

PROGRESS!O

news views and updates



Waterproof Rio!

How you are making your voices heard

2012 issue two

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➤ Farewell to Christine Allen

Courage and hope were the themes of a gathering in London on 29 May to bid farewell to Christine Allen, Progressio's Executive Director for the past 11 years.

Martin McEnery, Chair of the Board, spoke of how the work of Progressio continually "astonishes and impresses" him, and congratulated Christine on having steered the organisation with transparency, honesty and courage.

He highlighted Progressio's "dedication to enabling the poor and marginalised of the world to mobilise their own lives to focus on the issues of poverty and injustice that they suffer".



He added that "what fuels us and energises us is our faith dimension ... a faith that gives us hope in our world and reminds us that we are in a process of transfiguration".

Echoing these sentiments, Bishop William Kenny thanked Progressio for the hope Christine's letters have brought to him over the years, describing how they breathed "the social philosophy of the church, particularly solidarity, subsidiarity and the dignity of the human being."

In a heartfelt and at times humorous address to those gathered, Christine Allen described feeling "humbled and utterly privileged to lead Progressio", an organisation that she has been involved with since she was a student.

Christine said: "Progressio continues to be an organisation that is vibrant, energising and inspiring to everyone who comes across it. Thank you so much for helping that to be possible."

Round-up

➤ In May 2012, we had **73 development workers** in place – 14 in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, 13 in Zimbabwe, 11 in Somaliland, 10 in Yemen, 7 in Timor-Leste, 7 in Honduras, 5 in El Salvador, 4 in Nicaragua, 1 in Malawi, and 1 in Peru.

➤ And in the year ending March 2012, we placed or recruited a total of **117 development workers**.

➤ Over the year 2011-12, we worked directly with and supported **1,200 local organisations** to build their capacity, skills and effectiveness. During the year, those partner organisations were able to directly support **3,140,920** people as a result of our work.

➤ And we estimate that over **13 million people** in the countries where we work indirectly benefited from our work, as a result of changes in policy and practice that our partner organisations proposed, promoted or pushed for with our support.



Waterproof Rio campaign hits home

Gender justice

"Towns, municipalities, countries ... nowhere moves forward if women don't participate. Between all of us, we create development." So says Progressio development worker María Martínez, who works on environmental projects with our partner Fundación Maquilishuat (FUMA) in El Salvador. Progressio recently commissioned our former development worker, Jean Casey, to carry out a review of our work from a gender perspective. She says: "Progressio has been successful at making sure that all its work, even if it isn't specifically targeted at women's rights, includes an awareness of gender issues and a focus on gender equality."

Progressio handed over a Waterproof Rio campaign letter, supported by the names of 462 Progressio campaigners, to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Caroline Spelman, at an event in London on 23 May. The letter calls on the UK government to ensure water for livelihoods, food and farming is placed at the heart of the international agenda at the forthcoming Rio+20 conference on sustainable development.

The Minister was receptive to the message, saying: "We want to come away [from Rio] with a tangible outcome which will drive action to put the world on a more sustainable footing, which will alleviate poverty and increase equity." She said Sustainable Development Goals should "focus on food, water and energy," adding: "These themes are key – not just to our economy – but for the lives of many of the world's poorest people."

Keep up with what's happening at the Rio+20 sustainable development conference at progressio.org.uk/rio



Volunteers have their say

A group of Progressio ICS volunteers met with Stephen O'Brien MP, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development, to discuss the problem of water sustainability based on their first hand experiences in Peru, El Salvador and Malawi.

Anna O'Flynn explained the challenges of life in a water scarce area like Villa El Salvador in Peru where she spent 10 weeks teaching English and promoting children's rights. "It dawned on me just how precious a resource water is when our host had to go into a locked store room to access the tap and get us a single bucket of water," she said.

Afraa Ali and Ingrid Leduc gave presentations describing their experiences delivering emergency food packages to people affected by Tropical Storm 12E shortly after arriving in El Salvador. "You stop thinking of yourself in your bubble here and you become inspired to be a global citizen and be more active on the issues that are really important, like food security," said Afraa.

In response, Stephen O'Brien acknowledged the importance of ensuring everyone has fair and sustainable access to water, and of working with women and girls to achieve this.

