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Queen and Country Fifty Years On: Facts and Figures for the Golden Jubilee 2002

In June 2002, Queen Elizabeth II will celebrate her Golden Jubilee. This paper discusses the historical origins of jubilee celebrations and presents a range of statistics and other useful information about the fifty years of Her Majesty's reign.

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Summary of main points

Since the Norman Conquest in 1066, only five British kings and queens have served for fifty years on the Throne. On Wednesday 24 April, the Prime Minister will propose a Humble Address to be presented to Her Majesty on Tuesday 30 April in commemoration of her Golden Jubilee. This year's celebrations will culminate in a weekend of festivities between 1 and 4 June 2002.

This research paper presents some interesting facts and figures regarding Queen Elizabeth's fifty years on the throne, as well as a range of social, political and economic statistics to illustrate how Britain and its people have changed under the 'New Elizabethan' era. For example:

- The Queen has conferred over 380,000 honours and awards at over 450 Investitures.
- Ten Prime Ministers and eight Speakers of the House of Commons have served during Queen Elizabeth's reign.
- MPs' salaries have risen from £1,250 (1954) to £55,118 (2001).
- The Queen has granted Royal Assent to over three thousand Acts of Parliament, undertaken 251 official overseas visits, sat for 120 official portraits, and sent almost 100,000 telegrams to centenarians.
- Over the last half-century, the size of the British economy has tripled, crime has risen ten-fold, the number of young people staying on to undertake full-time further education has doubled, and average weekly earnings have grown by a factor of 40.
- The proportion of built up (urban) land has grown by 45% since 1952.
- Life expectancy at birth is now more than 8 years higher than in the 1950s, the number of people aged 65 or over has risen by around 4 million, and birth and death rates have fallen.

The Library has produced several Standard Notes concerned with the Golden Jubilee 2002: SN/PC/1435 on the plans and progress for the Golden Jubilee celebrations, SN/HA/1648 on the arrangements for the funding of jubilee street parties, and SN/IA/1732 on the issuing of the Golden Jubilee Medal. These are available on the Parliamentary Intranet

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I The History of Jubilees

Queen Elizabeth II is the fortieth Sovereign since William the Conqueror. Only four other kings and queens in British history have reigned for 50 years or more: Queen Victoria (63 years), George III (59 years), Henry III (56 years) and Edward III (50 years). James VI of Scotland reigned for 58 years (1567-1625), although he was a British king only from 1603 to 1625.

A. Ancient and Medieval Jubilees

Jubilees have been celebrated across different cultures and in various forms for more than 5,000 years. The origins of royal jubilees can be traced back to ancient Egyptian and Hebrew civilisations. After thirty years of rule, Egyptian Pharaohs were obliged to participate in various ceremonies (known as *Heb-sed*) to demonstrate to their public that they remained virile and fit to rule. One such ritual required the Pharaoh to display his athletic prowess over a prescribed distance.

In the Old Testament, the third book of Moses stated that a jubilee should be celebrated every fifty years. Families should gather together, land should be restored to its original owners, debts remitted, slaves freed, and land left fallow. The word ‘jubilee’ is derived from the Hebrew ‘*yobel*’ – a ram’s horn with which the start of a jubilee year was trumpeted on the 10th day of the 7th month after the lapse of seven Sabbaths of years (i.e. 49 years).¹ On this basis, Queen Elizabeth’s Golden Jubilee celebrations would have begun on 16 September 2001.

The medieval Roman Catholic Church celebrated papal jubilees from the 14th century onwards. The first papal jubilee was proclaimed by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300, and any communicant who found themselves in Rome during the jubilee celebrations could expect to be indulged with fine food and festivity. However, as in medieval England, jubilee celebrations were rare. Life expectancy remained low and the nature of kingship was so precarious that few monarchs reached the age of fifty. Even fewer reigned for more than 50 years. Only two English medieval kings lived long enough to celebrate their golden jubilees – Henry III (1216-72) in 1265-66 and Edward III (1327-77) in 1377. But medieval jubilee celebrations were essentially occasions of piety since they consisted mainly of religious observances and the granting of pardons.

