

Let's Talk Topical



Animal Testing

- Approximately 115 million animals are used in experiments world wide every year.
- In the UK in 2017, 87% of experiments involving animals were tested on mice, fish and rats.
- In the UK there is a ban on using animals in the testing of cosmetics and since 2013 it's been illegal to sell cosmetics products in the EU that have been tested on animals .
- In the UK no drug can be sold unless it has been tested on at least two different types of live mammal.



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Sneaky Technology Giants

- In 2019 79% of UK adults owned a smart phone and in the world 350,000 mobile phones are disposed of each day.
- An Italian court fined Apple and Samsung millions of Euros because research has proven that these companies' updates are designed to deliberately slow older phones down. This was to encourage users to buy newer handsets.
- The European Union plans to change the law so that mobile phone, laptop and tablet manufacturers have to make their devices easier to repair. This would help people in the UK as we would be buying the same models as the rest of Europe.

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Fast Fashion

- In 2018 the UK sent 300,000 tonnes of clothing to be burned or dumped in landfills.
- In the world 80 billion pieces of clothing are purchased a year.
- The fashion industry is one of the major polluting industries in the world.
- The production and distribution of crops, fibres and garments used in fashion cause environmental pollution including water, air and soil pollution.
- Many clothes contain plastics like polyester, nylon and acrylic in them.



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Polluted Air

- Air pollution is one of the world's biggest environmental concerns. It is caused by gasses and solids being pumped into the air by manufacturing, transport and burning fossil fuels.
- Breathing in air pollution can increase the risks of heart disease and stroke. It worsens asthma symptoms and can even cause lung cancer. Children are the most vulnerable to air pollution but it affects everyone.
- The Scottish Government has clear policies on reducing emissions from transport however a report in 2019 showed that air quality has actually worsened on Scotland's most polluted street, Hope Street.

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Pill Postcode Lottery

- Access to free healthcare is a universal right in the UK thanks to the NHS. However the services the NHS provides are getting more and more stretched due to increasing numbers of users, shortages of staff and the cost of missed appointments.
- Financial pressures have led some local health boards to restrict the services they offer to patients. Some parts of Scotland are offering treatments and medicines that others aren't.
- Many 'life changing' drugs including those for the treatment of cancer, epilepsy and cystic fibrosis are no longer being provided by the NHS due to being deemed not cost-effective.



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I Don't See Me!

- In 2018 a report by the University of Dundee showed that less than 10% of student nurses in Scotland are male.
- In the UK 44% of senior lecturers in bioscience are female yet just 16% reach professor level according to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Science and Health (EDIS).
- According to a report by Social Mobility in Engineering only 24% of engineers in the UK come from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Scientists from ethnic minorities are 10% less likely to get funding than white scientists according to UK Research and Innovation.


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Food for Thought

- In the UK genetically modified organisms (GMO) foods are not grown commercially but many GMO food are imported.
- GMO foods have had changes made to their DNA using methods of genetic engineering. This can enhance flavour, speed up the time taken to grow or make plants produce a higher yield of crop.
- In 2018 half of the UK's food was imported with 30% coming from Europe and 11% coming from other non EU countries.
- Many foods are transported from the other side of the world by planes, trains and road which contributes to their carbon footprint.



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Plastic Pollution

- Plastics have a devastating impact on our planet as they pollute our streets, beaches and harm wildlife.
- INEOS in Grangemouth is the largest producer of plastics in the UK and one of the largest in Europe.
- Eight million pieces of plastic pollution enters our oceans every day. By 2050 the weight of plastic in the ocean will be more than the weight of fish living in them.
- The scientific journal *Nature* showed that all beached marine mammals studied in 2019 had traces of plastic in their stomach.



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