

# Tory ministers have rewritten the law to deny increased disability benefit payments to more than 150,000 people

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Dan Bloom

23/02/2017

Panicking Tory ministers have rewritten the law to deny increased benefit payments to more than 150,000 people.

Two tribunals had ruled the [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP) should expand the reach of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) - which helps disabled people fund their living costs.

Yet the DWP warned that would cost £3.7bn extra by 2022 - so unveiled emergency legislation to stop the change happening.

But there was fury after she tightened the law without consulting the government's own Social Security Advisory Committee.

- [Brutal Tory cuts slice £1bn off real spending on social care - despite Theresa May's boasts](#)

Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary Debbie Abrahams stormed: "Instead of listening to the court's criticisms of PIP assessments and correcting these injustices, this government have instead decided to undermine the legal basis of the rulings.

"This is an unprecedented attempt to subvert an independent tribunal judgement by a right-wing government with contempt for judicial process.

"By shifting the goal posts, the Tory Government will strip entitlements from over 160,000 disabled people, money which the courts believe is rightfully theirs. This is a step too far, even for this Tory government."

A spokesman for Disability Rights UK added: "These new regulations will hit disabled people and those with serious health conditions very hard.

"The DWP itself admits this will include for example those who have a learning disability, diabetes, epilepsy, anxiety or dementia."

- [Tory cuts are seizing 800 vital Motability cars a WEEK from disabled people](#)

There are two types of PIP - the "daily living" element and the "mobility" element.

Disabled people are assessed for each type by totting up their circumstances under a 'points' system, where 8 points get a basic rate and 12 points an enhanced rate.

The first tribunal said more points should be available in the "mobility" element for people who suffer "overwhelming psychological distress" when travelling alone.

That would have handed new money to 143,000 people who previously received nothing for the mobility element of PIP.

Half of them would have received the enhanced rate of £57.45 a week, and the other half the standard rate of £21.80 a week, the DWP said.

Another 21,000 people would have moved from the standard to the enhanced rate, giving them an extra £35.65 a week.

The second tribunal recommended more points in the "daily living" element for people who need help to take medication and monitor a health condition. This would have affected just over 1,000 people, a DWP impact assessment said.

- [We're going back to Victorian times, where disabled people were hidden away: My Wigan Pier story](#)

The DWP said together, making these changes would have cost taxpayers £560m in 2017/18, £650m in 2018/19, £760m in 2019/20, £830m in 2020/21, and £910m in 2021/22.

Ms Mordaunt told MPs in a written statement: "If not urgently addressed, the operational complexities could undermine the consistency of assessments, leading to confusion for all those using the legislation, including claimants, assessors, and the courts.

"It is because of the urgency caused by these challenges, and the implications on public expenditure, that proposals for these amendments have not been referred to the Social Security Advisory Committee before making the regulations."

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# Brutal Tory cuts slice £1bn off real spending on social care - despite Theresa May's boasts

Theresa May has boasted she is giving councils more money - but spending in 'real terms' has plummeted 8.4%, the independent Commons Library said

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BY DAN BLOOM  
18:00, 21 FEB 2017



Theresa May has boasted she's giving councils more money - but what about her record (Photo: Getty)



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Brutal Tory cuts have sliced more than £1 billion off spending for social care, devastating research reveals.

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Theresa May has boasted she is giving councils "more money" for care as she refuses their demands for a fresh cash pot.

Yet 'real terms' spending - once inflation is counted - has plummeted 8.4% since the Tories took power, the House of Commons Library said.

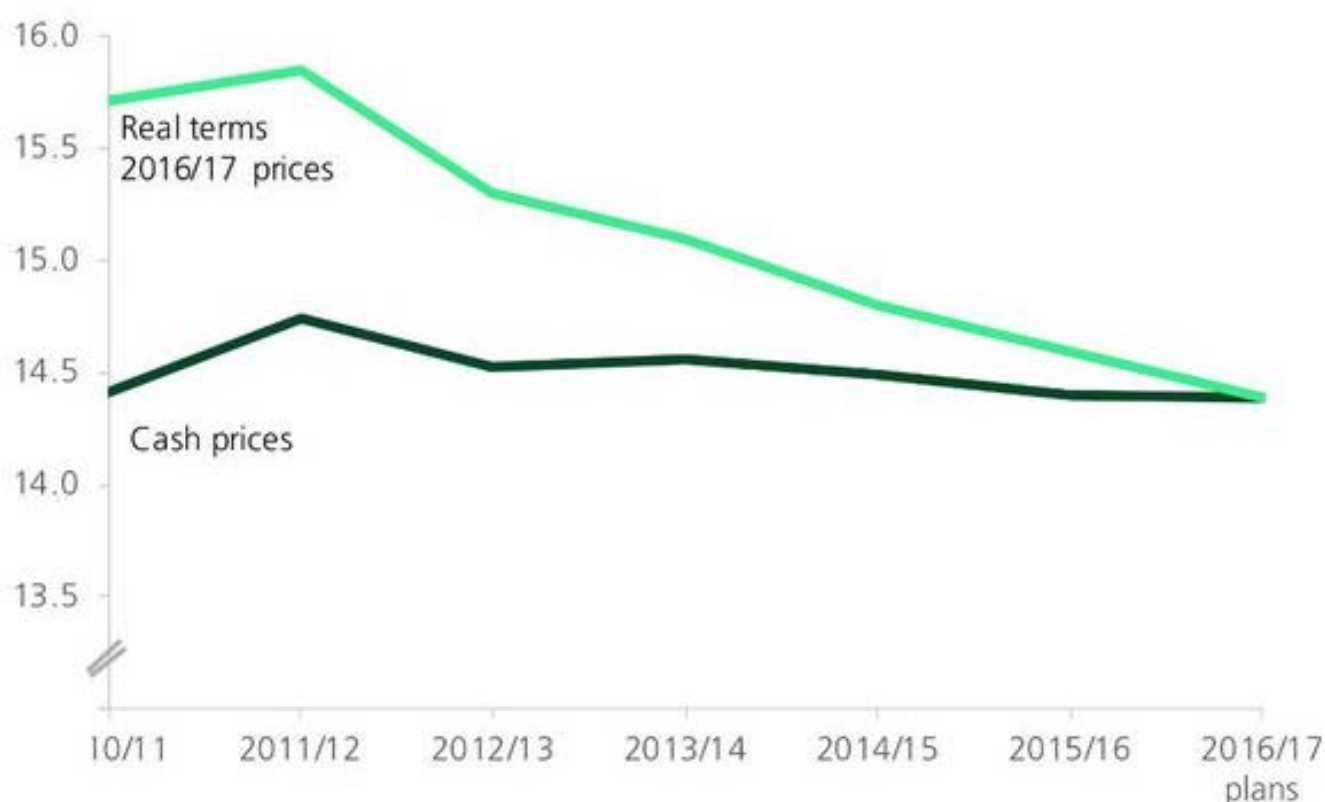
In [a new briefing for MPs](#), the respected independent body said England's spending on social care was £14.4bn in 2016/17 - down from £15.7bn in 2010/11 when measured in last year's prices.

**READ MORE**

- How much will my council tax be in 2017? Our payments calculator as bills soar for social care

The figures emerged today as town halls [\*\*warned of more cuts to bin collections, parks, libraries and leisure centres\*\*](#) after ministers failed to offer extra cash from April.

**Figure 2: Net current expenditure (£billions) on adult social care in England**



**The House of Commons Library revealed how spending has fallen in real terms** (Photo: House of Commons Library)

Cash-strapped councils had pleaded for new funds as they face a £5.8bn budget black hole by 2020 - £2.6bn of which relates to social care.

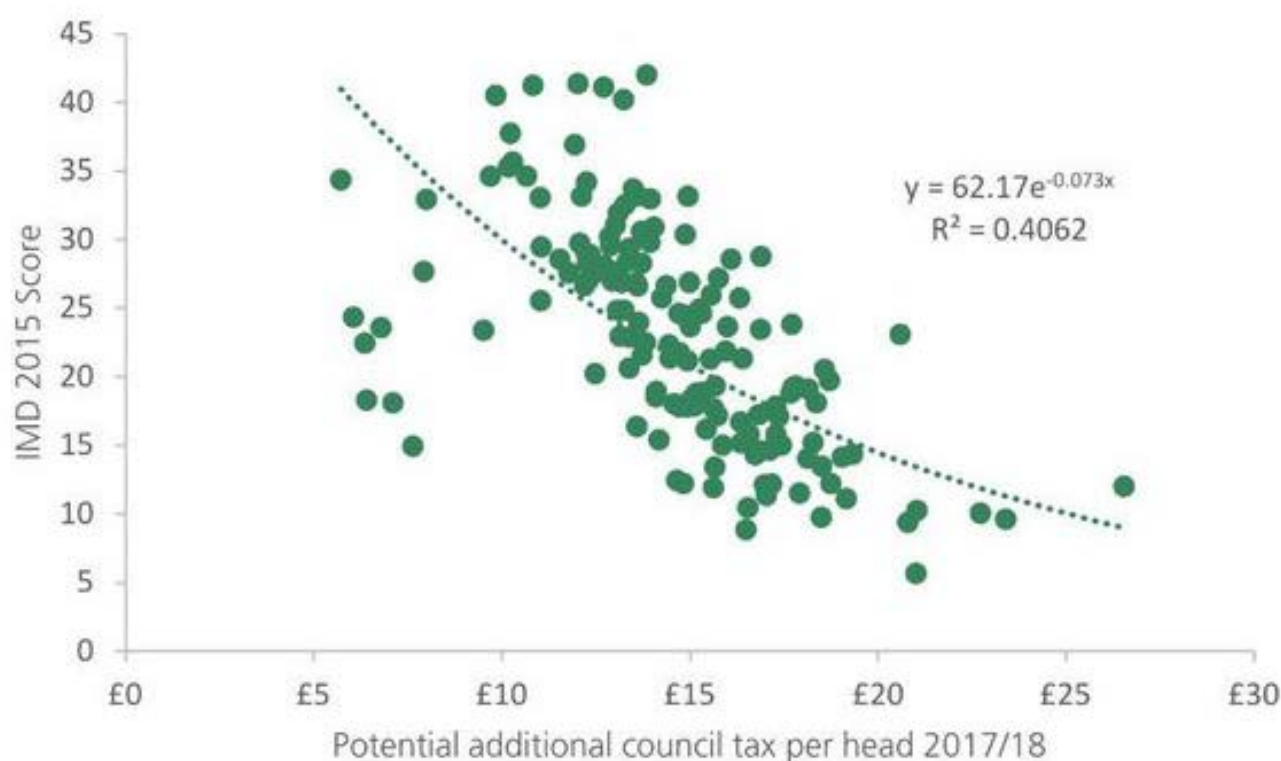
But the final local government finance settlement for 2017/18, slipped online by Tory ministers at 8pm on Monday night, did not make any new offer of help.

Local Government Association boss Lord Porter condemned the "hugely disappointing" statement and warned even 5% council tax hikes, planned by more than half of authorities, will not plug the huge gap.

The Commons Library also confirmed his warning that the benefits will vary massively across England - saying poor areas will lose out.

Councils "with higher levels of deprivation tend to have a lower potential amount per head to raise" by hiking bills 5%, the Commons Library said.

**Figure 4: Relationship between deprivation and additional council tax per head**



**And it showed deprived areas benefit less from hiking council tax by 5%** (Photo: House of Commons Library)

Lord Porter said: "Councils, the NHS, charities and care providers remain united around the desperate need for new government funding for social care.

"By continuing to ignore these warnings, social care remains in crisis and councils and the NHS continue to be pushed to the financial brink."

He added: "This will push councils perilously close to the financial edge over the next few years and force them all to make significant reductions to the local services communities rely on, including filling potholes, collecting waste, maintaining our parks and green spaces and running children's centres, leisure centres and libraries, to plug growing funding gaps."

The government's summary of the settlement shows English councils' 'core spending power' falling from £43.3bn in 2016/17 to £43bn in 2017/18.

Shadow Communities Secretary Teresa Pearce branded the settlement "smoke and mirrors – pushing numbers around but not offering any new money".

She added: "Shifting the burden on to council tax payers creates a postcode lottery in social care services. Wealthy areas will prosper whilst poorer communities will struggle.

## How much will my council tax go up in April 2017?

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"Libraries, youth centres and Sure Start centres have closed. Child protection services are creaking. Frail elderly people and vulnerable disabled people are being left lonely and isolated."

Prime Minister Theresa May told MPs in December: "The government are putting more money into social care through the better care fund, and by the end of this Parliament it will be billions of pounds extra... We have been putting more money into social care and health."

The government is letting councils raise up to £900m extra for care over the next two years, but £240m of this comes from raiding another council pot, the New Homes Bonus, and the rest comes from council tax.

A Department for Communities and Local Government spokesman said: "Our historic 4-year funding settlement gives councils the certainty they need to plan ahead, with more than £200 billion available until 2019/20 to spend on services local people want.

"The figures published yesterday simply confirm the final funding allocations for the second year of the four year offer accepted by 97% of councils."

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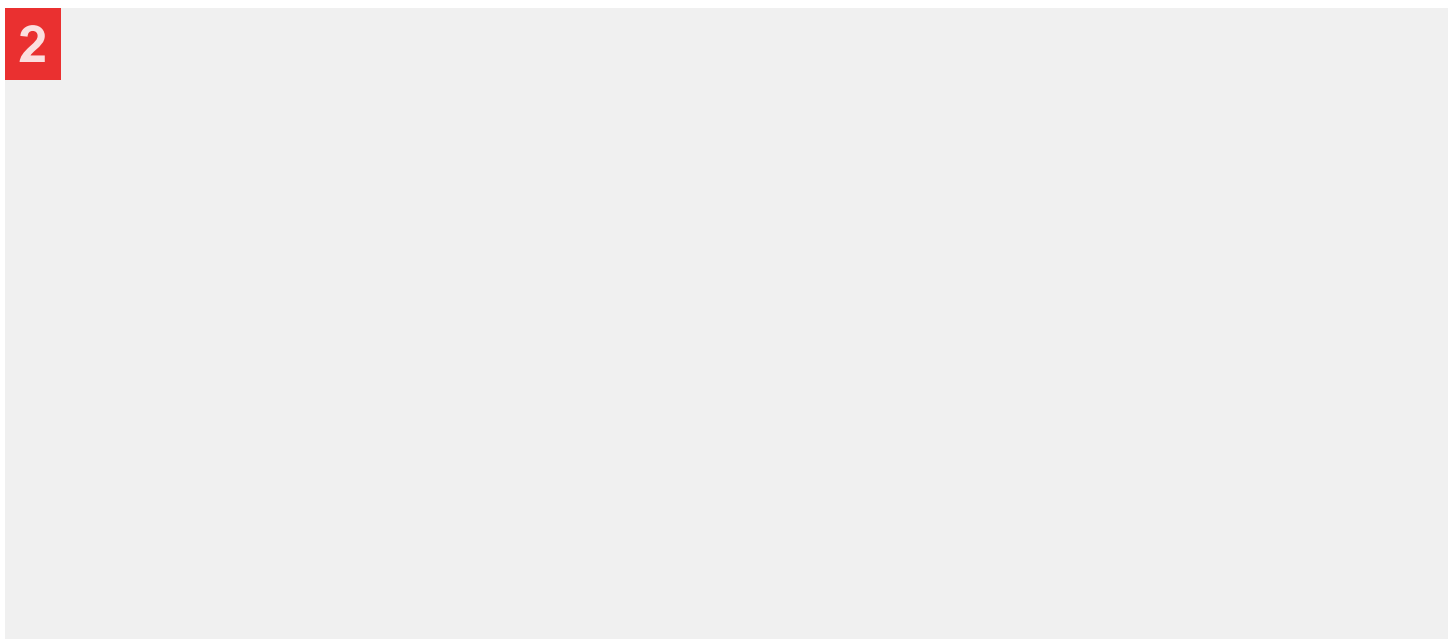
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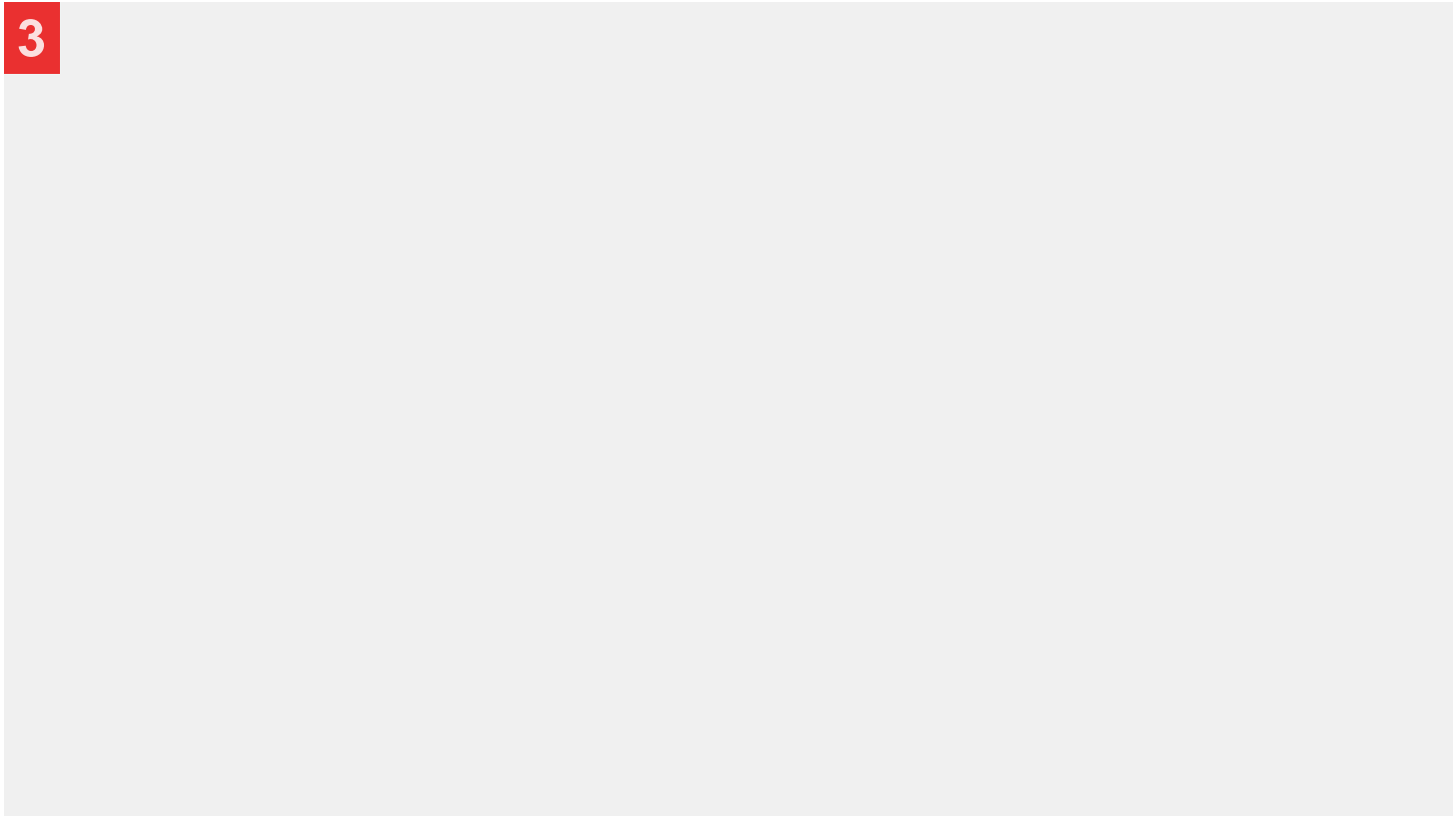
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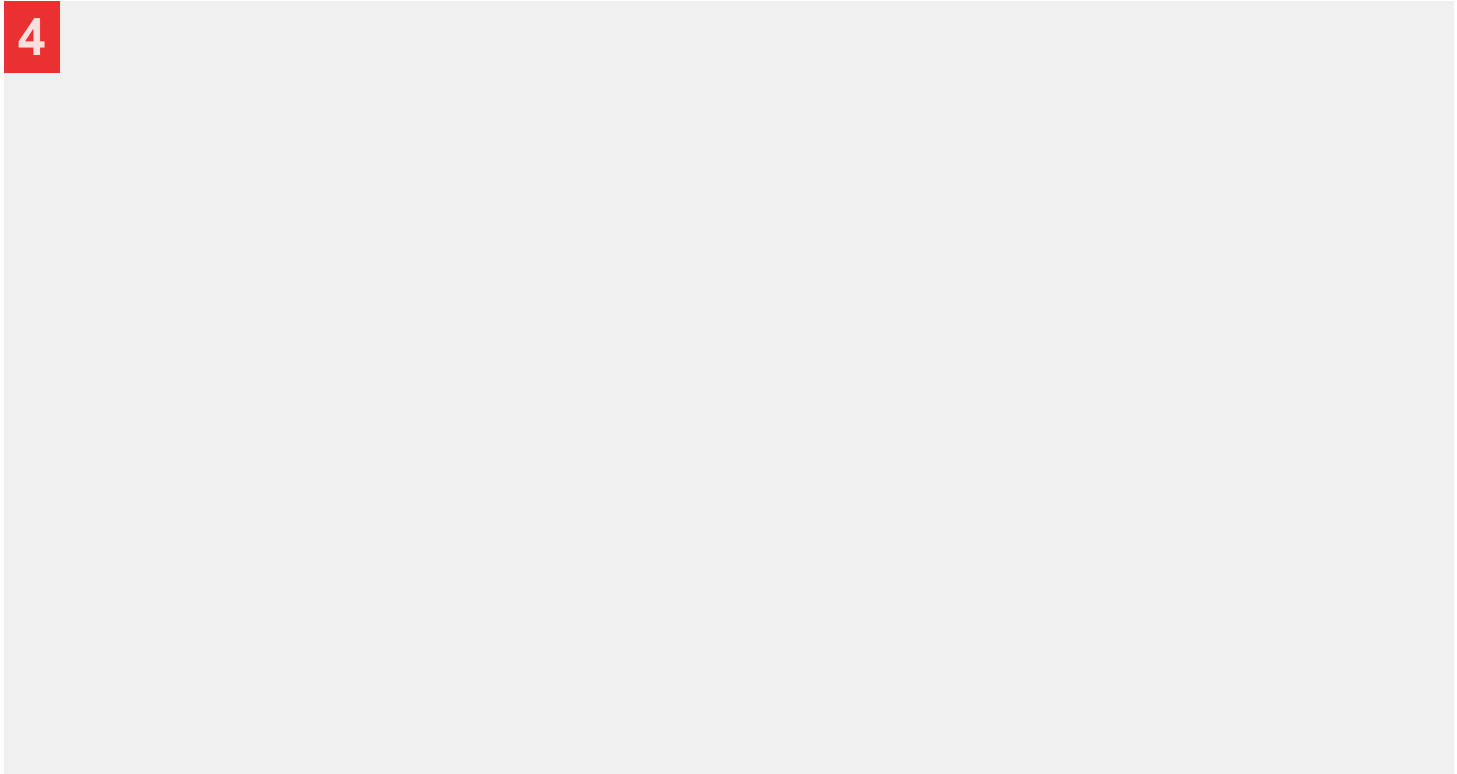






