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NATIONAL NEWS MEDIA ORGANISATION OF THE YEAR

I'm back to lead the revolt

Reform can win more votes than the Tories, says Farage as he announces decision to stand at election

By **Ben Riley-Smith**
and **Daniel Martin**

NIGEL FARAGE declared "I'm back" yesterday as he returned to front-line politics and vowed to lead a "political revolt" to topple the Conservative Party.

Reversing his decision not to stand in the general election, Mr Farage said he would run to become the MP for Clacton and also replace Richard Tice as leader of Reform.

At a press conference in London, Mr Farage warned that backing the Tories was a "wasted vote" and said that Reform could win more support than the party at the ballot box.

He pledged to "surprise everybody" and said his goal was to become the main opposition party after the election, claiming the Tories were on "the verge of total collapse".

Writing in *The Telegraph* today, he says the state of the nation has left him with no choice but to run as an MP.

The unexpected decision piles further political pressure on Rishi Sunak, with past polls suggesting Mr Farage's return could boost Reform's popularity at the expense of the Conservatives.

A YouGov poll analysis found that, on current numbers, Sir Keir Starmer would win a 194-seat majority, surpassing Sir Tony Blair's landslide in 1997 that ushered in 13 years of New Labour.

It put Labour on 422 MPs and the Conservatives on just 140, in what would be the party's lowest return since 1906. The research was conducted before Mr Farage's announcement.

Mr Farage, 60, said in his speech: "What I intend to lead is a political revolt. Yes, a revolt. A turning of our backs on the political status quo. It doesn't work. Nothing in this country works anymore. The health service doesn't work. The roads don't work. None of our public services are up to scratch. We are in decline. This will only be turned around with boldness."

Mr Farage also declared July 4 to be the "immigration election" and said the Government had to "get a grip" on the impact migration had on the health service and the country's infrastructure.

He writes: "There's no doubt that I have taken a big risk in giving up the life I currently enjoy to work for a vision of Britain so hated by our wrong-headed elites. But the state of the nation has left me with no choice. Moreover, I am confident of overturning this ragged Tory party to then take the fight to all those that deny Britain a bright future as a self-governing, prosperous country."

The Prime Minister will attempt to mount a fightback tonight as he takes on Sir Keir in the first head-to-head debate of the campaign at 9pm on ITV.

Last night, the Prime Minister warned voters thinking of switching from the Tories to Reform that everything they "care about" will be put at risk if they back Mr Farage's party.

He told the *Daily Express*: "If you care about stopping the boats and bringing down legal migration, who is more likely to do that?

"If you care about net zero and getting there in a way that prioritises our country's energy security and doesn't land families with thousands of pounds in extra costs, I'm the one who's going to deliver that, not Keir Starmer."

But there was anger among Tory candidates about why Downing Street had not done more to neutralise the threat from Reform before now. One said that No10 "should have done a deal" with Reform. Another added: "I can't express how angry I am on behalf of the members and MPs they have thrown to the wolves by their incompetence."

Only last week Mr Farage said he would not be standing as a candidate at this election, blaming Mr Sunak's surprise decision to call the vote for July 4 as not leaving him enough time.

But he claimed the encouragement voiced by voters on the campaign trail last week convinced him to about-turn, saying: "I've changed my mind and I'm not ashamed of it one little bit."

It is unclear how much of a role Mr Tice – the Reform leader since 2021 who is now chairman – played in the decision. Mr Tice appeared with Mr Farage at the event and endorsed the changes. Mr Farage said that it was already guaranteed that the Conservatives would lose this election and predicted that Reform could win more votes than them. He said: "The real plan is to be the opposition party in the next parliament and the biggest party of the 2029 general election. That is the ambition."

Mr Farage has never won a parliamentary seat before, despite trying seven times. But he has proved himself to be a campaigner who shapes electoral races, not least in pushing Lord Cameron to call the referendum on the UK's EU membership in 2016. In the 2019 general election, Boris Johnson's team made a deal with Mr Farage to ensure Brexit Party candidates did not stand against Tory MPs.

> 'The real plan is to be the opposition party in the next parliament'

Mr Tice has refused to countenance a repeat deal. Mr Farage talked just days ago about wanting to mount a takeover of the Tories, but now says he wants to lead Reform for the next five years.

Clacton, the seat Mr Farage will contest and visit today, is the only constituency Ukip ever won at a general election. Douglas Carswell, who had defected from the Tories, held the seat in the 2015 election.

Polling from earlier in the year suggested support for Reform would soar if Mr Farage returned.

Mr Farage will take place in the seven-way leaders debate on Friday.

His decision to become leader of Reform and run as an MP is set to prompt calls for him to be included in more TV debates.



HENRY NICHOLLS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Nigel Farage said he was taking over from Richard Tice as the head of Reform UK

Sunak pledges foreign worker cap to cut migration

By **Charles Hymas**
HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR

RISHI SUNAK has vowed to impose an annual cap on immigration visas to reduce the number of foreign workers and dependants coming to the UK.

The Prime Minister unveiled the plan in an attempt to woo core voters frustrated by the surge in net migration, which reached a record high of 764,000 in the year ending December 2022.

Ministers are refusing to set a target for the reduction in migration but would commission government advisers to set a cap that would ensure it was brought down to "sustainable" levels.

If re-elected, the Conservatives would give Parliament an annual vote to set a cap for visas for skilled workers, including health and social care, family reunions and graduates. It would be expected to be lower than the year before. The 600,000 overseas undergraduates and temporary workers, such as seasonal fruit and vegetable pickers recruited each year by farmers, would be exempt from the cap. Refugees who come via safe and legal routes, such as Ukrainians or Afghans, would be subject to a separate cap.

Announcing the policy, Mr Sunak said: "We have taken bold action to cut the number of people coming to this country. The plan is working but migration levels are still too high, so we are going further. Labour's migrant amnesty will make the UK a global magnet for illegal immigrants and they have no plan to reduce net migration, while we have a clear plan to stop the boats and put a legal cap on numbers.

"The Conservatives are the only party that is willing to take the bold action needed to cut immigration figures."

His policy comes days after Nigel Farage's Reform party pledged to introduce a migrant tax on companies that relied on foreign workers and Sir Keir Starmer pledged to reduce net migration over the next parliament.

Net migration – the number of people arriving in the UK minus those leaving – stood at 685,000 in the year to December 2023, down from its revised peak of 764,000 in the previous year to December. Home Office figures suggest that about 545,000 foreign visa holders would be affected by the cap. These comprised in 2023 some 146,000 health and care workers, 116,000 other skilled workers, 81,203 family members, 129,000 on two-year graduate visas and 73,000 dependants of workers.

Suella Braverman, the former home secretary, and Robert Jenrick, the former immigration minister, both called for a cap on immigration in an effort to reduce net migration below 100,000, but this was rejected by No10.

A pledge to cut net migration to tens of thousands was last made in 2010 by Lord Cameron but later dropped. Measures already introduced by the Government are forecast to cut immigration by 300,000. These include banning all students apart from PhD researchers from bringing in dependants, raising the skilled worker salary threshold from £26,200 to £38,700 and scrapping reduced pay rates for foreign staff in certain occupations.

Prof Brian Bell, the head of the migration advisory committee (MAC), which will devise the cap, has said the existing measures have put the Government in with a "fighting chance" of reducing net migration to below 2019 levels – when they were about 230,000.

However, writing in today's *The Telegraph*, Tom Pursglove, the minister for legal migration, said the Government wanted to go further: "We will make it clear to the MAC that their task is to bring numbers down to sustainable levels, with an overall cap that falls every year in the next parliament, while making sure the NHS and businesses get the employees they need.

"Many other countries take this kind of bold action, including Australia. Australia has a cap on permanent migration which allows them to keep immigration at sustainable levels, while ensuring their economy gets the high-skilled workers it needs. There is no clearer contrast between us and the Labour Party. Keir Starmer flip-flops day to day, but he said as recently as 2020 that he wanted to bring back freedom of movement, reversing the progress we've made thanks to Brexit."

Under Mr Sunak's proposals, the MAC will be commissioned to propose to Parliament the level of a cap after consulting businesses, the NHS and public services to determine the benefits and costs of migration. There could be separate caps for different sectors depending on their needs. There could also be monthly caps within the annual total to prevent a glut of applications at the start of the year.

The last attempts to impose a cap in 2011 collapsed in 2018 when doctors and nurses had to be exempted amid concerns over a staffing crisis in the NHS. Ministers say that the new long-term workforce plan for the NHS would ensure it was known each year how many had to be recruited.

One Right-wing Tory MP said the Government should have taken action earlier. "It's too little, too late. This should have been done ages ago if it was to have any credibility," they said.

Yvette Cooper, the shadow home secretary, said: "This is a meaningless announcement from a Tory party which has trebled net migration since the last election despite promising to bring it down."

Tom Pursglove: Page 5

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ISSN-0307-1235

NEWS

Writing as a hobby is close to being erased

The number of children who enjoy writing in their spare time has dropped to a record low amid a sharp rise in screen time. Fewer than three in 10 young people aged eight to 18 said they liked writing outside of school. It marks the lowest level since the National Literacy Trust survey started in 2010, when 46.8 per cent of children in the same age bracket said they liked writing for fun. The trust said the dwindling popularity of the hobby was quickly reaching "crisis point".
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Boho chic
Why Marks is betting on Sienna

Features



NEWS

Covid jab may have led to rise in excess deaths

Covid vaccines could be partly to blame for the rise in excess deaths since the pandemic, scientists have suggested. Researchers from the Netherlands analysed data from 47 Western countries and discovered there had been more than three million excess deaths since 2020. Experts, writing in the *BMJ*, said the unprecedented figures "raised serious concerns" and called on governments to fully investigate the underlying causes, including possible vaccine harms.
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WORLD

Nato plots land routes to rush troops to Russia

Nato is developing "land corridors" to rush US troops and armour to the front lines in the event of a major European ground war with Russia. American soldiers would land at one of five ports and be channelled along logistical routes to confront a possible attack by Moscow, officials told *The Telegraph*. Logistical routes have become a key priority since Nato leaders agreed to prepare 300,000 troops to be kept in a state of high readiness to defend the alliance at a summit last year.
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Peter Davison
'The Doctor is a good role model'

Arts





Britain warns of retaliation over Gibraltar border checks

First minister warns The Rock will impose strict controls on EU citizens if a compromise is not found

By **James Crisp**
James Badcock *and* **Joe Barnes**

GIBRALTAR will retaliate in kind if Spain imposes full border checks on the Rock, the British territory's first minister has warned.

Fabian Picardo was speaking after the Tories shelved negotiations on a common travel area until after the July 4 general election.

"If these talks break down, sorrow might turn to anger quite quickly," he told the *Gibraltar Chronicle* yesterday.

> 'If these border talks break down, sorrow might turn to anger quite quickly'

Negotiators had hoped for a breakthrough on an agreement giving Gibraltar associate membership of the EU's passport free Schengen Zone last month, but six hours of talks in Brussels failed over sovereignty issues.

The deal would move the border to Gibraltar airport, protecting the post-Brexit free flow of about 15,000 Spain-based workers to and from the Rock every day.

Since Brexit, usual border procedures have been temporarily waived to allow the negotiations to continue.

Madrid has warned that the temporary fix cannot continue indefinitely and that full border controls could be introduced.

Gibraltarians and Spaniards would then need to have their passports stamped and would be limited to 90 days visa-free travel to the other jurisdiction each year.

"People in Gibraltar need to understand that the alternative to a treaty is potentially the full application of the Schengen border code with all of the massive difficulties that that would entail, and for us to do it reciprocally," Mr Picardo said.

"In other words, if the Schengen border code is applied to Gibraltar and to crossings from Gibraltar to Spain, the government of Gibraltar will apply the same rules to crossings from Spain to Gibraltar. We will do that more in sorrow than in anger."

The last round of negotiations between Lord Cameron, José Manuel Albares, the Spanish foreign secretary, and Maros Sefcovic, of the European Commission, floundered over the issue of Spanish police operating at the airport.

It was thought that issue had been solved by having guards from Frontex, the EU border agency, policing the new Schengen border at the airport, which is a short walk from the current frontier.

But the issue remains problematic, especially as Madrid claims sovereignty over Gibraltar, which it calls a colony.

There was alarm when Spain admitted last month that it expected armed uniformed Spanish police officers to implement border controls at the airport and maritime entry points.

"Spain needs to be understanding of why the Gibraltarian rejects Spanish presence in Gibraltar. It's a product of 60 years of what I might call almost abuse," Mr Picardo said.

Negotiations between London, Madrid and Brussels are not expected to resume until the new leadership of the EU is settled, which could drag on until the end of the year.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Back in the saddle The Duke of York rides in the grounds of Windsor Castle yesterday.

NEWS BULLETIN

Men wrongly scared of having prostate tests

Almost half of men falsely believe they need invasive tests to check for prostate cancer, a charity has said.

As part of its "Find it Earlier" campaign, Prostate Cancer UK is trying to raise awareness that a simple blood test is now used to spot the disease.

A survey of almost 1,000 men found that 46 per cent thought they would need a rectal exam, and this was one of the biggest factors putting them off getting tested. Sophie Smith of Prostate Cancer UK said: "The way we diagnose and treat prostate cancer is now more accurate, effective, and safe than it has ever been."

More than 52,000 new cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed a year.

Wishing-well coins are poisoning fish

A pub has urged its customers to stop throwing coins into its wishing well after three carp died in the contaminated water.

Staff at The Fishpond, in Matlock Bath, Derbyshire, have put up notices warning against the practice as the coins contain toxic zinc and nickel.

A koi carp specialist is said to have told staff that chemicals in the coins were killing the valuable fish.

Three fish have died in the past five months and one of the five survivors has begun to develop sores and ulcers, according to the pub's Liley Henderson-Hirst. Staff recovered £130 worth of coins from the well two months ago – along with several vapes.

Sex assaults 'common' at Young Farmers socials

Sexual assaults are now "commonplace" at Young Farmers social events, the editor of *Farmers Weekly* has claimed.

Writing in the latest edition of the industry magazine, Abi Kay said men in farming did not appear to be held accountable for their actions compared with other parts of society.

Ms Kay wrote: "Girls attending such events have learned to expect that they will be grabbed and groped. It has become part and parcel of the culture."

A spokesman for the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs told *Farmers Weekly:* "Behaviour of this nature is unacceptable and all reported cases are treated extremely seriously."

Warmest spring since 1884 despite downpours

The UK had the warmest spring in 140 years even though it was also one of the wettest on record, according to the Met Office.

The average temperature last month was 13.1C (55.6F), beating the previous record, set in 2008, by a full 1C. This makes it the warmest May in records dating back to 1884.

Meteorological spring, which covers March, April and May, was also the warmest on record. The average temperature was 9.37C (48.9F), beating the previous high of 9.12C, set in 2017.

The UK had its wettest spring since 1986 and the sixth wettest on record, the Met Office added. An average of 12 inches of rain fell across the country – a third more than usual.

Beijing claims MI6 recruited Chinese couple as spies

By **Our Foreign Staff**

CHINA has accused MI6 of recruiting a couple who worked for the country's central government to spy for the UK.

Beijing's ministry of state security said in a post on its official WeChat account that Secret Intelligence Service operatives had convinced a man surnamed Wang, who worked in a "core confidential role" in the central state apparatus, to defect, along with his wife, surnamed Zhou.

The accusations came after months of mutual espionage allegations between Beijing and Western powers.

The ministry said British spies began cultivating Wang when he came to study in the UK in 2015, arranging dinners and tours for him in order to "understand his character weaknesses, interests and demands".

After learning that Wang "had a strong desire for money", MI6 then approached him to provide well-paid consulting services that came to involve the internal workings of central state agencies.

MI6 personnel later revealed their identities to Wang and directed him to return to China to collect intelligence, convincing him to coerce Zhou into doing the same. The ministry said it had gathered evidence and taken "decisive measures" against Wang.

The statement gave no details of Wang or Zhou's current occupations in China, the nature of the information they provided, or their whereabouts.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office was approached for comment.

China and Western powers have long traded accusations of spying but only recently started to disclose details of alleged individual cases.

Last month, police said Matthew Trickett, who had been charged with helping Hong Kong to gather intelligence in the UK, was found dead in a park in Maidenhead, Berkshire, in unexplained circumstances.

In April British police charged two men with passing sensitive information to Beijing between 2021 and last year.

Families miss child benefit in HMRC glitch

By **Charlotte Gifford**

ALMOST half a million families have been left out of pocket because of a technical issue at HM Revenue and Customs that affected child benefit payments.

The tax office has apologised to parents and guardians who did not receive their money yesterday because of a processing error.

About 30 per cent of payments scheduled for June 3 were missed, affecting around 500,000 people.

Parents posted on social media to complain about the missing funds, which some said had left them unable to pay for food.

Notifying people of the glitch on X, formerly Twitter, HMRC said there was "no need for customers to call us".

The tax office has repeatedly come under fire this year for its customer service performance, which MPs have said is at an all-time low.

> 500,000
> **Number of people who failed to receive yesterday's child benefit payment after a processing error**

HMRC has consistently failed to meet its customer service targets for almost all of the past five years as it tries to cut costs by encouraging taxpayers to use its digital services.

One of the main issues facing taxpayers has been long waiting times on the phone. The public spending watchdog in May said that HMRC had left taxpayers on hold for seven million hours in 2023-24 – the equivalent of 798 years.

A spokesman for HMRC said: "We're sorry that some customers' child benefit payments have not arrived as scheduled and we are working urgently to resolve the issue.

"The issues that caused payment problems today will not impact payments scheduled for tomorrow."

Thousands quit the military

By **Dominic Penna**
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS more people left the military than joined it last year, official figures show.

More than 15,000 full-time personnel quit the Armed Forces in the past 12 months, according to Ministry of Defence (MoD) data, while just over 11,000 signed up.

Of the 15,729 troops who left, more than half (8,101) chose to do so early, prompting accusations of a "Conservative-made recruitment crisis".

Last week, separate data showed the number of British Army troops was below 73,000 for the first time since the Napoleonic era as all three military services struggle to retain personnel.

John Healey, Labour's shadow defence secretary, said: "The Conservative-made recruitment crisis is just one example of their failure in defence for 14 years.

"Tory ministers have corroded the nation's contract with those who serve. Personnel living in damp and mouldy housing, morale falling to record lows, and retention rates dropping.

"It's time for change with Labour. We will ensure Britain is better defended."

Labour analysis also found that the number of military homes branded "non-decent", the worst rating given by the MoD, has risen to 2,000.

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The veterans fighting old age to get to Normandy

Serviceman who joined up at 17 says years have caught up with him ahead of 80th anniversary events

By **Danielle Sheridan** DEFENCE EDITOR

A D-DAY veteran says he cannot make it to Normandy for this week's 80th anniversary commemorations because "age has finally caught up with me".

Victor Walker, 98, is among a number of wartime service personnel unable to travel to France this year.

The King and Queen will be among those in attendance to remember the more than 156,000 Allied troops who landed on the shores of Normandy on June 6, 1944 in the largest amphibious invasion in history.

Mr Walker, who worked on board a destroyer escorting troops to the shores of France, told *The Telegraph* from his home in Essex: "Age has finally caught up with me."

Mr Walker spoke after a survey by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission found nearly half of young adults did not know what D-Day was, fuelling fears the sacrifices of former generations were being forgotten.

Mr Walker was 17 in June 1943 when he joined the Royal Navy as an able seaman. He served on HMS Versatile, a destroyer, starting his career escorting Arctic convoys. Before long, the ship was redeployed to the Solent to escort convoys across the Channel to Normandy.

He remembers being called to the upper deck in June 1944 to be told by the captain that the ship was to start escorting troops to Europe – specifically, Arromanches.

He recalled the "excitement" after his captain told the crew that "nobody knows what's happening, because no one is going ashore and no one is coming onboard".

"We escorted barges full of soldiers and tanks. As soon as we unloaded the barges we had to go back to England," he said.



Victor Walker has made his last D-Day veterans' trip to Normandy, Below, visitors arrive on vintage service motorcycles at Arromanches

After the first landings, the ship returned to Portsmouth to bring back Rear Admiral William Tennant, who was in charge of the Mulberry Harbour construction – an engineering feat critical to the success of the D-Day invasion – which consisted of two portable harbours that enabled cargo to be rapidly unloaded on to the Normandy beaches.

The harbours also served to protect the undersea pipeline known as Operation Pluto.

For two days straight, Mr Walker did not sleep, as the crew operated on adrenaline, scanning the waters for submarines.

The significance of D-Day remains clear to him to this day. He said: "If it wasn't for us old boys, we wouldn't be here today, would we?"

Although Mr Walker travelled to Normandy for the 65th, 70th and 75th commemorations, his health would not permit him to travel this year.

For many of the 50 veterans travelling to Normandy next week, it is likely to be the last time that they will make the journey.

Mr Walker said: "Age is, unfortunately, finally catching up with me. I have been very lucky to have visited Normandy several times in previous years to remember. However, this year I am unable to make the trip due to mobility and other health problems."

Instead, he is looking forward to attending the Royal British Legion's UK National Service of Remembrance, at the National Memorial Arboretum on June 6.

The service will focus on the stories of Second World War veterans, told through first-person testimony, and will culminate in an act of remembrance and wreath-laying.

Philippa Rawlinson, director of remembrance at the RBL, said: "The Royal British Legion is proud to be delivering a series of commemorative events across Normandy and the National Memorial Arboretum, which will honour the service and sacrifice of all those who served together to make the liberation of Europe possible."

After the war, Mr Walker joined HMS Liverpool for one year, before pursuing a career as a greengrocer.

Mr Walker's story comes after it was announced Able Seaman Lewis Curl, also 98, has died.

The Royal Navy veteran, who survived the sinking of a freighter off France, served with the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.



EDDIE MULHOLLAND FOR THE TELEGRAPH

'Fidel Macron' hijacking anniversary ahead of elections, say critics

By **Henry Samuel** *in Paris*

EMMANUEL MACRON has been accused of "requisitioning" D-Day with wall-to-wall media appearances in a bid to save his party from humiliation in the European elections.

Likening the French president to Cuban dictator Fidel Castro, Olivier Faure, head of the Socialist Party, criticised Mr Macron's plan to deliver three speeches on consecutive days.

"So on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, it will be 'Fidel Macron' on all the channels to commemorate and express himself without a contradiction at 8pm – in short, to campaign at a time when no one will be able to respond to him," he said. On Thursday, with three days to go before the ballot for the European Parliament, Mr Macron will issue a prime-time televised address evening to mark the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landings and the push to liberate France from Nazi occupation. He is due to mention the situation in Europe, as well as Gaza and Ukraine.

Then, on Friday, he will make a speech in Bayeux in which, as France Inter radio put it, he will seek to depict himself as the "true heir to Charles de Gaulle" on the eve of a media blackout at the end of official campaigning before the elections.

He will then receive Joe Biden for the US president's first state visit to France, with the aim of further bolstering his credentials as an international statesman.

The announcement of the June 6 address on France's top TV channels, as well as the Friday speech, sparked outrage from rivals on the Left and Right who said they would file a complaint to France's broadcast watchdog, Arcom.

Manon Aubry, the head of the Leftist France Unbowed, confirmed on radio network RTL that her party would be taking the matter to Arcom and demanded the length of the speech be deducted from the alloted airtime of Valérie Hayer, the European Macron candidate.

Eric Ciotti, head of the conservative Republicans party, said he would also be filing a complaint.

In a teaser regarding the D-Day ceremonies, Mr Macron made clear nods to the campaign, notably by saying that "2024 will go down in memory as marking the 'renaissance' of our nation". Renaissance is the name of his party.

Mr Macron is facing a drubbing in the EU ballot with the latest Ipsos poll placing Ms Hayer on 16 per cent, half the score of Ms Le Pen's hard-Right National Rally, on 33 per cent, whose campaign leader Jordan Bardella has framed the election as a referendum for or against the French president.

The Macron campaign is also at risk of being overtaken by Socialist-backed ex-commentator Raphaël Glucksmann, on 14.5 per cent of voting intentions.

The survey forecast that voter turnout would fall to 47 per cent compared with 50 per cent in 2019.

According to *Le Monde*, there is internal debate over whether Mr Macron's participation in the election campaign is a "help or handicap". His face has been removed from campaign posters in favour of prime minister, Gabriel Attal.

"Whenever we hand out a tract with Macron's face on it, we get turned away with the response, 'Oh no, not him,'" one Parisian campaign volunteer told the paper.



France's first lady Brigitte Macron greets veterans ahead of D-Day events, above

BBC viewers mock D-Day map blunders

By **Danielle Sheridan** DEFENCE EDITOR

THE BBC has come under fire for a D-Day mapping blunder on the *Antiques Roadshow*.

On Sunday night's episode, a series of maps flashed on the screen which showed the south coast ports where thousands of Allied troops embarked for Operation Overlord.

Although it was in Weymouth, Dorset, where more than 100,000 men were staged ahead of the invasion of Normandy, the BBC confused the Georgian harbour town with Poole and placed it 30 miles to the east on its maps.

The BBC also relocated Amsterdam to where Rotterdam is on another map.

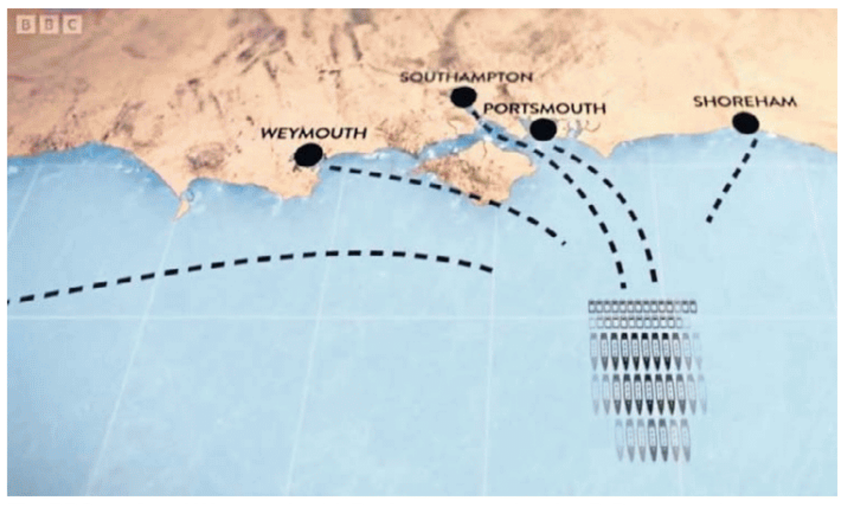
Viewers took to social media to express their frustrations. One posted online: "Excuse me, Fiona Bruce, but where exactly is Weymouth?

"I was stunned that something so basic could be got so wrong; on such an important episode of one of their flagship programmes.

"Some poor researcher is probably getting the hairdryer treatment right now; how embarrassing." Another said: "Although Poole and Weymouth are in the same county, they are miles apart.

Weymouth was a major embarkation point for the Americans, who went to Omaha Beach, and it should not have been overlooked like this. It's a good job that those who planned D-Day didn't make such basic errors on their mapping."

The BBC has been approached for comment.



The BBC confused Weymouth with Poole on a map showing D-Day operations

Last of wartime frigates in scrapyard SOS

By **Danielle Sheridan** DEFENCE EDITOR

THE one remaining Second World War escort ship risks being scrapped unless £150,000 can be raised to keep it afloat with the Princess Royal among its backers.

HMS Wellington, which has been moored on the Thames since 1948, is a typical example of a frigate used to protect convoys of merchant ships from 1939 to 1945.

If Britain had lost the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War then there would have been no way to transport food, weapons, goods and troops into the country.

Lord West, the former First Sea Lord, said it was a "scandal" that HMS Wellington was at risk, as he quoted from Winston Churchill's memoirs to sum up the vessel's importance: "The only thing that ever really frightened me during the war was the U-boat peril. The battle of the Atlantic against the U-boats, the longest of the war, was won by small escorts such as HMS Wellington and yet she is the only one still in existence. We should stir every sinew to ensure this ship, one of those that ensured Britain's survival and victory in World War Two, is preserved for the nation."

The Telegraph understands that the Princess Royal, who is a patron of the Wellington Trust, has privately given the ship her backing.

The warship's position as a going concern was put in jeopardy after the Honourable Company of Master Mariners (HCMM), which had rented the ship as its floating livery hall, departed after 75 years.

In a statement last year, the HCMM said it had ended the tenancy on "safety" grounds.

"The ship is 90 years old: as mariners we know that no ship lasts for ever and, sadly, HQS Wellington is no different," the organisation said.

It cautioned that safety issues meant "staff and visitor safety cannot be guaranteed by HCMM".

However, both HCMM and the trust stated the safety concerns raised had now been addressed. The trust said Wellington was "statutorily compliant, safe to visit and return to, and fit for purpose for all to enjoy as she continues to grace that part of the River Thames on the Embankment where she has lain since December 1948".

In order to keep the vessel running, the trust has set up a gofundme page which it hopes will raise funds and alleviate pressure in the short term.

Longer-term plans for how to keep the warship afloat include potentially letting cabins for overnight stays, relaunching it as an event space for dinners and receptions and introducing historical tours.

Speaking on board HMS Wellington on the 90th anniversary of its launch this week, Prof Dominic Tweddle, the former director general of the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth and now a trustee of the warship, said: "Very few of us these days are around or in ships, so will not perhaps appreciate their importance. They are our lifeline to the world. She had a hectic career keeping a lifeline open for Britain during the war."

General election

From a pint at the pub to party leader

Reform founder's shock return to front-line politics was kept secret from party leader until last minute

By **Daniel Martin, Gordon Rayner, Poppy Wood** *and* **Ben Riley-Smith**

IT WAS while sitting in the pub on a warm Sunday lunchtime that Nigel Farage made what could turn out to be the most significant decision of this general election.

"I took the day off yesterday," he told journalists at the emergency press conference at the Glaziers' Hall by London Bridge.

"Had a normal day. Walked the dogs. Did a bit of fishing. Popped into the pub, you know – a normal sort of day. It gave me time to think and reflect, and I began to feel a terrible sense of guilt."

The guilt, Mr Farage said, was about the people he had spoken to on the campaign trail who could not understand why he had decided two weeks earlier not to stand.

The guilt may also have come from the fact that many Reform UK candidates had only agreed to put everything aside to stand because they assumed they would be running under his banner.

But could it also have been for the leader he was about to oust – Richard Tice?

The Telegraph understands he waited until the next morning before even informing Mr Tice that he was taking his job.

Rishi Sunak had blindsided everyone by calling an election on July 4.

For months, it had been widely expected that Mr Farage would stand for Parliament for an eighth time, but the early ballot caught him on the hop

> 'I hoped at the back end of last week it would happen. I thought it was likely over the weekend'

and he ducked the challenge. Since then, he played his part as Reform UK's most identifiable figure, campaigning for candidates who were standing, including Mr Tice.

"What really shocked me last week was a number of people coming up to me on the street saying, 'Nigel, why aren't you standing?'" he told journalists.

"I gave my logical, rational reasons for it – but I simply couldn't help feeling that somehow they felt I was letting them down...

"So all those things have been weighing on my mind. Difficult though it is, I can't let down those millions of people. I simply can't do it. It'd be wrong.

"So I have decided I've changed my mind."

He added: "Better to fight something that's very, very difficult, where the outcome is far from certain, better to do that than let people down."

It was just after lunch – at 2pm – that Mr Farage said he made his mind up.

The Telegraph understands that it was at that point that he held a conference



YUI MOK/

Nick Candy and Holly Valance attend the Reform press conference, at Glaziers Hall, in London, where Nigel Farage took over from Richard Tice as leader of the party, below

Straight talker Nigel brings ray of hope to sunshine coast

Dispatch

Residents of Farage's new constituency welcome the cigar-toting Brexiteer to run-down Clacton

By **Neil Johnston**
in Clacton-on-Sea

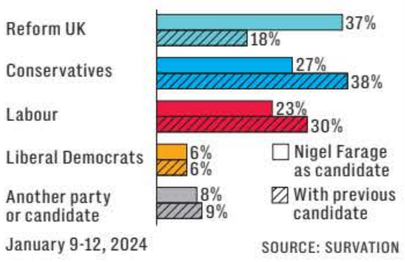
ON THE pier in Clacton today, with a backdrop of log flumes, ferris wheels and fish and chips, there will be a warm welcome for the man locals know for his pint and cigar.

While residents are thankful for "Dishy Rishi" and his support during the pandemic, the jubilant reactions to Nigel Farage's announcement to stand for Reform at the election suggest the Tories could suffer a major upset in the capital of Essex's sunshine coast.

"I like Nigel Farage, I liked Boris Johnson, I like Jeremy Clarkson," said Pauline McGinty, 76, the owner of Jolly Roger restaurant, which has stood on the pier for more than a century. "It's the straight talking, he's not got any side to him, has he. He's not snobby like the others who've got so much money, they don't know how much a loaf of bread is."

Farage expected to win in Clacton

Vote intention among Clacton adults



January 9-12, 2024 SOURCE: SURVATION

In a typical reflection of waning Conservative support among the town's 53,000 population, she said Rishi Sunak had done little to impress her since his furlough support scheme: "I do vote Tory, but this year I was thinking about not voting at all. It's very sad. Dishy Rishi was alright for furlough but I'm not sure he's doing what he should be doing at the moment."

Mr Farage, who sang the praises of the town's Wetherspoons during a press conference in which he announced he would stand as an MP, is popular in the town.

Ms McGinty said Mr Farage's announcement would "100 per cent change" her decision not to vote, and she expected him to win. "Nigel is well liked. It's the pint of beer and the cigar. He will definitely win here."

Despite the bright colours of the arcades and the endless opportunities to buy Clacton rock on Europe's biggest pleasure pier, the town is one of the poorest in Britain. It is in the top 1 per cent of deprived neighbourhoods and the constituency includes Jaywick, the poorest area of England.

The Jolly Roger may have been serving traditional food for 147 years, but the McGinty family have been saddened to see the once proud seaside town decline.

"I haven't been here as long as that," Ms McGinty jokes when she explains the restaurant's history. "The town is more run down than when I first got here. So many empty shops, too many charity shops, we lost Marks & Spencer, that was the biggest nail in the coffin I think."

As well as deprivation, Clacton's economy lags behind the rest of the UK and there are high rates of absenteeism at schools. The average age is 50, but even younger voters, who are less likely to vote for Mr Farage, seemed cheered that the Reform carnival would mean the pier being busier than usual as they manned ice cream stalls and fairground rides.

Mr Farage's support base will include the handful of anglers sitting at the edge of the pier, such as Bernard Dooling, 73, who said the Reform Party leader would "go down well".

"He's the only person who says what everybody thinks, he doesn't hold back," he said after catching a spiny dogfish. "You can't say how serious he will be about immigration until he actually does it, because no one knows. But the others keep saying immigration will come down and it doesn't. I've stopped voting because I thought we just can't keep doing one bad prime minister after another."

In the Moon and Starfish, the Wetherspoons that Mr Farage praised, there was excitement as pictures of him flashed up on the TV screens.

"Nigel, I like him. That's great news he's standing here," said Alan Jones, 72, a retired fitter, who sipped a pint.

"We like Reform. There will be a warm welcome for him here. I hope we get to have a pint with him in here."

But in an echo of Mr Sunak's warning that votes for Reform would put Sir Keir Starmer in Downing Street, even the small number of Labour voters in Clacton were excited by the former Brexit Party leader's announcement.

"Farage's changed his mind. I can't believe it," said John Davidson, 73, a retired postman.

"He will take votes from the Tory party, so I don't really understand what he's going to achieve. But I'm on the Left, so it won't be a concern of mine. He can do what he likes."



Pauline McGinty, owner of the Jolly Roger restaurant on Clacton Pier



LEE THOMAS; JASON BYE FOR THE TELEGRAPH

Tough talk What Nigel Farage said in his speech

On the election
This election needs a bit of gingering up. It is the dullest, most boring election campaign we have ever seen in our lives.

On Starmer
A man who campaigned not just for a second referendum but a believer in open borders, and who as a lawyer fought very, very hard for those that arrive on the back of lorries to get benefits once they got here.

On Labour and Tories
Whoever wins, taxes will remain high, the highest tax burden since 1948. Everyone's promising not to put taxes up but nobody talks about reducing the tax burden.

On standing as an MP
I simply couldn't help feeling that somehow I was letting people down. That I wasn't standing up for these people, people in their millions who've stood with me for many, many years.

On the next PM
Labour have won the election. There is not a contest. Whether the Conservatives get 80 seats or 150 seats is now almost irrelevant. Starmer has won this election, and nothing will change.

On Britain
We're massively behind America and many other parts of the world. We're in social decline. And we're actually in a form of moral decline.

On his intentions
What I intend to lead is a political revolt. Yes, a revolt. A turning our backs on the political status quo. Nothing in this country works anymore. The health service doesn't work. The roads don't work. None of our public services are up to scratch. We are in decline. So we're very, very much on the side of the little guy and woman and we're very much on the side of credit growth.

– how Farage took Tice by surprise

call with his closest advisers when he told them he was going to stand as an MP for Clacton, a seat formerly held by Douglas Carswell, the Tory-to-Ukip defector.

Party sources claim it was always the plan that if he did run in Clacton, he would announce his return as leader at the same time.

But because Mr Farage had ducked out of standing two weeks earlier, the leadership had been left in the hands of Mr Tice.

What seems clear is that Mr Tice was not one of the closest advisers told of Mr Farage's plan at 2pm.

In fact, it seems the conversation was not had until yesterday morning, just hours before the announcement was due to be made.

He had planned to be in Boston and Skegness campaigning, and had to cancel at the last moment when Mr Farage informed him of his plans.

Mr Tice told *The Telegraph*: "I hoped at the back end of last week it would happen. I thought it was likely over the weekend.

"We all confirmed it on Monday. You have to do it last minute in order to keep it secret. The best way to keep it secret is not to tell anyone."

The former leader was putting a brave face on his demotion to chairman, even telling the press conference yesterday that it had been his decision to ask Mr Farage to come back as leader.

Mr Tice said that he invited Mr Farage and "to my absolute delight" he accepted.

Mr Tice believes that Mr Farage's return means he can spend more time in Boston and Skegness, increasing the chance of winning it. But the new Reform UK leader was notably defensive when asked exactly who it was who decided that he should take over, telling one journalist: "Do you think he's been bullied or strong armed or something?"

He went on to say that it was best for him to take over as leader, because: "I've been doing this longer than Richard."

He added: "There's a people's army out there that I've built up over many, many years and they're still there.

"And they're very fond of Richard but they know me a little bit better. It's just as simple as that."

What is clear is that senior Reform campaign staff had no warning of Mr Farage's announcement at all and had to dash back to London for the announcement. They sent out the invitation to the press to attend a "general election announcement" just two minutes before Mr Farage himself tweeted about it.

> 'We all confirmed it on Monday. You have to do it last minute in order to keep it secret'

And whatever the truth about Mr Tice, it is clear that the already announced Reform candidate for the constituency of Clacton – Tony Mack – was not told about the change in plans until yesterday.

The party's central team only informed him to tell him he was being replaced moments before the news broke live on television, it is believed.

Last night, Mr Mack's biography and campaign details were removed from Reform UK's Clacton constituency webpage and replaced with information about Mr Farage.

His social media pages appear to suggest the announcement took him entirely by surprise.

A Facebook page shared pictures on Sunday night of new banners, posters, and fence signs featuring his campaign and said the promotional material would be "arriving this week".

Mr Mack also liked a post on X, formerly Twitter, on June 1 by another Reform candidate, which brushed off rumours that Mr Farage could run in Clacton as something that was "not going to happen". Mr Farage did have the gallantry to be shame-faced about this.

"I really do apologise," he told journalists.

Mr Farage added: "He knew six months ago that it was a possibility, all right.

"He knew it was a possibility… Sometimes tough things have to be done."

Riding high on a wave of support from his Eurosceptic fan base, Mr Farage has shown he is capable of taking these tough decisions.

In just one day, the former MEP has cast aside his former candidate and the party's former leader.

If he does not succeed in taking Clacton and destroying the Conservative party across the country, will it have all been worth it?



Sunak must abolish 'unfair' inheritance tax, urge ex-ministers

Prime Minister should put 'clear blue water' between him and Starmer with vow to axe the levy, MPs say

By **Dominic Penna**
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RISHI SUNAK should make a manifesto pledge to abolish inheritance tax, senior Conservative MPs have said.

The Prime Minister is being urged to make the election commitment to put more "clear blue water" between him and Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader.

Cutting inheritance tax was seriously considered ahead of last year's Autumn Statement, but Mr Sunak and Jeremy Hunt, the Chancellor, instead opted for tax cuts more directly focused on boosting economic growth.

Inheritance tax thresholds have been frozen since 2010.

The levy is regarded by some as deeply unfair, because it penalises people who have saved money throughout their lives after paying tax on their income.

Nadhim Zahawi, a former chancellor who is standing down at next month's election, said inheritance tax had "catastrophic results" for families as well as the wider economy.

"The campaign so far has seen the Conservatives put clear blue water between us and Labour, and has highlighted the total lack of ideas that Sir Keir has for Britain," he said.

"There's no better way to continue that fight than by pledging to abolish inheritance tax, the most unfair and hated tax in Britain.

"There are many economic reasons why it's a terrible tax, but the main thing people should take from it is that it's deeply un-human.

"There's no more human desire than to leave the earth knowing that you have passed something on to your children and grandchildren. The state gets in the way of this, with catastrophic results."

The Telegraph has been campaigning for the abolition of inheritance tax for the past year.

It is understood that Liz Truss, Mr Sunak's predecessor, and Dame Priti Patel, a former home secretary, also want the tax to be scrapped.

The Conservative Growth Group, a caucus of around 50 backbench MPs led by Ranil Jayawardena, an ally of Ms Truss, is also supportive of the measure to cut the tax.

In her book, called *Ten Years to Save the West*, Ms Truss recalled that she and her chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, had planned to abolish inheritance tax in spring 2023, but were ousted by mutinous Tory MPs months before that year's Budget.

David Jones, a former Brexit minister, said inheritance tax was "a wicked tax, an unconservative tax and we should certainly abolish it".

He added: "It's a very fundamental thing for people to want to leave their assets to their children, or to whoever else they want to leave it, without the state interfering.

"The Government should certainly pledge to abolish it in the manifesto, and of course Labour would never be able to follow it.

"It's a hugely unpopular tax and a commitment to abolish it would be really sound politics."

Sir Christopher Chope, who served as a minister under Margaret Thatcher, added: "Other countries have taken a similarly bold move.

"If we are having a radical election manifesto, why not include it in that?"

Senior Labour politicians have previously indicated that they would oppose any cuts to inheritance tax, while tax advisers have said that families are concerned that relief schemes could be tightened under a government led by Sir Keir.

Rachel Reeves, the shadow chancellor, said in 2021 she was prepared to examine "every single tax break" available if Labour came to power.

A poll carried out by YouGov in September found that more than half of the country backs the abolition of inheritance tax, including 70 per cent of people who voted for the Conservatives at the last general election in 2019.

Some 4 per cent of estates currently pay inheritance tax, but the Institute for Fiscal Studies think tank estimates that one in eight people will face a bill on their death or their partner's death over the course of the next decade.

It comes as Britain's tax overall burden is on course to continue rising to a record level since the Second World War.

Earlier this year, *The Telegraph* revealed that thousands of grieving families had been hit with shock inheritance tax bills of up to £1.4 million because their relatives died within seven years of passing on gifts.

4pc

The proportion of estates that currently pay inheritance tax, though this is predicted by a think tank to rise

GENERAL ELECTION 2024

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Only the Tories have a clear plan on migration

Commentary

By **Tom Pursglove**

MIGRATION into the UK is too high. It's not fair on the British people who feel the pressure it puts on housing, public services and communities.

That's why the Conservatives have a clear plan to bring numbers down and a record of taking the bold action needed to do so.

Last year we introduced the biggest ever package of measures to cut legal migration, including banning overseas students and care workers from bringing family members and introducing stricter controls on the Health and Care Visa.

We stopped immigration undercutting British workers by increasing the salary threshold for Skilled Worker visas by almost 50 per cent, to £38,700.

With the steps we've taken, we have cut the number of people who were eligible to come to the UK by 300,000 compared to last year. But we will go further to make sure that immigration is fair and prioritises those whose skills we need to support British businesses and our NHS.

We will introduce a legal cap to ensure that immigration is always controlled. Publicly accountable elected representatives in Parliament will be responsible for deciding the appropriate level, based on advice from the expert migration advisory committee.

We will make it clear to the committee that their task is to bring numbers down to sustainable levels, with an overall cap that falls every year in the next Parliament, while making sure the NHS and businesses get the employees they need.

Many other countries take this kind of bold action, including Australia. Australia has a cap on permanent migration which allows it to keep immigration at sustainable levels, while ensuring its economy gets the high-skilled workers it needs. There is no clearer contrast between us and the Labour Party. Keir Starmer flip flops day to day, but he said as recently as 2020 that he wanted to bring back freedom of movement, reversing the progress we've made thanks to Brexit.

Yvette Cooper says that Labour wants to cut net migration but would not say by how much or by when, let alone setting out a credible plan to achieve it. Their record shows that they have no credibility; Labour refused to back our key reforms to bring down net migration, such as the increased salary threshold. They say one thing one day and flip flop the next. The British people deserve honesty and a clear plan.

The reality is Keir Starmer is desperate to get the UK back into his favourite territory – orbiting the EU.

The choice for voters at this election is clear – between a prime minister who will cap immigration, or a Labour government that has no plan except to give illegal immigrants an amnesty.

Tom Pursglove is the legal migration minister

A terribly dull election needed some Reform

Sketch



By **Tim Stanley**

THANK Enoch for that! Just when we were reconciling ourselves to the dullest election outside North Korea, Nigel Farage tweeted that he's got an announcement to make. Conversion to Islam? Becoming a woman? No one knew, not even my contacts in Reform (if you're reading, Vivian, let me know when you're out of the clink and I'll buy you a pint).

We hotfooted it to Glaziers Hall in London, to a room lined by fat men, businessmen and young men in Peaky Blinders suits, giving this "surprise event" the air of a mafia hit. Richard Tice spoke with the self-confidence of a fellow who'd spent 24 hours being tied to a chair and gently persuaded to resign. I decided to "invite Nigel to be leader of Reform UK", he said, wincing at the memory of what they did with his executive toys, "and to my absolute delight, he accepted".

The cameras swung round to face Farage, grinning from ear to ear. I'm told Tice has also invited him to use his Jag whenever he wants, along with his house in Provence for six weeks a year.

Nigel skipped to the stage. "This election needs gingering up," he said. "Nothing works." Shoplifting is practically legal. Sectarianism is on the rise. Nigel cried "Allahu Akbar" with such passion, I nearly ducked under my seat. Tice had said "this must be the immigration election" – and if it wasn't before, it certainly was now.

The big reveal: Nigel is running in Clacton. Woohoo! Asked if the Reform candidate already standing in that seat was hearing this for the first time, Nigel looked unconcerned. Why, he'd only told Tice by text 30 minutes before. Pressed on how he made the decision, he described how he "walked the dogs, did a bit of fishing, popped into the pub" – and how it must amuse Mr Clacton to know that the fate of his candidacy was decided over a pint of Spitfire in the Dog and Duck.

People were begging me to run, claimed Nigel – and I believe him. That morning, Rishi declared he knows what a woman is (he should do: he worked in a pharmacy) and Starmer put a "triple lock" on our nuclear weapons (can Britain not afford a burglar alarm?). The prospect of these two debating is as thrilling as watching paint argue with a wall, especially as the Tories are dead in the polls.

"The election is over," said Farage; we might as well have a bit of fun. He has clearly decided that there's a bigger historical prize in being the man who terminated the Conservative Party for good – and some academic curiosity in the thought of Reform pipping them in the popular vote. The real battle is for second place. The election starts here.

"You'll write your little pieces about how we don't get on," said Nigel regarding Tice, "but I regret to say we're getting on quite well." Will you still be in charge at the next election, asked a hack? "By 2029," he mused, "I'm sure someone younger and better will have come along." Yes. And he'll run them down in Richard's car.

General election

Labour set for victory that would outshine Blair landslide

Analysis suggests Starmer will condemn Tories to their worst election performance since 1906

By **Charles Hymas** *and* **Ollie Corfe**

LABOUR is on course to win 422 seats in the Commons, beating the landslide achieved by Sir Tony Blair in 1997, according to a detailed YouGov analysis based on nearly 60,000 people.

The research showed Sir Keir Starmer's party would secure a majority of 194 seats – bigger than Labour's 179-seat majority nearly three decades ago – and 220 more than in 2019.

It would leave the Tories on just 140 seats, their worst performance since 1906, according to the poll.

It is the first MRP poll of the election campaign by YouGov and uses a statistical technique that enables an analysis to be done showing constituency by constituency results.

The poll put the Liberal Democrats on course to become the third-largest party in Parliament once again with 48 seats, overtaking the SNP with four times the number of constituencies they won in 2019.

Reform would not gain any seats despite polling above the LibDems with more than 10 per cent of the vote, but the survey was conducted before Nigel Farage announced he would lead the party and stand as a candidate in Clacton, Essex.

He predicted yesterday evening that Reform would overtake the Tories in a week.

The electoral collapse for the Tories would see some of the biggest figures in the Cabinet losing their seats.

They would include Chancellor Jeremy Hunt, who is trying to hold off the LibDems in South West Surrey, and Defence Secretary and future leadership contender Grant Shapps in Welwyn Hatfield.

Penny Mordaunt, the Leader of the Commons, who has also been seen as a potential successor to Rishi Sunak in any leadership contest, would also lose her seat in Portsmouth North, according to the YouGov projections.

Cheltenham and Chippenham, held by Alex Chalk, the Justice Secretary, and Michelle Donelan, the Science and Technology Secretary, respectively, would also switch over to the LibDems, according to the poll.

Other victims would be Gillian Keegan, the Education Secretary, Mel Stride, Work and Pensions Secretary, Mark Harper, Transport Secretary, and David T C Davies, the Welsh Secretary.

The Red Wall would be completely rebuilt if YouGov's forecasts are accurate, with all 42 of the seats won by Boris Johnson in the 2019 election victory returning to Labour. All but two would be gained with double-digit margins.

Labour is also set to become the largest party in Scotland by some margin, taking 34 seats to the SNP's 17, the Conservatives five and the Lib Dems one.

This would be the best Labour seat haul in Scotland since the 2005 and 2010 general elections, at both of which it won 41 seats.

The decimation of the Tory party in the Commons would see it lose 190 seats to Labour, 41 seats to the Lib Dems and one to the SNP.

Although Reform would not win any seats, it is forecast in the YouGov poll to come second in 27 constituencies.

"Our current model puts the Right-wing party in second place in 27 seats, including 11 seats in Yorkshire (eg Barnsley North, Barnsley South, Doncaster North) and eight in the North East (egHartlepool, Houghton and Sunderland South)," said the pollster.

YouGov suggested Reform could cost the Tories victory in 16 seats, based on its estimate from last year that around three in 10 Reform voters would side with the Tories if their party was not standing.

The Green Party would win a second Westminster seat, Bristol Central, for the first time in their history, alongside Brighton Pavilion.

"If these results were indeed replicated on polling day, it would be a seismic shift for British politics," said YouGov.



JONATHAN BRADY/PA WIRE

Ladies' man Rishi Sunak was in Oxfordshire on the campaign trail yesterday, visiting Henley as well as Wantage Town FC, where he was quizzed about his favourite dish at Nando's (chicken, chips and broccoli) and music taste (country).

MP candidates seek counselling for abuse

By **Amy Gibbons** *and* **Ben Riley-Smith**

POLITICAL candidates have been forced to seek counselling because they are so traumatised by abuse on the campaign trail, the head of the Electoral Commission has warned.

Writing for *The Telegraph* online, Vijay Rangarajan urged all parties to sign a respect pledge after a survey of hundreds of candidates standing at the local elections in May found nearly half had experienced intimidation or abuse, while a majority of women said that they avoided going out alone.

In some cases, he said that aspiring politicians were so traumatised by their experience on the campaign trail that they required counselling.

Some said that they had been physically attacked, while one candidate said they had received such troubling abuse online that their children felt unsafe at school.

Of all those surveyed by the Electoral Commission, 43 per cent of candidates reported experiencing some kind of abuse or intimidation, with 10 per cent describing it as a serious problem.

This increased to 56 per cent when respondents were presented with a list of specific scenarios, such as receiving physical threats or threats towards family, staff or friends.

Most of the abuse was said to have taken place online, but candidates also reported bad experiences while canvassing or at campaign events.

Mr Rangarajan said that the problem was "particularly severe" among women, with 56 per cent avoiding campaigning alone, while nearly half said they would steer clear of discussing controversial topics to keep themselves safe.

He also noted that more than a third of all those who reported abuse said it came from other candidates.

To address the problem, Mr Rangarajan urged parties across the political spectrum to commit to a "respectful election campaign".

The pledge is a joint venture with the Jo Cox Foundation, a charity championing respectful politics that was set up in memory of the murdered Labour MP.

By signing up to the Jo Cox Foundation Civility Pledge, candidates commit to "using a civil and constructive tone in political debate; acting with integrity, honesty and compassion; and behaving respectfully towards others, including those they disagree with", Mr Rangarajan said.

The Electoral Commission and the police have also published joint guidance to help candidates protect themselves and report any intimidating or abusive behaviour that they might experience.

Mr Rangarajan said: "Campaigning is vital to our democracy and usually carried out respectfully. However, our research shows that far too many candidates are facing harassment and abuse.

"Threats of violence, unwanted contact and discriminatory abuse are illegal."

Vijay Rangarajan: Telegraph online

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Rayner: I want world without nuclear arms

Deputy Labour leader defies Starmer after he announced triple lock on Britain's deterrent

By **Amy Gibbons**
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ANGELA RAYNER has said she wants to rid the world of nuclear weapons just hours after Sir Keir Starmer said he would be willing to use them.