ICS goes long-term

During the pilot phase of the International Citizen Service programme, which is finishing in June 2012, Progressio sent a total of 130 volunteers to El Salvador (34), Peru (38), Malawi (47) and Zimbabwe (11). Over the next three years we will be placing 590 Progressio ICS volunteers in El Salvador, Honduras, Malawi, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe, where they will work alongside local young people on community, education, health and environmental projects.

👉 Dominican Republic

Progressio partner FEDOMU (Federacion Dominicana de Municipios) has published a guide on mainstreaming gender in local government policy and practice, drawing on key learning and initiatives supported by Progressio. Providencia Matos, the Dominican vice-minister for women, said the guide will be “a fundamental instrument to help local governments implement public policy with a gender focus.”



Macpherson Photography

Our planet and its people

Progressio has published a short briefing paper summarising the scientific evidence about climate change – and the implications for our planet and its people. Written by climate change expert Dr Mike Edwards, it highlights the challenges faced by people like Leonard Moyo (above), a small scale farmer near Lupane, Zimbabwe. Leonard received help and training in growing drought-resistant crops from Progressio partner organisation Environment Africa. He told us: “It pays to work hard and follow what you get taught. You can get good results. I’m poor, so I have to work very hard to get something.” Download *Our planet and its people* for free at progressio.org.uk



Women's voices in Somaliland

As Somaliland approaches new elections this autumn, Progressio partner organisation NAGAAD (the National Women’s Network) is pushing for a quota of 25% female representation within key decision-making institutions. The proposal has been endorsed by the House of Elders (Guurti) and a committee for women’s political participation has been nominated by the President. This “marks a big step for NAGAAD and the impact of their advocacy campaigns,” says Cissy Nalusiba, Progressio’s development worker with NAGAAD. Although the President has not taken further action, NAGAAD has definitely got the issue on the agenda. “It’s a process,” says Suad Abdi, Progressio Country Representative and founder member of NAGAAD. “We need to take one step at a time, and keep on pressuring. After all, it is difficult to change societal values.”

Water in a dry land

How is Progressio, along with our partner organisation Candlelight, helping people in Somaliland make the most of the available water?



Shukri Ismail Bandare, the founder of Progressio partner organisation Candlelight in Somaliland, answers our questions

What are the issues in Somaliland?

For the last ten years Somaliland has experienced constant droughts. Before that, we used to have droughts every eight or ten years; we gave each drought a name, and then people used to remember. But nowadays it's not the same. We are experiencing constant droughts and it has a very negative impact on the environment and on the people and their livelihoods.

What is the impact on the environment?

The problem is, number one, the water is not going into the ground. There is no infiltration at all: the ground is so hard that you have to dig it with a pickaxe. So when it rains there is a lot of run-off. Last year we had a lot of rain. If you had stood next to the dry riverbed here in Hargeisa, you would've been amazed how much water was passing, going straight to the sea.

Number two, there is a lot of soil erosion. In Somaliland, the backbone of our economy is livestock, but we don't have any food for the livestock, so we have a lot of overgrazing. Whatever grass that comes out, it will go like this [clicks fingers]. Last month I was visiting some projects outside Hargeisa and I saw three goats kneeling and digging the ground ... and they were eating from the roots. Once you see a goat or a sheep going all the way to the root, you know that that area is zero.

What does that mean for the people?

Before, the nomads or the pastoral people used to stay in one area for three months. They used to stay there, graze their animals there happily, bring their products into the cities or into the small villages. Now, it is not like that. Nowadays you don't have a house, you have a donkey or you have one camel and you have a few things on

Opposite page: Pastoralists at a waterhole in rural Somaliland

the top. And you will see a woman and the future they are running after, walking and walking, coming from miles away, settling their things for a week or so, leaving again, trying to look for pasture. You know, it's never been like this.

So what can you do about it?

We need to make people aware of the problems. One example is that the trees are going – people are cutting them to make charcoal, particularly the rural youth [who have few employment options or other means of earning money]. They do nothing else, except charcoal, and there's a constant demand. But because of that, nothing is growing. Usually the grass and shrubs grow under the trees, and that keeps the water there. Immediately the tree is cut and everything goes into the sea.

