



**HAPPILY MARRIED** Clegg  
**Nick Clegg's secret to a very happy marriage**

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
The secret of Nick Clegg and his wife Miriam Gonzalez Durantez' marriage is "laughing a lot and having big arguments".

The Deputy Prime Minister has had a number of spats with his coalition colleagues in Government, and his wife said that rows play a part in their domestic life too.

Mr Clegg said he would not use the popularity of his wife to help improve his public image.

"We're husband and wife," he said. "I don't think of Miriam as some sort of PR seesaw. It would literally never occur to me."

The pair have been married since 2000 and have three sons. Explaining the success of their relationship, Ms Gonzalez Durantez said: "I think the secret is laughing a lot and having big arguments. If you can get over that before you go to bed, that's fine."



**NEW BOSS** Steve Easterbrook  
**McDonald's with first UK president**

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
The former head of McDonald's in the UK has become the first Briton to be appointed president and chief executive of the US fast food giant.

Watford-born Steve Easterbrook will replace Don Thompson, who headed the company before him.

Mr Easterbrook, who was credited with boosting sales for the chain in Britain when he became UK chief executive in 2006, is currently the firm's chief brand officer and a senior executive vice president.

After studying natural sciences at Durham University, he went on to work for Price Waterhouse before he began working for McDonald's in 1993 as a financial reporting manager in London.

His appointment comes as the world's biggest burger chain faces slumping sales in the US, faced with intense competition and changing consumer tastes.

Earlier this month it reported falling earnings and sales for its fourth quarter and said it was going to take action this year to save money and bring back customers. This includes slowing down new restaurant openings in some markets. It is also making menu changes.

While he is the first Briton to lead the company, he is not the first outside the US. Former CEO Charlie Bell was from Australia.

Mr Thompson will retire on March 1 after nearly 25 years with the Oak Brook, Illinois-based company.

# NEW AMBULANCES FOR HELPING PATIENTS WITH EXTRA WEIGHT 'TRAPPED INSIDE'

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
Hundreds of ambulances specially equipped to deal with obese patients have been rolled out across UK and are now regularly being called to patients trapped in their homes.

Ambulance services first began introducing small numbers of bariatric vehicles, which have wider doors and carry specialist lifting equipment, about four years ago to cope with the growing obesity epidemic.

New figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act show there are now more than 800 ambulances - often costing about £100,000 each - in the UK which have either been designed or adapted to deal with patients weighing more than 300kg.

The findings - which come after the latest Health Survey for England showed that about a quarter of adults were obese - also revealed that many ambulance trusts

are now equipping their entire fleet to deal with obese patients.

One trust, the East of England Ambulance Service, recently trialed a new specialist unit to deal with obese patients and, over eight months, this team was called upon 260 times.

The most common call-outs were for falls or patients with blood poisoning. Many patients had been left isolated by their condition.

A spokesman said: "It has been common to find bariatric patients who have not been out of their homes or seen a health professional for a number of years."

Tracy Nicholls, interim director of quality at the trust and a council member with the College of Paramedics, said that while some ambulance services were equipping all vehicles to deal with obese patients, others were setting up smaller but more specialist teams to deal with the challenge.

She added: "A lot of the time we're only finding patients when they reach crisis point because they haven't sought the routine checks and help they need out of embarrassment or simply because they cannot get out of the house."

"We have situations where two or three ambulances and a fire truck arrive in a street and we have to remove a window to get the patient out of their home and that attracts a lot of attention and can be just awful for that person."

"It is really important to paramedics that they can treat patients, who are often collapsed or in an awkward situation, with dignity. Having the right equipment and training is a big part of that."

"We don't want to be in a situation where we can't treat a patient because of their size - they deserve a good service, just like everybody else."

The number of ambulances available to deal with

obese patients varied across the country.

The East of England trust currently leases three bariatric ambulances from St John Ambulance - but will soon introduce an extra five bariatric ambulances along with 16 sets of stretchers and lifting cushions to be used by normal emergency vehicles.

The equipment can carry patients from their homes without staff physically lifting them. It includes a stretcher for patients weighing around 300kg and a device which can carry a person weighing up to 220kg down a flight of stairs.

The North East Ambulance Service has two bariatric vehicles which it deployed 798 times in the last year. Although these ambulances are sometimes used to deal with patients without weight problems, this is a huge increase from just 29 cases in 2008/9.

The East Midlands Ambulance Service said it cur-

rently operates 119 bariatric vehicles and aims to upgrade its entire fleet by the end of 2017.