Yesterday, the deputy Labour leader said she had not changed her mind about nuclear weapons and said she supported multilateral disarmament, which she said was "really important" in the "long term". In 2016, Ms Rayner voted not to renew Trident, Britain's nuclear deterrent.

Yesterday, Sir Keir announced a "triple lock" for Trident, including a commitment to delivering four new ballistic submarines, maintaining the continuous-at-sea deterrent and providing all the necessary upgrades for the boats to continue their patrols.

Asked whether he would authorise the firing of nuclear weapons, Sir Keir said: "Nobody who aspires to be prime minister would set out the circumstances in which it would be used. That would be irresponsible, but it is there as part of a vital part of our defence, so of course we would have to be prepared to use it." He insisted that his whole shadow cabinet was behind him.

Ms Rayner said the announcement was a "firm commitment" to the deterrent and insisted there wasn't a split in the party over the issue.

However she said she still backed global nuclear disarmament. Critics said her comment showed that Labour could not be trusted on defence and that Sir Keir's claims that the party had changed were a "con".

Grant Shapps, the Defence Secretary, said: "The Labour Party is a risk to Britain's defences. Angela Rayner's comments this evening casting doubt on the future of our nuclear deterrent show that the claims made today by Keir Starmer about the 'changed' Labour Party are a con."

Asked if she had changed her mind on the UK having nuclear weapons, Ms Rayner said: "Well, our announcement today is a firm commitment for the triple lock for the nuclear deterrent.

"First of all, that we will commit to the nuclear deterrent. Second, that we will make sure that those four submarines are built in Barrow, and thirdly that we will commit to all of the necessary upgrades going forward."

She added: "I haven't changed my mind. The vote that we had some years ago mentioned nothing about multilateral disarmament, and that's what I feel is really important for long term, is that globally we should be looking at disarmament of nuclear weapons, but that has to be done... with other countries."

Asked if there was a split in the party over Trident, she said: "No, we are absolutely committed to nuclear defence, we have our triple lock, we have our three programmes."

A Labour source said there was "no contradiction" between Ms Rayner's position on nuclear arms and Sir Keir's, saying: "The quote is clear, she's pro-Trident and fully behind the policy."

Last night, David Lammy, the shadow foreign secretary, said that he had changed his mind on nuclear weapons after the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Mr Lammy, who voted against renewing Trident in 2016, told the i newspaper Ukraine would "not have faced the invasion they did from Putin" had it kept its nuclear arsenal following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

It comes as Sir Keir pledged to scrap laws protecting Northern Ireland veterans from prosecution. On the campaign trail in Greater Manchester, he committed to repealing the Legacy Act, which gives immunity to hundreds of soldiers involved in the Troubles.

The Labour leader said it was a "mistake" for Westminster to pass the legislation, arguing that many felt "extremely uncomfortable" that it provides amnesty for all sides, including "terrorists".

IN BRIEF

JK Rowling backs Tory minister on trans rights

JK Rowling accused Alastair Campbell of showing Labour is "indifferent" towards women after he accused Kemi Badenoch of attempting to "weaponise trans rights".

Rowling came to her defence after she unveiled plans to overhaul the Equality Act to clarify that sex refers to biology not gender identity.

Mr Campbell said Ms Badenoch thinks "the biggest issue ... is the weaponisation of trans rights". Writing on X, formerly Twitter, Rowling said: "Badenoch is also minister for women and equalities. Thanks for highlighting Labour's indifference towards the rights of half the electorate."

Japanese emperor will not meet Sunak at No 10

Rishi Sunak will not host Japanese emperor Naruhito at No 10 during a state visit, owing to the election.

Buckingham Palace announced the three-day visit from June 25 despite several royal engagements already being postponed.

State visits usually involve a meeting with the prime minister. Efforts will be made to ensure the leaders of all main political parties enjoy equal billing amid the pomp and ceremony, with any potential visit to Downing Street or Westminster off the table.

Mr Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer are instead due to attend a state banquet at Buckingham Palace on June 25.

Rwanda migrants out on bail because of election

All migrants detained for deportation to Rwanda are set to be released on bail amid election uncertainty over the prospect of flights, according to lawyers and charities.

Dozens of asylum seekers have already successfully applied for bail as there is not a "realistic" prospect of imminent removal to Rwanda. Labour has pledged to scrap the scheme "on day one" if it wins the election.

Care4Calais said 100-plus detainees it was supporting were being released. The Home Office refused to say how many were detained in total, but it is believed to have been thousands.



IAN FORSYTH/GETTY

Charm offensive Angela Rayner, the deputy leader of the Labour Party, wears a Vote Labour necklace, above, on the campaign trail with the party's election battle bus in Doncaster, South Yorks. The bus is undertaking a 5,000-mile tour across the country in the run up to the general election on July 4.

Private school closures nothing to do with Labour, Starmer insists

By **Amy Gibbons** *and* **Jack Maidment**

SIR KEIR STARMER has said that private school closures have "nothing to do" with Labour's planned tax raid.

His party has pledged to impose VAT on fees as soon as possible if it wins the election on July 4, and to funnel the proceeds into the state sector.

The Labour Party claims that this will generate £1.7billion to invest in a "brilliant state education" for all, but the proposal has sparked fears of a pupil exodus from private to state schools as families struggle to afford rising costs. The proposals already appear to be taking a toll, with Downham Preparatory School in Norfolk blaming Labour's policy for its decision to shut at the end of term.

The head teacher said that the prep school, which charges half the national average, would have been forced to pass on the levy to "ordinary parents like plumbers and electricians", most of whom could not afford fee rises.

Alton School in Hampshire will also close this summer, with parents laying the blame at Sir Keir's door. The school said in a statement on its website that "adverse political and economic factors" had drained pupil numbers, leaving it "unviable" to run.

> 'When you look at the details, it's got nothing to do with Labour Party policy at all'

But the Labour leader denied that his tax raid was to blame, instead suggesting the forthcoming closures should be put into perspective.

He pointed to "hundreds" of private schools shutting over the past 14 years, while the Conservatives have been in power.

Sir Keir made the comments following a speech on Labour's defence policy in Bury, Greater Manchester, where he denied claims by the Conservatives that Britain would be less safe under his leadership.

Asked whether he regretted the closure of another private school as a result of his plans to add VAT to fees, he told *The Telegraph*: "I've seen a number of reports of private schools closing. When you look at the details, it's got nothing to do with Labour Party policy at all.

"In fact, I think hundreds of private schools have closed over the last 14 years.

> 'I say to the head teachers, you're going to have to cut your cloth accordingly'

"And it's about time that was put into the mix when these stories are reported."

It comes after Wes Streeting, the shadow health secretary, said that many private schools have "pleaded poverty and say people will be priced out" by the proposals.

Mr Streeting said on BBC's *Question Time*: "I say to the head teachers, you're going to have to cut your cloth accordingly like state schools have had to."

Mordaunt to stand in for Sunak in election TV debate

By **Amy Gibbons**

PENNY MORDAUNT and Angela Rayner will face off in the first debate of the election campaign to feature all seven major parties.

The Tory Cabinet minister and Labour deputy leader will trade blows on behalf of their bosses Rishi Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer in the event broadcast by the BBC on Friday.

The debate, hosted by Mishal Husain, will also feature representatives from the Liberal Democrats, Scottish National Party, Plaid Cymru, Green Party and Reform UK.

The parties can choose who represents them in the event, to be held from 7.30pm to 9pm, where questions will be put to them from the audience and the public.

It is likely Nigel Farage will appear on Reform's behalf, having declared he is taking over as leader and will stand as an MP in Clacton, Essex, in a surprise announcement yesterday.

The campaign trail is heating up ahead of the first TV debates, featuring the leaders of the Scottish parties, starting on Monday evening. Mr Sunak and Sir Keir will go head-to-head tonight.

Ms Mordaunt, the Commons leader, is tipped as a likely future Tory leadership contender, having thrown her name in the hat for the top job in the past. She is seen as a strong public speaker with vast experience sparring with the Opposition across the despatch box. The other parties have not yet confirmed who they are sending to Friday's event in London.

ITV will set the tone for the campaign with the first head-to-head debate today, exactly one month before polling day. It will then host an event with all seven major parties on June 13.

As well as the seven-way debate this Friday, the BBC will broadcast a *Question Time* special featuring leading figures from the Conservatives, Scottish National Party, Liberal Democrats and Labour Party.

The schedule builds up to what is expected to be the final televised debate of the election campaign, which will be a head-to-head between Sir Keir and Mr Sunak on June 26, hosted by the BBC, a week before the nation goes to the polls.

More events are expected featuring different party leaders with Sky News, LBC, Channel Four and GB News all believed to be bidding for some form of debate or audience question session.

Yesterday, Kemi Badenoch, the Business Secretary, said she believed Mr Sunak would be able to get the better of Sir Keir in the TV debates.

She said the events "can change things" and predicted "we will see a side of the Prime Minister we haven't seen".

Sturgeon being used by SNP to solicit for donations

By **Daniel Sanderson**
SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

NICOLA STURGEON is soliciting for donations from SNP supporters despite her husband being charged with the embezzlement of party funds.

The former first minister, who remains under police investigation as part of the probe into SNP finances, is appearing as a guest speaker at "adoption nights" for nationalist politicians.

The events are fundraisers for SNP general election candidates who have been "adopted" by a constituency, with supporters paying £10 each to hear Ms Sturgeon speak at local venues.

She has appeared at a fundraiser for Gavin Newlands, the SNP's candidate for Paisley and Renfrewshire North, and is being advertised as appearing at adoption nights for Stewart McDonald, the Glasgow South candidate, and for Lesley Backhouse, the Cowdenbeath and Kirkcaldy candidate.

She will take part despite her husband Peter Murrell, the former SNP chief executive, being charged with embezzlement of party funds in April. The home they share on the Glasgow outskirts was raided 12 months earlier, with Ms Sturgeon arrested in June last year. She was released without charge.

Craig Hoy, the Scottish Tory chairman, said: "Eyebrows will be raised at Nicola Sturgeon being deployed at SNP fundraisers for candidates, given her connections to the police investigation into the SNP's finances."



Nicola Sturgeon has supported Anne McLaughlin in Glasgow North East

On Saturday, Ms Sturgeon took part in a "coffee with Nicola" event in support of her friend Anne McLaughlin, the SNP candidate in Glasgow North East.

Ms Sturgeon was used to attract SNP supporters to a campaign hub who were then asked to volunteer to help Ms McLaughlin hold on to her seat.

Mr Murrell has not commented on the charges against him. Ms Sturgeon has described the situation as "incredibly difficult". The SNP was approached for comment.

Streeting urged to apologise for meeting 'Islamist' group

By **Dominic Penna**
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE security minister has urged Labour's Wes Streeting to apologise over a series of meetings with a Muslim organisation that was identified by Michael Gove as Islamist.

Mr Streeting, the shadow health secretary, attended events with the Redbridge branch of Muslim Engagement and Development (Mend) in his constituency of Ilford North in 2016 and 2017.

He said in social media posts at the time that he was "uplifted" to have met the group to discuss "tackling Islamophobia" and "community concerns".

In March, Mr Gove used parliamentary privilege to describe Mend as "giving rise to concern because of their Islamist orientation and views".

The Communities Secretary announced that the group, which encourages Muslims to participate in voluntary bodies and institutions, would be assessed against the Government's new definition of extremism.

Security minister Tom Tugendhat said: "Mend are well known for working with extremists, siding with those who would kill our troops, and seeking to divide communities across our country.

"Labour should take this opportunity to side with mainstream Muslims and condemn their behaviour, and recommit to tackling anti-Semitism. Instead of quietly deleting his comments from his website, Wes should urgently clarify his view and apologise to the Jewish community."

A source close to Mr Streeting rejected the suggestion that he had deleted anything from his website.

A spokesman said: "Wes attended an event on tackling Islamophobia in good faith seven years ago. The previous month, the Conservative Party hosted Mend at their party conference.

"Since then, actions by Mend which are beyond the pale were brought to Wes's attention and he has not engaged with them since."

Azhar Qayum, the chief executive of Mend, has challenged Mr Gove to repeat his claims outside Parliament.

He accused the Tories of "pursuing culture wars" and of "politicising extremism for electoral gain".

A spokesman for Mend said: "Mend is a mainstream Muslim organisation which has worked with a variety of MPs across the political spectrum over many years for the betterment of our society.

"The allegation of extremism from Tugendhat, who backed Liz Truss to become PM and served as a minister in her government is quite frankly rich.

"It is their extremist economic policies that plunged the UK into the brink of recession within weeks."

Airlines let fly at 'arrogant' net zero crackdown

Ex-BA boss hits out at European push to limit flights in the name of environmental welfare

By **Christopher Jasper** *in Dubai*

"ARROGANT" Europeans risk alienating the rest of the world by cracking down on air travel in the name of the green agenda, industry chiefs have said.

Willie Walsh, the head of airline trade body Iata, accused Western countries of seeking to deny other nations benefits that they have enjoyed for decades as part of the shift to net zero.

It comes as countries including Ireland, Belgium and the Netherlands seek to limit air travel amid pressure from activists in the so-called flight shaming movement.

Mr Walsh, who was previously chief executive of British Airways and its parent company IAG, said: "This debate around whether growth in travel should be suppressed is a European debate. It's solely a European debate and solely in certain parts of Europe.

"You don't have that discussion in other parts of the world."

Mr Walsh added: "When I travel around and meet with airline CEOs and politicians, outside of Europe they have a huge appreciation for the value that new connectivity will bring to their economies.

"I think we're quite arrogant actually to believe that the rest of the world should follow what Europe is doing.

"The rest of the world wants to have the benefit that Europeans have had."

With a shortfall in low-emission sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) threatening the ability of airlines to reach carbon-reduction targets, Mr Walsh said that governments should take steps to increase SAF output instead of seeking to stop people flying.

Mr Walsh, who was speaking at Iata's annual meeting in Dubai, said that the expansion of flights "will unlock huge economic value" in places like India.

'The Irish economy will suffer. The growth will just go somewhere else'

He identified Amsterdam Schiphol as suffering as the Dutch government actively seeks to reduce flight slots and Brussels as bracing for state-inspired changes to how it operates. Dublin also faces a passenger cap.

Mr Walsh said: "The Irish economy will suffer as a result. The growth will just go somewhere else.

"Ryanair will move aircraft and Aer Lingus will not expand their transatlantic operations. People will still be flying, they'll just be bypassing Dublin."

Sir Tim Clark, president of Emirates, which provides global connectivity for dozens of cities across Asia, Africa and South America via its hub in Dubai, said that it would be wrong to deny the developing world "those levels of connectivity that we have enjoyed for so long".

Sir Tim told the Iata meeting that the aviation industry is "single mindedly focused on decarbonising" but desperately needs help in doing so, since it is entirely dependent on external players to provide it with the tools to reach a target of net zero emissions by 2050.

Yvonne Manzi Makolo, who heads African carrier Rwandair, said that given the continent's poor roads and lack of railways, "air connectivity is the only way to go".

She added: "Saying we should slow down growth really doesn't make sense."

Iata cut its projection for production of SAF – which airlines are counting on to deliver 65 per cent of CO_2 reductions – to 51 million tons by 2030, from a previous forecast of 69m by 2028.

The airline industry stands to make a profit of $30.5 billion (£24 billion) this year, higher than in 2023 and better than the $27.4 billion estimated in December, according to new estimates.

That is still below the pre-pandemic level, even though a record number of passengers are forecast.

Mr Walsh said the figure is equivalent to $6.14 per passenger, or the price of a cup of coffee.

He compared the industry's 3.1 per cent margin with 11.5 per cent at Starbucks, and said the industry does not have the resources to decarbonise with government help.



Willie Walsh said the 'rest of the world wants to have the benefit that Europeans have had'

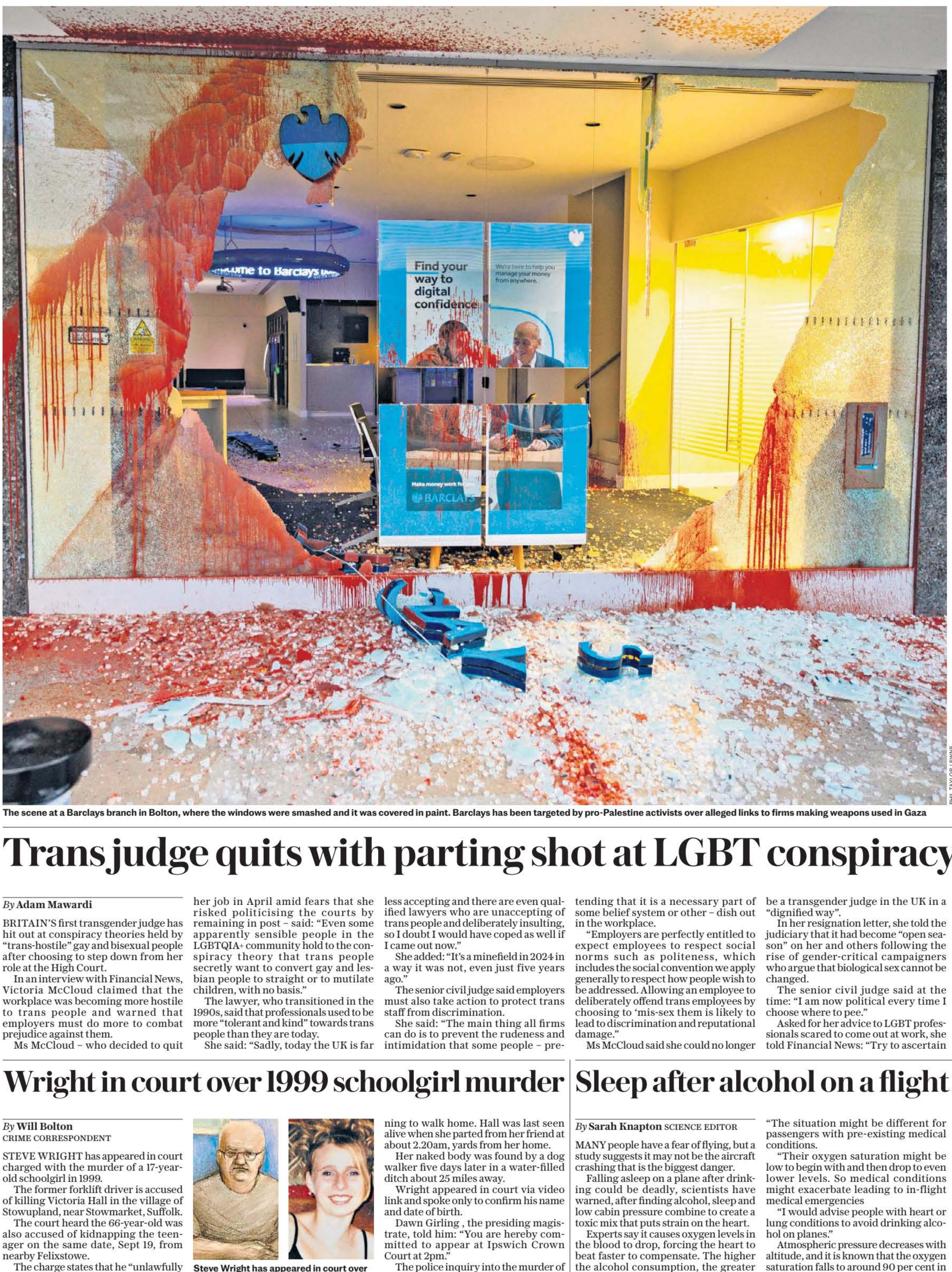
He said: "We're just asking them to do what they did for wind and solar power. I'm sorry to say but the transition to net zero will require customers to pay.

"The costs can't be borne by the industry given the wafer-thin margins we have."

◆ Virgin Atlantic will resume services to Israel at the end of the summer after putting operations on hold following the October 11 attacks by Hamas. Flights will operate daily to Tel Aviv starting in September, Virgin announced yesterday.

As well as resuming its own flights to Israel, Virgin will seek to bolster ticket sales through a new partnership with the country's national carrier El Al starting on June 10, giving travellers a choice of four services a day.

British Airways, EasyJet and Wizz Air have already resumed flights to Israel that were paused following the Hamas attack on Israel last year.



PHIL TAYLOR / SWNS

The scene at a Barclays branch in Bolton, where the windows were smashed and it was covered in paint. Barclays has been targeted by pro-Palestine activists over alleged links to firms making weapons used in Gaza

Bank windows smashed by activists during Gaza protest

By **Connor Stringer** SENIOR REPORTER

A BARCLAYS bank branch in Bolton has been left with smashed windows and covered in graffiti after being attacked by protesters.

Shattered glass littered the pavement outside the branch in Market Street yesterday morning, while red paint covered the building.

It is the latest incident to hit Barclays in recent months, which has joined a growing list of corporations targeted owing to the Israel-Hamas war.

On Friday, four people aged between 20 and 37 were arrested after two Barclays branches were covered in red paint and graffiti in Manchester. At the time, protest group Palestine Action said activists were responsible.

Protesters have long claimed that Barclays has deep links with the defence industry. The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) has claimed Barclays has been funding the Israel Defense Forces.

The group said in a report: "Barclays bank holds substantial financial ties with arms companies supplying weapons and military technology to Israel, used in its attacks on Palestinians."

According to the PSC, Barclays is "complicit" in Israel's attacks on Gaza's civilian population because it holds £1.6 billion worth of shares in, and provides £3 billion of loans to, military companies that make technology used in Israel's Gaza operations.

Defence firms where Barclays is claimed to be a shareholder include BAE Systems, Ultra Electronics and Qinetiq, Boeing, Caterpillar and General Dynamics, and some Israeli contractors. Barclays has lent or underwritten financing for Boeing, Caterpillar, BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, Raytheon and QinetiQ, the PSC claims.

BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce are involved in the production of the F-35, while Caterpillar makes D9 bulldozers used by the Israeli military.

General Dynamics manufactures the Namer armoured vehicle for Israel. Boeing manufactures the Apache attack helicopter and Hellfire missile.

Barclays' ties to Israeli defence company Elbit Systems cause controversy. According to activists, the firm manufactures arms used in Gaza.

Greater Manchester Police were contacted for comment. Barclays claims protesters have misunderstood its business and rebuts the claims.

Trans judge quits with parting shot at LGBT conspiracy theorists

By **Adam Mawardi**

BRITAIN'S first transgender judge has hit out at conspiracy theories held by "trans-hostile" gay and bisexual people after choosing to step down from her role at the High Court.

In an interview with Financial News, Victoria McCloud claimed that the workplace was becoming more hostile to trans people and warned that employers must do more to combat prejudice against them.

Ms McCloud – who decided to quit her job in April amid fears that she risked politicising the courts by remaining in post – said: "Even some apparently sensible people in the LGBTQIA+ community hold to the conspiracy theory that trans people secretly want to convert gay and lesbian people to straight or to mutilate children, with no basis."

The lawyer, who transitioned in the 1990s, said that professionals used to be more "tolerant and kind" towards trans people than they are today.

She said: "Sadly, today the UK is far less accepting and there are even qualified lawyers who are unaccepting of trans people and deliberately insulting, so I doubt I would have coped as well if I came out now."

She added: "It's a minefield in 2024 in a way it was not, even just five years ago."

The senior civil judge said employers must also take action to protect trans staff from discrimination.

She said: "The main thing all firms can do is to prevent the rudeness and intimidation that some people – pretending that it is a necessary part of some belief system or other – dish out in the workplace.

"Employers are perfectly entitled to expect employees to respect social norms such as politeness, which includes the social convention we apply generally to respect how people wish to be addressed. Allowing an employee to deliberately offend trans employees by choosing to 'mis-sex them is likely to lead to discrimination and reputational damage."

Ms McCloud said she could no longer be a transgender judge in the UK in a "dignified way".

In her resignation letter, she told the judiciary that it had become "open season" on her and others following the rise of gender-critical campaigners who argue that biological sex cannot be changed.

The senior civil judge said at the time: "I am now political every time I choose where to pee."

Asked for her advice to LGBT professionals scared to come out at work, she told Financial News: "Try to ascertain carefully the lie of the land so that you don't make the mistake of relying on an 'LGB without the T' activist who you thought might be an ally.

"They are few and far between but be aware."

Her comments come amid increased scrutiny of trans rights activism after the Cass Review in April warned against giving hormone drugs to under-18-year-olds and rushing children identifying as transgender into treatment they may later regret.

Wright in court over 1999 schoolgirl murder

By **Will Bolton**
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

STEVE WRIGHT has appeared in court charged with the murder of a 17-year-old schoolgirl in 1999.

The former forklift driver is accused of killing Victoria Hall in the village of Stowupland, near Stowmarket, Suffolk.

The court heard the 66-year-old was also accused of kidnapping the teenager on the same date, Sept 19, from nearby Felixstowe.

The charge states that he "unlawfully or by force or fraud took or carried away [Hall] against her will".

Wright faces a third charge of the attempted kidnap of Emily Doherty, then 22, in Felixstowe on Sept 18 1999. He was not asked to enter a plea and was remanded in custody yesterday to appear at Ipswich Crown Court.

Steve Wright has appeared in court over the murder of Victoria Hall in 1999

Hall left her home in Trimley St Mary, near Felixstowe, on the evening of Sept 18 1999 to go for a night out with her friend, Gemma Algar.

The two teenagers went to the Bandbox nightclub in Felixstowe and remained there until about 1am, when they went to buy chips before beginning to walk home. Hall was last seen alive when she parted from her friend at about 2.20am, yards from her home.

Her naked body was found by a dog walker five days later in a water-filled ditch about 25 miles away.

Wright appeared in court via video link and spoke only to confirm his name and date of birth.

Dawn Girling , the presiding magistrate, told him: "You are hereby committed to appear at Ipswich Crown Court at 2pm."

The police inquiry into the murder of Hall was reopened by cold-case detectives on the 20th anniversary of her death in 2019.

Wright appeared again via video link before Ipswich Crown Court yesterday afternoon in a hearing lasting just over an hour. Judge Martyn Levett set a provisional date for a four-week trial to start on Jan 13 next year.

Sleep after alcohol on a flight 'may be fatal'

By **Sarah Knapton** SCIENCE EDITOR

MANY people have a fear of flying, but a study suggests it may not be the aircraft crashing that is the biggest danger.

Falling asleep on a plane after drinking could be deadly, scientists have warned, after finding alcohol, sleep and low cabin pressure combine to create a toxic mix that puts strain on the heart.

Experts say it causes oxygen levels in the blood to drop, forcing the heart to beat faster to compensate. The higher the alcohol consumption, the greater the effects might be, they believe, and say it might be time to consider restricting alcohol on long-haul flights.

Although the elderly and those with heart or lung conditions are likely to be at the greatest risk, effects were seen even in young, healthy people.

Dr Eva-Maria Elmenhorst, of the German Aerospace Centre in Cologne, said: "The situation might be different for passengers with pre-existing medical conditions.

"Their oxygen saturation might be low to begin with and then drop to even lower levels. So medical conditions might exacerbate leading to in-flight medical emergencies

"I would advise people with heart or lung conditions to avoid drinking alcohol on planes."

Atmospheric pressure decreases with altitude, and it is known that the oxygen saturation falls to around 90 per cent in passengers at aircraft cruising height.

In the study, 48 people aged between 18 and 40 were asked either to sleep in a laboratory or an altitude chamber which mimicked cabin pressure at 8,000 feet.

In each group, 12 participants drank the equivalent of two cans of beer or two glasses of wine and their sleep cycle, heart rate and blood oxygen levels were measured. People in the sleep lab who had not drunk alcohol had oxygen saturation levels of about 96 per cent.

However, drinkers in the simulated cabin pressure chamber had oxygen saturation levels of about 85 per cent.

Those who slept in the chamber but did not drink had oxygen levels of 88 per cent, showing alcohol had a significant impact above altitude effects.

Writing in the journal *Thorax*, the researchers warned that the consumption of alcohol on board flights is 'an underestimated health risk which could be easily avoided' and said that passengers and crew should be informed about the danger.

"It may be beneficial to consider altering regulations to restrict the access to alcoholic beverages on board aeroplanes," they concluded.

Once-in-a-lifetime chance to spot new star bursting into life

By **Sarah Knapton** SCIENCE EDITOR

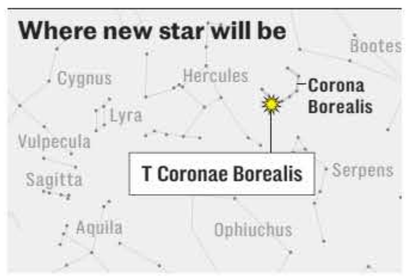
A NEW star is due to burst into the night sky with explosive results.

The dramatic blast, which will be visible to the naked eye and as bright as the North Star, is expected to take place by September. Known as T Coronae Borealis, the ultra-dense "white dwarf" was last seen exploding in 1946.

Dr Mark Hollands, of the University of Warwick's astronomy and astrophysics group, said it was stealing matter from a companion star, causing an explosive build-up of hydrogen.

He said: "This powerful nuclear detonation ejects the gas from the white dwarf surface in a hot luminous shell. What we then see is the system becoming thousands of times brighter."

Scientists have discovered 10 stars that act in a similar way but T Coronae Borealis is by far the closest at 3,000 light years away. Its first confirmed explosion was in 1866.



In the months leading up to the 1946 blast, astronomers noticed a major drop in brightness, indicating an explosion was imminent. There was a similar dip this February and March.

Dr Hollands said: "It signalled the fuse has been lit, and it is a matter of months before we witness the next nova." Although T Coronae Borealis can be seen with an amateur telescope now, once the eruption begins no special equipment should be required, even in areas of moderate light pollution.

"This could be a once-in-a-lifetime viewing opportunity as the nova outburst only occurs about every 80 years," said Nasa officials.

Those wanting to spot the new star have been advised to get familiar with the patch of sky around the Corona Borealis constellation using an astronomy chart, to learn which stars are currently visible.

"You'll really appreciate the difference when one night in the next few months there is one extra member of the constellation," said Dr Hollands. "It will be visible to the naked eye for a few nights and reach a similar brightness to other stars in the constellation."

Children close the book on writing for pleasure

Pastime yields to the lure of screen time as number of young enthusiasts down by almost 50pc in past year

By **Poppy Wood** EDUCATION EDITOR

THE number of children who enjoy writing in their spare time has dropped to a record low amid a sharp rise in screen time.

Fewer than three in 10 young people aged eight to 18 said they liked writing outside the classroom in an annual survey.

Just 28.7 per cent of more than 76,000 children questioned by the National Literacy Trust between January and March said they enjoyed writing in their free time. It marks the lowest level since the NLT started its survey in 2010, when 46.8 per cent of children in the same age bracket said they liked writing for fun.

The number has dropped by 5.9 percentage points in the past year alone, with the charity claiming that writing has become increasingly neglected in favour of other hobbies in the digital age.

It said the dwindling popularity of writing as a hobby was quickly reaching "crisis point". It has called for the Department for Education to place a greater emphasis on the importance of writing in its upcoming review of the subject.

Jonathan Douglas, the chief executive of the NLT, told *The Telegraph* that it comes amid growing "competition for children's attention" both at home and beyond in modern Britain.

"There's just so many things going on in childhood these days," he said. "In terms of children's own time – the truth is that they are living in multi-dimensional childhoods full of stimulations and excitement."

He said a large part of this included new experiences offered by technology, "not just present on a smartphone, [but] on every digital device".

The figures are focused on responses from those aged eight to 18, since the charity began surveying five- to eight-year-olds only in 2019, making comparisons over time harder.

Children aged five to eight generally enjoyed writing much more than their older peers, it found, though numbers have also declined over the past few years.

About two thirds of children aged five to eight said they liked writing in their free time in 2024, down from just over three quarters in 2020.

The charity suggested shifting childhood interests have also driven a decline in the number of children writing as a daily hobby outside school, with the number almost halving over the past year.

Just 11.1 per cent of children aged between eight and 18 said they wrote in their free time every day this year, compared with 19.3 per cent in 2023, the survey found. It also marks a record low, dropping from 27 per cent who said they wrote for fun daily in 2010.

Mr Douglas said the slump was probably also due to "ongoing disruption in children's lives" both as a result of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis.

"Childhood is just not such a happy place for many kids at the moment, the cost of living crisis factor means that kids are often bearing the brunt of wider social issues," he said.

> 'The truth is they are living in multi-dimensional childhoods full of stimulations'

"I suppose what we're most concerned about is that we're seeing a very sudden drop in the last couple of years, and that is really alarming."

Children from 405 schools across the UK were asked whether they habitually wrote anything for enjoyment either on paper or using a screen. The charity said that few children reported disinterest in writing due to limited resources such as a desk or journal materials.

Almost six in 10 of pupils aged eight to 18 that enjoyed writing said they did so to be creative, while a relatively small proportion – just under a quarter – said it helped them deal with personal problems.

Girls were more likely to write outside the classroom than boys, with 34.6 per cent of them reporting doing so in their free time last year, compared with 22.1 per cent of boys.

Mr Douglas warned that children's futures could be "put at risk" as writing continues to decline in popularity across the country.



ANDREW MILLIGAN/PA

Fashion gambit Anya Taylor-Joy appeared bottomless at the Dior 2025 Cruise show at Drummond Castle, in Perthshire, yesterday. The *Queen's Gambit* star, who has been promoting her new film, *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*, of late wore a grey wool blazer over a black short bodysuit with a turtleneck top with stirrup-style tights, which tucked into a pair of square-toed patent leather boots. Jennifer Lawrence, Geri Horner, Minnie Driver, and Maisie Williams were also at the event in Crieff, in Scotland.

Panther bringing terror to Cumbrian livestock, claims scientist

By **Joe Pinkstone**
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

THERE is a 99 per cent chance that there is a panther living and eating livestock in Cumbria, a scientist has claimed.

Reports of a big cat in the UK countryside have long been the domain of cryptozoologists and amateur sleuths – but evidence suggests it could be more real than previously believed.

A sheep carcass was seen being eaten by a large animal in the Lake District in October 2023 and four cotton wool swabs were wiped on the wounds, before being sent to Dr Robin Allaby, a biologist at the University of Warwick, for study.

With a lab dedicated to extracting modern environmental DNA from samples, the analysis revealed there to be two non-ovine sources of DNA around the ravaged sheep remains – one from a fox and one from the Panthera genus. This group of animals includes panthers, leopards, tigers and lions.

Dr Allaby has been conducting analysis of samples from suspected big cat attacks since 2011, and never has it yielded anything more exciting than a dog or fox.

The four swabs were analysed for mitochondrial DNA, a form of genetic material passed down from the mother and housed in the compartments within a cell that make energy, in order to determine to what species it belonged.

"In this case, the DNA sequence is 100 per cent unequivocally of the Panthera genus," Dr Allaby told *The Telegraph*.

The scientist is unable to conclusively say it is from a panther because one letter of the DNA code is not correct, but he believes this may be caused by water reacting with the big cat's DNA and altering the code.

"This means that while the sequence is almost identical to panther (Panthera pardus), there is this one base difference which means scientifically that we must restrict ourselves to calling it as Panthera genus rather than the specific species," he said.

"I find the data we have quite convincing. I'm 99 per cent plus persuaded that our hit is genuine from a panther in Cumbria. What do I think ate the sheep? Panthera pardus, a panther."

Fears for British honeybees after deadly Asian hornets tough it out over winter

By **Joe Pinkstone**

ASIAN hornets have survived a British winter for the first time, Government scientists have found, raising concerns they may decimate British honeybee populations.

The hornets are not native to the UK but more and more of them are being seen on British shores, with a record 72 sightings last year.

They eat honeybees, fruit and flowers and experts worry that if the insect establishes itself in Britain then it could have dramatic ramifications for native pollinators.

British hornets are larger and yellower, with the Asian hornets having black bodies and yellow leg ends.

The animals are no threat to human health but can destroy native honey bee hives and populations.

Government scientists from the National Bee Unit, part of the Animal and Plant Health Agency, are understood to have analysed three hives found in East Sussex and discovered the three queens are offspring of a hive found and destroyed in November 2023.



Asian hornets can destroy bee hives

This is the first evidence that Asian hornets have survived a winter in Great Britain, and a warning sign that they may be becoming better suited to British conditions.

There is no indication that the species has yet to become established in the UK, but there have already been 15 confirmed sightings of Asian hornets in the UK this year.

Ian Campbell, of the British Beekeepers Association, warns Britain nonetheless be at a "tipping point" where the species soon becomes entrenched in the UK.

An app which people can download and log any Asian hornet sightings in, called Asian Hornet Watch, is available on iPhone and Android.

The Great Britain non-native species secretariat says the species is "not easily confused with any other species".

The species was found in France in 2004 and since then has spread rapidly across the continent.

They could also be inadvertently carried to the UK by freight, in vehicles or in or on untreated timber. It is also possible they could cross the English Channel, scientists believe.

"They like social insects [such as honey bees], because social insects congregate in groups – and that's like an all-you-can-eat buffet for the hornet," Mr Campbell told *The Times*.

"If they do become established, some [UK] beekeepers in the worst-affected areas may give up."

Some dogs may resort to yapping as they lack features needed to express themselves

By **Joe Pinkstone**

FLAT-FACED dogs such as pugs and French bulldogs bark and yap more than other breeds because they have lost the ability to communicate effectively with people visually.

Wolves, the ancestors of dogs, have long noses and facial muscles which produce expressions that are easy for humans to understand.

However, selective breeding to create specific types of dog has reduced this ability in pet canines, a study has found.

Dogs vocalise more than wolves to make up for the facial expression shortcomings, figures show. Breeds with poorer facial communication, such as brachycephalic dogs, are more vocal than longer-nosed breeds.

Pet dogs have also adapted by evolving bigger eyebrow muscles to enhance puppy dog eyes, scientists say, which may further aid communication.

"Dogs are bred to vocalise (bark mainly) more than wolves, especially for pastoral breeds as they herd and protect livestock," Elana Hobkirk, a canine behavioural ecologist who led the study at Durham University, told *The Telegraph*.



Non-wolf-like breeds, below, tend to vocalise more in comparison to wolf-like dogs, left, says research



"However, pastoral dogs tend to have more wolf-like faces, and despite this, the dogs with the more non-wolf-like faces in our study actually vocalised more in comparison to wolves, and in comparison to the more wolf-like dogs. This suggests that the vocalisations have evolved as a means to compensate for a lack of facial communication brought about by selective breeding."

The study is published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

Covid jabs may be to blame for increase in excess deaths

Experts call for more research into side effects and any possible links to mortality rates

By **Sarah Knapton** SCIENCE EDITOR

COVID vaccines may be partly to blame for a rise in excess deaths since the pandemic, scientists have suggested.

Researchers from the Netherlands analysed data from 47 Western countries and discovered there had been more than three million excess deaths since 2020, with the trend continuing despite the rollout of vaccines and containment measures.

Experts said the "unprecedented" figures "raised serious concerns" and called on governments to fully investigate the underlying causes, including possible vaccine harms.

Writing in *BMJ Public Health*, the authors from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, said: "Although Covid-19 vaccines were provided to guard civilians from suffering morbidity and mortality by the Covid-19 virus, suspected adverse events have been documented.

"Both medical professionals and citizens have reported serious injuries and deaths following vaccination to various official databases in the western World."

They added: "During the pandemic, it was emphasised by politicians and the media on a daily basis that every Covid-19 death mattered and every life deserved protection through containment measures and vaccines. In the aftermath, the same should apply."

The study found that in Europe, Australia and the US there were more than one million excess deaths in 2020, at the height of the pandemic, but also 1.2 million in 2021 and 800,000 and 2022 after measures were implemented.

Researchers said the figure included deaths from Covid-19, but also the "indirect effects of the health strategies to address the virus spread and infection".

They warned that side effects linked to the Covid vaccine have included ischaemic stroke, acute coronary syndrome and brain haemorrhage, cardiovascular diseases, coagulation, haemorrhages, gastrointestinal events and blood clotting.

German researchers have pointed out that the onset of excess mortality in early 2021 in the country coincided with the rollout of vaccines which, the team said, "warranted further investigation".

However, more recent data regarding side effects have not been made available to the public, the experts warned.

Researchers said that it was "likely" that the impact of containment measures, restricted healthcare and socioeconomic upheaval during the pandemic had contributed to deaths, although accepted that was difficult to prove.

Gordon Wishart, chief medical officer at Check4Cancer, and visiting professor of cancer surgery at Anglia Ruskin University, said: "It was predicted early in the lockdown period that limited access to healthcare for non-Covid conditions would lead to delays in the diagnosis and treatment of time-critical conditions such as cancer, cardiac disease, diabetes and dementia and that this would lead to excess deaths from these conditions."

Speaking about the potential for vaccine harm, Mr Wishart added: "The paper provides more questions than answers but, it is hard to disagree with their conclusion that further analysis is required."



JOHAN PERSSON

A new haunt TV presenter Stacey Dooley, 37, third right, makes her stage debut in *2:22 Ghost Story* with Donna Air, Joe McFadden, right, and James Buckley as the thriller returns for a 10-week run at the Gielgud Theatre on the Southbank.

Melanoma vaccine being trialled on NHS halves risk of relapse

By **Michael Searles** *in Chicago*

A VACCINE being trialled on the NHS for melanoma skin cancer has been found to halve the risk of death or relapse.

It is the longest study yet into the pioneering technology and puts the vaccine in pole position to become the first to be approved for widespread use. Patients were given a personalised vaccine in combination with an immunotherapy drug called pembrolizumab (sold under the brand name Keytruda), and followed for at least three years.

The trial results, presented yesterday at the American Society of Clinical Oncology conference, revealed that the vaccine cut the risk of cancer returning and death by 49 per cent compared with patients who were only taking pembrolizumab, the current standard treatment.

The melanoma vaccine, developed by Moderna, has already been administered to at least one Briton in a separate global trial led by University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

It uses the same mRNA technology that was pioneered to create Covid jabs and is injected into patients after surgery to help ensure that all cancer cells have been eradicated.

It comes as the NHS has launched a world-first programme, known as the Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad, to fast-track breakthrough treatments to as many patients as possible in trials around the country.

Iain Foulkes, the executive director of research and innovation at Cancer Research UK, said: "The findings highlight the great promise of therapeutic cancer vaccines used in combination with powerful immunotherapies." Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that can spread around the body, which affects 16,700 people each year in the UK, killing 2,300. Dr Christian Singer, the lead author, said: "This is the first significant and profound long-term survival benefit of an anti-cancer vaccine in breast cancer patients reported to date."

[Frames subject to availability]. Cannot be used with any other offers. Second pair from the same price range or below. Both pairs include standard 1.5 single-vision lenses (or 1.6 for £170 Rimless ranges). Varifocal/bifocal: pay for lenses in first pair only. Excludes SuperDigital, SuperDrive varifocals, SuperReaders 1-2-3 occupational lenses and safety eyewear. Additional charge for extra lens options.

Women denied 'wonder drug' that can stave off breast cancer

By **Michael Searles**
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT *in Chicago*

THOUSANDS of women in England are being denied a "wonder drug" that can double life expectancy for terminal breast cancer patients, campaigners have said.

A trial of the drug Enhertu has found those incurably ill could live for twice as long before their condition worsens.

The treatment – formally known as trastuzumab deruxtecan – has been shown to cut the risk of terminal breast cancer spreading or growing by 38 per cent against standard chemotherapy.

The medication, which is a type called an antibody drug conjugate that binds to the protein, is available in Scotland but not elsewhere in the UK after it was rejected by the National Institute for Care and Health Excellence (Nice), the spending watchdog.

Campaigners have said it means thousands of women a year are denied access to the medicine.

Sophie Blake, 51, from Brighton, was diagnosed with breast cancer in December 2020 before being told it had spread to her lungs and liver in May 2022. The former TV presenter has HER2-low breast cancer that is currently under control, but Enhertu would be another option if it worsens.



Sophie Blake, 51, from Brighton, was diagnosed with breast cancer in December 2020 before being told it had spread

"This is yet more evidence of the precious extra time this treatment could give us," she said.

Women with HER2-low or ultra-low breast cancer who took Enhertu lived without their cancer growing for an average of 13.2 months, compared with only 8.1 months among those who had chemotherapy. Survival rates after 12 months were 87 per cent compared with 81.1 per cent.

The trial, presented at the American Society for Clinical Oncology conference, revealed that six in 10 patients responded to treatment from Enhertu – twice as many as chemotherapy.

Dr Simon Vincent, of Breast Cancer Now, said: "Thousands of people with HER2-low secondary breast cancer are being denied access to Enhertu on the NHS in England, and this is utterly unacceptable."

A spokesman for AstraZeneca, which makes the drug, said "conversations were ongoing" to make it available.

A Nice spokesman said: " We are extremely disappointed not to be able to recommend Enhertu for use in the NHS for advanced HER2-low breast cancer."

He added that "a price making it a cost-effective use of NHS resources being offered by Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca could resolve this issue almost immediately".

Pensioner is first in England to receive artificial cornea

By **Daily Telegraph Reporter**

A 91-YEAR-OLD man has made history by becoming the first patient in England to receive an artificial cornea.

Cecil Farley faced a year-long wait for sight-saving surgery after a human cornea transplant failed, but his surgeon offered him the chance to skip the queue by using an artificial one.

Medics hope that one day the new artificial corneas could reduce the need for human donations.

Thomas Poole, an NHS Foundation Trust consultant ophthalmologist at Frimley Health, Surrey, told PA the use of artificial corneas is a "great advancement for patient care".

The new product replaces the inner part of the cornea. It has been likened to a contact lens and is surgically attached to the eye by a single stitch and put in place with a gas bubble.

Mr Farley said the transplant surgery has enabled him to continue to see his 83-year-old wife Elizabeth.

He had no vision in his right eye but his sight has slowly been improving since the procedure, which took place in February.

Mr Farley, from Chobham in Surrey, had problems with his eye for around 15 years. Medics from Frimley offered the procedure, which is a type of corneal implant called endothelial keratoplasty and involves removing the abnormal inner lining of the cornea and replacing it with an artificial version, rather than a donated human one.

"I can still see my wife after 63 years of marriage, we can just carry on as normal and live life as fully as we can," Mr Farley said. "It makes your life fuller when your eyes work properly – you don't realise how debilitating it is until it happens to you."

The cornea is the clear outer layer at the front of the eyeball. When it's damaged, it can become less transparent or its shape can change. This can prevent light reaching the retina at the back of the eye and causes the image transmitted to the brain to be distorted or unclear. A cornea transplant can be performed to improve sight, relieve pain and treat severe infection or damage. Cornea transplants usually come from deceased donors.

Mr Poole and his colleague, Hanbin Lee, have successfully given four patients artificial corneas in the past two months.

Parents call for inquiry into hosptial after 9 babies died

By **Will Bolton** CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE families of nine babies who died at a scandal-hit NHS hospital trust are calling for a public inquiry into its maternity services.

They say without urgent intervention, children and mothers will "continue to die unnecessarily". Nine babies died and four mothers nearly died from 2021 to 2023 at the University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust.

The trust is the subject of a police investigation over allegations of medical negligence relating to the care of adults in neurosurgery and general surgery from 2015 to 2021.

Families have come forward with fresh allegations of failings at two hospitals managed by the trust, the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton and Worthing Hospital. Bereaved parents claim management repeatedly refused to take accountability for "systemic failures" or to learn from past mistakes.

Maggie Davies, chief nurse at the trust, said: "We offer our deepest condolences and sincere apologies to each of the bereaved families for their devastating loss." Dr Davies said the trust would continue "to listen and improve".

Nato maps out plan to block Russian invasion

Generals identify five key 'land corridors' to rush US troops to the front lines if Putin launches an attack

By **Joe Barnes**
BRUSSELS CORRESPONDENT

NATO is developing multiple "land corridors" to rush US troops and armour to the front lines in the event of a major ground war with Russia.

American soldiers would land at one of five ports and be channelled along planned logistical routes to confront a possible attack by Moscow, officials told *The Telegraph*.

It comes amid warnings from alliance leaders that Western governments must prepare themselves for a conflict with Russia in the next two decades.

Logistical routes have become a key priority since Nato leaders agreed at a summit in Lithuania last year to prepare 300,000 troops to be kept in a state of high readiness to defend the alliance.

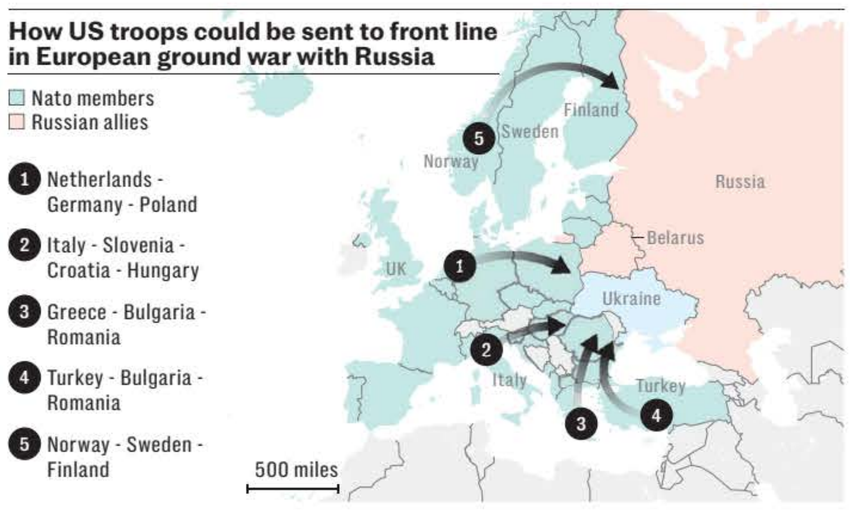
Existing plans have US troops landing in the Netherlands before boarding trains that transport them through Germany and onward to Poland in the event of a Russian invasion of a Nato member.

But arrangements are also being made behind the scenes to expand the routes to other ports across Europe to ensure that the lines of communications on the ground cannot be severed by Moscow's forces.

Lt Gen Alexander Sollfrank, the chief of Nato's JSEC logistics command, told *The Telegraph*: "Ukraine suffers very much from these Russian long-range missile attacks on the logistics systems."

If Nato forces entering from the Netherlands are hit by Russian bombardment, or northern European ports are destroyed, the alliance is set to shift its deployment focus to ports in Italy, Greece and Turkey.

From Italy, US troops could be carried overland through Slovenia and Croatia to Hungary, which shares a border with Ukraine.



Similar plans are in hand to transport alliance forces from Turkish and Greek ports through Bulgaria and Romania to reach the alliance's eastern flank. Blueprints are also being drawn up to move troops through Norway, Sweden and Finland.

In these corridors, the armed forces would not be restricted by local regulations and would be free to move military consignments at will. The French government has in the past complained that its tanks have been trapped at foreign borders by bureaucratic processes while trying to deploy in Romania as part of a scheme to defend against a possible Russian invasion.

In the past five years, the JSEC logistics command has carried out reviews on behalf of Nato to identify various routes that could be used to deliver troops to counter Russian aggression.

Ports in the Netherlands, Germany and the Baltic states are considered particularly susceptible to Russian missile strikes. Lt Gen Sollfrank added: "Everything is created in a way so the necessary resilience exists – robustness, reserves and also redundancies."

However, after warnings that Nato has only 5 per cent of the necessary air defences to cover its eastern flank, the JSEC commander is concerned about having the right surface-to-air capabilities to defend his logistical hubs. "Observing and assessing the Russian war in Ukraine, we have observed Russia has attacked Ukraine's logistics bases," he said.

"That must lead to the conclusion that it is clear that huge logistics bases, as we know it from Afghanistan and Iraq, are no longer possible, because they will be attacked and destroyed very early on in a conflict situation.

> 'Air defence is always scarce. If you want to be strong everywhere, you are strong nowhere'

"With regards to air defence it's always scarce. I cannot imagine a situation that you have enough air defence. That is a good example where a military principle apples: 'If you want to be strong everywhere, you are strong nowhere'."

Soldiering on Volodymyr Zelensky, the Ukrainian president, is given a red-carpet welcome with military honours in Manila before meeting Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr, the president of the Philippines, to promote a Swiss-organised peace summit for Kyiv.



UKRAINIAN PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SERVICE

Kremlin warns US of 'fatal consequences' after cross-border missile strike

By **George Styllis**

UKRAINIAN troops have used US-supplied Himars missiles to destroy an advanced air defence system inside Russia, as the Kremlin warned Washington it could suffer "fatal consequences" for backing the cross-border attacks.

Several missiles are understood to have hit an air defence installation in the Russian town of Belgorod that was equipped with S-300/400 surface-to-air missiles.

Photos of the aftermath of the attack, which is believed to have happened on Sunday, show vehicles on fire and billowing out smoke.

Sergei Ryabkov, Moscow's deputy foreign minister, said yesterday that the US would face "fatal consequences" if it allowed Ukraine to use American weapons for attacks inside Russia. The US has so far allowed Kyiv to hit targets within Russia only if they pose an immediate threat to Ukrainian forces.

It is not clear if the strike on Belgorod breaches the limits the US has imposed on the weapons, but Volodymyr Zelensky, the Ukrainian president, has requested permission to use US munitions for long range strikes.

Yesterday, those wishes were echoed by Dmytro Kuleba, the foreign minister, who told his Estonian counterpart that Ukraine was pressing its allies "on expanding the scope of its application".

"It is not 100 per cent, you know, clearance. It comes with some rules that need to be followed," he said at a press conference.

Ukraine has argued that in not allowing it to fire long-range weapons into Russia, its allies are hamstringing its defence. Mr Zelensky said: "So they have these weapons there and they do not remove them because they know that Ukraine cannot target them with Western weaponry even if they fire against us."

Ukraine's supporters fear that striking inside Russia will drag them closer to direct conflict with Moscow.



Trucks on fire after a suspected Himars strike on an air defence battery in Belgorod

Mr Ryabkov warned the US to take a more serious approach to conflict, saying it faced the risk of a dangerous miscalculation.

"I urge these figures [in the US] ... to spend some of their time, which they apparently spend on some kind of video games, judging by the lightness of their approach, on studying what was said in detail by Putin," Mr Ryabkov said.

