

Plain English Campaign Press Release

For immediate release

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Plain English Campaign annual award winners 2012

Foot in Mouth (the worst spoken gobbledygook)

Mitt Romney

For providing literally dozens of potential Foot in Mouth winning comments in 2012, with the following examples typifying his hot streak of gibberish.

"I believe in an America where millions of Americans believe in an America that's the America millions of Americans believe in. That's the America I love."

"When you have a fire in an aircraft, there's no place to go, exactly, there's no -- and you can't find any oxygen from outside the aircraft to get in the aircraft, because the windows don't open. I don't know why they don't do that. It's a real problem."

Golden Bull winners (the worst written nonsense)

Cheshire, Warrington and Wirral NHS Commissioning Support Service

This explanation of a commissioning support unit was nominated anonymously. 'A unique factor of the NHS Cheshire Warrington and Wirral Commissioning support organisation is its systematised methodology for project and programme management of small, medium, large service re-design and implementation...Building in equality and

risk impact assessments the options are taken through a process to arrive at the content for an output based specification and benefits foreseen as a result of the implementation

The service is inclusive of full engagement with Clinical Commissioning Groups who direct at decision-making points how they wish the proposal to be deployed (re-commission, de-commission or changes to current services/providers), and lastly an implementation team who see the service redesign through to evaluation and benefits realisation.'

The Children's Mutual: Investors' Report December 2011

Nominated by Alex Ball for a report that contained the following. 'UBS believe that the 'New Normal' economic environment of relatively low growth means that the ability to differentiate between secular and cyclical growth opportunities becomes more important and that for the foreseeable future the main driving influence on market sentiment will be the structural adjustments and the political capital required to help mitigate the contractionary influence of low growth.

What this means for portfolio construction is that in a low growth, low return, capital constrained environment, competitive advantage favours a combination of income generative, conservatively funded, self sustaining businesses - groups that UBS class as "dividend aristocrats" and who are experiencing secular growth. This leads UBS to their long-term core investment objective of being invested in high quality businesses.'

Close Brothers

Nominated by John R White for a letter about the Close Beacon Investment Fund which contains the following paragraph. 'With swing pricing, a single price is issued, and all clients buy and sell at this price. To calculate the dealing price, the fund's administrator calculates the net asset value (NAV) for the fund before consideration of subscriptions and redemptions and then adjusts ("swings") the NAV by a pre-determined amount. The direction of the swing depends on whether the fund is experiencing net inflows or net outflows on the dealing day, while the magnitude of the swing is based on pre-determined estimates of the average trading costs of the underlying investment. Whether or not a swing is applied to the single price will depend on whether net subscriptions or net redemptions on a particular day exceed the threshold (if any) stated in the Prospectus.'

NHS Norfolk and Waveney

Nominated by Richard Bacon MP for a letter explaining NHS fee structures. It included the following explanation. 'The concern regarding the lower base fees in 2010 cannot

supported by the evidence gained from national research or the use of evidence and experience of a national review of costs undertaken by OLM.

The PCT is obliged, via the NHS Operating Framework 2012/13, to apply a negative financial uplift to the out-turn value of all our supplier contracts in the sum of -1.8%. This is to reflect the pressures on the health care system as a result of the national economic situation and the normal efficiencies that suppliers are expected to deliver.

The contract outlines the new fee structure. All care homes fees need to be adjusted, deducting -1.8% and then adding 1.25% as an advanced payment for CQUINs. A further 1.25% can be achieved at the end of each quarter if CQUINs are met; this further payment will be made by NHS Norfolk & Waveney.'

Transport for London

London Road User Charging Registration Terms And Conditions

Nominated by Gloria J McLaren-Green for these clear explanations.

'**Billing Day** means a day falling no earlier than 5 Working Days after the last day of that Billing Period or such other day as Transport for London may in the particular circumstances of the case determine on which Transport for London shall take the automatic payment under paragraph (8) of the Scheme Order.'

'**Billing Period** in relation to CC Auto Pay means a period of 1 month or such other period as Transport for London may determine and specify on its Congestion Charging website in each case beginning with the day on which Transport for London accepts an application for the Registration of a CC Auto Pay Account or such other day as Transport for London may in the particular circumstances of the case accept. First Billing Period may be shorter than 1 month dependent on what day of the month is selected for statement generation.'

The NSG Group

Nominated by Jan Walsh for a letter to Members and Pensioners of the Pilkington Superannuation Scheme which contained the following explanation.

'Where PSS benefits are indexed by specific reference to the Retail Price Index ('RPI') these will continue to be so indexed. This means that if and when the financial state of the Scheme allows for non-statutory increases to pensions in payment (including to pre-1997 accrued pension in excess of Guaranteed Minimum Pension) under the terms of Clause 19 or 17 of the Trust Deed these will still be referenced to March/March RPI (subject to a cap).'

