

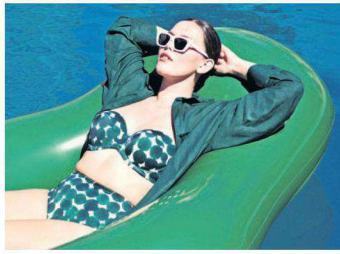
THE



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Why you're never too old for a bikini

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Anything to declare?

The new rules for office flings

Health MoTs will aim to keep older patients out of hospital

Eleanor Hayward Health Editor

Older patients arriving at A&E will be offered "health MoTs" to check for conditions including dementia, diabetes and heart disease.

Hospitals have been told to set up new services "at their front door" to screen any frail over-65s for chronic illnesses, under a plan to prevent thou-

sands of admissions and free up beds. It means those arriving at A&E needing treatment for falls, fractures or common infections will also be assessed for underlying illnesses straight away.

This will focus on providing treatment and medication to enable older patients to return home on the same day, so they do not have to be admitted to a ward for further checks. The NHS

hopes this will reduce the "bed-blocking" that is leaving thousands of elderly patients stranded on wards, causing a logjam in hospitals and damaging productivity.

The same-day frailty services are being established at all A&Es in England, running ten hours a day, seven days a week. Any conditions identified will be flagged with the

patient's GP, reducing the chances of them being readmitted to hospital.

Amanda Pritchard, chief executive of NHS England, said: "Health MoTs at the front door of A&Es for older people could be a lifeline for many, from blood pressure tests to a review of their falls' history, these checks mean patients can be assessed quickly and directed to the right support for their needs."

Nearly two thirds of those admitted to hospital are over 65, and the NHS is struggling to cope with rising demand from an ageing population. Last year there were more than 200,000 emergency hospital admissions in this age group because of falls.

"With rising demand for care, it is vital that we continue to adapt our

Continued on page 4

PM: A vote for Reform puts Labour into No 10

Sunak issues warning at Tory manifesto launch

Oliver Wright Policy Editor
Steven Swinford Political Editor
Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Rishi Sunak warned that a vote for Reform or the Liberal Democrats could hand Sir Keir Starmer a decade in power as he unveiled a £17 billion package of tax cuts in an effort to turn Tory fortunes around.

The prime minister said Labour could be in government for a "very long time" as he used the launch of the Conservative Party manifesto to urge against handing Starmer a "blank cheque".

The Tories released a social media advert saying that voting for other parties could give Starmer "the largest majority Labour have ever had". It included a graphic suggesting that the Tories could be reduced to only 57 seats.

Cabinet ministers said the Tories are now pursuing a "damage limitation" strategy as they broadly welcomed the manifesto. "It's the difference between five years of Starmer and ten years of Starmer," one said.

The manifesto is designed to make tax cuts the key dividing line in the campaign as Sunak accused Starmer of preparing to raise taxes if he won the general election.

A promise to abolish basic-rate national insurance for the self-employed, saving the average worker £1,350, was the main new tax announcement as Sunak sought to

position the Tories on the side of workers and entrepreneurs. He confirmed another 2p cut to employee national insurance, saving £450 for the average worker, a cut to stamp duty for first-time buyers, child benefit for more middle earners and a guarantee to raise the tax-free personal allowance for pensioners.

"Look at what this manifesto contains — a tax cut for everyone in work as we halve the rate of national insurance," he said.

His promise to pay for the giveaways with a £12 billion welfare squeeze and a crackdown on tax avoidance was questioned by some economists.

The manifesto also included:

- Building 1.6 million homes over the next parliament with new support for first-time buyers;
- Halving immigration, introducing an annual cap on migrants and working to "rewrite asylum treaties" while keeping open withdrawal from the European Convention on Human Rights;
- Recruiting 92,000 more nurses and 28,000 more doctors for the NHS and capping the lifetime cost of social care;
- Giving extra help to middle-class families by raising the child benefit tax charge from £60,000 to £120,000, benefiting 700,000 families.

The prime minister acknowledged that the government had not got "everything right" but insisted the Tories were the "only party" with "big

Continued on page 2



Hunter Biden with first lady Jill Biden, and his wife, Melissa, after being convicted. President Biden has ruled out a pardon

Hunter Biden guilty of buying gun illegally

Hugh Tomlinson Delaware

Hunter Biden, son of the US president, said he was "disappointed" by the verdict after being found guilty of illegally buying and owning a gun while abusing drugs.

After a week-long trial that was brutal and often humiliating for the first family, the jury took three hours to find President Biden's only surviving son guilty on all three felony charges linked to his purchase of a revolver in 2018 while addicted to crack cocaine.

Biden Jr, 54, was convicted of lying to a licensed gun dealer, making a false claim about his drug addiction on a federal form and illegally owning the gun

for 11 days. He now faces up to 25 years in prison, though legal experts do not expect him to receive a sentence close to the maximum.

In a statement after the verdict, Biden Jr thanked his wife and family for their support throughout the trial and his recovery from addiction.

"I am more grateful today for the love and support I experienced this last week from Melissa, my family, my friends and my community than I am disappointed by the outcome," he said. "Recovery is possible by the grace of God, and I am blessed to experience that gift one day at a time."

The president would travel to Delaware to be with his son, the White

House said. The verdict comes less than two weeks after his rival for the White House, Donald Trump, was convicted in his New York hush-money trial.

Unlike Trump, who has claimed that his trial was "rigged", Biden Sr issued a statement yesterday saying he respected the jury's verdict. He has ruled out issuing a pardon for his son.

"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," Biden said. "So many families who have had loved ones battle addiction understand the feeling of pride seeing someone you love come out the other side and be so strong and resilient in recovery."

Report and analysis, page 5

News

Today's highlights

7.05am Grant Shapps, defence secretary
11am Matt Chorley speaks to Professor Sir John Curtice about how to restore trust in politics
1.15pm Adrian Ramsay, co-leader of the Green Party
1.45pm Andrew Neil talks to Ben Bradshaw and Nadine Dorries, right
3.35pm Art historian Katy Hessel discusses her podcast Death of an Artist

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TODAY'S EDITION

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 How a robotic third thumb could change our lives

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WINNING STREAK
 Ally McCoist on why England could win Euro 2024

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LOAFING ABOUT
 Why doing nothing is good for us as we get older

PAGE 9

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



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Young, French and voting hard-right

France's National Rally opposition party has been boosted by young voters, personified by Jordan Bardella, the 28-year-old party president. Why are French youth shifting to the right?

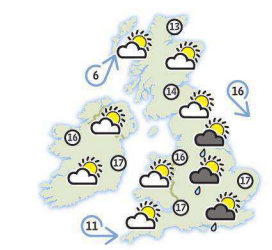
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THE WEATHER



Bright spells and showers in the east but mainly dry with sunny intervals elsewhere. Full forecast, page 49

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More than nine million people economically inactive, says ONS

Mehteen Khan

More than nine million people in the UK are economically inactive, official statistics show.

Within this figure, the number of working-age adults economically inactive has hit a record high of 2.8 million.

According to the Office for National Statistics, 22.3 per cent of adults aged 16 to 64 are not actively looking for work, the most for nine years and up by 132,000 in the three months to the end of April. When including students and those who have retired, the economically inactive population is 9.4 million.

Contrary to some hopes, the UK's missing worker problem has not improved since Covid lockdowns ended, with a record number of Britons now suffering from long-term illness amid spiralling NHS waiting lists and after a surge in mental health problems.

The ONS's figures are subject to revision as its labour market survey has been plagued by low response rates.

The falling supply of workers is a problem for politicians and the Bank of

England. Labour and the Conservatives have both vowed to get people back into work, with the problem costing the economy £39 billion through labour and skills shortages.

"A new government serious about growing the economy must tackle this pressing challenge and support the health of our workforce," Christopher Rocks, lead economist at the Health Foundation, said. "The next government will need to do much more to help people to remain in work and healthy in the first place. This should start by rethinking measures to reduce the generosity of health-related benefits, which risk being counterproductive by increasing poverty and further deteriorating health."

The Tories have said they would crack down on the record number of people claiming disability benefits and end the nation's "sick-note culture" in an effort to force people back to work.

Labour has said it would bolster workers' rights and raise the minimum wage if it wins power next month.

The Recruitment and Employment

Confederation, an industry body for the recruitment sector, said the next government could improve the supply of workers through "lowering barriers on skills, supporting infrastructure such as childcare and transport, regulation, immigration and tax".

For the Bank, the high inactivity rate risks stoking inflation as companies raise wages to retain and hire talent. Despite other parts of the labour market cooling off, the shrinking workforce could scupper the prospect of big interest rate cuts over the coming years.

The Bank's monetary policy committee is likely to keep the base rate at 5.25 per cent when it meets next week.

The UK's inactivity rate, which had been one of the lowest in the G7, jumped during the pandemic and, unlike in other European economies and in the United States, it has not recovered to pre-Covid levels.

The equivalent inactivity rate in America has dropped from a peak of 28 per cent in 2020 to 25 per cent, while in countries such as France and Germany it has been falling.

Tories pledge to deport 90,000 migrants

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

The Conservative Party manifesto has committed to deporting more than 90,000 migrants to Rwanda and other countries as part of a pledge to end the costly use of hotels for asylum seekers.

All future asylum claims would be processed within a new six-month deadline under plans set out in the manifesto to "end the legal merry-go-round" of asylum claims and end the use of hotels. It currently costs the Home Office about £8 million per day to house asylum seekers in hotels.

Rishi Sunak stepped back from any firm commitment on Britain's membership of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) but repeated his pledge to prioritise border security over compliance with the convention. The manifesto, published yesterday,

said a future Conservative government would clear the asylum backlog.

As of April 14, the most recent date for which figures are available, 83,154 asylum claims were awaiting an initial decision, which relates to more than 100,000 people. They include families and couples who can claim asylum as part of one claim.

The vast majority of those claims — 73,239, relating to more than 90,000 people — are from migrants who have arrived in the UK illegally since March 2023.

Provisions passed by the Illegal Migration Act last year placed an automatic bar on asylum for those who arrive illegally. However, the provisions have not yet been implemented as the Home Office has struggled to introduce the practical measures needed. In the manifesto, the Conservatives com-

mit to implementing the provisions, which would be backdated and lead to more than 90,000 migrants being permanently barred from the asylum system. The Refugee Council has forecast that this number will rise to more than 115,000 by the end of this year.

Senior party sources said migrants would be sent to their home country, Rwanda or another safe third country. In reality, however, the move is likely to place tens of thousands of migrants in limbo, barred from claiming asylum in the UK but unable to be removed.

While the government insists the Rwanda scheme is uncapped, leaked documents have revealed that the country is ready to take 30,000 asylum seekers over a five-year period.

The Rwanda scheme has already cost the UK government £290 million despite not relocating a single migrant.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 Tory manifesto launch

ideas". He added: "I'm not blind to the fact people are frustrated with our party and frustrated with me. We have not always got everything right. But we are the only party at this election with the big ideas to make our country a better place to live."

He said if Labour took power it would "change the rules" to give 16 and 17-year-olds the vote to ensure that the party was in power "for a very long time". He added: "All a vote for Reform or the Liberal Democrats does is allow Labour to do whatever they want to our country."

However, he told ITV News that he had "respect" for Nigel Farage and said he had been right to highlight migration as an issue. He denied he was threatened by Farage's entry into the race, saying the choice at the election was "either Keir Starmer or me".

Labour said Sunak was "cosplaying Liz Truss", claiming that the Tory manifesto contained £71 billion of unfunded spending commitments and likened the plans to Truss's mini-budget that would lead to a "second Tory mortgage bombshell".

However, Sunak cited his opposition to Truss's tax cuts to insist he was "not afraid to do things that are difficult" as he insisted voters could trust him to

Analysis

Seventy-six pages long. Nearly £20 billion worth of tax and spending announcements. Dozens of pledges. As manifestos go, Rishi Sunak's was substantial by any measure and designed to cut across every demographic (Steven Swinford writes).

It promises a 2p cut to national insurance for workers, income tax cuts for pensioners, and child benefit for high earners along with a policy blitz including compulsory national service for 18-year-

olds and the scrapping of "Mickey Mouse" degrees.

But will it be enough to shift the dial? Labour's lead in the polls has remained stubbornly north of 20 points.

The immediate debate around the manifesto will focus on whether it is affordable.

The costings document published alongside the manifesto shows that Sunak's pledges are underwritten by two big sources of cash: saving £12 billion by reforming welfare over the course of the next parliament and

raising £6 billion by clamping down on tax avoidance and evasion. A further £1.2 billion would come from "quango efficiencies" and £3.9 billion from reducing the civil service headcount.

Economists have pointed out that those revenue sources are far from certain. Indeed, welfare spending is forecast to rise significantly over the next five years. Clamping down on tax evasion and avoidance is unpredictable, and needs significant investment in HM Revenue & Customs.

deliver. "If I'm prime minister, you will have this bold action — all you have got from the Labour Party is a blank sheet of paper," he said. He insisted the election was "about the future", saying: "The future that we want to deliver for

our country is one where, above all, families will have financial security because their taxes are being cut."

Election reports, pages 6-9
 Manifesto should have been more inventive, leading article, page 23

Father and son who hired assassin face life sentences

Pair contracted an American woman to kill in a revenge plot that went wrong, David Woode writes

A father and his son are facing life sentences after a female American assassin they had hired botched a revenge killing when her gun jammed.

Mohammed Nazir, 30, and Mohammed Aslam, 56, plotted to kill Aslat Mahamud or members of his family after a dispute in 2018 at a jewellery store left them both injured.

The pair recruited Aimee Betro, 44, who flew in from Chicago for the contract killing in Acocks Green in Birmingham, on September 7, 2019, a court was told.

Betro was said to have been given a clear brief. Birmingham crown court was told that she arranged to meet Sikander Ali, a shop owner and Mahamud's son, after feigning interest in a Volkswagen Golf that the family was selling.

Disguised in a hijab, she "calmly" approached Ali, pointed the gun at his head and pulled the trigger. However the gun failed to fire and Ali fled the scene.

Undeterred by the failed hit, it was said that Betro went to Mahamud's house and opened fire three times.

The jury was told that she sent texts to Mahamud, which read: "Where are you hiding? Stop playing hide and seek."

Nazir and Aslam, of Derby, were charged with conspiracy to murder and possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, which they denied.

Last week, Nazir and Aslam were found guilty of conspiracy to murder.

Nazir was also found guilty of possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, perverting the course of justice and illegally importing firearms over a plot to bring guns into the country and then blame it on another

Female murderers for hire

● During the 19th century, Madame Popova operated a murder-for-hire service in Russia, where she was paid by wives to kill their violent husbands. She murdered some 300 men in all, using poison, weapons and her own hands. A repentant wife eventually tipped off Russian police and Popova was executed by a firing squad.

● Maria Jimenez, aka La Tosca, is one of Mexico's most prolific female assassins. Jimenez was paid about £1,400 a month by the Zetas drug cartel to murder her victims. Convicted in 2012, she confessed to killing 20 people.

● Kim Hyun-hui, a mother-of-two, clocked up a body count of 115 as a North Korean agent. She was recruited from university aged 19 and in 1987 took down a South Korean airliner with a bomb, under the orders of Kim Il-sung, who wanted to prevent the Olympics taking place in Seoul. Despite being sentenced to death, she was later pardoned. She defected, married a former South Korean intelligence officer and had two children.

person to frame them. Aslam was cleared of a firearms offence. The pair will be sentenced on August 9.

The court was told that Betro had returned to the US and remains at large. West Midlands police said that detectives were working to trace her.

The trial was told how the would-be assassin got out of the driver's side of a Mercedes as her target, Ali, pulled up in an Audi outside another address.

Kevin Hegarty KC, for the prosecution, told the court: "She walked quite calmly towards Sikander Ali and was pointing a gun at him at head height.

"As she got closer to Ali he saw her and he saw the gun and she pulled the trigger to fire the gun at him.

"Mercifully and luckily for him the gun jammed. He quickly reversed his car striking the open door of the Mer-



Jodie and a case of drop-dead glamour

Jodie Comer, who played the Russian assassin Villanelle in the BBC spy thriller *Killing Eve*, below, attended the gala screening of *The Bikeriders* at Curzon Mayfair in central London yesterday.

Comer, 31, won a Bafta and an Emmy for her performance in *Killing Eve*, which led to her gaining worldwide fame. She previously appeared in *Holby City*, *Silent Witness* and *Casualty*.

The Bikeriders, in which she stars alongside Austin Butler, follows the members of an American motorcycle club, the Outlaws MC, and is due for release this month.



Mohammed Nazir and Mohammed Aslam wanted revenge after a dispute

cedes. The would-be assassin then ran back to the Mercedes and started to drive away."

Betro is said to have abandoned the car and ordered a taxi just after 9pm.

In the early hours of the next morning, she called the same cab firm and took a taxi to Mahamud's house. Hegarty said: "She took out a gun, it may

have been the same gun. She took aim and fired three shots in the direction of the house before returning to the waiting taxi."

Police carried out a detailed investigation at the scene and discovered the would-be assassin was Betro, an American citizen. She is said to have flown from Chicago to Manchester, via Atlanta, and arrived in the UK on August 22 — some 16 days before the shooting.

Hegarty said that she bought the Mercedes in Alum Rock, a suburb east of Birmingham city centre, and in the days leading up to the shooting, she stayed at a number of hotels in Derby, Brighton and London.

While in Birmingham, Betro bought two phones from Tesco, one of which she used to contact Nazir and the other to text Mahamud, the court was told.

Hegarty revealed that there had been "history" between the households that involved an attack on a boutique in Alum Rock in July 2018 and a subsequent attack on the defendants' home in Derby when windows were smashed.

He said that Nazir had later told a friend about two guns he owned "to commit a revenge attack on those that had attacked his home".

Before flying back to America, Betro contacted Virgin airlines and attempted to change the flight documents so Nazir could fly back with her.

Hegarty said that Nazir flew to the US on September 13 and, on entry documents he filled in, gave the address where he would be staying as Betro's address in Wisconsin. He returned four weeks later and was arrested on the same day as his father.

Kevin Spacey auctions house to pay 'millions' in legal bills

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

Kevin Spacey is being forced to auction his house in Baltimore to pay off the "millions" he owes in legal bills.

The American actor, 64, right, said that he was returning to the US to put his belongings in storage before a sale of the riverside property that he lived in while filming the Netflix series *House of Cards*. The 9,000 sq ft home located in the city's Inner Harbour seaport is expected to attract starting bids of more than \$5.6 million.

Spacey, who in July was acquitted of nine sexual assault charges, told the

Piers Morgan *Uncensored* YouTube show that he had come close to bankruptcy as a result of his legal costs.

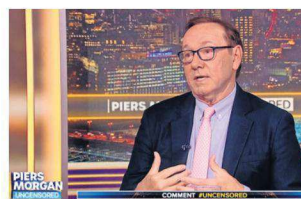
"This week, where I have been living in Baltimore is being foreclosed on. My house is being sold at auction so I have to go back to Baltimore and put all my things in storage," he said. "It's been a couple of times when I thought I was going to file [for bankruptcy], but we've managed to sort of dodge it, at least as of today. I still owe a lot of legal bills that I have not been able to pay."

He added that he planned to "get back on the horse" to help settle his debts amid calls from stars including

Sharon Stone, Stephen Fry and Liam Neeson for him to be allowed to return to acting.

Spacey, who broke down in tears during the emotional 100-minute interview with Morgan, said that he had thought about taking his own life as he fought to clear his name. "I do want to live, but there were times when I wasn't sure if I would make it," he said.

The interview took place weeks after ten actors, film crew members and a high school contemporary alleged in the Channel 4 documentary *Spacey Unmasked* that they were subject to unwanted sexual advances and groping



incidents that they say left them feeling shocked, ashamed and disgusted.

Spacey, who has denied any criminal behaviour, said that he had changed his ways, having "pushed the boundaries"

in the past by "being too handsy, touching someone sexually in a way that I didn't know at the time they didn't want". He added: "I will never behave in the ways that I did previously, ever."

He said that he could understand why it could be perceived as an abuse of power for a double Oscar winner to flirt with young actors.

"I can understand that perspective, but at the same time I'm a human being, and if I fall in love with somebody across a room then [just because I'm famous] am I not supposed to go and have a conversation with them or see if they are interested?" he said.



Sail of the century The Atlantic, a three-masted 185ft replica of a yacht built in 1903, competes in the Richard Mille Cup near Cowes on the Isle of Wight. After a series of races in the Solent, the final 100 nautical mile race starts tomorrow at Cowes and finishes in Le Havre, France. The race showcases the workmanship of classic yachts

Quintagram® No 1966

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Isle of Man town (6)

2 Labour prime minister (6)

3 --- out, dwindles to nothing (6)

4 Obstacles for country walkers (6)

5 --- Heston, classic film star (8)

A	A	C	E	E	E	E	H
I	I	L	L	L	M	N	N
O	O	P	R	R	R	S	S
S	S	S	T	T	T	W	Y

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Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

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Depression found to increase memory loss ... and vice versa

Eleanor Hayward Health Editor

Depression can speed up memory loss in the over-50s because it changes the structure of the brain, according to research.

Scientists at University College London (UCL) monitored 8,268 adults for 16 years to examine the relationship between depressive symptoms and forgetfulness. They found that suffering from bouts of depression could hasten memory decline, while in a vicious cycle, poor memory in turn worsened depressive symptoms.

The scientists said depression can cause changes in brain structures and lead to high levels of stress hormones, which damage brain cells, contributing to memory decline that can result in dementia.

They added that treatments for depression, such as antidepressants — taken by 8.6 million adults in England — could help stave off memory loss.

"It is known that depression and poor memory often occur together in older people, but what comes first has been unclear," said Dr Dorina Cadar of UCL's Department of Behavioural Science & Health and Brighton and Sussex Medical School, the senior author of the study.

"Our study shows that the relationship between depression and poor memory cuts both ways, with depressive symptoms preceding memory decline and memory decline linked to subsequent depressive symptoms.

"It also suggests that interventions to reduce depressive symptoms may help to slow down memory decline."

The researchers highlighted how depression can cause changes in the brain that may disrupt its ability to reorganise and form new memories, including "neurochemical imbalances" in serotonin and dopamine.

Cadar said: "Depression can cause changes in brain structures such as the

hippocampus, which is critical for memory formation and retrieval. Chronic stress and high levels of cortisol associated with depression can damage neurons in these areas.

"A further understanding of mechanisms linking memory decline and depression is crucial for developing targeted interventions aimed at improving mood and slowing cognitive decline in individuals with depression and memory impairment."

The study, published in the medical journal JAMA Network Open, involved data from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing, which includes a clinical questionnaire screening for symptoms of depression, such as a low mood and lack of energy, as well as memory tests. The participants had an average age of 64 at the start of the study and were followed for 16 years.

It found that the rate of memory decline increased as people experienced more depressive symptoms, and that

memory loss led to depression. The study said memory lapses can lead to frustration, loss of confidence, and feelings of incompetence, which are common precursors of depressive episodes.

Memory impairment may also disrupt daily functioning and social interactions, leading to social isolation, which can exacerbate depression.

Latest data from the Office for National Statistics shows about one in six adults in the UK suffer from depression.

Jiamin Yin, lead author of the study, said: "These findings underscore the importance of monitoring memory changes in older adults with increasing depressive symptoms to identify memory loss early and prevent further worsening of depressive function."

"Conversely, it is also critical to address depressive symptoms among those with memory decline to protect them from developing depression and memory dysfunction."

A&E health checks for over-65s

Continued from page 1

services to meet the growing and changing needs of patients — which is why ... we have asked NHS hospitals to introduce practical measures to ensure older people get the care and support they need. While some people do need to be admitted, it isn't always the most suitable place for older patients' needs, and they can also rapidly lose mobility while in hospital."

As well as freeing up NHS beds, reducing the amount of time elderly patients spend in hospital helps to prevent them deteriorating. Hospitals are also being urged to expand schemes such as chair-based yoga and "race tracks" on wards, that keep elderly patients strong. Research shows muscle strength reduces by up to 10 per cent during each week in hospital, meaning some frail patients become too weak to go home.

The NHS drive to reduce admissions in over-65s was announced before the NHS Confederation conference in Manchester today amid mounting concern about the toll of doctors' strikes on the elderly. Junior doctors from the British Medical Association are walking out for five days in the lead-up to the election, from June 27 to July 2, causing tens of thousands of NHS appointments to be cancelled.

Matthew Taylor, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, urged the BMA to call off strikes if both Labour and the Tories pledged to reopen talks within ten days of forming a new government. About 1.5 million appointments have been postponed since industrial action began in the NHS in England in December 2022. Junior doctors want a 35 per cent pay rise.

Just 1% get test needed for new Alzheimer's drugs

Eleanor Hayward

Only 1 per cent of dementia patients get tests at NHS clinics that would allow them to access revolutionary Alzheimer's drugs, research has found.

Two breakthrough drugs, donanemab and lecanemab, have been shown to slow the progress of Alzheimer's disease in its early stages. They are expected to be approved for NHS use this summer, and up to 280,000 patients in the UK will be eligible. However,

patients need "gold-standard" diagnostic tests in the early stage of the disease to benefit. This involves either PET [positron emission tomography] brain scans or spinal fluid tests, to confirm the build-up of toxic proteins in the brain.

Research led by Queen Mary University of London has shown that only a handful of patients seen at NHS memory clinics are offered these tests, highlighting a "clear and urgent" need to improve screening.

Researchers from several NHS trusts

examined the clinical notes from 1,017 patients with dementia in five areas of London. Half of them were referred to community memory clinics, the main dementia care and diagnostic service offered by the NHS.

The study, published in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry, found that 32 per cent of patients in memory clinics may be suitable for the Alzheimer's drugs.

However, less than 1 per cent of them had undergone the biomarker tests

needed to get started on the new drugs.

The study said specialist NHS services must be urgently set up to prevent a "large mismatch" between referrals for the new drugs and those who can get them.

David Thomas, head of policy and public affairs at Alzheimer's Research UK, said: "New drugs are finally on the horizon, but for their full potential to be realised, health systems need to be able to offer people with symptoms of dementia an accurate early diagnosis."

'Hunter looked helpless, but he's guilty'

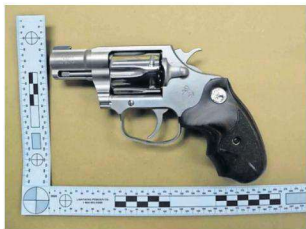
Hugh Tomlinson Washington

Hunter Biden nodded quietly as the jury handed down its verdict yesterday, announcing that the US president's son was guilty on all three felony counts.

With a deep breath and a thin smile, he turned and embraced his legal team one by one, then stepped into the public gallery to kiss his wife, Melissa. The couple left the courtroom together, while the Bidens' assembled entourage filtered out behind them, grim-faced.

Moments before, friends of the Biden family had been speaking to reporters in the hall outside, confident that Hunter would be acquitted. As news filtered through the courthouse that the jury had reached a verdict after just three hours of deliberation, it became clear that those hopes would be dashed.

A prolonged deliberation might have signalled that jurors were unconvinced by the prosecution claim that Hunter knowingly lied when he filled out a form to buy the Colt Cobra revolver from a Delaware gun store in October



President Biden was said to have been "consumed" by Hunter's trial, which involved the purchase of a Colt Cobra revolver

The chances of a jail term

Hunter Biden faces a maximum sentence of 25 years in prison and a fine of up to \$750,000 when he is sentenced for his felonies in about four months (David Charter writes).

The two counts of making false statements carry prison sentences of up to ten years and five years respectively, while the possession charge can result in a sentence of up to ten years. However, judges use a detailed set of sentencing guidelines that suggest he may face far less time in prison, if any.

The guidelines for Biden's convictions point to a maximum sentence of between 15 and 21 months in prison. Defendants in similar cases have received shorter sentences, including probation without being sent to jail, especially if they abide by the terms of their pre-trial and pre-sentencing release.

Hunter is a first-time offender and the charges involve a single weapon, which he had for just 11 days and was not misused. His ability to stay clean of drugs, the apparent stability of his marriage to Melissa Cohen Biden since 2019 and their parenting responsibility for their son, Beau, will also count in his favour. It all points to a non-custodial sentence, perhaps involving community service.

2018. Over the course of the week-long trial, though, prosecutors laid out overwhelming evidence that the president's son was still in the throes of crack addiction when he walked into Starquest Shooters and asked to buy a gun.

Speaking after the verdict, some jurors voiced sympathy for Hunter's battle against addiction but said that the evidence was compelling.

"He looks kind of helpless to me. I think he just needs to get away somewhere and get some real rehab, if he hasn't. Hopefully he's still not using," one juror told the New York Post. "We all knew Hunter Biden was a drug addict, and he was addicted, and he was making [drug] deals, like, 12 days prior to buying the gun. So, in his mind, how could he write [on the gun application]; no, he was not an addict?" he said.

Another said jurors were evenly split in a straw poll they took after receiving the case on Monday evening, but as they broke down the evidence, a consensus began to form. "Somewhere in most of our minds, we were probably thinking that, yes, he was guilty, but let's go over this again. Let's get it right, to do justice to Hunter and give him the benefit of the doubt," the juror said.

The verdict comes in an election year that has been as much about the courtroom as it has been about campaign events, after Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee for president, was found guilty of falsifying business records to hide a hush-money payment to a porn star.

Although President Biden did not attend the trial, family members including Jill Biden, the first lady, Hunter's sister Ashley, his wife Melissa and his uncle James Biden were regularly present. White House aides are concerned about the toll the trial and now conviction will take on the president as he steps up his re-election campaign. Biden, 81, is said to be "consumed" by his son's legal troubles, fearing that he could slide back into addiction if he is sent to jail.

Hunter's legal woes are not over. He also faces a federal indictment over unpaid taxes in California in a case that is set to go to court on September 5, just two months before polling day.

The trial followed the collapse of a plea deal last summer that would have shielded Hunter from jail time in the gun and tax cases. He has claimed that the case is politically motivated.

Prosecutors laid out a trove of evidence to underscore the depths of Hunter's addiction to crack cocaine around the time he bought the gun. There was also intimate testimony from Kathleen Buhle, Hunter's former wife, and Hallie Biden, the widow of his late brother Beau, with whom Hunter later had a relationship. Both women testified about their first-hand experience of Hunter's addiction and their failed attempts to help him get sober.

James Comer, the Republican chairman of the House oversight committee, said the guilty verdict marked a "step toward accountability".

How will the verdict affect US election?

Analysis

The unprecedented spectacle of a president's son squirming in the dock while prosecutors and his former lovers raked over the details of his sordid lifestyle has been excruciating for the Biden family but is unlikely to cause political pain (David Charter writes).

This election campaign is overwhelmingly about the impact of inflation and concerns over immigration and the loss of abortion rights, as well as the character of another convicted felon, Donald Trump, and the stamina — or lack of it — of President Biden.

The sad Hunter Biden show is unlikely to shift the needle with voters. If anything, it may help the president's standing, after he ruled out a pardon for his son under the presidential powers of clemency and refused to join Hunter's lawyer in condemning the proceedings as politically motivated. The president's reserve stands in contrast with

Trump's incessant attacks on the judicial system and loud complaints that his prosecutions amount to "lawfare" and an attempt at interference in the election.

Trump's allegations that the Department of Justice was behind the New York state hush-money prosecution — which it was not — and is irredeemably biased are refuted by the even-handedness shown in the federal prosecution of Democrats, including Robert Menendez, a senator from New Jersey who is on trial for corruption, and Henry Cuellar, a congressman from Texas set to stand trial next year for money laundering.

Meanwhile, the justice department decided not to indict one of the most pro-Trump Republican congressmen, Matt Gaetz of Florida, after investigating him for sex trafficking — hardly the action of a department hell-bent on political vendetta.

The relative quiet from the Republican side on the Hunter Biden prosecution also reflects that it is actively campaigning to allow greater access to gun ownership, not punish those who

A picture used in evidence in the trial

want to buy a firearm. The Gun Owners of America group said it "believes that the gun control Hunter Biden violated is unconstitutional and [the form he lied on] shouldn't even exist".

An Emerson survey found that 64 per cent of voters said the trial would have no impact on their decision, with 24 per cent saying it made them less likely to support Joe Biden and 12 per cent more likely.

The greater risk to Biden's re-election comes from his son's second trial, on tax evasion charges, in California in September. Starting just two months before polling day on November 5, and a matter of weeks before postal voting begins, this case will remind voters of Hunter's highly lucrative role on the board of a Ukrainian gas company.

Republicans will publicise the evidence of Hunter's "extravagant lifestyle" while failing to pay \$1.4 million over four years as part of their campaign against the "Biden crime family". No evidence has been produced proving that Joe Biden acted corruptly, but in the heat of the election campaign that will not matter.



Gary Glitter told to pay £500,000 to woman raped as a child

Sean O'Neill

Gary Glitter, the paedophile pop star, has been ordered to pay more than £500,000 in damages to a woman he raped when she was a schoolgirl.

The woman, now 60, told the High Court in London she was subjected to a lengthy ordeal by Glitter in 1977 after her mother, who was obsessed with the

singer, took her to one of his concerts and then met him backstage.

Then aged 12, she was plied with champagne at a hotel. She and her mother were then invited to Glitter's house in London, where he assaulted and raped the girl.

Mrs Justice Tipples said she accepted the claimant's evidence of the abuse and the profound effects it had on her life.

She dropped out of school, struggled to hold down a job and changed her name by deed poll because she had flashbacks of Glitter saying her old name.

The woman did not speak about the abuse until after her mother had died, when, she said, "the lid came off".

She reported her abuse to the police in 2013 and Glitter was convicted two years later, under his real name of Paul

Gadd, of assaulting her. The damages of £508,800 includes £381,000 in lost earnings and £7,800 for future therapy.

Richard Scorer, the woman's solicitor, indicated that there would now be a legal battle to obtain the money from Glitter, who is in prison and did not engage with the latest proceedings.

Glitter, 80, was jailed for 16 years in 2015 for sexually abusing the woman

and two other girls between 1975 and 1980. He was automatically released from HMP The Verne, a low-security prison in Portland, Dorset, in February last year after serving half his sentence.

He was recalled to prison less than six weeks later when police monitoring showed he had breached his licence conditions. In February this year, Glitter was refused an application for release.

News Politics

Behind the scenes, Tories talk of

Steven Swinford Political Editor
Oliver Wright, Chris Smyth, Matt Dathan, Aubrey Allegretti

For a campaign that has so far been beset by the weather, Nigel Farage and a spectacular own goal over D-Day, the Conservative manifesto launch went relatively smoothly.

Rishi Sunak chose Silverstone, home of the British Grand Prix, to unveil the 76-page document. He could not resist using the track as a metaphor, saying there was “nowhere better to mark the fact that our economy has truly turned the corner”.

The prime minister gave his cabinet their first glimpse of the manifesto shortly before he went on stage. Privately, most still believe Labour is on course for victory and the discussion among ministers is increasingly about the size of Labour's majority.

“He gave us all a pep talk, talking to each of us about what we'd done,” one minister said. “He was on good form. And look, this won't change the price of fish — Labour is still going to win — but if we get the campaign right from here on in, we can limit Labour's majority.”

“The tax-cut pledges create a genuine wedge between us and Labour. It's the difference between five years of [Sir Keir] Starmer and ten years of Starmer.”

Another minister said: “When you talk to people on the doorstep, there is absolutely zero enthusiasm for Labour, so I still hold out some hope that things might be closer than the polls suggest.”

“Our voters are angry but I still think we can persuade them to come back — unless they're just not telling us the truth. That is always a possibility.”

The manifesto has been months in the making and is designed to hit three broad demographics: workers, pensioners and parents. Despite Sunak's recent travails, the main measures are unchanged since the start of the election campaign. Sunak is said to have been “extremely involved” in the process, signing off on the document last Thursday evening after his disastrous decision to return home early from D-Day commemorations in Normandy.

In fiscal terms, it goes further than any Conservative offering in the past three elections. It includes £17.2 billion worth of tax cuts, including a 2p cut in

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this bold action,” Sunak said. “All you got from the Labour Party is a blank sheet of paper. Not a single big idea has been put on the table.”

Some of Sunak's own MPs, however, question whether it was bold enough. There was little new, the policies having been extensively trailed since Sunak called the general election. Candidates on the party's right are unhappy but have decided to keep their counsel. They wanted a stronger commitment on leaving the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) — left deliberately vague in the manifesto — and a bolder offer on tax cuts.

“I don't think it's enough,” one right-winger said. “We're still trying to ride two horses. The offer on the ECHR is too weak. We needed to be more explicit. But I don't think there's much he could have done, realistically. The public have made their mind up. It's too late to try and fatten the pig.”

Another said: “It's a big pile of nothingness. On immigration it takes us no further from where we are now.”

But they dismissed reports of an alternative right-wing manifesto being presented. “We're not going to let them use the excuse of blaming us,” a Tory candidate in the rebel camp said.

The policies have made little obvious difference to the party's fortunes — Labour still has a 20-point lead in the polls. Two previous 2p cuts to national insurance failed to register with voters, something that Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, acknowledged in a recent interview. So why did Sunak go for national insurance again? MPs on the right of the party have pushed hard for him to abolish inheritance tax.

Party sources said there was a “short” discussion on the subject. But given the manifesto tax cuts are funded by squeezing welfare, it was considered politically untenable to use the proceeds to fund giveaways for the wealthy.

“The reason we're doing [national insurance] is to make working people feel better,” said one senior Conservative. “That's the strategy.”

A staffer was more blunt in their assessment. “They're in ‘free broadband for everyone' territory,” they said — a reference to the 2019 Jeremy Corbyn manifesto pledge. “They could announce a fully funded £50 billion tax cut and no one would notice or care.”



A slow-motion car crash at Silverstone

Tom Peck
Political Sketch



When you're very much not in pole position in the polls, when you're going round and round in circles and not really getting anywhere, when the wheels are coming off and life's the pits, it's a brave decision indeed to launch your election manifesto at the self-writing car-crash-based pun factory that is the Silverstone Formula 1 racetrack.

There, breathe out, we're done. No more. Although, actually, there is one torturous F1-based metaphor you won't have already heard.

A former chairman of Silverstone once told me that the most incredible thing he'd ever seen in many decades working there had nothing to do with car racing. It happened when the Olympic swimming-pool-sized septic tank got blocked on grand prix weekend and he had to call in an extremely specialist contractor as a matter of

urgency. Without going into too much detail, if you're looking for a metaphor for Rishi Sunak's election campaign thus far, let's just say that there are sewage tanks out there so large they can be unblocked only by a man in full scuba gear.

Anyway, where were we? If you were to write some sort of idiot's guide on how to put on a Formula 1-themed election manifesto launch, the first item on the list would surely be to start on time. In the build-up to the event, all over the Tories' social media accounts was the same breathless promotional video. There were thumping drum beats, revving engines and the famous F1 start lights turning red, one by one, before turning off. “Tune in at 11.30am!” it said. On the basis of the record set by Max Verstappen in 2020, then, by the time the event got round to starting, Sunak had already been lapped eight times.

Eventually, the cabinet filed in and the room erupted with very faint applause. This is customary at these sorts of events. It tends to work better when those on the receiving end aren't wearing the kind of faces

that make them look as if they're making their way to the “immediate family” seats at Grandma's funeral.

Up on the main stage, beneath a four-storey-high ceiling, the prime minister was a distant speck. The room, frankly, was too big. Even with a backside on every seat it felt two thirds empty. He could have been giving the Gettysburg Address and it would have drifted up in to the cavernous ceiling space like a football chant that never quite gets going. He was fading and dying.

There is always the chance, on such occasions, that there might be some sort of bombshell lurking within. Seven years ago, no one spotted that Theresa May had set herself on fire with a plan to make pensioners sell their homes to pay for their care.

It doesn't appear to have happened again but it hardly matters. There will be no high-octane moment of impact. This particular car crash has been going on for some time now, in excruciating slow motion. There are still three weeks of it to go. Somebody fetch the snorkel.

The Conservative manifesto Your guide to main policies



National insurance

The manifesto includes another 2p cut to the rate of national insurance, taking the employee rate to 6p in the pound, at a cost of about £10 billion. The party is also pledging by the end of the next parliament to abolish the main rate of self-employed national insurance, at a cost of £2 billion in five years. The Tories say they will pay for this with welfare reforms, which they estimate would save £12 billion. However, the Institute for Fiscal Studies has said that such a savings target “looks difficult in the extreme”.



Triple lock plus

The party is promising to introduce what it described as a “triple lock plus” for pensioners, ensuring that the state pension is never taxed. The tax-free personal allowance for pensioners would rise by inflation, wages or 2.5 per cent, whichever is highest. The Conservatives say that this would cost £2.4 billion and would be paid

for by clamping down on tax avoidance and evasion.



Child benefit

The Tories have set out plans to raise the threshold at which families pay the child benefit tax charge from £60,000 to £120,000. They say this will benefit 700,000 families by an average of £1,500 and that the cost — £1.3 billion a year — would also be funded by clamping down on tax avoidance.



Education

The Conservatives will scrap so-called rip-off degrees in which graduates earn less on average than they would if they had not gone to university. The party says this would raise £900 million that it would spend on creating 100,000 apprenticeships by the end of the next parliament, at a cost of £885 million. Again, this would be funded by a crackdown on tax avoidance and evasion.

The party recommits to its plans to

trying to limit Labour's victory



Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murty at the Tory manifesto launch yesterday

give 30 free hours of childcare to all children over the age of nine months. This is due to be rolled out this year and next. It is also promising to ban the use of mobile phones during the school day and to roll out a new English baccalaureate to replace A-levels.



Defence

Rishi Sunak's plans to increase UK spending on defence to 2.5 per cent of GDP a year by 2030, at a cost of £6 billion a year, is also a central plank of the Conservative offer.

The party say that this pledge will be funded through plans to shrink the size of the civil service by 70,000, saving £3.6 billion.



Benefits

The Conservatives want to encourage more people with mental health and mobility problems to look for work and remove benefits from those who refuse to take jobs after a year Sunak is also promising to reform sick notes by removing the responsibility from GPs and giving it to a new occupational health service.

Disability benefits would also be overhauled to prevent "unsustainable" rises in claims.



Crime

The manifesto includes a commitment to recruit 8,000 additional police officers over the next three years at an annual cost of £818 million, as well as powers for neighbourhood police officers to seize knives and recover stolen goods. This would be paid for in part by increasing visa fees for people coming to the UK. The manifesto promises to increase the minimum sentence for murders that take place in the home from 15 to 25 years. The party will also look to introduce a US-style system of first and second-degree murder.



Housing

The manifesto contains a pledge to build 1.6 million new homes over the course of the next parliament – 100,000 more than the party's pledge in 2019, which it failed to deliver. It includes details of a £1 billion scheme to help first-time buyers, offering government-backed mortgages that would allow them to buy a home with just a 5 per cent deposit.

The manifesto also includes a pledge to permanently get rid of stamp duty tax for first-time buyers of properties costing up to £425,000.



Immigration

The Tories will introduce an annual legal cap on the number of work and family visas issued each year as part of plans to halve net migration, which stood at 685,000 last year. Migrants will have health checks before travelling to the UK and those with health conditions will have to pay a higher Immigration Health Surcharge, presently £1,035, to cover the extra burden they place on the NHS. The manifesto also re-commits the party to the Rwanda policy, arguing that once deportation flights start, migrants will be deterred from crossing the Channel in small boats. It commits to clearing the asylum backlog and deporting more than 90,000 migrants stuck in limbo. There is a new target to process asylum claims within six months to end the use of hotels for housing migrants. The party will work with other countries to "rewrite" asylum treaties to make them fit for the "challenges" of illegal migration.



European Convention on Human Rights

The manifesto does not commit to reassessing the UK's membership of the European Convention on Human Rights, but it does state that "if we are forced to choose between our security and the jurisdiction of a foreign court, including the ECHR, we will always choose our security".



Health and social care

The party says it will raise NHS spending above inflation every year, including recruiting 92,000 more nurses and 28,000 more doctors.

This will be done by investing more than £2.4 billion to fund a 27 per cent expansion in training places for new doctors and nurses by the end of the next parliament. Sunak has pledged to go ahead with Boris Johnson's delayed social care reform. Under the policy, the lifetime amount people have to pay for care would be capped at £86,000.



Climate change

The Conservatives say that they are committed to the UK's overall net-zero reduction targets but will not do so in a way that increases costs for consumers. They have delayed a ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to 2035.



Transport

The manifesto commits to reversing the expansion of Ulez – the ultra-low emissions zone – in London, as part of a wider plan to support drivers. Local referendums would also be allowed on new 20mph zones and low-traffic neighbourhoods.



Gender recognition

Plans to amend the Equality Act are also included in the manifesto. It says the party will introduce legislation to make clear that "sex means biological sex" rather than a person's self-determined gender.



National service

The Tories want teenagers to take part in either military national service or community volunteering when they leave school. They say this policy will cost £1 billion by 2029.

My Normandy visit ran over, Sunak says in D-Day interview

Oliver Wright Policy Editor
Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Rishi Sunak had to "go without" Sky TV as a child because his parents were making sacrifices for his education, the prime minister has said.

Sunak cited his parents' refusal to pay for the subscription channel as an example of having to "go without", as he was pressed on whether he related to the struggles of ordinary people.

In an interview with ITV News conducted on the afternoon that he returned early from D-Day commemorations, Sunak also said that events in Normandy had "ran over". He has since issued a series of apologies for his decision to return.

Apologising for having kept Paul Brand, the ITV journalist, waiting, Sunak said: "It all just ran over." While the prime minister attended events in Normandy on the morning of the D-Day anniversary, alongside the King and Queen, he chose to skip the afternoon event, with Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, the foreign secretary, taking his place next to President Biden, President Macron of France and Olaf Scholz, the German chancellor.

The content of the interview is likely to concern Conservative strategists and will be seized on by Labour to suggest that the prime minister is out of touch.

Asked whether he had "ever gone without something" Sunak, who was privately educated at Winchester College, said that he "went without lots of things because my parents wanted to put everything into our education and that was a priority".

Asked to give a specific example, he replied: "There'll be all sorts of things that I would've wanted as a kid that I couldn't have. Famously, Sky TV, so

that was something that we never had growing up actually."

The prime minister, 44, is a football supporter and may have wanted to watch Sky Sports, which began showing the Premier League in 1992, when he was aged 12.

Sunak also used the interview to make an appeal to Reform UK voters attracted by Nigel Farage's return to the political arena. He said that he had "respect" for the Reform leader, pointing out that Farage was "right" to highlight migration as a significant concern.

He said, though, that people who wanted the issue to be addressed should still vote for the Conservatives. "One of two people is going to be prime minister on July 5," Sunak said. "It's either Keir Starmer or me. A vote for anyone who's not a Conservative candidate is a vote to put Keir Starmer in office."

Sunak was challenged over a poll from YouGov that suggested 75 per cent of voters thought the country was in a worse state than when the Conservatives came to power in 2010.

The prime minister conceded that the past few years had been "very difficult" but that overall the Conservatives' record in power had been good. "You have to remember, just a few years ago, the Conservatives won a general election," he said. "People thought the Conservatives were doing a good job, otherwise they wouldn't have re-elected them."

"But what's happened in the last few years is we've been hit by two, once-in-a-century crises: a pandemic, which we hadn't seen before, and then an energy crisis as Russia invaded Ukraine and everyone's energy bill spiralled. And that's had an enormous impact on everybody."

Pledge to cut welfare bill 'not up to the challenge'

Oliver Wright, Chris Smyth

Economists have warned that Conservative plans to enable tax cuts by reducing Britain's welfare bill by £12 billion amount to "definite giveaways" paid for by "uncertain" savings.

The tax cuts are primarily funded by a pledge to tackle the rising bill for sickness benefits, although this was greeted with scepticism by experts.

The Tories aim to save a further £6 billion by tackling tax avoidance and evasion, alongside reducing Whitehall's staff budget by £3.9 billion. Reform of government quangos will save a further £1.2 billion, the party said.

Plans were already in place to reduce spending in unprotected departments by £21 billion over the next five years to meet the Conservatives' pledge to start reducing the national debt.

Paul Johnson, director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, said that the savings were intended to enable about £17 billion in tax cuts alongside a big increase in defence spending. "Those are definite giveaways paid for by

uncertain, unspecific and apparently victimless savings," he said. "Forgive a degree of scepticism."

The bulk of the savings come from promised reforms to disability benefits that are likely to involve many people with mental health problems being denied cash benefits.

Other savings are projected to come from ensuring fewer people are signed off work. No firm policies have been set out in either case.

Tom Waters, of the institute, said that plans to achieve £12 billion in welfare savings "are not remotely up to the challenge".

The Resolution Foundation think tank said that reducing spending on disability benefits by £12 billion would imply a cut of 40 per cent which "would be extremely challenging to deliver, not least as it would likely involve cuts to the entitlements of existing claimants".

The Conservatives have pointed out that current forecasts suggest a £20 billion increase in sickness benefits over the next parliament and that it is possible to stem the scale of that increase.

News Politics

Reform candidates are online 'friends' with fascist leader

Fintan Hogan, Tom Witherow

Close to one in ten candidates for Nigel Farage's Reform UK party in England are "friends" on Facebook with Gary Raikes, the British fascist leader, The Times has found.

Raikes, a former organiser for the British National Party, founded the New British Union in the image of Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists, with activists who call themselves "blackshirts".

The New British Union has called for a "fascist revolution" and sees parliamentary democracy as an "obstruction" to be replaced with a dictatorship.

Analysis by The Times shows that at least 41 of Reform's parliamentary candidates in the general election are friends with Raikes on Facebook, despite his account being active for only about a year and having about 4,000 connections.

The revelation came after Ian Gribbin, a Reform UK candidate, apologised for claiming that Britain would be "far better" if it had "taken Hitler up on his offer of neutrality", instead of fighting the Nazis in the Second World War.

Raikes has shared promotional material for the party on his Facebook account, including photos of himself

next to NBU insignia and images of Mosley, the face of British fascism. His Twitter/X account has also shared Islamophobic and xenophobic material, images of men giving Nazi salutes, and slogans such as "the future is fascism".

Leslie Lilley, the Reform UK candidate for Southend East & Rochford and one of the 41 candidates following Raikes, posted messages suggesting that "the Illuminati" control the world and that the Covid-19 vaccine programme was a "crime against humanity". The same account is being used to promote his parliamentary election campaign.

Steve Beatty, the candidate in Didcot & Wantage, captioned an image denying climate change with "Correct" and reposted an Islamophobic conspiracy theory. Grant Randall, standing in Rayleigh & Wickford, posted material denying the theory of evolution. Both men still have Raikes as Facebook friends.

Seven of the 41 Reform "friends" of Raikes were projected to finish second in their constituency, and a further 27 were forecast to be third, according to the latest YouGov polling, conducted before Farage returned to lead Reform and before Rishi Sunak's D-Day gaffe.

Several Reform candidates have stood down during this election

campaign over social media activity. Last week the party withdrew support for two candidates after The Times revealed that its list included a racist who referred to a group of black people as "baboons" and a magazine publisher who suggested Ghislaine Maxwell did her teenage victims "a favour".

A third, Stewart Sutherland, stepped down as the candidate for Blaenau Gwent & Rhymney after he was found to have promoted the racist "great replacement" conspiracy theory online.

Farage said that "every party" faced issues of vetting because of the snap election, and that Reform had simply run out of time to check its list.

More than 110 Reform UK candidates were dropped or swapped between January and June this year, The Guardian reported, many over public comments that came to light only after their appointment.

A poll by YouGov published on Tuesday put Reform only one point behind the Conservatives, Farage's announcement that he would become leader and stand in Clacton, Essex, boosted the party's popularity to 17 per cent. One pollster suggested the party could win up to four seats next month.