B. 18th and 19th Century Jubilees

George III (1760-1820) was the first modern Sovereign to celebrate fifty years on the throne. The beginning of his fiftieth year as King was marked on 25 October 1809 when, accompanied by members of the Royal Family, he attended a private service at Windsor

¹ Leviticus 25:9 ff.

before enjoying a grand fête and firework party at nearby Frogmore. In London, the Lord Mayor and City Corporation processed to St. Paul's Cathedral for a service of thanksgiving before holding a jubilee dinner at the Mansion House.

The longest reigning of all British monarchs, Queen Victoria (1837-1901), celebrated her Golden and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 respectively. The Golden Jubilee celebrations were held on 20-21 June 1887. After breakfast taken under the trees at Frogmore, where her late husband Albert was buried, Queen Victoria travelled to London for a royal banquet with fifty other European kings, princes and governing heads of British colonies and dominions overseas. The next day, Victoria was escorted in procession by the Indian cavalry to Westminster Abbey. As Mark Twain observed, the procession 'stretched to the limit of sight in both directions'. On her return to Buckingham Palace, Queen Victoria made an appearance on the Balcony to greet the crowds in the Mall. Later in the Palace Ballroom, Victoria distributed ornate jubilee brooches to her family.

In 1897, Queen Victoria celebrated sixty years on the throne with a short service of thanksgiving at St. Paul's Cathedral. The Queen was, by now, too frail to walk up the steps into the Cathedral nave and so the service was held outside. Afterwards, Victoria processed through the streets of London before returning to Buckingham Palace. In her diary, Queen Victoria remarked:

"No one ever, I believe, has met with such an ovation as was given to me, passing through those six miles of streets...the cheering was quite deafening and every face seemed to be filled with real joy. I was much moved and gratified."²

C. The Silver Jubilee - 1977

The last jubilee celebration was for Queen Elizabeth II in 1977 when she marked her Silver Jubilee. Although the actual anniversary of the Queen's accession was on 6 February 1977, most of the celebrations were held in the summer. On 4 May, both Houses of Parliament presented loyal addresses to Her Majesty. In her reply, the Queen stressed that the keynote of her Silver Jubilee remained the unity of the nation.

During the summer of 1977, Queen Elizabeth undertook an extensive tour of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. The Queen made state visits to Western Samoa, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, Fiji, Tasmania, Papua New Guinea, Canada and the West Indies. During the year, it was estimated that Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh travelled 56,000 miles.

The climax of the national celebrations came in early June. On the evening of Monday 6 June, the Queen lit a bonfire beacon at Windsor to start a chain of beacons across the

² <http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page929.asp>

United Kingdom. On 7 June, large crowds watched as the Queen travelled in the Gold State Coach to St. Paul's Cathedral for a service of thanksgiving attended by world heads of state and former British Prime Ministers. The service was followed by lunch at Guildhall at which the Queen reminded her guests of the pledge that she had made as Princess Elizabeth almost thirty years earlier:

“...When I was twenty-one I pledged my life to the service of our people and I asked for God's help to make good that vow. Although that vow was made in my salad days, when I was green in judgement, I do not regret or retract one word of it.”³

It was estimated that around 500 million people watched on television around the world as the procession returned to Buckingham Palace. The Queen made several balcony appearances, and street parties and carnivals were held across Britain in the afternoon and evening. In London alone 4,000 street parties were reported.

The final event of the national celebrations was a river procession down the Thames from Greenwich to Lambeth on Thursday 9 June, emulating the ceremonial Tudor barge trips of Elizabeth I, herself a reigning monarch for 44 years (1558-1603). Afterwards, the Queen opened the Silver Jubilee Walkway and new South Bank Jubilee Gardens. A procession of lighted carriages escorted Queen Elizabeth back to Buckingham Palace for further balcony appearances to greet the crowds gathered along the length of the Mall.

Royal jubilees have recently been celebrated elsewhere in the world. The late Emperor Hirohito of Japan celebrated fifty years on the Chrysanthemum Throne in 1976. Queen Juliana of the Netherlands celebrated her Silver Jubilee in 1973, followed by the jubilee celebrations for Prince Ranier of Monaco (1974) and the late King Baudouin of Belgium (1976).

II Queen Elizabeth's Fifty Years on the Throne

The Golden Jubilee celebrations will mark fifty years of public service by Queen Elizabeth to the UK and the Commonwealth. During that time, Her Majesty has undertaken numerous public engagements and witnessed many changes within the world of Parliament and politics, and within the Royal Family itself.

