

THE



TIMES

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51

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your health every dayINSIDE
TIMES2Guess who's
not coming to
the wedding
of the year

Farage's return and new poll deal blow to Sunak

● Ex-Ukip leader will head Reform and stand in Essex ● YouGov predicts Labour's biggest win

Geraldine Scott
Senior Political Correspondent
Steven Swinford Political Editor
Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Nigel Farage has pledged to lead a "political revolt" after announcing that he is returning to frontline politics in a significant blow to Rishi Sunak's slim electoral hopes.

Days after saying that he would not stand, Farage said he had changed his mind and would now lead Reform UK into the general election. He will stand as a candidate in the Essex coastal constituency of Clacton.

He said that the Tories "are on the verge of total collapse", adding that he is seeking to pick up millions of votes and become the main opposition party if Labour wins the general election.

A YouGov poll of more than 50,000 people found that Labour is on track for its biggest election victory in history, surpassing the number of seats won by Tony Blair in 1997.

The survey predicted that Sir Keir Starmer could win 422 seats, with the Conservatives reduced to 140 MPs. The seat-by-seat poll also shows that Sunak's electoral fortunes have declined since March, despite a policy blitz designed to close the gap with Labour.

Twelve cabinet ministers are forecast to lose their seats, including Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, and Grant Shapps, the defence secretary. Also facing defeat are Alex Chalk, the justice secretary, and Gillian Keegan, the education secretary.

Penny Mordaunt, the leader of the Commons who, alongside Shapps, is seen as a potential leadership contender, is also in peril with YouGov suggesting that she could lose her Portsmouth North seat to Labour. Sunak's own seat, Richmond & Northallerton, is no longer considered safe.

Speaking in central London, Farage said: "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 any more. The health service



Nigel Farage said he changed his mind about running after speaking to voters, and felt the campaign needed "gingering up"

doesn't work. 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."

He added: "They [the Conservatives] are on the verge of total collapse and frankly it couldn't happen to nicer people."

In other developments:

● Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer, the

Labour leader, will face each other in the first head-to-head debate of the election campaign tonight.

● Angela Rayner, the deputy Labour leader, said she supported global nuclear disarmament hours after Starmer said he would use the weapons if needed.

● Sunak pledged to introduce an annual cap on the number of work and

family visas issued each year in an attempt to open a divide with Starmer.

Farage said he had changed his mind about standing at about 2pm on Sunday after a day off walking his dogs, fishing and going to the pub.

He said he had been swayed by speaking to voters on the campaign trail, especially in Boston & Skegness. Continued on page 2

Hornet alert after invaders survive the UK winter

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

Invasive Asian hornets have survived the winter in Britain for the first time, testing has confirmed.

The results will stoke fears that the species, which preys on other insects and is estimated to have wiped out as many as one in three honeybee colonies in France, poses a growing threat to the UK's native pollinators.

The Asian hornet, which is slightly smaller than the indigenous European hornet and recognisable by its dark body and yellow legs, was first sighted in the UK eight years ago. Since then the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has tried to prevent the species from gaining a foothold by setting traps and destroying nests.

Genetic testing has now shown that Asian hornets trapped last month near Four Oaks, East Sussex, are the offspring of a nest that was destroyed in Rye, also East Sussex, last November. The findings are the first proof that the hornets have survived a UK winter.

Ian Campbell, of the British Beekeepers Association, said Britain could be at a "tipping point", at which the Asian hornet was on the brink of establishing itself.

Beekeepers have voiced concern that the National Bee Unit, which is overseen by Defra and has been given the job of eradicating the Asian hornet, is overstretched and underfunded.

Asian hornets are likely to have arrived in shipments of goods from Asia or in vehicles from mainland Europe. With the right wind conditions they may be able to fly over the Channel.

According to Defra figures, 2024 is shaping up to be a record year for the species. There were 15 confirmed sightings of Asian hornets in March, April and May. By the same point last year there had been three, and in all of 2022 there were only two.

After arriving in France in 2004, the species spread across the Continent. It has been blamed for decimating European honeybee populations, raiding hives and feeding worker bees to its young. A single Asian hornet nest can produce as many as 350 queens; 90 per Continued on page 2

IN THE NEWS

Chinese spy claims

Britain's overseas intelligence service used money, deceit and coercion to recruit a married Chinese couple as spies, Beijing's state security agency has claimed. Page 4

Cancer drug rejected

Hundreds of breast cancer patients are having their lives cut short because the NHS is failing to provide a drug that boosts survival times by a third, research shows. Page 5

Murder victim 'failed'

The family of Zara Aleena, who was sexually assaulted and murdered as she walked home, told an inquest that she was failed by a "crumbling" justice system. Page 15

Mexico makes history

Mexico elected the first female president in its history as Claudia Sheinbaum, a left-wing candidate and Nobel prize-winning scientist, won by a landslide. Page 26

GSK court setback

Almost £7 billion was wiped off the market value of GSK after the pharmaceutical giant suffered a setback in its costly legal battle over Zantac, its heartburn treatment. Page 31

England trio on target

England beat Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-0 in the first of two Euro 2024 warm-ups, with Cole Palmer, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Harry Kane on the scoresheet. Pages 62-64

News

Today's highlights

- 7am** Lord Howard of Lympne, the former Conservative Party leader
- 10.15am** How To Win An Election with Peter Mandelson, Polly McKenzie and Danny Finkelstein
- 1.15pm** Andrew Neil interviews the former chancellor Nadhim Zahawi
- 3.35pm** The author Colm Tóibín, right, discusses his critically acclaimed new novel Long Island

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TODAY'S EDITION

NEWS



MEET A WREN

Women who played a vital role in D-Day

PAGE 13

SPORT



MARATHON MAN

Djokovic prevails in second five-set epic in two days

PAGE 56

TIMES2



OUT OF STEP

The bullying row sullys Strictly's wholesome image

PAGE 6

433 days since Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was detained in Russia
#FreeEvan

LETTERS 24
LEADING ARTICLES 25
WORLD 26

BUSINESS 31
MARKETS 42
REGISTER 49

SPORT 54
CROSSWORD 64
TV & RADIO TIMES2



Trump is guilty. Will anything change?

He is the first former president in American history to be a convicted felon, but what exactly does the guilty verdict in Donald Trump's hush-money trial mean for a deeply divided America?

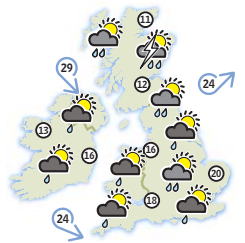
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THE WEATHER



Rain and showers spreading from the northwest. Staying dry in the south. Full forecast, page 53

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Rowling criticises Labour for 'indifference to women'

Geraldine Scott

JK Rowling has defended Kemi Badenoch and accused Labour of having "complacency and indifference" towards women's rights.

The author, who is a frequent campaigner on transgender issues, said she and Badenoch, the women and equalities minister, "might not agree on a lot" but in response to criticism of interviews given by Badenoch yesterday she questioned how often male politicians were called "spiteful".

Badenoch was launching the Conservatives' pledge to change the Equality Act so that sex is defined as someone's biological sex, but was called a "spiteful, toxic political personality" by one commentator online.

Sharing the post, Rowling said: "Kemi Badenoch and I might not agree on a lot, but how often are male politicians called 'spiteful'? And what's the issue with her manner? Did she fail in womanly sweetness, kindness and deference?"

Separately, she replied to Alistair Campbell, the former Labour spin doctor, who criticised Badenoch for not focusing on her other brief as business and trade secretary.

Rowling said: "Badenoch is also minister for women and equalities. Thanks once again for highlighting Labour's complacency and indifference towards the rights of half the electorate."

The Conservatives say the change will make it simpler for service providers for women and girls, such as those running sessions for domestic abuse victims, to prevent biological males from taking part.

But Labour said it would not amend the Equality Act if elected and that the Tories' attempt to stoke a culture war was a "distraction" from issues voters care about, such as the cost of living crisis. The Lib Dems also branded it a "distraction".

John Healey, the shadow defence secretary, said it was a "distraction from the election campaign" and that safeguarding legislation already existed.

Badenoch stressed that the Conservatives were seeking to clarify the Equality Act, not change it.

She told Sky News: "It is re-emphasising what should be the status quo. We have seen quite a lot of changes in terms of terminology in the law. Sex and gender we used interchangeably, now we don't do that, so what we're do-

ing is making sure people understand what the law says."

The Tories want to change the act to apply to biological sex, and say those who are biologically male but identify as female should be barred from using single-sex spaces.

Badenoch could not say whether someone's original birth certificate, or one amended after a legally recognised gender change, would define biological sex in such cases.

When pressed repeatedly, she told Today on BBC Radio 4: "What you are describing is a hypothetical scenario, assuming that when people go into rape crisis centres they're bringing in birth certificates, they're bringing in gender recognition certificates."

"What is happening at the moment is that people come to the centres and they are visibly of a different sex. You don't always need your birth certificate when you're going to the toilet and so on and so forth. This is not a paperwork issue. This is a practical issue."

Conservatives said the proposed change would not remove the existing protections against discrimination on the basis of gender reassignment provided by the Equality Act.

Scrap nuclear deterrent globally, urges Rayner

Max Kendix

Angela Rayner said that she wants to scrap nuclear weapons "in combination with other countries", hours after Sir Keir Starmer insisted that the whole shadow cabinet was behind his support for the weapons.

Starmer said yesterday that he would be prepared to deploy nuclear weapons to protect the UK and committed himself to maintaining the deterrent.

Rayner, the deputy Labour leader, and David Lammy, the shadow foreign secretary, were among the 47 Labour MPs who voted in 2016 against renewing the Trident nuclear weapons.

Asked about the 12 Labour frontbenchers who opposed Trident's renewal, Starmer said that he had his "whole shadow cabinet" behind him and added: "This is a changed Labour Party and the most important thing is I voted in favour of a nuclear deterrent. I lead from the front."

John Healey, the shadow defence secretary, told Times Radio that frontbenchers who opposed renewal had changed their minds and that "every frontbencher for Labour now knows this, accepts this and fully supports this". However, Rayner told the BBC yes-

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

Rayner said that she supported Labour's policy on Trident, which also includes a vow to build four new nuclear submarines to replace the Vanguard class that carries the deterrent.

Asked whether there was a split in the party, she told ITV: "No, we are absolutely committed to nuclear defence, we have our triple lock, we have our three programmes."

However, Rayner added that the 2016 vote "didn't mention the ongoing debate around whether we can multilaterally, globally get rid of all nuclear deterrents, which is what we would like to see. But whilst the insecurity exists Labour will be committed to our Trident programme."

Grant Shapps, the defence secretary, said that the comments cast doubt on the future of the deterrent and showed that Labour "is a risk to Britain's defences".

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Fresh blow for Sunak

where he felt a "terrible sense of guilt". He added: "The thing that really shook me in a way last week was the number of people coming up to me on the street saying 'Nigel, why aren't you standing?' [...] I simply couldn't help feeling that somehow they felt I was letting them down."

He said he also thought that the campaign needed some "gingering up", adding: "Thus far it is the dulllest, most boring election campaign we have ever seen in our lives," claiming that Labour and the Tories were the same.

Criticising both parties, he said: "We know that taxes will stay high. We know that mass immigration will continue

regardless of which party wins power. We know that people will get poorer."

Farage's attempt to win Clacton, a seat where the Conservatives had a 24,000 majority at the last election, is the eighth time he has attempted to become an MP.

In January a poll by Survation, commissioned by Farage's ally Arron Banks, suggested that he could comfortably win the seat. The former Tory MP Douglas Carswell previously held the seat for the UK Independence Party, after defecting from the Conservatives.

Sunak said the election was between him and Starmer. A Conservative spokesman said Farage "risks handing Keir Starmer a blank cheque".

He said: "Farage knows that Reform won't win any seats, but he doesn't seem to care that a vote for Reform only helps

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Asian hornet alert

cent usually fail to survive the winter, but that still leaves 35 females, each capable of founding her own colony. Each nest can kill and consume 11kg of insect prey a year.

"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," Campbell said.

"If they do become established, some [UK] beekeepers in the worst-affected areas may give up. We know that the levels of losses [of honeybee colonies] in France have averaged out at about 30 per cent, but in the worst-affected areas they can be much higher than that."

"The estimate now is that there are 500,000 Asian hornet nests in France, which is about one per square kilometre. And in the worst-affected areas, nest densities may be ten to 15 per square kilometre," he said.

The species may also spoil fruit crops, which they eat, he added. While individual hornets are seldom aggressive, they can be dangerous if people disturb their nests. The public have been asked to report suspected sightings to Defra using the iPhone and Android app Asian Hornet Watch. Defra has asked people to include a photo if it is safe to obtain one.



Labour. He's doing exactly what Keir Starmer wants him to do."

YouGov's seat-by-seat poll suggests that the Tories will lose 232 seats compared with the party's result in 2019, and Labour will pick up 221. The Lib Dems are on track to win 40 seats, replacing the SNP as the third largest party in Westminster, where the nationalists would be left with 17 seats. There was slightly better news for the Tories in a separate poll by More in Common. It predicted Labour would win 382 seats, giving it a majority of 114, and the Conservatives would hold on to 180 seats.

Election news, pages 6-9
Candidates are thinking too locally, William Hague, page 21
A worrying development for Sunak, leading article, page 25

It's shonky Wonka the musical!

Willy's Chocolate Experience bombed. Producers hope their adaptation will be a hit, writes **David Sanderson**

It was the "immersive treat that was meant to be sweet" and ended up as the "scheme gone bad turned viral fad". Or so goes a tune from the new Willy Wonka musical.

Based on a disastrous event in Glasgow this year, it will open at the Edinburgh Fringe festival and producers hope it will become a hit on the West End and Broadway.

Kirsty Paterson, the "sad Oompa Loompa" from the infamous *Willy's Chocolate Experience*, is involved in the musical, created by the renowned American producer Richard Kraft.

The first songs from *Willy's Candy Spectacular: A Musical Parody* have been released and the team of songwriters is poised to release tunes regularly in the run-up to its world premiere in August.

The immersive *Willy's Chocolate Experience* became the source of memes after its brief opening in February, which ended with four vans of police officers arriving to calm parents angered at paying £35 per head for a "world of pure imagination". Instead there was an empty space with a small bouncy castle and no chocolate.

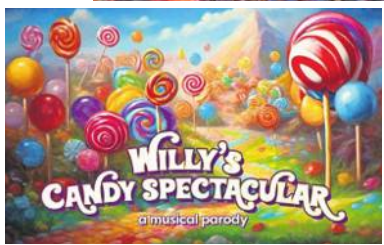
It prompted Kraft — who is known for mounting Disney-branded musicals in the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles — to start recruiting financiers and songwriters within days. He said that "the process of creating a brand-new musical, which usually spans years, is being condensed into just a couple of months".

Kraft has previously said that the Glasgow event was "about desperate dreamers who actually have fragments of a great idea, just executed beyond their budget and abilities".

The producers have stressed that the musical is a parody and there is no involvement from the companies that own the copyright to Roald Dahl's book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and its various adaptations. They said it was "not sponsored, endorsed or affiliated" with the House of Illuminati, which was behind the Glasgow event.



John Stamos stars in *Willy's Candy Spectacular*, which premieres at the Edinburgh Fringe. It features Kirsty Paterson, below, the "sad Oompa Loompa" from *Willy's Chocolate Experience* in Glasgow, which she acknowledged had been a "shambles"



In a statement issued in the immediate aftermath of its calamitous opening, the House of Illuminati, whose director is Billy Coull, apologised and said that "unfortunately at the last minute we were let down in many areas of our event and tried our best to continue on

and push through". The statement added that they "probably should have cancelled first thing instead".

The first songs portray the Glasgow event as "the start of the end of the world". One segment features the actor John Stamos singing: "Some thought

Unlikely inspiration

Jerry Springer: The Opera

When Sir Nicholas Hytner, then the director of the National Theatre, saw an early version of a "garish episode of *The Jerry Springer Show*, the American tabloid talk show, set to music of astonishing operatic panache" he thought it was "60 perfect minutes". The "lewd as a phallic parade" show became one of his early big hits.

Come From Away

Far away from New York on 9/11, the small Newfoundland town of Gander found itself the host of 7,000 air passengers grounded in Canada in the wake of the terrorist attacks. The events of the days that followed as friendships were forged became the unlikely material for one of the most successful new musicals in the West End in recent years.

Everybody's Talking About Jamie

In the early years of this century Jamie Campbell wanted to attend his Co Durham school's prom in drag. His tale, told in a BBC documentary, caught the attention of a theatre director who recruited the composer Dan Gillespie Sells and created *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*. It became a West End hit and was later adapted into a film.

it'd be Trump or Putin, setting the world ablaze; some thought it'd be masks or Covid vaccinations, that led to the end of days; but no it was *Willy's Candy Spectacular*."

Alan Zachary and Michael Weiner, two of the songwriters involved with

the project, said: "We love musicals with epic opening numbers; and we thought, 'What could be more epic than John Stamos singing about the end of humanity and linking our species' demise to an underwhelming immersive experience in Scotland?'"

Election won't stop emperor's visit

Kate Mansey

A planned state visit from the Emperor and Empress of Japan will go ahead, despite rules that bar Britain's royal family from engagements that might detract attention from the election campaign.

Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako will arrive on June 22 and stay until June 28. However, some elements of the visit have been adapted to take into account the political situation.

A palace source said that the key events of the state visit, such as the state banquet and the state carriage arrival at Buckingham Palace, would go ahead.

The general election campaign rules out any visit to Downing Street or the opportunity to address MPs at the Commons, which has taken place during previous state visits.

Naruhito and his wife will arrive at Stansted airport on Saturday June 22 where they will be greeted by Hajime Hayashi, the Japanese ambassador, and Viscount Brookeborough, greeting the guests on behalf of the King.

They will make private visits to the Japan House cultural centre in Kensington and the Thames Barrier in east London before the formal state visit starts on June 25, when they will be greeted by the Prince of Wales at their hotel. William will travel with the guests to Horse Guards Parade where they will receive an official ceremonial welcome.

Their visit will also include a trip to Windsor where the couple will lay a wreath on the tomb of Elizabeth II in the King George VI Chapel.

The Emperor and Empress will be shown a special exhibition in the Buckingham Palace picture gallery where

items from the Royal Collection relating to Japan will be displayed.

On the final day of the visit, Naruhito and his wife will visit Oxford for a private programme of engagements, including a visit to the colleges where they studied. The Emperor was at Merton College from 1983-1985 while the Empress attended Balliol College from 1988-1990.

The visit has already been postponed once. It had been due to take place in spring 2020 but was hit by the pandemic. The couple were last in the UK in September 2022 when they attended the funeral of the late Queen.

The King visited Japan five times as the Prince of Wales, including a trip to attend the enthronement of Naruhito in 2019.

The Queen, then the Duchess of Cornwall, accompanied Charles on a visit to Japan in 2008.

Damp and grey, but spring was the warmest on record

Adam Vaughan

Spring was wet, dull and, perhaps more surprisingly, Britain's warmest on record.

The season set an average temperature of 9.37C, the Met Office said. The previous highest, in records stretching back to 1884, was 9.12C in 2017.

Last month was particularly warm, at 13.1C on average, compared with the previous record of 12.1C in 2008. However, May was also dull, with 17 per cent fewer hours of sunshine than average. Large tracts of the Midlands, northwest and northeast England, Scotland and Wales experienced as little as 70 per cent of the average level of sunshine.

England and Wales were wetter than average last month, especially in East

Anglia. However, Scotland and Northern Ireland were drier than normal, meaning that there was 116 per cent of the rainfall that the country would usually expect. Overall it was the sixth-wettest spring since 1836, with downpours that caused problems for farmers and led to warnings of food price rises.

The Met Office forecast suggests that temperatures will be "rather cool" for the middle of this month before recovering to about average.

A Met Office spokesman said: "June may be more unsettled, but saying that summer won't begin until after June is stretching a point too far. This week, for example, temperatures may be a bit below average, but this weekend the forecast looks quite promising."

Weather, page 53

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES GLOSSOP



Ride through time Horse-drawn carriages return to Kiplin Hall in North Yorkshire for a film about its first owner, George Calvert, who founded the state of Maryland

China accuses MI6 of coercing married couple to spy for Britain

Richard Lloyd Parry Asia Editor

Britain's overseas intelligence service used money, deceit and coercion to recruit a married Chinese couple as spies, Beijing's state security agency has claimed in the latest accusation of espionage by both governments.

China's ministry of state security claimed in a social media post yesterday that a man identified only as Wang, who worked for a "core state agency", was recruited after visiting Britain on an official exchange programme in 2015. It is the second time in five months China claims to have apprehended an agent recruited by MI6.

According to the statement, British intelligence, recognising the "core confidential role" held by Wang, rapidly approved his application for the exchange programme. Once he was in the UK, they arranged for him to be lavished with "special attention, including

dinner invitations and sightseeing tours, to understand his personality, his weaknesses and his needs", it said.

After identifying his "strong desire for money", undercover MI6 agents befriended him on the university campus where he was studying and offered him a "part-time consulting opportunity with high compensation".

He began by providing publicly available information but, lured by rates "several times higher than the normal consulting fees", he began to disclose "core matters of the central state agency" in which he worked.

Eventually, "judging that the conditions were ripe", his handlers identified themselves as intelligence officers and asked him to work for them in return for money and "security guarantees". The ministry's statement said: "In the interests of profit, Wang agreed to the British side's request and completed the espionage formalities. MI6 trained

Wang in professional espionage and instructed him to return to his home country to gather important information about China."

The British spies repeatedly asked him to recruit his wife, identified as Zhou, who also worked in a "core" government agency, the statement said.

"Wang was initially hesitant but could not resist the repeated persuasion, enticement and even coercion, and finally agreed," it said. "Under Wang's strong instigation, Zhou agreed to collect intelligence. Thus he and his wife became British spies." The statement on the WeChat social media channel ends by saying that "the case is being further investigated".

Like many governments, Britain has a general policy of not commenting on reports relating to intelligence-gathering.

Chinese state security also used to avoid talking publicly about its work, but since creating a WeChat account

last July, it has used the medium to claim the capture of alleged American spies. This is the second time that Britain has been accused in the same way.

In January a similar post by the ministry outlined the case of a person known as Huang, who was said to have worked for MI6 since 2015 and had been supplied with "special espionage equipment" by the agency. Huang's gender, company and nationality were not specified, although he or she was described as the citizen of a "third country", neither Britain nor China.

In April a UK airport Border Force officer, an immigration officer and a Hong Kong trade official were charged in a London court with spying on pro-democracy activists in Britain and forcing their way into a residential address. The immigration officer, Matthew Trickett, 37, former Royal Marine, was found dead in a park a few days later. Police said his death was not suspicious.

BBC pundit shared post of PM with Hitler moustache

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

A BBC cricket pundit has been accused of fanning antisemitism on social media after sharing posts including one of Rishi Sunak sporting a Hitler moustache.

Qasim Sheikh, a former Scotland international cricketer, retweeted the picture featuring the prime minister, along with similar mock-ups of international leaders including President Biden, Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, Olaf Scholz, the Ger-

man chancellor, and Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission. The group is labelled the "Kids Killers Union".

The post, which Sheikh shared in January, appeared alongside a number of inflammatory statements that appear to justify the October 7 attacks on Israel and messages accusing Israel of lying about the al-Ahli hospital rocket attack. Israel has denied responsibility for the explosion, blaming a misfired rocket from a Palestinian militia.

One of Sheikh's posts, posted on Oc-

ttober 17, said: "Many innocent Palestinians have just lost their lives in a hospital bombing. To make it even worse the oppressor Israel has tried to blame someone else for the bombing."

Also in October, in the immediate wake of Hamas's attack on Israel, which killed about 1,200 people, Sheikh said: "The UK/US instantly stand with Israel today, although have stayed quiet for years on the atrocities committed by Israel over Palestine. Claiming Palestine has no justification to attack, don't they have a right to defend themselves."

The messages emerged after Sheikh, who was capped 27 times for Scotland, was signed by the BBC to provide commentary for the T20 World Cup, which started at the weekend. He will make his debut today for England's opening match against Scotland.

The BBC was contacted for comment. Sheikh said he did not support the October 7 attacks and apologised for any offence caused by his messages. "I would never seek to support any loss of innocent lives. That was not my intention," he added.

Quintagram® No 1959

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Lazy slovenly person (4)

— — — —

2 Of a pale grey colour (4)

— — — —

3 German white wine (8)

— — — — — — — —

4 Unfathomable, perplexing (8)

— — — — — — — —

5 London airport (8)

— — — — — — — —

A	A	B	B	E	E	F
F	G	G	H	H	I	I
I	L	L	L	N	N	O
R	R	S	S	S	T	W

Solutions see T2 MindGames p15
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

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KC's doubts on literary boycott

David Sanderson Arts Correspondent

The boycott of Britain's literary world is based on "tenuous" evidence about Baillie Gifford's support for Israel's "crimes in Gaza", according to a lawyer fighting for Palestinians at the International Court of Justice.

Philippe Sands KC said that claims made by Fossil Free Books, an activist group calling for literary festivals to end sponsorship deals with the asset manager, had not been established. He appealed for an end to the "trashing of people who had taken different sides in the dispute, which has led two book festivals to halt deals with Baillie Gifford."

Sands sits on the board of the Hay Festival, which returned the sponsor's six-figure cheque after writers, celebrities and politicians threatened a boycott. They had signed a letter published last month in which Fossil Free Books said ten literary festivals and book prizes could expect an "expansion of boycotts [...] until Baillie Gifford divests" from companies with links to Israel.

Edinburgh International Book Festival later said that it had agreed to end its deal with the company.

Fossil Free Books claims that the company has nearly £10 billion invested in companies with direct links to Israel's defence industry. Baillie Gifford has said that it has \$19 billion invested in Amazon, Nvidia and Meta, which have commercial dealings with Israel, but also had \$300 million invested in Airbnb, Booking.com and Cemex, which "have ... activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories".

Sands told the Hay Festival: "We don't know exactly what is going on." Netanyahu faces revolt, page 28

Breast cancer drug rejected by NHS can extend lives

Eleanor Hayward
Health Editor, Chicago

Hundreds of breast cancer patients are having their lives cut short because the NHS in England is failing to provide a blockbuster drug, research has shown, revealing that it boosts survival time by a third.

Enhertu extends lives by six months on average for women with a type of incurable breast cancer. However, medical regulators in England are refusing to approve it for these patients, claiming it is too expensive, despite it being available in Scotland and 15 other countries.

New trial results, presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual conference in Chicago, have reinforced the drug's life-extending benefits, prompting charities to say it is "utterly unacceptable" for the NHS to block access.

The trial involved 866 women with a type of breast cancer, known as HER2-low, that had spread to other parts of the body. Half were given Enhertu, while the remainder got the standard treatment of chemotherapy.

Women on Enhertu survived without their cancer growing for an average of 13 months, compared with eight months among those who had chemotherapy. The new trial showed that six in ten patients responded to treatment from Enhertu, twice as many as chemotherapy.

Dr Giuseppe Curigliano from the University of Milan, the author of the latest findings, said the drug meant people "lived longer without their disease progressing or causing death". He added that even more patients could benefit than previously thought, with survival also dramatically boosted among patients with a different cancer subtype called HER2-ultralow.

The findings were published after the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice) rejected the drug for use in England in March on cost grounds, under new criteria which do not class all terminal cancers as "severe". There are about 1,000 patients in England who would be eligible each year.

Charities said this has created an "in-

sufferable postcode lottery", where NHS patients in Scotland can receive the drug while their peers in England face dying months earlier.

A petition by Breast Cancer Now has more than 260,000 signatures calling for the drug to be made available.

Enhertu, the brand name for trastuzumab deruxtecan, has been developed by AstraZeneca and Daiichi Sankyo. It is one of a new breed of cancer drugs known as antibody-drug conjugates, made up of artificial antibodies which hunt down cancer cells to deliver chemotherapy directly to the tumour. Because they do not kill healthy cells they can be given in much higher doses than traditional chemotherapy, with fewer side effects.

The drug costs about £10,000 a month in the US, although the NHS has been offered a discount. It is available on the NHS for patients with some types of breast cancer, but not those with the HER2-low subtype.

Dr Simon Vincent, director of research, support and influencing at Breast Cancer Now, said: "This promising study suggests even more people could potentially benefit from Enhertu. Yet, despite this mounting clinical data emerging around the clear benefit Enhertu could bring patients, thousands of people with HER2-low secondary breast cancer are being denied access on the NHS in England, and this is utterly unacceptable. These people are desperately counting on Nice, NHS England, Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca to find a solution in their current talks and to urgently make this treatment available for them."

When the medical regulator Nice rejected the drug in March it said the cost the NHS was being asked to pay was "too high" in relation to its benefits.

A spokesman for Nice said: "We are extremely disappointed not to be able to recommend Enhertu for use in the NHS for advanced HER2-low breast cancer. A price making it a cost-effective use of NHS resources being offered by Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca could resolve this issue almost immediately. Further discussions with all relevant parties are continuing."



'I know this works, but I can't have it'

Case study

Sophie Blake, 51, fears the precious time she has left with her daughter Maya will be "stolen" because of the NHS's refusal to provide access to Enhertu (Eleanor Hayward writes).

The former television presenter from Brighton was

diagnosed with breast cancer in December 2020 and told it had spread to her lungs and liver in May 2022.

Blake's cancer is under control but if it starts to grow again then the drug would provide a last line of treatment and help extend her life for months so she could see her 17-year-old daughter go to university. She said the latest trial results provided "yet more evidence of the precious extra time this treatment could give us".

Blake said: "When we're so limited with what options are available, it's

If her cancer returns, Sophie Blake hopes the drug will extend her life long enough to see Maya go to university

particularly devastating. We know women in Scotland whose lives it has changed. To us, these wonder drugs are everything. I want to watch my daughter go to university, get married and have children. Enhertu could make that difference to women. We're being told our lives aren't considered cost-effective. The most frustrating thing is that we know it's there — they just won't give it to us."

Melanoma vaccine cuts death risk by half in trial

Eleanor Hayward

A cancer vaccine being trialled in the UK has been found to halve the risk of dying from melanoma, providing the clearest evidence yet this new class of treatment can transform survival rates.

The clinical trial involved 157 patients with melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Half were given a new personalised vaccine in combination with immunotherapy, while the remainder received only immunotherapy. Over a three-year period, the cancer vaccine was found to cut the risk of death or of the cancer returning by 49 per cent.

The findings were presented yesterday at the American Society of Clinical Oncology conference in Chicago. Experts said they fully expected the "extremely impressive" results to be replicated in trials of cancer vaccines on other types of tumour, including breast and bowel.

Last week the NHS announced it had launched a "Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad" which will enable thousands of patients to take part in clinical trials for personalised cancer vaccines.

Multiple cancer vaccines are being developed but the melanoma vaccine by Moderna is furthest along in clinical trials. This makes the vaccine, called mRNA-4157, the frontrunner to become the first to be approved.

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that can spread around the body. It affects 16,700 people each year in the UK, killing 2,300. The main symptom is a new or changing mole.

The melanoma vaccine is already being tested on patients in the UK as part of a larger phase 3 clinical trial.

The vaccines are customised for each patient and train the immune system to recognise the unique mutations on tumours and then hunt down those cancer cells. They are injected into the arm of melanoma patients after surgery.

Iain Foulkes, executive director of research and innovation at Cancer Research UK, said the melanoma trial results "show positive signs of the mRNA vaccine's long-lasting effectiveness".

He added: "The findings highlight the great promise of therapeutic cancer vaccines used in combination with powerful immunotherapies. Trials in the UK are also investigating similar vaccine technology for use in colorectal cancer after surgery."

Multiple studies are being presented at the conference of promising trials for vaccines against breast, bowel, skin and lung cancer, with scientists hopeful that the technology will provide a new weapon against the disease.

Puberty blocker ban removes vital care for teens, says doctor

James Beal Social Affairs Editor

Private gender clinics are consulting lawyers over the government's decision to ban new prescriptions of puberty blockers for transgender children.

Doctors could be struck off if they prescribe puberty blockers to children after an "emergency ban" on the drugs came into force yesterday.

The Department of Health has published legislation to close a loophole that allows under-18s to get the drugs via private clinics, after they were banned for NHS use in March.

The law will be in force until Septem-

ber 3 and make it illegal for any new prescriptions for the hormone-suppressing drugs to be issued to children in the UK.

The initial "emergency" restrictions cover only a three-month period but are likely to be extended beyond September by the next government.

Dr Aidan Kelly, director at Gender Plus, a Care Quality Commission-registered gender identity clinic serving young people and adults, called the government's decision "one of their last desperate acts in power".

He said Gender Plus was consulting its legal team about how best to support

transgender people and "hold the government accountable for this blatant act of discrimination".

On the clinic's website, Kelly said: "The law removes vital, proven care from those who need it, seemingly without consideration for the longer-term impact this will have."

"This is clearly an attempt to score political points in the run-up to the general election at the cost of a tiny and vulnerable section of our society — transgender youth."

"The move will undoubtedly cause fear and distress for these young people and their families, which contradicts

the government's stated intention for this ban, that of addressing risk to patient safety."

"It is important to note that this medication has only been banned for transgender patients, it will continue to be prescribed safely and without concern for those who are not trans."

"The wellbeing of transgender people is at risk while the current government remains in power."

Gender Plus is one of a number of private gender clinics in the UK treating young adults with gender dysphoria.

A Singapore-registered private clinic, GenderGP, was criticised last

month at the High Court for prescribing "dangerously high" levels of hormones to a teenager, which could have resulted in their sudden death.

Its founder, Dr Helen Webberley, said she was also shocked at the ban on puberty blockers.

She said on Twitter/X: "This has the potential to cause exceptional harm and those who are responsible must know that they are accountable for any harm that results."

"I will be working to provide solutions, knowledge and information to parents, families and children to help keep themselves safe."

News Politics

Labour set for bigger victory

Oliver Wright, Lara Spirit
Steven Swinford

Labour is on track for its biggest election victory, surpassing the number of seats won by Tony Blair in 1997, a poll of more than 50,000 people suggests.

The YouGov survey predicts that Sir Keir Starmer would enter No 10 with 422 MPs, with the Conservatives reduced to 140 seats, compared with the 365 seats they won five years ago.

The analysis also shows that the Conservatives' fortunes have declined since March, despite a policy blitz designed to close the gap with Labour.

Twelve cabinet ministers are forecast to lose their seats, including Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, Grant Shapps, the defence secretary, Alex Chalk, the justice secretary, and Gillian Keegan, the education secretary.

Penny Mordaunt, the leader of the Commons who with Shapps is seen as a potential leadership contender, is also under threat.

Overall the Tories are predicted to hold 15 fewer seats than was forecast in March, and Labour's majority is expected to increase to 194. In 1997 Tony Blair had a 179-seat majority.

It would be the second largest majority in British political history after Stanley Baldwin won a 209 majority for the Conservatives in the 1924 election.

The survey suggests a bleak set of results for the Tories. Of the 42 seats identified as forming the Red Wall in 2019, all are on course to be won back by Labour. In Ashfield, Normanton & Hemsworth and Ellesmere Port & Bromborough the Conservatives are forecast to be pushed into third place by Reform.

Of the 45 blue wall seats in the south, 19 are likely to go to Labour and 13 to the Lib Dems, with only 13 remaining in Tory hands. The Conservatives are also at risk of being ejected from London. YouGov's model has the Tories taking four seats, but all four are close contests.

In Scotland the SNP looks set to lose 31 of the 48 seats it won in 2019, which would leave it with only 17 MPs.

In Wales YouGov has Labour winning 28 of the 32 seats.

The Liberal Democrats also look on



The survey suggests Labour will win four more seats than Tony Blair's 418 in 1997

Cabinet casualties predicted

Twelve cabinet ministers are set to lose their seats, including Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, and Grant Shapps, the defence secretary, according to the YouGov mega-poll.

Also facing defeat are Alex Chalk, the justice secretary, and Gillian Keegan, the education secretary, among others. Chalk's Cheltenham seat is predicted to have such a convincing swing to the Lib Dems that it would be considered a safe seat for the party.

Penny Mordaunt, who alongside Shapps is seen as a potential leadership contender, is also in peril with the seat-by-seat poll suggesting that she

could lose the seat to Labour.

Some of these races are more competitive than others, with the result deemed a "toss-up" by the pollster, meaning the result is technically too close to call. Those set to lose their seats but with a chance of pulling through on election night are Keegan, Mordaunt, Simon Hart, the chief whip, Mel Stride, the work and pensions secretary, and Esther McVey, a minister without portfolio who has the unofficial title of a "common-sense tsar".

The remaining predicted cabinet casualties include Johnny Mercer, the

minister for veterans' affairs, Victoria Prentis, the attorney-general, and David TC Davies, the Welsh secretary, and Mark Harper, the transport secretary.

Hunt is predicted to lose his Godalming & Ash seat despite giving more than £100,000 of his own money to his local Conservative Party in the hope of boosting his chances.

Other senior Tories predicted to lose are Jacob Rees-Mogg in the renamed North East Somerset & Hanham seat, and Iain Duncan-Smith, the former leader, in the hyper-marginal Chingford & Wood Green constituency, both to Labour.

track to make big gains, with YouGov predicting that the party will gain 40 seats at the expense of the Conservatives to become the third largest party for the first time since 2015.

Reform is not predicted to win any seats but YouGov expects it to get about 10 per cent of the national vote, depriving the Tories of victory in some seats.

Overall vote share for the parties is similar to other recent YouGov surveys and has Labour on 43 per cent, the Conservatives on 25 per cent and the Liberal Democrats on 11 per cent. The Greens are predicted to be on 7 per cent.

Anthony Wells, head of political and social research at YouGov, said the poll suggested that voter sentiment was moving against the Tories. "Most conventional wisdom had it that when the general election was called there would be a narrowing of the polling gap between the two main parties," he said. "But this poll suggests Labour remain on track for a 1997-style landslide."

"Looking across all the polling carried out in the campaign so far, if anything the public have moved further away from the Conservatives."

The only hope for the Tories in the poll is that, according to YouGov's model, 131 seats are a toss-up in which the winning party's lead is fewer than five points. Eighty-seven of these seats are contests between the Conservatives and Labour, with the Tories ahead in 50 of them.

YouGov's MRP (multi-level regression and post-stratification) model uses a much larger sample of voters than traditional polls and then uses the data to predict at a constituency level the likely outcome of individual contests.

It does this by assessing the concentration of various types of voters in individual seats, including socio-demographic characteristics taken from census data, past voting choices, shares for various parties within each constituency and information about the candidates.

This election is more complicated because it will be the first since boundary changes to constituencies.

'Local' MPs can't give leadership, William Hague, page 21

Election MRP survey

What is an MRP survey?

MRP stands for multi-level regression and post-stratification

Prediction of seats

v 2019 326 seats to win

Labour
2024 prediction **422**
2019 result **202**

Conservative
140
365

Lib Dems
48
11

SNP
17
48

Plaid Cymru
2
4

Green
2
1

Predicted Labour majority

194
seats

Tory big beasts who could lose their seats

Jeremy Hunt
Chancellor
Godalming & Ash
2019: 53.3%, 2024: 30.6%
Projected winner

Grant Shapps
Defence secretary
Welwyn & Hatfield
2019: 52.6%, 2024: 29.4%
Projected winner

Alex Chalk
Justice secretary
Cheltenham
2019: 48%, 2024: 24.8%
Projected winner

Gillian Keegan
Education secretary
Chichester
2019: 57.8%, 2024: 31.8%
Projected winner

Penny Mordaunt
Leader of the Commons
Portsmouth North
2019: 61.4%, 2024: 34.8%
Projected winner

Tom Peck Political Sketch



Take the steep stone steps down under London Bridge and you're faced with a choice. Left to the London Dungeon, right to the haunted London tombs, or straight on to the newest scare attraction: Rishi Sunak's Worst Nightmare.

There, on stage in a grand old room beneath a giant crystal chandelier, the prime minister's innermost fears are being made flesh on an almost daily basis.

There's a great big Union Jack backdrop, there's a throng of hyped-up journalists and a rear platform packed with TV cameras. And there, with metronomic certainty, popping out of the darkness like a clockwork Jack the Ripper, comes that famous short-toothed, dimpled, demonic grin. Heeere's Nigel!

Here indeed was Nigel. Bounding up to the same stage for the second time in three working days. Giving the same speech to the same excitable crowd, but this time he'd brought the punchline as well as the joke. This time he had remembered

to load the warhead into the weapon of mass Conservative destruction.

At the second time of asking, after a third change of heart, he's now actually become the leader of the party of which he is technically also the owner. And he really is going to stand for election.

They say a week's a long time in politics. A week ago he definitely wasn't standing. Then he changed his mind, booked out the Glaziers Hall to announce he was, then re-changed his mind and turned up anyway to give a weird boilerplate speech about not very much at all. Now he was back again, having re-changed his mind. This may be what's known as double glaziering, but it certainly wasn't designed to keep the noise in. The reverberations from this one will certainly have been heard two miles away in Downing Street.

For a while, the prime minister might have been hoping his nightmare wasn't real. You tend to know things are just a dream when they take a turn for the odd. Could this maybe just be a dream? There, sitting next to each other in the audience, were Holly Valance and Rod Stewart. On closer inspection, Rod Stewart was in fact not the

actual Rod Stewart but a Rod lookalike, the Pimlico Plumbers founder Charlie Mullins, affectionately known to some as Dyno-Rod.

Dyno-Rod's face remained expressionless throughout. One suspects his face remains expressionless throughout everything these days. An expressionless face must have its uses in the plumbing game. If Charlie Mullins ever accidentally fell into a septic tank one doubts he would be capable of looking even mildly disgruntled.

So why had Nigel changed his mind again? "Well," he explained, he'd "had time for a bit of a think".

"I walked the dog, I did a bit of fishing, I went to the pub." All of Farage's mythical stories involve trips to the pub, even though there is almost certainly not a single boozer anywhere in the country where the most divisive politician of the past 30 years could possibly wander in for a quiet pint. If there is, it's certainly not anywhere he'd dream of sticking around for any longer than it takes to have his picture taken pouring a pint behind the bar.

Everywhere he went, on this somewhat imaginary-sounding day,

Nigel heard voices. "Why aren't you standing?" they all said to him. Nigel let out a little sigh. "Difficult though it is," he said, "I can't let down those millions of people. So I have decided, I've changed my mind. So I am going to stand."

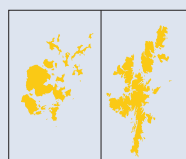
You have to think the Glaziers Hall is probably double glazed itself, so any sound heard of a head thudding into a desk with ferocious force from two miles away was probably imagined. But this was a moment that will haunt Rishi Sunak for four more weeks and after that, one suspects, the rest of his life.

At high noon today, Farage will be in Clacton, where he will no doubt receive the hero's welcome he has done every time he's been there before, with each different iteration of his Ukip reboot parties. Ukip have won there, and not just in a by-election but at the general election in 2015. You'd be extremely brave to bet on them not doing so again.

For anyone who might have been worried that in four weeks' time, politics was going to get very boring indeed, well, worry ye not. The chaos years are back up and running. Quite literally running, first in Clacton and then all the way to the House of Commons.

than Blair in 1997, poll finds

2024 projection



Seat change by region

	Con	Lab	Lib Dems
Scotland	-1	+33	-1
Northeast	-7	+7	
Northwest	-28	+25	
Yorkshire & Humber	-19	+18	
Wales	-10	+10	
West Midlands	-25	+23	
East Midlands	-25	+25	
East	-27	+23	+4
London	-16	+13	+3
Southeast	-44	+28	+16
Southwest	-30	+17	+13

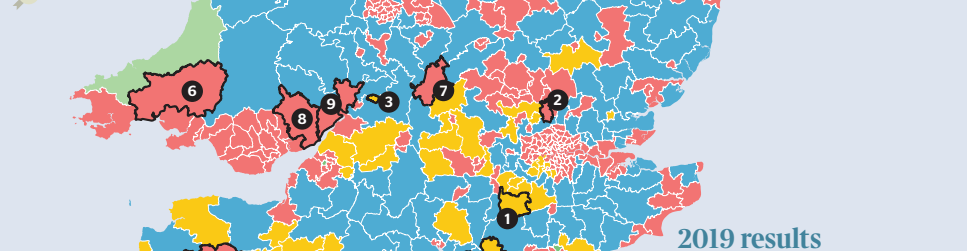
2019 election versus 2024 YouGov projection



Seat changes

Key to map

- Conservative
- Labour
- SNP
- Lib Dems
- Plaid Cymru
- Green
- Other



2019 results

Mark Harper
Transport secretary
Forest of Dean
2019: 59.6%, 2024: 33.9%
Projected winner



Mel Stride Department
for work and pensions
Central Devon
2019: 55.3%, 2024: 33.3%
Projected winner



Esther McVey
Tatton
2019: 57.7%, 2024: 38.3%
Projected winner



Johnny Mercer
Veterans minister
Plymouth Moor View
2019: 60.7%, 2024: 31.5%
Projected winner



Simon Hart
Chief whip
Caerfyrddin
2019: 52.7%, 2024: 22.1%
Projected winner



Victoria Prentis
Attorney-general
Banbury
2019: 54.3%, 2024: 32.6%
Projected winner



David TC Davies
Welsh secretary
Monmouthshire
2019: 52.1%, 2024: 33.3%
Projected winner



Source: YouGov

*The seats shown are those the ministers are contesting at the upcoming election. The 2019 vote share represents the seat they won in the last general election, some of which are changing under new boundaries.

Double whammy but writing was already on the wall for Tories

John Curtice Comment

Rarely can a party's campaign have received two such blows in one afternoon. First, Nigel Farage announced not only that he was going to stand in the election for Reform after all, but that he was going to take over the party's leadership for the next five years too.

Then YouGov released the results of its first MRP poll of the campaign, one that provides not only an estimate of the parties' standing in terms of votes but also of the outcome in seats. It suggested that the Conservatives are nearly 20 points behind in the vote, and at risk of losing at least three in five of their existing seats.

The two developments are not unconnected. Support for Reform has so far been holding up in the polls. Indeed, the YouGov poll, while not crediting the party with any seats, puts it, as have other polls, on 10 per cent. This — and the Conservatives' failure so far to make any discernible progress in the polls — may well have helped to persuade Farage to change his mind.

Unfortunately for the Conservatives, most of Reform's support comes from those who backed Boris Johnson's "Get Brexit Done" appeal in 2019 — many of whom would probably revert to the Conservatives if Reform were not now an option.

Indeed, five years ago, Farage withdrew his Brexit Party candidates in seats that the Conservatives were defending. Support for the Brexit Party subsequently fell away dramatically. Now, in contrast, he is

parking his tanks very firmly on the Conservatives' lawn. And although there is no guarantee that Farage's leadership will boost Reform's support — though some polling suggests that it may — his charismatic presence in an otherwise dull campaign makes it more likely that Reform will perform creditably on July 4.

Reform's decision to contest Tory-held seats is but one reason that YouGov's estimate that the Conservatives could find themselves with only 140 seats is credible, even though it implies that they may lose as many as 60 more seats than would be the case if their support were to fall by the same amount everywhere.

Because the Brexit Party did not contest Conservative-held seats in 2019, any votes that Reform takes from Sunak's party will be felt most keenly in those seats. As a result, the fall in Conservative support in seats the party is trying to defend is likely to be by more than the national figure of 20 points.

Moreover, such a pattern is almost an arithmetical inevitability — there are 70 seats where the Conservatives did not win as much as 20 per cent of the vote in 2019, and where they therefore cannot lose 20 points now.

To this can be added the risk that some opposition voters will back whichever of Labour or the Liberal Democrats appear better able to defeat the Conservatives locally.

All these patterns were in evidence in last month's local elections. The YouGov poll simply highlights the writing that was already on the wall.

John Curtice is professor of politics at the University of Strathclyde and senior fellow, National Centre for Social Research and The UK in a Changing Europe. He is also co-host of the Trendy podcast.

Behind the story

YouGov's MRP survey is designed to give a more sophisticated estimate than conventional polls of voting intention (Oliver Wright writes).

One difference is that MRP — or, to give it its full name, multilevel regression with poststratification — provides a much larger sample of voters (about 50,000) than in other surveys, which usually involve about 2,000 people.

MRP uses this data to predict outcomes at a constituency level. It does this by assessing the concentrations of various types of voters

in a seat, using socio-demographic characteristics taken from census data, past vote choices, shares for various parties in each constituency and information about the candidates standing.

Although a number of companies use similar MRP models, YouGov pioneered the technique, correctly predicting a hung parliament in the 2017 general election when other polls were suggesting a Tory landslide.

This year is more complicated, however, because this election will be the first since the parliamentary boundary review, which made wholesale changes to

the constituency map. Only about 80 constituencies are unchanged since 2019.

This creates a modelling challenge for MRP, which relies on constituency-based information and the party vote shares in each constituency at the previous election.

Although notional results have been produced by experts such as Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, no official data exists for how each party would have performed in 2019 if the constituencies then had been the same as the ones we have now — making this an important source of potential errors.

News Politics

PM plans to curb migration with annual visa cap

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Rishi Sunak has pledged to introduce an annual cap on the number of work and family visas issued by the UK each year as he tries to open up a clear divide with Sir Keir Starmer on immigration.

The precise number of visas granted each year under Sunak's plan would be determined by an annual vote in parliament. The prime minister is expected to call it an "immigration lock" to ensure that net migration levels are brought back to a sustainable rate that the government and MPs have more control over.

Net migration has reached record highs in recent years despite the Conservative Party having pledged at the last election, in 2019, when it was about a quarter of a million, to reduce it. The rate soared to an all-time high of 764,000 in 2022 but fell by 10 per cent last year, to 685,000.

Sunak will pledge that the cap will be lowered in each of the next five years if he wins the election. However, he has refused to commit himself to a figure, saying that it would be determined by the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), the government's independent advisers on immigration policy.

The group would be given a remit to reduce net migration, to bring migration down year-on-year over the next parliament, and to consider both the costs and benefits of migration. Costs that would be considered include the burden on public services, wage depression caused by foreign labour, the knock-on effects on tax revenue, the impact on the domestic workforce — such as higher numbers on jobless benefits — and the pressure on housing.

The cap would apply only to work and family visas, which made up about

half of the 1.3 million migrant visas issued by the UK in the year to March. It would not apply to foreign students, who have made up 562,403 of all visas in the last year, or to the annual 40,000 quota for seasonal workers who come to the UK for six-month periods.

The UK issued 605,264 work-related visas in the 12 months to March, of which about half were to the dependants of a main applicant. Another 79,384 family visas were issued to relatives of British residents.

Conservative Party sources said that the cap would be broken into monthly quotas and that some sectors such as health and care given a specific quota. Other sectors that are suffering shortages would also be prioritised to ensure that the new immigration cap was not operated on a first-come, first-served basis.

The new immigration lock would be introduced through primary legislation early in the next parliament, although Conservative Party sources said it would first require a comprehensive consultation by the MAC.

They said that foreign students would not be included in the new annual cap because they were more temporary migrants who came to the UK for a specific period. However, they would start to count towards the cap once they applied for the graduate visa route or work visas after they had finished their studies.

Announcing the policy, Sunak said he had started the process of reducing overall rates of immigration through measures introduced in January, but that he wanted to go further to control net migration.

He 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 take the bold action needed to cut immigration figures."

The policy will play a central role in the Conservative Party's manifesto and Sunak is expected to argue that it provides a mechanism and a firm commitment by which to finally deliver the promise to reduce overall immigration.

The party has failed to deliver the promises it has made to cut net migration at each general election since 2010, when David Cameron made a "no ifs, no buts" pledge to reduce numbers.

However, the new policy does not go as far as a group of former Conservative ministers have recently demanded. Suella Braverman, the former home secretary, has called for an overall cap. Robert Jenrick, the former immigration minister, and Neil O'Brien, a former housing minister, published a lengthy report last month on how to bring the numbers down. They called for net migration to be capped at 100,000 and for the health and care visa route to be capped at 30,000.

Responding to the government's announcement of a cap on long-term work and family visas, Yvette Cooper, Labour's 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.

"Why should anyone take seriously a promise the Tories have already repeatedly broken?"



Sinking feeling Rishi Sunak appeared not to notice a Liberal Democrat campaign

Battling broken promises

Analysis

Rishi Sunak's pledge to introduce an annual cap on visas has one primary goal: to outflank Sir Keir Starmer (Matt Dathan writes).

The prime minister will point out the Labour leader's refusal to commit himself to anything beyond a general pledge to reduce net migration.

However, the problem Sunak faces — as with every other bold promise he is making during this campaign — is that he cannot isolate this pledge from his party's record in power over the past 14

years. And it's hard to think of another issue on which the Tories have broken more promises than they have on immigration.

In the run-up to the 2010 election, when Britain was experiencing record net migration of about 200,000 per year, David Cameron promised to cut the figure to the "tens of thousands".

A year later, when he was prime minister, he went further, elevating it to a "no ifs, no buts" pledge. By the time of the next election in 2015, numbers were triple what he had promised.

Despite the failure, the pledge remained, albeit diminished, with Cameron promising to "keep our ambition of delivering annual net migration in the tens of thousands, not the hundreds of thousands".

Theresa May inherited and retained the target.

However, at the 2019 election, when the party was led by Boris Johnson, the pledge was diluted to simply "reducing overall immigration".

Since then, net migration has soared, reaching a record 764,000 in 2022. Although the level has started to tail off, the figure was still 685,000 last year, almost seven times the level Cameron had promised in 2010.

So while Sunak is trying to contrast Starmer's pledge to reduce overall numbers with his new annual caps, Labour will simply be able to point to the litany of broken promises left in the Conservative Party's rearview mirror. He will ask why voters have any reason to trust its latest promise.

However, Sunak's pledge goes one step further than those of his predecessors by providing

a mechanism by which he intends to meet the commitment. By setting an annual cap — voted on by parliament at a level decided by the government after a recommendation by the independent Migration Advisory Committee — the prime minister hopes he can separate his approach from his predecessors' failed record. In doing so, Sunak has both a new attack line against Starmer and the basis of a defence when the Labour leader points to the Tory party's failures.

The policy also gives Sunak a new message for Conservative voters tempted to back Nigel Farage's Reform Party.

What the prime minister must now hope is that voters are patient enough to give the Tories their fifth bite of the cherry at attempting to reduce immigration.

Imports of foie gras will be banned under Labour

Tom Ball

A Labour government would ban the importation of foie gras, in effect outlawing the sale of the French delicacy in Britain.

Production has been banned on cruelty grounds for more than a decade in the UK but about 200 tonnes of the food are imported from Europe each year. The process involves force-feeding ducks and geese using a foot-long tube until their livers become diseased, swelling up to ten times natural size.

Imports were due to be banned last year under the Animals Abroad Bill, supported by Conservative environmentalists including Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park and Carrie Johnson, the former prime minister's wife. It was thought to have been shelved under pressure from Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg and other MPs on the right of the party.

The dropping of the proposed ban prompted famous names including Miriam Margolyes, Mark Rylance and Jo Brand to sign a letter to Rishi Sunak demanding Britain end its "complicity

in this appalling trade". Due to competition laws, a product cannot be banned outright. However, if Labour wins the election on July 4, the party will ban the import of any products made through the force-feeding of ducks and geese, making it illegal to buy foie gras.

Steve Reed, the shadow environment secretary, said: "Labour has a proud track record on animal welfare, from ending the testing of animals for cosmetic products and the cruelty of fur farming. The next Labour government will build on this. We will ban the commercial import of foie gras, where ducks and geese are aggressively force fed."

Foie gras has been a staple of French fine dining since the 17th century, when it was initially a regional delicacy in Alsace and the southwest of the country.

Production rates have declined from about 19,000 tonnes per year a decade ago to 10,000 tonnes last year, in large part due to outbreaks of bird flu. Since the late 1990s, the number of European countries making foie gras has halved. Labour owe us some honesty about their plans, Hugo Rifkind, page 23



launch passing along the Thames when he paid a visit to the Leander Club in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, yesterday

Child benefit payout delay

Half a million people were affected by a delay in child benefit payments yesterday.

About 30 per cent of the payments due were not made. HM Revenue & Customs said it had since fixed the problem and those who missed out would be paid tomorrow morning.

A spokesman said: "We are very sorry that some customers did not receive their scheduled child benefit payments as expected and we understand the concern and difficulty this may have caused ... Anyone who has incurred a direct financial loss because of the delayed payment can apply for redress by completing our online complaints form."

Child benefit is usually paid monthly on a Monday or a Tuesday. Almost seven million families receive the allowance, which is generally £25.60 for an eldest or only child and £16.95 per child for any further children. People are usually eligible if they are responsible for a child under 16.

The problem with the payments was caused by a processing error.

My motto for debates? Train hard, fight easy

Lee Cain Comment

Boris Johnson stood at a podium locking horns with his old rival Michael Gove. The pair had been sparring for hours, political and personal invective flying, as they tried to land the knockout blow.

Having prepared candidates before debates for the EU referendum, a Tory leadership race and a general election, I've seen how — with the right strategy — TV head-to-heads and their rehearsals can make a big difference. The most important thing to remember is that the debate is an opportunity to drive a message and frame a choice positively to millions of voters.

In 2019 we wanted to show a sharp contrast between backing Boris to get Brexit done or dither and delay with Jeremy Corbyn. It required serious preparation. Boris was put

through relentless exercises designed to keep message discipline in the face of extreme provocation. Like a boxer in fight camp — train hard, fight easy was our motto.

Gove and Oliver Dowden took on the role of Corbyn. They were required to give the exhausted candidate a "going-over". Boris, too, was told to be aggressive with Corbyn.

Getting the candidate ready is only half the battle — campaign teams also have to endure gruelling negotiations with the broadcasters and opposing parties. These can take weeks, sometimes months, because every element of a TV debate is up for negotiation. The format, the presenter, the location, the audience demographics, which candidate speaks first, who closes the debate — the list seems endless, but it is the candidate preparation that really makes the difference.

Lee Cain is Boris Johnson's former director of communications and founding partner of Charlesbye Strategy

TV clash: what to expect from Sunak v Starmer

The Tory and Labour leaders will go head to head tonight on ITV, write **Steven Swinford** and **Oliver Wright**

Rishi Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer will clash during the first televised debate of the election campaign as the prime minister tries to make a dent in Labour's huge poll lead.

Both sides believe that this will be the first time many voters will pay attention to the election campaign. It is particularly significant as the first postal ballots are due to land on doorsteps next week.

THE ECONOMY

Starmer The Labour leader will make his central electoral pitch: that the Tories have trashed the economy and voters are significantly worse off after 14 years of Conservative government. Expect a particular focus on the huge rise in the cost of mortgages. Starmer will refer frequently to Liz Truss, the former prime minister, and her 49-day premiership. "Stability is change" is the line that Starmer is hoping viewers will pick up on. He will accuse the Tories of planning a £46 billion unfunded tax cut with their commitment to abolishing national insurance.

Sunak The prime minister will try to claim that Labour is secretly plotting to raise taxes. He will argue that Labour cannot be trusted on the economy and does not have a real plan for growth. The Tories, he will say, have pledged to cut national insurance from 12 per cent to 8 per cent for 27 million workers and, over time, to abolish it. The manifesto will also promise to reduce income tax for pensioners. The Sunak pitch will be that things are getting better, that inflation has come down and interest cuts are on the way. Don't risk it all by voting Labour, he will say as he accuses Starmer of preparing to introduce a "tax bombshell".

DEFENCE AND SECURITY

Starmer This is an area of potential weakness for the Labour leader, as polls show that defence and security are one of the few policy areas in which voters trust the Conservatives more than Labour. Starmer will emphasise that his "changed" Labour Party is "committed" to the UK's nuclear deterrent and would conduct a defence review to make sure Britain's armed forces were "fit to fight". He will highlight the fact that 14 Labour candidates are armed forces veterans. **Sunak** He will point out that he has committed the party to increasing defence spending to 2.5 per cent of national income by 2030, a timescale that Labour has

Sir Keir Starmer will say he is committed to reducing net migration

refused to match. He will almost certainly look for a chance to point out that in 2016 Angela Rayner, Labour's deputy leader, and David Lammy, the shadow foreign secretary, both voted against keeping Britain's independent nuclear deterrent.

THE NHS

Starmer This is fertile territory for Starmer, who will want to point out that Sunak has failed in his promise to bring down waiting lists, as a record 7.8 million people are waiting for NHS treatment. He will also try to highlight Labour's promise of an extra 40,000 NHS scans, operations and appointments every week during its first year, by paying staff to do overtime and using capacity in the private health sector.

Sunak He will point out that although the overall number of people waiting for NHS treatment has risen, the number of those waiting the longest has started to fall. He will also blame the lack of progress on junior doctors, and try to push Starmer into saying whether he would give the 35 per cent pay rise they are demanding.

MIGRATION

Starmer The Labour leader will argue that he and his party have changed. He will say that he is committed to reducing net migration, although he will not say by how much. He will pledge to scrap the Conservatives' Rwanda refugee scheme, which he has dismissed as a gimmick. In its place Starmer plans to "smash the gangs" and is weighing up a returns agreement with the European Union. **Sunak** He is planning to limit the number of work visas but is likely to focus predominantly on illegal migration. He will argue that Labour has no plan as he urges voters to back the Tories so that flights to Rwanda can get off the ground.

PERSONAL

Starmer He is not planning to go personal but may well do so if Sunak decides to target him. His team have spent hours prepping him for attacks on his time as a human rights lawyer, and he is willing to go on the offensive if he has to. Labour has repeatedly attacked Sunak for being richer than the King, targeting not his wealth directly but the idea that he is out of touch with the needs of ordinary voters. Starmer has also criticised the fact that Sunak's wife was non-domiciled for tax purposes.

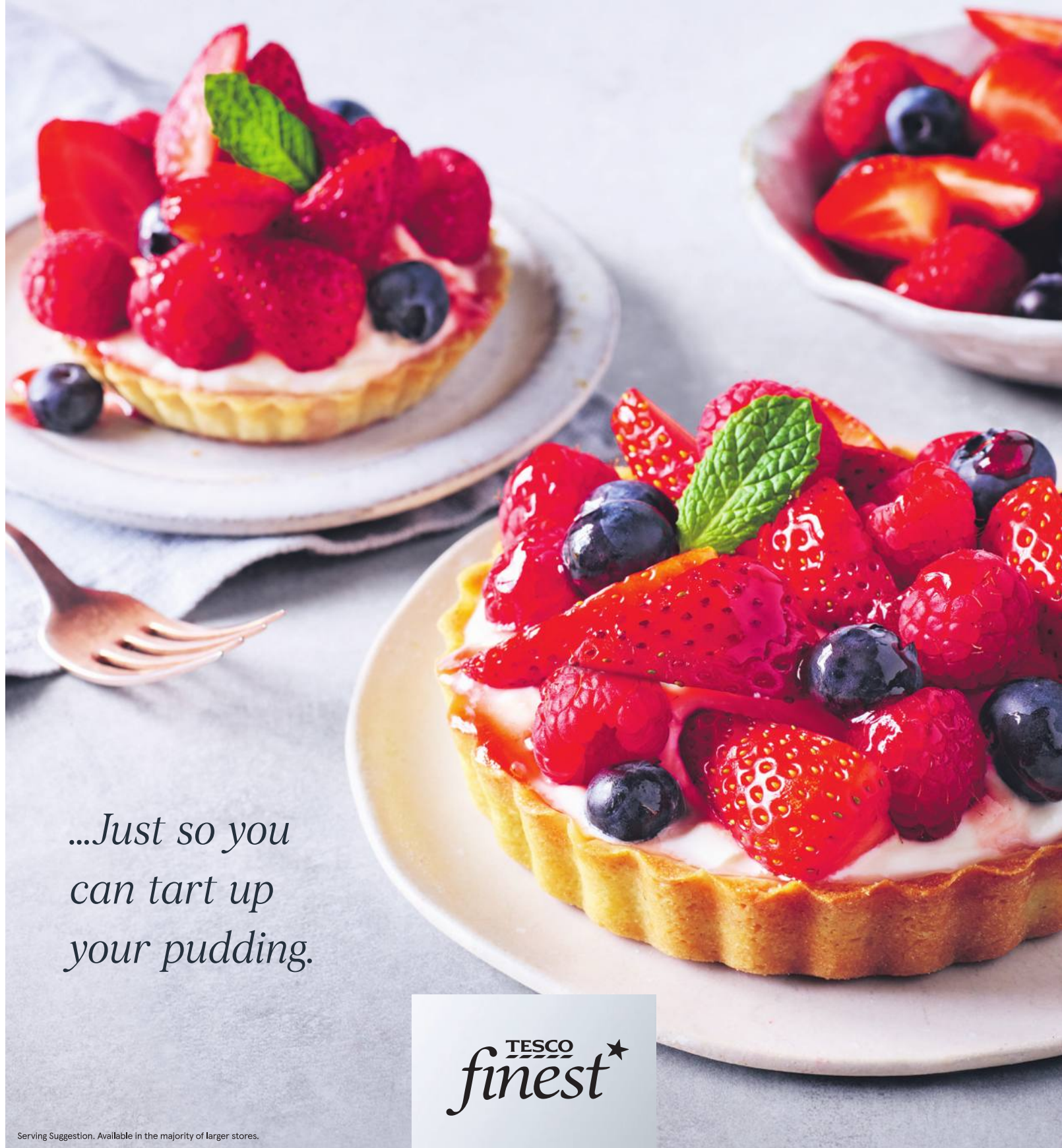
Sunak The prime minister also hopes to make a broad, positive pitch, but will inevitably accuse Starmer of being a "flip-flopper". He is likely to highlight Starmer's support for Jeremy

Corbyn, the former Labour leader, as well as his previous backing for a second EU referendum. Starmer, the pitch will be, is willing to do anything to get power.

Watch the debate at 9pm tonight on ITV



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Young farmers treat women 'like toys'

Emma Yeomans

Young farmers' clubs have been accused of sexual harassment after reports emerged of sexually aggressive T-shirts and photos of women with explicit words written on their faces.

Young men attending events, including an unofficial "DIY" national meeting, were alleged to have treated women like "toys" without being held accountable for their behaviour.

Incidents of sexual assault appeared to be "commonplace" at club events, wrote Abi Kay, an editor at Farmers Weekly magazine. She added that women had reported being grabbed and groped at parties. Asked what they had encountered at Young Farmers events, one young woman summed it up as "sex, drugs and alcohol".

Kay said: "This is certainly not the

image the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs (NFYFC) would want to portray." She described herself as a "staunch friend" of the farming industry, but added: "I have a duty to be honest with you. Even when, perhaps especially when, it is uncomfortable. So I will say it straight: young farmers, you have a problem. And the problem is the way some of you are treating the women in your community."

The Young Farmers organisation, which has 23,000 members, promises to support young people in agriculture and the countryside and help them to "enjoy a dynamic social life".

Kay said her attention was drawn to the issue when she noticed T-shirts at an unofficial Young Farmers event held in Blackpool last month.

T-shirts had slogans including "I can run faster horny than you can scared"

and "For the sporting birds I can tighten the choke". Others included references to sexual acts. Kay said she also saw photographs of young women at the event with "slut" written on their arms. Some had references to "free" oral sex written on their foreheads, she added.

She added: "What I found was that girls attending such events have learnt to expect that they will be grabbed and groped. It has become part and parcel of the culture. The kind of incidents that were described to me as commonplace are, in fact, classed as sexual assault, which carries a maximum sentence of ten years in prison."

"Worse still, several of the women said while they would have an issue with this behaviour outside young farmers' events, they did not see it as problematic at these events, because they had a 'different set of rules'."



T-shirts with sexual slogans were seen at a young farmers' event in Blackpool

One woman told Farmers Weekly: "In terms of sexual assault or sexual harassment, I've experienced that in a nightclub. Have I experienced that in Young Farmers? Also yes, but I've never thought of it as that. [It could be] being grabbed, being pulled, people pulling your skirt up, people taking your top. If somebody did that in another setting,

it's a different story and I don't understand why that is."

In a statement, the NFYFC said: "[We are] deeply saddened to learn that cases of sexual harassment or assault which have occurred at events/activities held by the YFC at a national, county or club level have not been reported. Behaviour of this nature is unacceptable in YFC, and all reported cases are always treated extremely seriously by NFYFC. The safety and safeguarding of our members is paramount, and NFYFC is committed to ensuring every member is safe while taking part in those activities. NFYFC has robust safeguarding policies, training and procedures in place. YFC members who have been affected by an incident at a YFC event should report it to their club or county designated safeguarding officer, or to the NFYFC safeguarding team."

Don't waste a moment, says Burrow

Georgia Lambert

"In a world full of adversity, we must still dare to dream," Rob Burrow said in his final message, made public after he died on Sunday of motor neurone disease, aged 41.

The Leeds Rhinos star, who spent 17 years at the rugby league club, had the neurological disease diagnosed in 2019, two years after he retired from the game.

In a speech recorded for *There's Only One Rob Burrow*, a BBC documentary broadcast last night, Burrow said: "My final message to you is whatever your personal battle, be brave and face it. Every single day is precious. Don't waste a moment."

He added that he hoped there would one day be a cure for the degenerative condition.

Burrow, a father of three children, spent the last four and a half years of his life being cared for by Lindsey, his wife, and campaigning with Kevin Sinfield, his former team-mate, to raise awareness of MND. They raised more than £15 million for MND charities.

In a statement Mrs Burrow called her husband "simply the best" and said that he was "our hero".

The programme ended with the former player saying: "Rob Burrow, over and out."



Heaven sent The sculptor Nina Bilbey adds the finishing touches to one of four stone angels to be installed at Canterbury Cathedral this weekend. The figures will be in a chapel where four original carvings were obliterated in the 17th century

Man, 91, has artificial eye transplant

A 91-year-old man has become the first patient in England to receive an artificial cornea transplant.

Cecil Farley faced a year-long wait for surgery after a human cornea transplant failed. Medics hope that artificial corneas could reduce the need for human cornea donations in the future.

Dr Thomas Poole, a consultant ophthalmologist at Frimley Park hospital in Surrey, told the PA news agency that artificial corneas were a "great advancement for patient care". They are attached to the eye by a single stitch and put in place with a gas bubble.

Farley said the transplant surgery had enabled him to continue to see his wife Elizabeth, 83. He had no vision in his right eye but his sight has slowly been improving since the procedure, which took place in February.

The cornea is the clear outer layer at the front of the eyeball. When damaged it can become less transparent or its shape can change, preventing light reaching the retina at the back of the eye and causing the image transmitted to the brain to be distorted or unclear.

Poole said: "Looking forward to the future, I think this may end up replacing human corneas."

"In maybe ten or 20 years' time, this may become the norm, where we don't need a human cornea and we can just take one out of the box."

Lake District church prays for victory in solar panel dispute

Kaya Burgess
Religious Affairs Correspondent

A listed church in a Cumbrian village has started a legal challenge against the Lake District National Park over plans to install solar panels on its roof.

The planning authority for the park has refused planning permission for 28 solar panels at St Anne's, a grade II* listed Georgian church in the village of Ings, near Kendal.

However, a church judge from the diocese of Carlisle has blessed the plans, in effect giving official Church of England backing to an appeal by the church's wardens against the Lake District National Park Authority.

The authority has said that the church, which dates back to 1743 with a roof made of "weathered local slate", is of "high historic significance". It has

argued that solar panels would be an "inappropriate" addition that would "fail to conserve or enhance" the appearance of the Lake District as a world heritage site.

