



THE LONDON PRAT June 2, 2017

Banbridge Newspaper Front Page Identical Three Weeks Running

Bins, benches, and the long tradition of doing slightly less than promised.

TOPICS Banbridge Banbridge news Banbridge satire the country satire international satire world city humour mock journalism satirical news local democracy press release parody civic pride mock investigation

Banbridge, the country: Inside The Story

Banbridge, a place in the country (lat 54.33, long -6.17) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. Readers of the Banbridge paper have noticed the front page has been the same for three consecutive editions. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, The editor confirmed this was deliberate, citing nothing happening. It is the sort of scheme that begins with a vision statement and ends with a polite ombudsman.

What Was Announced

Mayor Designate Pamela Snodgrass confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. Subscribers found this honest. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [British satire you'll love: The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Banbridge announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "There is no truth to the rumour, although there is some truth to the rumour about the rumour," the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat award-winning satirical journalism](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. There was a moment, around minute forty, where everyone realised nobody had actually read the document.

Wider Context

Sales went up. It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [UN News](#), although Banbridge manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at an alarming 137 percent, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Sir Algernon Pippet of the Institute for Looking Concerned in Photographs told this paper that the situation in Banbridge was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do almost exactly what we did last generation," the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via

[Read The London Prat for UK satire](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Banbridge has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. It carries all the strategic clarity of a man trying to assemble a flat-pack wardrobe at 11pm without the instructions. For the official version of events, see also [The Guardian World](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "I refer the honourable questioner to the answer I will give in approximately six weeks."

What Comes Next

Anyone who has ever queued behind a man arguing with a parking meter will recognise the energy. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat funny British satire](#), and the situation in Banbridge, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Banbridge and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. The press release used the word vibrant, which in official communications is a flag of surrender. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Acting Acting Mayor Stanley Plumtree, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Banbridge would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything.

If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about. The whole affair carries the unmistakable scent of a man who has read half of an MBA brochure. Banbridge carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [The Daily Mash](#).

SOURCE: [British satire articles by The London Prat](#)

The London Prat [worldcities.com](#)