A. The Royal Family

Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary of Windsor was born on 21 April 1926 at 17 Bruton Street, London. Elizabeth is the eldest daughter of the late King George VI (1895-1952) and Queen Elizabeth (*nee* Bowes-Lyon) (1900-2002). Princess Elizabeth acceded to the throne on 6 February 1952 on the death of George VI, and was crowned in Westminster

³ <http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page930.asp>

Abbey on 2 June 1953. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh have four children [Charles (b. 1948), Anne (b. 1950), Andrew (b. 1960) and Edward (b. 1963)] and six grandchildren [Princes William and Harry, Peter and Zara Phillips, and Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie].

Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh have been married for 54 years. They were married on 20 November 1947 in Westminster Abbey. The Queen's wedding dress was designed by Norman Hartnell using silk from Chinese silkworms bred at Lullingstone Castle. Her Majesty's wedding ring was made from a nugget of Welsh gold from the Clogau St. David's mine, near Dolgellau. The official wedding cake was made by McVitie and used ingredients given as a wedding present by the Australian Girl Guides.

Queen Elizabeth was the first monarch since Queen Victoria to become a parent while reigning. Her Majesty's third child, Prince Andrew, was born in 1960 and her fourth, Prince Edward, was born in 1963. In 1857, Queen Victoria had her youngest child, Princess Beatrice, twenty years after coming to the throne.

Queen Elizabeth has official residences at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh. Her Majesty also maintains private residences at Sandringham in Norfolk and Balmoral Castle in Aberdeenshire. The Queen is Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom. She is Colonel-in-Chief of over thirty army regiments, including the Welsh Guards, Grenadier Guards, The Blues and Royals, the Royal Australian Engineers and the Malawi Rifles.

The Queen has owned over 30 corgi dogs during her reign. The first, Susan, was given to Princess Elizabeth as an 18th birthday present in 1944. Most of the corgis have been direct descendants of Susan. Her Majesty currently has four corgis – Pharos, Swift, Emma and Linnet. The Queen has also introduced a new breed of dog, known as the 'dorgi', when one of her corgis was mated with Princess Margaret's dachshund named Pipkin. There have been eight dorgis – Tinker, Pickles, Chipper, Piper, Harris, Brandy, Cider and Berry.

B. Appointments and Honours

Since Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne in 1952, she has conferred 380,630 honours and awards at 459 Investitures. The first person to be presented to the Queen was Private William Speakman of The King's Own Scottish Borderers who received the Victoria Cross at an investiture held on 27 February 1952 for his bravery during the Korean War.

Her Majesty has appointed four Archbishops of Canterbury during her reign, and is expected to appoint a fifth later in 2002 on the retirement of Archbishop Carey. Archbishop Fisher (appointed in 1945) officiated at the funeral of King George VI in February 1952 and at Queen Elizabeth's Coronation in June 1953, and was succeeded by:

1. Michael Ramsey (1961-74)
2. Donald Coggan (1974-80)
3. Robert Runcie (1980-91)
4. George Carey (1991-date)

C. Royal Finances

Queen Elizabeth's official income is divided into three separate sources:

- the Civil List (official expenditure as head of state and head of the Commonwealth)
- Grants-in-Aid (voted for by Parliament to meet the upkeep of Royal palaces, state visits, royal ceremonial etc.)
- the Privy Purse (mostly financed by the income from the Duchy of Lancaster to meet other official and some private expenditure).

In addition, the Prince of Wales receives an annual income from the Duchy of Cornwall.⁴ The following table summarises the main sources of royal financing:

	2000-01
	<i>£ thousands</i>
Civil List and annuities paid to members of the Royal Family	10,417
: <i>less annuities refunded to Treasury</i>	<i>1,515</i>
Civil List (net)	8,902
Grants-in-Aid	28,500
Privy Purse ⁵	6,536
Revenue from Duchy of Cornwall paid to Prince of Wales	7,613

D. Parliament and Politics

Ten Prime Ministers have served Queen Elizabeth. Tony Blair is the only Prime Minister to have been born during her reign:

1. Winston Churchill [Con.] (1951-55)
2. Sir Anthony Eden [Con.] (1955-57)
3. Harold Macmillan [Con.] (1957-63)
4. Sir Alec Douglas-Home [Con.] (1963-64)
5. Harold Wilson [Lab.] (1964-70 and 1974-76)
6. Edward Heath [Con.] (1970-74)
7. James Callaghan [Lab.] (1976-79)
8. Margaret Thatcher [Con.] (1979-90)
9. John Major [Con.] (1990-97)
10. Tony Blair [Lab.] (1997-date)

⁴ Further information regarding the arrangements for the royal financing can be found in Library Standard Note SN/SG/819 (2001).