Sunak's team is said to be "resigned" to the likelihood of a crossover poll, in which the outgoing government will fall behind Reform UK.

A Reform UK spokesman said its efforts to vet candidates were "truncated" by the snap election. "Millions of people who are struggling want journalists to discuss policy and ideas, not juvenile gotcha identity politics," he said. "We take all allegations very seriously and will take appropriate action after a thorough internal investigation."

The party said it was "no crime to follow people with whom one has profound disagreements".

Raikes said his group calls for a "quiet revolution" that is "completely legal and peaceful", and that his "friends on Facebook" are "normal people who share some views and concerns over the way our country is heading".

Lilley, Randall and Beatty could not be reached for comment.

Nigel Farage had two objects thrown at him while campaigning in Barnsley. Video filmed from his bus appeared to show a man throwing a paper cup. The police later arrested a suspect



Gary Raikes has called for a "fascist revolution" to end parliamentary democracy



I've spent £2,000 on bodyguards for campaign, says Duffield

Ben Ellery Crime Editor
Daisy Eastlake

Rosie Duffield says she has spent £2,000 on bodyguards while campaigning for the election because politicians have not been given help with security.

The Labour candidate for Canterbury told The Times's Crime and Justice Commission that she had spent the money in the first week of the campaign and was concerned that she would have to keep paying until the election.

Duffield, 52, said her level of risk was considered "one of the highest" after a Manchester man was given a suspended prison sentence last week for sending her and JK Rowling a death threat.

"There is no email or clear advice to women MPs about what you have to do about your security budget," she said. "We have all these rules about what

you're allowed to spend on your general election campaigning and your leaflets and all that sort of stuff ... but we didn't get this clear guidance about how to spend the money [if security is included in the election expenses].

"I have had to have a close protection officer. Parliament normally pays for our security separately but because we're in an election period, no one had prepared for that.

"We're also having to tell all of the venues that are holding hustings that we have these security concerns, and I feel like a diva even doing it. It's embarrassing. I don't want to be walking around Canterbury, which has been my home for 26 years, with a lovely chap called Jason walking around behind me with an earloop."

Glenn Mullen, 31, was given an eight-week suspended sentence for sending

Rowling an audio message in Gaelic in which he said he was going to kill her "with a big hammer". He threatened to turn a "big gun" on Duffield. Both have been outspoken advocates for women.

Duffield said a few of her colleagues were also having to hire bodyguards with their own money but that they had tried to keep it out of the public eye. "A lot of people say, 'Well, lucky you've got the money.' You know, we don't want all that being discussed," she said. "But we are going to

A man threatened to "turn a big gun" on Duffield



have to try and sort it out. When you've just had someone with a death threat sentenced, and you're having to think about your security everywhere that you go, I'm not going to pretend it doesn't impact on democracy, because it does.

"Even though it's not conscious, I'm thinking, 'I'm a tough person. I'm getting on with it. I've been through much worse,' but it does impact on you. "I'm faintly embarrassed. I find it humiliating. I'm thrown off my game. I stutter a bit when I speak. I'm self-conscious

of it and I wish it wasn't the case. I find it all kinds of embarrassing. I wish there wasn't that attention on that whole area."

The Times contacted the Electoral Commission for comment.

Duffield, who has spoken in parliament about being the victim of domestic abuse, added that at times being an MP felt like being a victim of coercive control.

She said: "These [online] threats are a form of coercive control. What you're doing is saying, 'You've stepped out of line.' It really does make you think twice about saying something. I found, to my huge annoyance, that I have curbed what I say in parliament."

"There are certain debates I will not get involved in now because I know about those reactions. It does affect democracy."



Man held after cup thrown at Farage

A man has been arrested after objects were thrown at Nigel Farage while he was campaigning for the general election (Seren Hughes writes).

The Reform UK leader was on top of his party's battle bus in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, when an object narrowly missed him. Video filmed from the bus showed a man in a red hoodie reaching into what appeared to be a bin within a construction area and throwing a paper coffee cup, which also missed. Workmen could be seen pushing him out of the construction site before he ran off.

South Yorkshire police arrested a 28-year-old man on suspicion of public order offences after "disorder in Barnsley town centre".

A spokesman for the force said: "It is believed that the man threw objects from a nearby construction area. A suspect was quickly detained and remains in police custody."

Farage said he believed the objects were some wet cement and a coffee cup. He thanked the police and said: "I will not be bullied or cowed by a violent left-wing mob who hate our country." Farage also wrote on Twitter/X: "These people want to stop my election campaign. That's never going to happen."

Last week a milkshake was thrown over Farage in Clacton, the seat he hopes to win. Victoria Thomas Bowen, 25, was charged with assault by beating and criminal damage. She is due to appear at Colchester magistrates' court on July 2. **Splintering of the right, letters, page 22**



We may have just 57 MPs, say Tory ads

Aubrey Allegretti
Chief Political Correspondent

The Conservatives have suggested they could be reduced to 57 seats at the election in a social media advert — to discourage people from voting for Reform. The video is being promoted on Facebook and Instagram by Tory campaign strategists and states that Sir Keir Starmer could get a landslide far bigger than Tony Blair's in 1997.

Opinion polls suggest the Tories are braced for heavy losses, with party insiders privately conceding they are fighting a losing battle to stay in govern-

ment. Four new videos from the Conservative Party, launched on Monday, show the Conservatives on 140 seats, Labour on 422, the Lib Dems on 48 and Reform taking zero.

The outcome would eclipse the feat managed in 1997 by Blair, who led Labour to a landslide victory on 418 seats. It would also be significantly worse for the Conservatives than the losses under John Major.

In 1997, the Tories won 165 seats. In the scenario envisaged by the new Tory social media ad, the party would get just 57 MPs — finishing in third place behind the Lib Dems on 61. Reform is still shown to win no seats.

The ads' estimated audience is up to 200,000 people and came at a maximum cost to the Tories of £2,597, according to Facebook's ad library.

Luke Tryl, director of the More in Common think tank and a former Conservative special adviser, said: "Effectively conceding that you're going to lose the election to scare voters into

limiting the size of a Labour majority is a risky strategy."

Tryl said that the move risked "demotivating activists and also potentially triggering a 'strong horse' response from the public encouraging them to flock to the likely winner."

He said the argument that the Tories were at risk of coming third if voters flock to Reform "may be one of the few gambles the Conservatives have left to take", adding: "We know if there's one thing that Reform voters dislike more than the Conservatives it's the Labour Party, and fears about what a Labour supermajority might mean could well encourage some of them to begrudgingly to back the Conservatives, and inspire other disgruntled Conservatives who might have stayed at home to actually turn out."

A Conservative Party spokesman said: "The only thing we'll concede is that a vote for any other party is a vote for Keir Starmer and Labour's £2,094 tax bombshell."

Inside the battle for Nuneaton, the key bellwether seat

Labour is pouring resources into the struggling market town in an effort to win it back, writes Lara Spirit

It is the middle of the day and Nuneaton's town centre is desolate. Whole streets lie empty. Scores of shops are closed, some boarded up. At others you must knock to gain entry or order through a hatch.

High street crime in this Warwickshire market town is shaping up to be a key issue in the election on July 4. On Sunday afternoon, as the annual charity carnival passes through its streets, the death of a young man the previous night is confirmed and a murder investigation launched.

It is into constituencies such as Nuneaton, at the heart of Britain's electoral map, that Labour is pouring resources in the hope of turning the town red for the first time since 2010.

The path to a Labour victory runs not only through the "red wall" constituencies and Scotland but also through traditional swing seats such as Nuneaton. And not many have a more famous reputation. It was here that Margaret Thatcher's 1983 landslide began to crystallise, returning the first Tory MP for the seat since the 1930s. It was here too that in 2015 David Cameron realised that his party had won the outright majority that few expected.

The Conservative candidate hoping to be re-elected embodies the party's past 14 years in many ways. Marcus Jones, first elected here in 2010, is a rare thing in contemporary Tory politics: since 2015 he has served near-continuously in various party posts and has been avowedly loyal to every one of the five prime ministers he worked for.

Only once in his 14 years in parliament has he defied the party whip, when he supported a referendum on leaving the European Union. "I just thought people needed to get it out of their system, needed to have their say," he said in a small coffee shop in the town centre, not long after the arrival of a voter who says she will be supporting him. "I didn't stage that," he promises.

Jones politely declined the invitation to lift the lid on his experience as the second-longest-serving Tory whip since 2010, including his time as deputy chief whip when Rishi Sunak was prime minister. "What goes on in the whips' office stays in the whips' office," he says.

His colleagues talk of a record of respectful but effective discipline. "He's not a famous 2010 face but he's seen a lot, he's a diligent local MP and as a whip he's renowned for being respectful and kind," one former cabinet minister said, adding: "Actually he's seen everything, but he won't tell you any of that." He doesn't.

His Labour challenger is just as assiduously on-message over a quick lunch at a restaurant that is almost empty but teeming with antiques. "I don't pay much attention to the polls," Jodie Gosling tells me, but does not shy away from the high priority Labour HQ places on winning here.

A few hours earlier Gosling, who is a teacher and who set up a nursery in 2015, had been with Sir Keir Starmer in the constituency, where the Labour leader was promoting a new childcare

pledge. And last week Yvette Cooper, the shadow home secretary, met retailers in Nuneaton to discuss crime.

Activists are coming from across the country to help Gosling's campaign. But it is also being fought online, where Labour is using a relatively novel method of Google Ads, deemed a cost-effective means of targeting voters as increased spending limits mean millions more can be spent on digital advertising than in previous elections. "I'll stop you right there," Gosling says a young voter told her on the doorstep recently. "I've seen the Labour YouTube ad and you are Jodie Gosling." They then recited her video word by word back to her.

It wasn't the only time she'd been recognised from the video ads. "The others must have been about ten years old, definitely primary age, and they stopped me in the street," she said. "One of them said the four seconds of video they were forced to watch before they could skip to their video was too long."

Labour has reason to be hopeful here. In May the party gained control of the council from the Conservatives for the



Labour's Jodie Gosling with fellow West Midlands candidate Jess Phillips

first time since 2018. The most recent MRP seat-by-seat poll from YouGov puts it well ahead, with a ten-point lead.

It also puts Reform UK, the right-wing challenger siphoning votes from the Tories, at 13 per cent.

Improving the state of this town centre is a priority for both candidates. Both will cite party pledges on policing when canvassing, with the Tories promising 8,000 more neighbourhood police officers and Labour 13,000 constables and police and community support officers, 3,000 of whom would be full-time officers.

According to the Crime Rate website, which uses open police force data, social media and freedom of information requests from local police departments, crime is now 46 per cent higher in Nuneaton than the national average, making it the most dangerous of Warwickshire's big towns.

On the night of the May local elections, Jones did admit that levelling-up and regeneration of the town centre "weighed heavily" here. He now argues that the work is under way but completing projects does not happen immediately.

"A lot of the more traditional shops and parts of the town to make way for this regeneration, they've been closed and rammed and knocked down and so on and so forth and people still are not believing that it's happening," he said. "These projects are happening, but it takes time."

We're heading for the youngest parliament, Alice Thomson, page 21



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Animal rights activists deface King's portrait

A new portrait of the King has been targeted by animal rights activists who covered the monarch's face with a likeness of the clay animation character Wallace (Seren Hughes and David Sanderson write).

The two campaigners from Animal Rising who defaced Jonathan Yeo's new painting at the Philip Mould gallery in London also pasted on a speech bubble that said: "No cheese, Gromit. Look at all this cruelty on RSPCA farms!" The group, founded as

Animal Rebellion, a sister organisation of Extinction Rebellion, has called on the King to end his patronage of the RSPCA, which it accuses of running a discredited farm welfare scheme.

Philip Mould told The Times that the posters were removed within seconds and no damage was done. He said the gallery was reviewing its security but added: "It's difficult to predict when and how such things can be done by people who are determined." He said that the portrait had been wiped and dried within a minute.



The portrait by Jonathan Yeo was obscured by a picture of Wallace, from the Wallace and Gromit cartoons, of which King Charles is said to be a fan

Nathan McGovern, a spokesman for Animal Rising, said the activists knew the painting would be protected by glass and that there was no intent to cause damage, as the posters were attached using water spray. McGovern added that the stunt was a reference to the King's fondness for the *Wallace and Gromit* films made by Aardman.

The activists said they hoped the protest would bring attention to their investigation of RSPCA-backed farms, which found poor conditions at some sites. Chris Packham, the honorary RSPCA president, called at the weekend for the charity's food-labelling scheme to be scrapped.

The RSPCA said the stunt was a "distraction" from its work helping animals but that an urgent investigation into Animal Rising's findings was under way. The RSPCA Assured scheme is the "best way to help farmed animals right now", the charity said.

Neighbour of 12-year-old murderer 'put up barbed wire' as protection

David Woode Crime Correspondent
Ben Ellery Crime Editor

A neighbour of one of two 12-year-old boys convicted this week of murdering a man with a machete has revealed that he had to put up barbed wire to keep him off his property.

The pair murdered Shawn Seesahai, 19, during a "vicious attack" in a park in Wolverhampton on November 13 last year.

The boys, who cannot be named for legal reasons, were convicted of his murder on Monday and have become Britain's youngest killers since the death of James Bulger. Nottingham crown court was told that the boys attacked Seesahai, an aspiring engineer, with such force that they broke his skull.

A neighbour of one of the boys told The Times that he saw the killers together frequently. He said: "I've got

the barbed wire up. I put it up four or five months after he moved in. It took me a while to work out what he was.

"He moved in, I gave him boxing gear, fishing gear. Then I found out what he was, then I told him to leave me alone. They told me he moved here because he was involved with gangs. You'd see the gangs come with him, he'd told them where he was.

"I saw the other boy a lot but I don't know who he is. Every night the police brought him back. He went missing for three days at one point. He tried to catch a train to London. For two 12-year-olds to murder a lad, it's grim. He was only average height. He was skinny, no muscle. You'd flick him and he'd fall over."

Seesahai, who was from Anguilla in the Caribbean, had travelled to the UK to receive treatment for cataracts and had been discussing Christmas plans on a bench when he was targeted by the

boys. Prosecutors told the court that Seesahai was "utterly defenceless" and had "done nothing to offend the two boys".

The boy's neighbour said he "was out pinching every night of the week". He said: "I was sick of it. The police were bringing him back every night of the week. They'd wake me up, banging my door. The police did two raids, the neighbours told me. They arrested him and social services were always here. The police smashed my gate off when they were coming to get him."

He said that the boy climbed over his gates and he had to install CCTV. "He robbed a scooter. Him and his friends. It was a big one, it was about a 400cc, I don't know how he did it. It was a big scooter, a proper scooter," he said.

"When they brought him out he had a big grin over his face. They'd stay in the alleyway in the gang. They cut the lamppost wires so it was dark. You'd see

him going to the alleyway to meet them." He said that on the night of the murder CCTV images captured him running "around the back as fast as he could".

Regarding the boy's court case, he said: "I knew it was coming. The best they could do was find him guilty, but he's 12. What's that going to do? He's going to end up out of there in eight years. He's twisted in the head, he's not right in the head. Imagine what he's capable of doing at 18."

Another neighbour said: "We did see him, on his own and with another lad. They were very, very pally. They did go off in gangs. I think he was brought back more than once in the early hours. I couldn't believe it. The stuff they'd fetch out there, all the stolen stuff. I think he was classed as the tough guy by the older people. He went along with it, he thought he was." The boys are due to be sentenced next month.

Barrister died in holiday jet ski accident

Georgia Lambert

A barrister on her honeymoon in Dubai died on Christmas Day in a jet ski accident having received minimal guidance on operating the machine, an inquest was told.

Michaela Danso, from Holloway, north London, was thrown off the jet ski while with her husband, Joseph, in 2022. Walthamstow coroner's court heard that the couple had received almost no instruction on operating jet skis, despite lacking prior knowledge of such equipment.

After the instructor had disembarked from the jet ski, Danso, 46, pressed the accelerator and hurtled towards the sea wall, causing her to "catapult" onto the concrete ground.

A post-mortem examination found that Danso, who had practised at Charterhouse Chambers in Chancery Lane, died of a head injury caused by blunt force trauma.

Joseph said that the watersports rental service company Aquablue told them that they were too big to fit on one jet ski, which he believes was a ploy to make them rent two. He said: "She would be here if that claim [we wouldn't fit on one] hadn't been made."

He told the inquest that the company had given them life jackets but not helmets, adding: "I think if she had, she still would be here."

The court was told that Irvine contacted the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office to request information from Dubai but nothing was provided.

Graeme Irvine, senior coroner, recorded a conclusion of "accidental death due to injuries sustained in an accidental jet ski collision".

Hong Kong becoming totalitarian state, says judge

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Hong Kong is becoming a "totalitarian state" in which the rule of law has been "profoundly compromised" by Beijing, a retired British senior judge has said.

Lord Sumption, who until last week was a member of the cadre of UK judges that sit on the territory's highest court, said that the conviction last month of 14 pro-democracy campaigners was the "last straw" that prompted his decision to resign.

The activists face life prison terms

after being found guilty of subversion and attempting to "overthrow" the government in 2020, under national security laws introduced that year.

Lord Collins of Mapesbury, 83, like Sumption a former justice of the UK Supreme Court, also quit the Hong Kong bench last week.

Sumption, 75, one of the UK's most recognisable former senior judges due to his outspoken criticism of the lockdowns during the pandemic, had not commented on his decision until now. In an article in the Financial Times, he

said there was a "growing malaise" in the Hong Kong judiciary, and that what was once a "vibrant and politically diverse community" was slowly becoming a totalitarian state. He added: "Every judge knows that under the basic law, if China does not like the courts' decisions it can have them reversed."

In the wake of Sumption's article, Beverley McLachlin, 80, a former chief justice of Canada's Supreme Court, yesterday also quit the Hong Kong bench.

Speaking to The Times yesterday, Sumption said that the national secur-

ity law contained some safeguards for freedom of speech, but that it had emerged that the lower Hong Kong courts "were going to ignore them".

Three remaining Britons and four Australians make up the contingent of overseas judges sitting on the Hong Kong court, which replaced the privy council in London as the territory's highest bench when the colony was handed back to the Chinese on July 1, 1997.

Judges lend regime a spurious legitimacy, leading article, page 23

News

NHS worker labelled 'antivaxer' wins case

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

An ultrasound technician won an NHS payout after being branded an "antivaxer" for refusing to be vaccinated for coronavirus over concerns about allergies.

Gail Lauder was said to have created tension among colleagues when she discussed her position with patients at a hospital in Scotland, an employment tribunal was told.

But she had declined the vaccination because she had previously suffered from allergic reactions and was "very cautious" about medicines.

Lauder also said a danger of allergic reaction meant she could not wear the medical-grade masks her hospital required staff to wear during the pandemic.

She said her reluctance to refrain from discussing her situation prompted bosses to brand her an "antivaxer", a label the tribunal ruled amounted to "unfavourable treatment".

The judge, Sandy Meiklejohn, said the term "drew on a stereotypical view that someone who was not vaccinated against Covid must be an antivaxer". He added that the tribunal accepted Lauder's evidence that her decision not to be vaccinated was a personal one based on her medical history and that she "was not against vaccination generally".

Lauder is to receive compensation after suing Tayside Health Board for disability discrimination and harassment. The hearing in Dundee was told

that when the pandemic began, Lauder was a clinical specialist sonographer at the city's Ninewells Hospital.

The tribunal was told that the health board accepted that Lauder's allergies qualified as a disability.

In October 2020, Lauder complained that the surgical face mask required for staff triggered "coughing and irritation" and told bosses that she would wear a cloth mask instead. Lauder's colleagues were aware that she had decided not to be vaccinated and the tribunal was told that they "reacted negatively".

But it was not until two years later, after several disputes with bosses around her vaccination status and other matters, that Lauder triggered the hospital's grievance process.

As part of the investigation into her complaint, Michael Conroy, the hospital's imaging manager, said that Lauder had "different views on Covid and is an antivaxer, on occasion telling patients they didn't need to wear masks, which caused colleagues distress".

Lauder resigned in 2022 before the outcome of the grievance, amid claims that she was the victim of bullying.

She sued the health board over claims of constructive unfair dismissal, which the panel rejected, as well as disability discrimination and harassment.

The tribunal ruled that Conroy's "antivaxer" comment was related to Lauder's inability to wear a mask and was therefore discriminatory. Compensation will be decided at a later date.



Modern twist Fandango, a show from the choreographer David Coria and singer David Lagos, explores the musical form's history at Sadler's Wells in London

Tesco manager unfairly sacked over sex toy gift

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A Tesco store manager was unfairly sacked after he gave a female colleague a vibrator as a "secret Santa" gift and another sex toy for her birthday.

An employment tribunal was told that Shoaib Razaq gave Kerry Cliffe a vibrator as part of staff Christmas celebrations at a Peterborough branch.

Razaq — who was married and admitted that it was a "terrible decision" to make a present of the sex toy — was sacked as store manager for gross misconduct after it was determined that he had "abused his position of trust".

That decision was taken despite the female recipient of the "inappropriate gift" acknowledging that the manager had given it to her in a "joking manner" as other staff members handed out sex toys.

Razaq has now successfully sued for unfair dismissal and race discrimination after a judge determined that bosses failed to take "basic steps" when investigating the allegations against him.

However, Razaq's compensation from Tesco is likely to be reduced after the tribunal found he had contributed to his dismissal by buying the vibrator.

The tribunal concluded that the Tesco bosses had not properly investigated the misconduct claims and had little concern with what the precise allegations were against the store manager.

A hearing to decide Razaq's compensation will be held at a later date.

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'Stressed' crime series producer took own life

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

The producer of a true crime series took his own life in part due to the pressure of trying to get justice for the families involved, his family has claimed.

Channel 4 has opened an investigation into the circumstances that led to the death of John Balson, 40, who left behind a three-year-old daughter and a wife who is seven months pregnant.

He died on May 17 after eight weeks working on *In the Footsteps of Killers*, presented by the *Silent Witness* actress Emilia Fox and the criminologist Professor David Wilson.

In a letter to his family, shared with The Times with permission from his



John Balson, who had a young family, was working on a series presented by Emilia Fox and Professor David Wilson

relatives to raise awareness of working conditions in factual TV, Balson said that he regretted not stopping work on the show after those related to the case said that they did not want to take part.

Balson was threatened by some of the individuals he tried to contact and the police became involved, according to his wife. Despite the extra work created, he claimed that he was told to "push ahead" by bosses at Alaska TV, the production company that makes the programme.

"It was a case of going through too many documents, British Library microfilm and social media accounts over hours and hours and hours and travelling without rest with no breaks," he said in his letter. "I did genuinely care about trying to get justice. This was a

fatal mistake." Balson, an experienced true-crime producer, said he feared being blacklisted if he refused to continue working on the show. He criticised the TV industry for treating freelance workers as "expendable".

His family said that he had no history of mental health problems but began to suffer severe, stress-related head pain and dizziness, diagnosed by doctors as vestibular migraine disorder and exacerbated by his two-hour commute.

Charities advise that no single factor should be attributed to an individual's decision to end their life.

Yumeno Niimura, Balson's widow, called for TV bosses to explain the duty of care provided to her husband. "Nobody can explain why John experienced constant dizziness and excruciating pain in his brain. However, he believed it was the immense stress caused by his toxic working environment," Niimura said.

"Was the programme worth making someone work themselves to death? Will you continue treating people with no mercy? Was there any support system for people like him? Was saving money to make the programme worth risking his life? Why did he get all the blame when he was trying to honour and save the story? Was he treated with dignity and respect?"

Channel 4 has appointed the law firm Reynolds Porter Chamberlain to undertake a "thorough investigation" and pledged to take "whatever action is appropriate" after its findings.

A spokeswoman said that the broadcaster was "deeply saddened" by Balson's death. "John was a highly respected and much-loved professional, both amongst his colleagues at Alaska TV and those who worked with him across the industry, and will be sorely missed. We are in ongoing contact with John's family and offering them our support," she said. "While we do not employ production staff directly, the wellbeing of all those working on the productions we commission is vitally important."

A spokesman for Alaska TV said: "It was with great sadness that we learnt of John's passing, an extremely talented and thoughtful director. He will be hugely missed by us all. The wellbeing

of our all staff is of paramount importance, and whilst we're unable to comment further given the investigation with Channel 4, our thoughts and love are with John's family and friends."

A GoFundMe page set up in Balson's memory has raised more than £70,000 since being set up on May 26.

For confidential support, the Samaritans can be contacted by calling 116 123 or going to [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)



Non-stop bangers



Arctic air to keep summer heat out until next month

Georgia Lambert

Britons will have to hold out until July for a taste of warmer weather as cold winds blow in from the Arctic, the Met Office has said.

Forecasters have said that temperatures in the UK have been consistently three to five degrees below the seasonal average in the past week.

This is due to the mid-Atlantic jet stream, a fast-moving atmospheric wind, directing cold air from the north to the south across the UK and keeping temperatures lower.

The meteorologists foresee no reprieve from this chilly spell until the end of June.

Simon Partridge, a Met Office meteorologist, said: "It looks as if temperatures will stay near or slightly below average for the majority of the rest of June. Over the next couple of nights, we're actually expecting to see a little bit of frost in a few places. This will mainly be across Scotland and possibly

into northern England and Northern Ireland, where temperatures could get down to around freezing."

However, Partridge clarified that such patterns are "not unusual".

He said: "On average, we get an air frost — which is when the temperatures reach zero — every two to three June, so it's not that unusual. It's just not the norm for June to be this cool."

Towards the weekend, low pressure will lead to even worse weather in parts of northern England. "From Thursday and through the weekend, we'll see showers circulating around the UK," he said. Looking ahead, Partridge said that there was "no strong signal" of any particular weather pattern.

He added: "The models are following the climatological norm, which indicates that temperatures are where they should be or slightly above average."

"So there is a hint of things turning slightly warmer as we move into the beginning of July."

Weather, page 49

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DANNY LAWSON/PA

Taking the plunge Gordon McMinn from the Canal & River Trust ventures into the Standedge Tunnel on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which burrows 638ft under the Pennines. Guided tours of the canal, built in 1811, are available for the first time

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Euros fans warned Serbian hooligans could target match

Charlie Parker, Matt Lawton

England fans have been warned they could be targeted by hundreds of Serbian football hooligans at the start of the European Championship in Germany this weekend.

The squad's opening game against Serbia on Sunday has been marked as one of four "high-risk" matches in the group stages of the tournament. German police believe that as many as 500 Serbian "ultras" could be looking to cause violence at the Veltins Arena in Gelsenkirchen, near Dortmund, in the west of the country.

Peter Both, the city's chief of police, said that the biggest challenge for his officers would be identifying and intercepting "violence-seeking Serbian hooligans" before clashes occur. "We don't have concrete information but we can't rule it out," he added. "So we have to prepare."

About 40,000 England fans are expected to travel to the game, along with 5,000 to 8,000 Serbian supporters. Uefa designated the fixture "high-risk" after consultation with police in Germany, Serbia and the UK, amid concern over a return of the rioting that plagued previous European Championship tournaments. England and Russia were both threatened with expulsion in 2016.

Despite the risk, Both stressed that most supporters attending the match would be "absolutely peaceful" and said "we are very, very well prepared" to part troublemakers from "law-abiding fans". He praised the "brilliant" co-operation between German and British authorities and said many known English hooligans had been prevented from travelling, but told The Guardian that local forces still "had to expect that a

few of them will be here in Germany".

About 2,000 England fans have been handed banning orders forcing them to surrender their passports to police from June 4 until the final of the tournament on July 14, to stop them attending matches in Germany.

More than 1,000 police officers will be deployed around the grounds on match day, supported by plain-clothes hooligan "spotters" and a riot unit, although water cannon will not be deployed. Heightened security in Gelsenkirchen will mean fans are checked for weapons as they enter the stadium. They will also be served lower-alcohol beer inside and barred from drinking in the stands. However, policing may be more challenging after Uefa asked for the removal of barriers. Supporters of both sides will be seated close together and two thirds of tickets are for mixed areas.



Those outside the arena will be encouraged to use a free shuttle bus service to travel to a fan zone at Trabrennbahn racecourse, rather than gather in the city centre, which Both warned was too small for the numbers expected. He added that officers would not react to England fans singing offensive songs, saying: "We will approach all the English supporters with an open mind. We only will intervene in the event of any criminal or public safety incident."

Germany's experience with hosting large sporting events means it is well prepared for potential clashes, which could put off some hooligans from engaging in violent behaviour.

Serbian fans have a reputation for clashing with police and security teams, setting off flares and fighting rival fans. Serbian ultras, in particular, many of whom are said to be part of the far-right pro-Russian "Delije" ("strongmen") Red Star Belgrade fan groups, are among the most violent.

Serbia fans lit flares at an international match in Austria earlier this month

Don't say what you do on social media, judges told

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Judges have been ordered not to highlight their professional roles on social media as a senior judicial figure was reprimanded for breaching official guidance.

Tan Ikram, the deputy chief magistrate, who this year allowed three women convicted of terrorism offences to walk free, was given a formal warning over his use of LinkedIn. It emerged in February that he had "liked" a post that branded Israel a terrorist state and called for a "free Palestine".

Ikram, 58, who also sits on the body that appoints judges in England and Wales, had liked a LinkedIn post by a barrister who had previously promoted conspiracy theories claiming Israel allowed the October 7 attack by Hamas.

Two groups that monitor antisemitism lodged a formal complaint with the judicial conduct investigation office over Ikram's sentencing remarks and his conduct on social media conduct.

That office announced yesterday that Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, the most senior judge in England and Wales, had issued Ikram with a "formal warning" after finding that his "actions caused significant reputational damage to the judiciary".

The lady chief justice's decision was also driven in part by the finding that "the risk of undermining public confidence had been heightened by the fact that [Ikram] had identified himself on social media as a judge". Ikram was reminded of official guidance to judges regarding the use of social media.

Those guidelines stipulate that judges "should not use your official title and it is most unlikely to be appropriate to disclose the fact of your judicial role on any platform or account with unrestricted public access".

While the official investigation into Ikram accepted that he had inadvertently "liked" the controversial barrister's post, doing so nonetheless "had resulted in a perception of bias".

Whisky maker accused of attempted murder is denied bail

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A Polish craft whisky distiller accused of attempted murder has lost his second application to be freed from a British jail amid fears that he would flee attempts to extradite him.

Lucasz Ratajewski came to Britain from Poland 20 years ago after being given a three-year jail term for possess-

ing a handgun. A High Court judge has been told that he led a double life as Dariusz Plazewski, the boss of Bimber Distillery, one of London's first producers of English single malt in more than 100 years.

He was arrested in January after Polish prosecutors requested his extradition to stand trial for supplying drugs and conspiracy to attempt murder. The

Polish authorities also want Ratajewski to serve the remainder of the firearms sentence passed in 2003.

In February Ratajewski failed with an initial application to be released on bail, with the judge ruling that there was a "risk of flight".

Sitting in the High Court yesterday, Mr Justice Fordham rejected a second bail application, despite Ratajewski

having offered to provide £200,000 security.

The judge ruled there was a "very real prospect" that Ratajewski would abscond by obtaining a false identity document so that he could build a new beginning from scratch in a completely new country.

The court was told that the Polish authorities had initially issued an arrest

warrant for Ratajewski 20 years ago. However, he left Poland under a pseudonym to launch a prosperous life in the UK, where he used his knowledge of traditional moonshine production techniques gleaned from his father and grandfather.

In March Ratajewski's pseudonym was removed from Bimber Distillery's listing on Companies House.

Becks and Stewart team up for King

Sir Rod Stewart joked last night that David Beckham's knighthood was "coming soon" as the pair joined forces for the King's Foundation, a charity set up by Charles when Prince of Wales (Kate Mansey writes).

Other celebrity ambassadors at St James's Palace for the inaugural King's Foundation Awards included the actress Sienna Miller, the chef Raymond Blanc, the model Naomi Campbell, the broadcaster and entrepreneur Sarah Beeny and the broadcaster and gardener Alan Titchmarsh.

Stewart, 79, who was at the event with his wife, Penny Lancaster, 53, told the guests: "Penny and I are so honoured to be ambassadors for the King's Foundation. I'm also wonderfully



honoured to be a knight." Looking over to Beckham, Stewart added: "And David, yours is coming soon." Beckham, who said he was "honoured" to

become an ambassador for the foundation, laughed and replied: "Thanks, Rod."

The former England football captain has long desired a knighthood. Emails leaked in 2017, which Beckham then dismissed as inaccurate, appeared

The King was joined by Sir Rod Stewart and David Beckham, while the Prince of Wales learnt about seaweed replacing plastic items

to show his frustration at being passed over for the honour in 2013. The King said it was with "immense pleasure" that he could present an

award to Ban Ki-moon, 79, the former secretary-general of the United Nations. The Harmony award reflects the King's philosophy of working with nature.

Earlier the Prince of Wales spoke with entrepreneurs at an event in Cardiff to promote seaweed as a replacement for

plastic. One of them was Pierre Paslier, co-founder of Notpla, which makes food packaging and other disposable items out of seaweed. In 2022 Notpla won an Earthshot Prize, the green award set up by the Prince of Wales. An untapped slimy resource, leading article, page 23

Sergeant is jailed over child images

Seren Hughes

A Royal Military Police sergeant has been jailed after he was caught sending sexual images to an undercover police officer he believed was a boy aged 14.

Sergeant Christopher Tierney, also searched "men seduce boy stories" and was found in possession of more than 6,000 indecent images of children, Bulford military court, in Wiltshire, was told.

Tierney, 36, who was based in Bulford, pleaded guilty to three counts of making indecent images, one count of distributing indecent images and one count of attempting to engage in sexual communications with a child.

Judge advocate General Alan Large said he "showed a clear sexual interest in children" and sentenced him to two years in prison.

Tierney was dismissed from the military and will remain on the sexual offences register for ten years.

He was arrested in March last year after the National Crime Agency told police that an indecent image of a child had been distributed twice on Snapchat from a device registered to him.

While Tierney was under investigation an undercover Home Office police officer contacted him on an unnamed gaming website posing as 14-year-old student called Ethan.

Tierney was also subjected to a five-year sexual harm prevention order.

Judge Large said that committing the offences "having already had the shock of arrest and undoubtedly knowing what would be found on your phone is a significant aggravating feature".

Will I really find a third thumb useful?

After a slightly sketchy start, having an extra digit starts to feel like a superpower, discovers **Kaya Burgess**

Not all superheroes were bitten by radioactive spiders or mutated by gamma rays. Some enhanced their ordinary human bodies with futuristic technology — like Iron Man or Batman.

Now experts at the University of Cambridge hope new technology can enhance everyone's abilities, rather than create a special few.

"This is not about creating superhumans," says Dani Clode, a Cambridge researcher, as she straps a robotic extra thumb on to my right hand, giving me a second opposable digit across from my natural one. "I see this technology as moving everyone forward."

By the end of an afternoon spent testing the third thumb, I certainly feel I have developed superpowers.

Most prosthetics are designed to replace missing appendages, but Clode's invention is designed for "augmentation", adding extra capabilities.

In a lab in Cambridge, a pressure pad has been taped beneath each of my big toes, connected to sensors worn around my ankles like a criminal's electronic tags. These communicate wirelessly with a sensor and battery pack strapped around my upper arm, linked by wires to motors on my right wrist.

A double strap passes around my real thumb to hold in place a flexible grey thumb, 3D-printed in thermoplastic, with three segmented sections, which now protrudes comfortably from the opposite side. The thumb's tip is made of a flexible resin to improve its grip.

A press of my right toe makes the thumb curl inwards towards my palm with a surprisingly firm grip and satisfying robotic whir. A tap with the left

makes it move up towards my little finger. Used in combination, and after plenty of training, it can mimic the full range of a real thumb.

An extra thumb could be enormously useful for people with one hand or a weakness on one side after a stroke, Clode says, but she hopes the beneficiaries will also include musicians, plumbers, electricians and ceramicists — anyone working on something fiddly.

"I have spoken to a shoulder surgeon who tried it," said Clode, 32, who is from New Zealand and developed the first prototype while a student at the Royal College of Art in London in 2017. She now has a box of old models under her desk like a graveyard of robotic digits. "He tried it out to hold his arthroscope while using his tools as well, rather than needing an assistant."

While interviewing Clode, I grasped my notepad with the robotic thumb, using the fingers on the same hand to scribble notes, leaving my other hand free. Looking down, however, I see my



Kaya Burgess opens a bottle with one hand as he tests a robotic third thumb

notes are not entirely legible, given how close the pad is gripped to my fingers. I may need to wait to be The Times's first robotically-enhanced reporter.

Clode suggests we start simpler. I can easily grasp three large lemons in a single palm. Using the third thumb, I can grasp a fourth against the ball of my

hand. In a second task, I pick up foam shapes, manoeuvring small pyramids and cubes into a basket. In a third, I can pick up a Jenga tile between my index and ring fingers while picking up a second between the robotic thumb and my little finger.

Can it also cope with heavier items? "I can pick up a bottle of champagne with it," Clode said, laughing, hinting at the next task where I have to lift a litre-bottle of sparkling water with the thumb and hold it while using fingers on the same hand to unscrew the lid.

It feels like a multitasker's dream. MRI scans even suggest using the device can temporarily rewire the way the brain reads signals from the fingers, says Lucy Dowdall, 25, a PhD student working on the project.

Clode said support from the Cambridge lab, run by the neuroscience professor Tamar Makin, is allowing her to develop the thumb further, with plans to see if it could be controlled using electrical impulses in the arm muscles.

In the era of AI, pupils 'must learn how to be human beings'

THE TIMES
Education Commission

Katie Gibbons

The current school curriculum and exams system are equipping children with skills that will always be performed better by machine learning. Sir Anthony Seldon has warned as he called for education to "prioritise what it means to be human".

At an event to mark two years since the Times Education Commission (TEC) published its findings, leaders from across the sector endorsed its key recommendation for an overhaul of the secondary school curriculum.

Seldon, a political biographer and the head teacher of Epsom College, said that although exams have a significant role in education, the results are "not all important".

"The exam system majors on the very same skills that the algorithms will always be able to outperform people on. What we should be doing in this age of AI and algorithms, is teaching children the human skills," he said.

"The only debate that is going to matter in the next 50 years, is what does it mean to be a human being? What is human intelligence as opposed to machine intelligence? We are not prioritising [in schools] what it means to be human. You go to some highly academic schools and the kids are like zombies."

The flagship proposal of the TEC, to introduce a "British baccalaureate", secured a commitment from the prime minister, Rishi Sunak, who in October announced his intention to introduce the Advanced British Standard (ABS) and has no made it a Tory manifesto commitment.

Under his plans, A-levels would be

merged with technical T-levels to create "parity of esteem" between academic and technical subjects.

Polling from Edge Foundation, the education specialists, found that a baccalaureate has significant cross-party appeal in England. More than two thirds support the ABS, which would see a wider range of subjects studied until the age of 18.

Robert Halfon, the Tory former skills minister, told the event yesterday that he thought it was "massive" for Sunak to announce such a significant change to the secondary education system.

"It is very exciting, I'm glad it is in the manifesto: it's put it on the national agenda," he said. "It will have a huge change and once it comes through it will allow other changes to follow. It is important to win one battle at a time."

The introduction of the ABS remains somewhat divisive across the education sector, however, with many teaching professionals first keen to address the pressing matters of staff recruitment and retention and pupil absences.

Yet the TEC found a unifying agreement that there is urgent need for more investment in early years, which are the crucial building blocks for how children go on to engage with schooling.

Anne Longfield, the former children's commissioner for England, told the event that reintroducing something like the Sure Start initiative, launched by the Blair government in 1998 and scrapped by Michael Gove as education secretary, would be life-changing for millions of families. "We need to commit to early years. Schools should be at the heart of this new [initiative]," she said. "You bring services together in a common purpose and wrap them around schools and you identify the kids who need help early, probably from birth, or pre-birth."

Educational reform, letters, page 22



Take your seats Ovo Theatre's outdoor production of *The Secret Garden* is at the Roman Theatre in St Albans until Saturday

Boarding schools 'worth protecting'

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Boarding schools should be promoted as the "jewel in the crown" of British education, head teachers will tell the next government.

They claim to contribute almost a billion pounds in tax to the economy and support tens of thousands of jobs. The Boarding Schools' Association (BSA) is urging the main political parties to acknowledge, promote and protect their world-leading status.

David Walker, the BSA's director, said Labour's policy of levying VAT on private school fees would be a "tax on sleeping" if it exempted state boarding schools but was applied to those that were independent.

He said: "The UK has the largest

number of boarding schools per square mile in the world, the world's oldest boarding school [The King's School Canterbury], and more specialist boarding schools than any other country. There are more than 70,000 students at UK boarding schools, including more than 25,000 from countries around the world."

Most boarding schools are private; however, there are a number of state boarding schools that offer free tuition but parents pay boarding fees.

The Labour Party has pledged to levy VAT on independent school fees, which it says would generate £1.6 billion to spend on state schools. A recent census revealed that the average boarding school fee is £42,500.

The BSA says its 500 members gen-

erate £3 billion a year in revenues, support nearly 65,000 jobs, including 26,000 teachers, and contribute £900 million annually in tax.

Walker said more than 4,000 children with parents in the armed forces are in boarding schools and that the sector disproportionately supports arts, dance and music, such as through choir schools and conservatoires.

He added: "If VAT is added to independent school fees it would be the only part of education subject to the tax across the whole of Europe. It appears an exemption on VAT may be given on boarding fees at state boarding schools. There is no sense in implementing a tax on sleeping overnight in one type of school and not another. There should be no tax on children sleeping at all."

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Museum's £50m deal with BP is 'dismaying', claims rival

David Sanderson Arts Correspondent

The head of the Tate has broken ranks to criticise the British Museum's £50 million deal with BP, which she described as ethically suspect.

Maria Balshaw, director of Tate, said the museum's decision to re-enter a sponsorship deal with the energy company had caused her dismay, adding that it was certain to be a challenge for its new director, Nicholas Cullinan, to navigate.

The British Museum took activists and fellow cultural institutions by surprise in December when it announced the deal with BP, a decision that split its board of trustees, led by the former chancellor George Osborne, and resulted in the departure of its deputy chairwoman, the writer and broadcaster Muriel Gray.

For the past few years, most of the country's leading cultural institutions have moved away from sponsorship by energy giants amid concerns about their persistent reliance on fossil fuels and the speed of their move towards green energy.

Tate ended a 26-year deal with BP in 2017 and was followed by the Royal Opera House, the National Portrait Gallery and the Royal Shakespeare Company.

The British Museum had last year indicated an end to its longstanding partnership with BP, only to agree at a trustees meeting in June that it would accept the company's money over the next decade to help with a proposed redevelopment that it said would make its buildings and collections fit for centuries to come.

One trustee, Dame Mary Beard, told The Times in December that as a board member she had accepted "the view of the majority of the trustees (who I know looked long and hard at this) ... but it was not my view and ... this would not have been my decision."

Trustees were also warned about the increased risks of damage to the museum's collection of priceless objects from protesters angered by the sponsorship deal.

The only other of the 15 "national museums" — which include Tate and are charged by the state with looking

after the nation's collections — to accept money from fossil fuel companies is the Science Museum, which has a controversial deal with India's Adani Group, the world's largest private coal producer. The company sponsors the museum's new energy Gallery through a "green energy" subsidiary.

In a new book, *Gathering of Strangers: Why Museums Matter*, Balshaw takes aim at the British Museum over its ten-year £50 million deal with BP.

Balshaw, who has been director of Tate and its four galleries in London, St Ives and Liverpool since 2017, writes there was "surprise and anger" when the new BP deal was announced.



Maria Balshaw is the director of Tate

"I feel dismay that the British Museum would make such a choice at a time when so many UK institutions have committed to not supporting companies whose green energy work can be said to be too little and too slow, in the hope that they will be motivated to move faster," she said.

"I do not think the public ... wish to see such ethical dissonance in museums they care about, and will likely continue to be active in letting the museum know so. That this will be one of the challenges in the newly appointed director Nicholas Cullinan's inbox is certain." The British Museum declined to comment.

TMS

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Another Tory on the slide

As Ed Davey continues to play Centrist Parcs Dad, spreading the Lib Dem message that life is all swings and roundabouts, another politician has come a cropper at the funfair. George Osborne arrived to record his economics podcast wearing a large bandage on his elbow, needed when he gashed his arm at the Royal Bath & West Show. After showing his infant son the cows and tractors, the former chancellor, below, took him down a helter-skelter but managed to skin his arm on the side. At least this time he wasn't blue-lighted out of there. In 1996, he visited the Bath show as a special adviser to Douglas Hogg, then agriculture minister, but things got testy and Osborne and his master needed a police escort to escape the angry farmers.

If you are fed up with election canvassers, we did our best to stop them 118 years ago. In 1906, The Times published a leading article saying that speaking to voters on the doorstep was "antiquated and, for the most part, supremely futile". Our forebears argued that voters who follow politics surely can make up their own minds, while those who don't care for it should be "better left in splendid isolation".

STRICTLY RED

But the Tories used to be champions at canvassing. The historian Philip Cowley writes on Politics Home that before the last war the party ran a competition, the Duncan Challenge Cup, which he calls "a sort of *Strictly* for door-knockers". After local rounds, the final was held in Westminster and featured 16 pairs of activists who had to knock at a fake door and engage with a pair of "voters". The first winners



PATRICK KIDD

were from Islington North, then a Conservative-held seat, now Corbyn Central. Good luck finding much blue support there now.

RIFKIND'S CREATIVE WRITING
Our colleague Hugo Rifkind was careful only to invite people whose names he knew to the launch of his latest novel, *Rabbits*, on Monday. At the first signing event for his debut novel, in 2006, just two people asked for his scribble. One was the aunt of a good friend whom he had known for years. "Just sign it to me," she said, at which point Hugo realised he didn't have a clue as to her name and so just wrote: "To Neil's Aunt."

There's no sign of rapprochement between the Gallagher brothers as Liam continues his 30th anniversary tour of the first Oasis album. Definitely Maybe. Asked before the London swing what he would do if his estranged brother Noel showed up, Liam replied: "We have a little creche backstage with a ball-pool and colouring books. He could hang out there until we have finished."

WIZARDS FROM OZ

Tony Abbott, the former prime minister of Australia, spoke on Monday at the Carlton Club about the differences between British and Australian conservatives. During Abbott's election campaign in 2013, Boris Johnson offered him his assistance but, aware that the bumbling toff act might not go down well with everyone in Oz, asked: "Would I help more by campaigning for you or against?" Abbott also proposed a "labour mobility partnership" between our countries "given that the productivity of the British improves when they move to Australia and vice versa". If that goes ahead, could they send us an opening batsman and a couple of fast bowlers in exchange for all those doctors?

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There are more than 1,700 works on display, including *Two Part Invention* by the Royal Academician John Maine, right

Too much tick-box ... and too little to tickle the fancy

Art Laura Freeman

Summer Exhibition Royal Academy

★★☆☆☆

It doesn't have to be like this. The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition doesn't have to be a slog, it doesn't have to be room after room of muddled mediocrity with the odd good thing thrown in. Last year it felt fun and festive. The rooms were bright and brimful of surprises. Grayson Perry curated the summer show with impish pizzazz in 2018. Why is this year's summer show — the 256th — such a dirge?

Some rooms contrive to be so densely hung and cluttered it's like looking at a QR code, while others (Room III, for example) are so sparsely filled they feel cavernous and ill considered. There are some affected curatorial decisions. The architecture collective Assemble has painted sample swatches on the walls of the Wohl Central Hall. It might be meant to feel creative and "in medias res", but it just looks messy and unfinished. A room of black-and-white photography is dreary against staple-grey walls.

The Royal Academician Tom Phillips, who chaired the exhibitions committee in the 1990s, summed up the summer show as "of cabbages and kings". Taken from Lewis Carroll's *The Walrus and the Carpenter* it's an apt description of the pick'n'mix approach that invites submissions from elected Academicians and the public.

I'm not convinced that the Academicians this year count among the kings. There are some very cabbage, back-of-the-drawer works from Tracey Emin, Rose Wylie and Hurvin Anderson. Anderson has been on such a hot streak. Why send these barely-there, black-and-white postcards? There's a muted El Anatsui, nice enough but a come-down after his Turbine Hall theatrics, and a site-specific Conrad Shawcross piece that doesn't sit particularly specifically or happily in its allotted space above a door.

Among the 1,710 works — beating last year's 1,614 — there are, of course, some pleasures to compensate for the pain in the small of your

back. Norman Ackroyd RA is, at 86, on fine fighting form in Atlantic etchings where spray becomes gull and gull becomes spray. I looked and looked again at Emily Allchurch's *Mirrored City* photographs in which Venice morphs into Shanghai and vice versa until you can't be sure what is gondola and what

is junk, what palazzo and what temple. David Moore and Kate Davis's seascape of Bass Rock, an island in the Firth of Forth, woven from the musical scores of Scottish folk songs is beautiful and ingenious.

Why, though, would you "sky" (hang high) Adam Dant, whose ever-witty scenes of London life and history depend on being seen and read at close quarters? There are too many dogs and too many amusing collages using Tunnock's Teacakes wrappers, too much that is tick-box and too little to tickle the fancy.

From June 18 to August 18, royalacademy.org.uk



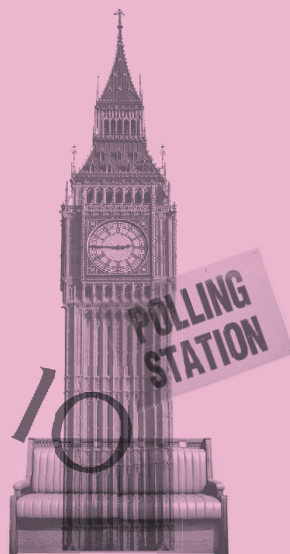
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Kidney damage on mission to Mars may lead to dialysis

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

Elon Musk's vision of a Mars colony may have been dealt a blow by a study that suggests astronauts travelling to the planet will be at risk of excruciatingly painful "cosmic kidney stones" and may even end up needing dialysis.

The billionaire founder of SpaceX has said that within 20 to 30 years of the first human setting foot on Mars, it could host a million-strong community.

However, a collection of 25 new scientific papers on the effects of space travel on human biology has questioned the feasibility of setting foot in distant worlds. The research draws on health data from scores of astronauts, as well as hundreds of rodents that were sent into orbit or placed in machines on Earth that emit the exotic forms of radiation found beyond the protective barrier of our planet's magnetic field.

The researchers looked at plasma and urine samples from astronauts, as well

as kidney tissue from mice that had been sent to space. The results suggest that the structure of the kidney changes because of microgravity, affecting its ability to control salt and mineral levels.

This could help to explain why astronauts have an elevated risk of kidney stones, and suggests that space radiation may damage mitochondria, the biological power plants that the kidneys rely on to remove waste from the blood.

Dr Keith Stew of University College London, who led the study, said the changes could lead to kidney failure. "If we don't develop new ways to protect the kidneys, I'd say that while an astronaut could make it to Mars they might need dialysis on the way back."

Afshin Beheshti of Nasa Ames Research Center called the findings a "yellow flag". While it is possible to treat kidney stones on Earth, they would present a much bigger problem on an isolated spacecraft 140 million miles from the nearest clinic.

Clock is ticking on Putin's nuclear gamble

Roger Boyes

Page 20



Comment

There are good reasons to fear the radical right

Engaging with the concerns of disillusioned voters offers more hope than Macron's all-or-nothing defence of centrism

Daniel Finkelstein



@DANNYTHEFINK

In 1928 Dr Alfred Wiener attended the executive committee of Germany's leading Jewish communal body and presented an analysis of recent election results. He suggested to the committee that the correct response was alarm. They were unconvinced. Indeed, they were quite irritated. He was sharply rebuffed.

