

This newsletter is primarily for Amnesty members and is written in my capacity as Amnesty UK Country Coordinator for human rights in the UK. It aims to give a brief overview of recent events and issues, and to feed into the Snapshot- a regular paper written for members of the Collective for Human Rights in the UK, an open group for anyone with a deeper interest, and taking a broader look at some of the issues.

We need to stand up to the growth of authoritarianism in the UK which is being fuelled by many of the current issues. We can only do this if we know what is going on. This news letter and the deeper Snapshot from the Collective aims to help raise awareness and understanding of events, policies and new legislation . So please read, share and talk about the issues.

Please note the next newsletter will be published at the end of October. The September Snapshot issued to members of the Collective for Human Rights in the UK looks at 'Digital ID is dead! Long live Digital ID! – although it is no longer mandatory it is coming in by default.

If you'd like to receive the deeper discussion paper please join the Collective for Human Rights in the UK – your only commitment is to receive the paper, read it and talk about it. If you'd like to be more pro-active, discuss the issues on-line, and help plan constructive action join the Special Interest Group for Human Rights in the UK. Both of these are open to everyone.-

To join -

Contact me by Email at: elena.fowler@amnesty.org.uk.
or on the Amnesty Community Platform



◆ **Amnesty International UK**
Campaigns on Amnesty International UK
Campaigns on UK Right to Food - We are calling on the new Prime Minister **to introduce a Right to Food Bill** and make sure everyone has access to the food they need to live a healthy life.

¹ Pictures are Ai generated unless indicated.

Read Amnesty International UK's latest policy briefing on the state of the nation's social security system. And download the pdf. <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/knowledge-hub/all-resources/sanctioning-harm-universal-credit-in-the-uk/>:

Read how **the Trussell Trust has found 'Universal Credit doesn't know the cost of living.'**: <https://malg.org.uk/new-trussell-trust-research-reveals-that-over-half-of-people-receiving-universal-credit-are-unable-to-afford-enough-food>

The minimum wage is reviewed every year by independent experts, but what food, energy bills or transport Universal Credit will cover is never checked, so Universal Credit 'is a support system that's not working.'

Trussell Trust want people to **send a postcard to your MP** to ask them to write to the Work and Pensions Secretary calling for a fair, independent process for setting Universal Credit rates:



<https://universalcredit.trusselltrust.justpost.cards/>

- ◆ **Amnesty is building a new Refugees Welcome Network- To join please email Ulrike.schmidt@amnesty.org.uk.**

- ◆ **The new Immigration and Asylum Bill continues its way through Parliament.**
– (also featured in last months news)

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood introduced a bill that reforms the interpretation of the right to family life under Article 8 of the ECHR, changes the Modern Slavery regime, and establishes a new Independent Immigration Appeals Authority. While the government has announced plans for new community sponsorship schemes for refugees, most of the Bill is tightening the screw on the most vulnerable people, making it even more difficult, or near impossible, to settle in the UK, build a life and contribute to our economy and society.

The Refugee Council says the proposed legislation could:

- Force refugees to pay an unfair a flat-rate charge of **£10,000** for the support they needed after arriving in the UK, having lost almost everything.
- Put nearly **200,000 people's lives** on hold as they get stuck in a backlog of asylum appeals decisions
- **Keep refugee families apart**, preventing thousands of children from being reunited with their parents.

The repayment plans are expected to take the form of monthly instalments direct to the Home Office, similar to the student loans repayment process, once immigrants are

earning above a set threshold, and before they can be considered for settled status. (Indefinite Leave to Remain). Migrants need settled status to live, work and study in the UK on a permanent basis, so the repayment requirement effectively becomes part of the pathway to settlement rather than a standalone charge. In their first 12 months in the UK they are not permitted to work, and after 12 months must first apply for permission and receive permission from the Home Office. Working before receiving permission — even after 12 months — is still a breach of the Immigration Rules. These proposals can only contribute to prolonging the high level of poverty endured by most asylum seekers.

For in-depth information on the Immigration and Asylum Bill 2026 and more detailed articles on the proposals: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10940/> and <https://www.justice.org.uk/briefings/asylum-and-immigration-bill>



Please write to your MP to voice your concerns. You can use the letter formulated by the Refugee Council as a template for your own letter to your MP, or join the on-line action by the Refugee council: https://refugee-council.movement-action.org/p/immigration-and-asylum-bill-email-to-mp?utm_source=2627EMQ215B&utm_medium=email

- ◆ Amnesty UK's Disabled People's Human Rights Network, Student Action Network, Anti-Racism Network, Feminist Network and Queer Rights Network have issued **a joint statement following the death of Professor Jason Arday.**¹



Read the statement here:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/get-involved/join-the-movement/join-a-group-or-network/disabled-peoples-hr-network/disabled-peoples-human-rights-network-blog/our-collective-statement-on-the-death-of-professor-jason-arday/>

