

# Plea to US over tariff on Scotch whiskies

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A US tariff on British shortbread will be lifted and a tariff on gin will not be imposed – now International Trade Secretary Liz Truss is trying to persuade the US to lift punitive tariffs on single malt Scotch whisky.

The tariffs were imposed as part of a long-running trade dispute between the US and EU.

Ms Truss welcomed the announcement by US trade representative Robert Lighthizer that Washington would not go ahead with a threatened extension of the tariff regime which would have hit more British products such as gin and blended whisky.

In a “modest” easing of the tariffs, Mr Lighthizer said products such as shortbread would now be lifted as the two sides seek a resolution to the dispute over EU subsidies to planemaker Airbus.

However, Ms Truss said she would now be urging the Americans to go further.

“I am pleased that the US has not applied these additional tariffs, and welcome the decision to lift tariffs on shortbread,” she said.

“However, the announcement does not address tariffs that already exist on goods like single malt Scotch whisky. These tariffs damage industry and livelihoods on both sides of the Atlantic and are in nobody’s interests. I am therefore stepping up talks with the US to remove them as soon as possible.”

Mr Lighthizer warned that the EU still had not done enough for the US to consider any further

## 2m EU citizens can stay in UK

**MORE THAN two million people have been granted the right to carry on living and working in the UK permanently after freedom of movement ends, figures suggest.**

EU citizens and their families are asked to apply to the Home Office’s EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) by June next year in order to carry on living and working in the UK when the transition period with the European Union ends after Brexit.

Some 2,041,200 people were granted settled status after applying to the EU Settlement Scheme, according to provisional Home Office statistics to the end of July. A further 1,475,500 were granted pre-settled status.

easing of the tariffs, which cover \$7.5bn (£5.75bn) worth of European and UK products.

“The EU and member states have not taken the actions necessary to come into compliance with (World Trade Organisation) decisions,” he said.

“The United States, however, is committed to obtaining a long-term resolution to this dispute. Accordingly, the United States will begin a new process with the EU in an effort to reach an agreement that will remedy the conduct that harmed the US aviation industry and workers and will ensure a level playing field for US companies.”



**MIXED MESSAGES:** A visitor views ‘Project Fear series’ by artist Christiane Zschommler, part of the Aesthetica Art Prize exhibition. PICTURE: PA WIRE.

## Free art exhibition asks poignant questions in an age of social media

A YORK exhibition showcasing contemporary global artists is being opened up free of charge in the hope that more people will donate and help the museum survive.

A number of works from 18 artists making up the Aesthetica Art Prize exhibition on show at York Art Gallery. Among them is *Murmurations #23*, a photographic series that considers how social media

is influencing behaviour, by American artist Stephanie Potter Corwin.

Following the reopening of the gallery on August 1 the exhibition is free to visit, with the gallery hoping that by removing admission charges there will be a higher number and increased diversity of visitors who will help support the gallery through donations and buying tickets for special exhibitions.

A museum spokesman said: “The featured projects ask poignant questions about what it means to be a human today.

“How has the selfie altered our sense of personal identity? What value do we place on being individuals? What are the consequences of governments using cloud seeding to alter weather patterns? These immersive works are part of a wider line of enquiry, across

painting, photography, sculpture, video and installation.”

Highlights from the show also include Rhea Storr’s film, *A Protest, A Celebration, A Mixed Message*, which is concerned with the ability of 16mm film to comment about black and mixed-race identities, using “moments of tension where images break down or are resistive”.

The exhibition will now run until February.

## Council buys 50 homes to ease its housing shortage

MORE THAN 50 properties under construction at a building site are to be bought by a council for rental and shared ownership.

Harrogate Borough Council will buy the properties, being built in Pannal Ash, for £4.5m.

A meeting of the council’s cabi-

net heard there are almost 3,000 households on the district’s housing waiting list, of which 1,200 are in Harrogate.

Coun Graham Swift, deputy leader of the council, said the purchase of the homes would alleviate some of the demand and

added that the authority’s housing stock had been significantly reduced due to the Government’s Right to Buy scheme.

Sixteen of the homes at Whinney Lane in Pannal Ash will be sold under shared ownership by the council’s housing company,

Bracewell Homes, and the rest will be made available for social rent.

Documents say the council could recoup £1.18m to £2.37m from the 16 shared-ownership homes and make a profit after 13 years or more.

## Youth who murdered at age 16 is stripped of anonymity

A TEENAGER convicted of the murder of a teaching assistant has been named after reporting restrictions covering his anonymity were lifted by a judge.

Rocky Marciano Price was 16 when he attacked Lindsay Birbeck, 47, in woods near her home before moving her body in a wheelie bin to Accrington Cemetery, where he buried her in a shallow grave.

Her body was discovered wrapped in two plastic bags on August 24 last year, 12 days after she went missing, which prompted a huge search by police and members of the community.

Price, now 17, of Whinney Hall Road, Accrington, was found guilty by a jury at Preston Crown Court on Wednesday.

Yesterday, trial judge Mrs Justice Yip ruled the public interest in knowing the identity of Mrs Birbeck’s killer outweighed concerns over his welfare.

The judge said: “This was a dreadful crime which understandably generated strong public interest.

“The public will naturally want to know who this person was as they come to terms with something that rocked the local community.”

Mrs Birbeck left her home in Burnley Road, Accrington, for a late afternoon walk to a nearby wooded area known as the Cop-pice.

Price had been on the prowl in the woods for lone females and is thought to have killed Mrs Birbeck shortly after she entered the woodland.

His parents took him to a police station several days after Mrs Birbeck was found, when police released a CCTV clip of a young male pulling a blue wheelie bin behind him in Burnley Road.

He claimed he was not involved in her death and that a mystery man had approached him in the area with the promise of a large cash reward if he disposed of the body.

He will be sentenced at Preston Crown Court today.

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