What Wiener, my maternal grandfather, had noticed was the pattern of regional results. Hitler's National Socialist party had fallen back in some urban areas. But its support was growing in rural districts. He warned his colleagues to take this threat seriously. They didn't concur.

Is it unreasonable of me to study the results of last week's European parliamentary elections and feel my skin prickle slightly? Feel dismay and foreboding? Do I deserve the sharp rebuff my grandfather once received?

There are any number of reasons why I might be advised to keep calm. The most important is that the populist parties that enjoyed success last week have taken trouble to deny any fascist sympathies. They are better described as parties of the radical right. It is also true that in many parts of Europe the centre held.

And yet I do not find these attempts at reassurance entirely persuasive. It is true that not everywhere in Germany, let alone everywhere in Europe, turned to the radical right last week. But this was the case in 1928 as well. Reactionaries now, as then, have established more

than a foothold. They have become an established political force. How can this not be worrying?

The radical right has already formed governments in Poland and Hungary, risen to power in Italy and topped the polls in the Netherlands. Now it is challenging to do the same in France. So those who say the election results last week were "mixed" are being complacent.

It is also complacent to regard the radical right as nothing much to worry about. I always worry about movements that claim to be the voice of the people and to embody its spirit. They claim this spirit is being suppressed by a manipulative elite. They develop conspiracy theories about its power. And they offer themselves up as the only true interpreters of the national will, the one force that will cleanse the nation.

To do this they must remove from power, or even from the country, all those whose values they deem at

France's president likes to take on opponents, not try to pacify them

variance with those of the true nation: immigrants, liberals, minority ethnic groups, politicians, lawyers, people who live in big cities, people who drink lattes, people who teach in universities, people who have university degrees.

My mother and father were both victims of this thinking. The Nazis rounded up all the Jews, some of whom were shopkeepers. The Soviets rounded up all the shopkeepers, some of whom were Jews. Mum and Dad were both arrested, members of the elite at only ten years old. I don't think it is unreasonable to start worrying about the radical right (or

the radical left) before it reaches the rounding-up stage.

There are broadly two approaches to addressing the radical right's rise. The first is to identify the grievances that animate voters for radical-right parties and attempt to address them. The hope is that these voters can be accommodated within the mainstream. The alternative is to confront these grievances and define the mainstream against them.

Very crudely, the first of these approaches might be termed the Cameron approach, the second the Macron approach. It is not immediately obvious which one of them is correct.

David Cameron organised a referendum on British membership of the European Union partly (he told me this directly) because he thought concerns about the country's independence were legitimate and it would be right to allow an opportunity for them to be ameliorated by a new negotiated arrangement and then put to a vote. He also thought this the best way of curbing the rise of the radical right.

Similarly, he accepted the need for immigration control and thought firm measures might reduce voter concerns. He would struggle, not altogether successfully, to get numbers down.

Liberals have expressed contempt for this strategy. They regard it as having been a total disaster. And there is plenty of evidence to support this view. The UK ended up leaving the EU and resorting to ever-more desperate measures to curb immigration, yet the radical right is still eating the centre right.

So liberals generally prefer a more confrontational approach, the one generally favoured by Emmanuel Macron. He embraces his leadership of the metropolitan elite, makes the



Marine Le Pen and Jordan Bardella's National Rally made gains last week

argument for international solidarity, globalism and the power of the EU. He believes that the demands of the radical right must be dismissed rather than pandered to.

This is certainly more emotionally satisfying. When, during last week's BBC debate, the Scottish Nationalist Stephen Flynn urged politicians to talk of the advantages of immigration, he received a solid round of applause, one of relief and appreciation. Until now Macron has regarded the Cameron strategy with haughty contempt, with plenty of reason for this contempt. The French president has been forced into occasional retreat on immigration but generally prefers taking on his opponents rather than pacifying them. This week he reacted to setback in a characteristic way.

The radical right crushed Macron's

centrists in the European elections and he responded by calling a domestic parliamentary election at the end of this month. He describes this as "a moment of clarification". His confidence in the liberal case is such that he thinks it will triumph when what is at stake is real power. The radical right is a protest vote.

This is a massive gamble. He could lose control of parliament, and perhaps ultimately of the Elysée, to the radical right.

I have always preferred the Cameron strategy to that of Macron, as I think you have to address real grievances and not simply attempt to override them. I shared Cameron's instinct that fears about European centralisation and concerns about immigration were both real and could not be easily dismissed as mere protest. I'm a conservative, not a pure liberal, and some of these fears and concerns are mine anyway.

Support for the broad Cameron approach is a position I maintain, despite what might be politely described as the setbacks. And it appears Sir Keir Starmer agrees. He has shifted Labour away from the Macron approach. He promises immigration control, has been relatively conservative on cultural issues and has not relitigated Brexit. He would never call this the Cameron approach but it is.

I think he is right. I hope he is. I think it is a better gamble than the one being engaged in by Macron. But what keeps me awake at night is the fear that neither approach will work. What happened to my mum and dad won't happen to me. It won't happen to my children. But could it? Yes.

Daniel Finkelstein's *Hitler, Stalin, Mum and Dad* has now been published in paperback

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Comment

Clock is ticking on Putin's nuclear gamble

Kremlin may have decided only the threat of atomic weapons can bring victory in Ukraine

Roger
Boyes



@ROGERBOYES

Back in 1983 I filed a brief report for *The Times* about Polish general staff officers gathering in a Warsaw cinema for a closed preview of the post-nuclear apocalypse US film *The Day After*. Until then my already chunky secret police file had been written up by rather bored agents. The leak of the film screening changed the tone: the spooks' analysis became twitchy, anxious perhaps that officers had been gossiping with westerners. It probably also reflected worries that Moscow would kick up a fuss.

The fact is East-West relations were at a dismal, paranoiac low. The Soviets had shot down a civilian Korean airliner in September 1983, believing it to be a US spy plane. In November of that year Nato's Able Archer exercises practised nuclear launch procedures in the event of Moscow invading Finland and Yugoslavia. The Kremlin thought the war game could be cover for a first strike by the West. US cruise missiles were about to be stationed in Britain to counter the threat of Soviet SS-20s. As for *The Day After*, wasn't that a way of readying western audiences for a coming war?

Many deemed 1983 to be the most dangerous moment since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. Could we now be approaching a similar showdown, born of miscalculation and

brinkmanship? Take a look at the Doomsday Clock, set annually by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, as a way of alerting the public to the relative proximity of nuclear destruction. It was first positioned, in 1947, at seven minutes to midnight. After the end of the Cold War it was shifted back to 17 minutes before midnight. Today, it shows 90 seconds to the midnight hour.

That is why Vladimir Putin's recent performance at a St Petersburg investors' forum needs some careful study. He was appearing with a noted hawk, Sergei Karaganov, an academic who has previously called for a pre-emptive and limited nuclear strike on Russia's enemies. Before

This could all be a bluff to capitalise on American timidity

their appearance, a smiling Putin approached Karaganov. "Are you going to stir things up?" he asked. "That's why I've been invited, I think," said the professor.

The performance then followed the pre-scripted direction. Putin reassured investors he saw no need to use nuclear weapons at present, as there was no immediate existential threat to Russia, but left open whether the Kremlin was ready to change its nuclear doctrine. Karaganov stuck to his guns, his views already set out in an article last year: "Following modern mainly western military-political thinking, we thoughtlessly set too high a threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, inaccurately assessed the

situation in Ukraine and did not start the military operation there successfully enough."

That sounds like an open debate, or at least a good cop, bad cop duet. In fact Karaganov's position, though he presented himself as a Dr Strangelove figure, is essentially that of Putin. First, Putin reserves the right to punish the West if Ukraine uses newly supplied western weapons to strike inside Russia. He says he will provide weapons to Russia-friendly neighbours of western supporters of Ukraine. Whether these are conventional weapons or tactical nuclear weapons has not yet been decided.

Second, the framing of these choices is already under way. This week four Russian vessels, including a nuclear-powered submarine, are heading for Havana for talks. Tactical nuclear drills are being held near the Ukrainian border.

It could all be part of an elaborate bluff, an attempt to capitalise on the timidity of the Biden administration. Some western analysts argue Russia's deepening dependence on Chinese support makes it unlikely that Putin will resort to a nuclear option. But training scenarios used by Russian forces between 2008 and 2014 reveal that the Russian army war-gamed the use of tactical nuclear forces in the case of an invasion in which 20 per cent of its strategic ballistic missiles were destroyed.

The military thinking is in place and as Putin surveys the shifting strategic climate — the expanding, dysfunctional nuclear family — he may calculate that only a credible threat of battlefield nukes can bring settlement of the Ukraine war on his

terms. Iran, under a new president and with a weakening supreme leader, may reverse the longstanding fatwa against acquiring nuclear weapons. It could pull out of the non-proliferation treaty and race for a bomb, as North Korea did in 2003. North Korea itself seems to be itching to turn its bomb-making capacity into geopolitical clout.

For her intriguing new book *Nuclear War: A Scenario*, the US author Annie Jacobsen interviews 50 strategists, decision-makers and engineers at length about how even a primitive North Korean attack on a Californian nuclear power station could cripple the country. It would be a war destined to spread. For one thing, the US Minuteman missiles launched against Kim Jong-un would have to cross Russian airspace. Given the dodgy communications between the US and Russia, that could be very messy indeed.

Putin does not sound like a desperate man at the moment. He has taken huge casualties already in Ukraine (315,000 dead and wounded in two years, compared with 210,000 dead and wounded Americans in nine years of Vietnam) but he keeps signalling he is ready for a long war. His eye is on a new US president, a sudden fall-off in support for Ukraine and a deal that would both decapitate his enemies in Kyiv and give Russia security guarantees.

Putin's gamble is that nuclear weapons, threatened or even briefly used, could bring a cold peace — even, perversely, some respect from other rogue nations. It looks as if the Doomsday Clock is going to be heading in the wrong direction again.



BP should let its workers' private lives stay private

Jawad Iqbal

The oil and gas giant BP appears to have lost its corporate marbles in demanding that its entire 90,000-strong workforce come clean about office romances or risk getting sacked. Senior leaders — numbering about 4,500 executives — have been given three months to report any intimate relationships that have occurred at work during the past three years. The new guidelines also ban anyone being in a couple with someone they "directly or indirectly manage" — a breach could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. It amounts to a corporate snoopers' charter that is both sinister and stupid.

Why is BP doing this? The company has moved to tighten its policy around workplace relationships in an attempt to avoid another scandal like that which led to the sudden departure of its chief executive, Bernard Looney, last September. He was found to have committed "serious misconduct" in failing to disclose workplace relationships. Looney was stripped of £32 million in pay and bonuses after his dismissal.

The public fallout has led to this latest revision of BP's conflict of interest policy. Out goes the previous (eminently sensible) guidance requiring employees to disclose and record family or intimate relationships at work only if they felt there could be a conflict of interest. This treated staff as adults, capable of exercising their own judgment and discretion. No more.

The ostensible justification is that the new disclosure rules allow employers to take pre-emptive steps to avoid conflicts of interest and issues of confidentiality. Yet the reality is that the guidelines will create more problems than they solve. Who, for example, gets to define what is considered a reportable office "relationship"?

The idea that sexual relationships in the office are the only ones that create issues of confidentiality or potential abuses of power is itself flawed. What if someone maliciously declares an imaginary office dalliance with a co-worker? How would the other person even know? What if two employees disagree about whether to declare a former or current relationship? It is equally unclear how the company's human resources department is expected to keep tabs on the "confessions" of thousands of employees.

In truth, many staff will choose not to disclose their office relationships. After all, there is no law that compels them to do so. Many people meet their eventual partners through work: that is not — nor should it be — a reportable offence.

BP, in its misguided intervention, is guilty of turning office romances into something more sinister. It would be better served keeping its corporate nose out of the private lives of its workforce.

Matthew Parris Notebook

Bike crash creates an accidental Corbynista

If you could see the photograph, you'd know at once what I mean by saying that politics can't entirely be disentangled from the personal. The photo is of a little boy in a child's green cycling helmet, satchel on back. He's on a pavement and looks tearful, as a bystander holds his red bike. We realise he has just fallen off it. Beside him stands an elderly gentleman in specs, leaning over kindly to comfort the boy, an arm on Eddie's shoulder.

I happen to know he's called Eddie because his father is the friend who sent me the pic. The kindly old gent is Jeremy Corbyn. The former Labour leader, now an independent parliamentary candidate, was merely a passer-by when Eddie met his accident. Eddie's dad, a million miles from being a Corbynite, WhatsApps me: "I may have to vote for him now." In this dreary and unedifying general election where no candidate appeals, I can think of worse deciders.

Swift rebuke?

Will I ever learn? Any experienced journalist could have told me: never dabble in sarcasm or irony because readers will think you're being serious. In last week's Notebook I extravagantly lauded the Tory plan for conscripting young people into national service, and suggested that old people should be conscripted too. Expecting readers' complaints that I was being flip, I was instead unnerved by praise for the idea from online commenters below the column. They think I'm serious. They love the idea. Or are they, too, being sarcastic?

We live in such crazy times that satire becomes hard to distinguish from serious suggestion. Online on Monday, beneath a Times report on the latest slaughter in Gaza, a reader expressed the view that one Israeli life was worth more than 50 Palestinian dead: a "diamond" extracted by detonating "rocks". I read and re-read it, trying to decide if this was sarcasm. I still don't know. Our literature's greatest satirist, Jonathan Swift, would today struggle with his *Modest Proposal* that

the starving Irish should eat their own babies.

Driving me mad

But here's an idea whose time has come — and positive: a good thing, rather than party leaders bidding against each other with promises not to do bad things. A former environment secretary, John Gummer (now Lord Deben), has tossed a little realism into the debate about motoring. The Tories are trying to tickle motorists' tummies, promising to abolish the Ulez charges in London; now comes a new Tory pledge to scrap all road tolls.

It's infantile. Revenue has to be raised. Some kind of restraint upon car use has to be applied.

Deben points out that EV vehicles are already eating into revenue from fuel duties. The loss could eventually cost the state £30 billion. To pay for roadbuilding, road repair and traffic management, he says, we'll have to start charging drivers for how far they drive. He's right. The technology is now straightforward. Users should pay according to use, not ownership of a





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Young MPs will want to change the agenda

New intake are likely to be the most diverse, youngest, least experienced cohort ever and their priorities will be different

Alice Thomson



@ALICETTAMES

At 4pm last Friday the parliamentary candidates' lists closed with a flurry of late entries. The Tories, after a desperate scramble, have managed to find a candidate for every seat except Rotherham. Labour has the youngest hopeful, Sam Carling, a 21-year-old student standing in North West Cambridgeshire; the Lib Dems have the oldest, the 80-year-old Gordon Birtwistle in Burnley. Each party has tried to shoehorn in its favourites at the last minute and there are a record 4,519 candidates' names on the ballot papers.

Meanwhile, the old guard have been packing up at Westminster, sneaking out a bit of letterheaded stationery, buying their final chocolate mints and reminiscing about their finest speech or fact-finding missions to Tobago before heading back to the shires and the suburbs to have a last cup of tea with their former constituency workers.

In total, 132 MPs all calling it a day, including 22 current or former secretaries of state and the chairs of

ten select committees; they include 75 Tories, 34 Labour MPs, nine SNP MPs and the Green Party's sole MP, Caroline Lucas. Some cite exhaustion, others the toll of being trolled, stalked and forced to wear stab vests. Several have lost their seat in the boundary change musical chairs or, in a few cases, been blocked by their party. "I just couldn't physically or mentally pin on that rosette again and perform an inane TikTok dance," said one former cabinet minister.

Whatever the result on July 4, this is likely to be the most diverse, youngest and least experienced parliament since at least the 1950s. The latest polling by YouGov predicts a Labour majority of 194

If Labour wins, at least four high-powered ministers will be gay

seats, with potentially 277 Gen X members, born between 1965 and 1980, and 227 from the millennial cohort, born between 1981 and 1996, including 23 in their twenties. The think tank British Future suggests there will be a record number of ethnic minority MPs taking their seats — about 14 per cent. "In 40 years we will have gone from nearly zero to one in seven MPs," says its

director, Sunder Katwala. Not only will the next parliament be the most ethnically and gender diverse (with about 39 per cent women), it will also have far more LGBT members. The Labour MP Chris Smith was in a minority of one when he said he was gay in 1984. When Ben Bradshaw became the Labour MP for Exeter, having been the second openly gay candidate only 27 years ago in 1997, he faced homophobic abuse, his Tory rival describing homosexuality as a "sterile, disease-ridden and God-forsaken occupation".

While Ireland has had a gay taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, and France a gay prime minister, Gabriel Attal, the Tories currently have no LGBT cabinet ministers. Now, if Labour wins, there are likely to be at least four high-powered senior ministers who are gay: Wes Streeting, Peter Kyle, Steve Reed and Luke Pollard. Three decades on, it's not an issue. When I interviewed Danny Beales, the Labour by-election candidate in Uxbridge & South Ruislip last year, it was Ulez, London's ultra-low emission zone, rather than his sexuality, that voters mentioned on the doorstep.

Michael Crick, who runs the Tomorrow's MPs Twitter/X account which monitors candidates, thinks there will be at least 100 openly gay MPs in the next parliament if you take the current YouGov polling. He

suggests would-be politicians in traditional heterosexual families may be put off standing in the 21st century because they tend to have young children and have more domestic responsibilities. Politics and the 24-hours-a-day media scrutiny increasingly take a huge toll on family life, with more than 40 per cent of the 2010 intake believed to have split from their partners in the past 14 years. Both the Tories and Labour also look set to have a larger

The vast majority of those campaigning deserve our respect

proportion of ex-military candidates than in the past two decades — toughness and resilience are useful qualities at Westminster.

Meanwhile, the Tories look likely to have fewer female MPs in the new parliament — less than 30 per cent of the candidates are women, often in now-unwinnable seats, and some claim privately that they have lost out in a "jobs for the boys" operation to "lads and spads from No 10". Only a year ago, the Tories' then-chairman Greg Hands suggested the figure should be 50 per cent.

So, what could be the impact of the class of 2024 when they arrive next month as the largest new

postwar intake? There will be some MPs who struggle, among them perhaps Labour and Liberal Democrat candidates from marginals who a year ago probably didn't imagine they'd be commuting to London rather than going back to their day jobs. But these diverse millennials and Gen Zers could bring about lasting change. Their concerns may differ from those of their predecessors and centre on issues such as housing, childcare and education. They could also push for a different work-life balance in the House of Commons with fewer late-night sittings.

It's easy to believe that the 4,519 candidates are venal, lying, self-obsessed careerists. Almost 90 per cent of voters say politicians "can't be trusted to tell the truth"; they face contempt, derision, public humiliation, even death threats. But most MPs I've met at the beginning of their careers are entering politics for the right reasons and determined to do the decent thing, even if some subsequently show themselves to be wildly unsuited to represent their constituents, becoming intoxicated by power, cynical about their ability to achieve change or losing their principles. The vast majority deserve respect as they canvass their way around the country — or, in the case of the Lib Dems, career up and down on a rollercoaster.

Letters to the Editor



Deficiencies in party manifestos

Sir, I was disappointed that your detailed coverage (Jun 11) of the Liberal Democrats' general election manifesto did not include any reference to the party's major proposals relating to sex and gender.

The Liberal Democrats' pledge to introduce gender self-ID, so that anyone is allowed to "change sex" by simply stating that they are the opposite sex, is highly controversial.

The party also proposes to legally recognise non-binary identities (people who believe that they are neither man nor woman) within the Gender Recognition Act. This would ride roughshod over decades-old legal provisions to protect women's rights, which are based on recognising that everyone is either male or female.

The Lib Dem proposals are based on the fringe ideological belief that being male or female comes down to feelings about what sex you would like to be rather than what kind of body you have — and they would be disastrous for women's rights.

Maya Forstater
CEO, Sex Matters

Sir, After 14 years in government it is extraordinary how the Tories have dreamt up all these marvellous tax-cutting policies — you have to wonder what they have been doing all this time. The truth is that cutting taxes and allowing public services to wither on the vine will not assuage the struggles of many people but rather prolong them. We need honesty (a quality in short supply these days) and a real plan to fix Britain.

Jon Jennings
Birmingham

Sir, In publishing their manifestos, political parties seeking to form the next government should be expected to conduct a risk assessment. They should be required to tell us what they thought were the chances over the next parliament, for instance, of a hostile act by a foreign power, an environmental disaster (floods or drought), economic shocks or a pandemic. They would then have to tell us how they planned to tackle such risks. A document of this sort would be far more useful than a manifesto making promises that will inevitably crumble in the face of events.

Mike Smith
Settle, N Yorks

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Splintering of the right and lessons of 1983

Sir, William Hague warns that "a struggle to realign the right threatens to put the country more firmly in the hands of the left" and that unless something changes the outcome of 1983, when a divided left enabled a united right, will be avenged ("Farage insurgency only brings years of Labour", Jun 11). This may be true in 2024 but it is not necessarily true over the next five years. Reform UK, like the Reform party of Canada in 1993, also has concentrated support and a distinctive electorate. It is likely to win seats in 2024, at least five million votes and a hundred or so second places, with many coming in Labour areas. It will be Farage, in other words, not One Nation, southern, liberal Tories who will be the main opposition in these areas on July 5.

Furthermore, we should remember that 80 per cent of seats have majority support for slashing the mass immigration that so-called moderate Tories imposed on the country, which Farage opposes. For all these reasons the liberal Tories, who are fond of ignoring their own mistakes over the past 14 years, continue to underestimate the revolt on their right.

Matthew Goodwin
Professor of politics and international relations, University of Kent

Sir, William Hague observes (indeed, laments) the split in the right-wing vote that may well lead to a Labour landslide. However, this split is largely a self-inflicted wound. From David Cameron calling the EU referendum in 2016 and Boris Johnson purging One Nation Conservative MPs in 2019 to Tories selecting Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak as leader and prime minister in 2022, the Conservative Party has pandered to the right wing. Hague studiously overlooks how, after eight years, this pandering has gravely harmed Britain.

Greg Smith
Crandall, Surrey

Sir, In developing his argument that Reform is bound to fail in its struggle to reshape politics in the UK, William Hague draws extensively on differences between the voting patterns of Republicans and Democrats in the US, compared with those between Labour and the Conservatives on this side of the Atlantic. Yet he overlooks one key point. Unlike the Conservatives in this country, the Republican Party today draws extensive support from the so-called working classes. Might not a Reform Party led by Nigel Farage reasonably hope to achieve the same,

thus breaking the historic mould of British politics? After all, many traditional Labour voters have views generally associated with the right wing of politics, and while by habit they might not vote for the Conservatives they are unlikely to have any such inhibitions in relation to Reform.

APN Currie

Winchester

Sir, Ben Howkins suggests a merger between the Conservatives and Reform UK could have the acronym CRU, which he says is a descriptor of fine wines (letter, Jun 11). Not so, according to my Larousse dictionary. It gives a number of meanings for cru, among them raw, uncooked, violent and brutal. With regard to wines, it merely says "land considered according to its produce, particularly vineyards" (my translation), with no mention of it being applied only to fine wine. Moreover, surely the appropriate acronym for a Conservative Reform and Unionist Party would be CRUP, which I can imagine all too well would quickly be changed in people's minds to something rather unpleasant.

George Hart

Rickmansworth, Herts

Educational reform

Sir, Rachel Sylvester encapsulates the challenges facing the education system in England ("Reform of education system is vital for growth", comment, Jun 10; letters, Jun 11) but she should give weight to the vital role of creativity in any future curriculum. Michael Gove's 2010 curriculum reforms have led to fewer children taking art and design, performing arts and music. At GCSE, arts entries have declined by 47 per cent since 2010 because of successive education secretaries' obsession with narrow PISA performance measures.

It is a significant failing that Britain's world-leading creative industries, worth £126 billion to the economy, now look overseas for a suitable workforce, while at least 14 universities are implementing redundancy programmes affecting arts degrees. Creativity is vital to the mental health of children as well as to the economy, and any future curriculum must reflect that.

Neil Roskill
Trustee, Diamond Learning (multi-academy) Trust

Middle East peace

Sir, I disagree with the assertion in your leading article that any democratic government would have liberated its citizens by the means used by the Israel Defence Forces ("Free the Hostages", Jun 10). Widespread civilian deaths are senseless, as they only increase terrorist recruitment. Northern Ireland would not be peaceful today if the British Army had adopted such tactics. Israel needs to recognise that Palestinians are not going anywhere and that the only answer to terrorism is a sovereign Palestinian nation, where they can live in peace alongside their Israeli neighbours.

John Bond
Oxford

Teaching overseas

Sir, Mark Steed (letter, Jun 10) states: "Given that UK graduates fund their own degrees and postgraduate teacher training qualifications, any moral obligation to work in UK state schools is a thing of the past." I was

under the impression that such education is paid for through UK taxpayer-funded loans repayable out of income. I should be interested to learn how UK-trained teachers living and working in Dubai effect these repayments out of their "no-tax income", which, presumably, is not declarable in the UK.

Amanda Robertson
Newmarket, Suffolk

Reminiscent smells

Sir, Further to Giles Coren's list of reminiscent scents ("Polished lino and Imperial Leather: my smell archive", Notebook, Jun 11), may I add flowering privet, seaweed, eau-de-cologne and parma violet scent.

Anna Webster
Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancs

Sir, To Giles Coren's list may I add the sweet, polished smell of a freshly opened packet of wax crayons. It always reminds me of Year 1 of primary school, and dreaming of a gold star for my drawing skills.

Martin Burstyn
London N10

END OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE ERA

FROM THE TIMES JUNE 12, 1924

One of the most marked symptoms of change in the contemporary life of rural England is the passing of the big country house. Day after day the back page of this journal is filled with descriptive advertisements of "desirable" Tudor or Jacobean mansions and "attractive" Queen Anne or Georgian residences of every sort and size. Early this week between twenty and thirty of the stately homes of England were thus offered for sale in our columns in a single day. Many of them will in all probability be homes no longer. The families that they have sheltered,

often for generations, are compelled to get rid of them — not for commercial gain, as though they were purveyors of boots or butter, but from the mere instinct of self-preservation. For years past they have been white elephants. Today they are millstones, from which, in order to avoid being dragged down to ruin, their owners must at all costs cut themselves free. In 1919, in the case of a number of large estates with an average nominal revenue of £20,300, it was found that the expenditure on income-tax, tithe, rates, and other similar outgoings left a free income of only 4s 6d in the pound. When this had been further reduced by mortgages, rent charges, jointures — and especially death duties — the sum that remained was often less than nothing. Today the position is worse. In all parts of the country the story is the same. On any day in the week — from Norfolk to the New Forest, from Sussex to Yorkshire and Durham and the

Berwick border, the upper reaches of the Thames and in the Cotswolds — prospective purchasers can take their pick of houses and estates of the most alluring charms, because their present owners can no longer afford to live in them. But this state of affairs is only one side of the picture. There are other men and women all over the countryside who, through no fault or choice of their own, are bound to be heavy losers by the passing of the country house. When the owner of the house puts up the shutters to avoid Bankruptcy Court, the inevitable result is that a considerable body of those to whom his estate provided work are driven into the towns. These big country houses cannot all be turned into schools or institutions or country clubs. What is to become of them?

THE TIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

Admiral Byng story

Sir, The real villain of the Admiral Byng story (Jun 10; letter, Jun 11) is Lieutenant General Fowke, the Governor of Gibraltar. Byng had to replenish his motley fleet at the Rock before dealing with Menorca. Under Fowke, the Gibraltar dockyards were run down, ill-provisioned and a disgrace. Instead of advising Byng on possible military options for dealing with the French on Menorca, Fowke did absolutely nothing and, with dishonesty and subterfuge, gave Byng false information about the Fort St Philip garrison, while retaining a possible landing force of four battalions of infantry for his own ends. Sadly, Byng did not have the character to see through this conniving soldier. Fowke was, rightly, court-martialled and was found guilty, but he was merely suspended for a year. It was he who should have been shot, not Byng.

Michael Scott

Author, *Scapegoats: Thirteen Victims of Military Injustice*

Jargon of design

Sir, It is heartening to learn from the letter co-signed by eminent architects (Jun 11) that they "have always supported street-based towns and cities as a way to build the homes we desperately need". Will residents of these street-based locations have access to, for example, food-based restaurants, goods-based shops and train-based stations? Might they also explain why, if "we must have local housing styles that reflect their local context and community", so many examples of the opposite have escaped from architects' drawing boards to disfigure so much of the UK? Perhaps a Labour-based government will provide the answer. Or perhaps not.

Stephen Gold
London N21

E-bike benefits

Sir, Kevin Maher should not be so quick to demonise all e-bike riders (Times2, Jun 10). As a 64-year-old, post cancer treatment, it has given me much pleasure to ride around the Hampshire countryside with my husband on his normal bike. I would not be able to ride for so long or far on a regular bike.

Andrea Gallagher
Fleet, Hants

Fancy phrases

Sir, Further to your archive report "Long words and fancy phrases" (Jun 11), as a skin pathologist nothing gave me more pleasure than issuing a report stating that a patient had "pityriasis versicolor due to Malassezia furfur" (a minor fungal skin infection) or "chondrodermatitis nodularis helices chronicus" (sun-induced painful skin nodule on the ear). We doctors need to find our fun somehow. And yes, we do "revel in length and outlandishness".

Dr John McCarthy
Newcastle upon Tyne

Food protests

Sir Dominic Sandbrook's column ("Milkshake's vanilla compared with protests past", Jun 8; letter, Jun 11) reminds me of another incident involving Harold Wilson. When a protester at a political meeting threw a cabbage at him, Wilson replied: "I asked for your ears, Sir, not your head."

Richard Briand
Leek, Staffs

Daily Universal Register

UK: The British Academy hosts its Summer Showcase, an annual free festival of talks, workshops and performances.

Nature notes



The low-growing bush vetch has a couple of fascinating features that allow it to thrive in meadows, unowned lawns, and roadside verges. Like all members of the pea clan, it can clamber up through the grass, hooking itself on to sturdier plants for support. This allows access to sunlight. Secondly, to protect itself from munching caterpillars and other insects, the vetch enlists the support of ants. As well as producing nectar in their purple flowers to attract pollinating bumblebees, bush vetch also produces the sugary liquid on its stem. These extrafloral nectaries draw in the sweet-toothed ants. In return for the reward, which is even sweeter than the floral nectar, the ants patrol the plants, picking off any unwanted caterpillars. JONATHAN TULLOCH

Birthdays today



Sir Michael Fabricant, pictured, Conservative MP for Lichfield (1992-May 2024), vice-chairman, Conservative Party (2012-14), 74; **Ahmed Aboul Gheit**, secretary-general of the Arab League, 82; **The Rt Rev John Arnold**, Roman Catholic bishop of Salford, 71; **Neil Basu QPM**, assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (2018-21, specialist operations), head of UK counterterrorism policing (2016-18), 56; **John Copley**, theatre and opera producer, 91; **Roy Harper**, folk singer and songwriter, *Another Day* (1970), 83; **Pat Jennings**, footballer, Tottenham Hotspur, Arsenal and Northern Ireland (1964-86), 79; **Sir Paul Kennedy**, lord justice of appeal (1992-2005), interception of communications commissioner (2006-12), 89; **Lord (Spencer) Livermore**, opposition whip (Lords), partner and director, Britain Thinks consultancy (2016-18), 49; **John Mackenzie**, Earl of Cromartie, explosives engineer, chief of the Clan Mackenzie, 76; **Jacqueline McLaren**, lord provost of Glasgow, 60; **Javed Miandad**, cricketer, Pakistan (1976-93), 67; **Lewis Moody**, rugby union player, part of the 2003 World Cup winning squad, England captain (2010-11), 46; **Robert Noel**, chairman, Taylor Wimpey (housebuilder), Hammerson (retail property), chief executive, Land Securities Group (2012-20), 60; **Neil Oatley**, chief designer, McLaren F1 team (1986-2002, now design and development director), 70; **Ian Partridge**, classical tenor, 86; **Bert Sakmann**, cell physiologist, Nobel prizewinner (1991), 82; **Nancy Stratford**, the last surviving female aviator who transported RAF aircraft and crew for the Air Transport Auxiliary during the Second World War (known as "Attagirls"), 105; **Cathy Tyson**, actress, *Mona Lisa* (1986), *Band of Gold* (1995-96), 59.

On this day

In 1981 Steven Spielberg's film *Raiders of the Lost Ark* was released in the US. It won four Oscars; in 1982 Dame Marie Rambert, founder of Britain's oldest ballet company, the Rambert Dance Company, died aged 94. She created Ballet Club in 1926, with a first performance of Frederick Ashton's *A Tragedy of Fashion* the same year.

The last word

"The problems of victory are more agreeable than the problems of defeat, but they are no less difficult." Winston Churchill, Speech to the House of Commons (November 1942)



Low Octane

The Conservative manifesto should have been more inventive and more courageous. Rishi Sunak had nothing to lose and everything to gain from being more radical

The choice of Silverstone, the home of British motor racing, as the venue for the launch of the Conservative manifesto yesterday was doubtless governed by the desire of spin doctors to convey a sense of dynamism. That, however, is a hard sell for a party 14 years in power. There is a natural desire for change in a democracy after such a period, even when the economic landscape is relatively benign. At present, for millions of British households coping with the aftershocks of Covid, Ukraine and the debacle of Liz Truss's premiership, that is anything but the case. Added to the tiredness of the electorate is the weariness of a Tory party grown fractious and inward-looking after years in office.

All the more reason, then, for Rishi Sunak to ignore conventional wisdom and strike out with a high-octane set of unashamedly Conservative policies — the complete abolition of inheritance tax, say. Labour would, of course, paint it as a sop to the rich but what would the prime minister have to lose? The removals men are already booked for No 10 on July 5 so why not go down fighting with a prospectus that trumpets his unabashed commitment to aspiration? Instead yesterday, Mr Sunak retreated into his inner accountant. He played safe, mindful

that such a bold measure may also be divisive in his party.

In place of a screeching, turbocharged policy announcement that would disconcert Labour and set pulses racing, Mr Sunak opted for a series of giveaways that in most cases had been well trailed. A two per cent cut to national insurance is no small matter, and is to be welcomed as prioritising the worker, but the government's gnawing away at what is in effect a second income tax has failed to ignite the enthusiasm of voters. Two previous two per cent drops did nothing to salvage the Tories' poll ratings and the £10 billion Mr Sunak lavished on yesterday's cut was, in political terms, almost certainly a wasted bet.

Impact matters in a manifesto and so does clear direction of travel. A commitment to work diligently towards reducing the overall tax burden is a good thing. But nothing says "party of low taxes" like the disappearance of a hated levy. Killing stamp duty entirely, instead of removing it only for first-time buyers as proposed, would have provided that much-needed impact.

There is another way for Mr Sunak to make an impact: by signalling his intention to act ruthlessly

to reduce the scandal of the ballooning number of people on incapacity benefits. Together with the cost of servicing the national debt, this burden, which soared during the pandemic and continues, mysteriously, to soar, is the principal reason for the parlous state of the public finances. With a scandalous nine million people economically inactive, simply returning to the pre-pandemic situation could save £34 billion.

As it was, there was good in the prime minister's proposals. Abolishing national insurance for self-employed workers is, at £2.6 billion, a cheap and effective way to stimulate an important element of the economy. And help-to-buy measures will be welcomed by people barred from the housing market by the difficulty of raising a deposit. However, a promise of 1.6 million new homes without a clear commitment to planning reform rang hollow. Triple lock plus, meanwhile, was an unjustified giveaway for already indulged pensioners.

In all likelihood, Mr Sunak will not be around to enact his manifesto. But there is merit in ameliorating defeat and maximising the strength of a Tory opposition, especially if the polls are accurate in pointing to a Labour landslide.

Fig Leaves

British judges lend Hong Kong's increasingly repressive regime a spurious legitimacy

Ever since Hong Kong was returned to Chinese control in 1997, British judges have served on the former colony's Court of Final Appeal. Their appointment to Hong Kong's highest court on renewable fixed terms was a sensible measure intended not just to help to preserve the rule of law, but to provide expertise to local lawyers as well as much-needed reassurance to local businesses.

Unfortunately their presence has done little to prevent Hong Kong's inexorable pivot toward mainland-style authoritarian rule. In the past week, two retired Supreme Court judges, Lord Sumption and Lord Collins of Mapesbury, have announced their resignation from the court, citing the political situation in Hong Kong as China continues its crackdown on dissent there.

Explaining his decision in an article for yesterday's Financial Times, Lord Sumption wrote: "Hong Kong, once a vibrant and politically diverse community, is slowly becoming a totalitarian state. The rule of law is profoundly compromised in any area about which the government feels strongly."

While Lord Sumption's strongly worded

denouncement of the Chinese authorities is partly to be applauded, cynics might be tempted to point out that both his and his colleague's decision to step down is not before time. The depressingly bleak situation Lord Sumption describes in Hong Kong is, after all, hardly an overnight development. Ever since Beijing imposed its draconian national security law in 2020, it has been able pretty much to arrest, detain and deport anyone in Hong Kong at will.

Opposition legislators have been disqualified and jailed; independent media has been shut down. Protests have been violently suppressed. Two weeks ago, a Hong Kong court convicted 14 pro-democracy campaigners of subversion in what is the territory's largest national security trial.

In Britain, there was an increasingly uneasy feeling that the appearance of British judges effectively propping up a legal system designed to target and destroy democracy and its supporters risked undermining the government's staunch and wholly justified opposition to China's repressive treatment of the people of Hong Kong.

Despite all this, three British judges will continue to serve in Hong Kong: two former presidents of the Supreme Court, Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers and Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury, and the former law lord Lord Hoffmann. Their positions there, however, are surely untenable.

Criticism of foreign judges offering their services to Hong Kong, where they earn about £40,000 a visit, is growing steadily. Last month, a report by the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation, a charity based in the US and Britain, accused judges on the territory's highest court of lending "their prestige to a justice system that has been undermined and co-opted by Beijing". This is surely right.

It remains a long-established tradition for British lawyers and judges to fill legal appointments in other common-law jurisdictions, but by serving in the courts of a territory where civil and political liberties have now been almost snuffed out, they are in danger of giving the appearance of lending a fig leaf of respectability to tyranny. Their swift and immediate resignation would put paid to any such dangerous misapprehensions.

All at Sea

British coastlines offer us an untapped if occasionally slimy resource

You can use it as fuel, you can fertilise your plants with it, you can make it into what looks like plastic, and you can use it to recapture carbon from the atmosphere. As Edmund Blackadder once said of the potato, "they'll be eating it next!". Although with seaweed, from wrack to dulse to kelp, to the seaweed-adjacent samphire, they of course already are.

For most land-lubbers, seaweed is an otherworldly, mysterious substance, flapping and bubbling into the strangest of forms. Yet in that liminal world between shore and open sea, a bounty is there for the taking. The Prince of Wales

paid tribute on a visit to the country yesterday to its flourishing seaweed industry. It should be flourishing far more.

Across Asia, 35 million tonnes of coastal algae is cultivated each year. Much of it is eaten, both by humans and farm animals. Aside from being cheap, it also has a carbon footprint far lower than most land-based crops. Last year, The Economist estimated that universally replacing even a small amount of cattle feed with seaweed could cut methane emissions by the same amount as removing every car in the world. Farmed seaweed is also a carbon sink, similar to forests but requiring

far less cultivation and no fresh water. Being at sea, also, it rarely gets in the way of anything else.

In Cardiff, the prince examined a golf tee made of seaweed, designed to naturally degrade, fertilising a golf course as a bonus. Two years ago, he awarded the Earthshot environmental prize to its manufacturer, Notpla, which also uses Welsh seaweed to make environmentally friendly, plastic-equivalent food packaging.

Despite its global abundance, seaweed may be the world's most neglected resource. As an ingenious nation with our extensive coastlines, we should be a global leader. Let the kelp help.

World

Ukrainians march for freedom from Putin's brutal rule

Ukraine

George Grylls Sumy

They arrive each day, carrying cats, dragging suitcases and pushing prams: their silhouettes can be seen from a distance, shuffling across no man's land.

The final stretch of their journey — the mile that separates Russia from Ukraine — must be completed on foot. Through binoculars, the Ukrainian border guards count the number of their compatriots crossing that day.

The Kolotilovka-Pokrovka checkpoint outside Sumy, a border city in northeastern Ukraine, is an anomaly across more than 1,000 miles of front line. It is the only means of escape for nearly five million people living under Russian occupation in the south and east of the country, who brave the arduous journey through Russian land to return to Ukrainian-held territory. Now even this lifeline is under threat.

Last month Russian troops attacked neighbouring Kharkiv, forcing Ukraine to divert elite troops away from the intense battles in Donbas to shore up its defences further north. Fierce resistance stalled the Russian advance but Ukrainian officials have warned that the front could be broadened to include Sumy, a region that shares a jagged 350-mile border with Russia.

"The Russians are widening their attacks to try and stretch us more thinly," said Roman Tkach, 52, a spokesman for the Sumy border guard. "If the area around the checkpoint becomes a battlefield too, it will become impossible to let people in."

The surrounding area is shelled on a daily basis. Glide bombs and artillery have flattened entire villages while remotely piloted drones destroy vehicles up to six miles from the border.

Uniquely, the Kolotilovka-Pokrovka checkpoint has so far been spared by the Russian guns. It is the only border crossing between Russia and Ukraine that remains open, through which about 50 Ukrainians flee each day. According to a local charity, Pluriton, 32,000 people have used the checkpoint during the war. "Lots of people have come back to die," said Vitaliy, 40, a volunteer with Pluriton.

Thanks to the charity, refugees who are too frail to walk can still make it back to Ukraine. Vitaliy's volunteers wander out towards the Russian border, trusting that the drones will hold fire, to rescue people left lying on stretchers and push them in wheelchairs to safety.

Once they have navigated the grey zone, the refugees are taken to an underground bunker to verify their Ukrainian citizenship before buses transfer them to Sumy.

They undergo lengthy checks to weed out Russian saboteurs, which means night has usually fallen before families can finally have something to eat at the reception centre in Sumy. "I



Wagner bloodbath

Almost 20,000 fighters from the Wagner mercenary group were killed in the battle for Bakhmut last year, more than the number of troops the Soviet Union lost in the decade-long invasion of Afghanistan (Alec Luhn writes).

As many as 213 mercenaries were killed each day in the ten-month campaign to take the Ukrainian city, according to documents obtained by BBC News Russian and Mediazona, an independent Russian media outlet. Most were convicts released from prisons, regardless of their crimes, and offered freedom in return for six months at the front.

Bakhmut had minor strategic value but took on totemic importance for both sides as troops fought from building to building, and shelling reduced the city to rubble. At least 5,000 Ukrainian soldiers are believed to have died. Yevgeny Prigozhin, Wagner's late head, came to national prominence with videos criticising the Russian military leadership for not giving his men enough ammunition. He finally declared victory in Bakhmut in May last year, and a month later led a coup attempt against Moscow. He was killed in August when his plane exploded over the Tver region in what many see as an assassination ordered by President Putin.

Wagner has paid nearly a billion pounds in compensation to relatives of those killed in the battle for Bakhmut, the documents show, effectively buying their silence. A wave of crime was unleashed in Russia when as many as 30,000 convict soldiers returned home.

"By signing 50,000 secret pardons, Putin has created not only 20,000 mostly nameless graves in Wagner cemeteries around Russia, but also 20,000 physically disabled and 10,000 mentally disabled and dangerous criminals that are now roaming the streets," said Leonid Volkov, an aide to the late opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

don't even know how long we have been on the road," said Dmytro, 33, his hands shaking with exhaustion. Accompanied by his wife, Olyna, and their seven-year-old daughter Valentina, he can at last enjoy a cigarette in free Ukraine. A man of fighting age, Dmytro was subjected to enhanced questioning in Russia. His fingerprints were taken before he was allowed to cross. "They asked me, 'Why do you want to leave? You understand you will have to kill Russian soldiers?'"

As her husband stumbles through half-composed sentences, Olyna clarifies that they have been on the move for three days. The family, originally from Nova Mayachka in occupied Kherson, travelled via Donetsk and the Russian city of Belgorod to cross the border to Sumy. They are heading on to the city of Mykolaiv, about 60 miles from where they set off. The final destination of those traversing vast distances through enemy territory is often only a few dozen miles from the Russian-occupied towns they left.

The fields around Sumy have become a construction site this summer as diggers frantically build fortifications in anticipation of another Russian offensive. Acres of fertile land have been sacrificed for trenches, pillboxes and "dragon's teeth" anti-tank traps.

Life maintains a peculiar sense of normality inside the city of Sumy, 25 miles from the border, as teenagers make the most of the lazy summer weather, leaping from the city's bridges into the river. Yet power outages are frequent and air alarms almost constant as the city suffers from regular drone, missile and glide bomb attacks.

At the Sumy reception centre, a volunteer orders everyone down to the basement. The arrivals from Russia descend to the shelter, where they concentrate their practised ears on the thudding sounds above, listening for clues. Among them is Katya, 73, who has made the journey from an occupied village close to the front lines in the Zaporizhzhia region. Her husband, Ivan, died in March from a heart attack caused by the shelling, prompting her to flee. "There are lots of people waiting to be freed back there," she said, overwhelmed by tears.

As the alarm lifts, the only person with a smile on her face is Raisa Berezina, 75, who has been stuck in Crimea since President Putin launched his full-scale invasion more than two years ago. Berezina is looking forward to being reunited with her son in Kyiv — something that perplexed Russian soldiers manning the checkpoints on her way back to Ukraine. "They kept asking me, 'Where are you going? Where are you going?'. I told them I was going home."

Additional reporting by Viktoria Sybir
Clock is ticking on Putin's nuclear gamble, Roger Boyes, page 20



AfD skips speech by 'beggar' Zelensky

Germany

George Grylls Mykolaiv
David Crossland Berlin

The hard-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) and populist left-wing BSW parties boycotted a speech by President Zelensky in the German Bundestag yesterday, with AfD calling Ukraine's leader a "war and beggar president".

Tino Chrupalla and Alic Weidel, leaders of AfD, said in statement: "We refuse to listen to a speaker in a camouflage suit. Zelensky's term of

office has expired. He is now only in office as a war and beggar president. Ukraine does not need a war president now, it needs a peace president who is willing to negotiate so that the dying stops and the country has a future."

Zelensky had attended a conference in Berlin focused on reconstruction. It was hosted by Olaf Scholz, the German chancellor, who announced further military and diplomatic support for Kyiv's fight against Russia.

The Ukrainian president was given a standing ovation from the 650 MPs in the Reichstag building. In his speech,

**Hamas 'ready to discuss'
Biden's ceasefire deal**
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**Corruption scandal engulfs
family of Spanish PM**
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Olena Zelenska spoke to Ukrainian soldiers being treated at a hospital in Berlin during a visit with her husband, President Zelenskyy. He gave a speech at a conference hosted by

Olaf Scholz, the German chancellor, to discuss the country's reconstruction after the war. Below: Ukrainian forces released images of a drone striking a Russian battlefield target



he compared Ukraine's division by war to the division in postwar Germany. "A divided Europe was never peaceful and a divided Germany was never happy," he said.

"We will not bequeath this war to our children, we will end it. And we will end this war on our terms."

He added: "The time for compromise is over. It has been over since Russia started bombing our cities."

In Sunday's EU elections, AfD made gains in Germany to come second on 15.9 per cent, two points ahead of the ruling Social Democrats, despite a series of scandals including allegations that several of its members had taken money from Russia to spread Kremlin propaganda. Only four of its 77 MPs took their seats to listen to Zelenskyy.

All ten MPs belonging to BSW, a left-wing, socially conservative party that is considered pro-Russian and won 6.2 per cent in the EU election, also boy-



AfD MPs stayed away as President Zelenskyy addressed the Bundestag

cotted the speech. "By staying away, we are also sending a signal of solidarity with all those Ukrainians who want an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated solution instead of being forcibly recruited by President Zelenskyy as cannon fodder for an unwinnable war," said Sevim Dagdelen, a BSW MP.

In a separate statement the BSW, which was formed in January, said that while it condemned Russia's war in Ukraine, it believed Zelenskyy was contributing to "a highly dangerous spiral of escalation and is accepting the risk of a nuclear conflict with devastating consequences for the whole of Europe".

AfD said the German government was giving Zelenskyy a stage "for reconstruction begging", adding: "The people are paying more than enough for military aid, EU aid and welfare benefits for Ukrainians. For us, our own people come first."

The boycott drew sharp rebukes from other parties. Katja Mast, parliamentary secretary of the Social Democrats, described it as embarrassing and disrespectful.

Michael Roth, an SPD MP, said: "To deny respect to a democratically elected president who is fighting for the freedom of his country is so rotten."

De Gaulle 'defiled' as his party backs protégé of Le Pen

France

Adam Sage Paris

French politics moved towards a historic shift yesterday as the head of the centre-right Republicans backed the populist National Rally in its attempt to form the next government.

National Rally, some of whose roots can be traced to the regime that collaborated with Hitler during the Second World War, has long been blacklisted by mainstream French parties. However, Éric Ciotti, the Republicans' leader, said that he would support Jordan Bardella, 28, the Rally's chairman, in his campaign to become France's first hard-right prime minister since 1944.

Ciotti said that he wanted an "alliance with the [National Rally]... with all those who support the ideas of the right, the values of the right".

His stance is vehemently opposed by Republicans who regard it as a betrayal of General Charles de Gaulle, the French Resistance leader who founded their movement. Gérard Darmanin, the interior minister, accused Ciotti of "signing the Munich Agreement" and added that he had "dishonoured" Gaulism. Olivier Marleix, head of the Republicans group in the National Assembly, called on Ciotti to resign.

However, Marine Le Pen, National Rally's parliamentary party leader, praised his "brave choice". The party shed its antisemitic and racist rhetoric after Le Pen took over the leadership from Jean-Marie, her father, a Holocaust denier, in 2011.

The Republicans, founded nine years ago by Nicolas Sarkozy, the former president, are moving ever further to the right. A deal with the Rally would significantly increase Bardella's chances while delivering a crushing blow to President Macron.

Macron, 45, called snap parliamentary elections after his centrist camp was trounced by National Rally in Sunday's European elections. Having lost his absolute majority in the national assembly in 2022, he is hoping that voters will take fright at the prospect of a populist, anti-immigrant government and swing behind him in the two-round parliamentary elections on June 30 and July 7.

A poll published by the Harris Interactive institute suggested that Macron's gamble may backfire. It said National Rally was on course to increase its number of seats from 89 in parliament to between 235 and 265.

AfD's camp is forecast to shrink from 249 seats to between 125 and 165.

That would be a success for Bardella, but he would still fall short of the 289 seats required for an absolute majority.

Bardella is seeking to get over the line with the help of the Republicans, with whom he claims to have

Who holds power in France?

Created for Charles de Gaulle in 1958, France's Fifth Republic is a hybrid with a directly elected five-year presidency and a parliamentary system. Usually, the president wields unchallenged executive power, choosing a prime minister to run a government that is accountable to the National Assembly (the lower house of parliament) but takes its orders from him. No woman has yet held office (Charles Bremner writes).

The prime minister and the cabinet need not have been MPs and they cannot hold seats while in office. The president is the only person with the power to dissolve parliament. If the opposition wins a controlling majority in an election, the president appoints a prime minister to head a "cohabitation" government.