The churchwardens at St Anne's have argued, however, that the panels would save more than £2,000 a year on their "uncomfortably high" energy bills, which would allow them to keep the church open for the 30-strong congregation and for the scores of people who attend concerts and hire the building for rehearsals, meetings and events.

"We want solar panels to cut down the energy costs," David Shaw, a member of the parochial church council, said. "It's only a small church. But we need to keep it warm in the winter to get people in."

Shaw said that the panels would be placed on the south side of the roof and



St Anne's near Kendal, Cumbria, is struggling with high energy bills

would not be visible from the main road, noting that they would be "really quite well hidden".

Dr John Hiley, the churchwarden behind the plans, said the church had suffered a "threefold increase" in its electricity bills and had to pass the costs on to people hiring the church.

"This usage of the church [raises

money] to protect the fabric of the building and so protects the architectural heritage, so I find the national park's decision anomalous," he said.

Asked about the need for the solar panels, he said: "It's financially advantageous and we need to do something about climate change."

James Fryer-Spedding, chancellor of the diocese of Carlisle, presides over a consistory court, which rules on proposed changes to church buildings or land, giving him the status of an ecclesiastical judge. He said that Historic England had judged that the solar panels would "adversely affect the special character of the listed building to a moderate degree" and agreed that the church was a "an outstanding example of a Georgian church in a rural area."

However, the solar panels would allow the church to "become close to

carbon zero" in its environmental impact and said they would "impact positively on the financial security of the church". He said it should be possible to install the panels in a way that was "sympathetic" to the building design.

Fryer-Spedding said the refusal of planning permission would normally have made his ruling "redundant" but the church was set to "pursue an appeal against [the authority's] decision."

Hiley said an appeal had been lodged with the planning inspectorate, an agency of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

He said the colour of the solar panels would be chosen to match the slate of the roof and they would "not affect or hide any of the Georgian features" of the building.

The park authority was approached for comment.

Coroner criticises Met over officer's suicide

Ben Ellery Crime Editor

The Metropolitan Police exacerbated the deterioration in mental health of a police trainer who took her own life, a coroner ruled yesterday.

Sergeant Nicola Forster, 45, had developed post-traumatic stress disorder after working at the Grenfell Tower disaster in 2017 and claimed to colleagues that she was being bullied by her boss, Inspector Hayley Webb.

Forster, a safety training officer at Hendon Police College in northwest London, was found dead at her home in September 2022.

Emma Whitting, senior coroner for



Nicola Forster's manager claimed her PTSD was not related to work

Bedfordshire, heard that Webb told Forster she needed to improve on the day that the trainer confided that she was fighting suicidal thoughts.

The inquest was told that Forster "would literally start shaking" when she knew Webb was in the building. Webb delayed referring her to occupational health because she believed her

mental health problems were not work-related.

Whitting told the court: "Line management decisions made in respect of [Forster] reflected a focus on managing upwards and were supported by the senior leadership. These decisions were at the expense of the deceased's personal and occupational welfare and contributed to a further significant deterioration in her mental health. The deceased intentionally took her own life following a deterioration in her mental health, which was exacerbated by the actions of her employer."

Forster started at the Met in 2000 and in 2020 joined the learning and de-

velopment team at Hendon, a job "she loved". Webb became her line manager and Forster told her that she had previously had mental health difficulties but had been receiving counselling.

The inquest was told that during a meeting in which Forster was in tears Webb told her she would be sanctioned if she did not improve.

A colleague said Forster "appeared to be massively intimidated by Hayley to the extent that when Nikki knew Hayley was in the building, she would literally start shaking".

In November 2021 Webb discussed an occupational health referral with Forster but decided against it because

she thought Forster's problems were not connected to her work.

Forster's mental health deteriorated "significantly" and in May 2022, she reported ill for work. A Police Federation representative said a 40-day absence meeting chaired by Webb was the most upsetting he had seen in 20 years. Webb then refused Forster's extension for pay while ill, claiming that the PTSD was not related to her work. In September 2022 her GP referred her to a mental health crisis team and on September 27 she took her own life.

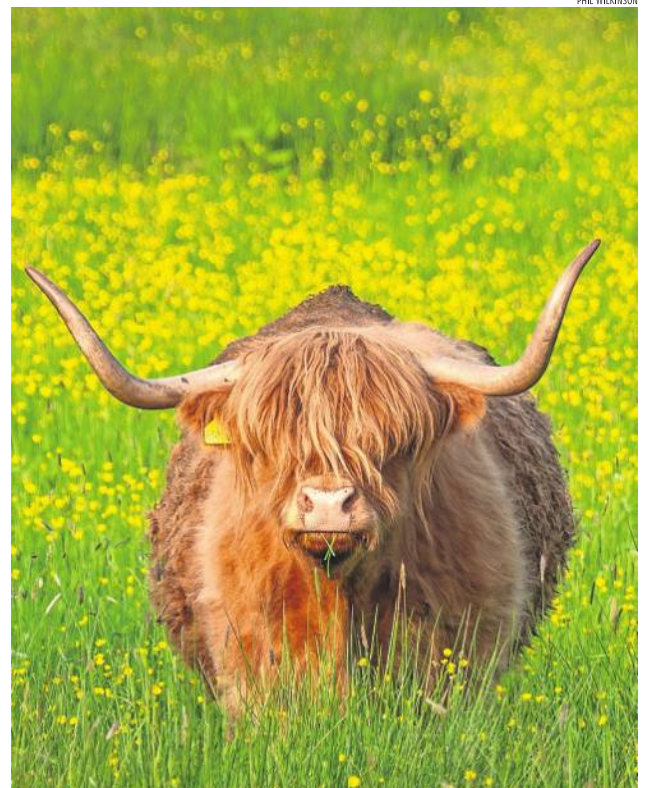
The Met said it was introducing "new leadership programmes" to assist line managers.

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Fringe benefits A buttercup meadow provides lush grazing for a Highland cow in the grounds of the Hirsle estate, near Coldstream in the Scottish Borders

Trans wife, 70, accused of samurai sword murder

Seren Hughes

A transgender woman has appeared in court accused of murdering her husband with a samurai sword in their flat in Brighton last week.

Joanna Rowland-Stuart, 70, appeared via video link from HMP Lewes, a male prison, and was not asked to enter a plea in connection with the death of Andrew Rowland-Stuart, also 70, on May 27. The defendant was remanded in custody.

The emergency services were called to their 15th floor flat after 7.30pm but despite the efforts of paramedics, Mr Rowland-Stuart was pronounced dead at the scene.

A plea hearing was set for July 19 and trial was set for November 25.

In an appeal from Sussex police last week, Detective Chief Inspector Alex Campbell said: "This is a fast-moving investigation and our inquiries are ongoing as we seek to establish the full circumstances which led to Andrew's tragic death. Our thoughts remain with



Joanna Rowland-Stuart, a retired LGBT rights worker, faces trial in November

his loved ones at this difficult time. In the meantime, we are urging the public not to speculate, but to come forward with any information which may be able to assist us."

Rowland-Stuart is a retired LGBT rights worker who describes herself as deaf and transgender. She has worked for the Brighton and Hove LGBT community safety forum and as a transgender rep with the civil service LGBT group Proud.



PETER TARRY FOR THE TIMES; ROBIN SAVAGE

Dorothea Barron, who sat in a Spitfire aged 99, far left, was a Wren who specialised in signalling. Marie Scott, below, was 17 on June 6, 1944 when the landings started

When D-Day started I was delighted: we'd done our bit

Women played a vital part in preparations for the Normandy attacks 80 years ago, they tell **Jack Blackburn**

As 17-year-old Marie Scott walked into her shift at Fort Southwick on a June morning in 1944, she knew something was up. When she looked towards the coast she could not see the sea for all the boats that had appeared in the harbour. But when her shift had ended, they had gone. The days that followed would be life-changing for her.

In the tunnels 100ft below Fort Southwick in Hampshire lay a communications hub where Scott worked. Initially a switchboard operator, she had been asked to retrain on radios and had got used to listening to and transmitting messages. The new job had all been rather mundane, until she lifted the receiver on the morning of June 6, 1944. "I was a bit bemused because I could hear these sounds — rapid machine gun fire, cannon, bombs dropping, shouting, screaming — all sorts of sounds but the sounds of war," Scott said. "I suddenly realised it was a signal from the beaches as they were landing, and that realisation stopped me in my tracks for a few seconds. Those sounds still resonate in me," she said. "I can still hear them, and I am nearly 98."

Scott, like hundreds of other young women in Britain, suddenly found she was playing her part in the invasion of Normandy, ensuring that the sacrifices of the men on the beaches would not be in vain.

They had come from disparate backgrounds and for different reasons. Some were motivated by a desire to do their bit, while others had a father, brother or sweetheart they wanted to support. Pat Owtram's father was a prisoner of war and she was determined to do whatever she could in the war effort.

"I was worried that the war might finish before I was 18 and I could do something useful," said Owtram, now 100. When her time came she found that, if you had a peculiar skill, it could mean that your opportunities were varied.

"I knew German from having German staff at my grandfather's house — that was a useful language at that point," Owtram said. She started working at Y (wireless intercept) stations where she would take down German messages and pass them to the codebreakers at Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire. Owtram had a chance to work at Bletchley when a family friend in the Foreign Office suggested her for it. She was told that they would be buried in the

country with a "crowd of jolly civilian girls". She sent her mother a telegram saying "Hate crowds jolly girls" and that was that.

"I still can't think of anything more boring than being stuck in the country with a lot of Foreign Office secretaries," she said. "I wanted to be by the sea where there were lots of jolly sailors."

She was not alone in this desire for male company. Doreen Edwards, who was 20 when she was called up in 1943, joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service and worked at Bulford Camp on Salisbury Plain, an army base in a hub of military activity. "Nether-avon airfield was quite near," Edwards said. "They used to come to our dances and we used to go to theirs. There was a lack of women in that part of the world. We got to know them pretty well."

In the spring of 1944, while Edwards was taking down coded messages



eight of those people are with us now."

Yesterday veterans arrived in a fleet of taxis, thanks to the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, whose cabbies are willing to drive them to Portsmouth and beyond. Some were in wheelchairs, others had sticks and some walked with a nimbleness that belied their years.

Twelve veterans of the Battle of Normandy were at afternoon tea at Southwick House with a few dozen more expected for dinners in Portsmouth before leaving for France this



from the radios, she noticed the disparity between men and women had increased. More airborne troops had turned up and this gave Edwards the idea that something big was about to happen. "One day the place was teeming with men and we all knew something was going on," she said. "The next day there was just one or two red berets walking around: they'd gone."

While most of the women had been kept in the dark about the invasion plans, Christian Lamb, then 23, had been working on D-Day for a long

while. Her job had been to map the Normandy coastline, the latest of her tasks after she had joined up early on in the war.

"I realised that you had to do your bit to win the war, no matter how idiotic or useless you appeared to be," she said.

Her work was critical to the success of the D-Day landings: she charted each beach and divided it into zones. This was highly sensitive work and signing the Official Secrets Act was a necessity. Lamb took this seriously — it was 40 years before she told her husband what she had done. He died in 1991. Lamb knew some of the details of the D-Day plans, but not the date.

The women all remember a sense of waiting through the spring of 1944, knowing that an invasion was coming but with no idea when the Allies' hammer would fall. When word of the landings reached home, some women were astonished to discover that they had been training soldiers for them.

"I was on the train coming down from Scotland that day, where I had been training men in signalling," said Dorothea Barron, who was a Wren in the Women's Royal Naval Service, specialising in semaphore and Morse code. "We got used to not asking questions, but I remember watching them lay out the matting on the sand so the soldiers didn't sink through." She added: "One hopes it was important. It was just our little contribution."

When news broke that the landings were under way, a spectrum of emotions were unleashed. "One of my colleagues came rushing round saying 'It's started! It's started! They're going to get him out!' Her fiancé was a prisoner of war," Owtram said. "I doubt they did get him out."

Barron, said she was "delighted. I was bullish: 'Let's get in and get them out.'"

Little news came through the day and, for most of the women, their positions offered no insight into how the operation was progressing. However, on D-Day, there was no time to worry.

Scott had been a girl when she joined up. She had only found herself at Fort Southwick because, as a Londoner, she was terrified of being made to join the land army and having to work with animals. D-Day was a seminal moment for the teenager. "I felt it was life-changing and it was. I was a callow 17-year-old with hardly any education," she said. "It was salutary."

The women have gathered in recent weeks before their journey to Normandy with the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans. As they share their memories there are tales of heartbreak and horror, yet an absence of regret. The war broadened horizons and gave them a sense of adventure. "Women did a lot of interesting jobs we never would have thought of, but for the war," Lamb said.

And would they have rather not had this experience? Not a bit of it.

As Edwards said: "I wouldn't have missed it for all the tea in China." **Remembering all those who served, letters, page 24**

Poignant return to the beaches for dwindling band of veterans

Jack Blackburn

In they came, nonagenarians and centenarians, trooping into a room that had at one point commanded the fates of their young lives.

The map room at Southwick House, near Portsmouth, where the D-Day "go" order was given, still has an invasion master plan on one wall, with every ship and beach marked, every minefield noted and the tides and forecasts accounted for.

The plans remain as they were when these men and women were at the start of their adult lives. Now they are preparing to return to Normandy for what is likely to be the last D-Day commemoration with a notable veteran presence.

It is a dwindling contingent. Five years ago they were presented by D-Day Revisited with a montage of 75 veterans for that anniversary. Few of those 75 remain.

"It is extraordinary," John Phipps, the founder of D-Day Revisited, said. "Only

morning. Drums and pipers greeted them with items from yesteryear heightening the occasion. To one side of the portico stood a Willys Jeep, under which a pillow caught its intermittent oil drippings. Later, a restored Rolls Royce swept up to the other side of the columns: it was the car General Montgomery had taken to France in 1944.

"What upsets you most is the boys who never came back and the mothers and fathers waiting for them," said Les Underwood, 98, who was a Royal Navy

gunner. Underwood had lied about his age to join up. Aged 15, he had taken a permission slip home to his mother who had signed it.

On D-Day, he was on a merchant ship at the landings and remembers elements vividly. "All the memories come back: guns going everywhere, screaming from the men, some getting off the landing craft and some even drowned."

"My father always said men and boys don't cry, but they do. I've cried at the thoughts of the men not coming back."

Young lawyers earn more than PM with £180k starting salary

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

More than 100 law graduates in the City of London were paid more than the prime minister from the day they qualified as solicitors.

In a revelation that will add to fears that salaries paid by law firms in the Square Mile are climbing ever higher, researchers found that the London offices of a dozen US law firms paid starting salaries of more than the £165,000 earned by the prime minister.

Those 12 firms account for 101 solicitors who have qualified in the most recent administrative round — some of them no older than 25 — with the lowest pay being £170,000. Two firms based in California have the highest starting salaries for newly qualified London solicitors: Gibson Dunn & Crutcher and

Quinn Emanuel both pay £180,000.

Ten other firms, all based in the US, pay higher starting salaries than that of the prime minister: Akin, Fried Frank and Milbank are in joint third position on £177,500. The remaining firms in that league table — compiled by The Lawyer website — are Vinson & Elkins, Kirkland & Ellis, Latham & Watkins, Paul Hastings, Davis Polk, Weil Gotshal & Manges and Simpson Thacher & Bartlett. The firm with the most newly qualified solicitors was Kirkland & Ellis, which is based in Chicago and is widely viewed as the wealthiest legal practice in the world. Full equity partners at the firm were paid an average of £6.25 million each last year.

Large domestic firms in the City struggle to compete with these starting salaries. The highest paying English firms are in the so-called magic circle — A&O Shearman, Clifford Chance, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Linklaters and Slaughter and May — which have starting wages ranging from £125,000 to £150,000.

It normally takes about six years to qualify as a solicitor. Students complete a three-year law degree followed by a one-year vocational course and then two years of on-the-job training. Those without law degrees must also do a one-year conversion course.

How pay compares

Newly qualified solicitor*	£180,000
City merchant bank graduate	£60,000+
Chartered accountant**	£45,000
Inner London qualified teacher	£36,745
Junior NHS doctor	Between £28,274 and £34,769

*at top City firm, **at "big four" consultancy firm



Making a splash Morning Rain (1997) by the Palestinian-American artist Samia Halaby is expected to fetch between £150,000 and £300,000 at the Modern and Contemporary Middle Eastern Art sale at Bonhams of London tomorrow

Spurs player attacked by watch thieves

Tom Allnutt

The Tottenham Hotspur midfielder Yves Bissouma was attacked and had his watch stolen as he returned to his hotel in Cannes on Sunday morning.

Hooded men sprayed Bissouma with tear gas and stole his watch, which was worth about £255,000, as he and his partner returned to their hotel on the Boulevard de la Croisette.

Bissouma, 27, tried to get into the hotel to escape the attackers, who snatched his watch before running off. French police have begun an investigation.

Bissouma returned to England later on Sunday and was back at Tottenham's training ground yesterday.

A spokesman for the club said: "We are aware of the incident and we will continue to check on the welfare of Yves and his family." Bissouma's representatives did not respond to a request for comment.

Bissouma left Brighton & Hove Albion to join Spurs for £30 million in 2022; before Brighton he had spent two years at Lille, signing his first professional contract there in July 2016.

The Mali midfielder enjoyed an excellent start to last season under Ange Postecoglou, the head coach, but struggled in the second half of the campaign as suspensions, injury and a bout of malaria contributed to a loss of form.

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Airtime Plan April 2026 – March 2027

£17 + RPI% announced in Feb 2025 = Price A

Price A + RPI% announced in Feb 2026

Representative Example	Duration of Device Plan	Upfront Cost	Monthly Device Payment	Credit Amount	Total Amount Payable for Device	Interest Rate	Representative APR	Cash Price	Lead airtime allowance	Airtime Plan	Airtime Plan April 2025 – March 2026	Airtime Plan April 2026 – March 2027
iPhone 15 Pro Max	36 months	£30	£29.69	£1,069.00	£1,099.00	0%	0%	£1,099.00	1GB	£17	£17 + RPI% announced in Feb 2025 = Price A	Price A + RPI% announced in Feb 2026

RPI rate is the Retail Price Index rate of inflation announced in February each year. £29.69 Device Plan for 36 months and £17 monthly rolling Airtime Plan. Lowest monthly price [ever] based on spreading Device Plan payment over 36 months and making an upfront payment of £30. £335 saving consists of £191 discount applied to device plan (total cost of device was £1,290 now £1,099) and further £144 saving achieved by £4 per month discount on the airtime plan over 36 months. Ends 3 July 2024. Data allowances must be used within the month and cannot be carried over. Subject to availability. **O2 Refresh custom plans:** Direct purchases only. Pay the cash price for your device or spread the cost over 3 to 36 months (excludes dongles). The device cost will be the same whatever you choose. There may be an upfront cost. You can pay off your Device Plan at any time and choose to keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or leave. If you are in the first 24 months of your Device Plan and you cancel your Airtime Plan you will have to pay the remainder of your Device Plan in full. After 24 months you can keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or end it without affecting your Device Plan. 0% APR. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct Debit. Credit provided by Telefónica UK Ltd, RG2 6UU. Telefónica UK is authorised and regulated by the FCA for consumer credit and insurance. Terms apply, see o2.co.uk/terms

Zara's murder shows justice system is failing, says family

Ben Ellery Crime Editor

The family of a law graduate who was sexually assaulted and murdered as she walked home have told her inquest that they are "tortured" by the thought that her death could have been prevented.

Zara Aleena's relatives said her murder had highlighted "the crumbling justice system [which is] meant to protect us".

Aleena, 35, was killed after a night out in Ilford, east London, in June 2022, by Jordan McSweeney, who had been released on licence from prison nine days earlier.

Her aunt, Farah Naz, told the jury at East London coroner's court in Walthamstow: "Since her death we have been campaigning so that our daughters, sisters, friends can be safe and protected as Zara never was. This is Zara's legacy."

Naz became emotional as she told



A vigil took place for Aleena in Ilford, east London, after her death in 2022

the jury of her niece's "sparkling eyes and curly jet black hair" and "glorious laughter".

She said Aleena was a carer for her mother and grandmother, "the rock of our family" and that it was the "proudest moment for all of us" when she was offered a job as a legal assistant at the Royal Courts of Justice.

Naz described her niece as "a carefree spirit with the most caring heart" and said she had worked to help resettle refugees in the UK. She said: "2022 was to be her year to live her wildest dreams. She wanted to buy her own home, find Mr Right and to have children. The future looked bright." She added: "One of the things she used to confidently say is 'I know I'm a good person'."

"If she were able to speak here today she would say 'I didn't do anything



Zara Aleena's bright future in which she planned to buy a home and marry was brutally taken away from when she was murdered, her aunt told the inquest

wrong," Naz said Aleena "wasn't just surviving, she was thriving", adding: "Zara walked everywhere and one night she walked home from an evening out with a friend, she was sexually assaulted and murdered. She was 35 years old."

"She believed that a woman should be allowed to walk home, and her dreams, her future was brutally taken."

Nadia Persaud, the area coroner, said the purpose of the inquest was to "consider the circumstance by which Zara came by her death, which will include whether any actions or omissions of state bodies contributed to her death".

The jury was told that McSweeney was 29 at the time of the attack and had received his first custodial sentence at the age of 13, with much of his adult years spent in prison or in the community under licence.

Reading a statement from a consultant forensic pathologist, Persaud said the cause of Aleena's death was a blunt-force head injury and neck compression.

The inquest also heard from Kim Thornden-Edwards, chief probation officer in England and Wales. When asked about risk assessments and sharing of information before McSweeney's release, Thornden-Edwards said he was deemed as a medium-risk offender, rather than high-risk.

She added: "What I would say is that the assessment of Jordan McSweeney has some complexities and nuances to it. The majority of his offending history is acquisitive, burglaries and thefts."

She said the threshold between medium and high-risk was "one of the most challenging".

Asked whether McSweeney could have been placed in approved premises if he was considered high-risk, Thornden-Edwards said: "They take the most serious offenders that you have and their bed spaces are very much in demand, they will house our critical public protection cases, they will also house terrorist offenders, even if Jordan McSweeney had been assessed as high risk, I do not think he would've hit the bar." She said people could not be given an electronic monitoring tag without an address, but said that had McSweeney had accommodation it "should've been a consideration".

The inquest continues.

Dog-fighting kingpin and gang jailed

Seren Hughes

Members of a dog fighting ring, including a kingpin known as Dr Death, have been jailed for animal welfare crimes.

Dogs endured brutal training regimes and were starved to fighting weight before being put in bouts where they fought sometimes to the death, Chelmsford crown court was told.

Jamie Sawyer, the judge, said that the gang showed "a shocking level of barbarism and callousness" for the dogs.

The animals suffered serious injuries including broken legs, were kept in dirty conditions, some with no access to clean water or proper bedding, and were left caged and alone for long periods. Injured dogs were treated with makeshift medical kits rather than taken to a vet.

The judge said the fights, which took place in England, Ireland and France, were "highly planned and without a care for the welfare of the animals in question". The judge told the defendants: "Dogs were treated as a commodity by each of you. They were playing pieces in your game."

Much of the key evidence in the case came from a phone belonging to Phillip Harris Ali, 67, of Chigwell, Essex, who was known as Dr Death. Ali was sentenced to five years for ten offences under the Animal Welfare Act yesterday. Many of the crimes were committed while he was still under licence conditions imposed after a 2007 conviction for attempted murder.

Gruesome match reports detailing how the animals were set upon each other were found on a phone belonging to Ali. Photos and videos of the fights, sent via the encrypted messaging app Signal, were also discovered.

Ali's "right-hand man", Stephen Albert Brown, 57, also of Chigwell, was jailed for two years and six months after he was found guilty of five offences.

Billy Leadley, 38, a personal trainer who had a blood-stained dog fighting pit at his home in Bangers Green, Takeley, Essex, was jailed for four years for 12 offences. His wife Amy Leadley, 39, a hairdresser, was sentenced for various offences linked to keeping a premises for dog fighting and not caring for the animals properly. She was given an 18-month community order, 200 hours of unpaid work and 25 days of rehabilitation activity.

Missing cryptoqueen's 'underworld ties'

Ben Ellery Crime Editor

The notorious "cryptoqueen" on the run for her part in one of the world's largest frauds evaded police with the help of an alleged Bulgarian mafia boss, new documents show.

Ruja Ignatova, an Oxford-educated Bulgarian citizen, co-founded the fake cryptocurrency scheme OneCoin, which fleeced investors out of \$4.5 billion (£3.54 billion), earning her a place on the FBI's ten "most wanted" list.

A new BBC documentary includes claims that Ignatova, who vanished in October 2017, had been kept safe by Hristoforos Nikos Amanatidis, commonly known as Taki. Richard Reinhardt, who began the investigation into OneCoin for the United States Internal Revenue Service, alongside the FBI, told the BBC: "We were told, allegedly a big-time drug guy was in charge of her physical security."

Reinhardt, an American writer, said:

"Taki came up more than once ... a recurring theme. This is like a white-collar criminal combined with a drug trafficker or mafia guy on steroids."

The new theory appears to be given credence by leaked Europol documents, seen by the BBC, which show that Bulgarian police had established a



Ruja Ignatova has not been seen since October 2017

link between Ignatova and Amanatidis before she disappeared. Police suspected that Amanatidis used OneCoin's network to launder drug money.

Amanatidis has never been convicted of any crimes, but he is widely suspected of being a prolific drug-smuggler and the head of a Bulgarian

organised crime group. He and his associates have been investigated for armed robbery, drug smuggling and murder. He is thought to live in Dubai.

The BBC's *Eye Investigations* and *Panorama* reported claims from several sources that Amanatidis and Ignatova had a close personal relationship and that he was godfather to her daughter.

Ignatova may have paid Amanatidis up to €100,000 a month for protection, according to a Bulgarian source. The pair were also linked through a complex deal to sell a plot of land on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast.

However, some believe that Amanatidis had Ignatova killed. In 2022, a Bulgarian journalist, Dimitar Stoyanov, of bird.bg, was given a police report found at the home of a murdered Bulgarian police officer. In the document, an informant described Amanatidis's brother-in-law drunkenly saying that Ignatova had been murdered on the crime boss's orders in late 2018.

Mother of four boys killed in fire denies manslaughter

David Brown

A mother has denied causing the deaths of her four sons and abandoning them at their family home.

Deveca Rose whispered "not guilty" when asked for her pleas at the Old Bailey in London to charges of the manslaughter of her two sets of twins — Leyton and Logan Hoath, 3, and Kyson and Bryson Hoath, 4. Rose, 29, also denied a charge of neglecting or abandoning the children at the family home in Sutton, south London, in December 2021. Her trial has been set for September.

The four boys were pulled from the house by firefighters and taken to hospital, where they were pronounced dead. Rose, an NHS carer, told *The Times*: "I can't get over it, I'll never get over it. Bryson, Kyson, Logan and



The trial of Deveca Rose, who is an NHS carer, is due to start in September

Leyton were my boys, they were my babies, they were my life, they were my world."

The boys' father, Dalton Hoath, said: "They were bright, caring, loveable boys, but most of all sons, brothers, grandsons, great-grandsons, nephews and cousins."

Solicitor who asked client for explicit videos is struck off

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A solicitor who persuaded a woman to send him sexually explicit images of herself as part of a bogus claim against her former husband has been struck off.

Sunny Sidhu, 35, who worked at a law firm in the Midlands, lied to a vulnerable client, telling her that he needed the images to apply for a non-molestation order to prevent her former husband from targeting her with a revenge porn attack.

The woman, who was referred to by a disciplinary tribunal as “person A”, sent the images to Sidhu’s phone on the understanding he was going to apply for a court order; but Sidhu, who was admitted to the solicitors’ roll in 2018, never saved the images to his law firm’s case management system despite having assured her he would do so.

In its ruling to strike Sidhu off, a solicitors’ disciplinary tribunal found that he had made no record of having received the images and “never applied

for the non-molestation order”. The tribunal ruled that over three months in 2021 the solicitor had in fact asked his client to send him the images “for his own sexual gratification”.

The tribunal hearing in London was told the woman had instructed the law firm where Sidhu was practising in relation to her divorce. Several court hearings were held at the end of 2020 and the start of 2021 and by May Sidhu said in a letter to his client that her divorce proceedings had been concluded.

Ten months later Sidhu resigned from his law firm and a few months later the firm and the woman reported him to the profession’s watchdog.

In a written witness statement, she said she was initially looking for a solicitor to enforce safeguarding measures for her and her children after the breakdown of her marriage.

Person A told the tribunal that her relationship with her former husband had become “physically, psychologically and financially abusive” after she

alleged he was sexually abusing their daughter. That led to criminal charges being brought against her husband.

Sidhu had asked person A whether she had sent explicit photos or videos of herself to her husband. The woman had confirmed her former husband had many videos and photos of her and Sidhu said she was at risk of being the victim of revenge porn. He told her he needed all the photos and videos.

The tribunal also awarded costs of about £32,400 against Sidhu.

PAUL ELLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Pier pleasure Queen Anne, a Cunard cruise liner designed for 2,996 passengers, arrives in the Mersey for a naming ceremony yesterday at the Pier Head, Liverpool

Heathrow ‘is like an awful WW2 airport’

Ben Clatworthy

The president of Emirates airlines has likened Heathrow to a dilapidated Second World War airport in terms of the experience it offers customers.

Sir Tim Clark, the boss of the UAE flag-carrier, said the airport put its shareholders and paying dividends before running a world-class business.

He said travelling from Terminal 3, the home of the airline, was a dismal experience and the building should be reconfigured. “I was at Heathrow the other day and walking out of our lounge the ceiling height is awful,” Clark said. “It looks like a utilitarian structure, post-Second World War. It is just not good enough.”

Clark said the plaza should be reduced in size to allow more room for security and check-in.

In March the long-running row between Heathrow and its airlines over how much the airport can charge in take-off and landing fees was reopened after an intervention by the competition authorities. The Civil Aviation Authority, the UK aviation sector regulator, has issued a ruling that charges per passenger must be cut by about 6 per cent, or a further £1.52, to £23.72 next year and then to £23.70 in 2026.

Heathrow said: “Every pound we want to spend on improving airport facilities needs approval from our regulator. Despite having our proposals cut back in the current regulatory settlement, we will still invest £3.6 billion upgrading our infrastructure over the next three years.”

Health plea for flight alcohol curbs

Ben Clatworthy

Transport Correspondent, Dubai

Airlines should consider restricting alcohol on long-haul flights to cut the chances of passengers suffering heart problems, academics say.

A study has found that the combination of in-flight alcohol and cabin pressure at cruising altitude may put strain on sleeping passengers’ hearts.

The problem of excess drinking has been addressed at the International Air Transport Association’s general conference in Dubai. Airline executives have been speaking to airports about ways to deter passengers from boarding planes while drunk.

The study, published in the journal *Thorax*, found that the combination of in-flight alcohol and cabin pressure appears to lower blood oxygen and increase heart rate, even among younger adults. “The on-board consumption of alcohol is an underestimated health



Alcohol and low pressure at altitude can raise the risk of heart problems

risk that could be easily avoided,” academics from the Institute of Aerospace Medicine in Germany said.

“It may be beneficial to consider altering regulations to restrict the access to alcoholic beverages on board aeroplanes,” they added.

The researchers pointed out that heart and circulatory problems account for 7 per cent of in-flight medical

emergencies, with cardiac arrests causing 58 per cent of all plane diversions.

They added that being in a hypobaric environment — where there is low air pressure — is known to decrease oxygen levels in the blood and increase heart rate.

According to the researchers, air passengers with heart problems have an increased risk of aggravation of symptoms because of the decreased cabin pressure at cruising altitude, which is amplified during sleep. Alcohol had similar effects, they said.

As a result, they sought to test the impact of alcohol consumption and sleep in a hypobaric environment.

The researchers assessed 48 people aged between 18 and 40. They spent either two nights in a sleep laboratory or an altitude chamber, which recreates the altitude of a cruising aeroplane.

Before one of the nights the people drank alcohol. Researchers conducted sleep study tests and monitored

participants’ heart rate and blood oxygen levels.

They found that the combination of alcohol and experiencing low oxygen concentration at high altitudes reduced sleep quality, “challenged the cardiovascular system” and led to extended duration of low blood oxygen levels. The authors concluded: “Together these results indicate that, even in young and healthy individuals, the combination of alcohol intake with sleeping under hypobaric conditions poses a considerable strain on the cardiac system and might lead to exacerbation of symptoms in patients with cardiac or pulmonary diseases.”

In 2017 Ryanair called on UK airports to take “necessary measures” to prevent excessive alcohol consumption, after increased disruptive behaviour from passengers.

The Civil Aviation Authority reported a 600 per cent increase in disruptive passenger incidents in the UK between

2012 and 2016, with most involving alcohol.

Ryanair urged banning the sale of all alcohol in bars and restaurants before 10am. It also called for the sale of alcohol in bars and restaurants to passengers to be controlled during flight delays by limiting the number of drinks per boarding pass to two.

At the time Kenny Jacobs, a Ryanair spokesman, said: “It’s completely unfair that airports can profit from the unlimited sale of alcohol to passengers and leave the airlines to deal with the safety consequences.”

“This is a particular problem during flight delays when airports apply no limit to the sale of alcohol in airside bars and restaurants.”

“This is an issue which the airports must now address and we are calling for significant changes to prohibit the sale of alcohol at airports, particularly with early morning flights and when flights are delayed.”



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Rock 'n' roll blends with country in sublime gig

Pop Peter Ross

Richard Hawley
Barrowland, Glasgow
★★★★☆

Richard Hawley was made for the glitterball light. Standing in its dappled glow with silvery quiff and golden guitar, he seemed the risen spirit of this old Glasgow ballroom. "Love is so hard to find," he sang on *Open up Your Door*, "and even harder to define." But he gave it a right good go. The 57-year-old's songs are the very definition of romantic.

Hawley has given the impression over nine albums that ballads pour out of him. His songwriting — retro but never pastiche — is such that he might have been a success in any era from the 1940s on. Now his reputation stands as high as it ever has, thanks to the use of his work in *Standing at the Sky's Edge*, the Olivier award-winning musical set around a housing estate in Sheffield, his home town and muse.

What gives Hawley's sound its distinctive atmosphere is his forging together of a continent-wide musical tradition — American country and rock'n'roll — with a strong sense of the physical and emotional landscape of his particular corner of the north of England. Americana is all about heartbeats and heartbreak; Sheffield is a city with a soul. And these cultures melt and mingle in the crucible of Hawley's tender sensibility. What emerges? In the case of the new song *People*, a gentle hymn in



Richard Hawley's reputation stands high after nine albums of powerful songs, many inspired by Sheffield, his home town

praise of his fellow citizens. It was moving enough in Glasgow to hear the litany of Sheffield's rivers intoned over an acoustic strum, but when he sings it at the Don Valley Bowl this August? Bring a hankie.

Hawley's voice is deep and resonant, an old house where ghosts walk, and he seemed to summon a

few in song. *Heavy Rain* was, he explained, written as a way of processing the loss of his childhood friend and former Pulp bandmate, Steve Mackey. *Heart of Oak*, the climax of the main set, was inspired by a friend he made later in life, the folk singer Norma Waterson.

The six-man band at times

conjured such a snarling sound that it belied Hawley's renown as a crooner. His two sides — balladeer and rocker — came together in *The Ocean*, a perfect storm that built over eight minutes from murmured baritone to a cyclonic squall of a guitar solo. Sublime.

Touring to June 20, richardhawley.co.uk

Van driver accused over cyclist death

Seren Hughes

A Team GB triathlete was killed during a cycling race in Wales after a van driver hit her from behind, a court has been told.

Rebecca Comins, 52, who represented the Great British Age Group team at the World Championships in 2019, was taking part in a time trial with warning signs and other cyclists on the road when the collision happened in June 2022.

James Wilson, for the prosecution, told Cardiff crown court that visibility was good and Comins, who had two children, was cycling with a bright rear light when Vasile Barbu, 49, of Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, "directly

Rebecca Comins
had been taking
part in a time trial



hit" her with his Vauxhall Movano van.

Barbu was unable to explain what happened and told the police he saw Comins on the A40 near Raglan and had a two-metre gap moments beforehand. He accepted that he must have collided with her and admitted causing death by careless driving but has denied the more serious charge of causing death by dangerous driving.

Wilson argued that the defendant's failure to avoid crashing into Comins was a "gross, catastrophic failure which amounted to dangerous driving".

He told the court Comins was cycling in "a proper manner" and was "correctly positioned" on a long, straight stretch of road. There was also space in the outside lane that Barbu could have used to safely manoeuvre around her, Wilson said. The case continues.

Parasite scandal water firm tried to hide its sewage data

Clean it up
CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

The company behind a recent parasite outbreak in drinking water tried to hide sewage data to avoid "political attention".

South West Water, whose chief executive was called to parliament over the *Cryptosporidium* outbreak, repeatedly refused to divulge information to The Times on sewage discharges that could reveal illegal dumping into rivers and seas on dry days.

Raw sewage releases are allowed during heavy rain, with spills on dry days considered risky for swimmers and more harmful to the environment.

The company told the UK's data watchdog that it wanted to withhold the stop and start times of sewage spills because it would allow third parties to analyse the data. "These analyses may not be accurate and could in turn cause undue media and/or political attention," it told the Information Commis-

sioner's Office. South West Water feared that attention would result in pressure being put on the Environment Agency and Ofwat, the regulator, which are investigating its possible illegal practices. The water firm, which wants to raise household water bills by 20 per cent by 2030, warned of an "adverse effect on the course of justice".

Susan Davy, its chief executive, was asked by the environment, food and rural affairs committee to attend a hearing after residents in Devon were told to boil water because of the parasite. The hearing was due to take place this week but was cancelled because of the announcement of the general election.

South West Water is one of six firms that have been ordered by the commissioner's office to release pollution data, enabling scrutiny of whether it is discharging sewage when it is not raining.

Northumbrian Water, another one of the six, made a similar objection to its figures being made public. "The data could become the subject of significant media or political attention and a public conversation of this kind could result in pressure being applied, direct-

ly or indirectly, to the independent investigators," it said.

Regulators are looking into whether water companies have breached permits for handling sewage at wastewater treatment works. An initial assessment indicated "widespread and serious" non-compliance by not treating enough sewage before releasing it into rivers and seas. Water firms could face financial penalties when the 30-month investigation reports its findings.

The Times was repeatedly rebuffed by the six water companies, including Yorkshire Water. It said the stop-start times of its spills, which could be cross-referenced with weather data to find potential evidence of illegal discharges on dry days, could lead to inaccurate analyses. It also suggested that releasing the information could "lead to pressure being applied to the investigations being conducted".

Anglian Water argued that the data could "prejudice the conduct of fair trial". It told the ICO: "It is our understanding that journalists ... will attempt to 'marry up' spill data with weather data in order to reach conclusions regarding the occurrence of pollution events."

Pollution of the UK's waterways and coastlines has emerged as a key environmental issue of the election campaign. Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, has cited sewage as an example of Tory "chaos" while the Liberal Democrat leader, Sir Ed Davey, highlighted sewage dumping in Windermere. On Sunday the Liberal Democrats said their manifesto would include plans for "blue flag rivers", a protected status to help swimmers and wildlife. The election has already delayed a decision by Ofwat on how much water firms can increase bills over the next five years to pay for new infrastructure, with the announcement pushed back to July 11.

"Water firms are trying to avoid scrutiny by withholding vital information on sewage spills," Tim Farron, environment spokesman for the Lib Dems, said.

Last week the government announced it would no longer accept applications for new bathing waters until 2025, a disappointment to swimming groups. The Times's Clean It Up campaign has been calling for hundreds of new bathing waters on rivers by the end of the decade to prompt an improvement in water quality.

'Teletubby' turf war as moles dig in

Georgia Lambert

A homeowner who invested thousands of pounds on an artificial lawn for her garden has won compensation after it became "virtually unusable" with mole holes she said made it resemble Teletubbyland, the undulating rural setting of the *Teletubbies* television show.

Val Starbuck, 64, paid Kositoes, an artificial grass company, £10,000 to lay the turf in her front and back gardens. At first, she was "delighted" with the results. But dips started to appear in the lawn a week after it was completed in July 2021 at her home in Wroxall, Isle of Wight. Starbuck said she was left with a "dangerous" garden that "gives way underneath you".

She told a small claims court: "It's just a mess, it's all falling apart. It looks a bit like Teletubbyland."

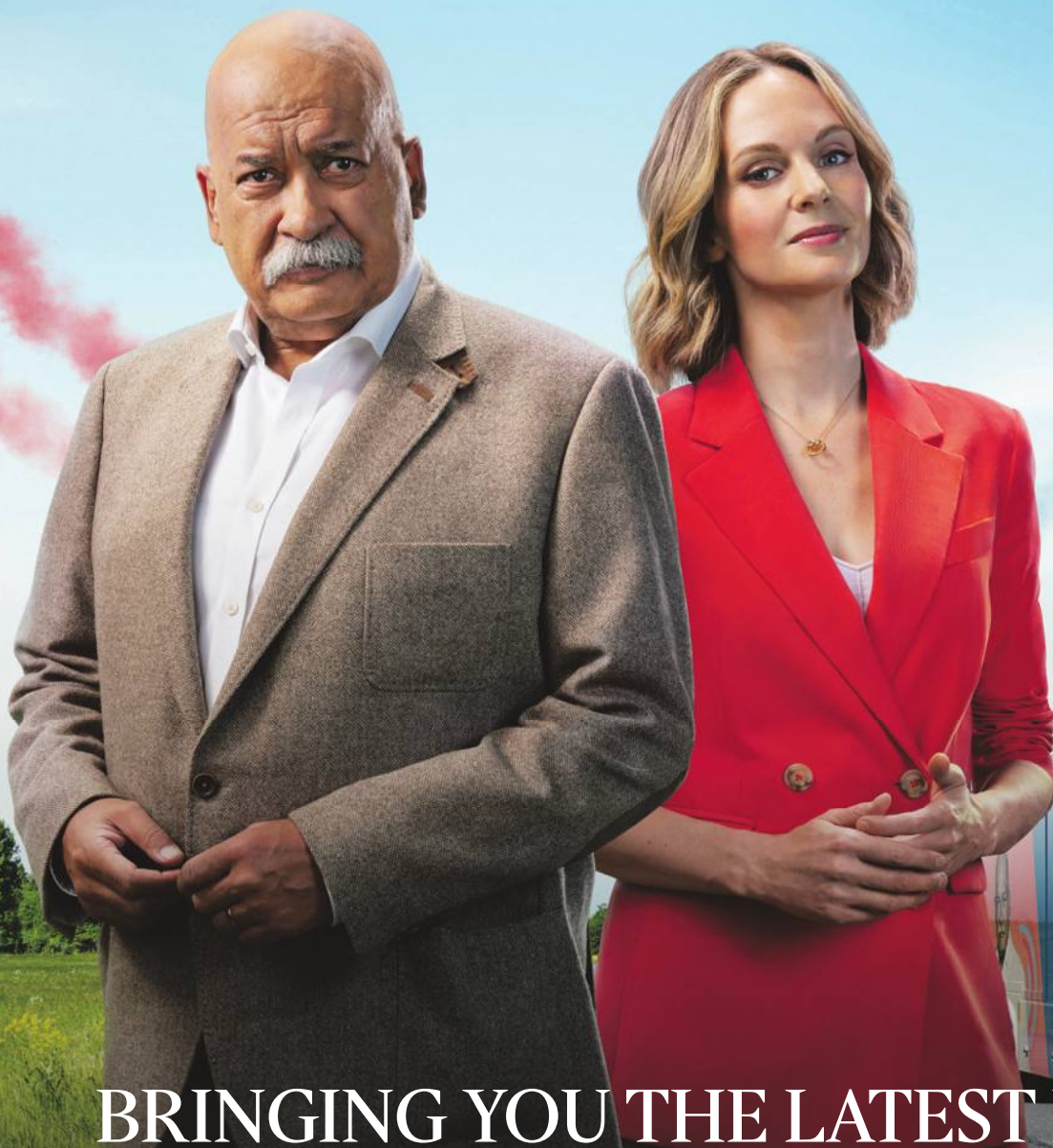
A judge at Isle of Wight county court awarded Starbuck £8,000 after finding that the project was "not carried out to a high standard as promised".

After the lumps appeared, Starbuck arranged for pest control to address her mole problem and Kositoes returned several times. But the problem remained unresolved and portions of the garden began to sink.

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Come on Starmer, what's your actual plan?

Hugo Rifkind

Page 23



Comment

'Local' MPs can't give leadership we need

A parliament dominated by former councillors would be ill-equipped to respond to the great global challenges ahead

William Hague



Most voters will have noticed by now that a general election is taking place and that the key date is July 4, polling day. But for would-be MPs there is another date that is just as important, or even more so: June 7. That's this Friday, the day nominations close at 4pm. By then, all candidates must be chosen.

This is the week, therefore, when the identity of the next MP is, in many seats, effectively decided. It's the week in which Labour HQ can use temporary powers to shoehorn high-flyers loyal to Sir Keir Starmer into seats that otherwise would not have selected them; the week for Diane Abbott to torment her leader after his botched attempt to stop her standing; the week for Conservative bosses to check that none of their new candidates will defect to Labour like some of the old ones.

It's the week in which smaller parties scramble to ensure they have candidates at all — particularly Reform UK, which had to apologise for admonishing a candidate for inactivity only to find that he'd been dead for several weeks. Behind the scenes, it's a frantic week.

As a result, by Friday we will have confirmation of an important trend in the composition of our next parliament. Not which party will command it — that really is up to you on July 4. But we are highly likely to see that, whichever party wins, there will be more MPs than ever before who claim a close connection with their seat, that they

are a true "local" representative. Never mind whether they could sit down with Joe Biden or eyeball Vladimir Putin — they will show, in their rapid response to your emails, they know about that months-old pothole from those recent roadworks. They will prioritise the parish meeting no matter what is going on in the wider world.

Taking up local issues, even though they are usually matters decided by councillors or other local bodies, has always been part of an MP's role. But something has changed in the past 20 years: it has become most of an MP's role. Answering the torrent of messages has taken over from legislating in MPs' daily work. Voters increasingly demand a truly local MP. The parties obligingly respond to this by providing one.

It's an understandable trend: people are mystified about who is accountable for what. They seek

Commons is becoming Birmingham city council on bigger scale

someone who will at least campaign for something locally in a world where bigger issues seem impossible to resolve. Yet the overall effect is very worrying. Instead of a national parliament, we are moving towards a meeting of local representatives, each pleading for their own area. The House of Commons is being turned into Birmingham city council on a bigger scale, and we all know what just happened to that.

Assiduous research by others has shown the trend. Analysis by Philip Cowley showed that at the last election 43 per cent of new Conservative MPs and 52 per cent of

new Labour MPs were councillors — much higher proportions than in the past. In this election, those percentages will go higher still. Michael Crick's work suggests that, prior to the election announcement, the great majority of Labour's new candidates were "local" and perhaps two thirds of Conservative associations had picked a serving or former councillor when selecting a new candidate. Sir Ed Davey's first appeal in the election was to say the Liberal Democrats would offer "local champions". It's a far cry from Gladstone rousing the nation with a vision of liberal values for the world.

I would not deny that many councillors make good MPs, nor understate the importance of an MP being responsive to constituents. In my time as an MP I toured my constituency almost every weekend, even when foreign secretary. But that does not mean that parliament should be dominated by former councillors. The prime minister who had the most distinguished local government career was Neville Chamberlain, famously described as viewing everything "through the wrong end of a municipal drainpipe".

The problem is that the obsession with localism, in Crick's words, "greatly restricts choice. Budding candidates have fewer seats they can realistically try for, while the party has less choice, so it reduces the quality of the candidates". The parties seem to understand this, which is why the last-minute selections of recent days involve the imposition, in Labour's case, or a very short list, in the Tory case, of promising future politicians who have run think tanks, been special advisers or been close to the party leaders. This brings the opposite problem — of limited local input into the choice of an MP — but is a



We need more MPs who can look Putin in the eye, not just talk about potholes

reaction to the underlying trend of localism at all costs.

Britain does need vibrant local democracy, which is why elected mayors with more powers are a good idea. It also needs, however, a strong national parliament, with members who can get there on account of their great ability, irrespective of where they grew up. We will need in the future our Churchill, Thatcher, Callaghan, Cameron or Macmillan — none of whom represented a local constituency.

There is a danger of parliament becoming more like a conference of many pressure groups than a gathering of leaders. Starmer's commitment to ban almost all second jobs for MPs threatens to accentuate that trend, with fewer experienced MPs staying in the Commons and a public sector

outlook predominating. Future MPs, it seems, must not only be predominantly focused on local matters but not allow anything to distract them. The paradox is they will face dangers that are overwhelmingly global and must seize opportunities that require the promotion of entrepreneurship.

What made the biggest impact on all our lives in the last parliament? Covid. Its origin was international.

What made the biggest impact in the last parliament? Covid

The defences against it relied on the ingenuity of business and science. What might be the greatest dangers of the next five years, the term of these candidates being nominated this week? A new pandemic, a rampant Russia, a crisis with China, a financial meltdown, a climate catastrophe, uncontrolled mass migration — take your pick. They are all global in nature. Where will the greatest opportunities lie? Leadership in AI, transforming the modern state and public services, developing the best talent in the world — all require leaps of imagination in national leadership.

As the issues become more global, our expectations of future leaders have become more local. There is a widening mismatch that political parties must address more coherently than rushing high-flyers into seats this week. In the meantime, we all have a part to play. When the candidates come to the door, ask something more than if they went to the school down the street. Ask how they will lead in a world where the events that change your life come from much further away than that.

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Right to roam shouldn't be a trespassers' charter

Campaigners claim countryside belongs to everyone but landowners are entitled to limit access

Melanie Phillips



@MELANIELATEST

Some two decades ago, a limited "right to roam" was established in law after furious public debate. In recent years there have been increasing battles over the rules governing this right. Now a new warrior has entered the fray.

The television wildlife presenter and author Kate Humble has defended the exclusion of the public from designated areas to ensure the protection of wildlife, the environment and farmland.

She told a Hay Festival event: "I do think it's enormously important that there are areas of the country where people are not allowed. We've all walked along footpaths or along river banks or through urban parks and seen the rubbish that has been left; frankly, the disrespectful way people treat the countryside."

The right to roam is an ancient custom that allows anyone to wander in open countryside regardless of who owns it. There has long been a conflict between those in favour of public access to private land and those who want to restrict it.

In 2000, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act mapped and designated as "open country" areas of mountain, moorland, heathland, downland and commons with a public right to roam there. These

areas cover just over 8 per cent of England's land mass. Scotland has a regulated "right of responsible access" to almost all of its landscape.

However, increasingly acrimonious campaigns have been launched to expand access to the English countryside. Campaigners say that walkers are being shut out of 2,500 areas where there is the right to roam but no legal means of getting into them.

In January the BBC reported that walkers wanting to enjoy countryside footpaths were being blocked or obstructed in nearly 32,000 places across England and Wales.

People often don't know where they have a right to walk in rural

Commandeering land in some higher cause is a route to tyranny

areas. Campaigners demand the introduction of a statutory right of access because landowners can withdraw their permission to walk across their land.

Last year the Court of Appeal ruled in favour of ramblers on Dartmoor where the public could "wild camp" without the landowner's permission. This tradition was challenged in a year-long battle by Alexander Darwall, who owns a 4,000-acre estate there. After he lost his fight, the Labour Party pledged to extend "wild camp" rights to all national parks in England.

The benefits of walking in the countryside are obvious. It's not only pleasurable but is known to have a

restorative effect on physical and mental health. The issue of right to roam, however, pits the interests of landowners against the interests of the general public and poses the question: "To whom does the land belong?"

To the pressure group Right to Roam, the answer is clear. It says that everywhere other than the areas where there are public rights of access, the public are "made to feel unwelcome in their own landscape". The entire countryside, it seems, belongs to everyone — and, therefore, to no one. Accordingly, the group advocates acts of trespass. The law of ownership is apparently a trifling nuisance to be brushed aside.

Vixen Tor, an outcrop on Dartmoor where hikers have the right to walk, became inaccessible after the farmer who bought the land withdrew public access, citing insurance requirements among other reasons. A mass trespass was planned last February but was called off amid bad weather.

In March, more than 500 people staged a trespass in protest at being charged to enter Cirencester Park in the Cotswolds, where access had been free for 326 years. Earl Bathurst introduced a £4 charge for visitors, with locals required to pay a £10 deposit. The Bathurst family said the system was introduced to support restoration and maintenance work for the estate, which spans more than 3,000 acres.

Whether these landowners are justified or behaving selfishly is beside the point. They are entitled to restrict access because they own the land. This is regarded as outrageous

by campaigners who brush aside the landowners' interests in the apparent belief that the countryside belongs to the whole of humanity.

But trespass is prohibited for a reason. The ownership of land or property is rightly regarded as a key safeguard of individual liberty and privacy. Commandeering private land in some notional higher cause is a route to tyranny.

It's also a route to despoiling the environment, since the landowner has a responsibility to steward the land; the public do not. As a consequence, public access often results in litter, noise and fouling of the area.

In addition, said Humble, it was important to allow farmers and food producers to prevent access to people who "don't understand how animals are looked after or how crops are grown".

Among the Right to Roam campaigners there's more than a whiff of class war, identifying landowners with the aristocracy who are assumed to disdain the common folk. But while some landowners are wealthy, many merely own small to medium farms and other businesses.

Where interests conflict, a careful balance is called for. While access to the countryside through existing rights of way could be improved, such a balance seems broadly to have been struck.

The militant campaigns for greater access owe more to the abandonment of respect for others in favour of a culture of individual entitlement. In the countryside, this means the public's right to get its way — and walk on it.



Next government must act to secure UK's scientific edge

John-Arne Røttingen

The structure of DNA, the first "test tube baby", the first blood transfusion. What do all these scientific discoveries have in common? All of them changed the world. And they all originated in UK science.

Britain deserves its reputation as a global leader in science and research and development (R&D) but this cannot be taken for granted. While nations such as the United States, Germany and China make sizeable investments in innovation, the UK needs to step up the pace to maintain its strategic advantage.

Prioritising R&D means investing in better health for everyone and boosting the domestic economy. Every pound of public money for R&D leads to almost double that amount in private investment, according to government figures.

Since joining Wellcome, a global health foundation and the largest non-governmental funder of UK research, in January I have made it a priority to visit or meet with more than 25 UK universities to hear their vision for UK science — and their concerns.

Universities are the backbone of a high knowledge, high-tech society but the current research funding model is not sustainable. It is heavily subsidised by international student fees. While we need a flourishing international student body, it is an unforgivable gamble to rely on these fees to prop up the nation's R&D. To allow strategic and resilient planning there should be ten-year funding settlements for research. Science is a long-term bet on the future. Eureka moments do not come out of the blue — the research behind them needs to be financially supported in a consistent way.

As one of the UK's and the world's biggest funders of health research, Wellcome sets out the priorities as we see them for the next government in our manifesto for science. The US currently leads the G7 in R&D intensity, with public and private investment amounting to almost 3.5 per cent of GDP, followed by Japan (3.27 per cent), Germany (3.13 per cent) and the UK (2.9-3 per cent). Long-term, the UK's aim should be to lead the G7 in research intensity.

We need to see strong international links where visas don't pose a barrier to global talent. The incoming government should make sure state-of-the-art lab space is not held back by cumbersome planning. It will have an opportunity to reverse the decline in NHS clinical research and unlock the potential of patient data. The public want to see politicians pay more attention to science and think it's an important area for the government to invest in. It is in everyone's interests for the next prime minister and government to build on the UK's outstanding legacy in R&D.

John-Arne Røttingen is CEO of Wellcome

Giles Coren Notebook

My son soon rises from the ashes of a cricket loss

I've written a fair bit about the joy my son's cricketing life brings me. Sam is a good little player and he loves it. But the terrible thing about cricket is that as well as joy, it can bring disappointment, loneliness and pain. And when that happens, you have to tell your little boy this is what sport is for: to enact the dramas of adult life in a safe space, with fixed rules, where nobody dies and you come out of it a stronger person. But it's hard sometimes.

On Sunday he played in the biggest game of his life so far. A county match, to all intents and purposes. And it did not go quite as well as he had hoped. It was not a terrible performance (as I have said now to him several hundred times). He bowled well without taking a wicket and did not drop a catch or anything. The batting was hard, his side collapsed against serious opposition and Sammy did well to

stay in for as long as he did while wickets tumbled around him. Three were runouts, though, and Sam blamed himself. From the sidelines, standing in the shade of some birch trees on a sunny day in Hertfordshire, I watched him wilt under the weight of his guilt, his shoulders slump, and I knew that beneath his helmet, his eyes would be wet.

With the run rate unattainable and eight wickets down, Sam hit out in a way I could see was intended just to get him out of there, the cricketing equivalent of "suicide by cop", and when he was duly caught in the deep, he jogged off not towards his team but towards me, under the trees on the opposite boundary, where I put my arms around him and told him I was proud of him, because I was.

Sam was convinced that his cricket career was over. His hot little face was salty with tears and my heart heaved for him. And

so began a long evening of trying to provide perspective. "But you played well..." "It's only cricket..." "Don't forget you're a brilliant drummer AND captain of the school quiz team..." "You don't want to be a cricketer anyway — it's £40k a year to play a sport nobody watches and you're finished at 35..."

He ate his dinner and went to bed. But around midnight I heard crying from upstairs and so I went to lie down next to him and spent the night there, eventually confiding that I used to have dreams too. First, of being a cricketer, obviously. Then of being a poet, a great novelist.

Of travelling the world and living the sort of life that... but he was snoring by then, while I lay awake, thinking about lost dreams and making the best of what one ends up with. In the morning, Sam, because he is 11, leapt

out of bed, wolfed down his breakfast, packed his cricket bag for a school match that afternoon and sprinted headlong into his Monday.

I, on the other hand...

Sink estate

I ended up a journalist, though, which is OK. The only worry has always been whether this declining industry would outlast me. So thank God I work for one of the few papers that is thriving in the new age. But as the dear old Evening Standard bites the dust (sorry, "goes weekly"), there is that sense of standing on a hilltop as the waters rise around one, scanning the sky for helicopters.

Career that cuts it

Maybe, when this is all over, I will go for a career in sport after all. Not as a player but as a barber, like Ahmed Alsanawi, who will travel to Germany as the England team's official hairdresser for the Euros. He charges £70 for a "Grealish", apparently. Same for a "Foden".

But how hard can it be carving zigzags into some vain kid's bonce after training? I'll do it for £25. And if I accidentally shave Harry Kane's nut clean with a slip of the hand on the eve of the final and he starts crying, well, no one is better placed than me to give him a cuddle and tell him it's only a haircut.





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Come on Starmer, what's your actual plan?

With a lead as large as the polls show now, Labour owes the electorate some honesty about where they're taking us

Hugo Rifkind



@HUGORIFKIND

It's funny, really. All those years I've spent howling at the TV news, pleading for politics to get back to normal. Through Faragists, through Corbynites, through Johnsoners and Trussniacs. Through culture warriors, and populists, and people who are sometimes unashamedly even either Andrea Jenkyns or Richard Burgon. "Let it end!" I have wailed. "Let us revert to the bland!" And now there I am, watching Laura Kuenssberg and Yvette Cooper mumble ennui-inducing nothings at each other. Oh! Oh no. I remember this. God, how could I have forgotten? Not that bland! What have I done?

Ignore the hype. This is not a wondering election but a waiting election. As in we are not wondering who will win. We are waiting until Labour does. You can see it in the body language, even feel it in the indefinable tone shifts of the broadcast studios, where it is inescapably obvious now who matters and who does not. And yet, although we know who the next

government is going to be, it strikes me that still, and to a huge degree, we do not know what it is going to do.

Perhaps this is because, as Keir Starmer's critics usually allege, it isn't particularly going to do anything. Or perhaps, as he struggles not to scare the horses, or carries his Ming vase over his slippery floor, or winces through whichever trepidatious cliché you prefer, it's because he doesn't want to tell us.

Oddly enough, the Tories don't quite seem to want us to be able to picture a future Starmer government either. Hence the main attack line on him, that he is "a man with no plan". Personally, I have my doubts about the wisdom of this, particularly from a Conservative Party that has over

You can't call somebody both useless and calculating all at once

the past decade given us numerous plans, all of which were insane. "No plan is better than a bad plan," as Theresa May might have said.

Still, in the past week we have seen flickers of something stronger. As Starmer has floundered over what to do about Diane Abbott, basically kicking her out of Labour and then kicking her back in again, the Conservatives have begun to suggest

he might be a patsy. One Twitter attack advert, pushed out this weekend, had him standing on stage next to Angela Rayner. "The leader of the Labour Party appears on stage with Sir Keir Starmer." Ho ho. There are shades here of how the Conservatives in 1997 appropriated Clare Short's comments about "dark forces" behind Tony Blair. Albeit dim shades, because Rayner isn't wildly scary either.

Below the radar, though, the Tories are going harder. A decade ago, when political parties started sending out semi-covert targeted adverts on platforms such as Facebook, I confidently predicted that all political journalists would soon learn to keep track of them. Nope, still just me. Oh well. Take a look, though, and you will see that the Conservatives are aiming to hit older voters, particularly, right in the anxieties. Several adverts, for example, warn that Starmer nurses anti-monarchist tendencies. One shows him 20 years ago in a pub — young, slim; it's actually quite flattering — admitting that he used to support abolishing the monarchy altogether. Others, aimed also at the over-45s, allege that Labour plans a raid on pensions.

Given that a future Labour government probably will try to extract money from private pensions, you might have thought

the Conservatives would be using this last attack line more universally. Yet you cannot call somebody both useless and calculating all at once. You can't simultaneously say, "They have no plan" and also: "They do have a plan, and it's evil." Perhaps also they worry that if the electorate at large really did fully understand what Labour might do with pensions, then quite a few voters would actually be all for it. See also the distinctly muted Tory response to

Right now, Starmer's problems are all to do with his critics to the left

the Labour policy on making private schools pay VAT.

Back on Blair, you'll probably remember the infamous "demon eyes" advert in which his own were replaced with those of, perhaps, Beelzebub. Today, I suspect, Tory strategists worry that likening Starmer to a demon might do him some favours. For all the failings of the Lords of Hell, they tend not to be called bland. Right now, indeed, Starmer's big problems are all to do with his critics to the left, most of whom complain that he's a continuation of the status quo and basically a Tory himself. So being able to say, "But the actual Tories say

I have a scaly tail?" might be helpful.

Between the two of them, then, we now seem to be having an election campaign in which Labour are afraid to say what they'll do in office in case voters don't like it, while Conservatives are equally afraid to spell out what Labour might do in case voters do like it. To go back to 1997 one last time, Blair also played his cards close to his chest during that election — for example, by refusing even to discuss the rate for his future minimum wage. It's a perennial argument how radical he would then go on to be, but it is often said that he and Gordon Brown both regretted not being more so when they eventually had the chance.

For Starmer's part, I can see full well why he's reluctant to commit to concrete policies before an election, not least with the cautionary precedent of May's majority-squandering social care policy of 2017 hanging heavily in the recent past. At the same time, though, if you can't be open about your plans when you're 20-plus points ahead in the polls, when can you?

It has done this country no favours, this now-embedded presumption that the only possible winning electoral strategy is a dishonest one. How about telling us what you're going to do before asking us to vote for it, rather than afterwards? Is that too much to ask?

Letters to the Editor



Right to roam

Sir, It is disappointing that your leading article on extending the rights of access to the countryside in England ("Roaming Limits", Jun 3) did not recognise the Scottish experience. The 2003 Land Reform (Scotland) Act gave everyone here a recreational right of access to most land and water. They only have these rights if they exercise them responsibly by respecting people's privacy, safety, livelihoods and the environment. The act is buttressed by an outdoor access code that sets out the relative responsibilities of access takers and land managers, and addresses the issues raised in your editorial. After some 20 years it is deemed to have worked well and major changes are not envisaged. If it can work in Scotland, why not in England?

Peter Mackay
Kingussie, Highland

Sir, Kate Humble and your editorial are right to deplore and condemn litter and detritus. However, this is a societal and nationwide problem and does not apply to the vast majority of footpath users, who take their litter home. Littering should not be used as an argument against public footpaths any more than against public highways.

Andrew Millar
Wallingford, Oxon

Gender pay gap

Sir, Tom Howard rightly highlights the slow promotion of senior women as a key barrier to closing the gender pay gap ("Gender pay gap" will close in 45 years", Jun 3). We cannot be satisfied with the present modest rate of change, and it is up to business leaders to grasp the nettle and put in place concrete measures now to accelerate progress.

The Pipeline's Women Count report identified workplace culture as a significant obstacle. Moreover, many senior businesswomen reported not feeling sufficiently supported in their career goals by their employers.

The good news is that there are solutions: better work-life flexibility, fairer internal processes, championing role models and sponsorship, and ending "the woman tax" where women, not men, are allocated additional duties alongside their day jobs. With decisive action from business leaders, women joining the workforce today could enjoy pay parity during the course of their careers. This is not an unattainable goal but a fundamental right.

Professor Geeta Nargund
Chair, the Pipeline

Corrections and clarifications

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Remembering all those who served on D-Day

Sir, With all the understandable comment and celebrations planned for the 80th anniversary of D-Day on Thursday we should also remember those whom Lady Astor at the time referred to as the D-Day Dodgers, the men of the British 8th Army who fought their way from North Africa, through Sicily and Italy, in mountainous terrain and malarial plains, in the harshest of winters and the roughest of summers, culminating in the triumphant entry into Rome on June 4, 1944. Once conditions in the city had stabilised, Pope Pius XII granted the 38th (Irish) Brigade the signal honour of having the combined pipes and drums of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Royal Irish Fusiliers and London Irish Rifles play on the piazza of St Peter's Basilica on June 12, 1944, an honour to be repeated at the request of Pope Francis by the bagpipes, pipes and drums of the Royal Irish Regiment on June 12 this year. When they are playing, we might quietly hum the last verse of Hamish Henderson's song, to the tune of Lili Marleen, in tribute to all who fought in Italy:

*Look around the hillsides,
Through the mist and rain
See the scattered crosses
Some that bear no name*

*Heartbreak and toil and suffering gone
The lads beneath, they slumber on
They are the D-Day Dodgers
Who'll stay in Italy*

Lt Col (ret'd) Patrick Chambers
Rosedale Abbey, N Yorks

Sir, D-Day was a crucial moment on the path to victory in the Second World War. While attention rightly focuses on its 80th anniversary, 1944 saw service personnel from across the Commonwealth fight important battles all over the world, from Monte Cassino in Italy to Burma and Northern India. The 1944 Victoria Cross roll of honour includes Sikh, Muslim and Hindu soldiers from India, as well as Nepalis from the Gurkha regiments. The service of Commonwealth forces as part of the British Empire in WW2, from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and beyond, has shaped the multi-ethnic and multi-faith society we share today. We should ensure that all who served are honoured — and use the 80th anniversary of VE Day in 2025 to increase public awareness and understanding of every contribution to our shared history.

Remembrance brings us together in recognition of all who fought and

sacrificed for our country. They served together then, so we can and should remember together today. **General Lord Dannatt**, chairman, Normandy Memorial Trust, former chief of the general staff; **General Lord Richards of Herstmonceux**, grand president, Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, and former chief of the defence staff; **Mark Atkinson**, director-general, Royal British Legion; **Sunder Katwala**, director, British Future; **Professor David Olusoga**, historian; **Professor Uzo Iwobi**, founder, Race Council Cymru; **Imam Qari Asim**, Mosques & Imams National Advisory Board *Plus a further 21 signatories at thetimes.co.uk/letters*

Sir, My late husband recalled his memory of D-Day as an eight-year-old boy. He was woken by his father very early and hurried out into the garden, still in his pyjamas. Looking up it seemed that the sky was black with planes that were on their way to the coast. His father said to him: "My son, you are watching history being made." Indeed. My husband spent 35 years as a schoolmaster teaching history.

Pamela Hart
Watford

Eco-friendly farms

Sir, Emma Duncan shows rare understanding of the history and trade-offs associated with English agriculture policy ("What do we want from our farms: food or flowers?", Jun 1) but overstates the impact of new green farming schemes. Attributing this year's projected poor harvest to these schemes is not supported by the evidence. As the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board has said, the lower yields will be largely down to one of the wettest winters on record, a winter that scientists have calculated was made wetter by climate change. Portraying the choice as food or flowers is also too binary. The experience of many farmers is that farming with flowers (and nature more widely) is good for food production, aids resilience to climate change through healthier soils and can boost yields by as much as 25 per cent. It is also popular. Recent polling suggests that 78 per cent of rural voters support a transition towards more environmentally friendly farming.

Tom Lancaster
Head of land, food and farming,
Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit

Labour's pledges

Sir, Kemi Badenoch's article ("We will protect women by ending doubt on gender", Jun 3) on the Conservative Party's plan to clarify the primacy of biological sex in safeguarding women highlights one of the three concerns about Labour's plans that my friends constantly raise about the election: gender self-identification; giving 16-year-olds the vote; and the sudden imposition of VAT on private school fees. The first two should be subject to meaningful public consultation and the latter phased in over several years. As they stand, these three issues will lose Labour much support among as yet undecided voters.

Tony Evans
Glasshouses, N Yorks

Sir, I am confused. On the one hand I am being encouraged by Labour to pursue my health requirements via the private sector so as to reduce pressure on the NHS ("Starmer pledges to clear half of NHS waiting list", May 29). On the other the party is discouraging me from educating my children and grandchildren at our excellent private schools by proposing to charge VAT

on their fees, the main effect of which will be to increase pressure on the already overstretched state education system. While the former policy seems eminently sensible, the latter looks like a cheap pre-election tax-raising gimmick whose associated costs will inevitably far outweigh its benefits.

Sir Martin Smith
Oxford

Part-time doctors

Sir, Dr Michael Dixon (letter, Jun 3) omits to mention a key factor causing problems for patients needing a GP appointment: the vast majority of GPs now work part-time, meaning that there is no continuity of care. As an example, the website of a local practice lists ten doctors, excluding trainees, who in total provide 54 sessions a week, when full-time doctors would provide 100 sessions.

Until doctors accept that practising medicine should be a full-time commitment for most of them, there will be no improvement in the service to patients, no matter how much funding is thrown at the NHS.

Clive Layton
Abbess Roding, Essex

LADY PELLY'S FATAL FALL FROM WINDOW

FROM THE TIMES JUNE 4, 1924

Mr Ingleby Oddie, the Westminster Coroner, recorded a verdict of "Accidental death" at the inquest on Lady (Amy Henrietta) Pelly, aged 77, widow of General Sir Lewis Pelly, who, fell from a window at 6 Chantry House, Eccleston Street, SW, on Saturday morning. Mr Arthur Edwin Clarke, solicitor, stated that Lady Pelly was a client of his. She shared the second floor flat with an old friend named Miss Duff. He saw her last in July, when her mental condition was normal. She was in a comfortable position and there was no history of insanity in

the family. Miss Maud Edwards, maid and cook to Lady Pelly, stated that the dead lady had been worrying for two or three weeks. She had a delusion that her dress did not fit her properly and that she was spending money on herself that she should have spent on poor people. She was a very active Churchwoman, much interested in social-work and charity. Lady Pelly retired at 10.15 on Friday night, when she seemed bright and said she would sleep without taking sleeping pills. At 5.50am the news was broken to her that her mistress had fallen from the window. Miss Duff, who was too indisposed to attend the Court, told the witness that she thought her friend had been worrying during the last few weeks. Alfred Osborn, a brewer's labourer, said that at 4.30 on Saturday morning he saw Lady Pelly fall from the window into the street. She was in the air when he saw her. Police-constable Dyer, another eye-witness, said that Lady Pelly seemed

to glide through the window head first, striking some coping as she fell. In the room he found that the window was open as far as it would go from the bottom, and there was a chair standing sideways as though it had been moved. Police-sergeant Nicholls, coroner's officer, said it was a thundery, sultry night, and it was possible that the lady went to the window to get some air and, losing her balance, fell out. The Coroner said he could not help feeling that there was strong circumstantial evidence to indicate that this was suicide, but in view of the police evidence, he could picture Lady Pelly pitching forward while opening the window. He could not say that he was completely satisfied, but he felt sure that a jury would record the verdict that he was going to record, one of "Accidental death".