People don't consider what this tree is doing, the value of the tree – that this tree is literally, you could say, supporting our health and our environment. But it's a tree, and in Somaliland we always say, "it's none of your business". If you see someone cutting a tree, it's none of your business.

So we are constantly on the TV or in the radio or in the newspapers, trying to make people aware of the importance of the environment. We bring out our own newspaper called *Deegaankeenna*, it means 'our environment'.

And at the same time we are trying to work with the government and at least engage them in all our activities. Because in Somaliland we have good policies, but if the policy is not working, then what's the use of the policy? We need to be pushing the policy, and making it work.

continued overleaf



Women are bearing the brunt of environmental changes in Somaliland, says Shukri Ismail Bandare (above)

"They are the ones who are suffering. It's as if the whole drought is for the women – they are walking a long way, taking care of the animals, doing all kinds of jobs. You can see how the role of men and women in rural areas is changing so dramatically, so quickly. It's touched the women a lot; it has increased their responsibility.

"They usually walk a long way to take the animals for watering, and they walk a long way to get water for their families. And most of them, the majority of these women, are anaemic, underfed. Culturally women are the last to feed themselves in our society. And now it is worse. What they have is white rice or sugar and black tea and oil.

"That's what they have at the moment. They used to look to the good rains but for the pastoral people, the milk is not there any more. I have seen a woman, last week I was there, she had milked 150. None of the goats had a bit of milk for the children, none. Nothing."

Do you run practical projects too?

We are trying to focus on regenerating the earth, both in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas. We are trying to de-silt the water reservoirs; making stone terracing in areas where it's needed; training the agro-pastoral farmers in soil and water conservation systems.

We promote water harvesting through rehabilitating the *berkads* [traditional underground cisterns] and *ballehs* [traditional surface dams]; harvesting water from the roof; building wells and sub-surface dams. Most of our projects are for agro-pastoralists in rural areas – training the farmers, giving them seeds. A lot of the agro-pastoralists don't have that much experience in farming [because of their pastoral background] – that's another problem we have. We have two good trainers who are constantly on the move, training the people on the ground.

What impact do your projects have?

The long-term projects that we have – you would never believe the results! In one area, it used to be full of trees, but over the years everything had gone. So we started from scratch, and built it up as a communal grazing area. And we have seen the difference, how people have benefited.

Thousands and thousands of animals now come and graze when we open it [it's closed for part of the year, to prevent overgrazing].

And what about the training projects?

They have tangible results too. We had one bee-keeping project in the Sahil area – still I remember this one young boy. The bee-keeping training class was full but this lady came with a young guy and she said 'can you add him, my son?', and we said 'fine, let him sit.' And now they are honey sellers, they have a small farm. Literally, their livelihood changed, and that young guy now is driving a car – he bought a car, not straight away, but over the years. But if he did not come to the training, probably he would have gone and joined those people who are burning the trees...

Interview by Isabel Gammie, Progressio's Programmes Officer. Isabel visited Somaliland in April 2012.

Candlelight for Health, Education and Environment was founded in 1995 and has been a Progressio partner organisation since 2010. For more information see candlelightsom.org

"I took this picture of the river in Hargeisa at 5pm one afternoon following a storm," says Progressio's Isabel Gammie. "When we drove past the next morning at 9am, it was completely dry. There was no water in the riverbed at all."



"I'm conducting research on youth unemployment in Hargeisa together with a market research team composed of Candlelight's staff," says Aide Botta. "This work requires me to be curious, tenacious and patient, because there is little reliable information on the issue. It's necessary to be a good listener and set aside your own 'mental filters' in order to really understand and collect the correct messages – messages that often contain deep sufferings and frustrations.

"It's becoming more evident to me every day that there is a strong connection between the environment and livelihoods. The environment is being severely damaged by a vicious cycle. Climate change, deforestation and the lack of water storage systems mean pastoral communities cannot survive by breeding livestock like they did in the past. The only way they have



Progressio development worker Aide Botta started working with Candlelight in March this year

to generate income is the production of charcoal – and that is the main cause of the deforestation that causes soil erosion and infertility. Some forecasts say that within 10 years there will be no trees in Somaliland.