The president still chairs cabinet meetings but the opposition prime minister sets domestic policy while the president retains power over foreign affairs and defence. This situation, not intended by the creators of the Fifth Republic, has happened three times — twice under Francois Mitterrand in the 1980s and 1990s and once under Jacques Chirac, from 1997-2002.

been in talks. He held out the prospect of an electoral pact in an interview with RTL Radio. "Among the candidates that my movement will support in the parliamentary elections, there will not only be people from the National Rally. There will also be people from the Republicans," he said.

Bardella sought to cast himself as a pragmatic moderate who could be trusted with the economy. His words were a pitch to centre-right voters who tend to back National Rally's tough stance on immigration and Islam but who may worry that its promise to reduce VAT on petrol from 20 per cent to 5 per cent, to cut electricity and gas prices and to slash taxes will lead to a Liz Truss-style economic meltdown.

The Republicans, who are on course to win between 40 and 55 seats, according to Harris Interactive, could split over a deal with National Rally. Xavier Bertrand, chairman of the Hauts-de-France region in the north, was among a host of senior Republicans figures opposed to an agreement with the populists.

"The DNA of the Republicans right is never the extremes," he said. Good reasons to fear radical right, Daniel Finkelstein, page 19



Some voters in Bordeaux held a march against the National Rally

World



In the mix King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima of the Netherlands dropped in on a recording session in Atlanta with the Dutch hip-hop artists Rotjoch and Frenna during a four-day visit to the US. Later they visited the Martin Luther King Jr National Historical Park and laid a wreath on the grave of the civil rights leader

Shots fired at 'lost' troops on Korean border

North Korea

Richard Lloyd Parry Asia Editor

South Korean troops fired warning shots after soldiers from the North crossed the border, adding to tensions as both countries launched propaganda balloons criticising one another.

Rather than being a deliberate incursion, Seoul said, the North Koreans appeared to have got lost in a densely wooded part of the demilitarised zone (DMZ) that stretches across the middle of the peninsula. The warning shots were not returned but the incident reflects the scope for misunderstanding at the border after an inter-military agreement collapsed last week.

"The DMZ was overgrown with trees and the military demarcation line sign was not clearly visible," Colonel Lee Sung-joon, a spokesman for South Korea's joint chiefs of staff, said.

The 20 or so soldiers were carrying pickaxes and other tools and appeared to be a work party. They strayed no more than 50 yards across the border. "We believe that they did not intend to invade, considering that they immediately moved northward after the warning broadcasts and warning shots," added Lee.

Activists in South Korea have sent balloons north carrying pamphlets criticising Kim Jong-un and news from the south. Pyongyang sent back hundreds of balloons of its own, carrying rubbish and even excrement.

We're ready to discuss Biden's ceasefire deal, claims Hamas

Gaza

Samer Al-Atrush

Middle East Correspondent

Hamas has said that it welcomes a UN security council resolution calling on the militant group to accept a Gaza ceasefire plan, but stopped short of accepting the proposal as fighting continued.

On Monday the security council endorsed for the first time a US-drafted plan for a six-week ceasefire, during which Israel would withdraw its troops from population centres in Gaza and Hamas would release hostages it kidnapped when it attacked Israel in October.

The United States said that Israel had accepted the plan and that Hamas remained the obstacle to enacting it.

"This council sent a clear message to Hamas: accept the ceasefire deal on the table. Israel has already agreed to this

deal, and the fighting could stop today if Hamas would do the same," Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the American ambassador to the UN, said.

Hamas said in a statement that it "welcomes what is included in the security council resolution" and that it was ready "to co-operate with mediators to engage in indirect negotiations".

Antony Blinken, US secretary of state, said the Hamas statement was "a hopeful sign" but that formal acceptance of the proposal from its leaders in Gaza was needed. "That's what counts, and that's what we don't have yet," he said. Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and an opponent of Hamas, said that the resolution was a "step in the right direction".

The plan, first announced by President Biden, lays out three phases of ceasefire in which Hamas would initially release some of the hostages and

Israel would withdraw from populated centres in Gaza. It could be followed by two other phases that would lead to ending the war.

Hamas and Israel have been holding indirect negotiations since October, when Hamas prompted the war with an attack in which 1,100 people were killed and more than 200 taken captive. Previous rounds mediated by Qatar and Egypt unravelled over disagreements on permanently ending the war — which remains Hamas's main demand.

Israel, which has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed and all the hostages are released, repeated after the security council vote that its goals had not changed. "We will continue until all of the hostages are returned and until Hamas's military and governing capabilities are dismantled," a senior Israeli official told the council, according to the Associated Press.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli

prime minister, faces a divided cabinet over the ceasefire plan, with hardline coalition members threatening to quit and bring down his government if it goes ahead. Benny Gantz, a centrist member of the cabinet, resigned over the weekend, accusing Netanyahu of mismanaging the war. Blinken told Netanyahu on Monday that the ceasefire would also bring peace to Israel's northern border areas that have been ravaged in cross-border attacks by the Lebanese Hezbollah militant group.

In Gaza, where more than 37,000 Palestinians have been killed since October, according to the Hamas-run health ministry, fighting continued in Rafah, with Israel announcing on Tuesday that four more soldiers had been killed in action the previous day.

Israel announced yesterday that four soldiers had been killed in an explosion at a building in Rafah which Hamas claimed to have "booby-trapped".

US teachers stabbed in Chinese park

China

Joshua Thurston

Richard Spencer China Correspondent

Four American tutors visiting China were stabbed during an altercation in a public park.

They were attacked shortly after leaving a temple in Beishan Park in the northeastern city of Jilin, police said.

Adam Zabner, a member of the Iowa House of Representatives, said his brother David was part of a group of tutors from Cornell College who had travelled to Beihua, a partner university in Jilin. He suffered an arm injury.

"I spoke to David. He is recovering from his injuries and doing well. My family is incredibly grateful that David survived this attack," Zabner said.

A video of people lying on the ground covered in blood was shared on Twitter/X after the incident.

Police said that a 55-year-old man named as Cui Moumou had been arrested, and that none of the victims' wounds were life-threatening. "Cui collided with a foreign national while walking in Beishan Park and subsequently stabbed that foreign national along with three accompanying foreign nationals and a Chinese tourist who attempted to intervene," police said.

One overseas Chinese-language social media post compared the incident to the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, when mobs angered by the presence of Britain and other imperial powers in China attacked and killed foreigners and laid siege to foreign embassies.

Mass stabbings in China are becoming more common, with a spate of attacks in recent years.

Storm breaks as Iceland returns to whale hunting

Iceland

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

Iceland has approved the killing of nearly 100 whales after briefly suspending the practice over welfare concerns.

Animal campaigners criticised the Icelandic fishing ministry's decision to issue a licence to the country's last remaining whaling firm. Hvalur hf will be allowed to kill 99 fin whales during a hunting season which usually lasts

until September. "This will badly tarnish Iceland's international image," Clare Perry, of the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency, said.

Patrick Ramage, director of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, said: "The world has been watching Iceland, waiting for its government to end whaling once and for all. While the numbers and quota period are significantly reduced, slaughtering 99 more whales makes no sense." An inter-

national ban on commercial whaling was agreed more than four decades ago. However, Iceland, Norway and Japan have continued whaling, with Japan this week adding fin whales to its list.

Campaigners had welcomed Iceland's decision to suspend whaling last June, when ministers signalled that the practice could end entirely this year. The moratorium was triggered after the country's Food and Veterinary Authority found that hunted whales were suf-

fering for so long that it breached the country's animal welfare laws.

The suspension proved short-lived. In August, Iceland opened the door to future whaling under stricter rules. The new licence is valid this year for 128 whales. In reality fewer will be hunted as Hvalur hf will be targeting the 99 in the Greenland and West Iceland region. Fin whales are classified as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List.

Corruption scandal engulfs PM's family

Spain

Isambard Wilkinson Madrid

An investigation has been opened into the younger brother of Pedro Sánchez, Spain's prime minister, for the alleged embezzlement of public funds.

A court in Badajoz, in the south-western Extremadura region, will examine alleged offences by David Azagra, 50, including embezzlement, crimes against the public administration and the treasury, misuse of public funds and influence-peddling.

It was opened after a complaint by Clean Hands, an activist group with links to the hard right, which also secured a case against Begoña Gómez, the Socialist leader's wife. Sánchez stepped back from public duties for five days in April over that case, which he called politically motivated.

The complaint against David Azagra, a musician who is known by that

stage name, was based on media reports that he receives a public salary of €55,000 as an orchestra director of Badajoz Higher Conservatory of Music. He has held the post since 2017 but does not attend in person and does not have permission to fulfil the role remotely. He is alleged to live in Portugal to avoid paying tax in Spain.

According to El Debate, the conservative news website that first made the allegations, a judge has initiated proceedings against Azagra and requested documentation linked to his employment contract.

In the complaint, Clean Hands accused the prime minister's brother of crimes against the public treasury and social security, embezzlement and fraud. It also implicates Sánchez's representative in Badajoz and one other local official.

The Socialist party said that the proceedings were based on "false accusa-

tions" from "the mud-slinging machine of Clean Hands and the far right".

Azagra has worked for seven years as director of the performing arts office of the Badajoz provincial council and is director of the youth opera, for which he earns an annual salary of about €55,000. He has assets of €2 million, according to the complaint.

In the Gómez case, a court in Madrid has summoned the prime minister's wife to answer allegations of influence-peddling and corruption on July 5. It is unclear if she will have to attend because the European Public Prosecutor's Office has assumed the lead role in the investigation — the allegations involve European funds.

When the court rejected a request to close the case, it said it was looking into two letters of support that Gómez allegedly provided in 2020 for a joint venture bidding for several public contracts. The joint venture's main



David Azagra occupies several senior roles in the classical music world

shareholder was Carlos Barrabés, a consultant who had ties to a department at Complutense University of Madrid that was run by Gómez. It won the contracts, beating 20 rivals, and was awarded €10.2 million.

Alberto Núñez Feijóo, the conservative leader of the opposition Popular

Party, has said Sánchez should resign. Gómez has not commented publicly since the investigation was opened.

Sánchez's woes have been compounded by a collapse in support for the populist left-wing platform Sumar, the main ally in his precarious coalition government.

Yolanda Díaz announced her immediate resignation as its leader after disastrous European parliament results. However, Díaz is not resigning from her role as deputy prime minister.

Another blow for Sánchez has been that in spite of the Socialists winning a recent election in Catalonia, the two main separatist parties have united to install their own Speaker in the regional parliament.

The move suggests the Socialists will struggle to have their own candidate elected as regional head. If they fail, a new election may be called or a separatist elected as Catalonia's leader.



Marsh reveals secrets of three musketeers

In 1627, an English force that had travelled to France to support a Protestant rebellion against Louis XIII was massacred in the marshlands of the Île de Ré on edge of the Atlantic (Adam Sage writes).

The exact site of this episode, one of the bloodiest in the war that formed the backdrop to Alexandre Dumas's 19th-century novel *The Three Musketeers*, has remained uncertain for centuries. Now, however, a heritage association claims to have found the site of the Battle du Pont du Feneau, which ended with the deaths of 1,800 to 3,000 English soldiers, by studying an

artwork painted soon afterwards.

The local and regional authorities will fund an exploration of the marshlands in the hope of finding the troops' remains. A battlefield museum is also planned, as well as a wall featuring the names of the soldiers who died. Specialists say the absence of oxygen in the silt means the bodies of the men, their horses and their equipment may have been preserved.

The English expedition was led by George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, who had fought with the Catholic Louis XIII against the Protestants before switching sides after the French



The 2011 hit *The Three Musketeers* is one of many films and books that have glamourised the 17th-century conflict that shook Catholic France

withdrew support for his campaign against the Spanish. French historians claim that Buckingham had an ulterior motive when he landed on the Île de Ré, having fallen in love with Anne of Austria, the French queen. They claim he was hoping to find a way of seeing her. The conflict, the

intrigue and the amorous adventures form the backdrop to Dumas's novel, and several film adaptations since, but the reality was less romantic.

"In the ditches full of bodies, the water was red with spilt blood," said Indalecio Alvarez, the founder of Île de Ré Patrimoine, the heritage



association that says it has found the battle site. "The officers who refused to surrender

were finished off on the spot. A Shakespearean tragedy unfolded here."

The association says it located the site by comparing aerial photographs with a painting of the battle by Laurent de La Hyre that was completed a few months later.

The association has also drawn upon a

contemporary account by Jacques Isnard, a historian and author.

Alvarez said it included a description of a house that is still standing and is rented to tourists in the summer. A cycle path now runs through the supposed site of the massacre, used by many English tourists.

Meloni and Pope form unusual alliance to fight threat of AI

Italy

Tom Kingston Rome

Giorgia Meloni and the Pope have teamed up to warn world leaders that if they blindly embrace artificial intelligence (AI) without considering its ethical implications, things will go horribly wrong.

The unusual alliance between the Italian prime minister and Pope Francis has been in the works for months and will come to fruition on Friday when the pontiff, by invitation of Meloni, flies to the G7 meeting in the southern region of Puglia to

tell assembled leaders about the dangers of AI.

"Meloni is very worried about job losses and the social and economic consequences of AI — she fears it could become a social tsunami," said Paolo Benanti, a Franciscan friar and technology expert who has advised the Pope and Meloni on AI.

"After tackling migration, climate change and now AI, Pope Francis has shown he has a great ability to set the agenda. He is like an antenna. I imagine they agree on this and have the same way of seeing the problem."

Addressing the UN in New York in

September, Meloni, 47, talked of the need for "algorithcs", a term coined by Benanti.

"We were used to progress that aimed to optimise human capacities, while today we are dealing with progress that risks replacing human capacities," Meloni said. "More and more, people will no longer be necessary in a world ever-dominated by disparities, by the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of the few."

Meloni has expressed concerns over the power of multinational companies and Benanti said that in the case of AI, she had a point. "I think British prime

minister [Rishi] Sunak shares this concern," he added.

Sunak met Meloni to discuss the fast-developing technology when she flew to a conference on AI held at Bletchley Park in November.

Meloni praised the Pope, 87, for starting the debate with his Call for an AI Ethics conference at the Vatican in February 2020, attended by Microsoft, IBM and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation. It followed frequent calls by the Pope to defend migrants and his 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si* (Praised Be), which warned climate change was hitting the poor hardest.

"From migrants to ecology to AI, he is sensitive to the needs of the most fragile people, the social effects," said Benanti. "He sees how all the training of AI is done by underpaid English-speakers around the world. In the same way, he sees how the use of genetically modified crops actually leaves farmers poorer and more dependent on technology."

Benanti added that when the Pope addresses the G7 leaders on Friday, he will speak of the impact of AI on the poor and possibly warn of perilous use of AI to guide autonomous weapons, from drones to missiles.

World

Real-life Lassie rescues its owner from remote ravine

Andrea Blanco

Brandon Garrett was driving with his four dogs on a remote road in Oregon when he lost control, careering off an embankment and crashing into a ravine.

He managed to crawl out of the wrecked vehicle with his pets but was too badly injured to climb back to the road. One of the dogs, however, a two-year-old whippet named Blue, had survived unscathed and took the initiative, running back to the campsite four miles away where Garrett had been staying with a friend to raise the alarm.

"He did the right thing," Garrett's brother, Tyree, said of Blue, who has been described as a "real-life Lassie", in reference to the fictional collie who has become a byword for canine dering-do. "He let everybody know that there was something wrong."

Tyree and several friends joined local residents in a search for Garrett. "We went ten miles up creek. I thought, 'there's only a couple of places you can see down into the ravine,'" Tyree said. "The first place I pulled up to I saw his pickup truck

about a hundred feet down to the bottom. I thought for sure he was a goner."

Tyree called down to his brother but received no answer, so he left the woods to find a phone signal to alert the authorities. The Baker county sheriff's office, Pine Valley Rural Fire volunteers and US Forest Service employees responded quickly, rushing to the scene and using chainsaws to clear a path for rescue.

Garrett eventually heard a sheriff's deputy calling his name. He was wrapped in a rescue basket and pulled from the ravine with the help of a highline rope system before being airlifted to hospital.

Tyree said that his brother was left badly bruised and battered. Two of the dogs were also severely injured, one suffering a broken hip and pelvis, and the second breaking a leg.

Garrett is recovering at home, with his family and four dogs by his side. The sheriff's office shared the rescue on its Facebook page, prompting comparisons between Blue and the heroine of the *Lassie* franchise.

"Brandon is a dog lover," Tyree said about his brother. "It's just amazing."



Dance partners Kamala Harris, the US vice-president, and gospel singer Kirk Franklin twirl on stage at a White House concert to celebrate Juneteenth. The public holiday, which commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, was established in 2021

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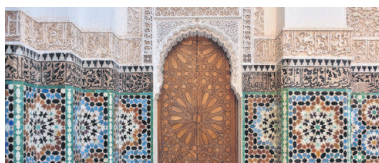
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Microdosing mushrooms could kill you, warns US

United States
Keiran Southern Los Angeles

At least eight people have been taken ill in the United States after eating chocolate bars laced with drugs.

The US Food and Drug Administration warned against consuming the chocolate bars made by Diamond Shruumz. The company has said that its products do not contain psychedelic substances such as psilocybin, the drug found in so-called magic mushrooms.

However, according to the brand's website, its bars — which have names including "birthday cake" and "cookie butter" — do contain "nootropic and functional mushrooms". Proponents of nootropics, sometimes known as "smart drugs", say they boost brain function.

Regulators said that victims suffered "severe symptoms" including seizures, loss of consciousness, confusion, agitation, abnormal heart rates, high blood pressure and vomiting. The cases involved four people in Arizona, two in Indiana, one in Nevada and another in Pennsylvania.

"All eight people have reported seeking medical care. Six have been hospitalised," the FDA said. "No deaths have been reported. FDA is working to determine the cause of these illnesses and is considering the appropriate next steps."

The FDA said it was investigating the incidents alongside the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention and local authorities.

Diamond Shruumz, which is based in California, has been contacted for comment. Its products can be bought online as well as in stores across the country. While the FDA mentioned cases in four states, health officials in Arizona said they had heard of similar incidents in Nebraska and Utah.

"While these products claim to contain only natural ingredients and no scheduled drugs, there is clearly something toxic occurring," Steve Dudley, director of the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Centre, said. "We've seen the same phenomenon of people eating the chocolate bar then seizing, losing consciousness and having to be intubated."

Mushroom chocolates have be-

come more prevalent in recent years amid a growing fascination with the supposed health benefits of microdosing. However, experts have warned of lax regulations around the products, meaning consumers cannot be certain of what they contain.

Microdosing involves taking a small amount of a drug, often a psychedelic, for supposed mental health benefits.

Dr Christopher Holstege, director of the Blue Ridge Poison Centre at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, said it was concerning that unregulated products were on store shelves. "It does worry me," he told The Times. "I don't think the general public realises what they're getting into with these products. They're not controlled and what is stated on packages is not necessarily what is actually in those packages. And that's pretty disturbing."

Hed added that there can be complications with existing medical conditions. "There's a tremendous risk for other interactions such as with medications or their medical conditions," he said.

Bestseller list 'cooking the books'

Josie Ensor New York

The New York Times bestselling books list is facing fresh allegations of bias after an analysis found that conservative authors were more likely to be snubbed.

The newspaper has previously been accused of favouring liberal writers when it comes to deciding who makes the list, but the first methodical look at sales data has revealed a definitive preference.

The Economist compiled 12 years of figures from Publishers Weekly and identified books by 12 publishers that describe themselves as political-

ly to the right of centre. These include Broadside Books, an imprint of HarperCollins that specialises in "conservative non-fiction", and Regnery Publishing, which describes itself as America's "leading publisher of conservative books".

It found that books by conservative publishers were 7 per cent less likely to make it on to the weekly bestseller lists than those by other houses with similar sales figures.

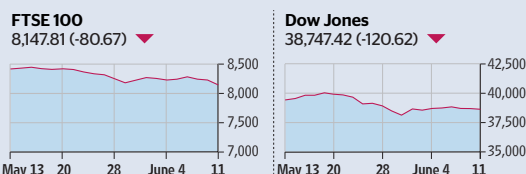
Books written by right-leaning authors that do become bestsellers rank 2.3 notches lower on the non-fiction list, on average, than those from other publishers and with simi-

lar sales. The New York Times, which has been compiling the list since 1931, does not make public its process for selecting bestsellers. It is known that they sample their own list of certain booksellers across the country, though which ones they use is a tightly guarded secret. In March, Elon Musk described the list as "pure propaganda".

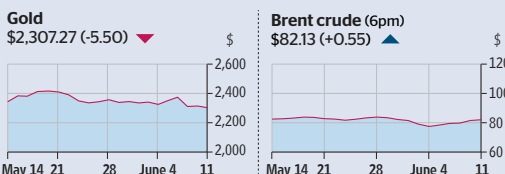
The New York Times did not dispute or confirm the analysis but told The Economist: "The political views of authors or their publishers have absolutely no bearing on our rankings and are not a factor in how books are ranked on the lists."

Business

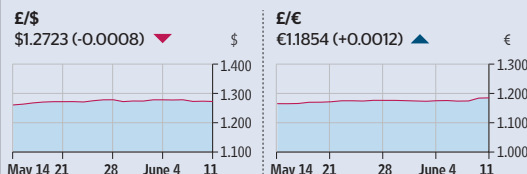
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Deltic blames 'negative political rhetoric' as it quits North Sea project

Emma Powell

An energy company run by a Labour campaign organiser has blamed fiscal uncertainty and negative political rhetoric for its decision to abandon a project in the North Sea.

Deltic Energy, whose chairman is Mark Lappin, 63, Labour's election agent for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine, said "deteriorating sentiment" towards the oil and gas industry meant

that the company had failed to find an investor willing to take on its share of the Pensacola project.

Pensacola is one of the largest discoveries in the southern North Sea in at least a decade, estimated at 72.6 million barrels. The project is a joint venture with Shell, which has a 65 per cent stake, and One-Dyas, a Dutch exploration company, which has a 5 per cent share.

Deltic's withdrawal comes a week after Jersey Oil & Gas, another

London-listed firm, said it was delaying a decision on a new development in the North Sea amid uncertainty over whether a potential Labour government would impose more punitive windfall taxes. Labour has said it would raise the energy profits levy from 75 per cent to 78 per cent and would "end loopholes".

Deltic has invested £12.8 million in the project so far and may have to honour certain expenditure approved before the withdrawal notice was

issued. The costs may be "material", the company said, but may not be fully payable until the first half of next year.

Graham Swindells, 51, the chief executive of Deltic, said that recent history in relation to large-scale discoveries, such as the Cambo and Rosebank fields, had "demonstrated the difficulties associated with progressing major offshore developments on the UK continental shelf as damaging political rhetoric and fiscal instability continue to

undermine the sector". Deltic's share of the licence will now pass to its joint venture partners on a proportional basis.

A spokesman for Shell said: "We continue to carefully appraise Pensacola ... We are disappointed that Deltic are withdrawing from the licence but remain confident that along with One-Dyas the opportunity can be thoroughly assessed."

Shares in Deltic Energy fell 2p, or 16.7 per cent, to 10p.

Raspberry Pi shares soar on UK debut

Micro computer maker's listing boosts London

Helen Cahill

An enthusiastic reception for the float of a British technology company on London's stock exchange has raised hopes the UK's markets can recover lost ground against international rivals.

Shares in Raspberry Pi, a Cambridge maker of low-cost micro-computers, jumped by more than a third on its first day as a public company after going on sale at the top of their expected range.

From a listing price of 280p, which valued the 15-year-old company at £540 million, the stock gained 105p, or 37.2 per cent, to reach 385p at the close, giving the business a market capitalisation above £750 million.

Arm Holdings, the microchip designer also based in Cambridge, and Lansdowne Partners, a hedge fund, both supported the float as cornerstone investors, with commitments to buy £27 million and £16 million worth of shares, respectively. Retail investors will be able to start trading Raspberry Pi's shares on Friday. The company expects the listing to raise £166 million.

Its staff are set to gain £68 million from the initial public offering under an employee incentive scheme, equivalent to £660,000 for each worker.

Eben Upton, 46, the chief executive of Raspberry Pi, said UK investors had the "right calibre and sophistication" to support the business. "I hope that this starts to dispel some of the misconceptions about the UK market versus the American market. For all but the largest technology companies, there isn't a valuation gap and there isn't a meaningful liquidity gap."

"I think the benefits of being in our home market outweigh any of the

disadvantages." Arm Holdings dealt a blow to London last year when it chose New York as the venue for its \$55 billion IPO, sparking fears of an exodus of British companies lured by the prospect of higher valuations and a deeper investor base. Flutter, the Paddy Power owner, has moved its main stock market listing to New York, while Tui, the German-owned travel business, approved a plan to delist from London in February.

Upton said that Raspberry Pi's bankers at Jefferies and Peel Hunt had been "very good at finding the right people to speak to" for its nine-month roadshow with investors before the float. A previous attempt to list the company in 2022 was delayed amid a global shortage of microchips.

"We felt we got a good hearing," Upton said. "We felt there are people who have the right understanding and are able to ask the right questions."

Raspberry Pi was founded when Upton, then a director of studies and struggling to get anyone to study computer science in Cambridge in 2008, drew on the success of the BBC Micro and ZX Spectrum home computers to found the Raspberry Pi Foundation, an educational charity, as a way to get children interested in computing. Four years later, it had created a cheap, credit-card sized computer that was "affordable enough for young people to own and explore with confidence".

Kathleen Brooks, research director at XTB, a broker, said the listing had enjoyed a "warm welcome" from investors. "This is a sign that there is life in the London stock market and companies can derive value from listing in London," she said.

Tucking into Raspberry Pi, page 32



Dame Alison Rose left NatWest under a cloud following the Nigel Farage scandal. Now she is back — at Charterhouse

Farage scandal boss returns to City

Ben Martin Banking Editor

The former chief executive of NatWest who left the lender over the Nigel Farage "debanking" scandal has returned to the City with a role at a private equity firm.

Dame Alison Rose has been hired as a senior adviser to Charterhouse, a London-based buyout firm that focuses on investments in mid-market companies.

Rose, 54, was appointed to the position in April. It marks her re-emergence in the financial services industry after her abrupt departure from NatWest in July last year. Private Equity News first reported Rose's appointment.

Once considered one of Britain's most powerful businesswomen, Rose had spent her entire career at NatWest.

She started as a graduate trainee in 1992 and had risen through the ranks to take charge of the FTSE 100 lender, one of Britain's biggest high street banks, in November 2019.

Her status as one of the UK's most senior female bankers propelled her into the establishment. She led an independent review into female entrepreneurship and was one of fourteen business figures who joined the prime minister's business council last July.

Once the Farage scandal erupted, however, her downfall from NatWest was swift. The lender became embroiled in a freedom-of-speech row after the Brexiteer was dropped as a customer of Coutts private banking division. Farage obtained internal Coutts documents showing that its reputational risk committee had believed his public views "were at odds

with our position as an inclusive organisation". Rose became personally ensnared in the row when it emerged she had discussed the Farage situation with a BBC journalist. While the bank's board gave her its backing, within hours she had stepped down after the government signalled she had lost its confidence. Her exit "by mutual consent" was announced in the middle of the night, a chaotic departure for a FTSE 100 business.

Although NatWest later made no findings of misconduct against her, her departure nevertheless meant she forfeited share awards and a bonus that were worth £7.6 million last November, which was when the board confirmed the terms of her exit package.

The furore that engulfed NatWest over Farage also led to wider scrutiny of debanking across the industry.

Business

Need to know

1 The number of working-age adults considered economically inactive has hit a record high of 2.8 million. According to the Office for National Statistics, 22.3 per cent of adults aged 16 to 64 are not actively looking for work. **Page 2**

2 Economists have said Tory plans to cut £12 billion from Britain's welfare bill to pay for tax cuts amount to "definite giveaways" paid for by "uncertain" savings. The party's tax cuts are primarily funded by promises to stem increases in the soaring bill for sickness benefits. **Page 7**

3 Shares in Raspberry Pi, a Cambridge-based maker of low-cost micro-computers, rose by more than a third on the London Stock Exchange on its first day as a public company. **Pages 29, 32**

4 Dame Alison Rose, the former chief executive of NatWest who left the lender over the Nigel Farage "debanking" scandal, has returned to the City as a senior adviser to Charterhouse, a London buyout firm that focuses on investments in mid-market companies. **Page 29**

5 Deltic Energy, the energy company whose chairman is Mark Lappin, Labour's election agent for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine, has blamed fiscal uncertainty and negative political rhetoric for its decision to abandon a project in the North Sea. **Page 29**

6 Average salaries for legal chiefs at City businesses have risen by more than 40 per cent as companies attempt to lure senior lawyers into offices five days a week. Researchers found that top-end salaries for general counsel at corporations, particularly at banks, had risen from £160,000 before the Covid pandemic to £230,000 on average.

7 Mortgage arrears have reached their highest level in more than seven years as the pain from higher interest rates bites on household finances. The total value of home loan balances with arrears climbed by 44.5 per cent year-on-year to £21.3 billion in the three months to the end of March, according to figures from the Bank of England. **Page 32**

8 Diageo has agreed to sell a majority shareholding in Guinness Nigeria as the drinks powerhouse becomes the latest western company to reduce its presence in the country, which is suffering an economic and currency crisis. **Page 34**

9 The cut-price Lumo rail service may carry only a small fraction of passenger traffic from London to Scotland, but it was a standout performer for FirstGroup last year. **Page 35**

10 In the aftermath of the war in Ukraine and amid fears of supply shocks, soaring oil prices were a key driver of inflation, pushing up costs for businesses that have fed through to price rises in goods and services. Recent oil price falls have provided some respite, but analysts are split on where the price will go next. **Page 37**



Grid powers up with giant plan for battery storage

The world's largest developer of offshore wind farms is planning to build a vast battery storage facility near Norwich (Emma Powell writes).

Orsted will install the energy storage system, which will be one of the largest in Europe, on the same

site as the onshore converter station for its Hornsea 3 wind farm in Swardston, Norfolk.

The project will store energy generated by Hornsea 3 when weather conditions are windy and when electricity supply exceeds demand so that it can be discharged later to help to balance the nation's

electricity grid. The storage system, using Tesla batteries, is set to be operational by 2026 and will have a capacity of 600 megawatt-hours, equivalent to the daily energy use of 80,000 homes. The cost of the project has not been disclosed.

Orsted operates a dozen offshore wind farms in Britain, including Hornsea 1 in the North Sea. Hornsea 3 will be the world's largest single offshore wind farm once it is completed, generating enough electricity to power more than three



Wages growth deals blow to hopes of interest rate cut

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

Wages growth in Britain held firm in the three months to the end of April after an increase to the national living wage meant average earnings were unchanged, keeping pressure on inflation.

Official figures showed nominal weekly earnings, excluding bonuses, rose by 6 per cent between February and April, the same as the previous three-month period and slightly lower than forecasts of a rise to 6.1 per cent. Weekly earnings including bonuses also held firm at 5.9 per cent, higher than the 5.7 per cent expected by economists.

Strong wages growth had been widely expected after the so-called living wage for workers aged over 21 was raised by 10 per cent to £11.44 from April 1. It is the first time for nearly a year that the headline earnings figure has not fallen.

The unemployment rate over the three months to April rose from 4.3 per cent to 4.4 per cent, above forecasts of no change and the highest rate since September 2021. The estimate is provisional and is subject to revision owing to lower response rates to the Office for National Statistics' survey of the workforce.

The pay figures are likely to delay the prospect of Britain's first interest rate cut since 2020 until after the summer, with financial markets now betting on the base rate being reduced from 5.25 per cent to 5 per cent in September. Investors are pencilling in only two or three rate cuts this year.

The Bank's monetary policy committee (MPC) will make its latest decision next Thursday, its last before the general election. Ratesetters are widely

Analysis

A record number of working-age Britons are "economically inactive", posing a challenge to the next government and a potential headache for the Bank of England (Mehreen Khan writes).

According to the Office for National Statistics, the economically inactive population has hit a record 2.8 million, or 22.3 per cent of people aged 16 to 24. The figure has risen by 132,000 in the three months to April. Contrary to the

expectations of many economists, the problem has not improved since the pandemic as a record number of Britons are now suffering from long-term illness amid spiralling NHS waiting lists and a surge in mental health problems. The ONS's figures come with a health warning as its data has been plagued by low response rates.

The falling supply of workers is a problem for politicians and the central bank. The Tories have said they will tackle the

problem with a crackdown on the record number of people claiming disability benefits and by ending the UK's "sick note culture" to force people back to work. Labour has said it will bolster workers' rights and raise the minimum wage.

For the Bank, the high inactivity rate risks stoking inflation as companies may raise wages to retain and hire talent. The shrinking workforce could scupper the prospects for monetary easing over the coming years.

expected to keep interest rates unchanged for a tenth consecutive month.

Rob Wood, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, a consultancy, believes it would be hard to justify a rate cut while wages growth is close to 6 per cent and he expects the Bank to hold rates. "Cutting rates with pay growth as strong as this would be unusual. The MPC may need to wait until September to cut," Wood said.

A majority of the nine-strong MPC have said they need to see more signs of slowing wages growth and falling infla-

tion in the employment-heavy services sector before easing monetary policy.

Despite the strong earnings figures for April, other measures of the labour market showed signs of slowing down. The number of vacancies dropped again by 12,000 to 904,000, marking a streak of nearly two years of declines. Overall employment, which measures the proportion of people in work, fell to 74.3 per cent, a three-year low, and measures of monthly payrolls growth declined in both April and May. The unemployment rate is the highest since

September 2021 and the employment rate is its lowest level since March 2021.

The economic inactivity rate, rising since the pandemic, climbed again to 22.3 per cent, the highest reading since 2015. Figures for benefits claimants rose by 50,400 between March and April, the single biggest monthly increase since the pandemic period.

Analysts at the Capital Economics consultancy, said they expected the MPC to vote for a rate cut in August, "as long as other indicators, such as pay settlements data and next week's inflation release, show decent progress".

Forecasters expect headline consumer prices inflation to have dropped in May from 2.3 per cent to 2 per cent, hitting the Bank's target for the first time since 2021. Inflation is expected to creep up above 2 per cent for most of the year after May.

Separate surveys of the labour market, including the MPC, have found that companies are reducing their wage bill forecasts for the coming year to about 4 per cent. Economists calculate that earnings growth needs to drop to 2 per cent to 3 per cent for inflation to decline and stay at the 2 per cent target.

The Resolution Foundation think tank, said the next government would have to worry more about a slowing labour market and falling employment than prices growth. "The big picture remains that average earnings remain more than £14,000 a year off their pre-financial crisis path after 16 years of wage stagnation," Nye Cominetti, principal economist at the foundation, said. **Jobs growth is being dominated by immigration, David Smith, page 33**



Orsted will install the energy storage system, which will be one of the largest in Europe, in Swardeston, Norfolk, taking energy from its Hornsea 3 wind farm

million homes and costing £8.5 billion.

The Swardeston development will take the total number of storage projects under construction or being operated by Orsted in Britain and America to 1,850MWh. In the UK, Orsted already operates a 11.25MWh battery storage facility in Liverpool.

Battery storage projects are designed to reduce price volatility for consumers by making more power available, including during peak periods when energy traditionally is more expensive, helping to smooth fluctuations in supply as more renewables come on to the energy system.

However, despite the sharp growth in the level of renewable energy within Britain's energy mix, the pace of development has been slowed by delays in securing grid connections and the slower adoption of

battery storage by National Grid in balancing supply and demand.

The Danish wind farm operator has been battling to turn around its performance after being hit by cost inflation and supply chain constraints, which pushed the company to scrap its dividend, to cut between 600 and 800 jobs and to scale back developments.

In May Orsted forecast adjusted earnings of between Dkr23 billion (£2.6 billion) and Dkr26 billion, compared with Dkr24 billion last year.

Duncan Clark, head of Orsted UK & Ireland, said the battery storage facility would help to ensure that energy generated by its wind farm was "used in the best possible way", storing it when demand was lower and then releasing it into the system when it was needed.

"This maximises the potential of renewable energy while providing increased energy security and value to consumers," he said.

No gravy trains for the public sector

BUSINESS COMMENTARY Alistair Osborne



People moan about 30-year rail trips. More fool them. Look out the window and Britain's privatisation experiment has thrown up all manner of delights — at least for everyone but the passengers.

Who can forget a former transport secretary, Stephen Byers, crashing himself and Railtrack into the buffers? Or the arrival of its successor Network Rail, now home to a vast £59 billion of net debts? Or the clapped-out franchising system, where train operator bidders were invited to prove how, when it came to forecasting, they were almost as useless as the Bank of England?

Or the cast of railway knights: Virgin's Sir Richard Branson, whose tilting trains came with "comedy" talking toilets; Stagecoach's Sir Brian Souter, always up for a scrap with the government; and FirstGroup's cattle-farmer ex-boss Sir Moir Lockhead, who sent a message to the workers by barbecuing an errant member of his herd.

Bit by bit, the colour has drained out of the railways, with Labour gearing up for the full monochrome experience: a back-to-the-future recreation of something uncannily like British Rail. If shadow transport secretary Louise Haigh gets to the signal box, she plans to renationalise all the private train companies (excluding the rolling stock ones too pricey to seize) when their contracts end: not quite as draconian as it sounds, admittedly, with 40 per cent of them already in public hands via various operators of last resort.

In a sense, too, her analysis of the problem is spot on. Across a fragmented network, "300 people are employed full-time to argue over whose fault delays are; passengers have to battle a dizzying array of 55 million different tickets; and 75 different types of train are in passenger service".

In fact, her take is pretty much the same as that of Keith Williams, the fellow now selling the Royal Mail owner to a Czech billionaire and whose blueprint for the railways was adopted by the Tories in 2018 and then routed into a siding. Having nicked the oppo's "Great British Railways" moniker and Williams' calls for a single "directing mind" that unifies responsibility for track and train, Haigh reckons her railway fix "could" save the public "as much as £2.2 billion a year".

Still, you don't have to be Graham Sutherland, the FirstGroup chief, to wonder about that. FirstGroup is the last UK-listed rail and bus group left standing and Haigh is poised to take back its South West, Great Western and Avanti operations between May 2025 and October 2026 — even if not its growing "open access" Lumo and Hull Trains services.

On the latest full-year figures, that will remove £106 million of FirstGroup's £204 million adjusted operating profits: one factor behind the fall in the shares from 187½p to 164½p over the past three months. Not to mention its hopes of a six-year extension on Avanti, the strike-hit west coast operator that was due to run the £65 billion-plus "Peaky Blinders" express: the line better known as HS2 from Birmingham to London's Wormwood Scrubs. Gone

are the days when such rail contracts were gravy trains. Today operators take no revenue risk, with FirstGroup earning a margin below 1 per cent — before a possible half a point more for good performance. Is Haigh sure the public sector, without incentives to perform, could do it any cheaper? Sutherland also reckons FirstGroup has saved the taxpayer "more than £230 million" in the past two years alone via such stuff as renegotiating rolling stock contracts and better maintenance.

As he puts it: "Savings in fees could well be offset by rising costs." On top, taking back FirstGroup's contracts alone will see the transfer of more than 15,000 workers. Can the public sector "manage all this", he asks? At least the passengers will know who's to blame if it can't.

A slice of Pi

What a turn-up. Some lookalike food group floats in London and the shares don't instantly do a Deliveroo: dive 30 per cent on day one. The opposite in fact. Such was the appetite for a slice of Raspberry Pi that they rose 375 per cent, in conditional dealings, to 385p — well above the 280p float price. Was it the self-raising flour in the pastry?

Anyway, it turns out that this Pi is less edible than it sounds, what with it being the Cambridge-based creator of low-cost computers — or a real tech company, again a bit different to Deliveroo. And to think despite that it still chose to list in London. Indeed, its founder boss Eben Upton hoped the float would "dispel some of the misconceptions" over the UK and US markets. "For all but the largest technology companies, there isn't a valuation gap and there isn't a meaningful liquidity gap." Besides, the group designs and makes its kit in Britain.

Raising £166 million, before any greenshoe, and now valued at £750 million, Pi goes back to 2008, born from a plan to encourage people to study computing and backed by an educational charity, which is cutting its stake from 77 per cent to 49 per cent. From those laudable beginnings, it's morphed into a business backed by Arm, Sony and the Lansdowne hedge fund, selling a 4GB computer board for £59: ideal, as Reddit users noted, for radios that turn on when someone sits on a bog seat plus possibly more useful stuff. It's early days, too. Still, so far it makes a nice change from London's usual pie-in-the-sky floats.

Manifesto muddle

Forget the £17 billion of tax cuts built on a fantasy clampdown on welfare spending and tax dodging. Who calls their manifesto "Clear Plan. Bold Action. Secure Future"? Of course it's a plan, that's what manifestos are. And aren't we meant to take it for read that it's clear? Why, too, is Rishi Sunak linking "bold action" to a "secure future"? The two don't always go together. Just ask Liz Truss.

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Lawyers cash in on five-day office work

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Average salaries for legal chiefs at City businesses have soared by more than 40 per cent as companies attempt to lure senior lawyers into offices five days a week.

Researchers have found that top-end salaries for general counsel at corporations, particularly at banks, have risen from £160,000 to £230,000 on average as recruiters struggle to fill positions that demand five-day working.

Bosses in financial services are understood to be especially enthusiastic about reversing the remote working trend that took hold during the pandemic.

In-house legal departments are also having to compete with a continuing salary inflation at City law firms amid predictions that newly qualified solicitors will be given starting salaries of £200,000 this summer.

One anonymous general counsel told researchers at *The Lawyer* website that recruitment of lawyers had

become "really difficult. If I see someone with 'willing to work five days in the office' on their CV, I will give them an interview straight away."

The researchers found that average salaries for general counsel at corporations had ballooned from a narrow spread before the pandemic of £150,000 to £160,000 to between £180,000 and

£230,000

What general counsel salaries have risen to in the drive for office work
Source: *The Lawyer*

£230,000 for those now willing to attend the office five days a week.

Researchers were told that few candidates for in-house legal roles were prepared to work even four days a week from an office. Legal department bosses said they could "count on one hand" the number of potential recruits willing to work a full week in the office

and therefore pay packets had been increased in an effort to tempt them.

The research came a week after it emerged that managers at one City law firm had warned partners that they could suffer negative performance reviews if they refused to spend at least three days a week in the office.

The move at Addleshaw Goddard, one of Britain's top 20 law firms in terms of earnings, was thought to be the first of its kind for such a firm in the Square Mile and it came after a decision at the beginning of May to make three-day attendance mandatory for all lawyers at the practice.

Researchers for *The Lawyer* said that general counsel had expressed frustration with the expectation by some, especially younger lawyers, that flexible working would be allowed. That mentality was said to have been fostered by the fact that so many newly qualified lawyers had completed at least part of their training online. It also blamed private practice for fostering the mentality that remote working was standard.

'Bond investors need not fear Labour'

Mehreen Khan

Bond investors and financial markets have nothing to fear from a Labour government with a large majority in next month's election, one of the world's biggest bond funds has said.

Andrew Balls, chief investment officer at Pimco, a bond investor, said markets had priced in the likelihood of a Labour victory that would make a "limited difference to the fiscal outlook".

"Rachel Reeves [the shadow chancellor] has laid out a clear [fiscal] path and I don't think the election is going to be a significant event. Sir Keir Starmer and Reeves will be happy that the election is seen by market participants

as a fairly low-risk event," said Balls, who is the brother of Ed Balls, the former Labour shadow chancellor.

Pimco, which is an investor in UK government bonds, said it was "overweight" on longer-dated gilts owing to the relatively benign outlook for the economy, where interest rates are on course to fall and both parties have promised to abide by a strict set of fiscal rules to reduce the debt burden.

The comments are a boon for Labour, which has prioritised fiscal discipline in the election campaign and has promised that no spending plans will breach its budgetary rules.

Pimco's intervention is in contrast to a warning from BlackRock, the world's

largest asset manager, which in January predicted a sell-off in gilts and the return of the "bond vigilantes" in response to both parties' pre-election spending promises.

Balls said the example of Liz Truss, who blew up the gilt markets with her mini-budget, would lead to a "conservative approach to fiscal policy" across Europe and in the UK.

A big Labour majority with a larger vote swing from the Tories could reassure financial markets compared with the risks posed by a smaller majority of about 20 seats, Balls said. "I have no reason to doubt that [Labour] will look to deliver what they have said on fiscal policy."

Business

I developed early taste for Raspberry Pi

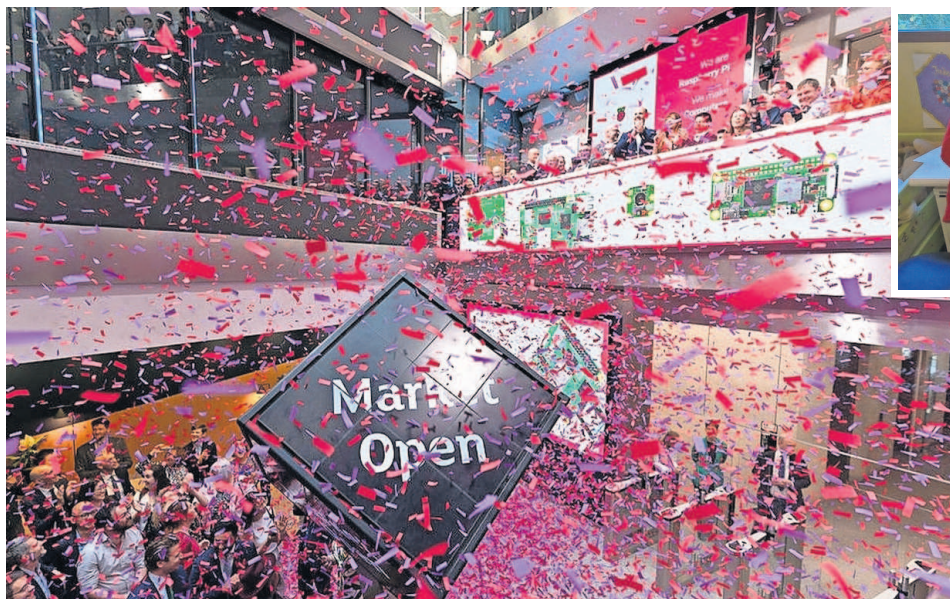
Tom Saunders became fascinated by the many uses for the cheap and cheerful computer



Neither I nor my university house-mates ever quite worked out what was digging up the garden in our student house, but when the intruder started to dig directly under our fence drastic measures were needed.

So I put together a makeshift wildlife camera, using nothing more than a £15 Raspberry Pi Zero with its equally affordable camera module, a phone charger and a Tupperware box with two lens-sized holes cut in the side. It was held together by tape, but with some free software it worked flawlessly as a proximity-activated camera, even if we never did quite catch the culprit.

Ever since, I've been a convert to the Raspberry Pi cause and have owned several of the company's computers, re-incarnating them again and again as a website scraper, home server and even simply as a rather over-engineered



The London Stock Exchange welcomes Raspberry Pi, the company behind the affordable computer built for teaching kids



RASPBERRY PI

applications of the company's signature product, its roots are firmly within the long heritage of British computer education synonymous with the BBC Micro and ZX Spectrum, the bestselling UK computer until Raspberry Pi supplanted it in 2015.

While I, and a surprising number of other journalists at this paper, used either the Pi or its predecessors before drifting in a somewhat different direction, others, including Upton, built on their experience to pursue careers in computer science.

"I'm a child in the 1980s, so I had a programmable computer when I was a child and I was kind of beguiled into becoming an engineer by it ... lots of my colleagues now at Raspberry Pi were like that, too," Upton said.

However, in his view the gap in the market that existed once computers from the 1980s became outmoded had a direct impact on interest in computer science, principally at Cambridge, where he studied. "You ask yourself, 'How did I get involved in this? Would it be possible for me to follow the trajectory that I followed today?' Of course, no, and so the Raspberry Pi came out of this idea."

In a twist that could happen only in the technology-concentrated world of Cambridge, the manufacturer behind the Micro eventually went on to found Arm, the British microchip powerhouse. In turn, Arm-based technology underpins Raspberry Pi's products.

"If you compare us to the other fruit company, the classic mode of Apple is that in their glory days they made the products that Steve [Jobs] wanted to buy. That turned out to be a very good way to design and specify products," Upton said. "That's what we do at Raspberry Pi. We make products for people like us, both with our enthusiast's hat on and with our professional engineer's hat on. We're making products we know we want."

Ultimately, just as some of the firm's customers have matured from burying its products in Tupperware containers, so has Raspberry Pi itself, from a university-based foundation shipping bite-sized computers to a quintessentially British technology success story.

Analysis

London's stock market had fallen out of favour as investors became more cautious during a period of rising interest rates and depressed valuations for British companies (Helen Cahill writes). However, Raspberry Pi's successful float may help to improve confidence and boost the City's flagging flotations market in the months ahead.

Peel Hunt, the broker, said Raspberry Pi's listing was "positive for the market overall" and that its performance would be "important for the broader market".

The market for initial public offerings is also set to be bolstered by the UK's improving economic outlook, an uplift in mergers and acquisitions, and strong performances of companies in the banking, mining and energy sectors, which have significant presences in City indices. Klarna, the "buy now, pay later"

credit business, Waterstones, the book stores chain, and Starling Bank have all been tipped as possible IPO candidates as companies become more confident that they can achieve a good price.

Shein, the Chinese fast-fashion retailer, is seeking to raise more than £1 billion by listing in London, but some fund managers have called for more information on how it makes its products.

Peel Hunt said: "UK investors are prepared to put money to work in attractive new opportunities, but they need to be compelling."

David Ramm, a partner at Crowell & Moring, an international law firm, said the London Stock Exchange still faced "fundamental problems", but Raspberry Pi's float represented "a significant piece of good news in a period that has been predominantly bad". He added that the company "represents a true UK technology success story".

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media storage device. I'm not alone. The Pi's affordability, compact size and processing power have led it to the heart of all manner of projects, some of which bear less than a passing resemblance to my makeshift camera. In 2021 a pair of the company's modified boards accompanied SpaceX's Dragon 2 spaceship on a mission to the International Space Station; a number of so-called Astro Pis are still on the ISS where they have been used to run experiments by students.

The Pi's computing power has grown enough over the years that they have been used in projects that are somewhat divorced from its founding purpose of teaching computer literacy. In 2017, the US Department of Energy combined 750 of them to provide a test-bed for supercomputers.

For Eben Upton, 46, the company's founder and chief executive, the novel applications of his computer still amaze him. "I went to Maker Faire, a hobbyist-focused event in Hanover last summer, and I was going into this rather cool hotel," he said. "In their reception they had a screen and it had a Raspberry Pi with an HDMI cable dangling off the bottom of the screen, playing the welcome video in the reception."

Online message boards are littered with rather more novel uses for the company's signature product, including automatically simulating a vacuum noise to keep their pets off a couch and designing a toaster that takes a selfie every time the toast is popped.

Despite the increasingly diverse

Mortgage arrears at record high as rates bite

Ben Martin

Mortgage arrears have reached their highest level in more than seven years as interest rates take a heavy toll on household finances.

The total value of home loan balances with arrears climbed by 44.5 per cent year-on-year to £21.3 billion in the three months to the end of March, according to figures from the Bank of England.

This took the overall proportion of mortgage balances that are behind on payments to 1.28 per cent, up from 1.23 per cent in the previous quarter and the highest level since the final three months of 2016. While arrears as a percentage of total balances remain

well below the 3.64 per cent recorded in early 2009 during the global financial crisis, the recent increase lays bare the pressure facing some homeowners from the rapid rise in interest rates in the past two and a half years.

Rampant inflation has forced the Bank to push through a series of rate increases in an attempt to contain price rises in the economy. These have taken its base rate from a record low of 0.1 per cent in late 2021 to its present level of 5.25 per cent, a 16-year high.