⁵ Since 1993-94, The Queen has paid income tax on all private sources of income and on the Privy Purse to the extent that it is used for personal purposes

There have been eight Speakers of the House of Commons during Queen Elizabeth's reign:

1. W. Morrison (later Viscount Dunrossil) (1951-1959)
2. Sir H. Hylton-Foster (1959-1965 *died in office*)
3. Horace King (later Lord Maybray-King) (1965-1971)
4. J. Selwyn Lloyd (later Lord Selwyn-Lloyd) (1971-1976)
5. George Thomas (later Viscount Tonypany) (1976-1983)
6. Bernard Weatherill (later Lord Weatherill) (1983-1992)
7. Betty Boothroyd (later Baroness Boothroyd) (1992-2001)
8. Michael Martin (2002-date)

Parliament has been recalled under Standing Order No. 12 on twenty-two occasions since 1952. These have included:

- 12-14 September 1956 (Suez crisis)
- 17-23 October 1961 (Berlin crisis)
- 22-23 September 1971 and 3-4 June 1974 (Northern Ireland)
- 3 April and 14 April 1982 (Falkland Islands)
- 6-7 September 1990 (Invasion of Kuwait)
- 31 May 1995 (Bosnian conflict)
- 2-3 September 1998 (Omagh bomb; Criminal Justice Bill)
- 14 September, 4 and 8 October 2001 (terrorist attacks in the USA)
- 3 April 2002 (Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother)

The longest session of Parliament under Queen Elizabeth's reign was the 1966-67 session (246 sitting days). The shortest session was the 1973-74 session (60 days).

The number of women MPs elected at the 1951 general election was 17. In 1997, 120 female MPs were returned to Westminster (an additional two women MPs were elected at by-elections during the course of the Parliament). 118 women MPs were returned at the 2001 general election and female Members currently comprise 18% of the total membership of the House of Commons.

Turnout at general elections has recently declined quite sharply. The highest election turnout during the Queen's reign was at the February 1974 election (78.8%), the lowest in 2001 (59.4%). The highest share of the vote for a party forming a government was recorded for the Conservatives in the 1955 general election (49.6%), the lowest for Labour in the February 1974 election (37.2%).

The basic pay of MPs rose to £1,250 in 1954. The salary of MPs as at April 2002 was £55,118 plus a range of other allowances available for them to claim.⁶

The Queen has granted Royal Assent to 3,135 Acts of Parliament. The first Act to be given Royal Assent after her Proclamation as Queen was the *Income Tax Act 1952* (1 Eliz. 2 chapter 1), signed on 28 February 1952. The most recent Act granted Royal Assent was the *Office of Communications Act 2002*, signed on 19 March 2002. Queen Elizabeth has opened Parliament every year except 1959 and 1963 when she was expecting Princes Andrew and Edward.

E. Royal Engagements and Overseas Tours

The Queen is currently patron of 620 charities and organisations, 433 of which she has held continuously since her accession to the throne in 1952.

Since 1952, Queen Elizabeth has undertaken 251 official visits to 128 different countries around the world. Her Majesty's official visits have ranged from the Cocos Islands (5.4 sq. miles, population 655) to the People's Republic of China (3.7 million sq. miles, population 1.25 billion). By the end of 2002, the Queen will have visited Canada on twenty separate occasions, Australia (14 times), New Zealand (10 times) and Jamaica (6 times).

Most of Her Majesty's overseas tours have been undertaken on the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. The Royal Yacht was launched by the Queen on 7 January 1954 and remained in service until it was decommissioned in December 1997. *Britannia* travelled over a million miles on royal and official duties. The Queen first used *Britannia* when she embarked with the Duke of Edinburgh at Tobruk for the final stage of their 1954 Commonwealth Tour returning to the Pool of London. *Britannia* is now berthed at the Ocean Terminal at Leith, Edinburgh.