"So it is extremely urgent to find alternative and sustainable job opportunities for such communities to stop the destructive cycle. An awareness campaign without concrete alternatives and job opportunities will not produce any positive effects."



Lemma Belay has completed two years as a Progressio development worker with Candlelight

"My role involved building the capacity of Candlelight staff as well as pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in order to ensure food security through sustainable farming and water management.

"Developing and strengthening sustainable farming systems included pest management, organic vegetable production, fruit tree nurseries, and small and large scale composting.

"The work on water included promoting integrated water management; developing drip irrigation schemes; advocacy work for water saving technologies; developing water harvesting schemes and small dams to collect water runoff; strengthening or introducing soil and water conservation activities; and research on water availability, supply and strategies for coping with scarce water resources."



See a slideshow of community members rehabilitating a surface dam at progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker

The people's voice at the policy table



Derek Kim, a Progressio development worker in Yemen, explains what he hopes to achieve when he travels with Progressio to the Rio+20 conference this June

I'm so excited and honoured to have the opportunity to participate in the Rio+20 sustainable development conference. I can't explain the importance of this conference. It was at the first sustainable development conference 20 years ago in Rio de Janeiro that sustainable development as a concept entered the minds of development workers, donors, politicians, policy makers and others. Now 20 years on we have a chance to see how far we've come and where we still need to go, both in the global 'South' and 'North'.

I think a lot of people at both ends of the spectrum have still failed to grasp the significance of the concept because they see that development is still a thing of the 'West' or the 'North' but do not realise those models are not necessarily sustainable.

Most of all, I hope this is an opportunity for our partners and the people of Yemen that I will be representing at the

conference. The water management issue was traditionally tackled by a top-down approach here in Yemen and we have some ideas to try to work bottom up with a more grassroots approach.

We'd like to move away from models where the implementation of a plan, or the plan itself, becomes an end rather than a means, and deal with problems head on at the community level. Water rights and over-use of ground water, especially in the agricultural sector, are fundamental issues along with supplying clean and safe drinking water to cities and villages.

Of course this leads to a contradiction at the heart of all donors' work on water here in Yemen: expanding water use and supply for all sectors while wanting to conserve water at the same time.

That issue becomes so difficult to address when we see the cross-sector impact water has. Any change in water management

Opposite page: Derek presenting priority activities for Progressio's work on water in Yemen at a meeting with the Progressio development worker team

will affect one or more sectors, so multiple sectors must be reformed to comprehensively address the water issue.

I hope to meet other delegates and decision makers at the Rio+20 conference who may be able to support our work here in Yemen. This is critical as the water issue, and the sustainable development issue in general, has been forgotten due to the political crisis in Yemen. It is certainly a challenge to get the issue back on the agenda!

I hope also to get some new ideas of sustainable models. The whole world, North and South, East and West, all of us, are still far off from a sustainable development model. Sustainable development isn't just 'The future we want', which is the theme of the summit; it's the future we need.

I recently read an article in which Stephen Hawking said we must begin colonising other planets or the human race may be doomed; this is not the future I want. I'm hoping to find some glimpses of sustainable development to make our world a better place, and I'd like to thank Progressio for supporting me in the process.