This has sharply pushed up the cost of mortgages, which are priced according to the market's expectation to future rates. Homeowners who took out fixed-term deals when borrowing

14

The number of consecutive rises in the base interest rate since November 2021
Bank of England

costs were at all-time lows are now remortgaging at much higher rates, piling pressure on household finances.

The average two-year residential mortgage rate stands at 5.96 per cent, up from 2.58 per cent three years ago, according to data provided by Moneyfacts. Similarly, the rate on the average five-year deal has climbed to 5.52 per cent from 2.81 per cent in 2021.

Mortgage costs are feeding into the tough economic backdrop that looms over campaigning for next month's general election. The annual inflation rate stood at 2.3 per cent in April, stubbornly above the Bank's 2 per cent target but down from the 41-year high of 11.1 per cent it reached in October 2022.

David Smith

Numbers don't lie: jobs growth is being dominated by immigration

“It would have been easy today to focus on the latest labour market statistics, showing rising unemployment, falling employment, fewer vacancies, another increase in economic inactivity and wage growth still too strong for comfort for the Bank of England. They have been described variously as “ugly” and “the worst since the pandemic” and they are not what a government would want during an election campaign.

Sometimes, though, you see another figure that makes you sit up and take notice. A recent example was from Greg Thwaites, director of research at the Resolution Foundation, who, in a piece by Jill Treanor, my Sunday Times colleague, pointed out that 90 per cent of new jobs over the past 20 years had gone to foreign-born people.

It is a striking statistic, although we should be clear what we are talking about. Jobs are created and destroyed all the time and many millions change employment every year. This is the figure for net new jobs, the addition to employment. And it is true.

Twenty years ago there were 28.4 million people in employment in the UK; today it is a fraction under 33 million (32.97 million), an increase of 4.6 million. Over that period, the number of foreign-born workers has gone up from just under 2.6 million to just over 6.8 million, a rise of 4.2 million. That 4.2 million out of a total of 4.6 million is where the 90 per cent figure comes from.

The year 2004 is important in this context, because that is when the Labour government under Tony Blair opened Britain's labour market to new members of the European Union, notably Poland and Hungary, but also the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovenia and Slovakia. That changed the nation's labour market, although the period from then until the late 2010s was also characterised by an eventual strong rise in employment

Investment in childcare would help people return to work



among UK-born people and a record employment rate for them. From 2004 to late 2019, 69 per cent of employment growth was among non-UK-born people, with the remaining 31 per cent among the UK-born.

Since the Conservatives came to power in 2010, 75 per cent of net new jobs have gone to foreign-born workers, or 62 per cent if the cut-off point is the end of 2019. It is since then, and since Brexit, that the numbers have created that 90 per cent figure, a product of falling employment among the UK-born — down by more than a million since late 2019 — and a rise in overseas-born but non-EU workers, up by a million.

What was feared because of freedom of movement and EU enlargement — the substitution of foreign workers for those born in the UK — has happened instead since Brexit, alongside much higher levels of net migration than when this country was a member of the European bloc.

A useful new report from the UK in a Changing Europe think tank, *Migration to the UK after Brexit: Policy, Politics and Public Opinion*, sets out how “taking back control” after Brexit meant that “more liberal policies for work, study and humanitarian migration soon became clear, with a sharp increase in migration to historically unprecedented levels”. Workers no longer come to Britain in large numbers from eastern Europe but from countries such as India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

Sooner or later, all politicians come round to talking about “British jobs for British workers”. Gordon Brown did in 2007 in comments echoed by his successors. The reality, as anybody looking at these figures must

acknowledge, is that in the 21st century the UK has become more

dependent on foreign workers than at any time in its history.

Over the course of 2022 and 2023, 700,000 non-UK, non-EU nationals came to this country to work, slightly offset by a much smaller number, 86,000, who left. The 2019-23 non-

EU immigration total for work purposes is just over a million.

Given the UK's dependence on foreign workers, will it ever be possible to get to a much higher employment rate without a further big influx of foreign workers? Labour has set a target of an 80 per cent employment rate, as a proportion of the population aged 16 to 64, compared with 74.3 per cent now (down from 76.1 per cent in late 2019), which would imply an additional 2.3 million or so in work. Based on the experience of the past 20 years, to achieve it would require two million more foreign workers, while the experience of the past four to five years would suggest even more.

It is not an impossible target. Stephen Evans, chief executive of the Learning and Work Institute, points out that Switzerland, the Netherlands and Iceland all have employment rates of above 80 per cent. Yet to generate an increase in the employment rate to 80 per cent in the UK requires both stronger economic growth and measures to bring more of the economically inactive (22.3 per cent of the working-age population) and unemployed (4.4 per cent) into work.

Evans, whose institute advocated an 80 per cent target two years ago, says it can be done with the right investment in skills and training, childcare, reducing record NHS waiting lists and coaching the economically inactive into or back into work. Halving the employment gap facing disabled people — a 2017 Tory commitment — would mean another 1.2 million people in work. “We need the next wave of reform and change to open up job opportunities to more groups (particularly disabled people, but others too) who want to work,” he says. “This is partly a response to an ageing population, as well as opening up opportunities to everyone who wants to work but doesn't get the help today.”

Even if such a programme were to be adopted immediately, it would take time for the effects to come through, probably years. The UK will continue to depend on foreign workers for the foreseeable future. And it is folly to deny it.

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Katie Prescott

Silicon Valley loves Rishi Sunak, so where does that leave Labour?

In 2022 Rishi Sunak, when he was chancellor, bounced on to the stage at London Tech Week. Waiting in the wings, a senior American technology executive looked on, shaking his head admiringly: “Man, I wish we had politicians like him back home.”

Further cementing his tech creds, Sunak opened London Tech Week 2023 in conversation with Demis Hassabis, of Google DeepMind. He topped off the year with a discussion with Elon Musk after the inaugural AI Safety Summit. Tech bros love a fireside chat. To the disappointment of organisers and with the election looming, Sunak was missing from this year's event. “He could have turned up for some light relief among friends,” one industry executive laughed, gesturing around Kensington Olympia. “This is his brotherhood.”

Sunak may have screwed up royally over his decision to leave the D-Day celebrations early, but when it comes to technology he has barely put a foot wrong. Yes, the government's banging of the drum to make Britain a “science and technology superpower by 2030” has felt comically overblown at times, but there has been no doubting its commitment to the sector.

The UK has led the way on AI safety. The government has stood up for technology against the competition watchdog, directing the latter to “think of the economy” when it makes decisions, a tacit wrist-slap after a block on Microsoft's purchase of Activision Blizzard. It kept up momentum in the quantum sector, which recently won a second decade of funding to the tune of £2.5 million.

It hasn't all been rosy, but Sunak has taken a personal interest in supporting technology. Quotes from the prime minister are regularly featured on press releases from American companies announcing British investments. Like the admiring executive at London Tech Week 2022, Silicon Valley loves him. He fits right in.

There has been a steady drip of US technology companies expanding in the UK, such as Coreweave, Workday, Stripe and OpenAI. The government has done a good job of engaging with them, so much so, in fact, that some privately have

admitted scheduling announcements around “what No 10 wants”.

Will this emphasis on supporting technology continue under Labour? As one in the opposition camp has put it, “speaking the language of the tech bros doesn't come naturally”, but the party does claim that it “gets” the importance of technology more than ever. A letter from Labour is doing the rounds of technology companies, urging them to sign up and publicly support Sir Keir Starmer. It points to Labour's “focus on creating growth”, its “commitment to being a reliable partner with business” and on its focus on “improving access to finance for start-ups and scale-ups”.

Thus far, the mood in technology towards Labour is a little suspicious. Companies are worried about changes to capital gains tax, employment law and carried interest (the share of profits that backers receive from successful investments). It doesn't help that a Labour “tech day” planned for June 3 was canned because of the election.

One American technology group said Labour has been “sucking it all in” but not saying very much, which was “frustrating”. Others have said that “there is a vibe they are saying the right things, but the detail isn't there” and that “they have some catching up to do”.

That may change this week. Peter Kyle, the shadow technology secretary, is due to take the stage at London Tech Week on Wednesday and Labour's manifesto publication is imminent. It is likely that Labour will focus on AI safety and on bringing technology into public services. Beyond that, the party remains a bit of an unknown with many in the sector, which is vastly more significant than it was when Labour was last in power. The party does not have anyone who slides into Silicon Valley's DMs like Sunak.

Labour's manifesto rhetoric will be picked apart and no doubt run through ChatGPT-4o. As for Sunak, he may yet opt for a career change along the lines of Nick Clegg, who went to Meta, and to reappear on the stage of London Tech Week 2025 as a tech bro himself. They would welcome him with open arms.

Katie Prescott is Technology Business Editor of *The Times*

Wall-to-wall laughter

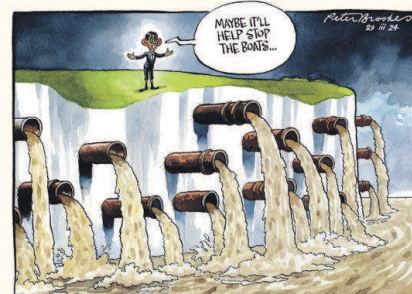
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Business

Diageo sells Guinness Nigeria stake as currency crisis bites

James Hurley

Diageo has agreed to sell a majority shareholding in Guinness Nigeria as it becomes the latest western company to reduce its presence in the African country, which is suffering an economic and currency crisis.

The drinks powerhouse, which owns brands including Johnnie Walker, Baileys and Smirnoff, will sell its 58 per

cent stake in the Lagos-listed business to Tolaram, a Singapore-based consumer goods group, for about 103 billion Nigerian naira (£55 million).

Diageo will retain ownership of the Guinness brand in the country, which it will licence to Guinness Nigeria, along with locally manufactured Diageo ready-to-drink and mainstream spirits.

PZ Cussons, Unilever and GSK are

among the western businesses that have been retreating from Nigeria amid currency turmoil that has resulted in a dramatic fall in the value of the naira and a shortage of foreign exchange. With fixed costs often invoiced in dollars, companies have faced rising expenses where they have to pay in naira, one of the world's worst-performing currencies.

Under President Tinubu, who came

to power last year, Nigeria abandoned the naira's peg to the dollar and removed complex currency controls. Under those controls, Nigerians often would use the black market, where dollars are traded at a much lower rate.

The reforms, which were intended to provide easier access to the dollar, to encourage foreign investment and to stabilise the naira, have instead led to a huge depreciation in the local currency. The partial removal of fuel subsidies, which was followed by much higher gas prices, has contributed further to the economic crisis.

Because Africa's most populous country is dependent on imports, its weak currency has led to high inflation and millions of people are struggling to buy food. April's inflation rate was 33.7 per cent and there have been protests about one of the worst economic crises it has faced in decades.

International companies also have struggled to repatriate their money. The country's central bank has been working to clear an estimated \$7 billion foreign exchange backlog.

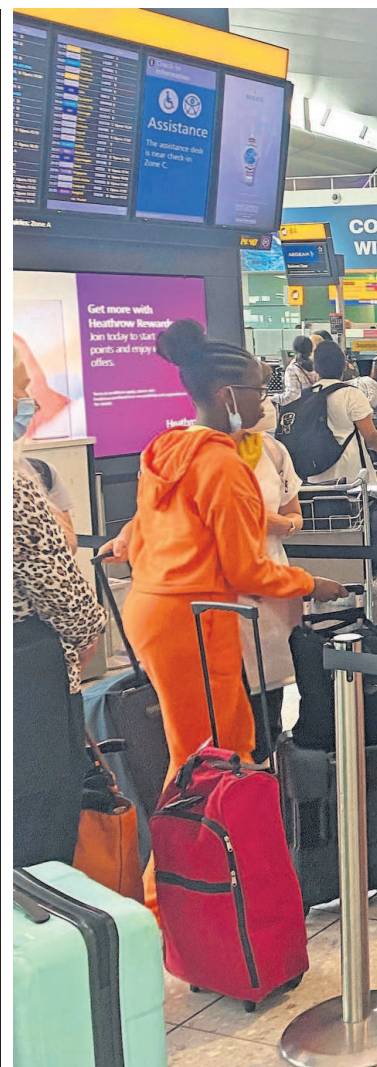
Nigeria was Africa's largest economy two years ago, but it is expected to drop to fourth place this year.

Tolaram is one of the largest consumer goods groups present in Africa and it is among global companies seeking to capitalise on the scaling back of investments by western rivals. Olam, a Singapore-based foods group, and Hayat Kimya, a Turkish consumer goods player, are still investing in Nigeria.

The Guinness transaction is expected to be completed during the 2025 financial year, subject to regulatory approvals in Nigeria, which represents up to 2 per cent of Diageo's global net sales value.

Analysts at Jefferies, the investment bank, said: "While Nigeria is an important Guinness market and the exit will be dilutive to group sales, the move should contribute modestly to higher returns and margins at the group level."

While Guinness was Britain's most popular pint last year, Diageo is out of favour with investors, losing close to a quarter of its value in the past year. Shares in Diageo fell a further 12½p, or 0.5 per cent, to £25.94 last night.



Heathrow lines up a record summer

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Severn Trent boss earns nearly £28m over ten years

Robert Lea

Britain's best-remunerated water boss has taken her pay to nearly £28 million over the past decade, despite the worsening pollution record at the Midlands water monopoly.

Liv Garfield, 48, the chief executive of Severn Trent since 2014, was paid nearly £3.2 million in the past year, including more than £2.2 million in bonuses. This was at a time when pollution incidents in the year rose by 24 per cent to 239, while 6,721 public sewer flooding incidents was 25 per cent worse.

At the 4.7 million households it serves, external sewer flooding increased by 20 per cent to 1,831 incidents and internal foul flooding incidents

also rose. Garfield's £793,000 basic pay in the year was topped up by an extra £142,000 in pension payments and perks for a total of £955,000, up 3.3 per cent year-on-year. She was additionally paid a £584,000 cash bonus and another £1.66 million in long-term incentive scheme payouts. Her total package of £3.18 million is Garfield's second best annual payday in her ten years running Severn Trent, bettered on ly by the £3.94 million she was paid in 2021-22.

Sharmila Nebhrajani, a former senior executive at the BBC, is the chairwoman of Severn Trent's remuneration committee. She said in the company's annual report: "The committee is confident that we have strong links between environmental performance and pay."

Liv Garfield has led Severn since 2014





STEVE PARSONS/PA

Lumo is shining light in profits for FirstGroup

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

The cut-price Lumo rail service may carry only a small fraction of passenger traffic on train lines from London to Scotland, but it was a standout performer for FirstGroup last year.

Annual pre-tax profits at the transport company have jumped by a third, with FirstGroup noting that its Lumo service between London and Edinburgh and its direct services to Hull had performed particularly well.

For the 53 weeks to March 30, FirstGroup, which in addition to rail services operates subsidised bus services nationwide, reported a 33 per cent surge in pre-tax profits to £139 million.

So-called open-access rail operations, which are run independently of the Department for Transport-controlled regional train companies, are proving a high-margin money-spinner for the company, the only remaining train operator listed on the London Stock Exchange.

It said its Lumo services between London and Edinburgh and its direct services to and from Hull had brought in £37 million, making them significant contributors to group profits, despite carrying less than 1 per cent of passenger volumes from the tightly managed Avanti west coast mainline, GWR great western main line and South Western Railway networks.

The profits boost enabled the company to lift its annual dividend by 45 per cent to 5.5p and to continue a share buyback programme that totalled £118 million in the year.

On the buses, returning passenger numbers, supported by the taxpayer-subsidised £2 cap on fares, helped revenue to grow by 12 per cent to £1 billion, on which the business made £83 million of operating profits, 43 per cent higher than in the previous year, at an operating margin of 8.3 per cent.

On the railways, FirstGroup's operation is split into two. Avanti, GWR and SWR are operated under contracts in which the Department for Transport takes all the revenue risk and bears all



Lumo's service between London and Edinburgh was a standout performer

the cost risk. The operations have incorporated into them the award of incentive fees for operational performance and growing passenger numbers, which were up by 10.4 per cent in the year to 271.6 million. These operations delivered a 12 per cent increase in operating profits to £105.6 million, for an operating margin of 2.9 per cent on £3.6 billion of revenue.

The other half of the business, comprising Lumo and Hull Trains, is the emerging jewel in the FirstGroup crown. Open access contracts operate outside the ambit of the transport department, with the operator bearing all the revenue and cost risk. Services are negotiated with the Office of Rail and Road and fill in gaps in timetables and on the network not operated by regional train operators.

Lumo and Hull Trains carried 2.7 million passengers in the year, up 22 per cent, on which it made £377 million operating profit at an operating margin of 16 per cent. The cut-price fares business model is proving so fruitful that FirstGroup is boosting capacity on its London-Edinburgh services and is extending them to Glasgow. It has requested a licence from the Office of Rail and Road to operate a similar model on the west coast main line between Rochdale, north of Manchester, to London Euston. Hull Trains has a similar request to operate services between London and Sheffield. Shares in FirstGroup fell 4¼p, or 2.8 per cent, to 164¼p.

Heathrow expects a record summer, with an estimated 30 million passengers forecast to travel through Europe's busiest airport (James Hurley writes).

It said that the 81.5 million people who used it in the 12 months to May was a record, up by

13.9 per cent on the previous 12 months. Last month was the first time that passenger numbers exceeded seven million in May, with 7.2 million people using the airport. London Stansted also had a record May, with its 2.7 million passengers up by 6.4 per cent on the same month last year. James Richardson,

Stansted's finance director, said the Essex airport had been boosted by a busy half-term week. Popular destinations included Dublin, Istanbul and Edinburgh. Heathrow said Terminal 2 had been used by 148 million passengers travelling on more than a million flights since it had opened in June 2014. In

Amid concerns at lengthy queues, Heathrow said it had successfully served record numbers of passengers

April, Heathrow said it had returned to profit in the first three months of the year, recording a pre-tax profit of £189 million compared with a loss of £60 million for the same period a year ago.

Novacyt in £5m Covid dispute payout

Alex Ralph

One of Britain's highest-profile Covid-19 testing companies has agreed to pay the government £5 million as part of a settlement to resolve a long-running High Court dispute.

A trial had been scheduled to begin this week between Novacyt, the London-listed company, and the Department of Health and Social Care. It now will not take place.

The fortunes of Novacyt and its share price were transformed during the pandemic after it secured lucrative work with the department. It became only the second company after Roche, the Swiss multinational, to have its test approved by the World Health Organisation for emergency use. The company struck a partnership to create a testing laboratory in Cambridge with the university and with GSK and AstraZeneca, Britain's two big Pharma companies.

Novacyt also became one of the top-five most-traded stocks on Euronext and Aim, the London Stock Exchange's

junior market, and was closely followed by retail investors.

However, it later became mired in a protracted legal dispute with the government that hit its shares and profits. Two years ago the government launched a £135 million breach of contract claim in the High Court against Novacyt and Primerdesign, a subsidiary the company acquired in 2016 for £12.3 million. Primerdesign is behind its PCR test.

The government alleged that Novacyt's test had failed its validation tests and had "poor sensitivity and false negatives". Novacyt rejected the claim and launched a counterclaim of £81.5 million for goods and services and for damages for breach of contract. It argued that the tests had "functioned in accordance with the specification".

As part of the High Court settlement, Novacyt said that "neither party has made any admission of liability or wrongdoing in respect of the claim or counterclaim or otherwise".

Shares in Novacyt, which were listed

on Aim at 59p in 2017, rose from about 13p at the start of 2020 to £11.94 in October that year. The stock has since slumped and it tumbled by a further 19.8 per cent, or 13¼p, to 56p last night.

Eight individuals shared stock worth £19 million under a share scheme begun at about the time the company was listed and after the share price had soared. It is unclear to what extent those employees cashed in those shares.

During the early part of the pandemic, Britain was scrambling to put together its emergency response and there were concerns about the country's capacity to quickly diagnose coronavirus cases.

The government called on business "to build a British diagnostics industry at scale". However, as the pandemic waned, Novacyt became one of three smaller London-listed diagnostic companies to become embroiled in legal disputes with the government over testing contracts.

The disputes weakened balance sheets, investment and employment.

Former BHS bosses must pay £18.5m over collapse

Jonathan Ames

A judge has ordered two former BHS directors to pay more than £18.5 million after being found liable for the collapse of the high street retailer.

Lennart Henningson and Dominic Chandler were told yesterday that they must pay £6.5 million each after Mr Justice Leech backed a wrongful trading claim against the pair.

Sitting in the High Court in London, the judge also ordered Henningson to pay additional fines totalling nearly £4 million over claims of "individual misfeasance" and breaches of duties. Leech went on to order Chandler to pay another £1.6 million over breaches of duty regarding the purchase of a BHS branch in Darlington.

Henningson and Chandler were members of the Retail Acquisitions team that bought BHS from its then-owner, Sir Philip Green, in 2015 for

£1. The latest court ruling comes eight years after the business went into administration, resulting in 11,000 redundancies and with a more than £570 million hole in its pension fund.

In his ruling, the judge accepted that Chandler "did not receive substantial rewards from being a director" that were "over and above what was reasonable for his services".

The judge acknowledged that the financial order made against Chandler "will be potentially ruinous for him" but added that he was "not persuaded that it is appropriate to take these matters into account".

The collapse of BHS in 2016 led to a national scandal and a series of committee hearings in parliament, some featuring Green giving evidence.

Ultimately, amid a clamour for him to surrender his knighthood, the former owner paid £363 million to fill part of the pension fund deficit.

Business Unit trusts

The Times unit trust information service

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
ALLIANZ GLOBAL INVESTORS				
Inv Serv: 020 7065 1400 Helpline: 0800 317 573				
Glb Yield A Inc £	206.01	...	+0.27	...
Strategic Bond C Inc £	130.72	...	-0.18	...
UK Corp Bond C Inc £	104.79	...	-0.78	2.87
UK Equity C Inc £	631.26	...	-14.91	3.28
UK City Inc A Inc £	32.49	...	-1.29	4.91
UK Growth A Inc £	831.92	...	-24.00	3.41
UK Index A Inc £	1423.81	...	-5.83	3.45
UK Mid Cap A Inc £	4654.61	...	-11.35	...

ARTEMIS FUND MGRS LTD

0800 092 2051

Authorised Inv Funds

Global Income R Acc £	196.43	...	-0.79	...
Global Income R Inc £	119.00	...	-0.48	...
Global Select R Acc £	174.66	...	-0.20	...
High Income R Inc £	64.43	...	-0.03	5.94
Income R Acc £	590.57	...	-0.99	3.50
Income R Inc £	239.74	...	-0.40	3.60
Monthly Dist R Inc £	69.38	...	-0.19	...
SouthGAP European Equity R Acc £	195.03	...	-4.11	...
SouthGAP Global Equity R Acc £	192.01	...	-1.80	1.81
SouthGAP UK Equity R Acc £	1049.91	...	-15.16	2.82
Strategic Assets R Acc £	940.20	...	-0.11	...
Strategic Bond R M Inc £	1010.16	...	-0.02	4.04
Strategic Bond R M Inc £	50.94	...	-0.02	4.14
Strategic Bond R R Acc £	101.98	...	-0.03	4.14
Strategic Bond R R Inc £	90.65	...	-0.01	4.22
UK Select R Acc £	886.84	...	-0.32	1.60
UK Smaller Cos R Acc £	1022.68	...	-5.58	1.55
UK Special Sits R Acc £	807.65	...	-1.07	1.44

AXA FRAMLINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD

Dling: 0845 602 1952 Priv Clients: 0845 777 5511

Equity Inc £	572.40	...	-2.70	4.43
Glt Acc £	201.30	211.80	+0.10	...
Glt Inc £	74.35	78.24	+3.89	1.09
Health Acc £	3297.00	...	+0.10	...
Japan Sm Co £	62.80	66.69	+0.19	0.30
Monthly Inc £	138.30	...	...	...
Monthly Inc £	215.80	...	-1.10	...
UK Growth Inc £	220.60	...	-0.40	...
UK Select Opps Inc £	1938.00	...	-4.80	...
UK Sm Co Inc £	293.20	...	-0.60	...

AXA FUND MANAGERS LTD

Admin & Eq 017 989 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 Acc £	288.10	...	+4.10	0.52
Japan Acc £	71.36	...	-2.30	1.51
Pac Growth Acc A Inc £	478.80	...	-17.60	2.30

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD

08457 46 46 46

European Growth £	233.10	...	-1.60	...
Sat Leaders £	248.50	...	-3.70	...
UK Growth £	679.80	...	-2.20	2.09
UK Income £	215.20	...	-1.00	4.59

CLOSE FUND MANAGEMENT LTD

0870 606 6402

Beacon Inv £	84.88	...	+0.35	...
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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 £	1449.00	...	-3.00	0.25
High Income £	45.07	...	-0.20	1.83
FTSE All-Share Track £	454.90	...	-2.70	1.83
Global Growth SC1 £	369.50	...	+0.60	...
High Inc 1st £	11.57	12.14	...	5.22
Max Inc Bond £	44.28	...	...	...
Multi Man Cst £	70.41	...	...	3.18
Multi Man Dist £	60.44	...	...	...
North Amer £	106.00	...	-2.00	...
Pacific Growth £	477.40	...	...	0.04
Strategic Bd £	201.60	...	+0.20	1.64
UK Equity £	344.00	...	+0.20	1.27
UK Growth & Inc A £	1558.50	...	...	...
UK Growth & Inc Dist £	234.70	...	...	...
UK Smaller Cos £	1122.00	...	...	1.63

DENTRENE INV MGMT LTD

0800 359 3010

Resp & Sust Sterling Bond £	186.14	...	+0.11	...
Resp & Sust Europ Eq £	364.70	...	-2.90	2.22
Resp & Sust Glt Eq £	370.10	...	-1.60	0.94
Resp & Sust Mid Income £	112.00	...	-0.70	4.47
Resp & Sust UK Eq £	223.80	...	-0.80	1.50
Resp & Sust UK Equity Opps £	593.30	...	-1.00	1.48

FIDELITY INTERNATIONAL

Private Onts 0800 414161 Broker Digs 0800 414181

Amer Spec Sits £	2540.00	...	+5.00	...
American £	6539.00	...	+9.00	...
Euro Opps £	484.00	...	-8.40	0.35
European £	3963.00	...	-47.00	...
Extra Income £	22.62	...	-0.09	6.19
Global Spec £	6479.00	...	+2.00	...
Global Focus £	325.00	...	-7.00	...
International £	149.50	...	-0.20	0.08
Japan £	654.30	...	+6.60	0.46
MoneyBdr Bal £	43.16	...	-0.22	4.27
MoneyBdr Glob £	327.60	327.60	+0.01	0.21
MoneyBdr Growth £	76.12	...	-0.95	...
MoneyBdr Inc £	28.93	...	-0.18	...

MoneyBdr UK Ind £	145.14	...	-0.40	3.17
Special Sits £	5172.00	...	-20.00	2.39
Wealthblder	69.75	72.18	+0.53	0.44

HALIFAX INVESTMENT FUND MGRS LTD

01296 386 386

Authorised Inv Funds

Share Class - C				
Corporate Bond £	34.19	...	-0.03	...
Ethical £	137.00	...	-0.30	...
European £	130.00	...	-0.80	...
Far Eastern £	126.10	...	-1.00	2.01
Fund of Inv Trst £	150.80	...	-0.30	0.69
Intl Growth £	152.70	...	-0.10	...
Japanese £	84.74	...	-0.64	1.15
North Amer £	139.30	...	-0.80	...
Smaller Cos £	116.90	...	-0.20	...
Special Sits £	50.44	...	-0.32	...
UK Equity £	102.40	...	-0.60	...
UK FTSE 100 £	76.51	...	-0.90	...
UK FTSE All-Share £	88.22	...	-0.48	2.34
UK Growth £	94.20	...	-0.45	...

HSBC GLOBAL ASSET MGMT (UK) LTD

Enqs: 0845 745 6123 Dlg: 0845 745 6126 Mon-Fri 9-6

HSBC Index Tracker Investment Funds (OEIC)

Amer Ind Acc £	1179.86	...	+6.42	1.08
Amer Ind Inc £	925.02	...	+5.03	1.09
Euro Ind £	1390.00	...	-19.21	2.84
Euro Ind £	844.98	...	-11.08	2.92
FTSE 100 Ind Acc £	313.09	...	-0.69	...
FTSE 100 Ind Inc £	135.34	...	-0.30	...
FTSE 250 Ind Acc £	319.11	...	-2.01	2.92
FTSE 250 Ind Inc £	184.66	...	-1.16	3.02
FTSE All-Share £	795.07	...	-2.91	3.16
FTSE All-Share £	382.05	...	-1.39	3.24
Japan Ind £	167.15	...	+0.23	1.62
Japan Ind £	125.70	...	+0.92	1.64
Pac Ind £	558.26	...	-1.60	2.90
Pac Ind £	329.54	...	-0.59	2.99

HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Share Class

Balanced Acc £	271.02	...	-0.19	1.33
Balanced Inc £	151.95	...	-0.14	...
Corp Bd Inc £	284.99	...	-1.90	3.09
Corp Bd Inc £	105.14	...	-0.70	3.09
Glt & Fd Int Acc £	497.78	...	+1.62	...
Glt & Fd Int Inc £	74.17	...	-0.26	...
Income Acc £	799.43	...	-2.45	3.76
Income Inc £	314.10	...	-0.96	3.89
Monthly Inc Acc £	313.41	...	+0.77	3.21
Monthly Inc Inc £	134.28	...	-0.62	3.99
UK Gth & Inc Ret B Acc £	1016.51	...	-0.66	3.60
UK Gth & Inc Ret B Inc £	168.83	...	-0.28	3.21
UK Gth & Inc Inc £	162.51	...	-0.66	3.60
UK Gth & Inc Inc £	68.83	...	-0.28	3.21

HSBC Specialist Investment Funds (OEIC)

American Index Ret £	10179.86	...	+6.42	1.08
American Index Ret Inc £	10179.86	...	+5.03	1.09
Asian Gth £	147.77	...	...	...
Asian Gth £	130.99	...	-0.96	...
Chinese Ex Acc £	513.81	...	+0.27	0.40
Chinese Ex Inc £	434.76	...	+0.22	0.34
Euro Gth £	973.97	...	+4.05	0.41
Euro Gth £	817.05	...	+3.39	0.44

IGNIS ASSET MGMT

Digs: 0843 222 8282

American Gth Inc £	322.55	340.42	-1.34	...
Balanced Growth £	262.17	274.69	-0.93	1.52
Balanced Growth Acc £	393.13	414.92	-1.40	...
Corporate Bond £	95.69	...	-0.89	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 £	333.52	349.80	-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	135.15	-0.06	...
Managed Trst £	71.96	74.36	-0.17	...
Mixed Pflto Inc £	95.54	100.84	-0.11	...
Pacific Gth £	498.71	526.34	-2.81	1.84
Smaller Comp £	756.24	798.14	-1.64	0.15
Smaller Cos £	628.94	663.79	-1.36	0.21

INSIGHT INVESTMENT FDS MANAGEMENT LTD

Client Servs: 02007 163 6000

Investment Multi-Manager Funds

Well Bdr Bal Acc £	96.05	...	-0.32	...
Well Bdr Growth Acc £	93.79	...	-0.36	...

INVESCO FUND MGRS LTD

Dling: 0800 085 8571 Inv Serv: 0800 085 8677

Bkr Serv: 0800 085 2221

INVEST Funds

UK Str Inv N/Tr £	323.57	...	-0.12	...
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INVESCO PERPETUAL FUNDS

Childrens Acc £	523.07	...	-1.44	...
Corp Bond Acc £	213.41	...	-0.19	...
High Income Inc £	233.01	...	-1.35	2.95
Income & Gth Inc £	436.59	...	-0.92	...
Income Acc £	1310.58	...	-4.84	3.28
Money Inc £	96.20	...	-0.02	3.68
Monthly Plus Inc £	93.46	...	-0.08	5.88
UK Aggressive Inc £	154.28	...	-0.42	...
UK Growth Acc £	994.23	...	-4.59	...
UK Sm Co Equity Acc £	1420.85	...	-0.07	1.30
UK Sm Co Growth £	82.54	...	+0.04	...

INVESTEC FUND MGRS

Broker Support and Dealing: 020 7597 1900

OEIC Series L, J, III, & IV

American A Acc £	807.81	...	+2.57	...
Asia ex Japan A Acc £	744.65	...	-0.68	...
Capital Accumulator A Acc £	1023.48	...	-3.81	...
Cautious Managed A Acc £	1033.41	...	-3.03	2.27
Cautious Managed A Acc £	1028.49	...	-1.55	2.30
Diversified Growth A Acc £	1030.43	...	-0.40	...
Diversified Growth A Acc £	1028.43	...	-0.42	...
Diversified Income A Acc £	1033.94	...	-1.28	3.42
Diversified Income A Acc £	1066.41	...	-0.35	4.89
Emerging Mkts Blended A Acc £	1015.72	...	-0.51	...
Emerging Mkts Blended A Acc £	1015.72	...	+0.20	...
Emerging Mkts Blended A Acc £	1065.40	...	-0.27	...

Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc £	1034.69	...	+0.14	...
Eng Mkts Local Cur Bd A Acc £	1034.69	...	-0.78	4.44
Eng Mkts Local Cur Bd A Acc £	1034.69	...	-0.33	6.29
Eng Mkts Local Cur Bd A Acc £	1034.69	...	-0.05	...
Enhanced Natural Resources A Acc £	1034.69	...	-1.25	...
Global Bond A Acc £	139.30	...	+4.03	0.82
Global Bond A Inc £	109.33	...	+3.00	0.82
Global Bond 1 Gross Inc £	10167.00	...	+29.78	...
Global Dynamic A Acc £	193.61	...	+1.95	0.47
Global Energy A Acc £	170.97	...	-1.14	...
Global Equity A Acc £	265.71	...	+0.41	

Up or down? Experts are divided on where oil prices will go next

Emma Powell

The price of oil has been as much an impediment to the world's recent economic health as a barometer of it. In the aftermath of the war in Ukraine and amid fears of supply shocks, soaring prices were a key driver of inflation, pushing up costs for businesses that have fed through to price rises in goods and services ranging from shampoo to airline tickets. Household energy bills were propelled to record levels.

Recent oil price falls have provided some respite, but the decline last week in Brent crude, the international benchmark, to below \$80 a barrel for the first time since February indicates confidence is shaky. Although last night it was back above \$82, analysts are split on where the price will go next.

The weakening oil price was triggered by the unwinding of supply cuts by the powerful Opec+ group, which set out a path for some of its members to unravel from October some of the voluntary production curbs it had put in place at the end of 2022. Oil-producing nations, led by Saudi Arabia and Russia, had sought to prop up prices in the face of uncertain demand.

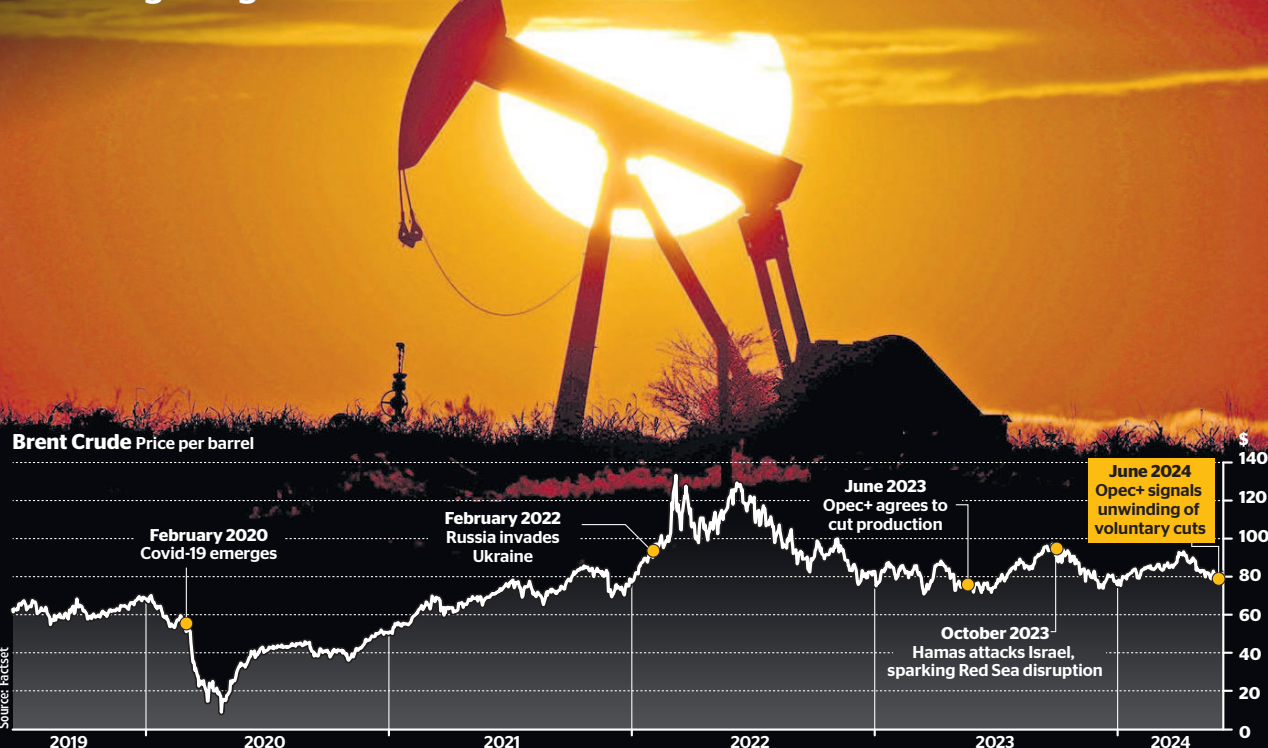
The cuts, which have totalled 5.86 million barrels a day, or 5.7 per cent of global demand, have played an important role in putting a floor under oil prices. While the reduction in most of that capacity has been extended until the end of next year, traders focused more heavily on the unwinding of 2.2 million barrels later in 2024.

Brent crude one-month futures fell to below \$77 a barrel, lower than the \$80 level that many Opec members such as Saudi Arabia need to balance their budgets. As recently as April, Brent crude had been priced above \$90 as a potential escalation of tensions in the Middle East sent tremors through the market.

Goldman Sachs, the American investment bank, has forecast a price of between \$75 and \$90 a barrel over the medium term, but it has said, too, that risks are "skewed to the downside" because of the Opec+ plans partially to reverse supply cuts. Rystad Energy, the oil industry consultancy, thinks Brent crude will remain at \$77 a barrel during the third quarter before rising to \$83 over the final three months of the year.

"Stocks currently are very well supported," Janiv Shah, an analyst at Rystad Energy, said. "Until we reach a

Barrelling along



point where this metric reverses, we'll probably see some pressure on prices."

Others view the response to the Opec+ cuts as an overreaction. "By our reckoning, the market actually needs them to reverse some of those cuts," David Fyfe, chief economist at Argus Media, another oil industry consultancy, said. Without the extra 2.2 million barrels, the market "would be very tight indeed", amid signs of a recovery in consumption in America and China. He noted that the cartel had the option to reverse its decision to loosen the production curbs, depending on market conditions.

In China, the world's biggest importer of crude oil, refineries have slowed their run-rates as the demand for petrochemical products, such as diesel, has softened. "Product weakness has

been partially because of the weak real estate sector [and] construction activity," Shah said.

Argus estimates that Chinese demand rose by only 200,000 barrels a day in the first four months of the year, based on refinery activity and net trade figures, but it is forecasting growth of between 500,000 and 600,000 barrels a day for the year.

The American summer driving season, when petrol consumption is 400,000 barrels a day higher than during spring and autumn, will be key to gauging crude oil demand and the outlook for prices.

The market should "adjust gradually" to the unwinding of supply cuts, Fyfe said, which could push oil above \$85 a barrel later in the year, but if stronger American or Chinese demand

failed to materialise that prediction could be thwarted.

The move by Opec+ to unfurl some of its production cuts has been interpreted as an indication that its ability to smooth out oil supply and demand imbalances has been compromised by the growth in non-cartel sources, mainly shale production in the United States. Opec members' share of the oil market shrank to 26 per cent in the second quarter, according to estimates from Argus, below the 30 per cent level the cartel has become used to.

Last month the International Energy Agency forecast that world oil supply would increase by 580,000 barrels a day this year to a record 102.7 million daily barrels as non-Opec+ output rises by 1.4 million barrels a day, offsetting an Opec+ production fall of 840,000

barrels, which assumed that voluntary cuts were maintained. The watchdog also reduced its forecast for daily demand, in contrast with a more optimistic projection from Opec.

"The shale mark I business model was to go for growth," Fyfe said. "There was the Klondike phase of US shale production, which was to chase volumetric growth." However, consolidation within the American shale industry, which has surged to \$200 billion in the past year, had instilled more discipline, he said: not only was there more competition from other commodities such as natural gas for capital, but also shareholders were demanding that more cash be returned rather than being spent on increasing production. That should mean prices are also a more important consideration.

Winter power-saving scheme scrapped

Emma Powell

A service that paid households to reduce their energy consumption at times of high demand will not be run this winter after National Grid's Electricity System Operator said that the risk of blackouts was lower than last year.

The ESO, which is responsible for keeping the lights on in Britain, said this month that it expected a greater supply margin this year thanks to increased capacity from interconnectors, which import energy from Europe, new gas generation, the growth in battery storage and more grid connections.

However, the novel "demand flexibility service" will be developed to be available at times of high electricity demand all year round.

The operator said it would discuss the service's proposed design with the

industry before seeking approval from Ofgem, the regulator, before the winter.

Kayte O'Neill, chief operating officer at the ESO, said: "The demand flexibility service has been a national first in empowering households and businesses to embrace energy flexibility and to be rewarded in the process. As we transition away from requiring it as a winter contingency service, it is only right that we look to the future of what this service can deliver."

Electricity supply margins are expected to increase to 9.4 per cent this winter, from 7.4 per cent last year, under the operator's "base case" scenario. The ESO published its early winter outlook report last week.

The buffer, a measure of available excess generation and the reserves held by the system operator above the electricity needed to meet demand, is

the largest since the winter of 2020 and is higher than a margin of 6.6 per cent in 2022, when Europe was plunged into an energy crisis after the outbreak of the Ukraine war.

The service was launched in 2022 by National Grid amid concerns that Britain could face controlled blackouts for three hours at a time. In the event, mild weather helped to reduce energy usage and both of the past two winters passed without any power shortages in Britain.

Last winter it paid 2.6 million households and businesses an aggregate £11.9 million to reduce or shift their electricity consumption at key times. People were able to benefit by shifting the time at which they carried out energy-intensive activities such as using the washing machine or oven on certain days to ease peak demand.

Ex-Whitehall chief to join EDF as its UK chairman

Emma Powell

The French state-backed company responsible for the entire fleet of Britain's nuclear power stations has hired a former civil service grandee as chairman of its UK business.

Sir Alex Chisholm will join EDF next month after the government's Advisory Committee on Business Appointments gave the move the green light.

He was previously permanent secretary at the Cabinet Office, making him one of the most senior figures at the central government department, aside from elected ministers.

EDF operates all five of the UK's nuclear power stations, many of which are due to be decommissioned by the

end of the decade. Britain generated about 20 per cent of its electricity from nuclear plants as recently as 2018, but that proportion has declined to about 13 per cent as ageing plants have suffered safety shutdowns and have been closed.

The company is also grappling with the spiralling cost of building Hinkley Point C, the UK's only new nuclear power station under construction. The start of electricity production had been scheduled for June 2027, but the completion date could now be up to three years later, it said this year.

Simone Rossi, EDF's UK chief executive, said Chisholm "brings great private and public sector leadership, governance and regulatory experience".

Lauren Almeida Tempus
Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips



Solar fund is looking to sunnier skies

NEXT ENERGY SOLAR
Market cap £435m | Dividend yield 11%

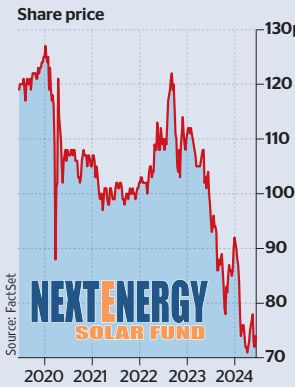
London's renewable energy infrastructure trusts are on sale, with big discounts and big yields almost everywhere you turn. Few, though, rival the 11 per cent dividend yield at NextEnergy Solar Fund, which, after Vodafone announced its dividend cut last month, is now the highest-yielding stock in the FTSE 350.

The £435 million renewable energy company was listed a decade ago and since then it has invested in solar farms throughout the UK, recently passing the one-gigawatt mark, generating enough energy to power about 750,000 homes.

The fund's official objective is to provide shareholders with attractive returns, mostly via the paying of regular dividends, through its solar energy infrastructure assets and some other technologies, such as energy storage. Since listing, it has done a decent job at delivering this, with total returns (that is returns with dividends reinvested) of 38 per cent over the past decade.

The stock has taken a hit in the past couple of years, as rising interest rates have made both alternative and income assets less attractive, as well as increasing the cost of capital for solar farms. Nevertheless, dividends have kept on growing and investors are beginning to speculate that the

Clouding over

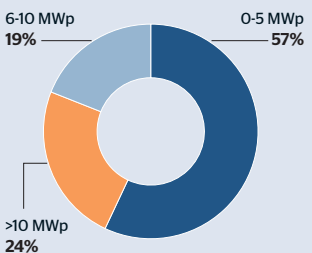


ADVICE Buy
WHY Share price weak but it pays a generous and reliable dividend

prospect of rate cuts later in the year could feed into some capital gains.

So how does NextEnergy Solar Fund make money? It owns 99 solar farms, with 860 megawatts of assets in the UK and 35MW of solar panels in Italy. About half of the company's revenues are made up of inflation-linked, government-backed subsidies such as renewable obligation certificates and feed-in tariffs. These

Portfolio by installed capacity*
Megawatt peak (MWp), the max power output of a solar panel system



*As a percentage of assets. As of 31 Dec 2023
Source: Company report

contracts are linked with inflation, which protects it from volatility in power prices and supports dividend growth. The rest of the fund's revenue comes from the sale of budgeted power generation into the market.

Last spring the fund launched a "capital recycling plan", which effectively meant selling some assets that do not get any subsidies. The move was designed to help to drive its growth, although some investors are worried that this may not be progressing fast enough. Analysts at Numis have noted that its renewable peers have sold more than £300 million of assets since the third quarter of last year, across both wind

and solar. However, the managers told the market in May that the fund was "progressing positively through exclusive negotiations with selected third-party bidders". News here could help the trust to narrow its double-digit discount.

Every trust in the sector trades at a discount to net asset value, at an average of 23 per cent, compared with 7 per cent in the wider investment company universe. NextEnergy Solar Fund's discount stands at 29 per cent. Its closest rivals in the solar space are the £633 million Bluefield Solar Income Fund and the £512 million Foresight Solar Fund, both of which have lower levels of leverage and higher dividend cover ratios. This reduced risk, however, means that both offer a lower yield.

Investors should keep an eye on the trust's gearing, which at the end of last year stood at 46.4 per cent of its gross asset value. Its maximum is 50 per cent. The capital recycling plan should help to bring this ratio down.

The fees are not particularly cheap, with charges reported at about 1 per cent, but this is typical of infrastructure trusts. The double-digit discount means that there is still considerable value in buying the assets at this price. The trust has a solid track record of increasing payouts and a cash dividend cover of 1.4 times. An 11 per cent yield means investors will be paid generously to wait until renewable investment trust shares win back market favour.

ADVICE Hold
WHY Some recent hiccups but strong structural demand

CHEMRING
Market cap £1.1bn | Forward price/earnings ratio 19

Chemring, the supplier of military components and technology, has an order book that has grown to a record £1 billion, it revealed last week. Yet the shares have slipped 3 per cent since its half-year results.

The numbers were certainly mixed. While its order book means long-term growth looks promising, pre-tax profits fell by 31 per cent to £15.2 million in the first half of its financial year, partly because of costs connected with its defined-benefit

pension scheme. There was also some operational disruption at a factory in Tennessee, blamed on an unexpected cold snap in the weather.

Chemring started life in 1905 as the British, Foreign & Colonial Automatic Light Controlling Company, building and installing equipment needed to move street lighting from gas to electricity. It now has two main business segments: sensors and information; and countermeasures and energetics, where it designs defence systems for air and sea platforms. Last year the group made £472.6 million in sales and £45.4 million in operating profits.

While there have been some recent manufacturing issues, the company

looks strongly supported by rising defence spending in the West, particularly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In fact, it has suggested that the present "rearmament cycle" could last for at least the next decade. It now expects to reach £1 billion in revenue by 2030, which would equate to a 9 per cent compound annual growth rate in organic revenue.

Chemring is also increasing its capital investment programme, from £120 million to £200 million, of which £90 million will be government-funded in its Norwegian business. Analysts at Shore Capital, the broker, believe that this should increase operating profits at its energetics division from £21 million to

£30 million and that it implies an uplift in margins from 25 per cent to 30 per cent.

This is good news for shareholders, although this extra capacity will take some time to develop. The shares trade at 19 times forward earnings, at a discount to its bigger defence businesses such as BAE Systems at 20 and Rolls-Royce at 30, although slightly above its five-year average of 17.2.