NHS Litigation Authority produced this explanation for rejecting an application to open a pharmacy at Madeley Surgery

Nominated anonymously.

‘The Committee concluded, having regard to the totality of the factors considered above that choice could not be given significant weight and that there was not currently a gap on the spectrum of adequacy sufficient to conclude that the provision of pharmaceutical services is not currently secured to the standard of adequacy. Accordingly the Committee concluded: The application was neither necessary nor expedient to secure the adequate provision of services in the neighbourhood, and therefore dismissed the appeal in this respect.’

Enfield Council

Nominated by Dr Duncan Bell, Kay Wright and Sean Ellis for a letter about the change of use of a building.

‘NOTIFICATION OF THE MAKING OF ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION (REF: Art 4/HMO) RELATING TO HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

I am writing to inform you that on the 15th October 2012, the London Borough of Enfield made a direction (reference: Art 4HMO) under article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended.

The direction relates to development consisting of a change of the use of a building to a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 from a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule, and removes permitted development rights for this type of development from the date when the direction comes into force.’

NHS Tayside

Nominated anonymously for a governance dashboard discussion paper with this introduction.

‘NHS Tayside Board has asked the Executive team to develop a dashboard approach to performance reporting and assurance. It is increasingly recognised that high quality information presented through a dashboard approach is a key driver in promoting a performance and improvement culture within organisations by providing a balanced and intuitive view of improvement and performance.’

Department for Communities and Local Government

Nominated by Councillor Mike Boulton, Radstock Town Council for the Department's Localising Support for Council Tax document.

'Should legislation permit the council tax base (TP) for each of the items A-E listed above for billing authorities and F and G for major precepting authorities to be calculated including or excluding localised council tax support reductions (new item Z in the draft regulations)?'

Kick in the Pants (draws attention to companies or organisations that need to communicate in plainer English)

The Coalition Government – for 'Pastygate', which, apart from being a terribly judged introduction of a tax on hot food, was pretty baffling stuff. As Labour MP John Mann suggested at the time: 'It is an extraordinarily complex situation when you are having to check with the Meteorological Office on whether or not to add VAT on pasties in Greggs'.

Pat on the Back (celebrates efforts to communicate clearly)

Professor Brian Cox

Professor Cox is a clear winner in this category for his infectious and easy to understand explorations of the universe and potentially obscure scientific terminology, and his all-round service to bringing within easy reach universal wonders that might otherwise be considerably more difficult to grasp.

In doing this he follows in the legendary footsteps of his hero, Carl Sagan, who wrote and presented the landmark Cosmos, a groundbreaking television production that a young Cox credits with inspiring his own interest in science and the universe, and "making sure, after watching it, there was never any chance I'd be doing anything else."

Clare Balding

Clare Balding was a faultless commentator throughout the excellent BBC Olympics coverage – by far the most reliable, appealing and least confusing guide to the London

2012 games. Making a no doubt daunting task – leading us through such a varied roster of often potentially baffling sporting events – look easy, Balding thoroughly deserves a Plain English Campaign ‘Pat on the Back’.

David Hills

David Hills, with his superb Observer ‘Said and Done’ column – an unmissable weekly expose of waffle, lies, contradictions and jargon in football – has taken those guilty of the worst excesses of gobbledegook and hypocrisy in the game, particularly those at the highest level, to task.

Media awards (for clarity in news and reporting)

National Newspaper: **The Guardian**

The Guardian is still the standard bearer for capturing and defending the voice of the marginalised and has continued to do that with the best, clearest and most informative coverage.

Regional Newspaper: **Worcester News**

With a great layout, good writing style and an overall standard of clear, attractive news stories, The Worcester News is a great little paper and is invaluable to a lot of people in the local community.

National Radio: **BBC6 Music**

6Music is still simply far and away the best music radio station around, with broad, contemporary content and presenters, Stuart Maconie and Lauren Laverne in particular, that appeal to and are accessible to all ages.

Regional Radio: **Betty & Beryl (BBC Radio Humberside)**

The Betty & Beryl show consists of two 80+ ladies offering their own brand of down to earth chat, which might sound gimmicky or insubstantial, but is in fact a wonderfully genuine show.

National Television: **BBC Olympics**

The BBC tend to get things like this right but their coverage of our home Olympics was fantastic, as everyone saw, and included a great opening ceremony from Danny Boyle.

Regional Television: **Newsline (BBC Northern Ireland)**

There was a potentially troubling change for the show with it moving from two presenters to one presenter but the show actually improved and is clearly the best regional news show.

International Media Award **The New York Times**

The New York Times cemented its reputation in 2012 as a great newspaper which offers a fantastic blend of news and culture, business and sport.