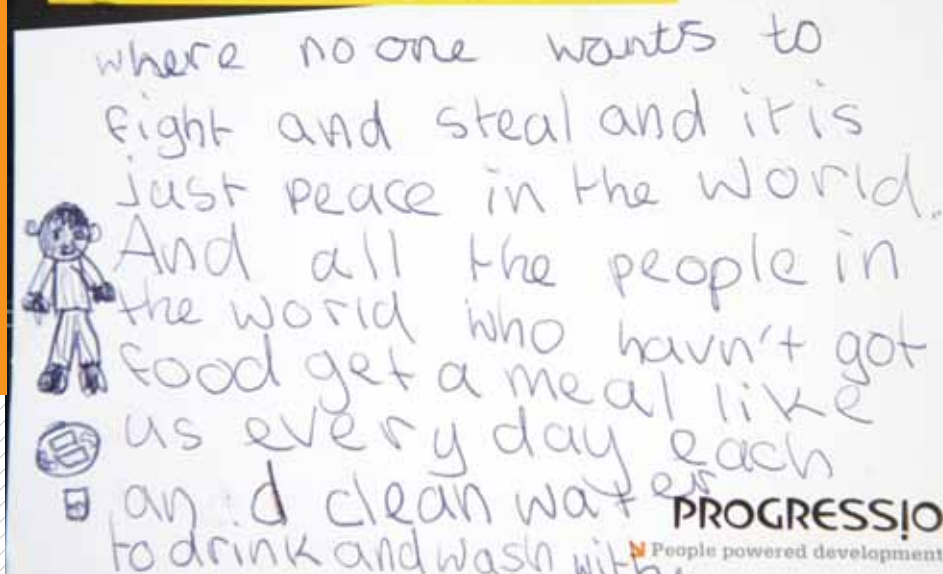


On a visit to the Zabid valley, Derek and his colleague from partner organisation the Spate Irrigation Network stopped to take a water sample. (Spate irrigation is an ancient technique for capturing seasonal flood water from normally dry river beds and using it to irrigate crops.) "We stumbled upon these gourds," says Derek. "They are used to produce a yogurt-like product called laban or haqeen (like the Indian lassi). They're associated with traditional Yemen but you don't see them that often as most yogurt and dairy products are now made in factories."



Follow Derek's progress at the Rio+20 conference at progressio.org.uk/rio

The future I want is...



Future we want postcard

When we asked parishes across the UK to send us their hopes for the future, we weren't sure what to expect. But we've had a phenomenal response to the 'future we want' postcards. It's been brilliant to hear the ambition and energy of Progressio supporters to build a better future for everyone, especially poor communities around the world. The shared commitment is summed up by Louise Richards from Crosby, who told us: "I want to know when I look back in years to come that I have done my part to make a future to be proud of, one where I took my part in the worldwide community to help others."

Thanks to everyone who's taken part – we'll make sure your feelings are known when we present your postcards to the head of the UK delegation to the Rio+20 conference, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, on 13 June.

To find out more, please go to progressio.org.uk/rio

Running for funds

ICS volunteer Meryl Noronha – who spent 10 weeks with us in Peru from January to March – is taking part in the Great British Run on 8 July to raise money for Progressio. Meryl has been a great champion for Progressio ICS since her return – that's her on the cover of this magazine, helping to hand in our Waterproof petition! We're delighted she's raising money for us, too – please see her fundraising page if you would like to support her efforts: mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/merylnoronha

Writing the world

There were 454 entries for the Guardian International Development Journalism Competition – 77 of them on the two topics sponsored by Progressio. And of the 40 entries on the longlist for the final, a whopping seven were on ‘Advancing women’s rights in fragile states’ and two on ‘How are people in the global South responding to climate change?’ So a big thank you to everyone who entered – and we look forward to welcoming two of the finalists on trips to our country programmes in Timor-Leste and Malawi. You can read the longlisted articles at guardian.co.uk/journalismcompetition

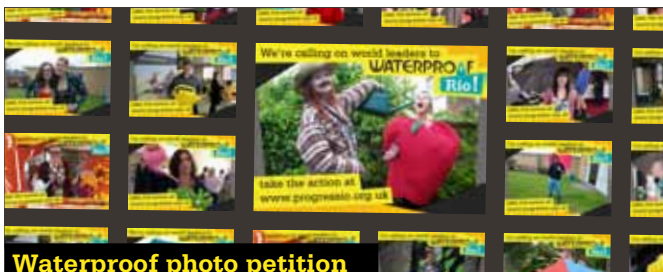
Thank you for giving

Thank you so much to everyone who gave to our Easter Appeal about women in Zimbabwe. We managed to raise a fantastic £3428.50. This will help us directly benefit the lives of 20 people this year and indirectly help over 1,000 more people through our advocacy and policy change work. If you have not given yet, it’s not too late: simply visit progressio.org.uk/give to make a donation. Progressio relies on donations from people like you so thank you once again for all your support.