PRICES

Major indices

New York		
Dow Jones	38747.42 (+120.62)	
Nasdaq Composite	17343.55 (+151.02)	
S&P 500	5375.32 (+14.53)	
Tokyo		
Nikkei 225	39134.79 (+96.63)	
Hong Kong		
Hang Seng	18176.34 (-190.61)	
Amsterdam		
AEX Index	921.25 (+3.45)	
Sydney		
AO	8005.90 (-106.90)	
Frankfurt		
DAX	18369.94 (-124.95)	
Singapore		
Straits	3309.21 (-12.87)	
Brussels		
BEL20	3857.98 (-32.81)	
Paris		
CAC-40	7789.21 (-104.77)	
Zurich		
SMI Index	12072.92 (-64.82)	
DJ Euro Stoxx 50	4965.09 (-51.39)	
London		
FTSE 100	8147.81 (-80.67)	
FTSE 250	20266.85 (-179.19)	
FTSE 350	4487.52 (-43.77)	
FTSE Eurotop 100	4098.31 (-36.48)	
FTSE All-Shares	4444.07 (-42.93)	
FTSE Non Financials	5390.76 n/a	
techMARK 100	7082.26 (-9.85)	
Bargains	n/a	
AO	1.2719 (-0.0006)	
Euro	1.1848 (+0.0026)	
:SDR	0.98 (+0.00)	
Exchange Index	83.62 (+0.25)	
Bank of England official code (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)	

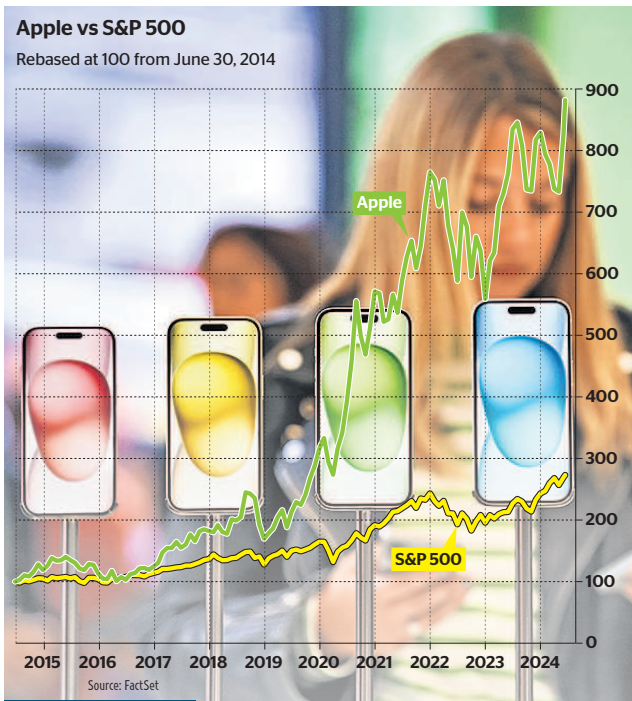
London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 24	96.620	96.780	96.620	96.760	11	62
	SEP 24	96.490	96.840	96.330	96.730	310862	652935
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
	Jun 25						
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 24	96.255	96.260	96.250	96.260	128666	730344
	Sep 24	96.395	96.410	96.385	96.405	221699	564744
	Dec 24	96.570	96.605	96.560	96.600	216749	535090
	Mar 25	96.725	96.780	96.720	96.770	163251	412385
	Jun 25	96.860	96.925	96.860	96.915	181764	377767
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
FTSE100	Jun 24	8249.5	8273.5	8121.0	8149.0	94335	541738
	Sep 24	8288.0	8313.0	8171.0	8194.0	3582	3442
FTSEurofirst 80	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						

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Commodities

ICIS pricing (London 6.00pm)				Brent (6.00pm)			
				Aug	82.08-82.07	Nov	80.77-80.74
				Sep	81.70-81.69	Dec	80.32-80.30
				Oct	81.24-81.22	Volume: 2157381	
Crude Oils (\$/barrel FOB)				LIFFE			
Brent Physical				80.38	+0.57		
BFOE(Aug)				82.16	+0.55		
BFOE(Sep)				81.92	+0.52		
WTI(Aug)				77.78	+0.55		
WTI(Sep)				77.30	+0.53		
Products (\$/MT)							
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)							
Premium Unld				860.00	863.00	-5.00	
Gasoil FCC				737.00	738.00	+8.75	
3.5 Fuel Oil				462.00	463.00	+0.00	
Naphtha				637.00	651.00	+6.00	
ICE Futures							
Gas Oil							
Jun	749.75-749.50	Sep	752.75-752.50				
Jul	750.00-749.75	Oct	755.00-754.75				
Aug	751.00-750.75	Volume: 733946					
				White Sugar (FOB)			
				Reuters			
				May	517.20-516.80		
				Jun	520.60-516.70		
				Aug	547.10-546.80	Aug	520.60-509.80
				Oct	527.30-527.00	Oct	524.10-509.10
				Dec	516.70-516.30	Volume: 72862	



Investors
renew taste
for Apple

Apple's stock valuation hit a record high of more than \$3.1 trillion yesterday as investors warmed to the iPhone maker's plans to integrate ChatGPT into its devices (Louisa Clarence-Smith writes). Shares in Apple rose by \$14.03, or 7.3 per cent, to close last night at \$207.15, a surge that enabled Apple to overtake Nvidia and re-establish its position

as the world's second most valuable company, beaten only by Microsoft. It comes after investors responded positively to Apple's developer conference in Cupertino, California, where on Monday Tim Cook, its boss, discussed Apple's take on generative AI. The company unveiled Apple Intelligence, its AI system that can conjure text, images and other content across Apple devices on command. Apple showcased how AI would enhance users' experience, including by helping customers to make an

email sound more professional or to generate custom emojis. Siri, Apple's digital assistant, will be able to prompt users if they want assistance from OpenAI's ChatGPT. After the developers conference, Apple shares fell by 2 per cent, but the stock rebounded after Wall Street analysts responded positively to the update. Gene Munster, at Deepwater Asset Management, said he was impressed by Apple's easy-to-use integration with ChatGPT. "They're really taking the friction out of using AI," he said.

The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
Oxford Instruments Investors cheer annual results	7.1%
ME Group Recovers some losses	4.7%
Hikma Pharmaceuticals Positive note from Citigroup	2.2%
Molten Ventures Rises ahead of final results	1.8%
Senior Bags multi-year contracts with Collins Aerospace	1.8%
Bardays Banks extend share price declines	-2.7%
Hochschild Mining Weaker gold prices	-2.8%
FirstGroup Disappointing annual results	-2.8%
Antofagasta Copper prices fall	-4.3%
Future Follow-through selling	-5.2%

Plans for simpler approach boost Oxford Instruments

Jessica Newman Market report

As trading screens glowed red, the few that flashed green were easy to spot. Among them was Oxford Instruments, shares of which powered to 11-month highs after the company revealed robust revenue growth, adjusted its medium-term targets and announced plans to reorganise the business. The £1.4 billion maker of scientific instruments reported a 5.8 per cent rise in revenue to £470.4 million for the 12 months to the end of March, driven by strong demand for semiconductors. Adjusted operating profits of £80.3 million were in line with expectations. The real driving force for investors was Oxford Instruments' new strategy. It is aiming to deliver organic

Wall Street report

The S&P 500 and Nasdaq indices rose, helped by a positive response to Apple's developer event in California on Monday. However, the Dow Jones industrial average closed down by 120.62 points, or 0.3 per cent, at 38,747.42.

growth at a compound annual growth rate of 5 per cent to 8 per cent and plans to expand its adjusted operating margins to more than 20 per cent. The company conceded that the overlap between its business units and markets meant that the structure of the business had "become overly complex". It outlined plans to reorganise into two divisions that will focus on fewer markets and on sharpening the product portfolio. This new approach was likely "to reflect continued returns from investments, improving processes and increased efficiencies", analysts at Shore Capital, the broker, said. The verdict from Jefferies was that the simplification plans were "refreshing and should aid business understanding". All this helped the company to top the FTSE 250 leaderboard, with its shares closing up 175p, or 7.1 per cent, at £26.35. As the rout in European financial markets intensified after the

CONSUMER GOODS

More cake is on the menu

Strong sales growth and the expansion of its British store estate lifted profits and revenues at Cake Box Holdings last year. The maker of egg-free fresh cream cakes increased its revenue in the 12 months to the end of March by 8.7 per cent to £37.8 million, with like-for-like annual sales growth of 4.4 per cent in its franchised stores. Its online sales swelled to £16.1 million from £13.8 million. Its store numbers rose to 225, with 20 new sites opened, including in



Cake Box Holdings is a maker of egg-free fresh cream cakes

Liverpool, Cambridge and Didsbury. All this helped to lift pre-tax profits by 15.1 per cent to £6.3 million. A final dividend of 6.1p takes its total dividend for the year to 9p, a 10.8 per cent increase

on the previous year. Shares in the company, which were floated at 108p in June 2018, closed flat at 175p in a subdued wider market. Sukh Chamdal, 62, the company's chief executive, said the launch of a new website, alongside a customer relationship management system and increased investment in marketing, had enhanced the company's enhanced brand awareness. He added that trading so far this year was in line with the company's expectations.

announcement of a snap general election in France, London was hardly unaffected. The FTSE 100 lost its early morning gains to close down 80.67 points, or 1 per cent, at 8,147.81, its lowest level in more than a month. The more UK-focused FTSE 250 similarly extended its losses, falling a further 179.19 points, or 0.9 per cent, to 20,266.85. Contributing to the Footsie's decline were its clutch of heavyweight miners. Antofagasta and Glencore lost 92p, or 4.3 per cent, to £20.67 and 10¼p, or 2.2 per cent, to 465½p, respectively, as metals prices came under pressure from, among other things, a weaker yuan, which reduced the purchasing power of Chinese buyers. Rio Tinto shed 106p, or 2 per cent, to £52.51. Hikma Pharmaceuticals was among a dozen larger stocks that did manage to breathe some life into the FTSE 100, with shares in the drugs maker rising by 43p, or 2.2 per cent, to £19.73. That was thanks to

analysts at Citigroup, who moved their estimates to the top end of previous forecasts, saying they were pleased with recent medical research data showing healthy trends for injectables and American generics. Elsewhere, Woodside Energy's announcement that it had achieved "first oil" at its Sangomar field in Senegal translated into good things for Scotland's Capricorn Energy, which sold its stake in Sangomar to Woodside in 2020. Capricorn's shares jumped 15p, or 8.8 per cent, to 186½p after it said that it expected to receive a contingent payment of up to \$50 million. On Aim, investors in Coral Products cheered and sent shares in the maker of bespoke plastic products up half a penny, or 4.2 per cent, to a near-four-month high of 12½p after it said it would reinstate dividends. BP Marsh & Partners, a private equity investor, advanced 21p, or 4.4 per cent, to 496p on the back of doubling its dividend.


London Grain Futures					
LIFFE Wheat (close £/t)					
Jul	172.00	Nov	210.00	Jan	unq
Mar	unq	May	212.15	Volume:	853
London Metal Exchange					
(Official)					
Cash	3mth			Dec 22	
Copper Gde A (\$/tonne)					
9566.5-9567.0	9698.0-9700.0			9825.0-9835.0	
Lead (\$/tonne)					
2122.0-2122.5	2179.0-2180.0			2240.0-2245.0	
Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$/tonne)					
2725.0-2727.0	2770.0-2770.5			2797.0-2802.0	
Alum Hi Gde (\$/tonne)					
2474.5-2475.0	2533.0-2534.0			2658.0-2663.0	
Nickel (\$/tonne)					
17625.0-17650.0	17850.0-17855.0			18870.0-18920.0	
Tin (\$/tonne)				15mth	
31650.0-31750.0	31950.0-32000.0			31685.0-31735.0	

Gold/Precious metals (US dollars per ounce)									
Because of a technical issue, the gold fix prices are from Monday									
Bullion: Open \$2309.88									
Close \$2307.16-2307.39 High \$2319.68									
Low \$2298.08									
AM \$2297.65 PM \$2304.40									
Platinum (\$/£)									
Silver \$29.14 (£22.91)									
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 4.25 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	8.8071-8.8593	8.8369-8.8383	153ds	429ds					
Euro	1.1879-1.1810	1.1849-1.1848	11pr	32pr					
Montreal	1.7494-1.7558	1.7516-1.7517	9ds	28ds					
New York	1.2707-1.2749	1.2719-1.2720	2pr	7pr					
Oslo	13.528-13.658	13.641-13.646	86ds	231ds					
Stockholm	13.308-13.398	13.364-13.368	214ds	630ds					
Tokyo	199.66-200.38	200.16-200.18	97ds	266ds					
Zurich	1.1393-1.1439	1.1428-1.1432	40ds	114ds					
					Premium = pr				
					Discount = ds				

Dollar rates	
Australia	1.5163-1.5164
Canada	1.3772-1.3773
Denmark	6.9481-6.9487
Euro	0.9315-0.9316
Hong Kong	7.8119-7.8124
Japan	157.37-157.38
Malaysia	4.7170-4.7220
Norway	10.725-10.728
Singapore	1.3541-1.3542
Sweden	10.507-10.510
Switzerland	0.8986-0.8987
Other Sterling	
Argentina peso	1147.5-1147.5
Australia dollar	1.9285-1.9288
Bahrain dinar	0.4760-0.4831
Brazil real	6.8199-6.8237
Euro	1.1848-1.1849
Hong Kong dollar	9.9357-9.9367
India rupee	106.37-106.37
Indonesia rupiah	20741-20748
Kuwait dinar KD	0.3890-0.3914
Malaysia ringgit	6.0042-6.0093
New Zealand dollar	2.0742-2.0747
Singapore dollar	1.7222-1.7225
S Africa rand	23.694-23.707
U A E dirham	4.6704-4.6710

Exchange rates			
	Bid	Change	
Australia \$	1.927		
Canada \$	1.751		
Denmark Kr	8.843	+0.01	
Euro	1.185		
Hong Kong \$	9.930	-0.01	
Hungary	468.190	+2.24	
Indonesia	20707.013	+2.97	
Israel Shk	4.714	-0.05	
Japan Yen	199.996	+0.45	
New Zealand \$	2.075	-0.01	
Norway Kr	13.645	+0.05	
Poland	5.142	+0.02	
Russia	113.323	+0.04	
S Africa Rd	23.769	-0.10	
Sweden Kr	13.370	-0.01	
Switzerland Fr	1.143		
Turkey Lira	41.137	-0.11	
USA \$	1.271		
Rates supplied by Morningstar			



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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 Unfortunately, due to a technical problem with our data provider, the 12-month highs and lows are currently inaccurate.

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E	

Automobiles & parts

395%	1%	Aston Martin Lag	152%	-	3%	-4.1
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Banking & finance

1920	136%	Abdn	148%	-	1%	9.7	...
720	3%	Acuity RM	4	-0.4
2801	1%	Admiral	2563	-	94	2.7	23.1
23%	1%	ADVF	12%	...	...	...	-3.1
403	249	AI Bell	372%	+	1	3.1	22.5
2702%	21594%	Aon Corp	22990%	+	423%	...	22.7
1105	87	Arbutnot Bldg	942%	-	20	4.8	4.2
144%	4	Argo Group	4%	...	...	...	2.0
230	6	Ashmore	180	-	4	9.1	12.4
1552%	1181	Asa New Z	1500	-	14	...	12.8
497	128%	Aviva	468%	-	1%	7.1	12.5
413%	101%	Banco Santander	391%	+	3	3.9	6.8
5380	87%	Bank of Georgia	3640	-	40	7.2	4.1
220	2%	Barclays	209	-	5%	3.7	8.0
282%	...	Blue Star Capital	...	...	...	...	-0.2
512%	226	BP Marsh&Ptns	496	+	21	1.4	13.6
202	4%	Brexitheart UK	5%	...	...	...	2.3
...	...	Brexit Dolphin	51%	+	1	...	28.1
1403	163%	Bridgepoint	209%	-	1%	4.1	32.2
210	24%	Ceasus Sec	29	...	...	...	5.9
286	1%	Chesna	247%	-	2%	9.5	20.1
...	...	City of Lon Gp	...	...	...	...	-0.6
...	...	City Lon Inv Gp	359	-	4	9.0	12.4
976%	157%	Close Bros	446%	-	7%	9.9	4.7
284	2%	CNC Markets	259	-	5%	1.8	70.0
1340%	77%	Commerz&Bk	1251%	-	42%	...	8.8
1418%	773%	Deutsche Bk	1248%	-	40%	...	5.1
2338	133%	Direct Line Ins	199	-	8	1.9	12.6

Investment companies

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld	Div	% or Pm

2995	1837%	31 Group	2970	+	23	2.8	40.6
349	276%	3i Infrastructure	328	-	5	3.3	-7.9
1554%	1126	Aberforth Smrl	1500	-	22	3.2	-12.8
1264	978	Alliance	1180	-	6	1.9	-3.4
417%	323	Asia Dragon Tr	399	+	2	1.5	-16.1
210	160	Athelney Trust	180	...	...	...	5.0
250%	185	AVI Global Trust	239	-	1%	1.4	-10.2
243	175	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	202	-	2	0.8	-10.8
101%	75%	BaillieGifford Eu Gr	97%	-	1%	2.3	-14.6
802	633	Baillie Gifford Jntr	725	-	5	1.1	-32.7
150%	104%	Baillie Gifford SN	112%	+	1	...	-16.3
177%	141%	Baillie Gifford UK Gr	172%	+	1%	1.9	-15.1
84%	60	Bal Comm Prop	76%	-	2%	4.6	-27.7
117%	91%	Bankers Inv Trst	110%	-	1%	2.0	-10.8
399	325%	BH Macro	355	+	1	...	-13.5
1048	75%	Biotech Growth	969	+	7	...	-5.2
127	104	BlackRock Com Inc	119	-	1%	3.4	-10.8
159%	131%	BlackRock Furo	148	+	1%	3.8	-8.1
65%	457%	BlackRock Grt Euro	621	-	5	1.0	-5.6
208	170	BlackRock Inc & Gwth	203	...	...	...	3.5
1520	1146	BlackRock Smrl	1456	-	16	2.7	-11.7
207	172%	BlackRock Sustain Amer	193	-	1	3.5	-10.1
643	503	BlackRock Throgment	618	-	4	2.2	-10.3
644	490	BlackRock Wild Mtn	548	-	12	5.9	-4.3
1360	1065	Brown Adv US sm	1255	+	5	...	-11.9
1365%	964	Brunner	1305	-	5	1.6	-4.9
3700	2593%	Caledonia Inv	3480	-	10	1.2	-35.4
429%	371%	City of Lon IT	415	-	4%	4.9	-2.2
95	60	Crystal Amber F	89	...	...	...	22.6
516	406	CT Priv Eq Ord	466	...	...	...	3.9
96	72	CT Property	77%	-	1%	1.1	-14.5
360	266%	CT UK Caplnk	328	-	2	3.6	-3.5
89	75	CT UK HT F	87%	...	...	...	-8.7
95%	71	CT UK HT	92%	+	1%	5.9	-4.9
590	448%	Dunedin Ent	510	+	12%	5.7	-32.3
746	612%	Edinburgh IT	720	-	6	3.6	-9.5
157%	120%	Elton Wivide	142%	+	1%	...	-11.7
326%	273%	EP Global Opp	301%	...	...	...	1.3
92%	7%	European Assets	90%	-	1%	5.6	-10.7
917%	740%	European Opp Trust	892	-	6	0.3	-10.6
1058	825%	F&C Invest Tr	992	+	1	1.3	-10.8
549%	473%	Fidelity Asian Val	518	-	4	2.6	-9.6
246	146%	Fidelity China Sp	218%	-	1	2.7	-10.9
740%	568	FidelityEmergMkt	677%	-	3%	2.0	-11.9
412%	311%	Fidelity European Trust395	3	-	2.0	-4.9	...
187	151	Fidelity Gap Tru	172%	...	...	...	-10.5
316	252	Fidelity Spec Val	301%	-	1%	2.8	-9.5
920	788%	Fins Gwth & Inc	838	-	1	2.0	-7.4
84%	59%	GCP Infrastructure	77%	+	1%	6.3	-35.8
38%	22%	Gdn Prosp Prc Mln	33%	...	...	...	-18.7
152%	127%	Greenoat UK Wind	134	-	1%	6.3	-16.9
230	170	Hansa Investment	216	+	2	0.8	-43.2
221	168%	Hansa Inv Co 'A'	203	-	3	0.8	-45.9
2490	205%	Hlvest GIL Pl Et	2405	+	30	...	-42.8
176	149	Hend Euro Foc	187	-	1%	2.1	-11.7
177	136	Hend High Inc	160	-	1	6.0	-8.2
902	626	Hend Smrl	859	-	7	2.9	-14.4
2230	1590	Herald	2135	-	20	...	-12.4
504	348%	HighCap Trust	47%	-	1%	1.3	-4.6
150%	111	HICI Infra	119%	-	1%	5.2	-22.6
...	...	Highbridge Tactical	...	...	...	...	6.1
1276	1046	IGC Ent Tr	1232	+	44	1.6	-38.7
421%	331%	Implex Env Mkts	393	-	1	1.0	-11.0
349	283	Invesco Asia Tr	320	-	3	4.2	-12.3

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E	

9424	232	Lond Stk Ex Gp	9342	-	58	1.2	67.6
1182	183	M&G	199%	-	3%	9.7	16.1
277%	12%	Man	254%	-	1%	5.0	16.7
326%	15	Manx Fin	18%	...	...	2.4	5.2
142	1	Marechale Cap	1%	+	1%	...	-3.6
796	97%	Mattoli Woods	790	-	1	3.4	41.1
40%	9	Metal Tiger	9	+	1%	...	-2.0
125%	30%	Metro Bank	36%	-	1%	...	2.7
1828%	1310%	Nat Aust Bk	1809%	-	18%	...	15.9
326%	13%	NatWest	303%	-	7	5.4	6.5
343	57	Numis	343	...	...	...	...
528	45%	OneSavings Bank	451%	-	2%	7.0	6.9
576	88	PayPoint	566	+	8	3.4	13.2
...	...	PCF Group	...	+	1%	...	-0.4
563%	88%	Phoenix	484%	-	4%	10.7	...
1136	608	Prudential	709%	-	11%	2.2	14.6
3	1/2	Quantum Blockchain	1/2	-	1%	...	-2.5
376%	71%	Quilter	117%	-	1%	4.3	37.8
43%	1%	Randall & Quilbe	1%	+	1%	...	...
199%	...	Rathbone Grp	1718	-	18	5.0	33.8
1/2	...	Riverfort Global Opp	1/2	...	...	1.6	-1.8
274%	29%	Rockwood Strategic	274	...	...	7.0	...
2480	69	S & U	189%	-	25	6.7	7.0
110%	1%	Sancus Lending Grp	1%	-	...	...	...
46%	...	Schroder REIT	45%	+	1 1/2	...	-4.1
464%	6%	Schroders	372%	-	8%	5.6	15.4
...	...	St James Place	508	-	5%	4.6	...
785%	7%	Stand Chart	721%	-	32	2.8	8.1
65%	4%	Starvest	11%	+	1%	...	-1.9
227	25%	STM Group	57%	...	...	1.0	59.2

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E	

1024	290	Billington Hldgs	510	-	20	3.7	6.4
240	1%	Boot (Henry)	205	-	2	3.5	10.6
403	3%	BREEDON	385	-	3	3.4	12.4
444%	1/2	Br Land	423%	-	6%	5.2	-3.6
160	19%	Caledonian Tst	95	...	...	...	...
5050	49%	Cap & Regnl	60	...	...	9.5	...
2450	55%	Cardiff Prop	2300	...	...	0.9	20.2
1286	1%	Carecapital	1%	...	...	...	-0.2
479	118%	Clarke T	160	+	1%	3.7	11.6
...	...	Countryside Partner	229%	+	14	...	16.7
18837%	11%	Gaven House	15%	...	...	...	-4.1
2402	1779	Derwent London	2296	-	26	3.4	-5.4
24%	3%	Dolphin Capital	4%	...	...	...	-4.9
27	15%	First Prop	19%	...	...	...	...
115	33	Fletcher King	45	...	...	1.6	20.6
71	18	Foxtons Group	67%	-	1	1.3	39.5
1008	185%	Galliford Try	238	-	10	4.6	17.2
474%	1%	Genuit Group	436%	-	5%	2.8	28.3
580	350	Glenview (MJ)	560	...	...	2.3	19.2
1023	1%	Grafton	965	-	10%	3.6	11.1
274%	41%	Grainger	233%	-	6	2.8	66.7
416	162%	Great Portland	335%	-	10%	3.4	-2.5
159	20%	Hammons	27%	-	1%	5.3	...
145	13%	Harworth Gp	145	+	4	1.0	12.6
580	27%	Heath (Samuel)	275	...	...	4.3	8.1
2368	187%	Helical	214%	-	1%	5.4	-1.5
890	192%	Highcroft Ins	587%	-	12%	...	-2.5
694	120%	Ibstock	151%	-	4%	4.4	28.5
225	76	James Halstead	188	+	3%	4.4	17.5
1376	2%	Kelleri	1210	-	22	3.6	10.0

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E	

38%	1%	SG	26%	-	1%	...	-7.0
98%	45	SigmaRoc	66%	...	...	...	35.0
100%	41%	Sirius Real Estate	96%	-	1%	5.2	32.0
168%	...	Smart (J)	125	...	...	2.5	...
435%	17	Steppe Cement	18%	...	...	...	6.5
151%	99%	Taylor Wimpey	148%	-	1%	6.4	14.9
401	110	Town Centre	152%	...	...	3.2	6.0
914%	712%	Travis Perkins	820	-	15	2.1	46.0
170%	1%	Tritax Big Box Reit	152	-	4%	...	40.8
62%	31	Tritax Eurobox	58	-	1%	...	...
3872	236	Tyman	356	-	3%	3.8	18.2
1057	104	Unite	882%	-	27%	3.8	35.8
1310	380	Vistry Group	1239	-	16	19.4	...
380	69%	Warehouse REIT	80%	-	1%	...	-2.9
604	84	Workspace Grp	554	-	11	4.6	-4.7
730	228%	Wynnstay Props	675	...	...	...	...

Consumer goods

3%	1	Agilitero	1%	...	-0.1
34%	3	Aleas	31%	...	1.7 15.8
820	1	Anglo-Eastern	76%	-	2 1.7 7.2
246	34%	Animakare	246	...	1.7 ...
2738	190	AB Foods	2517	-	29 2.1 16.2
147	1	Bakkarov Group	140%	-	1/2 5.1 15.2
32%	82%	Barr (AG)	60%	-	2 2.4 17.6
1%	1	BldStack Group	1%	...	...
213%	21	Brand Architects	31	+	1/2 -1.5
2735	7	Brit Amer Tob	2388	-	14 9.6 -3.6
1018	52	Britvic	966	+	1/2 3.3 20.1
2289	52%	Burberry	1009%	-	10 6.1 8.4
176%	4%	C&C Grp	154	-	4 1.0 -9.2
5%	1	Capital Metals	4	-	...
51%	21%	Catali	146%	+	4 1/2 5.3 ...
340	1/2	Character Grp	327	...	5.8 18.2
495	80	Churchill China	1100	...	3.2 14.7
340	175	Coca Cola HBC	2708	+	8 2.9 18.0
855	450	Colefax	855	+	5 0.6 9.9
146%	134%	Cranwick	4265	-	20 1.9 18.1
...	...	Devro	329	...	...
457	136%	Diageo	2944%	-	12 1/2 11 17.6
1/2	1/2	Distile	1/2	...	-5.9
874	1%	Evans (MPL)	850	+	2 5.3 11.1
245	19	Finsbury Food	110	+	1/2 -1.3
700	259%	Games Workshop	9720	-	15 4.3 22.9
992%	1114	Glanbia	1574%	+	66% 2.0 15.2
354	68%	Greencore	168%	-	2 23.4
275	152	Headlam	152	+	2 6.6 15.5
942	41	Hilton Food	861	+	10 3.7 21.4
920%	14%	Hornby	272	...	-4.2
77%	1%	Imperial Brands	19	-	2 7.4 7.8
7%	1	J Lewis Hford	11%	+	1/2 -
908%	27%	Kerry Grp	618%	-	25.3 1.4 18.0
128	25%	McRidie	141%	+	1/2 11.7

Equity prices **Business**

12 month					Price					12 month					Price					12 month					Price					12 month					Price																								
High	Low	Company			(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E			High	Low	Company			(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E			High	Low	Company			(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E			High	Low	Company			(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E																		
501	---	MediClinic	501	+	1/2	---	---	31.3			39%	1/2	Bonhill Group	1/2	+	1/2	---	-1.5					939%	64%	DRD Gold	64%	+	1/2	---	-7.5			376%	7%	Shuka Minerals	7%	+	1/2	---	-1.3			225	11	Roebuck Food Grp	14	---	---	-8.1			1644%	1056%	LG Electronics	1258%	+	102%	2.0	10.7
181%	1/2	N4 Pharma	1/2	---	---	---	---	-1.0			157%	65	Catalyst Media	80	+	2 1/2	34.8	5.4					1%	1/2	ECR Minerals	1/2	---	-1.8			12%	1/2	Sound Energy	1/2	---	-1.2			221	1%	RPS Group	221	-	1	---	---		309%	1%	Location Sciences	1/2	+	134%	---					
75%	5 1/2	NOIX Group	68%	-	1/2	1.4	32.5				124%	1/2	Catena	1/2	---	-0.2							135%	31%	Equity	41	---	---			189%	---	Surrise Resources	1/2	---	-5.7			839%	106%	RS Group	708%	+	7	31	14.2			50%	15%	Manoco	17%	-	1/2	3.8				
95.41	79.21	Novartis	CHF94.08	-	0.22	---	23.6				120%	1/2	DCD Media	100	-	30	---	5.0						122%	18	RTC Group	122%	---	---	4.4	9.6			122%	18	RWS Hldgs	167%	---	1/2	7.2	---			393%	71%	Metal	87	---	---	0.9	27.6								
3%	2	Omnia Diags	2%	---	---	-1.6					1141	27	Future	1050	-	58	0.3	11.1						193%	40%	Smiths News	59%	---	---	7.4	5.9			468	108	Science Group	435	-	10	1.1	20.0			46	1/2	Northamber	42	---	---	1.4	---								
335	1/2	Oveca Bio	1/2	---	---	-0.3					238	3%	GlobalData	223%	+	1/2	2.0	58.8						187%	22%	Serco	172%	-	1/2	1.9	9.6			187%	22%	Serco	172%	-	1/2	1.9	9.6			34%	7%	Online Blockchain	15%	+	2%	---	-2.0								
470	11	Oxford Biomedica	325%	-	1	---	-2.3				120%	1/2	Hyve Group	120%	---	---	---	---						193%	40%	Smiths News	59%	---	---	7.4	5.9			3882	26%	Smurfit Kappa	3590	-	32	3.6	14.2			119	2%	Odor Metrics	99	-	14	2.4	22.9								
15%	3%	Physiomics	1%	---	---	-3.3					221	67%	IG Design Grp	215	+	13	-9.6							1282	8%	Software Clinic plc	19	+	1%	---	-7.0			775	22%	Staffline	38%	---	---	4.3	---			40%	25%	Pennant Intl	26	---	---	---									
33%	2%	Proteome Scies	4	-	1/2	-4.8					263	59%	ITV	77%	-	1	6.3	14.8						439%	32%	SThree	420	-	7	3.8	10.1			193	54%	Synectics	176	-	1.7	13.7			457	115	QinetiQ	454%	+	1/2	1.7	35.5									
6226	201	Reckitt Benckiser	388	-	32	4.3	14.1				886	1%	Live Company Grp	1%	---	-0.1								960	37%	Trabion	53%	-	1/2	1.2	22.2			379	63%	Vianco	113	+	6	0.4	---			1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7								
44	8%	RUA Life Sciences	10%	-	1/2	-1.2					182%	124%	ME Group	169%	+	7%	4.5	12.7						379	63%	Vianco	113	+	6	0.4	---			3%	1	Westminster	2%	---	---	-5.2			6	1%	Seeing Machines	4%	-	1/2	-5.2										
135	1%	Sareum Hldgs	39	-	2	-4.2					172%	---	Mediaset	---	---	-1.5								960	37%	Trabion	53%	-	1/2	1.2	22.2			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
1268	4	Smith & Neph	1008%	-	18%	2.9	42.7				50	1%	Mission Group	24	---	6.9	-1.9							1715	100	Softcat	1713	+	10	1.5	30.5			954	33%	Smartspace S'ware	90	---	---	-9.4			954	33%	Smartspace S'ware	90	---	---	-9.4										
266	207	Spire Hcare	245	-	2	1.0	37.1				283%	152%	Moneysupermarket	221%	-	5%	5.3	16.4						1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
178%	4%	Synalgen	6%	---	---	-1.2					2183%	1468%	News Corp A	2147%	+	6%	---	68.4						1715	100	Softcat	1713	+	10	1.5	30.5			954	33%	Smartspace S'ware	90	---	---	-9.4			954	33%	Smartspace S'ware	90	---	---	-9.4										
336	49	Tissot Regenix	66%	-	2	---	---				2231%	1487%	News Corp B	2190%	+	1%	---	69.8						1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
20	1/2	Totally	8%	-	1/2	1.4	---				1036	1/2	Next 15 Group	950	-	16	1.5	36.9						1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
485	57%	Tristat	44%	+	10	3.0	35.5				1025	4%	Pearson	947%	-	6%	2.3	17.9						1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
39	1%	ValRoi	2%	---	---	-1.0					149%	84%	Gulf Keystone	141%	-	4%	---							1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											188	70%	Hochschild	176%	-	5	---							1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											172	1/2	Horizonte Minr	1/2	---	-0.1								1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											446	73%	Hunting PLC	412	-	5	1.9	7.5						1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											45%	---	Independ Res	---	---	---	---							1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											1764	7%	Indus Gas	11%	-	1/2	0.8							1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											145%	---	Ironvold	---	---	-4.9								1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											5075	49%	ITM Power	52	-	2%	-5.0							1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
											1870	4%	Jubilee Metals	7%	---	15.8								1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									
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											1%	1%	KEFI Gold and Copper	1/2	---	-3.7								1039	859%	Sage	1039%	-	7%	1.8	50.7			438	17%	ZIGUP plc	412%	-	6%	5.9	7.2			3726	35	Shearwater Grp	42%	-	1/2	-1.3									

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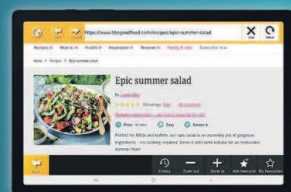
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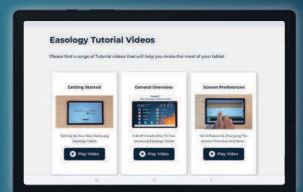
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Actor best known for
the 1970s TV series *Hazzell*
Nicholas Ball
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Register

Obituaries

James Lawson

Civil rights leader and Methodist minister who preached non-violent protest and became Martin Luther King Jr's chief strategist

In 1938, when James Lawson was a ten-year-old growing up in Ohio, a white boy shouted a racial slur at him from a parked car. Lawson hit the boy, went home and proudly told his family what he had done.

Lawson's mother reprimanded him. "What good did that do, Jimmy?" she asked. "What harm does that stupid insult do? It's nothing, Jimmy, it's empty. Just ignorant words from an ignorant child who is gone from your life the moment it was said."

Lawson took the reproach to heart. He vowed to find a "better way", and he became a lifelong pacifist and champion of non-violence.

He was imprisoned as a conscientious objector for refusing to serve in the Korean War. He spent three years in India studying the principles of civil disobedience and passive resistance that Mahatma Gandhi had so successfully deployed against British colonial rule. Back in the US, he became Martin Luther King's chief strategist during the great civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

At a time when many in the US's oppressed black population were agitating for more militant and confrontational tactics, Lawson persuaded a generation of activists that a dignified acceptance of beatings, jailings and other humiliations was a much more powerful way of stirring the nation's conscience and winning public support.

He organised workshops and led sit-ins, freedom rides, boycotts, strikes, voter registration drives and other forms of peaceful protest. He was jailed on several occasions and expelled from university. King called him one of the "noble men" of the civil rights movement, as well as "the greatest teacher of non-violence in America".

In 1968, King came to Memphis, Tennessee, to support a strike by sanitation workers that Lawson had organised. On April 3, the charismatic preacher delivered his famous "mountaintop" speech, in which he described his dream of equality but warned: "I may not get there with you." The next day he was shot dead in the city's Lorraine Motel.

In the ultimate act of forgiveness, Lawson later visited, befriended and ministered to James Earl Ray, King's assassin, and even officiated at his prison wedding in 1978. "As one of my sons said to me, 'If you believe all that stuff you've been preaching, you'll do it,'" he explained.

James Morris Lawson was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, in 1928. He was the sixth of nine children of an itinerant Methodist minister, also named James, who carried a gun for his own protection when he travelled in the south. His paternal grandfather had also been a minister and his great-grandfather was a slave in Maryland who had escaped to Canada. His Jamaican-born mother, Philane, was a seamstress.

Lawson grew up in Massillon, Ohio,



Lawson with King, who called him one of the "noble men" of the civil rights movement, in 1968. Right, at an impromptu press conference in Alabama in 1961 before a Freedom Ride. Below, in Los Angeles in 2013

and staged his first protest while still at high school — a sit-in at a restaurant that refused to serve black people. The owner served him but demanded he never return.

He enrolled to study sociology at Baldwin Wallace College in Beria, Ohio. Drafted to serve in the Korean War, he refused either to join the military or to seek the deferment to which he was entitled as a student. He spent 13 months in prison. After belatedly graduating, he moved to the Indian city of Nagpur as a Methodist missionary for three years and studied *satyagraha*, the philosophy of non-violent resistance to oppression developed by Gandhi to oppose British rule.

He returned to the US as the civil rights movement was gathering momentum in 1956. He enrolled in the graduate theology school at Oberlin College, Ohio, and met King when he came to speak on the campus. Both men were 28.

King, impressed by Lawson's advocacy of non-violence, urged him to move to the segregated south: "Don't wait. Come now. We don't have anyone like you down there." Lawson did so, joining Vanderbilt University's divinity school

in Nashville, Tennessee, as one of its few black students in 1958.

There he met his future wife, Dorothy Wood, with whom he had three sons. There, too, he co-founded the Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee, a key component of the civil rights movement, and organised workshops for young, black civil rights activists on behalf of King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

He did not mince his words. He warned volunteers to expect beatings, floggings and broken bones. Using role-

"There was something of a mystic about him ... the man was a born teacher"

playing techniques, he taught them how to dress smartly for protests and be courteous; how to withstand the verbal abuse and physical violence of segregationists; what to do if beaten and imprisoned by racist police; and how to post observers, summon ambulances and plan escape routes. He also taught them to forgive their enemies.

"I felt he was God-sent," said John Lewis, the future congressman who was one of many up and coming civil rights leaders instructed by Lawson. "There was something of a mystic about him, something holy, so gathered about his



manner. The man was a born teacher."

The first key test of Lawson's approach came in 1960, when hundreds of black students launched a campaign of sit-ins in segregated shops, restaurants and other public places across Nashville. Scores were arrested.

The protests ultimately succeeded and were copied throughout the south, but Lawson was expelled from Vanderbilt and obliged to complete his master's degree in theology at Boston University in Massachusetts. His expulsion made the front page of *The New York Times*, prompted several Vanderbilt professors to resign and triggered widespread protests.

In 1961 Lawson led a second group of Freedom Riders (civil rights activists challenging illegal segregation on interstate buses) after the first group was savagely attacked by mobs in Alabama.

That May he and 26 supporters took a bus from Montgomery, Alabama, to Jackson, Mississippi, where they entered the "whites only" waiting room at the terminal and were immediately arrested. They refused bail and were

convicted and fined \$200 each, but they refused to pay and spent weeks in jail. Meanwhile, the Freedom Rides gathered momentum and the Kennedy administration finally moved to enforce desegregation on interstate buses and trains.

In *The Children*, his history of the civil rights movement, David Halberstam described an incident when a white leather-jacketed motorcyclist spat on Lawson during a protest. Lawson asked him for a handkerchief. His astonished assailant gave him one. Lawson wiped himself clean, then engaged the man in a conversation about motorbikes.

"In that split second of confrontation," Halberstam wrote, "Jim Lawson had not only conquered his ego, he had forced his enemy in some basic way to try and see him as a man."

In 1962, Lawson was appointed pastor of Centenary Methodist Church in Memphis, but he continued his activism. In 1965, he was one of many protesters demanding black voting rights who were brutally beaten by Alabama state troopers at Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge as they sought to march to Montgomery. The day became known as Bloody Sunday.

Three years later he organised the weeks-long strike by sanitation workers in Memphis. He felt no regret about inviting King to support it despite his subsequent assassination. "Martin expected his death," he told *The New York Times*. "I don't know if he specifically expected it on that day, but he had known since Montgomery [the 1955 march] that he could be shot down at any time."

By the early 1970s the civil rights movement had largely succeeded in ending segregation in the south and in 1974 Lawson moved to Los Angeles to become pastor of the huge, predominantly black Holman United Methodist Church.

There he continued his fight for various forms of social justice. He hosted a weekly radio programme, was active in the labour and civil liberties movements, championed gay, abortion and union rights, opposed wars and defended immigrants.

Lawson was arrested at several protests, including a rally against US aid to El Salvador's right-wing government in 1989. In 2000, he joined a multidominational delegation to Saddam Hussein's Iraq to demand an end to international sanctions.

Lawson retired as Holman's pastor in 1999, having led the church for 25 years, but after nearly half a century fighting injustice one more job awaited him.

In 2006, he was invited to return to Vanderbilt, which had expelled him 46 years earlier, as a visiting professor. He accepted, saying he bore the university no grudge, and even agreed to bequeath it his papers. He began his first lecture by asking: "How many of you have experienced a hate crime against yourself? Let's see the hands."

James Lawson, American civil rights leader, was born on September 22, 1928. He died of a cardiac arrest on June 9, 2024, aged 95

Nicholas Ball

Actor whose performance as the wisecracking Cockney detective Jim Hazell turned him into a television star overnight

When Nicholas Ball heard that Thames Television was making a series about a wisecracking, Cockney ex-cop turned private detective called Jim Hazell, he approached the programme's producer June Roberts and asked her: "Why aren't I up for it?"

His demand took some brass neck for, at the time, Ball was an unknown actor in his early thirties who had trained at the Bristol Old Vic and had little television experience. Yet such chutzpah was exactly what the character required and so Roberts invited him to a screen test. A long list of 50 hopefuls were auditioned and then whittled down to four before Ball was chosen over John Nettles, who was left to wait another three years for his breakthrough part in *Bergerac*.

When *Hazell* went on air in 1978, the series turned Ball into an overnight star for his portrayal of the private eye who dropped his aitches in lines such as: "I've got a wad of cash 'ere that could choke a washing machine." Framed within a set of smart and knowing references to American film noir, it made him sound like an East End version of Philip Marlowe.

Hazell was soon attracting audiences of 20 million, Ball bringing a winning combination of toughness, cheek and vulnerability to his portrayal of the character who had been created in a series of books by the novelist Gordon Williams and the footballer Terry Venables (obituary, November 26, 2023). Hiding behind the nom de plume of PB Yuill, it was the Dagenham-born Venables who was largely responsible for the authenticity of the Cockney slang that was Jim Hazell's *lingua franca*.

With his big collars, leather safari jacket, flares and bouffant hair à la Rod Stewart, Ball captured the 1970s zeitgeist to period perfection, although oddly, despite garnering some of the biggest audience figures of the decade, *Hazell* has been seen less often on rerun channels than many of its contemporaries.

Perhaps it has suffered because the

violence was more restrained and less brutal than *The Sweeney*, there was no sex or bad language and not even a car chase in the Triumph Stag, Hazell's pride and joy. The series was also constrained by being shot in the studio rather than on the mean streets of London. "You can't go down dark alleys in studios — you find the studio wall," Ball noted ruefully.

However, the lack of high-speed action only emphasised his performance as the ducking and diving wide boy who had been kicked off the police force for turning to drink when his marriage broke up, and who continued to butt heads with Detective Inspector "Choc" Minty, played by Roddy McDillan in his final role before his death.

One episode also featured a cameo appearance by Pamela Stephenson, recently arrived from Australia and whom Ball had just married.

After his wife left him for Billy Connolly, his career went into decline

Hazell ran for 22 hour-long episodes between 1978 and 1979, and Ball's portrayal of the tough guy with attitude but a heart of gold became the template for Dennis Waterman's Terry McCann in *Minder*, which would replace the series in ITV schedules.

After *Hazell*, Stephenson left her husband for Billy Connolly, and Ball emigrated to the US, a move which seemed to stall his career. Indeed, seldom can an actor have gone so swiftly from household name to obscurity. "I went to Los Angeles for a month, but I kept falling in love over there and stayed for four years," Ball explained. "I thought, 'it's November, I could go back home and go down the old Kent Road on a cold and miserable day. Or I could go for lunch in Malibu!'"

While in Hollywood one of his few roles came on stage rather than screen



With big collars, flares and bouffant hair, Ball captured the 1970s zeitgeist to perfection

when he appeared in a production of Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter*, directed by Mel Smith. Back in Britain he teamed up again with Smith in a 1984 episode of *Alas Smith and Jones*, in which the pair reprised the spirit of Jim Hazell in a sketch about Cockney rhyming slang, making up phrases such as "he's done a concrete trampoline on me".

There was further bad luck when he appeared in the 1985 sci-fi horror movie

Lifeforce. Having spent 15 weeks filming, he was understandably crestfallen when he saw the final cut and found he was on screen for barely ten minutes.

In later years he made a creditable comeback on British television and in 2005 delivered a piquant performance in *Footballers' Wives* as the amoral and larger than life ex-rock star turned club chairman Garry Ryan. "He was a complete rat, firing people and sleeping

with other men's wives. But he was great fun to play," Ball said.

Still dropping his aitches, he caused mayhem on Albert Square in *East-Enders* between 2007 and 2009 as the vicious gang boss Terry Bates who attacked Peggy Mitchell, played by Barbara Windsor, while smashing up the Queen Vic pub. He was eventually written out of the soap when his character was sentenced to life for the murder of Jase Dyer, played by Stephen Lord, who had resisted his attempts to get him to join his "firm".

He is survived by his wife Ayda. John Nicholas Ball was born in 1946 in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. He wanted to act from an early age and, on leaving school, applied to the Bristol Old Vic's drama school. When he was turned down, he refused to take no for an answer. "I gave them an argument all summer, and finally they said, 'Oh, all right then, you'd better come along,'" he claimed.

While still a student he landed small parts in the 1960s television dramas *The Queen's Traitor* and *The Gold Robbers* and on graduating he joined the Portable Theatre Company, launched by the playwright David Hare in 1968. He went on to appear in early plays by the likes of Howard Brenton and David Edgar, and credited the experience as the ultimate education in live theatre. "We would do everything, book the venues, build the set, hire the transport and then take it out on the road," he recalled.

In later years, when television work was in short supply, he returned to the repertory stage but despite a widely held view that the success of *Hazell* could and probably should have led to so much more, he refused to bemoan his lot. "You make choices and some of them are the wrong ones," he said. "But you should never have regrets."

Nicholas Ball, actor, was born on April 11, 1946. He died after a short illness on June 5, 2024, aged 78

Sue Johnson

Psychologist known for her research into emotional attachment and bestselling books explaining the mystery of love

Sue Johnson's belief in the power of love may well have been construed as the fluffy stuff of the flower power era — except, she said, she had the evidence to prove it.

"Love is not just a sentimentality or a myth or, for adults, some sort of mixture of sexuality and sentimentality," she explained. "It is an ancient wired-in survival code that is designed to keep a few people you totally trust, and depend on, close to you."

The idea first came to her when she began counselling couples in the 1980s. "I was instantly mesmerised by the intensity of their struggles and the way they often spoke of their relationships in terms of life and death," she said. "It was far harder to work with them than families and children; they didn't want to be reasonable or negotiate and there was little literature to turn to."

She began to tape her therapy sessions and replay them over and over again to spot the pattern. "As I watched couples shout and weep, bicker and shut down," she recalled, "I began to understand that there were key negative and positive emotional moments that defined a relationship."

With the help of her thesis supervisor, Les Greenberg, she developed a counselling method called Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) in which she encouraged her clients to forget about learning to "fight better" but rather to

admit that they are dependent on their partner in the same way a child is to its mother. In this she was heavily influenced by the work of John Bowlby, a British psychiatrist and the "father of attachment theory", who studied traumatised children orphaned or separated from their parents during the Second World War.

After a research project, which found that her couples argued less once they had the therapy, Johnson published her first article, *Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy: An Outcome Study*.

There were naysayers. In the 1980s and 90s, the field of clinical psychology was dominated by the behavioural approach (the idea that behaviours are learnt and can therefore be changed) and generally averse to using emotions as a springboard for analysis.

Humans, Johnson claimed, are neurologically wired to be attached to their partners and social separation sends our nervous system into alarm. We are our "best selves" when in a relationship because we take risks, have self-belief and deal with prob-

lems better. Open relationships are overrated. Monogamy yields the best sex. "We are like fish in the ocean and the ocean we swim in are our close relationships," she said. "If you take a fish out of the ocean, or if you have an ocean that has no oxygen in it — no safety in it — then the fish start to look very strange indeed."

After several decades more research, in which EFT went global and made her into something of a modern love guru, Johnson published *Love Sense: The Revolutionary New Science of Romantic Relationships* (2013). It was as much an academic study as it was a how-to guide for couples navigating the storms of marital life; it showed its readers how to develop their "love sense".

Johnson's interest in "cracking the code of love", as she put it, began in childhood. She was born Susan Maureen Driver in 1947 in Kent, where her father Arthur and mother Winifred ran a pub called the Royal Marine. She spent hours "watching people meeting, talking, drinking, bawling, dancing, flirting" but her focal point was her parents' disintegrating marriage.

They divorced when she was ten and she vowed she would never marry.

"Romantic love was, I decided, an illusion and a trap."

In time she decided to unpick "the mystery of love". After completing her undergraduate degree at the University

of Hull she moved to Canada, aged 22, to take up a master's, then a doctorate, in counselling psychology at the University of British Columbia. Her first article, *Bonds or Bargains*, published in 1987, argued that psychologists had pathologised dependency. It was widely critiqued but in the subsequent decades her theories gained international acclaim.

After the success of EFT she was hired by the University of Ottawa to teach in its department of psychology and in 1998 founded the Ottawa Couple and Family Institute with her husband, John Douglas. He survives her along with their children Sarah, Tim and Emma. (She was briefly married in the 1970s and kept her first husband's surname.)

Even after her decades of research there were still sceptics. She could point to the statistic that nearly 75 per cent of couples who went through EFT report-

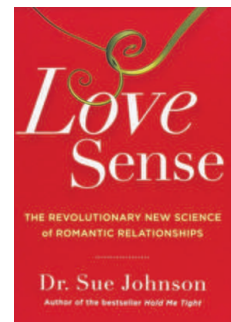
ed being happier in their relationships. Her book *Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love* (2008) sold millions of copies and was translated into 30 languages.

According to one friend, Johnson was rarely still. "She was reading, working in her garden, writing, talking with people, walking the dogs, painting birds on pieces of driftwood at the cottage."

A favourite pastime was the tango — she liked to use it as a metaphor for couples therapy ("Argentine tango is like the chess of social dancing. It is very difficult and yet strangers can move with this incredible synchrony together").

"My teacher, who was not big on empathy, said something like, 'Why do you want to learn tango? You're uncoordinated, you don't have any balance, you're not 22. This is going to be very difficult for you.' And I said, 'Well then, shut up and start teaching me.'"

Sue Johnson, psychologist, was born on December 19, 1947. She died of a rare form of melanoma on April 23, 2024, aged 76



Court Circular

**Buckingham Palace**

11th June, 2024
The King this morning received representatives of the Artificial Intelligence Community.
His Majesty later received a Briefing from Constitutional Experts.
The King, Royal Founding President, this evening held a Reception at St James's Palace for The King's Foundation Awards.

Kensington Palace

11th June, 2024
The Prince of Wales, President, the Earthshot Prize, this afternoon met representatives of the United Kingdom and Australian seaweed industry at Cardiff Metropolitan University, Llandaff Campus, Western Avenue, Cardiff, and was received by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of South Glamorgan (Mrs Morfudd Meredith).
His Royal Highness subsequently visited the Zero2Five Food Industry Centre, Cardiff Metropolitan University, Llandaff Campus.

St James's Palace

11th June, 2024
The Duchess of Edinburgh this

afternoon departed from Heathrow Airport, London, for Germany.
Her Royal Highness, Royal Colonel, The Queen's Own Yeomanry, this evening attended a Dinner at Normandy Barracks, Paderborn, with The Queen's Own Yeomanry, 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment and The Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Mr Alexander Stonor and Captain Paige Welsh are in attendance.

St James's Palace

11th June, 2024
The Princess Royal this morning opened Mercator Media Limited's Twenty Fifth Anniversary Seawork Marine Exhibition at Mayflower Park, Southampton, and was received by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire (Mr Nigel Atkinson).
Her Royal Highness, Patron, British Nutrition Foundation, this afternoon visited the British Armed Forces Nutrition Programme at The Royal Logistic Corps Regimental Museum, Connaught Road, Kings Worthy, Worthy Down, Winchester, and was received by Lieutenant General Sir Mark Mans (Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire).
The Princess Royal, Patron, Farms for City Children, and Past Master, Worshipful Company of Butchers, later attended a Festival of Learning at Butchers' Hall, 87 Bartholomew Close, London EC1.

The Princess Royal, Royal Fellow, the Royal Academy of Engineering, accompanied by Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence, this evening attended The

Prince Philip Fund Commemoration Dinner at Prince Philip House, 3 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1, and was received by Colonel Jane Davis (Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London).

