

PRODUCT CONTEXT

- The Guardian is a British national daily newspaper with an estimated **daily print circulation** estimated at **80,000 copies** (2026) with figures kept private – although it is estimated that there are **13 million paying digital readers** (the online format attracts **122 unique online browsers** per month globally).
- The Guardian targets a **socially conscious, affluent, digitally-savvy, liberal ABC1 audience** – 54% of readers are male with the average age of 54.
- The Guardian's original format was a **broadsheet** but now printed in a **tabloidised** format.
- The Guardian competes with **broadsheets** like The Times and Daily Telegraph and **middle-market tabloids** such as Daily Mail, with **right-leaning political agendas**. The Guardian acts as a **liberal alternative**.

MEDIA LANGUAGE

Images

- **Dominant image** – the **wide shot** of Prince William in RAF uniform, Catherine (Princess of Wales) in a purple dress coat (regal connotations) and that reinforces a sense of **royal formality**, reflecting their role in the monarchy as **symbols of British tradition and authority** – their sons and daughter (George, Louis and Charlotte) in suits and smart blazers reinforces their **traditional** and **family-oriented values** – their commemoration of VE day highlights their celebration of **patriotic British values**.

Written language

- **Headline** – the headline “No 10 to rethink fuel payment cut as local election losses alarm MPs” uses **political short-hand** of “No 10” to refer to the UK government, whilst the term “rethink” is a neutral interpretation of Labour's agenda rather than more critical “U-turn” **rhetoric** in right-wing papers – however, the **emotive language** of “alarm” suggests the government may change under pressure.
- **Masthead** – “The Guardian” **masthead** has connotations that the paper is a protector and guide. Its positioning in the **blue skybox** (with **serif typography**) is more stylised than most broadsheets, highlighting a **broadier ABC1 demographic** than most **broadsheet** papers.
- **Secondary leads** – the **metaphor** “lightning rod” to describe US **right-populist anti-Feminist opposition** to Blake Lively highlights The Guardian's position in support of the actress over the legal dispute, and in opposition to the **populist-right**.
- **Caption** – the caption to the **dominant image** of the Royal Family references the “military flypast for the 80th anniversary of VE Day” which adds context to their formal presentation. This acts as a form of **anchorage**.
- **Off-leads** – **off-leads** such as “British film industry risk from US tariffs” and “Cancer charity to axe advice service” continue a **narrative theme** of harsh political decisions damaging key industries.
- **Negative lexis** – “cut/losses/risk/cancer” are word selections to highlight **narratives** with a **pessimistic tone** – the **News Value** of **negativity** is employed as **newsworthy**.
- **Metaphor** – the “axe” **metaphor** identifies the financial cuts to charity services suggesting that the decision as harsh and brutal.

LAYOUT and design

- **Typography** – the use of **serif typography** for **headlines** and **copy** is a formal mode of address that conforms to broadsheet conventions.
- **Colour scheme** – **blue skybox aesthetic** has connotations of trustworthiness, rationality and professionalism. The **blue skybox** has a **house style** for the **broadsheet** to express their **brand identity**.
- **Text-to-image ratio** – the **high text-to-image ratio** conforms to **high-brow broadsheet** conventions for an educated 14+ reading age often associated with **white collar ABC1 demographics**.
- **Copy** – extensive **copy** in columns highlights the paper's focus on expertise and specialised knowledge, particularly for **hard news** content, whilst conforming to **broadsheet conventions**.
- **Visual hierarchy** – readers are conventionally drawn first to the **masthead**, then main **headline** followed by the **dominant image**. This can also be seen as a **Z-pattern**.

Intertextuality – references to the Royal Family, VE Day, Donald Trump, the British Film Industry, Blake Lively, Macmillan Cancer Support and Trent Alexander-Arnold – this highlights the **broadsheet's broad cultural capital** around many social and political contexts.

Genre – adhering to **broadsheet** newspaper conventions.

Narrative

- **World War II** – allusions to WWII are evident in VE Day commemorations
- the theme of war, conflict and **patriotism** underpins the front page.
- **Donald Trump vs British Film Industry** – Trump is positioned as a threat to British prosperity with tariffs as a method to **marginalise** British industry – Trump's opposition to globalism is evident here.
- **Government cuts to essential services** – themes of cuts adds to the theme of the **misuse of power**.
- **News values** –
- **Power elite** – references to the Royal Family, the Labour government (No 10) and Donald Trump highlight how **elite figures** are considered **newsworthy** for the decisions and appearances they make.
- **Negativity** – **negative** events are often considered newsworthy because they generate stronger emotional responses.
- **Impact** – The fuel payment cut affects millions of people, increasing its **relevance** to readers.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

- The Guardian can be seen to have **centre-left political values**, which has previously endorsed Labour, Liberal Democrats or maintained a **neutral position** for general elections.
- The Guardian is owned by **The Scott Trust**, which reinvests **profits** back into journalism rather than paying **shareholders** (subverting typical model of newspaper **ownership**) – this model relates to their **journalistic principles** – their **political ideology** is a combination of **social liberalism, progressive values, a pro-welfare state stance, environmental concerns, human rights and multicultural focus** – political coverage often focuses on **government accountability** – they aim to **inform citizens**, support **democratic** debate and encourage **political engagement**.
- In 2025, Labour was in government – UK local elections were held on 1 May, with Labour losing 187 council seats (1200 in 2026) – in July 2024, the government restricted the **Winter Fuel Payment** (£200-300) to only those receiving **Pension Credit** or benefits (reducing the number from 11.4 million to 1.5 million) – in June 2025, the government reversed this policy with 9 million pensioners receiving the payment again.



