



IT'S CURTAINS

A burglar who has 28 previous convictions for 76 offences has been jailed for stealing his neighbour's curtains and then hanging them in his own window. He was caught when the victims came to his door and asked why their net curtains were hanging in his window.

The Daily Mirror reported that Jason Williams, 38, was jailed for two years and five months after confessing to police and admitted the crime when he appeared before magistrates. He had originally denied the burglary but could not explain how the curtains came to be in his possession.

Williams broke down boarding on his neighbours home and stole the curtains along with two ashtrays and some lamb steaks from the freezer.

Williams' barrister, Alastair Smith, described the crime as "not very sophisticated."



ALIENS SABOTAGE BRITAIN'S NUKES

Six former senior US airmen have claimed that aliens have been hovering over UK and US nuclear missile sites since 1948 and deactivating the weapons, according to the Daily Mail.

At one base, it was claimed that the nuclear missiles were mysteriously put into launch mode until commanders overrode them.

One of the former officers, Colonel Charles Halt, claims to have seen a UFO at RAF Bentwaters, near Ipswich, one of the few bases in the UK to hold nuclear weapons.

He said, "I believe that the security services of both the United States and the United Kingdom have attempted – both then and now – to subvert the significance of what occurred at RAF Bentwaters by the use of well-practised methods of disinformation."

Another former airman, Captain Robert Salas, added, "We're talking about unidentified flying objects, as simple as that. They're often known as UFOs, you could call them that."

"The US Air Force is lying about the national security implications of unidentified aerial objects at nuclear bases and we can prove it."

He said he witnessed such an event first-hand on March 16, 1967, at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, which housed nuclear missiles.

Capt Salas added, "I was on duty when an object came over and hovered directly over the site. The missiles shut down - 10 Minuteman missiles. And the same thing happened at another site a week later. There's a strong interest in our missiles by these objects, wherever they come from. I personally think they're not from planet Earth."

SOGGY CHIPS – NO MORE

British Fish and Chips may never be the same again thanks to Malt Salt, a powdered vinegar invented by US company J&Ds. It's made using natural ingredients and blends sea salt and malt vinegar powder.

Malt Salt costs £2.80 and features a Union flag on the shaker. But the Guardian reports that purists may be sceptical, especially as the company's speciality is Bacon Salt, their motto: "Everything should taste like bacon."

Les Lock, owner of the Dolphin fish

bar in Bournemouth, Dorset, said he was prepared to give it a go.

"Some people do like their chips soggy and others prefer them crispy. It's all down to the individual. It would be great to be able to offer people a choice when they're having vinegar on their food."

"Of course, fish and chips is a traditional dish so it would have to be good to get people to change their habits, but stranger things have happened. It just might work. I wish I'd thought of it myself."



A PITTA FUN

Researchers have spent five months visiting 400 kebab shops in ten cities across Britain for a new guide by drinks firm WKD, according to the Daily Record.

WKD taster and kebabologist Ben McFarland, who has been described as the 'Simon Cowell' of kebabs, said, "Going around the country trying hundreds of kebabs might seem like the perfect job to some people but, believe me, it was a challenge."

Jason Donervan, Bristol's famous kebab van, has been short-listed for the national WKD Golden Kebab Award. Jason – whose real name is Mustapha – thought up the genius name when a customer told him he looked like Jason Donovan.

Other creative names that the researchers discovered were Pitta The Great, Abrakebabra, McDoners, Kebabistan, Prima Doner and Shish Happens.

LADY BOY

A couple in the north east of England have spoken of their shock after being told that their newborn baby girl is a boy.

Ms Robson, 21, from Brandon near Durham, and her partner, Andrew O'Shaughnessy, 27, were thrilled when their first baby was born at Sunderland Royal Hospital by emergency caesarean.

Their baby, Olivia, was born 11 weeks prematurely and immediately transferred to an incubator, reported the Northern Echo.

But five weeks later, when visiting the hospital, the couple were called in by a consultant and the news was broken to them that Olivia was a boy.

Ms Robson said: "I just burst into tears. It's taken a bit of getting used to. From that point onwards everyone kept calling the baby a he. Because he was born so early he wasn't fully developed – that's why no one could tell."

"As he got a few weeks older it became apparent." The couple have quickly adjusted to having a son rather than a daughter and now Olivia has a new name – Dylan.

THE AVERAGE BRIT

The average age to get married in England and Wales is 30.8 for men and 28.8 for women, according to figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The figures - released to mark next week's UN World Statistics Day - show the average British man is 38 years old, has 41 years left to live and has completed A-levels, while the typical woman is aged 40, will live for another 42 years and is educated up to GCSE A-C level.

The ONS said the average man in England was 5ft 9in tall and weighed 13.16 stone (83.6kg) and the average woman in England 11 stone (70.2kg) and 5ft 3in tall.

On average, women with full-time jobs work 34 hours a week and earn a £22,151 salary, whereas average men in full-time employment work 39 hours per week and earn £28,270 a year.