Kensington Palace

11th June, 2024
The Duke of Gloucester this morning visited Thame Community Shed, Kingsley Road, Thame, and was received by Mr Brian Buchan (Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire).
His Royal Highness afterwards visited Thame War Memorial, Upper High Street, Thame, and was received by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire (Mrs Marjorie Glasgow).
The Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior, the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, this afternoon visited Wellford Gardens Care Home, Park Hill, Wheatley, Oxfordshire.
His Royal Highness later visited Oxford Photovoltaics Limited, Unit 7-8 Oxford Pioneer Park, Mead Road, Yarnton, Oxfordshire.

St James's Palace

11th June, 2024
The Duke of Kent, President, Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, this morning attended the Council (Advisory) Board Meeting at 67 Portland Place, London W1.
His Royal Highness, Grand Master, United Grand Lodge of England, this afternoon received Mr Jonathan Spence (Pro Grand Master) at Kensington Palace.

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

HAPPY are your people! Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom! 2 Chronicles 9:7 (NRSV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

MEADOWS on 5th June 2024 to Jessica (née Tortorici) and Richard, a son, Henry Santo Cooper. Jessica and I proudly announce the birth of our son, Henry born at 10.09am at Northern Westchester Hospital, New York, US. Weighing in at a healthy 7lb 3oz.

SCOTT on 23rd April 2024 to Amy (née Gledhill) and James, a daughter, Etta Anne.

Deaths

CHAPMAN Janet Gibbeson (née Taylor) died peacefully on 3rd June 2024, aged 85. Devoted wife of the late Roy, mother of William, Lucy and Henry. Funeral service to be held on Tuesday 18th June. Inquiries to W Uden Funeral Directors, 020 8300 2002.

CHRISTIE Phoebe (née Robertson) on 3rd June 2024, aged 86. Much-loved wife of Martin for 62 years, and loving mother to Richard and Edward, and Granny to Rebecca, Charlotte, Victoria, Olivia and Sam, and Great-Granny to Laurie. Funeral Service at 1.45pm on Tuesday 2nd July at St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring. Family flowers only please but donations in her memory, if desired, to Save the Children.

FARMER Christina Diana died on 30th May 2024. Beloved wife of the late Colonel Michael Farmer, mother of Christian, grandmother of James and William. Funeral service to be held on 28th June at 10.30am at Trinity Church, Sissinghurst. No flowers but donations to Hospice in the Weald.

MACKINNON Jean Margaret (née Chalk) passed away on Friday 31st May 2024, aged 98. Dearly beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Jean will be sadly missed by all who knew her. Funeral to be held at West Suffolk Crematorium, Bury St Edmunds, in the Abbey Chapel on Thursday 27th June at 2.30pm.

ROBERTS Jennifer Mary DBE (née Halden, the Hon Mrs Justice Roberts) died peacefully on 10th June after a short illness. Widow of Richard, devoted mother to Melanie and Sophie, as well as much-loved granny, sister, niece, aunt and friend. There will be a private family funeral with a memorial service to follow in due course after the summer. No flowers please but any donations to the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, Fulham Road, London, SW3 6JJ.

DE ROUGE MONT Peter Henry died peacefully on 7th June 2024, aged 93, in Alderney, Channel Islands. Dearly loved husband, father and stepfather, grandfather and great-grandfather.

SOCKETT Ann Margaret (née Hopkins) died peacefully on 5th June 2024, aged 82, at her home in Virginia. Beloved wife of Hugh, mother to Victoria and Nicholas, and stepmother to Justin and Jonathan.

THORNTON Brian Maurice on 2nd June 2024, aged 87. Peacefully at home on Sunday 2nd June, having commented on his life, the day before he died: "It's been marvellous." Beloved husband of 65 years of Verity, father of Guy, Kim, Ben, Giles, Jo and Sam, grandfather of Tom, Tara, Tilly, Mia, Atalanta, Anna, Ella, Marcus, Lily, Joshua and Freddie, great-grandfather of Otto, Oscar and Milo. Private funeral. Thanksgiving service on Friday 6th September at 2pm at Gloucester Cathedral. Donations to St Michael's Hospice, Hereford.

WHITESIDES Dr Keith MBE MPhil LL.D, latterly of Dingley, Northamptonshire, passed away peacefully at home on 26th May 2024, aged 80. Funeral service at All Saints' Church, Dingley, on Friday 21st June at 1pm. All inquiries to J Stamp & Sons, Market Harborough, LE16 8AN, 01858 462 524 www.jstampandsons.co.uk

ZILKHA

Judith Diana (née Mogridge) on 25th May 2024, aged 89. Adored wife of Kevin, beloved mother to Tim, Caroline and Jonathan. Much-loved grandmother and great-grandmother. Service of thanksgiving to be held in July.

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(1) Coral Edwina Musgrave
(2) Peter John Robinson (as executor of the estate of the late Stanley William Authers)
Defendant
Konrad Erik Molver
IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION FOR A DECLARATION OF RELIEF OF ANY OBLIGATION TO OBTAIN CONSENT OF, OR TO CONSULT KONRAD ERIK MOLVER IN CONNECTION WITH A SALE OF 9 CONWAY AVENUE, QUINTON, BIRMINGHAM, B32 1DR ("THE PROPERTY"), PURSUANT TO SECTION 14(2)(A) OF THE TRUSTS OF LAND AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES ACT 1996

A claim has been issued in the County Court at Birmingham, in connection with the sale of the Property. The claim seeks a declaration from the Court that the Property is held on trust for the Claimants, Konrad Erik Molver, and for relief of any obligation to obtain the consent of, or to consult with, Konrad Erik Molver in connection with the sale of the Property pursuant to Section 14(2)(a) of the Trusts of Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996. Any person having an interest in the Property, and particularly, Konrad Erik Molver, may apply to the Court to intervene in the matter. If you wish to apply to the Court, you should do so at County Court at Birmingham. Civil Justice Centre, The Priory Courts, 33 Bull Street, Birmingham. B4 6DS as soon as possible, and if possible, within 21 days of the date of this notice. Delay may harm your prospects of being able to intervene.

First Claimant's Legal Representative
Shakespeare Martineau LLP
60 Gracechurch Street,
London, EC3V 0HR
0207 264 4444
Reference: 2514150.1.VJ

THE TIMES

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

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Legal Notices

CR-2024-002491
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS AND PROPERTY
COURTS
OF ENGLAND AND WALES
COMPANIES COURT (CHD)
INSOLVENCY AND COMPANIES
COURT JUDGE PRENTIS
IN THE MATTER OF TYMAN PLC
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE
COMPANIES ACT 2006

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that by an Order dated 4 June 2024 made in the above matters the Court has given permission for a meeting (the "Court Meeting") to be convened of the holders of the Scheme Shares (as defined in the Scheme of Arrangement, as defined below) for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, approving (with or without modification) a scheme of arrangement proposed to be made pursuant to Part 26 of the Companies Act 2006 (the "Companies Act") between Tyman plc (the "Company") and the holders of the Scheme Shares (the "Scheme of Arrangement"), and that the Court Meeting shall be held at 2.30 p.m. on 12 July 2024 at the offices of Latham & Watkins at 99 Bishopsgate, London, EC2M 3XF, United Kingdom, at which place and time all holders of the Scheme Shares are requested to attend.

A Scheme Shareholder entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy. To be valid, a form of proxy, together with the original of any power of attorney under which it is signed (or a copy thereof duly certified in accordance with the Powers of Attorney Act 1971 by, for example, a solicitor) must be completed and received by Link Group by post or by hand (during normal business hours) at PXSL, Central Square, 29 Wellington Street, Leeds, LS1 4DL, by electronic proxy appointment, or in the case of shares held in uncertificated form through CREST via the CREST electronic proxy appointment service, in each case no later than 2.30 p.m. on 10 July 2024 or, if the Court Meeting is adjourned, not later than 48 hours (excluding any part of such 48 hours period falling on a non business day) before the time fixed for the adjourned Court Meeting. If the form of proxy is not so lodged, or is submitted electronically, it may be handed to a representative of Link Group or the chair of the Court Meeting before the start of the Court Meeting.

To be entitled to attend and vote at the Court Meeting and for the purposes of determining the number of votes they may cast, shareholders must be entered on the Company's register of members at 6.00pm on 10 July 2024 or, in the event that the Court Meeting is adjourned, at 6.00pm on the day which is two days (excluding non-working days) before the day of any adjourned meeting. Changes to the register of members after 6.00pm on 10 July 2024 or, in the event that the meeting is adjourned, after 6.00pm two days (excluding non-working days) prior to the date of any adjourned meeting, shall be disregarded in determining the rights of any person to attend or vote at the meeting.

A copy of the Scheme of Arrangement, proxy forms and the explanatory statement required to be furnished pursuant to section 897 of the Companies Act are available on the Company's website (<https://www.tymanplc.com/investor-relations>). The Scheme of Arrangement shall be subject to the subsequent sanction of the Court.

Dated 12 June 2024

Latham & Watkins (London) LLP

99 Bishopsgate

London EC2M 3XF

Tel: +44.20.7710.1000

Solicitors for the Company

THE TIMES

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This Lotus Climax had a tubular monocoque chassis, ultra-lightweight glass fibre body, and the engine was in the rear, behind the driver! Chapman turned Formula One of his day on its head with revolutionary designs that endure to this day.

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This model has steering wheel, wing mirrors, windshield and real rubber tyres

The agile, wasp like Lotus with its disc brakes, superb handling was able to corner at speeds that were previously believed impossible.



Jim Clark - the greatest driver of his generation

In 1960 the softly spoken, farmer's son from the Scottish Borders formed a partnership with the Lotus Team design genius - Colin Chapman - that roared them into the record books.

Clark's Lotus stole the 1963 Formula One championship from beneath the noses of the powerful European teams. Had his engine not blown at the finishing line in the final race, he would have retained his championship the following year too. In 1965, Clark returned to become world champion and his place in history was secured.

Corgi Toys were at their zenith too - a world-beater in their own right - creating diecast models in their Swansea factory that thrilled generations of children. They did the victorious car

proud by issuing it in its 1964 British Racing Green livery, with Jim Clark at the wheel and that all important No.1 adornment reserved for champions.

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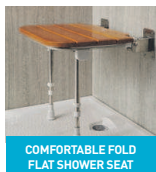
EASY USE TEMPERATURE
CONTROLLED TAPS



SAFE ACCESS LOW LEVEL
ENTRY & EXIT



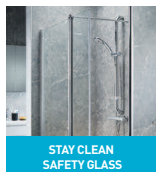
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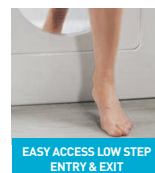
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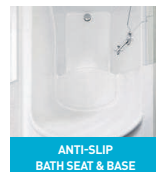
EASY USE TEMPERATURE
CONTROLLED TAPS



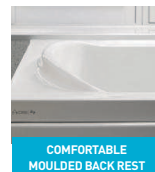
EASY ACCESS LOW STEP
ENTRY & EXIT



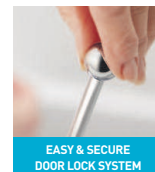
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20 NIGHTS DEPARTING 11TH JANUARY 2026

JANUARY 2026

Sun 11	Fly overnight from London to Benoa, Bali, Indonesia	Sat 17	Celukan Bawang, Bali, Indonesia
Mon 12	Benoa, Bali, Indonesia Upon arrival, transfer to a 4★ hotel† for your three night stay including breakfast	Tue 20	Kuala Lumpur (from Port Klang), Malaysia
Tue 13 -	Benoa, Bali, Indonesia	Wed 21 -	Penang, Malaysia (arrive late am -
Wed 14	Spend the days exploring as your wish. Book a Concierge Class stateroom or above and enjoy an Exclusive Free Ubud Nature excursion* . Visit Tohpati, the BATIK center, Celuk Village for Gold & Silver Smiths, Mas Village for Woodcarving, and Butan Village for Paintings. Proceed to visit one of the most famous Waterfalls in Ubud, Tegenungan Waterfall (B)	Thu 22	overnight - depart late night)
Thu 15	Benoa, Bali, Indonesia After breakfast, transfer to the port and embark the award-winning 5★ Celebrity Millennium® for your 12 night all-inclusive luxury voyage to Singapore (B)	Fri 23	Langkawi, Malaysia
Fri 16	Lombok, Indonesia	Sat 24 -	Phuket, Thailand (overnight)
		Sun 25	
		Tue 27	Singapore Disembark and transfer to a 4★ hotel† for your three night stay, including breakfast
		Wed 28 -	Singapore
		Thu 29	Spend the days exploring as your wish. Book a Concierge Class stateroom or above and enjoy Exclusive Free tickets to Gardens by the Bay* (B)
		Fri 30	Singapore After Breakfast, transfer to the airport for your overnight flight to London
		Sat 31	Arrive in London

Dates not mentioned are spent relaxing at sea. Meals are included as stated: B=Breakfast. All meals are included on the cruise element.

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Today Bright periods and showers in the east, mainly dry with sunny intervals elsewhere. Max 18C (64F), min 3C (37F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy, du=dull, f=fog, 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	9	D	3.4
Aberporth	12	C	1.6
Anglesey	13	C	1.0
Aviemore	9	R	1.8
Barnstaple	14	PC	0.0
Belfast	11	C	1.0
Birmingham	13	C	0.4
Bournemouth	16	C	0.0
Bridlington	12	PC	4.0
Bristol	14	C	0.0
Cambridge	14	S	0.0
Cardiff	14	D	0.0
Edinburgh	12	C	0.0
Exeter	11	C	0.6
Glasgow	14	S	0.0
Hereford	14	PC	0.0
Herstmonceux	14	C	0.0
Ipswich	12	R	1.4
Isle of Man	13	PC	0.0
Isle of Wight	16	PC	0.0
Jersey	15	PC	0.0
Kewick	12	C	5.2
Kinloss	11	R	0.8
Leeds	11	C	1.6
Lerwick	8	C	1.6
Leuchars	13	C	0.0
Lincoln	13	C	2.0
Liverpool	13	PC	1.2
London	15	PC	0.0
Lyneham	13	C	0.0
Manchester	13	C	0.0
Margate	13	C	0.0
Milford Haven	14	PC	0.0
Newcastle	11	C	3.0
Nottingham	13	C	0.0
Orkney	9	D	0.6
Oxford	13	C	0.6
Plymouth	15	C	0.0
Portland	14	C	0.0
Scilly, St Mary's	15	S	0.0
Shoreham	14	C	0.4
Shrewsbury	12	C	3.2
Snowdonia	10	D	2.2
Southend	15	PC	0.2
South Uist	9	C	0.8
Stornoway	9	C	0.4
Tiree	12	PC	0.0
Whitehaven	11	C	2.6
Wick	8	D	1.8
Yeoilton	15	C	0.0

The world

All readings local midday yesterday

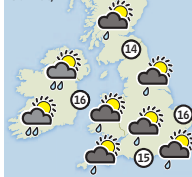
Alicante	24	PC	Madrid	22	B
Amsterdam	12	SH	Malaga	22	S
Alphen	35	S	Mallorca	20	T
Auckland	12	C	Malta	28	S
Bahrein	42	S	Melbourne	15	SH
Bangkok	33	PC	Mexico City	26	T
Barbados	31	B	Miami	26	T
Barcelona	20	B	Milan	24	B
Beijing	33	S	Mombasa	29	B
Beirut	28	PC	Montreal	16	DU
Belgrade	22	PC	Moscow	25	PC
Berlin	14	PC	Mumbai	31	S
Bermuda	28	B	Munich	13	PC
Bordeaux	21	B	Naples	22	B
Brussels	14	PC	New Orleans	32	S
Bucharest	32	S	New York	23	B
Budapest	23	PC	Nice	24	PC
Buenos Aires	18	S	Nicosia	31	PC
Cairo	33	S	Oslo	16	SH
Calcutta	35	PC	Paris	12	PC
Canberra	9	S	Perth	19	SH
Cape Town	24	S	Prague	15	PC
Chicago	19	PC	Riyadh	44	S
Copenhagen	13	R	Rome	26	PC
Corfu	29	S	San Francisco	18	PC
Delhi	42	S	Santiago	11	B
Dubai	43	S	Sao Paulo	25	S
Dublin	13	B	Seoul	26	PC
Faro	23	PC	Seychelles	28	PC
Florence	27	PC	Singapore	33	B
Frankfurt	17	S	Stockholm	16	B
Geneva	17	SH	Sydney	15	S
Gibraltar	24	PC	Taipei	31	S
Helsinki	17	PC	Tenerife	24	B
Hong Kong	32	PC	Tokyo	28	PC
Honolulu	29	PC	Vancouver	17	PC
Istanbul	30	S	Venice	21	PC
Jerusalem	31	S	Vienna	20	PC
Johannesburg	13	S	Warsaw	22	B
Kuala Lumpur	32	PC	Washington	27	B
Kyiv	18	S	Zurich	13	R
Lanzarote	24	B			
Las Palmas	24	B			
Lima	16	M			
Lisbon	22	PC			
Los Angeles	21	PC			
Luxor	40	S			

Five days ahead

An unsettled period with bright intervals and frequent outbreaks of rain and showers

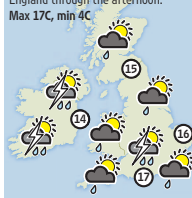
Tomorrow

A band of thick cloud and rain will move eastwards throughout the day, heaviest across Ireland through the morning and western Britain later. Max 16C, min 7C



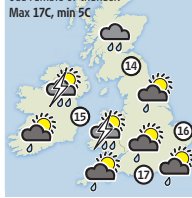
Friday

Bright intervals and spells of rain and showers, heaviest in Wales and central England through the afternoon. Max 17C, min 4C



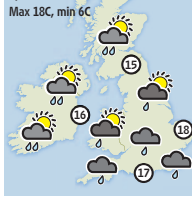
Saturday

A day of bright spells and showery outbreaks of rain, heaviest in Wales and Northern Ireland later with the odd rumble of thunder. Max 17C, min 5C



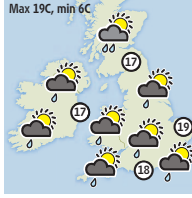
Sunday

Bright periods and widespread outbreaks of rain and showers, heaviest across Ireland and Scotland by the afternoon. Max 18C, min 6C



Monday

Bright spells and one or two showers across southern England. Patchy cloud and showery rain elsewhere, heaviest in the north. Max 19C, min 6C



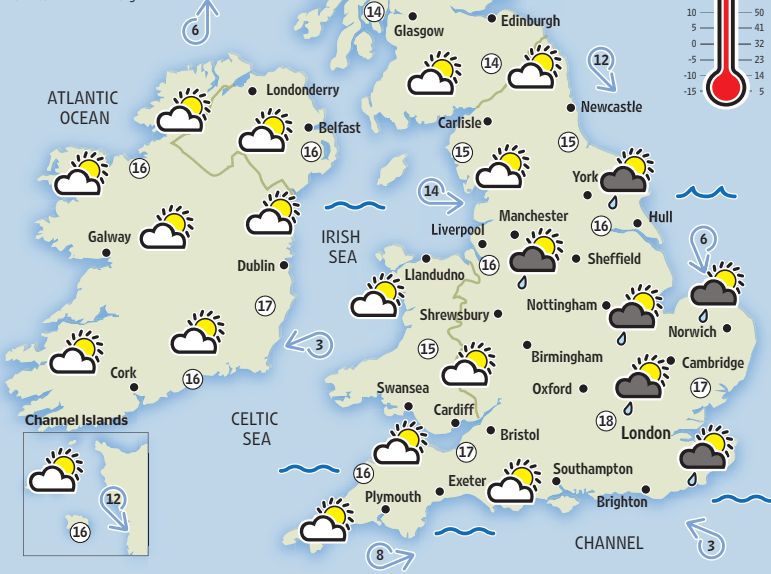
The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest

Wind speed
34 (mph)
Temperature
28 (degrees C)

Sea state
Calm
Slight
Moderate
Rough

Flood alerts and warnings

At 17:00 on Tuesday there were nine flood alerts and no warnings in England and no flood alerts or warnings in Wales and Scotland. For further information and updates in England visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk



General situation: A dry day with some sunshine in the north and west, cloudy with a few showers in the east.

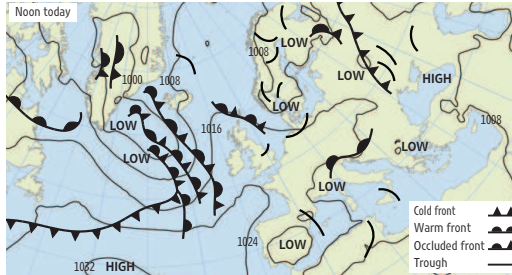
NE Scotland, Moray Firth, Aberdeen, N Isles: A day of bright periods and patchy rain, most widespread through the morning. Light to moderate west to northwesterly winds. Maximum 13C (55F), minimum 5C (41F).
Lake District, NW Eng, W Mids, Wales, Cen S, SW Eng, S Eng, Iolo, Channel Is: Mostly dry with sunny spells and the odd isolated showers through the morning. Light to moderate west to northwesterly winds. Maximum 17C (63F), minimum 4C (39F).

London, E Anglia, SE Eng, Cen N Eng, E Mids, E Eng: A day of bright intervals and scattered showers, heaviest and most frequent through the afternoon. Light and variable winds, perhaps moderate in places. Maximum 18C (64F), minimum 6C (43F).
Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: A largely dry day with sunny intervals and a chance of one or two isolated showers in the northeast through the morning. Light to moderate west to southwesterly winds. Maximum 17C (63F), minimum 7C (45F).

Edinburgh and Dundee, Cen Highland, NW Scotland, Glasgow, SW Scotland, Borders, Argyll, NE Eng: Mainly dry with bright intervals and perhaps the odd shower through the morning. Dry with some sunshine by the afternoon. Light west to northwesterly winds, moderate over high ground. Maximum 15C (59F), minimum 3C (37F).

Tides

Tidal predictions, Heights in metres		HT	HT
Today			
Aberdeen	05:58	3.7	18:49
Avonmouth	11:50	10.7	--
Belfast	03:44	3.4	16:23
Cardiff	11:39	9.9	23:54
Devonport	10:23	4.5	22:24
Dover	03:44	5.8	16:04
Dublin	04:08	3.7	16:52
Falmouth	09:51	4.2	22:04
Greenock	04:36	3.3	17:42
Harwich	04:19	2.6	16:26
Holyhead	02:50	5.0	15:28
Hull	10:41	6.4	23:31
Leith	07:24	4.8	19:56
Liverpool	03:32	8.2	16:03
London Bridge	06:26	6.3	18:32
Lowestoft	02:37	2.1	14:07
Milford Haven	11:00	5.6	23:18
Morcambe	03:44	8.1	16:15
Norwich	03:32	5.7	16:03
Newquay	09:55	5.6	22:13
Oban	10:28	3.0	22:36
Penzance	09:24	4.5	21:45
Portsmouth	03:56	4.1	16:44
Shoreham	03:40	5.3	16:15
Southampton	02:56	3.9	15:34
Swansea	11:04	7.7	23:22
Tees	08:16	4.9	21:04
Weymouth	11:20	1.5	23:29



Synoptic situation

An occluded front to the northeast of Britain will bring bright periods and some patchy rain to northeast Scotland throughout the day, most widespread in the morning. A trough will bring bright intervals and scattered showers across southeast England, heaviest and most frequent by the afternoon. Largely dry elsewhere with some sunshine.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday
Warmest: Wiggonholt, West Sussex, 17.2C
Coldest: Cairngorm, -2.1C
Wettest: Blencathra, Cumbria, 7.6mm
Sunniest: Aberdaron, 12.6hrs*

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 04:42
Sun sets: 21:17
Moon rises: 10:45
Moon sets: 01:14
First Quarter: June 14

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	22:33-03:42
Belfast	22:29-04:17
Birmingham	22:00-04:14
Cardiff	22:00-04:25
Exeter	21:57-04:30
Glasgow	22:32-04:01
Liverpool	22:10-04:13
London	21:47-04:12
Manchester	22:07-04:09
Newcastle	22:15-03:57
Norwich	21:48-04:00
Penzance	22:02-04:41
Sheffield	22:04-04:07

Weather Eye
Paul Simons



It is hard to believe this is June. Temperatures across the UK have sunk well below normal in cool breezy winds sweeping down from the Arctic, feeling more like early spring than the start of summer, with Benson in Oxfordshire unusually cool, 3C colder than normal so far this month.

If it was any consolation, June was largely dry for several days over many places, some relief after months of rain. But now it is turning wetter once more in rushes of showers, some of them heavy downpours, and the outlook remains unsettled. It feels reminiscent of typical old-fashioned British summers: cold, wet and breezy.

"As for the weather, that will never clear up: eternal rain, clouds and chill," wrote the aristocrat and diarist John Byng in August 1787. And in July 1777, Horace Walpole, son of the prime minister Sir Robert, gave an even more downbeat assessment: "We are in truth but Greenlanders and ought to conform to our climate."

As for our prospects this month, there isn't much sign of anything hot. The jet stream has been diving to the south, exposing us to cold northerly air, but this Thursday the winds change direction as low pressure from the Atlantic returns and temperatures rise slightly, although heavy rains and showers into the weekend will make it feel cool.

And yet summers have been warming rapidly in recent years so any cool spell is a brief blip in the recent climate. Indeed, there are signs of rising temperatures in the long-range outlook from European forecast centres, with warming conditions across Europe, and especially hot and dry in southern parts of the continent. One driving force behind this prediction is abnormally high sea surface temperatures, not just this summer but over the next few months. In fact, most oceans around the world are expected to be warmer than normal, with the exception of the Southern Ocean, and the return of La Niña conditions are also expected to cool temperatures across equatorial parts of the Pacific.

Speak directly to one of our forecasters on 09065 777675

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Sport

McIlroy: I'll eclipse Seve and Faldo

US Open
Tom Kershaw Pinehurst

Scottie Scheffler has often credited divine inspiration for his outstanding form, but Rory McIlroy is hoping to harness his own “come-to-Jesus” moment at Pinehurst this week.

The US Open seemed an unlikely source of salvation after three consecutive missed cuts from 2016 to 2018, but the Northern Irishman said an epiphany followed the last of those humiliations at Shinnecock Hills, where he opened with a brutal round of 80.

“Honestly, it was about embracing what I would have called ‘boring’ back in the day,” McIlroy said. “Explosiveness isn’t going to win the US Open. It’s more about methodically building your score over the course of four days and being OK with that. It was a reframing of the mindset more than anything.”

McIlroy has not finished outside the top ten at this tournament since then but must still rue the lacklustre fashion in which Wyndham Clark pipped him to victory at LA Country Club last year. Pinehurst No2 suits the 35-year-old’s belated affinity for firm and fast layouts, with so many severe run-offs to the slick tortoise-shell-shaped greens.

A tied-15th finish at Memorial last week, where McIlroy closed with a four-over-par 76, was not authoritative evidence of impending catharsis, but the world No3 was decidedly upbeat about his chances of winning a first major since 2014. “Obviously getting my hands on a fifth major has taken quite a while, but I’m more confident than ever that I’m right there, that I’m as close as I’ve ever been,” he said.

McIlroy has had to handle the same questions about the failure to add to his four major titles over the past decade with increasing regularity, but he treated that exhausting cycle with equal measures of ambition and perspective here. “I’m really proud of my body of work over the past 15 years and every-

Most major championships won by Europeans
(Country, winning span)

Harry Vardon (Jersey, 1896-1914)	7
Nick Faldo (England, 1987-1996)	6
Seve Ballesteros (Spain, 1979-1988)	5
John Henry Taylor (England, 1894-1913)	5
James Braid (Scotland, 1901-1910)	5
Rory McIlroy (Northern Ireland, 2011-2014)	4
Jim Barnes (England, 1916-1925)	4
Willie Anderson (Scotland, 1901-1905)	4
Willie Park Sr. (Scotland, 1860-1875)	4
Tom Morris Jr. (Scotland, 1868-1872)	4
Tom Morris Sr. (Scotland, 1861-1867)	4



McIlroy feels he has another ten years at the top

thing that I have achieved, whether it be season-long titles or individual tournaments or majors,” he said.

“I’ve always said I still feel like being the most successful European in the game is within my reach. I’ve got obviously Seve [Ballesteros, five] and Nick Faldo [six] to pass there in terms of major wins.

“The only thing about trying to pick a number is that you’re setting yourself up for failure or disappointment. Tiger [Woods] wanted to surpass Jack [Nick-



How’s my stroke, son? Charlie Woods gives his dad Tiger a helping hand on the tricky, speedy greens at Pinehurst yesterday as he prepares for the US Open

laus’s 18 major wins]. It looks like he mightn’t get there, but are we going to call Tiger’s career a failure? Absolutely not. He’s played arguably the best golf anyone’s ever seen.

“There’s always going to be that tinge of what could have been. I don’t want to do that to myself. If someone would have told me at 20 years old I’d be sitting here at 35 and this is the career I’ve had, I would not have believed them and I would have been ecstatic.

“I still have a good bit of time, hopefully the next ten years. Whatever those numbers are, whatever the totals add up to, I’ll accept that and feel like I’ve done pretty well for a little boy from Northern Ireland that dreamt of playing golf for a living.”

If he is to end his drought this week, McIlroy must overcome an obstacle almost as imposing as his own mental burdens in the form of Scheffler, whose fifth victory of the year last week at Memorial added to the sense of inevitability that the world No1 will dominate

here, having fallen short at last month’s US PGA Championship after his brush with the law. The charges, after his arrest outside Valhalla for assaulting a police officer, were later dropped.

“The only thing that stopped him from winning a golf tournament was going into a jail cell for an hour,” said McIlroy, who has been paired with Scheffler and the US PGA champion, Xander Schauffele. “The word that I use to describe him is ‘relentless’. It seems like every time he shows up, he is the guy to beat, and deservedly so.”

Jon Rahm, the 2021 US Open champion, was still not sure last night whether he would be fit to play this week. The Spaniard was forced to withdraw from last week’s LIV event in Houston and has not practised since arriving at Pinehurst because a cut on his foot became infected.

“The infection is now controlled, but there’s still swelling and there’s still pain,” Rahm, 29, said. “There’s a reason I walked out here in a flip-flop.”

US Open first round tee times

US unless stated, all times BST
Starting at first hole denotes amateur
11.45am C Jenkins, L McAllister, M McGowan
11.56 *P Bell, F Kjettrup (Den), C Petefish
12.07pm M Greyserman, C Jarvis (SA),
*O Morales (Mex)
12.18 C Connors (Can), E Grillo (Arg),
S Jaeger (Ger)
12.29 S Garcia (Sp), R Ishikawa (Japan),
F Molinari (It)
12.40 B Koepka, C Morikawa, J Thomas
12.51 R Fowler, A Hadwin (Can), P Mickelson
1.02 N Hojgaard (Den), Min-Woo Lee (Aus),
S Theegala
1.13 Sung-Jae Im (S Kor), Si-Woo Kim (S Kor),
M Pavon (Fr)
1.24 N Echavarria (Col), R Rock (Eng),
*N Shipley
1.35 *S Hagestad, T Kanaya (Japan),
M Meissner
1.46 J Herman, *B Kim, I Salinda
1.57 *C Prater, C Reiter, C Schaake
5.30 B Thompson (Eng), J Scrivener (Aus),
*B Valdes
5.41 S Bairstow (Eng), *S De la Fuente (Mex),
E Lopez-Chacarra (Sp)
5.52 C Beuzidenhout (SA), K Kitayama,
T Moore
6.03 J Day (Aus), H English, Joo-Hyung Kim
(S Kor)
6.14 R McIlroy (N Ire), X Schauffele,
S Scheffler
6.25 W Clark, N Dunlap, B Harman
6.36 H Matsuyama (Japan), J Rahm (Sp),
J Spieth
6.47 K Bradley, M Kaymer (Ger), S Lowry
(Ire)
6.58 A Bhatia, E Cole, E van Rooyen (SA)
7.09 A Noren (Swe), T Pendrith (Can), B Todd
7.20 *J Buchanan, B Campbell, T Detry (Bel)
7.31 *G Broin, M Moldovan, T Shimizu
(Japan)
7.42 J Chin, Sung-Hoon Kang (S Kor),
R Kawamoto (Japan)

Starting at hole 10
11.45 R Hevy (Phil), M Manassero (It),
T McKibbin (N Ire)
11.56 D Burmester (SA), R Hoshino (Japan),
S Power (Ire)
12.07 Seong-Hyeon Kim (S Kor), J Lower,
T Widing (Swe)
12.18 S Burns, L Glover, C Smith (Aus)
12.29 M Fitzpatrick (Eng), T Woods,
W Zalatoris
12.40 P Cantlay, R Henley, M Kuchar
12.51 L Aberg (Swe), T Finau, D Johnson
1.02 J Rose (Eng), W Simpson, G Woodland
1.13 D Berger, R Fox (NZ), D Puig (Sp)
1.24 Byeong-Hun An (S Kor), S Bennett, E
Molinari (It)
1.35 C Davis (Aus), A Eckroat, A Meronk (Pol)
1.46 Z Blair, A Rai (Eng), D Thompson
1.57 W Mack III, R Mansell (Eng),
*A McCulloch (Can)
5.30 G Forrest (Scot), G Sigg, *W Williams
5.41 C Hadley, M Hubbard, A Svensson (Can)
5.52 B Hossler, V Perez (Fr), A Schenk
6.03 M Hughes (Can), R MacIntyre (Scot),
N Taylor (Can)
6.14 T Fleetwood (Eng), T Hatton (Eng),
T Hoge
6.25 B DeChambeau, M Homa, V Hovland
(Nor)
6.36 P Malnati, J. T. Poston, S Straka (Aut)
6.47 J Knapp, *G Sargent, C Young
6.58 B Horschel, C Kirk, A Scott (Aus)
7.09 *B James, B Kohles, D McCarthy
7.20 F Capan, *L Clanton, A Svoboda
7.31 H Higgs, *H Tai (Singapore), B Wu
7.42 O Black, C Naegel, J Vrzich

Results

Football

International friendlies

N Ireland (2) 2 Andorra (0) 0
Bradley 16, 22
Portugal (1) 3 Ireland (0) 0
Felix 18
Ronaldo 50, 60
Azerbaijan 3 Kazakhstan 2; Belarus 0 Israel 4;
Greece 2 Malta 0; Moldova 0 Ukraine 4; San
Marino 1 Cyprus 4.

Athletics

European Championships
Rome: Men’s 400m hurdles final
1, K Warholm (Nor) 46.98sec; 2, A Sibilio (It)
47.40; 3, C Bengtsson (Swe) 47.94.
Women’s 400m hurdles final
1, F Bol (Neth) 52.49sec; 2, L Maraval (Fr)
54.23; 3, C Peeters (Neth) 54.37. Other 7, L
Nielsen (GB) 55.65.
Women’s 10,000m final
1, N Battocletti (It) 30mins 51.32sec (NR); 2,
D van Es (Neth) 30:57.34; 3, M Keith (GB)
31:04.77. Others DNF, E McColgan (GB); J
Warner-Judd (GB).
Men’s triple jump final
1, J Diaz Fortun (Sp) 18.18m (CR); 2, P Pichardo
(Por) 18.04m (NR); 3, T Gogols (Fr)
17.38m.

Cricket

ICC Men’s T20 World Cup: Group A
Pakistan v Canada
New York (Pakistan won toss and elected to
bat): Pakistan (2pts) beat Canada (0pts) by
seven wickets
Canada (balls) 52 (44)
A Johnson b Shah 4 (7)
N S Dhallwal b Aamer 4 (7)
P Singh c Zaman b Afridi 2 (6)
N R Kirton run out 1 (6)
R Singh c Rizwan b Rauf 2 (9)
R Singh c Zaman b Rauf 0 (2)
*S B Zafar c Rizwan b Aamer 10 (21)
*S K Rehman not out 13 (14)
D Heylinger not out 9 (11)
Extras (b 1, lb 2, w 10) 13
Total (7 wks, 20 overs) 106
J Siddiqui and J O A Gordon did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-20, 2-29, 3-43, 4-54, 5-54,
6-73, 7-87.
Bowling Afridi 4-0-21-1; Shah 4-0-24-1; Amir
4-0-13-2; Rauf 4-0-26-2; Wasim 4-0-19-0.
Pakistan (balls) 53 (53)
*Mohammad Rizwan not out 53 (53)
Saim Ayub c Movva b Heylinger 6 (12)
*Babar Azam c Movva b Heylinger 33 (33)
Fakhar Zaman c sub b Gordon 4 (6)
Usman Khan not out 2 (1)
Extras (w 9) 9
Total (3 wks, 17.3 overs) 107
Shadab Khan, Imad Wasim, Shaheen Shah

Afridi, Nasir Shah, Haris Rauf and Moham-
mad Amir did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-20, 2-83, 3-104.
Bowling Rehman 3-0-21-0; Gordon 3-0-17-1;
Heylinger 4-0-18-2; Zafar 4-0-23-0; Siddiqui
3-0-28-0.
Vitality Blast: South Group
Middlesex v Somerset
Lord’s (Somerset won toss and elected to
bat): Somerset (2pts) beat Middlesex (0pts)
by nine wickets
Middlesex (balls) 2 (3)
*S S Eskinazi c Davey b Overton 2 (3)
M K Anderson c Overton b Meredith 10 (8)
J B Cracknell c Banton b Meredith 6 (11)
M D E Holden c Gregory b Meredith 1 (2)
R F Higgins c Dickinson b Meredith 9 (11)
*J L B Davies c Dickinson b Overton 2 (6)
L B K Hollman c Smeed b Green 12 (17)
J M De Caires c Gregory b Davey 3 (9)
T G Helm c Van der Merwe b Davey 15 (17)
B C Cullen lbw b Green 0 (1)
N B Cornwell not out 15 (14)
Extras (b 1, w 2) 3
Total (16.3 overs) 78
Fall of wickets 1-12, 2-16, 3-19, 4-20, 5-23, 6-33,
7-41, 8-50, 9-50.
Bowling Overton 4-1-21-2; Meredith 4-0-12-4;
Gregory 3-0-14-0; Davey 3-3-13-2; Green 2-0-12-2.
Somerset (balls) 49 (42)
*T Braid not out 49 (42)
W C F Smeed c Cracknell b Helm 1 (3)

T Kohler-Cadmore not out 30 (30)
Extras (lb 2) 2
Total (1 wkt, 12.3 overs) 82
T B Abell, S R Dickson, *L Gregory, B G F Green,
C Overton, R E Van der Merwe, J H Davey and
P Meredith did not bat.
Fall of wicket 1-3.
Bowling Helm 4-0-20-1; Cullen 4-0-27-0;
Cornwell 1-0-1-0; Anderson 1-0-5-0; Higgins
1-3-0-20-0; Hollman 1-0-7-0.
Somerset P W L D N/R/Pts 6 R/81
Sussex 4 3 1 0 0 6 0.75
Surrey 4 3 1 0 0 6 0.59
Kent 4 2 2 0 0 4 1.15
Gloucestershire 4 2 2 0 0 4 0.14
Essex 4 2 2 0 0 4 -0.01
Hampshire 4 2 2 0 0 4 -0.47
Gloucestershire 4 1 3 0 0 2 -0.69
Middlesex 5 1 4 0 0 2 -2.09
Cycling
Tour de Suisse
Third stage (Steinmaur to Rüschlikon,
162kmp; 1, T Nys (Bel, Lidl-Trek) 3hr 27min
31sec; 2, S Williams (GB, Israel-Premier Tech);
3, A Bettiol (It, EF Education-EasyPost), 4 R
Adria (Sp, BORA-hansgrohe), 5 P Lapeira (Fr,
Decathlon AG2R La Mondiale) all same time.
Leading overall positions: 1, A Bettiol 7hrs
39mins 20secs, 2, E Hayter at 6sec; 3 W
Kelderman; 4, S Williams both at same time; 5,
J Almeida (Por, UAE Team Emirates) at 9sec.

Tennis

Mercedes Cup
Stuttgart: Men’s singles: Round of 32
J Duckworth (Aus) bt P-H Herbert (Fr) 6-4, 7-6
(2); L Musetti (It) bt G Mpetshi Perricaud (Fr)
7-6 (9), 7-6 (9); B Nakashima (US) bt C
Eubanks (US) 7-6 (4), 6-4; A Rinderknech (Fr)
bt A Michelsen (US) 6-4, 7-5; M Berrettini (It) bt
R Safiullin (Russ) 7-6 (8), 5-7, 7-5; D
Shapovalov (Can) bt M Martneau (Fr) 7-6 (5),
7-5; M Giron (US) bt A Murray (GB) 6-3, 6-4; J-L
Struff (Ger) bt F Cobolli (It) 7-6 (7), 6-3.
Rosmalen Grass Court Championships
Rosmalen, Netherlands: Men’s singles:
Round of 32 R Bautista Agut (Sp) bt M-A
Huesler (Swit) 7-6 (9-7) 6-2; A Vukic (Aus) bt M
Purcell (Aus) 6-3, 7-6 (7-5); M Raonic (Can) bt J
Thompson (Aus) 6-3, 6-4; A Fils (Fr) bt A Caz-
aux (Fr) 6-4, 6-4; M McDonald (US) bt B van de
Zandschulp (Neth) 6-4, 4-6, 6-2; A Mannarino
(Fr) bt S Napolitano (It) 3-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-2; G
Brouwer (Neth) bt J Mensik (Cz Rep) 6-1, 3-6,
6-3; T Griekspoor (Neth) bt M Kecmanovic
(Serb) 6-7 (3-7), 7-6 (9-7), 7-6 (7-3); A Popyrin
(US) bt R Hijioka (Aus) 6-4, 6-4; Z Berge (Bel)
bt T van Rijthoven (Neth) 6-4, 6-3; S Korda
(US) bt T Schocklate (Aus) 6-4, 7-6 (7-4).
Women’s singles: Round of 32 S Lamens
(Neth) bt B Pera (Aus) 6-4, 6-2, 6-4; C Naef
(Swit) bt E Mandlik (US) 7-6 (7-4), 1-6, 6-4; E
Bektas (US) bt A Bilnikova (Russ) 6-4, 6-0; B
Andreescu (Can) bt E Vedder (Neth) 4-6, 6-3.

6-2; N Osaka (Japan) bt E Mertens (Bel) 6-2,
6-4; Y Yuan (China) bt D Shneider (Russ) 1-6,
6-4, 6-3; J Pegula (US) bt A Savanovich (Blr) 6-2,
6-2; A Krunic (Serb) bt J Ponchet (Fr) 4-6, 6-2,
6-1; E Alexandrova (Russ) bt A Rodionova
(Aus) 6-3, 6-4; D Galli (Hun) bt A Rus (Neth)
6-0, 6-3.
Nottingham Open
Wormen’s singles: Round of 32 M Frech (Pol)
bt N Hibino (Japan) 6-1, 6-4; D Snigur (Ukr) bt
M Kostyuk (Ukr) 6-3, 6-3; R Marino (Can) bt V
Golubic (Swit) 6-1, 6-4; T Maria (Ger) bt E
Arango (Col) 4-6, 7-6 (7), 7-6 (6); A Krueger
(US) bt W Yafan (China) 6-3, 6-3; E Raducanu
(GB) bt E Shibaahara (Japan) 6-1, 6-4; O Jabeur
(Tun) bt C Osorio (Col) 6-2, 6-3; F Jones (GB) bt
C Dolehide (US) 7-6 (7-3) 6-3.

Fixtures

Cricket

ICC T20 World Cup Group A New York
United States v India (3.30). Group B
Antigua: Australia v Namibia (1.30am).
Group D: Landerhill: Sri Lanka v Nepal
(12.30am).
Vitality Blast North Group: Durham v
Leicestershire (6.30).

Harrington step down as BHA chief after mixed results

Rob Wright Racing Editor

Julie Harrington has announced that she will step down as chief executive of the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) at the end of this year. She has been in the role since the start of 2021.

She guided the sport through the Covid-19 pandemic and has overseen changes to the governance of racing but during her time in charge the BHA has

been criticised for changes to the whip rules, while the introduction of Premier racing this year has proved a damp squib. Indeed, crowds have been falling at the biggest meetings, with the Cheltenham Festival and the Derby at Epsom among those reporting a drop in numbers through the gates.

Harrington also had limited success in lobbying the government over its recent gambling review, with afforda-

bility checks for punters having already had a negative effect on the sport's income through the levy, with many people turning to overseas bookmakers rather than face intrusive checks on their finances. Bets placed abroad earn no money for the levy, which helps to fund racing, or for the government.

"It felt like the right time to move on," Harrington said. "It has been a huge privilege to lead the BHA during what

has been a period of real change as the sport has implemented shared strategies for a sustainable future and an ability to speak with one united voice.

"I am proud of the progress made over the past three years, especially in improving the governance structure, and I hope that racing's stakeholders continue to work together to attract new audiences, further improve the customer experience and grow the sport.

"I am confident that if the sport continues to foster the sense of unity and shared purpose that we have developed over the past few years, then great things can be achieved."

The news of Harrington's departure comes only six days after Nevin Truesdale said that he was stepping down as chief executive of the Jockey Club. Truesdale will be one of the front-runners to take over at the BHA.

Kempton Park

Rob Wright

5.05 Red Hat Eagle (nap) 7.10 Aiming High
5.40 Ziffree 7.40 Assembled
6.10 Never The Twin 8.15 Night Breeze
6.40 Rosa Applause (nb) 8.45 Le Rouge Chinois

Going: standard to slow

Draw: 5f-1m, low numbers best

RacingTV

5.05 Handicap (€4,187: 1m) (11)

- 1 (4)-1466 MISS DOLLY ROCKER 21 (C) R Teal 4-10-2 Jack Enright (5)
- 2 (1)-1040 YEOMAN 31 (BF) J Fanshawe 4-10-4 J Leary
- 3 (1)-204 QUET SEA 37 (H) Harry Charlton 4-10-9 Millie Wonnacott
- 4 (2) 23605 FRANCES 31 (D) S Woods 5-10-0 Kayla Fraser
- 5 (7) 24622 DEBBIE 43 (BF,C,D) S Pearce 6-9-12 T Jakes
- 6 (6)-40-20 STOCKPLYE 7 (BF) W Muir 6-9-12 Jack Doughty (3)
- 7 (5) 10-20 RED HAT EAGLE 25 (C) W Knight 4-9-10

7 (5) 10-20 RED HAT EAGLE 25 (C) W Knight 4-9-10
8 (9) 4052 L'ARGENT 111 M Appleby 4-9-9 E Jansen
9 (3) 26502 VASECRET 14 (C) J Williams 6-9-9 R Kavanagh
10 (10) 10600 PLATINUM JUBILEE 14 (C) D Donovan 4-9-5 G Catton
11 (2) 35545 CAPUCHINERO 14 (P,T) Alice Haynes 9-2-Anna Gibson
9-2 Stockpile, 5-1 Inascret, 13-2 Red Hat Eagle, 7-1 Miss Dolly Raker, L'Argent, 8-1 Frances, 10-1 Debbie, Capuchinero, Yeoman.

Rob Wright's choice: Red Hat Eagle was given too much to do at Thirsk last time Dangers Miss Dolly Raker, L'Argent

5.40 Fillies' Stakes (€3,780: 1m 3f) (14)

- 1 (7) 00 ANNA OF SAXONY 12 W Kitten 4-10-2 L Keniry
- 2 (5) 0 POPYDDORA 19 W Knight 4-10-2 N Calkin
- 3 (13) AL HAAL Owen Brown 3-9-2 J Crowley
- 4 (11) 56 AL TOO WEL 19 J & G Hodges 3-9-2 T Heard (3)
- 5 (10) ANNUM'S BREEZE 6 & J Moore 3-9-2 R Clutterbuck
- 6 (9) 3-2 INCENSED 25 A Bolding 3-9-2 O Murphy
- 7 (6) INLET Sir M Stoute 3-9-2 R Kingscote
- 8 (12) 4-2 KITTY FURNIVAL 16 S & E Crisford 3-9-2 W Buick
- 9 (3) ONE GLANCE (H) A King 3-9-2 D Probert
- 10 (1) 03 PANTHERA 41 M Meunier 3-9-2 Kye Stridom
- 11 (8) REACHING THE MOON W Kitten 3-9-2 R Hornby
- 12 (14) 0-4 SAPHIRE SORCERO 26 P Phelan 3-9-2 P Bradley
- 13 (4) TO MONTAIRE J & T Gosden 3-9-2 Doubtful
- 14 (2) ZILFEE 11 J Gosden 3-9-2 K Shoemark

5-1 Kitty Furnival, 1-4 Zilfee, 9-2 Incensed, 7-1 Al Haal, 15-2 Inlet, 12-1 Panthera, 25-1 Annum's Breeze, One Glance.

Wright choice: Ziffree, a half-sister to the brilliant Ennet, can make a winning start Dangers Kitty Furnival, Inlet

6.10 Fillies' Stakes (€2-Y-O: €3,672: 7f) (9)

- 1 (6) ART PATRON A Bolding 9-2 O Murphy
- 2 (3) EIGHTH AVENUE 5 & E Crisford 9-2 Billy Loughnane
- 3 (5) 00 L'IFE 13 W M Turner 9-2 L Keniry
- 4 (1) 0 MARRAKESH DAWN 21 M Usher 9-2 G Rooke
- 5 (4) 0 MYSTICAL ELEGANCE 81 (BF) D F Davis 9-2 David Egan
- 6 (7) NEVER THE TWIN A Watson 9-2 J Crowley
- 7 (2) RIDGEWAY REDWING D Chalkley 9-2 G Bass (3)
- 8 (9) THE TERMINUS Sir M Stoute 9-2 R Kingscote
- 9 (8) VERAISON Dr R Newland & J Insole 9-2 K Shoemark

5-2 Art Patron, 3-1 Eighth Avenue, 9-2 Never The Twin, 5-1 The Terminus, 4-1 VERAISON, 10-1 Mystical Elegance, 16-1 Ridgeway Redwing, 30-1 others.

Wright choice: Never The Twin, whose dam was a group three winner, appeals Dangers Eighth Avenue, Veraison

6.40 Handicap (€3-Y-O: €5,757: 6f) (11)

- 1 (7) 50-20 KINGDOM OF RICHES 18 B Beckett 9-11 Rossa Ryan
- 2 (3) 21-00 CITY HOUSE 39 (T,C,D) J Fanshawe 9-11 Billy Loughnane
- 3 (1) 31-1 ROSA APPLAUSE 41 (D) S & E Crisford 9-11 W Buick
- 4 (5) 11-23 BLUE DAY 9 (BF,D) Harry Charlton 9-11 O Murphy
- 5 (11) 32040 SLOAN ACCLAIM 25 (C) H Al Jehani (UAE) 9-11 James Doyle
- 6 (9) 62-11 JIMMY SPEAKING 33 (P,D) C Dwyer 9-11 L Edmunds
- 7 (10) 00-46 MAXIMUM IMPACT 39 G Scott 9-11 David Egan
- 8 (5) 3600 BETTIES BAY 15 (C) G Nicholls 9-11 J Bryan
- 9 (4) 4-30 DRAMA 25 (P,T,D) J Ferguson 9-12 T Marquand
- 10 (4) 2-21 DIFFERENT BREED 37 S Hodgson 8-11 W Carver (3)
- 11 (8) 4430 STANLEY SPENCER 293 J Tate 8-11 D Probert

5-2 Rosa Applause, 3-1 Blue Day, 6-1 Jimmy Speaking, City House, 12-1 Drama, Kingdom of Riches, Maximum Impact, 14-1 Stanley Spencer.