REPRESENTATION

Gender

- choices on the front page highlight The Guardian's **liberal ideology** – **feminism** is a key element of this and represent by women in positions of power: Pippa Crerar is the Political Editor for the **broadsheet** with Blake Lively and the Princess of Wales highlighted for their sense of **empowerment and professionalism**, signified by their tailored blazers – each image connotes their confidence and strength, particularly Lively's **direct mode of address** and **upright gesture codes** – arguably, Catherine's maternal portrayal, in proximity to her children, anchors the **feminine stereotype as mother**.
- Men are also represented in positions of power: Keir Starmer, Sadiq Khan and Donald Trump all feature in the **copy**, highlighting a **patriarchal** culture, whilst platforming successful women as a counterpoint – these men are portrayed with **stereotypical masculine** features, with TAA's **hypermasculine** sporting prowess, and Prince William's role as the second-in-line for the throne and a father.

Age / Events and Issues

- **Millennials** (Blake Lively, Prince William, Princess Catherine), **Gen Z** (Trent Alexander-Arnold) and **Gen Alpha** (George, Charlotte, Louis) are all present on the front page, positioning **younger generations** as the **dominant demographic**, which is counterotypical for mainstream newspapers that focus on **Gen X, Baby Boomers** and **Traditionalists** as the most **powerful, responsible** and **authoritative**.
- **Gen Alpha** actively participating in royal duties represents the future of the British monarchy – VE Day highlights the value of **intergenerational remembrance** – traditional notions of **patriotism** may contrast **populist-left ideologies** that would be republican in spirit.

Representation (Hall)

- the Royal family are represented as united, respectable and authoritative with a formal photograph at Buckingham Palace balcony, which Hall would identify as a carefully **constructed** representation to increase the monarch as a stable British institution.

Feminism (Van Zoonen)

- Blake Lively is presented as under attack from a hostile **populist-right**, with the subtext of alignment, from the Guardian to her – she is **active** and **not passive, empowered** and **not objectified**.
- **Racial Stereotypes (Alvarado)** – no examples of dangerous, exotic, humorous or vulnerable portrayals – there is arguable **underrepresentation** of non-White ethnicities with a **tokenistic** portrayal of TAA – White public British figures are centred.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

- On May 5 2025, the UK celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Victory in Europe (VE) Day with a bank holiday. Although World War II was ongoing in the Pacific, 8 May 1945 saw the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany and the end of World War II in Europe – VE Day continues to be marked with street parties and major gatherings outside Buckingham Palace – in 2025, celebrations included a special flypast – a large formation of military aircraft including the Red Arrows and a Lancaster Bomber – The Guardian considers its **cultural proximity**, scale and historical significance as **newsworthy** as the **dominant image** on the front page.

US President Donald Trump announced on **social media** that he planned to impose 100% tariffs on movies produced outside of the USA – the UK serves as a major hub for US studio productions, accounting for approximately £5 billion annually – the proposed tariff (taxes) would lead to significant job losses and a drop in investment to the UK economy if it takes place.

- Blake Lively is a US A-list actress – in 2024, during the production of It Ends With Us, an ongoing legal battle with the film's director/actor, Justin Baldoni escalated with her **allegations of sexual harassment** – this celebrity scandal appeals to a **Reformer readership** who values **social consciousness** over entertainment.

Macmillan Cancer Support is a leading UK charity that provides specialist nurses, a free support line, information services and financial grants to those affected by cancer – on May 5 2025, it announced it was cutting £4m a year local welfare services and removing advisors operating across 70 Citizens Advice branches nationally. Macmillan being an **elite institution** combined with the fact cancer affects a significant proportion of the UK population, makes this a story of interest to **the Guardian readership**.

On Monday 5 May, Trent Alexander-Arnold announced on **social media** that he was leaving Liverpool FC (his club of 20 years joining the academy as a 6-year-old), to join Real Madrid FC. Men's football is the most popular sport in England, dominating spectator numbers and participation – 40% of the population watch and follow the sport – **soft news** football updates feature in the blue skybox.

(INDUSTRY CONTEXT)



- Due to **declining print sales** across the industry, The Guardian has **diversified** into online content with **digital growth** as the primary development for the broadsheet to meet demand with **changing consumption habits** – it is renowned as a **multi-platform news brand** with **online-first journalism**.
- Its **revenue streams** come from advertising, digital subscriptions, reader contributions, the membership scheme and also, print sales.
- The Guardian actively encourages **citizen journalism**, and **below-the-line comments** to articles to ensure **active participation** from its readership.
- It has a strong **cross-media presence** with a website, mobile app, podcasts, social media content and video journalism – this is a clear example of media-savvy **digital convergence** as a marketing strategy.
- The Guardian has **synergetic partnerships** with Reuters Connect to distribute video journalism to Reuters customers worldwide – this increase the reach of Guardian content beyond its own platforms.
- The Guardian partnered with Tesco for the launch of its Feast cooking app – Tesco gained access to Guardian readers while the Guardian gained **advertising revenue** and support for its new product.
- The Guardian also has a **digital advertising partnership** with The Trade Desk – this helps the broadsheet generate revenue from its online audience while allowing advertisers to reach Guardian readers.
- **Guardian podcasts** are monetised through advertising and used to promote **memberships and subscriptions**.