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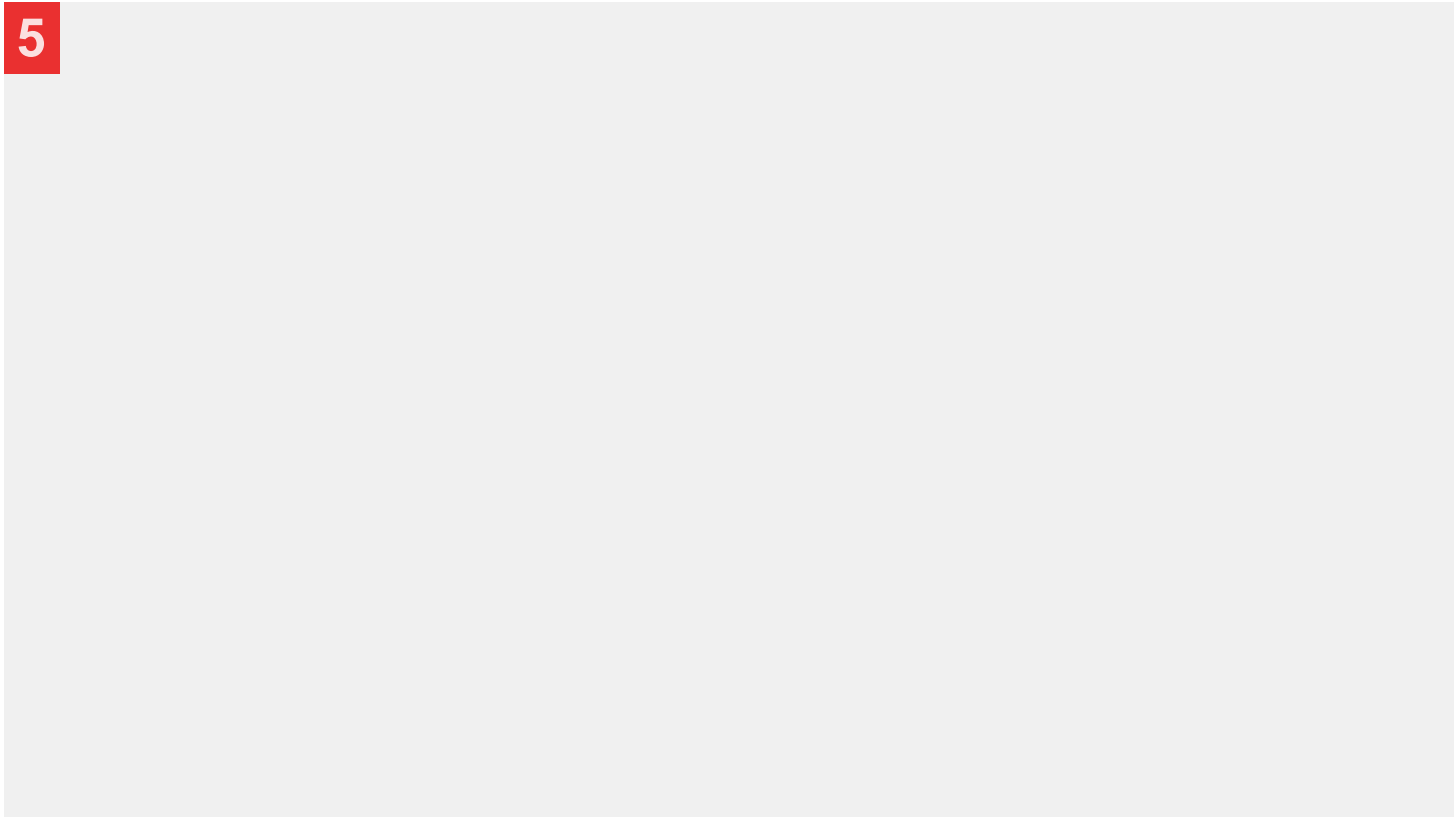
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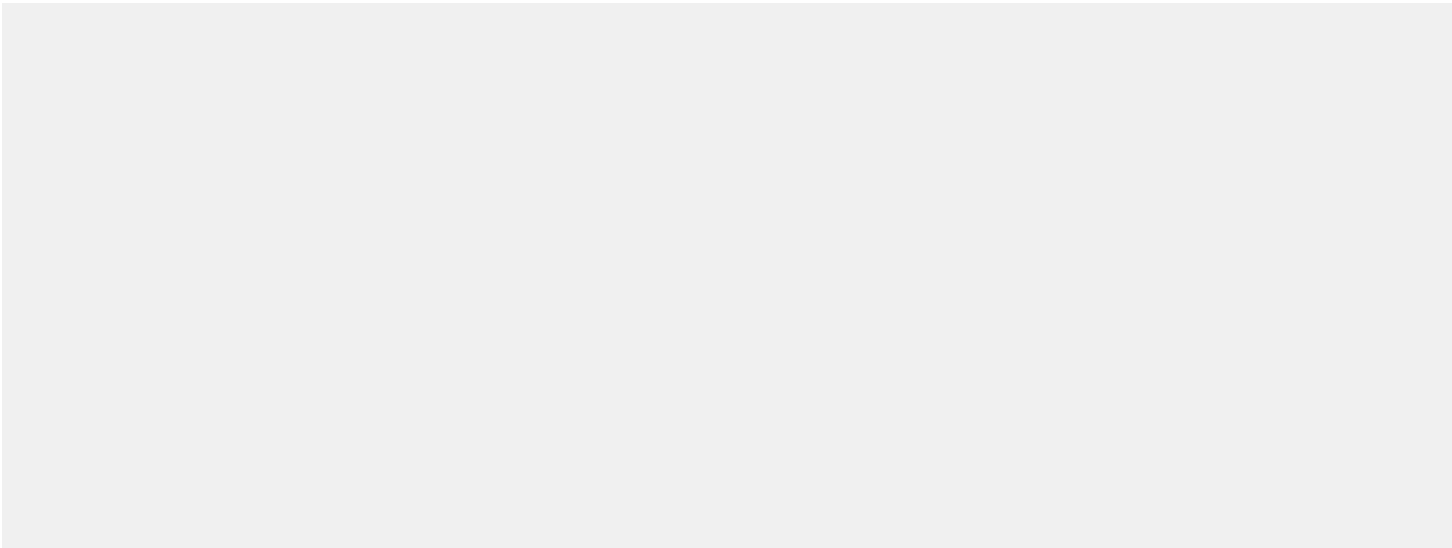


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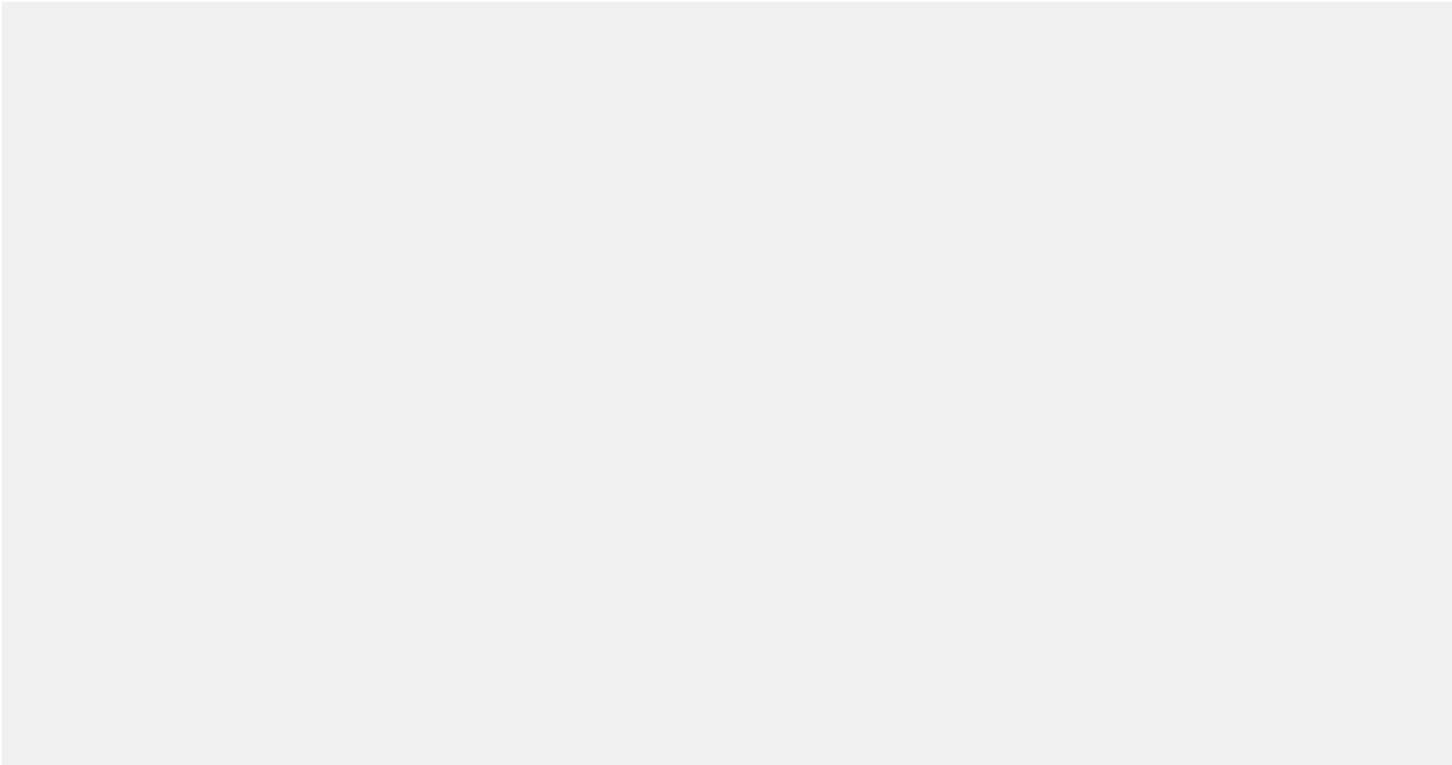






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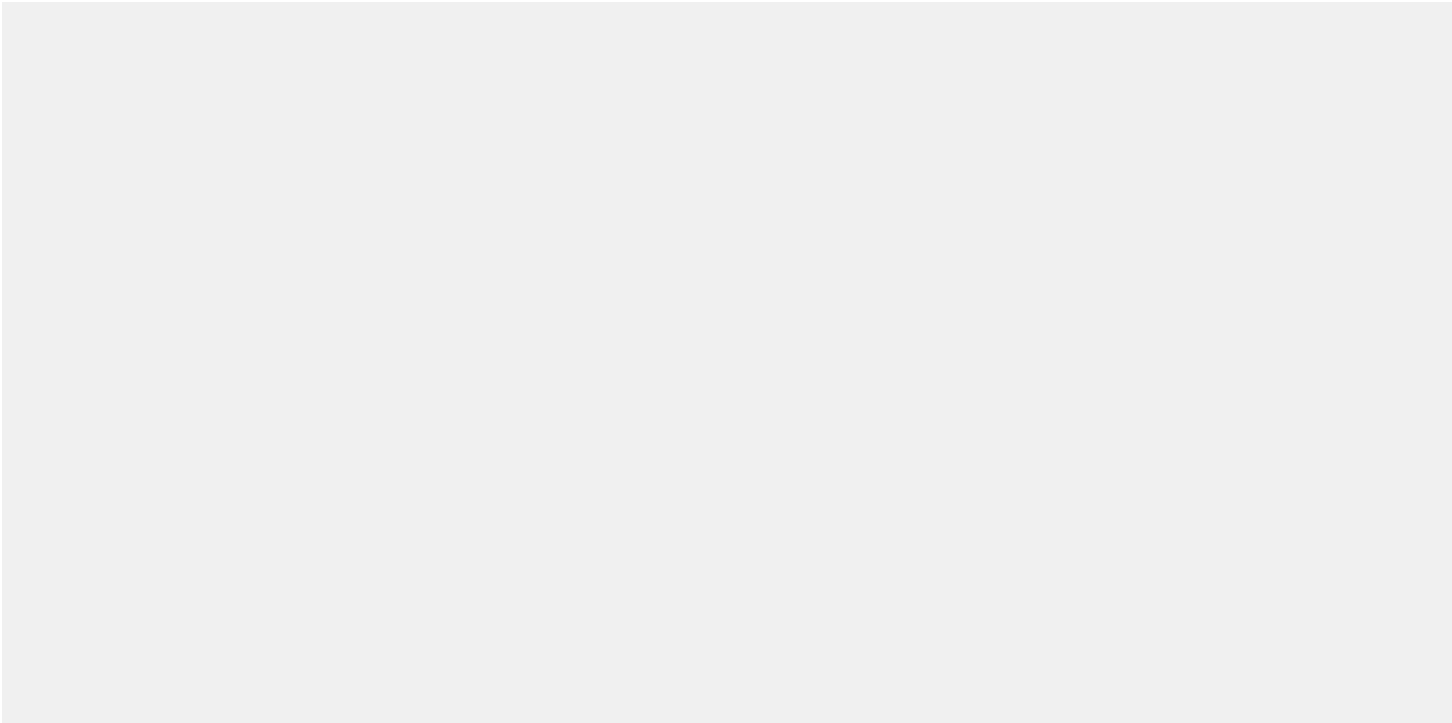
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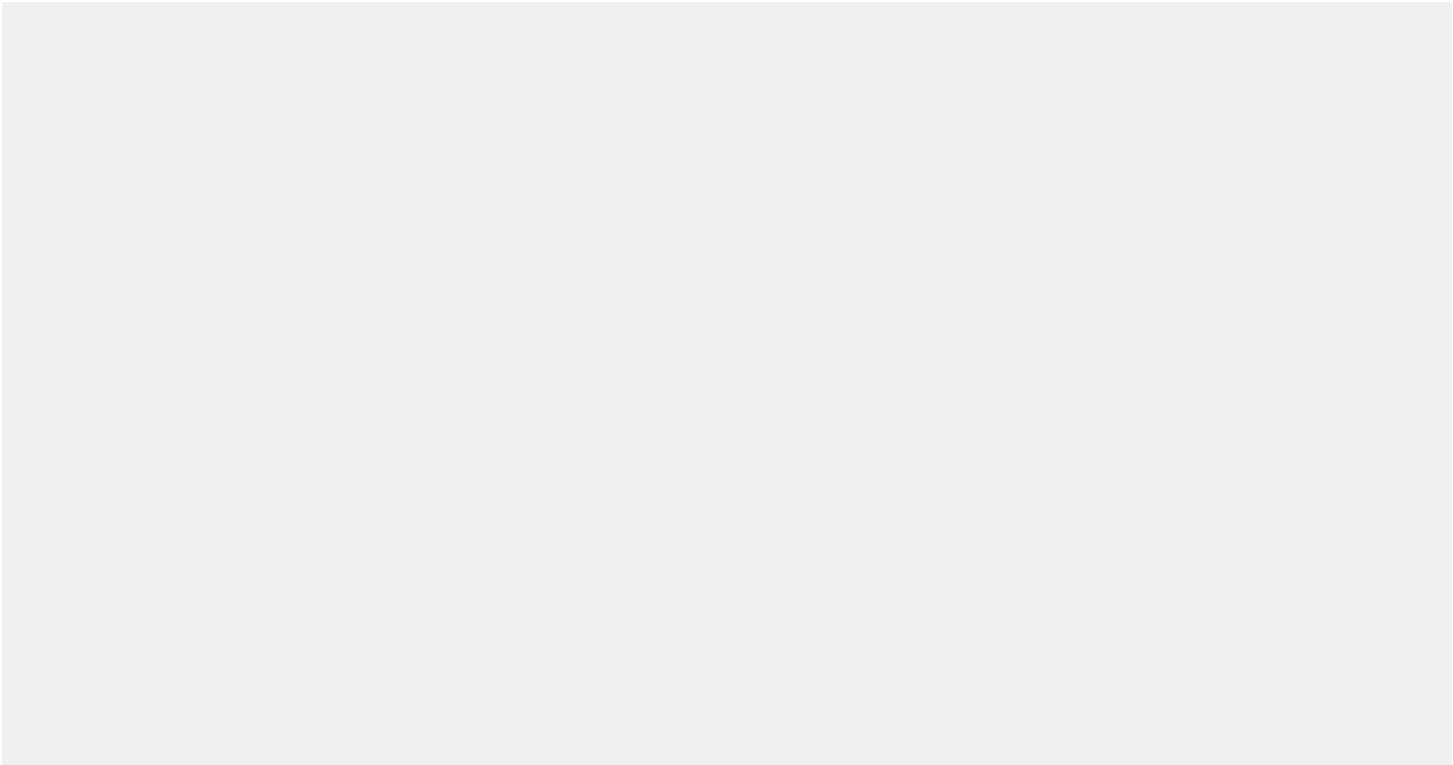
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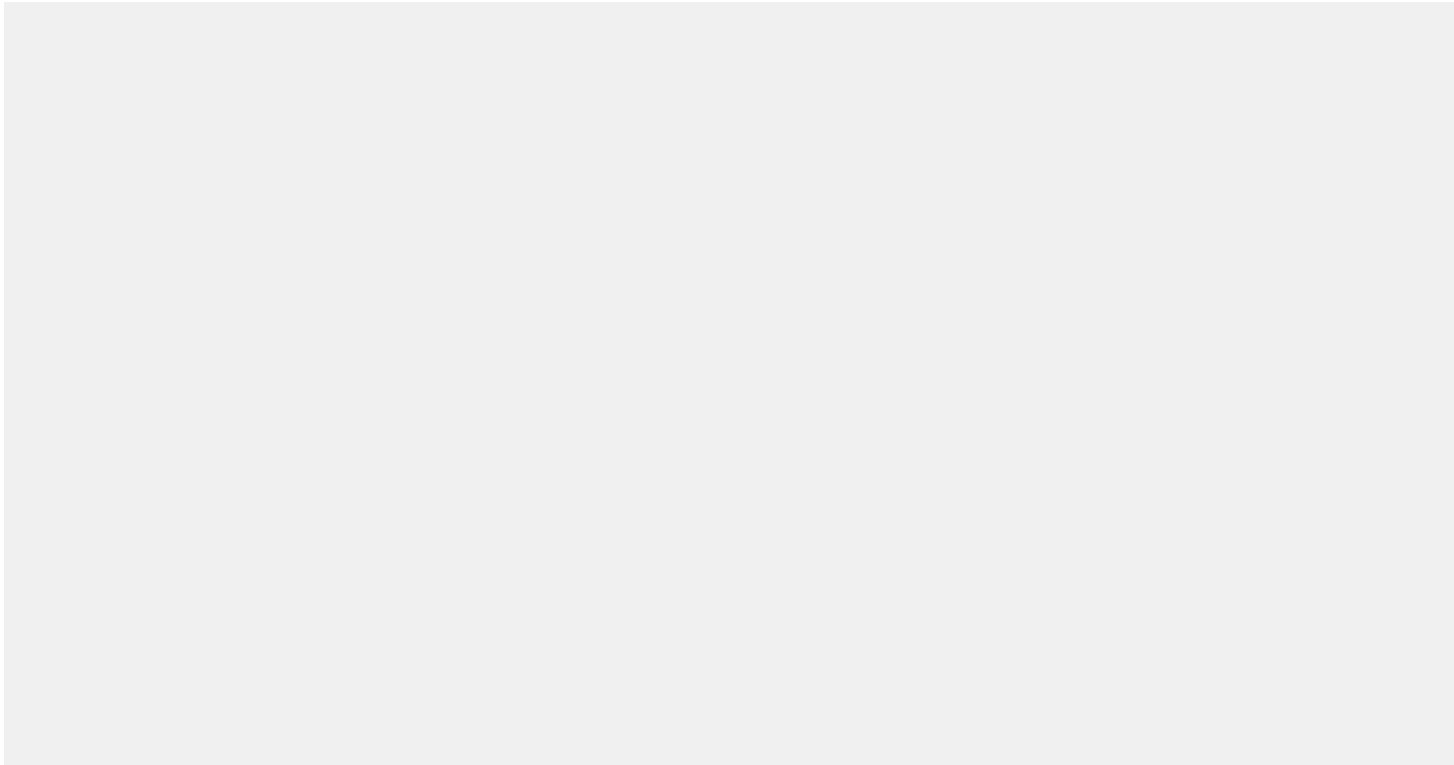