"I would like to warn American leaders against miscalculations that could have fatal consequences. For unknown reasons, they underestimate the seriousness of the rebuff they may receive," he added.

Vladimir Putin said that the West would be directly involved in any use of its weapons by Ukraine to strike deep inside Russia, because such attacks would require its satellite, intelligence and military help. Attacks over the border have stepped up dramatically in recent weeks after Russian forces launched a renewed ground offensive into Ukraine's north-east.

Ukraine has responded with attacks of its own. Among the most recent was one with drones that destroyed a convoy of 15 Russian trucks, according to footage recorded by the brigades involved in the attack.

Yesterday, Mr Kuleba said that Russia was trying to dissuade countries from participating in a Ukraine peace summit to be held in Switzerland later this month.

He said Russia was aiming to discredit the summit publicly, convince countries not to participate and urge those intent on going to send low-level representatives.

British hostage confirmed killed by Hamas, Israel says

By **Melanie Swan** *in Tel Aviv*

ONE of the last two British-Israeli hostages held by Hamas has been confirmed by Israel to have been killed in Gaza.

Nadav Popplewell, 51, was one of four more Israeli hostages abducted by Hamas on Oct 7 that Israel said yesterday have now died in captivity. The military identified the other three men as Chaim Peri, 80, Yoram Metzger, 80, and Amiram Cooper, 84.

Popplewell was abducted from Kibbutz Nirim with his mother, Hannah Peri, 79, on the day Hamas launched its brutal attack on Israel.

Ms Peri was released in November as part of a temporary ceasefire that saw some of the 250 hostages exchanged for Palestinian prisoners.

Hamas released footage of him in May with a black eye and reading from a script. Shortly after, the terror group announced he had died of wounds sustained during an Israeli air strike.

According to intelligence, his and the other three deaths have now been confirmed, said Rear-Adml Daniel Hagari the military spokesman. "We estimate the four of them were killed together in the area of Khan Younis a number of months ago while being held by Hamas terrorists, at the time IDF forces were operating in Khan Younis," he said.

Of the more than 250 people abducted on Oct 7, about 120 remain in Gaza, according to Israeli tallies. Many have already been declared dead.

British-Israeli Emily Damari, 27, is still thought to be held by Hamas after she was taken from Kibbutz Kfar Aza.

A statement from the families yesterday said: "The Israeli government must send out a negotiating delegation this evening and return all 124 hostages both living and murdered, to their homes. It is time to end this cycle of sacrifice and neglect."

They blamed the deaths of the captives on the government's reluctance to accept a ceasefire.

Kyiv claims enemy lost 1,270 troops and 14 tanks in a day

By **Daniel Hardaker**

THE Russian military has suffered 1,270 casualties in the past 24 hours, the Ukrainian general staff said.

Kyiv also claimed it had destroyed 14 Russian tanks, 22 armoured personnel carriers and 47 artillery pieces.

If accurate, the figure would mark one of the highest daily Russian casualty totals of the war.

While *The Telegraph* cannot independently verify Ukraine's claims, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has assessed Russian losses amounted to an average of 1,200 per day throughout last month.

The MoD also said the total number of Russian casualties since the start of the war has now likely passed 500,000.

Fighting has intensified in Ukraine since Moscow launched a new offensive in the Kharkiv region on May 10, where Russian forces are thought to have captured about 13 settlements and 116 square miles of land. Since the offensive began, Ukraine has regularly reported Russian casualties figures of more than 1,000 deaths per day. After initial Russian successes, Ukraine has claimed to have stabilised the new front lines.

In the city of Vovchansk, three miles from the Russian border, Moscow's forces have been bogged down in fierce combat since the first days of the May 10 assault. Ukrainian forces in the area have claimed that the fighting is "hotter" than Bakhmut, the city captured by Russian Wagner mercenaries last year.

> 500,000
>
> **The estimated number of Russian casualties since it began its invasion of Ukraine, according to the MoD**

The Kharkiv offensive has also drawn Ukrainian resources away from other areas, leading to steady Russian advances across the 600-mile front line.

Women in Moscow demand return of their loved ones

By **Our Foreign Staff**

A GROUP of Russian women have staged a small but rare protest outside the defence ministry in Moscow to demand the return of mobilised soldiers from the front in Ukraine.

For months, different groups of Russian women have organised sporadic demonstrations to exert pressure on authorities to return their husbands, sons and brothers who were mobilised after a decree by president Vladimir Putin in September 2022.

One of the women at the protest, who gave her name as Paulina, said the 18 women had gathered to appeal personally to Andrei Belousov, the newly appointed defence minister.

Paulina, 20, who has a husband fighting in Ukraine, said the women want Mr Belousov to impose strict limits on how long soldiers can serve before they must rotate out of active duty.

The protests are sensitive for the authorities, given that the Kremlin presents what it calls the "special military operation" in Ukraine as having the overwhelming support of the Russian people.

In February, dozens of reporters, including a video journalist, were detained while covering a demonstration by a group called Way Home.

Paulina said her group was not affiliated to Way Home, which Moscow designated a "foreign agent", a term carrying connotations of spying.She said none of the women were arrested and ministry officials failed to speak to them.

Pictures and videos published on the Telegram app showed women holding signs with slogans including "Please bring Papa home". Several had brought along their school-aged children and toddlers in pushchairs.

The protest is a marker of the despair that has gripped soldiers' families as the war in Ukraine grinds on into its third year, with no end in sight. Putin has said Russian troops will not stop until they meet the goals of the "special military operation".

Biden offering 'mass amnesty' for migrants

More than 350,000 asylum cases have been closed without official decision since 2022

By **Benedict Smith** US REPORTER

JOE BIDEN'S administration is quietly offering "mass amnesty" to hundreds of thousands of migrants, an investigation has found, as the president faces a growing backlash ahead of the election.

More than 350,000 asylum cases have been closed by the US government since 2022 for applicants who do not have a criminal record and are not seen as national security threats, the *New York Post* found.

Although this means no official decision on asylum status has been made, it allows migrants to stay indefinitely in the US without fear of deportation.

Andrew Arthur, a former immigration judge who works for the Centre for Immigration Studies think tank, said: "This is just a massive amnesty under the guise of prosecutorial discretion.

"You're basically allowing people who don't have a right to be in the United States to be here indefinitely."

The move appears to stem from a 2022 memo sent by a legal adviser with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), who instructed prosecutors to allow cases to be dismissed for migrants not deemed national security threats.

That year, 36,000 people were listed for deportation, 32,000 were awarded asylum, and 102,550 had their cases dismissed or removed from records - 10 times the number in 2014.

It comes as the US grapples with a backlog of around 3.5 million unprocessed asylum claims. Some applicants have been waiting years for their claims to be decided.

Figures from Syracuse University show that more than three quarters of asylum seekers have been allowed to remain in the US since Mr Biden took office – around half a million people.

Only migrants without criminal records are eligible to have their case dismissed, but ICE officials who spoke to the *New York Post* said it meant a protracted deportation process for those who subsequently broke the law.



FERNANDO LLANO/AP

Migrants cross the Rio Bravo on an inflatable mattress into the United States from Mexico

"If the migrants commit crimes after the dismissal, ICE will have to start all over and issue a new Notice to Appear in court and start the clock all over again," one person said. Another official said this "happens all the time", while a third claimed it was "starting to increase".

Hector Quiroga, a Washington-based immigration lawyer, noted that those whose cases were dismissed cannot receive benefits or a work permit.

Migrants can, however, reapply for asylum or seek other forms of legal status in the US. For clients with "horrible" cases where they are unlikely to meet the bar for a successful claim, "that's better than having a deportation order", Mr Quiroga added.

Mr Biden is seeking to address the public's concerns over illegal immigration, which is expected to be a key issue at the election in November. Today, he is expected to sign an executive order that would allow him to seal the US border with Mexico if illegal crossings surge to a daily average of 2,500 crossings over the course of a week.

Several people familiar with the discussions said the border lockdown would be lifted once that number declines to 1,500. The move would not affect other activities, such as trade. In theory, the order could mean that the border is closed to migrants seeking asylum almost immediately, because daily figures are above the 2,500 mark.

Legislation that set a cap at 5,000 illegal crossings per day faltered in Congress earlier this year amid opposition from Republicans and Democrats.

Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee, has repeatedly sought to pummel Mr Biden on border security and illegal migration.

Last month, he claimed the president was responsible for a "border bloodbath" that was "destroying the country".

"Every town is now a border town because Joe Biden has brought the carnage and chaos and killing from all over world and dumped it straight into our backyards," he said.

He has also sought to pin the blame on Mr Biden for the death of Laken Riley, whose name became a rallying cry for Republicans when an illegal migrant from Venezuela was charged with beating her to death.

US ELECTIONS 2024
For all our US Election coverage visit telegraph.co.uk/us-election



GIORGIO VIERA/GETTY IMAGES

Show of muscle Bodybuilder Nikki Fuller parades her support for Donald Trump at an election rally in West Palm Beach, Florida. The former US president's campaign says it has raised $53million (£42million) in donations since his fraud conviction.

President declares 'boundless love' for son on first day of gun trial

By **Tony Diver** US EDITOR

JOE BIDEN has declared his "love and support" for his son Hunter on the first day of his trial for illegal possession of a firearm, as Jill Biden attended the court to watch jury selection.

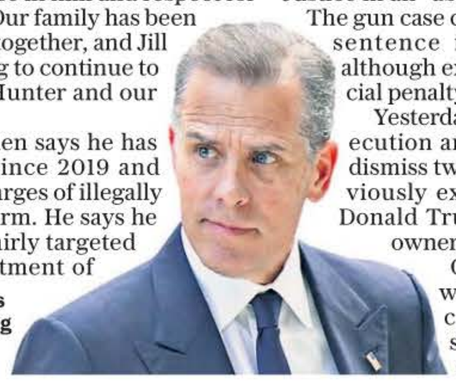
Hunter Biden, 54, is facing federal charges after allegedly lying about his use of illegal drugs at the time he bought a revolver from a Delaware gun store in October 2018.

Jill Biden appeared at the federal district court in Wilmington, Delaware, to witness the beginning of the trial, which took place on her birthday. She is Hunter Biden's stepmother. Despite the political risk of his son's trial during the US election campaign, the president also released a statement declaring that he and his wife Jill had "confidence in him and respect for his strength" over the case.

"Hunter's resilience in the face of adversity and the strength he has brought to his recovery are inspiring to us," he wrote. "A lot of families have loved ones who have overcome addiction and know what we mean.

"As the president, I don't and won't comment on pending federal cases, but as a dad, I have boundless love for my son, confidence in him and respect for his strength. Our family has been through a lot together, and Jill and I are going to continue to be there for Hunter and our family."

Hunter Biden says he has been sober since 2019 and denies the charges of illegally buying a firearm. He says he has been unfairly targeted by the Department of Justice in an "abnormal" prosecution.



Hunter Biden is accused of lying about his use of illegal drugs

The gun case could carry a custodial sentence if he is convicted, although experts believe a financial penalty is more likely.

Yesterday at the trial, the prosecution and defence agreed to dismiss two jurors who had previously expressed support for Donald Trump or opposed gun ownership.

One juror said she wanted to ban guns that could "kill children at schools" or assault rifles that can "kill a lot of people at once". The juror told the court: "I'd ban them altogether, to be honest."

Another man told the court he was a regular viewer of Fox News and Newsmax, a pro-Trump television station, and was dismissed by the judge.

He said he thought the recent Trump trial in New York made him believe prosecutors charged defendants based on their politics.

The jury will be narrowed down to 12 jurors and four alternates. A third potential juror said he was aware of the collapse of Hunter's previous plea deal, but was allowed to continue as neither side objected to his membership. The case is one of two federal actions against Hunter Biden scheduled to be heard this year. A second trial for alleged tax evasion is due to be heard in California.

Abbe Lowell, the former lawyer's attorney, said earlier this year: "If Hunter's last name was anything other than Biden, the charges in Delaware, and now California, would not have been brought."

Republicans have attempted to use Hunter Biden's legal woes as a counterbalance to the trials of Mr Trump, one of which concluded last week in New York with his convictions for 34 felonies.

South Korean tycoon is ordered to hand over £768m in record divorce settlement

By **George Styllis**

THE boss of one of South Korea's biggest firms has been ordered to pay hundreds of millions of pounds to his estranged wife after a judge ruled he would not have made his fortune without her help.

Chey Tae-won, chairman of tech conglomerate SK Group, has been told by Seoul's high court to give 1.38trillion won (£768million) to Roh So-yeong, the daughter of a former president.

The ruling, which overturns a decision by a lower court in 2022, becomes the country's largest divorce settlement.

SK Group's operations include South Korea's leading mobile carrier, SK Telecom, and Hynix, the world's second-largest memory chip maker. The new ruling has led to speculation that Mr Chey could lose his grip on the company and have to buy more stock to maintain control.

Mr Chey announced he wanted a divorce from Ms Roh in 2015 after revealing he had been having an affair and that his lover had given birth to a girl six years earlier.

The lower court initially ruled that Mr Chey pay her 66.5 billion won (£35 million), saying the settlement would not include his stock in the group's holding company.

However the high court decided on Thursday that his holding in the company should be counted as part of the couple's joint property, sending shares in the group surging. The judges said Ms Roh's father, Roh Tae-woo, who was president from 1988 to 1993, helped Mr Chey's business flourish by easing regulatory hurdles for SK under the leadership of Chey Jong-hyon, Mr Chey's late father. "His wife Roh played a role in increasing the value of SK Group and Chey's business activity," the judges said.

They said the new settlement took into account Ms Roh's suffering because of Mr Chey's extramarital affair.

Mr Chey's lawyers said they would appeal, saying SK Group had been under pressure from the Roh government and had "provided various financial contributions".

Mr Chey and Ms Roh, who have three children, married in 1988.

Two NYPD officers 'shot by Venezuelan' as they try to pull him over on illegal scooter

By **Susie Coen**
US CORRESPONDENT *in New York*

A VENEZUELAN who illegally crossed the US border has been arrested on suspicion of shooting two police officers who tried to pull him over.

Bernardo Raul Castro-Mata was driving an unregistered moped the wrong way down a one-way street in Queens, New York, in the early hours yesterday when he was challenged by officers.

He fled on foot and shot at the policemen with an illegally-owned gun while they chased him for several blocks.

One of the officers was struck in the leg, while the other, who was wearing a bulletproof vest, was hit in the chest.

They were both taken to hospital where they are in a stable condition. Castro-Mata was shot in the right ankle and has had surgery.

He was housed at hotel converted into a migrant centre in Queens after illegally entering the US near the city of Eagle Pass in Texas last July.

> 'The attack was a senseless act of violence as well as a total disregard for life'

He had not been arrested before in New York but is suspected of being part of a group which has been using mopeds to commit violent robberies, NYPD detective Joseph Kenny told a press conference.

Photographs from the scene show Castro-Mata being wheeled into an ambulance on a stretcher with his arms handcuffed behind his back.

The crimes he is suspected of include attacking a woman and stealing her credit card, which was later used at a cannabis shop.

Eric Adams, the mayor of New York, condemned the shooting as "a senseless act of violence, a total disregard for life" and thanked the officers for putting their lives at risk.

In February six migrants were arrested after a gang of more than a dozen men beat two NYPD officers to the ground.

Hunt for last of trio swept away by floods

By **Nick Squires** *in Rome,*

DIVERS, drones, and helicopters were searching yesterday for a man who was swept away by flash flooding in a river in northern Italy, a day after the bodies of his two female companions were found.

The three friends became trapped on a gravel bar in the middle of the Natisone River in the north-eastern region of Friuli Venezia Giulia when the river level suddenly began to rise.

Video footage showed them clutching each other as they desperately tried to withstand the force of the water. Minutes later they were swept away.

The bodies of Patrizia Cormos, 20, and her friend Bianca Doros, 23, were found on Sunday at locations between 700 metres and one kilometre downstream of where they disappeared.

Rescuers are searching for Cristian Molnar, 25, the boyfriend of Ms Doros. The three friends had decided to take a walk along the banks of the Natisone last Friday.



Christian Molnar, 25, was swept away with two female friends after they ventured to a small gravel island in the middle of a river

They ventured out onto a tiny gravel island but the level of the river began to rise as a result of torrential rain.

The mayor of the local town suggested that they could have saved themselves had they waded back to the riverbank immediately rather than staying put and trying to withstand the floodwaters. "They had the chance to escape and save themselves," Michele De Sabata, the mayor of the town of Premariacco, said.

He said that as a child he would play in the river but when the clear water started to turn muddy, locals would get out of the water, knowing that floodwater from the mountains was on its way.

"There was a fire service rescuer just seven metres away, but he was unable to do anything," Mr De Sabata told *Corriere della Sera* newspaper.

Rescuers saw the three young people swept away. A helicopter arrived just a minute too late, the mayor said.



ZOU ZHENG/XINHUA

Another one bites the dust A cowboy is flung into the air during a Ram Rodeo Tour bull riding event at the Brooklin Spring Fair in Ontario, Canada.

AI Tom Cruise stokes fear of Olympic terror

Russian disinformation film aims to scare people away from Paris in retaliation for French support in Ukraine

By **Henry Samuel** *in Paris*

RUSSIA has used a deepfake Tom Cruise to front a documentary about corruption in the Olympics as part of a campaign to stoke fear of a terror attack at this summer's Paris Games.

The disinformation drive was launched in retaliation for Russian athletes being banned from the 2024 Games over its war in Ukraine, according to a report from Microsoft's threat intelligence unit.

The report unmasked "prolific Russian influence actors" who last summer began trashing the Paris Olympics and the reputation of president Emmanuel Macron.

To accompany the fake Netflix documentary, which uses an AI-generated Tom Cruise narration, Russia mocked up reviews of the programme from David Beckham, Jared Leto, Miley Cyrus and Mike Tyson.

"These ongoing Russian influence operations have two central objectives: to denigrate the reputation of the [International Olympic Committee] on the world stage; and to create the expectation of violence breaking out in Paris during the 2024 Summer Olympic Games," the report said.

Microsoft said it identified traces of the campaign last year, when a company dubbed Storm-1679 released a four-part documentary on Telegram called Olympics Has Fallen, a play on *Olympus Has Fallen*, the 2013 film. Aping Netflix, the relatively slick production used AI-generated audio resembling Cruise's voice and eoffered fake five-star reviews from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and the BBC.

The film was endorsed by a post on a fake David Beckham social media account that claimed: "Tom, saw your show with Netflix with my family! Happy to be part of this project!"

In the sham documentary, the fake Cruise focuses on alleged corruption in the IOC, whose chief architect, it says, is Thomas Bach, the committee's president. At one point, his fake avatar remarks: "The IOC members enjoy many special privileges such as VIP services during the Olympics. Surely, you are now thinking about what kind of privileges I enjoy during filming. The craziest demand I've ever made is a two-bedroom hotel suite for me and my Scientology spiritual guide."



An AI-generated Tom Cruise fronts a fake documentary focusing on alleged corruption in the IOC, and right, it was endorsed on social media by a fake David Beckham account

His voice appears at times curiously stilted, such as when he says: "For a long time, I had my heart set on sports that might have become serious if not for the knee injury."

YouTube removed the programme at the request of the IOC, after it complained about "an entire documentary produced with defamatory content, a fake narrative and false information, using an AI-generated voice of a world-renowned Hollywood actor", but it remained available on Telegram, Microsoft added.

'If Russia cannot participate in or win the Games then they seek to degrade the competition'



The Russian campaign also released footage designed to resemble genuine news reports warning of credible threats of violence at the Paris Games, Microsoft found. A faked bulletin purported to have come from Brussels-based Euronews, falsely "reported" that Parisians were buying property insurance in case of terror attacks affecting their homes.

In another sham news clip impersonating France 24, the French broadcaster, the Russian campaign falsely claimed that 24 per cent of tickets bought for Olympic events had been returned because of terror fears.

Another group, which Microsoft called Storm-1099 but is commonly known as Doppelganger, has also joined the campaign. "The most worrisome disinformation advanced by pro-Russian actors has sought to impersonate militant organisations and fabricate threats to the Games amidst the Israel-Hamas conflict," Microsoft said.

Some images depicted the attacks at the 1972 Munich Olympics, where an affiliate of the Palestine Liberation Organisation killed 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team.

Microsoft said Russia, like the Soviet Union before it, had a long history of attacking the Olympics.

"If they cannot participate in or win the Games, then they seek to undercut, defame and degrade the international competition in the minds of participants, spectators and global audiences," the report said.

Climate scientist elected as Mexico's first female president

By **Simeon Tegel**

MEXICO has elected the first female president in its 200-year history, a landmark in a society known for its "machista" culture of entrenched sexism. Dr Claudia Sheinbaum, 61, of the leftist Morena party of outgoing president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, won a crushing victory, achieving around 59 per cent of the votes cast, according to an official quick count.

In a country where women achieved the right to vote in 1953 and two decades ago the then president called them "two-legged washing machines", her victory is seen as a big step forward.

As president Dr Sheinbaum has pledged to launch a specialist prosecutors' office to deal with the epidemic of femicides – up to 10 a day, according to the United Nations – and force domestic abusers to leave home. "We transform, we are warriors who open paths for other women," she said on the campaign trail.

Yet she also faces pressing questions, not just from feminists about her commitment to tackling gender inequality, but across a range of issues, from solving the migrant crisis to halting the drug cartels' rampant bloodletting.

With a PhD in energy engineering and a member of a UN climate research team that won a Nobel Prize in 2007, the former mayor of Mexico City is widely seen as an accomplished public servant. However, doubts remain over whether she will be a strong leader or allow a man, her mentor Mr López Obrador, to run her presidency from behind the scenes.

He was the one who elevated her from relative political obscurity to be his successor. Enjoying a consistent lead of around 20 points, she ran a cautious campaign, largely pledging to stick to his policies, including his generous social spending.

She has adopted his brusque tone towards the victims of Mexico's drug conflict, which has claimed more lives under Mr López Obrador than any other president. "It's better to make proposals than to criticise," she recently said of mothers of the thousands of disappeared, displaying a steely – opponents say callous – edge.

The one issue where she has voiced differences with Mr López Obrador is her personal area of expertise, vowing to ramp up renewable energy.

That contrasts starkly with his prioritising of Pemex, the archaic state-owned oil monopoly. Many also worry that she will continue her mentor's attacks on democratic institutions, including the internationally-respected electoral agency.

Veteran stunt pilot is killed in collision at Portuguese airshow

By **James Badcock**

A PILOT has died after crashing into another plane while trying to pull off a stunt at an airshow in Portugal.

Video footage of the tragedy at Beja in the southern region of Alentejo shows the Spanish flier performing a dive in preparation for soaring upward to join five other planes in formation.

However, he collided with one of the them and his plane plummeted to the ground where it burst into flames. The 37-year-old Portuguese pilot of the other aircraft made an emergency landing and was taken to hospital. He was reportedly discharged soon after. The rest of Sunday's show was cancelled.

The dead pilot was named yesterday as Manuel Rey Cordeiro from Galicia. He was part of a team of Spanish and Portuguese stunt pilots called the Yakstars, who get their name from their Yakolev Yak-52s trainer planes which were designed in the Soviet era.



Spanish pilot Manuel Rey Cordeiro died after crashing into the plane of another member of his aerial display team

Mr Cordeiro, 62, had been a pilot for more than 30 years and most recently worked for the Spanish airline Vueling.

The Beja airshow is the biggest in Portugal and spectators were supposed to see performances by the RAF Falcons parachute display team.



SOLARPIX

Footage from the airshow in southern Portugal shows his plane, right, breaking up

Seizing farms among South Africa coalition rivals' demands

By **Peta Thornycroft** *in Johannesburg*

SEIZING white-owned farms and nationalising all mines are among the demands of minority parties jostling for position in an unprecedented coalition after South Africa's elections.

Frantic coalition talks began yesterday after the ruling African National Congress lost its majority in a humbling election.

Two of the political parties vying for power – former president Jacob Zuma's uMkhonto weSizwe party (MK), and the Leftist Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) led by Julius Malema – have staked out radical demands in return for seats in a coalition government.

The EFF is demanding a further price – the resignation of President Cyril Ramaphosa. It comes after the ruling ANC secured 40.2 per cent of the vote in last week's election, losing its majority for the first time since it came to power with the end of apartheid.

Some in the ANC leadership appear to be willing to work with the EFF and MK, but Mr Ramaphosa is refusing to stand aside. At a media briefing on Sunday, several party leaders insisted Mr Ramaphosa's position was not up for debate until the party's next congress in three years' time.

Mr Zuma's MK party not only wants to take over white-owned land, it seeks control of swathes of the private sector, including mines and private schools.

Mr Malema, who is also seen as a possible kingmaker, runs a party that also pledges to nationalise the country's gold and platinum mines and seize land from white farmers.

Comment

Patriotic British voters now have a real alternative to this failed elite

NIGEL FARAGE



Britain has been failed by two main parties that have conspired to accelerate our decline. There is not a cigarette paper between Labour and the Tories in this election.

Both are hooked on a deadly addiction to mass immigration; neither has a plan to pull this country out of a deep economic hole. And, frankly, neither believe in it. I believe in this nation, and I'm prepared to fight for it.

That is why I have announced that I will lead Reform UK for the next five years and seek election as the MP for Clacton, a Brexit-voting Essex town that has a lot less than it deserves.

Campaigning this weekend, I was reminded of my responsibility to the millions of decent, patriotic Brits who are sick to the back teeth with our political establishment for its policy of betrayal. The people that I meet are furious at, first Labour, and now the Tories' open-door approach to mass immigration, with some 2.5 million migrants entering the UK in the past two years alone. That's why this really is the Immigration Election.

There is also deep anger that public services, from healthcare to housing, are disintegrating even as record peacetime taxes are levied on pitifully stagnant wages. And there is utter despondency among the electorate that neither Labour nor the Tories can put forward a plan – let alone a leader – that offers just a shred of hope that things might improve.

When media types tell me that a vote for Reform is a wasted one, I am first baffled by their arrogance and then remind them that, while Labour has already won this election, the role of official opposition is up for grabs.

There's no doubt that I have taken a big risk in giving up the life I enjoy to work for a vision of Britain so hated by our wrong-headed elites. But the state of the nation has left me with no choice. Moreover, I am confident of overturning this ragged Tory party to then take the fight to all those that deny Britain a bright future as a self-governing, prosperous country.

While the stakes are high, there is a path to meaningful power for a common-sense political party like Reform The referendum of 2016 was won on a bedrock of working-class, patriotic support built by Ukip under my leadership, which in the general election just a year before had taken more votes off Labour than the Tories. In 2019, I pointed those voters in Boris Johnson's direction, handing him a huge majority that he proceeded to bungle.

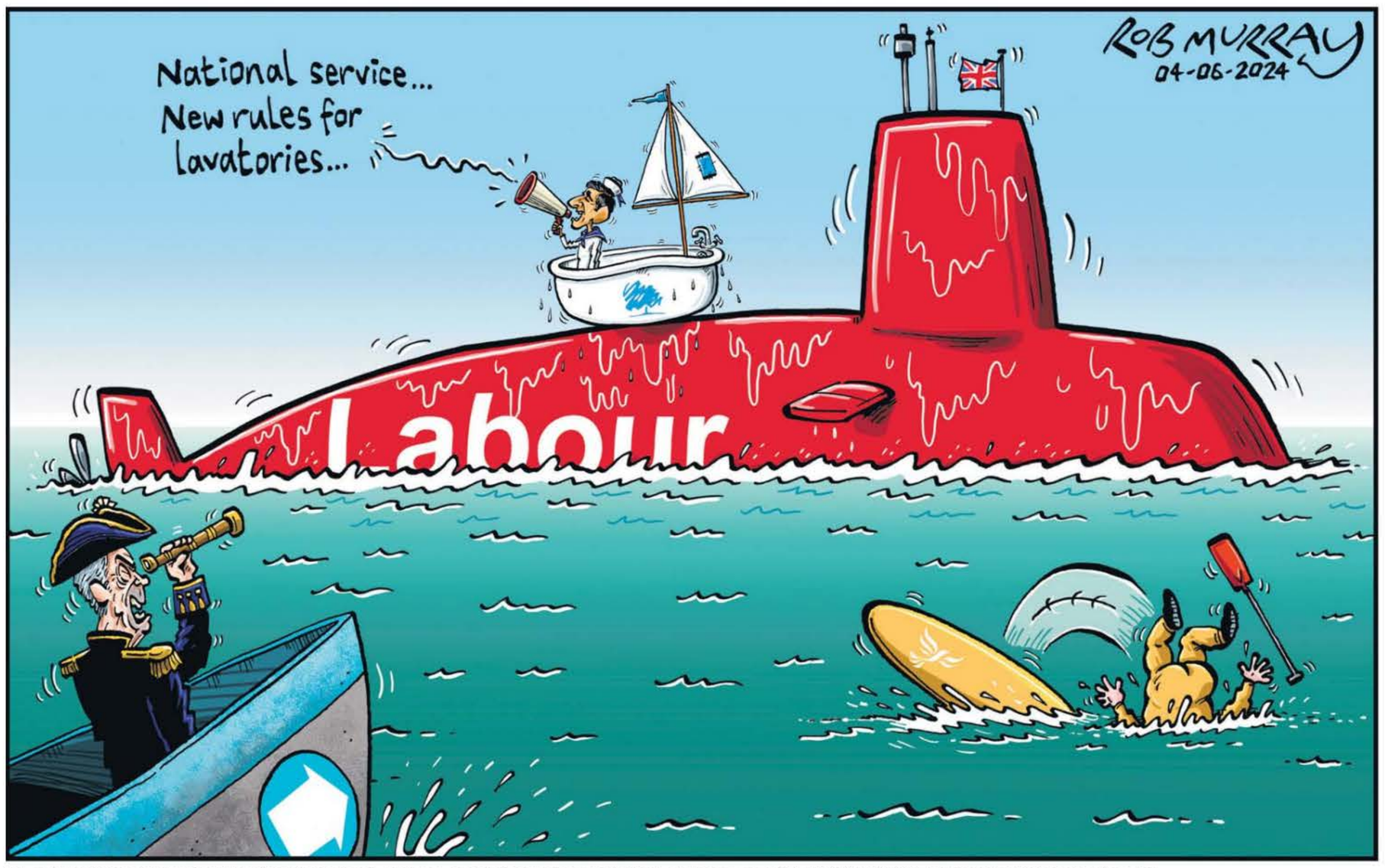
But the millions of voters looking for an alternative should know that there will be no reprieve for the Tories this time. My friend Richard Tice has got Reform polling impressively in the polls and now is the moment for us to go hell for leather, realising our potential to become a force in Westminster.

Reform's agenda for the country is based on the belief that the purpose of power is to best serve British citizens. Where Labour and the Tories stand for mass immigration, Reform would freeze non-essential migration to reverse long-standing wage depression and save Britain's public services from the burden of unlimited demand.

Where the London establishment stands for high taxes and high spending on their pet projects, Reform understands that British taxpayers know best how to spend their money. Where media institutions run by the chattering classes put down this country and its history at every opportunity, I will never apologise for championing Britain and putting its people first.

It is time for a change. Voters understand that Starmer's Labour is just the different side of the same grubby coin to Sunak's Tories. The electorate must be given the confidence that a viable alternative exists.

I want to lead a revolt against the political establishment and I'm asking you to join me by voting Reform on July 4.



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The public is about to discover just how dangerous Starmer's 'centrists' really are

The fanatical neo-Blairites being handed safe seats are plotting class war on the elderly, and much more

SHERELLE JACOBS



Is it already over, as Nigel Farage said yesterday? Are the only two matters yet to be settled in British politics the scale of Labour's looming majority and the future of the imploded Right? If so, it is terrifying to ponder just how little robust scrutiny Sir Keir Starmer's party has faced over its real plans for Britain.

The Diane Abbott row resulted in some speculation that a Labour government could usher in a Corbynite Trojan Horse, razing the economy and paralysing Starmer's agenda on everything from immigration to defence. But with many of the Corbynites purged, the country is in danger of overlooking a far more foundational threat. For all their claims to stand for "moderate" Labour politics, the alt-centrists who may soon be running the country are no less fanatical than the far-Left. It is not fringe calls for nuclear disarmament we should fear. It is a mainstream "radical centrist" bid to inflict generational retribution on the Boomers, empower the state, and turn magical thinking into Britain's guiding doctrine.

There is something gratingly familiar about Labour's new "moderates", at least on the surface. Their political scent – sterile, bleachy, intermingled with a stale whiff of spreadsheet activism – is redolent of New Labour's. And yet the ne(po)-Blairite spads, think-tank chiefs and Harvard fellows being quietly parachuted into safe seats are emphatically different – and perhaps even more dangerous – than their predecessors. It is not so much that Blairism is back, rather than its shell has been exhumed to host a radically millennial new spirit. It is hubristic, confrontational, and twisted with guilt.

While the far-Left has spent the last few years foaming over structural racism and the imminence of eco-collapse, a section of the centre-Left has been plotting a class war on the Boomers. One of the instigators has been Torsten Bell, head of the Resolution Foundation think tank, who has secured a safe Welsh seat.

Bell appears to have taken up the cause with vim since working on Resolution's Intergenerational Commission, a policy project that in partnership with the CBI and trade unions churned out endless reports seemingly blaming boomers for all society's ills. In particular, he has been absorbed in the task of crafting concrete wealth tax policies that won't scare the horses, such as tightening up inheritance tax, slashing pensions relief and capping ISAs.

The obsession with boomer wealth is telling. "Old, rich Brexiteers" have become a cathartic outlet for the Left's pent-up, bourgeois self-loathing, now that they must internalise their contempt for Red Wall "deplorables". The obsession with "rich pensioners" also smacks of a consolation target for a movement that remains too aligned with big business to wage an authentic war on rentier capitalism. A party truly keen to end stagnation might show more interest in Britain's transition towards risk-averse "blob capitalism", the corporations making more money from rents on assets like intellectual property than from production. But, apparently, it suits the reformed party of big business better to rage against middle-class people with second homes.

Another striking aspect of neo-Blairism is its belief in the magical powers of the state. It regards New Labour's faith in extracting the manna of free market capitalism and redistributing it to the needy as a cataclysmic doctrinal error that brought about not just the financial crash but an upswell of populist derangement, not to mention the twin Tory disasters of austerity and Brexit. They think that, in order for social democratic centrism to reclaim its hegemony, it must return to its core tenets of robust state intervention in the economy and aggressively pro-equality policymaking.

Perhaps no figure embodies this paradigm shift better than the up-and-coming Labour candidate, who is even now being tipped to succeed Starmer as leader, Georgia Gould.

The daughter of New Labour architect, the late Lord Gould, and leader of Camden Council, she seems to share her late father's enthusiasm for forging "inclusive" new coalitions. And yet, while he understood from his suburban upbringing that, in a world in which people want to "advance themselves with better houses, better holidays, better lives", government should respect the imperatives of the market, Georgia Gould has gravitated to the teachings of the celebrity Left-wing economist Mariana Mazzucato.

The latter argues that today's challenges demand the creation of a muscular, mission-driven state, inspired by John F Kennedy's Apollo Program which put a man on the moon. Georgia Gould's Camden Council has been a testing ground for Mazzucato's mission-driven vision, and it is expected that Starmer will scale it up on a national scale. At a time when Labour should be making tough choices about cutting back the state, Mazzucato-ism is a recipe for grotesque spending on white elephants. Its demands for "mechanisms of accountability" and "cross-departmental collaboration" invite an explosion of state managerialism on a scale unseen for decades.

It is not just the rising stars but the bruisers at the helm of the Neo-Blairist revival that give cause for alarm. Starmer's chief of staff, Sue Gray, might well turn out to be one of the most underestimated ideologues in politics. People dismiss her as a mere backroom operator, but she has already shown her hand. Having become practised at bashing the heads of rival factions within Whitehall, and perhaps also moved by the reconciliation politics that followed the Troubles, she recently suggested rolling out citizens' assemblies to tackle difficult issues. Other aides are fixated with Bidenomics. This despite the fact that Britain is flat broke and lacks the scale, currency strength, infrastructure and sheer resources to waste on green industrial ventures.

The magical thinking of the neo-Blairites bleeds into every aspect of their politics. They appear convinced it is possible to negotiate a new deal with the EU without having to make painful concessions. They seem to think that a modest reduction can stem the backlash against mass migration, and that it is possible to diplomatically solve the small boats crisis without confronting the flaws in international law.

Blairism rested on an superstitious faith in the alchemical mixing of forces: capitalism and socialism, private and public power. Neo-Blairism is cruder, nastier, more absurd – cakeism mixed with a dash of war against the old.

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Apparently, it suits the reformed party of big business to rage against middle-class people with second homes

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Way of the World Michael Deacon

It may be more than 20 years since Alastair Campbell resigned as Tony Blair's king of spin, but it's clear that he hasn't lost his touch. Yesterday, after Kemi Badenoch pledged to protect single-sex spaces for women, Mr Campbell demonstrated that he still possesses a matchless talent for smearing his political opponents.

"I'm sure the world of trade and business will take note that the actual Secretary of State for Trade and Business has decided that the biggest issue on her agenda on her first big election outing is the weaponisation of trans rights," he scoffed.

This is textbook spin – because, while superficially factual, it's also slyly misleading. Yes, Mrs Badenoch is indeed the Secretary of State for Business and Trade. But she's also the Minister for Women and Equalities. Which means that it is in fact her job to talk about women's rights – in this case, their rights to have their own sports, public lavatories and hospital wards. Yet Mr Campbell had made it sound as if the subject were none of her business.



But then, such tactics are all too typical of the modern Left, when it comes to the clash between the rights of women and the demands of trans activists. Since the Left know they're bound to lose any debate on this topic, they do all they can to prevent debate being held in the first place. To this end, there's one ploy they favour above all others: loftily dismissing the whole issue as a "culture war".

First out of the blocks yesterday was Daisy Cooper, the Lib Dems' deputy leader. Asked about Mrs Badenoch's pledge to protect women's spaces, she said: "Time and again we have seen how [the Government] tries to wage these phoney culture wars."

What a handy phrase "culture war" is. When you've got no idea how to counter your opponent's arguments, it enables you to duck out of engaging with those arguments at all.

Gender identity isn't the only area where it's useful, either. You can use it to dodge other awkward debates, too. Can't think of a way to defend Left-wing students who ban speeches by visitors they disagree with? Say, "This is just a Tory culture war!" Can't think of a way to defend cowardly publishers who rewrite classic works of fiction to appease the permanently offended? "This is just a Tory culture war!" Can't think of a way to defend the peculiar trend for drag queens reading stories to children? "Tory culture war!"

The possibilities are practically endless. In February, Keir Mather, a 26-year-old Labour MP, even told Parliament that objections to 20mph speed limits were part of a "distracting culture war by the Conservative Party".

So there you have it. If you think motorists should be allowed to drive at any speed above snail pace, you're a bigot. And probably a racist and a transphobe, too.

Yes, it's that time of year again. Pride Month. Four weeks in which social media accounts representing capitalist corporations heroically demonstrate their unswerving support for gay people and other marginalised minorities.

Within reason, anyway.

At the weekend, a user of Twitter/X noticed that @BMW (an English-language account for Western followers) was displaying the rainbow colours of the Pride flag – yet Middle Eastern accounts, such as @BMWSaudiArabia, were not. What was the reason for this curious discrepancy? In reply, @BMW stated that it was "an established practice" which "takes into consideration market-specific legal regulations and country-specific cultural aspects".

Right. I think I see what that means. The policy is to trumpet support for gay rights in countries where gay people have rights. But not in countries where they haven't.

Of course, this is far from unusual. Plenty of other corporate social media accounts follow the same policy. I can't help feeling, however, that it's ever so slightly odd. Because, if displaying the Pride colours is to serve any real purpose, surely corporations should be doing it in the Middle East. In that part of the world, after all, gay people are widely persecuted. Publicly showing support for their rights, therefore, might actually be useful, in promoting the case for change. At the very least, it would show that the corporations' support is honest and heartfelt – and not just a shallow, virtue-signalling PR exercise.

Sadly, it may already be too late. In June last year, a poll by YouGov found that 75 per cent of British people "say that brands which focus activity on Pride Month are doing so more for PR purposes than out of a sincere desire to show support for the LGBTQ+ community". A mere seven per cent of respondents said they believed the effort was genuine.

What a dreadfully cynical bunch we are.

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THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
ESTABLISHED 1855

The electoral stakes have risen suddenly

The Conservative Party's worst nightmare became a reality yesterday when Nigel Farage formally emerged from semi-retirement to throw himself fully into the election campaign for Reform. He promised to engineer a "revolt" on the Right and even to secure more votes than the Tories.

Judging by the latest opinion polls, this is not a fanciful boast. A YouGov MRP survey for Sky News showed support for the Conservatives collapsing and forecast a Labour majority of 194, even without the intervention by Mr Farage.

The former Brexit Party and Ukip leader had previously indicated that he would stay out of the fray, but was persuaded to take the leadership of Reform in succession to Richard Tice. Support for the party has been running at about 12 per cent and Mr Farage's decision should see that figure rise.

Since most of the party's votes are coming from disgruntled Conservatives, the higher the proportion it receives, the greater the chance of the Tories losing scores of seats that they might otherwise have retained. Mr Farage, however, has also set his sights on winning Labour votes, especially in the so-called Red Wall seats. In 2015, David Cameron won an unexpected majority because Ukip stopped Labour in many constituencies.

Nonetheless, the Tories are most vulnerable to this populist insurgency, despite announcing a series of policies aimed at potential Reform backers. Support running at anything around 15 per cent nationally would see them in serious trouble, even if Reform itself wins few, if any, seats. One exception might be Clacton in Essex, where Mr Farage is to stand and which was won by Ukip in 2015.

A weekend poll suggested that the Conservatives could be reduced to a rump of 66 seats in the Commons. Mr Farage envisages a meltdown on a par with that in Canada in 1993, when the ruling Conservatives retained only two seats in the 295-seat lower house.

But if Reform performs so well that the Tories lose large numbers of seats, Labour will be elected by a landslide. Reform leaders get irritated when they are told that a vote for them means Sir Keir Starmer in No10. They say that is going to happen anyway. Their ambition is now to replace the Conservatives as the main party of the Right over the next five years. The stakes in this election have just risen dramatically.

Scrap inheritance tax

As we report today, a growing number of Conservative candidates are pressing for a commitment in the manifesto to abolish inheritance tax. It would be nice to think that they are pushing at an open door. In an interview with *The Telegraph* recently, Jeremy Hunt said the tax was unfair and pernicious: "I think it is profoundly anti-Conservative because it stops and disincentivises people from saving for their future."

We couldn't agree more and, indeed, have been saying so for years. Our great regret is that the Tories did not use their time in office to bring about its abolition. Mr Hunt could have done so in his Budget but chose not to. Such a move would also have placed Labour in a quandary, since if it reversed the end of inheritance tax, that would be seen by all as a tax rise.

The Treasury is collecting record receipts from the tax, which was once a relatively benign revenue-raising measure levied on the very wealthy. As house prices have risen, it has subsequently ensnared hundreds of thousands. While inheritance tax may be levied on relatively few estates, modest homes in London are now caught in the net. It penalises the prudent and family-minded, inhibits aspiration and is a tax on wealth that was taxed while being accumulated in life.

The regime is also absurdly complicated, encouraging all sorts of planning and gifting to limit liability. Inheritance tax raises about £7billion a year, which is a small proportion of total revenues. Yet Mr Hunt gave no commitment to getting rid of it. "I hope it's something that over time a Conservative government would be able to look at," the Chancellor said. If something is unfair, pernicious and disincentivising, then it needs to be scrapped.

Wolves trump pugs

The once and perhaps future president is not the first pugnacious Trump. That accolade goes to William Hogarth's much painted pug. The artist and his canine Trump were famously in tune – but almost 300 years of breeding mean that today's pugs are finding it trickier to communicate with their masters. Contemporary specimens have much flatter, less expressive, snoutless faces. To have their needs met, they have no choice but to yap. Or at least that conclusion can be drawn from a study by Durham University researchers. It found that, due to the ancestral creatures' more expressive faces, humans are better at assessing the mood of wolves than dogs in general and, the less lupine the breed, the tougher the task. Pugs are at the extreme end of the spectrum – Hogarthian empathy between man and beast has been sadly lost.

Letters to the Editor

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Hope that Nigel Farage can shake the complacency from British politics

SIR – I have just watched Nigel Farage announce that he is running for Parliament, and I'm delighted.

At last there will be an alternative to the non-choice between Labour and the Conservatives, whose approach is simply to carry on as before.

What was profoundly depressing, though, was some of the hostile media questioning after Mr Farage's speech, seeking to make him look bad for changing his mind rather than asking him about his policies and plans for the future.

The establishment still doesn't get it. Mr Farage and Reform UK represent ordinary people. They've got my vote. Seatbelts on.

Alison Levinson
Hastings, East Sussex

SIR – Nigel's back. He just might have saved the country.

Stan Kirby
East Malling, Kent

SIR – If Nigel Farage becomes an MP he will be an important and influential voice for the centre-Right in Parliament.

A crushing defeat for the Conservatives will mean he plays a leading role, alongside the rump of Tory MPs, in providing opposition to a Labour government. This would certainly put the cat among the Westminster pigeons.

David Saunders
Sidmouth, Devon

SIR – I once had respect for Nigel Farage, but he has been an apologist for Vladimir Putin and would abandon Ukraine to servitude.

He won't be getting my vote, any more than Rishi Sunak or Sir Keir Starmer will.

John Kennedy
Hornchurch, Essex

SIR – Why do so many politicians today have so little political nous? Rishi Sunak campaigns joyously as he sees the end is in sight, but still does not understand that, by making attractive promises he will never have to deliver, he could reduce Labour's majority by at least half.

As a parting gift, therefore, let's have commitments to abolish inheritance tax, cut corporation tax, leave the ECHR, remove the tourist tax, semi-privatise the NHS, build more prisons and offer tax rebates to parents choosing private schools.

John Bunker
Olney, Buckinghamshire

SIR – Rosemary Marshall (Letters, June 3) accuses me of being "irresponsible" by encouraging people to invalidate their ballot papers.

How is she going to vote if she doesn't trust any of the candidates? It is far more irresponsible to vote for someone you don't think can do the job than to let it be known that you are not apathetic, just very unhappy about the way things are.

Margaret Humphreys
Wadebridge, Cornwall

Running for president

SIR – Judy Harckham (Letters, June 3) makes a valid point about the poor quality of American presidential candidates. Sadly, of the 335 million people in the US population, I suspect very few have the money behind them to run a campaign. Money makes its way to the top, no matter the morals.

Kirsty Blunt
Sedgeford, Norfolk

SIR – Both Sir Keir Starmer and Rishi Sunak appear to be honest and sincere.

Perhaps we should be more appreciative of the fact that, whoever wins the election here, it is unlikely we'll be subjected to the self-serving shenanigans associated with Boris Johnson and Donald Trump.

Patrick Miller
Hartlepool, Co Durham

Vital tourists

SIR – I don't agree that "tourists are beastly" (Comment, June 3).

We live in Haworth, which is awash with them. They are the main engine of the economy. It's thanks to them that we have so many pubs, restaurants, cafes and high-quality shops; they sustain our railway service and ensure an excellent bus service. They are usually nice people, too.

David Pearson
Haworth, West Yorkshire

SIR – P Farmer (Letters, June 3) accuses local people of selling their properties to second-home owners or holiday let landlords. In fact, many local vendors here have been desperate to sell to people who will live in the town.

The purchasers are aware of this and, unfortunately, make false assurances. Once the sale is made, there is no going back, but the remaining locals know of these broken promises.

A V Lofts
Salcombe, Devon

Epic's voyage

SIR – After a two-year sojourn in the Antarctic with the British Antarctic Survey, a friend and I jumped ship in Montevideo to meander slowly home through South America.

For reading matter, we settled on two volumes of the paperback edition of *War and Peace* (Letters, June 1), tearing the book into sections for the second reader and then, on the Amazon, using it as lavatory paper.

I still regret such cavalier treatment of a classic, but it did not mar my appreciation of Russian authors.

Tony Keeley
Reading, Berkshire



ALAMY

President Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II during a state visit to Britain in 1996

The damage done to Nelson Mandela's legacy

SIR – I lived and worked in South Africa from 1969 to 1971, when Apartheid was probably at its worst. I would go to work on a "white" bus and saw racially motivated beatings.

Nelson Mandela was incarcerated on Robben Island. He was released in 1990 after serving 27 years. He bore no grudge against anyone.

He paid a state visit to Britain in 1996 and was received by the late Queen Elizabeth II. This was the beginning of a deep friendship between them, and the Queen thought he was a remarkable man.

How sad he would be that the African National Congress (ANC) has lost its grip on power for the first time in 30 years (report, June 3) as a result of economic mismanagement and corruption. Mandela's ambition was for white and black people to live in harmony, work together to build South Africa and be an example to the rest of Africa. The ANC has failed to achieve this.

Rosemary Corbin
Zeals, Wiltshire

Battling bureaucrats to get potholes repaired

SIR – Having recently returned from driving around northern France and Belgium (Letters, June 3), I must say that I felt I had never actually left the UK. The roads in towns and the countryside were full of potholes and badly filled repairs. When we commented on this to our hostess, she agreed that they were dreadful. She added that she had informed the local mayor and was told, as in the UK, that the holes weren't deep enough.

Undaunted, she had taken pictures and gone in to complain. Again she was told there would be no repairs – and so they remain.

There is clearly a mindset shared by bureaucrats the world over.

Ian Wallace
Whitley Bay, Northumberland

SIR – French roads are, as Anthony Cutler says (Letters, June 3), a delight to drive on, both in terms of surface quality and the amount of traffic – to say nothing of French driving, in particular lane discipline.

However, for a country with a similar population to ours, France has double the land area of the UK, and the road network is twice as big, meaning our roads have to work a lot harder.

Margaret Forbes
London E1

SIR – Anthony Cutler extols France's double-decker trains and asks why the idea is not considered here.

British Rail did once have double-decker commuter trains running from the South East into London. I saw an example in a railway museum in the 1970s. They were just as crowded as current trains, and presumably unpopular, as they were removed from service.

Jeannette Meyers
Ashford, Kent

Labour's VAT raid

SIR – As a former chair of governors at Reigate Grammar School, I am disappointed by the lack of empathy and foresight shown by Sir Keir Starmer – an old boy – in his VAT attack on private schools (report, June 3).

His policy will deny present-day students the opportunities he enjoyed. The greatest impact will be felt not by the privileged or super-rich, but by the pupils whose parents struggle to finance an appropriate education for them, especially those with special needs.

At present there is widespread provision of bursaries to fund places for children from poorer backgrounds. That funding is now likely to dry up, reducing opportunities for working-class families – just as Labour's decision to scrap the Assisted Places Scheme did some years ago. We are already starting to witness the chaos that Sir Keir's policy will cause, with evidence of sizeable numbers looking for state-sector places that do not exist in the areas where displacement from the private sector is occurring.

Speaking after the announcement of the election, Sir Keir asked if we could trust Labour. It is clear that, in the matter of education, we cannot. And if the party cannot be trusted with education, why should we trust it to run the economy efficiently, establish an effective defence policy or deal with the challenges of housing, justice and immigration?

Past Labour governments have created systems that have led to the wrecking of occupational pensions, given us cliff edges in our tax and child benefit systems that disincentivise ambition, and crippled us with stamp duty changes that have stifled the housing market. The introduction of VAT on private school fees represents another use of Labour's wrecking ball.

Alan Walker
Leatherhead, Surrey

Unsung D-Day heroes

SIR – A great deal is being written about D-Day and the men, women, aircraft, tanks and warships involved. Seldom mentioned are the amphibious ships, in particular the Tank Landing Craft Mark 4, and their crews. More than 700 of these craft took part on June 6, crewed by some 9,000 sailors, and without them the armies would never have reached France, let alone gone on to Berlin.

These vessels were slow and not very beautiful but they did everything that was required of them, delivering their loads of men, tanks and trucks directly to the beaches, often under heavy fire. They deserve to be remembered.

David Miller
Newton Abbot, Devon

Footballers' lives

SIR – I write as chaplain to Scunthorpe United Football Club, now plying their trade in the National League North.

I'm always concerned for player welfare and wellbeing, both physically and mentally, and the prospect of the top clubs, both here and abroad, adding to their already busy schedule with a 32-team Club World Cup (Sport, May 31) appals me.

There will be precious little rest time between one season and the next, which will begin with already tired personnel. Supporters will rightly feel aggrieved if their star players are injured during this new competition, which is in addition to the newly extended European Champions' League.

Surely the time has come to limit the playing time of the top players in a single season. As always, it comes down to money.

Rev Alan Wright
Barton-upon-Humber, Lincolnshire

Labour's housing plans could leave the Tories stranded



CHARLES MOORE
NOTEBOOK

Given how much people care about housing, it is remarkable how little politicians have so far wanted to discuss it in this election. Labour's Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 and Margaret Thatcher's council house sales in the 1980s had enormous social and electoral impact. Yet today, though the subject cries out loudly for reform, the parties are muted.

In the case of the Conservatives, fear is the key. After their defeat in the 2021 Chesham and Amersham by-election, they abandoned planning reform and housing targets for local authorities. The election hastens this retreat. The Tories have the core-vote strategy of a party that expects to lose. That core is Nimby. Its constituency associations, especially in the south, contain members who want to stop anything being built anywhere near them.

Simultaneously, the Tories have, inexplicably, sought to weaken the private rented sector, one of the few housing successes of recent years. Their attack on no-fault evictions enrages the same core vote which they are trying to please. Added to this are the ever more elaborate, expensive and slow processes needed to get planning consent for anything. They will not permit zoning, but insist on the present plan-led system. Result of the above: policy paralysis.

So there is an opportunity for Labour, of which it should make more. Angela Rayner did speak about it in Leeds last month but, perhaps because of her own housing problems, she did not shout as loudly as usual. Rachel Reeves made low-key mention of it at the weekend. Rightly handled, housing and planning could be Labour's best way of showing it cares about the future while the Tories are stuck in the past.