Queen Elizabeth has received a number of unusual living gifts on her foreign tours. These have included two tortoises from the Seychelles in 1972, a seven-year-old bull elephant named "Jumbo" from the President of Cameroon in 1972 to mark Her Majesty's silver wedding anniversary, and a canary from Germany in 1965.

Since coming to the throne, the Queen has sent almost 100,000 telegrams to centenarians and more than 280,000 telegrams to couples celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. She has attended 31 Royal Variety performances, hosted 88 state banquets, launched 17 ships, sent 37,500 Christmas cards, and distributed 75,000 Christmas puddings to the Royal Household.

⁶ See Library Research Paper 01/87 for further details of Members' pay and allowances, together with an explanation of the new framework for salary and allowances from 2003.

The Queen has sat for 120 official portraits. The most recent portrait was painted in 2001 by Lucian Freud. Her Majesty has also been at the saluting base for every Trooping the Colour since the beginning of her reign, with the exception of 1955 when a national rail strike forced the cancellation of the parade.

The doors of Buckingham Palace were opened to the general public for the first time on the occasion of the opening of the new Queen's Gallery in 1962. The Gallery displays items from the Royal Collection. It is currently being renovated and will re-open for the Golden Jubilee on 22 May 2002. Since August 1993, the nineteen state rooms have been opened to the general public each summer while the Queen is away on holiday in Scotland.

The only time that the Queen has interrupted an overseas tour was in 1974 during a tour of Australia and Indonesia when a general election was called suddenly in Britain. The Duke of Edinburgh toured Australia while the Queen rejoined in Indonesia.

Queen Elizabeth has attended 46 Royal Maundy services during her reign, held in 35 cathedrals around the country. Over 5,000 people have received Maundy Money from Her Majesty in recognition of their service to the Church and their communities. The Queen has also laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in Whitehall on Remembrance Sunday in every year of her reign except 1959, 1961, 1963, 1968, 1983 and 1999 when she was either expecting a child or abroad on official visits.⁷

III Then and Now: Britain under Queen Elizabeth II

The Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations afford an opportunity to reflect on half a century of social change. This section reviews some of the main themes behind fifty years of social, political and economic transformation in Britain.

A. Society

The nature of modern families and prevailing patterns of child-rearing have changed considerably since Queen Elizabeth acceded to the throne in 1952. Single-person households now comprise almost one-third of all households in the UK. In 2001, 7 million people lived alone, compared with 1.5 million people in 1952. The annual number of marriages has fallen by one-quarter, whereas the number of divorces has risen five-fold. 40% of marriages today are re-marriages, compared with around 20% in the early 1950s.

Cohabitation has replaced marriage as the most common form of first partnership. 70% of partners in first marriages now cohabit before marrying, compared with only 5% in the

⁷ <http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page910.asp>

1950s. Partly as a result, 40% of babies are now born outside marriage, compared to 3.5% in 1952. One in five children currently live in lone-parent families.

B. Economy

Over the course of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the structure of the British economy has increasingly moved away from the primary and manufacturing industries such as coal, steel, shipbuilding and engineering, towards hi-tech and tertiary services. The service sector now accounts for 70% of UK total output while manufacturing contributes only 20% of GDP. In 1960, the UK economy was second only to the United States. Today, it is lying in fourth-place behind the U.S, Japan, and Germany.⁸

Exports of goods and services account for a larger share of gross domestic product than fifty years ago, 34.5% in 2000 compared with 13.1% in 1952.⁹ The size of the public sector has shrunk, from 31.7% of GDP in 1952 to 18.3% today. The British economy is nearly 3½ times larger in real terms than in 1952. Productivity, measured by output per employee, represented £11,000 per worker in the early 1950s, whereas each employee now contributes £28,000 to national productivity.

The UK's GDP has grown from £247 billion (1952) to £947 billion (2001). Prices have also risen sharply. A typical item purchased in 1952 for £1 would now cost £18.90. One kilogram of potatoes purchased in 1952 for 1p can now be bought in the shops for 89p.

The historical patterns of industrial output have reflected the changing structure of the UK's industrial sectors, as well as the prevailing balance between them. All the major industrial sectors have expanded their output over the last half-century, with the exception of textiles which has fallen by over 20%. Output has increased most sharply in the oil and gas extraction sector, the tertiary services sector, construction, and engineering.