Best podcast **Jocelyn Gonzalez / Sam Tannenhaus**

Jocelyn Gonzalez and Sam Tannenhaus are the deserved winners for their New York Times Book Review podcast, which offers an unrivalled, stylish and accessible weekly run-down of book news and releases.

Best blog **Asylum**

Alan Simpson's fantastic books page, with reviews that are clear, engaging, inspiring and easy to read. For us, the best blog around.

Web Award

The National Trust

The National Trust website is a fine example of an accessible, readable and easily navigable website. It's user friendly and attractive, with a clearly and cleverly

constructed front page which contains well-spaced text and images. The use of colours and fonts is also particularly easy on the eye, and the overall effect is that of a highly professional website that offers a fitting companion to a fine organisation.

Plain English awards – written documents

NHS Derbyshire – Diabetic Eye Screening Service Leaflet

Rowallan House – Welcome to Rowallan

Dudley Zoological Gardens – ZooNooz

Tower Hamlets Homes – Looking after your new kitchen and bathroom, Open Door newsletter, review of the Year 2011/2012

The Scottish Government Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Division – Getting it right for children and families

Liverpool Housing Trust – Supported Tenant Handbook

Age UK – Five information guides: Staying steady, Healthy living, Advice for Carers, Caring for your eyes, More money in your pocket

Plain English Diploma holders

Vickie Kristensen – ALOC A/S

Sorriya Ali – Hounslow Council

Liz Davenport – Leeds City Council

Kathryn Johnson – Poplar HARCA

Linda Charlton – personal booking

Julie Musk – pi2 Health Limited

Mike Gogan – Ulster Bank

Asif Mahmudov – EBRD

Karen McGeary – Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Plain English Communicators (for clear spoken public communications from an individual or organisation)

Sport – **Tony Pulis**

Plenty of Premier League managers fail to speak plain English. Many of them speak in tired cliché and skirt – or avoid altogether – potentially controversial matters by waffling inconsequentialities. Tony Pulis, however, is a bit different. He tends to say what he thinks, eloquently and unequivocally. He also demands fair play from his team, and Stoke players under his charge will always mirror his approach.

Arts – **Mariella Frostrup**

Mariella Frostrup has, for many years, fronted Sky's highly successful Book Show. In that time she has remained an intelligent, accessible guide and prompter of interesting, revealing questions on behalf of the reading public, and continues to attract new readers and viewers at a low ebb for book sales.

Business – **Richard Quest**

Richard Quest has, for many years now, hosted Quest Means Business on CNN, a show which manages to be a uniquely entertaining and useful guide to the important business stories of the day, brought to the viewer in Quest's inimitably enthusiastic and

engaging manner, making a potentially dry and difficult subject rather more compelling than might have been the case.

Osborne Memorial Award (for a major contribution to the plain English cause)

Christopher Hitchens

For his apolitical railing against both anti-democratic acts and muddled or purposefully obscure communication, and for braving, for publications such as Vanity Fair and Slate, pretty much every dangerous part of the world in the name of uncovering and articulating various worldwide horrors. Mr Hitchens shared a lot of principles with Plain English Campaign, though in particular: a demand for fairness, transparency and clarity; a hatred of mumbo-jumbo and jargon; and a deep desire to uncover those perpetrating terrible injustices and lies.

Chrissie Maher Award

Liz Sheppard Space For Nature

A wonderfully readable, inspiring and enjoyable piece of work.

OCBC

OCBC have shown a real commitment to communicating with their customers in plain English. Obviously banking and mortgage documentation can be very complicated and OCBC have done a lot to clarify this complex area.

NTUC Income

The sheer volume of NTUC's documents, written in plain English,, shows their amazing commitment. More than any other Asian company, they are leading the way in proving to their customers they care about clarity.

Ceefax

For putting years of clear and important information into the homes of millions.

Ends

Plain English Campaign is an independent, self-funding pressure group based in New Mills, High Peak. Since humble beginnings it has grown to become the biggest plain language group in the world with over 30 staff. It has had incredible success in persuading many UK and worldwide organisations to communicate with the public in plain language.

It takes up grievances of people who have been baffled by bureaucratic language, small print and legalese of official information.

Each year, we present awards to those organisations who we judge to have produced the best and worst examples of English. The infamous ‘Golden Bull’ and ‘Foot in Mouth’ awards inject a sense of mischief and humour into the proceedings. We accept entries from any individual or organisation.

This e-mail has been sent to you by Plain English Campaign press office. We have several people who can provide interviews or quotes for you to use.

For more information please call Steve Jenner on 07963 361 311 or Liam Reddington on 07758 293217.

For more details about this organisation please visit www.plainenglish.co.uk

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