Also read Carole Cadwallader The Jason Arday Reckoning - <https://broligarchy.substack.com/p/the-jason-arday-reckoning> - The attempts to cover up the complicity of the UK media's role in his death may be its sickest move

- ◆ **There has been a long running dispute between Apple and the UK government caused by the government giving Apple a Technical Capability Notice.**

These are secret notices, issued by the Home Office under the Investigatory Powers Act. The 2025 notice wanted to remove “electronic protection” of user data, allowing the state to view fully encrypted material held on iPhones and iCloud worldwide. In response to the first notice, Apple switched off Advanced Data Protection (ADP) for UK

¹ Picture from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jason_Arday

users, meaning that UK users of iCloud lost the extra encryption layer provided for everyone else in the world. Technically, Apple can access and hand over UK users' data if requested by the government, but cannot do that for users anywhere else in the world.

Commenting on the 2025 notice, **Amnesty said:**

'Encryption is a crucial enabler of human rights online and offline. Human rights defenders, journalists, and everyone else rely on the security and privacy of their devices to protect them not only from unlawful government spying, but also from cybercrime and other attacks from non-state actors. Weakening encryption, or mandating back doors, leaves all users more vulnerable'.²

It is understood that **Apple has now received a new technical capability order** requiring access to encrypted cloud backups belonging to British users. This appears to be pushing for guaranteed access/backdoor capability rather than relying on Apple's case-by-case requests and cooperation.

In October last year, Liberty and Privacy International brought unsuccessful legal action alongside Apple challenging the lawfulness of the TCN regime. Apple are now challenging the second notice.

In considering the second challenge Ruth Ehrlich, Director of External Relations at Liberty, said:



“This is a hugely important case that will have far-reaching implications for the public’s privacy rights well into the future. Opening a backdoor to all of that information carries a wide range of risks to our personal data. It is critical that the Government listens to the many concerns and commits to protecting our privacy rights.”

For more information on TCN’s and how they affect our rights - join the Collective for Human Rights in the UK and read the latest Snapshot

- ◆ **Liberty continues its campaign to protect Human rights in the UK and reset rights and liberties in the UK:**

² <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/latuk-governm est/ent-order-apple-allow-encrypted-data-access-will-severely-harm-users/>



‘In the last decade, successive governments have introduced ever more restrictions on protest, and people feel that their ability to speak out about the issues they care about is more restricted than ever. - We are living in a time of rapid technological change, and people want to see safeguards in place as new

technologies are rolled out by the police and the state.’

Sign the petition:

<https://action.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/page/194941/petition/1?ea.url.id=9795573>

- ◆ **The EHRC's updated code of practice on single-sex services came into force on August 5, 2026.** The Good Law Project is supporting a legal challenge to the lawfulness of the code, focusing on the sections that direct service providers to abandon trans-inclusive spaces.³

The statutory guidance was passed under the “negative procedure” for secondary legislation, which means that it came into force through a statutory order, with minimal parliamentary oversight.

Biological sex now determines access to single-sex spaces. Problems remain. There is a proportionality/alternative-provision safeguard rather than a total ban on trans people accessing single-sex spaces. That means that if a provider excludes them from, for example, a washroom space matching their gender identity, they're expected to make sure there's *something* the person can use instead, such as a gender-neutral toilet. Together with other critics the GLP maintains that the guidance is discriminatory, legally flawed, and harmful in practice because it directs service providers and organisations to exclude trans people (including those with a Gender Recognition Certificate) from single-sex spaces corresponding to their lived gender.

The guidance recognises it is a legitimate aim for single-sex provision to include ensuring the safety, privacy and dignity of women, men or both. But proportionality considerations require the service provider to balance the benefits of the single-sex service (such as reduced risk to women in contexts of undress or male violence) against the needs of all potential users and the impact on those excluded, including trans people. The framework forces trans-inclusive women's organisations, community groups, gyms, and leisure facilities into a stark choice: exclude trans people entirely or stop operating as single-sex spaces. They warn the guidance increases discrimination,

³ <https://www.scenemag.co.uk/good-law-project-backs-legal-challenge-to-government-and-ehrc-over-transphobic-trans-guidance/>

and risks forcing individuals to disclose their gender history, and places a strain on



limited accessible toilet facilities.⁴

For more details and to support the GLP trans rights campaign see:

<https://goodlawproject.org/campaign/trans-fighting-fund/>

◆ **Urgent Action Update issued on the case of Defend our Juries protesters in the UK.** - In June, The UK Court of Appeal upheld the proscription of Palestine Action, overturning the High Court's February ruling that it was unlawful. During July, some 300 people were arrested under **Terrorism legislation** after protesting in London to mark one year since the proscription of Palestine Action and for expressing support for a proscribed organisation under Section 12 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Defend Our Juries, says more than 3,500 people have been arrested after supporting the group. Retirees make up a significant number of the nearly 3,000 people arrested for supporting Palestine Action since the organisation was proscribed.⁵