Everyone knows it has become unprecedentedly hard for the rising generation to afford decent housing. Most people – including not just the young, but many parents and grandparents concerned for their descendants – see this as a scandal which frays the bonds of society. The young now have lower expectations of ownership and of finding the right home for bringing up a family than their parents had at their age. Has that ever happened before in Britain?

Labour has internal conflicts on the subject, too. Its Left mistrusts private home ownership. Its greener members see more roofs over peoples' heads as a threat to the planet. But the party's saner members understand the desperate need for an increase in the supply of housing of all kinds. To achieve this, they must recapture the original purpose of planning when the Attlee government introduced it, which was not (as modern planning officers so often see it) to prevent building but to build more, better.

Last October, Labour put its toe in this water with a short document which called for a new generation of new towns to "save the dream of home ownership".

In April this year, it went further. With public endorsement from Sir Keir Starmer, Labour challenged its own historic reverence for the Green Belt by pointing out that nowadays the name is often a misnomer. It spoke of the "grey belt", meaning scruffy, underused or derelict brownfield seats in Green Belt areas. Houses should be built in such places, it said. Covering its eco-back, Labour quoted the chairman of Natural England, Tony Juniper: "There is no inherent trade-off between building homes and protecting nature".

The April document added something important about such development, which is that it should be led by improved infrastructure, schools and amenities to attract the houses, rather than the present situation in which houses get built and the amenities come later, if at all.

Behind these moves lay Labour research with focus groups which showed that floating voters do like the idea of new towns and large-scale sites rather than the present practice of shoving little developments into small holes. They also want quite small private gardens, preferring much larger green public spaces.

Labour is aware of the interesting work done by Urban and Civic, a development company owned by the Wellcome Trust, which has some successful experiments in big sites to show. Under its long-standing chief executive, Nigel Hugill, it has calculated future need by observing differing population trends. The strongest growth is in places within 100 miles of London, most commonly areas such as those between Oxford and Cambridge, which include Milton Keynes. Urban and Civic is particularly proud of Houlton, near Rugby (a bit further north), a well-landscaped development whose publicity declares: "Home is where the park is."

The aim is commercial, and it succeeds as such, but the market catered for is closer to the "affordable" end than the luxury one, and the role for government can be decisive in clearing away the regulatory thickets. Such development is extremely helpful to the rising generation, but it is not the same as a social housing levelling-up agenda. Perhaps Ms Rayner was hinting at this in her speech when she said: "What works in Stockton won't always be what works in Southampton." If Labour goes down this path, there will be more development near the latter than the former.

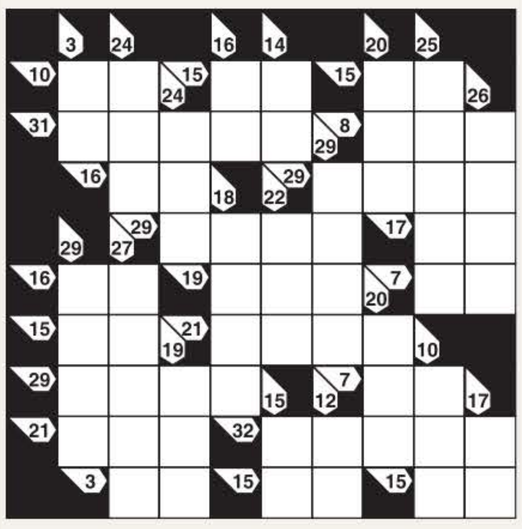
Politically, this could go wrong for Labour. If it makes over-specific proposals now, the Tories might be able to frighten voters in southern constituencies that they are about to be swamped by new housing. That approach might also displease elements in the Red Wall it seeks to win back. But if Labour can project a non-doctrinal effort to help build better lives for the younger people of lower-middle England, it could leave the Conservatives stranded.

Puzzles, Mind Games & Telegraph Toughie

KAKURO

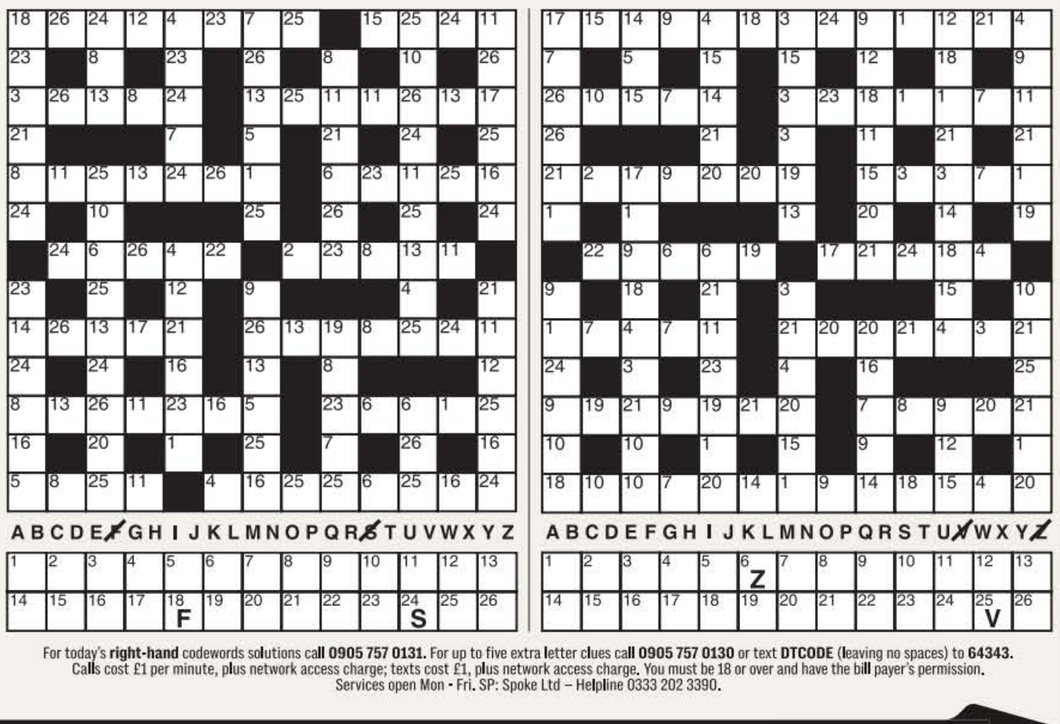
To solve kakuro you must enter a number between 1 and 9 in the empty squares without repeating a digit. The clues are the numbers on the black squares and are the sum of the solution numbers. The clue pointers indicate the direction of the answers. A block of two squares with a clue of 3 will solve as 2,1 and a 5 will produce 4,1 or 2,3. A 4 can only be 1,3, never 2,2. *Solution tomorrow.*

GENTLE NO 5041



CODEWORDS

Numbers are substituted for letters in this crossword grid. In the smaller key grid some letters are solved. Use these as clues to complete your first word. This will solve more letters that you can then enter in the grids. *Solutions tomorrow.*



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 F	19	20	21	22	23	24 S	25	26

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6 Z	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25 V	26

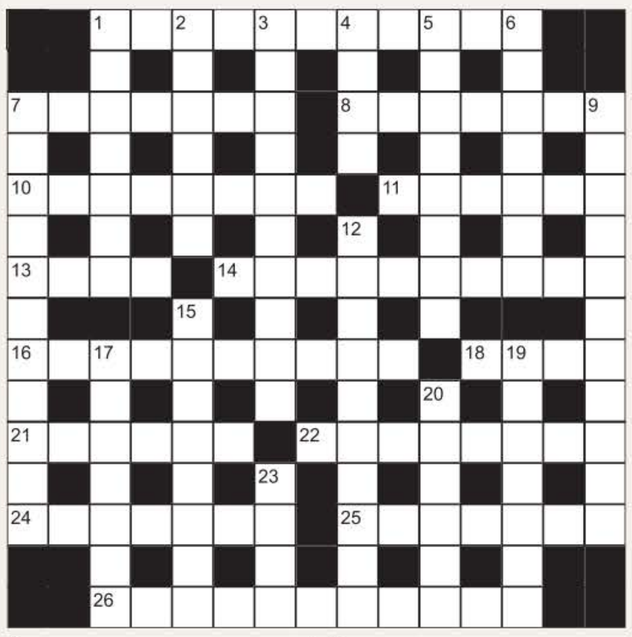
For today's **right-hand** codewords solutions call **0905 757 0131.** For up to five extra letter clues call **0905 757 0130** or text **DTCODE** (leaving no spaces) to **64343.** Calls cost £1 per minute, plus network access charge; texts cost £1, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon - Fri. SP: Spoke Ltd – Helpline 0333 202 3390.

Notes

TELEGRAPH TOUGHIE

NO 3281

GILA



Across

1 Finished and had to carry friend until just before the end (11)
7 Was suspicious of con, but somehow expected to get cleaned out (7)
8 Mythological character put in by artist (7)
10 Worthless piece sent back by American politician (8)
11 Station fed by an unknown number of lines (6)
13 One assisting a swimmer (4)
14 Good luck describing what "crème de la crème" might entail? (3,3,4)
16 Extravagant chap housing son in apartment (10)
18 Unfortunately due to receive nicked data (4)
21 Soporific work, after which I went for lunch? (6)
22 Adult with very low energy recently (2,2,4)
24 Mysterious exhibit, ultimately coy about publicity (7)
25 Hostility shown by former manufacturing company head (7)
26 Large plant in the middle sometimes covered by negligible illumination (11)

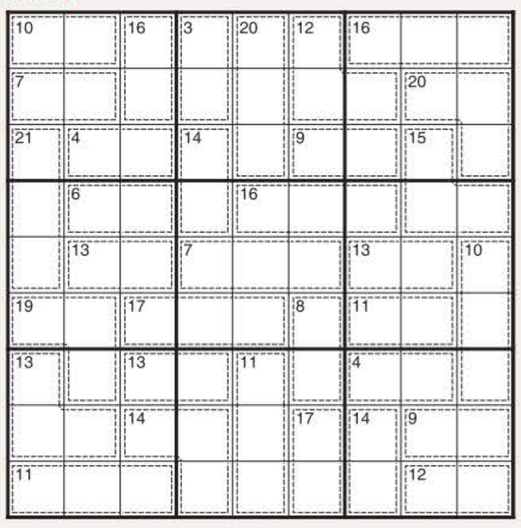
Down

1 Drunk couple initially embraced (7)
2 Symbolically record the lack of an art gallery? (6)
3 Doesn't stress when badly snarled up around end of motorway (10)
4 Podcaster's shabby appearance (4)
5 Agreements have to be restricted by judges (8)
6 Cadet entertains accepting reduction of hostilities (7)
7 Distribute and sell soft hygiene product (6,5)
9 Engineer loathes taking on separate types of serviced buildings (11)
12 Jam in racks next to cash register (10)
15 A club in Paris you primarily rated a shambles (8)
17 Rhinos, possibly, in a flipping crash heading north (7)
19 Close relatives live in comfy spot (7)
20 Expert, releasing book on golf, makes killing around Augusta? (6)
23 Odd pieces rejected by player with electronic instrument (4)

KILLER SUDOKU

Your clues are the caged numbers that represent the sum of the numbers within the cage. As in standard sudoku, each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9. *Solution tomorrow.*

GENTLE



SUDOKU

To solve this puzzle each 3 x 3 box, each row and also each column must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9. There are numerous strategies to help you solve sudoku. *Solutions tomorrow.*

REGULAR NO 6611

		7				4		2
9	8				4		6	
					9		1	
7				8				5
				5				
4				3				7
	1			6				
			2				4	
		6				8		

TOUGH NO 6611

8		1	3		4			
	2	6			9	1	4	
6							1	2
	8			5			6	
3	7							5
	3	9	1			5	7	
			7		2	4		1

Sudoku Solution For today's tough sudoku solution call **0905 757 0136.** Calls cost £1 per minute, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon – Fri. SP: Spoke – 0333 202 3390.

PANAGRAM

Create words of four letters or more, always using the centre letter. Proper nouns and plurals are not allowed, and you can only use each letter once per word. Can you find the nine-letter Panagram? *Solution tomorrow.*



Up to 6 words - Word Finder, 7 - Wordsmith, 15 - Word Wizard, 23 - Word Master, 31 - Word Genius, 39 - Word Perfect

ANAGRAMS

Each of the anagrams below spells out the name of a European city. *Solution tomorrow.*

REAL BACON _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
BRASS GROUT _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
TRIPLE MELON _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

MIND GYM

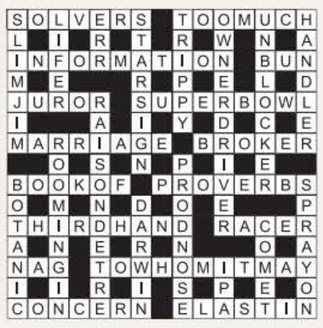
NO 4337

Start on the left with the given number and work your way across following the instructions in each cell. Target time: 30 seconds. *Solution below.*

BEGINNER										ANSWER
132	÷11	x4.5	TRIPLE IT	-74	3/4 OF THIS	7/11 OF THIS	HALVE IT	÷3	X BY ITSELF	
INTERMEDIATE										ANSWER
91	12/13 OF THIS	TRIPLE IT	-124	HALVE IT	√	x9.75	5/6 OF THIS	x2.4	-88	
ADVANCED										ANSWER
9	x17	TRIPLE IT	-235	÷16	X BY ITSELF	375% OF THIS	-279	HALVE IT	7/12 OF THIS	

TOUGHIE

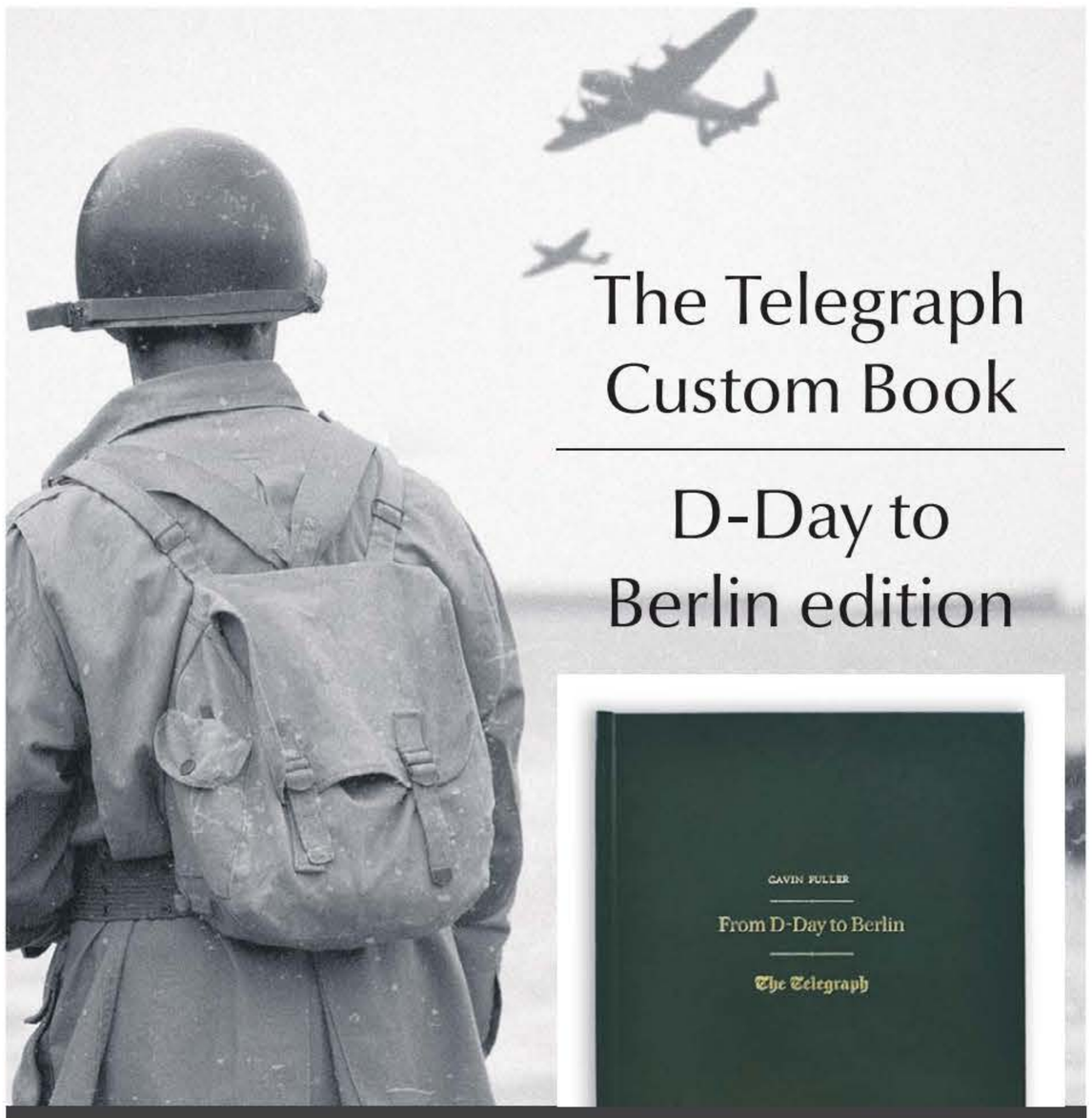
Toughie No 3280



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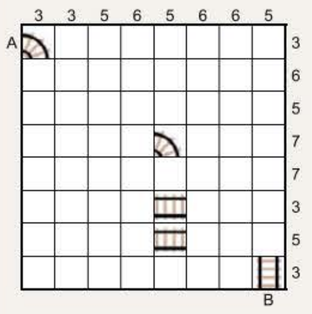
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TRAIN TRACKS

Lay down tracks to allow a train to travel from A to B. Only use straight and curved rails and the track cannot cross itself. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each column and row. *Solution tomorrow.*



MINI SUDOKU

Fill in the grid in such a way that every row and column and every 2 x 3 box contains the numbers 1-6. *Solution tomorrow.*

GENTLE NO 4104

		5			4
			6		
1		2			3
3			1		6
		1			
			5		

PLUSWORD

NO 744

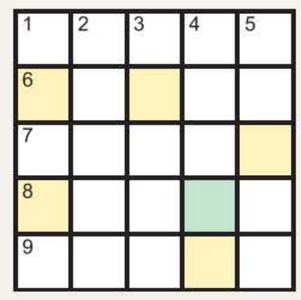
Solve the crossword, then use letters in the shaded squares to complete the additional PlusWord. A letter in a green square appears in the same column in the PlusWord as it does in the crossword; a letter in a yellow square appears in the PlusWord, but in a different column than it does in the crossword.
There is only one possible answer for the PlusWord; it may be that the PlusWord contains letters that aren't found in the crossword, but it can always be worked out logically without guessing.
Solution tomorrow.

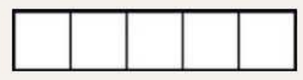
Across

1 Thin pancake
6 Handle, bar
7 Musical drama
8 *Gavin & Stacey* character played by Margaret John
9 Technique

Down

1 Lumps of earth
2 Move, as a plant
3 Each and ___ one
4 Danger
5 Rub out





WORD LADDER

Change just one letter to go from the top word to the bottom word. Each step must be a valid word and you cannot change the order of the letters. There are clues below for each rung, but they are not in order. For an extra challenge, try to complete the puzzle without using the clues. *Solution tomorrow.*

FLAN, ADVERTISE, CIRCUIT, BAZAAR, UNRELAXED



Notes

Play PlusWord for free online at telegraph.co.uk/pw or scan the QR code

The Telegraph PUZZLES

Try our Puzzles website today, and enjoy 1 year for just £4.99. Visit telegraph.co.uk/puzzles

THE SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's solutions

Sudoku Regular and Tough No 6610

4	2	9	1	7	3	6	5	8
1	3	8	5	9	6	2	4	7
7	6	5	2	8	4	9	3	1
6	5	2	3	4	8	7	1	9
9	7	1	6	5	2	4	8	3
3	8	4	9	1	7	5	2	6
8	4	3	7	6	5	1	9	2
5	1	6	8	2	9	3	7	4
2	9	7	4	3	1	8	6	5

6	2	4	7	9	3	1	8	5
9	8	5	2	6	1	7	3	4
3	7	1	4	8	5	2	9	6
5	4	9	3	2	7	6	1	8
7	1	3	8	4	6	5	2	9
8	6	2	1	5	9	3	4	7
2	9	7	6	3	4	8	5	1
1	5	8	9	7	2	4	6	3
4	3	6	5	1	8	9	7	2

Word Ladder: Fort, port, pore, pole, poll, pall, wall.

Anagrams: 1. Buttress 2. Strengthen 3. Supplement.

Panagram: Cubbyhole, louche, hobble, cobble, clubby, boucle, lobby, holey, coble, chyle, boule, bluey, belch, yule, luce, lube, loch, lobe, lech, holy, hole, coly, cole, clue, club, cloy, bulb, buhl, bole, blue, blub, bloc, blob, bleb.

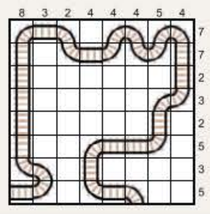
Today's Mind Gym
Beginner: 49 **Intermediate:** 68 **Advanced:** 133

PlusWord No 743

A	M	I	S	S
M	O	N	T	H
A	D	D	E	R
Z	A	I	R	E
E	L	A	N	D

Azure

Train Tracks



Killer Sudoku

9	4	5	7	2	1	6	3	8
8	2	7	6	9	3	1	4	5
6	3	1	5	8	4	2	9	7
4	7	6	8	5	2	9	1	3
1	9	2	3	6	7	8	5	4
3	5	8	4	1	9	7	2	6
5	8	9	1	3	6	4	7	2
2	6	4	9	7	5	3	8	1
7	1	3	2	4	8	5	6	9

Mini Sudoku No 4103

4	2	3	6	1	5
5	6	1	4	3	2
2	3	6	1	5	4
1	5	4	3	2	6
6	1	2	5	4	3
3	4	5	2	6	1

Codewords 1 and 2

1 E	2 D	3 V	4 K	5 L	6 C	7 G	8 O	9 H	10 J	11 N	12 P	13 I
14 R	15 X	16 U	17 Q	18 A	19 Y	20 Z	21 T	22 W	23 M	24 F	25 S	26 B

1 I	2 Y	3 V	4 Q	5 D	6 G	7 O	8 T	9 B	10 A	11 M	12 E	13 Z
14 R	15 F	16 K	17 J	18 L	19 W	20 X	21 H	22 S	23 C	24 U	25 N	26 P

Kakuro No 5040

	6	9	2		9	5	7	2	1
	3	8	1		8	6	9	4	7
	2	1		8	4	9		1	3
	1	3	2	5			7	9	
			3	1		3	1		
		1	6			1	2	6	3
	9	5		1	5	2		7	2
	1	4	2	3	8		9	8	7
	5	3	1	2	6		7	4	1

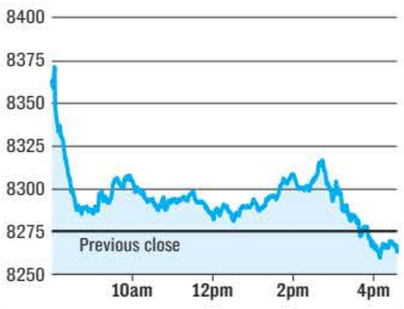
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Business



MARKETS

FTSE 100



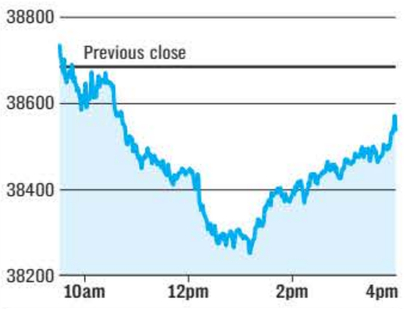
8262.75
-12.63 (-0.15pc)

52WkHigh	8474.41	
52WkLow	7215.76	
Yield	3.67pc	+0.01
P/E Ratio	13.72	-0.02

BIGGEST RISER
JD Sports Fash
134p
+6½ (+5.06pc)

BIGGEST FALLER
GSK
1598p
-168½ (-9.54pc)

DOW JONES



38571.03
-115.29 (-0.30pc)

52WkHigh	40077.40
52WkLow	32327.20

FTSE 250	20900.49	+170.37 (+0.82pc)
FTSE All Share	4517.03	-0.05 (-0.00pc)
FTSE All Share Yield	3.61	-0.01
FTSE Eurotop 100	4086.74	+10.68 (+0.26pc)
Nikkei 225	38923.03	+435.13 (+1.13pc)
EURO STOXX 50	5003.54	+19.87 (+0.40pc)
S&P 500	5283.40	+5.89 (+0.11pc)
Nasdaq	16828.67	+93.65 (+0.56pc)

CURRENCIES

£$
Rate
1.2773
Change
+0.42¢

£€
Rate
1.1751
Change
+0.23¢

Page 22

COMMODITIES

GOLD
$2349.20
(£1839)
+21.18 (+0.91pc)

BRENT CRUDE
$78.36
(August)
-3.26 (-3.99pc)

Page 22

Taking the Shein off
Why Labour can't count on the £50bn boost from Chinese fast-fashion company to save the City

Page 19

Down the drain
If water companies are going to remain in public hands, they need to be attractive investments
Ben Wright

Page 21

Royal Mail warns Czech takeover risks debt crunch

Disclosures add to the concerns over Kretinsky's £3.5bn merger, despite legally binding pledges

By **Ben Marlow** *and* **James Titcomb**

ROYAL MAIL has said its sale to the Czech billionaire Daniel Křetínský risks triggering a financial squeeze, raising fresh fears about the potential threat to the postal service from his debt-fuelled takeover.

Parent company International Distribution Services (IDS) has said that nearly £2.4bn of loans could be called in as a result of the deal.

Investors have the right to demand repayment of nearly £1.5bn of fixed-rate bonds if a sale affects its investment-grade credit rating. In addition, a sale could also result in lenders either withdrawing or renegotiating an unused £925m borrowing facility.

The disclosures, contained in annual results filed 10 days ago, add to the concerns surrounding Royal Mail's £3.5bn takeover by Mr Křetínský's EP Group.

As a result of what the board calls "uncertainty" over its existing financial arrangements in the event of any takeover, it has been forced to admit that the future of the company could be at risk.

In results published before Mr Křetínský confirmed his offer last week, it said: "While the board have been seeking assurances in relation to EP Group financing arrangements through due diligence and negotiation of contractual commitments, the financing arrangements of EP Group are outside of the control of the board.

"The directors have concluded that the extent of the uncertainty related to whether existing finance will be recalled following a change in control, together with a lack of visibility or control over the availability of funding, are conditions that constitute a material uncertainty that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern."

The disclosure comes amid concern in some quarters that Mr Křetínský's bid will put IDS's balance sheet under serious strain – £2.3bn of the £3.5bn offer will be financed by new debt, provided by a syndicate of four large European banks: BNP Paribas, Citi, Société Générale and UniCredit. After weeks of negotiations, the board of IDS last week said it had recommended the 370p-a-share offer. Mr Křetínský has promised to invest in Royal Mail and made a series of legally binding pledges to protect its universal service.

IDS's debt is rated at BBB with a negative outlook, putting it two notches above "junk" status. The costs of servicing it last year totalled nearly £100m.

Sources close to Mr Křetínský pointed out that he has offered legally binding undertakings designed to protect IDS's credit rating. The deal would be structured so that the company's investment-grade rating is "expected to be maintained post acquisition", EP Group said.

IDS will become a "core subsidiary" of EP Group, meaning its rating should not drop below the broader group's.

The commitments are designed to relieve fears about Royal Mail's future in private hands. One analyst said lenders would be likely to use the potential takeover as an opportunity to renegotiate the debt at a higher price.

Mr Křetínský has also vowed not to split heavily loss-making Royal Mail from its highly profitable parcels arm. However, shareholders are worried that the board is selling the company on the cheap, which would enable Křetínský to make a quick return through asset sales.

He could be getting his hands on one of the biggest corporate property portfolios in Europe. Royal Mail owns an estate of prime sites situated in towns up and down the country in locations that many delivery companies, as well as big property developers, covet.

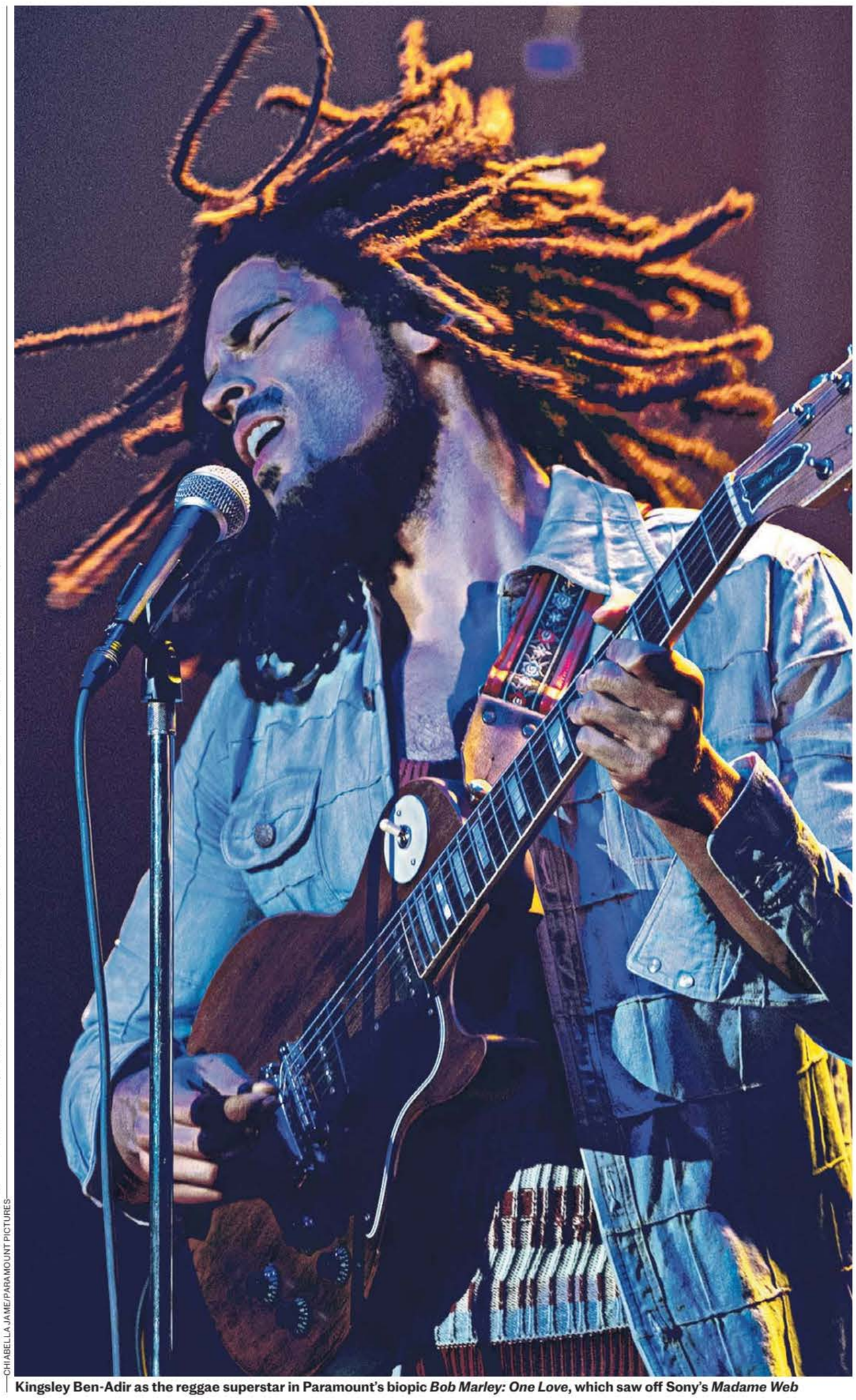
In 2011, Royal Mail offloaded a 2.3-acre site in the London's West End for £120m. Six years later the redeveloped site was sold for £435m.

A sale of Royal Mail would mark the first time that any country has sold its postal service to overseas investors. Jeremy Hunt, the Chancellor, has said that any takeover will face scrutiny under national security laws.

Mr Křetínský has said that "the EP Group has the utmost respect for Royal Mail's history and tradition".

Both IDS and EP Group declined to comment.

Ben Marlow: Page 21



CHIABELLA JAME/PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Kingsley Ben-Adir as the reggae superstar in Paramount's biopic *Bob Marley: One Love*, which saw off Sony's *Madame Web*

Billionaire tech heir nets $8bn deal for studio Paramount

By **Hannah Boland**

THE American owner of Channel 5 has agreed to a $8bn (£6.3bn) merger deal with a billionaire tech heir's production company, signalling an end to a months-long takeover saga.

Paramount, the television and film studio formerly known as ViacomCBS, has reportedly agreed to the terms of a merger with Skydance, a company set up by David Ellison, whose father is the Silicon Valley mogul Larry Ellison.

CNBC said the deal was valued at about $8bn. This includes a $2bn payout for controlling shareholder Shari Redstone, whose family has controlled Paramount since 1994 and who are among America's most high-profile media dynasties. They are said to have inspired the hit TV show *Succession*.

Ms Redstone, who holds about 77pc of Paramount, still needs to sign off on the deal, CNBC reported. An announcement on a tie-up is expected in the next few days. It suggests an end is in sight for a takeover drama that has drawn significant attention, given a deal would involve a change of hands for some of the world's biggest film and TV studios.

Paramount has created scores of Hollywood blockbusters including *Titanic* and *Forrest Gump*. More recently, it has enjoyed a stronger performance at the box office than rival studios, with its music biopic *Bob Marley: One Love* seeing off competition from Sony's superhero film *Madame Web* in February. Paramount also controls a cluster of television channels, including Channel 5, MTV, Nickelodeon and Comedy Central.

David Ellison's entertainment company, Skydance, emerged as a potential bidder for Paramount late last year amid a flurry of interest by rival production giants. Skydance had previously worked with Paramount on the *Top Gun: Maverick* film.

It was one of many hits made by Skydance, which also includes *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol*.

Mr Ellison's interest had received support from some of Hollywood's leading figures, including *Titanic* director James Cameron, who said this year that his ownership could be a "huge boon for this business in these ailing times". He added: "I love the Ellison idea."

Skydance's bid had been backed by private equity firms KKR and RedBird Capital, a fund that made a bid to take control of *The Telegraph* in a joint venture with the UAE. The deal was blocked by the Government over press freedom fears and *The Telegraph* is now being prepared for an onward sale.

However, other major studios had also logged an interest. *Harry Potter* maker Warner Bros had also been in talks over a merger with Paramount.

Paramount and Skydance did not respond to requests for comment.

Aerospace bosses share in £180m bonus

By **Matt Oliver**

THREE former bosses of aerospace company Melrose have shared in a £180m bonus pot following two decades of dealmaking.

Yesterday, the FTSE 100 business said it had paid out about 28.8m shares, after tax, to members of a performance pay scheme on May 31.

The scheme is designed to pay out 7.5pc of the rise in Melrose's market capitalisation since 2020.

Based on Melrose's stock price last night, the shares were valued at £178m.

The pot's value would have been about £330m but the company said it reduced the number of shares issued to cover tax liabilities for the recipients, with about £158m paid to HM Revenue & Customs in cash.



Melrose's former chief executive Simon Peckham is among the former ex-bosses receiving a payout

It is understood that Simon Peckham, a former chief executive, Christopher Miller, an ex-vice chairman, and Geoffrey Martin, an ex-finance chief, were the biggest beneficiaries, while Peter Dilnot, the current chief executive, received shares worth £1m. Co-founders Mr Peckham and Mr Miller, along with Mr Martin, recently left Melrose, which is focusing solely on aerospace, after founding the business in 2003 under the motto "buy, improve, sell".

◆ Star fund manager Nick Train has paid himself an estimated £14m dividend despite apologising last month for a recent poor run of stock-picking.

Accounts for Lindsell Train, the investment firm founded by Mr Train and Mike Lindsell, showed its founders shared a dividend pot worth £39m in the year to January. Mr Train and Mr Lindsell, along with their spouses, both own around 36pc of the business. Assets under management dropped from £18.6bn in 2023 to £15.9bn, while its pre-tax profits fell from £67m to £58.8m. Director pay fell from £15.1m to £8.6m.

Heathrow 'seriously lagging' behind rivals

By **Christopher Jasper** *in Dubai*

HEATHROW is in dire need of investment and is "seriously lagging" behind rival airports, the president of Emirates Airline has said.

Sir Tim Clark said Heathrow pales by comparison with aviation hubs in Asia and the Middle East, including his own company's base in Dubai, which took Heathrow's crown as the world's busiest international airport.

Sir Tim said: "Heathrow is seriously lagging behind in many of its customer-facing functions.

"It's an old airport and, all around, new airports are built employing the latest technologies to streamline their processes, whether it be security, check-in, immigration or whatever, and making the whole thing a lot easier."

'It's an old airport and new ones are built employing the latest technologies to make the thing a lot easier'

Dubai airport, which was opened in 1960, overtook Heathrow as the world's busiest airport a decade ago.

Heathrow was opened in 1946 and Sir Tim said it was showing its age.

His comments come ahead of a potential change of ownership at the airport. Spain's Ferrovial has struck a deal to sell its 25pc stake in Heathrow to Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) and private equity group Ardian. The deal is contingent on Ferrovial and PIF finding buyers for another 35pc stake in the airport. Speaking at the International Air Transport Association's annual meeting in Dubai, Sir Tim said: "The investment that needs to go into Heathrow must move at pace. You've got to invest, you've got to keep up with all the others."

A Heathrow spokesman said: "Every pound we want to spend on improving airport facilities needs approval from our regulator (the Civil Aviation Authority). Despite having our proposals cut back in the current regulatory settlement, we will still invest £3.6bn upgrading our infrastructure over the next three years."

Oil slumps 4pc despite Opec cuts

By **Melissa Lawford**

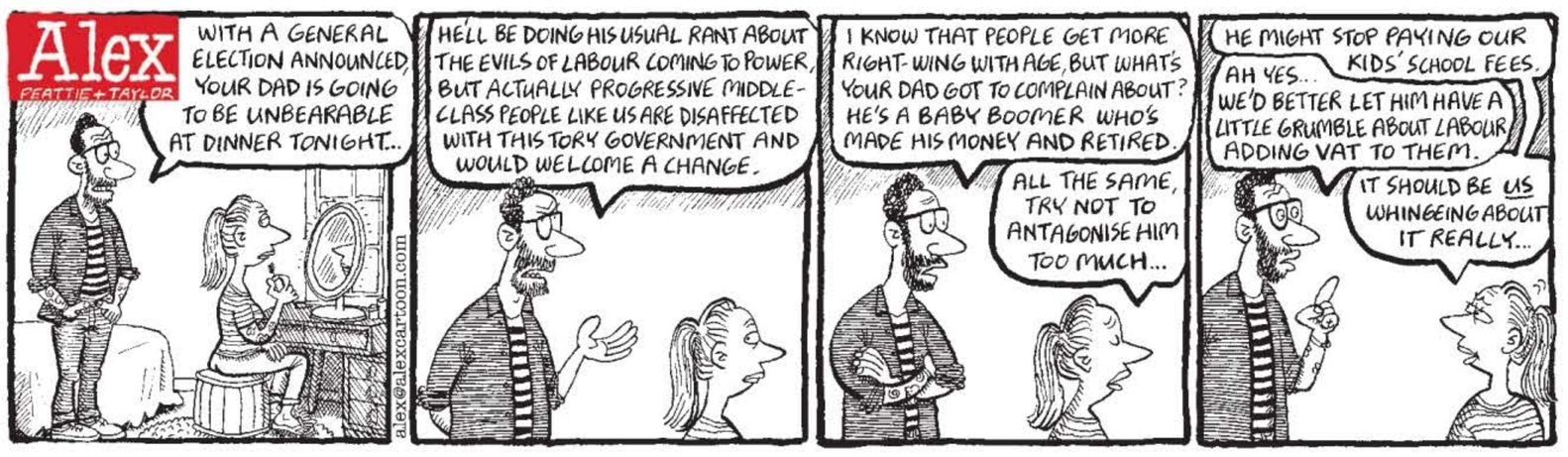
OIL prices have fallen nearly 4pc despite Opec production cuts amid signs that Saudi Arabia will struggle to maintain caps on future supply.

The price of Brent crude dropped by more than $3 yesterday to a four-month low of $78.33 a barrel, even after the Saudi-led cartel said it would extend voluntary production cuts for another three months. This was because, although the Organisation for Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies (Opec+) announced on Sunday that it would extend all three tranches of its production cuts for significantly longer than expected, it also laid out a schedule for how the cuts would be unwound, which analysts said was "surprisingly detailed".

Daan Struyven, head of oil research at Goldman Sachs, said that this means it will now be more difficult for Opec+ to continue low levels of production.

Opec+ said it would extend extra voluntary cuts of 2.2m barrels of oil per day for three months longer than planned, until the end of September, as well as extending two other layers of cuts for an extra year to the end of 2025.

Callum Macpherson, head of commodities at Investec, said Opec+'s power over market pricing is diminishing.



Next accused in High Court of plagiarising Harley-Davidson logo

By **Hannah Boland**

NEXT has been struck by a High Court row over claims it copied Harley-Davidson's logo with "motorbike-inspired" graphics on children's T-shirts.

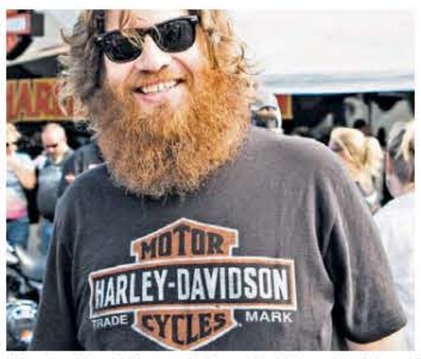
The US motorcycle company has demanded Next destroys a range of long-sleeve T-shirts featuring biker angel wings with flames, which it argued "essentially replicates" its logo.

In court documents, seen by the *Financial Times*, Harley-Davidson argues that the T-shirts include "graphic material and text which is ... commonly seen in the context of a motorcycle-based branding and more specifically the claimants' branding".

The T-shirts, which are still on sale at Next for children aged between three and 16, are described on the retailer's website as using a "motorbike-inspired graphic with flame sleeve prints".

Harley-Davidson claimed that the design would "call [Harley's imagery] to mind for many members of the public" and may cause "confusion on the part of the relevant average consumer".

Next and Harley-Davidson declined to comment. It is the latest in a series of high-profile lawsuits by Harley-Davidson, which makes about 5pc of its revenues from clothing sales. Last year, the business made revenues of $244m (£192m) from apparel sales, out of a total $4.85bn. The majority of its revenue still comes from the sale of motorcycles, accessories and parts. However, it has been struggling with a slowdown in demand for higher-end models.





Harley-Davidson claims the Next T-shirt, right, 'essentially replicates' its logo

In April, Harley-Davidson revealed a 23pc profit slump for its first quarter as higher borrowing costs hit demand for more expensive models. At the time, Jochen Zeitz, the chief executive, said: "We're just entering the riding season ... and a lot depends on the second quarter, which is why we have not changed our guidance at this point in time."

It has said revenues will either be flat or drop 9pc in its motorcycle business this year.

The legal row with Next follows a tussle with Urban Outfitters in 2017. Harley-Davidson took the retailer to court claiming it was selling "mutilated" versions of the motorbike maker's shirts. The pair reached a settlement in which Urban Outfitters agreed to stop selling all Harley-branded merchandise.

Labour risks 'unintended consequences' of zero-hours ban

Red tape would make it harder for businesses to hire and grow, hospitality and leisure bosses warn

By **Daniel Woolfson** and **Melissa Lawford**

LABOUR has been warned that its plan to clamp down on zero-hours contracts could cause economically damaging "unintended consequences" for businesses.

Hospitality and leisure bosses said the ban risked saddling them with needless paperwork that would make it harder to hire and expand.

Stephen Burns, the chief executive of Hollywood Bowl, which runs ten-pin bowling alleys, said: "I'm not a fan [of the policy]. There's quite a lot of businesses like ours that are very seasonal, and rely heavily on team members who want that flexibility ... rather than forced hours that people can't then commit to."

Labour has promised to ban "exploitative" zero-hour contracts, as part of a package of promises on workers rights, which it has dubbed a "new deal for working people". They do not plan to outlaw them completely.

Bosses have been meeting with unions and Labour representatives over recent months to discuss the policy, one of Labour's key election pledges.

Around 1.1m people in Britain are on zero-hours contracts in the UK, according to recent research by the Work Foundation at Lancaster University – roughly 3.4pc of the workforce.

Advocates argue they offer flexibility, allowing people to pick and choose when they work to suit them. However, critics claim the contracts offer "insecure" employment.

Kate Nicholls, the chief executive of UK Hospitality, which represents pubs, restaurants and nightclubs, said: "The key will be to make sure the detail of the policy is right. Nobody wants to impose burdens on businesses that would cut across good employment practices."

Mohammad Jamei, the director of economic policy at the Confederation of British Industry, said: "Any changes have to be weighed up against some of the opportunities that they could potentially close down. We want businesses to be able to take risks to open new premises and grow."

The National Living Wage increase that came into effect in April means businesses are holding back on investments because of higher labour costs, Mr Jamei said.

A Labour spokesman said: "Businesses will still be able hire seasonally and workers will be free to stay on a variable contract if that's what works best for them – but we won't put up with one-sided flexibility.

"Labour will make work pay. We will tackle insecure work by banning exploitative zero-hours contracts, giving workers the right to have a contract that reflects the number of hours they regularly work."


ANGEL GARCIA/BLOOMBERG

Rice to the occasion Farmers eat paella while blocking the AP7 highway at a protest over food security on the French-Spanish border in Le Perthus. The grains industry has been disrupted by demonstrations over rising costs and cheap imports.



Criminal inquiry into Monzo money laundering failings is dropped

By **Michael Bow**

A CRIMINAL inquiry into Monzo over potential breaches of anti-money laundering rules has been dropped after two years.

The online bank said the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) was no longer assessing criminal liability.

The FCA began looking into potential criminal wrongdoing at Monzo in 2021, examining potential breaches of anti-money laundering and financial crime rules from October 2018 to June 2022.

The investigation opened up the possibility of potential criminal prosecutions. However Monzo revealed in its annual report, out yesterday, that the FCA had dropped that threat.

The regulator is continuing the inquiry as a civil matter, which may result in fines.

The disclosure came as Monzo announced it had made its first annual profit after nearly a decade of operation.

The online lender moved into the black after adding 2.3m new customers last year. The bank, now the seventh largest in the UK, reported a £15.4m profit for the year to the end of March, compared with a loss of £116m in the previous year.

Like most banks, Monzo has reaped the benefit of higher interest rates, which allow it to earn bigger profit margins on products it sells. A greater number of customers also means more deposits flowing on to the bank's balance sheet and more sales of loans and investment products.


TS Anil, Monzo's chief executive, said it was moving away from its reputation as an app-and-debit card for millennials

Deposits jumped 88pc for the year to the end of March to £11.2bn, leading to a near-tripling of revenues to £880m.

Monzo was co-founded in 2015 by entrepreneur Tom Blomfield as an app-only challenger to high street banks.

The company has raised billions of dollars from venture capitalists to fuel its growth but has never managed to be consistently profitable.

Mr Blomfield left the company in 2021 and was replaced as chief executive by TS Anil, an ex-Visa and Standard Chartered executive.

Mr Anil said the lender was moving away from its early reputation as an app-and-debit card for millennials to being a conventional bank for everybody.

He said Monzo would likely now stay in profit for the foreseeable future.

The number of customers who now treat Monzo as their main bank has doubled over the past few years, he added. Nearly a quarter of Monzo's 9m customers use it as their primary lender.

The bank is planning to open an office in Dublin in the next few months. The move is designed to give the bank a foothold in the European Union.

M&S chief lands £2m pay rise as turnaround pays off

By **Hannah Boland**

MARKS & SPENCER chief executive Stuart Machin has landed a £2m pay rise after his turnaround push helped the retailer to its best financial position in almost 30 years.

Mr Machin's total pay package jumped to £4.7m last year, up from £2.7m a year earlier, boosted by a bigger bonus and a larger share award during the year. His salary rose by about 22pc for the year to £818,000, compared to £669,000 a year earlier.

Katie Bickerstaffe, M&S's co-chief executive who is stepping down next month, also received a similar increase, with her pay rising from £2.4m to £4.4m. It follows a strong period of growth for the retailer, which last month revealed its profits had surged 58pc in its latest financial year to hit £716.4m. Revenues were up 9.3pc to more than £13bn.

Sales and profits have been rising as a turnaround plan piloted by Mr Machin bears fruit, after years of stalled revival efforts under previous management.

Mr Machin, who became co-chief executive in May 2022, has overseen a modernisation of the company's clothing business and maintained a strong performance within food.

Last year M&S grew sales not only in its food business but also clothing, where growth has typically lagged. It now holds a 10pc share of the overall UK clothing and home goods market.

M&S finished its most recent financial year with the equivalent of £46m cash on hand, compared with a net debt of £356m a year ago. Strong sales, profits and cash prompted one analyst to say M&S was "in the strongest financial health since 1997".

Shares in the company are up about 64pc over the past year. Mr Machin's total pay package is the largest he has received since he took over as chief executive. M&S said the increase came after the company exceeded performance targets.

The company's pay board said Mr Machin had also helped to improve performance at M&S's grocery joint venture with Ocado by "coaching the chief executive of Ocado Retail" during the period. M&S said the majority of his package was in deferred variable pay, which was subject to holding periods and the value of which depends on future share price performance.

British company tackling mobile 'not spots' given $100m

By **James Titcomb**

A BRITISH aerospace company taking on Elon Musk's Starlink with high-altitude autonomous planes has secured a $100m (£79m) investment from Japanese investors to provide internet signals to mobile blackspots.

Telecoms group NTT Docomo has led the investment in Farnborough-based Aalto, a subsidiary of Airbus that is aiming to provide mobile signals from 60,000ft within two years.

Other investors include Space Compass, an NTT joint venture focused on space-based communications and computers, as well as the banks Mizuho and Bank of Japan.

The lightweight plane with a 65ft wingspan, called the Zephyr, is the largest aircraft manufactured in Britain.

Samer Halawi, Aalto's chief executive, said the planes provide signals in rural areas or in regions hit by natural disasters that may have knocked out mobile connections.

Aalto plans to use the funds to speed up production of its aircraft, manufactured in the UK, and set up airports from where the planes, capable of flying for about a month, can take off and land.

Why Labour cannot count on Shein to save the City



A London listing for the Chinese fashion giant may not be a vote of confidence, report *Michael Bow* and *Hannah Boland*

Chinese fast fashion giant Shein is preparing to join the London Stock Exchange in a £50bn deal that would be the largest share debut for over a decade.

The online retailer, known for its rapid product launches at ultra-low prices, is preparing to file registration documents with the Financial Conduct Authority ahead of a possible listing later this year, Sky News reported.

The filing does not mean a float is imminent and sources close to the company sought to dampen speculation that Shein will shortly join the market.

However, it marks the first step in the initial public offering (IPO) process and signals Shein is seriously considering London.

A float of Shein would be the largest IPO in London since Glencore joined the market in 2011 in a £38bn deal. It would give the moribund stock market a much-needed short in the arm.

London has been struggling to shake its image as a backwater market in decline, following an exodus of companies and a drought of new listings. Attracting Shein "could hopefully bring more inflows into the UK, it would hopefully see more interest in UK PLC on the back of it", says Liberum analyst Wayne Brown.

In a sign of the interest the company has generated in Westminster, senior figures from both Labour and the Tories have met with Shein's representatives in recent weeks.

Jonathan Reynolds, shadow business secretary, recently met the group, while Shein's executive chairman Donald Tang met with Jeremy Hunt, the Chancellor, earlier in the year.

A Labour spokesman confirmed the party had met Shein as part of its usual meet-and-greet with companies looking to invest or list in Britain.

Yet luring Shein to London could yield less upside than hoped.

The company's interest in the market is less a vote of confidence in London and more reflective of its struggles to plot a US stock market listing. Shein has been planning to list in New York since last year but has faced opposition from authorities and politicians amid ongoing US-China tensions.

Senator Marco Rubio, a former Republican presidential candidate, has been leading a campaign against Shein's plans after the company confidentially filed for an IPO last November.

Concerns centre on its cotton supply. Most Chinese cotton comes from Xinjiang, where there is alleged forced labour of Uyghurs.

Shein offers T-shirts for as little as £4, a price that many see as unfeasibly low. Rubio said in April there was a "high probability these companies have facilitated the importation of goods made with forced labour". Earlier this month a group of about two dozen US lawmakers called on the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to halt the float until Shein had confirmed it did not use Uyghur forced labour.

A spokesman said: "Shein has a zero-tolerance policy for forced labour and we are committed to respecting human rights. We take visibility across our entire supply chain seriously and we require our contract manufacturers to only source cotton from approved regions."

On the current course, the decision about whether to investigate Shein's supply chain claims looks likely to fall to Labour. The party could choose to vet the deal for national security concerns, although it is understood Labour does not currently believe the IPO represents a threat.

A party spokesman said: "We expect the highest regulatory standards and business practices from any company operating in the UK. We believe the best way to ensure this is to have more companies operating from and regulated by UK law."

A bigger concern, for the London market at least, may be whether City investors will embrace Shein. "I am hyper-sceptical about it," said one fund manager. The fund manager also highlights misgivings about the reported structure of the deal.

> 'It's a sign of how desperate London is to get a listing. It's a sign of weakness for London'

Shein is looking to raise £1bn by selling just a 5pc stake of the company, leaving investors at the mercy of majority shareholders.

"It's a sign of how desperate London is to get a listing," said the fund manager, who invests in FTSE 100 stocks. "It's a sign of weakness for London." Many fund managers say they would also prefer to see a steady stream of smaller companies coming to market, rather than behemoths like Shein. Tech start-up Raspberry Pi is often touted as the type of company fund managers would like to invest in.