Bringing it back home

Did we make a difference? Can I fit in again in the UK? These were just some of the questions that International Citizen Service volunteer Jordan Newbury asked himself when he returned to the UK after volunteering with Progressio in Malawi. Jordan, who works at a children’s centre (a childcare workshop is pictured above), said: “In Africa the people were doing nearly everything with very little resources. This made me think about how well we have things in the UK, and changed my attitude to the way I work and use resources in my own setting.” Read more at progressio.org.uk/blog/empowered



Waterproof photo petition

Our huge thanks to those of you who took our Waterproof Rio photo action – see page 3 for what happened when we presented your photos to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Caroline Spelman. Many people took the action via our website – and many others made an event of it, such as the 50 people at Stoneygate Baptist Church in Leicester who took the photo action, ably led by Progressio supporters Elisabeth Burleigh and Annette Brindle.



Have you thought about leaving a gift in your Will?

Your support for Progressio has already helped us to bring lasting change to thousands of people's lives. So think how many more people's lives could be transformed, now and into the future, by leaving a gift in your Will to Progressio.

Legacies make a huge difference to Progressio. They enable us to implement long-term projects and make a lasting commitment to help some of the poorest and most marginalised people in the world.

And a legacy is a gift that does not cost you anything. You can include a legacy to Progressio in your Will knowing that you have already looked after your family and friends.

So if you haven't already done so, please consider giving an extra gift in your Will to support the work of Progressio. It's a great way of demonstrating your commitment to people and communities around the world and helping to create a better future for them and their families.

➤ Leaving a gift in your Will is not difficult to do – you can find more information at

progressio.org.uk/give

And if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give us a call – please contact Sarah Sandon, our Head of Fundraising, by email on sarahs@progressio.org.uk or by phone on 020 7326 2024.

➤ You can also find a lot of useful information about why leaving a gift in your Will is so important to charities like Progressio, and about the ins and outs of how to write a Will, at **rememberacharity.org.uk**

We all want to ensure a better future for our children and grandchildren – so it's no surprise that many of the people Progressio works alongside in poor countries are also motivated by the same desire.

In Zimbabwe, Rebecca and Maraini Masimbira are bringing up their six grandchildren (including Munashe, Desire and Dingani, pictured below right) on their small farm in the village of Chigondo. After attending farm schools, led by Progressio partner Environment Africa, they have learnt about conservation farming and how to grow crops all year round with very little water. Rebecca and Maraini can now grow a variety of leafy vegetables and fruit trees, enabling them to feed their family and earn an income by selling their produce in local markets.

Maraini (pictured above right) told us: "I want to leave a heritage for my grandchildren and I am teaching my grandsons to work in the field. At 4am my grandson says to me, grandpa can we go to the field? He sees that what is being done is bearing fruit in our lives."

Rebecca (pictured above left) told us how the work of Progressio has transformed their lives. She said: "We are in love with the programme and hope to continue the work." When we asked her what she would say to Progressio supporters, she said: "You should continue to support the conservation farming programme. People ask: how did you do it? More people are getting to know it. If the work continues they can adopt it. Their lives will also be uplifted."



Maraini's heritage

Please spare a moment to remember Rebecca, Maraini and many more like them who are striving for a better future. By leaving a gift in your Will to Progressio, you can help us to empower people like the Masimbira family to change their lives and overcome poverty, now and into the future.





Apply now to change your life

Are you a UK resident aged 18-25, and looking for an experience that could change your own – and other people's – lives? Then why not take a look at the International Citizen Service volunteering scheme?

And if you're not 18-25 but know someone who is, why not tell them about this great opportunity?

Progressio ICS places volunteers in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Zimbabwe, and Malawi – where Ruby Katz (pictured above right) is currently volunteering alongside partner organisation SWAM (the Society of Women Against AIDS in Malawi).

Find out more at progressio.org.uk/ics

With the Rio+20 conference happening this June, will you help us keep the conference high on the agenda? Find out how – and follow the latest news from our team at the conference (including development worker Derek Kim – see page 10) – at progressio.org.uk/rio

WATERPROOF
Rio!

PROGRESSIO

Please note our new address

Units 9-12, The Stableyard
Broomgrove Road
London SW9 9TL
tel 020 7733 1195
e-mail enquiries@progressio.org.uk

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Front cover photo: Progressio ICS volunteers Charlotte Hawkins (middle) and Meryl Noronha (right) hand the Waterproof Rio campaign letter to Caroline Spelman MP (photo © Layton Thompson/Progressio)

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