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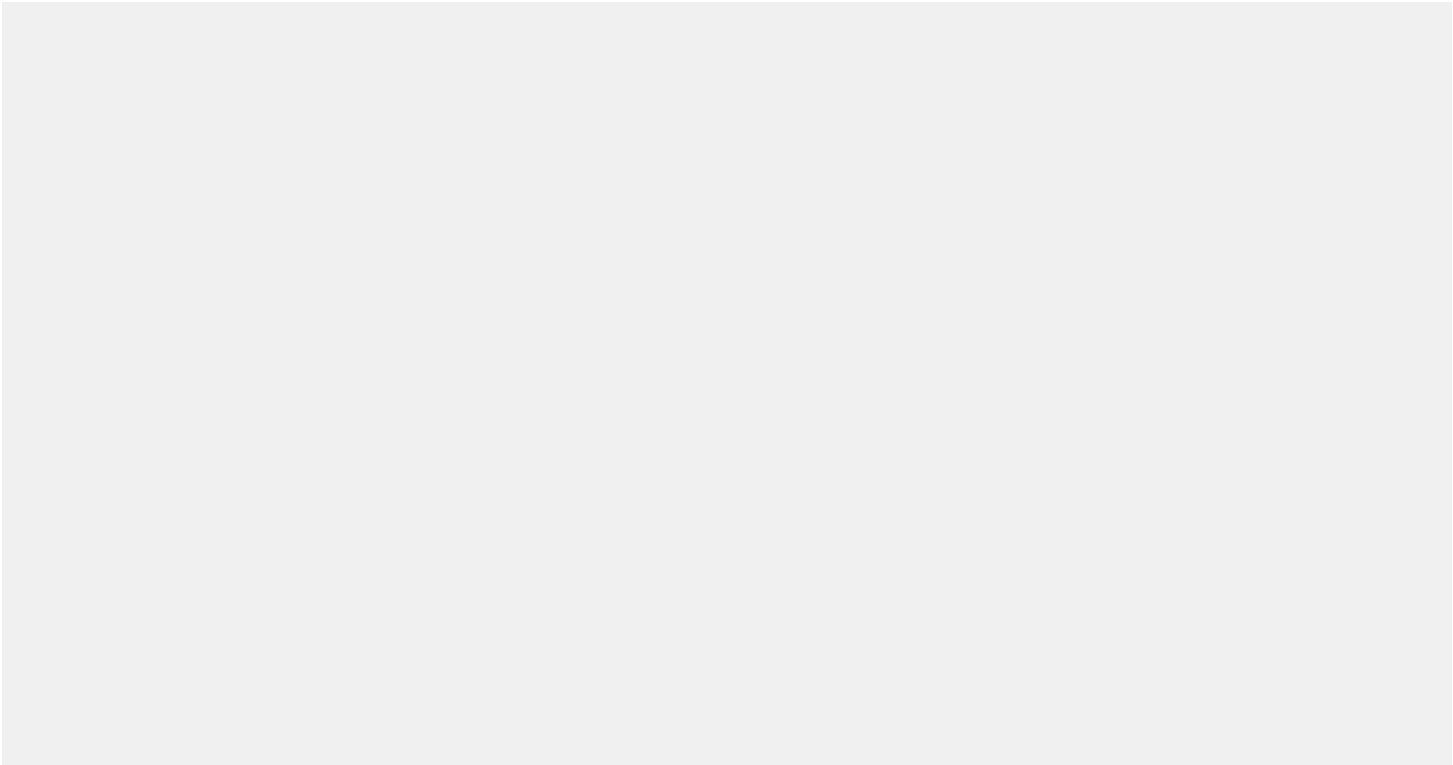
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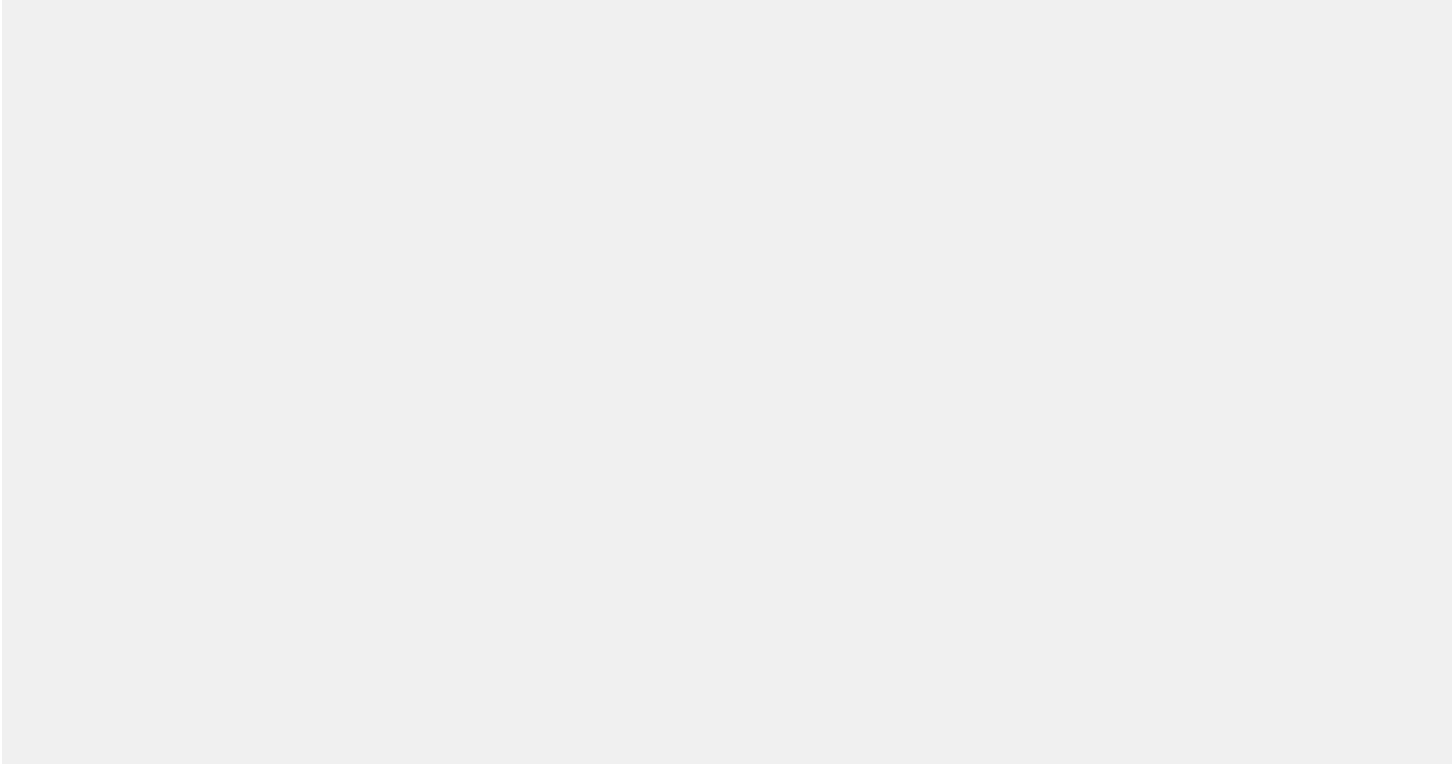
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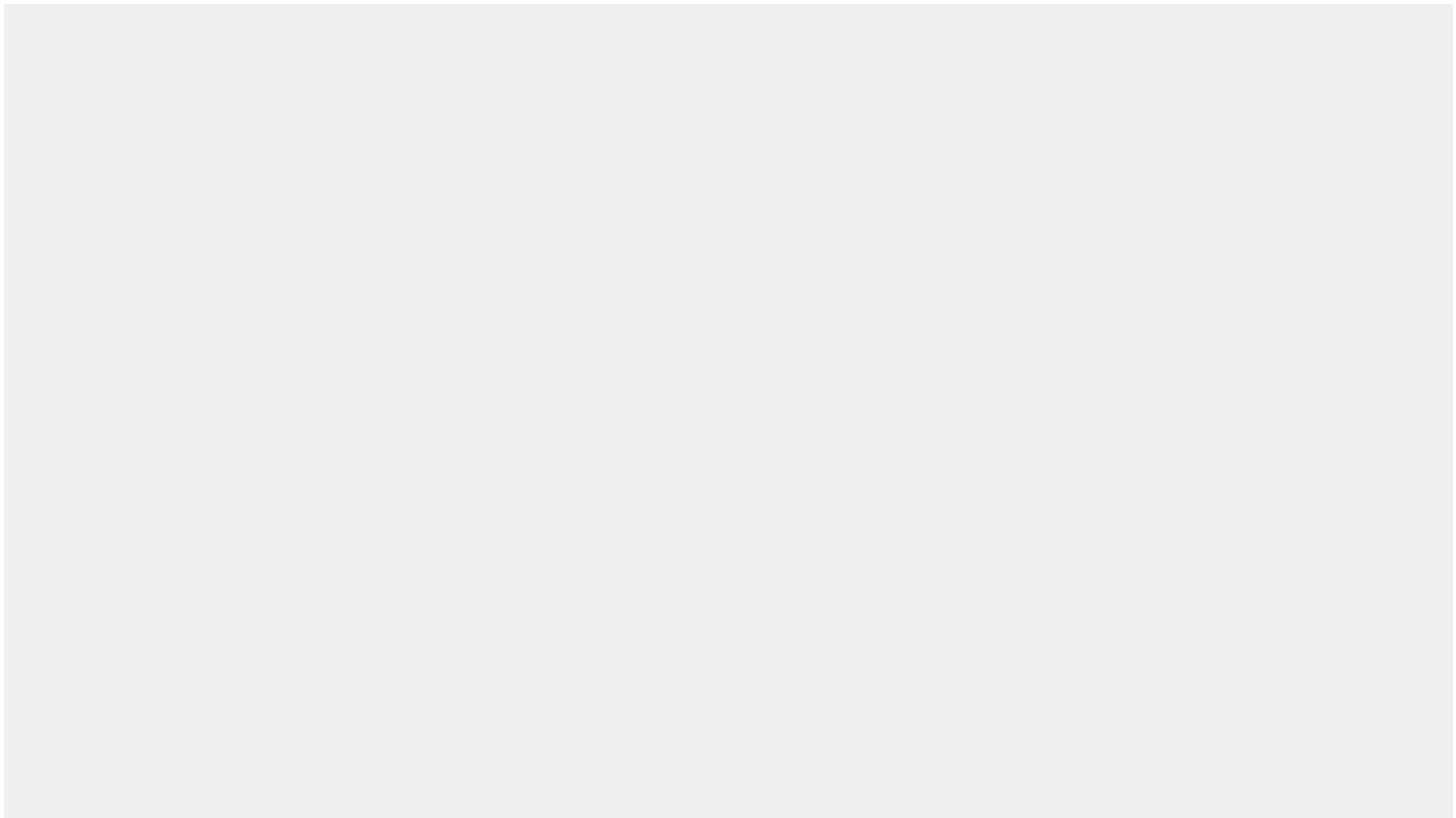
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# Tory cuts are seizing 800 vital Motability cars a WEEK from disabled people

So far, 48,500 people have had their vehicles taken from them as they transfer from Disability Living Allowance to the new Tory flagship Personal Independence Payment

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BY ROS WYNNE JONES  
22:56, 23 FEB 2017



**Celia Johnson relies on her vehicle** (Photo: Daily Mirror)

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Around 800 Motability cars a week are being snatched from **disabled** people as a result of cruel changes to the benefit system.

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So far, 48,500 people have had their vehicles taken from them as they transfer from Disability Living Allowance to the new **Tory** flagship Personal Independence Payment, according to figures seen by **Angela Eagle** MP.

This represents 45% of disabled people being reassessed as part of the move.

Meanwhile, the MS Society says it estimates a staggering 1,489 people with multiple sclerosis have had their mobility support downgraded since PIP started to replace DLA.

“We believe nearly 10,000 more people with **MS** could lose out by the time PIP is fully rolled out,” says the charity’s Laura Wetherly.

**READ MORE**

- Thousands with progressive and mental illnesses lose their disability benefits in cruel Tory cut



**Angela Eagle has obtained the figures** (Photo: Daily Mirror)

This column and MPs have been deluged with cases of disabled people distraught that cars which represent lifelines, ability to work – and, ironically, personal independence – are being taken away.

Some disabled people are losing their jobs while others are left housebound.

On Monday, another emotional MP pleaded with the **government** to help one of her constituents,



Tina Leslie.

“The victim of a house fire when she was 12 weeks old, she has no hands and has multiple physical problems,” Labour’s Siobhain McDonagh told Damian Green, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

“In the migration from DLA to PIP, she could not open the envelope telling her to go for her assessment. On February 1, all her benefits ceased, and on February 10, her Motability car was taken away. This cannot be right.”

This week, I spoke to Celia Johnson, 67, a mother from Berkshire who was forced to retire as a nanny when her MS worsened.



**Anastasia Dunne who has MS and has lost her car**

She is now at the secondary progressive stage of the neurological condition, using a walking frame

and struggling to maintain her independence.

She called her little Volkswagen Polo – which she had leased for 12 years under the Motability scheme – her “legs”.

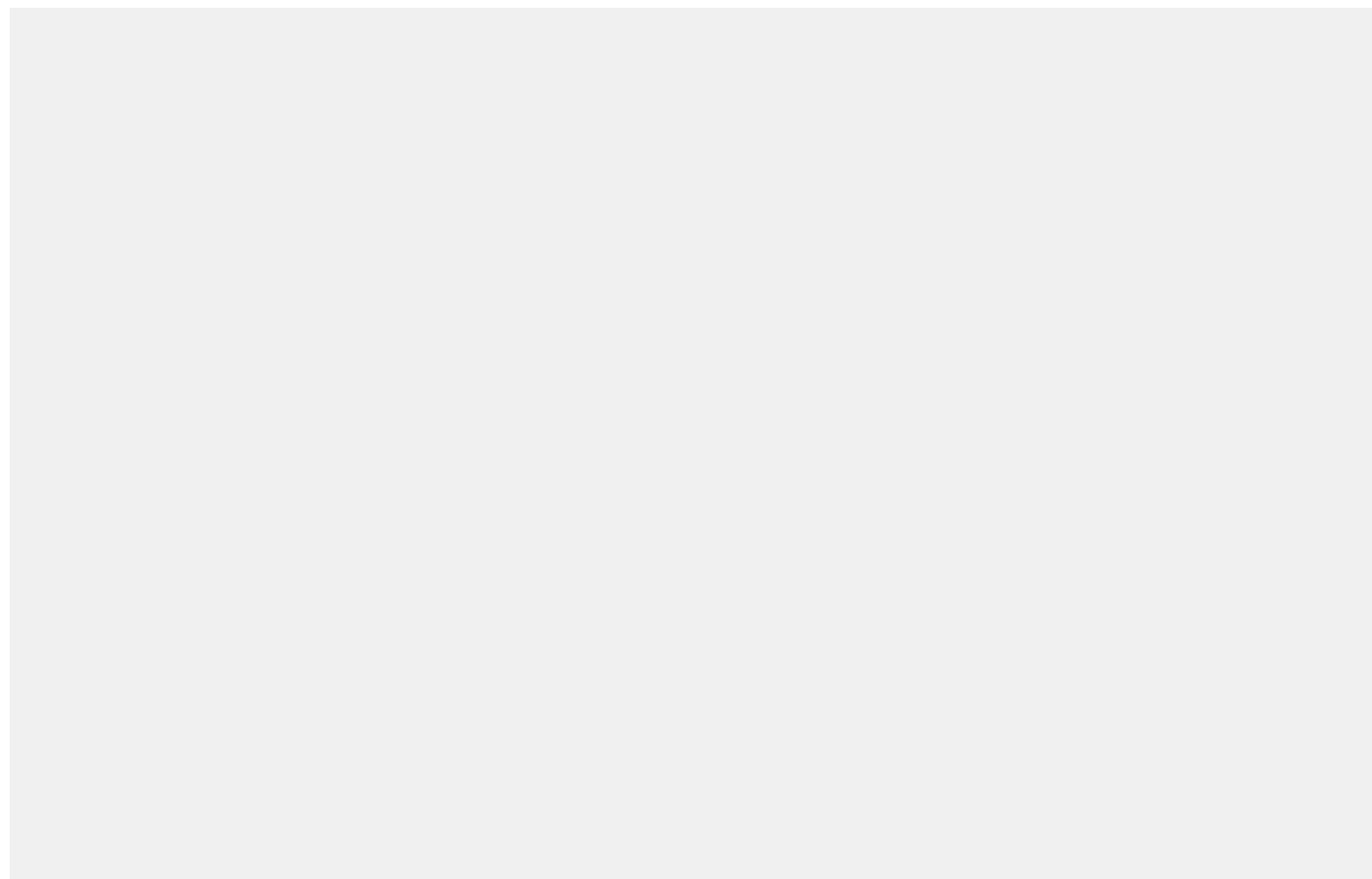
But in August, after she was reassessed while migrating from DLA to PIP, she was told to return her car. “I was two points short,” she told me, her voice still utterly disbelieving.

“The silly assessor basically decided my MS had improved and I could walk again. I bloody wish.

“Even the very nice man at the VW dealership could not believe it – he said, ‘not you as well?’ It was absolutely heartbreaking.”

Founded in 1977, Motability enables disabled people and their families to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair using a “mobility” component of their benefit.

The Queen is its chief patron. But as part of recent changes, the DWP has made the component more difficult to access – for example, by reducing the distance people need to be unable to walk, from 50 yards to 20 yards.





**Damian Green**

Meanwhile, despite 60% of people winning their appeal, Motability vehicles are being removed from claimants straight away.

This means new cars often have to be purchased when disabled people get their decision overturned.

In other cases, the system is descending into chaos. Anastasia Dunne, 23, was recently told she would lose her car despite having MS and very limited mobility.

“My car helped me do everything,” she says. “I live alone and without it I couldn’t get to the hospital or even get a pint of milk from the shop.

“The day after they came and took my car, I received a letter saying that they had reconsidered and I could have my car back. I had to travel from Cheshire to Birmingham to pick it up.

“The assessment and its outcome caused me to relapse. I have severe weakness in my legs, vertigo and immense pain.



"There are patches of skin all over my body where it feels like someone has put a hot iron to my skin.