THE TIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

Doorstep campaign

Sir, Times have changed in the central London constituency where Edward Lucas is standing ("Elections finally here and I'm on your doorstep", Jun 3). When I fought three elections there as the (successful) Conservative candidate in the 1970s, I never came across a duchess or a butler in a tailcoat and stiff collar, or indeed any other dress. On the other hand, in 1970 I was able to canvass Downing Street like any other street and to deliver my material in person at No 10.

Christopher Tugendhat
House of Lords

Political disillusion

Sir, Further to your leading article "Getting out the Vote" (Jun 3), the only way to improve voter turnout is to add "None of the above" to the ballot paper. Turnout would vastly increase, and in certain constituencies Not a would top the poll. Perhaps that would focus minds and improve the quality of candidates.

Jean Willgoose
Stapleford, Notts

Sir, Regarding the letter from Mary Smith (Jun 3) on whether to vote, it is perhaps difficult to imagine how, in the early years of the 20th century, women went to extraordinary lengths to campaign for the right to vote. For this reason I believe there is a certain duty for women to vote today, even if only to spoil the ballot paper.

Minna Andrews
Burntwood, Staffs

Library censorship

Sir, Further to your report "Libraries ban books after single complaint" (Jun 3), it is not the content of our literature that should disturb us but the frightening ignorance and arrogance of self-appointed censors. Dictatorship by individuals or collectives is desperately damaging for the health of young minds. It seems we are in danger of forgetting the hard-won lessons of history.

Pauline Wilson
York

Giant among men

Sir, There are few athletes who can electrify an entire stadium by taking just a single step, but Rob Burrow (sport and obituary, Jun 3) was undoubtedly one of them. As a teenager, I had the privilege of watching Rob play live at Headingley many times, the old ground seemingly bursting at the seams as he ducked and dived underneath men twice his size. It turned out, of course, that Rob was a true giant among men.

The Rev Dr Che Seabourne
West Bridgford, Notts

Emperor's tippie

Sir, Max Hastings (Notebook, Jun 3) is right to warn against excessive use of cassis in adding it to white wine to make the drink known as Kir. Even the French, its inventors, can be heavy-handed in this department. During the 20 years I spent in the Languedoc, my neighbours introduced me to a far more subtle alternative using *crème de mûres sauvages* (wild blackberries) instead of cassis. And on returning home I found that adding a dash of brandy produced a much-applauded house cocktail — we call it Kir Napoleon.

Peter Jackson
South Barrow, Somerset

Daily Universal Register

UK: Rishi Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer take part in their first election debate, on ITV.
International: QS World University Rankings published.

Nature notes



Spring and summer rain in wooded areas, particularly those planted with pine trees, may give rise to the phenomenon

known as tree soap, when foam runs down tree trunks or collects at the base of the bole. When rain runs down tree trunks it is known as stemflow, but when the weather is dry chemicals can accumulate on the bark of trees. These can include natural plant substances such as sap, particulates from the air such as salts and acids, and other pollutants. Stemflow causes them to accumulate in a concentrated form. This is essentially a crude soap made with an alkali such as sodium or potassium, mixed with carboxylic acids, which is agitated into foam by the bumpiness of the bark it flows over. MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today



Ben Stokes, pictured, cricketer, Durham and captain of the England Test team, 33; **Martin Adams**, darts player, BDO world championship winner (2007, 2010, 2011), 68; **Cecilia Bartoli**, mezzo-soprano, 58; **Anthony**

Braxton, jazz musician, 79; **Richard Caring**, chairman, Caprice Holdings, whose portfolio includes The Ivy chain of restaurants, 76; **Bob Champion**, jockey, Grand National winner (1981), 76; **Oona Chaplin**, actress, *Game of Thrones* (2012-13), 38; **Prof Dame Sandra Dawson**, social scientist, master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge (1999-2009), 78; **Bruce Dern**, actor, *Nebraska* (2013), 88; **Ben Francis**, co-founder and chief executive, Gymshark (fitness apparel and accessories brand), 32; **Andrew Gwynne**, Labour MP for Denton and Reddish (2005-May 2024), shadow health and social care minister (2023-May 2024), 50; **Hakainde Chhilema**, president of Zambia, 62; **Angelina Jolie**, DCMG, actress, *Changeling* (2008), director, *By the Sea* (2015), and special UN envoy for refugee issues (2012-22), 49; **Val McDermid**, crime novelist, *Past Lying* (2023), 69; **Segun Ogunsanya**, chief executive, Airtel Nigeria, 58; **Stefano Pessina**, executive chairman, Walgreens Boots Alliance, 83; **Melanie Phillips**, journalist, Times columnist and author, 73; **Michelle Phillips**, singer-songwriter, the Mamas and the Papas, *California Dreamin'* (1965), 80; **Bar Refaeli**, supermodel, 39; **Chris Robshaw**, rugby union player, England (2009-18; captain 2012-15), 38; **Izabella Scorupco**, actress, *GoldenEye* (1995), 54; **Baroness (Elizabeth) Smith** of Gilmerehill, trustee, John Smith Memorial Trust, 84; **Princess Lilibet**, daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, 3; **Bradley Walsh**, actor and TV presenter, *The Chase*, 64; **Ruth Westheimer**, Holocaust survivor, sex therapist and US chat show host, 96; **Sir Bill Wiggin**, Conservative MP for North Herefordshire (2001-May 2024), shadow secretary of state for Wales (2003-05), 58.

On this day

In 1878 Cyprus was ceded to Britain in return for the promise of military aid for the Turkish against the Russians.

The last word

"Forever — is composed of nows." Emily Dickinson, American poet (c1863).



I'm a Celebrity

Like him or loathe him, Nigel Farage is a consequential political figure. His decision to lead Reform into the election is a worrying development for Rishi Sunak

Nigel Farage owns Reform, quite literally. He is a director of Reform UK Party Limited, along with Farage Media Limited and Thorn In The Side Limited. So when he decided this week that his public needed him there was no need to seek the approval of party officers or members. He simply picked up the phone to Richard Tice, who had been keeping the leader's seat warm for him, and told him to move over.

That is how Mr Farage does business: as the man said to have extracted £1.5 million for his appearance on *I'm a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!* he is used to getting his way. Like him or loathe him — and there are plenty of people in the latter category — he is a figure of indomitable self-belief, a subscriber to the Great Man theory of history. His decision, announced yesterday, to assume the leadership of Reform for five years and stand as the party's candidate in Conservative-held, Euro-sceptic Clacton will be dismissed by the Tories as the cavortings of a fringe political narcissist.

The mood behind closed doors in CCHQ, however, will be sombre. Despite serial defeats in parliamentary contests, Mr Farage is a formidable and feared campaigner who could inflict serious damage on an already embattled Tory party.

Entering the fray at a surprise press conference

yesterday Mr Farage laid into Rishi Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer for presiding over the most boring general election in modern times. Boring because both parties had surrendered to mass immigration, high taxes, falling living standards and endemic crime. The public, he said, had zoned out. Labour was bound to win and the voters, disillusioned with the political class, had stopped listening. It was a plague-on-both-your-houses message but his axis of attack was clear: Reform, he said, possessed the potential to displace the Conservatives as the principal right-of-centre party in opposition, dealing a death blow to what was once the most successful and durable political force in the western world.

This, too, will be dismissed by the Tories. Britain's first-past-the-post voting system makes a radical shake-up of the main parties exceedingly difficult. But Mr Farage's talent for guerrilla politics makes him anything but marginal. The 3.9 million votes he garnered as leader of Ukip in the 2015 election goaded David Cameron into the referendum on membership of the European Union that ended his career as prime minister and changed the course of modern British history. Mr Farage believes he can do even better this time.

Labour may lose some votes but the danger to

the Tories is much more serious: polling at about 12 per cent, Reform threatens to tear an arm off them. Combined with tactical voting, the insurgent successor to Ukip and the Brexit Party is a potent threat, even though it is not slated to win seats.

Mr Farage's declaration may change that, boosting Reform's vote sufficiently to win some seats. Even if only he becomes an MP, he could become the focus for bruised right-wing Tory backbenchers in search of a saviour. An unlikely scenario, but Mr Farage's declaration is more bad news for the prime minister after a YouGov poll yesterday suggesting a Labour majority of 194 seats, the biggest Commons majority in a century.

Mr Farage is a capricious figure. His decision may be due to some knockback in America, where he was expected to champion Donald Trump. He may yet disappear back into the media. He has compared himself to his hero, suggesting he could hijack the Tories in the same way that Mr Trump hijacked the Republicans. Grandiosity? Supporters of Mr Sunak will say so. But in Brexit Mr Farage showed his power to shape events. If only the peerage supposedly offered him by Boris Johnson in 2019 in return for calling off the Brexit Party had become a reality. Such is fate.

South of the Border

Mexico's first female president must foster a productive relationship with the US

Mexico's newly elected and first female president, Claudia Sheinbaum, was celebrated yesterday as an ambitious moderniser. But the success of her mission will depend ultimately on factors outside her control: on who wins the presidential election north of the Rio Grande and on international drug and migrant flows. It looks set to be a bumpy ride.

On paper, the election seems to have awarded real political muscle to Ms Sheinbaum, a former mayor of Mexico City. The presidential vote was accompanied by balloting for more than 20,000 other positions, including 500 new members of congress, 128 new senators, nine new governors and thousands of regional and municipal representatives. A whole political establishment has been rearranged in an elaborate display of musical chairs. It does not amount to a full-blown revolution, more like an orderly succession.

The outgoing president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, having served his six years in office, has used his political machine to help his protégée Ms Sheinbaum into power. If she can garner enough support for constitutional change, Mr López Obrador calculates, it should buy enough time to

complete what he calls Mexico's Fourth Transformation, a series of epoch-making leaps that began with independence in 1821.

Ms Sheinbaum needs, however, to free herself from the dreams of her overly ideological leftist patron and address Mexico's real-world problems. Her first task is to assess what alliances she can form within the new congress to shape reforms to the health system, to security, the economy and welfare. Some 27 million Mexicans receive direct support from the government and the state is due a shake-up in the institutions they depend on.

Crime rates are soaring due to the unfettered activities of Mexico's murderous drug cartels. Last year there were 30,000 registered drug-related killings; this year there have been more than that number in the first five months. Assassination is an everyday hazard of politics. In the 2021 mid-term elections 27 candidates were murdered; so far in 2024 there have been 40 political killings. Two mayoral candidates in one township were killed within hours of each other. In addition, Mexico is ranked as the most dangerous place for journalists in the western hemisphere.

Ms Sheinbaum, a US-trained expert on sustainable development, is deemed to be more worldly than her monolingual patron, who hardly left the country. She will have to engage with Washington and Latin America to stem the production of fentanyl tablets which, using smuggled Chinese precursor drugs, is turning pockets of suburban America into drug zones. There is a recognition by Mexico and the US that the sheer volume of bilateral trade — \$800 billion — demands a degree of mutual respect. Even Donald Trump, who on the 2016 election trail regularly insulted Mexicans, came to realise as president that it was madness to make an enemy out of a neighbour. President Sheinbaum will no doubt try to elevate the tone of discourse over coming months, as she will try to tighten the border with Guatemala to slow the flow of migrants crossing Mexico to reach the US.

Much depends on the US election. In the next ten years young and dynamic Mexico, with its diversified economy, could thrive. But its leader must learn from Mr López Obrador's mistakes and make proximity to the US a geopolitical asset, not simply a narco and people-trafficking opportunity.

To Try and Try Again

Rob Burrow's bravery in the face of motor neurone disease is an inspiration

The greatest players of rugby league are heroes in their communities, the old coalfield towns and post-industrial cities of the English north. As David Storey wrote in *This Sporting Life*, the tale of a miner's son elevated to stardom by his local club, these are the places that will always have their teams, if nothing else. But the regionalism of rugby league is such that few players achieve national renown.

Rob Burrow, who has died so unjustly at the age of 41, was different. It was not merely that he dazzled on the pitch in his 16 years with Leeds Rhinos. It was the way in which he dealt with cruel

adversity that transcended sport. Given two years to live after being diagnosed with motor neurone disease (MND) in 2019, Mr Burrow displayed superhuman fortitude. "I wasn't afraid of death," he said. "I was afraid of not making the most of however long I had left." He survived years longer than expected and, true to his word, made the most of the time allotted to him.

Together with his former team-mate Kevin Sinfield, who carried him over the finish line at the Leeds Marathon last year, Doddie Weir, the late Scottish rugby union star who succumbed to MND in 2022, and Stephen Darby, the former

Liverpool footballer diagnosed with the condition in 2018, Mr Burrow did an immense amount to raise awareness of — and money for — those living with his illness; indeed, more than any public figure before him. Last year, in the grip of MND, he launched a podcast with the aid of AI.

As the general election approaches, the MND Association is asking all parties to invest in treatments, accessible homes and more support for those who care for MND sufferers, like Mr Burrow's widow Lindsey. Rishi Sunak and Sir Keir Starmer should accept the challenge. It would be a fitting tribute to an indomitable spirit.

World



I won't fail you, vows first female president

Mexico

Stephen Gibbs
Latin America Correspondent

Mexico has elected the first female president in its history after the left-wing candidate Claudia Sheinbaum won a landslide victory.

The former head of government of Mexico City vowed yesterday that she would not let down the country after being elected with close to 60 per cent of the vote. "I won't fail you," she said.

Mexico election results

Preliminary results

Claudia Sheinbaum (MORENA-PT-PVEM)
58.8%

Xóchitl Gálvez (PAN-PRI-PRD)
28.2%

Jorge Álvarez Máynez (MC)
10.5%

PREP results as of 8.55am CST with 81.7% counted

Sheinbaum, a Nobel prize-winning scientist, highlighted the historic nature of her win in a speech shortly after the electoral authorities announced that she had an insurmountable lead.

"After 200 years of the republic, I will become the first female president of Mexico," she said at a hotel in Mexico City, the capital. "I do not arrive alone. We all arrived, with our heroines who gave us our homeland, with our ancestors, our mothers, our daughters and our granddaughters."

The vote was the biggest in Mexican history, electing the president as well as about 20,000 other officials including all members of congress, governors in eight states, the head of Mexico City's

government and thousands of mayors.

Sheinbaum stood for the ruling Morena party and had been widely predicted to win, though not on the scale she achieved. With 82 per cent of ballots counted, her nearest rival, Xóchitl Gálvez, representing a coalition of opposition parties, had 28 per cent of the vote. That margin, a lead of near 30 points over the runner-up, is the largest in a presidential vote in Mexico since 1982, when the country was a single-party state. Morena also looked set to achieve a two-thirds "supermajority" in congress, which would give it the power needed to make constitutional changes without opposition support.

Some voiced concern that the scale of the victory could lead to an erosion of democracy in Mexico similar to that which took place in Venezuela after Hugo Chávez and his party achieved a sweeping election victory in 2006.

The outgoing president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, has previously sought to overhaul the judiciary to allow the direct election of judges as well as removing the country's autonomous election agency but was prevented from doing so by the opposition.

"September will be the most revolutionary month that Mexico has experienced in this century. López Obrador will still be president and he'll have a congress that owes him their jobs," Antonio Ocaranza, a Mexican political analyst, told the Wall Street Journal.

"This is something really historic," López Obrador said of the result. "We are living through exceptional, extraordinary, glorious times."

About 98 million Mexicans were registered to vote in the election and a majority — 51 million — were women. In total, Sheinbaum received close to 35.5 million votes, upwards of 5 million



Mexico's president-elect Claudia Sheinbaum, above, won by a landslide, with a majority of the 98 million registered voters — 51 million — being women. The vote was the biggest in Mexican history, yet the run-up to it was violent, with at least 38 political candidates killed by criminal organisations

more than López Obrador himself achieved in 2018.

The run-up to the election was violent, with at least 38 political candidates killed by criminal organisations involved in their own shadowy battle for territory. On Sunday two people were killed at polling stations in the state of Puebla. In the western state of Michoacán, a town council candidate was

killed by two hitmen on a motorcycle hours before the polls opened.

Sheinbaum, 61, a politician who is known as "la doctora" owing to her PhD in energy engineering, has vowed to continue most of the policies of the incumbent, López Obrador.

López Obrador, who founded the Morena party, was not able to stand for re-election because Mexico's constitu-

tion only permits single six-year terms.

His social welfare programmes are credited with lifting millions of Mexicans out of poverty but his security policies — López Obrador said before he took office that criminals should be offered "hugs not bullets" — are widely regarded as a failure. Under his rule the country's murder rate soared to historic highs, while the reach of drug cartels

Netanyahu faces revolt over Gaza 'truce'
Page 28

I'm that bitch: Meloni's enemies gift her a slogan
Page 29

REUTERS/ANADOLU/GETTY IMAGES, AP

A trailblazer — but one smear sticks

Analysis Stephen Gibbs

She is a Nobel prizewinner with an engineering PhD, an accomplished ballet dancer, the first female head of government of Mexico City, and now president-elect of Mexico, having won a majority larger than that of her predecessor.

By any standards Claudia Sheinbaum is a trailblazer. Despite this, however, she faces one persistent question: can she break free from the shadow of her bombastic, populist mentor, President López Obrador, when she assumes office on October 1?

During her whirlwind campaign across Mexico, however, it was noticeable how careful she was not to criticise the president. Asked in an interview with *The Sunday Times* for an example of something López Obrador had done wrong and that she could do better, she declined to answer.

There is a pragmatic reason for that. The outgoing president will leave office with an impressive 60 per cent approval record, largely thanks to his record in reducing poverty and increasing real wages. Many of the millions of Mexicans who voted for Sheinbaum did so simply because they wanted more of the same.

But there is a school of thought that says Sheinbaum will succeed only if she dares to veer from the path that López Obrador forged. He, the argument goes, is perhaps fortunate that Mexico has single term limits, a legacy of the 1910 revolution, with its rallying cry "No re-election".

Because, despite the popularity of the outgoing administration, there is evidence that much is not well in the second-largest economy in Latin America, and that López Obrador has allowed many problems that urgently need addressing to stew.

Chief among those is security. Over the past six years the president has taken a broadly permissive approach to Mexico's enormously powerful gangs, which under his watch have become even richer.

The country's murder rate is the highest in its history. Whilst in charge of Mexico City Sheinbaum substantially reduced the number of murders by significantly boosting spending on public security. But can she repeat that on a national scale?

On the economy, Mexico's fiscal deficit has soared to historic highs over the past 12 months as the government increased outgoings during the election year. It will fall to Sheinbaum to make cuts to spending, a move that will not be popular. Sheinbaum insists she is nobody's obedient protégée. Her success may depend on proving that to be true.

Coffins left next to Eiffel Tower 'are latest dirty tricks by Russia'

France

Adam Sage Paris

French investigators suspect that a Russian dirty tricks campaign is behind the appearance next to the Eiffel Tower of five coffins marked "French soldiers of Ukraine".

Detectives say the suspects appear to be linked to a gang responsible for vandalising the Holocaust Memorial in Paris last month in an allegedly Russian-inspired operation.

The FSB, the Russian state security service, is said to have orchestrated the appearance of stars of David on walls in Paris after the Hamas attack on Israel in October. Stéphane Séjourné, the foreign affairs minister, has accused Moscow of seeking to destabilise and divide France.

The latest incident was on Saturday, when a Bulgarian-registered van was seen on CCTV stopping near the Eiffel Tower. Two men got out and put five coffins in the road.

The coffins were covered in French flags, bore the words "French soldiers of Ukraine" and contained bags of plaster of roughly the same weight as a human body.

The driver, a Bulgarian, was arrested. He told detectives that he had arrived from Bulgaria that morning, and had been paid €120 for the mission.

His two passengers, a German and a Ukrainian, were arrested after police used CCTV footage and telephone tracking to locate them at Bercy coach station in Paris, where they were preparing to catch a Flixbus coach to Berlin. They said they had each been paid €400 to participate in the coffin operation.

The Kremlin has been increasingly vehement in its criticism of France since President Macron refused to rule out sending western troops to fight in

Harris sent to peace talks

Tom Ball

Kamala Harris, the US vice-president, will attend peace talks in Switzerland on June 15 after President Zelensky accused Beijing of helping Moscow to put nations off joining the meeting.

Harris and Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, will attend in a show of solidarity with Kyiv. The White House said it would bolster Ukraine's effort to "secure a just and lasting peace".

President Zelensky has been touring Asia to drum up support for the talks. In Singapore he claimed that China was working to disrupt the event. "We need the support of Asian countries," he said. "It is unfortunate that such a big, independent, powerful country as China is an instrument in the hands of Putin."

Ukraine. A Kremlin spokesman described French policy as "provocative and destructive" and Pyotr Tolstoy, the deputy chairman of the Duma, said it would end with "coffins in Orly [airport in Paris]".

Suspects have been arrested after leaving coffins by the Eiffel Tower



They told French police that they had been paid by a Moldovan businessman who had once been a candidate for a pro-Russian political party.

Le Monde obtained French police documents identifying the FSB as having been responsible for the stenciling of the stars of David.

has grown. Sheinbaum has not fully spelt out how she will tackle the crisis.

The president-elect spent part of her academic career in California studying Mexican energy consumption patterns and is seen as an expert on climate change. This may prove a point of difference with the outgoing president, who has pumped billions into the indebted state oil company Pemex and faced criticism for his environmental policies, including the construction of a controversial tourist train in the Yucatán peninsula.

The vote has taken place in the same year as a United States presidential election and has been keenly watched north of the border. In recent years record numbers of immigrants have arrived via Mexico to the US and the issue has become a central theme in the American vote.

Sheinbaum, who strongly supports migrants' rights, has said she will seek a co-operative relationship with Washington. "We will always tell [the US] it's better to build bridges rather than walls," she said during her campaign.

As well as being set to become Mexico's first woman president, Sheinbaum will also become its first Jewish leader. She describes herself as a secular Jew. Her Jewish maternal grandparents immigrated to Mexico from Bulgaria, fleeing the Nazis.

Productive relationship with the US is vital, leading article, page 25

Biden: My son Hunter is an inspiration

United States

Hugh Tomlinson Wilmington

The president said he had "boundless love" for his son as Hunter Biden arrived in court yesterday to face a criminal trial on federal gun charges.

Hunter, 54, whose personal and financial troubles have dogged his father's presidency, is charged with lying about his addiction to crack cocaine when he filled out a form to buy a gun in Delaware in 2018. He has pleaded not guilty but if convicted he faces the possibility of jail time.

The trial of the president's surviving son is an unwelcome distraction for the Democratic incumbent who will face Donald Trump at the ballot box in five months' time. It is set to reopen deep wounds for the first family, with prosecutors laying out vivid personal accounts of Hunter's addiction in court documents before the trial.

In the depths of his addiction to crack cocaine in 2018, Hunter Biden texted Hallie Biden, his lover and the widow of his brother Beau, who died in 2015: "I'm a liar and a thief and a blamer and a user and I'm delusional and an addict ... and I've ruined every relationship I've ever cherished."



Jill Biden, the first lady, attended the first day of jury selection yesterday

Jury selection began yesterday, less than a week after Trump was convicted on all 34 counts in his New York hush money case, becoming the first former president to be convicted of a crime.

Despite the potential embarrassment surrounding Hunter's case and the disruption to the re-election campaign, the Biden family rallied around him in a show of unity.

Hunter arrived accompanied by family members, including his stepmother Jill Biden, the first lady. She was

present for jury selection, sitting in the second row, with Hunter's wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, and his sister, Ashley Biden. According to reports, she followed the interview of the jurors closely, jotting down notes in a white legal pad.

The president did not appear but issued a statement saying: "I am the president, but I am also a dad. Jill and I love our son, and we are so proud of the man he is today. 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."

The president is preparing for a pivotal month in his campaign for re-election. Over the course of the three-week trial, he will make two foreign trips and hold a star-studded fundraiser in California with George Clooney, Julia Roberts and the former president Barack Obama.

The jury is expected to deliver its verdict just as Biden is rehearsing for his crucial first TV debate with Trump on June 27. Hunter Biden also faces another trial, in September, over an alleged scheme to avoid taxes on his income as a businessman working overseas.

World

Japan's killer bears are developing an appetite for human flesh

Japan

Richard Lloyd Parry

For years he caused terror on the island of Hokkaido, a huge, bloodthirsty brown bear who rampaged among farms, ripping out and devouring the innards of helpless cattle.

Oso18, as the fearsome animal was known, was finally shot and killed last year by a hunter, and his reign of terror was brought to an end. But now the attacks have resumed, prompting anxiety about a "new Oso" and the growing number of bears who are acquiring a taste for flesh — human as well as animal.



On May 21, close to where Oso rampaged in eastern Hokkaido, a black bear broke into a cattle shed and savaged the calves inside, ripping out and eating the entrails of four of them. Four more were so badly injured that they had to be destroyed.

Three days later, a black bear in rural Gunma prefecture, north of Tokyo, seriously hurt an elderly couple after entering their home in the middle of the night, leaving them with head and face injuries that will take months to heal.

In the middle of May, a 64-year-old man in Akita

Bear attacks on humans are becoming common in Japan

prefecture was killed by a bear while he was foraging in the mountains for bamboo shoots. Two police officers had to beat a retreat after being mauled while trying to retrieve his body.

"I've seen about 40 bears myself," a local government officer in Akita told the All-Nippon News Network. "Bears are everywhere. Even if you set off firecrackers right next to them, they won't run away. They just prowls around."

In the 12 months to March, 219 people were attacked nationwide in 198 separate incidents, the highest number since records began 17 years ago. Six people were killed, including a university student who was eaten by an Ussuri brown bear on Hokkaido in November.

Locals took heart after the shooting

last July of Oso18, whose name came from Osotsubetsu, where he prowled, and the width in centimetres of the pawprints he left behind.

In the previous four years he had attacked 66 cows near the towns of Shibecha and Akkeshi in eastern Hokkaido, of which 32 died. When he was finally slain, he was found to be 2.2m (7ft 3in) tall and 1.2m (3ft 11in) on all fours. He ended up being eaten in a barbecue at a game restaurant in Tokyo, and in a miso stew in the Hokkaido city of Kushiro.

Bears have a largely vegetarian and insect diet, but heavy rain last summer, followed by drought, reduced the population of insects and the harvest of chestnuts, mountain grapes and kiwi fruit on which the bears gorge in the

autumn months in preparation for hibernation, leading them to seek alternative sources of nourishment.

Experts speculate that they have also acquired a taste for flesh from consuming deer, whose numbers are rising unchecked because of the dwindling number of hunters in Japan. People who do hunt often leave the carcasses of deer on the mountain, where they are easy pickings for bears.

"The lack of professional hunters, like park rangers in Alaska financed by the government, is a problem when it comes to controlling the number of bears," Yasushi Fujimoto, head of a hunting organisation, said. "The mountain is turning into a restaurant for bears, because of the remains left on the mountain after hunting."



ISA TERLI/ANADOLU/GETTY IMAGES

Modern wonder The moon rises over Grand Camlica Mosque in Istanbul, designed by the female architects Bahar Mizrak and Hayriye Gül Totu. It opened in 2019

Tallest tower planned for tornado alley

United States

Harriet Alexander

He has baffled locals, perplexed politicians and drawn derision from Manhattan, but Scot Matteson is determined to build his 120-storey Legends Tower in a car park in Oklahoma City — a place famous for tornadoes.

Next week the city will decide whether to let Matteson construct the 1,907ft (581m) tower, whose height is a reference to 1907, when Oklahoma voted to become the 46th state.

"There are a lot of naysayers and a lot of jealousy," Matteson said. "But there are also a lot of people behind us."

Matteson has enlisted the engineering firm Thornton Tomasetti, based in Manhattan. Ola Johansson, of Thornton Tomasetti, accepted that tornadoes were a concern but said the danger was not as severe as people imagined. "It's primarily related to airborne debris," he said. "That airborne debris is most likely to be prevalent at the lower level ... you use impact-resistant glass and other things. So it doesn't matter if the tower is 500ft or 1,500ft."

If approved, Legends Tower will be more than twice the height of anything else in Oklahoma, and exceed by more than 100ft One World Trade Center in New York, the tallest building in the US.

Netanyahu faces revolt over 'truce'

Israel

Gabrielle Weiniger Tel Aviv

Israel will agree to a ceasefire deal only if it includes the elimination of Hamas, Binyamin Netanyahu said yesterday as he faced a rebellion over a proposal to end the war in Gaza.

Israel's prime minister told the Knesset's foreign affairs and defence committee that "claims that we agreed to a ceasefire without our conditions being met are incorrect". He reiterated that the primary aim of the war was "the elimination of Hamas".

He said in a video statement released after the meeting: "It is not something I am adding now; it is not something I am adding because I have been pressured by the coalition. It is something the war cabinet unanimously agreed upon."

The blueprint announced by President Biden was intended to end hostilities in Gaza after a six-week ceasefire

and the release of some hostages and Palestinian prisoners.

About 120 people are unaccounted for after being kidnapped by Hamas on October 7, with at least 37 of them presumed dead, after Hamas gunmen stormed across Gaza's border into Israel, killing about 1,200 people.

Members of Israel's hard-line coalition government had threatened to quit over the potential deal.

Itamar Ben-Gvir, the national security minister, said he had still not been shown the proposal. He said in a speech to his party aimed at Netanyahu that he had been to the prime minister's office twice and both times officials had refused to show him the document.

Ben-Gvir said he was later told by Tzachi Hanegbi, Netanyahu's national security adviser, that a written version of the proposal "did not exist".

Ben-Gvir accused Netanyahu of trying to "whitewash" the plan and insisted

Four hostages dead in Gaza

Four hostages in Gaza, including a British citizen, were confirmed dead yesterday in circumstances the Israeli military said would raise "difficult questions".

Chaim Peri, 79, Amiram Cooper, 84, Yoram Metzger, 80, and Nadav Popplewell, 51, a British-Israeli citizen, were last seen in videos released months ago by Hamas. Hamas said they were killed in Israeli airstrikes. The Israeli military said its investigations found the four were held in Khan Younis, a southern Gaza city from which its troops withdrew in April.

that any deal must include the toppling of Hamas. "What do you have to hide?" he said, addressing Netanyahu. "If the deal is not reckless and includes a commitment to end the war to topple Hamas then why do you refuse to present it to me?" He threatened again to quit the coalition.

Bezalel Smotrich, the far-right finance minister, has also threatened to leave the government should Israel go ahead with the deal.

Should Ben-Gvir and Smotrich, alongside other right-wingers, leave the coalition, the government may fall. Members of the opposition, led by Yair Lapid, have voiced support for the US-backed deal and may be able to prop up Netanyahu to enact the ceasefire, should he accept them in the coalition.

Heavy bombing was reported across the Gaza Strip along with rocket attacks against Israel overnight on Sunday.

Antony Blinken, the US secretary of

state, spoke to two other members of Israel's war cabinet on Sunday in discussions that "commended Israel's readiness to conclude a deal and affirmed that the onus is on Hamas to accept", according to a state department press release.

In the call with Blinken, the Israeli minister Benny Gantz said Israel would do "whatever is necessary" to bring back the hostages, adding in a statement it was "imperative" the deal recommended by Biden was implemented.

Arab foreign ministers from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Egypt said in a statement it was important to "deal seriously and positively" with the Biden proposal.

The diplomatic efforts come after 22 people were killed in central Gaza and Khan Yunis to the south. The Israeli military said the targets hit included a "sniper post" and other fighters, military infrastructure and weapons depots.

I'm that bitch Meloni: PM's enemies gift her a slogan

Italy

Tom Kington Rome

Giorgia Meloni may have hit on a sure-fire slogan to stop voters in their tracks as Italy goes to the polls this weekend.

At a rally in Rome's Piazza del Popolo, the Italian prime minister won noisy applause with a video in which she introduces herself as "that bitch Meloni".

The video was filmed by her staff last week when she met Vincenzo De Luca, the left-wing governor of the Campania region, after he was recorded calling Meloni a "bitch" in a private conversation. Meloni stuck out her hand and said, "President De Luca, that bitch Meloni, how are you?"

De Luca described her greeting as a "vulgar" stunt but Meloni appeared determined to milk it for all it was worth at her rally, claiming that "people are shocked because a woman defends herself", adding, "I am a woman and I demand the same respect others get."



Giorgia Meloni's remark went down well with her supporters

Meloni presented her campaign for the European elections on Sunday as a personal crusade, telling voters that backing her involved spending "just five minutes to tell me you are at my side".

Despite standing as a candidate, Meloni will not take up her seat in the European parliament if elected — a common ploy among high-profile politicians in Italy where European elections are treated as a popularity contest by the main parties.

Meloni has been touted as a king-maker in the next European commission, able to choose between supporting Ursula von der Leyen for a second term or building a hard-right voting

bloc with France's Marine Le Pen. But before she capitalises on her new-found clout in Europe, Meloni has set herself a target this weekend of matching the 26 per cent of votes she took in Italy's 2022 general election.

That means taking on her coalition ally Matteo Salvini, leader of the League, who is bashing the EU in an attempt to steal votes from her.

Salvini has fielded a former army general as a candidate, who last week used a symbol evoking an Italian fascist Second World War commando unit.

"As people on the same side compete with each other, campaigning is becoming more violent and more simple in an effort to attract attention," said Alessandra Ghisleri, head of polling firm Euromedia Research. "Issues relating to the EU are often a bit distant, so you need to work even harder to attract that attention."

Flavia Perina, a right-wing MP-turned-journalist said: "In the last ten days the fear of voters abstaining from voting has driven political parties to try and galvanise them, and Meloni's *stronza* remark went down really well with her backers."

Roughly translating as "bitch", the word has prompted a debate about the growing use of slurs and swear words in public debate in a country where blaspheming — the use of religious references in curses — is strongly frowned on. The habit of using bad language has even spread to Pope Francis, who apologised last month after claiming there was too much "faggotry" in Catholic seminars.

Meloni's use of the word *stronza* contrasts with Margaret Thatcher's decision to adopt the more prosaic nickname "Iron Lady" after it was bestowed upon her by the Soviet Union.

"In recent years, as political correctness wanes, Italian politicians have been happier to use swear words because they think it shows they are not part of the elite and on the same level as voters," Perina added.

considered in the UK, where prices are decided by water companies. Anglian Water is trialling higher summer tariffs in the Norwich and Lincoln areas from May to the end of August.

In Toulouse, the scheme has angered many residents. "This is punitive environmentalism," Roland, a suburban householder with a large lawn, told Europe 1 radio.

It has also riled environmental activists. "This is not a measure in the general interest," Alternative pour une Métropole Citoyenne, a green opposition group, said. It accused the local authority of designing the scheme "to cope with droughts while allowing Veolia [the water company] not to lose revenue".

The Toulouse area loses 11 per cent of its water each year to network leaks.



Wedding cruise stirs up wave of complaints

A cruise ship packed with the cream of Indian society for an opulent wedding party has prompted numerous complaints to police after it pulled into the port of Genoa and pumped out loud music until dawn (Tom Kington and James Imam write).

The noisy stopover was part of a Mediterranean tour by 800 revellers who are also taking in Palermo, Rome and Cannes in one of the most outrageously expensive Indian weddings in history.

Estimated to cost €139 million, the cruise is just one event in the run-up to the July wedding of Anant Ambani, son of the billionaire tycoon Mukesh Ambani — India's richest man — and Radhika Merchant.

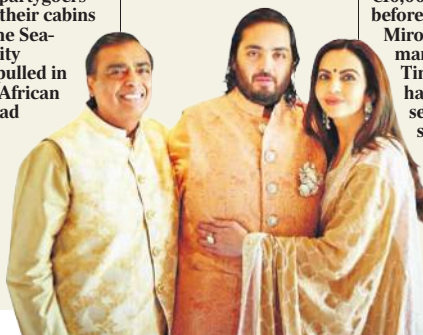


the daughter of a wealthy industrialist.

Pulling into Genoa in the small hours of Sunday with speakers blaring music, the Celebrity Ascend cruise ship startled residents who rang the police to no avail. As the partygoers staggered to their cabins on Sunday, the Sea-Eye 4, a charity rescue ship, pulled in to unload 51 African migrants it had intercepted.

Genoa was the latest port in which the revellers had prompted complaints. The

Celebrity Ascend had steamed into the city from Portofino, about 40km east of Genoa, where visitors were cleared out by the mayor for five hours on Saturday to give the wedding party free rein. With a



Portofino was one stop for the Celebrity Ascend to celebrate the wedding of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant, below, with his billionaire father Mukesh

population of less than 400, Portofino is a popular wedding venue. Kourtney Kardashian married Travis Barker, drummer of Blink-182, there two years ago.

More than a dozen restaurants in the town were offered up to €10,000 to provide dishes and snacks. However, the management of Il Puny — a renowned restaurant that counted Silvio Berlusconi among its clients — refused to take part. "We were offered €10,000 just 20 days before the event," Andrea Miroli, the restaurant's manager, told The Times, adding that he had been asked to serve lobster sandwiches.

"I find this offensive, bad-mannered and incorrect. I have my customers and an illustrious history to protect."

Toulouse ups water charges in summer

France

David Chazan Paris

Water will cost substantially more in summer than in winter in the southern French city of Toulouse under a measure introduced to encourage frugality during increasingly common droughts.

Charges are rising by 42 per cent from June until the end of September. Toulouse is one of the first big European cities to charge a premium for water during the long, dry summer.

Jean-Luc Moudenc, the conservative mayor who implemented the policy, told the TFI television channel: "The aim is to create new habits during the ... summer when water resources are low, to encourage people to be more careful."

Seasonal charging is also being

Across France, water losses to leakage are estimated to be about 20 per cent, comparable to those in the UK.

The surcharge will apply to water used by the 800,000 residents of Toulouse, France's fourth largest city. The authorities say it will be partly offset by a 30 per cent cut in the winter. A couple with one child will typically pay only 60 cents more for water over the year, according to the local authority. The annual charge for a household with a garden and a pool is likely to increase by more than €80.

Last year a drought depleted water reserves in southwestern France. The Pyrénées-Orientales, France's southernmost department, is still suffering from a drought. Toulouse had a record temperature of 42.4C last August.

French parents sue TikTok for 'encouraging suicide'

David Chazan, Paris

French parents are suing TikTok, the Chinese-owned video-sharing app, arguing that it failed to protect children who killed themselves after being influenced by harmful content.

Marie was 15 when she was found dead in her bedroom in her family home in Cassis on the French Riviera in 2021. When Stéphanie, her mother, looked through Marie's phone she found her daughter had been viewing TikTok videos that Stéphanie believed could encourage suicide.

Last month Marie's parents formed a group, Algos Victima, with other

parents to start a joint lawsuit against TikTok which they hope will force social media platforms to improve safety. Six other families whose children killed themselves or suffered severe mental illness after being exposed to what the parents describe as harmful content have joined the group.

Marie's parents lodged a criminal complaint in September for "incitement to suicide" and "failure to protect a person in danger", but they believe a group lawsuit will carry greater weight.

TikTok did not respond to a request for comment. However, its website says: "If we believe someone under 13 is using TikTok, we will ban their account."

World



Colour of money: rare blue chamber reveals the riches of Pompeii

Experts digging at Pompeii have revealed a sacred room used for worship which was painted blue, a rare and expensive colour in the Roman city, where interiors were usually yellow, black, white or red (Tom Kington writes).

Using a costly local mineral to obtain the colour, the house owner then added paintings of women representing the seasons and the countryside.

Elsewhere in the room, piles of building materials suggest that redecoration had been planned, just as Pompeii



was buried in volcanic material by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD79.

Oyster shells left in one corner had either provided the builders' lunch or were waiting to be ground up for use in mortar — or both.

The discovery was announced yesterday as police at Herculaneum — Pompeii's neighbour, which was also buried by

the eruption — arrested a 27-year-old Dutch tourist who had allegedly written his name on an ancient frescoed wall with a marker pen.

Italy introduced tougher penalties this year for those who damage monuments and cultural sites, imposing fines of up to €40,000.



The room was painted blue, a costly colour. In Herculaneum, a tourist was arrested for writing his name on a wall, left

Last year a tourist from England was caught using a key to scratch his and his girlfriend's names on a wall at the Colosseum in Rome.

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The Mekong River flowing through the heart of Southeast Asia. Our journey along this amazing natural wonder explores the fascinating waterborne worlds along its banks, from floating villages, stilt houses, colourful floating markets and the thousands of local boats of all shapes and sizes plying its mud-coloured waters.

Departures September to December 2024 and February 2025

Tycoon's empire at risk over \$1bn divorce bill

South Korea

Richard Lloyd Parry Asia Editor

One of South Korea's richest men faces a struggle to hold on to his business empire after he was ordered to pay 1.38 trillion won (\$1 billion) to his estranged wife in the country's biggest divorce settlement.

Chey Tae-won may lose control of the SK Group, an industrial conglomerate, after appeal judges in Seoul more than doubled the award made in a lower court to Roh So-young, the daughter of a former president.

The Seoul high court ruled that Chey's marriage into the ruling family of the late president Roh Tae-woo, who led South Korea from 1988 to 1993, brought benefits to his business which should be recognised in the settlement. The judges also denounced him for his extra-marital affair with a woman with whom he now has a child.

"It was reasonable to rule that, as his wife, Roh played a role in increasing the value of SK Group and Chey's business activity," the ruling said, according to Agence France Presse. "[He] is not showing any signs of remorse for his foul behaviour in the course of the trial ... nor respect for monogamy."

The court ruled that Chey must pay 1.38 trillion won as a division of

property and two billion won in alimony to Roh. By one calculation made in a South Korean newspaper, the interest alone on the unpaid award amounts to more than £109,000 per day.

"I respect the judiciary's judgment, but I'm disappointed with the ruling, which denies the history of SK," Chey said. "I am sorry for causing public concern to members of SK Group and all stakeholders with personal matters. I will fulfil my duties and

award on the assumption that shareholders will be given dividends and other incentives to drive the price of its stocks up before a sell-off by Chey.

Analysts warned that, allowing for the capital gains tax he would have to pay on any sale, he would have to cash in at least £1.09 billion to cover the divorce bill. This could reduce his shareholding in SK from 18 per cent to 3 per cent. Alternatively, Chey, whose personal wealth is estimated at £1.8 billion by Bloomberg, could try to cover it by selling other assets and borrowing from banks.

Chey and Roh, both 63, met as students at the University of Chicago, married in 1988 and had a son and two daughters. In 2015, Chey announced he had a child with another woman, and two years later petitioned for divorce.

Chey has run SK since the death of his father, who was the brother of its founder. SK Group is South Korea's second biggest *chaebol*, or industrial conglomerate, after Samsung. Its businesses include oil, chemicals, semiconductors, information technology and mobile phone networks.



Chey Tae-won and Roh So-young married in 1988

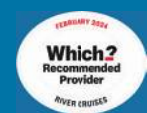
make sure it does not have a negative impact on SK and the national economy."

Chey's lawyers said that he would appeal to the supreme court, which could take two or three years. There is speculation about how he will meet his obligations if it fails.

Shares in SK rose on the news of the



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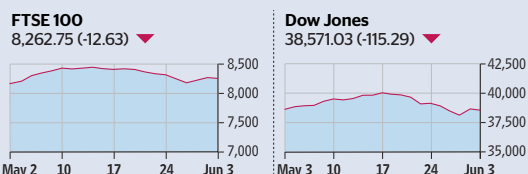
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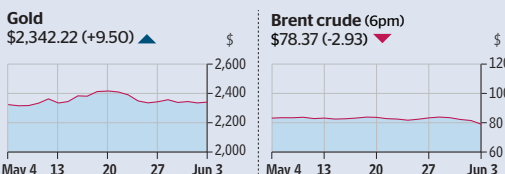
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Business

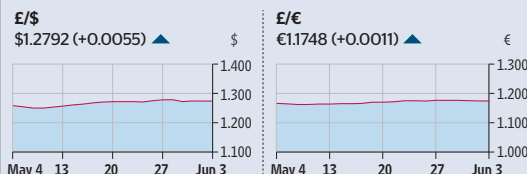
WORLD MARKETS (Change on the day)



COMMODITIES



CURRENCIES



Fund manager's human rights warning over Shein London listing

Isabella Fish Retail Editor

London must not become a listings venue of "last resort" for companies with "dubious human rights records", one of London's leading fund managers has warned in a broadside against the City's bid to host the \$70 billion float of Shein.

Peter Hugh Smith, chief executive of CCLA Investment Management, which oversees about £14 billion of

assets and is an investor in Amazon, said reports that the Chinese fast fashion group was eyeing a float in the UK were "worrying".

He said that government approval for the controversial initial public offering "sends the signal that the UK is willing to overlook significant human rights concerns. That is not a healthy image for a stock exchange."

Shein is exploring a London listing after an attempt to list in New York

faced regulatory hurdles. Both the Conservatives and Labour are said to have shown their support over what could be Britain's biggest stock market float.

However, several senior British politicians, including the chairmen of three parliamentary committees, have recently questioned Shein's suitability for a London stock market listing and called for greater scrutiny of the company. The fashion company, which was

founded in China but is now based in Singapore, has faced accusations of using suppliers whose workers are subject to labour abuses.

"In the face of declining listings on the London Stock Exchange, policy-makers are keen to court big companies looking to make their stock market debuts," Hugh Smith said. "The solution, however, is not to make the UK a listing place of last resort for companies with dubious human rights records."

Shein denies allegations of labour exploitation. A spokesman said that it was investing millions of pounds in strengthening governance and compliance across its supply chain, adding: "Our regular supplier audits are showing a consistent improvement in performance and compliance by our supplier partners. This includes improvements in ensuring that workers are compensated fairly for what they do."

Peter Hugh Smith, page 35

Court ruling wipes 10% off GSK

Significant setback for company in cancer case

Emma Powell, Alex Ralph

Almost £7 billion was wiped off the market value of GSK after the pharmaceutical giant suffered a significant setback in its costly legal battle over Zantac.

After markets closed on Friday night, an American state court ruled that experts could testify on behalf of just under 70,000 plaintiffs who claim that the heartburn treatment gave them cancer.

The FTSE 100 group has said that it disagrees with the Delaware state court's decision and will immediately seek an appeal.

The company had tried to get the claimants' experts and evidence thrown out on the grounds that it was not scientifically robust, which would effectively have stopped the cases in their tracks. The Delaware proceedings are still at an early stage and no date has been set for a trial.

GSK said: "Scientific consensus is that there is no consistent or reliable evidence that ranitidine [marketed as Zantac] increases the risk of any cancer and GSK will continue to vigorously defend itself against all claims."

The decision will overshadow GSK's participation at the American Society of Clinical Oncology's annual meeting, a key annual industry cancer event in Chicago that finishes today.

It comes a week after a state court in Illinois sided with GSK and found that it was not liable for a claimant's cancer — the first case involving the company to go before a jury. A second case that had been due to be heard at

the end of last month was also dismissed. A previous decision in Florida in 2022 dismissed about 50,000 cases at a pre-trial hearing, giving GSK's defence a boost.

Ranitidine helped to fund GSK's global expansion and became one of the first prescription blockbusters, generating more than \$1 billion in annual sales. The drug reduces the amount of acid produced by cells in the lining of the stomach and was a popular treatment for heartburn. It was released as a prescription drug by GSK in the 1980s before the rights to the over-the-counter product in America were sold to other drug companies.

GSK suspended all dose forms of Zantac to all markets pending tests and investigations after being contacted by regulators, and in 2020 the US Food and Drug Administration asked makers of all versions to withdraw products from the market.

The decision by the Delaware court extends the litigation and the overhang on the shares, which fell 168½p, or 9.5 per cent, to close at £15.98 yesterday, wiping about £6.9 billion off the group's market value. GSK has not made any provision for a potential settlement or put an estimate on what those might be. The base case of Citi, GSK's joint house broker, is a \$3 billion settlement.

The Delaware ruling does not mean that the court agrees with the experts testifying on behalf of the claimants, but it does expose the group to jury risk.

The company said it "will continue to vigorously defend itself against all claims and manage this litigation in the best interests of shareholders".



Sam Altman, chief executive of OpenAI, has built up a multibillion-dollar fortune with stakes in more than 400 companies

Altman profits from tech partners

Louisa Clarence-Smith

Sam Altman, the chief executive of artificial intelligence group OpenAI, has quietly built up a portfolio of personal investments in technology companies, some of which do business with OpenAI, valued at almost \$3 billion.

Altman, 39, has become one of Silicon Valley's most prolific investors, with holdings in more than 400 companies, including Airbnb, Stripe and Reddit, managed by his family office. The scale of his investment empire was first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

Altman has no stake in OpenAI, saying he does not want the seductions of wealth to corrupt the development of AI, and is paid an annual salary of \$65,000. However, he is building a for-

tune via his personal investment portfolio, which has been funded by a debt line from JP Morgan.

It includes holdings in companies which do business with OpenAI, raising questions about potential conflicts of interest. In one example, OpenAI announced a partnership with Reddit, the social media platform, which sent the company's shares up by more than 10 per cent, increasing the value of Altman's personal Reddit stake.

A blog post about the partnership, published in May, included a disclosure that Altman is a shareholder in Reddit. OpenAI, which developed the free to use AI system ChatGPT, said the partnership was led by Brad Lightcap, its chief operating officer, and approved by its independent board of directors.

Other companies in which Altman has made personal investments include Exowatt, a start-up which aims to modernise data centres for the AI era, and Helion, a company planning to build nuclear-fusion power plants.

OpenAI is in talks with Helion to buy large quantities of electricity to power data centres, and Altman has recused himself from negotiations, the WSJ reported. Altman is a Stanford University dropout who arrived on the tech scene as the founder of Loopt, a mobile social networking service.

He was president of Y Combinator, a San Francisco-based startup accelerator, for five years, before becoming chief executive of OpenAI in 2019.

Other companies he has invested in

Continued on page 32

Business

Need to know

1 Almost £7 billion was wiped off the market value of GSK after the pharmaceutical business suffered a setback in its costly legal battle over Zantac. An American state court ruled that experts could testify on behalf of just under 70,000 plaintiffs who claim the heartburn treatment gave them cancer. **Page 31**

2 London must not become a listings venue of "last resort" for companies with "dubious human rights records", a leading fund managers has warned. Peter Hugh Smith, head of CCLA Investment Management, said reports that the Chinese fast-fashion group Shein may float in the UK were "worrying". **Page 31**

3 Sam Altman, the chief executive of OpenAI, has built up a portfolio of investments in technology companies valued at almost \$3 billion. Altman, 39, has holdings in more than 400 companies, including Airbnb, Stripe and Reddit. **Page 31**

4 Despite an expected rate cut this Thursday from the European Central Bank, markets are betting that, rather than cutting in co-ordinated fashion, central banks in Britain and the US will move only after the summer, raising the prospect of monetary policy divergence and volatility in currency markets.

5 Monzo has posted its maiden annual profit despite a surge in provisions for possible bad loans as the digital bank's lending book grows and arrears rise. It swung from a pre-tax loss of £116.3 million in 2023 to a profit of £15.4 million in the 13 months to the end of March this year.

6 Retail sales in the UK remained downbeat last month as wet weather and rising bills kept consumers cautious. According to the British Retail Consortium and KPMG, total retail sales jumped by 0.7 per cent over the year to May, up from April's 4 per cent drop. **Page 34**

7 Shares in a vaping company have been suspended as the board cannot provide an "accurate update" on its financial position. Chill Brands said more time was needed for an inquiry into Callum Sommerton, its chief executive, amid allegations of insider dealing. **Page 36**

8 Hipgnosis Songs Fund's private equity suitor has improved its offer for the music rights owner to \$1.6 billion. Blackstone is increasing its cash offer from \$1.30 a share to \$1.31 a share and structuring the deal as a scheme of arrangement. **Page 37**

9 Initial public offerings in London's "Class of 2021" have lost roughly £30 billion in market value since listing their shares. More than 100 companies were listed on the London Stock Exchange in 2021, a record year for flotations in the City. **Page 38**

10 WH Ireland has plans to slim down to a pure wealth management firm after offloading its loss-making capital markets division to Zeus Capital for a token £1 plus possible performance-related payments of up to £5 million. **Page 39**

Markets face volatility if ECB diverges from the Fed

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

After years of aggressive tightening, rate-setters in advanced economies are preparing to respond to falling inflation by lowering borrowing costs from multi-decade highs.

An expected rate cut this Thursday from the European Central Bank comes in the wake of reductions by Sweden's Riksbank and the Swiss National Bank. The Bank of Canada is expected to follow suit next week.

However, markets are betting that, rather than cutting in co-ordinated fashion, central banks in Britain and the United States will move only after the summer, raising the prospect of monetary policy divergence and volatility in currency markets.

The likelihood of the Bank of England cutting interest rates this month was dashed by the announcement of a general election on July 4, which prevents the monetary policy committee from making public speeches or statements in advance of its next decision on June 20. Shifts in monetary policy are usually accompanied by signalling from MPC members in advance of their meetings. Investors have now pushed back bets on a UK interest rate cut to September.

The biggest outlier in the race to cut interest rates is the US Federal Reserve, the world's most powerful central bank, which is grappling with unexpectedly stubborn inflation, a strong labour market and robust growth. Investors are betting on the Fed's first rate cut since 2020 in December, a month after US presidential elections, which would make it the last major authority to loosen monetary policy.

"The Fed has good reason to main-

tain a hawkish bias over the coming months, given the upcoming US elections," Peter Praet, former chief economist at the ECB, said. "While future fiscal and trade policy is highly uncertain, the potential for fiscal policy to remain expansionary and possibly become even more so could fuel another inflation surge, as could continued or even greater trade protectionism. None of this is the case in Europe."

In recent decades, the world's central banks have largely followed the lead of the Fed, whose actions shape important asset markets such as sovereign bond yields and currency markets. But the prospect of rate cuts in Europe and no change in the US will mark the first big transatlantic divergence since 2013, when the ECB cut interest rates and the Fed signalled a "tapering" in its quantitative easing bond buying.

"The US economy has been and likely will remain much stronger than the eurozone in terms of growth and inflation. Ultimately, that will drive divergence," Ruben Segura-Cayuela, Europe economist at Bank of America, said. He expects only one rate cut worth 0.25 percentage points this year from the Fed, compared with three worth 0.75 percentage points from the ECB.

Before 2011, in more than 65 years, the ECB and the German Bundesbank before it had never cut interest rates before the US, which makes a potential eurozone rate cut this week a "unique event in modern times", Jim Reid at Deutsche Bank said.

The biggest spillover of central banks no longer moving in sync will be in the currency markets, where the dollar is expected to strengthen in relation to the pound, the euro and the Canadian dollar. A high interest rate environment

Euro wobbles



benefits a currency, as investors can borrow in lower interest rate jurisdictions and then invest in higher return assets priced in dollars.

Analysts at Société Générale expect the euro to fall to a low of \$1.05 against the dollar by the end of the year, the weakest since November 2022, and for the pound to slump to \$1.19 against the greenback, the lowest since the aftermath of Liz Truss's mini-budget.

Weaker currencies also risk keeping inflation high by importing higher prices into an economy.

Central bankers have begun playing down the consequences of monetary policy divergence for financial conditions and asset prices.

Andrew Bailey, governor of the Bank of England, told journalists last month that there was "no law which says that we can only move after the Fed moves". He said: "We have a remit and a target which is related to domestic inflation in the UK."

"We're an open economy, so we take the rest of the world into consideration, but we take it into consideration only

Underperforming Train gets £16m

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

The star fund manager who apologised last month for his poor recent stock-picking performance is thought to have received well over £16 million in dividends and pay from the asset management business that he jointly heads.

Nick Train, co-founder of Lindsell Train, banked £14 million from dividends, according to the latest annual report. He is also thought to be the highest-paid director, who took a pay cut from £5.6 million last time to £2.6 million in the year to January.

Train, 65, has been one of the most highly regarded stockpickers in the City, managing the £1.5 billion Finsbury Growth & Income Trust and the £3.6 billion Lindsell Train UK Equity Fund. But he has underperformed in the past two years and last month apologised to shareholders of FGIT, saying: "We really should be able to do better."

Train co-founded Lindsell Train with Michael Lindsell in 2000 but remains the more visible of the two men and has

amassed a strong following after picking long-time share winners including Experian. More recently, some of his bets have turned sour, partly because of poor sentiment about UK stocks but also some misfires, including Burberry.

The latest report from Lindsell Train shows clients defecting from the group's funds, with assets under management tumbling by 12.2 per cent to £15.9 billion "primarily due to net outflows". Fee revenue dropped by 10.8 per cent to £86.1 million. Operating profits at the firm fell by 17.5 per cent to £55 million and the total dividend payout was cut from £49 million to £39 million. Train and Lindsell, and their spouses, each own about 36 per cent of the business.

Train said last month that he was "frustrated by the malaise gripping the UK equity market", which he argued was "only partly justified". He has therefore largely stuck with his investment philosophy, saying: "What is difficult is finding a credible way to convey to [FGIT] shareholders why we remain optimistic about the company's invest-

ment portfolio." The shift by investors to passive index-tracking funds has hit active managers like Train, while the collapse of the empire of another once-feted asset manager, Neil Woodford, has also dented confidence.

Net outflows from the UK Equity Fund have amounted to £878 million over the year to the end of April, according to Morningstar data. Over three years, £3.2 billion has been pulled from the fund, according to Citywire. Over five years the fund has delivered a return of 12.5 per cent, significantly lagging the 28.8 per cent produced by the Investment Association UK All Companies benchmark.

FGIT, a constituent of the FTSE 250, has underperformed the UK equities investment trust benchmark over five years but is still ahead over ten years.

Fund management firms typically charge fees based on a percentage of assets under management, benefiting when markets rise or new clients are won, but losing when markets fall or clients pull out money.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31
Altman's vast investment empire

include Retro, which aims to extend healthy human lifespans by 10 years. He has also co-founded a venture firm, Apollo Projects, with his brother Max.

Last month, Altman and his husband, Oliver Mulherin, a software engineer, signed a pledge to give away most of their wealth to philanthropic causes. "We intend to focus our giving on supporting technology that helps create abundance for people," they wrote.

Bret Taylor, OpenAI's chairman, told the WSJ that Altman has "consistently followed policies and been transparent about his investments".

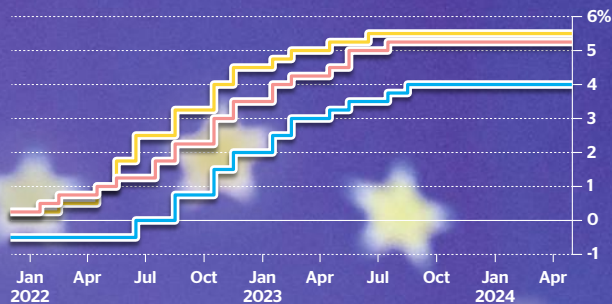
He said: "Sam is fully focused on his role as chief executive. We carefully manage any potential conflicts and always put OpenAI and our mission first. Our fully independent audit committee reviews all potential conflicts involving directors and officers to ensure the best outcomes for OpenAI."

News Corporation, ultimate owner of The Times, last month became the latest publisher to strike a deal allowing OpenAI to use news content from its publications.

Major central banks are gearing up for rate cuts...

Borrowing costs %

UK US Eurozone

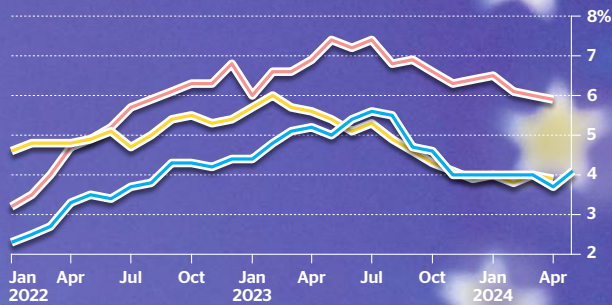


Source: BoE, Fed, ECB

...but sticky service sector inflation is worrying them

Annual services inflation %

UK US Eurozone



Source: ONS, BEA, ECB

insofar as it affects inflation in this country."

Isabel Schnabel, an executive board member at the ECB, said last month that it was important "not to overstate the narrative of monetary policy divergence". Instead she warned that difficulties in bringing inflation back to 2 per cent was "a global phenomenon".

"We are seeing second-round effects all over the world and they are still working their way through our economies," Schnabel told Japan's Nikkei. "Services inflation plays a large role

in many jurisdictions." Her comments were vindicated last week by data showing a larger-than-expected rise in eurozone inflation in May from 2.4 per cent to 2.6 per cent, a four-month high. Services inflation, the most important measure of domestic price growth watched by central bankers, rose from 3.6 per cent to 4.1 per cent. Service sector inflation has also failed to come down as much as the Bank of England has forecast, dropping modestly from 6 per cent to 5.9 per cent in April.

Headline consumer prices inflation

in the UK also did not decline as much as expected in April — to 2.3 per cent rather than 2.1 per cent — and US price growth has risen in three of the past four months to 3.4 per cent.

Sideways moves in inflation will lead central banks to cut interest rates in a gradual and "cautious" fashion, Christian Keller, head of economics research at Barclays, said. "The ECB is likely to approach the easing cycle cautiously and the prospects of Federal Reserve interest cuts remain tenuous and tied to data developments."

Monzo beats bad loans for first profit

Ben Martin Banking Editor

Monzo has posted its maiden annual profit despite a surge in provisions for possible bad loans as the digital bank's lending book grows and arrears rise.

TS Anil, Monzo's chief executive, hailed a "landmark year" for the nine-year-old business after annual results showed a swing from a pre-tax loss of £116.3 million in 2023 to a profit of £15.4 million in the 13 months to the end of March this year, its first time in the black. Gross revenues soared from £355.6 million to £880 million, while the group's deposit base climbed by 88 per cent to £112 billion in the period, which included a change of year-end from February to March.

Yet the amount Monzo set aside to cover future expected credit losses also rose sharply, to £176.9 million from £101.2 million the previous year. Anil insisted that this 75 per cent jump in its bad debt provision was commensurate with the 84 per cent increase in Monzo's total lending balances to £1.4 billion.

The group's lending has grown rapidly, partly because of its push into the "buy now, pay later" industry through its Flex product. Borrowing available to its customers either through overdrafts or Flex climbed to £15 billion from £540 million a year earlier.

However, provisions were also pushed higher by an increase in the number



Monzo boss TS Anil hailed a 'landmark year'

of borrowers falling behind on debt repayments, with about £49 million of its gross lending in arrears and £84.6 million in default.

"We certainly saw some minor increases in arrears as the cost of living crisis played itself out," Anil said, adding that Monzo lends "only a small portion of our balance sheet".

The group's loan-to-deposit ratio is less than 15 per cent and there was a "marginal increase" in its realised losses as a percentage of average balances, saw a "marginal increase" to 9.75 per cent from 7.58 per cent, Anil said. Realised losses and expected credit losses totalled £204 million.

"We've always been incredibly disciplined with our lending," he insisted.

Monzo is part of a cohort of young online-only lenders and fintechs, including Starling Bank and Revolut, that are taking market share from the big high street banking incumbents. Founded in 2015, it now has 9.7 million customers, including more than 400,000 business clients.

The business is now targeting international expansion. While Monzo already has small operations in the United States, it announced on Monday that it would embark on its long-suspected push into continental Europe by entering Ireland. Anil said the bank expected to open an office in Dublin "in the coming months".

Shein could go out of fashion in City

BUSINESS COMMENTARY Tracey Boles



Shein has added a bit of sparkle to many a teenager's wardrobe. Could the fast fashion retailer be about to do the same for London's stock market which has become rather dowdy lately?

Certainly the numbers for a potential initial public offering are dazzling, with the online retailer expected to be valued at more than \$60 billion. That would make it one of the biggest firms in London and give the IPO pipeline some much-needed polish. No wonder the two main political parties have welcomed Shein with open arms.

Shein — pronounced She-in — is a formidable business in terms of its operating capabilities. It makes items on demand so the customer effectively controls design, dictating styles, colours and patterns. The items, often as cheap as chips, are produced at lightning speed.

Founded in Nanjing, China, in 2012 and now headquartered in Singapore, Shein was looking to list in America but the US Securities and Exchange Commission told the company that its application would not be accepted unless it submitted a public filing. Shein did not find the expected glare palatable and it is looking to list elsewhere, with London a leading candidate.

In the UK, rumblings have started about the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) credentials, notably its labour and supply chain policies. Retailers also complain that it gets a price advantage by avoiding duty and VAT for British consumers.

Senior politicians have said that a Shein listing should not be allowed to go ahead while parliament is dissolved for the general election and that an IPO by the business should be subjected to greater scrutiny.

The company has tried to respond to criticism as well as to give itself a western face. Its executive chairman Donald Tang has spent a long time in the US. But Shein would come under intense scrutiny as a public entity and would need to find non-executive directors willing to reassure investors on its ESG policies.

As the veteran retail analyst Clive Black of Shore Capital puts it: "The governance of the business will be a major talking point."

"How transparent will they be about their operating performance, [including] who supplies the products, what their labour processes are and how the product is distributed? Shein faces some really substantial compliance issues because this is not a conventional business."

The London market has accepted contentious listings before. Shein for its part has pointed to its code of conduct for suppliers and wants to reduce waste. In any case the retailer could just be testing the waters for a market debut here.

The confidential filing, expected as early as this week, is a draft and not a firm commitment to the UK stock market. It may be fishing for the answer to this question: we love its ultra-fast fashion but do we love Shein enough?

Leader of the herd

The Internet of Things has come a long way since connected cows hit the headlines. For the uninitiated, these are cattle that wear devices such as collars and ear tags that monitor them and their habits, leading to better meat and dairy products.

An increasing number and range of devices are being connected to the IoT. The number of connections is expected to increase from 2.9 billion in 2022 to 73 billion in 2032. This allows companies to monitor or control the condition and location of their products anywhere in the world, be that in clinical care, smart buildings, energy management, or logistics and distribution. The benefits include efficiency, sustainability and value.

Vodafone, an early mover into the IoT, has become a dominant player. Since 2010, it has built a global business connecting about 187 million devices worldwide for thousands of brands. Its IoT products and services business generated €1 billion of revenue last year and became a standalone company on April 1.

So what's next for this fast-growing arm of the business? Vodafone wants to "hyperscale" the unit by attracting more customers, on more networks in more countries. I see a time when it may make sense for the business to be spun off from Vodafone for a stock market listing. Given the potential for growth, this is one to watch.

Oil of plenty

Should the UK really be removing investment allowances for the North Sea, which is what Labour might do if it gets into power? Net zero is years away and electricity generated by renewables, while desirable, is not able to meet the needs of a populace 85 per cent reliant on gas boilers. If we don't produce enough of our own gas, we will have to import liquefied natural gas, which carries its own carbon footprint.

According to the oil and gas trade body OEUK, Labour's proposals for the oil and gas industry could see the UK "move towards being uninvestable". The party wants to remove "loopholes" — the consultancy Wood Mackenzie understood this to refer to the current investment (or uplift) allowance — but the lack of clarity about the plans means Labour could also remove the capital allowance.

Meanwhile, Norway continues to invest in the continental shelf. Oil and gas companies there will spend \$24 billion this year, reflecting growth in investments for exploration and on existing fields. Norway's system has been in place for three decades and allows all capital costs to be deducted. From a nation that set up a sovereign wealth fund for its surplus North Sea revenues, that speaks volumes. It makes Labour's proposals seem completely wrong-headed.

tracey.boles@thetimes.co.uk

Business

Weather and bills keep retail sluggish

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

Retail sales in the UK remained downbeat last month as wet weather and rising bills kept consumers cautious, two closely watched surveys show.

According to the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and KPMG, total retail sales jumped by 0.7 per cent over the year to May, up from April's 4 per cent drop. May's rise was well below the 12-month average increase of 2 per cent.

Separate research by Barclays, which monitors about 40 per cent of the UK's debit and credit card transactions, found that retail spending fell by 0.4 per cent over the past month, the sharpest decline since September 2022. Sluggish in-store spending and clothing sales drove overall retail consumption lower in May.

The figures illustrate that households remain cautious with their finances after a sharp rise in living costs over the past two years. A string of household bills rose in April, including broadband contracts and council tax in some areas, adding to pressure on budgets.

Downbeat retail sales indicate that the economy is slowly recovering from a short recession last year. Rishi Sunak, the prime minister, has emphasised to voters that the economy is gathering



TOLGA AKMEN/EPA

momentum under the Conservatives as part of his general election campaign. GDP grew by 0.6 per cent in the first quarter, the quickest in two years. The election will take place on July 4.

Helen Dickinson, chief executive of the British Retail Consortium, said: "Despite a strong bank holiday weekend for retailers, minimal improvement to weather across most of May meant

only a modest rebound in retail sales last month."

Data released by the Bank of England last month showed that consumer spending on credit cards and borrowing demand was weak over the spring. The British economy leans heavily on strong consumer spending to generate growth.

Barclays said that overall consumer

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Barclays said that overall consumer

Rain and rising cost of living pressures put a dampener on retail sales as consumers stayed at home during May

spending grew by just 1 per cent in May, the worst reading since February 2021 and also likely to be below the rate of inflation in the month, meaning that sales would have declined in real terms. May's inflation reading is published on June 19. Spending on takeaways fell by 0.2 per cent, the first drop since May 2020, while transactions at supermarkets were also weak, the bank said.

The BRC said that food sales jumped by 3.6 per cent on a three-month annual basis compared with 9.6 per cent growth in the same three months last year, a period influenced by the coronation bank holiday weekend. Food inflation has fallen rapidly over the past year. Non-food spending dropped by 2.4 per cent in the three months to May, larger than the 12-month average, although DIY spending was lifted by the May bank holidays.

There is hope that a clutch of sporting and entertainment events this summer and more settled, warmer weather will stimulate demand among consumers. Karen Johnson, head of retail at Barclays, said: "Retailers faced a challenging May, yet the few sunnier days in the month did bring a welcome uptick in footfall."

Macroeconomic conditions have gradually improved over the past year, with inflation down to 2.3 per cent, the lowest level in nearly three years, and real wages rebounding. Pay growth has remained strong at around 6 per cent, probably feeding into a rise in consumer confidence. The Bank of England is expected to cut interest rates from 5.25 per cent, a 16-year high, in the second half of this year, delivering a boost to household sentiment and finances.

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British factories bounce back into growth at quickest rate in two years

Jack Barnett

British factory output expanded at its quickest pace in nearly two years although the rate of growth was slightly slower than initially estimated, a closely watched survey shows.

The final S&P Global and Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply purchasing managers' index (PMI) for the UK's manufacturing industry jumped to 51.2 last month, up from 49.1 the previous month.

The reading was revised down slightly from an initial estimate of 51.3 but it tops the 50-point threshold that separates growth from contraction and is the highest point since July 2022.

Experts said that there was a widespread uptick in activity, signalling that demand is rising for consumer goods, equipment and investment assets as economic conditions stabilise.

Rob Dobson, director at S&P Global Market Intelligence, said: "The breadth of the recovery was also a positive, with concurrent output and new order growth registered for all of the main sub-industries (consumer, intermediate and investment goods) and all company size categories for the first time in over two years."