Justice Minister Alex Davies-Jones said anyone supporting a "terrorist organisation will feel the full force of the law" and places in prison will be made available for anyone convicted.⁶

ARRESTS AT PEACEFUL PROTESTS CONTINUE- TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THE MODEL LETTER found here:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur45/1370/2026/en/>

SIGN THE PETITION: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur45/1370/2026/en/>

⁴ <https://sex-matters.org/posts/updates/what-is-in-the-new-guidance/>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/feb/16/arrested-retirees-vindicated-by-ruling-against-palestine-action-proscription>

⁶ <https://www.thenationalnews.com/news/uk/2025/08/11/half-of-arrested-palestine-action-supporters-over-60-as-defiance-against-uk-government-widens/>

- ◆ **Seven people have been charged with vandalising Donald Trump's Turnberry golf course in Scotland, accused of malicious damage "having a terrorist connection".**⁷

Palestine Action has now been designated a terrorist group by the US government, which has announced targeted sanctions against it. The Guardian reported the US confirmed it had "taken action" against the network, Palestine Action has "promoted its violent, criminal, and terrorist acts on social media, encouraging the use of similar tactics internationally, including within the United States and along the US-Mexican border".⁸

The UK **Supreme Court** has confirmed it will hear an **appeal** by Palestine Action co-founder Huda Ammori challenging the government's **proscription** of the group as a



terrorist organization. The hearing is scheduled for November 4-5.⁹

To read more about the significance of a 'terrorism connection', the different approach taken by Scotland, and when and how the Jury learns they are hearing a terrorist case - sign up to the Collective for Human Rights in the UK and read for the latest Snapshot.

- ◆ **Sainsbury's has suspended live facial recognition (LFR) technology at the East Dulwich branch while it investigates an incident where customer waiting for staff approval to complete his alcohol purchase at a self-service checkout, was mistakenly identified as a suspected shoplifter and told to leave.**¹⁰

Transport for London is trialling live facial recognition cameras on the London Underground in an expansion of its use at London railway stations.¹¹

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/aug/28/seven-charged-damaging-trump-scottish-golf-course-accused-terrorist-connection>

⁸ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/palestine-action-trump-terrorist-group-b3039889.html>

⁹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c87n321w9ql0>

¹⁰ <https://www.computing.co.uk/news/2026/sainsbury-s-suspends-facial-recognition-at-london-store-after-shopper-wrongly-challenged?>

¹¹ <https://www.btp.police.uk/news/btp/news/england/btp-expands-live-facial-recognition-lfr-trial-into-london-underground-stations/?ref=digitaljetty.com>



For more detail of increasing surveillance systems function creep towards authoritarianism, join the Collective for Human Rights in the UK and read the latest Snapshot .

◆ **Report. *Britain's Political Prisoners***, suggests Britain has a new breed of political prisoner. The report analyses the imprisonment of protestors in Britain since 2019 and argues that courts are increasingly using remand detention, contempt proceedings and lengthy custodial sentences in response to acts of civil disobedience and direct action. Increased use of severe punishment, including imprisonment before trial, is an indicator of authoritarianism.

- ◆ **The Representation of the People Bill** returns to the Commons on Wednesday 2 September for its remaining stages before going to the Lords.

It lowers the voting age to 16, expands automated voter registration, adds bank cards to accepted voter ID. Its key purpose is to tighten the rules on political funding, and stop foreigners using money to interfere in UK elections. Company donations will be capped based on two years of revenue, and MPs will be barred from accepting foreign gifts above £2,230.¹² The government has separately moved to cap overseas electors' donations and loans at £100,000 a year and ban all cryptocurrency donations, following the Rycroft Review into foreign financial interference.¹³

However, **the Bill in its current form, fails to stop the super-rich from buying political influence because it only addresses foreign sourced donations and does not introduce an overall cap on how much a UK-based individual, company, or union can give.**¹⁴

This is significant for Reform UK. Jolyon Maugham, executive director of the Good Law Project, said:



“Reform UK claim they’re the voice of the people in Westminster, but if you want to know who they’re really speaking for, just follow the money.”¹⁵

For more details of how reform has moved from having no policies, to their recent policy announcements, and how they take advantage of the loophole in

¹² <https://www.thelawyerportal.com/blog/a-summary-of-the-representation-of-the-people-bill/>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cap-on-donations-from-overseas-electors-and-ban-on-crypto-donations-to-protect-democracy>

¹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2026/jul/12/uk-cap-political-donations-stop-rich-buying-influence>

¹⁵ <https://unearthed.greenpeace.org/2026/06/24/trump-donors-oil-companies-funding-alliance-for-responsible-citizenship/>

party political funding and are falling into line with the Trump administration ,
see the latest snapshot from the Collective for Human Rights in the UK.