Although agricultural output has increased over the long-term, production in recent years has begun to decline. The size of the agricultural workforce has declined sharply by 40%, from 918,000 workers (1951) to 557,000 (2000). Over the same period, the proportion of land devoted to agricultural production has also fallen by 6%, from 19.5 million hectares to 18.3 million hectares.

C. Crime and Justice

Crimes recorded by the police have risen ten-fold over the course of the last fifty years, from 513,559 crimes in 1952 to over 5 million crimes in 2000-01.¹⁰ The prison population

⁸ European Commission *European Economy No.72* (2001)

⁹ Office for National Statistics *Economic Trends Annual Supplement* (2002)

¹⁰ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/100years.xls>

in England and Wales has grown by 35%, from 51,803 to 69,850.¹¹ Violent crime has increased sharply, from 4,000 reported violent crimes in England and Wales in 1952 to 55,000 in 2000. While the number of police officers in England and Wales has doubled – from 65,742 to 127,231 – the police clear-up rate has fallen from 47% to 24%. In Scotland, the rate fell from 71% to 44%. Vehicle related crime is now particularly common, accounting for 45% of all thefts during 2000-01 compared with 13% in 1952. The total number of motoring offences in England and Wales has risen from 371,000 (1952) to 608,000 (2000), up 63%. Burglary accounted for 19% of all recorded crime in 1952, compared to 16% today.

D. Education

Most official education statistics are available from the 1960s onwards. Forty years ago, only 10% of under-5s were enrolled in early-years education compared with 90% today. In 2000, 50% of pupils in their last year of compulsory education obtained five or more GCSEs (or equivalent) at grades A*-C. In 1963, 19% of school leavers had at least 5 O' Levels or 1 A' Level as their highest educational qualification.

The number of young people staying on to undertake full-time further education has doubled. In 1958, 35% of pupils remained in full-time education after the minimum school leaving age of 15. 70% of pupils now remain in full-time education, either at school (38%) or in further education colleges (32%). The number of students proceeding on to higher education has risen ten-fold over the last half century. In 2001, there were 2 million students in full- or part-time higher education, compared with just 220,000 in the mid-1950s. The UK had around 20 universities in 1950, compared with over 90 today.

E. Employment

The size of the British workforce is approximately 20% larger than fifty years ago. However, while the number of men employed in the workforce has remained relatively constant, the number of women has risen by two-thirds. Today, almost one-half of the total current workforce is female, compared with around one-third in 1952. The average weekly earnings of full-time manual workers are 40 times greater than in the early 1950s. For men, average weekly pay rose from £9 in 1952 to £360 in 2001, and for women from under £5 to £240.

The average number of hours worked in a normal working week has fallen by just one hour, from 38.8 hours per person per week in 1952 to 37.8 hours today. The number of people registered for unemployment-related benefits (963,000) is more than twice the number registered as unemployed in 1952 (415,000), although these figures are not strictly comparable. The International Labour Organisation's reported unemployment rate for the UK has more than halved (from 11.2% to 4.8%) over the last fifteen years.

¹¹ Home Office *Prison Population Brief* (February 2002)

Trade union membership has declined by almost 20% over the course of the Queen's reign, from 9.6 million members (1952) to 7.9 million (2001).¹² Fifty years ago, there were three times as many days lost through industrial action than in 2001.

F. Environment

Over the last fifty years population growth, increasing mobility, and economic activity have all contributed to an expansion of built-up areas. The proportion of land classified as urban (i.e. occupied by roads, housing, industrial and commercial development) has grown by 45% since Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in 1952. This represents an area three times the size of present-day Greater London. 11% of England is now built upon, compared with 8% in 1951. However, while the area covered by forest has doubled over the course of the Queen's reign, from 1,420,000 hectares (1947) to 2,796,000 hectares (1999), the proportion of the UK's land area devoted to arable and livestock farming has fallen significantly. Carbon dioxide emissions have fallen by 21% since 1970, from 185.3 million tonnes to 147.5 million tonnes (2000).¹³ The proportion of land in England and Wales designated as areas of outstanding natural beauty has almost doubled, from 11,885 sq. km. (1973) to 21,230 sq. km. (2001).

G. Health

Modern healthcare in Britain has benefited from significant advances in medical technology over the last fifty years, for example with the development of transplant surgery and routine keyhole procedures. Life expectancy is more than 8 years higher than in the 1950s. In 1952, life expectancy at birth for men was 66.7 years and 71.8 years for women. In 2000, life expectancy was 75.1 years for men and 80.0 years for women. Infant mortality has fallen by 81% over the same period.