Manufacturers have been hit hard by a sharp rise in interest rates in the UK and globally. Businesses often finance purchases of manufactured goods by borrowing, which has become more costly. The Bank of England has pushed interest rates up to 5.25 per cent, a 16-year high.

"Manufacturing output has decisively exited its long recession," Rob Wood, chief UK economist at the consultancy Pantheon Macroeconomics, said.

Inflationary pressures persisted in



JAGUAR LAND ROVER/PA

The purchasing managers' index for manufacturing jumped from a reading of 49.1 in April to 51.2 last month

the industry, with factories increasing the price of products at the quickest pace in a year. The PMI survey suggests that the sharpest price increases were concentrated in the consumer and intermediate goods sectors.

Input price inflation, a measure of the rate of change in businesses' operating costs, rose for a fifth month in a row, though at a slower pace compared with April.

Dobson said: "The latest PMI survey data provided a mixed picture for price pressures at manufacturers. At the factory gate, output-charge inflation strengthened for the fifth successive month and to its highest level in a year. That said, a solid easing in the rate of increase in input costs should help prevent price pressures from becoming embedded."

UK consumer prices index inflation fell to 2.3 per cent in April from 3.2 per cent in the previous month. Services price growth remains elevated at 5.9 per cent.

Woo investors by reforming tax, CBI urges

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

Businesses have called on the next government of whichever party to revitalise "brand Britain" by setting out pro-investment reforms in tax, planning and skills in its first 100 days in power.

Rain Newton-Smith, chief executive of the employers' body the CBI, said the next administration had to come up with "a credible plan" to address poor productivity and weak growth.

"A new government of whatever colour provides an opportunity to shift gear and prioritise the long-term decisions that can deliver a decade of sustainable growth," she said. "Top of the in-tray should be sharpening the investor pitch for 'Brand Britain' — ensuring we are at the very top of the league table when it comes to investment."

While deliberately neutral on which party would be better for business, the CBI said the new government must be bold in pitching Britain to investors around the world.

One priority was a roadmap setting out long-run plans for business taxes so that companies considering new capital expenditure in the UK could plan with more certainty and predictability. Another was a credible plan to speed up the planning system while a third was the need to address labour shortages and boost productivity including reforming the apprenticeship levy.

Input from more than 400 business leaders and 70 trade associations shaped the latest CBI thinking, it said.

Mohammad Jamei, director of economic policy, said investors needed "forward guidance" to reassure them before making big spending decisions.

Mehreen Khan

Why markets are calm amid the rise of the populist right in Europe



“ This week's elections for the European parliament, the first without the UK, have been dominated by predictions of a surge in support for hard-right parties. But what are the economic consequences of a strengthened right wing in the legislature?

If polling is correct, the elections held across 27 member states from June 6 to June 9 could result in nearly half of the parliament's 720 seats being held by populist right-wing parties. The biggest will be Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy, the Alternative for Germany, and France's National Rally led by Marine Le Pen. The bulked-up presence of the hard right is likely to be accompanied by a rightward shift among the traditional centre-right political grouping, the European People's Party (EPP), which counts Germany's Christian Democrats among its ranks.

The biggest losers are likely to be the Greens, whose support hit a high watermark in 2019, when they won 72 seats on the back of younger voters' activism over climate change. The Greens are now on course to lose a third of their seats amid waning popular support for the climate transition and gripes against Greens serving as coalition partners in some western member states.

The immediate question after all votes are counted is whether a “grand coalition” of the centre-right EPP, Social Democrats and liberals can form a majority. In 2019 the three groups united to give their backing to Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president. A repeat three-way coalition is still the most likely outcome over an alliance of the centre and nationalist right, despite the constrained political arithmetic.

For all the uncertainty around the results, which will be among the most volatile since the parliament's first election in 1979, financial markets have barely

Marine Le Pen's allies could dominate in the European parliament



responded. Bond spreads between Germany and other eurozone countries — a traditional “fear gauge” — have been unmoved. Investors' pricing of eurozone assets is being driven by this week's likely interest rate cut from the European Central Bank, rather than election results.

Investors' indifference reflects a number of related factors. The first is that the composition of the European parliament is not the most important variable deciding the direction of EU policy in key areas such as defence, foreign policy or the economy. The parliament can make a commission president's life difficult and can even block legislation, but its heft is mostly outweighed by the member states and heads of government.

The muted market consequences of a hard-right parliament also reflect how Eurosceptic forces have become far less Eurosceptic. France's National Rally, Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, and Germany's AfD no longer want to quit the euro, the platform that propelled them to prominence over a decade ago during the bloc's debt crisis. We can thank Brexit for that.

On the flip side, full-blown federalists are also in vanishingly short-supply. Even President Macron of France has toned down his demands for “more Europe” in the face of his domestic political opponents who want more, not less, French sovereignty over Brussels.

In the absence of major contestation over the future of the eurozone, the architecture of the single currency — with its pandemic recovery fund, fiscal rules, and the European Central Bank — is largely settled. Outstanding issues such as the completion of the banking union or the capital markets union

have been shunted into the technocratic, rather than political, arena. Intractable divisions over how to complete both of these projects will persist, not because of strident opposition from the right wing, but the classical north-south tensions over risk-sharing in the eurozone.

This leaves climate and industrial policy as the areas where growing economic nationalism has the potential to shift the direction of EU policy. In 2019, Von der Leyen's commission was forced to respond to an unexpected “green wave” with reams of legislation to accelerate the transition to net zero emissions. This wave has now morphed into a “greenlash”, with voters concerned about the cost of the energy transition after two years of high inflation. Hard-right and centre-right parties have capitalised on the anxiety and are demanding rollbacks of laws such as the ban on new combustion engine sales after 2035, but the green agenda cannot be reversed entirely.

Climate wariness will feed into the EU's deeper splits on how to respond to Chinese dominance in the supply of clean tech and aggressive American fiscal policy to build up domestic capacity. On this, ascendant hard-right forces in the parliament and European Council can stymie a united EU response. Le Pen has hit out at Brussels for following America's lead on China and a parliamentary assistant for the AfD's lead election candidate has been arrested on suspicion of spying for Beijing.

Any co-ordinated EU industrial policy will also be complicated by the fact that it is larger, richer economies that are best placed to subsidise industry and attract manufacturers over smaller ones. Industrial policy in the EU is inherently competitive, creating winners and losers among poorer and richer member states. These inequities will stoke resentment among nationalists in southern and eastern Europe, who will see themselves as victims of another Brussels-led initiative to bend the rules in favour of rich economies.

They are resentments that echo the grievances of the sovereign debt crisis, when cack-handed policies laid the ground for today's right-wing forces to secure a foothold in Europe's politics. This time, the constellation of political forces and threats of a nationalist backlash is likely to create inertia rather than activism on industrial policy.

Mehreen Khan is Economics Editor of The Times

Peter Hugh Smith

London must not turn a blind eye to slavery claims as it woos Shein

In the face of declining listings on the London Stock Exchange, policymakers are keen to court big companies looking to make their stock market debuts. The UK's stock market is significantly smaller today than it was a decade ago, so concern over the City's attractiveness for companies seeking to raise funds is understandable. The solution, however, is not to make the UK a listing place of last resort for companies with dubious human rights records.

The recent rumours of Shein, the ultra-fast fashion retailer, eyeing a London listing are worrying. Shein has faced serious accusations of using suppliers whose workers are subject to labour abuses. Shein published a modern slavery statement in 2023, but an investigation by the Swiss watchdog Public Eye in May this year showed questions over potential labour abuses remained.

Shein has said the report was based on a small sample and it is investing tens of millions of dollars in strengthening governance and compliance across its supply chain and working to improve suppliers' practices. But as rumours of a London listing continue, it sends the signal that the UK is willing to overlook significant human rights concerns. That is not a healthy image for a stock exchange.

If we look at the big picture, modern slavery probably exists in just about every supply chain. It's a vile practice, whereby vulnerable people can be abused, coerced and exploited for profit. And, yes, it absolutely takes place in the UK.

Labour exploitation is not just morally reprehensible, it also undermines British businesses operating responsibly. They are unfairly disadvantaged by rivals whose competitive edge, their absurdly low prices, is built on exploited workers.

The problem is not when a company discovers there is labour exploitation in its supply chain. The problem is when it does nothing about it, tries to conceal it, or worse, doesn't bother looking for it in the first place.

Last year, our annual modern slavery benchmark research on the UK's 100 largest listed companies revealed a troubling truth — while

all companies have policies against modern slavery, many lack effective implementation. We, and many other investors, expect companies to act responsibly and take the necessary steps to do their utmost to prevent their own operations and those of their suppliers from benefiting from exploitation.

The news of Shein's potential listing comes just as the Council of the European Union gave final approval to the corporate sustainability due diligence directive. This legislation requires member states to pass legislation mandating environmental and human rights due diligence. Many British companies with a European presence will be affected. This directive followed an EU regulation passed in April that banned the sale, import and export of goods made with forced labour in the EU. There is significant risk that the UK will be seen as a market for goods tainted with forced labour.

The UK stands at a crossroads. Do we prioritise short-term gains by welcoming companies with a track record of alleged irresponsible labour practices, or do we uphold our commitment to responsible business conduct?

Strong investor protections and market integrity are the bedrock of London's appeal as a financial centre. We can, and must, remain competitive while upholding the highest standards. Investors, increasingly aware of labour market risks, must do more to hold companies to account, not just because exploitative labour practices are repellent, but because there is a growing regulatory risk in the US and now in Europe.

Failing to stay aligned will ultimately damage the UK's reputation and hurt our ability to do business with our American and European partners. That is precisely why CCLA, along with over 150 businesses, has called for the UK to introduce legislation mirroring the EU directive.

It's time for the UK to once again show it is serious about tackling modern slavery and that robust safeguards are not negotiable.

Peter Hugh Smith is chief executive of CCLA Investment Management, the UK's largest charity fund manager

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Business

Shares suspended for Chill inquiries

Tom Howard

Shares in a London-listed vaping company have been suspended because the board cannot provide an "accurate update" on its financial position with the chief executive still under investigation.

Yesterday morning Chill Brands asked the London Stock Exchange to stop investors from being able to buy and sell its shares. The company said that more time was needed to complete an investigation into Callum Sommerton, its chief executive, amid allegations of insider dealing.

Sommerton, 28, has been suspended since Fieldfisher, the law firm, was brought in to look at the allegations at the end of April.

Chill Brands disclosed yesterday that a second investigation was also under way, this time into "a number of commercial arrangements that the company has entered into connected to its UK vape business". No further details were disclosed.

With the outcomes of those investigations still unknown, the board of directors said they were "unable to currently provide the market with an accurate update of its financial and trading position". The intention is that a "more detailed update" on how the company is faring will be published once the investigations have concluded.

Chill Brands, whose nicotine-free Chill Zero vapes are sold via retailers including Morrisons, has come under

pressure from a clampdown on disposable vapes. Even before the suspension, its shares had lost more than 80 per cent of their value over the past year.

Its crisis deepened in April, when it abruptly suspended Sommerton. He said at the time: "I am surprised and disappointed by the allegations made against me, which I believe are without merit. I am confident that I will be vindicated. I will avoid further comment at this time to allow the process to progress."

The emergence of that initial investigation came shortly after the company received a letter from a large investor calling for a shareholder meeting to overhaul the board. Jonathan Swann, who owns a 13.5 per cent stake in Chill Brands, wants to oust the company's two co-founders: the chief operating officer Trevor Taylor and chief commercial officer Antonio Russo.

Swann accused the pair of treating Chill brands "as if it were their own private business". He raised concerns about their pay, a lack of progress in the US and the absence of a chief financial officer.

Taylor, 43, and Russo, 41, have already said that they intend to resign before the end of September, although a vote is taking place in London today at which shareholders will decide whether to go along with Swann's wish to expedite their exits. Swann has proposed appointing to the board Aditya Chathli, a PR executive.



TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS

Lord Ashcroft, a former deputy chairman of the Tory party, has a 16 per cent stake in the company

compliance services division to Inflexion, a private equity firm. It is returning up to £225 million of the proceeds to investors through a dividend and a share buyback.

The division accounted for 40 per cent of the group's adjusted profits and 20 per cent of its revenues. Alex Dacre, who was Marlowe's chief executive, has gone with it to Inflexion. His exit prompted Quinn, 64, to take on executive duties while Marlowe hunted for a new chief executive.

The company has yet to announce a successor to Dacre, 36, son of Paul Dacre, the editor-in-chief of DMG Media, which publishes the Daily Mail.

Ashcroft, Marlowe's biggest shareholder with a stake of almost 16 per cent, was appointed as a non-executive on its board in March. He said: "Kevin has made a significant contribution to the development of Marlowe throughout his six-year tenure."

Marlowe shares closed up by 28p, or 5 per cent, at 586p.

Ashcroft steps up after Marlowe boss resigns

Lord Ashcroft will lead the board of Marlowe after the business services company he co-founded completed a £430 million

deal to sell one of its main divisions (Ben Martin writes).

The Aim-listed group said yesterday that Kevin Quinn had resigned as its


executive chairman and Ashcroft, 78, a former treasurer and deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, would replace him on an interim and non-executive basis.

Marlowe said it had officially closed the sale of its software-focused governance, risk and

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Hollywood Bowl strikes it lucky to score £100m in UK revenues

Dominic Walsh

Britain's biggest tenpin bowling operator remained in growth in the first half of the year, despite being up against strong comparative trading.

Hollywood Bowl, which has 71 UK venues, reported like-for-like sales growth of 1.3 per cent in the six months to the end of March, with total UK revenues surpassing £100 million for the first time.

Its fledgling Canadian business, which trades under the Splitsville brand, was up 8 per cent on a like-for-like basis while its expansion from four

bowling centres to 11 at the end of March helped boost total revenues by 46.9 per cent to £15.9 million.

For the group as a whole revenue increased by 8.1 per cent to a record £119.2 million, while underlying earnings grew by 10 per cent to £48.3 million on an adjusted basis. Profit before tax was up 10.5 per cent to £29.5 million and the interim dividend was up 21.7 per cent to 3.98p per share.

Despite paying a £20 million dividend and spending money on acquisitions and refurbishments, Hollywood Bowl still ended the half year with net cash on the balance sheet of

● **Luke Littler is not alone in coining it on (and off) the oche (Dominic Walsh writes). The teenage darts sensation faces competition from Flight Club, which opened its first darts venue in Shoreditch almost a decade ago and has now opened its 27th bar some 10,500 miles away in Sydney — its third down under. The company, which had £100 million of sales last year, has just secured a £60 million bank facility to keep the darts flying. The chain, which also serves food and cocktails, is now part of Red Engine hospitality group.**

£41.4 million, just short of last year's £44.1 million.

Steve Burns, chief executive, said the growth in Canada had been "quicker than we originally anticipated, but we didn't want to say no to acquisitions that came our way. We're starting to grow a business of meaningful scale over there". Over the next decade, Hollywood Bowl has set itself a target of expanding to 130 venues — 95 in the UK and 35 in Canada.

The group has a strong pipeline of new sites, having acquired three centres in the UK in the first half of the year and another in Canada.

Although the group has stopped expanding its mini-golf courses as standalone operations, it is adding the courses to some of its larger bowling centres.

Asked whether Hollywood could seek further international opportunities, Burns said: "We've got our plates full with growth in the UK and Canada for the short term. Over the long term we'll look at other geographies, but we'll wait until we've got something meaningful to say."

Hollywood Bowl's shares closed down by ½p or 0.2 per cent to 331½p in Monday's trading.

Warehouse trust eyed for takeover

Jessica Newman

An investment trust focused on buying warehouses in Europe could become the latest British company to be bought by an overseas buyer after the property group confirmed it was in talks with Brookfield Asset Management about a potential takeover.

After the market closed yesterday, Tritax EuroBox said that Brookfield, the Canadian investment firm chaired by Mark Carney, was "in early stages of assessing a possible cash offer" for the business.

Tritax EuroBox, which was listed in London in 2018 and is now a member of the FTSE 250, said that it had not received a formal proposal, adding that there could be no certainty that any firm bid would be made.

Its shares closed up 11.3 per cent last night at 60p.

The company invests and manages a

€1.5bn

Value of Tritax EuroBox's portfolio
Source: company report

portfolio of logistic assets in Europe, with properties located in Spain, Germany and Belgium. As at the end of March, the value of its portfolio stood at €1.5 billion.

Brookfield has more than \$925 million in assets under management around the world, including property, infrastructure, renewable power, private equity and credit.

Carney, the former Bank of England governor, joined the company in 2020, becoming chairman of its asset management business two years later as it was spun out into a separate company.

Tritax EuroBox shares the same management as Tritax Big Box Reit, which invests in British warehouses that are often found alongside motorways and main roads.

In January, LondonMetric confirmed that it had reached a deal to merge with LXI Reit, which owns the land on which Thorpe Park and Alton Towers sit.

● Sirius Real Estate, the owner of billions of pounds' worth of commercial property in the UK and Germany, has increased its dividend for the tenth year in a row. The FTSE 250 company, which owns warehouses, business parks and office blocks, said "continued strong occupier demand" for its buildings in both the UK and Germany had allowed it to keep putting its rents up, while the value of its portfolio rose €12.4 million to €22.1 billion in the 12 months to the end of March.



The fund, which has been at the centre of a bidding war, uses royalties from artists including Shakira, above, and Iron Maiden to generate income for investors

Blackstone sweetens offer for music rights fund Hipgnosis

Helen Cahill

Hipgnosis Songs Fund's private equity suitor has improved its offer for the music rights owner to \$1.6 billion and restructured the deal to make it easier to complete.

Blackstone is seeking to end a long-running takeover battle for the music business, which owns rights to material by Beyoncé, Justin Bieber and Shakira among others, by increasing its cash offer from \$1.30 a share to \$1.31 a share and structuring the deal as a scheme of arrangement.

Such an arrangement, requiring approval from 75 per cent of shareholders, is intended to avert the situation where a minority of investors can resist the bid while remaining owners of the shares.

Merck Mercuriadis, the former manager of stars such as Elton John and Iron Maiden, launched the company in 2018, to turn music rights into a mainstream asset class by using the royalties from radio, streaming and performances to generate income for investors.

Blackstone has been in a bidding war for Hipgnosis with Concord Chorus, a royalties fund based in Nashville, which had offered to buy the company for \$1.4 billion. Blackstone secured support from Hipgnosis's board of directors with an initial offer of \$1.58 billion.

Hipgnosis has been through a period of upheaval as it faces higher interest rates, wide-ranging governance issues and a dispute with Mercuriadis.

Shareholders revolted against corporate governance at the company in October last year, which prompted the departure of three directors, including Andrew Sutcliffe, the chairman, who was replaced by Robert Naylor, the former chairman of Round Hill Music Royalty Fund, a listed investment trust. Investors also voted down a \$440 million discounted sale of 29 catalogues, including works by Nelly, Chrissie Hynde and Jay-Z, to a Blackstone fund managed by Mercuriadis.

Shot Tower Capital, an American investment firm, then conducted a due diligence review of Hipgnosis's assets

and cut the valuation of the fund by 26 per cent. Shot Tower concluded that Hipgnosis's catalogue was of "high quality", but that due diligence and underwriting standards had "resulted in the fund overpaying for the majority of the catalogues it acquired".

Blackstone's improved offer represents a 49.2 per cent premium to Hipgnosis's share price on the date before the private equity firm's first bid. The board has supported the new offer, which has been funded by directors securing a reduction in the company's advisory fees for the deal.

In a note, analysts at Numis said the deal was a "good outcome from what had been a problem child investment" as it would deliver a return of 25.8 per cent to investors in the fund's initial stock market listing.

Numis said: "The shift in structure of the deal from a takeover offer to a scheme of arrangement creates a cleaner acquisition for Blackstone, whereby it would have full control of the assets if it can achieve the more

stringent 75 per cent support of votes cast. We would expect that this reflects a confidence from Blackstone that investors are on board with the deal and that it believes it can achieve the required 75 per cent acceptances, reflecting that the board is unanimously recommending the offer."

Analysts at Liberum said the deal was a "good outcome" for shareholders and the "wider alternative funds universe".

They added: "Achieving a good outcome for investors, who heavily backed it with over £1 billion of issuances, was critical. The earlier bidding war with Concord highlighted the attractiveness of the asset class, which has been underpinned by a number of tailwinds, including streaming growth and increased royalty payout rates."

The Competition and Markets Authority has also confirmed it does not require any further information on the transaction, Hipgnosis said in a statement to investors.

Hipgnosis's share price closed up by ½p to 101p.

Business

Class of 2021 fails test of time on London markets

City's high expectations failed to materialise and now the collective value is down by £30 billion, writes **Lauren Almeida**

Initial public offerings in London's "Class of 2021" have lost roughly £30 billion in market value since the listing of the shares.

More than 100 companies were listed on the London Stock Exchange in 2021, including Deliveroo, the take-away delivery app, Darktrace, the cybersecurity business, and Dr Mar-

tens, the footwear and fashion business, in what was a record year for flotations in the City.

Wise was the biggest company to go public in London in 2021, with the financial technology company valued at nearly £9 billion in a direct listing. Its float was hailed as a success in the wider campaign to make London a more

attractive destination for technology companies, but since then its share price has fallen by about a tenth.

Deliveroo was also among the largest businesses to list that year, but its stock market valuation has slumped from an opening £4.6 billion to £2.3 billion today.

In data compiled by Morningstar Direct, of the top ten biggest IPOs in 2021, only Darktrace increased in value. After a volatile life on the stock market, the Cambridge-based business agreed to a private takeover last month.

Dr Martens, the boots company that was listed in 2021 at 370p, now languishes below 100p.

Kenny Wilson, its outgoing chief executive, has said that the company is still beset by weak consumer demand in the United States. The company reported a 43 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £97.2 million in the year to the end of March.

London is seeking to reinvigorate flotation activity on its markets. It was Europe's most popular listing venue in 2021 but has attracted only 1 per cent of all IPO volumes throughout the Continent so far this year, according to Dealogic.

The UK had an average share of 31 per cent of IPO volumes between 2012 and 2023.

The Spanish market has ranked highest by deal value this year, following the IPO of the cosmetics group Puig, which owns brands including Charlotte Tilbury and Paco Rabanne.

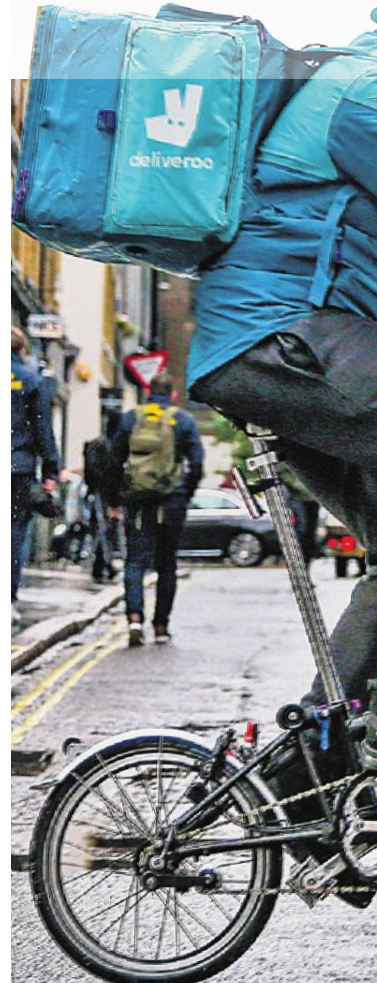
Last year Arm Holdings, the Cambridge-based chip designer, opted to list its shares in New York rather than London, where it was once quoted, despite significant lobbying by the government.

A valuation gap between European publicly quoted energy companies and their American counterparts has stoked further discussion among some of London's most valuable businesses regarding a switch to New York.

Shell, the second largest company in the FTSE 100 by market capitalisation, has suggested that it would be open to moving its listing from London.

Wael Sawan, 49, its chief executive, said last month that if the company

Saddle sore



worked through its improvement plan and the valuation gap did not close, "we have to look at all options".

However, there are hopes in some quarters that Shein, the vast fast-fashion retailer, will float in London this

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Hopes for stock exchange as Raspberry Pi plans IPO

Helen Cahill

Raspberry Pi is looking to raise £157 million in a rare technology float for the London Stock Exchange.

The Cambridge-based technology company has priced its shares at between £2.60 and £2.80 for a float on June 10 amid hopes of a revival for London's IPO market.

Raspberry Pi designs and manufactures computers that help children to learn to code, and the company will be valued at between £500 million and £540 million. It counts Arm, the microchip giant, and Lansdowne Partners, the hedge fund, as investors, with stakes of 3.3 per cent and 4.15 per cent respectively.

Both have made commitments to purchase shares worth \$35 million and up to \$20 million respectively in the market debut, with the Raspberry Pi Foundation, a charity founded to pro-

mote the study of computer science, selling shares in the public offering, alongside a group of employees.

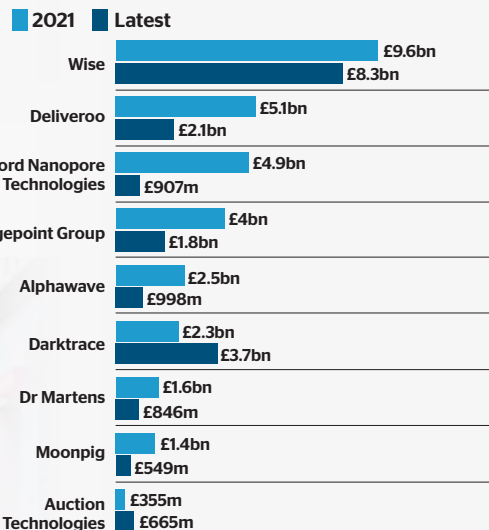
Raspberry Pi is floating in London following a dearth of IPOs and speculation that UK investors are unfavourable to technology companies. Arm, which is also based in Cambridge, dealt a blow to London when it floated on the Nasdaq at a valuation of \$55 billion.

Raspberry Pi was started as a business selling low-price computers in 2012, and sold about a million units in its first year. It has now sold more than 55 million units.

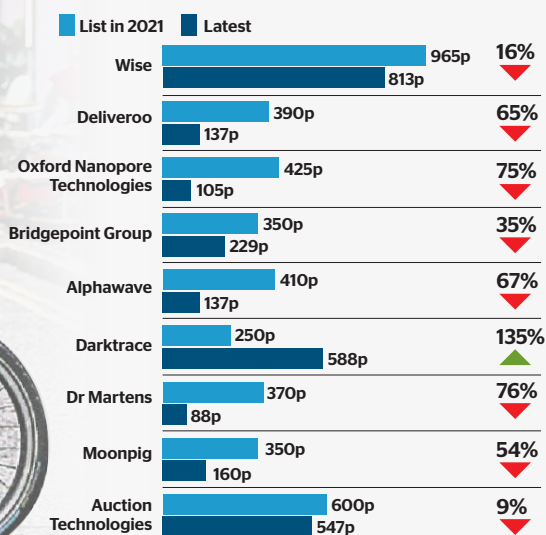
Eben Upton, co-founder and chief executive of Raspberry Pi, had been planning to float the business in 2021, but it was pushed back owing to a global shortage of semiconductor chips. He told The Sunday Times last year: "There's good, smart money in London ... this narrative that you have to run off to the US feels a little overblown."



Market capitalisation



Share price performance



Source: Euronext

year. The Chinese-founded company had hoped to do so on the New York Stock Exchange, but its plans have been derailed by political tensions between America and China. The company is now being courted by Jeremy Hunt, the

chancellor, and leading Labour Party figures. Shein was valued last May at \$66 billion.

The Financial Conduct Authority is also in the process of revamping the UK's listing rules, a process that is

expected to reduce red tape and to speed up listings.

Last month Julia Hoggett, 50, the boss of the London Stock Exchange, said its pipeline of IPOs was "building up" before the rule changes.

Watchdog chief quits after backlash

Ben Martin Banking Editor

The head of the payments regulator who has spearheaded contentious plans to force banks to reimburse fraud victims up to a limit of £415,000 is abruptly leaving the watchdog.

Chris Hemsley will stand down as managing director of the Payment Systems Regulator on Friday after almost five years to take up a position at an advisory firm, the watchdog said yesterday.

The regulator will start its search for a successor after the general election. In the meantime he will be replaced on an interim basis for nine months by David Geale, who joins from the Financial Conduct Authority, where he was most recently director of retail banking.

Aidene Walsh, the regulator's chairwoman, said Hemsley had driven "effective change to make payments better for everyone", adding: "He has also transformed the organisation, increasing its impact, and leaves it in a strong position."

Hemsley is leaving the watchdog

while at loggerheads with sections of the financial industry, however. The regulator has faced a backlash over rules that will take effect from October 7 that will compel banks and other payments companies to reimburse customers who fall victim to so-called authorised push payment (APP) fraud, up to a limit of £415,000 per claim.

Hemsley has argued that the new requirements incentivise firms "to prevent APP fraud from happening in the first place while ensuring victims are protected in a consistent way".

Yet the industry is concerned about the liabilities that firms will face under the regulator's plan and the risk that fraudsters will take advantage of the compensation rules to swindle money from payments companies through false reimbursement claims.

Bim Afolami, the City minister, has criticised the new rules and told the Financial Times last month that he believed there were "significant problems" with the regulator's plans.

A spokesman for the watchdog said

Hemsley's exit was "not at all" related to the backlash and that its reimbursement proposal "will proceed as planned".

APP frauds are scams where a consumer is tricked into sending money to another party they believe to be legitimate. It covers everything from impersonation and investment scams to romance frauds, with losses amounting to £459.7 million last year from 232,429 cases, according to UK Finance figures.

A number of companies have already been voluntarily reimbursing victims, with £287.3 million returned in 2023, a reimbursement rate of 62 per cent. The regulator's plan will lead to a big shake-up, however, with Hemsley saying last year that it "significantly increases the level of protection for people".

He is leaving to join Fingleton, a firm that advises businesses on regulatory matters. It was set up in 2013 by John Fingleton, a former chief executive of the Office of Fair Trading, which was subsequently merged with the Competition Commission to create the Competition and Markets Authority.

WH Ireland to focus on wealth management

Patrick Hosking, Financial Editor

WH Ireland has announced plans to slim down to a pure wealth management firm after offloading its loss-making capital markets division to Zeus Capital for a token £1 plus possible performance-related payments of up to £5 million.

The sale of the division, which specialises in advising smaller companies on floats and deals and making markets in their shares, marks another chapter in the consolidation of the sector in the face of dwindling deal volumes.

In January Panmure Gordon and Liberum Capital said they were merging to form Panmure Liberum. Numis was sold to Deutsche Bank last year, while Cenkos and FinnCap agreed a £43 million merger, creating Cavendish.

Shares in WHI were marked 1.25 per cent higher to 4.05p on the back of the sale announcement, under which Zeus will pay up to £5 million of deferred consolidation to WHI next year depending on client retention and the level of deal fees. The stock closed down 6.25 per cent, or ¼p, to 3¾p.

WHI hinted at a sale of the division in December last year and said on Monday that the disposal would help it recover to sustainable profitability, while reducing liabilities and working capital and regulatory requirements.

The deal will expand Zeus, based in Manchester, to up to 125 retained corporate clients, 90 employees and an extended trading platform making markets in 200 smaller company stocks.

Zeus was founded in 2003 and bought Arden Partners, another smaller company broker, last year. It is best known for advising and nurturing Boohoo, the fast fashion retailer, which has fallen from grace in recent years. It

also floated Revolution Beauty, another investor disappointment.

The WHI division has specialised in advising smaller companies, acting as nominated adviser, or nomad, to tiddlers raising capital on the junior Aim market. It has been a drag on WHI performance for some time. It lost £2.48 million on revenues of £12.25 million in the year to March last year.

Phillip Wale, chief executive of WHI, said there was now "an almost non-existent level of activity in the Aim market". The combination would deliver scale benefits and give Zeus firepower in WHI's specialist area of miners.

All 31 staff in the division would transfer over initially with no immediate job cuts, he added. The size of the performance payment would depend partly on a significant recovery in activity levels in the next 12 months.

The sale simplifies WHI to a pure wealth manager and could make it more attractive to a bidder.

In a wider trading update, the company said market conditions "have continued to be challenging, especially for brokers specialising in Aim companies, although the directors remain focused on operational efficiencies to ensure that the group is well positioned for a recovery in the markets".

Specialist British funds have been experiencing net outflows, forcing them to sell smaller company shares.

"The entire ecosystem is under pressure," one practitioner said. However, the FTSE Aim 100 index has rallied by 5.1 per cent in the past month, outpacing the FTSE 100, up by 0.9 per cent.

Zeus was approached for comment. The company boss said that activity in London's Aim was almost non-existent



Anglo American may float platinum business in UK

Emma Powell

Anglo American is considering floating its South African platinum mining business in London, a move it hopes could prevent some investors from dumping the stock.

The FTSE 100 mining group is pursuing a restructuring plan set out last month in defence against a thwarted \$39 billion takeover by BHP, a rival.

Amplats, which is already partially listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, is set to be demerged completely before the end of next year.

Duncan Wanblad, the Anglo chief executive, has said that the miner is weighing up a secondary listing of the business in London, which could help to ease so-called flowback issues that may arise from some shareholders being unable to hold shares in South African-listed stocks. The structure would be similar to the 2021 spin-out of

thermal coal assets in South Africa via Thungela Resources, which is primarily listed in Johannesburg with a standard listing in London, which means it is not included in the FTSE indices.

Keeping the Amplats business as part of Anglo would "risk not getting the full value" from the assets. The price of platinum group metals, used in catalytic converters, has slumped as the automotive industry runs down excess supplies.

BHP had also proposed demerging Amplats, along with the South African coking coal business, as part of its takeover. However, the structure of the deal, which proved the main sticking point in negotiations, was contentious with some shareholders and government figures in South Africa.

The Australian mining giant abandoned its pursuit of its smaller rival last week after setting out a £38.6 billion offer. Anglo American shares closed down by 10½p, or 0.4 per cent, to £25.03.



AUTOMATION FOR THE PEOPLE

Experts predict seismic changes in how humans and machines will work together. As AI tech evolves, business leaders must be ready to move quickly to embrace its potential



When OpenAI revealed its new generative AI (GenAI) model, GPT-4o, this month, the firm's chief technology officer, Mira Murati, said it marked a step change in how humans and technology work side by side.

"We're looking at the future of interaction between ourselves and machines," she said at the launch event, adding that the company wanted to "remove some of the mysticism from the technology".

There's no shortage of hype around artificial intelligence and what it can do. A recent poll by Deloitte found 71 per cent of UK business leaders believe GenAI in particular will transform their company within the next three years, and 75 per cent expect their organisation's investment in AI to increase over the next fiscal year. More generally, the International Monetary Fund estimates almost 40 per cent of global employment will be affected by AI.

Adam Spearing, head of AI innovation at software company ServiceNow, believes the rise of artificial intelligence is causing both excitement and concern, while questions are currently being asked about job losses, cybersecurity, ethics and the need for reskilling at scale – as well as where AI can have the biggest impact.

"It's very mixed at the moment," Spearing says. "Some leaders have a clear plan and some are panicking about what to do and who to talk to. There's an element of FOMO – the fear of missing out. Actually, 'where do I start?' is the right question to ask, because you've got to have a considered approach to this."

"Done right, AI is going to take away a lot of the mundane grind that employees go through. Often we ask them to swivel between umpteen different systems to solve a particular problem. AI can take a lot of that frustration away."

By automating repetitive work, AI can free up employees to focus on higher-level, strategic tasks that require creativity and human input. Using AI-powered search



functions, they have the data they need at their fingertips to make better decisions and collaborate more productively. Workflows are joined up and optimised. More theoretical ideas can be tested before resources are committed, and relationships with customers can become much more positive, as issues are solved promptly without escalation.

One Zoom study found that among those leaders whose teams are using AI, 75 per cent collaborate better, 75 per cent make better decisions, and 74 per cent are able to work better when they're not in the same location.

Professionals are already excited about that prospect. Microsoft's 2023 Work Trend Index found that 70 per cent of employees would like to delegate as much work as possible to AI to lessen their workloads.

But AI in and of itself isn't a silver bullet, says Costi Perricos, global generative AI leader at Deloitte. Instead, business leaders need to consider the problems they're trying to solve, keep people at the heart of the solutions, and get cross-function buy-in across HR, compliance and legal functions from the start.

"What we see leaders struggling with at the moment is moving from experimentation to scaling," Perricos says. "When AI projects become a purely technological problem, they fail. We're also seeing a lot of human resistance. There will be those who think this is magical tech that is going to transform everything, others that think this is the devil's work and is going to destroy humanity. And then there are those that understand these tools can help them do their job."

There are a number of reasons why employees may be apprehensive about AI adoption. Some may fear the unknown, and be reluctant to reskill. Others may be sceptical about the benefits, or worry about the loss of control. Starting small, providing opportunities for everyone to voice their concerns, and prioritising quick wins can all help get the wider workforce on side.

Perricos says Deloitte has found horizontal scaling particularly effective – whereby everyone has tools put in their hands from day one and is encouraged to



ADAM SPEARING,
HEAD OF AI INNOVATION,
SERVICENOW

“
Processes
that took
tens of
minutes
now take
seconds

experiment within agreed parameters. Leaders can then focus on more complicated improvements within different verticals over the longer term.

Much of the focus of the AI debate today is on the efficiency that automation will bring. The potential applications for the technology are endless. It's not beyond the realm of possibility, for example, that one day, every employee will have an AI co-pilot – almost a junior helper – and hybrid work will exist as a partnership between humans and technology, as opposed to combining office-based and remote work.

But in the future AI won't just automate tasks, it will open up new possibilities around what businesses and their people can do, Spearing says. "This is a catalyst for real transformation. We hear from customers that have processes that used to take tens of minutes that now take seconds. The prize here is a more empowered, engaged workforce that's able to get things done faster, more efficiently, with less frustration. And there will be much higher levels of loyalty for those brands that do this well."

Upskilling for the future

In this new landscape, employers must seize the day to train and empower their people

The World Economic Forum predicts new technologies will disrupt 85 million jobs globally between 2020 and 2025 – and create 97 million new roles. Organisations of every size are struggling with the question of how to support their employees to upskill as AI technology evolves, and how to adjust their overall workplace strategy to prepare the business for the future.

Despite the challenge at hand – and with the half-life of skills (a time limit on their relevance or effectiveness) already at less than five years – most professionals have not had the training they need. Research by the Boston Consulting Group found 86 per cent of frontline workers believe they will need upskilling to address how AI will change their jobs, but only 14 per cent have actually received such training.

The good news is employees want to learn at work, and AI is well placed to help business leaders tackle this challenge. AI can map the skills businesses already have in place, predict the

new skills they will need in the future, and free up time for learning and development by automating some of the more menial tasks.

It can also help develop more targeted, personalised development plans and career paths for individual employees to follow. Considering some businesses may have five generations of employees within the same workplace, all with a different experience of digital tools, a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to be effective. Instead, workers need support to evolve at a pace that works for them.



A NEW ERA FOR ALL... BOOSTING INCLUSIVITY

Leaders say AI can be a democratising force – provided it is integrated with a mindful approach

Amid a tough economic environment and global talent shortage, many employees are being asked to do more with less. That's having an impact on their wellbeing. The 2024 Global Talent Trends report published by the HR consulting firm Mercer found that 82 per cent of employees are at risk of burnout this year. Almost four out of 10 (37 per cent) say they're struggling with an excessive workload.

By automating some of the more laborious, repetitive tasks, a portion of that workload could be managed by AI. Tasks such as taking notes at



a meeting, inducting new team members or documenting new procedures, for example, are all jobs that AI is well placed to do instead.

It can also be a useful tool as part of a wider inclusion strategy.

Research has shown, for example, that women do 200 hours more non-promotable work per year than men. And in functions like human resources, AI tech is being used to remove unconscious bias in recruitment, boosting gender and ethnic diversity along with neurodiversity in workforces, and helping businesses tap into new sources of talent.

Those from disadvantaged backgrounds will now be able to explore career paths that may have seemed out of reach.

"It democratises things like coding, which is a real positive," says Costi Perricos, global generative AI leader at Deloitte. "Writing prompts for large language models will be determined more by understanding language and linguistic skills than knowledge of programming."

Of course, such progress is only really possible with the right guardrails in place. Without committing to principles of transparency, accountability, fairness, and security, the mass adoption of AI could do more harm than good. One survey by Code First Girls found 47 per cent of women polled believe the gender imbalance in tech (a sector where seven out of 10 employees are men) will cause our AI models to be biased, and 25 per cent believe it will push women out of employment. The European Union is working on plans for an AI Act to mitigate some of these dangers, among others.

Sarah Porter, CEO and founder of InspiredMinds, a global tech and science strategy group that aims to connect people that want to do good with AI, says business leaders should be mindful of the risk of bias, and the oversight that will need to be in place. "The dangers of exclusion in AI is that it's developed with one sliver of society represented. I'm a big believer that AI should be created with the input of a multidisciplinary mix of people: philosophers, economists, scientists and civilians.

"We will indeed be working alongside AI in the future. To be fair, we already are. We need to ensure we are creating a human-centred AI that includes everyone, and that the purpose we create AI for is in alignment with our goals for humanity."



Let it flow

Companies discovering the team benefits that AI can bring

By partnering with ServiceNow's AI-powered Now Platform, businesses are finding that processes can be redesigned so employees can make requests, track responses and solve problems themselves. This frees up team members to focus on what matters.

At the specialist professional service and technology firm Davies Group, for example, a number of employees are making use of ServiceNow's generative AI tool, Now Assist.

Darrell Burnell, group head of technology, says that while he's exercised caution by starting with automatically generated case summaries, resolution notes and call transfer details, he's been impressed so far. The ability to pass tasks – or "tickets" – clearly and efficiently between departments has enabled his company's teams to get things done with a smoother workflow than ever before.

"If you transfer a ticket to another resolve group, it summarises it on the fly, straight out of the box," he adds.

The tool has also highlighted

improvements the company needs to make to knowledge management and categorisation methods, Burnell says.

"We need to make a quality improvement, because the system is only as good as the data it's exposing. With Now Assist you're in natural language territory so you ask for different things. It's hard to find stuff if your articles aren't worded correctly."

Hena Jalli, chief information officer of BT Business, has also been struggling with a complex infrastructure spanning 125 service platforms, 85 monitoring systems and 76 different processes. That has created a very siloed customer experience.

By consolidating all its service platforms onto one ServiceNow layer, BT has been able to bridge those silos and drive progress across a number of metrics.

"We've seen big improvements in our net promoter score and our average time to resolve incidents has halved," Jalli says. "We're experimenting with AI via a number of Now Assist features, but call summaries and knowledge predictions have been promising."



Businesses need to make sure they prepare now to ensure they have the skills they'll need in the future, says Adam Spearing of ServiceNow. "We've talked about the digital skills gap for a long time. The idea of a lifetime learner has never been more important. We need to pay a lot more attention to that as employers, thinking about how we provide that training for people, and creating an environment where people want to learn and are rewarded for doing so."

But there is also an onus on employers to think about their own skills portfolio, he adds. "We've all got to consider what skills we'll need in the future, and how we're going to build our own ability to embrace AI into our personal development plans."

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business transformation
[ServiceNow.com/uk/AIforPeople](https://www.servicenow.com/uk/AIforPeople)

Lauren Almeida Tempus
Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips

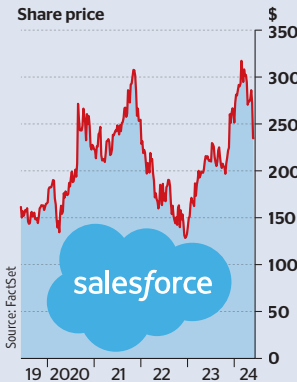


Missed targets are not the only story

SALESFORCE
Market cap \$235.4bn | Annual net income \$4.1bn

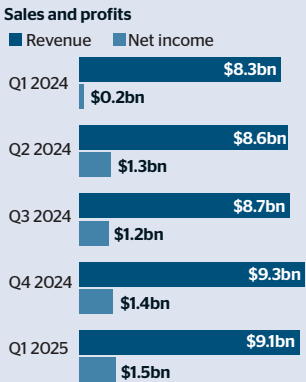
Salesforce has grown into one of the biggest and most influential software businesses in both Silicon Valley and Wall Street. So it came as a shock to the market last week when it missed sales expectations for the first time since 2006 — the shares dropped by 20 per cent in one day, wiping roughly \$50 billion off its value. But now with the stock trading around record lows, an attractive buying opportunity may have emerged. It provides cloud-based enterprise software, specialising in “customer relationship management”. Its platform helps sales professionals track, target and analyse current and potential clients and is the No1 provider in this field, with about a fifth of the market share. However, fears of a slowdown in corporate IT spending (outside of artificial intelligence) have hit the shares hard. The software company said last week that revenues rose by 11 per cent to \$9.1 billion in the three months ended in April. In itself, this is impressive — but it failed to match Wall Street’s expectations. So too did the company’s projected 7 per cent growth for the current period. Billings, which measures business transactions during the quarter, grew by just 3 per cent year-on-year, a record low and behind analyst

Enterprising behaviour



ADVICE Buy
WHY Sales growth weakness but retains attractive fundamentals

forecasts of 9 per cent. The concern is that slowing growth means corporate money is being diverted away from Salesforce and towards more AI-focused investments. The company told analysts last week that major deals are taking longer to close, if they do at all. Brian Millham, its president, said: “We saw compression on many deals that we ultimately ended up getting done,



but they got smaller when we ultimately closed them.” Salesforce’s top-line growth may be slowing, but there is still much to like in the underlying business, not least its improving profitability. A cost-cutting programme has boosted adjusted operating margins above 32 per cent for the first time. Analysts expect earnings per share will grow by 10 per cent in this financial year. The company also has a strong free cash flow margin that has averaged 22 per cent over the past five years. This has enabled its significant share buyback programme, repurchasing \$2.2 billion in shares in the first quarter alone. It also introduced a maiden dividend

earlier this year, though the stock yields less than 1 per cent. Salesforce’s start-up culture may still be alive and well within the business, but it is starting to develop the markers of a more mature outfit — a focus on earnings growth, cash returns and improving profitability. Investors should watch carefully for any signs that it is abandoning its growth mindset, as it could easily fall behind the likes of Microsoft, which offers its own rival, though smaller, sales-centric platform Dynamics. But Salesforce is by a wide margin the market leader in its sector, and is one of the cheapest enterprise software stocks, trading at about 20 times forward free cash flow, compared with a multiple of around 27 among its peers. Spending elsewhere in the technology sector may be eating into Salesforce’s top line, but developments in generative AI should also be supportive of its product, too — the company stores huge amounts of data across different geographies and sectors, and some bullish analysts argue that AI could help it bring this information to the forefront, as well as help smooth the onboarding process for new customers. Investors should brace for further volatility until the environment in corporate IT spending stabilises, which should be helped if interest rates fall, but with the shares now trading at an all-time low of 23.7 times forward earnings, value for this market leader looks too compelling to ignore.

POLAR CAPITAL TECH TRUST
Market cap £3.7bn | Discount to NAV -8.5%

Excitement about growth fuelled by artificial intelligence means that there are few ways that investors can get exposure to the American technology sector at a reasonable price. Enter Polar Capital Technology Trust. The investment trust has built a £3.8 billion portfolio spread across a variety of different tech themes. Around a third of the portfolio is in the semiconductor industry. Its biggest investment is the chip designer Nvidia, at 10.4 per cent of

the portfolio as of the end of April. Its top 10 holdings also include Taiwanese semiconductor Manufacturing Company, as well as the chip companies Advanced Micro Devices, ASML Holding and Micron Technology. Ben Rogoff, the fund manager, has racked up a respectable track record, delivering a net asset value return of 588 per cent over the past decade as of the end of April, though this was slightly behind the fund’s benchmark, the Dow Jones Global Technology index, which returned 590 per cent in the same period. More recent performance has been disappointing, with a net asset value

return of 26 per cent in the past three years, compared with a 42 per cent rise in the benchmark. This might explain why the trust is trading at a 9 per cent discount to its net asset value at present, compared with an average of 8 per cent across the whole investment trust universe. But this year the trust has done well, with the shares up 13 per cent in the first four months against a 10 per cent rise in the benchmark. The fees are not particularly cheap — it charges a tiered management fee of 0.8 per cent of its net asset value up to £8 billion, 0.7 per cent between £2 billion and £3.5 billion, and 0.6 per cent beyond that.

It can charge a performance fee of 10 per cent of its outperformance against its benchmark, though this is capped at 1 per cent of net asset value. No performance fee was paid in its last financial year, or the year before that. Still, the discount means overall the trust remains one of the more affordable ways to get access to pricey stocks in Silicon Valley.

ADVICE Buy
WHY High quality tech at a 9 per cent discount

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arm to chip in further

Arm Holdings has declared its ambition to take more than half of the Windows PC market in five years, as Microsoft prepares to start selling a new range of computers based on its chips in mid-June. Its shares rose 2.1 per cent yesterday. The Cambridge-based firm made a fortune through its close relationship with Apple; its microchips power the iPhone and the majority of other smartphones. The new range of PCs called “Copilot+” will run on processors designed by Arm, which can run AI features, without using cloud data centres.

Ackman offloads 10%

The billionaire American investor Bill Ackman has sold a 10 per cent stake in Pershing Square Capital Management before a possible initial public offering of the New York-based hedge fund. The stake was sold to a consortium of investors and family offices, who paid \$1.05 billion, the company said. The sale follows reports that Ackman, 58, is seeking a listing of Pershing Square as soon as next year. The management company runs closed-end funds.

Cocktail bars call time

Hostmore, the company behind TGI Fridays, suffered a 10 per cent fall in like-for-like sales in the 20 weeks to May 19, although its underlying earnings have stayed ahead of last year. The company has called time on its cocktail bar offshoot, 63rd + 1st, with the last two sites expected to close this month, improving earnings. The company said its proposed takeover of TGI Fridays Inc, the US franchise owner, was on target for completion by the end of September.

Not just a pay package

Marks & Spencer has handed Stuart Machin, its chief executive, the largest remuneration package in a decade. Machin, who has helped return the retailer to its “strongest financial health” in almost 30 years, took home a total of £4.7 million as the 140-year-old business continued to reap the rewards from investments in food and clothing. His pay, higher than that of his predecessors, Steve Rowe and Marc Bolland, will increase by 3 per cent to £848,720 from July 1.

PRICES

Major indices

New York		
Dow Jones	38,571.03 (+115.29)	
Nasdaq Composite	16,828.67 (+93.65)	
S&P 500	5,283.40 (+5.89)	
Tokyo		
Nikkei 225	38923.03 (+435.13)	
Hong Kong		
Hang Seng	18403.04 (+323.43)	
Amsterdam		
AEX Index	905.10 (+1.49)	
Sydney		
AO	8024.10 (+53.30)	
Frankfurt		
DAX	18608.16 (+110.22)	
Singapore		
Straits	3348.87 (+0.00)	
Brussels		
BEL20	3932.76 (+14.67)	
Paris		
CAC-40	7998.02 (+5.15)	
Zurich		
SMI Index	12007.04 (+6.18)	
DJ Euro Stoxx 50	5003.54 (+19.87)	
London		
FTSE 100	8262.75 (+0.00)	
FTSE 250	20900.49 (+170.37)	
FTSE 350	4561.46 (+0.00)	
FTSE Eurotop 100	4086.74 (+10.68)	
FTSE All-Shares	4517.03 (+0.00)	
FTSE Non Financials	5427.45 n/a	
techMARK 100	7082.37 (+39.45)	
Bargains	n/a	
US\$	1.2780 (+0.0036)	
Euro	1.1742 (+0.0000)	
:SDR	0.98 (+0.00)	
Exchange Index	83.25 (+0.09)	
Bank of England official close (4pm)		
CPI	133.47 Apr (2015 = 100)	
RPI	385.00 Apr (Jan 1987 = 100)	
RPIX	380.10 Apr (Jan 1987 = 100)	
Morningstar Long Commodity	677.16 (+5.72)	
Morningstar Long/Short Commod	4703.45 (+27.75)	

London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 24	96.230	97.020	96.230	96.960	66	2023
	SEP 24	96.390	97.230	96.260	97.060	258423	677335
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
	Jun 25						
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 24	96.245	96.260	96.245	96.250	128720	749594
	Sep 24	96.425	96.460	96.420	96.450	179322	549205
	Dec 24	96.595	96.655	96.590	96.640	199727	514379
	Mar 25	96.750	96.825	96.735	96.805	160984	397197
	Jun 25	96.875	96.975	96.870	96.955	146572	374035
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
FTSE100	Jun 24	8325.5	8373.5	8250.0	8273.0	85009	538808
	Sep 24	8390.0	8390.0	8312.0	8318.0	293	954
FTSEurofirst 80	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						

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Commodities

ICIS pricing (London 6,000pm)			
Crude Oils (\$/barrel FOB)			
Brent Physical	76.05	-3.40	
BPOE(Aug)	78.34	-3.08	
BPOE(Sep)	78.25	-3.03	
WTI(Aug)	73.99	-3.02	
WTI(Sep)	73.74	-2.91	
Products (\$/MT)			
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)			
Premium Unid	844.00	848.00	-28.00
Gasoil EEC	715.00	716.00	-23.25
3.5 Fuel Oil	441.00	441.50	-20.00
Naphtha	609.00	623.00	-28.00
ICE Futures			
Gas Oil			
Jun	709.00-708.50	Sep	717.75-717.50
Jul	711.50-711.25	Oct	721.00-720.75
Aug	714.50-714.00	Volume:	734725
Brent (6,000pm)			
Aug	78.46-78.45	Nov	77.78-77.75
Sep	78.34-78.33	Dec	77.47-77.45
Oct	78.07-78.06	Volume:	2421338
LIFFE			
Cocoa			
Jul	7639-7605	Sep	5043-4887
Sep	7046-7042	Dec	4380-4550
Dec	6322-6304	Mar	5084-4165
Mar	5653-5631		
May	5302-5280		
Jul	5056-5057	Volume:	82617
RobustaCoffee			
Jul	4280-4275	Mar	3752-3400
Sep	4114-4109	May	3630-3400
Nov	3946-3947		
Jan	3809-3793	Volume:	20778
White Sugar (FOB)			
Reuters			
May	520.90-520.40		
Jun	525.00-521.20		
Aug	553.70-553.50	Aug	529.90-523.30
Sep	531.90-531.70	Oct	528.30-518.70
Dec	520.40-520.10	Volume:	72399



GEORGE STEINMETZ/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES

European gas prices hit a 2024 high

European gas prices hit their highest level this year after an outage at a gas processing plant in Norway sparked supply concerns (Emma Powell writes). The outage was caused by a crack in a two-inch pipeline onboard Sleipner Riser offshore, according to Gassco, the operator. Sleipner Riser is a connection point for the Langedled North and South pipelines

connecting the Nyhamna plant in Norway with the Easington terminal in northeast England, one of the UK's six main gas terminals. The price of the European benchmark Title Transfer Facility rose 4.8 per cent to €35.85 per megawatt-hour on the Intercontinental Exchange, the highest since December. The latest sharp rise in prices underscores the sensitivities in the European market to supply disruptions. Norway is the biggest supplier of natural gas to Europe since the war in Ukraine forced the

continent to wean itself off Russian supplies. Prices have come down considerably from the historic highs reached in the immediate aftermath, helped by high levels of European gas storage and healthy imports of liquefied natural gas. The decline in wholesale prices from an August 2022 peak has also helped to bring down household energy bills, which had soared and put consumers under increased cost of living pressures. Ofgem has reduced the energy price cap by £122 to £1,568 a year from July, the lowest in more than two years.

The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
JD Sports Shareholder increased its stake in the retailer	5.1%
St James's Place Broker upgraded its rating to "buy"	4.7%
easyJet Increase to industry profit forecasts	3.4%
Hunting Record order book value	1.1%
Hipgnosis Blackstone raises its takeover bid	0.4%
Anglo American Invests disappointed by lack of deal	-0.4%
Intermediate Capital Group Stock downgraded to "hold"	-1%
BP Oil prices fall over investor concerns about demand	-1.4%
Baltic Classifieds Significant stakeholder sells shares in the business	-5.5%
GSK Trials against company to proceed	-9.5%

Digital advances set tails wagging for Pets at Home

Emma Taggart Market report

Analysts at Liberum think that consumers are going to continue pampering their pooches, upgrading their rating of Pets at Home from "hold" to "buy". The broker expects new innovations — including the company's launch of its new digital platform — to lead to an increase in the frequency of purchases and a rise in revenues. Analysts also highlighted that double-digit growth in Pets at Home's vets division had provided a financial boost to the company. They believe growth in this sector and its high margins will buoy the group. The bullish note sent shares in Pets at Home up 26½p, or 8.9 per cent, to end the day at 322½p. It was one of the biggest movers on the FTSE 250,

Wall Street report

It was a mixed start to the week for US equities as soft manufacturing data raised fears about the strength of the economy. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 0.3 per cent, while the S&P 500 and Nasdaq finished the session higher.

which rose 170.37 points, or 0.82 per cent, to 20,900.49, its highest level in two years. However, a tier above it was a rocky day for the FTSE 100, which fell 12.63 points, or 0.15 per cent, to 8,262.75. The blue-chip index was significantly weighed down by the pharmaceutical company GSK. Shares in the London-listed business shed 168½p, or 9.5 per cent, to £15.98 after a Delaware court ruled the company would face trials over its heartburn treatment Zantac, which is alleged to be carcinogenic. GSK denies this. Shares in Intermediate Capital Group fell 24p, or 1 per cent, to £22.86 after analysts at Deutsche Bank downgraded their rating of the asset manager from "buy" to "hold". Oil prices slipped 3 per cent as investors worried about the demand outlook. Shares in BP fell 7p, or 1.4 per cent, to 481½p, while Shell shed 29p, or 1 per cent, to £27.82½. JD Sports topped the FTSE 100 leaderboard after its shareholder

TECHNOLOGY

Reddit helps GameStop roar

A Reddit post has prompted a share-buying frenzy in an American video game retailer, three years after the chatroom's members caused a surge in social media-fuelled retail trading (Louisa Clarence-Smith writes). Keith Gill, the stocks influencer known as Roaring Kitty, used Reddit to share details of an apparent \$116 million bet on GameStop. The post sent shares in the video game company up 21 per cent to close at \$28 in New York last night. About \$390 million



of GameStop shares had been traded by 6am yesterday. The post marked a return to Reddit for Gill, who has been credited with starting a mania around "meme stocks" in 2021. One Reddit user

responded: "You've been missed. Everyone get in here." The meme stock trade resurfaced in May, when Gill began posting cryptic messages on Reddit for the first time in three years. One post showed a drawing of a man leaning forward in a chair, a meme used to suggest volatile trading opportunities ahead. GameStop, based in Texas, was founded in 1984 and runs a chain of more than 4,000 stores, mainly in the US. It has struggled against online competition, closing hundreds of stores.

Fidelity increased its stake in the retailer from 4.9 per cent to 5.25 per cent. Shares in JD Sports closed up 6½p, or 5.1 per cent, at 134p. Airlines flew after the International Air Transport Association, the industry body, raised the net profit outlook for the sector to \$30.5 billion in 2024. Shares in easyJet climbed 15½p, or 3.4 per cent, to 475½p; IAG, the British Airways and Aer Lingus owner, advanced 3½p, or 2.2 per cent, to 175½p; Wizz Air, the Hungarian budget airline, gained 122p, or 5.3 per cent, to £24.14. Shares in TUI rose 37½p, or 7 per cent, to 575½p after its fellow German travel operator FTI Group announced it had filed for administration with investors expecting increased revenues following the collapse. Hunting advanced 4½p, or 1.1 per cent, to 422p after the engineering group announced that it had secured an \$86 million order from the Kuwait Oil Company and a record group order book of \$751 million. Quilter,

the wealth manager, climbed 5½p, or 4.4 per cent, to 123p, after JP Morgan upgraded its rating of the company to "overweight" from "neutral". The bank was also a fan of St James's Place as analysts think the negative news for the wealth manager is now likely to be over. Shares in St James's Place climbed 23½p, or 4.7 per cent, to 523p. Another riser was Chemring, which advanced 8½p, or 2.2 per cent, to 394½p before its interim results today. The biggest faller on the FTSE 250 was Baltic Classifieds Group, which shed 14p, or 5.5 per cent, to 242½p after Apax, the private equity firm, sold 40 million shares in the online advertising business, at 231p per share, raising about £92.4 million. Shares in Taseko Mines shed 17p, or 7.7 per cent, to 203p as the Aim-quoted company announced it had suspended operations one of its mines. Shares in Power Metal Resources climbed 2p, or 11.8 per cent, to 19p after it secured a £2 million investment from ACAM LP.

London Grain Futures				
LIFFE Wheat (close £/t)				
Jul	172.00	Nov	218.50	Jan
Mar	222.00	May	226.50	Volume: 885
London Metal Exchange				
(Official)				
Cash	3mth		Dec 22	
Copper Gde A (\$/tonne)				
9985.0-9985.5	10106.0-10107.0		10240.0-10250.0	
Lead (\$/tonne)				
2223.0-2224.0	2279.0-2280.0		2343.0-2348.0	
Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$/tonne)				
2928.0-2929.0	2976.0-2978.0		2960.0-2965.0	
Alum Hi Gde (\$/tonne)				
2623.0-2625.0	2668.0-2670.0		2763.0-2768.0	
Nickel (\$/tonne)				
19300.0-19325.0	19565.0-19575.0		20555.0-20605.0	
Tin (\$/tonne)				
32550.0-32600.0	32800.0-32825.0		32625.0-32675.0	

Gold/Precious metals (US dollars per ounce)	
Because of a technical issue, the gold fix prices are from Friday.	
Bullion: Open \$2325.55	
Close \$2342.01-2342.42 High \$2344.81	
Low \$2314.85	
AM \$2342.90 PM \$2348.25	
Platinum \$ (£)	
Silver \$30.44 (£23.82)	
Palladium \$ (£)	
European money deposits %	
Currency	1mth 3mth 6mth 12mth
Dollar	0.13 0.20 0.29 0.55
Sterling	4.20 5.30 4.74 0.81
Euro	0.10 0.15 0.20 0.50

Money rates %	
Base Rates Clearing Banks 5.25 ECB Refi 4.50 US Fed Fund 5.25-5.50	
Halifax Mortgage Rate (SVR) 8.74	
Sterling spot and forward rates	
Mkt Rates for	Range Close 1 month 3 month
Copenhagen	8.7383-8.7641 8.7576-8.7586 149ds 421ds
Euro	1.1752-1.1716 1.1743-1.1742 10pr 32pr
Montreal	1.7337-1.7433 1.7431-1.7433 8ds 24ds
New York	1.2695-1.2794 1.2780-1.2781 2pr 6pr
Oslo	13.322-13.398 13.385-13.403 81ds 239ds
Stockholm	13.299-13.412 13.313-13.316 198ds 614ds
Tokyo	199.23-200.64 199.55-199.57 88ds 265ds
Zurich	1.1441-1.1497 1.1444-1.1446 38ds 114ds
Premium = pr Discount = ds	

Dollar rates	
Australia	1.4982-1.4985
Canada	1.3640-1.3640
Denmark	6.8525-6.8530
Euro	0.9188-0.9188
Hong Kong	7.8197-7.8200
Japan	156.14-156.15
Malaysia	4.2050-4.2100
Norway	10.477-10.483
Singapore	1.3469-1.3470
Sweden	10.416-10.420
Switzerland	0.8955-0.8955
Other Sterling	
Argentina peso	1145.3-1145.3
Australia dollar	1.9148-1.9151
Bahrain dinar	0.4780-0.4851
Brazil real	6.6871-6.6909
Euro	1.1742-1.1743
Hong Kong dollar	9.9934-9.9945
India rupee	106.24-106.25
Indonesia rupiah	20710-20724
Kuwait dinar KD	0.3906-0.3929
Malaysia ringgit	6.0181-6.0245
New Zealand dollar	2.0689-2.0692
Singapore dollar	1.7212-1.7217
S Africa rand	23.643-23.655
U A E dirham	4.6919-4.6922

Exchange rates	
	Bid Change
Australia \$	1.913
Canada \$	1.741 +0.01
Denmark Kr	8.765 +0.02
Euro	1.175
Hong Kong \$	9.989 +0.03
Hungary	459.735 +2.28
Indonesia	20731.411 +41.84
Israel Shk	4.685 -0.05
Japan Yen	199.516 -0.56
New Zealand \$	2.068
Norway Kr	13.383 +0.01
Poland	5.032 +0.02
Russia	114.291 -0.77
S Africa Rd	23.684 -0.29
Sweden Kr	13.321 -0.07
Switzerland Fr	1.145
Turkey Lira	41.131 +0.12
USA \$	1.277
Rates supplied by Morningstar	

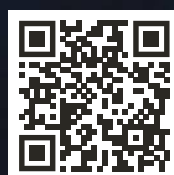
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UK Corp Bond C Inc £	104.79	...	+0.78	2.67
UK Equity C Inc £	317.26	...	+14.91	3.28
UK Equity A Inc £	333.82	...	+15.54	3.21
UK Growth A Inc £	859.60	...	+54.29	3.16
UK Growth A Inc £	1423.81	...	+5.83	...
UK Mid Cap A Inc £	465.61	...	+11.25	...

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High Income R Inc £	64.56	...	+0.33	5.94
Income A Acc £	592.25	...	+0.52	3.50
Income R Inc £	242.50	...	+0.22	3.60
Monthly Dist R Inc £	70.18	...	...	...
SmartGAP European Equity R Acc (£850.80)	...	...	+3.03	1.98
SmartGAP Global Equity R Acc (£845.51)	...	...	+3.21	1.81
SmartGAP UK Equity R Acc (£851.25)	...	...	+3.25	2.62
Strategic Assets R Acc £	91.22	...	...	...
Strategic Bond R M Acc (£101.26)	...	...	+0.64	4.04
Strategic Bond R M Inc (£50.99)	...	...	+0.31	4.15
Strategic Bond R Q Acc (£102.08)	...	...	+0.63	4.14
Strategic Bond R Q Inc (£50.70)	...	...	+0.12	4.23
UK Select R Acc £	906.12	...	+7.41	1.60
UK Smaller Cos R Acc (£102.16)	...	...	+21.03	1.55
UK Special Sits R Acc £	828.78	...	+3.80	1.44

AXA FRAMINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD

Dling: 0845 602 1952 Priv Clients: 0845 777 5511

Equity Acc £	572.40	...	-2.70	4.83
Gilt Acc £	201.30	211.80	+0.10	...
Gilt Inc £	74.35	78.24	-0.39	1.09
Health Acc £	320.00	...	+20.00	...
Jap Smll Cos Ac £	62.54	66.09	-0.19	0.90
Managed Inc £	138.30	...	...	...
Monthly Inc £	220.20	...	+0.70	4.32
UK Growth Inc £	222.90	...	+0.50	1.01
UK Select Opps Inc £	1965.00	...	+9.00	1.45
UK Smll Cos Inc £	298.70	...	+3.10	0.26

AXA FUND MANAGERS LTD

Admin & Eq 0117 999 0808

AXA Trusts

Gen Acc £	2101.00	...	+6.00	2.64
Gen Inc £	1079.00	...	-2.00	...

UK/Global Investment Companies

Euro Acc A Inc £	234.70	...	...	1.18
Extra Inc B Inc £	86.74	...	+0.24	...
Global Growth R Inc £	288.10	...	+1.40	0.52
Japan Acc £	162.20	...	+1.20	1.51
Pac Growth Acc A Inc £	479.80	...	+17.60	2.30

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD

08457 46 46 46

European Growth £	235.20	...	+1.30	...
Sus Leaders £	852.60	...	-3.20	...
UK Growth £	685.80	...	+1.10	...
UK Income £	212.90	...	+0.20	...

