standards after poor **PISA** results.
- **30% business rates cut** for high-street hospitality and leisure venues.
- New Welsh constituency names **could be changed again**.

Wales news

- **Green GEN Cymru** unveiled a **22m slimline "monopole" pylon** designed "with the Welsh landscape in mind" after backlash against grid upgrade plans in mid and west Wales. CPRW: "still a major piece of infrastructure in the countryside."
- **New Severn tidal lagoon revealed** — the Western Mail's front-page splash, alongside "Why I quit Reform to join Plaid".

- A mum's **Facebook kidney plea** prompted a "mind-blowing" gift from a total stranger — a lifesaving transplant.
- A **PC who held a suspect in a headlock and punched him** says he "did nothing wrong" — PC Richard Williams denies eight allegations of unreasonable force.
- A baby born during a **Harry Potter screening in Cineworld Broughton** has "Cineworld" on her birth certificate.
- A **health board considers its biggest service shake-up for a generation**, with reductions in community hospital beds.
- **Polling (ITV, 15 Sep)**: support grows for Burnham's Labour in Wales while **Plaid stays top** in Senedd voting intention.
- Wales' most wanted woman, **Lynne Leyson**, appeared at Swansea Crown Court after being arrested.
- **Owain Glyndŵr Day** was marked across Wales on 16 September.

? Economy & Business

Item	Detail
UK inflation	3.1% in the year to August — a five-month high, above the 2% target, driven by petrol and diesel
Bank of England	Held rates; "tough choices" ahead
US Fed	Hiked rates for the first time since 2023 (unanimous)
Budget	28 October ; capital gains tax rise tipped
Borrowing costs	Long-term UK borrowing costs could halve the Chancellor's headroom
Energy	Brent crude up 18% in September to more than \$107/barrel on Middle East tensions
Business	Clearlake Capital takes full control of Chelsea FC as Boehly, Walter and Wyss sell
Steel	Welsh steelworkers put on "light duties" as cheap imported steel floods the market
Trade	'Made in Europe' law threatens UK plans for an EU reset

?? Weather & Environment

- **Drought**: new research shows **at least seven months of relentless rain** are needed to end the drought in England.
- Environment Agency, government and water companies step up efforts to prevent England remaining in drought into next spring.

- **London today:** dry start with plenty of sunshine, then showers developing into locally heavy, thundery downpours. Breezy. Highs around 17–19°C, lows near 11°C.
- Thunderstorm warnings have expired but rain continues to pose a **flood risk** for parts of the UK.
- Nepal's foreign minister used the flood disaster to call for a "global effort" on climate change; a study attributes a likely role to warming.

? Sport

- **Manchester United 2-3 Brighton** — a two-goal lead surrendered at Old Trafford; **Michael Carrick's** tenure is under real pressure for the first time.
- **Chelsea:** Clearlake Capital acquires full control as Todd Boehly, Mark Walter and Hansjörg Wyss sell their stakes.
- **Carabao Cup:** League Two **Fleetwood will host Arsenal** in the fourth round.
- **Scotland:** John Swinney defends **£45,000 business-class flights** to the World Cup.
- Luis de la Fuente extends his Spain contract to 2032.

? Feel-Good Roundup

- A **stranger's kidney** donation after seeing a Facebook plea saved a Welsh mum's life — she called it "mind-blowing".
- A 13-year-old boy became the new **voice of Thomas the Tank Engine**.
- A **man who failed GCSE maths 70 years ago** finally passed.
- **Alex Batty** says he has a renewed "sense of purpose" after being abducted by his mother.
- The "Deadlifting Grandma", **Martine Barons, 65**, is a triple world champion.

? Quick Summary

Category	Lead story
📰 Top Story	Palace vs Earl Spencer war of words over Diana memoir claims
📰 Politics	Burnham rejects "tax and spend socialist" label as 28 Oct Budget looms
📰 Reform	Mega-donations row; Farage says "broken no rules"
⚖️ Justice	Lucy Letby inquiry findings; Tate brothers extradition filed

Category	Lead story
🇬🇧 UK	Body found in search for Noah Woods, 3
🇨🇾 Wales	Reform Wales crisis — leader arrested then resigned; MS defects to Plaid
🇨🇾 Senedd	Plaid minority govt under budget pressure over Flying Start
🌐 World	US Fed hikes rates for first time in three years
🌐 World	Gaza — 21 killed including 8 children in building collapse
🌐 World	Assad regime "planned Austin Tice kidnap for weeks"
🌐 World	Nepal-Tibet floods: climate change likely played a role
🌐 Economy	UK inflation 3.1%; BoE holds, Fed hikes; Budget 28 Oct
🌐 Weather	Seven months of rain needed to end drought; thundery showers today
🏆 Sport	Man Utd 2-3 Brighton — Carrick under pressure
😊 Feel-Good	Facebook plea leads to stranger's lifesaving kidney donation

? Notes on sources

- Compiled from BBC News (UK / World / Politics / Wales), The Guardian, Nation.Cymru, Sky News, ITV News, gov.wales and Google News RSS aggregation.
- **Social media section omitted:** Nitter, Phice and Reddit scraping steps remain offline — no verified social reaction data available for today's run.
- Live top-story lists were pulled via the Playwright renderer (192.168.178.100:8090) to avoid serving cached copies.

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