**Yvette Cooper is also fighting the changes**

"Even though I now have my car back, the whole process was so horrible and completely unnecessary."

The Department for Work and Pensions says: "The reality is there are 70,000 more people on the Motability scheme than there were in 2010, and most people leaving the scheme are eligible for a payment of £2,000 which can be put towards the purchase of a car if they wish."

Campaigners say this is disingenuous because in the five years prior to 2010, Britain's ageing population meant the number of people eligible had increased by 180,000.

The growing scandal is being investigated by Labour MPs [Angela Eagle](#), Rachel Reeves and Yvette Cooper, who have called on the Secretary of State to investigate as a "matter of urgency".

“The Tory Government is heaping misery on some of the most vulnerable people in our society,” says [Angela Eagle](#), MP for Wallasey.

“It is a scandalous waste of money to take vehicles away from people and sell them at a loss before they can appeal, which often results in a brand new vehicle being awarded.

“People who contact my constituency office experiencing difficulties claiming PIP suffer serious hardship as a result. They report the process to be cold-hearted and degrading.

“The Tories’ eagerness to snatch vehicles away from people who struggle to walk just a few yards is just one element of the chaotic and inhumane ‘I, Daniel Blake’ benefits system that they have administered since 2010.

“The Tories seem to view their cuts as figures on a spreadsheet, paying little attention to the people suffering. It leaves me shaking with rage.”

Campaigners say this is disingenuous because in the five years prior to 2010 Britain’s ageing population meant the number of people eligible had increased by 180,000.

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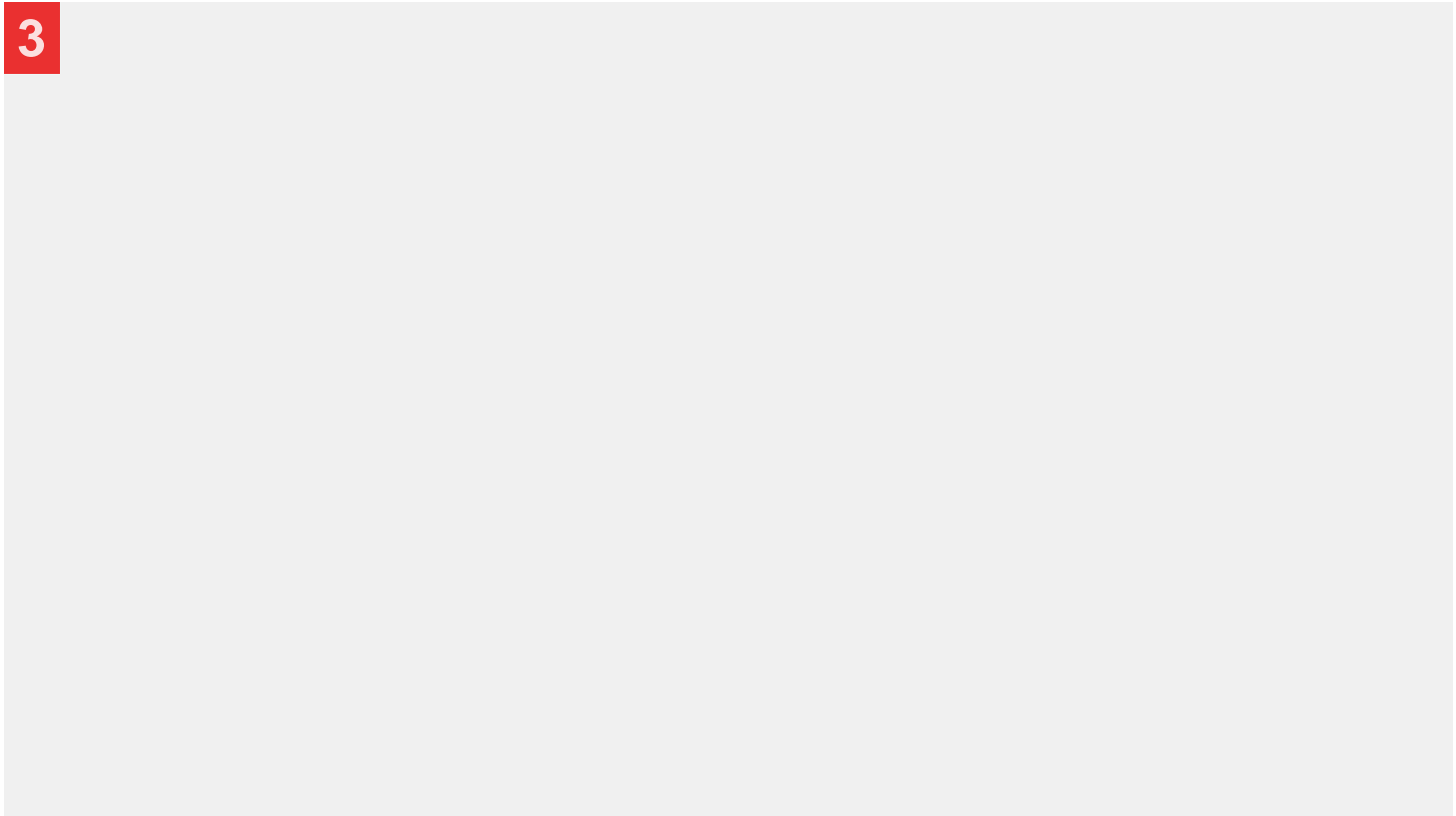
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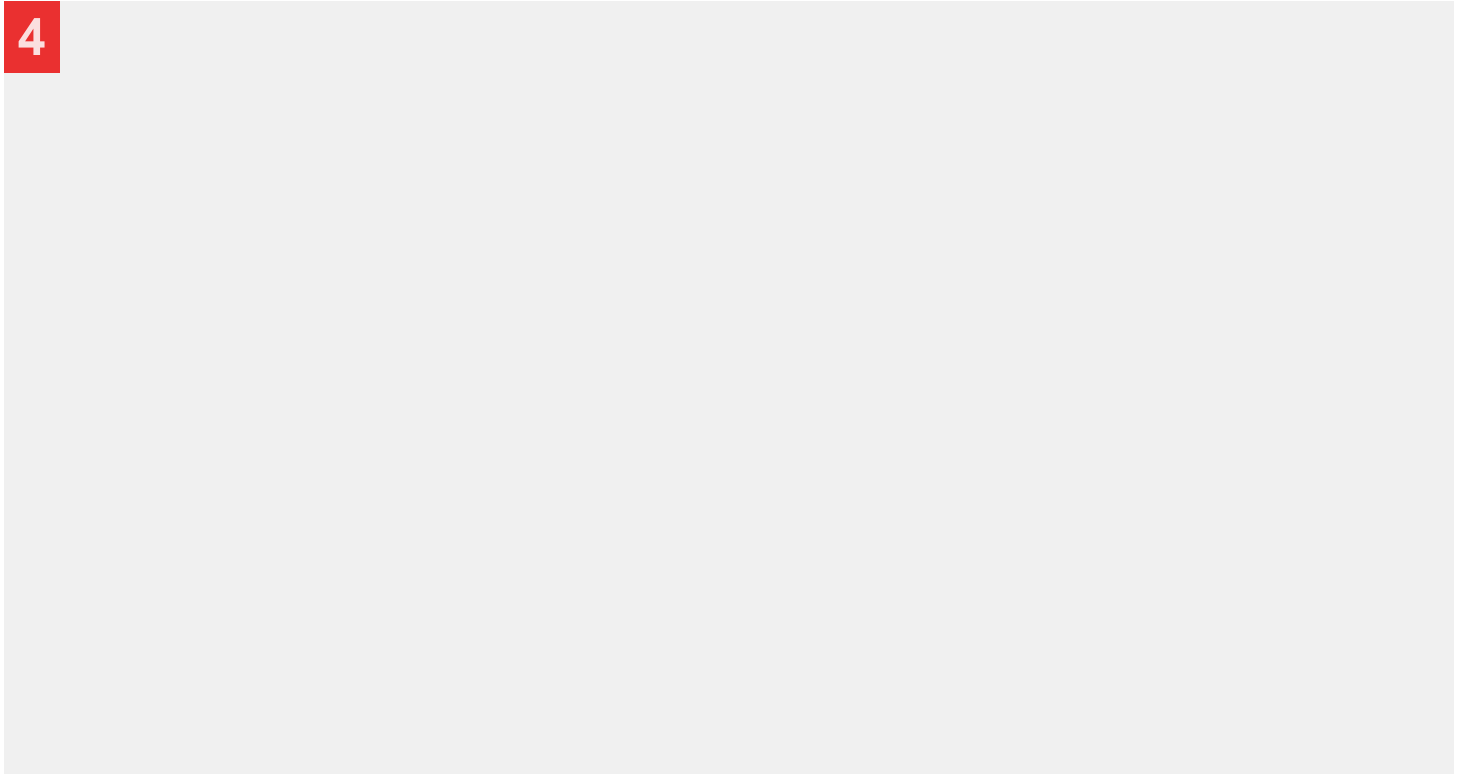
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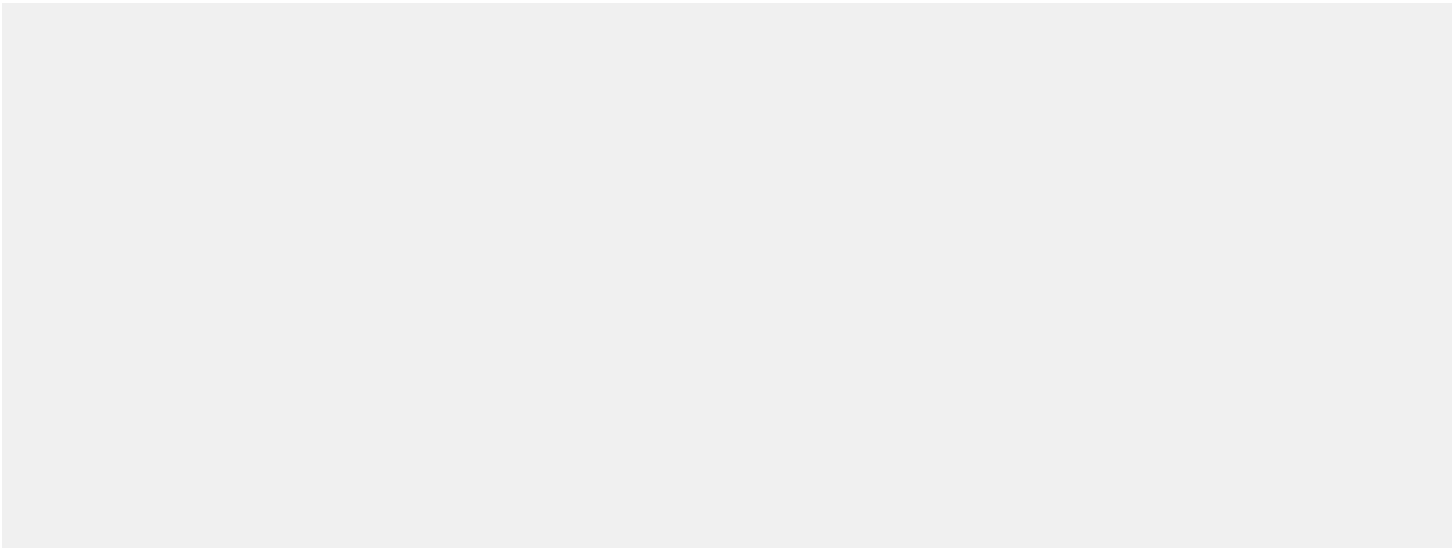


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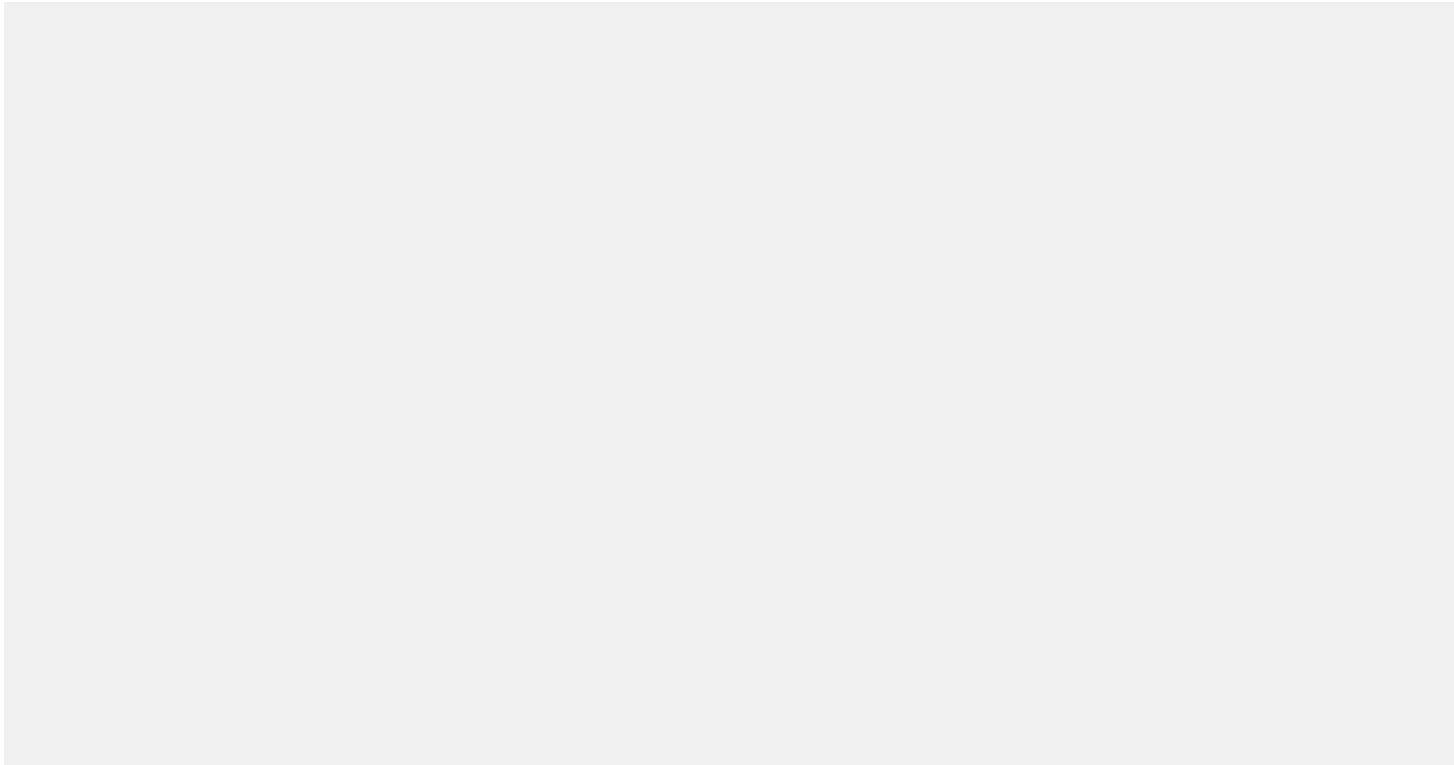
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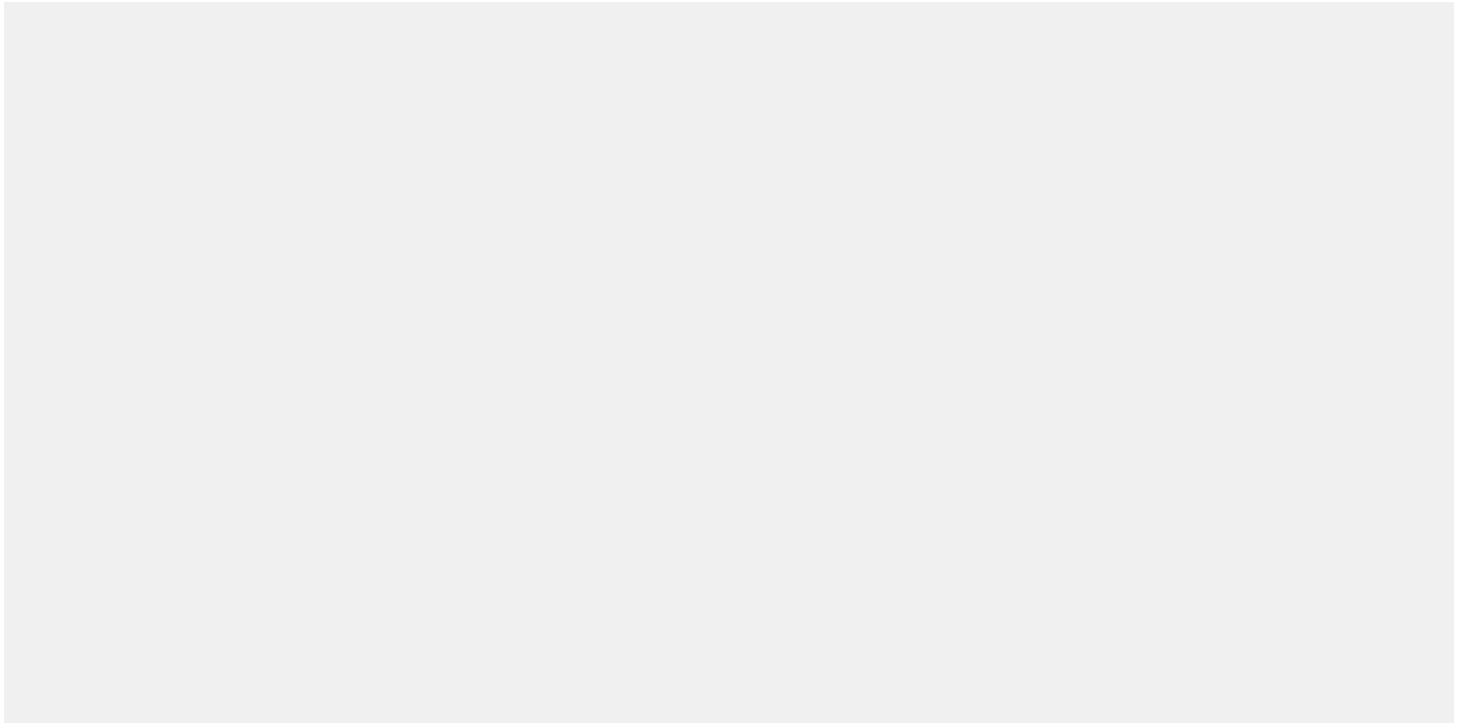






