UK Headlines — 18 Oct 2026

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Sunday edition — UK & world news sweep

? Top Story

France in turmoil: 1,200+ arrested as cost-of-living protests turn violent Over half a million people joined cost-of-living demonstrations across France, with disorder breaking out in multiple cities — a tourist office torched in Lyon, a town hall vandalised in Marseille, buildings ablaze and looting in Paris. The Independent's front page: "Hundreds arrested as French protests become violent"; the Sunday Telegraph pictures "Rioters on the rampage across France". Protesters cite rising costs and declining services. (BBC, The Papers)

?? UK Politics

- **Sunday Times investigation: SAS soldiers hunting Isis were arrested for murder** — Five SAS men were arrested on secret bases in Syria and Iraq in 2022 while still under police investigation, then sent back into the war zone within 48 hours and "left in limbo for three years" before being told no charges would be brought. All five have left the military and complained to the then-PM Starmer over "potentially unlawful arrests". MoD says allegations are "properly assessed and, where appropriate, investigated".
- **Reform UK still reeling from ITV Exposure undercover film** — The party faces questions over candidate vetting; a Reform activist was suspended after reportedly saying Muslims cannot be British; a Reform councillor quit over offensive remarks, and another called the TV report "vote interference". (BBC)
- **Farage in Sunday Express: "Britain will never rejoin the EU"** — Accuses PM Andy Burnham of an "outdated view of the world"; says pressure from Labour's traditional northern heartlands will block any move back toward the bloc. Comes as Burnham argues rejecting closer EU ties would be a "dereliction of duty".
- **Ex-top civil servant Olly Robbins reaches settlement with government over sacking** — Robbins was dismissed as the Foreign Office's most senior official over the vetting of Lord Mandelson. (BBC)

- **Police assessing a Palestine Action post by the national security adviser's wife.** (BBC)
- **Housing loans granted while Burnham was Mayor of Greater Manchester are being investigated by councillors.** (BBC)
- **Banks expect to be hit with higher taxes in the upcoming Budget.** (BBC Business)
- **Burnham invites Swinney to work together on "deeper Scottish devolution"** — The Scottish First Minister responded that Scotland is "not like Manchester", in a dig at the PM, while vowing to combat the "rise of the far right".
- **Lord Ricketts (ex-national security adviser): UK must protect against Russian "hybrid attacks".** (BBC)
- **Man jailed over Starmer-linked arson attacks deported** — Stanislav Carpiuc removed from the UK. (BBC)
- **Observer: "The childhood lottery"** — A child in Blackpool is 27 times more likely to miss school than one in Lambeth, per a new study; the children's commissioner declares a "national emergency".

?? Sunday Front Pages (via BBC The Papers)

Paper	Front page
Independent	Hundreds arrested as French protests become violent
Sunday Times	SAS men hunting Isis in Syria were arrested for murder
Sunday Telegraph	Civil Service fact-checkers embedded at the BBC
Mail on Sunday	Schoolchildren "brainwashed by left-wing BBC" (Bitesize row)
Sunday Express	Britain will never rejoin the EU (Farage interview)
Sun on Sunday	"Match of the date" — MOTD's Chapman & Cates step out as a couple
Mirror	"Humbled by your bravery" — Bedford crash doctor Eli Prior honoured
Sunday People	Rich pickings
Daily Star	Comedy legend fights off mugger (Paul Whitehouse)
Observer	The childhood lottery

The BBC itself is under a two-paper pincer: the Telegraph reports Civil Service fact-checkers embedded at the BBC (the corporation denies civil servants had any editorial influence), while the Mail on Sunday accuses BBC Bitesize of pushing "extreme left-wing views" via an "Increasing Immigration" game — the BBC says it will review the examples.

? World / International

- **Trump waives several Russia sanctions as row with Zelensky intensifies.** (BBC)
- **Several dead or injured in major fire at Canadian Forces Base Wainwright.** (BBC, breaking)
- **European diplomats attacked by Israeli settlers in the West Bank** — Belgium's foreign minister says masked settlers attacked Palestinians, Catholic representatives and Western diplomats/officials. (BBC)
- **At least 17 dead in crush at a Hindu (Durga Puja) festival event in India.** (BBC)
- **Anti-government protesters battle police in Albania** — cars burnt and stones thrown in Tirana. (BBC)
- **Oregon school attack (Bend):** a teacher fought the attacker before an armed dad shot the suspect multiple times; community grieving at Silver Rail Elementary. (BBC)
- **A wave of homemade synthetic drugs is sweeping the US and deepening the crisis.** (BBC)
- **Satellite photos show a luxury boat with 50m pool and water slides near Kim Jong Un's summer retreat.** (BBC)
- **Canada whale rescue tragedy:** the international operation to free the last 30 captive whales made headlines — then five of them died. (BBC)
- **Musk back in the spotlight** — a somersaulting sports car wins headlines for technological daring, but politics dims the awe. (AFP)

