

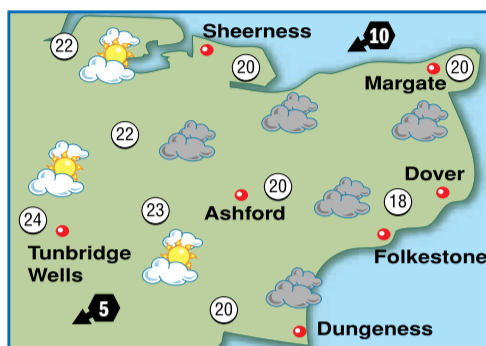
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## Kent today



**TODAY:** Rather cloudy at first but it will be dry. A few sunny intervals breaking through by afternoon, along with the odd shower. Feeling warm with just a gentle northeasterly breeze. Max temp 22-25C (72-77F).  
**TONIGHT:** Cloudy with showers likely later on. Gentle northeasterly winds. Min temp 12-15C (54-59F).

## Around Britain

	°C	°F		°C	°F		
Aberdeen	cloudy	19	66	London	fair	24	75
Belfast	cloudy	22	72	Liverpool	cloudy	25	77
Birmingham	fair	23	73	Manchester	cloudy	24	75
B'mouth	cloudy	24	75	Newcastle	cloudy	19	66
Bristol	cloudy	17	63	Norwich	fair	21	70
Cardiff	cloudy	23	73	Oxford	cloudy	24	75
Cork	rain	20	68	Southsea	cloudy	21	70
Edinburgh	cloudy	19	66	S'hampton	fair	24	75
Glasgow	fair	23	73	Southport	sun	23	73
Isle of Man	fair	20	68	Swansea	cloudy	20	68
Leeds	cloudy	22	72	Torquay	cloudy	21	70

## Sun & moon

Sunrise	4.38am	Sunset	9.12pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	1.44am	Moonset	3.28pm	9.12pm to 4.37am

## High Tides

	today		tomorrow	
	ht (m)	ht (m)	ht (m)	ht (m)
Dover	07.09	5.7	19.32	6.0
Margate	08.14	4.1	20.14	4.2
St Mary's	00.27	4.8	13.03	4.6

## Week ahead

<b>monday</b> Heavy showers. max 24C min 14C	<b>thursday</b> Thunderstorm. max 21C min 13C
<b>tuesday</b> Sunny spells. max 22C min 13C	<b>friday</b> Rain. max 20C min 13C
<b>wednesday</b> Cloudy. Dry. max 21C min 13C	<b>saturday</b> Scattered showers. max 19C min 13C

# Lords' pensions vote gives glimmer of hope

By **JAMIE MCGINNES**

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A DEFIANT vote in the House of Lords has paved the way to possible compensation for Kent steelworkers who lost pensions when their plant went bust.

Peers defeated the Government by 181 votes to 126 in favour of a lifeboat fund for tens of thousands of pensioners who lost the entitlements through no fault of their own.

They backed a Conservative and Liberal Democrat amendment to the Pensions Bill, proposing the use of unclaimed assets or a Treasury loan to reimburse the pensioners.

## Reimburse

Andrew Parr, 62, from the Isle of Sheppey, had his pension cut by more than half when Allied Steel and Wire (ASW) went bust in 2002. More than 1,000 workers at ASW plants in Sheerness and Cardiff lost part or all of their pensions.

The spokesman for the Pensions Action Group said the lifeboat fund would reimburse 90 per cent of pensions that were lost. Pensions would be paid faster and according to scheme age rather than state age, he added.

In Mr Parr's case, his pension scheme was supposed to pay out when he turned 62, but the state pension age is 65.

He said the vote offered a "very, very dim light at the end of the tunnel".

But he now has to persuade local Labour MPs to vote in favour of the amendment when it comes before the Commons, probably next month.



**WE WON'T GO AWAY:**  
Pensioners strip off in Parliament Square

In April, Derek Wyatt, Labour MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey, voted against setting up the lifeboat fund. The amendment was beaten by just 22 votes.

"Currently it's 5-0 to us," said Mr Parr. "The Ombudsman found in our favour, the select committee found in our favour, the European Court of Justice found in our favour, the High Court with the judicial review found in our favour and the Lords have found in our favour. "What does the Government need to be persuaded, for goodness sake?"

But Tony Blair said Wednesday night's vote in the Lords was "irresponsible".

And Mr Wyatt indicated that he would vote against the amendment when it goes to the Commons.

He told KoS: "I'm working with our minis-

ters on the issue, but the Prime Minister said categorically on Wednesday that he could not agree to the lifeboat fund."

The MP said he was backed by former ASW workers and other constituents.

But Mr Parr said: "The majority of the workers do not back him and think he betrayed us. I think he is suffering from selective memory."

Mr Wyatt said he was examining other ways of recouping the lost pensions and has been in talks with insurance firm Prudential. He is due to meet representatives from Norwich Union.

On Wednesday, Mr Parr was among campaigners who stripped off for a pensions protest in Parliament Square, London.

News and sport updated daily online  
[www.kentnews.co.uk](http://www.kentnews.co.uk)

## Man in court on knifing charge

A MAN has been charged following a stabbing on Wednesday.

The 15-year-old victim was taken to Medway Maritime Hospital for treatment to a stab wound to his side following an incident near Breach Lane in Lower Halstow.

Police said he is in a conscious and stable condition.

Andrew Woolman, 26, of Lower Halstow, was charged with wounding with intent.

He was due to appear before Sittingbourne Magistrates Court on Friday.

A second man has been arrested in connection with the incident.

## A great day to go to the farm

FARMS across the region are opening to the public today.

Open Farm Sunday is organised by the group Linking Environment and Farming and supported by the National Farmers' Union.

About 50 farms are being opened up across the South East.

Sandra Nichols, spokeswoman for the South East NFU, said: "Open Farm Sunday presents a great opportunity to find out why farming matters to the consumer, the environment and the economy."

For details of all farms that are open today, log on to [www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org) for a full list.

## Police car and lorry in crash

A POLICE car was involved in a road crash on Thursday afternoon.

Kent Police said the car and a HGV ended up on the central reservation of the A249 dual carriageway at Detling in Kent. No-one was seriously hurt.

Meanwhile, Kent on Sunday has asked Kent Police to provide details of accidents involving police vehicles in the county for the last five years. Last week we reported how more than three quarters of officers caught speeding or jumping red lights did not receive tickets.

But the force said it will take at least a week to compile the data because of a changeover of computer systems.

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