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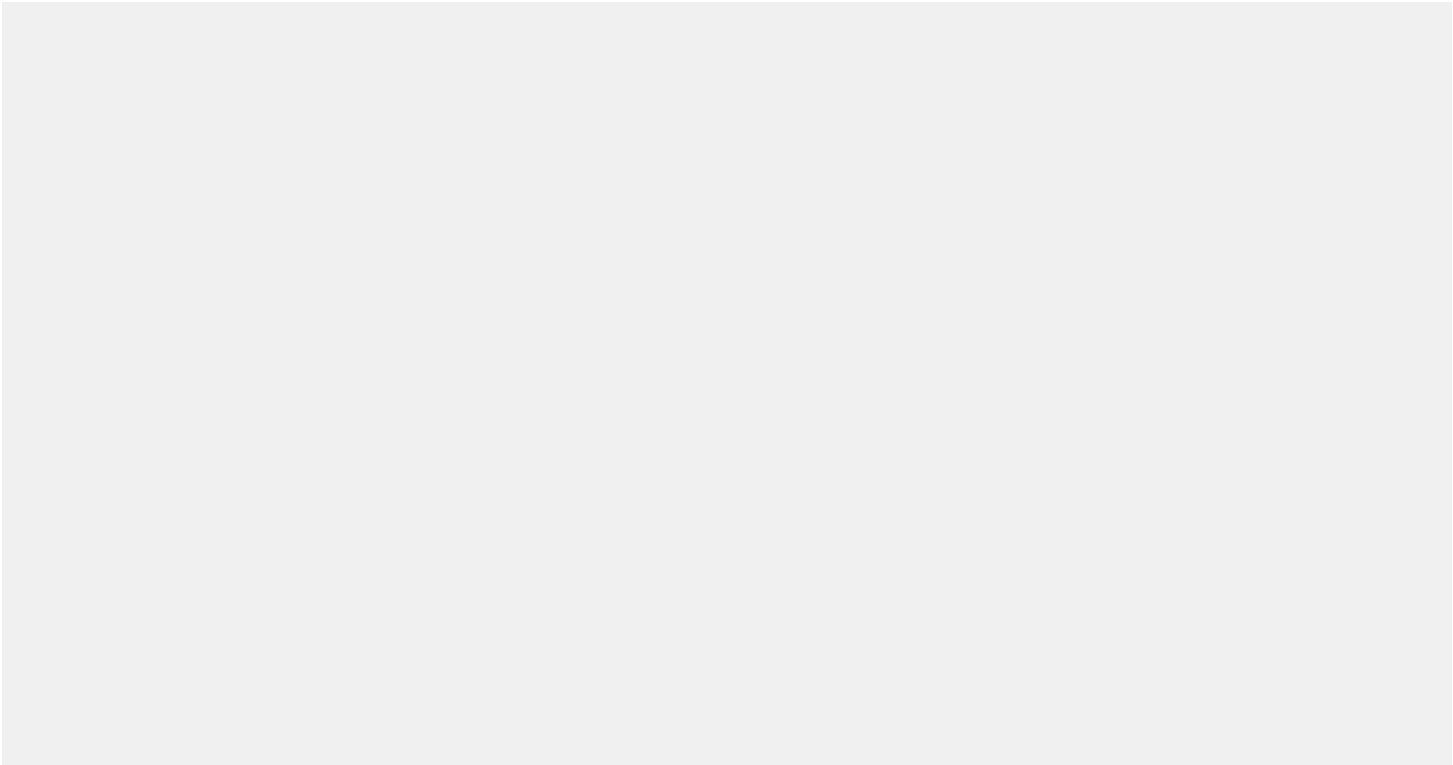
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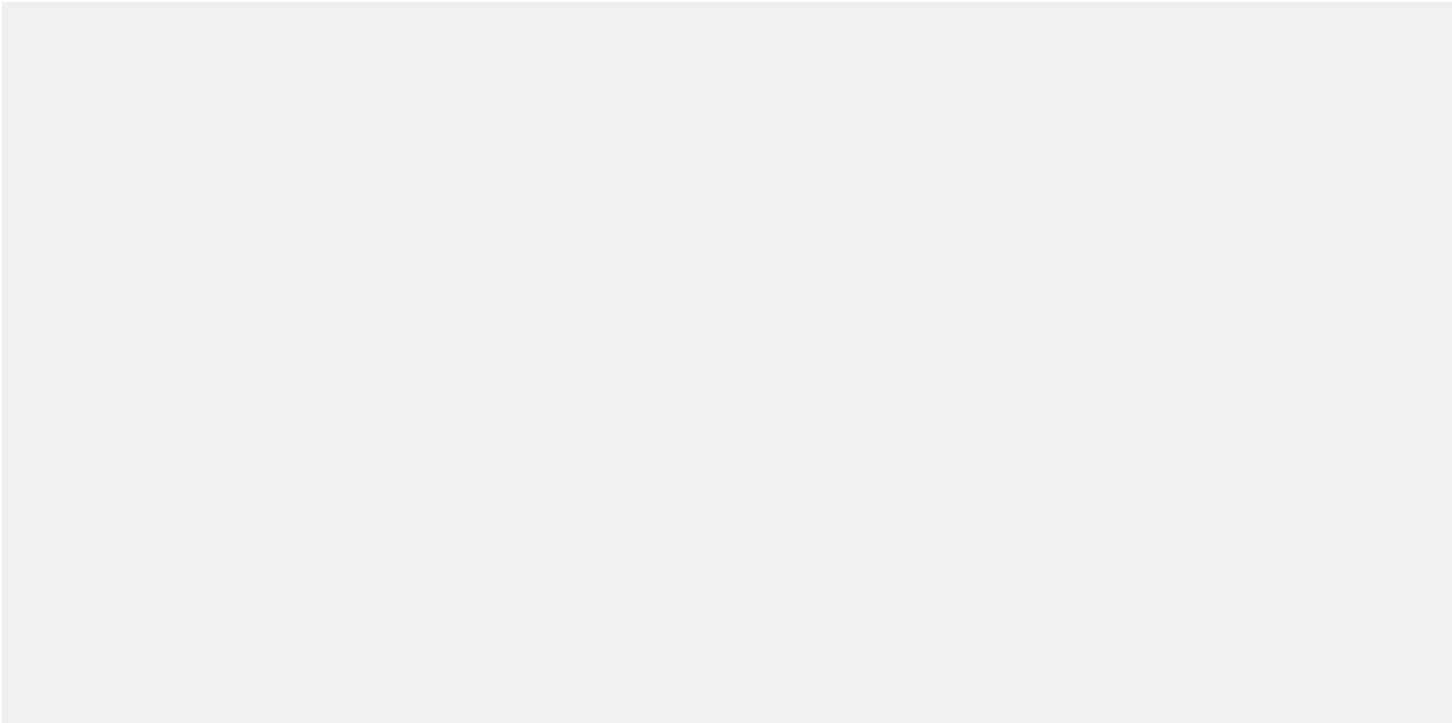






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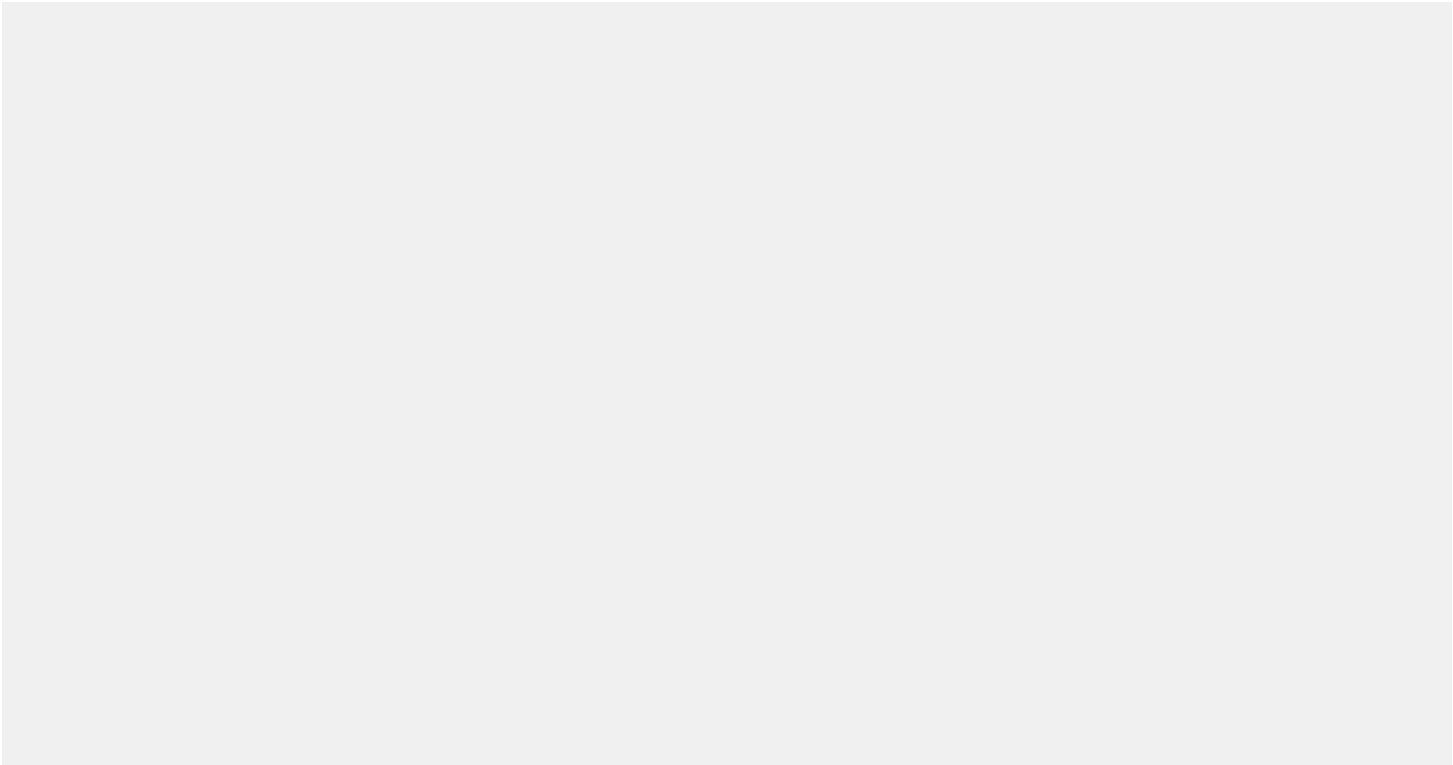
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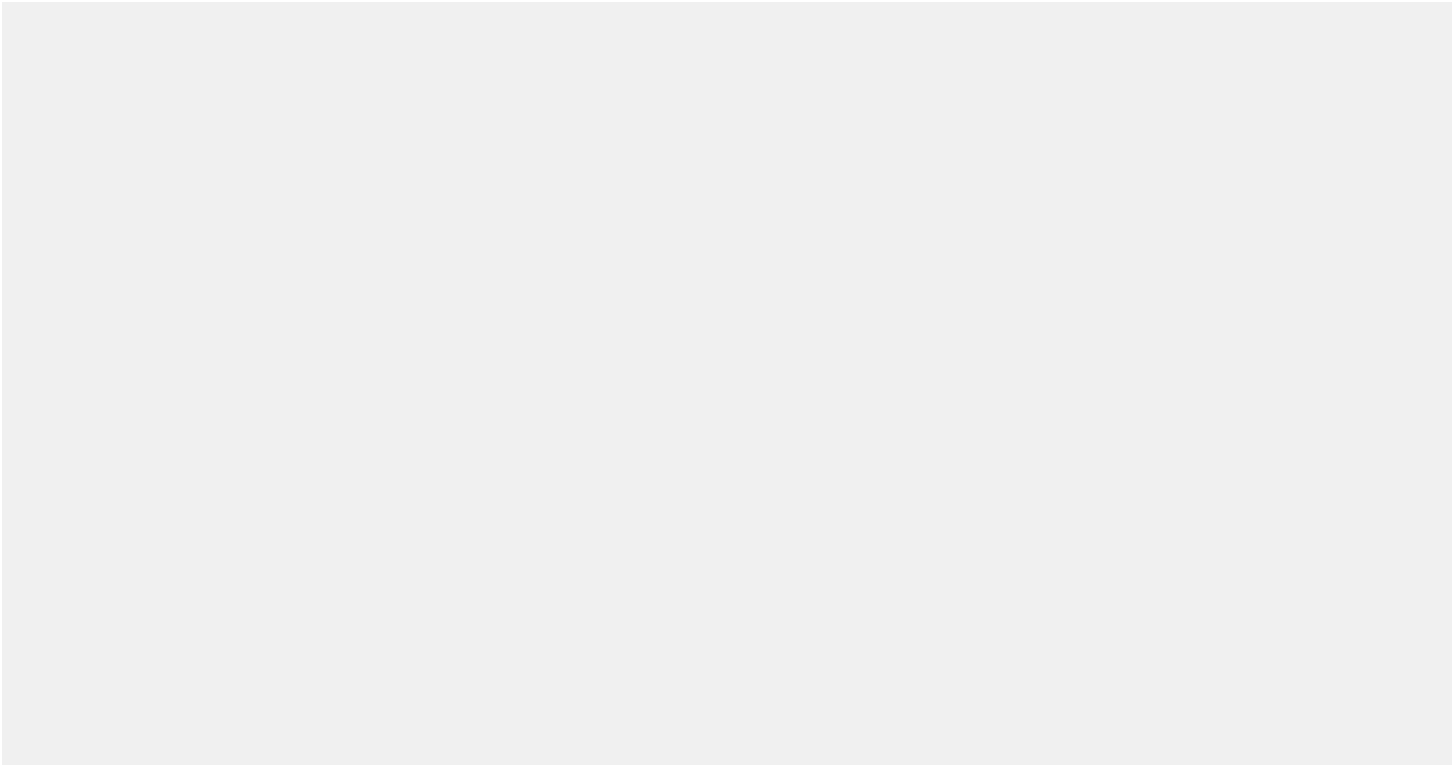






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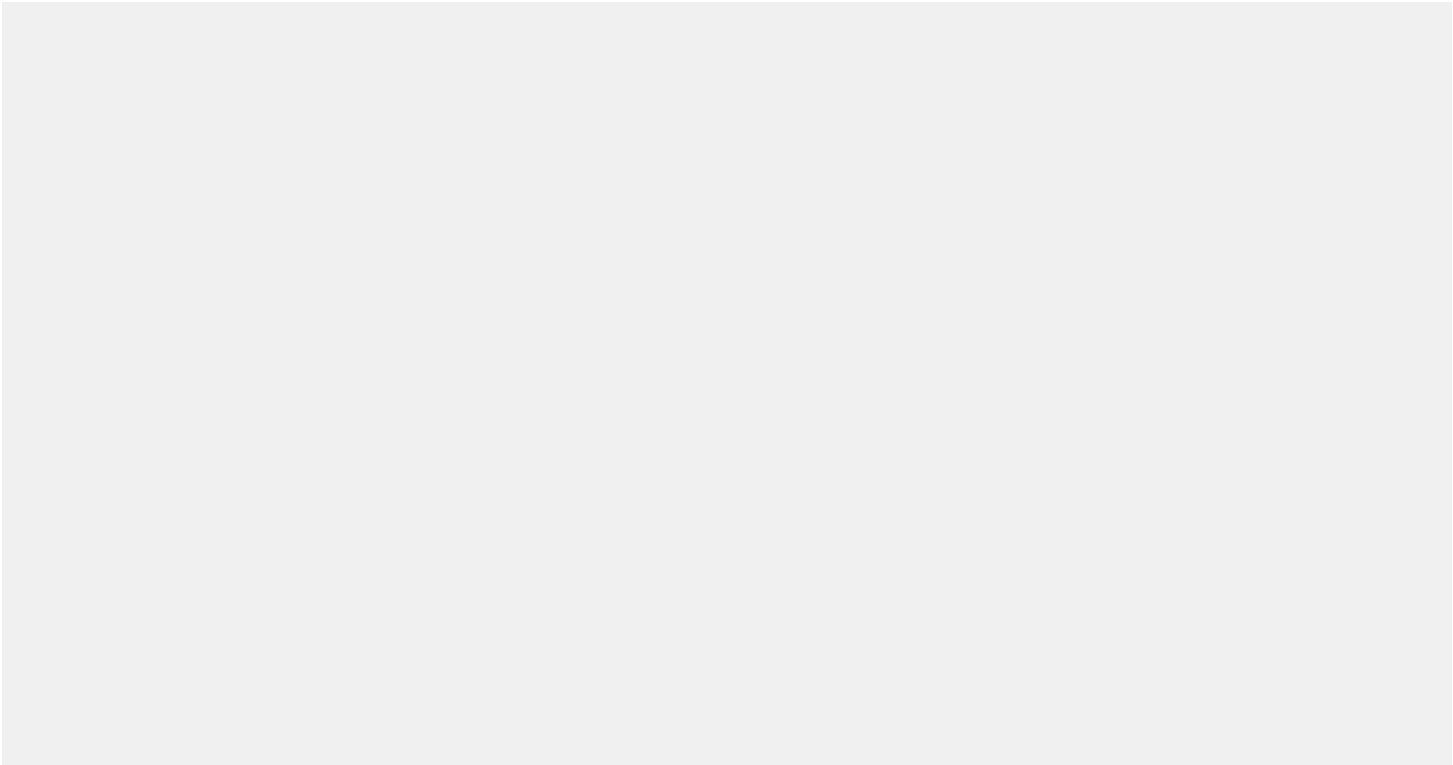
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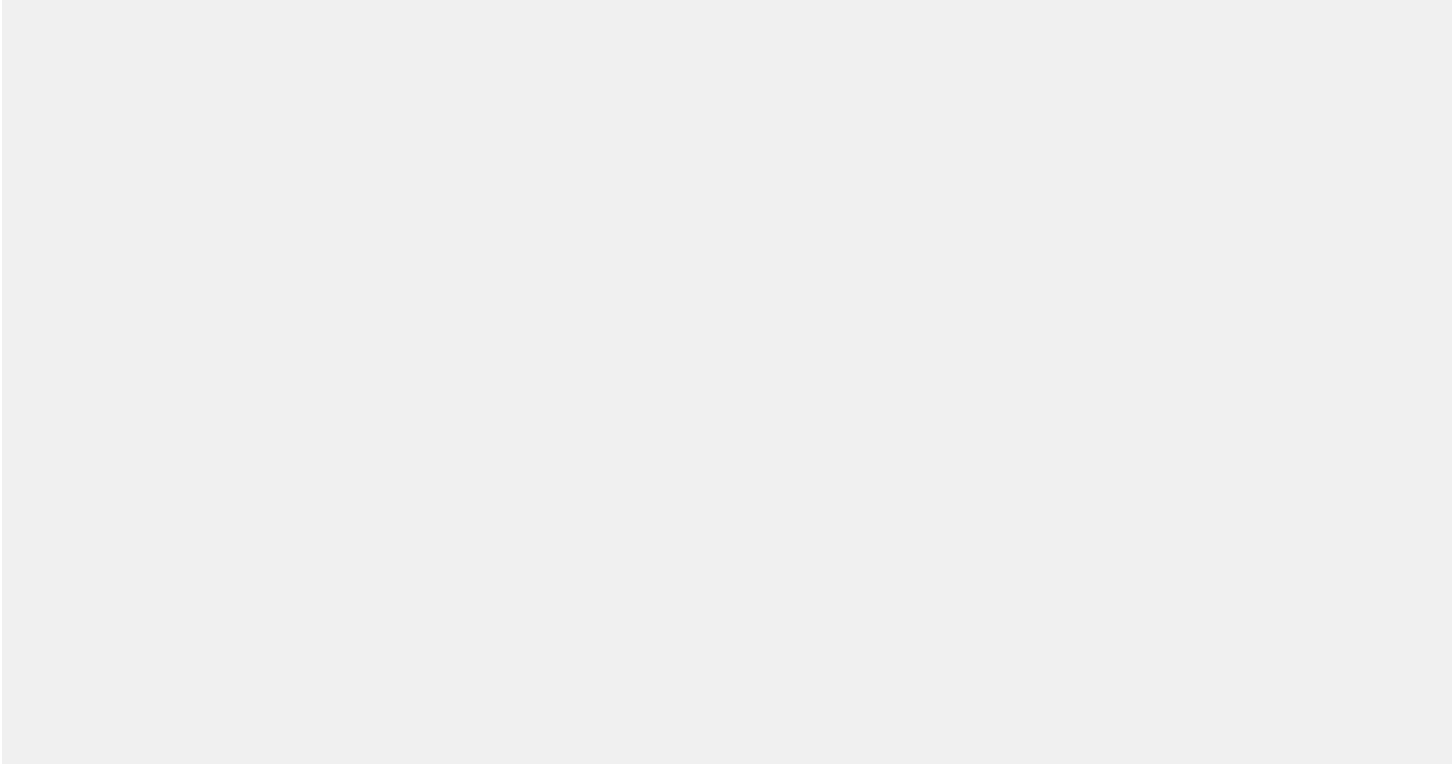
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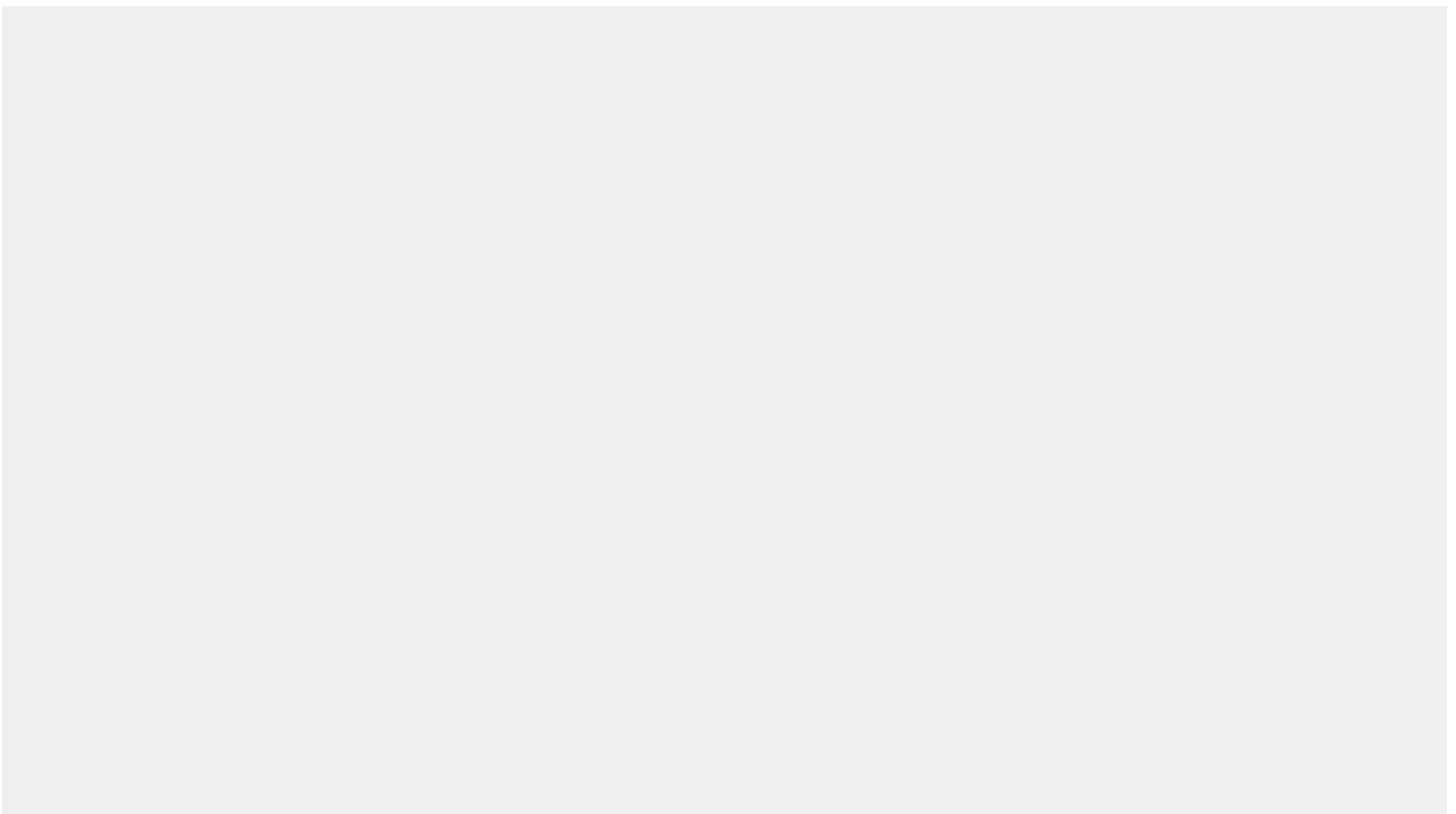






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# We’re going back to Victorian times, where disabled people were hidden away: My Wigan Pier story

As part of our Road to Wigan Pier 2017 project, 80 years on from the publication of George Orwell's essay, Sandra Daniel talks to Claire Donnelly about the problems disabled people face

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BY SANDRA DANIELS

09:50, 6 FEB 2017 | UPDATED 07:53, 24 FEB 2017





(Photo: MDM)

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**Sandra Daniel, 53, from Solihull, used to work for a self-advocacy project, that closed because of government cuts. As she tells Claire Donnelly, without the project and others like it, disabled people are becoming invisible.**

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Until last year I worked for a self-advocacy project called People First here in Birmingham.