CLOSE FUND MANAGEMENT LTD

0870 606 6402

Beacon Inv £	84.88	...	+0.35	...
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Dealing: 020 7426 6232

Winchester £	4052.48	...	-78.29	1.13
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COLUMBIA THREADNEEDLE INVESTMENTS

Enqs: 0870 601 6183 Dealing: 0870 601 6083

Share Class 1 - Retail				
Corporate Bd £	49.99	...	+0.31	...
Emerging Mkts £	116.50	...	+0.50	...
Euro Growth & Inc £	1443.00	...	+2.00	0.25
Global Bond £	49.07	...	...	1.23
FTSE All-Share Track £	463.40	...	+1.50	1.49
Global Growth SCI £	365.00	...	+2.70	...
High Inc Trst £	11.57	12.14	...	5.22
Max Inc Bond £	44.28	...	...	4.40
Muti Man Cont £	70.41	...	...	3.18
Muti Man Dist £	60.44	...	...	3.57
North Amer £	1095.00	...	+10.00	...
Pacific Growth £	477.40	...	...	0.04
Strategic Bd £	201.50	...	+0.50	1.64
UK Equity £	946.00	...	+2.00	1.27
UK Growth & Inc £	695.50	...	...	...
UK Growth & Inc Dist £	234.70	...	...	...
UK Smaller Cos £	1118.00	...	+3.00	1.43

EDENTREE INV MGMT LTD

0800 358 3010

Resp & Sust Sterling Bond £	186.32	...	+0.51	...
Resp & Sust Euro Acc £	376.90	...	+3.00	2.22
Resp & Sust Gld Inc £	373.20	...	+2.30	0.94
Resp & Sust Mgd Income £	1124.90	...	+0.50	4.47
Resp & Sust UK Acc £	222.90	...	+0.40	1.50
Resp & Sust UK Equity Opps £	198.30	...	+2.70	1.48

FIDELITY INTERNATIONAL

Private Cnts 0800 414161 Broker Digs 0800 414181

Amer Spec Sits £	2512.00	...	+15.00	...
American £	637.00	...	-37.00	...
Asian Growth £	441.60	...	+2.50	0.35
European £	393.00	...	+31.00	0.60
Extra Income £	22.64	...	+0.01	6.19
Global Spec Sits £	639.00	...	-4.00	...
Global Focus £	322.00	...	-14.00	...
Diversified Growth A Inc £	192.50	...	+0.20	0.08
Global £	649.90	...	+7.70	0.46
MoneyMdr Bal £	43.35	...	+0.24	4.27
MoneyMdr Glob £	327.60	327.60	-0.10	0.21
MoneyMdr Inc £	76.12	...	-0.95	...
MoneyMdr Inc £	28.92	...	+0.02	5.13

MoneyMdr UK Ind £	145.91	...	+1.03	3.17
Special Sits £	522.00	...	+24.00	2.59
WealthBuilder	69.75	72.18	+0.53	0.44

HALIFAX INVESTMENT FUND MGRS LTD

01296 386 386

Authorised Inv Funds

Share Class C				
Corporate Bond £	34.48	...	+0.37	3.77
Ethical £	135.50	...	+1.10	0.17
European £	131.80	...	+1.00	1.21
Far Eastern £	127.10	...	+2.80	2.01
Fund of Inv Trst £	152.30	...	+1.30	0.69
Intl Growth £	152.20	...	+1.40	0.69
Japanese £	85.87	...	+1.17	1.15
North Amer £	186.50	...	+1.40	0.07
Smaller Cos £	121.00	...	+2.30	1.48
Special Sits £	51.54	...	+0.55	1.03
UK Equity £	104.70	...	+0.90	3.26
UK FTSE 100 Tr £	79.46	...	+0.12	2.73
UK FTSE ALL-5 Tr £	89.97	...	+0.01	2.34
UK Growth £	96.21	...	+0.04	2.36

HSBC GLOBAL ASSET MGMT (UK) LTD

Enqs: 0845 745 6123 Dlg: 0845 745 6126 Mon-Fri 8-6

HSBC Index Tracker Investment Funds (OEIC)

Amer Ind Acc £	1165.87	...	+10.78	1.08
Amer Ind Inc £	914.05	...	+8.45	1.09
Euro Ind Acc £	1401.55	...	+7.84	2.44
Euro Ind Inc £	852.73	...	+4.77	2.92
FTSE 100 Ind £	315.08	...	+0.69	3.10
FTSE 100 Ind Inc £	136.20	...	+0.30	3.18
FTSE 250 Ind £	325.40	...	+3.63	2.92
FTSE 250 Ind Inc £	186.29	...	+2.10	3.02
FTSE All-5 Acc £	802.39	...	+2.39	3.16
FTSE All-5 Inc £	385.56	...	+1.34	3.24
Jap Ind Acc £	168.29	...	+2.14	1.62
Jap Ind Inc £	126.36	...	+1.61	1.64
Pac Ind Acc £	550.32	...	+0.59	2.80
Pac Ind Inc £	328.86	...	+5.07	2.99

HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Share Class

Balanced Acc £	270.99	...	+1.77	1.33
Balanced Inc £	151.95	...	-0.14	...
Corp Bd Acc £	285.63	...	+1.69	3.29
Corp Bd Inc £	105.38	...	+0.62	3.99
Gilt & Fd Ind Inc £	497.78	...	+1.62	...
Gilt & Fd Ind Inc £	74.17	...	+0.24	...
Income Acc £	809.63	...	+0.87	3.76
Income Inc £	318.10	...	+0.35	3.29
Monthly Inc Acc £	313.41	...	+0.77	3.21
Monthly Inc Inc £	135.68	...	+0.19	3.39
UK Gth & Inc Ret B Inc (£104.64)	...	...	+0.24	3.60
UK Gth & Inc Ret B Inc (£65.76)	...	...	+0.10	3.71
UK Gth & Inc Acc £	164.69	...	+0.24	3.60
UK Gth & Inc Inc £	69.76	...	+0.10	3.71

HSBC Specialist Investment Funds (OEIC)

American Index Retail £	101165.87	...	+10.78	1.08
American Index Retail £	109145.55	...	+8.45	1.09
Asian Gth Acc £	147.77	...	-0.07	...
Asian Gth Inc £	139.99	...	-0.06	...
Chinese Gth Acc £	513.81	...	+0.27	0.60
Chinese Gth Inc £	434.76	...	+0.22	0.34
Euro Gth Acc £	973.97	...	+4.05	0.41
Euro Gth Inc £	817.05	...	+3.29	0.44

IGNIS ASSET MGMT

Dly: 0141 222 8282

American Gth Inc £	322.55	340.42	-3.34	...
Balanced Growth £	262.17	276.69	-0.93	1.52
Balanced Growth £	393.13	414.92	-1.40	...
Corporate Bond £	96.69	...	-0.69	4.27
European Growth £	403.88	426.26	-3.57	2.18
European Growth Acc £	475.71	502.07	-4.21	2.24
Global Growth £	331.53	349.90	-3.09	0.12
Higher Yield £	83.98	88.64	-0.29	...
Higher Yield Acc £	275.04	290.28	-0.92	...
Japan £	49.06	51.78	-0.03	0.94
Managed £	130.69	138.15	-0.16	...
Managed Trust £	71.96	76.96	-0.17	...
Muti Pfd Inc £	95.54	100.84	-0.11	...
Pacific Gth £	496.71	526.34	-2.81	1.34
Special Comp £	756.24	788.14	-1.64	0.15
Smaller Cos £	628.94	663.29	-1.26	0.21

INSIGHT INVESTMENT FDS MANAGEMENT LTD

Client Servs: 0207 169 4000

Insight Investment Multi-Manager Funds

Well Blkr Bal Acc £	96.05	...	-0.32	...
Well Blkr Gwth Acc £	93.79	...	-0.36	...

INVESCO FUND MGRS LTD

Dling: 0800 085 8571 Inv Serv: 0800 085 8677

Bkr: 0800 028 2121

INVESCO FUNDS

UK Str Inc N/Tr £	323.57	...	-0.12	...
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INVESTEC FUND MGRS

Broker Support and Dealing: 020 7597 1900

OEIC Series Liabls & Iv

American A Acc £	791.51	...	+10.47	...
Asia ex Japan A Acc £	723.53	...	+5.17	...
Capital Accumulator A Acc (£923.18)	...	...	+3.21	...
Cautious Managed A Acc (£938.56)	...	...	+0.95	2.27
Cautious Managed A Acc (£923.26)	...	...	+0.58	2.30
Diversified Growth A Acc (£126.90)	...	...	-0.10	...
Diversified Growth A Acc (£126.90)	...	...	+1.93	2.95
Diversified Income A Acc (£933.18)	...	...	+0.44	3.62
Diversified Income A Acc (£967.56)	...	...	+0.09	4.89
Emerging Mkts Global A Acc (£102.40)	...	...	+0.14	...
Emerging Mkts Global A Acc (£102.50)	...	...	+0.20	...
Emerging Mkts Global A Acc (£106.92)	...	...	+0.07	...

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Y
Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc	161.76	...	-0.49	1.24
Emer Mkts Local Curr Debt A Acc	103.43	...	+0.25	4.44
Emer Mkts Local Curr Debt A Inc	106.34	...	+0.10	6.29
Emer Mkts Local Curr Debt Gross	102.08	...	-0.05	...
Enhanced Natural Resources A Acc	103.24	...	-1.25	...

Business Equity prices

Dividend yields Please note dividend yields are supplied by Morningstar. The yield is the sum of a company's trailing 12-month dividend payments divided by the last day's closing share price.

12-month high and low High/Low prices for UK equities are based on closing prices. Investment trust high and low prices are based on intra-day figures.

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E

Automobiles & parts

395%	1%	Aston Martin Lag	148%	+ 3%	-0.0
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Banking & finance

1920	136%	Abdn	156%	+ 1%	9.4	
720	3%	Acuity R	4			-0.4
2801	1%	Admiral	2736	+ 22	2.7	24.6
23%	1%	ADVF	15			-3.7
403	249	AI Bell	391%	+ 6%	2.7	23.6
27097	21651%	Aon Corp	21948%	- 100%		-22.3
1105	87	Arbutnot Bks	992%	+ 22%	4.7	4.4
144%	4	Argo Group	4			2.0
233%	6	Ashmore	198%	+ 3%	8.6	13.6
1554%	1182%	As New Z	1494%	+ 17%		-12.8
497	128%	Aviva	479%		6.9	12.9
413%	101%	Banco Santander	407	- 3	3.7	7.2
5380	87%	Banco of Georgia	3750	+ 40	7.2	4.2
219%	2%	Barclays	219%	- 1%	3.6	8.4
282%		Blue Star Capital				-0.2
512%	226	BP Marsh&Ptns	458	- 3	1.4	12.6
202	4%	Brazeheart Inc	5	- 1%	2.0	
		Brewin Dolphin	515	+ 1		-28.1
1403	166%	Bridgepoint	229%	+ 6	3.9	25.5
130	24%	Ceasus Secs	22%			-5.9
286	1%	Chesnara	250	+ 4%	9.4	20.3
442%		City of Lon Gp	10	+ 1		-0.6
797%		City of Lon Inv Gp	372	+ 14	9.2	12.8
976%	157%	Close Bros	496%	+ 17%	9.4	5.2
284	2%	CNC Markets	280	- 1%	1.7	75.6
1339%	77%	Comm&rk	1309%	- 13%		-9.2
1417%	772%	Deutsche Bk	1307%	+ 11%		-5.3
2338	133%	Direct Line Ins	212%	- 2	1.8	13.5

Investment companies

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld	Div%	P/E

2995	1837%	31 Group	2926	+ 63	2.8	40.6
349	276%	3i Infrastructure	340%	+ 2	3.3	-7.9
1554%	1126	Aberforth Smr	1544	+ 10	3.2	-12.8
1264	977%	Alliance	1208	+ 4	1.9	-3.4
417%	323	Asia Dragon Tr	399	+ 4	1.5	-16.1
210	160	Athelstan Trust	180	...	5.0	-4.5
259%	185	AVI Global Trust	244	+ 1	1.4	-10.2
243	175	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	207	- 3	0.8	-10.8
101%	75%	BaillieGifford Eu Gr	99%	+ 1%	2.3	-14.6
802	633	Baillie Gifford JnTr	735	+ 10	1.1	-12.7
150%	104%	Baillie Gifford SN	110%	+ 1	...	-16.3
177%	141%	Baillie Gifford UK Gr	175%	- 1%	1.9	-15.1
84%	60	Bal Comm Prop	80%	+ 2%	4.6	-27.7
117%	91%	Bankers Inv Trst	112%	...	2.0	-10.8
412%	325%	BH Macro	362	- 2	...	-35.5
1048	715	Biotech Growth	960	+ 16	...	-5.2
127	104	BlackRock Com Inc	121%	+ 1%	3.4	-10.8
159%	131%	BlackRock Fr Inv	148	- 1%	3.8	-8.1
65%	457%	BlackRock Grt Euro	625	+ 2	1.0	-5.6
208	170	BlackRock Inc & Gwth	204	+ 1	3.5	-12.2
1520	1146	BlackRock Smr	1512	+ 14	2.7	-11.7
207	172%	BlackRock Sustain Amer	200	+ 1%	3.5	-10.1
643	503	BlackRock Throgmorton	641	+ 2	2.2	-10.3
644	490	BlackRock Wild Min	590	...	5.9	-4.3
1360	1065	Brown Adv US sm	1285	- 5	...	-11.9
1365%	964	Brunner	1345	+ 15	1.6	-4.9
3700	2593%	Caledonia Inv	3545	+ 5	1.2	-35.4
429%	271%	City of Lon IT	422%	- 1%	4.9	-12.2
91	60	Crystal Amber Fd	87%	- 1%	22.6	-11.2
516	406	CT Priv Eq Ord	474	+ 14	3.9	-5.8
96	72	CT Property	73%	- 1%	4.1	-14.5
340	266%	CT UK Cap&nk	333%	- 1%	3.6	-15.5
92	75	CT UK HT 8	87%	...	...	-8.7
95%	1%	CT UK HT	93%	- 1%	5.9	-4.9
590	448%	Dunedin Ent	500%	...	5.7	-22.3
746	612%	Edinburgh IT	741	- 1	3.6	-1.5
157%	120%	Edin Widvie	144%	+ 1	...	-11.7
327%	273%	EP Global Opp	308	...	1.3	-21.6
92%	7%	European Assets	90%	+ 1%	5.6	-11.7
915	740%	European Opt Trust	905	- 1	0.3	-10.6
1058	825%	F&C Invest Tr	1006	+ 4	1.3	-10.8
549%	473%	Fidelity Asian Val	528	+ 6	2.6	-9.6
746	181%	Fidelity China Val	723	+ 1	2.7	-10.9
240	56%	FidlyEng&Mkt	691	+ 5%	2.0	-11.9
412%	311%	Fidelity European Trust402	...	+ 1%	2.0	-10.9
187	151	Fidelity Jap Tru	175	+ 1	...	-10.5
312%	252	Fidelity Spec Val	311	+ 1	2.8	-1.5
920	788%	Fins Gwth & Inc	832	- 3	2.0	-7.4
84%	59%	GOC Infrastructure	79%	+ 1%	6.3	-35.8
28%	22%	Gdn Prosp Prc Mtl	3%	- 1%	...	-18.7
152%	127%	Greencoat UK Wind	141%	+ 1	6.3	-16.9
230%	161%	Hansa Investment	218	+ 4	0.8	-43.2
221	162	Hansa Inv Co A'	213	...	0.8	-45.9
2450	201%	Hervest GIL Pt Eq	2345	- 45	...	-42.8
195%	149	Hend Euro Fc	192	+ 2	6.1	-11.7
177	136	Hend High Inc	162%	...	...	-2.0
902	626	Hend Hrd	890	+ 2	2.9	-34.4
2230	1590	Herfald	2190	+ 15	...	-12.4
504	348%	HigCapital Trust	495%	+ 8%	1.3	-4.6
150%	11%	HICL Infra	12%	+ 1%	5.2	-22.6
...	...	Highbridge Tactical	...	...	...	-61.1
1276	1046	ICG Ent Tr	1238	+ 14	1.6	-8.7
421%	331%	Imax Env Mkts	398	...	1.0	-11.0
349	283	Invesco Asia Tr	318	+ 4	4.2	-12.3

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E

66%	39%	EFG-Hermes Hldg	46%	...	...	5.4
187	101%	EPE Special Opps	177%	+ 1	...	...
1170%	940%	FBD	1119	+ 17	7.7	6.8
82%	33	Fishe	75	...	0.3	15.0
1765%	51	Froelk Topping	51	...	2.0	39.3
1364	2%	Georgia Capital	942	- 8	...	2.1
1120	450	Gresham House	1100	- 20	...	30.5
490	1%	H&T Group	399	...	4.2	8.2
836	39%	Harsard Global	47%	- 1%	9.0	9.9
1120	185	Hargreaves Lansdown1064	...	+ 8%	3.9	18.9
181%	24%	Hillies Under	171	- 2%	1.7	33.4
706%	41%	HSBC	693%	- 3	7.0	7.7
822	93	IG Group	822	+ 12	5.6	11.1
209	1%	Imapx	432	- 2%	6.3	14.5
2394	1%	Intermed Capital	2286	- 24	3.3	29.5
131	45%	IPF	117	+ 4	9.1	5.7
139%	115%	International Public P'ship126	...	+ 1	...	86.3
565	409	Investec	530	+ 11%	6.3	7.2
547	283	Investment Co	355	+ 2	...	44.1
431%	43%	IP Group	54	- 1	2.3	-3.2
160%	46%	Jarvis Securities	60%	+ 1%	15.0	6.8
142	73%	Jupiter Fund Mgmt	84%	+ 1%	...	8.2
107%	3	Just Group	104%	+ 10	...	9.3
689	1%	Lancashire Holdings	637	+ 4	2.5	6.1
268	192	Legal & Gen	251%	+ 1%	8.1	34.6
...	...	Liberty Group	502%	- 2%	...	-16.2
836	93%	Lioustrust	23	+ 8	...	9.9
62%	26	Livemore Inv	36%	- 1%	...	...
33%	3%	Lloyds Banking Group55%	...	+ 4.9	7.3	...
24%	1%	LMS Capital	18%	...	...	-4.0

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld	Div%	P/E

174%	154%	Invesco Bond Inc	170%	+ 1%	6.9	2.1
147%	133	IPST Bali	140%	...	2.5	-9.4
286	222	IPST Gd GST	272	- 10	2.3	-9.8
104	100%	IPST Managed	103	...	0.9	-4.6
190%	160	IPST UK Eq	164%	...	3.7	-13.3
996	723	JPM American	943	+ 2	0.7	1.7
378	309%	JPM Asia Gr & Inc	363	+ 8	3.9	-1.3
291	189	JPM China	229	- 1%	5.2	-10.6
748	622%	JPM Claverhs	732	+ 6	4.8	-4.7
804	514	JPMorgan Eng & ME & Africa48	...	- 1%	1.0	158.6
109%	96	JPM En Mkts	102%	+ 1%	1.4	-11.7
488%	352%	JPM Euro disc	483	...	2.0	-10.4
142%	116	JPM GEM	132	+ 2%	3.5	-11.2
568	451	JPM GGI	541	+ 4	3.2	1.3
373	798	JPM Indian	971	+ 21	...	-19.4
337	283%	JPM Jap SmI Co	294	...	3.8	-12.8
553	435	JPM Japan	524	+ 6	1.1	-8.7
1430	995	JPM Mid CapI	1220	- 1%	2.9	-14.6
107	90%	JPM Multi-asset Gd	101%	- 1%	...	5.7
339%	229	JPM SmI Co	339	+ 4%	3.3	-13.4
234	182	Keystone Positive Change Inv	209%	+ 3%	0.1	-11.5
899	178	Law Debenture	884	+ 8	3.9	-1.0
131%	103%	Lowland	130	+ 1%	3.5	-12.5
254	179	Majedie	244	...	2.6	-9.0
399	294%	M Currie Port	373	+ 4	1.0	-1.7
101	76	Maryon Val In	101	...	4.9	-52.2
249%	177%	Mercantile IT	244	+ 1%	3.0	-12.1
593	476	Merchants	582	...	5.3	-4.2
790	665	Mid Wind	762	+ 7	1.2	-1.6
1218	880	Monks Inv Trst	1164	+ 8	0.2	-11.1
146	106	Montano Euro SmI	142%	...	0.6	-13.9
904	766%	Murray Income Trst	862	- 4	4.3	-9.7
269%	238%	Murray Inv	249%	+ 1%	4.1	-10.8
350	90	NB Global Floating	62%	- 1%	5.4	-1.6
390	338	Pacific Assets	370	+ 6	0.5	-12.6
336	245	Pantheon Inv	326%	+ 1%	...	-32.6
4268	2682	Pershing Sq	4094	+ 16	0.5	-26.7
492%	457	Personal Assets	486	+ 1	1.5	-0.7
1300	2090	Prem Jap Trst	3030	+ 40	...	-9.8
145	87	Polar Cap & Inf	104	...	6.2	-14.9
122%	95	Renewables Inv	101	+ 1%	5.2	-14.0
2030	1696	RPT Cap Ptnr	1824	- 4	...	-28.0
1045	510	Riverstone	900	...	...	-26.9
464	382	Schroder TotRt	446	+ 10	2.3	-7.8
535	456	Schrd Asia Pac	513	+ 3	2.1	-12.3
2140	247	Schrd Inc Gwth	290	+ 4	4.5	-10.9
636	217	Schrd Jap Gwth	260	+ 5	1.8	-1.9
636	482	Schrd UKMid	632	+ 12	3.1	-14.8
115%	11%	Schroder UK KP Tr	121%	+ 1%	...	-47.6
540	500	Scot American	511	+ 6	2.8	-4.6
646	632%	Scot Mtge	872%	- 5%	0.4	-9.1
227	207	Secs Trst Scot	218	+ 2	3.0	-4.4
88%	71%	Sequoia Eco	79%	+ 1%	7.4	-13.5
271%	211%	Temple Bar	271%	...	3.6	-7.9
167%	140%	Talton Emf Mkt	156	+ 1%	2.7	-15.2
140%	128%	The GIL Smaller	166%	+ 3%	1.3	-9.8
1%	...	Tiger Royal and Inv	1%	...	...	-12.2
345	252%	Tru Property	339	+ 8	4.4	-4.1
87	74%	Tru Inc&Gd	79%	+ 3%	3.7	-4.3
150	99	UHLIC Ord	103%	- 3%	3.2	-42.9
241	203%	UHLIC Emerging Mkt	226	...	3.1	-10.5
660	500	Vietnam Ent Inv	61%	+ 12	...	-16.9
270	209	Witan	256	- 1	2.2	-8.4
355%	286	Wit Health	349	+ 4	0.8	-15.5

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4279%	3562%	Sun Life Can	3885%	- 37%	4.5	12.4	6469%	2%	Kingsiver Corp	6214%	- 221%	0.3	20.5
3465	3%	Tavistock Inv	4	---	1.7	---	725%	8%	Land Sec	670	+ 17%	6.0	-8.1
3460	4%	TBC Bank Group	2590	+ 40	6.6	4.3	708%	33%	Life Science Reit	33%	+ 1/2	---	-5.4
518	2%	Tenn	2%	---	---	-0.8	24	8 1/2	Lon & Assoc	11 1/2	- 1/2	---	-3.4
51%	44	Thames Ventures VCT	44	---	---	-5.6	210%	17%	Londonmetric Property 2008	+ 3%	4.8	---	---
44%	1/2	Time Finance	42%	+ 1/2	---	9.9	237	31 1/2	Mapco Prop Op	38 1/2	- 2	---	-1.4
230	21%	Vanquis	57%	+ 3 1/2	11.0	---	329%	---	Marshall	324	+ 8	3.9	44.2
1475	3%	Volvere	1475	---	---	19.3	105%	4%	Michelmelsh	101 1/2	+ 1	4.4	10.0
90%	3%	WH Ireland	3%	- 1/4	---	-0.5	26	1/8	Minifair PLC	---	---	---	-0.4
1684	20%	Walker Crips Grp	23	---	2.1	18.2	2540	1706	Morgan Sindall	2540	+ 20	4.5	10.1
4893%	303%	Wells Fargo	4603%	- 87%	---	12.1	11900	558	Mountview	9825	---	5.0	14.1
1454%	1044%	Westpac	1392%	+ 33%	---	13.4	9150	58	NewRiver REIT	72%	---	9.1	-0.4
978%	24%	Worthington Investors Ltd	25%	+ 1%	---	9.7							
42995%	35204	Zurich Financ	41380%	+ 26%	---	17.7							

[illegible]

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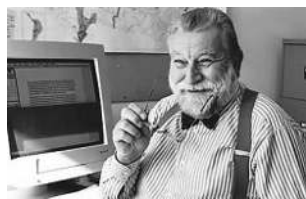
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Pioneering editor of the BBC's Today programme
Mike Chaney
Page 50



Register

Obituaries

Peter Jarvis

Whitbread chief executive who bought and sold an array of restaurant chains, turned Threshers around and invented Captain Birdseye

Peter Jarvis, big, bluff and heavily built, had no trouble thinking the unthinkable. "When we first put nappy-changing facilities in pubs in Scotland," he said, "people thought we were going out of our brains."

He had been inspired by 1990s feminist research predicting an era dominated by female customers and values.

When he joined the drinks trade in 1976, fizzy keg beers ruled and women could still legally be refused service in pubs. Men would knock back several pints while their wives or girlfriends stayed at home to cook dinner. When they were taken out, they were ushered into the saloon or snug rather than the more raucous public bar. But Whitbread, sensing the mood was changing, recruited Jarvis among a cohort of young executives with marketing rather than brewing experience. He had been part of the Unilever team that invented Captain Birdseye and he built the Brewer's Fayre and Beefeater brands for his new employer.

When Jarvis became chief executive in 1990, he bought chains of restaurants in a £500 million spending spree that raised eyebrows among investors and competitors. The UK franchises for TGI Fridays and Pizza Hut were followed by Costa Coffee, Hungry Fisherman, Henry's, Roast Inn, Berni Inns, Café Rouge, Dôme, Bella Pasta and Pizzaland restaurants as well as Marriott hotels. When he bought the David Lloyd tennis and health clubs he tried (but failed) to encourage young parents by installing nurseries in the grounds. Jarvis was particularly proud of turning Threshers into one of Britain's biggest off-licences. However in 2010, new owners bowed to supermarket pressure and closed it down.

Many other chains fell too. "Whitbread developed a number of retail concepts, giving the company a plethora of ideas from which it could pick one or two that could be expanded significantly, leaving the others to be dropped," a NatWest analyst said. Hungry Fisherman, Henry's and Roast Inn were among those discarded.

Jarvis's hand was strengthened by the government's 1989 Beer Orders, which compelled large breweries and their pub chains to be separated. "The idea was to force brewers to sell pubs to reduce the price of beer," David Richardson, then Whitbread's strategic planning director, said. "In practice, they held on to pubs and got rid of brewing. Our pubs were not as big as some of our rivals' boozers, so we started to look for other things." By then, more people could afford what Jarvis called "urban casual dining" and wanted their palates tickled at reasonable prices.

"When I was appointed I was seen as just a safe pair of hands and a fast pair of legs, but nobody built more hotels and no one opened more coffee shops in this country," Jarvis said.

Nevertheless, he continued to buy breweries whenever promising ones came up. The most notable was Boddington's, which he promoted as "the cream of Manchester". In one television advert, a young Melanie Sykes pops her head out of an ice cream van, gives an athlete a pint of bitter instead of a cone and asks: "Do you want a Flake in that, love?"



Jarvis played in goal for England Youth, but declined to go professional

Peter Jack Jarvis was born in Farnworth, Bolton, in 1941, the only child of Jack Jarvis, a bricklayer who became a cotton mill maintenance manager, and his wife, Olive, who ran a fashion boutique in Manchester.

Life was hard during the Second World War, only a dozen miles from the blitz being suffered by Manchester. Jarvis, brought up by his grandmother, parents, aunts and cousins, contracted polio aged 12. He spent weeks in an iron lung before making a

He contracted polio at the age of 12 and spent weeks in an iron lung

near-perfect recovery that left him with only a slight stammer. Tall and powerful, he channelled his energy into sport alongside bricklaying and night shifts in bakeries and the Littlewoods mail order centre.

He rose from being the best at sport in Bolton School to playing in goal for England Youth and fast bowling for junior Lancashire teams. His huge, gnarled hands were disfigured by several broken fingers. In 1958, when his beloved Bolton Wanderers won the FA Cup, he might have gone professional. But footballers' wages were still modest, so instead he read geography at Christ's College, Cambridge. He won a blue for three victorious matches against Oxford at Wembley stadium, captaining the side in his final year. He also bowled for the university, without

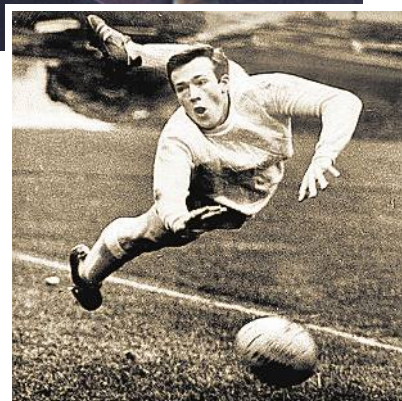
making the Varsity team. "The best thing that happened was a serious injury which prevented me playing cricket, and that meant I passed my exams," he said.

Bolton School had been endowed by the first Lord Leverhulme, founder of the Anglo-Dutch foods and toiletries group Unilever. In Jarvis's day the chairman of the Old Boltonians' Association was also chairman of the United Africa Company, then Unilever's biggest subsidiary. "The company took an interest in me and I took an interest in them," he said. He was offered a junior management trainee's job straight from school, but went to Cambridge first.

He spent a dozen years at Unilever, part of it in the team that invented the Captain Birdseye advertising campaign. There he met his future wife, Judith, who worked in the public relations department. They married in 1968, and had a son and a daughter, Edward and Emma.

"We are a very close family and always have been," Emma said. "Despite Dad's career success, he spent lots of time with us throughout our childhood and adulthood, always supporting us in our academics, careers and hobbies. When I wanted to learn to ride, he had lessons too."

Jarvis was sent to the US for a year to work for Lipton, Unilever's tea business, a sign he was regarded as a rising talent. "They ran the best school of marketing this side of the Atlantic," he said. But he was lured to Whitbread by a former



Unilever executive, Anthony Simonds-Gooding, who had become managing director of the UK operations and told him: "You'll like it here. They need people like us and there are great opportunities." When Simonds-Gooding moved to the Saatchi & Saatchi advertising agency, Jarvis took his boardroom spot.

Initially, Jarvis was made sales and marketing director of Whitbread's whisky business, with the task of establishing Long John International whisky in the US against the rivals Johnnie Walker and Dewar's. Despite six months commuting between London and New York, he had to admit defeat.

Nevertheless, he had been picked out by Sir Charles Tidbury, then Whitbread chairman, who observed: "He was a bit of a workaholic but he had an ability to let people get on with things. He had a nose for business. When he knew he had to do something unpleasant, even

to get rid of people, he got on with it. There has to be a certain ruthlessness about any chief executive, and he had that."

Tidbury told him to establish the wine operation, which he did effectively through the Stowell's of Chelsea brand. In 1989 Jarvis sold the entire non-beer interests for £540 million and his reputation was secure. He picked up an array of directorships, with Rank Group, Barclays Bank and the former high-street clothing retailer Burton Group.

Jarvis left Whitbread in 1996 and, when Burton demerged the Deben-

'There has to be a certain ruthlessness about any CEO — and he had that'

hams department store chain in 1998, he stepped up as chairman. He was embroiled in controversy five years later when it emerged that he had sanctioned highly unusual payments to two private equity firms to research rival takeover bids for Debenhams, the firm he led.

"If a venture capital company is seriously interested, they should not need to be funded," a fund manager said. "It makes the management look too keen to be taken over."

Jarvis replied: "They had invested a lot of money in the process. We thought they were serious and they had done a lot of work."

The bidding went considerably higher and, despite opposition from individual shareholders, institutional investors holding 99.5 per cent of the equity accepted a £1.7 billion offer. "I bent over backwards to look after our shareholders' best interests," said Jarvis, who in effect retired after the deal was done. Richard Fletcher, business editor of The Times, said: "In hindsight he did shareholders a huge favour."

Jarvis was a member of the Brewers' Society (now the British Beer and Pub Association), a fellow of the IGD (formerly the Institute of Grocery Distribution) and for eight years was a governor of his alma mater, Bolton School. He was appointed CBE in 1995 for services to the brewing and catering industries.

After leaving Whitbread he bought a boat and regularly sailed from Chichester, West Sussex, to Salcombe in Devon, where he renovated an old mill house. Into his fifties, he was still able to beat his son Edward at tennis. Later he enjoyed gardening, travel, cooking, family life and keeping up with business news.

Although Jarvis spent much of his career persuading people into mid-priced restaurants, he never lost his affection for pubs. He said: "We're very, very close to customers, we do a lot of research and come up with a lot of new ideas. But we want to preserve the British pub. It is plainly the most successful of its kind in the world."

Peter Jarvis CBE, businessman, was born on July 1, 1941. He died of heart failure on April 18, 2024, aged 82

Mike Chaney

Ebullient BBC executive who launched Newsbeat and became editor of Radio 4's flagship Today programme in the 1970s

When Mike Chaney launched a current affairs show on BBC Radio 1 he set about re-creating the populist approach of The Sun and instructed his staff that the programme's production values had to be "faster and slicker than Radio 4".

The result was a bulletin that brought the news of the day to young listeners in an accessible style that Lord Reith would not have recognised, interspersed with quirky stories and interviews with famous people.

Bearded and ebullient, and with experience in both radio and tabloid newspapers, Chaney was the perfect man for the job. He had spent the 1960s as a producer on the BBC's World Service and then the Home Service and Radio 4, where he produced *Today*.

The main presenter at the time was the much-loved but erratic Jack de Manio. Chaney had his work cut out trying to prevent De Manio's gaffes, cringing in the control room when he referred to Yoko Ono as "Yoko Hama, or whatever her name is".

Chaney left for Fleet Street in 1970 and joined The Sun but was lured back to Broadcasting House three years later by Ian Trethowan, managing director of radio and later director-general, to launch *Newsbeat*. Independent commercial radio was about to begin broadcasting under legislation introduced by Ted Heath's Conservative government and some ministers were arguing that the advent of stations such as Capital Radio should lead to the abolition of Radio 1. *Newsbeat* was the BBC's principal weapon against such attacks, by establishing Radio 1's public service credentials.

The Sun carried the news of Chaney's appointment on its front page under the headline "Sun staffer gets top Beeb job", but when he took up the post he was shocked to discover the "pitifully

small" budget he had been allocated of £100 a day for on-air reporting and presenting talent. "This is going to be hard work," he announced, but rolled up his sleeves and recruited a team of young reporters and producers, mainly from local radio, that included Richard Skinner, Peter Mayne, Bill Rogers and Laurie Mayer.

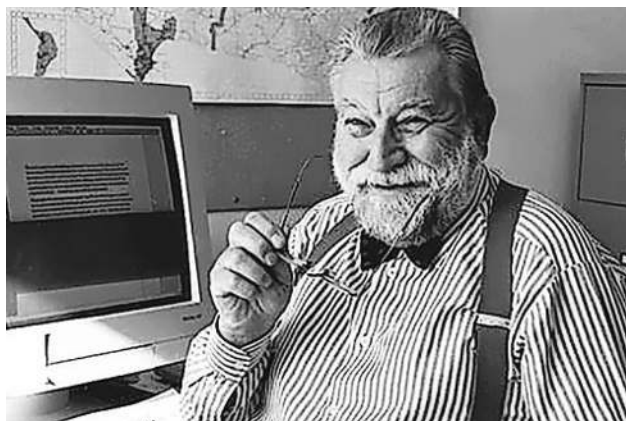
Under his direction they forged a style that was vigorous and, for a time, unique. "We had to give the top line of every story the smoothness of a Coca-Cola advert and the punch of a Fleet Street headline," noted Paul Heiney, who was among the reporters Chaney hired, along with Libby Purves.

Chaney's reward was to return to *Today* in 1976 as editor. De Manio had retired and, in a move that was ahead of its time in addressing London bias,

Chaney cringed in the control room at Jack de Manio's gaffes

Chaney decided the programme should be presented jointly from the capital and Manchester. John Timpson was in a studio in Broadcasting House, with Brian Redhead, who had been the northern editor of The Guardian, as his opposite number in Manchester. Chaney moved six of the programme's production staff north as Redhead's support team.

The BBC trumpeted its "new inter-city style of presentation" and Redhead, who remained a *Today* presenter until 1993, enthusiastically embraced the move. "If you want to drop a word in the ear of the nation, then this is the programme in which to do it," he declared. However, Timpson called it a "ridiculous idea" and left for a brief and unsuccessful career in television.



Chaney's forthright wit brought trouble when he complained of *Today* being cut

By the time Timpson was persuaded to return to the *Today* fold in 1978, Chaney was a marked man, having clashed with the powers-that-be when the Radio 4 controller, Ian McIntyre, had cancelled *Today's* Saturday edition and handed over half its weekday airtime to a mix of lighter items involving music, sport and trailers called *Up to the Hour*, presented by Laurie Macmillan.

Chaney called it "absolute crap, the floor sweepings" and the newsreader Peter Donaldson, styling himself Donald Peterson, was almost sacked for ridiculing the show on air. Chaney feared the mutiny might result in "Mack the Knife" — as they called McIntyre — having the rebels "hung by the bollocks outside Broadcasting House".

His editorial judgment was proved right. *Up to the Hour* was axed after just 14 months and McIntyre was moved sideways to Radio 3. In the fallout, Chaney was forced to reapply for his own

job and when he was rejected he was sent into exile as the launch controller of Radio Norfolk with a tiny staff.

His reaction was one of characteristically forthright wit. "As you know, I've been thrown on the shit heap but this is as nice a shit heap as any to be thrown on," he told the Eastern Daily Press.

Michael Kingsley Chaney was born in 1931 in north London, the elder son of Lily (née Baker) and Stan Chaney, a building society manager. He was educated at Oxted grammar school in Surrey. After completing his National Service with the RAF he enrolled on a journalism course at Regent Street Polytechnic (now the University of Westminster).

His progress as a journalist took him from local papers to the northern editions of the nationals and finally to Fleet Street with the News Chronicle. His first radio experience came in the late 1950s with the Nigerian Broadcast-

ing Corporation, which helped him to land a job with the BBC World Service.

While at the BBC he continued to moonlight in Fleet Street, not least because following his divorce from his first wife, Diana Emptage, and his marriage to Frances Bernard in 1964, he had two families to support. Even in the 1970s when he was the editor of *Today* it was rumoured that he was supplementing his income with night shifts at The Sun. His seven children caused one newspaper diarist to remark that rather than editing *Today* "surely a late-night appointment would have been more in the public interest".

He is survived by his third wife Annie (née Edwards), whom he married in 1993 and with whom he lived in Puddletown, Dorset. He is further survived by his children Caroline and Richard from his first marriage and Rose, Ama, Isla and Ceri, from his second. Another daughter, Kate, from his first marriage, predeceased him.

Chaney finally parted company with the BBC after two years running Radio Norfolk when he complained to Aubrey Singer, the managing director of radio, that the station's stock of razor blades — used to cut and edit tape — was old, rusty, blunt or all three. When Singer told him to "f*** off", Chaney took him at his word and resigned.

Moving to Dorset he became press officer for the county council until his retirement in 1995. Two years later he attended a party to celebrate 40 years of *Today*. "We had twice the audience when I was editor," he told the show's presenters of the time, who included John Humphrys and Jim Naughtie. "We didn't need all this narcissism."

Mike Chaney, BBC executive, was born on March 3, 1931. He died on March 15, 2024, aged 93

Nora Cortiñas

Argentinian human rights activist and voice for 'the disappeared' after her son was abducted and killed by the junta in 1977

Nora Cortiñas kissed her son goodbye as he boarded a bus in April 1977 and never saw him again. Five days later Carlos Gustavo Cortiñas was kidnapped in Buenos Aires. Recently married and with a young family to feed, the university graduate had started working as an economist for the government. "He was 24 years old, had a wife and a very small child," his mother recalled. "He left one cold morning and never came back. He was kidnapped at the train station while on his way to work."

After graduating in economics from the University of Buenos Aires, Carlos believed he could make a difference and improve the quality of life for Argentina's poorest. Unbeknown to him, his past had been scrutinised by the US-backed junta that had taken power in a coup in 1973. His crime was membership as a student of a militant Peronist youth group and support for Father Carlos Mugica, an activist Roman Catholic priest who was assassinated in 1974. Carlos Cortiñas would become one of an estimated 30,000 perceived enemies of the state who would "disappear" between 1976 and 1983.

Cortiñas compared her son's abduction to "having an arm amputated". When she went to the police, pleading for help, she was told to stop making inquiries for her own safety.

"I entered into a spiral of madness," she said. "I was called, threatened, told I would be put in prison."

In despair, she joined other mothers of the disappeared in Plaza de Mayo in



Nora Cortiñas in Plaza de Mayo where she and other mothers protested weekly

front of the presidential palace in Buenos Aires. Every Thursday the Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora would walk around the square holding up photos of their children. Some wore cotton nappies to symbolise their children as babies. Others, like Cortiñas, wore a white headscarf.

Protest under the noses of the junta was unsurprisingly deemed unacceptable. Three of the founding mothers in the square — Esther Ballestrino de Carreaga, Azucena Villaflor and Maria

Ponce de Bianco — joined the disappeared.

Cortiñas and other mothers continued to protest in the square every Thursday. Passers-by ignored them, afraid of being arrested. "It was like we were invisible," she said. However, their bravery did not go unnoticed by the world's media. Increasing international attention made it more difficult for the junta to arrest Cortiñas. By late 1982, with Argentina in economic chaos and smarting from defeat to Britain in the

Falklands conflict, widespread protests broke out on the streets. The junta fell in 1983.

Cortiñas accused the first democratically elected president after the junta, Raúl Alfonsín, of breaking a promise to "open the archives" and tell the world what had happened to the disappeared. "We never knew, we still don't know to this day, exactly what happened to Carlos. We don't know who kidnapped him. We don't know where they took him. We don't know how or when he was killed, or anything."

She continued to protest in Plaza de Mayo on Thursdays until near the end of her life.

Nora Irma Morales was born in Buenos Aires in 1930, the third of five daughters in a family of Spanish immigrants. Her father, Manuel, ran a printing business and her mother, Mercedes, was a seamstress. Nora, known as Norita, performed well at school but left aged 12, like many Argentine girls, because it was deemed more useful for her to learn to cook, clean and sew at home in preparation for marriage. At the age of 19 Nora married Carlos Cortiñas, a civil servant. "My husband was very macho, he didn't like me to work in anything other than taking care of the house," she said.

Naturally didactic and with a strong personality, Cortiñas would set up an atelier in the family home to teach other young women to sew.

She always believed in peaceful protest. In 1986 she set up a splinter mothers group when Hebe de Bonafini (obituary,

November 24, 2022), one of the co-founders of the original group, took it in a more radical direction.

In later years Cortiñas was considered a leading voice for human rights in Argentina, espousing several other causes. She campaigned for the legalisation of abortion — which she lived to see achieved in 2020 — and for better treatment of prisoners with HIV/Aids.

Cortiñas had finally received the education her intellect deserved, graduating in social psychology at the University of Buenos Aires in 1993. She became an academic, teaching "economic power and human rights" at the university. Much of her research focused on the years of the junta, but she never found out what happened to her son.

Her husband died of a heart attack in 1994 at the age of 71. She is survived by their younger son, Damián.

Her final public appearance was on March 24, the National Day of Remembrance for Truth and Justice, when she was seen in a wheelchair wearing her white headscarf and clutching a picture of her disappeared son. After her death was announced, there was only one place for her friends, fellow campaigners and admirers to go. Plaza de Mayo quickly filled up.

Nora Morales de Cortiñas, social psychologist and human rights activist, was born on March 22, 1930. She died on May 30, 2024, aged 94

Email: obituaries@thetimes.co.uk

Lives remembered

Her Honour
Suzanne Norwood

John Samuels writes: At a time, now happily forgotten, when conduct, connivance and collusion

were each discretionary bars to the grant of a decree of divorce, members of the Bar would meet, without prejudice, to discuss the terms on which their respective clients might achieve their matrimonial freedom without infringing those arcane rules.

As her far more junior colleague I frequently attended such meetings with Suzanne Norwood (obituary, May 24) in her chambers at 3 Temple Gardens for such discussions. I could not fail to notice that she was invariably formally dressed, including wearing a hat. With some diffidence I eventually asked her why.

"Are you going on to a cocktail party?" She shot me a withering glance. "A discussion about the dissolution of a marriage is a formal procedure." I have never forgotten that magisterial reply, in a tone which she subsequently applied throughout her distinguished judicial career.

June Mendoza



Bill Dunn, former MEP, writes: June Mendoza (obituary, May 20) had a nice sense of humour. She told

me that when she had finished the painting of the 400 MPs in the Commons chamber, she realised the visitors' gallery above them was empty. So she painted in her own family there and, although dogs are banned from the Commons, you can just see the ears of theirs peeking above the parapet.

Sir Tony O'Reilly



Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare writes: One talent worthy of mention was Tony O'Reilly's ability as an ac-

complished after-dinner speaker (obituary, May 20). He always made it look so effortless, showing the skill of the consummate professional.

However, Tony had a weakness. He was an unashamed optimist. His purchase of the Wedgwood china and Waterford glass companies was to prove his downfall, when he was finally burnt by the flame of romanticism.

My wife Mary, like myself, thought that he would end his days as president of Ireland, which would indeed have been a more fitting closure to the career of such a remarkable man.

Keith Wainwright



Nigel à Brasard writes: In the 1970s I used to have my hair cut by Keith Wainwright (obituary, May 24) at Smile. I

remember telling Keith how nervous I felt about starting a job as a graduate trainee at a British merchant bank. Keith said that I had proved my ability in being awarded a degree and that if it did not work out then it was the bank's fault and not mine. Thanks to Keith's advice I started work with a positive frame of mind and thoroughly enjoyed my subsequent career in banking. I have always been grateful to him for his reassuring words.

If you would like to add a personal view or recollection to a published obituary, you can send your contribution by email to tributes@thetimes.co.uk

Births, Marriages and Deaths

To book a Birth, Marriage or Death announcement in the Register, visit newsukadvertising.co.uk for help, please call 020 7782 7553 or email BMDs@thetimes.co.uk

AT THAT time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD. Zephaniah 3:20 (AV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

FRAME on 17th May 2024 to Emma Elizabeth Cameron (née Cunningham) and Andrew Austin Whitaker, a son, Albert (Berlie) Charles Cameron, brother to Isla Elizabeth Whitaker, at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, London.

PERERA on 23rd May 2024 to Frances (née Trivett) and Robert, a daughter, Iona Mary Cecily, sister to Willoughby.

WILSON on 27th May 2024 to Tallulah (née Lewis) and Finlay, a daughter, Ottillie Agnes Juno.

Marriages

MR B. P. A. LITHERLAND AND MISS O. E. C. BROCKLEHURST The marriage took place in Hong Kong on Friday 24th May between Benjamin, elder son of Mr and Mrs Piers Litherland and Olivia, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs David Brocklehurst.

Deaths

ASQUITH Stephen Andrew Romilly Michael died peacefully at home surrounded by his children and grandchildren on 31st May 2024. Funeral 13th June at home. Donations to Kate's Home Nursing, website <https://www.kateshomenursing.org/contact-us/>. No flowers please.

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 11.30am. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, in memory, for Stroke Association or Alzheimer's Research UK – inquire to HJ Paintin Ltd, tel 01223 891226. A memorial service to be held in London will be announced at a later date.

GREEN Dick Capt of Craig-Y-Dorth, Monmouth. Formerly British Airways Captain passed away peacefully at home on 27 April, aged 81. A much-loved husband, brother, godfather, and friend to all. Funeral service at the Forest of Dean Crematorium on Wednesday 12 June at 12.30pm. Donations for Dementia Scotland and the British Heart Foundation may be made at www.ernest-heal.co.uk. Casual dress preferred.

GREY-TURNER Lillias died peacefully on 17th May 2024, aged 103. What changes she saw in her lifetime! Beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Her life will be celebrated on 9th July 2024 at 11.00am at St Peter's, Petersham. No flowers, but donations (optional) to the Brain Tumour Research Campaign (Maxwell Thompson Fellowship), btrc-charity.org

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 11am.

PINK Philip Daniel on 28th May 2024, aged 89, in Winchester. Beloved husband of Janet. Much-loved father and grandfather. Funeral service at Winchester Cathedral, 13th June, 2pm. Family flowers only.

PYE (Brig) Hugh William Kellow OBE died peacefully on 30th May 2024, aged 86. Beloved husband of Mary, much-loved father of Robert and Victoria, and grandfather of Tabitha, Lizzie, Evelyn, Edward, Katie, Olivia and Jermina. Private family funeral. Donations, if desired, to Parkinson's UK and The Royal Lancers Charitable Trust.

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY AND PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

To place notices for these sections please call 020 7782 7553

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 11.30am three days prior to insertion

SINCLAIR Colin died suddenly on 25th May 2024 at home in Lasswade. Colin will be deeply missed by Lois, Nick and Rachael, Jessica and John Elliot and Claire, and the grandchildren, Emily, Matthew, Caollia, Munro, Fraser and Skye. Family, friends and colleagues will remember him as a kind, thoughtful, funny and no fuss man so will understand that it is Colin's wish to have a private funeral. Colin and Lois would like to thank all their wonderful friends who have been so supportive over the last few years. It is very much appreciated by them both.

VARDON Johanna Eileen MBE, peacefully on 25th April 2024. Widow of adored husband John Mawdsley Baxter, much-loved aunt, great aunt, great great aunt, stepmother and stepgrandmother; sister to John (twin), Barbara, Veronica and Hugh. Founder of the National Foaling Bank and "mother" to generations of horses bred from her famous mare Fidda. Thoroughbred service at St Swithun's Church, Cheswardine, Shropshire, at 2.30pm on Saturday 22nd June. No flowers. Donations to St Swithun's Platinum Jubilee Window Fund and the National Foaling Bank's charity c/o Perry & Phillips Funeral Directors, 4 Undercross, Bridgnorth, WV16 4BB. Tel 01746 765255.

WYNN COWELL Richard died peacefully on 16th May 2024 at Queen Elizabeth Court, Llandudno, loving husband of Jean, dear father of Bethan and Owain, and cherished Taid of Iolo, Angharad, Llywelyn and Olivia. Private family funeral service will be held in June.

YOUNG Paula Mary died peacefully on 22nd May 2024, aged 93, after a short illness. Beloved wife of David, much-loved mother of Christopher, Alison, Jonathan and Rachel, proud grandmother of James, Annie, Harry, Jack and Anna and fond great-gran of Iris and Olive. The funeral will be held at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Cobham, at 9.30am on Tuesday 11th June, and afterwards at Woodlands Park Hotel, KT11 3QB. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to St Mungo's.

The simple way to place your Birth, Marriage or Death announcement in the Register. Available 24 hours a day. Go to: newsukadvertising.co.uk

Legal Notices

Notice under the Trustee Act 1925 E.ON UK Senior Executive Pension Scheme (formerly known as the Powergen Senior Executive Pension Scheme)

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 27 (1) of the Trustee Act 1925 that E.ON UK Pension Trustees Limited ("the Trustee") is winding up the E.ON UK Senior Executive Pension Scheme ("the Scheme"). If you have received communication from the Trustee regarding the wind up of the Scheme, then you do not need to take any action.

This notice concerns members of the E.ON UK Senior Executive Pension Scheme only. If you have additional benefits in the E.ON UK Group of the Electricity Supply Pension Scheme, these are unaffected.

The wind-up of the Scheme commenced on 19 January 2024.

Anyone who believes that they are a member of the Scheme, and has not otherwise received notification of the wind up of the Scheme, is required to provide details to the Trustee by emailing pensions.feedback@eon-uk.com, or in writing to this address: E.ON UK Pension Trustees Limited

Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8LG

Anyone who believes they have any other interest, claim or entitlement in relation to the Scheme but have not received announcements from the Trustee, should contact the Trustee in the same way.

Claimants should provide their full name, address, date of birth, National Insurance number, the period during which they worked for E.ON UK plc or any associated company and any documents supporting their claim. Claims must be made within 2 months of the date of publication of this notice. In addition, if any person or persons are requested to set out particulars of such a claim in writing within 2 months of the date of publication of this notice. Once two months have elapsed following the publication date of this notice, the Trustee may distribute the assets of the Scheme amongst the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have prior notice and will not, as regards the assets so distributed, be liable to any person of whose claim they do not have notice. Dated 4 June 2024.

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DECEMBER 2024

Sun 19 **Embark *Ambition* and depart London Tilbury**
Mon 23 **Leixões (for Oporto), Portugal**
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Tue 24 **Lisbon, Portugal ★Christmas Eve★**
Expect a memorable Christmas Eve spent in the charming city of Lisbon. This coastal city effortlessly marries its rich history with a contemporary cosmopolitan vibe and no visit is complete without a taste of their pastel de natas!
Wed 25 **★Spend Christmas Day relaxing at sea★**
From a delicious Christmas dinner (without the washing up!) to spectacular themed entertainment throughout the day, it's sure to be a memorable affair indeed
Thu 26 **Funchal, Madeira**
Fri 27 **Arrecife, Lanzarote (arrive midday)**
Sat 28 **Las Palmas, Gran Canaria (depart late night)**



Sun 29 **Santa Cruz, Tenerife**
Mon 30 **Santa Cruz, La Palma**
Nestled along the lush coastline of La Palma, Santa Cruz de la Palma emerges as a charming gem, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in its rich history and vibrant culture
Tue 31 **★Spend New Year's Eve relaxing at sea★**
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Wed 1 **Casablanca (for Marrakesh), Morocco**
★New Year's Day★
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Thu 2 **Gibraltar (arrive midday)**
Fri 3 **Cádiz, Spain**
Sat 4 **Portimão, Portugal**
Mon 6 **Vigo (for Santiago de Compostela), Spain**
Thu 9 **Arrive in London Tilbury**
Dates not mentioned are spent relaxing at sea

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Today Rain and showers spreading in from the northwest, staying dry in the south. Max 22C (72F), min 0C (32F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, ss=sun, t=thunder
*previous day **data not available

	Temp C		Rain mm	Sun hr*
midday yesterday				
Aberdeen	19	S	0.2	5.8
Aberporth	13	C	0.4	11.6
Anglesey	15	C	0.0	11.7
Aviemore	17	S	0.0	3.5
Barnstaple	17	C	0.0	**
Belfast	17	C	0.0	**
Birmingham	16	C	0.0	1.5
Bournemouth	19	C	0.0	14.7
Bridlington	19	PC	0.0	**
Bristol	17	C	0.0	15.2
Cambridge	16	R	0.0	12.8
Cardiff	18	PC	0.0	14.9
Edinburgh	17	C	0.4	6.3
Exeter	15	C	0.4	8.6
Glasgow	18	B	0.0	2.8
Hereford	18	C	0.0	**
Hertsmere	18	C	0.0	10.5
Ipswich	17	C	0.0	10.2
Isle of Man	14	C	0.0	9.6
Isle of Wight	19	D	0.0	**
Jersey	18	S	0.0	10.7
Kewick	14	C	0.0	**
Kinross	17	S	0.0	3.9
Leeds	15	C	0.0	**
Lerwick	13	PC	1.8	0.0
Leuchars	19	S	0.2	6.9
Lincoln	18	B	0.0	13.6
Liverpool	14	D	0.0	**
London	18	C	0.0	13.9
Lyneham	18	C	0.0	14.8
Manchester	16	C	0.0	7.3
Margate	17	R	0.0	10.8
Milford Haven	17	C	0.0	**
Newcastle	17	C	0.0	**
Nottingham	16	C	0.0	14.7
Orkney	12	C	1.2	0.8
Oxford	18	R	0.0	**
Plymouth	19	C	0.0	**
Portland	16	PC	0.0	**
Scilly, St Mary's	17	C	0.0	**
Shoreham	19	PC	0.0	12.5
Shrewsbury	16	R	0.0	14.5
Snowdonia	16	C	0.0	**
Southend	19	C	0.0	10.5
South Uist	13	PC	0.0	**
Stornoway	14	C	0.2	0.4
Tiree	14	PC	0.2	0.0
Whitehaven	16	C	0.0	8.0
Wick	14	C	0.0	**
Yeovilton	19	PC	0.0	15.1

The world

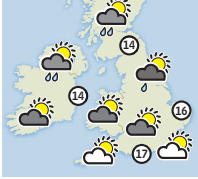
All readings local midday yesterday			
Alicante	23	PC	Madeira 23 B
Amsterdam	16	B	Madrid 27 S
Antwerp	13	S	Malaga 23 S
Auckland	17	PC	Mallorca 25 PC
Bahrain	33	S	Malta 28 S
Bangkok	37	PC	Melbourne 11 B
Barbados	30	B	Mexico City 30 DU
Barcelona	22	PC	Miami 29 B
Beijing	31	S	Milan 21 B
Beirut	30	**	Mombasa 32 PC
Belgrade	19	R	Montreal 24 B
Berlin	14	DU	Moscow 24 PC
Bermuda	25	PC	Mumbai 33 **
Bordeaux	20	DU	Munich 16 SH
Brussels	15	B	Nairobi 23 B
Bucharest	31	S	Naples 24 T
Budapest	22	SH	New Orleans 24 T
Buenos Aires	11	R	New York 26 B
Cairo	34	S	Nice 22 PC
Calcutta	33	**	Nicosia 36 S
Canberra	8	DU	Oslo 21 S
Cape Town	14	R	Paris 19 B
Chicago	24	B	Perth 20 PC
Copenhagen	18	PC	Prague 16 B
Corfu	27	PC	Reykjavik 7 B
Delhi	41	**	Riga 17 SH
Dubai	40	S	Rio de Janeiro 25 S
Dublin	16	B	Riyadh 41 S
Faro	23	S	Rome 23 PC
Florence	20	T	San Francisco 19 PC
Frankfurt	19	B	Santiago 14 B
Geneva	20	B	Sao Paulo 22 PC
Gibraltar	23	S	Seoul 24 S
Helsinki	24	SH	Seychelles 31 PC
Hong Kong	25	SH	Singapore 31 B
Honolulu	29	PC	St Petersburg 23 PC
Istanbul	32	S	Stockholm 24 PC
Jerusalem	31	S	Sydney 16 S
Johannesburg	14	B	Taipei 31 S
Kuala Lumpur	32	PC	Tenerife 23 B
Kyiv	24	**	Tokyo 21 PC
Lanzarote	24	PC	Vancouver 13 R
Las Palmas	25	PC	Venice 20 PC
Lima	16	DU	Vienna 21 PC
Lisbon	27	S	Warsaw 21 B
Los Angeles	19	C	Washington 28 B
Luxor	40	S	Zurich 15 B

Five days ahead

Frequent rain and heavy showers in the north and west, staying drier across southern Britain

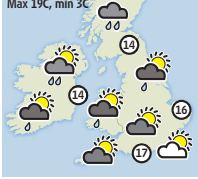
Tomorrow

Mainly dry in the south with sunny spells. Rather cloudy with rain and showers across Scotland and northern parts of Ireland and England.
Max 19C, min 2C



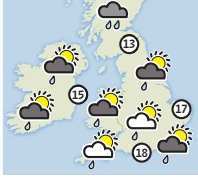
Thursday

Mostly dry with sunny spells in the south. Cloudy with outbreaks of rain and showers in Scotland, Ireland and northern England. A few isolated showers in Wales and central England.
Max 19C, min 3C



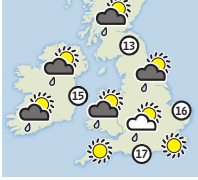
Friday

Staying unsettled with rain and showers across Scotland, Ireland and northern England. Sunny spells and a few showers in the south.
Max 19C, min 2C



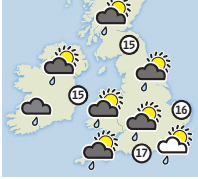
Saturday

Rather cloudy with showery rain in the north and west of Britain and Ireland, but mostly dry with sunny spells in the south.
Max 20C, min 3C

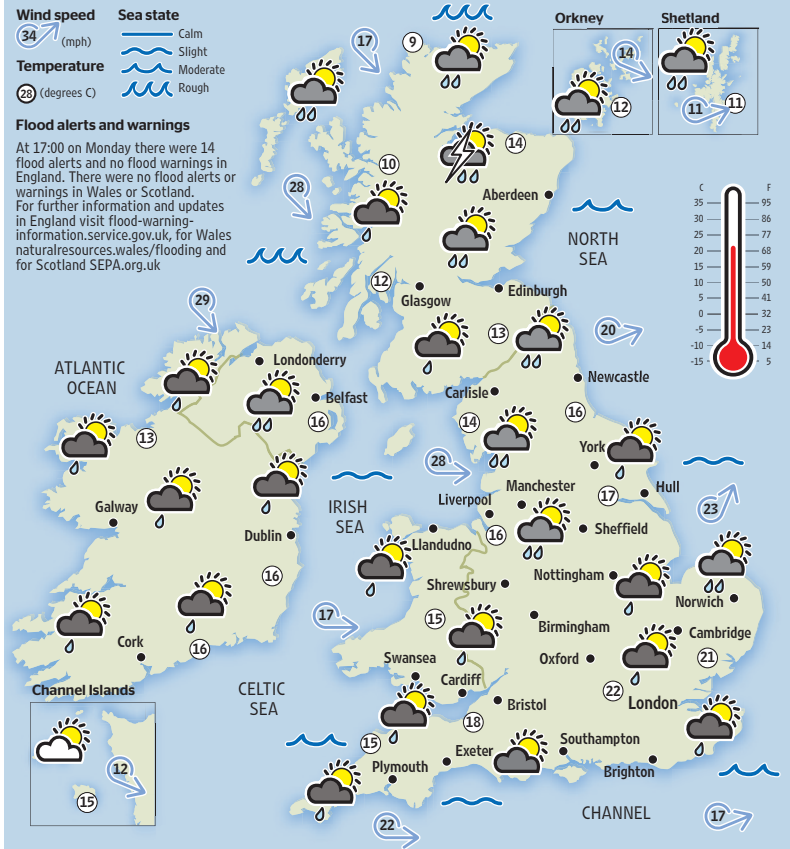


Sunday

Sunny intervals and scattered showers, more frequent in the north and west and drier in southern areas.
Max 19C, min 4C



The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest

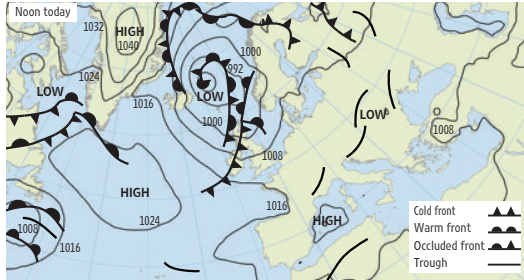


General situation: Showery rain will spread southwards across Britain and Ireland, followed by sunny spells and blustery showers in the north. London, E Anglia, SE Eng, Cen S Eng, SW Eng, Channel Is: Bright spells, and isolated showers at first, turning cloudy with showery rain later, heavy at times by evening. Light to moderate southwesterly winds. Maximum 22C (72F), minimum 4C (39F). E Eng, Midlands, Wales, Cen N Eng, NW Eng: Mostly cloudy with showery

rain, perhaps heavy at times in the afternoon. Light to moderate west to southwesterly winds. Maximum 20C (68F), minimum 3C (37F). NE Eng, Borders, SW Scotland, IoM, Lake District, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee: Cloudy with showery rain in the morning. Sunny spells and isolated showers later. Moderate to fresh west to northwesterly winds. Maximum 17C (63F), minimum 2C (36F). Cen Highland, Argyll, NW Scotland,

Moray Firth, NE Scotland, N Isles: Sunny spells and scattered heavy showers, some thundery and perhaps wintry over higher ground. Moderate to fresh northwesterly winds. Maximum 14C (57F), minimum 0C (32F). Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Mostly cloudy with showery rain clearing southwards. Becoming mainly dry with sunny spells through the afternoon. Moderate to fresh northwesterly winds. Maximum 17C (63F), minimum 2C (36F).

Tides			
Tidal predictions. Heights in metres			
Today	HT	LT	HT
Aberdeen	06:00	12:19	4.1
Avonmouth	10:02	18:28	12.3
Belfast	10:02	3.4	22.29
Cardiff	05:47	11.5	18.14
Devonport	04:29	5.1	16.59
Dover	10:12	6.2	22.30
Dublin	05:58	4.8	16.28
Falmouth	11:22	3.3	23.50
Greenock	10:40	3.8	22.53
Harwich	09:09	5.4	21.44
Holyhead	05:11	6.9	17.19
Hull	01:15	5.1	13.30
Leith	09:57	8.9	22.29
Liverpool	05:57	8.9	22.29
London Bridge	05:57	8.9	22.29
Lowestoft	08:36	2.3	20.20
Milford Haven	04:58	6.5	17.25
Morecambe	10:09	8.9	22.22
Newhaven	09:58	6.2	22.22
Newquay	03:53	6.5	16.19
Oban	04:51	3.7	17.05
Penzance	03:25	5.2	15.54
Portsmouth	10:11	4.4	22.41
Shoreham	10:13	5.8	22.38
Southampton	09:21	4.2	12.21
Swansea	05:04	8.8	17.32
Tees	02:26	5.1	14.35
Weymouth	05:27	1.8	18.01



Synoptic situation

An area of low pressure east of Iceland will push a series of fronts southwards across Britain and Ireland. A blustery northwesterly wind and bands of showery rain will move from Scotland and Ireland into England and Wales. High pressure in the Atlantic will edge back into Ireland later bringing drier conditions there later in the day.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday
Warmest: Boulmer, 21.7C
Coldest: Aonach Mor, 2.7C
Wettest: Resallach, Sutherland, 6.6mm
Sunniest: Almondsbury, Gloucestershire, 15.2hrs*

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 04:46
Sun sets: 21:10
Moon rises: 03:09
Moon sets: 19:13
New Moon: June 6th

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	22:25-03:47
Belfast	22:22-04:20
Birmingham	21:53-04:17
Cardiff	21:53-04:17
Exeter	21:51-04:23
Glasgow	22:24-04:05
Liverpool	22:03-04:16
London	21:41-04:15
Manchester	22:00-04:13
Newcastle	22:07-04:01
Norwich	21:41-04:03
Penzance	21:56-04:44
Sheffield	21:57-04:10

Weather Eye
Paul Simons



Following the evacuation of Britain's expeditionary forces from Dunkirk in the summer of 1940, the UK faced the prospect of a German invasion. In those dark days, Churchill approved a top-secret operation to wage guerrilla warfare to disrupt an invading army. Small groups of local men given the obscure title of Auxiliary Units were recruited in areas of the UK likely to be overrun early on, and in total about 3,500 men were recruited, including farmers, farm workers, gamekeepers, miners, quarrymen and even poachers, chosen for their intimate knowledge of their local area. They were then given intense training in guns, unarmed combat, use of explosives and assassination. The men and their equipment were hidden in underground bunkers, often in woods. Military engineers dug many of the bunkers, accessed through a camouflaged entrance hatch on the ground and down a ladder in a vertical shaft. The hideouts had plenty of room for the arms, ammunition, sabotage material and bunks, but only two weeks of rations. The units were not expected to survive for long, and were not intended to be a long-term resistance movement like those in Occupied Europe. One of the problems faced by the saboteurs was flooding, especially in low-lying land, and some of the bunkers had to be abandoned. Dampness was a common problem until paints were found that could resist condensation and more efficient ventilation systems were built, some of them venting above ground in tree stumps. Should the enemy have reached a unit's area, the auxiliaries would have carried out operations behind enemy lines, destroying bridges, aircraft and airfields, ammunition and fuel supplies, and assassinating officers. The plan was to create mayhem to give time for regular army forces to regroup and prepare a counterattack. The Auxiliary Units remained such a closely guarded secret that their existence was not widely known until the 1990s.

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Sport

Work on Burrow's 'pipe dream' begins

John Westerby

The start of construction work on a new flagship £6.8million MND centre was hailed as a step towards making Rob Burrow's "dream a reality", a day after the former Leeds Rhinos scrum half's death from the disease.

Money raised by Burrow's friend and former team-mate, Kevin Sinfield, has contributed significantly to the project being launched less than three years after Leeds Teaching Hospitals began a fundraising appeal in September 2021. The idea of such a specialised centre had been considered a "pipe dream", but the extraordinary fundraising spearheaded by Sinfield and the awareness brought about by the bravery of Burrow and his family have generated sufficient funds that should see the Rob Burrow Centre for Motor Neurone Disease completed in a year.

"It was a bittersweet day, and I'm sad that Rob wasn't able to witness this moment, but I know he would be beaming with pride," Paul Watkins, director of fundraising at Leeds Hospitals Charity, said. "I'm sure the thousands of people who have donated to the appeal will share our excitement as we move one step closer to making Rob's dream a reality."

The fundraising appeal for the new



As tributes to Burrow were laid, left, his parents Geoff and Irene and sisters Joanne Hartshorn, above right, and Claire Burnett, above left, launched the new centre in his memory

centre, in Seacroft, was launched in September 2021, a little less than two years after Burrow had MND diagnosed. Of the £5.8million raised so far, Sinfield has contributed just over £2.5million with his remarkable endur-

ance running efforts, one of which saw him running the Rob Burrow Leeds Marathon and carrying his friend across the finish line.

The marathon was introduced in 2023 and the event has contributed

more than £1.1million to the new MND Centre over its first two years. The project has received no government funding, although £50million of government money was pledged to MND research 18 months ago via the United

to End MND campaign, with which Burrow was initially associated.

Dr Agam Jung, a consultant neurologist at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, conceived the idea of the centre in conversations with Burrow and his wife, Lindsey, in 2020. "What we thought was a pipe dream will soon become a reality, taking us a step forward for our patient care and MND services," Dr Jung said. "It has been an incredibly fast-paced journey from my initial idea and discussions with Rob and Lindsey, to breaking ground now."

The new facility is described as a flagship centre for the north of England, where MND patients and their families can be supported and where specialists can work towards a greater understanding of the condition. There will be specialist areas at the centre for speech and language therapy, dietetics, neurology, respiratory and palliative care, along with an area where patients will be able to "bank" their voice, as Burrow did before he was forced to use a digital aid to enable him to communicate.

Leicester Thunderer

2.33 Hidden Verse 4.03 Reaching High (nap)
3.33 Magic Rascal 4.38 Charency
3.33 Sahara View 5.08 Atty's Edge

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Draw no advantage

Racing TV

2.33 Restricted Maiden Stakes (2-Y-O: £3,240: 6f) (14)

1 (9) BRACKLESLEY BAY 7 (P) D Osborne 9-7 C Shepherd
2 (1) 2 CALYXOU 18 (P) C Hughes 9-7 P Cosgrave
3 (11) DAPPER GUEST 8 (P) Murgerson 9-7 T P Queally
4 (11) EQUALISED C Hills 9-7 Rossa Ryan
5 (14) HIDDEN VERSE Dr R Newland & J Insole 9-7 K Shoemark
6 (7) MR LIGHTSIDE M Appleby 9-7 J Hart
7 (13) PENTLE BAY 6 (P) Goughley 9-7 J P Spencer
8 (12) 4 ROKUM 24 E & Houghton 9-7 C Bishop
9 (12) ALASHOS James Horton 9-5 G Wood
10 (9) 0 AMERICAN ST 20 K Ryan 9-5 S Gray
11 (10) BRIGHTON BOA 8 (P) Balding 9-5 Jason Watkins
12 (8) 2 HIGH ON HOPE 20 D Dacombe 9-5 A Rawlinson
13 (10) 3 MAPLEDRUM 18 M Morgan 9-2 J Gilligan
14 (3) DOTTIE DIAMOND W Stone 8-12 Laura Pearson
3-1 Calyxou, 9-2 Rokum, 9-1 Maple Drum, 7-1 High On Hope, 8-1 Pentle Bay, 12-1 Brighton Boa, Equalised, 16-1 Bracklesley Bay, Alashos.

Thunderer's choice: Hidden Verse is bred to speedily; stable is off mark with its two-year-olds Danger Mapledrum

3.03 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,664: 1m 2f) (13)

1 (5) 00-00 AZURE STAGE 15 E Dunlop 9-10 Rossa Ryan
2 (11) 06-04 HARLINGTON 20 R J Smith 9-10 T Marquand
3 (12) 00-00 STANBACH LOOK 14 W Knight 9-9 C Shepherd
4 (10) -4154 DIBBLE DABBLE 34 F Ferguson 9-9 S Bowen (5)
5 (8) 0-006 DAYLIGHT RANSOM 38 (P) McEntee 9-9 S Bowen (5)
6 (2) -4000 OLD BAILLEY 17 (P) N Tinkler 9-8 J McManoman
7 (7) 6-434 READY OR NOTT 30 C Johnston 9-8 F Norton
8 (13) 30-60 SILVER SHAMROCK 42 (P) J Feilden 9-8 A Farragher
9 (6) 0-525 MAGIC RASCAL 12 (P) G Boughley 9-7 P Cosgrave
10 (9) 05-5 LETMEBETHEBOSS 29 W Muir & C Grassick 9-6 N Currie
11 (11) 50606 RASMAH 20 A Watson 9-5 Laura Coughlan (3)
12 (3) 41305 SUBALTERN 47 (W,P,T,D) Miss A Murphy 9-1 R Kavanagh (7)
13 (11) 000 HOT PATOOTIE 29 S Dow 9-0 K Shoemark
3-1 Magic Rascal, 4-1 Harlington, 6-1 Ready Or Nott, 10-1 Rasmah, Dibble Dabble, 12-1 Old Bailley, Letmebetheboss, 14-1 others.

Thunderer's choice: Magic Rascal has run creditably on his past two starts
Danger Ready Or Nott, Hot Patootie

3.33 Maiden Stakes (E5,400: 1m) (14)

1 (8) SAHARA VIEW 5 Bm Sorensen 4-10-2 S B Kirrane
2 (2) 40 TALORMAN 12 W Williams 4-10-2 H Burns (2)
3 (1) 0 THE GLEN ROVERS 14 L Wadhams 5-10-2 D Costello
4 (6) 6 TWIN EARTH 12 A Watson 4-10-2 Laura Coughlan (3)
5 (4) 0-DALISO 329 (W,T) S Kirk 4-11-1 Sharif Mohd (7)
6 (7) CABALLO DE MAR 6 Scott 3-9-5 C Shepherd
7 (3) FOREST GATE E & Houghton 3-9-5 C Bishop
8 (12) HANNASBOY H Evans 3-9-5 W Cox
9 (12) JOJANNOSS H Evans 3-9-5 T P Queally
10 (13) 02 KING'S SCHOLAR 30 A Walker 3-9-5 T Marquand
11 (11) 0-4-50 DEUCE 35 (H) R Varian 3-9-5 R Dawson
12 (14) 22 UNDER SIEGE 18 A Balding 3-9-5 Doubtfire
13 (9) 0 ARAHIAN ROSE 20 S & C Crisford 3-9-0 R Cooley
14 (10) GAILEY MUSICAL P Evans 3-9-0 G Downing
5-2 Deuce, 4-1 King's Scholar, 9-2 Sahara View, 11-2 Forest Gate, 12-2 Caballo De Mar, 10-1 Arahian Rose, 12-1 Twin Earth, 25-1 others.