The group yesterday said it was expecting a valuation of up to £540m when it goes public later this month. The expected valuation is a boost for the company, which had previously been expected to target a valuation of about £400m.

Shein also risks putting noses out of joint among London's other listed companies. *The Telegraph* recently reported that UK high street leaders were concerned about tax loopholes that meant Shein could sell products cheaper than UK rivals. By shipping individual orders directly from factories in China, the company avoids the tax charged on bulk imports that other retailers face when they ship in orders to their UK factories.

"It raises the question: is Shein on a level playing field with UK growth companies?" says Liberum's Brown. Rivals also allege that Shein engages in industrial-scale copyright infringement. The company is said to have computer algorithms that scan the internet to see what products are selling well. It marries this data with China's vast textile manufacturing might, enabling it to quickly launch competitor products.

> 'It raises the question: is Shein on a level playing field with UK growth companies?'

H&M has sued Shein in Hong Kong alleging it copied its designs, while a rival lawsuit filed in the US last year claimed the company had "grown rich by committing individual infringements over and over again".

Shein has said it "takes all claims of infringement seriously, and we take swift action when complaints are raised by valid IP rights holders".

Brown suggests the lawsuits are simply sour grapes, saying "its business model is phenomenal".

GSK suffers £7bn slump after ruling on Zantac cancer claims

By **Hannah Boland**

GSK has lost almost £7bn of value after a US court ruled that more than 70,000 lawsuits against the British drug-maker could go ahead.

Shares in the company dropped as much as 10pc following the news that GSK would have to face cases arguing that its former heartburn treatment Zantac causes cancer. The fall represents the drugmaker's biggest share price slump in almost two years. GSK was the biggest faller on the FTSE 100 yesterday, ending the day down 9.5pc.

In a judgment on Friday, which was published over the weekend, judge Vivian Medinilla said a jury should weigh up the scientific evidence on both sides.

She ruled that scientific evidence linking Zantac to cancer was admissible in court, saying: "In Delaware ... trial courts entrust questions of science to the scientists. It would be improper to simply dismiss these experts as 'poseurs or witnesses for hire'." Analysts said the ruling in Delaware exposed GSK to more than 70,000 cases. Citi suggested a Zantac settlement could cost about $3bn (£2.4bn). Morgan Stanley warned in 2022 that the pharmaceutical industry could face tens of billions of dollars in potential liabilities from Zantac cases.

It follows years of legal wrangling over Zantac, which drug-makers pulled from sale in 2019 after US watchdogs said they discovered "unacceptable levels" of probable cancer-causing ingredients in the medicine. It had been available over the counter in the US. In the UK, GSK recalled four prescription-only Zantac medicines. GSK and other companies that sold Zantac have been battling lawsuits over the treatment since the middle of 2022, rejecting claims that its ingredients cause cancer.

Other court cases have been found in their favour, with a jury in Chicago last month finding that Zantac did not cause an individual to develop colon cancer.

GSK said yesterday that it will "continue to vigorously defend itself against all claims" and was immediately seeking an appeal to the Delaware ruling.

GSK said that it was also filing motions for dismissal.

A spokesman said the litigation in Delaware "remains at an early stage" and only addressed the question over whether the expert evidence was "sufficiently reliable to allow them to present their evidence at trial".

GSK share price



Spending on takeaways falls for first time in four years

By **Eir Nolsøe**

SPENDING on takeaways has dropped for the first time in four years after rising bills prompted people to rein in spending on luxuries.

Card spending grew at the slowest pace in more than two years last month, according to Barclaycard, with shoppers spending only 1pc more compared with a year earlier. The sluggish spending came as the cost of some household bills and essentials increased in April, which Barclays said dealt a blow to consumer confidence.

Households reduced their use of platforms such as JustEast and Deliveroo, triggering the first decline in spending on takeaways since May 2020.

More than two in five people said they were tightening their belts. Cutting back on takeaways was the most commonly cited money saver.

Airlines also had the worst month since July 2021, with spending on flights increasing by just 5.6pc.

Overall, non-essential spending grew at the slowest pace in more than two years, Barclaycard said, at 0.7pc.

The British Retail Consortium, an industry body, separately reported a 0.7pc rise in shop sales in May. Shoppers cut spending on all items, excluding groceries, by 2.4pc in the three months to May compared with a year earlier.

Helen Dickinson, chief executive of the BRC, said continued poor weather meant retailers saw only a "modest" rebound after a 4pc sales drop in April.

However, Ms Dickinson said: "Retailers remain optimistic that major events such as the Euros and the Olympics will bolster consumer confidence."

Jack Meaning, chief UK economist at Barclays, said easing inflation and rising incomes were "all pointing to a gradual acceleration in consumer spending over the next 12 months, especially as we begin to see the Bank of England reduce interest rates."

Elsewhere, a closely watched survey of purchasing managers confirmed Britain's factories are finally seeing better days.

Manufacturing production and new orders rose to a two-year high in May, amid hopes of imminent interest rate cuts and improving demand.

Yet the rebound comes with renewed price pressures, which could become a concern for the Bank of England if they persist.

GameStop shares spike as 'memestock' trader reveals stake

By **Matthew Field**

SHARES in video game retailer GameStop climbed as much as 80pc yesterday after the return of a trader who helped drive a previous dramatic spike in its stock during the "memestock" frenzy.

GameStop shares shot up to $40 (£31) in early US trading, before falling back and trading up about 30pc compared with their closing price last week.

The rally has been driven by a trade by financial analyst Keith Gill, who posted a picture on Reddit suggesting he had bought 5m shares worth $116m on Friday, along with further options that would make him one of GameStop's biggest shareholders.

Mr Gill's previous trades fuelled a massive buying spree at GameStop in 2021, which sent its shares up more than 1,700pc in a matter of days. It cost Wall Street hedge funds that bet against the stock billions of dollars. The episode was made into a film, *Dumb Money*.

Mr Gill, formerly a financial analyst with MassMutual, posted a series of cryptic posts on the social media site X in May, prompting a flurry of interest in the stock from speculators.



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Water sector risk-return trade-off is out of Wacc



BEN WRIGHT

If investors turn their backs on the industry, the next government will be in deep trouble

Sir Ed Davey has taken a couple of pratfalls off a paddleboard in the Lake District and the Liberal Democrats have announced "bold" (read: "unrealistic") plans "to end the sewage scandal". But so far in this election campaign, the two main parties have spent very little time discussing a topic that will be near the top of the next government's in-tray.

That's hardly surprising. When it comes to the UK's water industry, logic is now fighting an uphill battle against emotion. The overwhelming majority of the public would like water companies to be nationalised. Both the Tories and Labour know this would be a cripplingly expensive mistake and aren't keen to tell voters they're wrong. But something clearly must be done. Public ire about sewage in rivers and on the beaches keeps ratcheting up. Thames Water is in serious danger of defaulting on its debt and entering special measures. Less than a week after the election, the industry regulator Ofwat will set out its requirements for every English and Welsh water company for the five years from 2025, which is likely to kick-start months of heated wrangling.

The arguments about who is to blame for all this are well-rehearsed. Critics of the water companies claim they have spent years paying out dividends to their investors and bonuses to their executives rather than investing in their networks. Exhibit A for the prosecution is the sewage in the rivers; exhibit B is the lack of new reservoirs since 1991.

Behind closed doors, water industry insiders suggest they have been restrained from investing as much as they'd like by a regulator that, under pressure from its political masters, has prioritised low bills. They are also struggling to deal with population growth, climate change and higher costs. Overlaying all this is a public perception that water companies are wantonly polluting the UK's rivers and beaches when in fact things are improving. A recent report by Moody's found that water treatment and sewage discharges are no worse than in most other countries but the salience of, for example, spills from storm overflows had been fed by increased monitoring.

"There are two conclusions that one might draw at this point," wrote John Earwaker of First Economics in a recent note. "One might be that water companies just haven't been up to the task recently and deserve at least some of the criticism they have been receiving. But an alternative view might be that, with the benefit of hindsight, companies were set an impossible challenge five years ago and are now paying the price for regulatory miscalculation."

Likely it's a bit of both. The water industry is a three-way balancing act to ensure companies invest enough in their networks while ensuring investors can earn a reasonable return without consumer bills going through the roof. That balance hangs on Ofwat's assessment of the weighted average cost of capital, which includes the cost to a company of raising equity, servicing existing (embedded) debt, and issuing new debt.

There are two reasons why it will be particularly important for the next regulatory period. First, water companies have proposed investing £96bn between 2025 and 2030 – a 90pc increase on the current five-year period. And, second, the regulator wants water companies to reduce their gearing ratio from 60pc to 55pc. (For utilities this is calculated by dividing debt by regulatory capital value, which is similar to enterprise value – equity plus net debt – in a standard company.)

> 'Despite the political turmoil, the water industry still holds plenty of attractions'

You don't need to be a corporate finance expert to realise that, if you are simultaneously making a huge capital investment while also reducing your gearing, you are going to need a shedload of fresh equity. This will have to be provided by investors.

Despite the political turmoil, the water industry still holds plenty of attractions: utility providers are traditionally pretty steady-as-she-goes companies that chug along quite nicely regardless of the economic weather. But even if you were convinced of the case for investing in a UK water company – why might you choose to invest in the equity rather than the debt?

Because more risk usually equates to higher returns. Bond investors are lending a company money and will therefore get paid back no matter what (almost). Even if the company goes bankrupt they should have first dibs on any remaining assets. Equity investors, on the other hand, are only buying the opportunity to share in the firm's notional future profits.

But that risk-return trade-off is in danger of disappearing from the UK water industry. Over the past 20 years the difference between the cost of equity and debt for UK water companies has varied between 2.9 percentage points and 3.6 percentage points (with an average of 3.4 percentage points).

However, according to methodology that Ofwat has published for calculating the weighted average cost of capital (Wacc) in the next regulatory period, the estimated cost of debt will be 3.28pc and the cost of equity will be 4.14pc. This gives you a difference of just 0.86 percentage points.

For that, investors will have to bear the risk of the company overspending on projects. This could, of course, be the result of mismanagement. But it might also be the result of, say, Russia invading Ukraine and sending the price of energy, of which water companies are big consumers, through the roof.

Equity holders will also be the ones ponying up if the company is penalised by the regulator for not hitting its targets or fined for messing up. The net loss of profit experienced by shareholders over three years on account of their "operational performance" was around £3.5bn in three years to 2023, according to First Economics (a tad more than they paid out in dividends).

And, of course, equity investors will be at the front of the queue to lose their money if the company goes belly up. Hardly seems worth it, does it? Yet if investors turn their backs on the UK water industry, the government really will be heading up an extremely polluted creek without a paddle.



AVANTI WEST COAST/PA

Sea change One of Avanti West Coast's new Hitachi-built Evero trains goes through Llanfairfechan in North Wales. The new models have 16pc more seats than the Voyager trains they are replacing, and their introduction has led to more services between London and Birmingham.

A devastating debt time-bomb is lurking inside Kretinsky's takeover of Royal Mail



BEN MARLOW

The postal service is about to fall prey to the sort of takeover that has harmed many household names

Postal deserts, trade union dust-ups, soaring stamp prices – a series of crises have dented Royal Mail's reputation in recent years. But the cheery marketing blurbs on its website are a timely reminder that it remains one of this country's most important and dependable national institutions.

"Your delivery is in good hands", it boldly states. "Trusted to deliver your mail for 500 years" declares another. For how much longer, though? That is the question that should be keeping the Government awake at night after the board of Royal Mail's parent company International Distribution Services meekly surrendered to a debt-fuelled takeover bid at the hands of gnomic Czech billionaire and corporate raider Daniel Křetínský.

Not that you'd know it from the warm words that both sides had for this most unlikely of marriages. According to IDS chairman Keith Williams, the company "has the potential to become a leading international logistics player" in Křetínský's cuddly embrace.

The great man himself meanwhile, is at pains to acknowledge that Royal Mail "is part of the fabric of UK society", not to mention that "owning this business will come with enormous responsibility". Never mind the post bag, pass the sick bag.

Yet no amount of nauseating spin can mask the danger lurking in the 63-page document accompanying last week's agreed offer from Křetínský's EP Group.

Of the £3.5bn that Křetínský has agreed to pay for IDS, an eye-watering £2.3bn will be in the form of entirely new debt. Therefore, two thirds of the total is not his own money.

Instead, it will be borrowed from a syndicate of banks. With interest rates a 16-year high, they will make sure to extract their pound of flesh at a steeper cost than the company's existing borrowing.

The loan component of the deal alone should ring alarm bells from Royal Mail's headquarters in Clerkenwell right across the City and all the way to Westminster.

Royal Mail is already carrying debts of £1.7bn, which is costing nearly £100m a year to service.

As if that wasn't enough, the small print of Royal Mail's most recent annual results reveals further risks from a sale. Change of control clauses in the company's lending agreements mean more than £1.4bn of existing bonds may have to be paid, and a £925m loan facility could be pulled.

Analysts think it is unlikely lenders will call their debts in; nevertheless, it is further evidence of the risks attached to a buyout and delisting.

Křetínský's people paint him as a benevolent industrialist with sacks of spare cash to shower his investments with. However, the reality is that Royal Mail is about to be subjected to the sort of highly geared takeover that has imperilled many household names from care home giant Southern Cross and music label EMI to roadside rescue service AA and department store operator Debenhams.

More recently, a shocking reminder of the devastating effects of over-burdening companies with debt is on full view at Thames Water as it teeters on the brink of collapse and a taxpayer-backed rescue. There is no denying that Britain's postal service has struggled in a big way in recent years. Yet, the idea that loading a relatively debt-light business up to the eyeballs with billions of pounds in fresh loans is likely to be beneficial to its prospects is plainly nonsense.

Křetínský's approach is a textbook private equity bid in everything but name with all the corresponding risks such a model brings. As private equity-owned companies too often discover to their horror, in order to meet quarterly debt repayments, something has to give.

Usually, that means reduced investment but it can also entail ruthless cost-cutting at the expense of jobs – a possibility that the Communication Workers Union may want to think more carefully about as it fluffs its lines on Křetínský's interest.

In its rush to kick out the current regime, the CWU seems content to stand aside and allow Křetínský a free run at an organisation where it represents 115,000 employees.

CWU boss Dave Ward says the union is against private ownership. Yet the Royal Mail is about to disappear from the glare of the public markets overseas and into the arms of a foreign investor dubbed the "Czech Sphinx" for his approach to accountability. The potential for asset sales should be a genuine concern, too. Both Royal Mail shareholders and experts believe Křetínský could be getting his hands on one of the biggest corporate property portfolios in Europe – an estate of prime sites situated in towns up and down the country – on the cheap.

The CoStar commercial property website points out that the buildings are in the sort of locations highly prized by the so-called "last-mile" delivery companies, and it is for this reason that they could be dramatically undervalued.

Developers are also likely to spy rich pickings. In 2011, the Royal Mail offloaded a 2.3 acre site in the West End of London for £120m, which it then temporarily leased back as a sorting office. Six years later the redeveloped site was sold for £435m.

Whenever he has been pressed about whether this deal is in the national interest, Jeremy Hunt talks disingenuously about the need for Britain to be open to foreign investment.

But real foreign investment, such as the £2.5bn Microsoft plans to spend on AI data centres in London and Cardiff, is not the same as a heavily debt-financed takeover of a critical national asset by a self-interested private equity tycoon. To conflate the two is to take us all for fools.

Power stations to keep bills high until 2030

By **Matthew Field**

BRITAIN'S ageing fleet of gas and nuclear power plants will keep prices high until the end of the decade, energy analysts have warned, with prices predicted to spike to cover gaps in renewable energy generation.

Energy forecaster Cornwall Insight said the prices paid to electricity generators to keep the UK's grid stable would reach at least £51 per kilowatt until 2030, substantially higher than current rates of £18 per kW.

Under the UK's Capacity Market, power plant operators are paid to plug demand for electricity generation when intermittent renewable energy sources such as wind and solar are at their weakest.

The current prices were agreed in 2020 until 2025, but the latest auction data show the cost of providing backup capacity spiking as high as £65 per kW.

Cornwall Insight said prices were only predicted to fall to about £51 per kW by 2030, with the elevated costs passed on to consumers as part of their energy bills.

"As existing power plants become less reliable, particularly gas and nuclear, their running hours will decrease, and they will require higher prices in the Capacity Market to cover costs," the analysts said.

New, cleaner technologies that could serve to meet demand, such as battery storage, are also currently more expensive.

"Additionally, uncertainty over the lifespan extension of certain nuclear plants and the operational start date of Hinkley Point C will contribute to keeping prices elevated. While solutions like battery storage could meet some of the increasing power demand, they can be expensive, and generators need higher payouts to cover costs," said Tom Faulkner, head of product development at Cornwall Insight.

"At the same time, refurbishing the ageing plants to continue to provide the power comes with its own costs – costs which ultimately land at the feet of consumers."

Energy bills have spiralled following Russia's war in Ukraine, which affected gas prices. Under Ofgem's price cap regime, average household bills are expected to fall around 7pc from July, bringing the typical energy bill paid by direct debit down to £1,568 per year.

However, Cornwall Insight expects prices could begin to climb again from October.

Toyota and rivals halt car exports over safety

By **Matt Oliver**

TOYOTA and four other Japanese vehicle makers have been forced to halt some shipments amid a widening safety-test cheating scandal.

The government in Tokyo found the companies had submitted faulty or manipulated safety test data when they were applying for the certification of certain cars and motorcycles.

It is the latest blow to Japan's well-regarded auto industry after revelations of "irregularities" in certification processes in January, following an investigation at Toyota's Daihatsu compact car unit. The companies insist the issues do not affect the performance or safety of their vehicles and that customers can continue driving them.

At Toyota, the world's biggest carmaker, the cheating relates to the popular Yaris Cross, the Corolla Fielder and Corolla Axio, as well as four discontinued models. The company's infractions included using inadequate or outdated data for crash tests and falsified data in engine power tests.

At a press conference in Japan yesterday, Akio Toyoda, the Toyota chairman, bowed deeply for several seconds in front of television cameras – a customary gesture used by companies that have been caught misbehaving.

Mr Toyoda said: "We sincerely apologise. These acts shake the very foundation of the verification system. They should have never been committed."

Toyota said the halt to shipments would affect two assembly lines responsible for the production of 130,000 cars a year. The company sold 11m vehicles last year. The other companies caught up in the testing scandal are Honda, Mazda, Suzuki Motor and Yamaha Motor, who also admitted they had found evidence of inadequate testing.

Mazda, based in Hiroshima, said it falsified test results for collision testing of five models including the Mazda2 and the Roadster RF.

Meanwhile, Tokyo-based Honda said it had carried out improper tests on 22 discontinued cars. In Suzuki's case, the fraudulent conduct was limited to a single model: a light commercial version of a previous-generation Alto.

Yamaha admitted to irregularities related to the YZF-R1 sports motorcycle.

Toyota shares dropped 1.8pc in Tokyo yesterday. The findings deepen a crisis in Japan's car industry, with the government having ordered some 90 manufacturers to re-examine testing procedures. Investigations into 17 companies are still ongoing.

Markets

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Government securities

52 week High	Low (£)	Stock	Price (£)	+/-	Flat Yield	Rdm Yield
102.30	99.20	Treas 5¾ 25	100.07	+0.02	5.00	4.93
112.21	100.63	Treas 6¾ 28	107.65*	+0.31	5.57	4.12
106.59	90.79	Treas 4¼% 32	101.03*	+0.52	4.21	4.10
106.09	94.06	Treas 4¼% 36	99.27	+0.70	4.28	4.33
110.73	96.88	Treas 4¾% 38	103.05*	+0.84	4.61	4.46
Index Linked Securities						
385.25	371.32	Treas 2½% IL 24	385.14	+0.09	0.65	2.07
352.43	325.85	Treas 4¼% IL 30	344.37	+1.40	1.20	0.36
243.64	239.45	Treas 2% IL 35	247.56	+1.52	0.81	0.68

10-year Government Bonds

	Yield%	Spread vs Bunds	Spread vs T-Bonds
France	3.05	+0.47	-1.36
Germany	2.58	-	-1.83
Japan	1.05	-1.53	-3.36
Great Britain	4.22	+1.64	-0.19
United States	4.41	+1.83	-

The share prices, price-earnings ratios and dividend yields below are supplied by Interactive Data (Europe) Ltd. The yields are calculated using historic dividend payments divided by the closing share price multiplied by 100.

Aerospace & defence +0.93%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
575	266¾	Babcock Intl ●	565	-½	0.3	-81.9
1415¼	883¼	**BAE Systems**	1395½*	+3½	2.1	22.8
456⅞	292¼	QinetiQ ●	455¼	+8	1.8	18.8
468¼	143½	**Rolls-Royce**	460⅞	+7½	–	16.0
183	146¾	Senior ●	163¼*	+4	1.4	21.8

Banks -0.68%

224¼	128¼	**Barclays**	219¼	-¾	3.6	7.9
998½	278	Close Bros ●	496¼	+17¾	–	9.1
725¼	572¼	**HSBC**	693¼*	-3¾	6.9	7.7
57⅞	39¾	**Lloyds Bk Gp**	55⅞	-⅛	5.0	7.3
329¾	168	**NatWest Group**	319¼	+4¼	5.3	6.7
423	257	Santander	407	-3	3.0	23.9
796	571	**Standard Ch**	776⅝	-1	2.8	9.1

Beverages +0.32%

3509	2563	**Diageo**	2639	+8½	3.0	16.0

Chemicals +0.36%

6286	4018	**Croda Intl**	4574	+34	2.4	37.3
1917⅛	1428½	Johnson Mat ●	1752	-6	4.4	29.9
1632	1152	Victrex ●	1290*	+2	4.6	18.2

Construction +0.97%

391¼	291⅝	Balfour Beatty ●	375*	+3¾	3.1	10.6
582¾	384½	**Barratt Dev**	504¾	+1¾	5.5	9.5
2898	1903	Bellway ●	2732*	+54	4.1	9.2
5360	3634	**Berkeley Grp**	5240	–	1.8	12.3
245	170	Boot H	207*	+5	3.5	10.5

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
88	40⅞	Costain	83¾	-3¾	1.4	10.3
1028⅞	737¼	Grafton Gp ●	1014¼	+21¼	3.5	14.6
2605	1640½	Morgan Sindall ●	2540	+20	4.5	10.0
1501	925	**Persimmon**	1471½	+26½	4.1	18.4
750	423⅜	Redrow ●	717	+5	3.5	7.9
150¾	98⅛	**Taylor Wimpey**	148¾	+1¾	6.4	15.0

Electricals +0.92%

240	135	Dialight	179	–	–	–
958	586	discoverIE Grp ●	754	+26	1.5	33.8
2500	1802	**Halma**	2240	+14	0.9	36.1
4500	2823¾	Renishaw ●	4035	+35	1.9	25.3
2489¼	682¾	XP Power	1570	+50	1.1	-34.6

Electricity +0.69%

637⅞	395¼	Drax Group ●	516	-2½	4.5	3.6
1052⅞	645	**Nat Grid**	886	+3¾	6.6	15.5
1932½	1485	**SSE**	1777½	+22½	3.4	11.3

Engineering / Industrial +0.20%

89¾	63½	Coats Group ●	85¾	-⅛	2.6	31.1
884	212	Cropper J	330	–	2.1	61.1
7300	4200	Goodwin	6200	+120	1.9	30.0
1911	1429	**IMI**	1870	+15	1.5	20.4
1719⅞	1291	**Mondi**	1550½	-10½	4.0	16.9
76¼	48⅛	Severfield	72¾	+4	4.8	10.4
1776½	1517½	**Smiths Gp**	1733	+11	2.4	26.5
415	260½	**Smith (DS)**	382¾	+1¾	4.7	10.7
3910	2528	**Smurfit Kappa**	3862	+42	3.4	15.5
11480	7900	**Spirax**	8855	-55	1.8	35.5
2210¼	1652½	**Weir**	2106*	-18	1.8	23.9

Food producers +0.71%

2765	1815½	**Ass Brit Fds**	2561*	+11	2.1	19.1
2830	2065	**Coca-Cola HBC**	2688*	+40	2.9	18.3
4570	3158	Cranswick ●	4465	+20	2.0	21.2
957	614	Hilton Food ●	897*	+3	3.6	22.1
93	48	REA Hldgs	87½	–	–	-3.4
4357	3680½	**Unilever**	4307*	+28	3.4	19.6

Gas & Water -0.82%

173¼	115	**Centrica**	141¼*	-⅞	2.8	2.0
802	532⅞	Pennon Gp ●	611	-11	7.3	-169.7
2800	2243	**Severn Trent**	2357*	-29	5.0	46.2
1139½	896¼	**Utd Utilities**	1006	-10	4.9	54.1

General financial +0.37%

239¾	156¼	Ashmore ●	198¼	+3¼	8.5	16.0
300⅝	164¾	Bridgepoint Grp ●	229⅞	+6	3.8	25.5
1151	676⅝	**Hargreaves L**	1064	+8½	3.9	15.6
831½	600½	IG Group ●	822	+12	5.5	9.4
2448	1244⅞	**IntermediateCp**	2286	-24	3.5	13.8
567	414¾	Investec ●	530	+11½	6.5	5.0
66¾	40	IP Group ●	54	-¾	2.4	-3.3
865	519	Liontrust	798	-23	9.0	13.0
60	30	Lon. Fin. & Inv.	50½	+2½	2.4	11.5
9696	7784	**Lon Stock Ex**	9150	-12	1.3	65.9
241½	181½	**M&G**	203¾	+4¾	9.7	-3.1
279¼	200½	Man Group ●	262	-1¾	4.9	16.8
124½	71¼	Quilter ●	123	+5¼	4.2	39.7

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
2500	1750	S & U	1970	+70	6.1	9.4
470	346¼	**Schroders**	396	+4¾	5.4	16.1
231½	43½	Vanquis Banking Gp	57¾	+3¾	10.4	-24.0

Healthcare +0.17%

371¼	306¾	**Haleon**	326¾	+1¼	1.8	28.6
1269	887	**Smith & Nep**	984¼	-6¼	3.1	41.6

Household goods +0.87%

2289	1016	**Burberry**	1045½	+10½	5.8	14.1
127¾	24½	McBride	126	+4½	–	-19.1
195¼	81½	PZ Cussons ●	112⅝	+2¼	4.6	12.9
6346	4102¾	**Reckitt Benck**	4487	+35	4.3	19.6

Information technology -0.09%

389	224½	Aptitude Sftwre	380*	+10	1.4	52.6
1285	855¼	**Sage Gp**	1020*	-2½	1.9	49.2
205	79¾	Spirent ●	184¼	+¾	1.7	54.7

Insurance +0.67%

238	134⅝	abrdn ●	156¼	+1¼	9.3	–
2870	2010	**Admiral**	2736*	+22	3.8	24.6
501⅛	366	**Aviva**	479¾	–	7.0	12.7
701½	485¼	**Beazley**	683½	-6½	2.1	5.5
240½	132¼	DirectLineIns ●	212¾	-2	1.9	13.4
1277⅞	926	Hiscox ●	1151*	+9	2.6	7.1
690	525	Lancashire Hldg ●	637*	+4	2.5	6.0
259	203¼	**Legal & General**	251¾*	+1¾	8.1	34.3
573¼	436¾	**Phoenix**	498¼	+2	10.6	-36.1
1161½	684¾	**Prudential**	755¼	+8¼	2.2	15.5
1185½	393¾	**St. James's Place**	523	+23¾	4.6	-290.6

Investment trusts +0.86%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	NAV
2995	1837½	**3i**	2926	+63	2.1	2094
349	276¼	3i Infrastructure ●	340½	+2	3.5	364
774	528	abrdn New India	764	+24	–	924
1264	977½	Alliance Trust ●	1208*	+4	2.1	1264
368½	242¾	Allianz Tech Trust ●	350	+4	–	392
417½	321¾	Asia Dragon Trust ●	399	+4	1.7	448
243	175	Baillie Giff China	207	-3	1.0	230
101¼	75¾	Baillie Giff Euro Gwth	99¾	+¾	0.4	116
84½	60	Balanced Comm Prp ●	80½*	+2¼	6.6	107
117¼	91½	Bankers Invstmt Tst ●	112¾*	–	2.3	126
1048	715	Biotech Growth	960	+16	–	1026
127	104	BlackRockEnrgy&Res	121¾	+¾	3.7	138
159⅜	131¼	BlckRock FroInv	148	-1½	4.4	161
653	457½	BlckRck Grt Euro ●	625*	+2	1.1	651
208	170	BlckRck Inc&Grth	204	+1	3.6	225
207	172½	BlckRckSustAmInc	200	+1½	4.0	221
1520	1146	BlackRock Small ●	1512*	+14	2.8	1681
643	503	BlkRk Throg Tst ●	641	+2	2.3	706
644	490	BlackRock Wld M ●	590*	–	5.7	611
1365½	964	Brunner	1345	+15	1.7	1409
3700	3110	Caledonia ●	3545	+5	2.0	5348
429½	371½	City of Lon ●	422½*	-½	4.9	433
206	151½	CQS Nat Res G & I	204	+7	2.7	228
255¾	206	CT Glbl Mgd G	254	–	–	260
121½	98	CT Glbl Mgd I	119	–	6.1	116
516	406	CT Priv Eq Ord	474	+14	5.9	683

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	NAV
340	266¾	CT UK Cap & Inc	333½	-½	3.7	348
95½	71	CT UKHighIncTst	93¼	-1¾	6.0	98
590	448¾	Dunedin Ent	500½	–	2.0	625
746	612¾	Edinburgh Inv Tr ●	741	-1	3.7	818
157¾	120¾	Edin Worldwide ●	144⅛	+1	–	163
92¾	73	European Assets	90¾	+⅝	6.5	103
1058	825¾	**F&C Inv Trust**	1006	-4	1.5	1117
549⅞	473¾	Fidelity Asian V	528	+6	2.7	569
246	181¼	Fidlty China Sp Sits ●	223	+1	2.8	248
412½	311½	Fidelity Euro Tst ●	402	+1½	2.1	413
187	151	Fidelity Japan Tst	175	+1	–	195
312½	252	Fidelity Sp V ●	311*	+1	3.1	337
920	788¾	Finsbury Gwth ●	832	-3	2.3	912
168¾	128¼	Glbl Small Co Trust ●	166¾	+3¾	1.4	183
177	136	Hend High Inc	162½	–	6.4	180
176	148½	Hend Intl Inc	165½*	+1½	4.6	190
902	626	Hend Smaller Co ●	890	+2	3.0	1004
236	169	Hend Opp	234*	+2	3.0	259
2230	1590	Herald Inv ●	2190	+15	–	2480
504	348½	HgCapital ●	489½	+8½	1.3	508
150¾	111	HICL Infrastructure ●	125*	+⅝	6.6	158
1276	1046	ICG Enterprise Tst ●	1238	+14	2.7	1912
748	623	JPM Claverh'se	732*	+6	4.7	775
110½	84¾	JPM Eur G&I	107½*	+1	4.0	119
553	435	JPM Japanese ●	524	+6	1.2	572
337	283¾	JPM Jpn SmCp G&I	294	–	4.8	334
729¾	551¼	**Land Secs**	670	+17½	5.9	–
131½	103¼	Lowland Inv	130	+½	4.9	148
254	179	Majedie	244*	–	3.1	273
399	294¾	Mtn Currie Port	373	+4	1.1	378
249⅞	177¼	Mercantile Inv Tr ●	244	+½	3.2	272
593	476	Merchants Tst ●	582	–	4.9	591
1218	880	Monks ●	1164	+8	0.3	1288
904	766¾	Murray Income ●	862*	-4	4.4	966
269¾	218½	Murray Intl ●	249½	+½	4.6	275
64¾	52	Northern 2 VCT	54½	–	5.7	59
86¾	82½	Northern 3 VCT	84½	–	5.3	92
60½	54	Nthn Venture	57½	–	6.3	63
390	338	Pacific Assets	370	+6	1.1	411
336	245¼	Pantheon ●	326½	+½	–	490
145	87	PremierMitonGlb	104*	–	7.3	122
2030	1696	RIT Cap Ptnrs ●	1824	-4	2.1	2511
290	260⅞	Ruffer Inv Pref ●	274½	–	1.3	288
464	382	Schroder Asian TR	446	+10	2.6	477
540	450	Scot American ●	511*	+6	2.8	557
946½	632¼	**Scot Mortgage**	872⅝	-5¾	0.5	955
151½	101⅞	Shaftesbury Capital ●	146*	+¼	2.2	3.2
1450	1162¼	Smithson Inv Tst ●	1382	+10	–	1553
227	207	STS Global Income	218	+2	3.0	220
167¾	140¾	Tmpletn Em Mt ●	156	+1¾	3.2	185
345	253	TR Property ●	339	+8	4.6	362
135	121	UIL Fin ZDP 2024	132½	+½	–	136
120	105	UIL Fin ZDP 2026	116½	–	–	135
241	203¼	Utilico Emerg	226	–	3.8	273
270	209	Witan ●	256*	-1	2.4	282
355⅝	286	Worldw HealthTr ●	349	+4	0.9	382

Net Asset Values © 2024 Morningstar Estimated at previous day's close see www.Morningstar.co.uk.

Media +0.15%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
849	580¼	**Auto Trader**	827¾	+11¼	1.2	29.4
620½	365	Bloomsbury	604	-6	2.4	15.2
865¼	684	**Informa**	847¾	–	2.1	28.2
82½	55½	ITV ●	78⅜	-¾	6.3	15.2
1046½	793¼	**Pearson**	932¼	-15¾	2.4	17.6
87¼	58½	Reach	86¼*	+5¾	8.5	12.7
3542	2432	**RELX**	3422*	+6	1.7	36.4
603	457¾	**Rightmove**	544¾	+11¾	1.7	22.2
889¾	656	**WPP**	816⅜	-⅞	4.8	13.1

Mining -0.37%

2813	1630	**Anglo Amer**	2503	-10½	3.1	–
2425	1280	**Antofagasta**	2215	+12	1.3	33.4
2707½	2157	BHP Group	2308	-13	5.3	11.6
132¾	77¼	Centamin ●	118¾*	-⅞	2.6	19.1
81	81	Evraz #	81	–	–	0.5
697¾	435¼	**Fresnillo**	616½	-3	0.7	24.8
506¾	365¼	**Glencore**	481½*	+¾	2.1	18.1
190¾	68¼	Hochschild Mng ●	188	+1¾	–	-24.0
470	291	Kenmare Res	357	-3	12.7	3.2
5910	4509½	**Rio Tinto**	5434	-42	6.3	11.2

Oil & Gas -1.11%

562¼	441	**BP**	481¼*	-7	4.7	7.0
18¾	11½	EnQuest	15¾	-¾	–	-12.6
461	190	Hunting ●	422	+4½	1.9	7.3
87½	8¼	Petrofac #	10½	–	–	-0.2
2961	2214	**Shell**	2782½*	-29	3.8	12.3
211¾	124	Wood Grp (John) ●	179	+2¼	–	-14.2

Pharmaceuticals -1.65%

12488	9461	**AstraZeneca**	12346	+156	2.0	41.1
2572	1478	Genus ●	1868	+66	1.7	36.8
1823½	1302⅜	**GSK**	1598*	-168½	3.8	13.1
2222	1711	**Hikma**	1959	+29	2.9	29.1
1938	1125	Indivior ●	1445	–	–	–

Property +1.51%

11	7	Alina Hldgs	8	–	–	22
50¾	37½	Assura ●	42¾	+1¼	7.9	–
1272	901	Big Yellow Gp ●	1264	+16	3.6	–
446¾	287¼	Brit Land ●	444⅜	+6¾	5.1	–
63¾	48¾	Cap&Regional	59¼*	-¼	9.5	–
2452	1766	Derwent Ldn ●	2340*	+12	3.4	–
423½	291	Gt Portland Est ●	342*	-3½	3.7	–
278¾	215¾	Grainger ●	255*	+5	2.7	72.9
30	20½	Hammerson ●	28¾	+⅜	5.2	–
284½	181	Helical	222½	-1½	2.2	-1.4
944¾	675	**Segro**	922¾	+11¾	3.0	–
165	110	Town Centre	153*	-7	–	–
173	121¾	Tritax Big Box ●	162¼*	+4¼	4.5	180
106⅞	68	Warehouse REIT	82⅞	+2¼	7.7	126

Retailers +1.09%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
29	13	Brown (N)	14¼	...	–	-1.3
80¼	43	Currys ●	79¾	+2¼	1.3	-1.8
1335½	959	Dunelm ●	1100	-1	7.1	14.6
949½	661	**Frasers Group**	897½	+16	–	8.5
2996	2244	Greggs ●	2938	-2	2.1	20.9
244¾	136	Halfords	152¾	-¾	6.5	9.8
937	605	**Howden Joinery**	910½	+3	2.3	19.6
177¾	103	**JD Sports Fash**	134	+6½	0.7	13.1
274	198¼	**Kingfisher**	267¾*	+3¾	4.6	14.7
310	178¾	**Marks & Spen**	306½*	+4¼	1.0	14.0
8½	3½	Mothercare	4½	-⅛	–	–
9466	6348	**Next**	9322	-16	2.2	16.3
1017	332¾	**Ocado**	382¾	+9¼	–	-10.0
814	280½	Pinewood Tech	371	+16	–	3.2
161½	100¼	Saga	138⅛	+¾	–	-1.7
311½	243¾	**Sainsbury J**	279¾	+2¼	4.7	47.4
1675	1069	Smith WH ●	1157	+7	2.7	19.0
316¼	217½	**Tesco**	312¼*	+1¼	3.9	18.6

Support services -0.10%

6180	4437	**Ashtead Gp**	5524	-164	1.4	19.2
3306	2680	**Bunzl**	2970*	+34	2.3	18.9
35⅜	12¾	Capita	15	+¾	–	-1.4
20¾	12½	Carillion #	14¼	–	–	0.5
6075	4145	**DCC**	5715*	+25	3.4	17.3
107	29¼	De La Rue	99	+2¾	–	-3.5
191¾	130¼	Essentra ●	171¼*	+6¼	2.1	95.1
3796	2366	**Experian**	3630	+23	1.3	35.3
17810	11375	Ferguson	15905	+5	1.5	20.8
5145	3746	**Intertek Group**	4786*	+10	2.3	26.0
211	122½	Int'l Workplace ●	182¼*	-½	0.5	-8.5
172	99	Johnson Serv	162¼	-5¼	1.7	25.3
124¼	88	MITIE Gp ●	121¾	+¾	2.6	17.9
663¾	387¼	**Rentokil**	419¾	+5¼	2.1	27.7
619⅝	394	Ricardo Gp	492	+4	2.5	-56.6
490	344	Robt Walters	419*	+6	5.6	20.8
193¼	135¼	Serco Group ●	179¾	+1¾	1.9	9.8
41¾	25⅞	SIG	28¼	+¾	–	-7.4
934¼	684¾	Travis P ●	868	+8½	2.1	48.0

Telecommunications +1.24%

150⅝	101¾	**BT Group**	132¼	+2¼	6.0	15.3
1898	1356	Telecom Plus ●	1872	-10	4.4	21.6
82½	62¼	**Vodafone**	76½	+⅞	10.0	21.4

Tobaccos +0.60%

2742	2233	**Brit Am Tob**	2435	+20	9.7	-3.8
2006	1553½	**Imp Brands**	1937½*	-3½	7.7	7.7

Transport -0.12%

340	194¼	Int'l Dist Services ●	335¼	-1	0.6	-23.0
445	310	ZIGUP ●	438	+2	5.7	7.3

Travel & Leisure +0.96%

1388	785¾	Carnival ●	1094	+14	–	-232.9
591½	350	**easyJet**	475⅞	+15⅝	0.9	11.0
1414½	643¾	**Entain**	705⅞	+30¼	2.5	-4.7
189	109¾	FirstGroup ●	173	+2¼	2.5	14.7

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
17980	12020	Flutter Entrtmt	14830	-70	–	-27.5
720	520	Fullers 'A'	720	+14	2.3	55.5
1873⅞	137	**IAG Intl Cons Air**	175¼	+3¾	–	3.8
8790	5184	**Intercont Hotels**	7952	+52	1.5	22.9
314½	194¾	Mitchells&But ●	308	–	–	-440.0
120	52¾	Mobico Group ●	53¾	-⅜	–	-1.8
620	365½	Playtech ●	480	+2	–	16.3
104⅜	60¾	Rank Group	81¾	-1¼	–	-4.0
687	375	TUI AG	575½	+37½	–	8.5
862½	587	Wetherspoon ●	770	+4	–	16.2
3714	2848	**Whitbread**	2954*	+1	3.3	18.3

AIM -0.21%

61¼	23¾	Afentra	59¼	-¾	–	-63.0
1150	840	Arbuthnot	992½	+22½	4.7	4.5
2300	1425⅝	BrooksMacdonald	2050	–	3.7	17.9
⅛	⅛	Cambria Africa #	¼	–	–	-9.6
235	150¼	Central Asia Met	219½	-3½	8.2	13.7
444¾	126¾	Ceres Power	217¾	+1	–	-7.8
1508	947	Churchill China	1140*	+30	3.2	16.2
476¼	290	CML Micro	360	-20	3.1	11.9
860	430	Cohort	808	-12	1.7	28.9
1¼	⅛	Deltex Medical	⅛	–	–	-1.1
122⅝	72	Eleco	119	+11½	0.7	37.2
67	23¼	Futura Medical	37¾	–	–	-16.9
41¼	14	Hornby	24½	-1	–	-7.0
228¼	185	James Halstead	192*	+1	4.3	18.8
77⅛	33¼	LifeScienceREIT	33¾	+½	5.9	81
550	183¼	Mpac Group	495	-4	–	37.8
1040	510¾	MS Intl	1005	-10	1.6	39.3
90	48¼	Premier Miton	72½	–	8.3	29.0
69	19	SRT Marine Sys	19½	–	–	–
74	37	Tribal Gp	53¼	-2¼	1.2	21.3
34	14	Union Jack Oil	19	-¼	1.3	24.1
2	¾	Xtract Resources	1	–	–	-4.3
1240	919	Young & Co – A	990	-20	2.1	19.5
902	580	Young & Co – N/V	620	+4	3.4	12.2

The Alternative Investment Market is for young and growing companies. Shares may carry higher risks than those with a full quotation, and may be difficult to sell.

Americans -1.18%

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	+/-	Grs Yd	Cvr
45½	23¼	Alcoa $	44¾	+¼	0.9	9.4
244⅜	140⅜	Amer Express $	234	-6	1.2	4.3
40¼	25	BankAmerica $	39¾	-⅜	2.4	3.0
267½	159¾	Boeing $	182¼	+4¾	–	–
382	206	Caterpillar $	327	-11½	1.6	4.3
171¾	139⅜	Chevron $	158⅝	-3¾	4.1	1.7
75½	56¼	Coca-Cola Euro $	73¾	-¼	2.8	0.9
95¾	67¾	Colgate Palm $	92¼	-¾	2.2	1.6
82¾	61¼	DuPontDeNemrs $	81¼	-1	1.9	0.6
123¾	95¾	Exxon Mobil $	114¾	-2¾	3.3	2.1
35¾	14¾	Foot Locker $	27⅞	+½	–	–
180⅜	101⅛	Gen Electric $	159⅞	-5¾	0.2	12.0
396⅜	274¼	Home Depot $	327¾	-7¼	2.7	1.7
210⅞	174⅞	Honeywell $	201¾	-¼	2.1	2.0
39½	25¼	HP $	35¾	-1¼	3.1	2.7
199¼	127¾	IBM $	163¾	-3	4.1	1.3
51¼	29¼	Intel $	30¼	-⅜	1.7	1.9
46⅛	29	Intl Paper $	45	-⅛	4.1	0.3

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	+/-	Grs Yd	Cvr
205⅞	135¼	JP Morgan Ch $	199¾	-3¾	2.3	3.6
176	143¼	Johnson&Johnson $	147½	+¾	3.4	1.4
34⅛	27¾	Keurig Dr Pep $	34⅛	+⅛	2.5	1.8
88⅛	67¾	Manpower $	74	-⅛	4.0	0.4
30	21¼	Marathon Oil $	28⅜	-⅛	1.5	5.6
302¾	245¼	McDonalds $	257⅞	-1	2.6	1.8
133⅛	99¼	Merck $	127¾	+2¼	2.4	0.3
433⅜	309½	Microsoft $	409¾	-6	0.7	3.9
40

Why interest rates have major implications for investors' stock market portfolios



RUSS MOULD
QUESTOR
SHARES STRATEGY

The Bank of England's response to inflation will have a significant effect on your returns

The inflation figure for April, showing a 2.3pc year-on-year increase in the consumer price index, leaves financial markets expecting two interest rate cuts from the Bank of England in 2024, one in August and one in December. That would take the Bank Rate to 4.75pc from 5.25pc, but it compares poorly to initial expectations for the year of six cuts, with the first one coming in March. This reappraisal of both the sticky nature of inflation and the Monetary Policy Committee's response to it has major implications for investors' stock market portfolios. What happens in the halls of the Bank's headquarters in Threadneedle Street has the potential to have a significant effect on your pocket.

Rate of return

The thinking is as follows:

◆ Central bank interest rates influence the return available from asset classes that are perceived to be lower risk, such as cash and bonds.

◆ Ten-year Government bond yields are seen as the "risk-free rate" and any other investment should return more than that to compensate for the additional risks.

◆ The higher the risk-free rate goes, the less inclined, or obliged, investors may feel to take risk and pay up for other asset classes, such as shares (and vice-versa). As such, interest rates affect the "P" in the p/e (price to earnings ratio) – the lower the interest rate, the higher the price investors may be willing to pay (and vice-versa). The cost of money also affects activity in the real economy – and therefore corporate earnings, or the "E" in the p/e ratio. In theory, lower interest rates can boost earnings (E) and the price (P) investors are prepared to pay for them.

This should benefit share prices, since price times earnings equals share price. Equally, however, the opposite applies. Higher rates can mean lower multiples of lower earnings and thus lower share prices, so the danger to current hopes for lower rates is that the headline cost of borrowing stays higher for longer than expected (or even unexpectedly goes higher).

The risk-free rate

The yield offered by a Government-issued bond is usually seen as the risk-free rate for investors in that country because, in principle, the Government will not default on its liabilities. It will always be a priority to make the interest payments (known as "coupons") on time and return the initial investment (or principal) once the bond matures, even if the Government must print money to do so. The last time the UK defaulted was 1672 and the Stop of Exchequer under Charles II, and as such the 10-year UK government bond, or gilt, is seen as the risk-free rate for UK investors. At the time of writing, the 10-year gilt is yielding 4.13pc. This is down from last August's high of 4.73pc and this may be one reason why the FTSE 100 is advancing to new peaks. It is also, therefore, the minimum nominal annual return on any investment that any investor should accept, since it is seen as risk-free.

Any other alternative investment carries more risk so investors should demand more from them:

◆ Investment-grade corporate bonds should yield more than government bonds because companies can go bust and management can do silly things

◆ High-yield (or "junk") corporate bonds should yield more than investment grade bonds because these firms are more indebted, and the risk of bankruptcy and default is higher

◆ Shares should offer the prospect of higher total returns than junk debt, because share prices go down as well as up, while a junk bond will offer pre-determined interest payments and return of the initial investment if all goes well. The returns demanded by an investor to compensate themselves for the (additional) risks involved will therefore move relative to the gilt yield and that in turn will be influenced by central bank-approved interest rates.

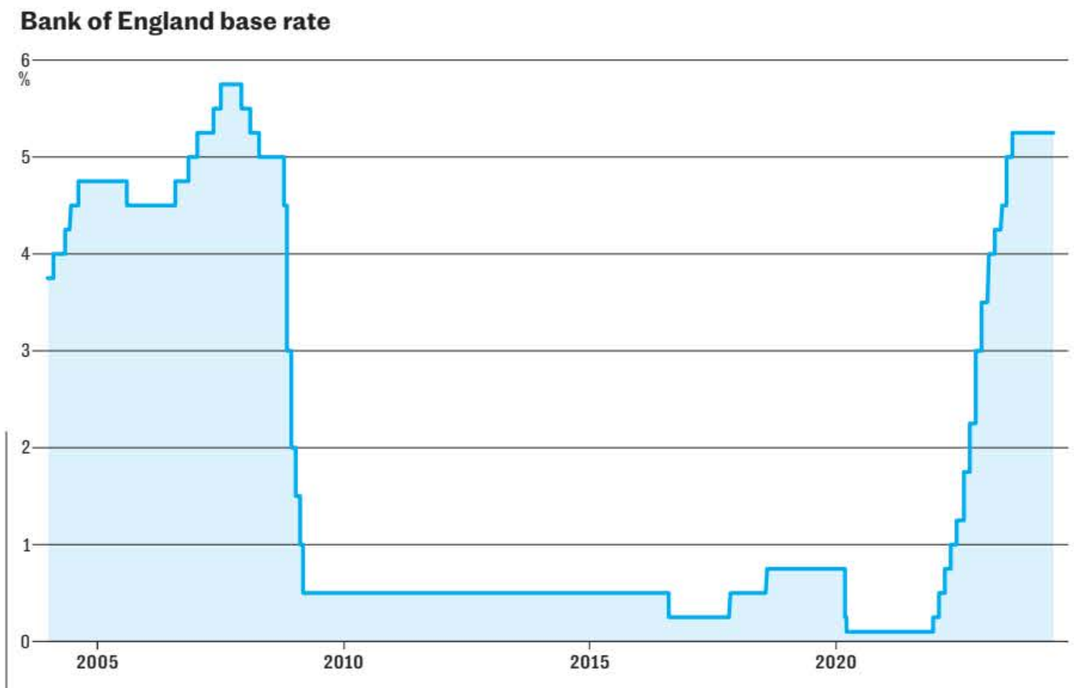
If a central bank is lowering interest rates, then the yield on existing government paper will look more attractive. Investors may look to buy gilts as a result. This decrease in yields on government debt means the returns that investors should demand from other, riskier options, could also increase. This means lower yield on newly issued bonds or paying a higher price for existing bonds (as a higher price means a lower yield for bonds, just as it does for shares).

For shares, lower rates can mean that investors are prepared to pay a higher valuation, or multiple of earnings and cash flow, and also perhaps accept a lower-dividend yield.

Interest rates

The 10-year gilt is yielding 4.13pc. This is down from last August's high of 4.73pc and this may be one reason why the FTSE 100 is reaching new peaks

'The last time the UK defaulted was 1672 and the Stop of Exchequer under Charles II'



Read Questor's rules of investment before you follow our tips: telegraph.co.uk/go/questorrules

Ford managers set date for industrial action over pay

White-collar workers at Ford's UK sites are poised to take industrial action this month amid a row over pay.

Unite, the union, said managers at sites in Dunton, Essex; Daventry, Northants; Halewood, Merseyside; and Stratford and Dagenham, both in east London, will work to rule and refuse overtime on June 14.

The union is also threatening full-blown strikes if the dispute is not resolved soon.

But it accused Ford of refusing to hold "meaningful negotiations".

War with Hamas forces Pret to scrap launch in Israel

Sandwich chain Pret A Manger has dropped plans to launch its first branch in Israel, blaming travel restrictions and disruption from the war with Hamas.

Pret had signed a deal in December 2022 with Israel's Fox Group and food business Yarzin Sella to bring the company's brand to Israel.

However, a spokesman confirmed it had pulled out of the licensing deal. "We have taken the difficult decision to end our current agreement with Fox Group and Yarzin Sella Group."

NYSE glitch wrongly shows Buffett's business down 99pc

A glitch on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) wrongly showed Berkshire Hathaway shares down 99pc yesterday, forcing it to halt trading.

Shares in Warren Buffett's conglomerate were displayed as being worth $185.10 (£144.82), down as much as 99.97pc from its previous price of $627,000 per share, while other businesses also showed dramatic falls.

The NYSE's website suggested it had paused trading in dozens of stocks but were now up and running. There was no indication of a cyber attack, it said.

Blackstone raises bid for music rights company Hipgnosis

Private equity group Blackstone has sweetened its offer for London-listed Hipgnosis Songs Fund to $1.6bn (£1.25bn) as it attempts to secure a takeover of the music rights business.

The US investor increased its offer from $1.30 to $1.31, and said it intended to switch the deal to a "scheme of arrangement". This means the deal will require 75pc of shareholders to approve it, but gives Blackstone total ownership if it passes. Blackstone has been battling with US-based Concord Music for control of Hipgnosis.

Shares suspended in vape-maker Chill Brands amid inquiry

Shares in listed-vape maker Chill Brands have been suspended amid an investigation into the use of insider information. It said it was "unable to currently provide the market with an accurate update of its financial and trading position".

It suspended Callum Sommerton, its chief executive, launching an internal investigation. He said: "The allegations are without merit. I am confident that I will be vindicated."

Its shares were worth just 2.15p on Friday, down 98pc from a 2021 high.

Warehouse operator is takeover target for Canadian fund

Canadian investment management giant Brookfield is considering a bid for FTSE 250 warehouse business Tritax EuroBox, which owns and leases distribution centres across Europe.

Tritax went public in London in 2018. Its portfolio includes Amazon centres and a Lidl logistics hub with a total value of £1.5bn, but the value of its assets has dipped as interest rates have risen. Brookfield said yesterday it was in the "early stages of assessing a possible cash offer" for Tritax, whose shares were up 11pc yesterday.

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☐ **OR** tick this box if you've chosen to include a cheque made payable to British Red Cross

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giftaid it

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187724

Social news

Today's birthdays

Sir George Reid, Lord-Lieutenant for Clackmannanshire, 2011-14, is 85; **Prof Dame Sandra Dawson**, Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, 1999-2009, 78; **Mr Bob Champion**, former jump jockey and racehorse trainer, 76; **Ms Val McDermid**, author, 69; **Sir Martin Donnelly**, former senior civil servant, 66; **Mrs Joanie Whiteford**, Lord-Lieutenant for Ross and Cromarty, 65; **Ms Andrea Jaeger**, former tennis player, 59; **Miss Cecilia Bartoli**, mezzo-soprano, 58; **Dr Alex Peterken**, Head, Charterhouse, 50; **Miss Angelina Jolie**, actress, 49; **Mr Chris Robshaw**, former England rugby union captain, 38; **Ms Shelly Woods**, athlete; Paralympic silver medallist, women's marathon, London 2012, 38; **Mr Ben Stokes**, cricketer; Captain, England Test team, 33; and **Ms Eilidh McIntyre**, sailor; Olympic gold medallist women's 470 sailing class, Tokyo 2020, 30.

