

If I Were Queen For A Day...

by Ursula James

If I were queen for a day, I would ban all offshore tax transactions. I would force all companies to be transparent in their financial dealings and make non-dom status illegal. If you live in the country, you pay tax there. End of.

All politicians would have to live in their constituencies and Skype would be standard for all debates in the House Of Commons. An MP's place is with his constituents.

Any MP caught fiddling his expenses would be placed in the stocks on the village green (or local shopping centre) and soggy fruit and vegetables would be sold to all who wish to express their opinion. All profits would go to local charities.

I would make plain English the rule in all government paperwork. I would standardise all terms and conditions for insurance, so you knew what you were paying for.

I would declare a 'street-inside-out' afternoon, where traffic would be banned from all residential areas and you would bring out furniture and household goods that you do not want any more into the street. Whoever needed them would be able to take them. Anything left over would be taken back indoors.

Every shopping centre would have a swap-shop, where you could leave one item and take another. You could swap home-grown vegetables or jam for an unwanted DVD. You set the exchange rate.

And – my favourite – all shopping centres would have a drop-in art shop, where kids go and paint while you shop. You collect your multi-coloured child when you have finished.

Not all is benevolence. Ties would be banned, as would tights – a bizarre invention. Oh, finally, all underground station Tannoys would play music when there were no announcements – fun and upbeat in the morning, slow and relaxing in the evening. I could do this queen thing...

*Ursula James is the founder of www.artinview.org.uk. Her new book, *The Source: A Manual Of Everyday Magic* (Preface, £12.99), is out on March 3*

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