The aim of the project was to support learning disabled people to speak up for themselves and have a say in national and local democracy, but the main funding for the project was withdrawn by Birmingham City Council, so the project become unsustainable and closed.

I was born with a congenital impairment and have been receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

to support me with the extra cost of being a disabled person for many years, I was awarded a life time award by the DWP as my impairment is permanent.

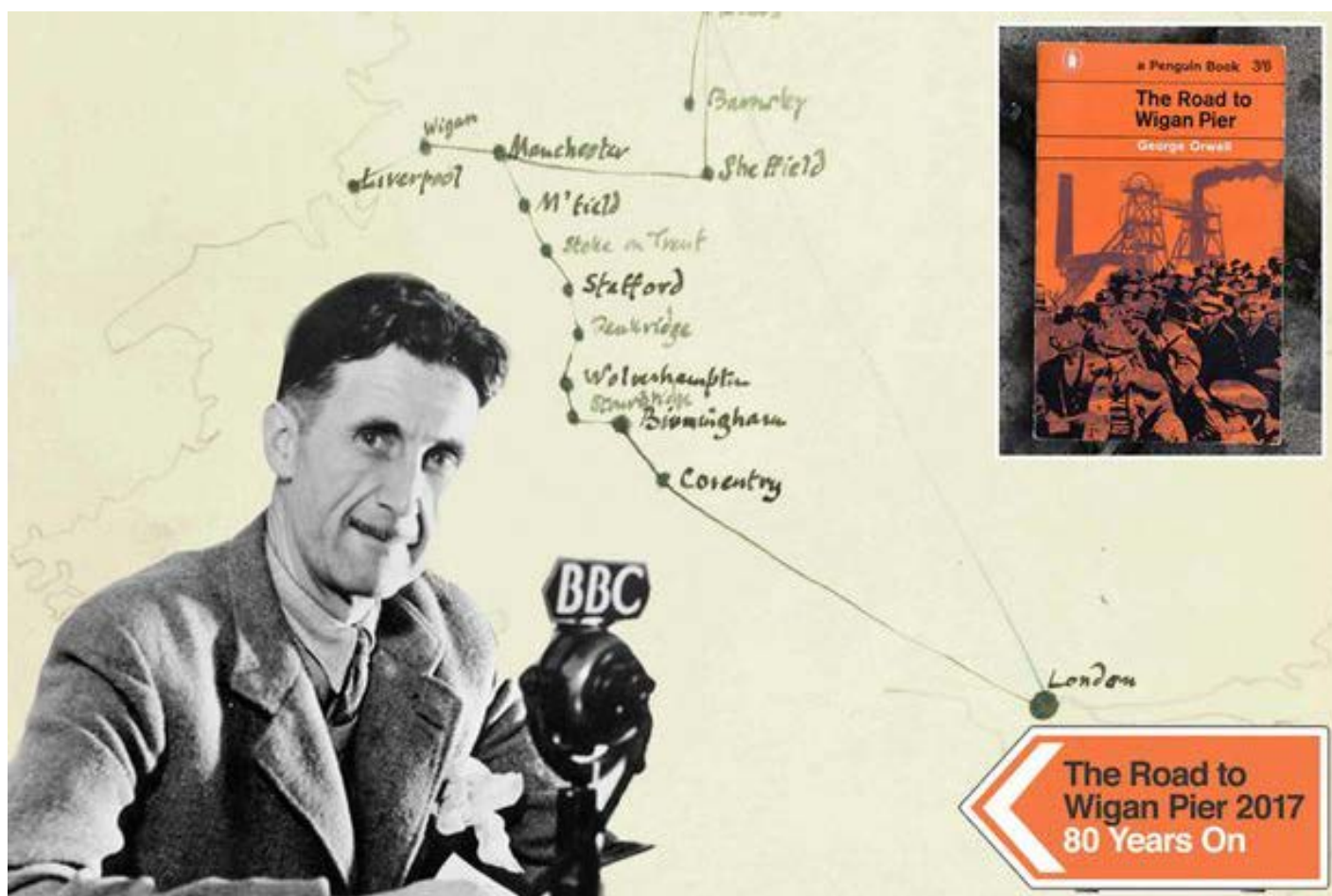
The DWP have now written to me saying I have to make an application for Personal Independent Payments (PIP) otherwise my DLA will stop within four weeks. How can this be cost effective and necessary when my impairment is for the rest of my life?

Disabled people have faced a disproportionate amount of cuts, to their benefits, their organisations and services, support to hold down a job and now with the closure of self advocacy, support and advice projects we are losing our voice too, we are being made invisible.

#### READ MORE

- Road to Wigan Pier 2017: Recreating George Orwell's journey 80 years on and mapping modern Britain

There are more and more barriers being put in place to stop us taking part in the community, clearly that isn't fair or right. Disabled people will become invisible, no longer part of society.



**We are telling stories of today's Britain on George Orwell's Road to Wigan Pier route** (Photo: Daily Mirror)

We're going back to Victorian times, where people were hidden away, set apart from society, is this the plan? In a time where we're seeing a 45 per cent rise in hate crimes against disabled people this can't be allowed.

We are a part of this society and our voice should be heard - not through a third party but directly, from disabled people themselves.

As disabled activists, we need to keep fighting, to get our voices heard.

Over the last few months local disabled citizens have asked several questions about the cuts to social care and how the collapsing together of social and health will impact on independent living for disabled people. All they got was flannel and a dose of patronisation from Councillor Paulette Hamilton, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

A lot of councils used to have what was called a prevention agenda - providing support services to disabled people so that they didn't fall into crisis, but now that has gone, unless you fall into crisis

you're not getting support.

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## Our Wigan Pier Stories: Birmingham



Education changed my  
life



Inequality leaves  
people struggling



Glad I'm not starting  
out now



Bricking it over PIP  
assessment



Immigration a change  
for the better



Return to Victorian  
times on disability



I was a GP - now I'm  
struggling



Education cuts killing  
social mobility



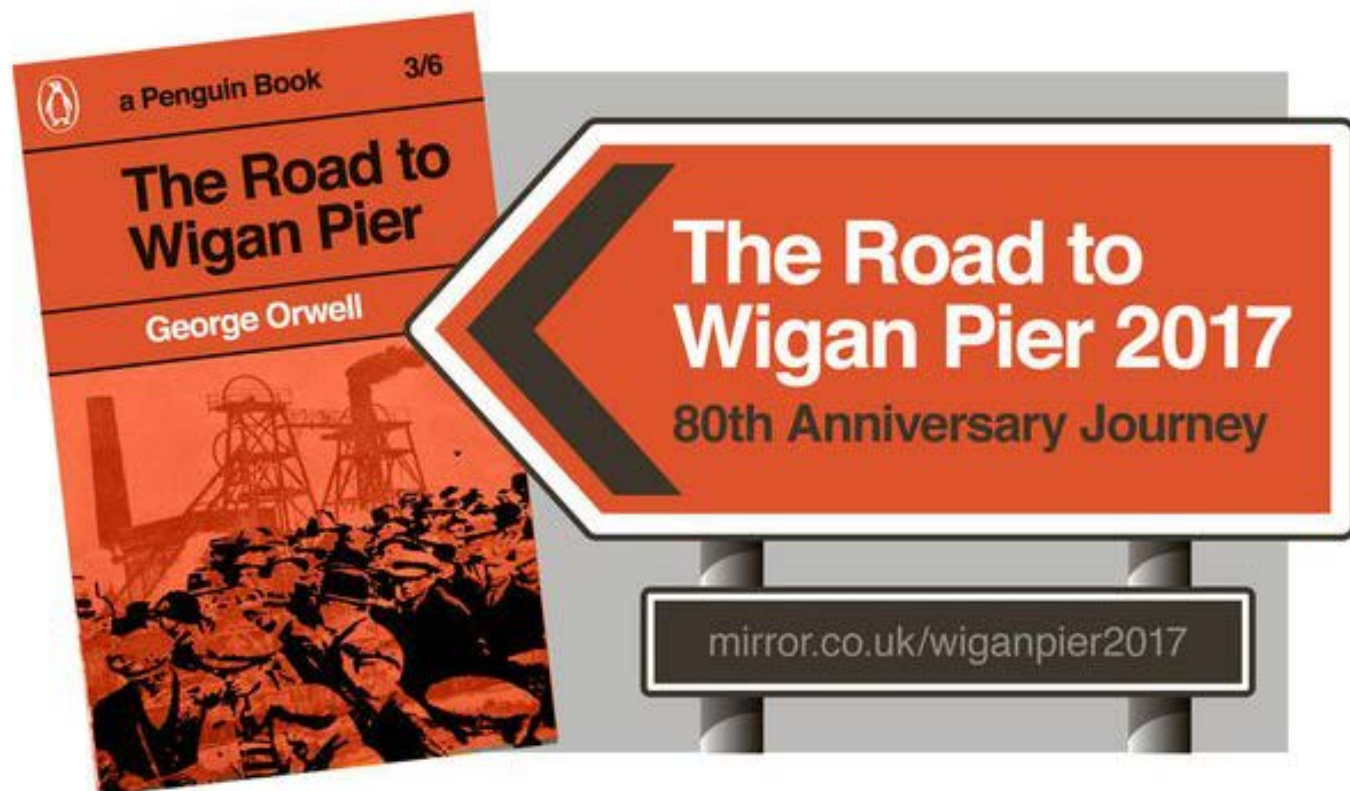
Constant assessment  
made me suicidal

## Have your say and tell us what life is like for you in 2017

We are retracing the journey George Orwell made in his book, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, throughout 2017 to tell modern stories of working and unemployed poverty.

They'll appear in a regular series in the Daily Mirror newspaper and here, on our [special anniversary website](#).





Our Road to Wigan Pier project runs throughout 2017

## Road to Wigan Pier: Tell us about your experiences in modern Britain

What struggles have you experienced in Britain today? Write down your experience below or record a video message for us.

Your name \*

Please tick this box if you wish to remain anonymous

Age \*

**Location \***

**Share your  
experience \***

**Contact email \***

**Contact number \***

**Upload your  
videos/photos here**

Upload a File

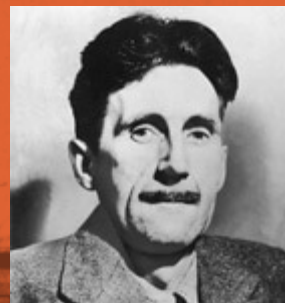
By ticking this box I am agreeing to the Mirror Online terms and conditions outlined [here](#)

\*

I agree

Submit

## The Road to Wigan Pier Then and now



In 1937, George Orwell's book *The Road to Wigan Pier* revealed how families were struggling to live in northern working class England. Throughout 2017, on the 80th anniversary of its publication, with your help, Ros Wynne-Jones and Claire Donnelly are retracing his steps. Content will be added here as we go.

Choose a location on the map



or pick from the drop-down list

Please select a place...

Join our journey

Help by sharing your stories

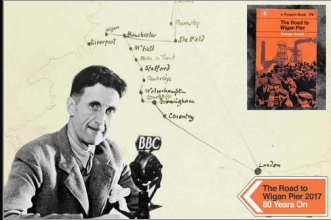
[Get involved](#)




All 1931 and 2011 data courtesy of A Vision of Britain Through Time

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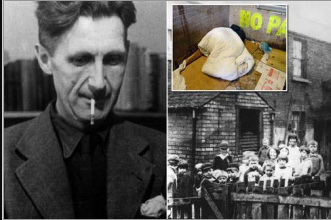
# The Road To Wigan Pier 2017




The Wigan Pier project explained



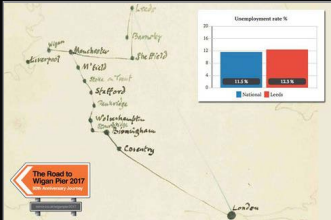
How to get involved




The hard road to Wigan Pier




Why I think mission needs repeating




Explore Orwell's Britain vs today



Today's Birmingham left behind



Hard choices in the Black Country

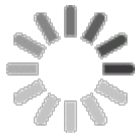


Episode 1: Birmingham

If you don't live on the route but would like to share experiences of living on a low income or struggling with welfare cuts, please contact [realbritain@trinitymirror.com](mailto:realbritain@trinitymirror.com) , where we are keen to hear your story.

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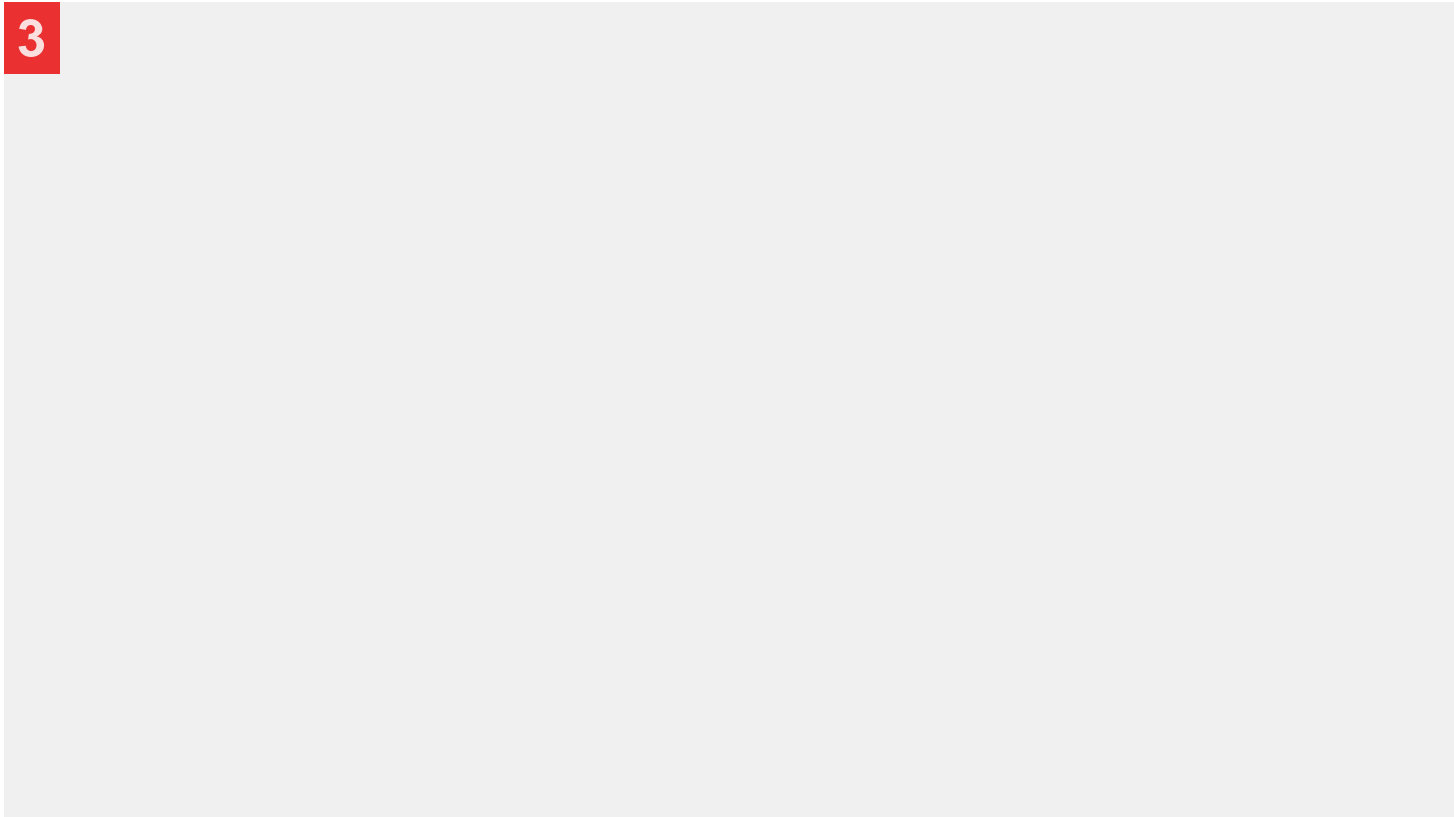
The PM will try to overturn a crushing defeat on the Brexit Bill in the House of Lords, which voted for an amendment to let EU nationals stay in the UK

**2**



FUNERALS

Man is **BURIED ALIVE** in coffin under city street after kissing his wife goodbye