Thunderer's choice: Sahara View is making a belated debut but a half-brother to six winners Danger So Deuce

4.03 Handicap (3-Y-O: £5,234: 1m 4f) (6)

1 (4) 636-4 METABOLT 27 (B,F,D) D Loughnane 5-9-9 Rossa Ryan
2 (1) 1-23 EDUCATE 42 (P,T,B,F) J & T Gosden 9-9 K Shoemark
3 (3) 023-5 SEA THE THUNDER 30 (B,F) R Beckett 9-6 Rossa Ryan
4 (4) 334-1 CALVERT 230 R Tait 9-4 J Crowley
5 (5) 30-42 REACHING HIGH 26 (B,F) Sir M Staute 9-0 R Kingscote
6 (6) 023-0 SPACEPORT 39 W Muir & C Grassick 9-0 D Tudhope
11-4 Reaching High, 3-1 Edge, 4-1 Sea The Thunder, 9-2 others.

Thunderer's choice: Reaching High is regally bred Danger Sea The Thunder

4.38 Handicap (E5,234: 7f) (8)

1 (4) 636-4 METABOLT 27 (B,F,D) D Loughnane 5-9-9 Rossa Ryan
2 (1) 40-50 MITROSONFIRE 17 (D) W Muir & C Grassick 6-9-7 T Marquand
3 (5) 23-40 MOTHER MARY 24 (D) R Hughes 4-9-9 Ethan Jones (7)
4 (7) 04-02 LEGEND OF LEROS 13 (D) M Botti 4-9-8 H Crouch
5 (8) 0-462 HAT TOSS 16 (D) James Owen 4-9-7 C Shepherd
6 (5) 30-10 RED MIRAGE 10 (D) J & S Quinn 6-9-7 J Hart
7 (6) 0054-DASHING DICTION 21 (P) W Stone 6-9-1 K Shoemark
8 (3) 06541 CHARENCEY 24 (C,D) L Williams 4-9-0 Josephine Gordon
9-1 Hat Toss, 4-1 Metabolt, 9-2 Charency, 6-1 Mitrosonfire, 7-1 Red Mirage, Mother Mary, 10-1 Dashing Dick, 20-1 Legend Of Leroy.

Thunderer's choice: Charency won with plenty to spare here last month; can defy a 5lb rise Danger Hat Toss

5.08 Apprentice Handicap (E3,664: 5f) (9)

1 (5) -0016 MRS TRUMP 16 (D) P Midgley 4-9-9 Mark Winn
2 (1) 535-6 ATTY'S EDGE 11 (D) C Mason 8-9-9 Gina Mangan
3 (7) 60222 ALFRED COVE 26 (D) A Carroll 5-9-8 Jack Dougherty (5)
4 (3) 60300 PORFIN 12 (D) P McEntee 6-9-7 Grace McEntee
5 (2) 106-5 COMPANY MINX 32 J R Jenkins 7-9-7 S Feilden (5)
6 (6) 25510 VIEWFROMTHESTARS 29 (P) D Usher 5-9-6 Georgia Dobie
7 (9) 40-40 ZENO 42 (P) R Cowell 4-9-3 J Peate
8 (4) 2-005 ENCHANTED NIGHT 12 (P,D) J Dunnett 6-9-3 Mia Nicholls (5)
9 (8) 45454 LIBERTY BAY 20 (V,D) M Usher 6-9-3 G Bass
5-2 Alfred Cove, 4-1 Liberty Bay, 5-1 Mrs Trump, 7-1 Atty's Edge, 10-1 Zeno, Enchanted Night, Company Minx, 12-1 Porfin, 16-1 Viewfromthestars.

Thunderer's choice: Atty's Edge should be sharper for his comeback run
Dangers Alfred Cove, Porfin

Southwell Thunderer

2.15 Mystic Man 4.20 Backsackackme
2.45 Taste The Fear 4.50 Mostly Sunny
3.15 Charisma Cat 5.00 Elham Valley
3.45 Queens Venture 5.50 Eric Carmen

Going good
Sky Sports Racing

2.15 Handicap Chase (E4,700: 2m) (14)

1 2465-SEA PRINCE 218 A Hales 8-12-2 K Woods
2 522-4 KROATE 29 Jonjo & A O'Neill 6-12-0 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
3 46-42 HOMME D'UN SOIR 9 (V,D) Billy Aghraham 8-11-13 Bowen
4 135-3 CHASE A FORTUNE 24 (D) C Grant 6-11-12 D McMenamin
5 23-6 LEGENDARY DAY 10 A Keatley 6-11-11 B Hughes
6 345-9 POST NO BILLS 31 R Potter 9-11-10 S Bowen
7 245-3 ROMANOR 26 (D) Seamus Mullins 10-11-10 M G Nolan
8 31-34 TEXARD 12 (D) R Armeson 9-11-9 P Armeson (3)
9 7200-KARE GRANDCHAMP 187 G & J Moore 6-11-4 C Quinn (3)
10 1P11-MYSTIC MAN 245 (P) O Harry Deham 7-11-5 B Bromley (5)
11 76-164 BROWN MANDY 12 J J Hanlon (tre) 7-11-2 Paddy Hanlon (7)
12 331-3 ABAYA DU MATHAN 17 (P,T,D) G Hamner 12-10-2 R Dume
13 0220-WE GOT YOUR BACK 55 (H,T) L Morgan 6-10-8 A Wedge
14 P34-1 TROPICAL TALENT 25 (T) O Greenall & J Guerrero 5-10-4
5-1 Mystic Man, 11-2 Tropical Talent, 7-1 Kroate, 8-1 Homme D'un Soir, Chase A Fortune, 10-1 Legendary Day, Texard, Abaya Du Mathan, others.

2.45 Handicap Chase (E4,700: 3m) (7)

1 53P5-THE WOLF 41 (B,T,D) O Murphy 10-12-0 S Bowen
2 631-1 TASTE THE FEAR 28 (C,D) Dr R Newland & J Insole 9-11-12 L Scott (5)
3 301-1 NO REGRETS 27 (V,D) N Richards 10-11-4 Sean Quinlan
4 731-3 CRYSTAL MOON 51 (P,T,B,F,D) A King 7-11-5 G Sheehan
5 6390- GALLOPING PRIDE 39 E Lawelle 7-11-2 T Bellamy
6 411P- DO NO WRONG 53 (D) Justin Landy 8-11-0 C Bentley
7 2323-TOM GREEN 42 (T) England 9-10-13 Mr T Broughton (5)
5-2 Taste The Fear, 7-2 No Regrets, 4-1 Crystal Moon, 9-2 Tom Green, 8-1 The Wolf, 10-1 Do No Wrong, 14-1 Galloping Pride.

3.15 Mares' Open NH Flat Race (E2,451: 2m) (11)

1 EVEREST G & J Moore 5-11-2 N F Houlihan
2 HOT CHIQUE 28 (H) Mrs M Rowley 5-11-2 Tabitha Worsley (3)
3 734-0 NOBODY'S PERFECT 24 (H) Billy Aghraham 5-11-2 J Bowen
4 3 ROKOLA VOGUE 28 D Killahena & G McPherson 5-11-2 J Woods
5 WILLKOTE 28 O Murphy 5-11-2 S Bowen
6 3 AVA'S ANGEL 24 S England 4-10-11 J Burke
7 CHARISMA CAT A King 4-10-11 T Cannon
8 4-5 PORRIDGE 28 F O'Brien 4-10-11 L Harman
9 REMEMBER MOI E Williams 4-10-11 Miss Olive Nicholls (7)
10 SILVER PAMEL J J Hanlon (tre) 4-10-11 Paddy Hanlon (7)
11 4-SUGAR GLIDER 41 (B,F) Boudhbee-Brooks 4-10-11 R Patrick
3-1 Charisma Cat, 4-1 Rokola Vogue, 11-2 Ava's Angel, 7-1 Porridge, 10-2 Sugar Glider, 8-1 Willkote, 12-1 Silver Pamelet, Everest.

3.45 Mares' Open NH Flat Race (E2,451: 2m) (10)

1 2-0 EITHER WAY 28 (B,F) N Henderson 5-11-2 J Bowen
2 60-JAKANA 51 F O'Brien 5-11-2 C Brace
3 LAPONITE (H) T Budge 5-11-2 B Hughes
4 SCREENED (W,T) J Snowden 5-11-2 G Sheehan
5 5-SHAKYRA 323 (B,F) O'Brien 5-11-2 J J Burke
6 IRONED OUT E Williams 4-10-11 Isabel Williams (3)
7 0-3 LATTERSTON TARA 238 P & M Bowen 4-10-11 S Bowen
8 4F-PISMO BEACH 45 S Edmunds 4-10-11 C Hammond
9 34-QUEENS VENTURE 58 D Skelton 4-10-11 H Skelton
10 4-SNAPAUDACIAHEROS 24 R Menzies 4-10-11 N Moscrop
11 Latterston Lily, 9-2 Screened, 5-1 Either Way, 7-1 Shakyra, 15-2 others.

4.20 'National Hunt' Maiden Hurdle (E4,193: 2m 4f) (13)

1 11-66 BACKMACKSCAMKE 20 (B,F) E Mullins (tre) 5-11-4 R McLernon
2 P44-3 RIFTYFIFTY 16 (T) L Horsfall 5-11-4 K Rogan
3 00-04 GLEN ROAD 12 S Smith 5-11-4 N Schofield
4 2701- HELL HOUND 41 (T) M Mullholland 5-11-4 J Burke
5 P-NOBLE CAVE 40 (P) Jonjo & A O'Neill 5-11-4 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
6 370-SKYJACK HUCK 21 J J Canfield 5-11-4 Sean Quinlan
7 3050-TIMETOTALK 256 Fionn McSharry 8-11-4 N Moscrop
8 TUMBLE TUMBLEFIRE J Canfield 6-11-4 W Shanahan (5)
9 P0-KAUTO CASTILLO 39 M Keighley 4-10-12 S Bowen
10 P6-6 LINE OUT 18 L Morgan 4-10-12 A Wedge
11 04/P MY DREAM 26 S Humphrey 6-10-11 J Best
12 200-TRADITUDE TARA 238 P & M Bowen 6-10-11 J Bowen
13 0-06 KUMA BEACH 13 L Morgan 4-10-15 H Reed
8-11 Backmacksackme, 9-4 Hell Hound, 12-1 Traditude Tara, 14-1 Skyjack Huck, 16-1 Noble Cave, 25-1 Line Out, 33-1 Kuma Beach, 50-1 others.

4.50 Handicap Hurdle (E2,348: 2m) (12)

1 520-BANNISTER 40 (C,D) N Kent 7-12-0 C Hammond
2 21 MOSTLY SUNNY 14 (D) Skelton 5-11-13 H Skelton
3 402-1 CLIMPS OF GAL 25 M & D Easterly 5-11-9 P W Wadge (3)
4 32-GLIMPSE OF GLORY 76 Jonjo & A O'Neill 4-11-4 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
5 604-1 FOSTER'S FORTUNE 25 G Grant 5-11-8 D McMenamin
6 44-12 FOR THREE 14 (P,T,B,F,D) S England 10-11-4 J England
7 701-P SHE'S A ROCCA 25 (P,D) N Richards 9-11-1 Sean Quinlan
8 0608-INGO 43 C & J Moore 6-10-11 C Quinn (3)
9 0090-GREAT WARFORD 150 (P) J Canfield 5-10-10 L Skelton (3)
10 403-0 TREASURED COMPANY 29 (D) Sue Smith 8-10-10 N Schofield

11 540- DRAGONBALL PRINCE 51 (P) O Greenall & J Guerrero 4-10-6

12 APP-3 ROYAL MAX 28 C & A Poggon 6-10-2 S Bowen
3-1 Mostly Sunny, 11-2 Chicago Gal, 4-1 For Three, 13-2 Foster's Fortune, 15-2 Glimpse Of Glory, 10-1 Dragonball Prince, Inigo, 14-1 She's A Rocca.

5.20 Handicap Hurdle (E4,066: 2m 4f) (6)

1 053-2 ELHAM VALLEY 21 C & A Poggon 7-11-9 S Bowen
2 P0-5 BELVEDERE BLAST 21 (D) A Keatley 6-11-6 B Hughes
3 3020-COPPER BEACH 199 (W,D) Sue Smith 7-11-6 P J Kavanagh (3)
4 13F-2 THE BIG LENSE 28 (P,D) James Owen 11-11-6 Mr A Chadwick (5)
5 9F1-4 LUPA K 5-1 O Greenall & J Guerrero 6-11-3 H Brooke
6 245-1 POZO EMERY 28 (V,C,D) L Morgan 9-11-2 J Kingston
11-10 Lupa K, 5-1 The Big Lense, Pozo Emery, 11-2 Elham Valley, 8-1 Copper Beach, 16-1 Belvedere Blast.

5.50 Handicap Hurdle (E2,348: 3m) (16)

1 0P2-P JETEYE 21 (P,T,B,F) S England 7-12-0 J England
2 0300-SAMMYLOU 101 (T) D Killahena & G McPherson 11-11-13 K Woods
3 160-4 NO WAY POU 17 (C) Daisy Hitchens 10-11-10 Beau Morgan (5)
4 725-FINE BY ME 231 N Twiston-Davies 7-11-7 J Brace (7)
5 4334-MALAGO ROSE 58 (P) S Earle 6-11-5 J Best
6 22P5-HONNEUR DE SIVOLA 21 (T) C Hobson 7-11-4 B Poste
7 P63F-EMOTIONAL ROLLER 126 (B,F) Sue Smith 6-11-4 T Midgley (3)
8 7F-3 ROCKY HILL 28 Lacey 7-11-3 S Sheppard
9 0660-BERKESTOWN 200 J Canfield 7-11-3 Sean Quinlan
10 P00-2 STRIP OF HONOUR 13 (T,V) A Day 7-10-12 Harriet Tucker (7)
11 005-0 WILLKEEKEPHIM 17 J Coulson 6-10-10 Tabitha Worsley (3)
12 203-0 FOX'S SOCKS 25 (T) M Sowersby 9-10-9 A Anderson (5)
13 P0-5 ERIC CARMEN 18 (C,D) G Hamner 8-10-9 R T Dume
14 45P-2 INSPECTOR VILNEY 26 (P) N Mullholland 7-10-8 R McLernon
15 440P-ROBAM 37 (W,P,D) M Mullineux 8-10-4 K Rogan
16 PPA-ROCKY HILL 28 (P) N Mullholland 7-10-2 S Bowen
9-2 Eric Carmen, 5-1 Rocky Hill, 12-2 Inspector Vilney, 7-1 Stripe Of Honour, 15-2 Jeteeye, 8-1 Malago Rose, 10-1 Fine By Me, Emotional Roller, others.

Wolverhampton Thunderer

5.30 Where's Clare 7.30 Little Empire
6.00 Balqa 8.00 Dequinto
6.30 Wake Up Harry 8.30 Kodi Hawk
7.00 Streak Lightning 9.00 Con Te Partiro
Going standard
Draw low numbers best
Sky Sports Racing

5.30 Restricted Maiden Stakes (E2,0: E3,942: 5f) (11)

1 (2) 4 BANTZ 21 W Haggas 9-9 C Fallon
2 (3) C NEVER KNOW J Tate 7-9 N Callan
3 (8) 6 CANDY CLOUT 9 P Spencer 9-5 R Hornby
4 (10) 55 CYCLOMITE 17 (P) J Ferguson 9-5 D Muscatt
5 (4) 60 MIGHTY REAL T Jack Jones 9-5 L Morris
6 (7) COLOCO 10 P De Fay 9-3 B Sayette
7 (6) 55 EMPORESS 11 M Millman 9-2 D Probert
8 (5) P FREGOLA 7 R Hannan 9-2 P Dobs
9 (1) 2 WHERE'S CLARE 15 C Johnston 9-2 J Fanning
10 (1) MISS CAMPANELLA D Shaw 8-12 C Hardie
11 (9) 4 Where's Clare, 4-1 Never Know, 6-1 Bantz, 7-1 Fregola, 8-1 Empress, 12-1 Cydonite, Coloco, 14-1 Candy, 20-1 others.

6.00 Handicap (E2,983: 1m 10f 104yd) (13)

1 (12) -5110 STOIC SPY 86 (B,F) I Furtado 4-9-9 M Ghani
2 (4) 52236 BALAOA 13 (P,D) Mrs Stella Barclay 6-9-9 C Noble
3 (3) 352-0 MCCANN THE MAN 31 (P) Andri Brown 6-9-9 T Jakes (5)
4 (13) 5483 COME ON JOHN 22 (C,D) M Atwater 5-9-6 L Morris
5 (10) 2002 STRATEGIC FORTUNE 22 (P,D) J Butler 7-9-8 C Beasley
6 (3) 06320 HIGH COURT JUDGE 24 (P) David Dennis 4-9-7 R Hornby

7 (7) 35250 PRINCE HECTOR 22 (P,D) J Bedi 6-9-5 Paula Muir (3)

8 (1) -4550 DILLYINGDILLYDON 94 (P) James Owen 6-9-4 A Kealey (3)
9 (11) 20044 SAG TIMOTHY 29 (H) R Stephens 4-9-4 D Probert
10 (8) 0-306 CAPTAIN ST LUCIFER 63 (T) Suzanne France 7-9-17 Eaves
11 (9) 05440 CAPALLICLUSTE 15 (H) D F Davis 4-9-0 S De Sousa
12 (6) 06006 BEAU GESTE 42 (C,D) A Carroll 8-9-0 Molly Gunn (7)
13 (2) 05600 PERSIAN WOLF 24 (V) D Shaw 6-9-0 T Heard (3)
9-2 Balqa, 5-1 High Court Judge, Stoic Spy, 7-1 Come On John, 8-1 Dillyingdillydon, 10-1 Sag Timothy, Capalliste, Strategic Fortune, others.

6.30 Handicap (E3,716: 7f) (9)

1 (5) 060-0 ROARING RALPH 24 (B,D) M Dods 4-9-11 C Beasley
2 (4) 1-312 WAKE UP HARRY 59 (P,D) Brian Toomey 6-9-9 J Callan
3 (8) 00500 DAYMAN 13 (P,D) D F Davis 5-9-3 L Keniry
4 (9) 06313 MR SQUIRES 4 (P) R Fall & S Murray 4-9-7 C Rodriguez
5 (1) 2-086 VINEY 38 (D) M McGinn 4-9-6 T Jakes
6 (2) 40100 NIGHTS OVER EGYPT 35 (P) R Monies 4-9-5 C Farn
7 (4) 62460 CIRCLES 22 (B,C,D) A Carrall 5-9-3 J Evans (5)
8 (2) 0-513 SAM'S HOPE 33 (D) A Carrall 4-9-2 S W Kelly
9 (7) 45233 MUDLAHHIM 7 (P) S Dixon 8-8-12 L Morris
3-1 Wake Up Harry, 7-2 Mr Squires, 5-1 Roaring Ralph, Sam's Hope, 8-1 Mudlahhim, 10-1 Circles, 12-1 Nights Over Egypt, 16-1 Viney, 20-1 Dayman.

7.00 Handicap (E3,716: 7f) (9)

1 (1) 0-550 AL AMEEN 24 (P) J Fanshawe 5-9-11 D Muscatt
2 (6) -0303 STREAK LIGHTNING 36 (B,F,C,D) R Carr 7-9-9 J P Sullivan
3 (2) 03351 BORA BORA 36 (C,D) J Butler 6-9-8 L Morris
4 (5) 35605 BLACKBAG 33 (W,B) A Brown 7-9-6 S De Sousa
5 (9) 05-00 GREATEST TIME 113 P Evans 4-9-4 Dylan Hogan
6 (8) 1253 PESSOA 18 (C,D) A Wattle 5-9-4 C Farn
7 (4) 02523 BELVERLEY 17 (P) J Williams 4-9-4 C Farn
8 (2) 40392 CANDY WARHOL 36 (T) S Dixon 5-9-2 P Dennis
9 (3) 00606 TOP BUTTON 12 (H,T) S Williams 6-9-7 M Ghani
3-1 Beyerley, 7-2 Bora Bora, 4-1 Streak Lightning, 6-1 Candy Warhol, 8-1 Blacklick, 10-1 Alameen, 12-1 Pessoa, 16-1 Top Button, 25-1 Greatest Time.

7.30 Handicap (E2,983: 1m 1f) (13)

1 (11) 41120 00D SOCKS HAVANA 8 (P,T,D) R Menzies 6-9-8 C Rodriguez
2 (2) 00413 LITTLE EMPIRE 22 (B,F,C) A McCann (tre) 4-9-8 T Jakes (5)
3 (6) 6-50 LOVE IS A ROSE 35 M Wigham 4-9-8 S De Sousa
4 (10) 00500 KING SHARJA 11 (P,B,F) Jack Jones 5-9-8 L Morris
5 (8) 11542 THOUGHTFUL GIFT 7 (P,B,F) Jack Jones 5-9-8 L Morris
6 (8) 45425 PLUMETTE 22 (P,C,D) A Rales 8-9-7 R Hornby
7 (13) 3-315 CAREY STREET 11 (C,D) A Carroll 8-9-7 L Callan
8 (12) -3520 MASTERPAINTER 95 (V) M Dods 4-9-7 C Beasley
9 (7) 506-0 CLOCH NUVA 12 (P,D) Mrs Stella Barclay 5-9-6 C Noble
10 (9) 64200 ENZO ANGEL 11 (B,F,D) N Mullholland 5-9-6 D Probert
11 (4) 00611 BILLY MCCAGGY 22 (P,D) M Harrington 5-9-5 T Eaves
12 (5) -3446 FAST AFFAIR 35 (P,D) J Fanshawe 4-9-5 D Muscatt
13 (1) 2-515 MENG TIAN 8 (C,D) S Woods 5-9-4 Dylan Hogan
4-1 Little Empire, 9-2 Thoughtful Gift, 5-1 Billy McCaggy, 10-1 Odd Socks, Havana, Enzo Angel, Fast Affair, 12-1 Carey Street, Plumette, others.

8.00 Handicap (E2,983: 6f) (12)

1 (8) 63-00 GLORY CLUT 22 (P,D) O Pears 4-9-9 D Muscatt
2 (10) 5400-DUNNINGTON LAB 337 (W) P Winks 4-9-9 T Eaves
3 (1) 0404-ORIENTAL SPIRIT 216 (T,D) W Kilfoyle 6-9-8 R Hornby
4 (3) 51030 TATNEEN 7 (P,D) A Brittain 9-9-7 C Hardie
5 (2) -4506 GLOBAL EFFORT 16 (P) P McCartney 4-9-6 L Morris
6 (5) 04014 RED WALLS 22 (C,D) L Williamson 6-9-4 B Sayette
7 (7) 039-0 CLIMB OF

Sport French Open

Djokovic pulls off unlikely escape

Stuart Fraser
Tennis Correspondent, Paris

Even by Novak Djokovic's standards, his latest act of escapology at Roland Garros was quite something. After finishing his previous match at 3am on Sunday, he returned to the court at 4pm yesterday for yet another successful comeback from two sets to one down.

The 37-year-old looked down and out midway through his fourth-round match against the No 23 seed, Francisco Cerundolo. He hurt his right knee, complained about the quality of the court, showed some frustration with a screaming child and slowly limped in between points. Yet he still won 6-1, 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 in his longest French Open match at four hours and 39 minutes.

Djokovic's hopes of claiming a record 25th grand-slam singles title here looked particularly precarious when he was 4-2 down to his Argentine opponent, who had never before progressed beyond this stage of a major tournament. Not for the first time, the Serb

Most grand-slam matches won

Novak Djokovic	370
Roger Federer	369
Serena Williams	367
Rafael Nadal	314
Martina Navratilova	306

found a second wind to turn the tables. He now takes sole ownership of two records from Roger Federer in reaching a 59th grand-slam quarter-final and claiming a 370th grand-slam match win. He also avoids losing his world No 1 ranking to Jannik Sinner for now.

"The last match I was two sets to one down and at the fourth set the crowd gave me so much energy," Djokovic said. "Tonight also you did the same. I'm now sure how I won this match again."

Other than Djokovic rubbing his neck after the third game, all had looked well for him in the early stages. He looked comfortable in taking the first set for the loss of only one game.

Soon after he lost his way. Djokovic required a medical timeout at 2-1 down in the second set after hurting his right knee and required two further visits from the physio. He then blamed the surface, claiming there was too much clay sitting on top, and became angry with the tournament supervisor Wayne McKewen for turning down his request that the court be swept more frequently.

"I screwed up my knee because I



made a quick move," Djokovic said. "I'm sliding and slipping all the time. The only thing I am asking is that every second changeover you can sweep the court."

When McKewen said that the grounds staff had insisted "the court is normal", Djokovic blew his top. "For them?" Djokovic replied. "But you are the supervisor, you are representing us players. I'm telling you as a player it's not OK and you're going to go with the groundspeople that never play tennis?"

Shortly before this exchange, Djokovic had shown signs of irritability after being distracted by the noise from an upset child in the stands. His mood soon worsened when he dropped serve at 6-5 down to concede the second set.

It looked as if Djokovic was running on fumes. He tamely lost the third set and then came to within two games of being knocked out in the fourth set. Suddenly the adrenaline kicked in when he broke back at 4-4, letting out a big roar, and he salvaged his chances with another break of serve for the set.

There was another dig at officials when he took a tumble on the court

Djokovic receives treatment after hurting his right knee during the fourth-round tie against Cerundolo, right, in which the Serb was pushed to the limits of his physical ability, above



early in the decider. "Well done supervisors, ground staff and everyone," Djokovic said, sarcastically. "The court is not slippery at all."

Contesting back-to-back five-set matches for the first time at a grand-slam event since the 2012 French Open, Djokovic held his nerve and pounced at a pivotal moment, breaking for 5-3 with a forehand winner down the line. The relief was evident when a Cerundolo backhand landed wide on Djokovic's first match point.

"Three or four times I was points away from losing this match," Djokovic said. "Thank you to my opponent. He deserves so much applause."

Alex de Minaur became the first Australian to reach the men's singles quarter-finals here since Lleyton Hewitt in 2004, thanks to the support of a vocal French child who is being billed as his superfan. After the boy stood out for his passionate cheers in the previous round, De Minaur personally invited him to sit in his courtside box for a 4-6,

6-2, 6-1, 6-3 win over Daniil Medvedev, the No 5 seed. "I might have to get him on tour week in, week out," De Minaur, the No 11 seed, said. "Even on that big court, I could hear him after every single point. I think he'll be chilling with me tomorrow in my practice day, and of course be there for the next match."

In the women's singles, Mirra Andreeva underlined her potential once again by reaching a first grand-slam quarter-final at the age of 17. A 7-5, 6-2 victory against Varvara Gracheva, the last remaining French singles representative, saw her become the second youngest player this century to reach the last-eight here, behind a 15-year-old Sesil Karatantcheva in 2005.

Andreeva looks to be taking everything in her stride after addressing the temper that could occasionally derail her play. A new coaching partnership with Conchita Martinez has helped focus the mind.

"She makes a lot of notes," Andreeva said. "And then after we have a little talk. She also asks me what I think, what I would add or what I don't feel comfortable with. It's very easy."

France forget to name team for Euros

Athletics
Rick Broadbent

Paris Olympic chiefs have spent months assuring dissenters that this summer's Games will pass without a hitch, but what might be termed a French farce before this week's European Athletics Championships does not bode well.

For many the six-day event in Rome, which starts on Friday, is an important staging post on the road to Paris, but the absent-minded French bosses forgot to say which of their athletes were going. European Athletics said "major administrative mistakes by one Member Federation" had "profoundly impacted" preparations.

In short, France initially entered 12 athletes who later changed their minds. However, the French federation failed

to inform anyone and so denied 12 others a place. In addition Azeddine Habz, the second fastest 1500m runner in Europe this year and one of France's strongest medal prospects, was omitted due to this error.

He was unimpressed. "I already saw myself as European champion," he said after finishing third in last week's Diamond League meeting in Oslo. He sent an email to the federation but it was ignored. Finally, under pressure from all quarters, the French team saved face and included Habz and Simon Bédard.

European Athletics, based in Switzerland, did not mince its words in a statement issued yesterday, saying it had been forced to make "exceptional changes" to the final entries because "it is only fair the athletes' careers are not destroyed by administrative mistakes". It has now told relevant national teams

that they can fill the places needlessly taken by France.

Changes to entry lists are not rare in an Olympic summer, but a public reprimand is highly unusual. Zharnel Hughes and Imani-Lara Lansiquot have pulled out of the Great Britain team for Rome after feeling niggles, and Amy Hunt will now run the 100m as well as the relay.

After setting a new European 400m record, Matthew Hudson-Smith has also withdrawn to focus solely on the Games. The British team for Rome still includes the likes of Katarina Johnson-Thompson, Keely Hodgkinson, Dina Asher-Smith and Molly Caudery.

Jemma Reekie will also be travelling fresh from a victory in the Diamond League in Stockholm on Sunday. She ran the 800m in 1min 57.79sec, but will move up to the 1500m in Rome.

Gold medallists will win £177k in new global event

Matt Lawton
Chief Sports Correspondent

World Athletics has unveiled a new global championship that will feature the biggest prize fund in the sport's history, with gold medal winners receiving \$150,000 (£177,000) from a pot totalling \$10 million.

In a move aimed at addressing the absence of a global athletics event in one of every four seasons, Lord Coe, the federation's president, has created the World Athletics Ultimate Championship. It will start in 2026 in Budapest and will be held every two years in a three-day format as the final event of the track and field summer calendar. The regular World Championships will

still go ahead every two years, with next year's nine-day event due to take place in Tokyo. The Ultimate Championship will be staged at the conclusion to the alternate seasons.

Lord Coe said the summer of 2028 represents an opportunity for the best athletes to "start receiving the rewards that are a reflection of what they are doing", with the cash available at the Ultimate Championship topping even the reward for gold at the World Championships, which stands at \$70,000. That year all the medal winners in athletics at the Los Angeles Games will also receive prize money. The event will feature the world's best 400 athletes, whose invitations will be based predominantly on their world ranking.

MacIntyre's dad proves a cut above as caddie

Bob MacIntyre has been open about suffering from homesickness this year but his first PGA Tour win, at the RBC Canadian Open on Sunday, with his father alongside him as his stand-in caddie, proved the perfect remedy, and the winnings will now pay off his parents' mortgage (Rick Broadbent writes). Suffice it to say, dads-and-lads weekends are rarely better than this.

Doug MacIntyre, a well-regarded shinty player in his time, took the flag off the 18th stick at Hamilton Golf and Country Club and rubbed his head. "I'm a grass-cutter, not a caddie," he said after his son's one-stroke victory over the American Ben Griffin.

He is, indeed, the head greenkeeper back at Glencruitten Golf Club on the outskirts of Oban in Argyll, and had to call in a few favours so he could answer his son's SOS last week.

MacIntyre, presently in between caddies, got him a lightweight bag,



although the wet conditions meant he needed extra towels and clothing so he was saddled with the big version on Sunday.

"He's wanting me to do well just because I'm blood," Bob said as he explained their tears.

"He's going to get a nice pay cheque out of it and my mum and dad will



be mortgage-free now."

More good news for Dougie is that his son's victory gets him into the US Open so he is spared bag-carrying duties in 36-hole qualifying on Monday.

When MacIntyre, 27, nailed the winning putt, he looked straight to his father, who gave a tentative fist-pump. Not

showy people, the MacIntyres, but down-to-earth, honest folk who know what it's all about. "It's incredible, goosebumps," MacIntyre said. "It's a dream of mine to play golf for a living. It's been a dream of mine to win on the PGA Tour and I just can't believe I've done it with my dad on

MacIntyre's father and stand-in caddie Dougie is overcome after his son's victory in Canada. Below, father and son with Bob's girlfriend Shannon Hartley

my bag. The guy's taught me the way I play golf. I mean, I never make it easy. He said that when I was 16. But I play with my heart on my sleeve and we've got a hell of a fight in the two of us."

In his first greenside interview, he spoke about how his parents would foster children, the emotion of saying goodbye to those family members, and how the family struggled financially. "I couldn't play in golf tournaments as a junior because we couldn't afford it. I think that makes me fight and never give up."

He added: "I messaged my coach this morning and said, 'Be on speed dial,' because yesterday wasn't pretty. I could see my dad getting a bit edgy at times. He kept saying, 'Come on, we've got this, keep going.' I can't believe we've done this with him on the bag. Disbelief."

MacIntyre ruled out keeping his dad on his bag full-time. "He's going to go home and get back on the mowers," he said. A valuable lesson had been reaffirmed, though. "If in doubt, phone Dad."

'I've cried in dark corners of motels'

Before next week's US Open, Xander Schauffele tells Tom Kershaw about the journey to his first major win last month

A tremor of self-doubt vibrated through Xander Schauffele on the 18th green at Valhalla Golf Club. Faced with a 6ft putt to win the PGA Championship, the unflattering narrative about his past near-misses at major championships had become impossible to ignore, with questions of his mettle an unrelenting theme to every press conference and interview.

The world No2 had worn that reputation with a brave face and gritted teeth, but he stood behind his ball knowing he might never have a better chance to break the cycle.

"It was a career-defining putt, and those thoughts were flying through my head: how much I've wanted and dreamt about this since I was a kid. When you start racking up those moments when you're in the hunt and it gets away, it irritates you," Schauffele says. "People keep asking and the chip on your shoulder grows, but nobody was putting more pressure on me to win than myself. To see that putt lip in on the last hole was as satisfying as I could ever imagine."

The tears afterwards as Schauffele embraced his caddie and entourage

before an emotional call with his father, who had been watching from a converted shipping container in Hawaii, were a testament to that. The last time the 30-year-old remembers golf conjuring such emotion was in his first full season on the second-rung Web.com Tour in 2016, when pressure to succeed and support himself financially became overwhelming.

"I've cried in frustration in dark corners of motel rooms early on," Schauffele says. "I had some serious performance anxiety. My caddie Austin [Kaiser, a friend from college] and my family dropped everything to try and help. I felt the weight of that on me, plus I was performing poorly. I wasn't sure if this would work out."

Resilience at key intervals has underpinned his career. After missing the cut in nine of his first 12 events, he managed to earn his PGA Tour card after surviving the qualifying finals. The next season he won his maiden PGA Tour event and the \$10 million season-ending Tour Championship within the space of three months.

Schauffele's consistency ever since then has been remarkable; the last time he was ranked outside the world's top 15 was October 2018.

He credits much of his strength to his German father, Stefan, a former decathlete who harboured Olympic dreams until a car accident aged 20 left him blind in one eye. He used to put Schauffele in a suit and encourage him to sip wine while barely a teenager to develop a taste for the finer things in life, then made plain he would have to earn them for himself.

"He never pushed me to play golf, I wanted to, but I learnt the harsh reality of being accountable and what sacrifice is at a pretty young age," Schauffele says. "My dad was a complete stickler, making sure I was disciplined, doing everything like clockwork. He definitely moulded how my brain thinks."

When he won Olympic gold in Tokyo and gave the medal to his father, it carried as much sentimental value as any major championship. Stefan remains his son's mental coach and de facto manager, but has taken a slight backwards step since the Ryder Cup last October, where incendiary comments about a pay dispute with the PGA of America caused a minor furore. Stefan was in the headlines again after Valhalla, when he dismissed the rumours that Schauffele could join LIV Golf.

"No chance. Xander is not chasing the money. Xander is about legacy," he said. Schauffele had never been that forthright, but a close relationship with Patrick Cantlay, a significant influence on the PGA Tour's policy board as it continues to negotiate with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, had already rendered the possibility of him defecting to LIV unlikely.

"It's funny, my friends used to send me screenshots of me as the favourite to join LIV, and the odds were solely based on me not commenting much," Schauffele, who did meet LIV representatives in Saudi Arabia once, says. "I've shown up to play PGA Tour events week in, week out. I love my job and I don't really see myself going anywhere else. I had to at least sit down and listen to what was being offered, but once I realised it wasn't really going to fit in with how I envisioned my career, it fizzled out."

Schauffele has remained bold in his criticism of Jay Monahan, though. In an interview with *The Times* published shortly after the framework agreement was announced a year ago, he admitted feeling "betrayed" and said it would be difficult for the beleaguered PGA Tour commissioner to regain the trust of players.

Two independent directors, Jimmy Dunne and Mark Flaherty, have recently resigned from the policy board, citing a lack of meaningful progress, but Monahan remains after helping to secure a \$1.5 billion investment from a consortium led by Fenway Sports Group. Asked if the resentment has subsided, Schauffele only narrowly

Schauffele kept his nerve to win the PGA Championship



stops short of calling for the commissioner to resign.

"What I can say is that throughout all of this turmoil, what's probably bothered me the most is that we need a leader," he says. "My job is to do what I did [at Valhalla], play good golf and be an entertainer. I've criticised Jay in the past, but the fact is not once has our commander-in-chief stood up for all of us players and said, 'This is happening, this is where we're going.'"

"He didn't take a stand when anyone left, he didn't come out to the public and face the music. Obviously, there were reasons [Monahan took a medical leave of absence in the immediate aftermath of the announcement], but historically in tough situations you need a strong leader who can make the big waves smaller and make us feel better. "Whether I trust him or not doesn't matter."

Schauffele accepts that his duel with DeChambeau and the resulting viewing figures were irrefutable evidence that golf's divide must be mended. "Bryson makes people turn the television on," he says.

For the time being, the players will continue to reunite only at the majors, starting with next week's US Open at Pinehurst, where Schauffele will be among the favourites as usual but viewed in a different light after the doubts were vanquished at Valhalla.

"If you look at sport, there are always guys that came from nowhere," he says. "It's extremely rewarding when you feel like you've had to go out and make it happen yourself."

Sport T20 World Cup

Family history and tiny fishing village: my tour in Guyana

Mike Atherton

Chief Cricket Correspondent



It's a long time since I've been to Guyana, an absence partly explained by the desire to stage England's Test matches in tourist-friendly destinations like Barbados and Antigua. England haven't played a Test in the country since 1998, so it was a touch nostalgic heading back to the old Bourda ground in Georgetown, where I contributed a Zak Crawley-like run of scores in Test cricket: 144, 0, 0 and 1.

Like the old Rec ground in St. John's, Antigua, Bourda was a victim of the 2007 World Cup. The desire to create new grounds more suitable to modern cricket means it no longer stages internationals, but something precious has also been lost in the name of progress.

Bourda was such an atmospheric ground, with knowledgeable and passionate supporters (who could be a touch volatile, as those involved in the riot-affected World Series Super Test of 1979 would attest).

So much has gone now. The old wooden stands, so expensive to maintain, have come down, although the Rohan Kanhai Stand, concrete and therefore more durable, and the old pavilion remains. In its heyday, the Georgetown Cricket Club — the oldest in the Caribbean — could boast 4,000 members, but has a fraction of that now. There is maintenance work going on when I arrive, courtesy of ICC funds, and the pavilion is getting a lick of paint, but this is a ground whose time has passed. It was here where West Indies won their first-ever Test match, in 1930 against England.

My wife's grandfather, the splendidly named Francis Ignatius de Caires, did not play in that inaugural victory, but he did play in three of the four Tests of that series, West Indies' first on home soil. His absence for the Guyana Test was doubly puzzling: he had scored 80 and 70 on debut and shared a 142-run stand with the great George Headley, and he was a local lad from Georgetown.

As an international player, his photograph sits in the old pavilion and he forms part of a small but important contribution to West Indies cricket by those of Portuguese descent. Joshua Da Silva, the wicket-keeper from Trinidad, carries that flame now.

For my short trip, I'm staying in Moray House, a wooden house in the heart of Georgetown, built in 1880. It was here that Frank died in 1959 from cancer, aged only 49. It is odd to think I'm staying in the house where someone lived who was involved in the first series West Indies played at home and who batted with the great



Headley, almost a century ago. Everest Cricket Club in Georgetown feels more hopeful than Bourda. Those who have read CLR James's classic book, *Beyond A Boundary*, on cricket in West Indies will know that cricket clubs in the region often sprung up out of a need to belong.

The Georgetown Cricket Club was originally the club of the white elite. Demerara Cricket Club was initially set up by the Portuguese who were not entitled to join GCC but became the home to black cricketers, like Clive Lloyd and Lance Gibbs.

Those who came from out of town, often labourers of East Indian descent, joined Everest, originally called the East Indian Cricket Club and founded in 1914. These demarcations have long since passed, but these three clubs form the heart of cricket in Georgetown.

Like Bourda, the Everest ground boasts a significant history and many famous players — this was Kanhai's club — have graced its turf. Unlike Bourda, it looks on the up. There is a tennis court, squash court, table tennis area and new hybrid indoor/outdoor cricket facility is being built. New Zealand are due to practise here, the day after their arrival, but the seasonal rains put a dampener on that. Who would have thought it would rain in Guyana in the middle of rainy season?

Having completed their final warm-up game against a depleted Australia team in Trinidad, West Indies flew into Georgetown. There is a great sense of pride here that five local players — Romario Shepherd, Shamar Joseph, Shimron Hetmyer, Sherfane Rutherford and Gudakesh Motie — are in the squad, which suggests that

cricket in Guyana remains strong. There are also two others — Canada's Jeremy Gordon and Dillon Heyliger — of Guyanese birth playing in this World Cup. The Caribbean influence on this tournament was given sharp focus when Aaron Jones lit up the opening night in Dallas, hitting ten sixes in a match-winning innings. Jones was born in New York but grew up in Barbados and played first-class cricket there, before moving back to America.

I meet the boys from Baracara, Romario Shepherd and Shamar Joseph. Baracara is a small fishing village of about 300 people, four hours' boat ride up the Canje river. I had visited there earlier in the week (more of which later) and it is remarkable to think, remote and shorn of any formal cricket facilities as it is, that it has given two players to the national team.

Joseph has become the talk of the country, after his fast-bowling exploits in Australia. The village has immense pride in the achievements of both men and that pride is reciprocated. Shepherd, who duly took West Indies' first wicket of the World Cup against Papua New Guinea, says it is better to have a small number of people who have your back completely than an army only half-interested.

The villages of the hinterland are largely as they were, and great tracts of this country remain untouched, but Georgetown has changed significantly. The reason? Oil. It is not surprising, given the geography of the country — Venezuela is a next-door neighbour — that there are huge reserves of oil off-shore and Guyana has one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

One consequence is that Guyana is no longer the poor relation of the Caribbean. The country was looked down on by the rest of the region during the 1970s-90s, when there was political tension, economic decline and mass emigration. Now the workers of the Caribbean are returning in search of opportunity.

Guyana, unsurprisingly, is playing a central role in the T20 World Cup, hosting five matches in the initial stages and a semi-final, while Jamaica, for example, has none.

Atherton, main image, plays a game with youngsters at an orphanage in Georgetown in 1998. Below, England facing West Indies at the historic and atmospheric Bourda Ground



Barbados dream got

Simon Wilde Bridgetown

Jofra Archer will fulfil a long-awaited dream when he takes the field for England against Scotland on Tuesday. Archer was born in Bridgetown and qualified for England in 2019 but has missed two white-ball tours of the West Indies as well as a Test series here — among much else besides — because of various injuries.

His desire to play international cricket here was something that sustained him through the dark days of his rehabilitation. Until his comeback against Pakistan in Birmingham ten days ago, Archer had not played for England in any format for almost two years.

On the final morning of training, Jos Buttler signalled Archer's readiness to play in England's opening group match of the T20 World Cup, the first of potentially nine matches in 26 days should they reach the final, also at Kensington Oval, on June 29.

Buttler said that the England camp needed to be conscious of Archer's situation and the importance this next game had for him. "[We need] to sort of understand that. Obviously, he's a real

cool, calm, collected guy, but I'm sure there's some emotion around that [playing at the Kensington Oval] as well. So understanding that he might be feeling those things [is important]," the England white-ball captain said.

"I'm sure he'll have a lot of close friends and family here watching and I'm sure he'll be desperate to perform well in front of them. We know what he's capable of but we need to allow him to 'be' for a bit, and not expect too much."

Archer looked like he had never been away when he faced Pakistan in two T20s before England headed to the Caribbean, taking two for 28 at Edgbaston and one for 31 at the Kia Oval, both times hitting top speeds of 91mph.

England are considering hitting Scotland with the high pace of both Archer and Mark Wood, who notched 96mph at the Oval in his first game for seven weeks. Wood is competing for the last spot in the side with the left-armers Reece Topley, a specialist against left-handed batsmen.

Archer's most notable bowling performance at the Kensington Oval came as an 18-year-old playing for Barbados against Hampshire during their pre-

CLIVE MASON/GETTY IMAGES



Archer through the dark days

season tour in March 2014, taking three for 36 at a time when he was piquing the interest of a number of counties. He held a British passport through his father and eventually opted to take up a trial with Sussex, largely through the persuasions of his close friend Chris Jordan.

Jordan, also born in Barbados, has recently returned to the England T20 side himself in a comeback that has also been heart-warming to observe. It had looked as though Jordan's international career might be over at 35 but he is embracing the role of elder statesman and attack leader.

Archer will be hoping for a Kensington Oval international debut as eye-catching as Jordan's, when ten years ago he carried off the man of the match award for taking three for 39 and hitting 27 off nine balls in a T20 against West Indies.

Other West Indian-born cricketers to return to the Caribbean in England colours include Roland Butcher, who made his Test debut in Barbados in 1981,

and Devon Malcolm, who in 1990 took five wickets in a famous Test win for England in Jamaica, the island of his birth. But Archer now has the chance to lift a World Cup in the place of his birth, and a share of the winners' \$2.45million (about £1.9million) prize.

Another member of the squad, Phil Salt, though born in North Wales, also spent some of his childhood in Barbados, attending Harrison College and relentlessly pursuing his passion for cricket. He was 13 when he watched from the stands as England won the T20 World Cup for the first time, under Paul Collingwood at the Kensington Oval in 2010.

"I think every kid in the ground would have thought, 'That's going to be me one day,' but you never believe it, so to be here in an England shirt with the opportunity to do something special is incredible," he said.

Today's fixture will be played on the same pitch used for the Namibia-Oman match on Sunday, which appeared slow and uneven in bounce.

England v Scotland

Group B

Today, 3.30pm (UK time)

TV: Sky Sports Cricket

Scotland: three to watch

George Munsey An attacking opener, Munsey is the man to get the innings off to a flyer. He hit 14 sixes during an innings of 127 off 56 balls against the Netherlands in Dublin in 2019

Chris Sole A fast bowler who is capable of genuinely high speed and punching holes in the opposition top order, as he showed with a three-wicket burst that denied Zimbabwe a place at last year's World Cup

Michael Leask An off-spinning all-rounder with a penchant for hitting a long ball at the death. He struck 42 off 16 balls against England in Aberdeen in 2014

...and where the squad were born:

Scotland Matthew Cross, Michael Leask, Mark Watt, Chris Sole

South Africa Richie Berrington, Brendon McMullen, Chris Greaves, Brad Wheel

England Ollie Hairs, Michael Jones, George Munsey, Charlie Tear, Brad Currie, Jack Jarvis, Safyaan Sharif

Younger fans are most supportive of keeping VAR

Football

Martyn Ziegler Chief Sports Reporter

Football fans are split over whether to keep VAR before a vote of Premier League clubs this week — but younger supporters are keen to keep the system, according to a poll.

The survey by Ipsos found that 44 per cent of fans questioned said they would be in favour of the Premier League scrapping VAR, with 40 per cent wanting to keep it and 13 per cent stating "no preference".

Only 33 per cent of those aged 16-34 were in favour of scrapping it, however, while 48 per cent of all fans surveyed were in favour of keeping it if it was used less often and more quickly.

Wolves have formally proposed to the other 19 Premier League clubs that VAR should be removed "to preserve the integrity and enjoyment of the game". Although most clubs are expected to vote against Wolves, there is a general sympathy with some of the points they have raised and they are expected to demand improvements to the system.

Ipsos surveyed 792 people aged 16 to 75 in England who said they were football fans and Keiran Pedley, its research director, said: "These findings show football fans are split on the future of VAR, with older fans inclined to scrap it and younger fans inclined to keep it."

"Overall, fans do appear to be prepared to give VAR time if changes are made that improve the process. However, the strength of concern about the impact VAR is perceived to have had on the match-going fans' experience should not be underestimated."

Wolves have sent a six-page document in support of their proposal and that cites research by the Football Supporters Association's National Supporters' Survey in June 2023, which said only 26.8 per cent were in favour of VAR, compared with 63.3 per cent against it. However a YouGov poll for

The Times in November 2023 showed 79 per cent of the 722 people surveyed wanted to keep VAR and only 18 per cent wanted it scrapped, with 3 per cent being unsure.

The Premier League's annual meeting on Thursday is also expected to agree to a "shadow trial" of a new financial system next season, including a cap on spending.

The "anchoring" proposal, which would restrict the top teams' spending to a proportion — likely to be five times — of the estimated £105million the bottom club receives in TV and prize money on transfers, wages and agents, will not be enforced but will be monitored for each club to ensure it can work.

The clubs agreed to anchoring in principle in April — it would be the first cap on spending in the Premier League — despite opposition from the two Manchester clubs and Aston Villa. The Premier League will also hold discussions with the PFA about the system as the players' union is resistant to any form of cap.

The shadow trial will include the "squad cost control" which would work alongside anchoring and would also limit clubs to spending no more than 85 per cent of their revenue on transfers, wages and agents.

The Premier League's Profit and Sustainability Rules (PSR) will remain in force for next season but are likely to be amended. Crystal Palace have put forward a proposal that clubs such as Aston Villa, who were surprise qualifiers for the Champions League, can claim as allowable PSR losses the difference that top clubs receive from Uefa's coefficient payments — which are based on a club's past ten years of results in Uefa competitions plus the number of European trophies won.

In a separate proposal, Villa will also try to convince clubs to raise the PSR limit of maximum losses over three years from £105million to £135million.

Essex racism charges could result in points deduction

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Zohab Sharif — and detailed a number of incidents of racist abuse including one of the Asian players being nicknamed "Bomber" and bananas being thrown at a black player. Separately, the former chairman John Faragher was alleged to have used the racist phrase "n***** in the woodpile" during a meeting of the Essex board in 2017. In May 2022, Essex accepted a fine of £50,000 by the ECB for failing to investigate the incident properly.

However, they now face more serious sanctions after a long investigation by the Cricket Independent Regulator. After its assessment of the evidence, Essex have been charged with breaching ECB directive 3.3 during the years 2001 to 2010 for "conduct, acts or omissions which may be prejudicial to the interests of cricket, or which may bring the game into disrepute".

In a statement, the regulator said that Essex had "failed to address the systemic use of racist and/or discriminatory language and/or conduct at Essex".

Essex released a statement acknowl-

edging the charges and the scope of their breach and their willingness to co-operate with the disciplinary proceedings and to accept their findings.

If found guilty, Essex could face a significant points deduction in the County Championship, where they are second in Division One. There is precedent for this as Yorkshire were deducted 48 points in the championship and four points in the T20 Blast and fined £400,000 after being found guilty of four offences by the Cricket Discipline Commission of failing to investigate properly and act on allegations of racism at the club.

The cricket regulator came into being last year, put in place by the ECB after the damning report by the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket last summer, which said that cricket was plagued with discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, gender and class and one of the recommendations within the report was that the role of regulator needed to be independent of the governing body because there was a conflict with its role as promoter of the game.

Can Maresca fix Chelsea's issues?

Gary Jacob

Enzo Maresca has signed a five-year deal to become the Chelsea head coach.

The 44-year-old Italian led Leicester City to promotion to the Premier League at the first time of asking after two spells on Pep Guardiola's coaching staff at Manchester City. He succeeds Mauricio Pochettino, who departed by mutual consent two weeks ago after he led the team to sixth in the Premier League, earning a place in the Europa Conference League.

Maresca's deal includes the option of a further season until 2030 as well as break clauses, which have not been disclosed, in favour of Chelsea, who have paid about £10million in compensation. He will be joined by six backroom staff from Leicester including Willy Caballero, 42, the former goalkeeper who is his assistant manager and spent four years playing for Chelsea.

"To join Chelsea, one of the biggest clubs in the world, is a dream for any coach," Maresca said. "It is why I am so excited by this opportunity. I look forward to working with a very talented group of players and staff to develop a



Maresca's five-year deal includes the option of a sixth

KEEPING PLAYERS FIT

Chelsea had the second-highest number of injuries this season after topping the table in 2022-23. That does not include Wesley Fofana, who was injured before the start of the campaign. The captain, Reece James, played just 481 minutes due to two injuries and had two injury-hit seasons. Roméo Lavia played just 32 minutes in one match in his first season after a £58million move from Southampton, and Christopher Nkunku just 514 minutes having been signed for £52million from RB Leipzig last summer. Pochettino was always frustrated at not being able to pick his best players until nearly all were fit at the end of the season.



Left to right: Lavia, Fofana and Nkunku cost a combined £180m and played a total of 546 minutes last season

PLAYING STYLE

Maresca's favoured formations have the full backs inverting to create an extra man in midfield. That system could help Enzo Fernández push forward from midfield as he struggled to thrive alongside Moisés Caicedo, who also cost more than £100million. This season Chelsea scored 77 goals, their third-best attacking campaign of the Premier League era, beaten only by the title-winning seasons of 2009-10 (103 goals) and 2016-17 (85). But they also conceded more league goals (63) than any other in the Premier League era — two thirds of which were in the second half.

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Pochettino had problems managing the relationship with sporting directors, overbearing owners and supporters. While not every supporter always warmed to Pochettino, due to his 5½ years at rivals Tottenham Hotspur, some changed their opinion about him after an upturn in results. In a recent fans' poll on which of the four managers should take charge, Maresca was third behind Roberto De Zerbi and Rúben Amorim and slightly above Kieran McKenna. Chelsea turned to Maresca after McKenna pulled out of the running and signed a new deal at Ipswich Town, having also rejected the chance to join Brighton & Hove Albion as a successor to De Zerbi.

ENVIRONMENT

In March civil war broke out between Chelsea's supporters' organisations, showing the discontent and frustration about things broader and deeper than the mediocrity on the pitch. The Chelsea Supporters' Trust (CST) warned that the club was sliding towards "irreversible toxicity" in the stands and in turn was accused of causing "chaos and division" by the club's fan advisory board.

BACKROOM STAFF

Along with Caballero, the other staff joining from Leicester are the first-team coach Danny Walker, goalkeeping coach Michele De Bernardin, fitness coach Marcos Álvarez, analyst Javier Molina Caballero and development coach Roberto Vitiello. Ben Roberts will become the goalkeeper coach and has also been appointed as head of global goalkeeping.

team that continues the club's tradition of success and makes our fans proud."

Maresca, who will be tasked with returning Chelsea to the top-four places and the Champions League, is the third permanent head coach appointment by the club since a change of ownership in May 2022. That frequency shines a light on the issues he will face managing expectations, relationships inside and outside, keeping players fit and finding a style and system best-suited to a squad costing more than £1billion. His managerial predecessors, Thomas Tuchel and Graham Potter, lasted months and Pochettino just a season. This is the set-up Maresca is joining.

STRUCTURE

Maresca will have to limit his role to coaching the team with players bought by Paul Winstanley and Laurence Stewart, the sporting directors. Chelsea

refused Pochettino's request to be given power especially over transfers at the end of the season, with the Argentinian once saying, "This is not my team. This is Chelsea's team."

Chelsea can point to the success of holistic approaches at Manchester City, Arsenal and Liverpool, although in all cases, the coaches gained power.

Maresca will work with Bernardo Cueva, who has been hired from Brentford to run Chelsea's set-piece department. Pochettino had dismissed the idea of adding a set-piece coach, saying it would be up to him whether Cueva would be in the dugout. Chelsea ranked ninth in the Premier League for set-piece goals conceded (11) and tenth for set-piece goals scored (12) this season.

RECRUITMENT

Chelsea are set to prioritise a new goalkeeper, centre back, left back and forward this summer. The west London club are expected to sign Tosin Adarabioyo on a free transfer from Fulham. He will replace Thiago Silva, 39, who will leave to rejoin the Brazilian club

Fluminense. Trevoh Chalobah, another centre back, is also expected to leave and since he is homegrown his sale will carry weight in the calculation for the club trying to meet the Premier League's profit and sustainability rules.

Leicester: We're disappointed

Leicester expressed their frustration yesterday that Maresca decided to leave. "Given the promising foundations established during his single season in charge, the club is disappointed that Enzo has decided at this stage that he no longer wants to be part of our vision," a club statement read. "However, with Enzo's decision made and the Board's terms for his departure met, we wish him well in his future endeavours."

Chelsea are expected to sell players before June 30 to stay within the financial rules after reporting a loss of £90.1million for last season. Of their other homegrown players, Conor Gallagher is expected to be the subject of an offer from Tottenham Hotspur. Armando Broja has interest from Southampton and abroad, and Ian Maatsen could exit after playing on loan for Borussia Dortmund. Chelsea want to sell Romelu Lukaku, Kepa Arrizabalaga and Hakim Ziyech. Lukaku is likely to be wanted by Antonio Conte when he is named as Napoli head coach. The Belgian scored 13 league goals while on loan at Roma this season.



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Clough, crime and Cranston: tales of O'Neill and Tyldesley

Pair tell **Alyson Rudd** of unlikely friendship that was cemented with a visit to a murder house

Every good podcast needs chemistry and the latest football offering is built on the foundations of a long, unusual friendship grounded in criminal justice.

The *Football Authorities* showcases the varied career of Martin O'Neill, with his many anecdotes teased out by Clive Tyldesley, the veteran commentator. They know each other well, having met when Tyldesley, a cub reporter with Radio Trent, was sitting in the corridor outside Brian Clough's office one evening and O'Neill walked past and nodded, only to see Tyldesley there again the next morning. The Nottingham Forest midfielder made a quip about Clough having made the journalist sleep over and a friendship was born.

It was cemented when O'Neill asked Tyldesley to drive him to a house on Merseyside where a murder had been committed.

"I thought, 'Oh crikey, where are we going?'" Tyldesley says. "It was 29 Wolverton Street, a cul-de-sac, on a dark and misty evening in 1981. Norwich [O'Neill's new team], were playing Everton and he was supposed to be having a quiet meal with the team. I think he went and knocked on the door. Can you imagine on a Friday night, a famous footballer peering through your window?"

The murder that so fascinated O'Neill, who had studied law before becoming a player, happened in 1931 and marked the first time someone convicted of murder was successful in having the verdict overturned by the Court of Criminal Appeal.

"William Herbert Wallace was supposed to have battered his wife over the head in the living room," O'Neill says, and goes on to explain that someone had phoned Wallace, an insur-



ance agent with Prudential, to tell him to go to an address that did not exist.

"Whoever makes that phone call is the killer," says O'Neill with a note of courtroom triumph in his voice. There is no Menlove Gardens East.

"But we had to drive there," Tyldesley says. "This is no ordinary footballer. That is the reason we get on. I had never heard another footballer speak like that, to have such an interest and a passion beyond football."

In case anyone is thinking the justice system missed out on a top-rate barrister when O'Neill signed for Forest, he tells a story about "just how poor a judge I am of a human being".

He was a young boy when James Hanratty was hanged, remembers his mother crying when he died and would tell anyone who did or didn't want to know that Hanratty was innocent "and then they found a piece of DNA on a victim's underwear and they dug up Hanratty's body and he's guilty". Plenty of people phoned to tell him he had been wrong all along.

"What would Clough do?" will be a regular feature on the podcast and I suggest that the plethora of reminiscences about the former Derby County and Forest manager point to a man who was both charismatic and a bully.

"He didn't like me at all," O'Neill says, "and I felt I was battling to win his approval, to prove him wrong rather than right. He could be as charming as you like or as rude as you like."

"You have to remember he was drinking at the time," Tyldesley says. "It was the one battle he never won. His decline was due in no small part to his relationship with alcohol and that made him moodier than he might otherwise have been."

O'Neill expresses some surprise that he survived the cull when Clough arrived at Forest.

"I wasn't great in the air, and Cloughie felt that was a sign of cowardice. I had to force myself into heading the ball. I'd be the first one picked on in the



O'Neill, front right, and Clough, left, in 1975 after victory in the Forest manager's first game. Inset, O'Neill, right, and Tyldesley

dressing room but I answered back and that didn't help."

"The fact you went to university before football came calling for you," Tyldesley says. "It singled you out as an unusual footballing personality and it didn't sit too kindly with a manager who wanted to dominate everything in his realm. Me, as a rookie reporter, I never answered him back. I was afraid of him. He was kind to me when it suited him. Everything he did was on his terms."

O'Neill was linked with the recent vacancy at Rapid Bucharest and there was a brief spell when Romanian journalists were calling and texting him to ask him what he knew about the country's football. O'Neill did not go for an interview and the job went to Neil Lennon, who played under O'Neill, who describes him as "my Roy Keane".

"One day he irritated me as he was having a bad game at Celtic but was still having a go. Just shut up," I said, and he said, 'OK, I'm not going to say another word,' but I didn't want that either."

"Honestly if there had been a job in Bolivia, he'd have taken it," O'Neill says.

The podcast will have a jingle every time either Tyldesley or O'Neill is guilty of name-dropping which is likely to be a frequent occurrence given that O'Neill's son-in-law is James Friend, the cinematographer who won an

Oscar for *All Quiet on the Western Front*. O'Neill relates joining the filming for the drama series *Your Honour* in New Orleans. He was too shy to meet Brian Cranston, the star, but chatted instead to a woman sitting nearby on the set.

"I didn't give her a second to speak, telling her about great films like *The Graduate* and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. I am boring her into submission but don't realise that I am boring her into submission. My daughter comes over to take me to the car that's waiting and tells me the woman is one of the producers of *The Shawshank Redemption*. She knew more about films than me and I was really embarrassed."

O'Neill did resist the temptation to gush when pitchside for the play-off final for talkSPORT, even though 15 yards away was Dustin Hoffman.

"I wanted to throw the ear plugs down and say, 'You're brilliant!'"

"The challenge of the podcast is to relate our vast experience to 2024," Tyldesley says. "My journalistic responsibility is to bring these extraordinary stories to the present day. You can see threads that are very relevant."

Before the Euros, they will be asking if the England manager's job is the impossible job. Gareth Southgate attended Tyldesley's wedding but that won't stop him being journalistically critical.

"The most difficult commentary I have had to execute was England v Iceland because my wife and I had been out for meals with Roy and Sheila Hodgson. He was a close friend," he says. "But with a minute to go I heard my editor in my ear saying, 'You're going to have to call this.' At the end of the game I had to say Hodgson's tenure as England manager was untenable."

O'Neill has also had to wonder about conflict of interest in making the podcasts as he is the new chair of the League Managers Association but Richard Bevan, the chief executive of the LMA, told him not to worry given that "there are conflicts of interests all over the place".

"We will be asking what it feels like to be sacked," Tyldesley says. "What's the day after like? The feeling of injustice is the same today as it always was."

The worst sacking of O'Neill's life is, unsurprisingly, when he was told, in June 2019, that his time was up at Forest and 24 minutes later, while he was about to tell his wife he would be home sooner than he was expecting, the new manager was announced. "I was really angry about that," he says, "it was Nottingham Forest, it was my team."

● The *Football Authorities* with Clive Tyldesley and Martin O'Neill is available to listen to now on Global Player, with new episodes dropping weekly

Villa close in on signing £5m Barkley from Luton

Aston Villa have moved closer to signing Ross Barkley for around £5 million from Luton Town (Gary Jacob writes). The midfielder, 30, would be Unai Emery's first summer signing after he revived his career last season, scoring five goals and providing four assists in 32 appearances in the Premier League.

This would be Barkley's second spell at Villa after spending the 2020-21 season on loan there from Chelsea.

Paquetá needs more time for spot-fixing response

Lucas Paquetá has requested an extension from the FA after being charged with four instances of spot-fixing last week. The West Ham United midfielder, 26, had until yesterday to respond or request more time. He has been charged with deliberately getting yellow cards in matches against Leicester City, Aston Villa, Leeds United and Bournemouth in the past two seasons. He has always denied any wrongdoing.

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Mbappé completes Madrid move

wrote. "So happy and proud to join the club of my dreams @realmadrid."

"Nobody can understand how excited I am right now. Can't wait to see you, Madridistas, and thanks for your unbelievable support. Hala Madrid!"

Before the transfer was officially announced, Mbappé revealed to the French president, Emmanuel Macron, that his move to Real would be announced last night.

Mbappé is training with the France

team in preparation for this summer's European Championship and was caught on video by the French broadcaster RMC Sport discussing his impending move to the Bernabéu.

When asked by Macron when the deal would be announced, Mbappé responded: "Tonight, tonight."



Mbappé's deal is believed to be worth €15 million (about £12.8 million) a year after tax.

The 25-year-old leaves PSG after seven years at the club where he won six Ligue 1 titles and four French Cups, finishing his time there as the club's all-time leading goalscorer with 256 goals from 308 appearances.

Sport Football

Trent comes of age as Wharton grabs his chance

England

Palmer 60 (pen), Alexander-Arnold 85, Kane 89

3

Bosnia

0

Jonathan Northcroft

They say international friendlies are all about the bigger picture — but in this, the fine details were the story, the thrill and the takeaway. The pick of them were provided by Trent Alexander-Arnold, who had waited since his debut in 2018 to do so, but finally came fully of age in an England setting.

There has never been the slightest doubt about his talent. How to use it has been Gareth Southgate's question. Well here was the simple answer. Just get him on the pitch.

Alexander-Arnold, having sauntered around central midfield with effortless excellence for just over an hour, spent the last portion of the match at right back, and was just as brilliant there, dispatching the best of England's goals with a sweet swing of his right boot five minutes from time.

He initiated the attack himself, by easing forward and finding Jarrod Bowen on the edge of the box. Bowen was tackled but Adam Wharton kept the moving going by sweeping the loose ball to Jack Grealish.

Grealish sent a dipping cross to the back post where Alexander-Arnold caressed a shot past Nikola Vasilj. He then went through three different goal celebrations but you wouldn't have begrudged it if there had been more — he was already man of the match, but there is nothing like a goal to cement a performance in the memory.

Alexander-Arnold's strike, his third for his country, gave England a 2-0 lead and a sticky period towards the end of the first half, in which England dropped their intensity following a decent start, was long forgotten. Harry Kane added a final goal by reacting quickest to force a shot over the line after Ezri Konsa inadvertently blocked a Bowen shot after more good Grealish work. 3-0 was about what England deserved — but no more than the par score against opponents who finished eight points behind Luxembourg in a fruitless Euro 2024 qualifying campaign.

Southgate was left with those fine details. They included the wonderful, head-up, straight-backed, all-in-balance posture of Wharton every time he received the ball and the calm efficiency every time he used it. Somehow, five months after a move from the Championship, this 20-year-old looks a born international footballer.

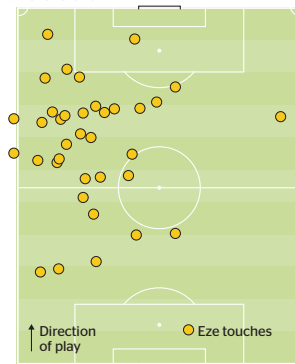
They also included the hunger of Grealish to impress during his cameo, the versatility of Konsa, Bowen's combinations with Kane and the encouragingly free way Kane was moving upon his return from a back injury.

And they involved Palmer, who along with Eberechi Eze illuminated the early stages with quality on the ball and ability to throw off defenders. And who then, in the second half, dispatched a penalty with typical shrugging sang froid for his first international goal.



Eze does it for England

The Crystal Palace forward staked his claim to remain in the final 26-man squad by being a constant threat with tricky runs on the left flank



Road to Gelsenkirchen

Friday England v Iceland, Wembley

Saturday England's 26-man squad for Euro 2024 is announced

June 10 Fly to Germany

June 16 First group game: England v Serbia, Gelsenkirchen

It was awarded — after a VAR check — when Haris Hajradinovic pulled Konsa's shirt at a corner. During a protracted delay, Palmer stood there casually, ball tucked under his arm, watching disinterestedly as first Ermedin Demirovic, then Hajradinovic made showy attempts at pumping up Vasilj. Palmer took a breath, strolled up and — despite slipping slightly as he addressed the ball — smacked home the spot kick. That gave England a 60th-minute lead, and the platform to pull away.

Alexander-Arnold played as a No 6, but wore the No 8 shirt, and had the rolled down socks of a No 10 — and

purred through his 62 minutes in midfield, bringing elements associated with all these three roles to his game. His positioning was strategic, his motion continual and his passing as smooth as silk sheets.

Playing off both feet, he showed the full range of passing tools, spreading to the flanks with switches of play, keeping it short and simple at other times and feeding the ball straight down the pitch and daringly through the lines if gaps opened up. Such a pass in the ninth minute found Palmer, who turned and slipped an equally fine ball between Nikola Katic and Stjepan Radeljic to release Ollie Watkins but Watkins took a touch instead of shooting first time and Katic got across to strong-arm him off balance.

Vasilj parried Watkins' shot — and if there was one area of concern for Southgate it was that Watkins once again did not take a chance to cement himself as the alternative to Kane.

The first half did drift a bit, as football in friendlies tends to do, and you were thankful for Eze and Palmer, such liquid, impish footballers who whatever the occasion — even if it's an audition for a place at a Euros — cannot help but play as if in the five-a-side cage.

When they combined it was gorgeous. In the 17th minute, Eze started a move by dropping deep and dropping a shoulder to collect possession, turn away from his man and glide to the edge of the box before finding Palmer who played back to Conor Gallagher — but Gallagher curled his shot into the stand.

A few minutes later, Palmer was the one moving cleverly to get himself on the ball before feinting past a defender — a baffled and flailing

Wharton looked composed on his England debut while Eze, above left, was lively



Jusuf Gazibegovic. Then Eze slalomed between three men to reach the edge of the area and England forced a corner from which Lewis Dunk knocked down to Konsa but Konsa's shot at Vasilj.

England ended the first half sloppily, epitomised by a poor Marc Guéhi pass which Hajradinovic and had one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's meagre (and unthreatening) two shots. Instructed to play quicker and find Palmer earlier, England were better at the start of the second but, found by a deft little pass by Alexander-Arnold, Palmer could not quite strike the ball cleanly again Vasilj had a routine stop.

When Palmer took an extra touch to waste an opening provided by Bowen's crisp square

pass — just when you expected him to curl a shot in — you wondered if he was fading but, no, his next intervention was the ice-cold penalty.

After that, Southgate made five substitutions and the pick of those introduced were Wharton, Grealish and Kane. He startled Vasilj by wheeling, 25 yards out, and smashing a dipping, shot which the goalkeeper parried unconvincedly. He looked ravenous for a goal — and in the final moments slaked his appetite with another one for England.