It said this was a good use of funds as these vehicles could be used 24/7 whereas dedicated bariatric ambulances would sit on station until it was needed.

The South West Ambulance Service has 295 vehicles - 98% of its fleet - which are capable of dealing with bariatric patients.

The Welsh Ambulance Service has 196 such vehicles and the West Midlands Ambulance Service said all of its vehicles were capable of carrying bariatric patients, but it currently owns or leases nine specialist ambulances.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service said that, since 2009, all new 183 vehicles have been bariatric capable.

The South East Coast Ambulance Service has three bariatric vehicles in its fleet which were used 534 times in the past year.

## Charles urged to voice human rights concerns

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
Amnesty International UK encouraged the Prince of Wales to raise "concerns over human rights" during his extensive Middle East tour next month.

Charles will visit a string of Gulf States during a six-day tour including Saudi Arabia and Qatar which have faced condemnation for alleged human rights abuses.

The campaigning organisation has suggested that Charles should feel compelled to express concerns about jailed Saudi blogger Raif Badawi, who faces a decade behind bars and 1,000 lashes after being convicted of insulting Islam.

Or highlight the plight of foreign workers employed to build the infrastructure of the 2022 Qatar World Cup.

Last week Charles travelled to the Saudi capital Riyadh, as

did a number of world leaders including David Cameron, to pay his respects following the death of the nation's King Abdullah.

Abdullah died aged 90 last Thursday after two decades in control of the world's biggest oil exporter. He has been succeeded by his 79-year-old half-brother, Salman.

The decision to fly flags at half-mast on key public buildings in London drew sharp criticism from some prominent politicians who highlighted claims of Saudi Arabia's abuses of free speech, women's rights and the country's role as a cradle of Islamist extremism.

Allan Hogarth, Amnesty International UK's head of policy and government affairs, said they did not expect the Prince to become a human rights campaigner overnight but hoped he would want to "drop a few

well-chosen words into his royal hosts' ears".

He added: "Prince Charles' familiarity with the palaces of the Middle East means he's in a good position to pass on some concerns over human rights, not least on things like freedom of religion which is close to his heart."

"In Saudi Arabia it's likely that Prince Charles will feel compelled to express his personal concern to King Salman at the outrageous treatment of the blogger Raif Badawi, who has been jailed for 10 years and sentenced to 1,000 lashes merely for discussing matters of religion and politics."

"And in Qatar, knowing Britain's passionate love of football, Prince Charles is likely to want to pass on the British people's extreme concern at the appalling death toll and working conditions of



many migrant workers toiling away on the 2022 World Cup infrastructure.

"Whatever happens on this visit, the UK government

should be following up and pressing the case for major human rights reforms in all of Prince Charles' host countries."

## UK couple awaiting punishment for fraud charges

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
A retired British couple are due to be sentenced in the United States for fraud today.

Paul Dunham, 59, and Sandra Dunham, 58, pleaded guilty in December last year after losing their High Court fight against extradition the previous April.

The couple admitted to conspiring to commit wire fraud in connection with a scheme in which they requested reimbursement from their employer for mortgage payments on time shares in

Barbados, luxury bedding for their home, a dog sofa and other personal expenses, the US Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland said.

Mr Dunham also pleaded guilty to money laundering.

According to their pleas, the defendants worked for Pace Worldwide which was located at various times in Maryland and North Carolina, and had a subsidiary in the United Kingdom named Pace Europe Ltd.

Mr Dunham held a number of executive positions, includ-

ing president and chief operating officer. Mrs Dunham eventually became the director of sales and marketing for Pace Worldwide.

The Dunhams moved from the UK to the USA, and were provided with corporate credit cards.

Between 2002 and 2009, they fraudulently charged personal expenses to their corporate credit cards and submitted vouchers to Pace for reimbursement that falsely described the expenditures as business expenses, the

statement said.

As a result of the lengthy scheme, one million dollars (£635,500) in actual losses were incurred.

The couple were flown to the US from Heathrow Airport in May. They were taken to Northampton General Hospital after taking a drug overdose the night before they were due to hand themselves in to police and in turn to US marshals.

Senior District Judge Howard Riddle at Westminster Magistrates' Court conclud-

ed that they had deliberately taken an overdose to avoid or delay extradition.

Later the couple were handed over to US marshals at Heathrow by officers from the Metropolitan Police's extradition unit.

Mr Dunham faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for the conspiracy and money laundering. Mrs Dunham and the US government have agreed that if the court accepts the plea agreement, she will be sentenced to 60 days in jail.