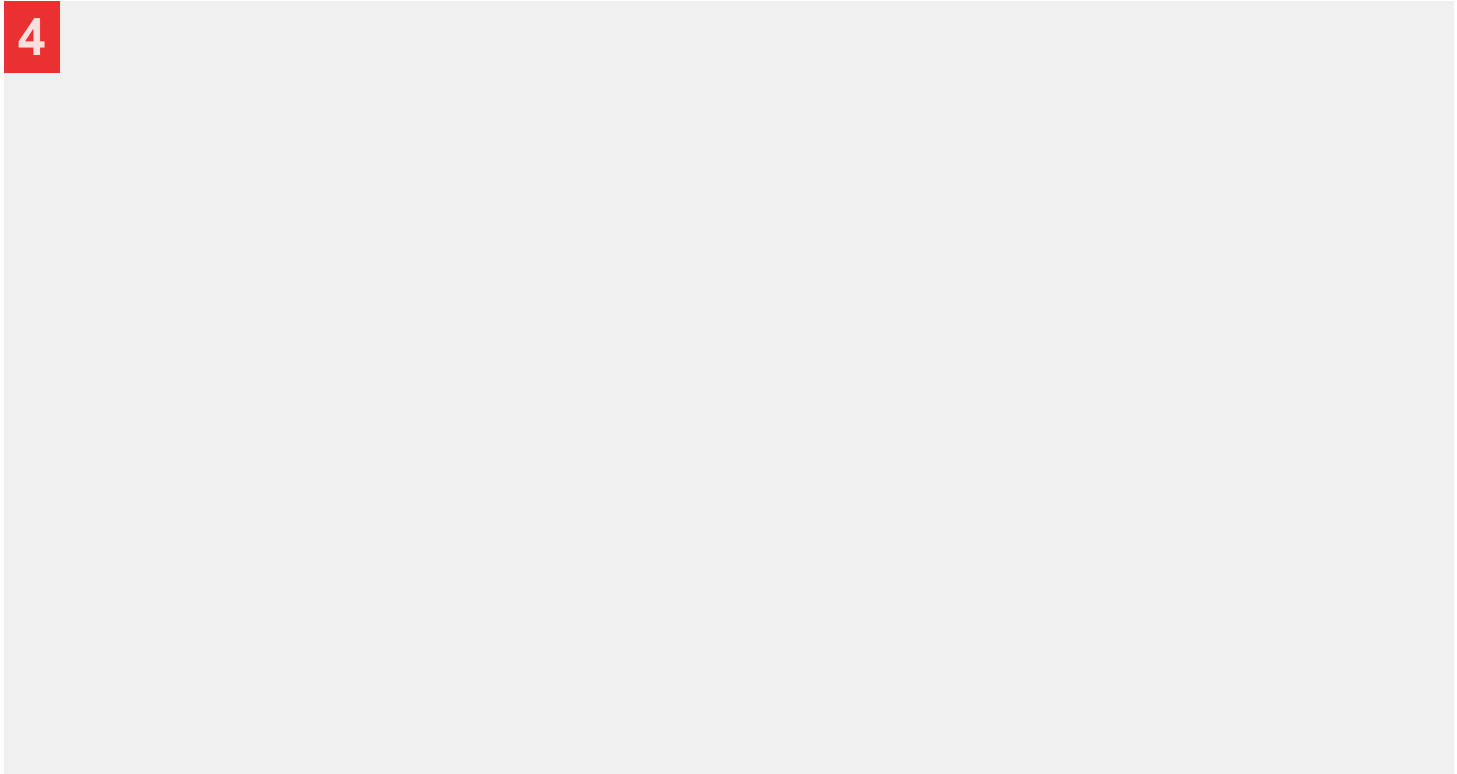






SLIMMING WORLD

**Proof Porky Lights sausages AREN'T high in fat amid shock claims Slimming World test results are misleading**





SLIMMING WORLD

**Porky Lights sausages 'Syn' value has been revised on Slimming World - and it's REALLY bad news**

5



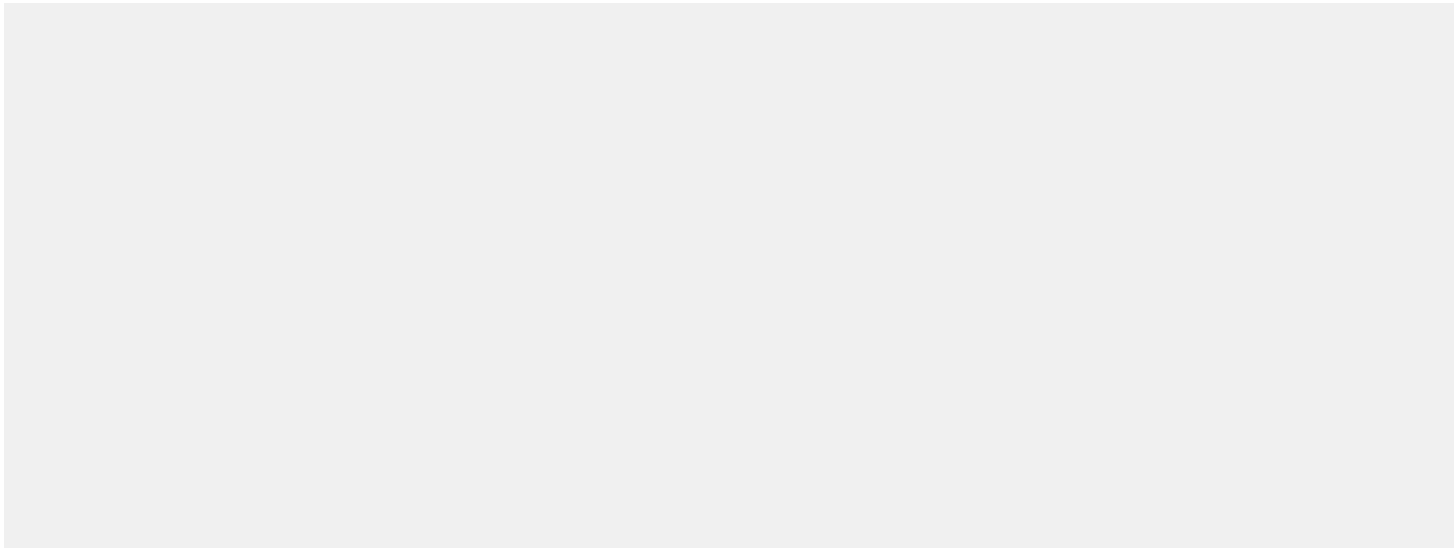


INQUESTS

Groom-to-be died after taking cocaine during all-night drugs binge on stag do in Magaluf

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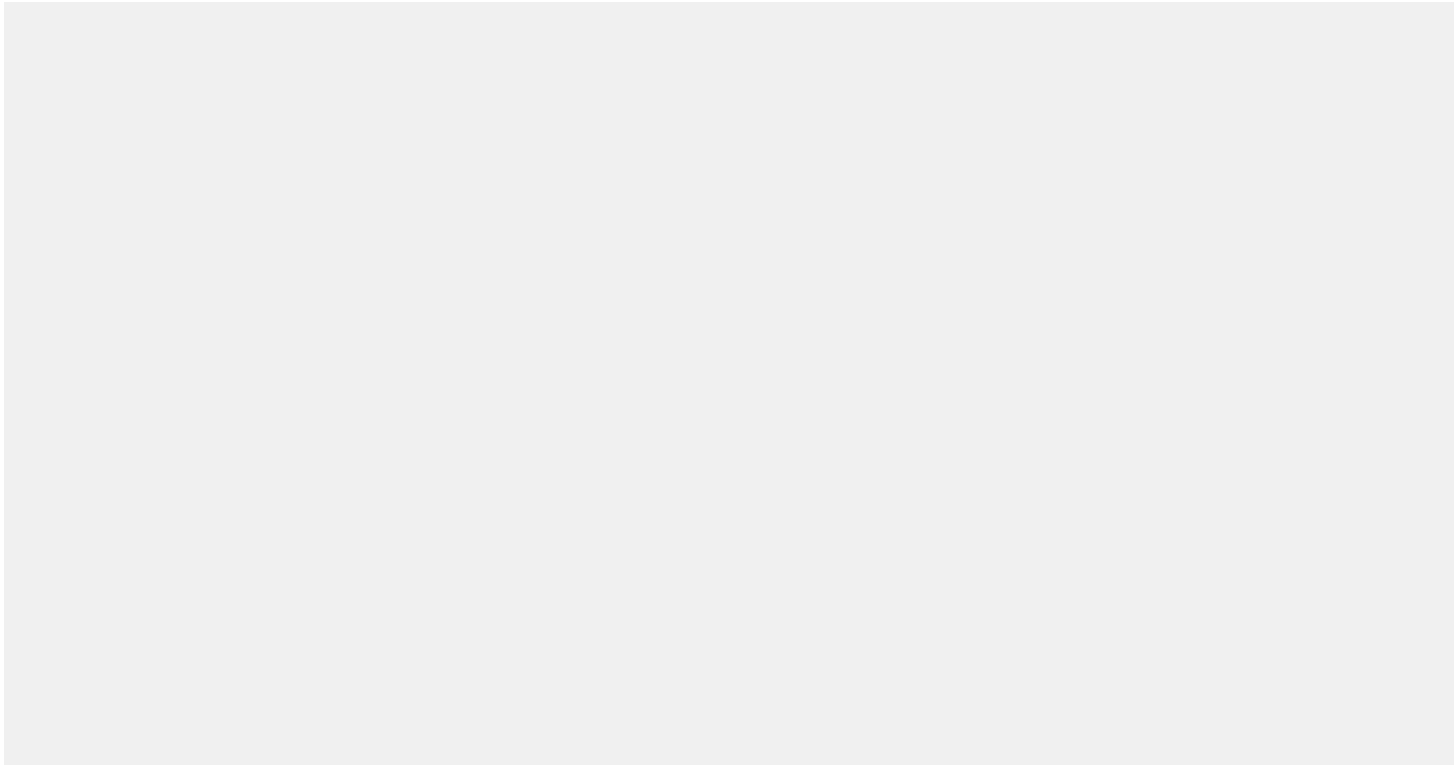
# TOP STORIES





WORLD BOOK DAY

Celebrity ids dressed up for World Book Day but which parents are behind the Horrid Henry costume?

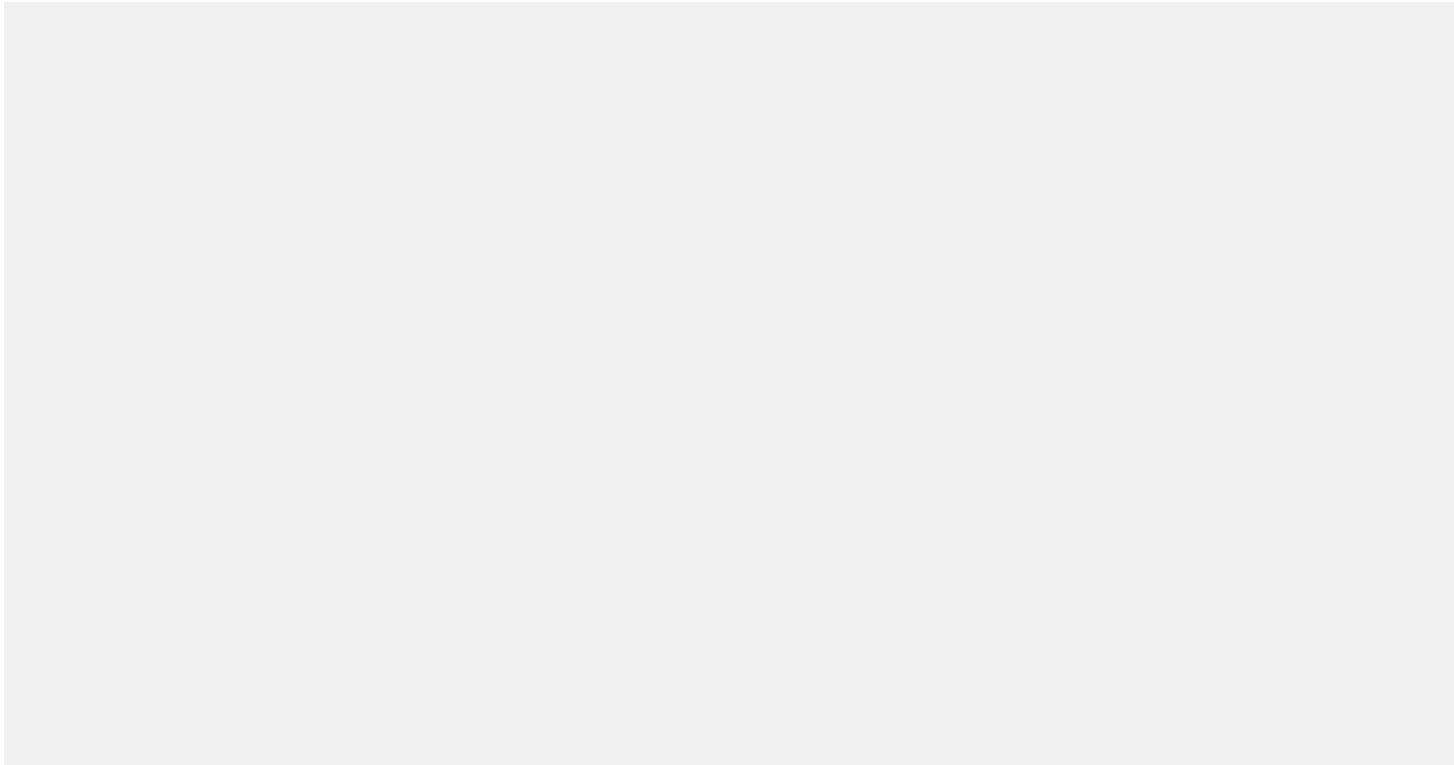






INQUESTS

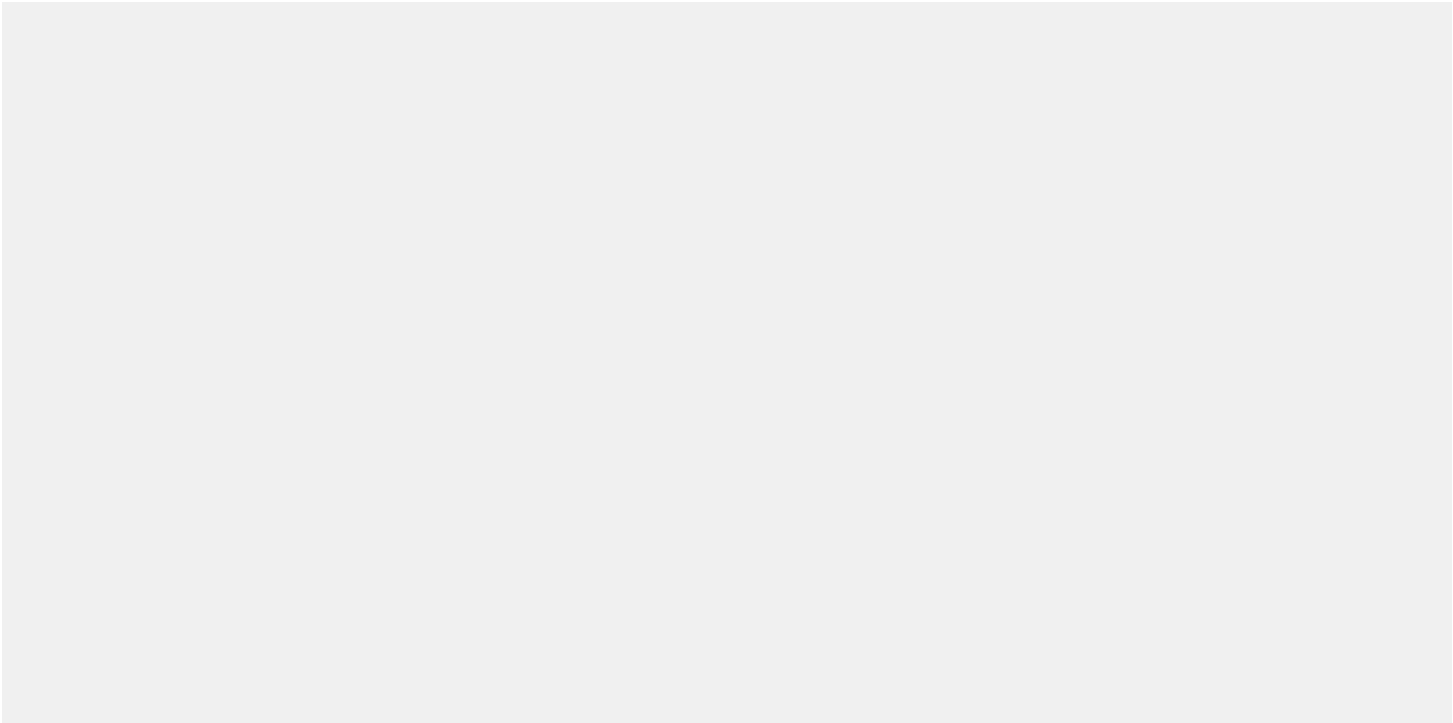
**Groom-to-be, 31, died after taking cocaine during all-night drugs binge on his stag do in Magaluf**





OBESITY

**Obese 700lb mum-of-two forced to wash herself with a HOSE says her drug addict parents forced her to binge eat**

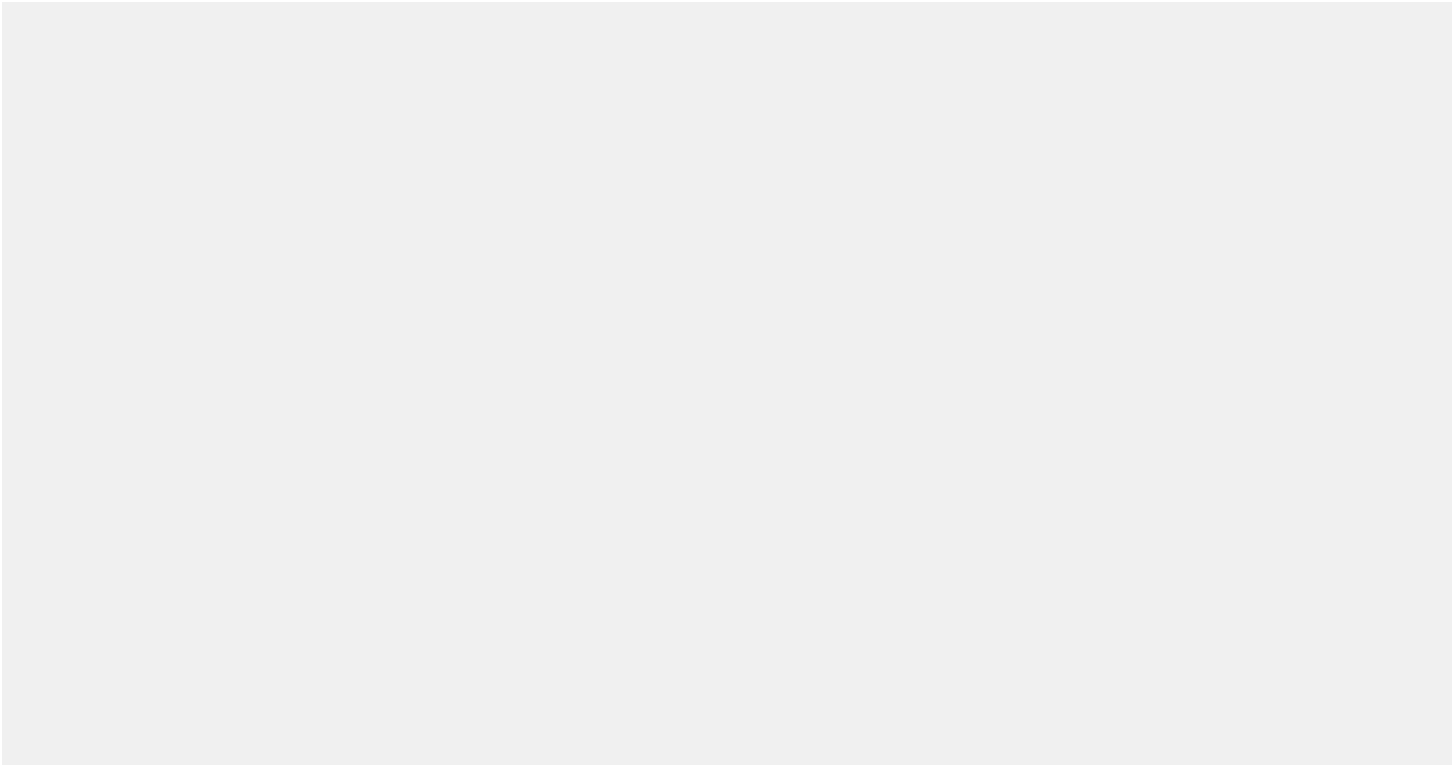






RELATIONSHIPS

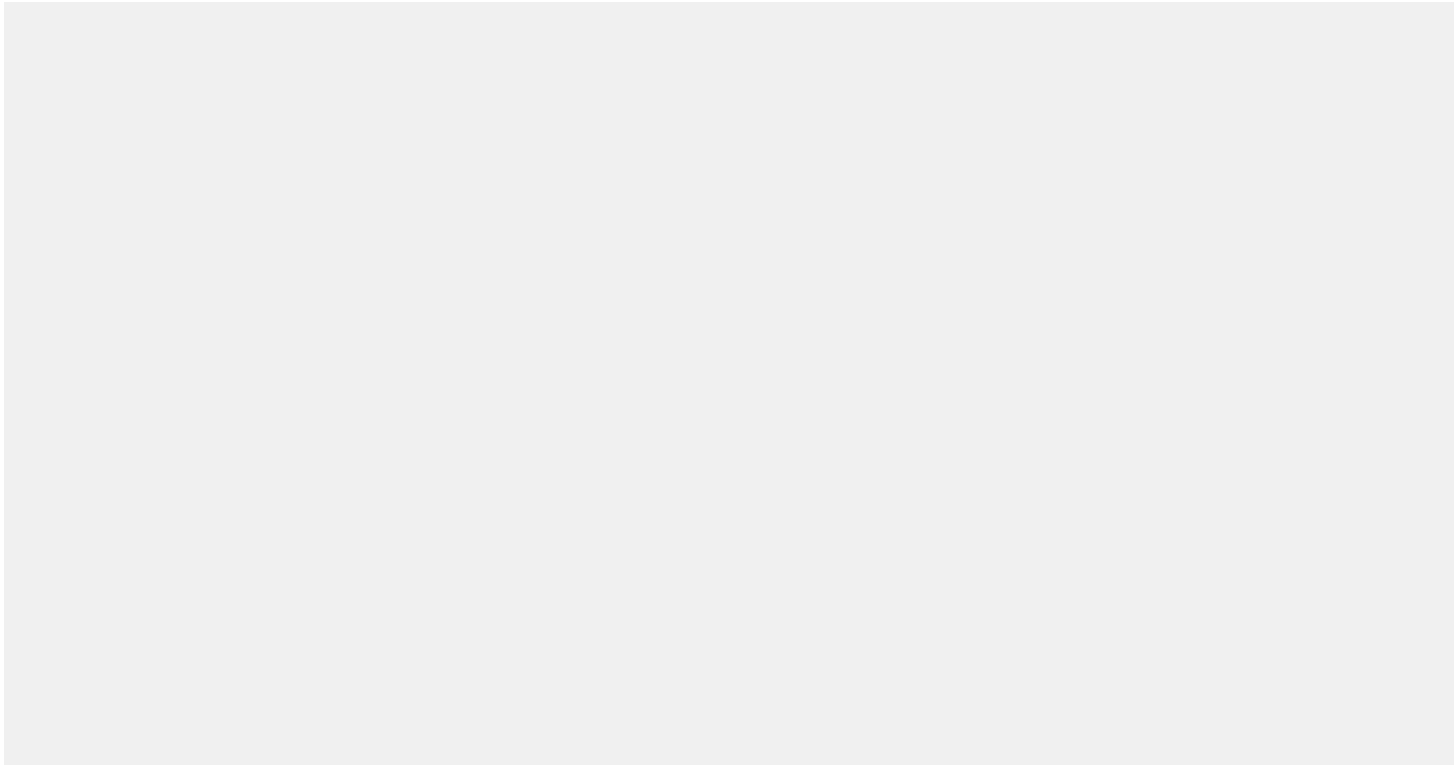
Sainsbury's worker takes OAP on dinner 'date' after discovering his loneliness