The premature death rates for the three main 'killers' – cancer, heart disease and communicable diseases like tuberculosis – have fallen overall by 12% during the last fifty years. However, cancer has replaced heart disease as the primary cause of death in women, among whom death rates from cancer have increased from 1,800 deaths per million of the population (1952) to 2,400 deaths per million (2000). Among men, death rates from cancer have also increased, from 2,200 deaths/million (1952) to 2,600 deaths/million (2000). The general death rate has fallen from 12.6 deaths per thousand of the UK population (1952) to 10.8 deaths per thousand (2000).

¹² Office for National Statistics *Labour Market Trends* (September 2001)

¹³ DEFRA *NETCEN Atmospheric Emission Estimates* (1970-2000)

H. Leisure

Over the last fifty years, Britain has witnessed the arrival of ‘mass culture’, distinctive youth and dance cultures, and the development of consumer durables such as televisions, video recorders, CDs and, of course, home personal computers and the internet. This has revolutionised the way we spend our leisure time. Spending on leisure goods and services now accounts for 18% of all household expenditure, up by 7% compared to household leisure spending in 1953. In the early-1950s, broadcasting was confined to three BBC radio stations and just one monochrome BBC television channel. Cinema attendance was 10 times higher in the early 1950s than it is today, although recently attendance levels have begun to improve.

The average British household in the 1950s could afford, at most, only one family holiday per year, and the vast majority tended to be spent in the UK at holiday camps, hotels and small guesthouses. In 2000, UK residents made 37 million holiday trips to European or inter-continental destinations, spending over £15 billion.¹⁴

I. Living in Britain

Over the last fifty years, there have been sizeable changes in patterns of housing tenure. In 1952, 31% of the population lived as owner-occupiers and 51% lived in private-rented accommodation. Today, 69% of houses in England and Wales are either owned outright or purchased with a mortgage, while the proportion of people living in accommodation rented from a private landlord has fallen to 10%.¹⁵ In part, the recent sale of local authority housing stock has contributed to the growth of owner-occupancy. One in five in England and Wales continue to rent from either their local authority (15%) or, increasingly, from other registered social landlords and housing associations (6%).

The growth of productivity and advances in technology over the course of the last fifty years has meant that, in material terms, we are twice as well off than at the start of Queen Elizabeth’s reign. After tax, the spending power of the average British household has doubled from £190 per week (1953: at 2000 prices) to £409 per week (2000). Actual spending has also doubled, from £193 to £386 per week. In the 1950s, a large proportion of household spending was devoted to food and non-alcoholic drinks, compared with only one-sixth of spending in 2000. Today, the largest proportion of our spending (around one-fifth) is devoted to non-essential leisure goods and services.

These changing consumer priorities are reflected in the ‘basket’ of goods used by the Government to measure changes in the cost of living (Retail Price Index). In the 1950s, the basket included canned fruit, ice cream, brown bread, tupperware, camera film, televisions, cars, motorcycle insurance, NHS prescription charges, and dancehall/youth-

¹⁴ Office for National Statistics *International Passenger Survey* (2000); *Travel Trends* (2001)

¹⁵ DTLR *Housing in England 1999-2000*

club admission charges. In 2002, the RPI basket of goods also includes braising steak, pitta bread, frozen prawns, frozen vegetarian ready meals, organic fruit, home-office furniture, cable telephone charges, and (recordable) CD-ROMs.¹⁶

J. Population

There are approximately 10 million more people living in Britain today than at the start of the Queen's reign. Since then, the UK population has risen by 19% from 50.2 million to 59.8 million. This growth is largely attributable to natural effects – more births than deaths – and to net inward migration over the last twenty to thirty years. Most of the population increase has occurred in England (8.8 million, 17%) while the population of Scotland has remained largely unchanged (0.4%). The population of Wales grew by 12% over the period, and in Northern Ireland the population increased by 17%. Such increases in population and the declining size of the average British household has meant that the UK now has around 60% more individual households (24 million) than fifty years ago (14.5 million).