Today is the anniversary of the suffragette Emily Davison receiving fatal injuries sustained when she was knocked down by the King's horse at the running of the Epsom Derby in 1913. It is also the anniversary of the Liberation of Rome in 1944.

Forthcoming marriage

The Hon P.C.M. Kitchener-Fellowes and
Miss H.A.R. Gunn
The engagement is announced between Peregrine Charles Morant, only son of Lord and Lady Fellowes of West Stafford, and Henrietta Arabella Rosie, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Marcus Gunn, of Bridlington, Yorkshire.
Online ref: WO025165

Luncheon

Rotary Club of London
Mr Paul Buchanan and Mr Neville Shulman were the speakers at the Rotary Club of London luncheon yesterday at the Chesterfield Hotel. The Neville Shulman Rotary Charity Cup and Certificate were presented to Mr Clive Amos. Mr Doug Wills, President, was in the chair.

Clergy news

Retirements and resignations
Revv Jean Bussey ceased as assoc min, Lawford Lighthouse (Coventry), but remains assoc min, Newbold on Avon with Long Lawford (same dio), with effect from April 10 2024; Can Barbara Clutton, assoc min, Draycote and Leam Valley (Coventry), retired with effect from April 28 2024; Kay Dyer, assoc min, Stratford upon Avon, Luddington and Clifford Chamber (Coventry), retired with effect from May 30 2024; Garry Simmons, tr, Glascote and Stoneydelph, and rd, Tamworth (Lichfield), retired with effect from May 31 2024; Charles Thomas, v, Wolverhampton St Andrew (Lichfield), to retire with effect from June 13 2024; Preb Janet Waterfield, v, Lichfield Christchurch and Longdon (Lichfield), to retire with effect from June 30 2024.

Bridge news

Last week the highest scores each day in the English Bridge Union's open 12-board online matchpoint duplicate pairs games were as follows, **writes Julian Pottage, Bridge Correspondent**:

Monday
70.63% scored by Tony Ratcliff and Julian Pottage in Game 3 (7.30pm).

Tuesday
74.65% scored by Mike Huggins and an Advanced BBO Bot in Game 4 (9pm).

Wednesday
73.72% scored by Fowzi Baroukh and an Advanced BBO Bot in Game 4.

Thursday
70.83% scored by Dennis Valtisiaris and an Advanced BBO Bot in Game 4.

Friday
74.11% scored by Gad Chadah and an Advanced BBO Bot in Game 4.

Saturday
70.65% scored by Celia Oram and Derek Oram in Game 1 (2pm).

Sunday
70.49% scored by Kevin Clark and Graham Johnston in Game 1.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Daily Telegraph.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY JUNE 4, 1924

RED SEA SLAVE TRAFFIC.

NAVAL REINFORCEMENTS.

It was announced at the Foreign Office last evening that the Government had decided to reinforce the British naval force in the Red Sea by the despatch of a division of fast destroyers. Naval patrols, formed of sloops belonging to the British, French, and Italian navies, are maintaining an active supervision of these waters with a view to the suppression of the slave traffic from the African to the Arabian coast. Their work consists in stopping and searching the native dhows which they meet in the course of their patrols, in order to ascertain that there are no slaves being transported on board them. From time to time slaves are discovered, the dhow arrested, and the slaves liberated and sent home.

It is, however, becoming apparent that the vessels which have been operating in the Red Sea are not sufficient completely to suppress the traffic of slaves. There are numerous islands with rocky creeks into which the dhows sailing by night can retire during the day time and hide, and with a fresh breeze it is not always possible for the warships hitherto available to overtake the dhows. The Government hope with the reinforcement of fast ships now being sent to put an end to the slave trade in the Red Sea.

BALLOON IN LIGHTNING.

BELLEVILLE (ILLINOIS), WEDNESDAY.

The two mangled bodies of Dr. C. L. Meisinger, of the United States Weather Bureau, and Lieut. J. T. Neely were found this morning in a field 150 miles north-east of Scott-field. They have been engaged in a series of flights in a free balloon to test the upper air conditions around the storm centres, and it is believed that the balloon, which exploded and burst into flames, was struck by lightning.

Dr. Meisinger was one of the foremost meteorologists of the United States, and he and Lieutenant Neely had repeatedly ridden before the storm, gathering data regarding the conditions governing cyclones, which work had been their dangerous speciality.

VOTES AT TWENTY-ONE.

By a majority of thirty-eight votes to eleven the Select Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Sir Cyril Cobb (U., Fulham W.), yesterday decided that women should receive the vote at the age of 21. This in effect is the proposal in the Representation of the People (1918) Amendment Bill, introduced by Mr. W. M. Adamson (Lab.-Soc., Cannock), and the main point discussed was whether the age should not be 25 for both men and women. An amendment to this effect was proposed by Lord E. Percy (U., Hastings), who urged that the electorate was becoming so large that it was difficult to get real representative government.

It is hoped to conclude the Committee stage of the bill to-morrow.

FIRST STRAWBERRIES.

The first English outdoor strawberries of the season were received at Covent Garden Hampshire yesterday. Fair are quantities expected next week.

TUBE STRIKE THREAT FOR MIDNIGHT TONIGHT.

Mr. Jackson, assistant secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, stated yesterday that there had been no communication from the unofficial Strike Committee, which has sent in a programme of demands for railway shopmen and is threatening a strike of shopmen on the London Electric and Great Western Railways at midnight to-night unless negotiations are opened.

The Strike Committee has not yet indicated any modification of its policy or attitude. The leaders of the revolt deny that the threat arises from Communist agitation or influence, and state that the aim is to "speed up consideration of the shopmen's claims." They have been informed that the union has decided to present to the companies at an early date a new national programme for the revision of wages and conditions of all grades of the service, including the shopmen, and they have been invited to await the national and constitutional negotiations. The Strike Committee are still considering the position. They assert that something like 80,000 men will come out if the strike takes place, but this statement is ridiculed by the union and the companies. At the same time, it is recognised that, if the threat materialises, there is a danger that the movement may spread. It does not apply to the traffic grades, but only to the railway shops. Apparently the craftsmen are not involved, but the Strike Committee claim to control the power station men, and particularly switchboard attendants. If there is any material withdrawal of labour at the great Chelsea power station of the London electric railways it would necessarily have a serious effect on the Tube railways.

The N.U.R. are relying on their members to be loyal to the union, and it is hoped that the strike, if it takes place, will prove a fiasco. The unofficial movement will in no sense be countenanced by the union, nor is it likely that negotiations will be undertaken by Unity House on behalf of the strike committee. It follows, as a matter of course, that there will be no strike pay from N.U.R. funds.

It now appears that, unless there is a change of policy at the eleventh hour, an attempt will be made to carry out the strike threat. The unofficial strike committee are issuing their orders from what is termed "Central Headquarters," at the Labour College, Earl's-court, but no members of the committee were in attendance there yesterday afternoon. The strike notice is addressed to railway shopmen on the Great Western system and in the London electric shops and power departments. Because of the uncertainty which exists in regard to the scope of the threat, and the extent to which the order will be responded to, it is impossible to estimate the probable effect on the Tube services or on the Great Western system, but it will not be immediate unless the power stations are involved.

Mr. Jones, the secretary of the Electrical Power Engineers' Association, expressed the opinion last night that the fact that the N.U.R. had repudiated the strike movement would give sufficient support to the "loyalists" to enable the Lot's-road power station of the London Electric Railway to continue running. Mr. Jones said his own organisation had a few of the more skilled electricians in the power station, but the remaining employees and semi-skilled and manual workers might belong either to the N.U.R. or the Electrical Trades Union. "I imagine," he added, "that those who are not members of my association, in view of the attitude taken up by the N.U.R., will remain on duty."

The Electrical Trades Union has made no pronouncement of its policy, but it has not been linked up with the strike movement. The strike committee assert that their instructions will be carried out by the men to whom they are addressed. Meanwhile the companies concerned, having made clear their position, are maintaining silence, and awaiting events.

Interviewed by a Press representative, Mr. Akehurst, secretary of the Strike Committee, said that the shopmen would strike at midnight. He made the significant remark that the Strike Committee would be in permanent session at the Central Labour College, London, after to-night. He said he had absolute confidence in the men. They would strike at the appointed time, unless the managers gave them a satisfactory reply. He was very reticent regarding the action of the electricians. He declared, however, that the following railway shops would cease work to-day: Ealing Common, Wood Lane, Acton Works, Golders Green, Luton Road, and Lillie Bridge. Other grades would probably become involved. Asked why the Great Western Railway was the only main line affected, Mr. Akehurst said this would be a test case, to demonstrate the solidarity of the rank and file. Neither the railway managers nor Unity House had so far communicated with the Strike Committee, and the position was a deadlock.

Senior RAF appointments

AVM TT Jones to be Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff Capability and Force Design in June 2024 in succession to Maj Gen DJ Eastman.
Air Cdre NJ Stringer to be United Kingdom Strategic Command Attaché, Washington DC in September 2024 in succession to Brig TA Harper.
Gp Capt L Boyd to be Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Marham in September 2024 in succession to Gp Capt FA Wigglesworth.
Gp Capt LJ Foy to be Commander Air C2 Force in June 2024 in succession to Gp Capt JA Booth.
Gp Capt J Hetherington to be Commandant Aviator Training Academy in July 2024 in succession to Gp Capt FD Garwood.
Gp Capt SC Moorehead to be Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Odiham in September 2024 in success to Gp Capt MD Roberts.
Gp Capt NA Towers to be Commanding Officer Northwood Headquarters in August 2024 in succession to Col CD Read.

Bridge Hand

Vienna calling

By **Tom Townsend**

Dealer West **E/W vulnerable**

♠ 10 3
♥ J 9 5
♦ J 9
♣ Q J 7 6 5 2

♠ K 9 7 4
♥ K Q 10
♦ Q 10 8 6 2
♣ A

♠ 8 5 2
♥ 8 6 4 2
♦ 7 4 3
♣ 9 8 4

♠ A Q J 6
♥ A 7 3
♦ A K 5
♣ K 10 3

West	North	East	South
1♦	pass	pass	2NT(1)
pass	3NT	pass	pass
pass			

(1) It's not Unusual

Contract 3NT by South
Opening Lead ♦6

LIKE the state pension age, the minimum age for seniors bridge is always threatening to rise. For international purposes, it's crept up via biennial increments from 60 to 64 in recent years. By the time this process is complete, at the 2026 European Championships, it will be 65. The reason for these gradual advances? To stop anyone becoming an ex-senior.

Our deal is from the Senior Mixed Pairs in Louisville, a matchpoint event. North-South were Roberto Scaramuzzi and Kitty Cooper. There's a point in the bidding. We've seen it before, but plenty still get it wrong. South's 2NT, in the reopening seat, is the Tom Jones convention. It's not the Unusual No-Trump, as it would have been directly over 1♦, showing the two lowest unbid suits. It shows a 2NT opening bid.

West had an uncomfortable lead to 3NT. Not expecting much help from his partner, he led his fourth-best diamond and shrugged. East indeed had a genuine Yarborough – no card higher than a nine. That's a 1,827 to one shot.

South scored the ♦J, knocked out ♣A, and won the diamond continuation in hand. Placing the ♠K with West, not that it was an absolute certainty, Cooper advanced the ♠6 at trick four. West, we can see, should have banked his ♠K on that, but let it run to East's ♠Q. Too bad she didn't have it.

The ♠10 scored in dummy, bringing South up to 11 tricks. Her 12th required West to hold both heart pictures. Cooper crossed to the ♥A, leaving the ♥J as a squeeze threat in dummy. This quiet preparatory move is the Vienna Coup (it's a good day for Bridge Column Bingo). She cashed her third diamond trick in hand, and ran dummy's clubs. This was the ending:

♠ 3
♥ J
♦ none
♣ 6

♠ K 9
♥ K
♦ none
♣ none

♠ 8 5
♥ 8
♦ none
♣ none

♠ A Q J
♥ none
♦ none
♣ none

The final club finished West. Twelve tricks, when the field was making 10 or at most 11, scored 97 per cent on the board.
Final Result 3NT plus three, N/S +490
Par Result 3NT plus one, N/S +430

Chess

Carlsen punished

By **Malcolm Pein**

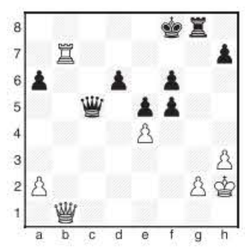
MAGNUS Carlsen often struggles on home soil. He failed to win a Classical game at Norway Chess 2023 and lost one to Fabiano Caruana. In round three of the 2024 edition at Stavanger, the world number one was defeated by the teenager Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa. This was the Indian's first ever Classical win over the 16th world champion and he assumed the sole lead. Coincidentally, Pragg's victory, last Wednesday, was eight years to the day since he became the youngest ever IM at the age 10 years, 10 months and 19 days.

Caruana's defeat of world champion Ding Liren brought him up to second as he also secured three points for a Classical win. Wins in the Armageddon deciders are worth 1.5 points and a defeat gives the player one point.

Carlsen was punished for repeatedly rejecting the chance to castle.



R Praggnanandhaa – M Carlsen
Sicilian Paulsen
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Qc7 6.0–0 Nf6 7.Qe2 d6 8.c4 Nbd7 9.Nc3 Ne5 10.h3 b6 11.f4 Nxd3 12.Qxd3 Bb7 (Weakening the e6-pawn 12...Be7 13.f5 0–0 14.Bg5 Bd7 15.b3 Rac8 16.Rac1 h6 17.Bh4 Rfe8 was more solid) **13.f5 Qd7?!** (If 13...e5 14.Nc2 Rc8 15.Ne3 Black cannot break out, if 15...b5 16.cxb5 axb5 17.Nxb5 Qb6 18.Rd1 Nxe4 19.a4 Be7 20.a5 Qa6 21.Nd5) **14.Bg5 Be7 15.Rad1 Rc8 16.Qe2!** (See board left) **16...e5** (Black has to concede the d5-square. If 16...0–0 17.e5! causes ructions on the d-file) **17.Bxf6! Bxf6 18.Nc2 Qc6 19.Ne3** (Knights dominate bishops, Carlsen eliminates one) **19...Bg5 20.Kh1 Bxe3 21.Qxe3 f6** (After 21...0–0 22.f6 Black will soon be mated) **22.b3 b5 23.Nd5 Qc5 24.Qf3 bxc4** (24...Bxd5 25.Rxd5 Qb6 26.cxb5 axb5 27.Qd3 0–0 28.Rxb5 or here 26.Qh5+ Ke7 27.cxb5 axb5 28.Rfd1 are both dire for Black) **25.Qh5+ Kf8 26.Rf3! Bxd5** (26...cxb3 27.Rxb3 Ba8 28.Rc3 wins) **27.Rxd5 Qb6 28.bxc4 Rxc4 29.Rb3 Rb4** (Exchanging one of his two active pieces hastens the end, but 29...Qc7 30.Kh2 is similar. Black misses his rook on h8 and 30...Ke7 31.Rg3 Rg8 32.Qxh7 Kf8 33.Rgd3 Rc6 grovels on) **30.Rdd3 Rxb3 31.Rxb3 Qc7 32.Qd1 g6 33.Qb1 Qc5 34.Rb7 gxf5 35.Kh2! Rg8** White to play and win:



Answer:
36.Qb3 d5 37.Rxh7 1–0 (36...Qb8+ is one threat. Also 36.Rxh7 Qb5 37.Qc1 Qc5 38.Qh6+ Kg8 39.Qxf6.

Announcements

Email: announcements.ads@telegraph.co.uk **Book online:** announcements.telegraph.co.uk

Births

CLARK.—On 18th May 2024, at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Annabel and Aaron, a second son, Charles Henry Lockwood (known as Charlie), a brother for Freddie, grandson to Jeremy and Caroline Clay and Andrew and Mary Clark and great grandson to Frances Buckenham. With thanks to the midwives and nursing staff.
Online Ref: WO025176

Deaths

CLEASBY.—John Victor died peacefully after a short illness on 27th May 2024 aged 91 years. He led a very full and happy life and leaves behind his beloved wife Teresa, two devoted daughters, three grandchildren and a wonderful extended and loving family. He will be sadly missed. The funeral will be a private family affair.
Online Ref: WO025166

ELSDEN.—John Neil. Sadly passed away on 17th May aged 93 years. Loving husband of Vera, brother to Hilary, father to Neil, grandfather to Ben and Sam, and much loved great-grandfather. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. His Funeral Service will take place at Surrey & Sussex Crematorium, on Tuesday 11th June at 3 p.m. Family flowers only. Donations, in his memory may be made to the British Heart Foundation via www.freemanbrothers.co.uk/remember or you may post donations c/o Freeman Brothers, Horsham. Tel: 01403 254590.
Online Ref: WO025078

GERRARD.—Peter Noel, CBE, died peacefully on 21st May 2024, aged 94, at home in Ashdon, Saffron Walden, Essex. Beloved husband of the late Prue Gerrard, father of Phyllida, Deborah and Hugo and grandfather of nine grandchildren. Funeral at All Saints Church, Ashdon on Tuesday 18th June at 11.30 a.m. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, for Stroke Association or Alzheimer's Research UK - search Peter Gerrard at JustGiving.com Enquiries to HJ Paintin Ltd. Tel: 01223 891226. A memorial service to be held in London will be announced at a later date.
Online Ref: WO025183

HINTON-CLIFTON.—Edward (Ted) of West Layton, Richmond. N Yorkshire. Sadly passed away on 25th May aged 93 years. Husband of the late Jeanette (Jane), father to Timothy and Peregrine, stepfather to Diana, Anthony and Robin, grandfather and great grandfather. Service of Thanksgiving and Committal, at St Mary's Parish Church, Barnard Castle on Wednesday 12th June at 11.30 a.m. Family flowers only please.
Online Ref: WO025212

JINKS.—Olga died peacefully at home on Wednesday 29th May 2024, aged 93. Beloved wife of the late Edgar, much loved Mum of Alison, Debbie and Alastair, grandmother to Tom, Jamie and Katie and mother-in-law to Bill and the late Harvey. Celebration of Life will be held at 3.30 p.m. on Wednesday 12th June at Thornhill Crematorium - no black. Family flowers only.
Online Ref: WO025197

NAYLOR.—Mary Letitia (née Salusbury-Trelawny). Loving wife of the late Procter Naylor, mother of Harriet, Edward and William, grandmother of Florence and James, died peacefully on 30th May 2024, aged 86. Funeral at St Mary Magdalene Church, Bildeston, Suffolk on 10th June at 11 a.m.
Online Ref: WO025171

PICKLES.—On 24th May, at the age of 94, Jocelyn Ann Pickles (née Davies), widow of Michael Pickles. Enquiries to Davies & Sons (F/D). Tel: 01691 653116.
Online Ref: WO025202

SEELY.—Timothy Ward, died on 18th May 2024, beloved husband of Camilla and father of Hugo. A Thanksgiving Service will be held at St Andrew's Church, Farnham on 11th June at 12 noon. Any donations to The Injured Jockeys Fund, via cheque c/o Thorne Leggett, 8-10 The Street, Farnham, GU10 4PR.
Online Ref: WO025158

WALTERS.—(née Treasure). Linda Ruby. Passed away peacefully with family by her side, on Thursday 16th May 2024, aged 78, following a recent cancer diagnosis. Devoted wife to Michael. Loving mother to Phillipa, Victoria and Elizabeth. Proud Grannie to Ben, Sam, Alannah, Charlie, Grace and Logan. Funeral Service to be held at St Michael's Church, Kingsteignton on Wednesday 19th June 2024 at 10.15 a.m. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Children's Hospice South West or RSPCA via Parker's Family Funeral Directors, TQ12 2HN. Tel: 01626 437001.
Online Ref: WO025215

WRIGHT.—Graham Alan CBE. Died on 18th May 2024 at home, aged 65. Much loved husband of Clare and loving father of Jamie and Emma. Brother to Alistair and Stuart, and son of David Wright. Funeral Service to be held on Thursday 27th June, 1.45 p.m. at The Oaks Crematorium, Havant, followed by a celebration of Graham's life at Stansted House, Rowlands Castle. All welcome.
Online Ref: WO025209

YOUNG.—(née Mayhew). Brenda, of Milford on Sea, Hants, died aged 85 on 23rd May 2024 after a short illness. Much loved wife of David (deceased), mother of four, and grandmother of two. Cremation on Tuesday 25th June, for details email brendayoungfuneral@outlook.com Donations to RNLI.
Online Ref: WO025235

Personal

Text for the day

YOU PREPARE a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.
Psalm 23.5-6 (NIV)

Birthdays

HAPPY BIRTHDAY VICTORIA GRIFFITHS! We hope you have a wonderful day. From all your friends and colleagues at The Telegraph xx
Online Ref: WO025223

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1960s
According to Blower

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Bren Orton

Extreme kayaker whose feats included breaking a British record by plunging off a 128ft waterfall

BREN ORTON, who has died in a kayaking accident aged 29, was a world-class British white-water kayaker whose passion was to travel the world exploring and "running" wild rivers and big rapids, and dropping over huge waterfalls.

One of his most spectacular stunts was to paddle over the notorious Big Banana falls deep inside the jungle of Veracruz, Mexico, in December 2017, a drop of 128ft (40m).

The waterfall was first run by another paddler in 2010, but Orton also fancied his chances, together with his German paddling partner, Adrian Mattern.

Things did not get off to a good start. The pair were still sick from a trip to Pakistan when they arrived; camera equipment was stolen; and when they got to the falls they discovered it was out of season. Worse, Orton realised that he would have to abseil down into a gorge to reach the falls: he knew nothing of climbing and had a fear of heights.

With the promise of "a few beers" they procured the services of an 18-year-old local climber with knowledge of ropes. Unfortunately he left the harnesses at the hotel, but he managed to fashion new ones with some webbing and a karabiner (the D-shaped metal ring with spring-hinged side used by climbers for holding rope).

Orton felt distinctly unsafe as he lowered himself into the abyss to make a reconnaissance of the falls, but by the time he had returned he had made up his mind. "I decided, looking at the lip, that whilst not ideal it was completely doable and I could hit the line," he later wrote. The pair vowed to return the following day.

Orton was sick again overnight and could not stomach any breakfast. But he overcame his reservations and was first to lower himself on to the upper section of the river. His kayak was lowered down next.

"I tried to find that magical feeling I get before all of my best lines," he recalled. "Calm, excited and clear minded. I gave the 'go' signal to the team, took one last deep breath, exhaled and sent it."

He described the drop as an almost mystical experience. "The brain does strange things to you when you're in the air and I remember everything slowing down, the air awareness taking over, and 'watching' myself as I rode down the first half off the waterfall in what felt from a third-person view point."



Orton in Norway, 2022: he worked as a gravedigger and medical guinea pig to fund his trips

INSTAGRAM

The impact, however, was colossal – like being in a car crash. "It was crazy. We both had really good lines," he said the following day, but "when you're running a waterfall that big you have to accept you're going to take a big hit. We both took big hits." (Mattern successfully followed.)

Orton had lost his paddle and was severely winded, but his arms remained aloft for minutes as he celebrated. It was the second biggest waterfall that had ever been run and set a new British record by 50ft.

Brendan James Orton was born on June 10 1994 in Warrington and educated at St Gregory's Catholic High School. He first fell in love with kayaking after a school trip to the Lake District aged nine, but soon decided that school was not for him.

At the age of 16, after learning that the White Nile was to be dammed in Uganda, he sold some childhood possessions, worked on a building site and bought a ticket. It had always been a dream to paddle the rapids. Two months after his trip, the dam was completed and the rapids were lost.

Thereafter he pursued his passion. Initially, he focused on the discipline of freestyle; this is where kayakers perform tricks on a single feature of white water. Orton invented one called the "Slim Chance", a backwards loop-to-loop out of a hole. He also competed internationally, representing Great Britain at the 2015 ICF Canoe Freestyle World Championships in Ottawa, where he made the final in the men's kayak.

To support himself, Orton worked variously as a gravedigger, call-centre employee and building-site labourer. He even participated in medical trials to fund his travels, an experience he described as "sketchy". Ultimately, he secured sponsorship deals from kayaking brands and started making videos of his adventures on social media, building up an audience of almost 59,000 followers. He moved to Innsbruck, Austria, and began to apply the freestyle skills he had learnt to wild and remote rivers around the world.

Orton was no stranger to the dangers of the sport. Several months after his 128ft drop, he ran the 100ft Alexandra Falls in Canada and was not so lucky. He suffered a serious head injury and was knocked unconscious, ending up upside down in the water. He was rescued only thanks to the herculean efforts of his team.

Other destinations he paddled included Pakistan, India, America, Austria, Norway, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Uganda, Zambia and Japan. In 2019 he fulfilled another dream by kayaking the Tsangpo Gorge in Tibet, which is fed by the Himalayas and is home to some of the wildest white water found anywhere in the world.

Orton said people were often left disappointed with his explanation of why he did what he did: "They expect heroic reasonings of how I am 'pushing my sport' or tales of a quest to 'break new ground'. Unfortunately my answer can't live up to their expectations and my reply is simply 'Because I want to', which I think is actually the best reason to do anything."

Orton, who described himself on Facebook as a "happy ginger dude", was kayaking on May 16 and died after becoming trapped in a recirculating feature on the River Melezza in Switzerland; he did not resurface. His body was discovered in Lake Maggiore two weeks later. He was unmarried.

Bren Orton, born June 10 1994, died May 16 2024

David Martin Jones

Political thinker who rejected academic orthodoxies and described Islamic State as a 'death cult'

DAVID MARTIN JONES, who has died aged 73, was a maverick conservative author and lecturer on political theory, militant Islamic movements, geopolitics and what are now called "culture wars"; in 2015 he argued that the Islamic State was a "death cult", a characterisation quickly adopted by many others including Tony Abbott, then prime minister of Australia, and Boris Johnson, then an MP. Jones applied the same term to Hizbollah and Hamas.

He did not view these groups as freedom fighters, but rather as terrorists enamoured of savagery against others and death for themselves in preference to living in anything resembling a liberal democracy. He looked at what these groups actually said and wrote, finding in them a determination at all costs to impose a Muslim caliphate.

These were views he expressed long before the attack of Hamas on civilians in Israel on October 7 last year.

He argued that the West had helped to facilitate the rise of such groups by harbouring some of the leaders in London and elsewhere and turning a blind eye to extreme Islamist views in British universities.

More generally, he maintained that the West had become complacent after the fall of communist regimes in Europe in 1989-90. Many thought then that freedom and democracy had won and would inevitably continue in the ascendant. They lowered their guard against totalitarian regimes that had survived, and those which emerged afterwards. Meanwhile, the western world was harbouring a nascent totalitarianism of its own making, encapsulated in the title of one of Jones's 11 books, *Illiberal Democracy*. He saw a western culture of growing statism and compulsory conformity with supposedly liberal or progressive ideas.

Jones was out of step with the dominant Left-wing attitudes he found in most universities in the West, and his friends felt that his failure to climb the academic ladder was because he held fast to his views.

Michael Rainsborough, formerly Professor of Strategic Theory at King's College London, believed that because his and Jones's writings were so at variance with academic orthodoxy they were regularly denounced and excluded from preferment – not receiving grants, being criticised in academic reviews and so on.

In later years, Rainsborough and Jones joked that they were "cancelled before it became fashionable". Whatever the truth of this, Jones had to resort to a peripatetic academic life. He had jobs at various times in Toronto, Sydney, Tasmania, Brisbane, Singapore and Budapest, as well as London.

He was born in Wales on August 21 1950 and attended Cathays High School, Cardiff, then a grammar school. He was the first in his family to attend university, going to Reading University and completing a PhD on "Oaths and Obligations in the English Civil War". He did not have an easy path, teaching at a comprehensive school in



Jones: 'cancelled before it was fashionable'

Kilburn to finance his PhD work. As someone who grew up in the 1960s, Jones initially had hippy tendencies and espoused ideas he would later come to despise. But his intellectual development was profoundly affected when he was supervised at the LSE by Professor Kenneth Minogue, one of the leading conservative thinkers of his time.

Jones's first teaching post was in Singapore in 1989. He was uncomfortable with the rule of the prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, suggesting that the regime wanted to know too much about people and control them too closely. He helped a lecturer, Christopher Lingle, escape from Singapore to Malaysia after Lingle had got into trouble with the authorities for impugning the integrity of the judiciary. Jones was himself followed by the secret police.

He moved to the University of Tasmania and wrote about south-east Asian terrorist groups, 17th-century political thought and Welsh radicals in Van Diemen's Land – the early name for Tasmania – in the 1830s and 1840s. That last area of study helped inform a documentary on the Welsh in Australia by the BBC's Huw Edwards.

Jones subsequently worked at Queensland University in Brisbane and became Visiting Professor in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London. But after a change of leadership in that department he became unhappy with the way it was going: with typical sardonic humour, he wondered how "War Studies" became "Woke Studies". His services were dispensed with. Most recently he had worked as research director at the Danube Institute, a conservative think tank in Budapest where he was more at home.

Jones was an urbane character with a dry sense of humour. What many of his friends did not know was that underneath his congenial and cheerful manner there were dark and depressed thoughts. He took his own life following a breakdown. He is survived by his wife, Jo, and by three stepdaughters.

David Martin Jones, born August 21 1950, died April 16 2024

Karl-Heinz Schnellinger

Powerful defender acclaimed as 'Panzer' who played for West Germany in four World Cups

KARL-HEINZ SCHNELLINGER, who has died aged 85, was regarded during his decade with AC Milan as one of the finest full-backs in the game; he was among the few players to have participated in four World Cups, although the closest he came to winning the trophy was at Wembley in 1966, when he and his West German team-mates had to acknowledge England's superior skill and greater good fortune.

In 1963 Schnellinger became among the first German players to ply his trade abroad. Italian clubs were revolutionising the finances of football – Jimmy Greaves had moved to Milan two years before – and Schnellinger, earning 400 Deutschmarks a month at FC Köln, happily accepted a signing bonus of 300,000 DM from Roma.

Roma lent him to Mantova for a season to acclimatise to Italian football, but he announced himself in sensational style by helping the team to an unexpected 4-1 victory over mighty Milan. A right-footed left-back – the first in a long line in die Mannschaft, as the German national team is known – Schnellinger was powerfully built but surprisingly quick, solid in the air and decisive in the tackle.

Though he rarely ventured upfield, his tactical awareness allowed him to turn defence into attack with incisive passes. His consistency and robust build, which belied a good-humoured presence in the dressing room, led him to be nicknamed "The Volkswagen" by German fans and "Panzer" by Italians; his example did much to rebuild relations between the two nations after the war years.

Schnellinger won the Coppa Italia with Roma in 1965. He then moved to Milan,



Schnellinger, arms raised, celebrates his side's last-minute equaliser in the 1966 World Cup final

AP

where under Nereo Rocco he played alongside Giovanni Trapattoni, Gianni Rivera, Kurt Hamrin and Cesare Maldini. In a golden era for the club, he won the Coppa Italia three times and Serie A in 1968.

The following year Milan beat Celtic and Manchester United on the way to the European Cup final, where they defeated the emerging Ajax side of Johan Cruyff 4-1. Milan had won the Cup-Winners' Cup the previous season, and so became the first team to win the two premier European trophies.

In 1973, they took the Cup-Winners' Cup again, beating Leeds, although Schnellinger missed the final. A year later, Milan lost at the last hurdle to FC Magdeburg. By then, he had earned comparisons with greats such as Giacinto Facchetti and Nilton Santos, and in 1965 Stanley Matthews chose him to be his opposing full-back in his testimonial match.

Schnellinger won his first cap for West Germany in 1958 a day after he turned 19, and by playing at the World Cup that year became the youngest German to do so until 2022. He was also picked in 1962, though following his move to Italy he was frozen out along with other "mercenaries".

He returned in time for the 1966 tournament. In the final he marked Alan Ball, and it was a deflected shot off his back which set up West Germany's equaliser at the end of normal time.

Four years on in Mexico he had his revenge when it was his cross which enabled Uwe Seeler to pull the side level with England, who went on to lose. In the semi-final against Italy, Schnellinger famously scored his only international goal, setting up the hectic period of extra time which saw the match dubbed the "Game of the Century", with Italy prevailing 4-3. In total, he won 47 caps for the national team.

Karl-Heinz Schnellinger was born on March 31 1939 in Düren, near Cologne. He was a bright boy, with ambitions to become a doctor. To his teachers' despair, however, by 10 he was already on the books of the local team, SG Düren 99. He left school early to concentrate on football, although he did a business apprenticeship.

By 1957 he was in the West Germany youth team, and the next year signed for 1. FC Köln. Before the advent of the Bundesliga, football was organised into regional championships and Schnellinger helped the "Billy Goats" to several of these in the Oberliga West.

In 1962, they beat 1. FC Nürnberg to win the national title, with Schnellinger voted West Germany's player of the year, a rare honour for a defender. After leaving Milan in 1974, having played for them 334 times, he signed for Tennis Borussia Berlin, promoted for the first time to the top flight.

He made his Bundesliga debut as captain, but injury restricted him to half of their matches that season and he could not save the side from relegation. He hung up his boots and settled back in Milan, working in PR for a firm selling fitted kitchens.

Karl-Heinz Schnellinger is survived by his wife Ursula and their three daughters.

Karl-Heinz Schnellinger, born March 31 1939, died May 20 2024

Elmer Boyd

Dallas detective who took Lee Harvey Oswald into custody



Boyd, second from right, escorting Lee Harvey Oswald in 1963

ELMER BOYD, who has died aged 96, was one of the detectives who took Lee Harvey Oswald into custody following the assassination of John F Kennedy; he was thought to be the last surviving investigator of the president's murder.

He was initially assigned to Kennedy's motorcade for its journey through Dallas on November 22 1963 but at the last minute he was switched with his partner Richard Sims to carry out a sweep of Trade Mart, where the president was due to have lunch and deliver a keynote speech about the future of science.

"We were told Kennedy was five minutes away from arrival, but then we got word he'd been in an accident," Boyd recalled in 2017. He and Sims got to the motorcade and followed on as it rushed the stricken president to hospital; they were then sent to the Texas School Book Depository on Dealey Plaza, the scene of the shooting, where a man had been seen with a rifle.

Boyd was one of three policemen sent to comb the sixth floor, where they found bullet casings near the window; while they were there, they heard that their colleague, Officer JD Tippitt, had been shot dead – as it transpired, by Oswald, who had been confirmed by staff at the Depository as missing. Later that day Oswald was arrested after slipping into a cinema without paying – the film playing was *War Is Hell* – and in a famous photograph Boyd and Sims were pictured escorting him into the police station.

Having worked several double shifts helping to interrogate Oswald, Boyd was sent home to rest, and was watching television with his family when Oswald was shot dead by Jack Ruby as he was being transferred to prison. Boyd recognised Ruby, a well-known local figure, instantly.

"Jack Ruby thought of himself as a big gangster, but he was just a nightclub owner," he said. "He wanted to be the hero by killing Oswald, though he said it was to spare Jackie [Kennedy] the trauma of having to come back to Dallas for the trial."

Boyd only became aware of the historical photo of him and Oswald years later when a man from Ireland sent him a copy. "He wanted me to sign it and send it back so he could put it up in his brother's pub," he said.

He was called back in with Sims following the killing, and guarded Ruby after his arrest.

Elmer Boyd, always known as "Sonny", was born on September 21 1927, in Cryer Creek, Texas, south of Dallas, before moving with his family to nearby Blooming Grove, where he went to high school.

He served in the US Navy between 1946 and 1948 and joined the Dallas police department in 1952, working his way up from patrolman to become a robbery and homicide detective in 1957.

Boyd left the Dallas police department in 1978, going on to work for the nearby Euless police department south of the city until retiring in 1989. He refused to talk about the Kennedy assassination for 40 years; when he did begin giving interviews, he was unwavering in his belief that Oswald had acted alone.

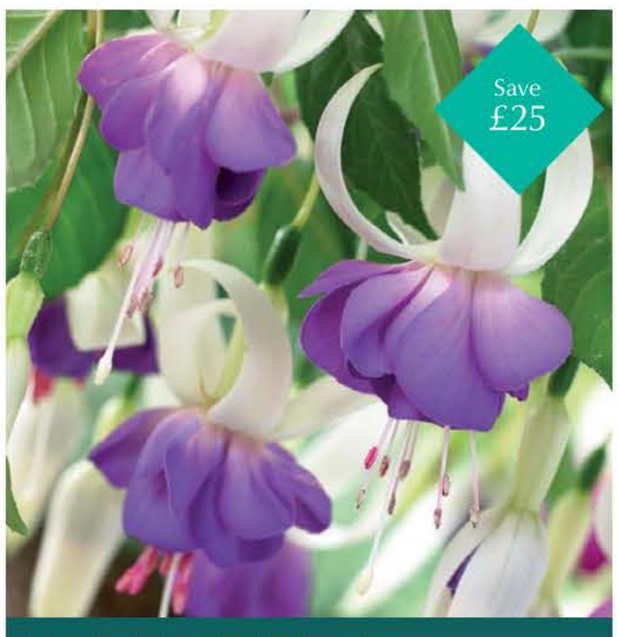
Away from the police force, Boyd was passionate about country music and played the harmonica. In 2023 he donated his firearms, cowboy hat and the handcuffs he used on Oswald to the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza.

In 1950 Elmer Boyd married Yvonne Smith, his childhood sweetheart, whom he had met at an ice rink; she died in 2015 and he is survived by their three daughters.

Elmer Boyd, born September 21 1927, died May 24 2024

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Dad's the word in moving, sensitive adoption drama



Young fathers: Sion Daniel Young and Fra Fee as Gabriel and Andy

There are precious few dramas about the adoption process, which is why **Lost Boys & Fairies** (BBC One) feels so welcome. That the couple hoping to adopt are both male adds an extra layer of fascination and jeopardy. But the true rarity value, for a script on the BBC's mainstream channel, is that this is also a knotty bilingual exploration of Welsh identity. It's a wonderful fillip to encounter reams of modern Welsh dialogue so far from S4C. *Ardderchog*!

The couple are Andy (Fra Fee), a sensible accountant from Belfast, and Gabriel (Sion Daniel Young), a drag queen who sings in a Cardiff nightspot called Neverland. Their desire to adopt pitches them into a searching assessment with Jackie (Elizabeth Berrington), a mumsy social worker who has to explain to the nervy wannabe dads when she's teasing them.

Screenwriter Daf James throws a lot into the pot. Torch songs, fabulous drag nights, flashbacks galore, lashings of sex, a history of homophobia from Section 28 to pronouns – plus, for Gabriel, phantasmagoric visions from his past as a young gay outcast. It's never worthy or dull. The most powerful scene finds the couple at an excruciating open day in which prospective adopters compete for potential matches.

Both men approach parenthood not quite admitting to their own scars. In Gabriel's case there's a cultural faultline dividing him from his widowed father, Emrys (William Thomas), who is baffled that his son lives his life not only in drag but, worse, in English. The language subplot may well baffle anyone not previously exposed to it, but it feels organic and genuine enough.

What is less so is the gratuitous swing of an axe that concludes the middle episode of three, yanking the plot in a random new direction. The final episode is certainly moving, with a spectacular cortège scene and an exquisite setpiece involving the adopted child's birth mother (Gwyneth Keyworth). But for all the heartfelt performances, not least by Leo Harris as the fostered boy Jake, it feels like an act of mistrust not to allow the original premise to play out on its own terms. Rather than end with the moment of adoption, a more confident version of the script might have devoted the last act to exploring what happens after happily ever after.

It's not often that a policing documentary looks like something produced by a natural history unit. But this happened in **Football Cops** (Channel 4) when an officer stood outside a pub in Coventry as home fans mustered before a game. For the camera he described the fans' established patterns of behaviour as if observing group dynamics among a troop of sub-Saharan chimpanzees.

The difference is that the police have to manage the movement of these young primates. Sunderland were the visitors, and the two clubs have a weird enmity that goes back to 1977. Do Google the particulars. The point is that every time they meet, it could all kick off. And this time it very nearly did.

The football cops profiled here represent the thin high-vis line between anarchy and mere rowdiness in Britain's streets on match days. Every club has its own Dedicated Football Officer who goes to all games and, meeting twice a season, they get quite chummy. For Coventry City it's Stu Spencer, also known as "Cardio" owing to a heart attack he once had. Ipswich Town have Ian Roland, aka Roly. Manchester City have Matt Hawtin, who has been spared the nickname of "Haughty".

They are charming, peaceable blokes doing a thankless job. Cardio loves it. "It's only the best job," he mused, "if you're interested in policing and football, I suppose."

Whenever you hear how much it costs to police football matches, here's why. To shepherd a particular group of lairy Liverpool fans away from Manchester City's Etihad Stadium and onto the train, it took aerial surveillance, constant comms and massive numbers to kettle them while some City fans passed.

Policing the match itself is a relative doddle. The worst that happened in this first episode was a Coventry fan invading the pitch with an illegal flare, whose blue smoke announced a gender reveal of his unborn child. Cardio rolled his eyes at the idiocy. The expectant dad got a four-year ban.

There are no bespoke cops for cricket or rugby because its followers don't go in for tribal antagonism and pre-arranged punch-ups. That football alone attracts puerile delinquents is hardly news, and yet this series is a genuine eye-opener.

Lost Boys & Fairies ★★★
Football Cops ★★★★

What to watch

QUEENIE
Channel 4, 10pm & 10.35pm



Dionne Brown is terrific in the lead role in Candice Carty-Williams's witty dramedy

Candice Carty-Williams's sparkling debut novel *Queenie* was the literary talk of the town in 2019. Its depiction of the everyday racism suffered by young black British women is a superb blend of humour and bite; and its wider portrayal of a young woman in crisis at just about every level – emotionally, culturally, professionally – is deeply sympathetic yet laugh-out-loud funny. Joyfully, they are qualities that this absorbing eight-part adaptation – scripted by Carty-Williams herself – captures in abundance. Dionne Brown is terrific as Queenie Jenkins, a 25-year-old Jamaican-British woman who straddles two cultures but never feels comfortable in either – whether at work (as a journalist/social media editor whose ambition is constantly squashed by her micro-aggressive colleagues), at home (with her noisy family who are on an entirely different wavelength) or in the crumbling relationship with long-term boyfriend Tom (*Big Boys*' Jon Pointing). Which leads her to make some bad decisions that put her life in a downwards spin. The cringe-inducing opening scene, in which Queenie gets some shock news during a medical examination, sets the story up brilliantly. All episodes are online now. ***Gerard O'Donovan***

COMEDY

Wendy Craig Remembers – Butterflies
BBC Four, 7.45pm
The actress recalls the on-set affection that made the filming of her hugely popular 1970s sitcom *Butterflies* so special – and how she turned a reputation for disastrous cooking to her advantage. A rerun of the pilot episode follows, plus an episode of the 1960s comedy that made her famous – **Not in Front of the Children**.

Extraordinary
ITV2, 10.05pm
Winner of this year's Royal Television Society award for scripted comedy, Emma Moran's clever, funny series finally gets a mainstream airing (having previously streamed on ITVX and Disney+). Máiréad Tyers is perfectly cast as Jen, a young woman living in London trying to negotiate a world in which everybody has a special superpower – except her.



Butterflies stars Geoffrey Palmer and Wendy Craig

DOCUMENTARY

Against the Tide – Storyville
BBC Four, 10pm
Sarvnik Kaur's beautifully shot documentary uses the friendship between two Indian fishermen from different economic and educational backgrounds as a canvas on which to explore the impact of modernity, big tech and global commercial interests on traditional ways of life among Mumbai's Koli fishing community.

ENTERTAINMENT

The Great British Sewing Bee
BBC One, 9pm
Tonight's episode centres on a sun-splashed holiday theme. The made-to-measure challenge – which involves designing and making an outfit fit for the Riviera – inspires some sensational results. First, though, a pattern test involving table linen and embroidery.

POLITICS

Sunak v Starmer: The ITV Debate
ITV1, 9pm
The first leadership debate is a head-to-head between Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer. The incumbent PM and Labour hopeful are sure to clash over everything from private schools to net zero. Julie Etchingham moderates. It's followed by **The ITV Election Interviews**, which is set to feature leaders of the Liberal Democrats, the SNP, Reform UK and the Greens, while Rhun ap Iorwerth of Plaid Cymru will be interviewed at 11.40pm on ITV1 Wales.



Rishi Sunak will take on Keir Starmer on ITV1 tonight

SPORT

Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: England v Scotland
Sky Main Event, 3pm
Reigning champions England make their bow in the 2024 tournament – co-hosted by USA and the West Indies – as they take on neighbours Scotland at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados. The British nations share Group B with Oman, Namibia and Australia. ***GO***

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About the expert
Mike Nelhams is the curator of Tresco Abbey Garden and has spent more than 35 years working in the subtropical paradise.

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The Daily T
A new Telegraph podcast

Radio choice

Drama: A Tale of Ossian
Radio 4, 2.15pm

Robert Forrest weaves an entrancing web of Gaelic legend and longing in his excellent new drama *A Tale of Ossian*. Finlay Welsh plays a mysterious old man who turns up in a Scottish hospital with his pockets full of leaves; Wendy Seager is the hospital-visitor vicar who falls under his spell, their relationship changing both of their lives. Elsewhere, comedian Frank Skinner chooses a terrific selection of listener requests – from Black Country-born poet Liz Berry to alt-folk rocker PJ Harvey and British-American poet WH Auden – as **Poetry Please** (*Radio 4, 4pm*) returns for a new run with Roger McGough. ***Gerard O'Donovan***

RADIO 1
FM 97.6-99.8MHZ

6.57am Newsbeat **7.00** Radio 1 Breakfast with Greg James **10.30** Newsbeat **10.32** Rickie, Melvin and Charlie **12.45pm** Newsbeat **1.00** Dean and Vicky **3.30** Newsbeat **3.32** Going Home with Vick, Katie and Jamie on Radio 1 **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Radio 1's New Music Show with Jack Saunders **8.00** Radio 1's Future Artists with Tara Kumar **10.00** Radio 1's Power Down Playlist with Sian Eleri **11.00** Martha **1.00am** Radio 1's Drum & Bass Mix **1.30** Radio 1's Drum & Bass Mix **2.00** Radio 1's Workout Anthems **3.00** Radio 1 Relax **4.00** Radio 1 Dance **5.00 - 6.57am** Radio 1 Early Breakfast with Arielle Free

RADIO 2
FM 88-90.2MHZ

6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show **9.30** Vernon Kay **12.00** Jeremy Vine. Current affairs chat **2.00pm** DJ Spoony. DJ Spoony sits in for Scott Mills **4.00** Sara Cox. Music and chat **6.30** Sara Cox's Half Wower. Sara plays the biggest and best tunes to get listeners dancing **7.00** Jo Whiley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30** Jo Whiley. Jo chats to Natalie Jamieson about recent TV shows **9.00** The Jazz Show with Jamie Cullum. The world of jazz **10.00** Trevor Nelson's Magnificent 7. Uplifting tunes and essential throwbacks **10.30** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation **12.00** OJ Borg **3.00am** Pick of the Pops **4.00 - 6.30am** Jason Mohammad

RADIO 3
FM 90.2-92.4MHZ

6.30am Breakfast **9.30** Essential Classics **1.00pm** Classical Live **4.00** Composer of the Week: Amanda Maier-Rontgen **5.00** In Tune **7.00** Classical Mixtape. A sequence of music **7.30** Radio 3 in Concert. Performances of the string octets by Mendelssohn and Enescu **9.45** The Essay: EarthWorks. Archaeologist Rose Ferraby explores the peat of the Fens **10.00** Night Tracks. Sara Mohr-Pietsch presents a soundtrack for late-night listening **11.30** 'Round Midnight **12.30 - 6.30am** Through the Night

RADIO 4
FM 92.4-94.6MHZ; LW 198KHZ

6.00am Today **9.00** Being Roman with Mary Beard **9.30** All in the Mind **10.00** Woman's Hour **11.00** Add to Playlist **11.45** Book of the Week: Night Train to Odesa **12.00** News **12.04pm** Call You and Yours. Consumer affairs with Winifred Robinson **12.57** Weather **1.00** The World at One. Presented by Sarah Montague **1.45** Thief at the British Museum. The hunt for the missing gems leads Katie Razzall and Ittai Gradel across Europe **2.00** The Archers. Fallon springs a surprise and Vince is on the warpath **2.15 Drama: A Tale of Ossian** By Robert Forrest **See Radio choice 3.00** Short Cuts. Short documentaries and adventures in sound about dreams and hidden places **3.30** Thinking Allowed. Laurie Taylor explores the changing nature of opioid use **4.00 Poetry Please** New series. Frank Skinner presents his poetry recommendations **See Radio choice 4.30** When It Hits the Fan. The world of crisis management **5.00** PM. Presented by Evan Davis **5.57** Weather **6.00** Six O'Clock News **6.30** Joe Lycett's Obsessions. Actress Nina Wadia shares her love of driving holidays **7.00** The Archers. Joy attempts to make amends and trouble brews for Lilian **7.15** Front Row. Arts programme **8.00** The Today Debate **8.40** In Touch **9.00** The Law Show **9.30** The Bottom Line: The Decisions That Made Me a Leader **9.59** Weather **10.00** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: Long Island **11.00** Uncanny USA **11.30** Soul Music **12.00** News and Weather **12.30am** Book of the Week: Night Train to Odesa **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.00** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News Briefing **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45 - 6.00am** Farming Today

RADIO 5 LIVE
MW 693 & 909KHZ

6.00am 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.00** Naga Munchetty **1.00pm** Nihal Arthanayake **4.00** 5 Live Drive **7.00** 5 Live Sport. Build-up to France v England in the Women's Euro 2025 qualifiers **8.00** 5 Live Sport. England v France (kick-off 8.00pm) **10.00** Gordon Smart **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo **5.00 - 6.00am** Wake Up to Money

CLASSIC FM
FM 99.9-101.9MHZ

6.30am Classic FM Breakfast with Dan Walker **9.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour with Dan Walker **10.00** Alexander Armstrong **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minhall **4.00** Margherita Taylor **7.00** Relaxing Evenings **10.00** Calm Classics **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00 - 6.30am** Early Breakfast

WORLD SERVICE
DIGITAL ONLY

8.00am News **8.06** People Fixing the World **8.30** Business Daily **8.50** Witness History **9.00** The Newsroom **9.30** Assignment **10.00** News **10.06** The Arts Hour **11.00** The Newsroom **11.30** The Global Story **12.00** News **12.06pm** Outlook **12.50** Witness History **1.00** The Newsroom **1.30** In the Studio **2.00** Newshour **3.00** News **3.06** People Fixing the World **3.30** World Business Report **4.00** BBC OS **6.00** News **6.06** Outlook **6.50** Witness History **7.00** The Newsroom **7.30** Sport Today **8.00** News **8.06** Assignment **8.30** Tech Life **9.00** Newshour **10.00** News **10.06** People Fixing the World **10.30** In the Studio **11.00** The Newsroom **11.30** World Business Report **12.00** News **12.06am** The Arts Hour **1.00** News **1.06** Business Matters **2.00** The Newsroom **2.30** The Climate Question **3.06** Outlook **3.50** Witness History **4.00** The Newsroom **4.30** The Documentary: Things Fell Apart **5.00 - 8.00am** Newsday

RADIO 4 EXTRA
DIGITAL ONLY

6.00am Hercule Poirot: Mrs McGinty's Dead **6.30** The Great Impersonation **7.00** Semi Circles **7.30** The Goon Show **8.00** The Fair Intellectual Club **8.30** These Days **8.45** D-Day Minus 5: Taking Leave **9.00** Joe Lycett's Obsessions **9.30** A British History in Weather **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** A Good Read **10.30** The Seven Car Parks of Croydon **11.00** Hercule Poirot: Mrs McGinty's Dead **11.30** The Great Impersonation **12.00** Semi Circles **12.30pm** The Goon Show **1.00** The Fair Intellectual Club **1.30** These Days **1.45** D-Day Minus 5: Taking Leave **2.00** The Personality Test **2.30** Artists **3.00** I'll Be Caesar **4.00** A Good Read **4.30** The Seven Car Parks of Croydon **5.00** Hercule Poirot: Mrs McGinty's Dead **5.30** The Great Impersonation **6.00** Semi Circles **6.30** The Goon Show **7.00** The Fair Intellectual Club **7.30** These Days **7.45** D-Day Minus 5: Taking Leave **8.00** The Personality Test **8.30** Artists **9.00** I'll Be Caesar **10.00** Joe Lycett's Obsessions **10.30** Think the Unthinkable **11.00** Rubbish **11.30** Helen Keen's It Is Rocket Science **11.45** Hearing with Hegley **12.00** A Good Read **12.30am** The Seven Car Parks of Croydon **1.00** Hercule Poirot: Mrs McGinty's Dead **1.30** The Great Impersonation **2.00** Semi Circles **2.30** The Goon Show **3.00** The Fair Intellectual Club **3.30** These Days **3.45** D-Day Minus 5: Taking Leave **4.00** The Personality Test **4.30** Artists **5.00 - 6.00am** I'll Be Caesar

Today's television

Main channels

FV Freeview FS Freesat (AD) Audio description (R) Repeat (S) Subtitles (SL) In-vision signing

BBC One

6.00 am Breakfast (S) **9.30** Rip Off Britain (S) **10.15** The Moment of Proof (R) (S) **10.45** Expert Witness (AD) (R) (S) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (S)
12.15 pm Bargain Hunt (AD) (R) (S)
1.00 BBC News at One; Weather (S)
1.35 Regional News; Weather (S)
1.45 BBC News at One; Weather (S)
2.00 Doctors (AD) (S)
2.30 Clean It, Fix It (R) (S)
3.00 Escape to the Country (R) (S)
3.45 Garden Rescue (R) (S)
4.30 The Finish Line (S)
5.15 Pointless (R) (S)
6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather (S)
6.30 Regional News; Weather (S)
6.55 Party Election Broadcast (R) (S)



The Great British Sewing Bee

7.00 The One Show With Alex Jones and Jermaine Jenas (S)
7.30 EastEnders Cindy is determined to get George back (AD) (S)
8.00 Sort Your Life Out with Stacey Solomon A couple hope to transform their chaotic two-bed home (AD) (R) (S)
9.00 The Great British Sewing Bee The sewers face challenges based around travel **See What to watch** (AD) (S)
10.00 News; Weather (S)
10.30 Regional News; Weather (S)
10.40 Tokyo Vice Jake makes a long overdue visit home (AD) (S)
11.35 Tokyo Vice **12.30am** The Repair Shop **1.35 - 6.00am** News

BBC Two

6.45 am Garden Rescue (R) (S) **7.30** Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure (R) (S) **8.00** Sign Zone: Race Across the World (AD) (R) (S) (SL) **9.00** News (S)
12.15 pm Politics Live (S)
1.00 Impossible (R) (S)
1.45 Mastermind (R) (S)
2.15 Great Coastal Railway Journeys (AD) (R) (S)
2.45 Five Bedrooms (AD) (R) (S)
3.30 The Farmers' Country Showdown (R) (S)
4.15 Ocean Giants (R) (S)
5.15 Flog It! (R) (S)
6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games (R) (S)
6.30 Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure (S)



D-Day: The Unheard Tapes

7.00 Your Garden Made Perfect A couple need help redesigning their Cheshire garden (R) (S)
8.00 Springwatch Celebrating the wildlife heroes who dedicate their time to nature (S)
9.00 D-Day: The Unheard Tapes The bloody battle for Normandy that followed D-Day. Last in the series (AD) (S)
10.00 Meet the Richardsons (AD) (R) (S)
10.30 Newsnight (S)
11.05 FILM: Colette (2018) Biopic starring Keira Knightley **See Film choice** **12.50am** Sign Zone: Hidden Treasures of the National Trust **1.50** Sign Zone: Great British Railway Journeys **2.20** Sign Zone: David & Jay's Touring Toolshed **2.50** Sign Zone: Lifeline **3.00** Sign Zone: The Outlaws **4.00 - 6.30am** This Is BBC Two

ITV1

6.00 am Good Morning Britain (S) **9.00** Lorraine (S) **10.00** This Morning (S)
12.30 pm Loose Women (S)
1.30 News; Weather (S)
1.55 Regional News; Weather (S)
2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal (AD) (R) (S)
3.00 Lingo (R) (S)
4.00 Tipping Point for Soccer Aid (R) (S)
5.00 The Chase (R) (S)
6.00 Regional News; Weather (S)
6.20 Party Election Broadcast (S)
6.30 News; Weather (S)



Emmerdale

7.30 Emmerdale Rose makes a faux pas (AD) (S)
8.00 Beat the Chasers – Celebrity Special Nish Kumar, Chris McCausland, Mary Earps and Alexander Armstrong take part (R) (S)
9.00 Sunak v Starmer: The ITV Debate The first General Election debate between the party leaders **See What to watch** (S)
10.10 The ITV Election Interviews Anushka Asthana interviews the leaders of the Liberal Democrats, the SNP, Reform UK and the Green Party **See What to watch** (S)
11.10 News; Weather **11.40** Regional News; Weather **11.55** ITV Studio Sessions **12.20am** Shop on TV **3.00** On Assignment **3.30** My Mum, Your Dad **4.20** Unwind with ITV **5.35 - 6.00am** Made in Britain

Channel 4

6.30 am 3rd Rock from the Sun (AD) (R) (S) **6.55** 3rd Rock from the Sun (AD) (R) (S) **7.20** 3rd Rock from the Sun (AD) (R) (S) **7.45** Everybody Loves Raymond (AD) (R) (S) **8.40** Everybody Loves Raymond (AD) (R) (S) **9.10** Everybody Loves Raymond (AD) (R) (S) **9.40** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **10.10** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **10.40** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **11.10** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (R) (S)
12.05 pm Channel 4 News (S)
12.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (R) (S)
1.10 Car S.O.S (AD) (R) (S)
2.10 Countdown (S)
3.00 A Place in the Sun (R) (S)
4.00 A Place in the Sun (S)
5.00 Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (S)
6.00 Four in a Bed (S)
6.30 The Simpsons (AD) (R) (S)



Emergency Helicopter Medics

7.00 Channel 4 News (S)
8.00 Emergency Helicopter Medics Critically-ill dialysis patient Gillian desperately needs fluids (AD) (S)
9.00 Grand Designs A North Lincolnshire man plans to build a four-bedroom home in his garden (R) (S)
10.00 Queenie See What to watch (AD)
10.35 Queenie See What to watch (AD)
11.10 The Rest is Politics **12.10am** Sky Coppers **1.05** Taskmaster **2.00** Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back **2.50** FILM: The Watermelon Woman (1996) Drama starring Cheryl Dunye **4.15** Iris Prize Best British Shorts **4.25** Britain's Most Luxurious Hotels **5.20** Beat the Chef **5.50 - 6.30am** Countdown

Channel 5

6.00 am Milkshake! **9.15** Jeremy Vine (S) **11.15** Storm Huntley (S)
12.45 pm Friends (AD) (R) (S)
1.10 Friends (AD) (R) (S)
1.40 5 News at Lunchtime (S)
1.45 Home and Away (AD) (R) (S)
2.15 FILM: The Baby Snatcher (2021, TVM) Thriller starring Ali Liebert (S)
4.00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (R) (S)
5.00 5 News at 5 (S)
6.00 Police Interceptors (R) (S)
6.55 5 News Update (S)



Sell by Dates: The Surprising Truth

7.00 Sell by Dates: The Surprising Truth Investigating if food date labels are a con **See What to watch** (S)
7.55 5 News Update (S)
8.00 The Yorkshire Vet Julian Norton heads back to Cambridge University (S)
9.00 Into the Amazon with Robson Green Robson explores the Anavilhanas Archipelago in a canoe. Last in the series (S)
10.00 My Teacher, My Abuser (R) (S)
11.05 Crimes That Shook Britain **12.05am** Ultimate Police Interceptors **1.00** PlayOJO Live Casino Show **3.00** Inside Tiffany's: The World's Most Famous Jewellers **3.50** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun **4.40** Wildlife SOS **5.05** House Doctor **5.30** Entertainment News on 5 **5.35** Fireman Sam **5.45 - 6.00am** Paw Patrol

Film choice



Outcast of the Islands *(1951, b/w)*
Film4, 1.45pm ★★★★

It's not as perfect as *The Third Man* or *Oliver!*, but Carol Reed's adventure film is still a riot. After being fired from his job in a Dutch East India colony for misconduct, selfish Peter Willems (Trevor Howard) decides to settle in a remote Borneo village. Rather than keeping his head down, he seduces the village chieftain's daughter (Kerima) and double-crosses just about every friend and colleague he encounters.