??????? Wales

- **King Charles and Queen Camilla opened the new Senedd term this week** — the King greeted the Senedd in Welsh, with Rhun ap Iorwerth's Plaid Cymru government in power for the first time following May's election.
- **YouGov Wales snapshot (Oct 2026):** Burnham is Wales's most popular politician (+14 net); Farage the least popular (−43); ap Iorwerth splits opinion (+1, 33% fav / 32% unfav). Plaid Cymru seen as a "main party" by 78% — more than Labour (67%) — with the Conservatives on just 31%. 60% disapprove of the UK government's record; 50% disapprove of the Welsh government's.
- **Nurse stole £750k from 99-year-old woman** for cosmetic surgery and home improvements. (BBC Wales)
- **Man arrested after body discovered in a flat in Holyhead** — North Wales Police investigating. (ITV/BBC)
- **Reform MS Jason O'Connell's smart glasses** (autocue feature) spark debate in the Senedd.
- **Ex-Reform politician likens the party's response to criticism to "an abuser".** (BBC Wales)
- **Data centre developers may build a "climate-wrecking" gas power plant next door.** (BBC Wales)

- **New appeal over the mystery of a body found in a reservoir two years ago.**
- **Sport: Elfyn Evans returns home as World Rally champion**; Scarlets thrash Newcastle (Costelow injury worry); Wales football — Swansea told to use the West Ham defeat as fuel.
- **Tom Jones on the money?** "I'm not sure how King Charles would feel about being replaced by Tom Jones on our money." (BBC Wales feature)

?? UK Round-up

- **More NHS staff sacked over attacks victims' records** — Nottingham University Hospitals Trust introduces a new protection system after the Barnaby Webber / Grace O'Malley-Kumar / Ian Coates records scandal. (BBC)
- **Comedian Paul Whitehouse mugged at a London cash machine** — the 68-year-old fought back and the thief "scuttled away empty-handed". (Daily Star / BBC)
- **Boy, 16, and 80-year-old man die in light aircraft crash near Loch Lomond.** (BBC)
- **DIY SOS to be "rested" next year to save money**, the BBC confirms.
- **Harry and Meghan at their first joint engagement since returning to the UK** — a visit to a community recording studio in Nottingham.
- **The Celebrity Traitors:** Miranda's tears, joy and dance moves steal the show.
- **Husband calls for the PM to intervene after wife detained in Egypt.** (Birmingham)

?? Weather

- **Why hasn't the UK had any named storms yet?** — BBC Weather explainer (with 400+ comments) as the season stays unusually quiet; waves crashing on Blackpool prom.
- Wales today: sunny, highs 13–14°C, lows 4–7°C; light rain due Monday.
- **Northern Lights illuminated skies across the UK** this week.

? Polling — YouGov Wales Snapshot, October 2026

Sample: 1,039 Welsh adults 16+.

Politician	Net favourability (Wales)
Andy Burnham (PM, Labour)	**+14** (49% fav / 35% unfav)
Rhun ap Iorwerth (FM, Plaid Cymru)	+1 (33/32)
Ed Davey (Lib Dem)	−6
Kemi Badenoch (Con)	−22

Politician	Net favourability (Wales)
Zack Polanski (Green)	−26
Nigel Farage (Reform)	**−43** (23/66)

Government	Approve	Disapprove
UK (Labour)	18%	60%
Welsh (Plaid Cymru)	22%	50%

Most important issues for Wales: health 48%, economy 44%, immigration 33%, housing 24%, education 20%. Welsh party leaders other than ap Iorwerth are largely anonymous — ≥68% "don't know" for every one, including Reform Wales leader Helen Jenner (61% don't know even among May Reform voters).

? Feel-Good Roundup

- **Off-duty doctor Eli Prior**, injured herself in the Bedford plane crash, stayed on the train to help wounded passengers — set to receive a Pride of Britain Award ("humbled by your bravery", says air ambulance doctor Rob Wilmore).
- **Ex-ambulance call handler saves collapsed man's life** after spotting his dogs behaving strangely. (BBC Wales)
- **RNLI rescue: the moment a sailor was saved from a sinking yacht.** (BBC Wales video)
- **Elfyn Evans crowned World Rally champion** and welcomed home.
- **Emotional TV plea for cancer research led to a meeting with the PM** for campaigner Archie Goodburn.
- **Gavin and Stacey stars to feature** in a festive Julia Donaldson TV adaptation.

? Quick Summary

#	Story	Category
1	France: 1,200+ arrested, 500k+ at violent cost-of-living protests	◫ World
2	Sunday Times: SAS men arrested for murder mid-Isis ops, 3-year limbo	◫ UK
3	Reform UK vetting questions grow after ITV Exposure undercover film	◫ UK
4	Farage: Britain will "never rejoin the EU"; Burnham pushes closer ties	◫ UK

#	Story	Category
5	Trump waives Russia sanctions as Zelensky row intensifies	□□ World
6	Israeli settlers attack European diplomats in West Bank	□□ World
7	Canada base fire: several dead or injured	□□ World
8	King Charles opens new Plaid-led Senedd term	□□□□□□□□□□□□□ Wales
9	YouGov Wales: Burnham +14, Farage −43; Plaid the "main party" (78%)	□□ Polling
10	Observer: Blackpool child 27× more likely to miss school than Lambeth	□□ UK
11	Whitehouse fights off mugger; Loch Lomond crash kills 2	□□□□ UK
12	BBC under fire: Telegraph (embedded fact-checkers) + Mail (Bitesize)	□□ Media

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Compiled: Sunday 18 October 2026, 08:00–08:20 BST — via SearXNG search sweep + Playwright fetches of BBC UK / BBC Politics / BBC Wales / BBC World / BBC The Papers / YouGov. Social-media reaction steps (Nitter, Reddit, Phice) skipped — services dead this run.

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