COURT CASE

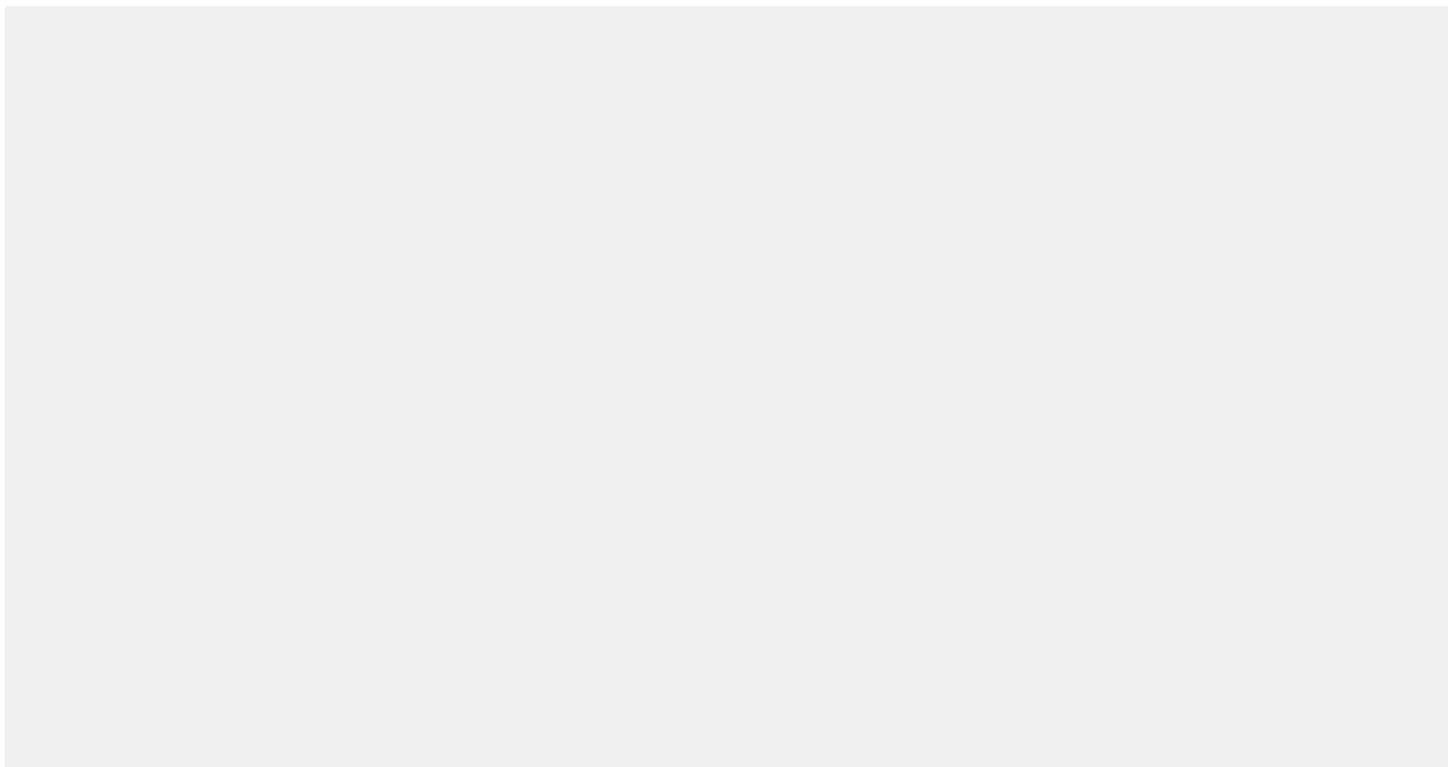
Doting dad killed in front of his wife and daughter 'after contract killers target the wrong man'





NHS

**NHS 'on a burning platform' with patients at risk warns England's top hospital inspector**







ASTHMA

**"I can't wake mummy": Toddler trapped with mum's body for TWO DAYS survived by eating block of cheese**

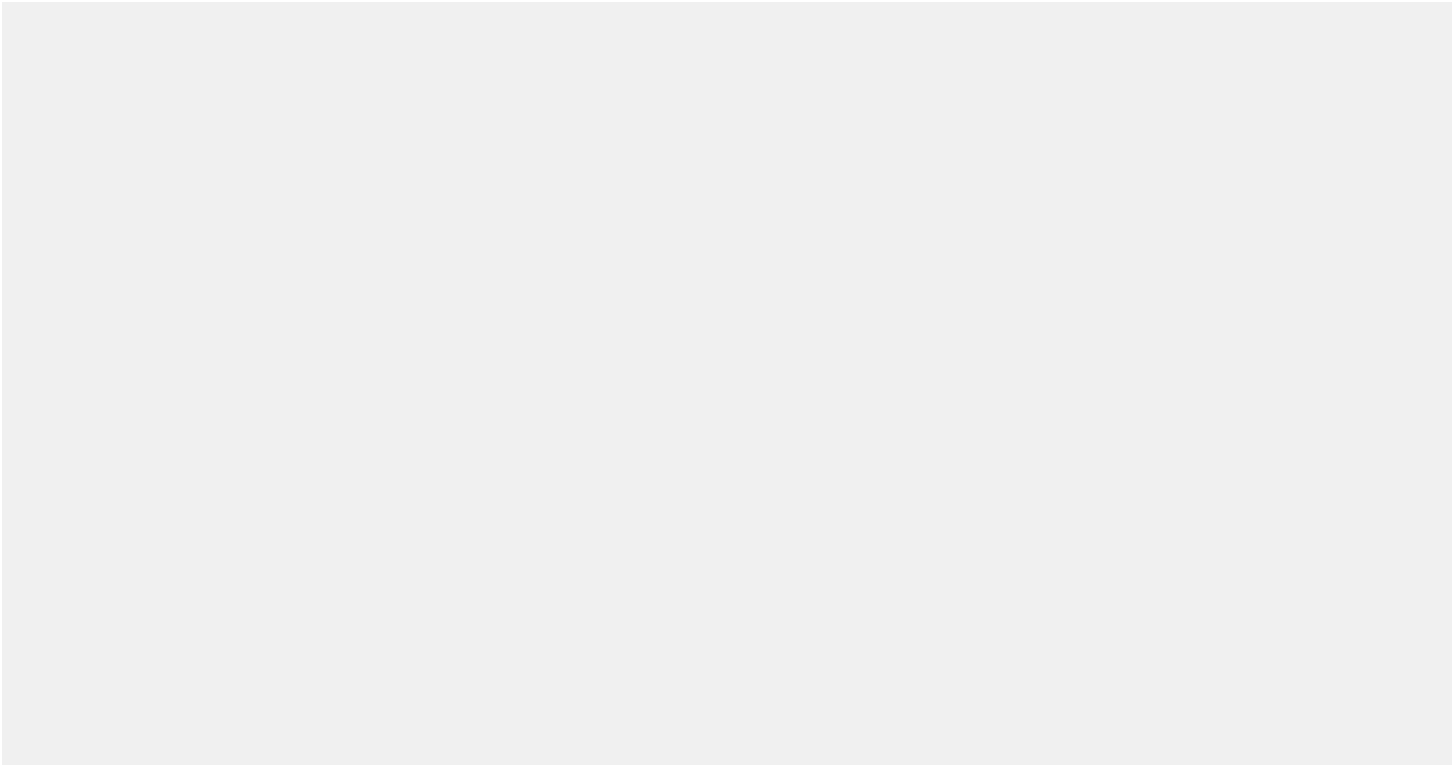






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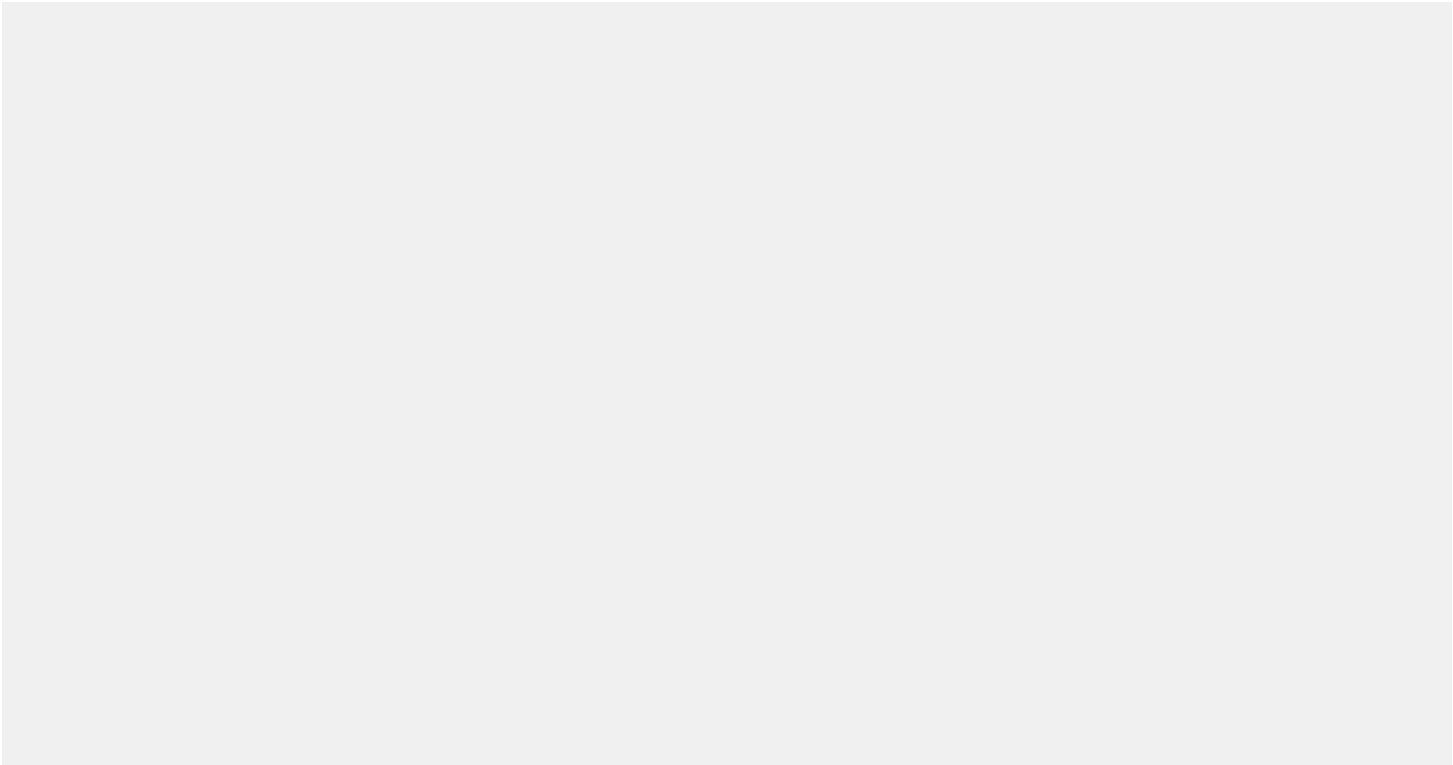
From looking grumpy to ignoring a letter: 6 weird things you never realised you could be fined for





KELLIE MALONEY

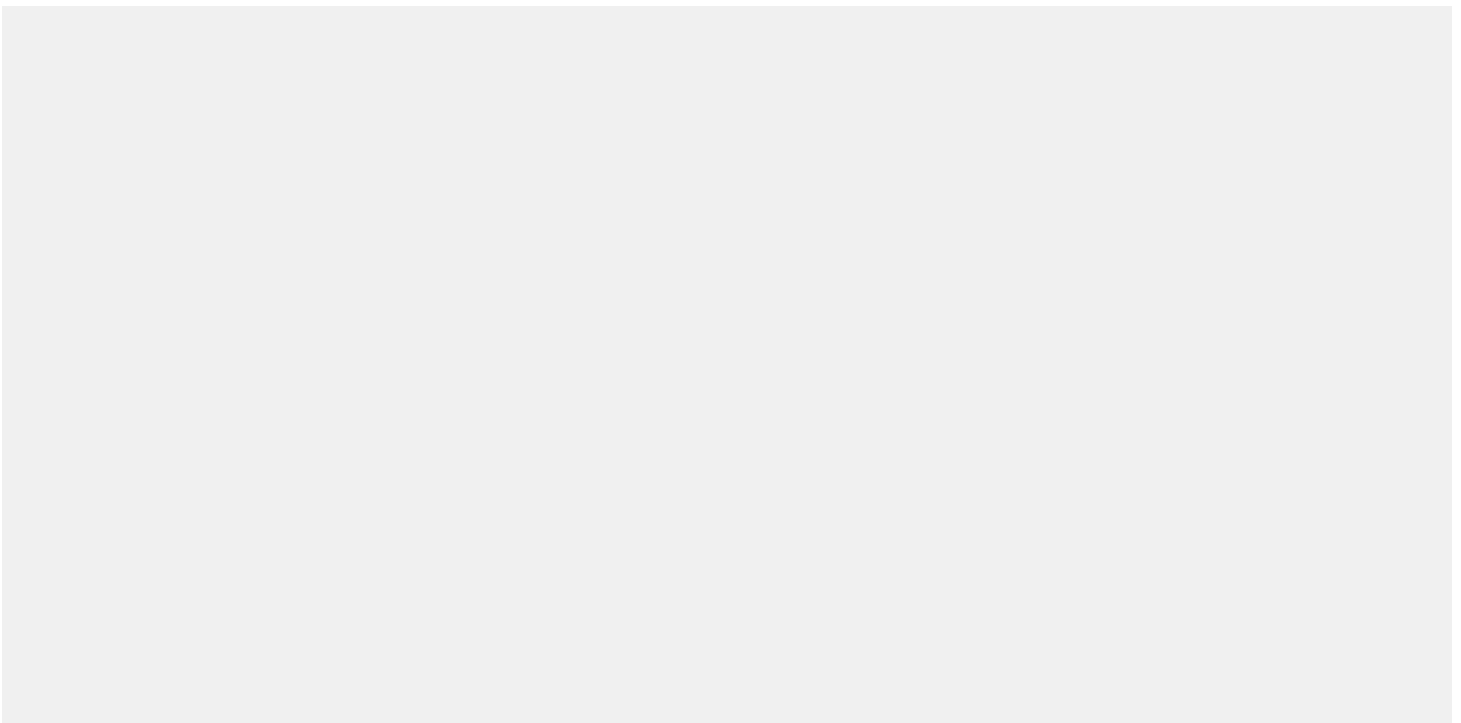
**Kellie Maloney's heartbreak as First Dates episode canned when man discovered she was a 'celebrity trans'**





#### COURT CASE

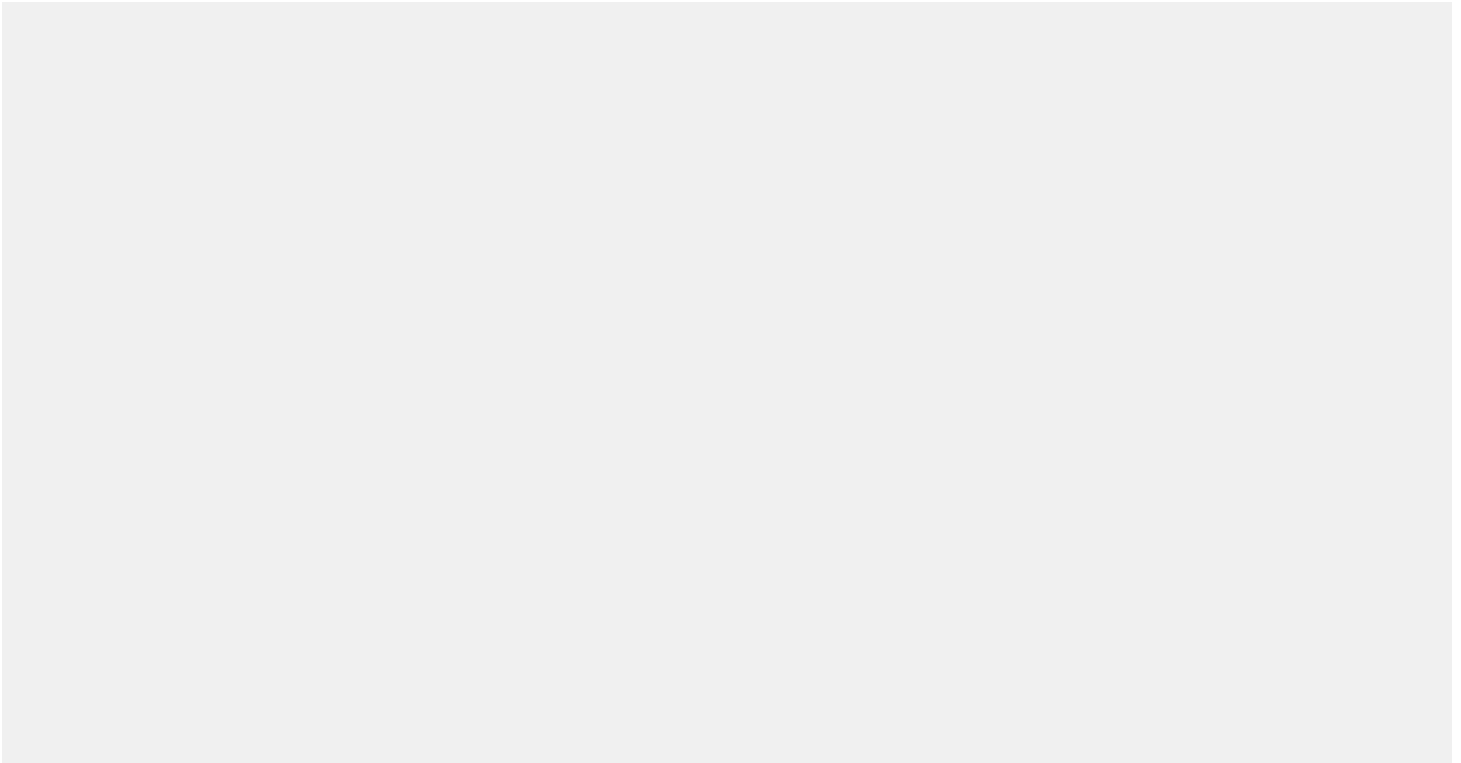
**Trainee electrician ran onto football pitch and attacked female footballer after she squared up to girlfriend during game**





FRAUD

**Conwoman jailed after lying about having cancer to swindle £38k from lover she hid from her fiance**







WEATHER

Snow and flood warnings issued as freezing downpours sweep across Britain in time for the weekend



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