England (4-2-3-1): J Pickford 7 — E Konsa 8, L Dunk 7 (J Gomez 73min), M Guéhi 6 (J Branthwaite 62, 6), K Trippier 7 (A Wharton 62, 7) — T Alexander-Arnold 9, C Gallagher 6 — J Bowen 7, C Palmer 8 (J Maddison 61), E Eze 7 (J Grealish 61min) — O Watkins 5 (H Kane 61, 7). **Booked** Branthwaite.
Bosnia (3-4-3): N Vasilj 7 — A Ahmedhodzic 6 (T Muharemovic 82min), N Katic 7, S Radeljic 6 (H Hadzizadunic 74) — E Bicakcic 6 (N Mujagic 73), B Tahirovic 6, D Saric 6 (D Huseinbasic 63), J Gazibegovic 6 — A Gigovic 5 (D Burnic 82), E Demirovic 6 (H Tabakovic 74), H Hajradinovic 6. **Booked** Tahirovic, Gazibegovic.
Referee R Saggi (Nor) Att 52,305



Swift return for injured Earps is boost for Wiegman

Kit Shepard

Mary Earps is expected to be back for England's Euro 2025 qualifiers in July, with her hip injury not as severe as initially feared.

Earps, who won the Best Fifa Goalkeeper award in February, was visibly upset as she limped off during Friday's defeat by France in Newcastle and was on crutches after the game. However, although she will miss tonight's qualifier away to France, she is set to be out for only one match.

"It's not too big an injury," Sarina Wiegman, the England head coach, said. "We expect her to be back the next game."

However, England may need to get a result without Earps on Tuesday for the two qualifiers in July — against Ireland and Sweden — to have much meaning.

"We've had a target on our backs since winning the Euros," Beth Mead said. The winger's assertion may be true but opponents are getting pretty good at hitting that target.

The 2-1 loss to France on Friday led to England dropping below Sweden to third place in their four-team qualifying group, with three out of six games played. Only the top two reach next summer's tournament automatically, so England desperately need a win in Saint-Etienne as they try to avoid dropping into the play-offs.



Earps is set to miss only one game with her injury

"It's a tough group," Mead said. "Most people would probably say it's the group of death but we've got to beat the best to be the best."

England's poor form is more than a minor blip. Since winning their World Cup semi-final last August they have lost the subsequent final, have failed to reach the Nations League last four and are now at risk of needing to get through two rounds of play-offs to defend their European title in Switzerland next summer.

Results under Wiegman have declined over the past year and her selection decisions last Friday raised eyebrows. Nevertheless, Wiegman is not wavering amid claims her team are becoming too predictable. "We have an identity, we're not going to throw everything overboard because we want to be unpredictable to the opponent," she said. "Because then we're going to be unpredictable to ourselves. We want to build on what we already have."

Wiegman will make at least one change tonight, with Chelsea's Hannah Hampton likely to replace Earps. In attack, whether she sticks with proven figures such as Alessia Russo, Ella Toone and Mead or tries younger options like Grace Clinton and Aggie Beever-Jones will be a key decision.

Mead also spoke about Vivianne Miedema, her partner, leaving Arsenal this summer. "I'll get some peace and quiet now, that will be nice," Mead, 29, said with a smile. "Obviously Viv's a world-class player and a player I'll very much miss playing with. She wanted something new, she wanted a new challenge and I wish her the best. Just hopefully it isn't against Arsenal."

France v England
TV: ITV4, kick-off 8pm

England took an hour to break the deadlock, when Palmer scored from the spot, left, after Konsa was fouled in the penalty area. Alexander-Arnold then doubled the lead with a volley across goal, right, before Kane completed the scoring by poking home, above, after a scramble in the six-yard box



Southgate: We've been waiting for Adam for years

CONTINUED FROM BACK

before late goals from Trent Alexander-Arnold and Harry Kane, the captain, completed a convincing victory.

England now face Iceland on Friday in their final warm-up game before the finals, after which Southgate must trim his squad from 33 names to 26.

"There were numerous good performances," Southgate said. "I would imagine Eberechi caught the eye with the way he started, how he glides past people and the power he shows."

"I thought Conor Gallagher was an important performance for us. I thought he played with real maturity and then [there was] a first goal for Cole Palmer, and Adam Wharton showed what he has been doing at the end of the season and in training."

"He sees pictures early and he can play forward. It is very early for him, but

lovely that he looked as comfortable as he did.

"I think there is more to come from Cole as he feels more comfortable in the group and we feed the ball where he needs it. He has had a fabulous season and can have a real impact."

"It is a decision [reducing the squad] where we understand the significance for all of the players. So we are giving it the respect it deserves."

"Of course it is always going to be subjective and we have to balance what we need in every area of the pitch, as well, so that is the added complication. "It is not just getting the best individuals in, there is a positional element to that as well. But we have really good options and we came through the game without any physical issues."

"We are spinning a lot of plates trying to get individuals into things and also perform. This was a good night for us."

Wharton, 20, continued his stellar rise, after his January move from Blackburn Rovers to Palace, with his England debut, while Jarrad Branthwaite also made his senior international bow.

Whether Wharton makes the cut remains to be seen, but he has improved his chances no end over the past week.

"There is no question he has impressed us," Southgate added. "The biggest [thing] for us is that ability to see pictures and play forward early. It sounds really simple but finding a player who does that hasn't been easy for us over seven or eight years."

"There is a lot still ahead of him, a lot of adjustment, but the other players have recognised his quality very quick-

ly. He showed in his cameo what we have seen in training. He has big steps to take but he is adapting really well."

England, who are set to welcome Kobbie Mainoo, Kyle Walker and Phil Foden to the camp today following their break after the FA Cup final, will continue their tournament preparations in London.

The run-out for Kane came after he ended the domestic season with Bayern Munich nursing a back injury, but he allayed any fitness concerns.

"I'm feeling good," he said. "A lot of the end of season [rest] was precautionary. It was a good chance to get a good break. I feel fine. I'm sure I'll get some minutes on Friday. I'm not someone who takes too long to get sharp."

30

This was the first England starting XI without a player from Arsenal, Man City, Man United or Tottenham in 30 years: November 1994 vs Nigeria

Sport

My Caribbean diary

Mike Atherton's travels before England's World Cup opener

Pages 58-59



Marathon man

Djokovic's extraordinary comeback at French Open

Page 56



Palace pair boost Euros chances

- Southgate impressed with Eze and Wharton
- Alexander-Arnold and Palmer also shine

England 3
Bosnia-Herzegovina 0

Paul Joyce

Gareth Southgate admitted that he faced a tough task to choose seven players to ditch from his provisional England squad for Euro 2024 after his fringe stars, including Crystal Palace's Eberechi Eze and Adam Wharton, caught the eye in the friendly victory over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The England manager was impressed as his side ran out 3-0 winners at St James' Park with Cole Palmer opening the scoring from the penalty spot

Continued on page 63



Eze was a bright spark for England at St James' Park and drew praise from Southgate, who congratulated Wharton, inset, after an eye-catching debut off the bench

Mbappé lands £85m bonus

Kylian Mbappé has completed his free transfer to Real Madrid from Paris Saint-Germain, picking up a signing-on bonus believed to be worth at least £85million.

Two days after becoming European champions for the 15th time and sealing a Champions League and La Liga double, the Spanish side announced that the France forward had signed a five-year contract at the Bernabéu. He will officially become a Real player on July 1, when his contract with PSG expires.

A statement from Real read: "Real Madrid and Kylian Mbappé have reached an agreement for him to be a Real Madrid player for the next five seasons."

Mbappé shared images of himself as a youngster in Real Madrid kit on social media, as well as meeting Cristiano Ronaldo, shortly after the club statement. "A dream come true," he

Continued on page 61

Essex facing racism charge

Elizabeth Ammon

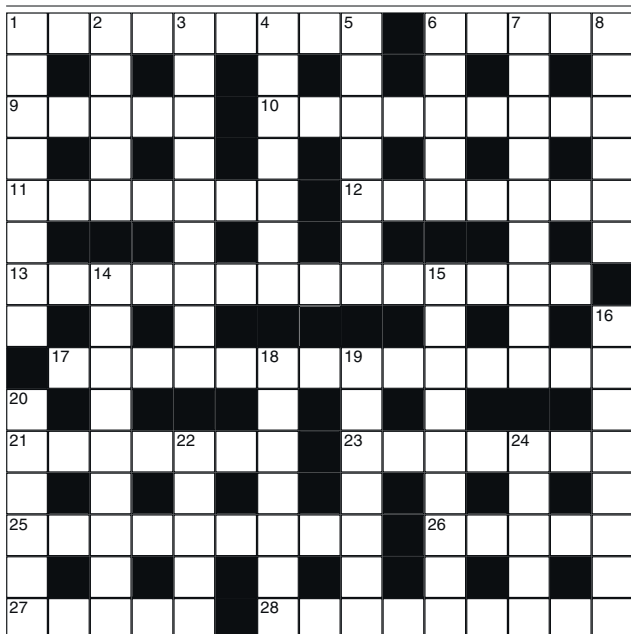
Essex have been charged with systemic use of racist and discriminatory language between 2001 and 2010 by cricket's new independent regulator and could face a significant points deduction if found guilty at a disciplinary hearing that will take place in the next few months.

Last year a series of historical allegations by some former players were upheld by an independent report by Katharine Newton KC. The report found that from the mid-1990s to 2013, there was a culture within the club whereby comments on the basis of race, ethnicity or religion were widespread but seen as "just banter".

The report was commissioned after allegations by three former players — Jahid Ahmed, Maurice Chambers and

Continued on page 59

Times Crossword 28,934



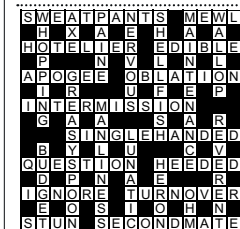
ACROSS

- Record start of tweet by a politician on X (9)
- Cut from blade, as some say (5)
- Seconds required with some sterling seafood (5)
- Novel heroine and husband back call for clubbing (9)
- How toper opens more rum, swigging large tot (7)
- Groups of new arrivals, tons entering during a film (7)
- Advanced runs to block improved team's attacking options? (7,7)
- Catch partner pocketing grand — it's won with tricks (8,6)
- Finished postgrad degree with new supervisor (7)
- Officer getting popular, mature and tender (7)
- Cooked fat eel and raw, small crustacean (5,4)
- Inspiration for writer's books returning after long time (5)
- Club — United, say — regressing (5)
- They may darn well see stars out to save millions (9)

DOWN

- Rising bit of smoke's permeating support for lab kit (4,4)
- Source of penicillin doctor pulled out of odd places (5)
- Lamp is put up over entrance (9)
- Initially, hard to oust female feeling a certain desire (7)
- Bit of capital — one thousand pounds I invested in power firm (7)
- Way to entertain little fool, perhaps (5)
- Beat walls in vacated residence having sideboards (9)
- Papers upset customer wanting upper-class periodical (6)
- Oscar Peterson ultimately dotes on swinging solo (2,4,3)
- Linguistic flaw in news by newspaper head (9)
- Good-natured dope you heard is in love (8)
- Make invalid filling of lush doughnut, say (7)
- Jazz fan, in bed, lifted by ace composition (7)
- Respectful gesture and awestruck remark for setter? (3-3)
- Publication featuring King Edward's face and Mrs Simpson (5)
- Succulent core of plant supplied (5)

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Guess who's not coming to the wedding of the year

How the Duke of Westminster got embroiled in the royal spat

The Prince of Wales, the Duke of
Westminster and the Duke of Sussex

If we're a nation of side-hustlers I'm going to need to upskill, fast

Robert Crampton



Almost half of Britons have a side-hustle, which is the new sexy name for a second income. That includes two thirds of those aged 18-34, as you might expect given that the stats include flogging your clothes on eBay, and a quarter of people in middle-age, which I reckon I still am, at least until August when I turn 60. Evidently, having had the same solitary job for 33 years, I am missing out. But what to do?

Well, like the Gen Zedders I could start by hawking my second-hand gear online, especially since, unlike the young folk, I happen to own an original U2 1980 *Boy* tour T-shirt and I don't want it any more, not least because over the past 44 years it seems to have become a crop top. Sticking with T-shirts, I have Jobs Not Bombs, Mines Not Missiles and Women Against Pit Closures. How about a mint-condition Solidarnosc poster? Or a hardback copy of *Where Eagles Dare*, which is — get this — printed upside down? Any offers?

That's the selling-off-the-family-silver option, but what about more sustainable income streams? I am not afraid of hard work. In my youth I was variously a paperboy, milkman's assistant, taxi runner-in, Betterware door-to-door salesman and window cleaner, which was going well until the real window cleaner got back from his annual fortnight in Filey and told me to piss off. My best gig was bootlegging homemade wine to my fellow 15-year-olds. Something to consider.

Having consulted the family re my skill set though, the feeling is I would make an excellent tour guide to local history in east London, boring newly arrived hipsters with war stories of the bad old days 30 years ago. The big drawback, we agreed, is that there may be a degree of non-consensuality involved. As in, a market for my guiding offer might not exist. This analysis is based on my repeated attempts on the bus to engage nice Italian families in conversation on the nice East End attractions. "That's where the Krays grew up", "Two of King Charles I's regicides lived on that spot there" etc. The best I get is a polite nod and a request for directions to Buckingham Palace. I can't foresee



much take-up. Getting paid to tell people things they don't want to know is sadly closer to extortion than entrepreneurship. If I tried to commercialise the impromptu history lessons I give my children, plucking vegetarians out of the falafel queue round the corner and marching them into our house, kidnapping could be added to the charge sheet.

In a similar vein, my daughter suggested private tutoring. "But when you did that essay for me in the sixth form on prime ministerial power," she recalled, "you only got a B+." She then reminded me how I had given her politics teacher a hard time about that grade at parents' evening.

During the pandemic my family operated a not-for-profit (in fact, free) Covid café in our front garden. Friends would sit the requisite distance apart and we'd all chat in loud voices while my son, a skilled barista, passed flat whites through the kitchen window. Maybe I could reboot it for paying customers, possibly nostalgia-theme the setting with a Protect the NHS lectern, some sourdough and a Matt Hancock grope-o-matic machine.

Or, in the spirit of Paul Newman's Fast Eddie, I could work an actual hustle, only by being mediocre at pool, darts, poker or whatever instead of secretly being really good. But conning the punters by pretending to be top notch then being crap and cleaning up is, er, more complicated than the other way around, isn't it?

So, light wedding and sweeping it will have to be. Welcome to my new venture, open for business, no menial unskilled grunt work skivvying task too small. The name? Bob-a-Job, obviously. And about as lucrative.

Seventies-style sex education

Love Island, which started up again last night, provides teenagers with useful sex education lessons, the show's executive producer Mike Spencer says. Yeah, right, you keep telling yourself that, mate. Meanwhile, I started wondering what the equivalent popular culture hanky-panky (as some ancient people called it in the 1970s) instruction platform was for my generation. Besides the dirty bits in *The Godfather*, *The Fog*, *The Day of the Jackal* and, for the girls, Jackie Collins, of course.

Well, it was *The Joy of Sex* by Alex Comfort, wasn't it? Not so much the text but the hand-drawn illustrations featuring that long-haired bearded bloke who looked like Benny out of Abba. Does your mother know? Not likely. We passed around a richly graffitied copy between us in guilty, clandestine fashion. It's much better that these things are more out in the open nowadays, although *Love Island* probably isn't the ideal vehicle.

There were dozens of positions, I recall, only three of which you ever employ after the age of 30. OK, four, if you're a nymphomaniac.

For whom the

Britain's most eligible bachelor is to be wed. The heir will be there, but not the spare.

By Kate Mansey

It's a problem that apparently no amount of money can solve. When you're friends with two princes who are at loggerheads, which one do you invite to your wedding? This is the conundrum faced by Hugh "Hughie" Grosvenor, the 7th Duke of Westminster, who will marry his fiancée, Olivia Henson, at Chester Cathedral on Friday.

The duke's £10 billion fortune means that, at 33, he is the richest person under the age of 40 in the UK, according to The Sunday Times Rich List, and the 14th richest overall.

He was 25 when his father, Gerald Cavendish Grosvenor, died suddenly of a heart attack in 2016. Hugh became one of the country's wealthiest landowners, as he inherited a property portfolio that spans land in Scotland, Lancashire and 300 acres of prime estate in Mayfair and Belgravia. For years Tatler magazine proclaimed him to be Britain's most eligible bachelor.

However, the duke may well have realised during the past few months that the universal misery of a wedding seating plan cares not for titles or cash in the bank. For, besides his vast wealth, he is a rare breed in another way. He is one of only a few friends who has remained close to both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Sussex despite the brothers' increasingly bitter public feud. The duke's godfather is the King and, in turn, he is godfather to William and Harry's eldest sons, Prince George and Prince Archie. But with William and Harry barely able to sit in the same cathedral without visible rage, the royal rift has threatened to overshadow the Westminster wedding. So, which of them to invite?

It is understood that a civilised understanding was reached between the duke and Harry over the phone. It's a long way to come from California, after all. Harry was invited but then agreed to stay away. The duke's diplomacy then cleared the way for William to perform the role of usher during Friday's ceremony — a job that would have been beyond awkward if he was obliged to show Harry to his pew, even though he might enjoy telling him where to go. The Princess of Wales, meanwhile, will stay away as she continues her recovery after revealing this year that she is undergoing chemotherapy.

The King is not expected to attend, either. Charles continues his cancer treatment and will have just returned from the 80th anniversary commemoration of the D-Day landings in Normandy on Thursday.

Nevertheless, it is fast becoming the most royal nonroyal wedding of the year, with members of Britain's oldest



It's fast becoming the most royal nonroyal wedding

and wealthiest aristocratic families heading north. While the duke is extraordinarily wealthy, a source close to him added: "He isn't someone who's drawn towards the limelight. He's self-effacing in many ways." They added that he prefers to keep things "low-profile".

Where the wedding is concerned, however, the 400-strong guest list and a reception at his vast 11,000-acre estate at Eaton Hall, styled on a French château, appears to suggest that the "low-profile" ship has sailed. Given the scale of the event, journalists looking to cover the service at the cathedral have been encouraged to apply for official accreditation.

Guests are likely to include several members of the Van Cutsem family, who have been friends with the Windsors for generations. Also expected is Lady Zoe Warren, the aristocratic yoga guru and youngest child of the 14th Earl of Galloway, and her husband, Jake Warren, a godson of Princess Diana and son of Queen Elizabeth II's racing manager, John Warren.

Guests have been advised not to bring gifts, presumably to cut down on the need for an airport-style security scanner for any large boxes, as much as the very obvious point that this is not a couple in need of a new toaster. The police and local council are

I'm sick of noisy Brits abroad

Misbehaving British tourists are getting another kicking. The

Dutch want to boot us out of Amsterdam, airlines complain about our mile-high drinks — and now the Mallorcans despair of our poor form on their beaches. And in bars, pools, shops, everywhere really. As a Brit now on holiday

in Corfu, I'm keeping my head down and laying on ze German accent thick.

Mind you, here in the Ionian islands at least, our yachtsies are every bit as embarrassing as our yobs. The piping voices! The peremptory behaviour with waiters!

The contempt for the ignorantly non-nautical! "Yah, and she actually asked whether it was a V6 or V8," I overheard yesterday, followed by wild derisory laughter.

National shame, eh? It comes at you from all quarters.

wedding bells don't toll

COVER AND BELOW: MAX MUMBY/GETTY IMAGES; BELOW: PRESS ASSOCIATION



sufficiently convinced that there will be enough interest in the billionaire's wedding that roads close to the cathedral will be cordoned off and barriers erected along the route. Overkill? Maybe. But they're said to be acting on experience.

When the duke's sister Lady Tamara married Edward van Cutsem at the same cathedral in 2004, it was dubbed "Chester's own royal wedding". Reports at the time estimated that 4,000 well-wishers had turned out in the drizzle to line the streets and peer down from the upper-floor windows of Costa and McDonald's. Guests included William and Harry — happier times — as well as Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. Similarly, the duke's father's memorial there was a huge event.

When the duke's other two sisters got married, they cleverly dodged the spectacle. Lady Edwina Grosvenor married the TV presenter and historian Dan Snow in a private ceremony at Bishop's Lodge in Woolton, Liverpool, in 2010. Similarly, Lady Viola Grosvenor married the Dragoon Guards officer Angus Roberts in a quiet ceremony and later held a lavish "no shoes, no news" private celebration at the boutique hotel resort on the private island of Manda Bay off the coast of Kenya, which is owned by Roberts's parents.

As the heir to the family fortune and chair of Grosvenor Group, skipping a public wedding celebration clearly didn't seem like an option for the duke and his bride, with one person close to proceedings suggesting that it will be "as official as unofficial can be".

On May 7 the couple marked the one-month-to-go milestone by visiting organisations supported by his

Westminster Foundation, which contributes about £7 million a year through more than 200 grants to local charities. The occasion had some of the hallmarks of a formal royal engagement, although the duke admitted with a charmingly unroyal puppyish enthusiasm that he was "unbelievably excited" about getting married, even though he found it all "nerve-racking".

So that the general public can also enjoy the occasion, the duke has put some money behind the bar, or at least the ice-cream bars. At three independent city centre businesses in Chester the bride and groom will subsidise free ice cream on their wedding day. After years of the image of snooty elitism, could this shift to a "Milky Bars are on me" aristocracy be the future for the British class system?

He is also paying for this year's summer flowers, the annual blooms that are planted around the city by the council. He is said to be keen to use his position to support the local

“The billionaire duke represents Great Britain at skeet shooting

community in the northwest and to be conscious of what "socially responsible wealth" looks like.

A source close to him said: "The duke has a great personal connection to the area — it is where he grew up. They have made a conscious effort to involve local and regional suppliers to

A young Duke of Westminster with Prince William at the wedding of his sister Lady Tamara in 2004. Left: with his fiancée, Olivia Henson, in their engagement photo

several aspects of their day." His bride, who attended Marlborough College, the alma mater of the Princess of Wales and Princess Eugenie, will suddenly find herself styled as the Duchess of Westminster, while Hugh's mother, Tally, who incidentally is godmother to Prince William, will now be known as the dowager duchess.

A modern couple, the pair met through friends after the duke attended Newcastle University. Henson, the daughter of the stockbroker Rupert Henson, is descended from the marquesses of Bristol and the dukes of Rutland, as well as the Hoare banking family, yet she works as an account manager at the ethical food company Belazu.

On announcing their engagement in April last year, the couple released a rare public photo of them standing in a garden in casual clothes. No moody black-and-white social media posts or ballgown magazine cover shoots here. Even the engagement ring has been described as "nothing too flashy".

The duke's non-flashy charm and loyalty are likely to ensure that his friendships with William and Harry will continue. It seems he is already planning a trip to California. The billionaire happens to represent Great Britain at the sport of skeet shooting (clay pigeon shooting to you and me) and hopes to compete at the Olympic Games in 2028, when they are held in Los Angeles, not far from the Montecito-based Harry and Meghan.

In the meantime the duke might have another diplomatic hurdle to overcome. If the billionaire and his new wife go on to have a baby, how are they going to choose which godfather to invite to the christening?

The lowdown Heidi Klum

Happy birthday, Heidi Klum.

Oh yes, many happy returns indeed. I can only assume that the supermodel is in fact ageing in reverse?

Not if the jolly pink party balloons that surrounded her on the day are to be believed. They definitely said 51.

Well, unless they were the wrong way round.

I think we can safely assume they weren't.

How do you know, anyway? Did you get an invitation?

Nah. Just saw it on Instagram.

Natch. Big bash?

Not really. It was a simple family affair, by the looks of things, a lunch with her third husband, Tom Kaulitz, and wider brood. Well, I say simple. The table was decorated with a vast amount of pink roses and I doubt anyone had to do the washing up afterwards.

Rightly so. This is just the sort of do she deserves.

Forget that. Fans were most excited by the fact that the picture she shared featured a rare sight: the faces of all four of her kids. She has two daughters (Lou, 14, and Leni, 20) and two sons (Henry, 18, and Johan, 17) but they don't get much airtime on her socials.

Gosh, well. That really is a treat for the bloodthirsty gossips. Sorry, I mean admirers.



Exactly! And there was another, er, eye-catching picture shared from the day.

Of some...scarcely photographed pets?

Of Klum in her birthday suit. She took the opportunity to share a snap of herself topless sunbathing around the pool with her — checks notes — 12 million Instagram followers.

Of course she did! No better way to celebrate another year around the sun. If you look like Klum, that is.

Well exactly. Who can blame the gal?

Not me.

Hannah Rogers

The truth about the rise in cancer among younger people

Dr Mark Porter

More young people than ever are being diagnosed with cancer, according to new data from Cancer Research UK (CRUK).

The number of new diagnoses in the 25-50 age group in the UK has risen by about a quarter in the past three decades, reflecting similar trends since in other richer countries. So what is going wrong?

Cancer is still relatively unusual in younger people. Nine out of ten cases occur in the over-50s, and about half in the over-75s. According to the US National Cancer Institute the median age for being diagnosed with common cancers such as breast and lung is, at 67 and 71 respectively, much older than many people might think. Indeed, one common issue I experience in practice is that older people tend to underestimate their risk, something that can affect uptake in national screening programmes. Suffice to say that for nearly all cancers, the older you are, the greater the risk.

However, an increase in rates in younger people is obviously worrying — for them, their families, the NHS and the wider economy — and it has researchers scratching their heads. The fact that the increase is more pronounced in wealthier countries suggests it may be something to do with diet and lifestyle. Exactly which part depends on the specific interests of the researcher you ask, with suggested triggers ranging from ultra-processed foods to changes in make-up of the “friendly bacteria” living in our bowels.

Smoking is a well-established risk factor in lots of cancers, including of the mouth, lung, bladder and pancreas, but far fewer people smoke in the UK than they used to (although many more vape). Alcohol and processed meat are important too but they always have been and changes in consumption don't explain the recent upward trend.

Weight is one risk factor that has been heading in the wrong direction in the past few decades, particularly among younger people. CRUK estimates that being overweight is now responsible for at least 1 in 20 cancers, and plays a significant role in a number of different types, including cancers of the bowel, breast, ovary and pancreas. The strength of the link varies but, in general, the heavier you are, the greater the risk, with an obese woman being at least twice as likely to develop womb cancer than a slim peer, and 30 per cent more likely to get bowel cancer.

The mechanism behind the link with weight is complex but excess fatty tissue can encourage metabolic and hormonal changes that promote cancerous change and growth, and impair the ability of the immune system to spot and destroy cancer cells before they become established.

Not all fat is equal in this regard. While peripheral fat stores, such as those under the skin and around the buttocks and hips, can affect hormone levels, the most dangerous type is “visceral” fat stored around your midriff (and organs). It is apple-shaped men and women, rather than pears, who are most likely to develop obesity-related cancers.

I see from my social media feed this morning that Covid vaccination is being blamed (again) by some. However, the new CRUK data only goes up to 2019, long before Covid and the introduction of vaccines. Not that the facts seem to bother some influencers on Instagram, Twitter/X and TikTok.

The type of cancers that affect younger people vary with age (see right) but include lower-profile

Being overweight is responsible for at least 1 in 20 cancers

types like thyroid and lymphoma. Thyroid cancer is increasingly picked up as an incidental finding during scans performed for other reasons, at least partly explaining the rise in new diagnoses.

On the upside, while cancers are becoming more common in younger people, we are also getting better at treating them. In the mid-1990s about 75 per cent of teenagers and young adults diagnosed with cancer were still alive ten years later. Today that figure is more than 80 per cent. A small but significant increase in survival reflecting better diagnosis and treatment, albeit still below the European average.

The bottom line? There is no one cause behind the increase in cancer rates. By all means cut back on ultra-processed foods and look after your friendly bacteria, but not at the expense of more mundane advice such as eating a healthy diet, staying slim, not smoking, drinking in moderation and exercising regularly.

Always report worrying symptoms, such as new lumps and bleeding, take up your invitation to screening programmes you are eligible for, and have the HPV vaccine if offered it.

And do keep the risks in perspective. We all die, normally at a ripe old age, and often from something we never anticipated and can't do a lot about.

RIP Rob Burrow.

The illnesses to look out for

The type of cancers most likely to affect younger people varies with age:

● In teenagers (aged 15 to 20) thyroid, brain and spinal cord tumours, and lymphoma are most common

● In people in their twenties it is thyroid cancer, lymphoma (Hodgkin) and melanoma

● In 30 to 40-year-olds it is thyroid and melanoma again, along with a rise in the types that are common in older people, particularly breast and bowel cancer

● For a summary of the new data from CRUK visit: [news.cancerresearchuk.org](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org)



What to do every

Scientists have pinpointed the ideal wellbeing regimen. From duration of exercise to length of sleep, here's what they recommend you do. By Peta Bee

Where would we be without activity trackers? Even those of us who are the most

technologically reluctant are usually aware of at least our daily step count and, for the data driven, the wrist-worn wearable has become a means of documenting everything from sleep to heart rate. Increasingly we rely on them for motivation, the stats providing us with a sense of guilt and accomplishment often in equal measure, prompting us to be more active when we don't feel like it. In scientific studies, fitness monitoring is providing more meaningful insights into how we move (or don't) as researchers drill down through data in a way that could change activity guidelines for maintaining and improving health.

Mark Hamer, a professor in sport and exercise medicine at University College London (UCL), says activity trackers have advanced understanding of movement patterns and health in unexpected ways. “Fifteen years ago the only means we had of assessing activity levels was with questionnaires that were problematic and unreliable,” he says. “With wearable trackers we can accurately capture the nuances of daily activity, not just structured sports and exercise, which comprise a relatively tiny part of the daily pie.”

It is this everyday activity that makes a difference to health. “These devices record and track any increases in vigorous activity, such as digging in the garden, which we had previously overlooked in research but which have such an important impact for the majority of people,” Hamer says. “We now know from wearable data that repeated short bouts of high-effort incidental activity can help to prevent chronic disease outcomes.”

Results of scientific tracking studies can also give us a clearer idea of what is needed to avoid ill health — not always as daunting as you might imagine. In a recent study, published in the journal *Diabetologia*, Dr Christian Brackenridge, a researcher at Swinburne University of Technology, led an international team looking at the movement and activity patterns of 2,000 adults to determine the perfect daily balance of sitting, standing and physical activity for optimum health.

Brackenridge asked participants to wear the scientific-grade thigh-worn trackers that are often used in studies because they produce more accurate results and, he says, “are less likely to be biased by idle wrist movements”. They are not commercially available and for everyday use a Fitbit or Apple Watch is fine.

Brackenridge then monitored all movement over 24 hours and assessed

results against cardiometabolic health markers such as waist circumference, BMI, blood glucose and cholesterol levels. Collectively, these markers are considered risk factors for both cardiovascular diseases, such as strokes and heart attacks, and metabolic diseases, including obesity and type 2 diabetes. Based on the top five to ten people with the lowest cardiometabolic risk factors, he and his team were able to come up with what he says is an “ideal balance of behaviours and physical activity” to ward off these risks and stay healthy.

Encouragingly, his results showed that getting more sleep — up to eight hours and 20 minutes was considered healthy — and not necessarily breaking a sweat got results. In particular, the benefits of interrupting sitting time with light activity — that's pottering around the house, walking from room to room — were pronounced. “It's the action of breaking up prolonged sitting down with regular light activity that is beneficial,” Brackenridge says. “We found that doing this around meal times seems to have a very positive outcome on metabolic health for people with type 2 diabetes.”

Other experts are now specialising in activity-data tracking. Emmanuel Stamatakis, professor of physical activity, lifestyle and population health at the University of Sydney, has published more than 400 peer-reviewed papers, many of them using wearable device data that he says takes information about movement and wellbeing to a new level. His latest papers, including a review of six studies involving 15,253 people conducted with an international team including Hamer and published in the *European Heart Journal*, have shown that everything from five daily minutes of stair climbing to at least 2.6 hours a day standing up can dramatically improve health.

All this is welcome news for more reluctant exercisers who find the prospect of 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise almost insurmountable. “A lot of people hate gyms and hate structured exercise so just don't do it,” Stamatakis says. “We need to give people more activity options that are both achievable and beneficial for those who fall well short of targets.”

The key thing is to make these small changes daily habits. “It's no good adopting these things once or twice a week,” Stamatakis says. “If they are going to work, you need to add some of them every day.” Still, specific amounts of these incidental exercises are not intended to be a prescription but a guide.

“Not all these habits will be achievable for everyone within every 24 hours,” Brackenridge says. “But they are things we can work towards

day to improve your health

GETTY IMAGES



**Get 8 hours
20 minutes
of sleep**



**Run for a
few minutes**

adding to our lifestyles and which will boost our health in a holistic way." The more of these scientifically sound activity changes you can implement every day, the better for your waistline, health and longevity.

1 Try to get between 7 hours and 8 hours 20 minutes of sleep a night

About seven hours of sleep is often recommended for peak health, but in Brackenridge's study participants with the healthiest cardiometabolic profile allowed themselves eight hours and 20 minutes a night.

Consistently getting too much or too little sleep is associated with a higher risk of ill health. Results of a study at UCL, published in PLOS Medicine, that analysed the impact of sleep duration on the health of more than 7,000 men and women aged 50 to 70 found that getting five hours of sleep or less at age 50 meant people were 40 per cent more likely to be diagnosed with two or more chronic diseases over 25 years, compared with those who slept up to seven hours a night. Healthy people who slept for longer than nine hours at 50 seemed to experience no adverse health outcomes, but in people who had any chronic underlying health issue, longer than nine hours was associated with about a 35 per cent increased risk of developing another illness.

2 Sit for less than six hours a day

The less time we spend sitting and lying down (when not sleeping) the better, but Brackenridge found that "sitting longer than six hours was associated with less optimal cardiovascular and metabolic health outcomes". Stamatakis says that risks of high blood pressure, cholesterol and

other cardiometabolic risk factors become considerable if you sit for ten hours daily but reach concerningly high levels if you sit for 12.1 hours in every 24-hour cycle.

"If you do sit for a lot of the time, the benefits of breaking it up with movement are huge," Stamatakis says. "Accumulate 90 minutes a day of walking or three to eight minutes a day of stair-climbing and you can eliminate many of the adverse outcomes of long sitting."

3 Aim for 4.4 minutes of Vilpa

Vigorous intermittent lifestyle physical activity (Vilpa) is considered the non-exerciser's version of high-intensity interval training (HIIT), involving bursts of huffing and puffing that last 10-60 seconds.

"We are not talking a structured form of exercise, such as interval training, but daily activity that imitates some of the physiological effects of that kind of workout," Stamatakis says. "It shouldn't feel like a chore and should be something you find easy to slot into your day." He gives examples such as playing high-energy games with the kids, running for the bus or climbing up and down stairs or hitting maximum walking pace two or three times for 20-30 seconds on a ten-minute stroll to the shops.

In a Nature study involving 25,241 UK non-exercisers, Stamatakis showed that just three to four daily bouts of high-effort activity during daily tasks led to big reductions in the risk of premature death. "This kind of



**Stand for at
least 2.6 hours**

activity has an even more dramatic effect on health than we realised," he says. "We showed 60-second bouts of Vilpa for a total of 4.4 minutes a day to be associated with a 26-30 per cent reduction in cancer and all-cause early mortality as well as a 32-34 per cent lower risk of death from heart disease."

4 Accumulate a total of 64 minutes of walking

We all know that walking is good for us, but how many steps do we really need to do to stay healthy? In another of his tracking studies published in March, Stamatakis highlighted a daily total of 64 minutes of walking steps as a level that enhanced the overall health of his participants.

"We do not mean you have to go out for an hour-long hike each day," he says. "All of the walking activity accumulated by participants was incidental, the kind you clock up in everyday activity." In steps, this equates to 6,000-8,000 a day, but he says that anything above a baseline 2,200 steps a day is associated with a lower risk of death. The lowest early mortality risk comes with people who clocked up 9,000-10,500 steps a day.

5 Stand for at least 2.6 hours

Sit less, stand more is a maxim we should all apply to life. Brackenridge found the optimum amount of time on your feet to be five hours and ten minutes, but anything more than 2.6 hours of standing a day is associated with better health outcomes. "The important thing is to replace excess sitting with any other activity, including standing," Stamatakis says. "The more you can do that every day, the more you will benefit."

6 Run (even if it's just for a couple of minutes)

Running — even for a bus or chasing kids around the park — can have a potent effect on wellbeing if you do it daily. In his recent ProPass paper, Stamatakis reported that "any amount of regular running is associated with better cardiometabolic health".

You don't need to "go for a run" or schedule a weekly 5km to make a difference. "Your best bet is to run for one or two minutes and build up the number of times you do that in a day," he says.

7 Spend five minutes climbing the stairs

Marching up and down stairs has been associated with improved blood sugar and cholesterol levels as well as helping to lower blood pressure. "For someone who doesn't consider themselves an exerciser, stair walking is tremendously effective," Stamatakis says. "Going up and down a few flights with effort during the day for a total of five minutes is a good target."

Three ways to alleviate muscle knots

1 Stretch at the end of the day Most of us have experienced sore, tender muscle knots after a hard gym session or from general poor posture. Also called myofascial trigger points, they are something of a medical enigma.

"Researchers have shown that they don't show up on scans, so it remains a bit of a mystery what is happening to the muscle," says the chartered physiotherapist Sammy Margo. "Common consensus is that knots are hyper-sensitive spots of muscle and surrounding tissue, called fascia, that has thickened, leading to reduced blood flow and increased inflammation in the area."

While they don't cause long-term damage, the knots can limit range of motion. Ten minutes' stretching at the end of the day won't get rid of them, but a study in the Journal of Physiotherapy found that it is useful in reducing pain and, Margo says, will help to keep future knots at bay.

2 Try deep-tissue massage

Knots will usually disappear of their own accord within a couple of weeks, but a deep-tissue massage may help to alleviate them sooner. "The combination of firm, sustained pressure and slow strokes in and around the affected area might help to decrease the fascial muscle tightness in the area, increasing blood flow," Margo says.

A study at the Open University last year showed that massage guns, which use percussive therapy to deliver strong vibrations into muscle tissue, eased muscle stiffness, "eliciting a reduction in experiences of musculoskeletal pain". A foam roller or massage ball can also be used, Margo says. "Apply as much pressure as you can comfortably tolerate to release myofascial trigger points."



3 Try dry needling and shockwave therapy

If the knots persist for longer than two weeks then consulting a physiotherapist for treatment might be worthwhile.

"Studies have shown that shockwave therapy helps to break down persistent trigger points or knots, particularly in the neck and shoulders," says the sports physiotherapist Paul Hobrough. "It also encourages a chemical change to nerve and muscle interaction, which helps with pain relief."

Another option is dry needling, which studies show to be an effective way of treating chronic muscle knots. It involves fine needles being inserted into them and then removed after a few minutes, and is believed to work by causing a micro injury, prompting better blood flow and a healing response that eases tension.

Peta Bee

times2

Trauma on the dancefloor? Strictly has a new curse

Amanda Abbington says her BBC dance partner left her with PTSD. He denies bullying. Who is right, asks Andrew Billen

Perhaps commitment to the cliché is a contractual requirement. Perhaps it is actually how they feel. Whichever it is, there has scarcely been a celebrity contestant in *Strictly Come Dancing's* two-decade run who, during a poop-deck interview with Claudia Winkleman or in the moment of exit or reprieve or ultimate triumph, has failed to speak of their *Strictly* journey. And it's always in the warmest terms: learnt so much, made such friends, acquired in their professional mentor a soul mate who will for ever be part of their lives.

What, however, when that journey ends in an almighty crash, and when that crash leaves not only the apprentice dancer psychologically bruised but the professional partner's reputation shading towards black and blue? We are finding out in the off-air sequel to *Strictly's* 2023 series. The emotional collision between the *Sherlock* actress Amanda Abbington and her dance instructor partner, Giovanni Pernice, apparently led her to quit the show after five weeks. Now the matter is before the lawyers.

You do not need to have interviewed Winkleman or as many former *Strictly* contestants as I have to know this is not the typical progression of a *Strictly* journey. It is not a cruel show, not *The X Factor*. Claudia Rosencrantz, the executive who brought *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* to ITV, has called it the most "beautiful" Saturday night show, adding that its best possible home is BBC1, its remit being to bring the nation together, not chase revenue from phone votes. *Strictly* is sequins and fake tan, but also good humour and wholesomeness. Or so it was.

In January, a month after series 21 finished, Abbington announced that she was suffering from post-traumatic stress from her training sessions with the sexily lupine Pernice. Two unnamed women then joined her in hiring lawyers to pursue a legal claim against him. As rumours about his departure from the show — denied neither by him nor the BBC — sizzled, Pernice issued a statement rejecting any suggestion of abusive or threatening behaviour. Then, over the weekend, in a brief phone interview with a journalist from the Mail, Abbington called him "nasty" and



Giovanni Pernice and Amanda Abbington. Top right: during training for the 2023 series

disputed that he had asked for their rehearsal sessions to be recorded for his protection. No, she said, she had asked for the cameras.

Now, every fairytale — and *Strictly* even looks like one — requires a villain, but having interviewed Abbington three times and found her warm, open and, yes, vulnerable, I am reluctant to reimagine her as a wicked witch. Deeply hurt by her split from her long-term partner, the actor Martin Freeman, she became engaged in 2021 to Jonathan Goodwin, a stunt artist. Two months after they got together he suffered a severe spinal injury. She stayed with him.

Equally, I don't want to believe that Pernice is a Sicilian version of Gaston from *Beauty and the Beast*. He joined the show in 2015 and reached the final three times in his first four years. Then, in 2021, he lifted the glitterball trophy. The nation by now had fallen for him as surely as he had fallen for his dance partner, the *EastEnders* actress Rose Ayling-Ellis. The enthralled stare with which he received her every pronouncement signalled, we at home giggled, unrequited passion, although the prosaically minded pointed out that close facial proximity was required for Ayling-Ellis, who is deaf, to lip-read.

The nation rejoiced in their victory, and Ayling-Ellis was soon starring in a West End production of *As You Like It*.

“Strictly is good humour and wholesomeness. Or so it was

Pernice's *Strictly* journey in the seasons that followed, however, pursued a distinctly downward trajectory. His next partner was eliminated in week three. The one after that was Abbington.

The whole mess is counterintuitive. The *Strictly* set in Elstree, Hertfordshire, is a happily industrious space. The studio is as awesome as a medieval cathedral but the stars are modest within it. The supposedly wicked judge Craig Revel Horwood signs autographs for visiting children. True, a director called *Strictly's* original presenter Bruce Forsyth "challenging" to work with, and I can believe it: I once heard him telling a *Generation Game* stage manager that some minion had been so negligent "he should, in fact, be out". But Bruce's successors, Winkleman and Tess Daly, are not hard work, or starchy. The former insisted to me two years ago that the show is not about its hosts. On meeting the novices before a new season she made them tea. "We



work out that somebody likes bourbons, so I'm, like, 'OK, I'll order you more bourbons.'"

As for the professional dancers, I was once trained by one, Paul Killick (for a feature, obviously). I was terrible and hate dancing; Killick was generosity itself. Nine years later, in 2013, I watched the breakfast TV presenter Susanna Reid rehearse with her partner Kevin Clifton and sensed nothing but professional regard. I asked her whether dancers were nicer people than non-dancers. "I don't know that they're nicer people," she replied. "They're intriguing people. They're quite driven, incredibly hard-working, full of energy, often very funny, great fun to be with, very tactile."

The falling out between Pernice and Abbington is, of course, the reverse of the show's usual peril, that pro and am warm to each other too much. The marriage-destroying *Strictly* curse is even more of a cliché than the *Strictly* journey, and recurring proof of the more erudite cliché that dancing is the vertical expression of a horizontal desire. There are so many instances to cite, but they include *Countdown's* Rachel Riley splitting from her husband after the 2013 series (she subsequently married her dance partner, Pasha Kovalev) and the comedian Seann Walsh's papped 2018 kiss with the pro Katya Jones, an unforced error that resulted in his separation from his girlfriend. Between those headlines came the great *Strictly* scandal of 2015, when the *Coronation Street* actress Georgia May Foote left her boyfriend for ... Giovanni Pernice.

All that can be finally said for the curse's sudden switch of polarity from love to hate — this *Strictly* journey that may even end in court — is that it at least exhibits novelty. Martin Amis, who surely didn't watch a single episode, might even have claimed that, in what he dubbed civilisation's war against cliché, *Strictly Come Dancing* has notched up a minor victory.



Denim outfit, £20.49

Why I would never buy a £6.49 top from Shein

Fashion this fast makes me ill. Do our politicians agree? By Harriet Walker

£35 billion and profits of £1.5 billion.

That members of the shadow cabinet have met Donald Tang, Shein's executive chairman, before the election and the brand's potential float on the London Stock Exchange is unsurprising — so has Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, and French ministers. The retailer could be valued at about £55 billion, which would make it Britain's biggest stock market float if it came to pass. Yet the US told Shein it could not list in New York without submitting a public filing, after claims it used cotton from forced labour in the Xinjiang region of China. It's obvious why post-Brexit politicians want it here, but do the rest of us?

"Shein is ultra-fast fashion," Izzy Manuel, a sustainability expert and podcaster, says. "Its workers are being paid 3p per garment and doing up to 18 hours a day. It launches more clothes in a year than H&M, Zara and Boohoo combined. The fact we are considering allowing it to list here is so, so bad."

In 2022 Shein pledged millions to upgrade its supply chain after a Channel 4 undercover documentary found workers on low pay for long hours. Yet a report by the Swiss human rights group Public Eye last month found not much had changed in 12 months: 75-hour working weeks were still the norm.

"Our regular supplier audits are showing consistent improvement in performance and compliance," the company says. "Our third-party auditors found 4,000 workers at Shein supplier facilities in China earn basic wages that are on average two times higher than local minimum wage."

"There's a level of transparency with H&M, Next and Primark," Peter McAllister, executive director at the Ethical Trading Initiative, says. "They will admit to problems and work with us to resolve them. But Shein is not working with anyone credible. So unless they have found a magic formula, there are huge question marks over how they can deliver to the public at the price points they are doing so."

The company's justification is its unique set-up as a marketplace rather than a shop. It works with lots of small factories that supply direct to the consumers, and produce only what Shein's algorithms know it will sell after testing the water with an initial run of 200 or so.

All this, Shein claims, reduces its waste to about 1 or 2 per cent, compared with about 20 per cent at

most other brands. It is this approach that has led pundits to class Shein not as a fashion brand but as a technology business — and to predict that its model is the one that will inform the way all of us shop in the future.

"If fashion changes every time we get our phone out, then what does that mean?" Patrick Grant, the *Great British Sewing Bee* judge and designer behind the brand Community Clothing, said at the Hay Festival at the weekend. He added: "They are [all] desperate to get you to buy something." His book *Less: Stop Buying So Much Rubbish* is a manifesto built on spending more for higher quality and repairing it when it eventually shows signs of wear.

There is a place for low-cost, good-value clothing during a cost of living crisis, yet the issue is that Shein's sheer volumes seems to encourage some shoppers to go mad. There are more than 920,000 TikTok videos tagged #sheinhaul, featuring vast consignments bought for hundreds of pounds in boxes filled with ... well, tat.

Which brings us to the quality: Shein clothes are not exactly known for it, and it is the toxic clash of high volume and low (unrecyclable) quality that has created mountains of discarded clothing in the Atacama desert in Chile that can be seen from space. It is estimated that clothes need to be worn at least 30 times to offset the carbon produced in making them. I know someone whose £37 high-heeled Shein boots were so badly designed she couldn't get her feet into them when they arrived.

"I use it for fancy dress mainly," Katie, 31, says of the site. "Hen dos and festivals. It's definitely worse quality than Zara." "I was surprised by it," Alex, also 31, adds. "It's definitely not high street quality but it's better than I expected. It's useful for hen dos and festivals."

Anyone with teenagers will already know the draw of Shein and its preternaturally low prices. The generation that gave us Greta Thunberg is just as addicted to cheap thrills as we once were.

Is it any surprise given that Shein's interface is practically like using a fixed-odds betting terminal? There are bonuses for joining up and for maintaining a "streak" by visiting the site every day. There are rewards too for those who post reviews to show how the clothes fit in real life; if other users click "like" you get further points, which is why many reviews end "please like, I need help".



Two-piece, £14.99

Top, £6.49



Chris Xu, founder and chief executive of Shein

It isn't the only time the phrase has come up. "I bought stuff there when I was broke and couldn't afford many clothes for my girls' holiday," Laura, 22, says. "But there was a rumour on TikTok of the people making them putting 'help me' notes in the labels and that really put me off."

The viral images have since been found to be "fake news", although similar messages were found in 2017 inside clothes sold by Zara that had been made in a Turkish factory. Yet they are symptomatic of an unease around Shein that is less pronounced with other fast-fashion brands, all of which are run in the West. In 2021 Tom Tugendhat, the Conservative MP, described Shein as "a sinister cross between surveillance and capitalism". There is speculation that its bid to list on the New York Stock Exchange was rejected for the same reason TikTok is under threat of being banned.

Then there is the fact that Chris Xu, its founder, doesn't give interviews. "It's cultural," Leonard Lin, Shein's global head of public affairs and Singapore general manager, told Drapers, the fashion industry trade publication. "In Asia businesses choose to keep a low profile."

Given the coming stock exchange float, he may yet find the searchlight turning in his direction — especially with the potential change of government in London, who might seek to use the listing to enforce better practice. "The Conservatives have been laissez faire about business," McAllister says. "We hope to have a more sensible hearing from a Labour government — contact we've had suggests their door would be open. That's positive because it hasn't been."

It might prompt an examination of all our shopping habits. "Even M&S is fast fashion these days," says Manuel, who co-presents the podcast *Spill the Sustainability Tea*. "All fashion brands have their issues. Not even luxury fashion is ethically made. There is just no need to be producing a billion garments a year."

“Its workers are being paid 3p per garment and do up to 18 hours a day

In fashion and environment circles its name is close to a dirty word. To teens and the TikTok crowd, however, Shein is a trove of inexpensive ways to update your look without busting the budget — and it seems an incoming Labour government might see the Chinese-founded fast-fashion giant in this light too, should it choose to list on the London Stock Exchange this year.

Shein has 65 million app users — and 74 million total users worldwide — browsing its 6,000 new styles uploaded every day (for comparison, Zara launches about 10,000 a year). Visiting the homepage is like playing a fruit machine: 25 per cent off any orders over £5.99; £3 off when you register. I have never bought anything on Shein and never would. I love a bargain, but browsing so many thousands of clothes at prices like these just makes me feel ill.

Free returns, practically free clothes given many items start at only £1.20. That's for a vest top — jeans are more like £6.45. The Singapore-based company — which calls itself a platform rather than a retailer, because it hosts suppliers rather than holds stock — is growing rapidly around the world thanks to social media, recording sales last year of

times2

I went from being a girly girl to caked in mud on a pitch

I'll be watching the Lionesses tonight, says **Hannah Skelley**. They spurred me (and plenty others) on to join a team

If you had told my 13-year-old ballet-obsessed self that I would join a women's football team at 28, I'd have suspected you had headed one too many balls on the football field yourself.

But here I am, sweating and laced into my Astroturf boots on the Market Road pitches in Islington, north London, playing left back (or goalie) in an 11-a-side game with one aim — to stop the other team equalising before half-time.

After a last-minute substitution, two tense corners and a goal ruled offside for our opponents, at the final whistle it's 4-2 to us. Cue knee slides and a jumping group hug as we scream in celebration: "Up the girls!"

Alas, the Lionesses' manager Sarina Wiegman hasn't called me for this evening's Euro 2025 qualifier against France. My foray into footie began four months ago when I was roped into a "friendly" charity match by my flatmate. With all the gear (and little to no idea), my girlfriends and I won 3-0 against a band of doctors, nurses and civil servants. Surprisingly, I absolutely loved it.

It gave us the confidence to form a proper side, but we're not the only ones starting grassroots divisions. According to England Football, in the past seven years the number of female teams nationwide has more than doubled: 1,500 of them were registered in the immediate aftermath of England's victory at Euro 2022.

Now ranked second in the world, the Lionesses definitely influenced my decision to try the sport. Like many of the 14.4 million people who tuned in

to the final at Wembley, I spent most of the match in the pub in awe.

Name a more iconic moment than the forward Chloe Kelly ripping off her shirt and whirling it around her head after scoring the winning goal against Germany — I'll wait. The yellow card she received for revealing her sports bra was worth it, because that match changed the face of football for a generation of girls.

According to the FA, 75 per cent of schools now offer pupils equal access to football in PE lessons and there are 73 Emerging Talent Centres feeding girls into Professional Game Academies across the country.

Finally the game has become lucrative: as predicted by the Deloitte Football Money League, women's elite sports will generate unparalleled global revenues in excess of £1.1 billion this year, football being the most valuable. That's thanks to better match attendance, commercialisation and a deserved boost in broadcast deals.

Growing up in Hull in the Noughties, I'd sooner have executed a triple pirouette than score a hat trick, because football wasn't available to us girls. In PE lessons we were funnelled into netball instead — goalkeeper was my designated spot.

Some of my football team-mates now (TV and podcast producers, marketing managers, physiotherapists, finance analysts and solicitors) played as kids, but not for long. One admitted her family asked her to stop training, fearing she would become "too muscular and unfeminine". Another said her team struggled to get pitch time over the boys so soon gave up.



Hannah Skelley, right, and, above, with her team-mates



“**Facemasks the night before a match and make-up are all part of our prep**

That's all part of the appeal now: we can sign up — muscles or not — and play when we previously couldn't.

My team-mates and I are from different backgrounds but share the universal dilemmas of being in our late twenties: how we'll get on the first rung of the property ladder; whether we should freeze our eggs; how to let go of toxic friendships; and — my least favourite — how to parent parents that have become elderly too soon.

We tackle these problems post-practice over pints and crisps, with chats about reality TV, recipes we're cooking and who we're dating. I'm lucky to have scored this girl gang.

Speaking of dates, when I tell men I play football, most say I look like too much of a "princess" to get stuck in. But as we've seen from the England squad, pristine ponytails, fake tan and false lashes aren't amiss on the pitch.

And my team are equally glamorous; if anything, we amp it up. Facemasks the night before a match, Dyson Airwrapping our hair and sealing our make-up with setting spray are all

part of our prep — part of our kit.

As preened as we may be, on matchdays you might be surprised to hear we're also cocky, loud and competitive. We shout at each other, wind up the other team and can throw a Mary Earps-inspired retaliation when we think the ref is wrong. We have ridiculous nicknames; being fair-haired and 5ft 10in I have been christened Crouchy, although I promise I don't do the robot when we score.

As excitement among my squad ramps up for the men's Euros, like the rest of the nation we're already planning where we'll be watching the matches (the women's Euros kick off a year later, in July 2025). The difference this summer? We're no longer just spectators — we get to have a kickabout ourselves.

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Ten years ago, Meghan Trainor released *All About That Bass*, a booty-shaking ode to the joys of being pear-shaped. Inflected with doo-wop, hip-hop and Trinidadian soca, it went to No 1 around the world, inspired a string of parodies — from a Thanksgiving version (*All About That Baste*) to a *Star Wars* one (*All About That Base: No Rebels*) — and helped to propel Trainor to a Grammy for best new artist in 2016.

It also made plus-size women and girls feel better about themselves. “I saw the superpower that that three-minute song had on strangers all over the world,” the Massachusetts-born singer says from New York, where she is promoting her new album, *Timeless*. “Girls’ mums and dads would come to me in the street and be like, ‘Hey, my daughter wouldn’t leave the house until she heard that song.’”

While Trainor, 30, would love to report that things have improved in the decade since, the state of online discourse suggests the opposite.

“Is everyone getting meaner or are they just getting louder?” she says. “Sometimes, they’ll say something bad about my kid and I’m like, ‘Oh my God.’ And my husband’s like, ‘Can’t engage cos then they’ll win.’” When it gets too much, “I go on YouTube and type in baby animals. I know my safe places.”

She believes we will look back at this era one day and think, “I cannot believe we did that.”

“It’ll be our smoking cigarettes in hospitals. I hope in the future there’s an app that’s not so aggressive — that they figure out a way to have no comments and just share posts and share love.”

In the meantime, social media is at the centre of her business and it’s slightly heartbreaking to see how much store this bright and sensitive woman sets by it. Trainor says that a lot of the comments she reads about herself are along the lines of “Oh, I thought you retired. Are you still doing music?” She sometimes points out that she never went away, but that *Treat Myself*, the album she released during the pandemic in 2020, “didn’t reach many people”. It went to No 25 in the US, which, by her standards, was disappointing: her first two albums went to No 1 and No 3. “I was bummed,” she says.

But sometimes social media can come to the rescue. Owing to the vagaries of TikTok, a forgotten album track from 2015 called *Title*, also doo-wop-heavy, surged in popularity in 2021. “I woke up feeling like, ‘This is my birthday.’ It always broke my heart that *Title* got thrown away,” Trainor says. “I was like, ‘OK, people miss my doo-wop stuff.’” So she did another, *Made You Look*, which became her biggest hit in years, and there are more on the new album, including *Been Like This*, which blends doo-wop with the Charleston and verses from the rapper T-Pain.

Her candour about returning to a successful formula is disarming. Although there are a few references to “my truth”, most of what Trainor says is refreshingly unvarnished. She had media training once, when she was 19, “and she told me that everything I was saying was wrong”. Trainor told them a story about recording in Nashville. “One day, I couldn’t make it to the bathroom and peed in the grass and I



‘Is everyone getting meaner or just louder?’

Ten years after Meghan Trainor became a global star with *All About That Bass* she tells **Ed Potton** about the backlash

was watching cows and thought, ‘This is the coolest thing ever.’ And [the media trainer] was like, ‘Never say anything about this.’

“My team knows I’m an open book and sometimes it can bite you in the booty. But sometimes it’s great and it makes you relatable.”

She has spoken in public about everything from taking Miralax, a laxative, to having panic attacks. Talking to fans about the latter was hugely helpful, she says. “Feeling like I was crazy and being really scared, and going on medication, and having fans be like ‘me too’ was the best feeling.” The only question she doesn’t

answer is how she will vote in November. “Can’t I say it?” she says, looking at her team. Apparently not, but I’d be astounded if she were a Trump woman.

Trainor grew up on Nantucket, an island 30 miles south of Cape Cod, the daughter of two jewellers; her mother was 24 when she was born and her father 44. She thinks her habit of combining modern pop with vintage styles stems from her parents’ diverging music tastes. “My mum would play Madonna and Backstreet Boys, and my dad would play Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder,” she says. There was also a Caribbean influence



Trainor with her husband, Daryl Sabara, and Chloë Grace Moretz. Below: at the Grammys in 2016

from her Trinidadian uncle. Did she learn body positivity from her folks? “Nah, I wish,” she says. “I’m very hard on myself and that’s where I get it. My dad is brutally honest, which sometimes wasn’t helpful.”

Since 2018 Trainor has been married to Daryl Sabara, an actor known for playing Juni in the *Spy Kids* films. “He’s right here on the couch,” she says, pointing off camera. She calls him “Spy Kid”. They got together after a showbiz double date in Los Angeles with her friend the actress Chloë Grace Moretz, and Moretz’s boyfriend at the time, Brooklyn Beckham.

“I didn’t know who Brooklyn was. I asked Chloë, ‘Do you know any nice guys?’ And she’s like, ‘My best friend [Sabara] is the nicest guy ever.’ The

“**My three-minute song had a superpower all over the world**

four of them went bowling and to a karaoke bar. “Me and Chloë were singing Britney Spears and Daryl was singing *Your Song* by Elton John to me. None of my friends sing in front of me — they get really shy and nervous. So for him to be like, ‘Girl, I’m about to perform for you’ — I was in love. We made out all night long.”

She and Sabara have two children, Riley, three, and Barry, almost one, which, along with Covid, is the reason her forthcoming American tour is her first in seven years. She did a private show in Tulsa, Oklahoma, recently and took the kids. “We had a blow-up bed for my toddler, with a tent and a blow-up bathtub for the little baby, and it was chaos,” she says. Most of the shows she has played lately have been corporate gigs. “Older gentlemen in suits, and they’ll have their phone up and be like, ‘My daughter is on FaceTime.’ So I can’t wait to see fans that I recognise again.”

Even if the world hasn’t improved in the ten years since *All About That Bass* came out, Trainor thinks she has.

“I look back at myself and I’m like, ‘Oh, she was so afraid, so insecure.’ Now I look at myself and I’m like, ‘I’ve never been prettier. I’m literally ageing backwards.’”

You wish she could stop worrying about that stuff, but it’s the world she lives in. Let’s just hope the commenters get kinder.

Timeless is out on June 7 on Epic



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Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

	2	7		5					1 6	8	
7		9 3		2				8 6 4	5 7		3 9
	2	8		5				7 8	3		
5	8 7	7	5		4			3 6	7 1 5	8	
	5 6			8			5		5 4 8		9
	8	1			5	7		4		6	
7		6						8 2	6		

[illegible]

Suko

13 18 14

Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Mini Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

4		3		2	
3	5	1	2	6	
6	4	2	1	3	
2		6		5	

**Solutions in
tomorrow's Times2**

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.

2	25	10	16		18	3	15	18	22	13	20	14	
3		9		26		7		25		26		5	
10	9	25	26	11	4	18		13	3	10	26	7	
11		3		3		5		13		4		2	
3	7	2	26	6		11	5	19	20	25	1		
16				3		26				26	E	1	
26	21	21	20	13	1		10	14	26	13	12	26	
2		11				8		18				26	
	14	5	13	23	1	18	H		26	5	1	26	7
10		12		5		20		26		14		5	
4	11	20	W	7		22	25	24	24	3	7	15	
5		25		15		3		19		10		26	
23	5	13	17	20	13	5	23		10	1	3	13	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 W	15	16	17	18 H	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26 E

Sudoku fiendish

	7	8	3
1	6 8 2	9	
1	2	5	4
5		6	
4 8	9	1	
9	1 6 5	7	
1 6	3		

Killer tricky

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

23		21			8		13	11
	18							
15		6		15	30			
	22					23		12
				10				
26	17		22	12			4	7
				10		10		
		10	24	14			22	

Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger ($>$) or smaller ($<$) than the number next to it.

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Yesterday's solutions

SAMURAI

1	6	9	2	3	5	7	4	8
8	7	2	4	7	6	1	5	3
3	5	4	7	9	8	6	2	1
6	2	3	5	7	9	1	8	4
9	8	7	1	2	4	3	5	6
5	4	1	6	8	3	2	9	7
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8	4	5	9	3	2	7	6	1
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SUDOKU

8	5	7	1	2	3	4	9
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	9	6	4	5	3	8	1	7	2
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	3	7	9	4	6	5	8	2	1

KILLER

4	6	7	2	1	3	5	8	9
3	2	9	8	5	4	1	7	6
1	5	8	6	7	9	2	4	3
5	9	2	3	6	8	7	1	4
6	8	4	7	2	1	3	9	5
7	3	1	4	9	5	6	2	8
2	7	3	9	8	6	4	5	1
9	4	5	1	3	2	8	6	7
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SUKO

TRAIN TRACKS

FUTOSHIKI

CODEWORD

V	I	S	C	O	U	S		G	L	E	A
I	L	F	F		U	A	Z	A	V		
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An unsentimental and witty gay adoption story

Carol Midgley TV review



Lost Boys and Fairies

BBC1
★★★★☆

Football Cops

Channel 4
★★★★☆

There was a striking scene midway through *Lost Boys and Fairies* that belied its schmaltzy title. A gay couple seeking to adopt a child attended a sort of kid "speed dating event" and met a little girl who appeared to be blind. Gabriel (Sion Daniel Young) was a natural with her — funny, kind, on her wavelength. His boyfriend, Andy (Fra Fee), afterwards remarked how amazing he had been. It was because there was no pressure, he replied. "I knew there was no way

we would ever take her on." This bare honesty is the special ingredient of Daf James's drama, which is loosely inspired by his experience of adopting and isn't anywhere near as sentimental as I feared it would be. It's the kind of honesty that shows prospective parents sharp-elbowed to curry favour with the "prettiest" children. And that has Gabriel vetoing a child with HIV or Aids. "Are you kidding me?" his boyfriend asked. "It will complicate things," Gabriel replied.

I had thought we might be in for a supposedly heartwarming three hours in which the gay couple fall in love with the child anyway and take her home to all live happily ever after. But this isn't that kind of drama, and it's much better for it. The performances are strong, although I dare say there may be a couple of emails about a sex scene between the two men on primetime BBC1.

The premise is the adoption process through which Gabriel, a drag queen in a Cardiff club, and Andy, an accountant, must go. Gabriel initially hides his traumatic childhood experiences and former addiction problems to be the "perfect" candidate, which his social worker Jackie (an excellent Elizabeth Berrington) sees straight through.

What I liked about the story is that it surprises you. There are laughs where you don't really expect them



Sion Daniel Young and Fra Fee in *Lost Boys and Fairies*

and sadness when you didn't see it coming. Prepare for a twist. I liked that Gabriel's dad, a religious traditionalist who hit his young son when he caught him wearing dresses, isn't quite the one-dimensional monster he could be. Not all dramas could get away with the scene in which Gabriel worries if a little boy has overheard him saying he has a "semi on". But it is done in a witty rather than a cringing way. This drama is tender, uplifting and candid without being slushy.

One thing that was clear from *Football Cops* is that police at matches are certainly fond of their acronyms and initialisms. There were DFOs (dedicated football officers), OFOs (operational football officers), ASBs (people showing antisocial behaviour), EGCs (evidence-gathering cameras). *Line of Duty* take note.

It was also a reminder of how difficult the job is and how little a minority of fans seem to fear the police. One told an officer: "I will put you down." Another said his taxes paid police wages. "I paid for your f***ing hat, you silly c***." He wasn't arrested. You had to see the funny side at times. I'm sure the DFOs we saw at Coventry City, Ipswich Town and Manchester City must have to, often. Such as when a Coventry fan ran onto the pitch releasing a blue flare. He said it was a "gender reveal" flare for his unborn baby. They do say God loves a trier.

Radio choice

Ben Dowell



Mary Anne Hobbs

6 Music, 10.30am

Today's programme features a session from the British musician Natasha Khan, *above*, better known for the past 17 years as Bat for Lashes. The multitalented, multidisciplinary artist has recently returned to the UK with her three-year-old daughter after spending six years in California. Over her career she has recorded six albums, including her latest, *The Dream of Delphi*, as well as soundtracks for film, podcasts and television. She has also had three Mercury prize nominations, three Brit nominations and two Ivor Novello wins, for *Song of the Year* in 2010 and Best Soundtrack in 2019.

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Times Radio

Digital, web, smart speaker, app
5.00am Rosie Wright with *Early Breakfast*
6.00am Aasmah Mir and Stig Abell with *Times Radio Breakfast* **10.00am** Matt Chorley **1.00pm** Andrew Neil. Interviews, comment and analysis **2.00pm** Jane Garvey and Fi Glover. Live discussion on the day's news **4.00pm** John Plenaar with *Times Radio Drive*. In-depth discussion of today's news **7.00pm** The Evening Edition with Kait Borsay. Engaging evening conversation **10.00pm** Carole Walker. Late night news and tomorrow's front page **1.00am** The Story **1.30am** Highlights from Matt Chorley **2.00am** The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show. Ticket information for Radio 2 in the Park in Preston **9.30am** Vernon Kay. Tim Booth reveals his musical inspirations **12.00pm** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** DJ Spoony **4.00pm** Sara Cox **6.30pm** Sara Cox's Half Wower **7.00pm** Jo Whalley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30pm** Jo Whalley **9.00pm** The Jazz Show with Jamie Cullum **10.00pm** Trevor Nelson's Magnificent 7. Uplifting tunes **10.30pm** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation. Bill Curtis from the Fatback Band shares his Musical Youth **12.00am** DJ Borg **3.00am** Pick of the Pops (r) **4.00am** Jason Mohammad

Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
 Petros Trelawny presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show. Including **7.00am**, **8.00pm** News. **7.30am**, **8.30pm** News headlines **9.30am** Essential Classics
 Georgia Mann plays the best in classical music, featuring new finds, some musical surprises and plenty of familiar favourites **1.00pm** Classical Live
 Tom McKinney showcases a performance of Brahms's fourth symphony from the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the Finnish conductor Jukka-Pekka Saraste. Plus, the Scandinavian violinist Johan Dalene performs Beethoven's *Spring Sonata*. Bridge (Christmas Dance "Sir Roger de Coverley"); Lutoslawski (*Dance Preludes*); Cecilia McDowall (*O nata lux*); Cimarosa; Olafsson (arranger) (*Sonata No 42 in D minor*); Haydn (Quartet in C); Foulds (*Holiday Sketches*); Beethoven (*Violin Sonata No 5 in F, Op 24 Spring*); Brahms (*Symphony No 4 in E minor, Op 98*); Barber (*Adagio for Strings*); and Schumann (*Kinderszenen*, Op 15)

4.00 Composer of the Week: Amanda

Maier-Röntgen (1853-1894)
 Donald Macleod explores Maier's first years in Leipzig, as she established herself in musical society and met a shy young Julius Röntgen, who later became her husband. Maier-Röntgen (*Aftonlocken "The Evening Clock"*; Violin Sonata in B minor — 1st mvt; Piano Trio in E flat — 2nd mvt; Violin Concerto in D minor; and *Sangen "Song"*); and Julius Röntgen (*Serenade for Wind No 1, Op 14 — 1st mvt*)
5.00pm In Tune
 Katie Derham is joined by the Chiaroscuro Quartet and the pianist Emmanuel Despax, all playing live in the studio
7.00pm Classical Mixtape
 A selection of classical favourites mixed with jazz, folk and music from around the world
7.30pm Radio 3 in Concert
 Belcea Quartet and Quatuor Ebene join forces for two pieces, the string octets by Mendelssohn and Enescu. Recorded live at Wigmore Hall. Mendelssohn (*Octet in E flat, Op 20*); and Enescu (*Octet in C Op 7*)
9.45pm The Essay: EarthWorks
 The archaeologist Rose Ferraby examines traces of the past in the British landscape. She explores the peat of the Fens to unearth long-lost signs of time and change (r)
10.00pm Night Tracks
 Sara Mohr-Pietsch presents an adventurous, immersive soundtrack for late-night listening, from classical to contemporary and everything in between
11.30pm Round Midnight
 Soweto Krich presents this weekday late-night show that celebrates the thriving UK jazz scene. He is joined by Tom Skinner, who picks a record from his personal collection
12.30am Through the Night
 Cellist Julia Hagen joins the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and conductor Andres Orozco-Estrada in Dvorák's Cello Concerto

Radio 4
 FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz
5.30am News Briefing
5.45pm Prayer for the Day
5.45pm Farming Today
6.00pm Today
 With Mishal Husain and Nick Robinson
9.00pm Being Roman with Mary Beard
 Allison Emmerson joins Mary Beard as they delve into the life of Alia Potestas (5/6)
9.30am All in the Mind
 The potential of the human mind (4/6)
10.00pm Woman's Hour
 Nuala McGovern presents the magazine

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11.00 Add to Playlist

With Sam Lee and Debbie Wiseman (2/6) (r)

11.45 Book of the Week:

Night Train to Odesa

By Jen Stout. After a gathering essential accreditation and equipment, the author is ready to cross the border and report from the ground. She heads for Odesa, keenly aware that the Black Sea fleet has the city in its sights. Read by Jen Stout (2/5)

12.04pm Call You and Yours

1.00pm The World at One

1.45pm Thief at the British Museum

The hunt for the missing gems leads Katie Razzall and Ittai Gradel across Europe (7/10)

2.00pm The Archers (r)

2.15pm Drama: A Tale of Ossian

By Robert Forrest. An old man turns up in hospital with his head full of stories and his pockets full of leaves. Stars Finlay Welsh

3.00pm Short Cuts

Short documentaries and adventures in sound about dreams and hidden places (6/6)

3.30pm Thinking Allowed

Laurie Taylor is joined by Helena Hansen and Alex Stevens to discuss the changing nature of opioid use (3/6)

4.00pm Poetry Please

Frank Skinner joins Roger McGough and presents his poetry recommendations (1/4)

4.30pm When It Hits the Fan

The world of crisis management (6/12)

5.00pm

6.00pm Six O'Clock News

6.30pm Joe Lycett's Obsessions

The actress Nina Wadia shares her love of driving holidays (2/4) (r)

7.00pm The Archers

Joe Lycett's Obsessions. With Radio 1 DJ Clara Amfo and weather presenter Carol Kirkwood **10.30pm** Think the Unthinkable.