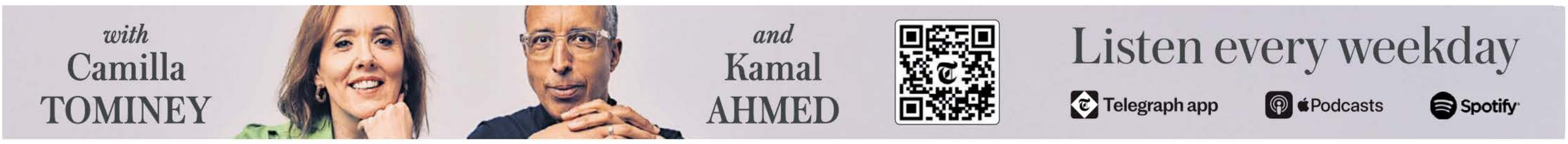
Colette *(2018)*
BBC Two, 11.05pm ★★★★

Wash Westmoreland's historical biopic sees Keira Knightley play Colette, a woman who marries rakish "literary entrepreneur" Willy (Dominic West). When he publishes one of her novels under his name to success, it lights a wildfire story of literary and sexual emancipation. The biographical details are bruisingly observed, and Knightley shoots daggers from her cut-glass cheekbones.



Aquarela *(2018)*
BBC Four, 11.35pm ★★★★

Russian film-maker Viktor Kossakovsky crafts one of the finest climate-change documentaries yet. *Aquarela* makes stunning use of sound to depict the crackling, trickling and snapping of the vast ice plains in Greenland and Siberia, left to ruin by human destruction. The melting ice results in collapsing glaciers and vicious storms and floods – like *The Day After Tomorrow* come to life.



Freeview, satellite and cable

FV Freeview FS Freesat (AD) Audio description (R) Repeat (S) Subtitles (SL) In-vision signing

BBC Four

FV 9 FS 173 SKY 116 VIRGIN 108

7.00 pm Volcanoes of the Solar System: Horizon
7.15 War Walks
7.45 Wendy Craig Remembers – Butterflies See What to Watch
8.00 Butterflies See What to Watch
8.30 Not in Front of the Children See What to Watch
9.00 Rik Mayall: Lord of Misrule
10.00 Against the Tide – Storyville See What to Watch
11.35 FILM: Aquarela (2018) **See Film choice**
1.00 am Vasa: The Ghost Ship
2.00 War Walks
2.30 - 3.25am Bloody Omaha: Timewatch

ITV3

FV 10 FS 115 SKY 119 VIRGIN 117

11.15 am Heartbeat
12.25 pm Heartbeat
1.40 Classic Emmerdale
2.10 Classic Emmerdale
2.35 Classic Coronation Street
3.10 Classic Coronation Street
3.45 Agatha Christie's Marple
5.55 Heartbeat
6.55 Heartbeat
8.00 Midsomer Murders
10.00 Wire in the Blood
11.05 Wire in the Blood
12.00 The Royal
12.55 am Bless This House
1.20 Upstairs, Downstairs
2.15 Unwind with ITV
2.30 - 6.00am Teleshopping

ITV4

FV 26 FS 117 SKY 120 VIRGIN 118

11.50 am The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
12.55 pm Magnum, PI
1.55 Kojak
2.55 Minder
4.05 The Sweeney
5.15 World Rally Championship Highlights
6.15 Cycling: Criterium du Dauphine Highlights
7.15 Uefa Euro 2025 Qualifier: France v England
10.25 Isle of Man TT
11.25 No Room For Error
12.25 am All Elite Wrestling: Rampage
1.35 Isle of Man TT
2.35 Unwind with ITV
3.00 - 6.00am Teleshopping

Sky Arts

FV 36 FS 147 SKY 130 VIRGIN 140

Noon The Joy of Painting
12.30 pm The Joy of Painting
1.00 Tales of the Unexpected
2.00 Australian Ballet: Cinderella
3.35 Inside Art: Van Gogh at the Courtauld Gallery
4.00 Discovering: Ronald Colman
5.00 The Joy of Painting
6.00 Tales of the Unexpected
7.00 Grand Ole Opry
8.00 Guy Garvey: From the Vaults
9.00 Johnson & Knopfler's Music Legends
10.00 Ennio: The Maestro
1.00 am FILM: I Am Bruce Lee (2011) The life and career of the actor and martial artist
3.00 - 4.00am The Sky Arts Book Club Summer Reads Special

Sky Atlantic

SKY 108

11.10 am Billions
12.15 pm Game of Thrones
1.20 The Sopranos
2.25 The Sopranos
3.30 True Blood
4.35 True Blood
5.45 Billions
6.50 Billions
7.55 Game of Thrones
9.00 The Tattooist of Auschwitz
10.05 House of the Dragon
11.15 Band of Brothers
12.20 am Domina
1.20 The Deuce
2.30 Game of Thrones
3.40 - 4.10am In Treatment

Film4

FV 14 FS 300 SKY 313 VIRGIN 428

11.00 am Reach for the Sky (1956, b/w) Biopic of Second World War pilot Douglas Bader starring Kenneth More
1.45 pm Outcast of the Islands (1951, b/w) Drama with Ralph Richardson **See Film choice**
3.50 Oliver! (1968) Musical starring Ron Moody
6.45 A Good Year (2006) Comedy drama starring Russell Crowe
9.00 The Craft: Legacy (2020) Horror drama starring Cailee Spaeny and Gideon Adlon
10.50 Plan B (2021) Comedy starring Kuhoo Verma
1.00 - 3.25am The Blue Caftan (2022) Premiere. Romantic drama starring Lubna Azabal

Drama

FV 20 FS 158 SKY 143 VIRGIN 116

11.40 am The Bill
12.40 pm Classic EastEnders
1.20 Classic EastEnders
2.00 London's Burning
3.00 Lovejoy
4.15 Tenko
5.15 Birds of a Feather
6.00 Waiting for God
6.40 Are You Being Served?
7.20 Last of the Summer Wine
8.00 Dalziel & Pascoe
10.00 New Tricks
11.20 Soldier, Soldier
12.30 am Lovejoy
1.40 Call the Midwife
2.50 - 4.00am Classic Holby City

Dave

Noon Storage Hunters UK **2.00pm** Extreme Fishing with Robson Green **3.00** Top Gear **5.00** Hairy Bikers' Best of British **6.00** Rick Stein's Mediterranean Escapes **7.00** Would I Lie to You? The Unseen Bits **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **9.00** QI XL **10.00** Mad Dogs **11.00** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **12.00** Mock the Week **12.40am** Would I Lie to You? The Unseen Bits **1.20** Live at the Apollo **2.30** Meet the Richardsons **3.00-4.00am** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA

GOLD

Noon Last of the Summer Wine **12.40pm** Keeping Up Appearances **1.20** My Hero **2.00** Porridge **2.40** Dad's Army **3.20** Are You Being Served? **4.00** Last of the Summer Wine **5.20** Porridge **6.00** Keeping Up Appearances **6.40** Dad's Army **8.00** Still Open All Hours **8.40** Blackadder the Third **9.20** dinnerladies **10.00** The Royle Family **10.40** Harry Enfield and Chums **11.20** The Office **12.00** Still Open All Hours **12.40am** Blackadder the Third **1.20** dinnerladies **2.00** The Royle Family **2.35** Harry Enfield and Chums **3.15-4.00am** The Office

ITV2

Noon Dress to Impress **1.00pm** Wheel of Fortune **2.00** Family Fortunes **3.00** Veronica Mars **4.00** Dawson's Creek **5.00** Dress to Impress **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.00** Family Fortunes **8.00** Bob's Burgers **9.00** Love Island **10.05 Extraordinary See What to Watch 10.50** Family Guy **11.50** American Dad! **12.50am** Bob's Burgers **1.45** Hey Tracey! **2.40** Unwind with ITV **3.00-6.00am** Teleshopping

More4

11.25am Find It, Fix It, Flog It **12.30pm** Come Dine with Me **3.10** Four in a Bed **5.50** Chateau DIY **6.55** Car S.O.S **7.55** Grand Designs **9.00** PopMaster TV **10.00** Do You Remember...2000? **11.05** 24 Hours in A&E **12.10am** PopMaster TV **1.15** 999: On the Front Line **2.20** 24 Hours in A&E **3.25-3.50am** A Place in the Sun

PBS America

11.50am WWII in Color: Road to Victory **1.00pm** The War on Disco **2.05** The Soviet Union: 100th Anniversary 1922 **3.05** D-Day: Victory **4.05** Beautiful Serengeti **4.40** Race to Victory **5.40** WWII in Color: Road to Victory **6.45** The Soviet Union: 100th Anniversary 1922 **7.45** D-Day: Victory **8.45** Race to Victory **9.40** WWII in Color: Road to Victory **10.50** The War on Disco **12.00** The Soviet Union: 100th Anniversary 1922 **1.00am** D-Day: Victory **2.00-6.00am** Teleshopping

Talking Pictures TV

24 hours, including at:
Noon Worzel Gummidge **12.35pm FILM:** Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon (1942, b/w) Mystery thriller starring Basil Rathbone **1.55 FILM:** The Aviator (1985) Period adventure starring Christopher Reeve **3.55 FILM:** The Day Will Dawn (1942, b/w) Adventure starring Hugh Williams **5.55** The Beverly Hillbillies **6.30** Scotland Yard **7.05** The Road to D-Day **7.35** Dangerous Assignment **8.05** Manhunt **9.05** Maigret **10.55** Cellar Club with Caroline Munro **11.00 FILM:** The Stepfather II (1989) Horror starring Terry O'Quinn **12.45am** Cellar Club with Caroline Munro **12.50 FILM:** 13 Ghosts (1960, b/w) Horror comedy starring Donald Woods **2.30** Cellar Club with Caroline Munro **2.35-4.10am FILM:** Raw Deal (1948, b/w) Prison escape drama starring Dennis O'Keefe

Yesterday

Noon Great British Railway Journeys **1.00pm** Antiques Roadshow **2.00** Bangers & Cash **4.00** Adolf Hitler's War **5.00** World War Weird **6.00** Antiques Roadshow **7.00** Canal Boat Diaries **8.00** Bangers & Cash **9.00** Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics **10.00** Bangers & Cash **11.00** Abandoned Engineering **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys **1.00am** Hornby: A Model World **2.00** Abandoned Engineering **3.00-6.10am** Teleshopping

Sky Sports Main Event

11.00am Live World Pool Championship. Coverage of the first session on day two of the tournament **3.00pm Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup** England v Scotland **See What to watch 7.30** Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Netherlands v Nepal **8.30** Live World Pool Championship. Coverage of the second session on day two of the tournament **9.30** Sky Sports News **10.00** Sky Sports News at Ten **10.30** Back Pages Tonight **11.00-6.00am** Sky Sports News

Sky Sports Premier League

Noon Gary Neville's Soccerbox **1.00pm** Premier League Best Goals **2.00** Premier League Highlights **3.00** Premier League **3.30** Premier League Highlights **5.00** Premier League Review **7.00** Premier League Icons **7.30** Premier League 100 Club **8.00** Gary Neville's Soccerbox **9.00** Southgate: Life As England Manager **9.30** Fabregas & Henry: Christmas Special **10.00** Class of '92: Full Time **11.00** PL Retro **1.00am** Premier League Years **3.00-4.00am** PL Greatest Games

TNT Sports 1

Noon MotoGP **1.30pm** MotoGP Chequered Flag **2.30** WRC Review **3.30** MotoGP Rewind **3.45** Uefa Europa League & Conference League Magazine **4.45** Original Documentary **5.30** Premier League Review **6.30** Premier League Stories **7.00** Uefa Europa League & Conference League Magazine **8.00** Uefa Champions League Magazine **8.30** No Filter Football **8.45** What I Wore **9.00** WWE Monday Night Raw **11.30** MLB Lead Off **12.00** Live MLB. New York Yankees v Minnesota Twins (start-time 12.05am) **3.00am** MLB Closer **3.30-4.00am** Fight Week

Discovery

Noon Wheeler Dealers **1.00pm** Barnwood Builders **3.00** Gold Rush **4.00** Alaska: Homestead Rescue **6.00** Demolition Down Under **7.00** Bitchin' Rides **8.00** Supertruckers **9.00** Gold Rush: Parker's Trail **11.00** Gold Divers **1.00am** Gold Rush: Parker's Trail **3.00-4.00am** Gold Divers

Sky Cinema Premiere

24 hours, including at:
Noon Force of Nature: The Dry 2 (2024) Thriller starring Eric Bana and Anna Torv **1.55pm** Blue Beetle (2023) Fantasy adventure starring Xolo Maridueña **4.05** Ride On (2023) Action drama starring Jackie Chan **6.20** Bonus Track (2023) Comedy starring Joe Anders **8.00** Force of Nature: The Dry 2 (2024) Two federal agents investigate the disappearance of a hiker. Thriller, starring Eric Bana and Anna Torv **10.00** Blue Beetle (2023) Fantasy adventure starring Xolo Maridueña **12.10am** The Exorcist: Believer (2023) Horror sequel starring Leslie Odom Jr **2.05-4.05am** Turtles All the Way Down (2024) Romantic drama starring Isabela Merced

Sky Documentaries

Noon Rise of the Superheroes **2.15pm FILM:** Kipchoge: The Last Milestone (2021) Documentary following Eliud Kipchoge's record-shattering feat **4.00** The Directors **5.00** Discovering: Harrison Ford **6.00** The Seventies **7.00** The Great Rhino Robbery **8.00** The Man Who Bought Cricket **9.00** Striking with Pride: United at the Coalface **10.40 FILM:** Forced Out (2023) People dishonourably discharged from the armed forces because of their sexuality **12.35am FILM:** Suited (2016) Documentary looking at the work of Brooklyn tailoring company Bindle and Keep **2.00-4.30am FILM:** Amy (2015) Documentary portrait of singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse

Sky History

Noon The UnXplained with William Shatner **1.00pm** Pawn Stars **2.00** Ancient Skies **3.00** Bomber: Terror of WWII **5.00** Pawn Stars **6.00** American Pickers **7.00** Forged in Fire **8.00** What on Earth? **9.00** Hitler's Handmaidens **10.00** Auschwitz – One Day **11.15** Paranormal: Caught on Camera **12.15am** Pawn Stars **2.05** The Curse of Oak Island **3.00-4.00am** What on Earth?

Sky Max

Noon The Flash **1.00pm** SEAL Team **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 **4.00** S.W.A.T. **5.00** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **6.00** Stargate SG-1 **8.00** Rob & Romesh vs Art **9.00** A League of Their Own: Mexican Road Trip **10.00** The Walking Dead: The Ones Who Live **11.15** Hold the Front Page **12.10am** The Walking Dead **1.05** S.W.A.T. **2.05** Resident Alien **3.00-4.00am** Hawaii Five-0

Variations

Northern Ireland

BBC One: 6.55 - 7.00pm A Party Election Broadcast By Sinn Fein **10.40** The Lough Neagh Monster – Spotlight **11.10** Tokyo Vice **12.05am** Tokyo Vice **1.05** Celebrity Bridge of Lies **1.50 - 6.00am** BBC News
BBC Two: No variations
UTV: 11.55pm - 12.20am View from Stormont

Scotland

BBC One: No variations
BBC Scotland: 7.00pm This Farming Life **8.00** Paramedics on Scene **9.00** The Nine **10.00** Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster **10.45** Best of Only an Excuse? **11.15** What Next for the Wellerman? **midnight** Close
STV: 4.20 - 5.35am Night Vision

Wales

BBC One: 6.55pm A Party Election Broadcast by The Welsh Conservatives **7.00 - 9.00** Match of the Day Wales Live **10.45** Tokyo Vice **11.40** Tokyo Vice **12.35 - 1.35am** The Repair Shop
BBC Two: 1.45pm First Minister's Questions **2.45** Mastermind **3.15** Great Coastal Railway Journeys **3.45** Five Bedrooms **4.30 - 5.15** The Farmers' Country Showdown **6.30** Hairy Bikers: Namibian BBQ **6.45** Match of the Day Wales Live **7.00** The One Show **7.30 - 8.00pm** EastEnders
ITV1 Wales: 11.40pm ITV Election Interviews: Plaid Cymru See What to Watch 11.55 - 12.20am Sharp End

ITV1 Regions

No variations

S4C

6.00am Cyw **12.00** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **12.05pm** Bwrdd i Dri **12.30** Heno **1.00** Ffasiwn Drefn **1.30** Ffermio **2.00** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **2.05** Prynhawn Da **3.00** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **3.05** Ken Owens: Y Sheriff **4.00** Awr Fawr: Y Tralalas **4.05** Awr Fawr: Sam Tan **4.15** Awr Fawr: Byd Tad-Cu **4.30** Awr Fawr: Sion y Chef **4.45** Awr Fawr: Sigldigwt **5.00** Stwnsh **6.00** Cymry ar Gynfas **6.25** Darllediad Etholiadol gan y Ceidwadwyr Cymreig **6.30** Ralïo+ **6.57** Newyddion S4C **7.00** Heno **7.30** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **8.00** Pobol y Cwm **8.25** Rownd a Rownd **8.55** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **9.00** Y Llinell Las **10.00** Pêl-Droed Rhyngwladol **11.00** Pum Merch, Tri Chopa, Un Cwch **11.30 - 12.05am** Codi Hwyl

Weather & Crosswords

Forecast

General situation

A cold front will produce showers or spells of rain in Scotland and Northern Ireland into northern England today. Showers will reach southern England and Wales in the afternoon.

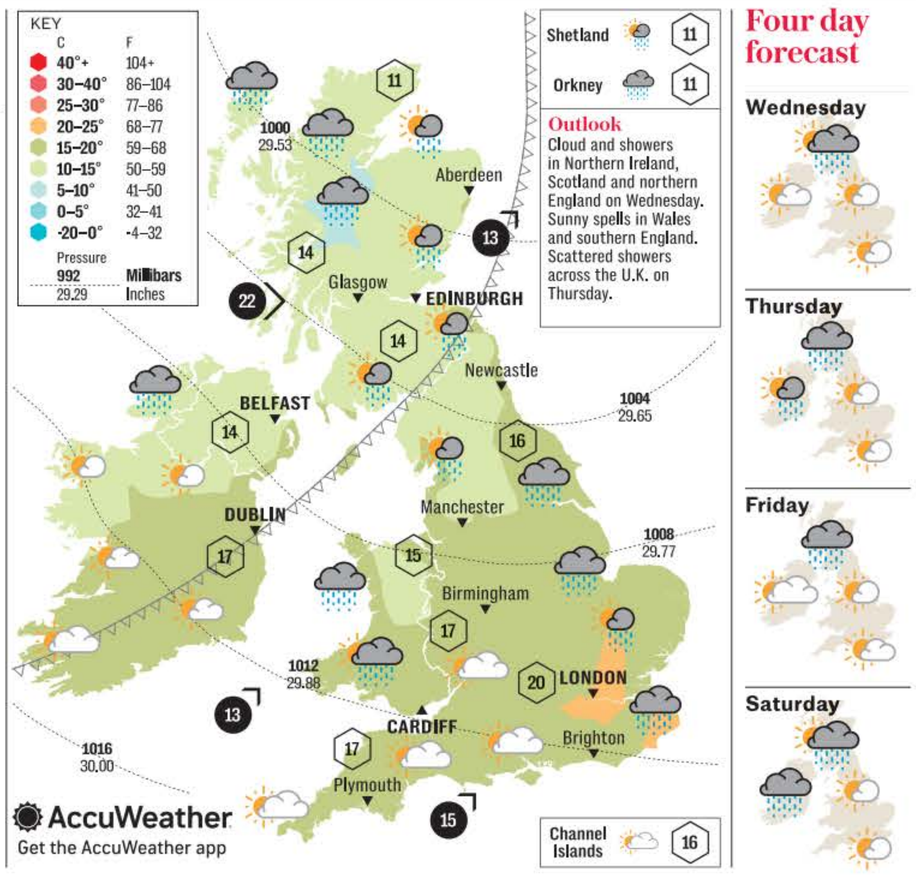
◆**London, Cent S England, Channel Is, SW England, E England, SE England, E Anglia, Midlands:** Cloud and sunny periods today with showers. A moderate W to SW wind. Max 60-70F (16-21C). Clear periods and mainly dry later tonight. Min 41-52F (5-11C).

◆**NW England, Lake Dist, IoM, Cent N England, NE England:** Mostly cloudy today with spells of rain. A moderate SW to W wind. Max 48-62F (9-17C). Dry tonight. Min 34-46F (1-8C).

◆**Wales:** Sunny periods today with afternoon and evening showers. A moderate SW to W wind. Max 48-62F (9-17C). Dry later tonight. Min 36-50F (2-10C).

◆**N Ireland:** Spells of rain today. A moderate W to NW wind. Max 46-57F (8-14C). A couple of showers tonight. Min 33-45F (1-7C).

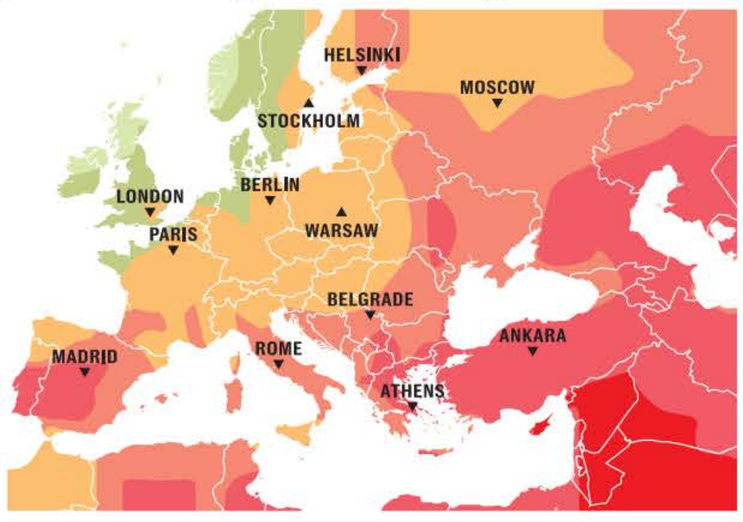
◆**SW Scotland, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll, W Isles, SE Scotland, NE Scotland, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, Orkney, Shetland:** Mostly cloudy today and tonight with rainy spells, some wintry in the hills. A moderate W to NW wind. Max 36-60F (2-16C). Min 32-46F (0-8C).



Four day forecast

European readings Last night's report for 24 hours to 6pm

	Max °C	Min °C	Daytime weather
Akrotiri	35	21	sunny
Alicante	24	18	p/cldy
Amsterdam	17	10	cloudy
Athens	34	21	sunny
Barcelona	23	17	windy
Bari	24	18	storms
Belgrade	29	16	storms
Benidorm	24	16	sunny
Bergen	14	11	showers
Berlin	23	14	cloudy
Biarritz	20	12	p/cldy
Bodrum	37	20	sunny
Bordeaux	22	12	p/cldy
Brest	21	9	p/cldy
Brussels	17	8	cloudy
Bucharest	33	14	showers
Budapest	26	15	showers
Cagliari	28	15	sunny
Chamonix	17	10	storms
Copenhagen	19	14	p/cldy
Corfu	30	20	p/cldy
Cork	19	12	cloudy
Corsica	23	13	p/cldy
Crete	29	17	p/cldy
Dublin	18	12	showers
Dubrovnik	25	17	showers
Faro	25	20	windy
Florence	23	15	showers
Frankfurt	20	12	p/cldy
Funchal	23	17	p/cldy
Gdansk	24	13	p/cldy
Geneva	21	13	showers
Gibraltar	23	18	sunny
Hamburg	21	13	cloudy
Helsinki	26	13	showers
Innsbruck	21	12	showers
Istanbul	33	21	haze
Kyiv	25	13	p/cldy
La Rochelle	24	14	sunny
Lisbon	27	18	sunny
Locarno	21	11	storms
Luxembourg	19	9	p/cldy
Madrid	30	13	storms
Majorca	26	14	sunny
Malaga	28	15	sunny
Malta	30	20	sunny
Marseille	26	14	windy
Menorca	23	14	p/cldy
Milan	24	14	showers
Monaco	22	15	showers
Moscow	26	17	showers
Munich	17	13	showers
Naples	24	17	p/cldy
Nice	22	16	sunny
Nicosia	39	22	sunny
Oporto	27	18	sunny
Oslo	23	16	sunny
Palermo	23	20	sunny
Paris	22	8	p/cldy
Perpignan	28	18	sunny
Prague	18	13	cloudy
Reykjavik	8	4	showers
Rhodes	35	23	sunny
Riga	24	14	cloudy
Rome	23	14	sunny
Saint Malo	20	9	p/cldy
Salzburg	18	13	showers
Santander	19	15	p/cldy
Santiago/Comp.	27	12	sunny
Sofia	27	17	p/cldy
St. Petersburg	24	18	showers
Stockholm	24	9	showers
Strasbourg	19	14	cloudy
Tenerife	26	19	windy
Tirana	32	20	p/cldy
Toulouse	22	12	p/cldy
Valencia	26	17	p/cldy
Venice	22	16	rain
Vienna	24	16	showers
Vigo	29	15	sunny
Vilnius	23	12	showers
Warsaw	23	15	showers
Zagreb	22	16	showers
Zurich	17	13	showers



Nature Notes

Blackbirds hit by deadly virus

A deadly virus carried by mosquitoes has been blamed for the rapid decline in the blackbird population.

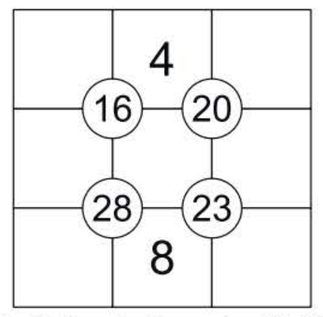
First detected in the UK in London in the summer of 2020, Usutu virus is potentially fatal to the songbirds and now it appears to have started to spread across south-east England.

To monitor the scale of the problem the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) is asking members of the public to take part in a survey.

A spokesman for the BTO said: "For hundreds of years, this familiar bird has been celebrated by poets, painters and songwriters but now the popular songster of town and country is in danger of becoming scarcer in many of its former haunts.

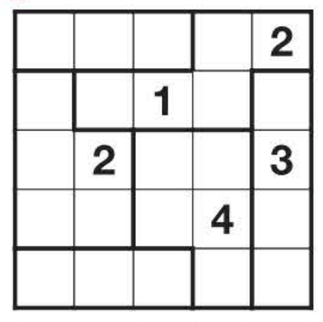
"The online Blackbirds in Gardens survey will help BTO scientists better understand how blackbirds use different types of garden, and what factors might influence the risk of disease transmission."

Sujiko® MODERATE NO 4889



To play Sujiko, enter the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the total in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding squares. Today's solutions appear tomorrow.

Suguru NO 1977



The aim of Suguru is to fill the grid so that no same digit is touching. A two-cell outlined block contains the digits 1 and 2; a three-cell block contains 1, 2, 3; and so on. The same digit must not appear in neighbouring cells, not even diagonally.

Yesterday's solutions:

Sujiko 4888: 123 / 457 / 869

Suguru 1976:

4	2	4	2	1
3	1	3	5	3
4	5	2	1	2
1	3	4	3	4
5	2	1	2	1

Suko 951: 283 / 671 / 495

Suko 952: 617 / 824 / 395

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British readings Last night's report for 24 hours to 6pm - *estimated readings

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max °C	Min °C	Daytime weather
Aberdeen	9.9	0.01	21	13	p/cloudy
Aberystwyth	0.4*	0.00	17	10	cloudy
Antrim	0.3	0.00	18	12	cloudy
Aviemore	9.8*	0.00	16	11	p/cloudy
Barnstaple	0.5*	0.00	19	13	cloudy
Barrow-in-Furns.	0.4*	0.00	16	12	cloudy
Basingstoke	0.6	0.00	22	11	cloudy
Bedford	3.1*	0.00	22	12	cloudy
Belfast	0.3*	0.06	19*	13*	showers
Berwick	9.4	0.00	19	12	p/cloudy
Birmingham	6.3*	0.00	21	11	cloudy
Bodmin	1.8*	0.00	21	10	cloudy
Bournemouth	1.7	0.00	24	9	cloudy
Braintree	3.9*	0.00	21	11	cloudy
Brecon	2.8*	0.00	20	7	cloudy
Bridlington	4.7*	0.00	19	12	cloudy
Brighton	5.8*	0.00	21	9	cloudy
Bristol	3.7*	0.00	21*	11*	cloudy
Camborne	2.8	0.00	17	12	cloudy
Cardiff	2.5	0.00	19	12	cloudy
Carlisle	0.5*	0.00	18	13	cloudy
Catterick	1.4	0.00	21	11	cloudy
Cheltenham	3.5*	0.00	23*	12*	cloudy
Chester	0.2	0.00	17	13	cloudy
Coventry	2.4*	0.01	21*	12*	cloudy
Doncaster	2.0*	0.01	20*	12*	cloudy
Dover	3.5*	0.00	16	9	cloudy
Dundee	11.2	0.01	21	12	sunny
Eastbourne	6.1*	0.00	20	9	cloudy
Edinburgh	7.7	0.01	19	13	p/cloudy
Epsom	7.3*	0.00	21	10	p/cloudy
Falmouth	2.0*	0.00	19	12	cloudy
Farnborough	4.6*	0.00	22*	10*	cloudy
Fort William	9.3	0.00	16	9	p/cloudy
Glasgow	7.0	0.00	18	12	p/cloudy
Great Malvern	2.8*	0.00	24	9	cloudy
Grimsby	3.0*	0.00	18	12	cloudy
Guernsey	5.5*	0.00	18	12	cloudy
Hereford	2.3*	0.00	23	12	cloudy
High Wycombe	3.5*	0.00	22*	7*	cloudy
Holyhead	0.1	0.00	16	12	cloudy
Huddersfield	1.4*	0.00	17	11	cloudy
Ipswich	3.8	0.00	19	8	cloudy
Isle of Man	0.9	0.00	17	12	cloudy
Isle of Skye	6.6*	0.00	14*	7*	cloudy
Isle of Wight	5.3*	0.00	18	12	cloudy
Isles of Scilly	5.7*	0.00	18	13	cloudy
Jersey	10.8	0.00	18	11	p/cloudy
Keswick	0.0*	Trace	16	12	cloudy
Kew Gardens	4.0*	0.00	23*	13*	cloudy
King's Lynn	3.7*	0.00	19	11	cloudy
Leeds	1.6*	0.00	17*	12*	cloudy
Leek	0.0*	0.00	17	11	cloudy
Leominster	0.6	0.00	23	12	cloudy
Lincoln	0.5	0.00	22	12	cloudy
Liverpool	0.2	0.00	17	13	cloudy
London	1.5	0.00	24	13	cloudy
Manchester	0.6	0.00	17	12	cloudy
Middlesbrough	2.8*	0.00	20	12	cloudy
Newcastle	10.3*	0.00	19	12	windy
Newquay	2.8	0.00	17	12	cloudy
Nottingham	0.0	0.00	21	12	cloudy
Orkney	2.3	0.05	15	9	showers
Oxford	3.4	0.00	23	12	cloudy
Perth	7.4*	0.00	19	12	p/cloudy
Peterborough	2.9	0.00	22	12	cloudy
Plymouth	4.6*	0.00	21	11	cloudy
Portsmouth*	5.8*	Trace*	20*	11*	cloudy
Prestwick	3.3	0.02	16	12	cloudy
Ramsgate	1.4	0.00	19	9	cloudy
Rhyl	0.7*	0.02	16	13	cloudy
Rugby	2.1*	0.00	21	11	cloudy
Salisbury	4.3*	0.00	23	9	cloudy
Scunthorpe	2.7*	Trace	21*	12*	cloudy
Sheffield	2.0	0.00	20	12	cloudy
Shetland	3.0*	0.12	13	8	showers
Shrewsbury	0.3	0.00	19	12	cloudy
Skegness	1.6*	0.00	20	11	cloudy
Southampton	3.5*	0.00	23*	12*	cloudy
Southend-on-Sea	0.1	0.00	20	11	cloudy
Stockport	0.6	0.00	17	12	cloudy
Stornoway	1.5	0.01	14	8	showers
Swansea	2.3*	0.00	22	12	cloudy
Swindon	4.5*	0.00	21	11	cloudy
Thirsk	6.8*	0.00	21	9	cloudy
Tiree	5.0*	0.01	14	9	cloudy
Weymouth	6.1*	0.00	19	13	cloudy
Whitehaven	0.1*	0.01	14	11	cloudy
Windermere	0.9*	0.01	17*	12*	cloudy
Worcester	3.0*	0.00	24	9	cloudy
Yeovil	6.2	0.00	21	9	cloudy
York	3.2*	0.03	20*	12*	showers

World readings

	Max °C	Min °C	Daytime weather
Accra	30	24	p/cldy
Addis Ababa	31	10	p/cldy
Adelaide	14	4	p/cldy
Alexandria	30	23	haze
Algiers	25	14	windy
Amman	40	22	sunny
Anchorage	11	8	cloudy
Ankara	31	14	p/cldy
Ascension Is.	29	26	showers
Auckland	18	13	p/cldy
Baghdad	48	26	sunny
Bahamas	30	25	storms
Bahrain	36	32	haze
Bamako	41	27	sunny
Bangkok	35	28	p/cldy
Beijing	34	17	showers
Beirut	33	23	sunny
Bermuda	25	19	p/cldy
Bogota	21	10	cloudy
Bridgetown	30	28	showers
Brisbane	22	9	sunny
Buenos Aires	11	6	sunny
Cairo	37	23	sunny
Canberra	11	1	showers
Cape Town	14	9	rain
Casablanca	24	16	p/cldy
Chicago	27	14	p/cldy
Christchurch	12	-1	p/cldy
Colombo	31	27	showers
Damascus	39	19	sunny
Dar es Salaam	32	22	sunny
Dhaka	32	28	storms
Dubai	41	30	sunny
Falkland Is.	6	3	cloudy
Harare	28	11	sunny
Havana	31	22	storms
Hong Kong	29	26	rain
Honolulu	24	23	showers
Jakarta	32	26	storms
Jeddah	40	30	sunny
Jerusalem	35	21	sunny
Johannesburg	14	8	showers
Kabul	35	17	p/cldy
Karachi	34	28	sunny
Kolkata	34	28	p/cldy
Kuala Lumpur	32	26	storms
La Paz	14	-4	sunny
Lahore	48	28	haze
Lima	19	16	p/cldy
Los Angeles	17	14	p/cldy
Maldives	33	28	p/cldy
Manila	34	26	p/cldy
Marrakesh	30	17	sunny
Melbourne	15	5	cloudy
Miami	29	24	rain
Montego Bay	31	26	storms
Mumbai	34	31	rain
Nairobi	27	16	p/cldy
New Orleans	31	25	p/cldy
New Delhi	45	31	p/cldy
New York	28	22	p/cldy
Ottawa	27	12	sunny
Perth	22	11	cloudy
Port-of-Spain	31	26	p/cldy
Rio de Janeiro	27	20	sunny
Riyadh	42	27	haze
San Francisco	18	14	p/cldy
Santiago	16	10	p/cldy
Seattle	13	11	rain
Seoul	28	14	p/cldy
Seychelles	31	26	cloudy
Singapore	32	26	storms
Sydney	20	9	p/cldy
Taipei City	26	20	cloudy
Tangier	28	19	sunny
Tel Aviv	35	23	sunny
Tokyo	23	17	showers
Toronto	21	16	p/cldy
Tunis	27	18	p/cldy
Vancouver	14	11	showers
Washington	28	21	storms
Wellington	12	9	sunny
Winnipeg	18	12	p/cldy

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather.com** ©2024

Atlantic front



Noon today: A cold front will move southeastward across the United Kingdom and into Norway while a weak low impacts southeast Europe.

Sun & moon (Greenwich)

Sun rises	0448
Sun sets	2113
Moon rises	0311
Moon sets	1915
New moon	June 6

Yesterday

Warmest	Bournemouth 24C (75F)
Coldest	Aonach 3C (38F)
Wettest	Baltasound No. 2 0.56 in.
Sunniest	Lossiemouth RAF 13.1 hr.

Lighting up

Aberdeen	2157 to 0418
Belfast	2154 to 0452
Birmingham	2124 to 0448
London	2113 to 0447
Manchester	2131 to 0444
Penzance	2126 to 0515

High water

Aberdeen	0010	3.9m	1219	4.1m
Belfast	1002	3.4m	2229	3.3m
Cardiff	0547	11.4m	1814	11.5m
Dover	1012	6.2m	2230	6.4m
Falmouth	0358	4.8m	1628	4.8m
Harwich	1040	3.8m	2253	3.8m
Holyhead	0909	5.4m	2144	5.3m
Hull	0511	6.8m	1719	7.2m
Liverpool	0957	8.9m	2229	8.8m
London	0012	6.7m	1250	6.6m
Portsmouth	1011	4.4m	2241	4.7m
Southampton	0921	4.2m	1536	1.0m

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Pollen count

Grass and weed pollen are very high. Tree pollen is low and fungal spores are moderate.

Provided by the National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit

Sea forecast

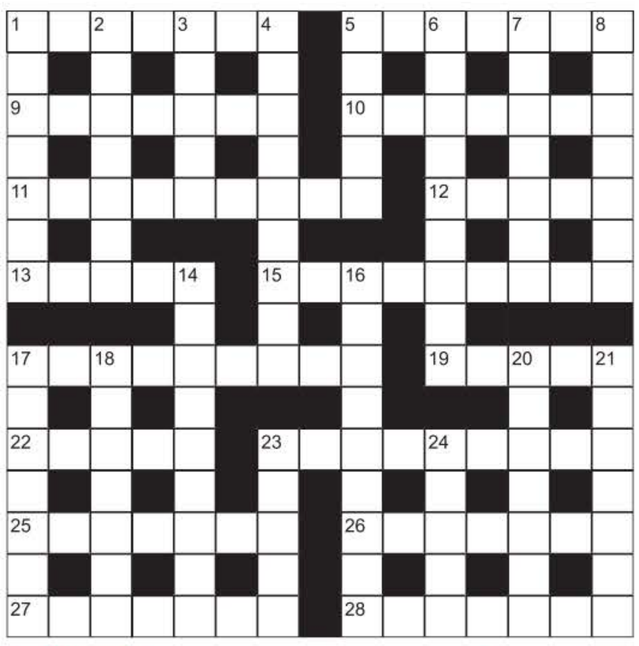
S North Sea: A gentle to fresh southwesterly wind today. Seas will be very rough. Visibility will be poor.

Dover Strait, English Channel: A moderate to strong southwesterly wind today. Seas will be very rough on the east and the west. Visibility will be good.

St. George's Channel: A gentle to fresh west-southwesterly wind today. Seas will be very rough. Visibility will be good.

Irish Sea: A moderate to strong westerly wind today. Seas will be moderate. Visibility will be fair.

Crossword 30,631 telegraph.co.uk/puzzles



Across

1 Problem with boots initially is hard for cobblers (7)
5 Start admitting dog's tied up (7)
9 Deal with trouble (7)
10 University student group united with almost everyone striking (7)
11 Lacquering without third of marks disappearing (9)
12 Faith in God? Only some object (5)
13 Grating sounds right next to snakes (5)
15 Enter game, breaking consensus (9)
17 Speaks to district attorney about clothes (9)
19 Group of soldiers keeping five European squirrels away (5)
22 Student, a bit of a looker? (5)
23 Uses trains (9)
25 Want sailors in French church (7)
26 Panto regularly seen in that place? (7)
27 Meet Harry first, say, but not king (7)
28 Fancies gentleman in river is ignoring current (7)

Down

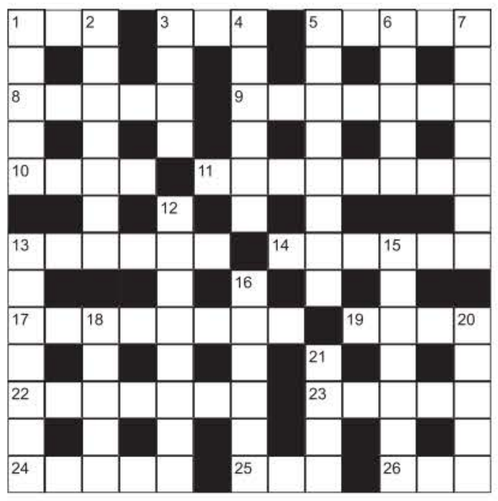
1 Get better religious education with fellow rector, at first (7)
2 Dotty neckerchiefs daughter's taken off (7)
3 I had mainly simple thoughts (5)
4 Worker is holding tops of containers and picnic hampers (9)
5 Enthusiast's taken up golf, getting injured (5)
6 Many left enthralled by noblewoman (9)
7 Regret adolescent announced habitual procedure (7)
8 Relish upsetting editor with answer to clue? (7)
14 Wife stops flogging last of potions for lumps and bumps (9)
16 Esteemed Conservative getting horribly pestered outside (9)
17 Seems new paper's carrying article (7)
18 Security is turning up in warehouse (7)
20 Guest's face covering masking sex appeal (7)
21 Spy heartlessly halts schemes (7)
23 Army men enjoy locking up foe (5)
24 Groups of sailors travel slowly, we're told (5)

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Help with today's clues Single clues **0905 757 0120.** All Across/Down clues **0905 757 0121.** Calls cost £1/minute, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon-Fri. SP: Spoke – Helpline **0333 202 3390.**

Quick Crossword



Across

1 *American poet* (3)
3 *Top* (3)
5 *Stratum* (5)
8 Depart (5)
9 Withdraw (7)
10 Give out (4)
11 Passageway (8)
13 Attractive (6)
14 Pal (6)
17 Thinks over (8)
19 Wagers (4)
22 Punched (7)
23 Picture (5)
24 Indications (5)
25 Paddle (3)
26 Hint (3)

Down

1 Heartbeat (5)
2 Analyse (7)
3 Masticate (4)
4 Forgive (6)
5 Bookish (8)
6 Concede (5)
7 Went to bed (7)
12 Tries (8)
13 Sea robbers (7)
15 Graceful (7)
16 Atelier (6)
18 Thrown (5)
20 Expensive (5)
21 Fibber (4)

Help with today's Quick Crossword clues Single clues **0905 757 0122.** Solution **0905 757 0123.** Calls cost £1/minute, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon-Sat. SP: Spoke – Helpline 0333 202 3390.

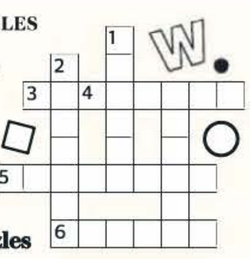
Yesterday's Quick Crossword Solution

Across: 7 Reef, 8 Ray, 9 Zing, *(Rephrasing)* 10 Tune up, 11 Tragic, 12 Ape, 13 Hasten, 14 Rating, 16 Lender, 19 Object, 21 Ell, 22 Stayed, 24 Dearth, 25 Envy, 26 Nag, 27 Achy. **Down:** 1 Nebula, 2 Affected, 3 Trepan, 4 Oyster, 5 Ezra, 6 Ensign, 15 Taj Mahal, 17 Extant, 18 Redone, 19 Old age, 20 Catchy, 23 Yo-yo.

Solution No 30,630

■	A	P	H	R	O	D	I	S	I	A	C	■	■	■
■	■	V	■	A	■	U	■	N	■	L	■	H	■	■
M	E	A	N	S	■	T	I	D	A	L	W	A	V	E
O	■	L	■	B	■	O	■	U	■	O	■	O	■	X
T	E	A	L	E	A	F	■	S	I	G	N	S	U	P
H	■	N	■	E	■	T	■	■	I	■	■	■	■	L
E	X	C	O	N	■	U	R	T	I	C	A	R	I	A
R	■	H	■	■	■	N	■	A	■	■	■	E	■	N
S	P	E	E	D	W	E	L	L	■	M	E	D	I	A
T	■	■	■	R	■	■	■	K	■	A	■	B	■	T
O	B	S	C	E	N	E	■	I	N	F	E	R	N	O
B	■	T	■	S	■	R	■	N	■	I	■	E	■	R
E	V	I	L	D	O	I	N	G	■	O	V	A	R	Y
■	■	N	■	E	■	C	■	T	■	S	■	S	■	■
■	■	G	E	N	E	A	L	O	G	I	S	T	■	■

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To enter, visit telegraph.co.uk/extra-competitions or scan the QR code
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The Maldives, the Mediterranean and the great rivers of Europe. **Pages 2–4**



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Illuminating journeys in Sicily, Malta and Madeira. **Pages 5–7**



Asian tours

The mystique of India, Japan and south-east Asia. **Page 8**



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The world is full of surprises. Even seasoned travellers find themselves in awe of something new. Even popular destinations have secrets waiting to be discovered.