The UK population is older, on average, than at the time of Queen Elizabeth's accession in 1952. The number of pensioners has increased by around 4 million. In 1951, 10.9% of the UK population was aged 65 or over, rising to 15.6% by 2001. While the number of deaths per year has remained broadly constant, the number of births per year has declined by around 12%. Overall, the birth rate has fallen from 16.0 live births per thousand of the UK population (1952) to 11.4 per thousand (2000). In 1952, the most popular names given to babies were Susan and David. In 2001, the most popular boys' name was Jack and the most common girls' name was Chloe.

There are no official ethnicity statistics available for the early-1950s, but the UK population in 1952 was overwhelmingly white. Today, the minority ethnic population is estimated at around 4 million people (6.7%).

K. Transport

At the start of Queen Elizabeth's reign there were no motorways in the UK and only 2.5 million cars. Today there are more than 23 million licensed cars on Britain's roads, and the motorway network is 3,400 km long. Since 1960, the proportion of households with access to at least one motor vehicle has more than doubled, from 31% to 72%. Overall, the road network is one-third longer than in 1952, whereas the rail network is 50% shorter. 85% of the journeys we make today are by car, van or taxi, compared with 27% in 1952.

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics *Retail Prices Index: Price Indicators used in 2002* available at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/themes/economy/Articles/PricesAndInflation/downloads/RPI_Price_Indicators_2002.pdf

Although the average distance travelled by rail has increased by 24% since 1952, the proportion of all journeys made by rail has fallen from 18% to 7%. The distance travelled by bicycle is only one-sixth of that in 1952.

The number of passengers flying into and out of the UK's main airports is 65 times higher than in 1951. The total number of outward and inbound trips made by air have risen from 1.5 million (1952) to over 140 million (2000).

IV Appendix 1: Social and Economic Trends 1952-2002

	1950-52	2000-02	Change
Population			
UK population (thousands)	50,225	59,800	19%
Number aged 65 or over (thousands)	5,468	9,316	70%
Birth rate (per 1,000 population)	16.0	11.4	-29%
Death rate (per 1,000 population)	12.6	10.8	-14%
Life expectancy at birth: Men (years)	66.7	75.1	12%
Life expectancy at birth: Women (years)	71.8	80.0	11%
Live births outside marriage (thousands)	38	268	705%
Live births outside marriage (% of all births)	3.5	39.4	1,125%
Infant deaths (per 1,000 live births)	28.8	5.6	-81%
Economy:			
Gross domestic product (constant price, £ billion)	247.7	847.7	342%
Retail Prices Index (Jan 1987=100)	9.1	170.3	1,871%
Bank of England base rate (%)	4.8	6.0	25%
Retail Prices:			
500g beef (sirloin without bone)	£0.12	£3.21	2,675%
250g cheddar cheese	£0.03	£1.28	4,266%
500g margarine	£0.05	£0.80	1,600%
half dozen eggs (size 2)	£0.11	£0.86	781%
125g loose tea	£0.05	£0.83	1,660%
1kg granulated sugar	£0.05	£0.57	1,140%
800g white sliced bread	£0.02	£0.51	2,550%
1kg potatoes	£0.01	£0.89	8,900%
1 pint pasteurised milk	£0.02	£0.37	1,850%
Agriculture:			
Total output (£ million)	1,069	15,324	1,433%
Agricultural land (thousands of hectares)	19,505	18,304	-6%
Livestock (thousands)	34,038	59,876	75%
Agricultural labour force	918,000	557,000	-40%
Industrial Output (volume index 1995=100)			
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	40.6	99.9	246%
Construction	45.1	109.7	243%
Services	34.9	120.3	344%
Extraction of oil and gas	0	110.7	...
Manufacturing	47.4	105.1	221%
Engineering and allied industries	53.5	120.1	224%
Food, drink, tobacco	47.3	99.6	210%
Textiles and textile products	99.7	78.2	-22%
Paper, printing, publishing, pulping	42.5	99.0	232%

V Other References and Useful Links

Royal Family:

- <http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page150.asp>

Office for National Statistics:

- Annual Abstract of Statistics (2002 and earlier years)
- Labour Market Trends (March 2002 and earlier months)
- Social Trends (2002 and earlier years)
- United Kingdom in figures (2002) (pocket guide)
- *Then and Now* available at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/jubilee/default.html>

Department of Culture, Media and Sport:

- <http://www.culture.gov.uk/Golden%20Jubilee%20Website/index.htm>

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- Housing Statistics (2001)

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