The management consultants try to achieve physical perfection **11.00pm** Rubbish. Martin falls victim of his own scheme **11.30pm** Helen Keen's It Is Rocket Science. Examining humankind's obsession with UFOs **11.45pm** Hearing with Hegley. Nigel Piper and the Popticians join the lyrical comedian John Hegley in Barnet, London. From 1998

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11.00 Uncanny USA

Danny Robins investigates reports of supernatural activity (6/10)

11.30pm Soul Music

Stories of what Bruce Springsteen's *Dancing in the Dark* means to people around the world, revealing how the lyrics resonated with feelings of marginalisation (1/5) (r)

12.00pm News and Weather

12.30am Book of the Week:

Night Train to Odesa (r)

12.48pm Shipping Forecast

1.00am As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only

8.00am The Fair Intellectual Club 8.30

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television & radio

Viewing Guide
Ben Dowell

Queenie
Channel 4, 10pm/10.35pm

Top pick Candice Carty-Williams's 2019 novel *Queenie* was a literary success whose eponymous heroine was touted as the black Bridget Jones. After

what seems like an age, we finally have this lively TV adaptation of her story of the young woman living in south London looking for love. The author eventually eschewed the Bridget Jones comparison, although the similarities between the travails of the pair are strong, not least because Queenie's boss at the newspaper she

does social media for is played by the Bridget Jones movie alumna Sally Phillips. The action opens with Queenie (Dionne Brown) on a hospital bed, her legs in stirrups and various medical people looking in a rather private place. So far, so hapless Bridge. Only this becomes a much saltier tale of a woman navigating far

more current concerns. Queenie's boyfriend, Tom (Jon Pointing), is white and there is a dinner party scene where one of Tom's elderly relatives delivers some offensive speculation about the colour of any baby they may have in front of a seething Queenie. The reasons for Queenie's hospital visit are quite serious,

even though she is unable to tell Tom. Her big problem is her emotional detachment, and Brown delivers a skilled performance that conveys her character's beguiling mix of charisma, confidence and vulnerability. Good work from the ensemble helps things tick along nicely. Continues tomorrow.

Sell By Dates: The Surprising Truth
Channel 5, 7pm

The Channel 5 controller Ben Frow has a knack for delivering enticing programme titles — who among us hasn't wondered if something in the fridge that is a day or two past the sell-by date is OK? The consumer journalist

Harry Wallop and the restaurant critic Jimi Famurewa are on hand to ask, for example, whether the sniff test is good enough. The food scientist Dr Chris Clarke also puts fetid food under the microscope and reveals the tell-tale signs that mince and chicken have gone bad, and when it is safe to eat mouldy cheese.

	BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	Channel 4	Channel 5
Early	6.00am Breakfast 9.30 Rip Off Britain 10.15 The Moment of Proof (r) 10.45 Expert Witness. A look at an investigation that was solved using blood pattern forensic analysis (r) (AD) 11.15 Homes Under the Hammer. Featuring properties in London, Stoke and Surrey 12.15pm Bargain Hunt. Christina Trevanion presents the show from Oswestry, Shropshire (r) (AD) 1.00 BBC News at One; Weather 1.35 BBC Regional News; Weather 1.45 BBC News at One; Weather 2.00 Doctors. A young couple crash into The Mill (AD) 2.30 Clean It, Fix It. The team helps a mother and daughter with little storage space (r) 3.00 Escape to the Country. Alistair Appleton helps a couple from Miami move to Cheshire (r) 3.45 Garden Rescue. Charlie Dimmock and Lee Burkhill propose new designs to turn a steep, inhospitable slope in Redditch into a haven the whole family can enjoy on a budget of £65,000 (r) 4.30 The Finish Line. Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene host the quiz show in which contenders race in moving podiums around the studio floor to try to win £5,000 5.15 Pointless. Quiz show (r) 6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather 6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather 6.55 Party Election Broadcast. By the Labour Party (r)	6.45am Garden Rescue (r) 7.30 Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure (r) 8.00 Sign Zone: Race Across the World (r) (AD, SL) 9.00 BBC News 12.15pm Politics Live 1.00 Impossible (r) 1.45 Mastermind. Specialist subjects include Madonna and the rivers of Yorkshire (r) 2.15 Great Coastal Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo continues his south Wales coastal railway journey in Barry Island (r) (AD) 2.45 Five Bedrooms. Harry straddles the hens' shindig and bucks' bash. Ben reels from a discovery, and Liz considers consequences (r) (AD) 3.30 The Farmers' Country Showdown. Beekeepers collect honey from their hives, while vegetable and fruit farmers gather their crops for the Winchester Farmer's Market (r) 4.15 Ocean Giants. Documentary exploring the lives of whales and dolphins. Narrated by Stephen Fry (r) 5.15 Flog It! Antiques experts Claire Rawle and Thomas Plant look out for potential treasures at Chiddingstone Castle in Kent, while presenter Paul Martin visits a hop garden (r) 6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games. Ashley John-Baptiste, Simon Rimmer, Claire Sweeney and Esme Young compete (r) 6.30 Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure. Clive takes on a potential Olympic champion in the boxing ring	6.00am Good Morning Britain. Featuring a lively mix of news and current affairs, plus health, entertainment and lifestyle features 9.00 Lorraine. Entertainment, current affairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly 10.00 This Morning. A mix of chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions 12.30pm Loose Women. Topical debate 1.30 ITV News; Weather 1.55 Regional News; Weather 2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal. David Dickinson, Fay Rutter, James Layte, Simon Schneider and Jo Brayshaw head to Crewe to assess items brought in by members of the public (r) (AD) 3.00 Lingo. A Birmingham mother and daughter, a Burton upon Trent couple, and a daughter and her mum from Hertfordshire compete. Adil Ray hosts (r) 4.00 Tipping Point for Soccer Aid. With television presenter and UNICEF ambassador Charlie Boorman, ITV's fishing aficionado Ali Hamidi and horse racing commentator Chris Hughes (r) 5.00 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as four contestants work as a team to take on one of the ruthless Chasers and secure a cash prize (r) 6.00 Regional News; Weather 6.20 Party Election Broadcast. By the Labour Party 6.30 ITV News; Weather	6.30am 3rd Rock from the Sun (r) (AD) 7.45 Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) 9.40 Frasier (r) (AD) 11.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Gordon Ramsay revisits four restaurants he earlier tried to save (r) 12.05pm Channel 4 News Summary 12.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Part one of two. A failing Italian restaurant in Boston, Massachusetts (r) 1.10 Car SOS. Fuzz Townsend and Tim Shaw restore a car belonging to a busy doctor (r) (AD) 2.10 Countdown. Krishnan Guru-Murthy is in Dictionary Corner 3.00 A Place in the Sun. Lucy Alexander heads to the beautiful island of Ibiza hoping to help a couple find their dream holiday home there (r) 4.00 A Place in the Sun. Ben Hillman helps a cleaning business manager and a builder find a holiday home in Paphos, Cyprus 5.00 Sun, Sea and Selling Houses. Hunting for a holiday home in Almeria with help from a father-and-son duo 6.00 Four in a Bed. The group brave a windy boat trip during the second visit of the week to Ullswater View in the Lake District where the hosts try to give their guests a taste of luxury 6.30 The Simpsons. Marge breaks her leg — so Lisa volunteers to take over as head of the household (r) (AD)	6.00am Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine. The broadcaster discusses the issues of the day 11.15 Storm Huntley. Debate on the day's talking points continues 12.45pm Friends. Joey tells a fellow cast member that her character is to be killed off (r) (AD) 1.10 Friends. Chandler hears a startling revelation, and Rachel teaches Ben to play pranks on Ross (r) (AD) 1.40 5 News at Lunchtime 1.45 Home and Away. Theo's searching for Valerie and Kirby has little sympathy left, Eden sits face-to-face with Levi and unpicks the lies he has told and Cash confides in Eden about his own time away (r) (AD) 2.15 FILM: The Baby Snatcher (PG, TVM, 2021) A woman suspects a photographer drugged her and was planning to steal her child. Thriller starring Ali Liebert and Lauren K Robek 4.00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. Documentary following Brits who moved to Spain, swapping the damp and grey conditions of the UK for a new "cheap-as-chips" life in the Spanish sun (r) 5.00 5 News at 5 6.00 Police Interceptors. An officer is hot on the heels of dangerous driver heading towards Nottingham city centre, while an altercation at a petrol station results in a woman assaulting an officer (r) 6.55 5 News Update



A new podcast looking back

Our new podcast, *Your History*, tells the life stories of people who have shaped our own. Join Anna Temkin, deputy obituaries editor of The Times, every week and discover endlessly fascinating stories.

7PM	7.00 The One Show Presented by Alex Jones and Jermaine Jenas 7.30 EastEnders Cindy is determined to get George back, Harvey bonds with Maya, while Kathy sets Reiss up with a business opportunity (AD)	7.00 Your Garden Made Perfect A couple need help redesigning their garden, which has a stunning view of rural Cheshire but does not work for their large family. Two designers each come up with a new outdoor plan, pitching it to the couple through the use of virtual reality technology (2/6) (r)	7.30 Emmerdale Rose makes a faux pas, Marlon vents his concerns to Paddy, and Samson is thrilled (AD)	7.00 Channel 4 News	7.00 Sell by Dates: The Surprising Truth Demystifying the dates and the small print on food packaging with the journalist Harry Wallop, the restaurant critic Jimi Famurewa and other experts. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> 7.55 5 News Update
8PM	8.00 Sort Your Life Out with Stacey Solomon Stacey and her team help a couple transform their chaotic two-bedroom home through a radical space-saving reorganisation. Giving the home a supersized spring clean, and radically reconfiguring the bedrooms to create maximum space (4/6) (r) (AD)	8.00 Springwatch Celebrating the wildlife heroes who dedicate their time to nature and the under 18 winner receives their coveted Wildlife Hero Award. Chris Packham and Michaela Strachan continue to broadcast from Dorset and Iolo Williams seeks out the dormouse at Garston Woods (6/12)	8.00 Beat the Chasers: Celebrity Special Bradley Walsh hosts as Nish Kumar, Chris McCausland, Mary Earps and Alexander Armstrong take on quiz experts Mark Labbett, Anne Hegerty, Shaun Wallace, Paul Sinha, Jenny Ryan and Darragh Ennis, hoping to win big money for their chosen charities (r)	8.00 Emergency Helicopter Medics A critically-ill dialysis patient desperately needs fluids, so the East Anglian Air Ambulance crew must make a tough decision. In Canvey Island, the medics take over the breathing of motorcyclist who is bleeding from his ear (AD)	8.00 The Yorkshire Vet Shona Searson hits the fast lane to the farm in the middle of the motorway, where a ewe is struggling to give birth. Julian Norton heads back to Cambridge University. Plus, a goat struggling to feed her three kids is brought to the practice to see Peter Wright
9PM	9.00 The Great British Sewing Bee The sewers make a summer blouse from old tablecloths, bags out of nautical paraphernalia and outfits inspired by the French Riviera as they face challenges based around travel set by judges Patrick Grant and Esme Young (3/10) (AD)	9.00 D-Day: The Unheard Tapes The story of the bloody battle for Normandy that followed D-Day, narrated by soldiers on both sides and French witnesses, whose words are lip-synched by actors (3/3) (AD)	9.00 Sunak v Starmer: The ITV Debate Julie Etchingham moderates the first live head-to-head General Election debate between Rishi Sunak — the leader of the Conservative Party — and Keir Starmer — the leader of the Labour Party — in front of a studio audience. See <i>Viewing Guide</i>	9.00 Grand Designs Kevin McCloud follows the progress of a North Lincolnshire born-and-bred college deputy principal who plans on building a stylish, sustainable and affordable home among the trees in his garden (r)	9.00 Into the Amazon with Robson Green In a canoe, Robson explores the Anavilhanas Archipelago, an intricate pattern of tiny islands and lagoons, and learns to fish with a bow and arrow. Plus, he goes in search of one of the Amazon's most impressive predators. Last in the series
10PM	10.00 BBC News; Weather 10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather 10.40 Tokyo Vice Jake makes a long overdue visit home to Missouri and a death at Chihara-kai causes an upheaval. Meanwhile, Katagiri has a stroke of luck that might lead to a major breakthrough (7/10) (AD)	10.00 Meet the Richardsons Lucy Beaumont goes on a wild night out in London with the television personality Alan Carr (3/6) (r) (AD) 10.30 Newsnight Headline analysis presented by Victoria Derbyshire	10.10 The ITV Election Interviews Anushka Asthana invites the leader of the Liberal Democrats Ed Davey, SNP leader John Swinney, Reform UK leader Richard Tice and co-leaders of the Green Party Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay to answer her questions in extended interviews	10.00 Queenie New series. Drama based on the novel by Candice Carty-Williams starring Dionne Brown and Harry Long. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> (1/8) (AD) 10.35 Queenie The realisation that Tom isn't coming back takes its toll, so Queenie takes steps to numb her loneliness. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> (2/8) (AD)	10.00 My Teacher, My Abuser Documentary about three UK teens who were abused by those in a position of trust (r)
11PM	11.35 Tokyo Vice Katagiri loses the best lead he had, and Jake's successful trip home propels the group in a new direction (8/10) (AD)	11.05 Colette (15, 2018) A woman is persuaded to write up her semi-autobiographical tales, which become a sensation when published under her husband's name. Biopic starring Keira Knightley, Fiona Shaw, Dominic West and Robert Pugh. See <i>Viewing Guide</i>	11.10 ITV News; Weather 11.40 Regional News and Weather 11.55 ITV Studio Sessions The vocalist Becky Hill joins Clara Amfo (5/6) (r)	11.10 The Rest is Politics Former Labour spin doctor Alastair Campbell and former Conservative MP Rory Stewart bring their podcast to the screen as they discuss the latest from the General Election campaign	11.05 Crimes That Shook Britain A look at the events surrounding Raoul Moat's shooting spree in Northumberland during the summer of 2010. The former convict, bouncer and tree surgeon shot his former partner and killed her boyfriend and then shot and blinded a policeman while on the run (2/6) (r)
Late	12.30am The Repair Shop Jay Blades hosts as members of the public bring in a 40-year-old armchair, a silver bangle that fell under the wheels of a taxi, the remains of a model wooden carousel and a homemade bodhran drum for experts to restore. Narrated by Bill Paterson (r) (AD) 1.35-6.00 BBC News	12.50am Sign Zone: Hidden Treasures of the National Trust A showstopper clock needs restarting (r) (AD, SL) 1.50 Great British Railway Journeys. Visiting Glasgow's Hampden Park Stadium (r) (AD, SL) 2.20 David & Jay's Touring Toolshed (r) (AD, SL) 2.50 Lifeline (r) (AD, SL) 3.00-4.00 The Outlaws (r) (AD, SL)	12.20am Shop on TV 3.00 On Assignment. Emma Murphy meets the widows being abandoned by their families in India (r) (SL) 3.30 My Mum, Your Dad. The parents take part in a group task that embarrasses their grown-up children (r) (AD, SL) 4.20 Unwind with ITV 5.35-6.00 Made in Britain. Aunt Bessie's (r) (AD, SL)	12.10am Sky Coppers (r) (AD) 1.05 Taskmaster (r) (AD, SL) 2.00 Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back (r) (AD, SL) 2.50 FILM: The Watermelon Woman (15, 1996) Drama 4.15 Iris Prize Best British Shorts (AD) 4.25 Britain's Most Luxurious Hotels (r) (AD, SL) 5.20 Beat the Chef (r) 5.50-6.30 Countdown (r)	12.05am Ultimate Police Interceptors (r) (AD) 1.00 PlayOJO Live Casino Show 3.00 Inside Tiffany's: The World's Most Famous Jewellers (r) 3.50 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (r) 4.40 Wildlife SOS (r) (SL) 5.05 House Doctor (r) (SL) 5.30 Entertainment News on 5 5.35 Fireman Sam (r) (SL) 5.45-6.00 Paw Patrol (r) (SL)

television & radio

Butterflies

BBC4, 7.45pm

It is hard to imagine but Carla Lane's gentle sitcom *Butterflies* about a housewife named Ria who has a nice but inattentive husband and two entitled sons, and dreams of having an affair with a man called Leonard, was fairly shocking when it aired

in 1978. The show's star Wendy Craig recalls her time on the comedy before a repeat of the first episode (8pm). After that viewers will be treated to Craig's other turn as a middle-class housewife (who moves from suburbia to the countryside) in the 1960s classic *Not in Front of the Children* (BBC4, 8.30pm)

Sunak v Starmer: The ITV Debate

ITV, 9pm

To some, a general election campaign only really feels like a general election campaign when the main party leaders finally slug it out on national TV. ITV has landed the first of what are expected to be two hour-long debates

between the two men, only one of whom will be smiling from the doors of No 10 the day after polling on July 4. It is overseen by Julie Etchingham, a seasoned moderator who refereed for the channel in 2015, 2017 and 2019. Straight afterwards at 10.10pm (also on ITV) Anushka Asthana interviews the other party leaders.

Storyville

BBC4, 10pm

Sarvnik Kaur's beautiful, understated film *Against the Tide* follows two friends from Mumbai's ancient Koli fishing community. Rakesh has inherited a boat and the knowledge of catching fish from his father. Like a typical Koli fisherman, he casts

his nets in the creeks and shallow waters of the sea which means his catches tend to be small. His best friend Ganesh runs a commercial boat and opens the film wondering whether to buy illegal fluorescent lights to catch bigger hauls deep-sea fishing. When Rakesh's young son falls ill he also faces some tough decisions.

Film Colette

BBC2, 11.05pm

Keira Knightley stars in the story of the pioneering French novelist Colette's journey away from the controlling literary entrepreneur Henry Gauthier-Villars (Dominic West). The performances are just fine, but it's tonally uneven. (15, 2018)

Sky Max

6.00am NCIS: Los Angeles (r) **7.00** DC's Legends of Tomorrow (r) **8.00** **AD** **12.15pm** Game of Thrones (AD) **1.20** The Sopranos (r) **3.30** True Blood (r) **5.45** Billions (r) **AD** **7.55** Game of Thrones. The High Sparrow eyes another target, Jaime confronts a hero, and Olenna Tyrell plans to leave King's Landing. Meanwhile, Arya makes a plan (r) **AD** **9.00** The Tattooist of Auschwitz. Gita helps a young woman give birth in their block and conceal the baby, but this leads to the sacrifice of someone Gita holds dear. Starring Jonah Hauer-King and Anna Pröchlik (r) **AD** **9.00** A League of Their Own: Mexican Road Trip. The gang takes MLS-style penalties in front of 60,000 fans at Guadalajara's Estadio Akron **AD** **10.00** The Walking Dead: The Ones Who Live. Post-apocalyptic horror (r) **AD** **11.15** Hold the Front Page (r) **AD** **12.10am** The Walking Dead (r) **1.05** S.W.A.T. (r) **AD** **2.05** Resident Alien (r) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T. (r) **AD** **5.00** Highway Patrol (r)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Urban Secrets (r) **7.55** True Blood (r) **10.05** Billions (r) **AD** **12.15pm** Game of Thrones (AD) **1.20** The Sopranos (r) **3.30** True Blood (r) **5.45** Billions (r) **AD** **7.55** Game of Thrones. The High Sparrow eyes another target, Jaime confronts a hero, and Olenna Tyrell plans to leave King's Landing. Meanwhile, Arya makes a plan (r) **AD** **9.00** The Tattooist of Auschwitz. Gita helps a young woman give birth in their block and conceal the baby, but this leads to the sacrifice of someone Gita holds dear. Starring Jonah Hauer-King and Anna Pröchlik (r) **AD** **9.00** A League of Their Own: Mexican Road Trip. The gang takes MLS-style penalties in front of 60,000 fans at Guadalajara's Estadio Akron **AD** **10.00** The Walking Dead: The Ones Who Live. Post-apocalyptic horror (r) **AD** **11.15** Band of Brothers. Winters is promoted to a desk job. Damian Lewis stars (5/10) (r) **AD** **12.20am** Domina (r) **AD** **1.20** The Deuce (r) **AD** **2.30** Game of Thrones (r) **AD** **3.40** In Treatment (r) **4.10** Urban Secrets (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Guest Wing (r) **AD** **7.00** Discovering: Harrison Ford (r) **8.00** The Directors (r) **9.00** The Seventies (r) **AD** **10.00** The Great Rhino Robbery (r) **AD** **11.00** The Man Who Bought Cricket (r) **AD** **12.00** Rise of the Superheroes (r) **2.15pm** FILM: Kipchoge — The Last Milestone (12, 2021) **4.00** The Directors (r) **5.00** Discovering: Harrison Ford (r) **6.00** The Seventies (r) **AD** **7.00** The Great Rhino Robbery (r) **AD** **8.00** The Man Who Bought Cricket. Allen Stanford spies a new opportunity (2/3) (r) **AD** **9.00** Striking with Pride: United at the Coalface. A look at the miners' strike of 1984-85 (r) **AD** **10.40** FILM: Forced Out (2023) People dishonourably discharged from the armed forces because of their sexuality **AD** **12.35am** FILM: Suited (2016) The work of tailoring company Bindle and Keep **2.00** FILM: Amy (15, 2015) Portrait of singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse **4.30** Premier League Legends (r) **AD** **5.00** Discovering: Harrison Ford (r)

Sky Arts

6.00am The South Bank Show Originals **6.30** Academy of Ancient Music: Vivaldi's Four Seasons **8.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **9.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.00** Discovering: Robert Donat **12.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **2.00** Australian Ballet: Cinderella **3.35** Inside Art: Van Gogh at the Courtauld Gallery **AD** **4.00** Discovering: Ronald Colman **5.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **6.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **7.00** Grand Ole Opry. With Carrie Underwood, CeCe Winans, Suzy Bogguss and Linda Evans **8.00** Guy Garvey: From the Vaults **9.00** Johnson & Knopfler's Music Legends. Meeting Emmylou Harris. Last in the series **10.00** Ennio: The Maestro. Documentary celebrating Italian composer Ennio Morricone **1.00am** FILM: I Am Bruce Lee (15, 2011) The actor and martial artist (AD) **3.00** The Sky Arts Book Club Summer Reads Special **4.00** Cheltenham Literature Festival **5.00** Auction

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News **7.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **8.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **9.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **10.00** Sky Sports News **11.00** Live World Pool Championship. Coverage of the first session on day two of the tournament, which takes place at Green Halls in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia **3.00pm** Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: England v Scotland. Coverage of the Group B match from Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados **7.30** Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: Netherlands v Nepal. Coverage of the Group D match from Grand Prairie Cricket Stadium in Dallas, Texas **8.30** Live World Pool Championship. Coverage of the second session on day two, which takes place at Green Halls in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia **9.30** Sky Sports News **10.00** Sky Sports News at Ten **11.30** Back Pages Tonight **12.00** Sky Sports News **12.00** Sky Sports News **1.00am** Sky Sports News **2.00** Sky Sports News **4.00** Sky Sports News **5.00** Sky Sports News

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: **6.55pm-7.00** A Party Election Broadcast by Sinn Féin **10.40** The Lough Neagh Monster: Spotlight **11.10** Tokyo Vice. Double bill **AD** **1.05am** Celebrity Bridge of Lies (r) **1.50-6.00** BBC News

BBC1 Scotland
As BBC1 except: **6.55pm-7.00** Party Election Broadcast (r)

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: **6.55pm** A Party Election Broadcast by The Welsh Conservatives **7.00-9.00** Live Match of the Day Wales: Ukraine v Wales (Kick-off **7.00**). The UEFA Women's Euro 2025 Group B4 qualifier **10.45** Tokyo Vice (AD) **11.40** Tokyo Vice **AD** **12.35am-1.35** The Repair Shop (r) **AD**

BBC2 Wales
As BBC2 except: **1.45pm** First Minister's Questions **2.45** Mastermind (r) **3.15** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (r) **AD** **3.45** Five Bedrooms (r) **AD** **4.30-5.15** The Farmers' Country Showdown (r) **6.30** Hairys Bikers: Namibia BBQ (r) **6.45** Live Match of the Day Wales. Build up to Ukraine v Wales **7.00** The One Show **7.30-8.00** EastEnders (AD)

ITV1 Wales
As ITV1 except: **6.20pm-6.30** Party Election Broadcast **11.40** ITV Election Interviews: Plaid Cymru **11.55-12.20am** Sharp End

STV
As ITV1 except: **6.20pm-6.29** Party Election Broadcast **11.40-11.54** STV News **12.20am-3.00** Shop on TV **4.20-5.35** Night Vision

UTV
As ITV1 except: **11.55pm-12.20am** View from Stormont. Political developments

BBC Scotland
2.45pm-5.00 Live Sportscentre: Israel v Scotland (Kick-off **3.00**). The Women's UEFA Euro 2025 Group B2 qualifiers at Budaörsi Városi Stadium **7.00** This Farming Life (r) **8.00** Paramedics on Scene (r) **AD** **9.00** The Nine **10.00** Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster (AD) **10.45** Best of Only an Excuse? (r) **11.15-12.00** What Next for the Wellerman? (r)

BBC Alba
6.00am Alba Today **5.00pm** AH-AH (r) **5.10** Abadas (r) **5.20** Oscar & Ealasaid (r) **5.35** Peataichean (r) **5.40** Meaban is Moo (r) **5.50** Daolag-bhreac is Seillean (r) **5.55** Stòiridh (r) **6.00** An Saoghal Droi aig Pol Ploc **6.10** Geamaichean Gorach (r) **6.15** An Teaghlach Rìoghail an Ath-dhoras (r) **6.40** A-nall 's a-nall (r) **7.00** Vets: Gach Creutair Beo (r) **7.30** SpeakGaeltic (r) **8.00** An Là **8.30** Cidsin Granalaidh Chalanais (r) **9.00** Mìorbhall na Monach: Secrets in the Peat (r) **10.00** Trusadh — Bardach Ghaidhlig (r) **11.00** Machair (r) **11.25** Fraochy Bay (r) **11.30** Alleluia! (r) **12.00-6.00am** Alba Today

S4C
6.00am Cyw: Blociau Rhif (r) **6.05** Guto Gwiningen (r) **6.20** Gwdihw (r) **6.35** Sam Tan (r) **6.45** Byd Tad-Cu (r) **7.00** Y Tralalas **7.05** Twt (r) **7.20** Ein Byd Bach (r) **7.30** Sion y Chef (r) **7.45** Ne-wff-ion (r) **8.00** Bing (r) **8.10** Tomos at Ffrindiau (r) **8.20** Jen a Jim at Cwydair (r) **8.35** Ben a Mali a' Byd Bach O Hud (r) **8.45** Cacamwni (r) **9.00** Shwshaswyn (r) **9.10** Abadas (r) **9.25** Sblòl a Sblòl (r) **9.35** Blero yn Mynd i Ocido (r) **9.45** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **10.00** Blodau Rhif (r) **10.05** Guto Gwiningen (r) **10.20** Gwdihw (r) **10.35** Sam Tan (r) **10.45** Byd Tad-Cu (r) **11.00** Y Tralalas (r) **11.05** Twt (r) **11.20** Ein Byd Bach (r) **11.30** Sion y Chef (r) **11.45** Ne-wff-ion (r) **12.00** News **12.05pm** Bwrdd i Dri (r) **AD** **12.30** Heno (r) **12.40** Ffasiwn Drefn (r) **AD** **1.30** Ffermio (r) **2.00** News **2.05** Prynghawn Da **3.00** News; Weather **3.05** Ken Owens: Y Sheriff (r) **4.00** Awr Fawr **5.00** Stwnsh **6.00** Cymry ar Gynfas (r) **6.25** Darllediad Etholiadol gan y Celdwadiwyr Cymreig **6.30** Rallio (r) **6.57** News **7.00** Heno **7.30** News; Weather **8.00** Pobl y Cwm (AD) **8.25** Rownd a Rownd **AD** **8.55** News **9.00** Y Llinell **9.15** Rôl-Dreod Rhyngwladol **11.00** Pum Merch, Tri Chopa, Un Cwch (r) **11.30-12.05am** Codi Hwyl (r)

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THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES

T AUDIO

BBC3

7.00pm Phoenix Rise. Faith gets more than she bargained for when she goes in search of her birth mum with Billy (9/10) **AD** **7.30** Phoenix Rise. A mystery is solved at the Cov Rocks music festival (10/10) **AD** **8.00** Shark Tank. Opportunities include a natural hair care line crafted for multicultural young men and a solution to help pet parents keep their dogs calm during long events **8.40** The Catch Up. A round-up of the day's news **8.45** Zen Motoring. While running errands, former battle rapper Ogmios meets an unexpected guest in need of help **9.00** FILM: House of Gucci (15, 2021) An outsider marries into the family behind the Italian fashion empire, and starts to unravel the family legacy. Fact-based crime drama starring Lady Gaga and Adam Driver **AD** **11.30** Fresh Cops. Jack deals with a drunk hotel guest and Philippa gets up (3/6) **12.00** Fresh Cops. Khadeejah and Aarifah investigate a seemingly unspurious house fire (4/6) **12.30am** Charlotte in Sunderland **1.30** The Film Fan's Guide to Liverpool **1.40** Fresh Cops **2.40-4.00** Peacock (AD, SL)

BBC4

7.00pm Volcanoes of the Solar System: Horizon. Examining volcanoes on Earth and those elsewhere in the solar system **7.15** War Walks. Richard Holmes recalls the events of a night of the Blitz **AD** **7.45** Wendy Craig Remembers — Butterflies. Wendy Craig reflects on her starring role in Carla Lane's 1970s *Butterflies*. See *Viewing Guide* **8.00** Butterflies. First episode of Carla Lane's comedy starring Wendy Craig. See *Viewing Guide* **8.30** Not in Front of the Children. Episode of the 1960s sitcom starring Wendy Craig and Ronald Hines. See *Viewing Guide* **9.00** Rigs of Nigg. How more than 5,000 workers created oil platforms in the North Sea **10.00** Against the Tide — Storyville. Following story of two Indian fishermen whose friendship is tested as one continues with traditional fishing methods and the other tries modern technology. See *Viewing Guide* **11.35** FILM: Aquarela (12, 2018) Stunning images capturing the raw power of water by the film-maker Viktor Kossakovsky **1.00am** Vasa: The Ghost Ship **2.00** War Walks (AD) **2.30-3.25** Bloody Omaha: Timewatch (AD)

Talking Pictures

6.00am FILM: The Southerner (U, 1945) (b/w) **7.50** Look at Life **8.00** Sherlock Holmes (b/w) **8.35** FILM: Railroaded (PG, 1947) (b/w) **10.05** FILM: Sons of the Sea (U, 1939) **11.40** Setting Up Home **12.00** Worzel Gummidge **12.35pm** FILM: Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon (PG, 1942) (b/w) **1.55** FILM: The Aviator (PG, 1985) **3.55** FILM: The Day Will Dawn (U, 1942) Second World War adventure starring Hugh Williams (b/w) **5.55** The Beverly Hillsbills (b/w) **6.30** Scotland Yard. A murder hunt is launched **7.05** The Road to Day. A deception plan **7.35** Dangerous Assignment (b/w) **8.05** Manhunt. An agent terrorises Jimmy **9.05** Maigret. A detective is shot **10.55** Cellar Club with Caroline Munro **11.00** FILM: The Stepfather II (18, 1989) Horror starring Terry O'Quinn and Meg Foster **10.45am** Cellar Club with Caroline Munro **12.50** FILM: 13 Ghosts (PG, 1960) Horror comedy starring Donald Woods (b/w) **2.30** Cellar Club with Caroline Munro **2.35** FILM: Raw Deal (18, 1948) Prison escape drama (b/w) **4.10** FILM: Every Day's a Holiday (U, 1965)

Film4

11.00am Reach for the Sky (U, 1956) Biopic of Second World War pilot Douglas Bader starring Kenneth More (b/w) **AD** **1.45pm** Outcast of the Islands (PG, 1951) Drama starring Ralph Richardson (b/w) **3.50** Oliver! (U, 1968) An orphan falls in with a gang of pickpockets. Musical starring Ron Moody **6.45** A Good Year (12, 2006) A city trader reassesses his priorities in life when he travels to France to sell off a vineyard he has inherited. Ridley Scott's comedy drama with Russell Crowe **9.00** The Craft: Legacy (15, 2020) Three girls attempting to freeze time welcome a newcomer into their coven with dramatic results. Sequel to 1996 horror drama *The Craft* starring Calista Flockhart and Gideon Adlon **10.50** Plan B (18, 2021) A straight-laced high school student and her slacker best friend have 24 hours to hunt down a morning after pill in America's heartland. Comedy with Kubo Verna **1.00am-3.25** The Blue Cifant (12, 2022) A gay tailor extinguishes his desires to maintain a public facade, but a new apprentice alters the delicate equilibrium. Romantic drama starring Lubna Azabal and Saleh Bakri

More4

8.55am A Place in the Sun **10.25** A New Life in the Sun **11.25** Find It, Fix It, Flog It **12.30pm** Come Dine with Me (AD) **3.10** Four in a Bed **5.50** Château DIY (AD) **6.55** Car SOS. Tim Shaw and Fuzz Townshend work on a 1978 Bedford HA ice-cream van (AD) **7.55** Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud revisits a home built on an airfield in Strathaven in Scotland to check on the progress (7/7) **AD** **9.00** PopMaster TV. Contestants from London, Sheffield, Glasgow, Surrey and Tyne and Wear compete to recall facts and stats about their favourite chart-toppers and beyond in this fifth heat round. Presented by Ken Bruce **10.00** Do You Remember... 2000? A look back on the pop culture trends of the year 2000 including Furbies, Nokia mobiles and the head-to-head chart battle of Victoria Beckham and Sophie Ellis-Bextor. Last in the series **11.05** 24 Hours in A&E. The team treats a man injured in a collapsed garage incident, and a pensioner with lung cancer (4/9) **AD** **12.10am** PopMaster TV **1.15** 999: On the Front Line. A drunk nuisance caller **2.20** 24 Hours in A&E **3.25-3.50** A Place in the Sun

Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.10** London's Burning **8.00** Doctors **9.20** Classic Holby City **10.40** Classic Casualty **11.40** The Bill **12.40pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** London's Burning **3.00** Lovejoy **4.15** Tenet **5.15** Birds of a Feather **6.00** Waiting for God **6.40** Are You Being Served? **7.20** Last of the Summer Wine. Nora gets a cleaning job with a much-praised widower **AD** **8.00** Dalziel & Pascoe. The duo investigate a seemingly accidental death at a private zoo, where human remains have been found in the tigers' den. With Warren Clarke (2/4) **AD** **10.00** New Tricks. Fresh DNA tests on an unidentified body found in 1996 reveal the victim to be an Albanian police interpreter, whose last assignment was translating for a witness in a murder trial (3/10) **AD** **11.20** Soldier, Soldier. The officers carry out a series of exercises in evacuating casualties from a combat zone, which leaves them convinced they are about to be sent on active duty **12.30am** Lovejoy **1.40** Call the Midwife **AD** **2.50** Classic Holby City (SL) **4.00** Teleshopping

Yesterday

6.10am Scouting for Toys (AD) **8.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **10.00** Adolf Hitler's War **11.00** World War Weird **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys **3.00pm** Antiques Roadshow **2.00** Bangers & Cash (AD) **4.00** Adolf Hitler's War **5.00** World War Weird **6.00** Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Minehead Railway Station **7.00** Canal Boat Diaries. A journey from Yardley Wood to Netherton Tunnel (2/10) **AD** **8.00** Bangers & Cash. Paul heads to County Durham to pick up a 1936 Singer Le Mans sports car, and a pristine 1957 Lambretta LD 150 **AD** **9.00** Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics. The team opt to buy one of the most affordable sports cars on the road — the Mazda MX-5 **AD** **10.00** Bangers & Cash. Dave heads for the Midlands to collect a Triumph Toledo **AD** **11.00** Abandoned Engineering. Exploring a series of vaults, hidden from view in Edinburgh, Scotland (5/12) **AD** **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys **1.00am** Hornby: A Model World **AD** **2.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV2

6.00am CITV **9.00** World's Funniest Videos **9.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **10.00** Love Bites (AD) **SL** **12.00** Dress to Impress **1.00pm** Wheel of Fortune (AD) **2.00** Family Fortunes **3.00** Veronica Mars **4.00** Dawson's Creek **5.00** Dress to Impress **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase **AD** **7.00** Family Fortunes. Gino D'Acampo hosts **8.00** Bob's Burgers. Louise runs away **AD** **8.30** Bob's Burgers. Tina tries out for the cheerleading squad, but spirited spectator Gene makes more of an impression **AD** **9.00** Love Island. The series continues for the cast of singles, who know they had better be ready to expect the unexpected in paradise **10.05** Extraordinary. New series. Comedy following Jen, who lives in a world where everybody except her has a superpower **10.50** Family Guy (AD) **11.20** Family Guy (AD) **11.50** American Dad! (AD) **12.20am** American Dad! (AD) **12.50** Bob's Burgers (AD) **1.45** Hey Tracey! **2.40** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale **7.00** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **8.05** Endeavour (AD) **10.10** The Royal **11.15** Heartbeat (AD) **1.40pm** Classic Emmerdale **2.35** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **3.45** Agatha Christie's Marple (AD) **5.55** Heartbeat. Rural drama **AD** **8.00** Midsomer Murders. The peace in a sleepy hamlet is disturbed when a man's body is found tied down on a miniature railway — just like the hero in *Gulliver's Travels* **AD** **10.00** Wire in the Blood. Part two of two. An abduction and murder cause professional tension as Tony disagrees with Don's suspicion that the culprit is a paedophile he narrowly failed to convict on a previous occasion (5/6) **11.05** Wire in the Blood. Part two of two. An unexpected confession from Paul Gregory forces Carol to release her prime suspect — but when another murder is committed it becomes clear the case is far from closed (6/6) **12.00** The Royal. Bridgit makes a decision **12.55am** Bless This House **1.20** Unairs, Downstairs. Sir Richd sells Eaton Place **2.15** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

Tetonor Moderate No 471

76	47	216	18
42	207	32	300
152	37	342	58
23	312	56	72

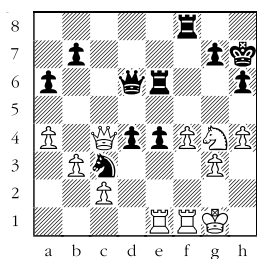
	4	4	6	6		9	12			19	23			50	
--	---	---	---	---	--	---	----	--	--	----	----	--	--	----	--

When complete, the strip below the grid can be split into eight pairs of numbers. Adding the numbers in a pair gives one of the 16 numbers in the grid. Multiplying them gives a different number in the grid. For example, a 4 and 6 in the strip could be paired to make 10 ($4+6$) and 24 (4×6) in the grid. Enter each sum below the corresponding number in the grid. The blanks in the strip must be deduced, bearing in mind the numbers are listed in ascending order.

The next Tetonor puzzle will appear on Thursday

**For more puzzles, including
Mini Sudoku, extra Codeword,
Train Tracks and Futoshiki
go to page 10**

Winning Move



Black to play.
This position is from Goltsev-Kazakouski, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2024.

This position is a model example of the advantages conferred by strong central control. Thanks to the well-protected pawn duo on d4 and e4, Black utterly dominates the centre. The white kingside is also rather weak but the winning blow comes from a slightly unexpected direction. Can you see it?

KenKen Medium No 6224

3	$12 \times$			$1 -$	
$72 \times$		$1 -$	$4 -$	$6 \times$	
$2 \div$				$11 +$	$3 \div$
	$10 \times$	$11 +$			
		$18 \times$		$2 \div$	$2 -$
$1 -$					

All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

Futoshiki No 4772

				^
v	v		v	
				4
	v			
		^	v	
	4			>

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Codeword No 5232

	16		26		16		15		11		8		
15	6	2	3	14	12		17	7	3	9	6	5	
	9		17		24		11		9		17		
9	7	2	7			11	17	8	1	7	4	11	11
	5					20		9		11		24	
13	9	6	11	18	13	9	10	10	2	3			
	5		17						7		9		
		4	22	26	6	9	19	9	16	9	7	26	
	11		24		4		17				9		
11	21	20	4	4	16	4	4		25	4	6	1	
	20		7		4		3		20		8		
14	17	6	8	2	7			4	9	6	26	18	12
	23		4		26		6		12		12		

~~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	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Yesterday's solution, right*

Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

Lexica Easy No 7451 Hard No 7452

The image shows two 8x8 grids. The first grid has the word 'BENEDICT' placed in black cells. The letters are: B (row 1, col 1), E (row 2, col 1), N (row 3, col 8), E (row 4, col 8), D (row 5, col 1), I (row 6, col 1), C (row 7, col 1), and T (row 8, col 1). The second grid has the word 'OAMUND' placed in black cells. The letters are: O (row 1, col 1), A (row 2, col 1), M (row 3, col 1), U (row 4, col 1), N (row 5, col 1), and D (row 6, col 1). Both grids have a black dot in the top row, column 3.

Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

Train Tracks No 2261

1 1 8 5 6 7 2 2

2

4

A

4

6

6

4

3

3

B

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Quintagram®

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Oaf from university coming into
fortune (4)

2 What voter must put down or put out (5)

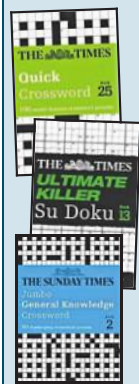
3 Worry about Irish broadcasters showing *The Crown* (6)

4 Respectful partner everyone
turns to show off (8)

5 Hotpot inn cooked for showing
The Crown? (4,2,3)

C	E	E	E	E	E	H	I
L	N	N	N	O	O	O	C
P	R	R	R	R	S	S	T
T	T	T	T	U	V	V	X

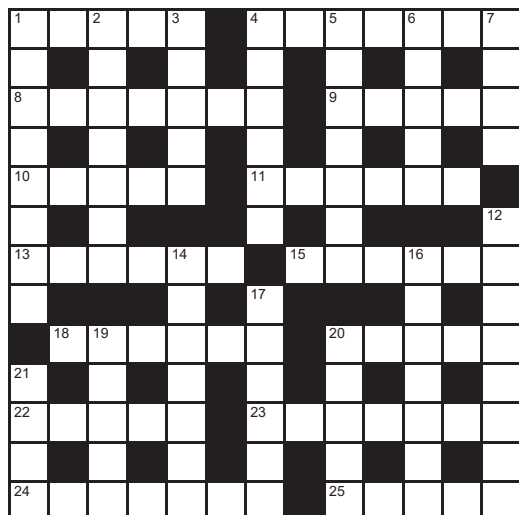
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Email: puzzles@thetimes.co.uk

times2 Crossword No 9548



Across
1 Rudimentary (5)
4 Captured again (7)
8 Commerce (7)
9 Egg-shaped (5)
10 French sculptor of *The Kiss* and *The Thinker* (5)
11 Castigate, admonish (6)
13 Name of cities in Wales and Northern Ireland (6)

15 (Of gears) engaged (6)
18 Sordid political activities (6)
20 Snarl (5)
22 Language of south Asia (5)
23 Side view or outline (7)
24 Seafarer (7)
25 Humid, close (5)

Solution to Crossword 9547

FORETASTE PLO
O A A T F O O
O F T E N A T F A U L T
T C H O K E R C I D E R
E N S I I
F A T H O M L E A G U E
A W H N R
N A S A L O U T L A W
A T E B D Y
T R O D D E N G O U D A
I N G O O A R
C U E E M B R O I L E D

Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes — Virgil's Aeneid.

Latin scholars will know exactly what this means: "I fear the Greeks, even when bearing gifts" — in reference to the wooden horse of Troy. In plain English: don't trust an opponent who appears to be handing you a present.

Peter Braid reports this instructive deal from the New Melville Bridge Club in Edinburgh. West leads ace, king and a third club (despite East playing upwards to deny a doubleton). Plan the play.

This ruff-and-discard appears friendly. And at the table, declarer succumbed to the undoubted temptation to ruff with dummy's singleton heart, shedding a diamond from hand. He then cashed the ace-king of spades and ruffed a spade. She cashed the ace-king-queen of hearts but had to lose the fourth heart to West and, later, a diamond to East. One down.

Let us go back to trick three. East is marked with seven diamonds and three clubs. He has only three major-suit cards. There is no distribution of those three major-suit cards that will allow declarer to succeed. Either East has fewer than two spades, in which case he is ruffing a high spade from dummy; or he has fewer than two hearts, in which case hearts are splitting badly and he will lose a heart and a diamond.

The winning line is to eschew the Greek gift and ruff the third club in hand. There are various ways home from here. Probably best is to cross to the ace of spades (in case East has a bare queen),

Dealer: East, Vulnerability: Both

Cross IMPs (like Teams)

Cross IMPS (like Teams)		♠ AKJ1085 ♥ 6 ♦ 8742 ♣ QJ	
♠ Q73 ♥ J1082 ♦ - ♣ AK9876	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> </div>	♠ 94 ♥ 3 ♦ AKQJ953 ♣ 1053	
	♠ 62 ♥ AKQ9754 ♦ 106 ♣ 42		
S	W	N	E
3NT(1)			

(1) The "gambling" 3NT, showing a long (seven-card) solid minor and no ace or king outside (nor a slower stopper eg QJx). I've never really understood why it's called "gambling" as it's anything but. You are giving partner a virtual blueprint of your hand, and partner will rescue when appropriate.
(2) Tempting to pass and hope to cash out the hearts. Mind you, it's unlikely West will pass (unless he has ♥J10xx — and stoppers elsewhere — with a card in partner's minor). Here, West would run to 4♣ (pass or correct — although West knows it'll be "correct") and (assuming North doesn't chance 4♠) South will then bid 4♥ over East's 4♦.

Contract: 4♥, Opening Lead: ♣A
return to the ace-king-queen of hearts and concede a fourth heart. Ruff West's (say) club return, finesse the jack of spades, cash the king and lead a long spade. Away go both your diamonds and that's ten tricks and game made.

Note that if West hadn't given that trick-three ruff-and-discard, declarer would probably have fallen into the winning line. Kudos to West. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

Brain Trainer

EASY	12	x 2	÷ 6	x 9	x 2	÷ 12	+ 54	50% OF IT	+ 1/5 OF IT	+ 25	ANSWER
MEDIUM	6	x 14	+ 3/12 OF IT	x 4	÷ 10	50% OF IT	SQUARE IT	x 2	- 26	+ 1/4 OF IT	ANSWER
HARDER	233	+ 279	+ 5/8 OF IT	x 6	- 768	÷ 12	75% OF IT	x 6	+ 984	x 2	ANSWER

Polygon

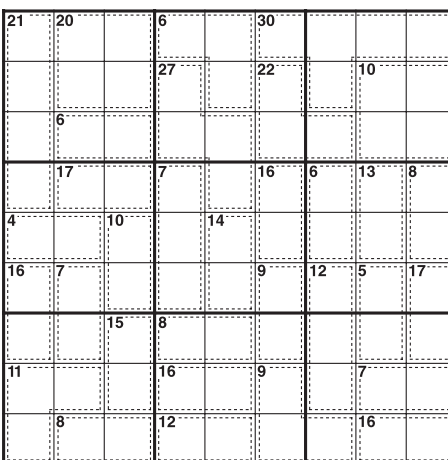


From these letters, make words of **three** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. **How you rate** 15 words, average; 20, good; 24, very good; 29, excellent

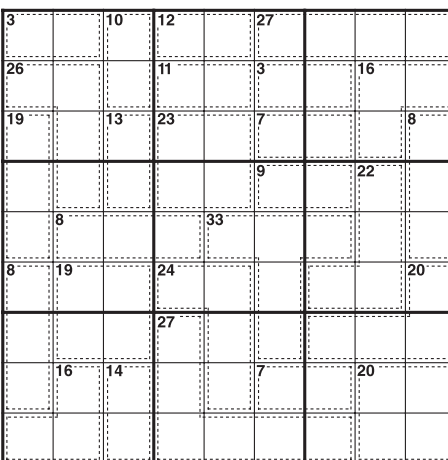
Yesterday's answers

coop, cop, coup, coupon, cup, cusp, oops, opus, poco, pons, poo, poon, pun, pus, scoop, scup, snoop, sop, soup, **souppçon**, spoon, sup, upon

Killer Moderate No 9502



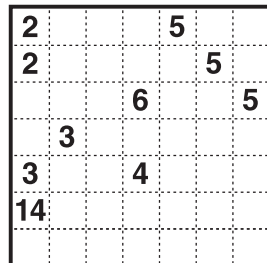
Killer Tough No 9503



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Cell Blocks No 5115



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Set Square No 3734

+	x	5	= 85
-	+	÷	
+	2	x	= 6
+	x	+	
-	x	= 21	
= 11	= 30	= 12	

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2692

WORKCAMP MEAN
E E A A E O
PIQUE LOCKJAW
T U S I R I O
I S A A G N E W T O N
P R E S S D
E V E N S O S T A R V E R
R A S F E R
S W A L L O W T A I L
I N T A I L A P
S I Z E O U P L U X O R
T I E E E O
S L O B G R A N D D A D

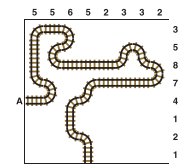
Codeword 5231

BONSAI FLUFFY
W T M L S L
U N C O U P L E H O A R
E P A E E A T
D R U G S A T U R A T E
E X P L O R A T I O N
S U A L I S E W I N
E Q U A L I S E K E E P
O U E M S L V
Z I N G P R O H I B I T
R I L M M N C
J E R S E Y E I G H T H

Kakuro 3730

2 1 3	2 1	1 3
4 2 1 3	5 3 1 4	2
2 4 1	5 3 2 1	
2 1 7 9 3	6 5	
4 7 9 8 6 3	1 3	
9 8	2 1 3 8 9 7	
5 8	2 1 3 7 5	
1 2 3 5	8 6 9	
2 4 1 3 5	2 6 3 1	
3 5 1 2	4 1 2	

Train Tracks 2260



Sudoku 14,961

4	9	8	3	7	5	1	6	2
2	6	7	8	9	1	4	3	5
3	1	5	6	2	4	7	8	9
6	7	3	2	4	8	9	5	1
9	8	2	1	5	3	6	7	4
1	5	4	9	6	7	8	2	3
5	3	9	4	8	6	2	1	7
8	2	1	7	3	9	5	4	6
7	4	6	5	1	2	3	9	8

Sudoku 14,962

1	6	9	7	2	8	5	4	3
5	2	7	3	4	6	1	8	9
8	4	3	9	5	1	7	2	6
2	3	1	8	9	4	6	7	5
4	7	6	5	3	2	9	1	8
1	5	4	9	6	7	1	4	3
7	9	2	1	6	3	8	5	4
3	1	5	4	8	9	2	6	7
6	8	4	2	7	5	3	9	1

Sudoku 14,963

3	9	8	7	2	1	4	6	5
6	4	7	8	5	3	1	9	2
5	1	2	6	4	9	3	7	8
1	8	4	5	6	2	7	3	9
7	5	6	3	9	8	2	4	1
9	2	3	1	7	4	5	8	6
4	3	5	2	8	6	9	1	7
2	6	9	1	7	8	5	3	4
8	7	1	9	3	5	6	2	4

Killer 9500

4	6	1	9	2	5	8	7	3
2	7	3	8	1	6	5	4	9
8	5	9	7	3	4	6	2	1
3	1	7	4	6	8	2	9	5
9	2	6	1	5	3	7	8	4
5	4	8	2	7	9	1	3	6
1	8	4	5	9	2	3	6	7
6	9	5	3	8	7	4	1	2
7	3	2	6	4	1	9	5	8

Killer 9501

8	2	7	9	4	5	1	3	6
1	4	9	2	6	3	7	8	5
6	3	5	1	7	8	4	2	9
4	5	1	7	3	6	2	9	8
7	9	6	8	1	2	5	4	3
3	8	2	4	5	9	6	1	7
5	1	4	3	9	7	8	6	2
2	7	3	6	8	4	9	5	1
9	6	8	5	2	1	3	7	4

GK Crossword 236

PIADLESTEAMER
E U A E P O H B
ARROW APHRODITE
S I S T E R G N E
AIRHOSTESS SERP
N O T U V W
TOPSIDE SVERIGE
S A E R N L
ROSETTA GASKELL
P O W E R I
VEDA EDGARALLAN
O F O R E S P A G
LABYRINTH PIPIT
T L E T E E A O
E I S T H E R A N T I Z E N

Cell Blocks 5114

3	7
2	4
2	2
4	2
2	3
2	9
2	3

Set Square 3733

2	-	6	+	5
+	x	x	x	
9	+	8	x	4
x	÷	÷	-	
7	÷	1	x	3

Lexica 7449

W	H	Y	A
N	A	N	Y
G			
E	B	O	N
R			

Futoshiki 4771

4	<	5	3	1	<	2
5	1	2	>	3		
3	1	4	<	2	5	
1	<	2	5	>	3	4
2	<	3	4	5	1	

KenKen 6223

3	1	2	5	6	4
2	3	5	4	1	6
6	5	3	2	4	1
4	6	1	3	5	2
5	4	6	1	2	3
1	2	4	6	3	5

Lexica 7450

P	U	S	H	E	D
T	I	E	A		
T	O	N	M		
I	R	K	E		

Today's solutions

Concise Quintagram

- Slob
- Ashy
- Riesling
- Baffling
- Heathrow

Cryptic Quintagram

- Lout
- Cross
- Vertex
- Reverent
- Thin on top

Suko 4133

7	9	2
3	1	8
4	5	6

Brain Trainer

- Easy 61
- Medium 1,070
- Harder 5,136

Word watch

- Geniculate** (b) Bent like a knee (*Chambers*)
Norsel (c) A band joining rope to a fishing net (*Collins*)
Leptocaul (c) Any tree with a thin trunk and branches (*OED*)
Chess - Winning Move
1... b5! unexpectedly traps the white queen in mid-board. After 2 axb5 axb5 Black will make a decisive material gain

1 Abba 2 Tarzan aka John Clayton, Lord Greystoke 3 £50 4 Deafness or hearing loss 5 Martin Luther King Jr 6 Private Eye, the column was originally titled Nooks and Corners of the New Barbarism 7 Brooklyn 8 McLaren 9 The Limpopo 10 The Gentleman's Relish or Patum Peperium 11 Edward III, it is titled *L'assedio di Calais* or *The Siege of Calais* 12 Lauren Bacall 13 *Portrait of the Dwarf Nano Morgante*, its title subject was born Braccio di Bartolo 14 Michaela Tabb 15 Jan Smuts

MindGames

For extra
puzzles
See page 10

Word watch

David Parfitt

Geniculate

- a Pertaining to a family or clan
b Bent like a knee
c To make a wish

Norsel

- a A nibbled piece of food
b The outer casing of an aircraft engine
c A band joining rope to a fishing net

Leptocaul

- a Hair on the head of a newborn baby
b A luck-bringing spirit
c Any tree with a thin trunk and branches

Answers on page 15

Sudoku Mild No 14,964

			8			4		
9		8					2	6
2					1			
		7	1	3	4			2
		6			5			
		5	9	6	2			1
6					7			
7		4					9	3
			2			6		

Difficult No 14,965

1		7					9	3
	6		1					4
3								
	4			5				
			7		6			
	9	8	2	3			7	
4			6					1
			8		1		5	
8	5				9		6	

Super fiendish No 14,966

			5	8	7	3		
		3			6	5	8	
	5					7	9	
1				9	4		5	
7			8					
4	9		1					
3	8	2						
	2	4	3					1

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

The Times Daily Quiz Olav Bjortomt

1 Which Swedish pop group reversed the first "B" in its official logo in 1976?

2 Which fictional character is the husband of Jane Clayton, Lady Greystoke?

3 A "bullseye" is a nickname for which denomination of Bank of England banknote?

4 "Autism" is discrimination against people with which physical disability?

5 *Stride Toward Freedom* (1958) was which American civil rights leader's first book?

6 In 1971, John Betjeman began the architectural column Nooks and



Corners in which satirical magazine?

7 *Long Island* (2024) is Colm Toibin's sequel to which novel, named after a New York City borough?

8 The Artura Spider is which British sports carmaker's first high-

performance hybrid convertible?

9 Which African river did Kipling describe as "great, grey-green [and] greasy" in *The Elephant's Child*?

10 Which anchovy paste was created in 1828 by John Osborn?

11 Donizetti composed an 1836 opera about the siege of Calais by which king of England?

12 Which US actress received her only Oscar nomination for *The Mirror Has Two Faces* (1996)?

13 Which double-sided painting by Bronzino portrays a naked dwarf who served Cosimo I de' Medici?

14 In 2009, who became the first woman to referee a World Snooker Championship final?

15 Jacob Epstein's statue of which South African statesman is this?

Answers on page 15

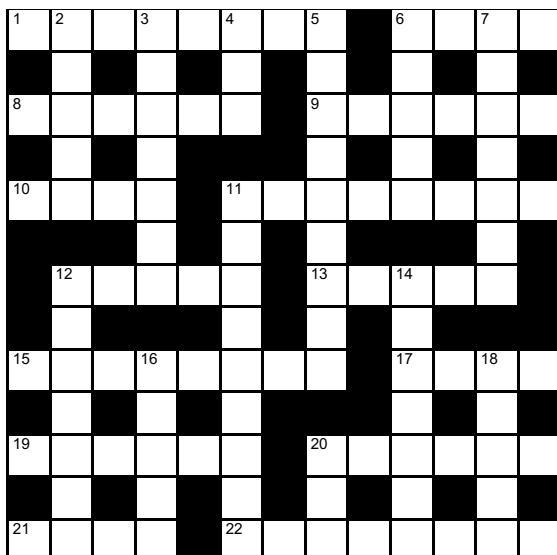
Suko No 4133

	20		20	
	13		20	
16		11		18

Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

For interactive puzzles visit thetimes.co.uk

The Times Quick Cryptic No 2693 by Hurley



Across

- 1 IT device firm silent about parking by right (8)
- 6 National with magnetism? (4)
- 8 Religious Education most important, don't leave (6)
- 9 Member of clergy welcoming time in Swiss region (6)
- 10 Formerly of note primarily associated with Church (4)
- 11 Sudden and surprising act, raid, many initially upset (8)
- 12 Personal belongings fill up (5)
- 13 Pleasing quality, allowing extra time to pay (5)
- 15 Holiday area, cold, with unusual pastime (8)
- 17 Stolen items in goods wagon (4)
- 19 Establish ascendancy over naval vessel, expected to arrive (6)
- 20 Sandy's liveliness (6)
- 21 Enthusiastically greet cold weather? (4)
- 22 Model agency worker departed (8)

Down

- 2 Regularly on cue, rain in Pacific maybe (5)
- 3 Flat metal piece, gold, to remain at stable price (7)
- 4 Brown belt (3)
- 5 Playground quarrel — four sides in it? (9)
- 6 Pundit's first with answer describing police car (5)
- 7 Stars, not quite ten, referring to pride maybe? (7)
- 11 Lacking confidence, I'd end tiff somehow (9)
- 12 Something for kitchen — pasta, extremely useful when stirred (7)
- 14 London players are captivating south: north also? Not so! (7)
- 16 Sound of laughter about daughter's foot-operated device? (5)
- 18 Some dealer, thorough, shows warning (5)
- 20 Heard fellow exercising here (3)

Yesterday's solution on page 15

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Few places have captured the imagination quite like Pompeii. As well as a fascinating tour of this iconic architectural gem, you'll have time to explore at your own pace too. From villas with brightly-decorated frescoes

to the spectacular amphitheatre, there's plenty to enjoy for that step-back-in-time encounter. You'll visit the seaside resort of Sorrento, and there's time to discover the Amalfi Coast and Ravello as part of an optional excursion.

The trip was well organised and our holiday director was not only knowledgeable, but very caring. She made sure that all our needs were met. All that was required from us was to have a fabulous holiday...Just You met all expectations, and I will definitely be touring with them again.



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Explore the iconic coastal paradise of the Amalfi Coast with charming towns and dramatic cliffs lapped by azure waters as you set out on foot to discover some of the area's ancient paths and hidden treasures. In Sorrento we will stop for lunch at a local farm and sample

some of their fresh produce including cheese, wine and limoncello. Fuelled up, we will walk onto a charming fishing village to enjoy a private cruise along the coast, and making the most of the cool sea breeze. In Amalfi and Ravello we will enjoy the beautiful woodland and national park,

leading us up nicely to the challenging Path of the Gods hike which takes in remote villages and bustling towns. And should you wish to hang up your walking boots for a while, there's two days of free time, or you can join an optional trip to Pompeii or the island of Capri.

This was my third Just You holiday and yet again I thoroughly enjoyed it. First time on a walking holiday, what an experience, going to places that I would never go to normally was a treat, walking was strenuous but really enjoyable. Meeting other people from various backgrounds is always fascinating and very interesting. Loved it and will return.




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Porto Cervo and take in all the delightful views before a visit to the charming village of San Pantaleo. A walking tour of Olbia and its glorious squares and promenades invite you to relax and enjoy the shade over a coffee or enjoy browsing its many boutiques.

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Explore Florence's historic centre



Visit Pisa's famous leaning tower



Enjoy a night at the opera (subject to timetable)



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Discover a host of highlights as you explore Tuscany's iconic rolling countryside, dotted with olive groves, vineyards and medieval hilltop towns. You'll visit vineyards and a mill to find out how olive oil and wine is produced in the region, followed by a

farm-to-table lunch of delicious Tuscan specialties. Art enthusiasts will love spending time in Florence where some of the great masters worked, while the spa town of Montecatini Terme is a haven for shopping, dining and relaxing during your time at leisure.

Tuscany was beautiful. Everything was handled well from start to finish. The guide was helpful and a lovely group of people. Really enjoyed my first solo trip.



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Visits to the clifftop town of Ronda and traditional villages of Frigiliana and Nerja



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Enjoy the Spanish way of life on this relax and discover style tour, created exclusively for solo travellers. Andalucía is an enthralling region which boasts a mild Mediterranean climate. You'll have the opportunity to admire the whitewashed villages of Mijas

and Ronda and tour vibrant Malaga. This cosmopolitan city is enveloped in more than 3,000 years of history making it one of the oldest cities in the world. There's also time to spend at leisure, relaxing on Nerja's lovely sandy beaches.

As a solo traveller who has previously paid a lot extra in supplements discovering this company has been a godsend. This was by far the best organised holiday I've ever had...



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Visit to Monet's Garden including entrance



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The famous gardens of Claude Monet take centre stage for this short break. With your base close to the chic capital of Paris, you'll feel inspired by the impressionist's wonderful spaces including the flower garden, Clos Normand, as well as the Japanese-style water garden. This enchanting

experience continues with an optional excursion to the formal gardens of the Château de Versailles, featuring more than 200 sculptures, woodland groves, fountains and a spectacular orangery. There's also the opportunity to enjoy an evening coach tour of Paris - the perfect time to discover the City of Light.

The trip was extremely well organised which as a first time solo traveller was important to me. The guide was excellent and was with the group from the beginning of the tour to the very end and was informative and helpful - and friendly with a sense of humour. Everything from the Eurostar journey, the location of the hotel and the organised tours was perfect!




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- Explore the Julian Alps, Lake Bohinj and Lake Bled
- Guided tour of Ljubljana and visit to Bled Castle
- Just You Holiday Director as your host
- Overseas transportation and portage



Discover Slovenia's hidden gems on this all-encompassing tour which reveals mirror-like lakes, glorious mountain scenery and enchanting castles, fused with opportunities to enjoy Slovenian culture with local treats and traditions. As well as touring the Kranjska Gora and the Julian Alps to experience

the best of the great outdoors, there's a tour in Ljubljana - a compact and charming city with cobble-stoned streets, a castle-topped hill and the Ljubljana River running through its heart, a lovely place for a stroll. And of course, no visit would be complete without a visit to Lake Bled on a traditional wooden Pletna boat!

Excellent care for single travellers. Your hand is held from check in to check out. Paul, our holiday director on the Slovenia trip was just amazing. This was my 4th trip and already looking for next trip with Just You.



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- Visit Troy, Pergamon and the Gallipoli War Memorial
- Tour the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus
- Just You Holiday Director as your host and Specialist Local Guide



The Grand Bazaar, the Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia are really just the beginning when it comes to exploring Turkey. This classic tour offers an assault on the senses in the best possible way, where history, culture and

memorable moments are shared with like-minded travellers. From the ancient city of Ephesus to belly-dancing shows and Gözleme pastries, we'll explore Turkey's culture on a backdrop of famous landmarks and natural wonders.

Turkey is a beautiful country and the scenery, the history and the culture was very interesting and absorbing. We had a local guide who was very knowledgeable.



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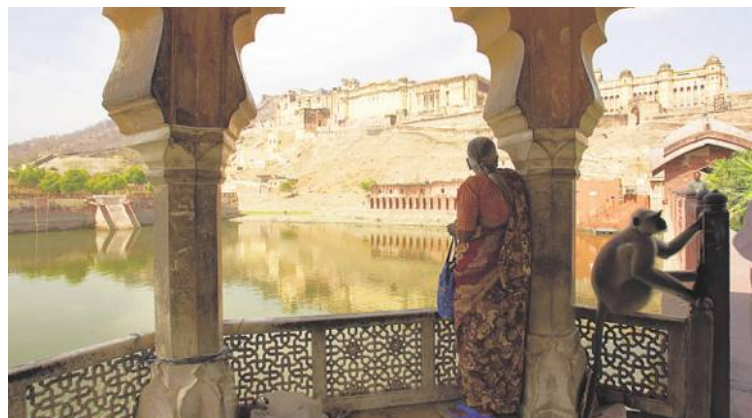
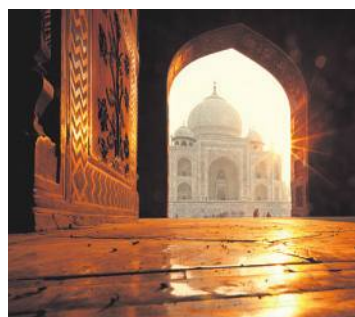
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Spirit of India

 Departures | October 2024 to November 2026

This enthralling tour takes you on an incredible journey through India's very best cultural, religious and natural sites. Starting with the heady scents of Old Delhi and its vibrant bazaars and food stalls, we'll then move onto the pink city of Jaipur and its eclectic mix of fortresses, palaces and more. Look

out for the elusive tiger in Ranthambore National Park as part of an exciting game drive, and then we'll enjoy our cultural fix with visits to temples and the holy city of Varanasi, where we'll sail along the Ganges at dawn - a real 'pinch-me' moment on this tour.



Price includes



Return flights from London (one night in flight)



Overseas transfers, other transportation & portage



11 nights in four- and five-star hotels, with a guaranteed room of your own



11 breakfasts, five lunches, 11 dinners



Tours of Old Delhi, Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Amber Fort and Jaipur



Game drives in Ranthambore and boat ride on the River Ganges



Visits to Abanheri Step Wells and a fragrance house for a perfumery tour



Sail the Ganges as dawn breaks



Just You Holiday Director as your host



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My trip to India was everything I hoped it would be and more! Our guide Abi was excellent, just the right balance of information and interesting cultural knowledge. The sites we visited were breathtaking and making new friends added to the experience.



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Our trusted partner




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America's Western Wonders

 **Departures | October 2024 to October 2025**

Experience incredible natural and man-made wonders on this truly epic tour. Starting in Los Angeles, you'll see highlights including the TCL Chinese Theatre and have the chance to visit Warner Bros Studios. Enjoy a stay in San Diego, a city perched on the edge

of the Pacific Ocean, then take a journey through the stunning Arizona Desert. A visit to the Grand Canyon is an amazing trip of a lifetime, and an optional flight over comes highly recommended. You'll travel along a section of Route 66 to the neon-lit wonderland of Las Vegas before

heading back to California through the Mojave Desert. The highlights keep on coming as you explore Yosemite National Park, then cross San Francisco's famous Golden Gate Bridge for a two-night stay in this cosmopolitan city.

The highlights keep on coming on this energetic tour of America's west from movie set sights to the bright lights of Las Vegas, there's excitement at every turn!



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Price includes

-  Return flights from London and use of an airport lounge in the UK
-  Overseas transfers, internal flights, other transportation & portage
-  12 nights in hotels of a great standard plus one night in flight
-  A guaranteed twin or double room of your own
-  12 breakfasts and two dinners including welcome dinner and drink and farewell drink
-  Tours of LA, San Francisco and San Diego, visits to the iconic Grand Canyon and stunning Yosemite National Park
-  Drive part of Route 66 and stay on the Las Vegas strip
-  Just You Holiday Director as your host and Specialist Local Guide



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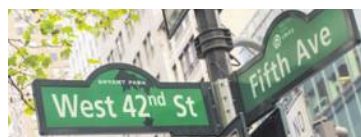
New York City

 **Departures | September 2024 to December 2025**

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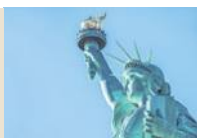
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The Big Apple, The City That Never Sleeps, no matter what you call New York, it is one of the most exciting cities in the world. This short break gives you the chance to see many of its most iconic landmarks,

beginning in its beating heart, Times Square. You'll explore Central Park with a knowledgeable guide and see Manhattan's highlights as you enjoy a lunch time cruise, sipping a drink as you circle the remarkable Statue of Liberty.

This was my first holiday with Just You and won't be my last. I booked another as soon as I came home! It was well organised from start to finish...



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Price includes

-  Return flights from London or Manchester and use of an airport lounge in the UK
-  Overseas transfers, other transportation and portage
-  Three nights in a hotel of a great standard in the heart of Manhattan
-  Three breakfasts, one lunch and one dinner
-  Sightseeing tour, walking tour of Central Park and lunch cruise on Hudson River included



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A Mexican Adventure

 Departures | November 2024 to November 2025

Experience a real adventure as you explore Mexico all the way from its cultured capital, Mexico City, to the golden beaches of Cancun. An exhilarating tour of Mexico City takes in the historic centre and lively square where key landmarks include the Metropolitan Cathedral, National Palace and one of the world's top ten museums: the National Anthropology Museum. During this trip

you'll visit a number of valley and colonial towns such as Oaxaca - famed for its rich cultural traditions reflected in its local crafts and cuisine. There's also time for the great outdoors with a visit to the jungle and waterfalls of Agua Azul. Before we finish in Cancun for a little relaxation, we will visit the remarkable Chichen Itza - one of the new seven wonders of the world and one of the best preserved Mayan cities.



What we love

This exhilarating tour takes you right across Mexico to experience history, culture and famous attractions, allowing you to say you've seen the best of this vibrant country!



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- Price includes**
-  Return flights from London (one night in flight) and use of an airport lounge in the UK
 -  Overseas transfers, other transportation & portage
 -  13 nights in three and four-star hotels, with a guaranteed room of your own
 -  13 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners
 -  Visits to Teotihuacan archaeological complex, National Anthropology Museum, Monte Alban in Oaxaca, Sumidero Canyon in Chiapas, Chichen Itza, and Merida - capital of the Yucatan
 -  Just You Holiday Director as your host

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