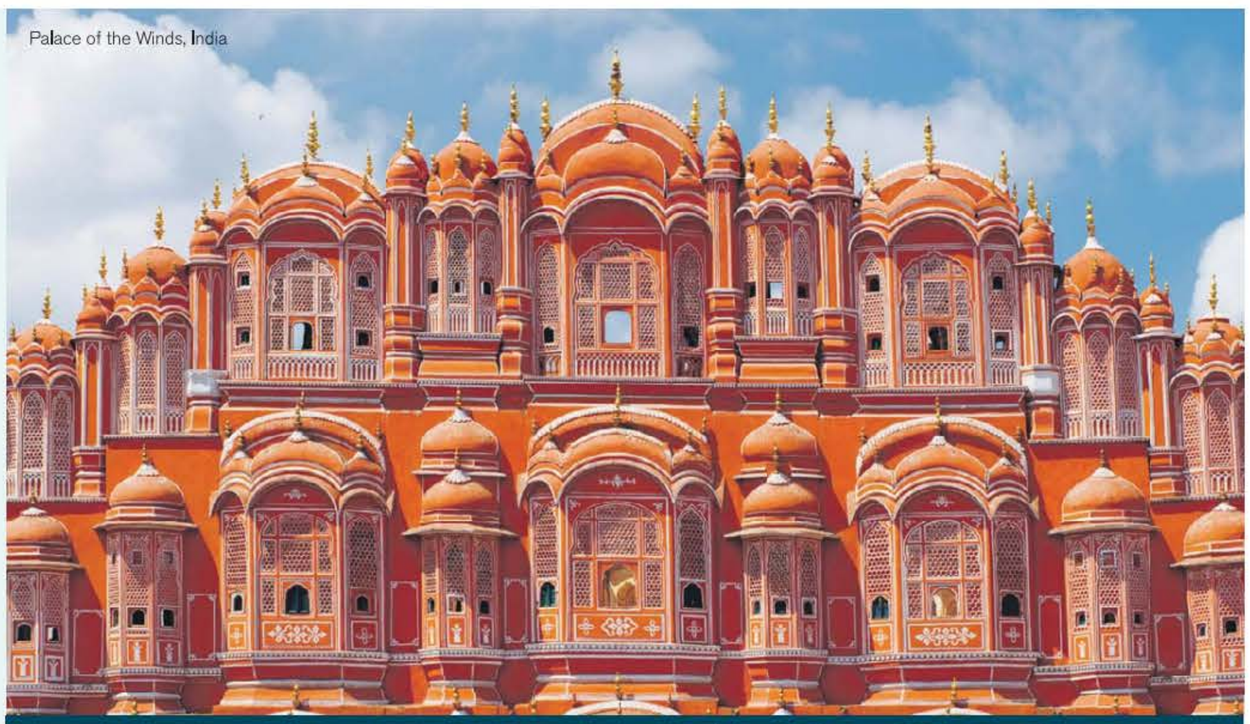
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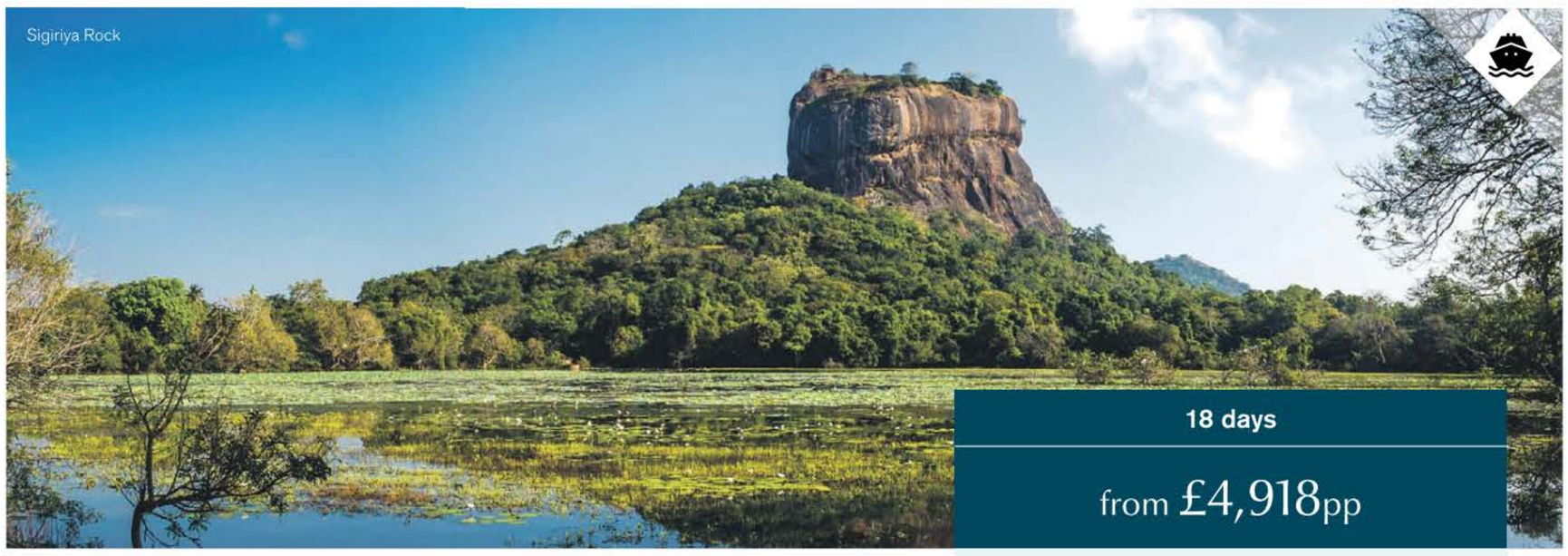
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Yasawa Princess


Sigiriya Rock

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from £4,918pp


Kandy

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What's included

- Return flights plus transfers
- Nine nights in three to four star accommodation
- Seven nights on board Yasawa Princess
- Half board during the tour, full board during the cruise
- Visits to Dambulla, Sigiriya Rock, Kandy, Royal Botanical Gardens, tea estate, spice plantation, Galle and Elephant Transit Home
- 4x4 drive in Yala National Park
- Three nights on the Sri Lankan coast
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- Traditional Maldives line fishing
- Indian Ocean sunset cruise

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Trogir

Eight days

from £2,199pp

YACHT CRUISE

Split, Rab and undiscovered islands of the north

Departures in September 2024

Board your yacht cruiser to see the wonders of Croatia. Witness Romanesque architecture in the coastal town of Rab. Visit Zadar, the ancient capital of Dalmatia. Explore Diocletian's Palace in Split and the cathedral in Sibenik. In Kornati National Park, walk among serene lakes.

What's included

- Return flights from a choice of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights on a four-star yacht in your choice of cabin
- Daily breakfast, six lunches, one dinner plus the Captain's Dinner
- Tours of Split, Trogir, Rab, Zadar and Sibenik
- Cruise route through Kornati National Park
- Swim stops in island locations
- Cruise director

telegraph.co.uk/tt-rab Call **0330 162 1508**


Santa María Cathedral, Palma

12 days

from £2,999pp

TALL SHIP CRUISE

Spain, Balearics and Malta on Star Clipper

Departs April 24, 2025

Voyage under the sails of tall ship Star Clipper from the Spanish port of Malaga to the sunny Balearic Islands – Ibiza, Mallorca, Menorca – and then Malta's golden capital, Valletta. Beautiful mountains, grand fortresses and ancient cities await.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Nine nights' accommodation on board Star Clipper with full board
- One-night pre-cruise stay in Malaga with breakfast
- One-night post-cruise stay in Malta with breakfast
- Tours of Malaga, Cartagena, Dalt Vila, Valletta, Mdina and Palma
- Tour of Almería or a scenic drive through the Alpujarras Mountains
- Wine tasting and tapas in Mijas
- Visit to Menorca
- Tour manager

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Terms and conditions: *Based on 49,000 Feefo reviews. **Unlimited quantity of drinks at lunch and from 6pm to midnight while on board (selected drinks available). †Subject to availability. Calls charged at local rates. Lines open Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm and Sun 10am-4pm. Prices based on two sharing and correct at time of printing. Supplement may apply for single cabins or rooms. Travel insurance not included. Holidays provided by Riviera Travel (co. no. 1869298; ABTA V4744 & ATOL 3430 protected), a company independent of Telegraph Media Group Ltd. Terms and conditions apply. For deposit details and all terms and conditions, visit telegraph.co.uk/tt-traveltcs. See the Data Protection Notice in today's Personal Column.

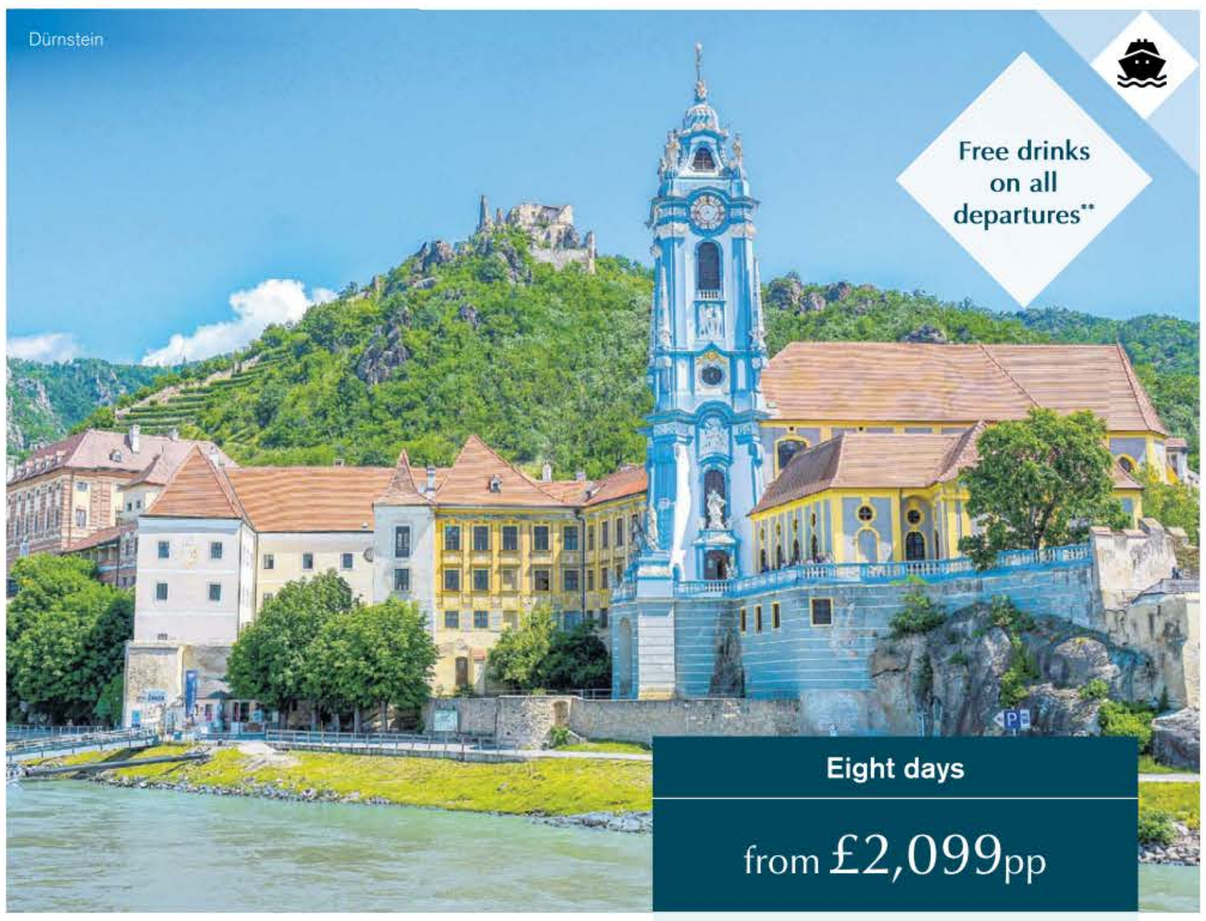
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River cruises in 2024

Witness the history of Europe unfold as you visit delightful towns on the Rhine, or magnificent cities on the Danube. On a captivating trip to France, see the best of Paris, Monet's 'Water Lillies' pond and the Palace of Versailles. You can even extend your cruise with a hotel stay in Budapest or a rail journey on the Glacier Express.



The Blue Danube

Departures from July to October 2024

Explore the treasures along the banks of this mighty river. Visit glorious Vienna and hear a string quartet perform on board. Admire Melk Abbey, Esztergom Basilica and the restored old town of Bratislava. In Budapest, see the neo-Gothic Parliament Building and watch a Hungarian folklore show on board.

Budapest extension
Extend your cruise with a three-night stay in Budapest from only £539pp.

What's included
- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board with excellent cuisine
- Tours of Vienna and Budapest
- Visit to Bratislava
- Trip to Salzburg or Linz
- Route via the Wachau Valley
- Trips to Melk Abbey and Esztergom Basilica
- Visit to Dürnstein
- Cruise director and concierge

telegraph.co.uk/tt-danube-blue Call **0330 162 1508**



Rhine cruise to Switzerland

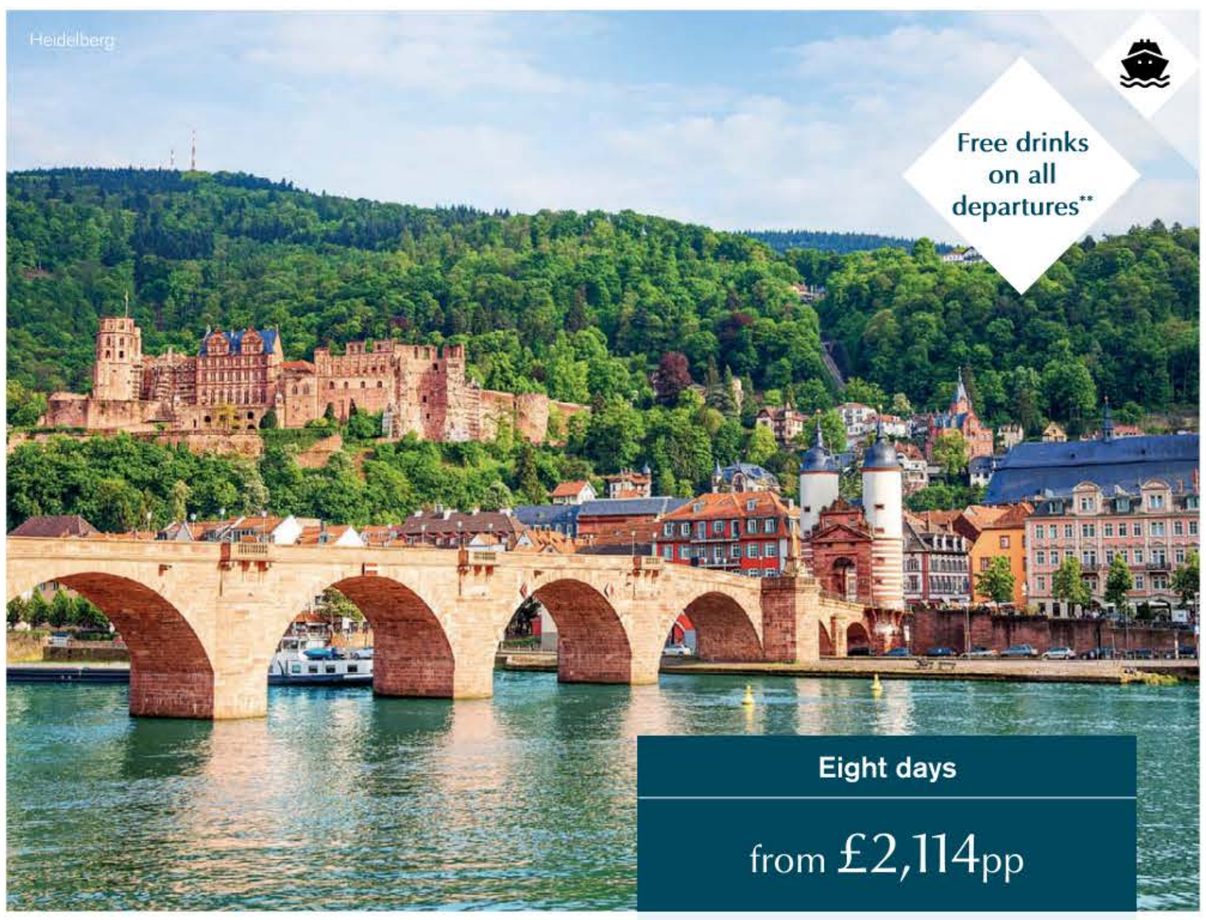
Departures from July to October 2024

Cruise from Cologne and pass through the fabled Rhine Gorge and Black Forest. See the pretty French city of Strasbourg and lovely German towns, ending among Swiss lakes and mountains.

Glacier Express extension
Extend your cruise with a three-night tour from only £969pp. Stay in hotels in Chur, Zermatt and Davos, and travel on the Glacier Express.

What's included
- Return flights or Eurostar from London St Pancras plus transfers
- Seven nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board with excellent cuisine
- Trips to Koblenz, Rüdesheim, Breisach and Lucerne
- Tour of Strasbourg
- Tour of the Black Forest and the lakeside town of Titisee
- Jungfrau and Eiger mountain views
- Cruise director and concierge

telegraph.co.uk/tt-cruise-rhine Call **0330 162 1508**



Rhine, Strasbourg and Heidelberg

Departures from July to October 2024

Strasbourg is a city of half-timbered houses and a cathedral with intricate carvings akin to lace. Heidelberg is a great seat of learning, crowned by a handsome castle. See these cities and more as you cruise the splendid Rhine Valley. On board your luxury cruise ship, you'll enjoy a spacious cabin, delicious cuisine and attentive service.

What's included
- Eurostar from London St Pancras or return flights† plus transfers
- Seven nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board with excellent cuisine
- Tours of Strasbourg and Heidelberg
- Visits to Mainz and Boppard
- Rhine Gorge cruise route
- Scenic drive through Alsatian countryside to Colmar
- Cruise director and concierge

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Paris, Normandy and historic treasures of the Seine

Departures from July to September 2024

Meander along the Seine through captivating landscapes that have inspired artists and writers for centuries. Fall for the charms of Paris and savour the beauty of Monet's garden. Discover elegant châteaux and honour the memory of Second World War heroes on the D-Day beaches in Normandy.

What's included
- Eurostar from London St Pancras or return flights† plus transfers
- 10 nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board (except one lunch) with excellent cuisine
- Tours of Paris, Auvers-sur-Oise, Rouen, D-Day beaches, Honfleur or white cliffs of Étretat, Château de Malmaison and the abbeys at Jumièges and Saint Wandrille
- Visits to Caudebec-en-Caux and Claude Monet's house and garden
- Optional visit to Versailles Palace
- Cruise director and concierge

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Terms and conditions: †Supplement may apply. **Unlimited quantity of drinks at lunch and from 6pm to midnight while on board (selected drinks available). Calls are charged at local rates. Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm and Sun 10am-4pm. Prices are based on two sharing and correct at time of printing. Supplement may apply for single cabins. Travel insurance not included. Holidays provided by Riviera Travel (co. no. 1869298; ABTA V4744 & ATOL 3430 protected), a company independent of Telegraph Media Group Ltd. Terms and conditions apply. For full deposit details and all terms and conditions, visit telegraph.co.uk/tt-traveltcs. See the Data Protection Notice in today's Personal Column.

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River cruises in 2024 & 2025

On a cruise across Portugal on the Douro river, fall for the charms of Porto, taste the local port and wine, and delve into Spain to see Salamanca in all its glory. In the Netherlands, see Amsterdam by canal, as well as the windmills of Kinderdijk and the spectacular flowers at Keukenhof Gardens.



Eight days

from £1,599pp

The Douro, Porto and Salamanca

Departures from July to November 2024

Cruise along the Douro Valley from Portugal to Spain, passing terraced hillside vineyards. Taste port wine at a famous producer in Porto, and learn about wine production at a historic quinta (country estate). Follow in the footsteps of St Francis at Castelo Rodrigo, and hear Portuguese folk music. In Salamanca, discover the ancient university, glorious Plaza Mayor and live flamenco.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board with excellent cuisine
- Tour of Porto with a trip to a port wine cellar
- Full-day excursion to Salamanca with a tour
- Tour of Castelo Rodrigo
- Mateus Palace tour
- Visit to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Remedies Church in Lamego
- Cruise director

telegraph.co.uk/tt-cruise-douro Call **0330 162 1508**



Eight days

from £1,949pp

Bruges, medieval Flanders, Amsterdam and the Dutch bulbfields

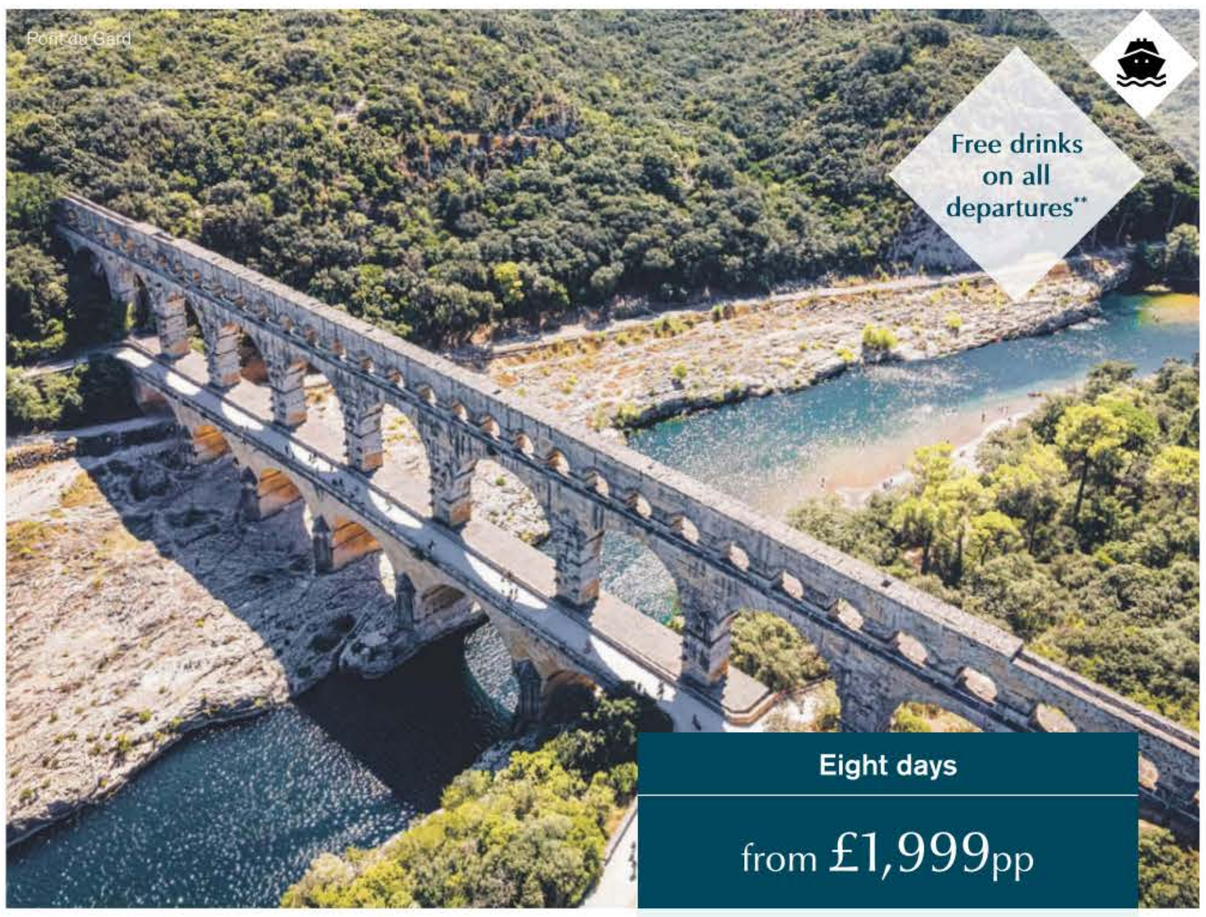
Departures in April 2025

See the highlights of the Low Countries, from the ancient lanes of Bruges and Ghent to the Netherlands' capital where artists such as Van Gogh flourished. At the Dutch bulbfields, witness one of the world's greatest flower displays.

What's included

- Return flights or Eurostar from London St Pancras plus transfers
- Seven nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board (except one lunch) with excellent cuisine
- Classic Amsterdam canal cruise
- Visits to Hoorn, Keukenhof Gardens, Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery and Hartenstein Airborne Museum
- Tours of Antwerp, Ghent, Ypres and Bruges
- Cruise director and concierge

telegraph.co.uk/tt-bruges-riviera Call **0330 162 1508**



Eight days

from £1,999pp

Burgundy, the River Rhône and Provence

Departures from July to October 2024

From the famous vineyards of Burgundy to the sunny hills of Provence, the rugged beauty of the Ardèche Gorges and the medieval charm of Avignon – this enthralling cruise reveals France at its best.

Lake Geneva and Golden Pass extension
Extend your cruise with a three-night stay on Lake Geneva from only £849pp.

What's included

- Return flights or Eurostar from London St Pancras plus transfers
- Seven nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board with excellent cuisine
- Visit to Beaune with a wine tasting
- Tours of Lyon and Arles
- Visit to Vienne
- Ardèche Gorges tour
- Trip to the Pont du Gard
- Tour of Avignon and Papal Palace
- Cruise director and concierge

telegraph.co.uk/tt-riverrhone Call **0330 162 1508**



18 days

from £4,949pp

Grand cruise of the Rhine Gorge, medieval Germany & Switzerland

Departures in May, June and August 2025

Cruise from Cologne with its fine cathedral and call at charming medieval towns across Germany. Pass through the stirring Rhine Gorge and hear Bavarian music on board. In Switzerland, take a train through the lakes and mountains of the Bernese Oberland.

What's included

- Return flights plus transfers
- 17 nights' accommodation on board a five-star ship
- Full board with excellent cuisine
- 16 tours including Cologne, Koblenz, Rüdesheim, Speyer, Strasbourg, Bernese Oberland with mountain railway, Andernach, Black Forest, Titisee, Mainz, Miltenberg, Wertheim, Würzburg, Ochsenfurt, Bamberg and Nuremberg
- Visits to Breisach, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Lucerne and Boppard
- Rhine Gorge cruise route
- Cruise director and concierge

telegraph.co.uk/tt-grand-rhine Call **0330 162 1508**

Terms and conditions: **Unlimited quantity of drinks at lunch and from 6pm to midnight while on board (selected drinks available). Calls are charged at local rates. Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm and Sun 10am-4pm. Prices are based on two sharing and correct at time of printing. Supplement may apply for single cabins. Travel insurance not included. Holidays provided by Riviera Travel (co. no. 1869298; ABTA V4744 & ATOL 3430 protected), a company independent of Telegraph Media Group Ltd. Terms and conditions apply. For full deposit details and all terms and conditions, visit telegraph.co.uk/tt-traveltcs. See the Data Protection Notice in today's Personal Column.

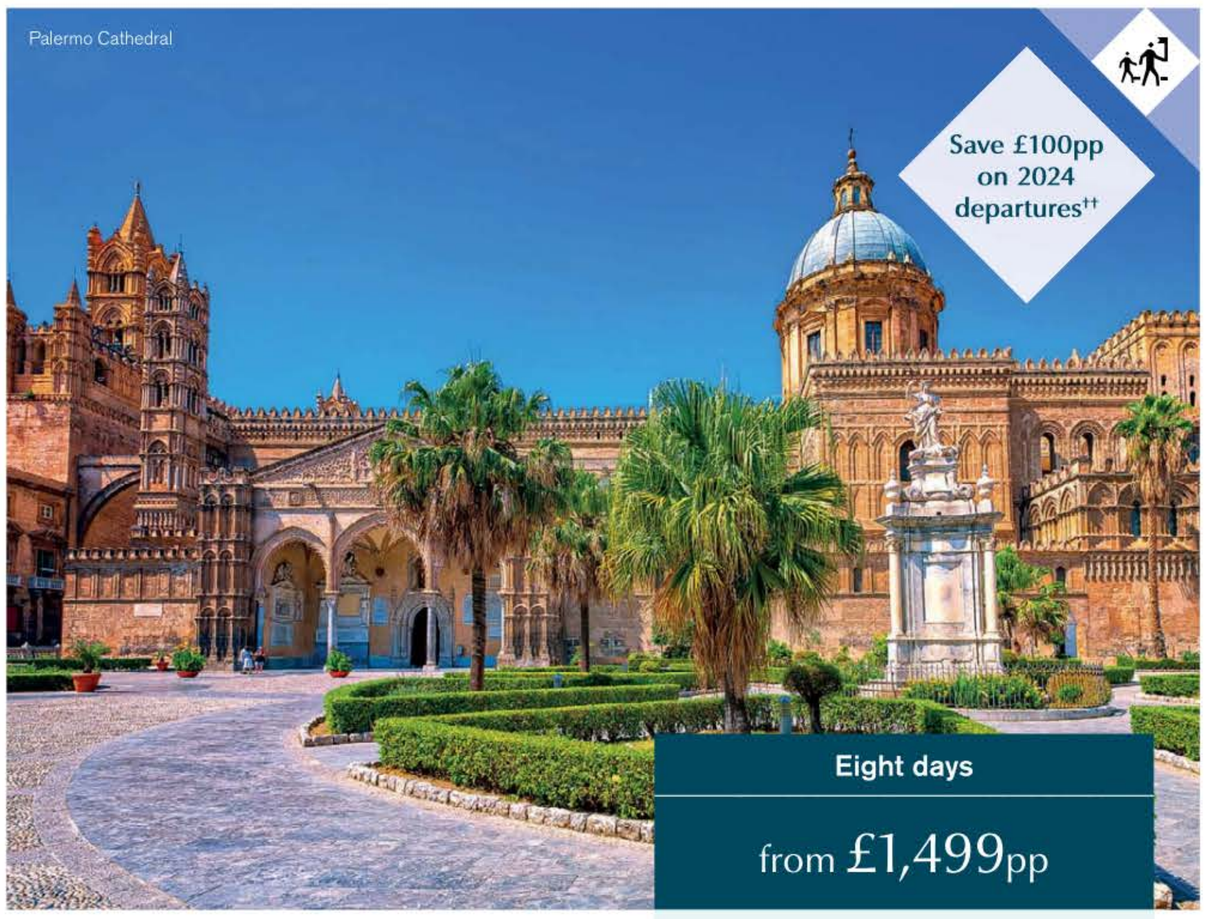
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TRAVEL SOLUTIONS
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Cruises and Tours from our trusted partner Riviera

European tours in 2024

In Sicily, explore classical relics and sensational scenery, with plenty of time to savour the fabulous cuisine. Admire the treasures of Venice with an expert guide. On the Portuguese island of Madeira, discover lush gardens, sublime coastlines and jagged peaks, not to mention the endearing capital Funchal.



Sicily

Departures from August to October 2024

Sicily has been at the crossroads of almost every Mediterranean civilisation for thousands of years. The island's landscapes are just as varied, with snow-capped mountains, meadows of wildflowers, citrus and olive groves, and a stunning coastline. On this tour you will explore the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento, the capital Palermo and Syracuse, one of the richest cities in ancient Greece. You'll also witness Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast and dinner plus one light lunch
- Valley of the Temples tour
- Visits to Palermo and Syracuse
- Trip to the ancient Greek theatre at Taormina
- Tour of the Roman villa in Piazza Armerina
- Visit to Mount Etna
- Sicilian meal at a farmhouse
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-sicily-riviera Call **0330 162 1508**



Madeira, the Pearl of the Atlantic

Departures in October and November 2024

A paradise island 600 miles southwest of Lisbon, Madeira is blessed with a mild climate and subtropical flora. Explore beautiful gardens, the hidden Valley of the Nuns, and the charming capital Funchal. Taste the island's famous sweet wine, and gaze at a waterfall known as the Bridal Veil. You'll soon see why Madeira won the heart of Winston Churchill.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast and seven dinners
- Funchal old town walking tour
- Trip to Palheiro Gardens and Monte Palace Tropical Garden
- Ascent to Curral das Freiras
- Visits to Câmara de Lobos, Cabo Girão, Porto Moniz, Santana and Ribeiro Frio Natural Park
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-sig-madeira Call **0330 162 1508**



Malta uncovered

Departures in September and October 2024

Malta was once home to Prince Philip and the late Queen, who always remembered it fondly as her "isle of happy memories". For 6,000 years, the island has seen various civilisations come and go. You'll find early Christian catacombs, glorious cathedrals, and the oldest temples on Earth. Beyond this fascinating heritage, you'll discover an island of endearing natural beauty.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast and dinner
- Tours of Valletta, Gozo and Città Vittoriosa
- Visits to the Malta Experience, Ggantija, Hagar Qim, Mdina, Rabat and Marsaxlokk
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-uncover-malta Call **0330 162 1508**



Lake Garda, Venice and Verona

Departures from July to October 2024

This tour reveals the finest sights in Northern Italy. At Lake Garda, watch gentle waves lap the shingle shoreline with the snow-capped Dolomites in the background. In Venice, discover a spellbinding city with treats such as the Doge's Palace, St Mark's Basilica and the Grand Canal. Finally, in romantic Verona, you'll see why Shakespeare chose to set *Romeo and Juliet* here.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights in a choice of three- to four-star accommodation with breakfast and dinner^
- Full day exploring Lake Garda on land and by boat
- Tours of Venice and Verona
- Trip to a vineyard with a tasting
- Full day tour of the Dolomites
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-garda-venice Call **0330 162 1508**

Terms and conditions: ††Saving applies to selected European tours in 2024, subject to availability. Calls charged at local rates. Lines open Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm and Sun 10am-4pm. Prices based on two sharing and correct at time of printing. Supplement may apply for single rooms. Travel insurance not included. Holidays provided by Riviera Travel (co. no. 1869298; ABTA V4744 & ATOL 3430 protected), a company independent of Telegraph Media Group Ltd. Terms and conditions apply. For full deposit details and all terms and conditions, visit telegraph.co.uk/tt-traveltcs. See the Data Protection Notice in today's Personal Column. ^Stays at the Hotel Portici and Antico Borgo are on a B&B basis.

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Cruises and Tours from our trusted partner Riviera

European tours in 2024

The colourful heritage of Spain is revealed on a tour of Andalucía, complete with tapas and sherry. A tour of the Italian Lakes includes a trip on the Bernina Express mountain railway, while a trip to Tuscany reveals the Renaissance art of Florence. In Turkey, discover the magic of Istanbul and the secrets of Ephesus.



Seven days

from £899pp

Classical Spain

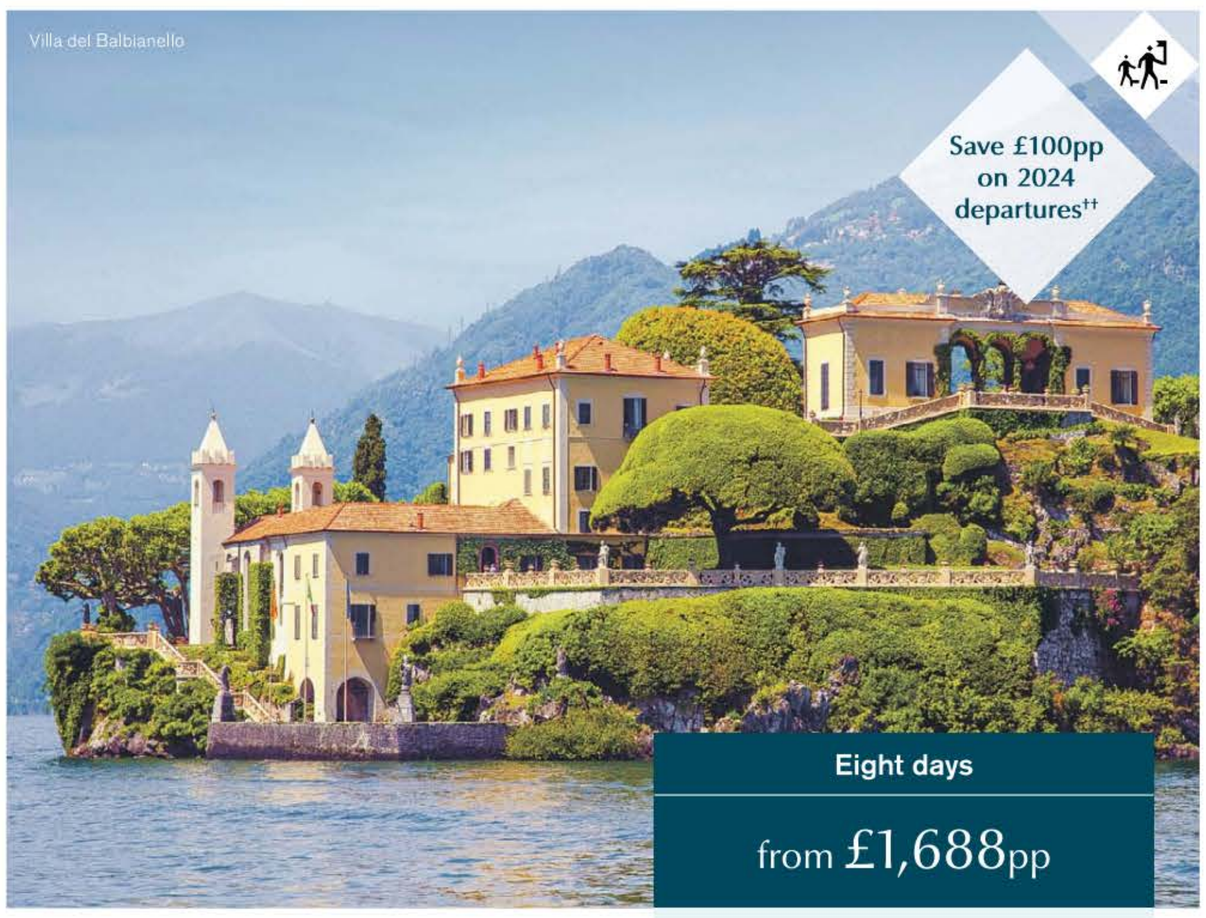
Departures from September to November 2024

Experience Andalucía's magical fusion of Spanish and Moorish cultures. Immortalised by Ernest Hemingway, this is the Spain of Carmen, Figaro and flamenco. Explore Seville's exquisite streets and the mountaintop city of Ronda. See Granada's Alhambra Palace and the dazzling Mezquita (mosque) in Córdoba, ancient capital of the Moors. Along the way, taste tapas and sherry for which the region is famous.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Six nights' three- to four-star accommodation with breakfast
- Seville tour with a local guide
- Introduction to tapas in Seville
- Visit to Alhambra Palace, Granada
- Tour of the Mezquita, Córdoba
- Trip to Ronda, city above a gorge
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-spain-classical Call **0330 162 1508**



Eight days

from £1,688pp

Lake Como, St Moritz and the Bernina Express

Departures from July to October 2024

William Wordsworth described Lake Como as "a treasure the Earth keeps to itself". The lake is your base for this wonderful tour, which explores the jewels of Northern Italy and Switzerland. Visit the neighbouring lakes of Maggiore and Lugano, and take a spectacular journey through the Alps on the Bernina Express train.

What's included

- Return flights from the UK plus all transfers
- Seven nights' three-star accommodation with breakfast and dinner
- Cruise to Bellagio on Lake Como
- Visit Villa del Balbianello
- Full-day visit to St Moritz with a journey on the Bernina Express
- Visits to Maggiore and Lugano
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-lake-como-tour Call **0330 162 1508**



Eight days

from £1,449pp

Florence and Tuscany

Departures from July to October 2024

With its rolling hills, ancient cities and delicious cuisine, Tuscany's charm is irresistible. Admire Renaissance treasures on a tour of Florence, including entry to the revered Uffizi Gallery. See Siena's Piazza del Campo, one of Europe's greatest medieval squares, and peer up at the fabled Leaning Tower of Pisa. You will also visit the hilltop village of San Gimignano, and Lucca, birthplace of Puccini.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' three- to four-star accommodation with breakfast and four dinners
- Tour of Florence
- Entry to the Uffizi Gallery
- Tour of Siena with a local guide
- Visits to Pisa, Lucca and San Gimignano
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-florence-tuscany Call **0330 162 1508**



Seven days

from £1,699pp

Istanbul, Ephesus and Troy

Departures in September and November 2024

Savour the heady blend of the ancient, Christian and Ottoman worlds in Turkey. The siege of Troy by Spartan and Achaean warriors from Greece in the 13th or 12th century BC was immortalised by Homer in the Iliad. Leaping ahead over a thousand years, Ephesus boasts grand Roman monuments such as the Library of Celsus and the Great Theatre.

What's included

- Return flights from the UK plus all transfers
- Six nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast and three dinners
- Visits to Troy, Gallipoli, Anzac Cove and the mountainside site reputed to be the house of the Virgin Mary
- Tours of Pergamon, Ephesus and Istanbul (including Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace and Grand Bazaar)
- Ferry across the Dardanelles strait
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-istanbul-riviera Call **0330 162 1508**

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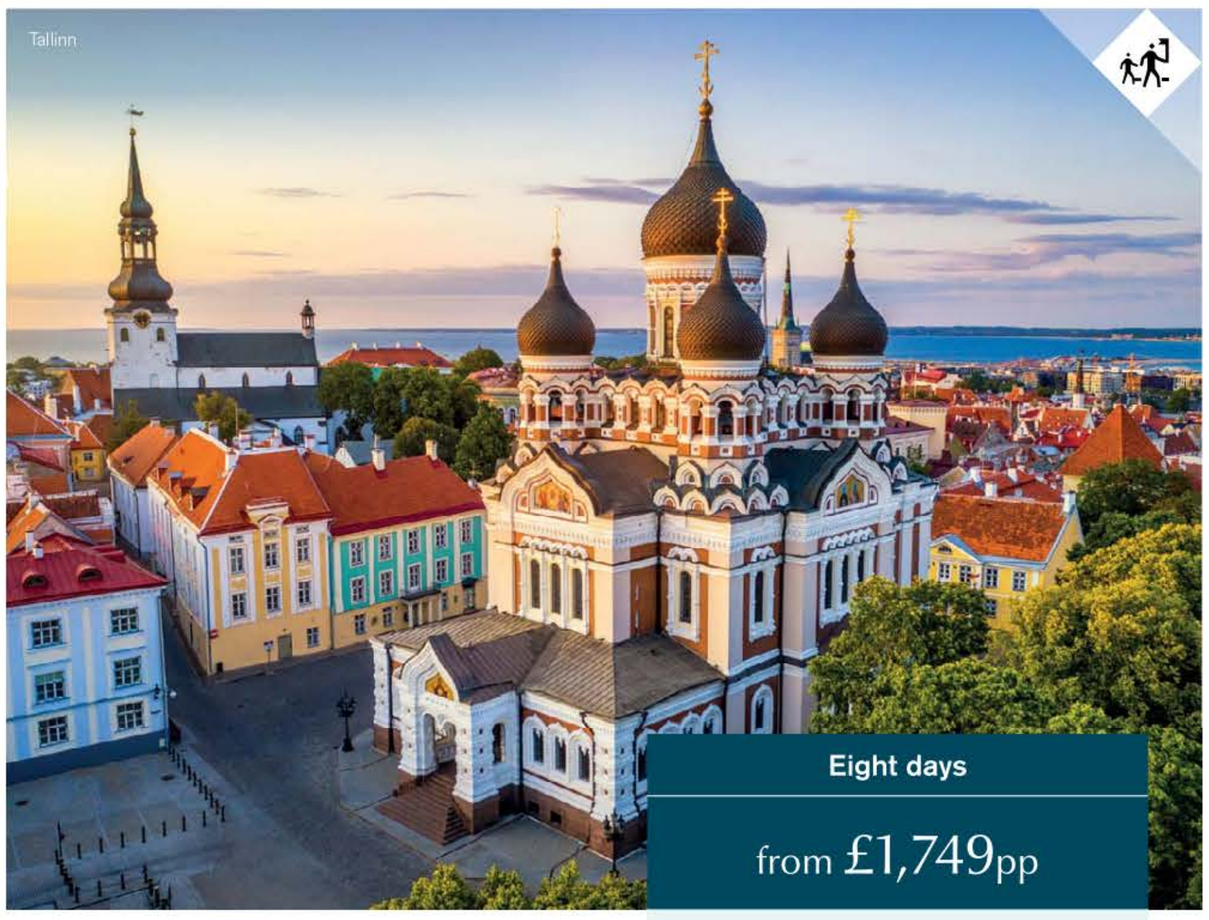
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European tours in 2024 & 2025

Signature Tours with Riviera Travel offer an upgrade on the regular tours, with a limit of 25 guests and extra activities. On a Grand Tour, spend longer in your destination and return home with even more stories to tell. Learn to make pasta in Italy, sip wine in France, and hear Sibelius in Finland.



SIGNATURE TOUR

Helsinki, Tallinn and Riga

Departures in August 2024

The capitals of Finland, Estonia and Latvia have a compelling past, revealed in a patchwork of medieval turrets, Baroque palaces and Art Nouveau façades. In Helsinki, visit Suomenlinna Fortress and hear the music of Sibelius at the historic Balder Hall. Stroll through the Unesco-listed centre of Riga. In Tallinn, visit Kadriorg Park, and taste local food and craft beers at a brewery.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast daily and three dinners
- Tours of Helsinki, Tallinn and Riga
- Tour of Suomenlinna Fortress
- Trip to Kadriorg Park
- Tour manager

Plus...

- Live music performance at Balder Hall in Helsinki
- Estonian delicacies in Tallinn
- Visit to a Tallinn brewery
- Small group of 25 maximum

telegraph.co.uk/tt-riga Call **0330 162 1508**



SIGNATURE TOUR

Puglia, Lecce and Vieste

Departures in September and October 2024

Puglia is a beautiful region at the 'heel of Italy'. See the conical trulli houses of Alberobello and the Romanesque cathedral of Bari. Explore the Baroque city of Lecce and the cave village at Matera. Learn the craft of pasta-making, eat lunch at a family-run osteria, and relax in the charming seaside town of Vieste.

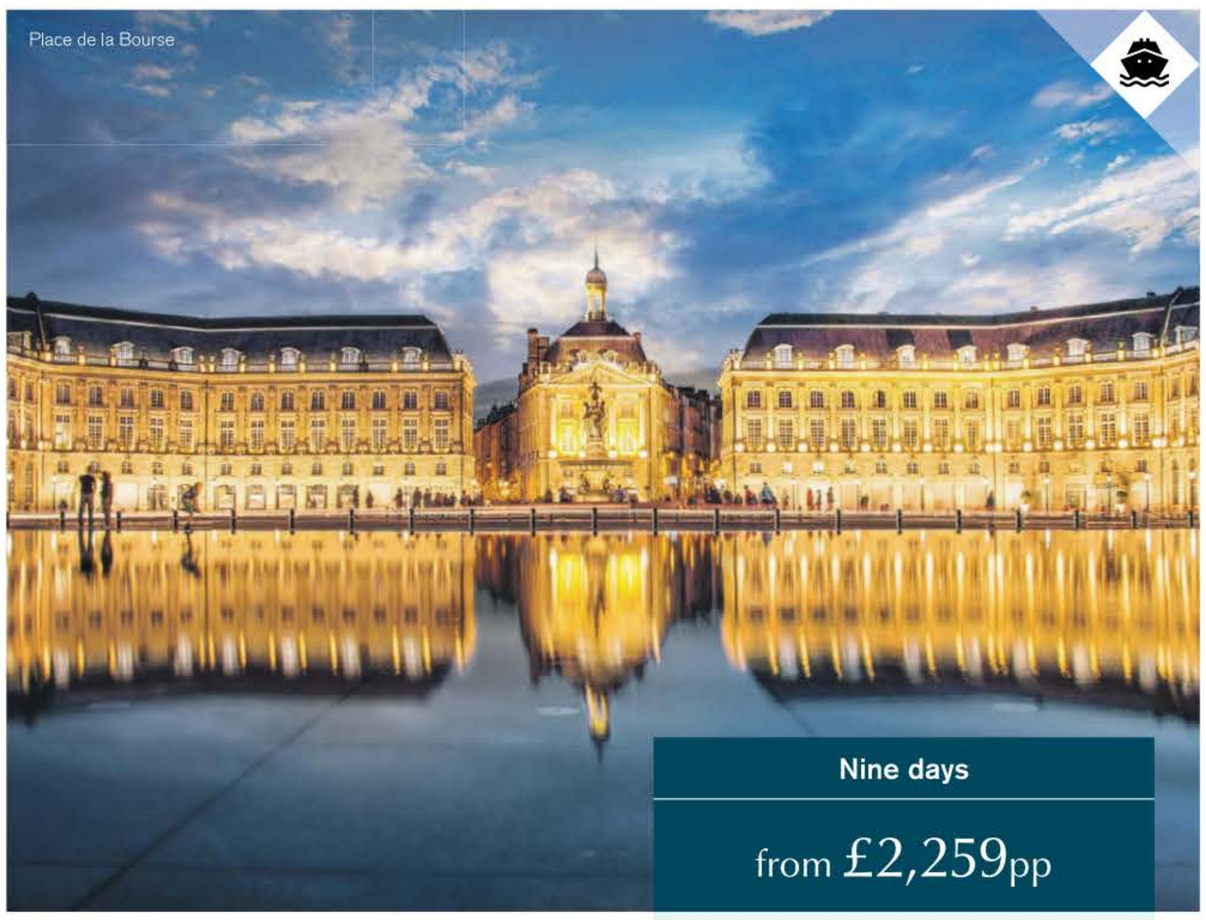
What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Seven nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast, one lunch and six dinners
- Trip to Alberobello trulli houses
- Tours of Matera, Bari and Lecce
- Pasta-making workshop
- Visit to an olive-oil mill
- Tour manager

Plus...

- Small group: 25 guests maximum
- Lecce city tour
- Gargano National Park cruise
- Lunch at a Puglian farmhouse

telegraph.co.uk/tt-puglia-tour Call **0330 162 1508**



Grand Tour of Paris, Bordeaux & Saint-Émilion

Departures from May to October 2025

See the best of Paris, including a tour by night and a trip to charming Montmartre. In the city of Bordeaux and neighbouring commune of Saint-Émilion, visit a château, learn more about wine at the City of Wine museum, and explore the tunnels beneath Les Cordeliers cloisters where sparkling wine is produced.

What's included

- Return Eurostar or return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- Eight nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast and one lunch
- Trip to the City of Wine museum
- Saint-Émilion château and winery tour with tasting
- Les Cordeliers tunnel tour
- City tours of Paris and Bordeaux
- Trip to Montmartre, home of the artists' quarter and Sacré-Coeur
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-grand-paris Call **0330 162 1508**



Grand Tour of northern Croatia from Split to Istria

Departures from May to October 2025

In Split, see Emperor Diocletian's Palace and the sculptures at the Mestrovic Gallery. Visit delightful ports such as Trogir, Rovinj, Zadar and Bol on the island of Brac. Admire waterfalls at Plitvice Lakes National Park and endless Mediterranean views. See Habsburg-era villas in Opatija and the grand square in Italian Trieste.

What's included

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports plus transfers
- 11 nights' four-star accommodation with breakfast daily and three dinners
- Walking tour of Split including Emperor Diocletian's Palace
- Visits to Trogir, Rovinj, Zadar and Bol
- Tours of Opatija and Trieste
- Trip to Plitvice Lakes National Park
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-grand-croatia Call **0330 162 1508**

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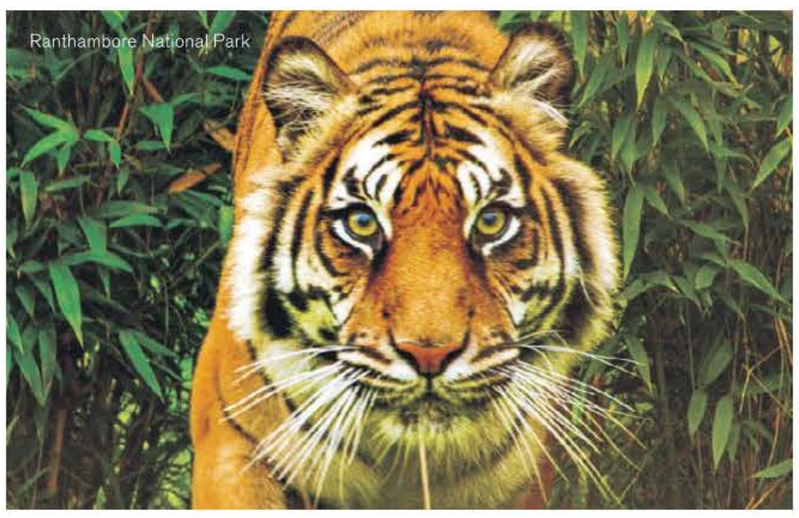
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Extraordinary tours of Asia

In India, witness the Taj Mahal, Amber Fort and – if you're lucky – a tiger at Ranthambore National Park. In Japan, find a thriving society that embraces both tradition and progress. Marvel at the temples of Angkor in Cambodia, and cruise beautiful Halong Bay in Vietnam.


Taj Mahal


Ranthambore National Park


Viceregal Lodge


Amber Fort

15 days

from £2,599pp

Grand journey from India's Golden Triangle to Shimla

Departures from September to December 2024 and from February to April 2025

This thrilling tour explores the Golden Triangle – Delhi, Agra and Jaipur – with visits to the Taj Mahal, Amber Fort and the Moghul city of Fatehpur Sikri. Highlights include staying in a Rajasthani fort – now converted into a Heritage Hotel – the ascent to Shimla on a narrow-gauge railway, and seeking the elusive tigers on a safari at Ranthambore National Park.

What's included

- Return flights from the UK plus transfers*
- 13 nights' three- to five-star accommodation with daily breakfast and 10 other meals
- Tours of Old and New Delhi, Jaipur, Amber Fort, Viceregal Lodge in Shimla, plus a walking tour of the city
- Visits to the Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri
- Journey on the classic 'Toy Train' from Kalka to Shimla
- Driving safari in Ranthambore National Park
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-grand-india Call **0330 162 1508**


Angkor Wat

16 days

from £3,499pp

Vietnam and Cambodia

Departures in November 2024 and from January to March 2025

In Cambodia, see the ancient temple complex at Angkor, and the Royal Palace in the capital Phnom Penh. In Vietnam, cruise Halong Bay with its great karst towers of rock, and explore the Cu Chi tunnels, the Viet Cong hideout in the Vietnam War. This beguiling trip takes you to the heart of south-east Asia.

What's included

- Return flights from the UK plus transfers*
- 13 nights' four- and five-star accommodation with 13 breakfasts and six lunches
- Tours of Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Imperial City of Hue, Phnom Penh
- Halong Bay cruise on a converted Chinese junk boat
- Visits to the temples of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom and Ta Prohm
- Full-day trip on the Mekong Delta
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-vietnamtour Call **0330 162 1508**


Mount Fuji

13 days

from £4,399pp

Best of Japan

Departures from August to November 2024 and from February to April 2025

Japan is an ancient culture of emperors, samurais and Zen Buddhism, as well as a place of constant innovation. On this tour, explore the thrilling capital Tokyo, ride a high-speed bullet train, and enjoy views of Mount Fuji from Lake Kawaguchi and the hot-spring mountain resort of Hakone. You'll also visit the former imperial capital Kyoto and take part in a tea ceremony.

What's included

- Return flights from the UK plus transfers*
- 11 nights' four-star accommodation with 11 breakfasts and three other meals
- Tour of Tokyo
- Trips to Lake Kawaguchi and the mountain spa resort of Hakone
- Journey on the bullet train
- Visit to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park
- Tours of Kyoto and Nara
- Tour manager

telegraph.co.uk/tt-best-japan Call **0330 162 1508**

Terms and conditions: *Premium-economy upgrades available at a supplement. Calls are charged at local rates. Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm and Sun 10am-4pm. Prices are based on two sharing and correct at time of printing. Supplement may apply for single rooms. Travel insurance not included. Holidays provided by Riviera Travel (co. no. 1869298; ABTA V4744 & ATOL 3430 protected), a company independent of Telegraph Media Group Ltd. Terms and conditions apply. For full deposit details and all terms and conditions, visit telegraph.co.uk/tt-traveltcs. See the Data Protection Notice in today's Personal Column.

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