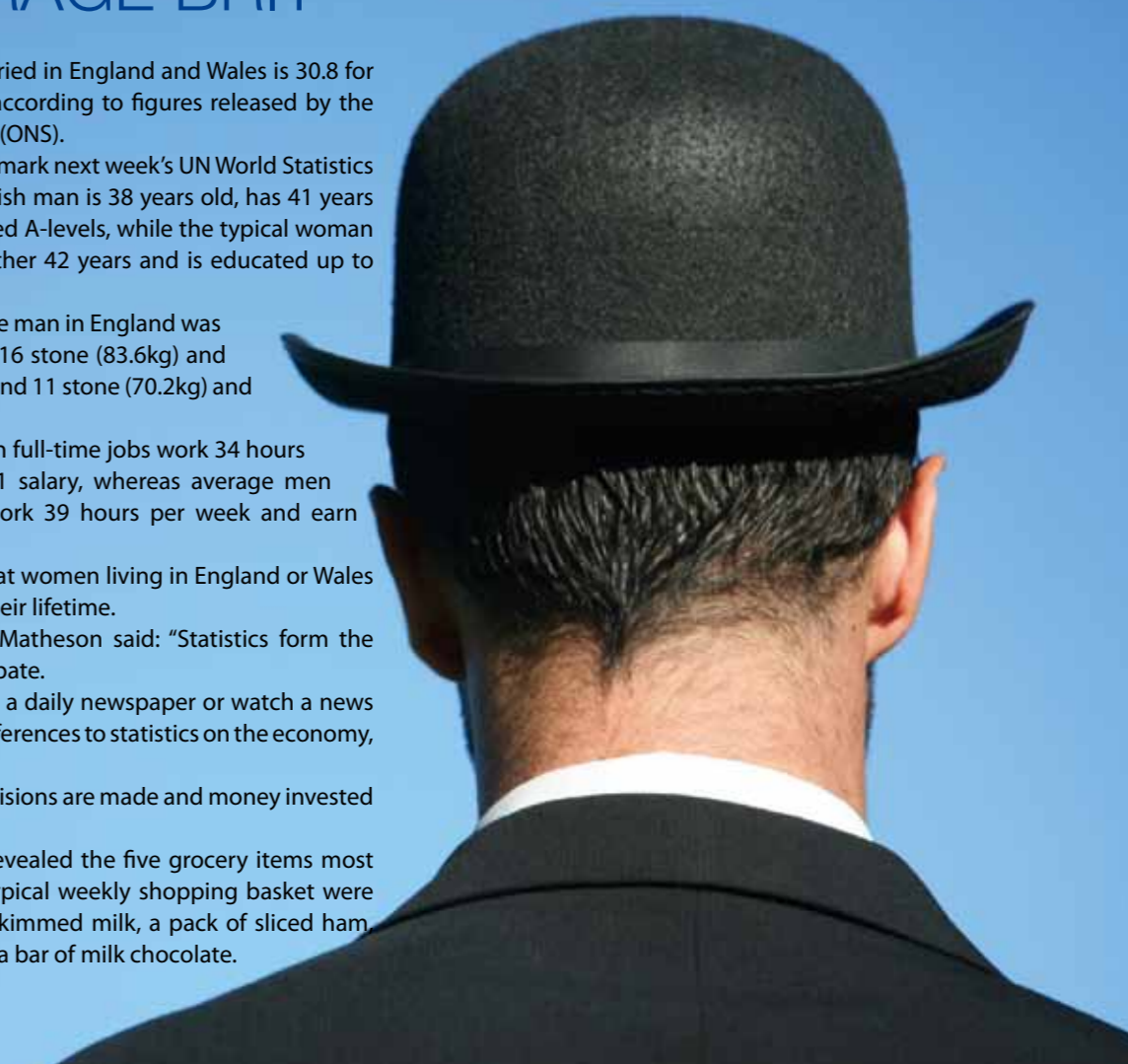
The statistics showed that women living in England or Wales have 1.96 children during their lifetime.

National Statistician Jil Matheson said: "Statistics form the backbone of democratic debate."

"It is impossible to open a daily newspaper or watch a news broadcast without seeing references to statistics on the economy, health, education or crime."

"Every day in the UK, decisions are made and money invested based on official statistics."

The ONS analysis also revealed the five grocery items most likely to be included in a typical weekly shopping basket were a two-pint carton of semi-skimmed milk, a pack of sliced ham, breakfast cereal, bacon and a bar of milk chocolate.



REACH FOR THE SKIES

Winston Churchill has become the first British Prime Minister to enter the UK pop charts.

Classical music label Decca has joined up with the RAF Central Band for the official album of the Battle of Britain, released this autumn to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and the 90th anniversary of the band itself.

Reach For The Skies features some of Churchill's most rousing speeches from 1940 and entered the UK album chart at number four. It sets Churchill's memorable speeches The Few and Their Finest Hour to classics such as The Dambusters March, Battle of Britain March, Spitfire Prelude, Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines and 633 Squadron.

The Central Band of the RAF signed their contract on the wing of an original Battle of Britain Spitfire, in the presence of Battle of Britain veterans at the RAF Museum in London, and Decca hope to replicate the success of Vera Lynn who topped the UK album charts last year, aged 92.

"The album features music dedicated to the heroes of

yesterday, today and tomorrow, and we expect the RAF to be propelled right to the top of the charts. With a little help from Winston Churchill himself, we have produced an album of which we're all immensely proud, and one that we hope will continue to showcase the excellence of musicianship for which the RAF has always been known" said Decca's managing director Mark Wilkinson.

Wing Commander Duncan Stubbs, principal director of music for the RAF, added that the morale military music gave, not only to the airmen in the Battle of Britain but the British public too, remains relevant to today's modern RAF and is a continuing inspiration to those serving in Afghanistan:

"Just like all the men and women of the commonwealth nations and our allies did during the Battle of Britain, today's men and women of the Royal Air Force show the same bravery and sacrifice through out the world to ensure the freedom of others. If through our music we can help keep the tradition and spirit of the Battle of Britain alive, then we will have done a good job."