Wright choice: Rosa Applause can add to her front-running success at Lingfield Dangers Jimmy Speaking, Betties Bay

7.10 Handicap (€4,187: 1m 4f) (7)

- 1 (4) 00-02 AIMING HIGH 8 (H) D M Simcock 5-10-4 H Turner
- 2 (3) 24063 MEASURED MOMENTS 15 J Butler 5-10-0 N Calkin
- 3 (1) 1421 REYAN STAR 32 (C) J Johnston 3-9-12 James Doyle
- 4 (7) 3322 FREE SPEECH 30 (C) J Johnston 3-9-12 David Egan
- 5 (6) 05332 COLLEGE CHOR 16 (P) W Haggas 3-9-0 T Marquand
- 6 (3) 03-40 MALINKA 23 R Beckett 3-9-11 Rossa Ryan

7 (5) 64-0 WARBLER 157 H Morrison 3-9-10 Billy Loughnane
10-3 Measured Moments, 7-2 Aiming High, 4-1 College Choir, 9-2 Free Speech, 13-2 Reayadash Star, 8-1 Warbler, 12-1 Malinka.

Wright choice: Aiming High came back to form when second at Lingfield; can go one better: Danger College Choir

7.40 Handicap (€3,140: 1m 3f) (10)

- 1 (10) 002-5 EAGLE ONE 143 (T) N Twiston-Davies 6-9-11 L Keniry
- 2 (5) 3230 BUSBY 29 (P,C) P Kirby 5-9-11 D Probert
- 3 (6) 45230 THE BAY WARRIOR 28 (P,C) M Usher 6-9-10 R Clutterbuck
- 4 (7) 03230 PRINCE ALI 60 D Faulkner 6-9-9 O Murphy
- 5 (4) 10-40 FICIONAL 35 (P,BF) R Hughes 4-9-8 F Marsh
- 6 (3) 40-40 DANKZDIEFTHOON 21 Butler 4-9-7 N Calkin
- 7 (8) 5-522 FOUERE 33 D Ivory 4-9-7 L Morris
- 8 (9) 00-40 NOSTROMO 9 R Teal 4-9-5 L Edmunds
- 9 (1) 0423- SHOWLEEN SPIRIT 182 G Baker 5-9-3 Doubtful
- 10 (2) 1033- ASSEMBLED 21 (T,C,D) M Rinnell 5-9-2 R Hornby

7-2 Fougere, 5-1 Ficalional, 11-2 Busby, 6-1 Prince Ali, 7-1 Eagle One, The Bay Warrior, 10-1 Nostromo, Darkdiefthoon.

Wright choice: Assembled needed the run here last time after a six-month absence Dangers Fougere, Ficalional

8.15 Handicap (€3,140: 1m 3f) (10)

- 1 (5) 241-5 STRIKE ALLIANCE 20 H Dickinson 4-9-11 O Murphy
- 2 (4) 10-40 ORIENTAL ART 25 D M Hick 4-9-11 H Turner
- 3 (6) 42344 CHAGALL 11 Jack Jones 8-9-10 Rossa Ryan
- 4 (7) 1131- GOBLET OF FIRE 125 N Henderson 4-9-8 K Stott
- 5 (3) 00-402 NIGHT BREEZE 51 Williams 4-9-8 W Buick
- 6 (1) 2-265 FRAVANCIO 38 (P) M Madgwick 5-9-7 G Rooke
- 7 (4) 313-0 SEXY RENY 9 (P) G Harris 4-9-6 Billy Loughnane
- 8 (9) 55333 DEVIZES 12 (C) P Phelan 4-9-5 D Bradley
- 9 (10) 44300 LOGISTICAL 134 (P) S Hodgson 4-9-2 W Carver (3)
- 10 (2) 000-0 COLONIAL LOVE 32 R Frost 4-9-8 L Morris

5-1 Goblet of Fire, 4-1 Night Breeze, 9-2 Strike Alliance, 11-2 Devizes, 6-1 Chagall, 10-1 Fravanco, 12-1 Oriental Art, 3-1 Sexy Reny.

Wright choice: Night Breeze, second at Goodwood, should relish this stiffer test Dangers Goblet of Fire, Chagall

8.45 Handicap (€4,187: 2m) (8)

- 1 (6) 60123 DAMASCUS STEEL 8 (BF,C) E Dunlop 4-9-11 Rossa Ryan
- 2 (7) 34-31 LE ROUGE CHINOIS 144 (D) M Appleby 4-9-10 S Feilden (7)
- 3 (4) 60-66 IMPHAL 21 (C) P Butler 10-9-9 Jack Doughty (7)
- 4 (2) 13614 ABRAAI 13 (D) S Pearce 6-9-8 J Crowley
- 5 (1) 7006- SKY POWER 168 (W) R Stephens 7-9-5 F Marsh
- 6 (2) 4-111 WANNABE BRAVE 13 (V,C,D) J Fanshawe 5-9-3 O Murphy
- 7 (3) 5-42- HOME AND DRY 136 (P,T) A Haggas 6-9-1 L Morris
- 8 (5) 1320- TAZANAME 636 (C) K Frost 7-9-0 Billy Loughnane
- 9 (1) 21- WANNABE BRAVE, 7-2 Damascus Steel, 9-2 Abraai, 5-1 Le Rouge Chinois, 13-2 Home And Dry, 16-1 Tazaname, 20-1 Sky Power, 33-1 Imphal.

Wright choice: Le Rouge Chinois won at Lingfield on his first try at this trip Dangers Wannabe Brave, Damascus Steel

Fontwell Park

Rob Wright

2.13 Gwash 4.13 Village Master
2.43 Paddy De Pole 4.43 Amalfi Bay
2.43 Millie Mite 5.18 Blow Your Horn
3.43 He'llistopthetop

Going: good Sky Sports Racing

2.13 Novices' Hurdles (€4,066: 2m 6f) (6)

- 1 601-4 GWASH 25 (H) J O'Brien 5-11-9 J Burke
- 2 012-1 PLYFO 30 (BF) Janis A & O'Neill 4-11-9 R McLernon
- 3 400-0 HIGHWAY HOME 25 (P,T) D Stewie 4-11-2 Tabitha Worrall
- 4 LORO CHIPS (T) A Honeyball 6-11-2 R Dingle
- 5 PLANXTY 1545 Mrs D Grissell 5-11-2 M Goldstein
- 6 323-3 BRIEFLY 27 A Honeyball 4-10-3 S Twiston-Davies
- 7 11-8 PLYFO, 7-4 Gwash, 4-1 Briefly, 8-1 Loro Chips, 50-1 Highway Home, 100-1 Planxy.

2.43 Handicap Hurdle (€4,066: 3m 2f) (6)

- 1 511-1 PADDY DE POLE 30 (P) P Nicholls 6-12-0 F Ginglell (3)
- 2 2116- SEA THE CLOUDS 238 (T,BF) J Snowden 7-11-13 W Featherstone (10)
- 3 50P-1 EARTH KING 27 (P,C,D) N Mulholland 6-11-8 H Cobden
- 4 66-22 THIRTYFOUR THIRTY 13 (V,C) S Hosie 5-11-4 S Twiston-Davies

5 4346- PRESENTING YEATS 264 (D) R G Hawker 8-11-1 J Best
6 040-0 KIDDERPULF 124 J Snowden 5-10-12 G Sheehan

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

3.13 Handicap Chase (€3,248: 2m 3f 10y4d) (10)

- 1 44-11 CALL OFF THE DOGS 17 (B,C,D) G & M Moore 9-12-0 C Quinn (3)
- 2 511-1 PADDY DE POLE 30 (P) P Nicholls 6-12-0 F Ginglell (3)
- 2 2116- SEA THE CLOUDS 238 (T,BF) J Snowden 7-11-13 W Featherstone (10)
- 3 50P-1 EARTH KING 27 (P,C,D) N Mulholland 6-11-8 H Cobden
- 4 66-22 THIRTYFOUR THIRTY 13 (V,C) S Hosie 5-11-4 S Twiston-Davies
- 5 4346- PRESENTING YEATS 264 (D) R G Hawker 8-11-1 J Best
- 6 040-0 KIDDERPULF 124 J Snowden 5-10-12 G Sheehan

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

3.13 Handicap Chase (€3,248: 2m 3f 10y4d) (10)

- 1 44-11 CALL OFF THE DOGS 17 (B,C,D) G & M Moore 9-12-0 C Quinn (3)
- 2 511-1 PADDY DE POLE 30 (P) P Nicholls 6-12-0 F Ginglell (3)
- 2 2116- SEA THE CLOUDS 238 (T,BF) J Snowden 7-11-13 W Featherstone (10)
- 3 50P-1 EARTH KING 27 (P,C,D) N Mulholland 6-11-8 H Cobden
- 4 66-22 THIRTYFOUR THIRTY 13 (V,C) S Hosie 5-11-4 S Twiston-Davies
- 5 4346- PRESENTING YEATS 264 (D) R G Hawker 8-11-1 J Best
- 6 040-0 KIDDERPULF 124 J Snowden 5-10-12 G Sheehan

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

13-9 Paddy De Pole, 9-4 Earth King, 6-1 Thirtyfour Thirty, 6-1 Sea The Clouds, 14-1 Presenting Yeats, 16-1 Kidderpulf.

- 2 P4P- PRINCESS MIDNIGHT 227 (T) P Jizzard 10-11-8 F Ginglell (3)
- 3 05-3 GROOM DE COTTE 34 (T) G & M Moore 9-11-9 R McLernon
- 4 05-3 MISS FEDORA 13 (B,C,D) S Mullins 5-10-12 M G Nolan
- 5 02-1 LOVE YOU SVOLA 23 (D) Mrs H Holmes 6-10-9 P Price (3)
- 6 3446- CONCEAL 72 (P) Bi Abrahamian 9-10-6 K Brogan
- 7 39P-3 BELGARIUM 12 (T) J Tizzard 6-10-4 B J Powell
- 8 491-2 MILLIES MITE 27 (P,T,C) J Jewell 10-10-5 M Goldstein
- 9 30-35 SHAW'S CROSS 17 A Irvine 12-10-2 P Armon (3)
- 10 1605- MILTON BOY 77 (P) N Hawke 5-10-2 D Noonan

2-1 Call Off The Dogs, 4-1 Millies Mite, 6-1 Belgarium, 8-1 Princess Midnight, 10-1 Love You Svola, Shaw's Cross, 12-1 Conceal, 12-1 others

3.43 Handicap Hurdle (€3,248: 3m 2f) (10)

- 1 430-0 ASTROMAN F18 (C,D) S Hosie 7-12-0 B Harris (3)
- 2 FV6-2 DEAR RALPHY 17 (B,T) A Honeyball 8-11-10 H Cobden
- 3 PPS-4 HELLSTOPTHETOP 17 B Burke 7-11-4 H Kimber
- 4 30P- WEARWINKERBROWN 133 Mrs H Holmes 8-10-13 P O'Brien
- 5 PPS-1 NO MORE NO 34 (T) Mrs L Hill 5-10-12 R Padick
- 6 221-6 HE IS A CRACKER 12 (D) G Brown 5-10-10 J Ryder (10)
- 7 33-4P JOYFUL KIT 24 H Brown 8-10-7 B Godfrey
- 8 00P-4 NO WORRIES 31 (P,T) N Mulholland 10-10-5 S Twiston-Davies
- 9 0P-3P GLORIOUS MIST 17 (P) P Butler 7-10-5 M Goldstein
- 10 PPS-4 YESMOSORRY 27 (T) N Gifford 7-10-4 James Davies

3-1 No More No, 4-1 Dear Ralph, 11-2 He'llistopthetop, 6-1 He Is A Cracker, 7-1 Astroman, 8-1 No Worries, 10-1 Joyful Kit, 16-1 Glorious Mist.

4.13 Handicap Chase (€4,700: 3m 2f) (6)

- 1 11-11 VILLAGE MASTER 18 W Greaux 5-12-0 J Bowen
- 2 165-3P DICKEN NELLY 30 P & M Bowen 7-11-13 S Bowen
- 3 PPS-3 JEGINSTOWN KING 36 (T,C) O Simp 7-11-9 B R Jones
- 4 1562- MASTERDEAM F18 (P,T) N Mulholland 7-11-7 S Twiston-Davies
- 5 10-15 TOAD OF TOAD HALL 17 (C,D) Alexandra Dunn 8-10-2 P Armon (3)
- 6 0P-0 ALWAYS FORCE IT 11 H Brown 5-10-2 J Best
- 7 11-8 Village Master, 7-2 Jiginstown King, 4-1 Masterdeam, 5-1 Dickey Rielly, 10-1 Toad Of Toad Hall, 50-1 Always Force It.

Wright choice: Village Master, second at Goodwood, should relish this stiffer test Dangers Goblet of Fire, Chagall

4.43 Handicap Hurdle (€3,248: 2m 3f) (10)

- 1 3P-6 BEAT THE HEAT 17 (V,C,D) J Boyle 7-12-0 Sean Hoolahan
- 2 05-3 NADIM 22 (H) S Munn 5-11-3 B Harris (3)
- 3 03-4 SAMI BEAR 37 C Gordon 8-11-6 F Gordon (5)
- 4 40-3P TARA ITTI 27 (P,C) G & J Moore 6-11-5 N F Houlihan
- 5 5-45-5 STATE OF BLISS 10 (T) N King 6-11-3 J Quinlan
- 6 62P-4 AMALFI BAY 34 (T) A Honeyball 6-11-2 S Twiston-Davies
- 7 0-4-0 OUTBACK FRONTIERS 19 G O'Shea 8-10-11 S Bowen
- 8 30-6 HESHEBHINDY 39 A Irvine 8-10-2 P Armon (3)
- 9 0P-3P DICKEN NELLY 30 P & M Bowen 7-11-13 S Bowen
- 10 60P-1 MOUNTAIN 36 (P,T,C) Joanne Thomas-Hewitt 8-10-2 T Worsley (2)

4-4 Amalfi Bay, 5-2 Tara Itti, 6-1 Nadim, 7-1 Sami Bear, 8-1 State Of Bliss, Beat The Heat, 10-1 Heshbehindy, 12-1 Outback Frontiers.

5.18 Handicap Hurdle (€3,248: 2m 3f) (10)

- 1 522-2 EARTH CRY 25 (T) N Mulholland 6-12-0 S Twiston-Davies
- 2 065-2 BLOW YOUR HORN 13 (P,T) J Williams 7-11-13 C J Todd
- 3 20-05 CUBAN COURT 31 (P,T) N King 6-11-6 J Quinlan
- 4 541-4 TIP TOP TONTO 36 (P) R & F Flint 8-11-5 J Tudor
- 5 126-4 GRAM OF HOPE 7 E Lovell 4-11-3 T Bellamy
- 6 00P-4 P M HEN FEAT 36 S Hodgson 5-11-1 A Anderson (5)
- 7 PPS-4 DREADPOETSOCIETY 35 C Gordon 6-10-7 R Dingle
- 8 PPS-4 BROADWAY STAR 30 (W,P,T) Mrs H Knight 4-10-2 B J Powell
- 9 30P-0 SOLIDTOWN 36 (P,T,C) Joanne Thomas-Hewitt 8-10-2 J Best
- 10 PPS-4 VINTAGE ICON 35 A Irvine 5-10-2 C Quinn (3)

9-4 Earth Cry, 5-2 Blow Your Horn, 6-1 Tip Top Tonto, 7-1 Gram Of Hope, 8-1 Sullivan Bay, 12-1 Cuban Court, Dreadpoetsociety, 25-1 others

Hamilton Park

Rob Wright

6.20 Mr Trevor 7.50 Catherine Choi
6.50 Lucy Kings 8.25 Aces Wild
7.20 Bengurion 9.00 Ledger

Going: good to firm, good in places
Draw: no advantage

Racing TV

6.20 Handicap (€3,477: 6f) (14)

- 1 (7) 20400 THE GAY BLADE 15 (C) Jurdine 5-11-3 Dominic Shipley (5)
- 2 (10) 0-103 CAPTAIN DANDY 15 (D) A Nicol 4-9-13 E Cagney
- 3 (3) 02320 STORMY PEARL 15 (P,D) D Thompson 4-11-2 Ned Sangster (7)
- 4 (4) 5555-4 GAWTH KITTEN 32 (T) D Dunlop 7-11-1 Sophie Smith
- 5 (5) 3040-3 SAVANNAH 28 (P,C,D) A Winkle 9-11-1 K Ruddy (7)
- 6 (11) 40-00 SIRIUS WHITE 35 (L) M Morgan 4-11-1 Ellie Mayo (5)
- 7 (7) 02545 GLOBAL HUMOR 11 (B,C) J Goldie 9-11-4 A Keighley
- 8 (2) 24243 BERNIE THE BEAR 26 (B,D) Miss L Perratt 4-10-13 Megan Davies (7)

- 9 (9) 0026 MR TREVOR 4 (V,C,D) Mrs A Duffield 6-10-11 S Brotherton
- 10 (10) 0020 BEN DIKOUK 25 M Wallford 4-10-9 Alice Cooke (7)
- 11 (6) 10055 HARD SEARCH 13 (B,C,D) J Carr 8-10-7 Jack Nicholls (3)
- 12 (12) 6004 PEACTION CARNEHAN 15 (V,C,D) M Mullineux 10-10-7 Katie Gordon (5)
- 13 (1) 04050 JACKMEETTER RUDE 15 (P,D) J Scott 5-10-7 Jake Dickson (7)
- 14 (14) 65040 DODGY BOB 15 (B,C,D) M Mullineux 11-10-7 Mr S Perry (7)
- 15 (2) Captain David, 5-1 Mr Trevor, 7-1 Global Humor, Bernie The Bear, 8-1 Stormy Pearl, Hard Solution, 10-1 Gathwick Kitten, The Gay Blade.

Sport Cricket

Cup fate is out of England's hands – after one bad day

Mike Atherton

Chief Cricket Correspondent, Antigua



The best that can be said for England's defence of their T20 crown so far is that they remain in the contest. A washout against Scotland and a heavy defeat by Australia has left them teetering, though, and has brought back uncomfortable memories of their limp 50-over World Cup defence in India before Christmas.

After that dismal showing, a failure to qualify for the super eights here would put Matthew Mott's position, in particular, under heavy scrutiny — coaches being always more expendable than captains. England judge themselves, in white-ball cricket, on their performances in ICC global events, rather than bilateral series, and as a well-resourced team they operate under high expectations.

So, a vital few days lie ahead. England play Oman tomorrow and Namibia on Saturday and need to win handsomely on both occasions to significantly improve their net run-rate. At present, that stands in Scotland's favour by an uncomfortable margin after their hammering of Oman. Scotland's net run rate is 2.164; England's is minus 1.8. That's a lot to make up. At least it clears the mind: England will have to put their foot down.

Even then, they will need Australia to beat Scotland in St Lucia and hope that the timing of those final group-stage games (England play Namibia at 1pm local time, Australia play Scotland at 8.30pm on the same day) does not give Scotland too much of an edge, knowing what score might be needed to progress on run rate if the result is beyond them.

What looked a straightforward group

Group B

	P	W	L	D	N/R	Pts	R/R
Scotland	3	2	0	0	1	5	2.16
Australia	2	2	0	0	0	4	1.88
Namibia	2	0	1	1	0	2	-0.31
England	2	0	1	0	1	1	-1.80
Oman	3	0	2	1	0	0	-1.61

Scotland will progress to the Super 8s if they win their final game, but could do so without winning if other results go their way. Australia will definitely progress with two wins, but one win is likely to be enough. Namibia need to win both fixtures, or definitely beat Australia and hope other results go their way. England need to win both of their games and will probably have to overturn a big net run-rate difference to progress. Oman are already eliminated.

Remaining fixtures

(all times BST)

Australia v Namibia (Today, 1.30am);
England v Oman (Tomorrow, 8.0);
Namibia v England (June 15, 6.0);
Australia v Scotland (June 16, 1.30am).

England v Oman
North Sound, Antigua
Tomorrow, 8pm
TV: Sky Sports Cricket

initially, with three associate nations, suddenly has traps everywhere. One such is what may occur in the Scotland match if Australia have already qualified. Will Australia rest players? Who knows? And in any case, all of that is out of England's control.

The nature of this tournament means that one rained-off match or one poor performance can ramp up pressure very quickly. Take New Zealand, for example. They arrived in Guyana underdone, with a lot of their players having not had much cricket in the IPL. They were walloped by Afghanistan in their only match so far and now, with a net run rate of minus 4.2, face West Indies in Trinidad tomorrow in a make-or-break match.

The other factor is that associate nations are getting better all the time. The gap is already narrowed in T20,



Going down swinging? Buttler tries to hit Topley with a swimming noddle as part of a warm-up before nets yesterday

which is the least predictable format of the game, and it is narrowing further with the investment of money and resources. At the time of writing, USA and Canada are above Ireland and Pakistan in group A; Scotland are top of group B; New Zealand and Sri Lanka are bottom of groups C and D respectively. England are not alone.

Essentially, there has been one bad performance, against Australia, to analyse. In almost two weeks, England have played only 50 overs of cricket, which is not enough to be definitive about how well or badly they are playing. Before the tournament, common consent was that they are a good side — not as good as they were, for sure — but good enough with the players at their disposal to command a semi-final place at least. Fifty overs' worth of cricket is not enough to change all that, more difficult though their task now is.

The nature of the tournament, with long periods of inactivity between games, has brought heightened scruti-

ny. It has been said in some quarters that England are too uptight and in others that they are too blasé. And the suggested fixes have included dropping Jonny Bairstow, demoting Bairstow, promoting Harry Brook and bringing in Ben Duckett and so on. It is crucial that Jos Buttler and his players are not distracted by any of that. They must back their own convictions and try not to chase their tail, as they did in India.

The problem against Australia was not with the bat but with the ball: 201 was too many runs to concede on that pitch in Bridgetown. Simple. No other team has yet passed 200 in the tournament. Reece Topley was a bad miss. Left-armers who swing the new ball — Ruben Truempelmann (Namibia) and Fazalhaq Farooqi (Afghanistan) — have gone well with the strong cross-breezes to help. After the new ball, cutters have been important on pitches that have been slower than expected (leading to the lower scores). Topley provides a bit of both. Mark Wood is

thought to be more vulnerable than Chris Jordan, although against Oman and Namibia, I'd be tempted to keep Wood's high pace in the team. Jordan's original selection was based around his improved lower-order hitting (and fielding) but there is enough batting with Liam Livingstone at No 7.

The decision to give Will Jacks the second over to a tiny wind-assisted boundary was too high risk and did not pay off. Part pre-determined (two left-handers; Jacks having dismissed Travis Head in the IPL) and part instinctive (Moeen Ali bowled a good first over) it was a gamble. Buttler could do with his gambles paying off from here on in.

England's precarious situation means that, inevitably, there has been a lot of scrutiny on, so far, very little evidence and very little cricket, but that is where they are and that is how things stand. If their position doesn't improve significantly over the next few days, there will be a lot more to follow. Such is the way of things.

Flintoff's son Rocky, 16, gets first England Under-19 call-up

Elizabeth Ammon

Rocky Flintoff, the 16-year-old son of the former England all-rounder Andrew, has been named in the England Under-19 squad for their one-day series against Sri Lanka this month.

Rocky is seen as a highly talented batting all-rounder and recently scored his maiden century, only two days after his 16th birthday, for Lancashire second XI, including a 39-run partnership with his older brother, Corey, 18, against Warwickshire.

His innings of 116 from 165 balls included two leg-side pulled sixes that carried strong echoes of his father's strokemaking — so too the manner-

isms at the crease. Flintoff only made his Lancashire second XI debut this season, but he and his brother have been in Lancashire's academies from an early age. Rocky's century against Warwickshire came the week after his maiden 50, in a second XI match against Durham — an innings that also contained three hard-struck sixes.

Rocky and Corey play club cricket for Southport & Birkdale, and both attend Manchester Grammar School, which counts Mike Atherton, John Crawley and Lancashire's director of cricket, Mark Chilton, among its alumni.

Andrew is with the England white-ball squad at the T20 World Cup as an assistant coach, having come back into

cricket last year, working with the white-ball team and the England Lions. He will take up his role as head coach of Northern Superchargers in the Hundred at the end of July.

It is unusual (although not unprecedented) for someone as young as 16 to be selected in an under-19 squad — they are usually made up of 18 and 19-year-

Rocky's shots and mannerisms have reminded watchers of his father

olds — but it is often the first recognition for players who have been identified as having international potential. Many of the squad have already made their first-team county debuts, while others have been selected based on age-group or second XI cricket, but identified by the ECB's team of scouts.

The squad for the three-match series features a number of familiar names: the side will be captained by Essex's Luc Benkenstein, son of Dale, the Lancashire head coach. Also in the 16-man

group is Haydon Mustard, son of the former England and Durham wicket-keeper Phil, Thomas Rew, the younger brother of James, who has been tipped for international honours, and Farhan Ahmed, the younger brother of Rehan, who has just signed his first professional contract with Nottinghamshire.

England U19 squad v Sri Lanka: Luc Benkenstein (Essex; captain), Farhan Ahmed (Notts), Tazeem Ali (Warks), Charlie Allison (Essex), Noah Cornwell (Midds), Rocky Flintoff (Lancs), Keshana Fonseka (Lancs), Eddie Jack (Hants), Dom Kelly (Hants), Freddie McCann (Notts), Harry Moore (Derbys), Haydon Mustard (Durham), Thomas Rew (Somerset), Noah Thain (Essex), Raphael Weatherall (Northants), Theo Wylie (Warks)
Fixtures: June 28 day-night, Chelmsford. July 1 11am, Hove. July 3 11am, Hove.



Murray: I may not compete at Olympics if I don't play doubles

CONTINUED FROM BACK

against me. It makes me feel better that I managed to beat her and the umpire at the same time. It was something I had to deal with and overcome."

This was Raducanu's first match on grass for two years and her first in front of a home crowd in the same period. She was quickly into her stride, setting her irritation at the officiating aside to race through the first set in only 31 minutes.

On her previous visit to Nottingham, two years ago, she had lasted 33 minutes in a first-round match against Viktorija Golubic before she was forced to retire with an injury, a pattern that would become all too familiar.

The decision to miss the French Open was taken in the hope of ensuring she remains fit for the rest of this season, on grass courts this summer and then hard courts later in the year, and the quality of her play after seven weeks away was better than she had perhaps expected.

"I'm surprised in a way, how well I came out and played," she said. "I didn't really know how it would go, but my intentions were great from the start."

Raducanu broke her opponent's serve in the opening game, clinching the break with a delicate backhand lob from Shibahara's drop shot. Shibahara, 26, who won the mixed doubles at the French Open two years ago with Wesley Koolhof, attempted to attack Raducanu with a serve-volley approach, but she was undone by the quality of returns from the British player.

Her only wobble came when she had opened up a 5-1 lead in the second set and her serve suddenly began to misfire, causing her to be broken twice. "The only thing that needs some training in live situations is serving out a match, like today," Raducanu said. "It's not quite the same in practice trying to replicate serving out a match."

Once again, at 5-3, an umpiring call went against her and there are no challenges to Hawk-Eye in this tournament. "It's not just me, Harriet [Dart] was saying the same thing; quite a few players say it," Raducanu said. "It's difficult when there's no challenge. It does add to the drama for the spectators, but for us it can be the most frustrating thing ever."

"It happens so often, but this year I



Raducanu won her first match on grass for two years and admitted that she was surprised by how well she had performed

actually feel Hawk-Eye has been a little bit off, so it doesn't really make a difference at the end of the day."

After that brief period of concern, Raducanu recovered to break Shibahara for the sixth time in the match, booking a second-round match against Daria Snigur, the world No127 from Ukraine.

Cameron Norrie followed Dan Evans into the second round of the men's tournament. After Evans, the world No62, had completed a 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 victory over Dominic Stricker, the world No144 from Switzerland, Norrie beat Sho Shimabukuro, the Japanese

world No215, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3. Meanwhile, Andy Murray has revealed that he is considering giving the Paris Olympics a miss after a first-round defeat at the Stuttgart Open. The 37-year-old lost 6-3, 6-4 to Marcos Giron, the world No54 from the United States.

Although Murray is entitled to place for the Olympics because of his status as a three-times grand-slam champion and two-times gold medallist he has now admitted that he may not take it up. This follows his suggestion in March that he would go to Paris only if he felt he could win a medal.

A further factor is Neal Skupski

falling down the doubles rankings, meaning there may be only one British pair competing. This could force British Olympic chiefs to put forward Joe Salisbury and Skupski as the sole pair.

"I need to see what happens with the Olympics," Murray said. "I'm not 100 per cent sure what the situation is there with the doubles yet and whether or not I will play if I just get in the singles. I don't know. My body didn't feel great playing on the clay in the last month or so. I had quite a few issues with my back, so I don't know if I would go just for singles. I need to wait a little bit and see on that."

England stars are yet to agree new 'hybrid' deals

Rugby union
Elgan Alderman

England players are still negotiating the terms of their new hybrid contracts for next season as they prepare to fly out for their three-Test summer tour.

While the squad trained yesterday morning, Ellis Genge and Anthony Watson, who are not travelling to Japan and New Zealand, met Bill Sweeney, the RFU chief executive, at Twickenham to discuss commercial and welfare issues. That meeting came as the RFU opened up its financial books to the new organisation that is negotiating the players' relationship with the union.

England players voted to replace the Rugby Players' Association with a new agency to handle contracts and commercial deals with the RFU. Known as Team England Rugby, the new body has Jamie George, Maro Itoje, Joe Marler, Genge and Watson as directors. The hybrid contracts, of which 25 could be available, form part of the new Professional Game Partnership, which is set to begin next month. Under the deal international players could earn in the region of £160,000 in lieu of match fees, which were valued up to £23,000.

Itoje — who will fly out on the tour today with the squad, despite being only 102 minutes shy of the season



George said he was happy with the negotiations

workload limit imposed upon players — and George, the England captain, were the first to agree to the contracts in principle. The lack of progress was described as "alarming" by sources and club directors of rugby such as Mark McCall at Saracens had urged a resolution to the contract limbo. The RFU wants the "enhanced Elite Player Squad" finalised by November.

After a "two-year odyssey" of negotiations, a club-country deal worth £33million a year to Gallagher Premiership clubs was agreed in principle in April, giving the RFU more control over players.

"We probably had to get our own house in order first, but we're really happy with where we're at and negotiations with the RFU are ongoing," George said. "We met with [the RFU] around a month ago. The RFU were so honest in terms of opening up the books, letting us see everything, proposing how things look going forward."

"That's the best thing about the players having control of our contracts and futures — being able to be at the forefront of it — and we're really happy with the representation we've had. It's been brilliant so far. There are obviously going to be challenges in the negotiations but we have the right people in the right places, represented by the right people."

"This is a collaboration. It's not us versus them. That was exactly why we wanted to do what we have done. Before it just didn't work, the synergy just wasn't there. We want to go in and say, 'Let's have this conversation.'"

"We understand we are incredibly lucky to do what we do, but also we understand that this is a business and the RFU got hit hard by Covid and all that kind of thing. Those conversations are ongoing."

I didn't give Novak respect he deserved, admits Federer

Stuart Fraser Tennis Correspondent

Roger Federer has admitted that he did not give Novak Djokovic "the respect he deserved" when he first emerged on the tour and believes the Serb initially struggled to gain support among tennis fans because he was seen as a "party crasher".

The 20-times grand-slam singles champion has given fresh insight into his rivalries with Djokovic and Rafael Nadal as part of a new behind-the-scenes documentary on his retirement two years ago. *Federer: Twelve Final Days* will be released on Amazon Prime next Monday.

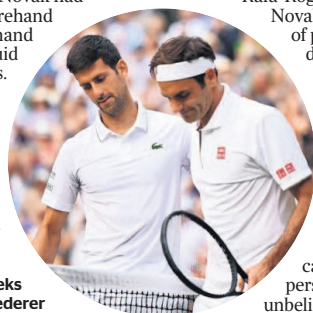
The most interesting element comes in Federer's reflections on his fellow members of the "big three". There is an acknowledgement that he underestimated the ability of Djokovic, who is now widely considered to be the greatest male player of all-time with a total of 24 grand-slam titles and 428 weeks at world No1 (118 more than Federer).

"I played him in Monaco the very first time [Federer won 6-3, 2-6, 6-3 in 2006] and I walked off the court and thought, 'Yeah, he's OK,'" Federer said. "Even though there was some hype around him, I wasn't really fully convinced."

"I think I didn't give Novak the respect he deserved because of his technical flaws. I felt like Novak had a very extreme forehand grip and his backhand for me wasn't as fluid as it is nowadays. But then he ironed those things out super well and became an unbelievable monster of a player."

Federer also touches on Djokovic's early struggles for popularity in the stands. Although Djokovic now enjoys significant backing wherever he plays, given his status, it took him some time to breach the stronghold of support that had been commandeered by Federer and Nadal. "I guess he was the party crasher of Rafa and Roger fans," Federer said. "There was a lot of Rafa-Roger love there, so when Novak came probably a lot of people said, 'Look, we don't need a third guy. We're happy with Roger and Rafa.'"

"The Federer fans at the beginning didn't really like him because they just thought, 'Roger's a bit more easy, he does it with ease'. Then Novak came in with his strong personality and that unbelievable grit of wanting



to win at all costs. I think also Novak was triggered by the relationship with the fans. That deep focus maybe scared some people away. He's been a little bit misunderstood."

The documentary also includes new footage of the period around Federer's retirement. Initially the cameras had been invited for a home video project that would capture the end of his career for family members. It was then decided months afterwards to release the material as part of a documentary.

Clips of Federer at home in Zurich show him preparing to announce that he is retiring because of knee pain. His wife, Mirka, is in tears at the prospect. "Telling the kids in the room about my retirement was hard," Federer said. "Three of the kids cried, Mirka cried. It was obviously very emotional. It's only afterwards where I started to realise how much Mirka had been suffering. I don't remember her begging me to stop but, of course, she was asking the question, 'Why are we still doing this?'"

Gold eludes Neita by barest margin

Rick Broadbent Rome

Daryll Neita was a hundredth of a second away in her pursuit of her first senior solo gold medal in the Stadio Olimpico last night. The smallest of margins spawned the biggest of frowns, and while a European 200m medal is no trifle, she confessed she craved a little extra.

To rub salt into the raw wounds, Switzerland's Mufinga Kambundji clocked 22.49sec, the time that Neita had run in her semi-final the previous night. Ifs, buts, dips and maybes.

"I am honestly just so disappointed because I really wanted that medal," she said. "I should have got it. I could feel myself dipping, which isn't my strongest point." Helen Parisot, of France, took the bronze.

The normally bubbly Londoner was utterly deflated. Her time of 22.50sec is average for her and she beat it seven times last year alone. It means the wait goes on for the woman who made her first Olympics at 19. The upside is she upgraded her bronze from two years ago but you could tell it was no kind of silver lining.

"I'm happy for the winner," Neita added, graciously. "I'm not a bitter person. I'm just upset at myself because I came here for the gold. I'm grateful to finish the race healthy and it is still the middle of the season so I can't let this dictate how the rest of my season goes."

Neita had felt the stars were aligning. Now that she is based 300 miles away in Padua, this was almost a home championship for her. She has taken to Italian life well. Melon the chihuahua was safely at home and, she was told, watching, but on a night when Gianmarco Tamperi, the Italian high jumper with half a beard, won the gold, ripped off his shirt and made a beeline for the president in the crowd, she was a whisker away. With Dina Asher-Smith concentrating on the 100m, and winning that, it was a missed opportunity to climb out of her long shadow.

Earlier, Megan Keith bored herself to near tears as she won a 10,000m bronze medal in her rookie event. She kept her cool in chaotic circumstances with a dearth of sponges and



Switzerland's Kambundji, far right, crosses the line one hundredth of a second ahead of Neita to claim 200m gold in 22.49sec, the time Neita had run in her semi-final



Keith, above, won 10,000m bronze but McColgan, left, had to drop out of the race



officials struggling to keep track of who had been lapped in an overcrowded

field. Another home star, Nadia Battocletti, completed the distance double, with Diane van Es, of the Netherlands, taking silver, but it was a fine effort from the Scottish student, 22, who ran her first 10,000m only in March.

While she had not been entirely thrilled by the experience, she realised she was good at it. "I'm still getting to grips with how mundane it is," she had said of the 25-lap race, adding that she had never even watched a 10,000m on TV. "I find them pretty boring." After finishing 13 seconds behind Battocletti, who set an Italian record of 30min 51.32sec, Keith said: "I enjoy them more than I let on but I stand by it being monotonous. I'm really happy, though. I gave it a shot for a brighter colour but you can't not be happy with a bronze."

Keith was the fastest of the field this year, and mixed up her tactics, but knew she was not going to outkick the two women ahead. Ultimately, Battocletti, who had not raced over the distance this year, was a class apart.

It was a punishing night for Eilish McColgan, who needed a strong performance to prove "form and fitness" to the GB Olympic selectors, but she dropped out with ten laps to go. She has suffered on and off the track over the past year. A string of injuries have sidelined her, and the deaths of her stepfather and grandmother in the past seven months have been emotionally hard. "I am gutted to drop out but there was nothing there," she said. "I got to halfway and thought, 'I'm in trouble today.' I knew straight away going through 5k I was going to struggle to keep going, I even felt a bit dizzy toward the end. I was hoping for a bit of a miracle after a lack of training, but miracles don't really exist in distance running."

Lina Nielsen is another who has had an emotional time both here and throughout her career. The 400m hurdler is an inspiring figure who has been running with multiple sclerosis since the age of 17. The symptoms come and go for her, and the worst attack was so

debilitating that her identical twin sister, Laviai, had to brush her teeth. Laviai, who also had the disease diagnosed, two weeks before her Olympic debut in 2021, ran a personal best to finish sixth in the 400m final on Monday.

A day on and Lina toiled home last in the 400m hurdles, but it has been a tough time for the sisters after their coach, Tony Lester, suffered a heart attack last week. Femke Bol won, obviously, in another championship record of 52.49.

In the men's race Norway's Karsten Warholm won his third European title, to go with his Olympic one, and it felt like the bad old days for the GB 4x100m men's team as they fumbled the baton and came last in their heat.

"It was horrendous," confirmed the veteran bend runner Richard Kilty, who was running with CJ Ujah, the man he said he would never forgive after his doping ban led to the GB team being stripped of their Olympic silver medals from 2021.

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In a nondescript chambers in the EC4 area of London, an arbitration is taking place that will change football for ever. Or maybe not. That will usher in a duopoly lasting decades. But probably won't. That will destroy the very fabric of the game we know and love. Although that's really quite unlikely.

We've heard from everybody in the past week, since *The Times* broke the story of Manchester City's challenge to the Premier League. Henny Penny, Cocky Locky, Goosey Loosey, Turkey Lurkey, Ducky Lucky, Chicken Licken. They're all on the move because the sky's coming in, if you know your European folklore, or maybe just your Happy Mondays.

But it's not. The sky isn't falling, no matter what the arbitrators decide. Teams can field only 11 players. Good players do not want to be in the reserves. Managers leave. Bad decisions get made. Nothing is for ever, not even in the Bundesliga, as Harry Kane rather frustratingly discovered.

There are two main possible outcomes to City's challenge to the league over Associated Party Transactions (APT). City lose and the competition carries on as it is. The same financial regulations, the status quo. If they win, and APT is overturned, City will have more money to spend through larger sponsorships and investments from Abu Dhabi but, as Manchester United discovered, that doesn't always spell success either. United have been colossal spenders but haven't won the league since 2013 when Sir Alex Ferguson left, because he was a football genius and the rest of them weren't. With David Gill grafting in the corridors of power, United looked to have helped to shape football's financial rules so they were invulnerable to Ferguson's eventual departure. Wrong. And Pep Guardiola is City's Ferguson. City had the money before he arrived but couldn't retain a title, let alone win four straight, plus the Champions League. He changed it all for them. And he says he will leave in 2025. What next? There's no manager out there like Guardiola.

There are plenty of imitators. Plenty of good coaches who could be elevated by City's resources, as Roberto Mancini and Manuel Pellegrini were. But the doomy predictions aren't just centred on City as an elite club, elbows out, one of many. The forecast is that they will win in perpetuity, or share the spoils with Newcastle United, and it will be impossible to compete. If City win, football is over is the conclusion. No, it isn't.

This legal reckoning was always going to happen the more rules, the more restrictions, the more lawyers, the more accountants were allowed to suffocate the game. APT regulations are nothing new. They have been in place within Uefa for more than ten years and as far back as 2013. Martin Stopper and Tim Bagger of the sports legal experts Lentze Stopper, based in Munich, said they could contravene European law. And yet nothing from the affected clubs. Not from City, or Paris Saint-Germain, or Wolfsburg or Bayer Leverkusen or PSV Eindhoven.

Nothing, indeed, until February, when a further escalation of APT rulings in the Premier League left a minority of clubs with pretty much nothing to lose. City may have overegged their victimhood, but not half as much as the league and its member clubs overegged the workings of APT and Profitability and Sustainability Rules; a whole maypole of red tape they all dance around that is, at root, protectionist.

What changed? Well, for a start, burden of proof. It moved from the league having to demonstrate a related party had artificially inflated



City will surely struggle to replicate their success — six titles in seven years — when Guardiola leaves

Martin Samuel

Sky won't fall in even if City win their court case

The voice of sport

a sponsorship deal, to a club having to prove it had not. And if it couldn't, charges would follow on the grounds that "all reasonable care" had not been used to avoid this. So not just a block on the deal, but charges. Because the Premier League likes nothing more than putting its members in the dock these days. That's why it spent £28 million on external legal counsel last season.

To prove fair market value there must also be an under-bidder, whose details are revealed. Yet clubs work very hard on the sponsorship market. If British Airways is beaten by, say, a Gulf concern, why would the club working on that deal want to notify their competitors that BA has serious money to invest in football? They may want to revisit that partnership in other ways. Naming rights, training ground sponsorship, one of those little logos on the sleeve.

Why give a rival the heads-up? It makes no commercial sense.

Neither does the length of time it is now taking to get deals approved. The business of football moves fast. Chelsea missed the break on lucrative shirt sponsorship last summer, because the Premier League would not green-light Paramount+ for fear it would conflict with their

broadcast partners. They only got approval for a replacement, Infinite Athlete, in October and there has been subsequent APT controversy because of the company's investment links with the Chelsea co-owners Clearlake Capital. If Chelsea are among the clubs supporting City, and citing the time it is taking to get deals approved, who can blame them? Waits of four months are not uncommon, making some commercial transactions unworkable, and forcing down earning potential.

The idea that anyone knows what is fair across every industry and every club is equally overplayed. Uefa ruled a €200 million-a-year deal between the Qatar Tourism Authority and PSG was not fair market value in 2012. Yet for a country looking to get on the map, was it? Qatar was a future host of the World Cup, and wishes to host an Olympics. Qatari money helped to deliver Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi to PSG so that the main protagonists at the World Cup final between France and Argentina in Doha were also symbols of Qatar's arrival on the world stage.

And that isn't worth €200 million? Maybe not to an established business. But to Qatar? Who at Uefa truly knows the qualitative value of such a wide-ranging project? Who at the Premier League is qualified to know what the Newcastle venture is actually worth to Saudi Arabia. It's certainly more vital than it was for Mike Ashley. A deal between Newcastle and Saudi investors cannot be compared to a deal cut with Sports Direct. So much of APT restriction involves a wanton misunderstanding of the nature of investment.

"The tyranny of the majority," claimed Manchester City, and everyone laughed. It's

Racism accusations are just plane wrong

Tony Burnett, the chief executive of anti-discrimination charity Kick It Out, thinks he knows how the media works. He doesn't. If he believes Bukayo Saka ended up on the back pages of a number of national newspapers on Saturday because he's black, Burnett knows nothing.

George Formby understood. "If you want to get your photo in the press," he sang, "you must be different, some kind of way." And Saka was. His image encapsulated England's defeat at home to Iceland for one simple reason: he was throwing a paper aeroplane. That childish object has come to symbolise a dreary, mediocre England performance at Wembley. Paper aeroplanes rain down when England are losing or the crowd is bored. They have become the equivalent of Nou Camp's white handkerchiefs.

For Saka, in his England shirt, to be pictured throwing one rendered many thousands of disparaging words redundant. The shot combined the defeat and the public reaction to it. On this newspaper, it was felt the injury to John Stones so close to a tournament was more significant than an abject performance in a friendly, so his picture appeared instead. Fair enough. Yet for those focusing on the defeat, Saka's uncommon act was perfect.

It is irrelevant too that Saka contributed to only 25 minutes of the 90. His performance was as insignificant to the story as the colour of his skin. A white player, on for five minutes, but throwing a paper aeroplane would have become the motif just the same. Without the plane, Saka gets nowhere near any back page.

When photographers crowd around the England manager at a press conference, do you know what they are looking for? Clue: not a picture of a man sitting on a chair behind a desk. They want the moment he puts his head in his hands, or pulls a face, does something expressive. The leader of the Liberal Democrats as good as announced his manifesto on a rollercoaster just to get his gurning mug in the paper.

So, newspapers didn't require lectures on responsibility from Burnett. But they will reserve the right to put whatever looks of interest on the pages. Particularly as we presume to charge for them.

called democracy, they sneered. But it's not. At the risk of explaining John Stuart Mill to the Oxbridge set, in football, if every rule, every policy, every regulatory development, is intended to be a curb on the same minority — and backed by the prevailing opinion — that is as much tyranny as democracy. And since Financial Fair Play was introduced, in whatever form it is manifested, it has always been aimed at specific clubs. First Chelsea, then City, now Newcastle.

When FFP was initially discussed it was to address debt, which would have hugely affected Manchester United under the Glazers. Then it pivoted, so the bogeyman became owner investment and putting money into football became a bigger crime than taking it out. The multi-club ownership model was also going to be a problem, until more established members of the elite copied the Red Bull, City Football Group idea, so now that threat seems to be receding too. Remember, it's only dirty oil money when it's buying players for City. Not when it's sponsoring Arsenal's stadium, or is the longest-running commercial partnership at Old Trafford.

There could be a compromise in arbitration this week. Win some, lose some. Yet it remains strange that everyone thinks the alternative to protectionism is a free-for-all. It's not. It's a spending cap. Not linked to income, not anchored to the worst club in the league. One figure for all. And no loans. If the number is £400 million on wages and transfer fees, then 20 clubs can spend it, but the owner can't loan it. If the club only generate £100 million, a further £300 million can be added, but only as a gift. An owner can't ask for it back if he leaves. Straightforward. Easily regulated.

You've either generated the money, or you've been given the money, but when you've spent that money, if you choose to spend the money, you're done. And if Guardiola is your manager you'll quite possibly win the league; and if he isn't, you probably won't. But, either way, the sky won't fall in.



Sport Euro 2024

Costly Euros miss and a goal past 'Rip Van Winkle'

ITV's Ally McCoist talks **Michael Grant** through his Scotland memories, and why he thinks England can win Euro 2024



There are conventions to be upheld when it comes to an Ally McCoist interview and chief among them is the Herculean struggle it takes to sit him down in the first place, to actually get to the point where he is across the table, the coffees have been poured and he's settling down to unwind for a blether. Santiago had an easier job landing that marlin in *The Old Man and the Sea*.

It begins with an email to his personal secretary, who politely replies that McCoist says yes and will be in touch the following week. He duly calls and a couple of dates are suggested. Closer to them, you send him a text. Nothing. So you send an email. Nothing. Eventually, with hope fading, he does call again to confirm a time and place. On the day, he phones to say he is running late. Then he phones again: that lateness he mentioned? He's really sorry but he'll be even later than that. When he arrives he hands me his phone to show he had tried unsuccessfully to send a text saying he would be later still.

You could read a book between the agreed meeting time for a McCoist interview and his actual arrival for it. Maybe even write one. When he finally barrels in, immediately joking that being 75 minutes late is a personal best, we both know it isn't. I know McCoist well enough to have taken a laptop along, so work could be done during the wait. It need hardly be said that the wait is always worth it.

That personal secretary is nothing of the sort, of course. Her name is Vivien McCoist, portrayed by the man himself as having the patience of a saint for not only putting up with him but navigating the organisational minefield of running his personal diary. "She used to have a full head of hair," he says of his wife. "Now I don't recognise her. The only bald lady in Bridge of Weir."

A newspaper profile talked about how people are attracted to McCoist. It described his life as laughter, hysterical gushing convulsions of it which seemingly carried him from

one golden moment to the next. That piece appeared in 1993. It could have been written yesterday. In general, people have never tired of McCoist. At 61 the charm, wit, and natural, streetwise intelligence which has shone for decades has propelled him beyond the Rangers and Scotland days into a second outstanding career in broadcasting. Still an evolving one too, given his burgeoning popularity as a co-commentator. The eternally playful joker showed how seriously he should be taken when he won the pundit of the year category at the British Sports Journalism Awards in 2023, getting commended for being "funny, informed and a joy to listen to, he enriches without excess or irrelevance".

To him it was a big deal to be so highly rated by his peers. "It was. Absolutely. I was delighted to finish third this year too. You're not just up against Roy Keane, Phil Neville, Jamie Carragher and Graeme Souness. It's Mike Atherton, Nasser Hussein, you know. Andrew Coltart. It's the big league. I was absolutely thrilled."

"I love it what I'm doing. Maybe that's the one thing that comes across on the comms, sitting on the halfway line at the biggest games on the planet. But you have to do your preparation and your homework and all that stuff. I was always comfortable that I had the knowledge to do it and that I could put it over in a manner that the football fan could relate to and listen to."

The first things people associate him with on air — other than infectious enthusiasm — are the jokey one-liners and the potential to dissolve into laughter. But he has said it before: he's not there to be Billy Connolly. "You are there to pass on information because you are knowledgeable and you have experience. You're not there because you have a sense of humour. You have to remember that. That said, if you can pass it on in a manner which endears you to people that is a big plus. You'll never endear yourself to everyone. Especially here."

Here is Glasgow. His life is a tennis rally of shuttles between two airports, Glasgow and London City, so many trips he claims the security staff give him high-fives and ask what he's been up to in the, erm, 48 hours since they last talked. The usual duties as a presenter on talkSPORT's breakfast show are accompanied this month by him bringing his Rolls-Royce co-commentary act to Euro 2024 for ITV. He will be in Munich on Friday night for Germany against Scotland, the tournament's opening game. The last time Scotland were at a major



tournament overseas, and opening it, was 26 years ago, when they faced Brazil in the curtain-raiser for France '98.

McCoist was on the mic then too and he could be seen as well as heard. He had a chat show with the Scottish comedian Fred MacAulay and a decision was taken that on the eve of the game it would be a hoot to broadcast it from the centre of Paris. "We're filming the show from the first floor of the Eiffel Tower and there were Scotland fans climbing up, trying to get around a bit of barbed wire to get into the show. We're looking at the first floor of the Eiffel Tower and all we can see are these hairy arses trying to get in. Crazy. That was one of the... I won't say great nights, but let's say unforgettable. The Auld Alliance stuff was the same night."

That was why the night was far from great. The Auld Alliance is a Scottish pub in Paris which was packed with fans. McCoist was there with the TV star Ulrika Jonsson when she was assaulted by her boyfriend at the time, Stan Collymore, during an argument. Fans turned on Collymore and he subsequently issued a public apology for the incident, which ended their relationship. "That was an episode which should never be forgotten," McCoist says. "An absolutely shocking episode."

This time he will be in Germany for the duration. "I think I will get back, right enough, for wee bits and pieces. I've got to get back for the wee man's [Harris, his youngest son's] prizegiving. This is his last year, so he's leaving school. I've got to get to Cologne right after the [Scotland v Switzerland] game and then get a



Scotland's game against Switzerland next Wednesday will bring back fond memories for McCoist, who scored against the Swiss at Euro '96, main. He will work with Laura Woods, above, as part of ITV's coverage in Germany

flight the following morning to Schiphol and I've got to get into Glasgow by about quarter to nine and then get to the church."

I couldn't look more doubtful about this if he had suggested he was intending to split the atom. "Oh I know, I know. I don't fancy it either. I didn't say I fancy it, not for one minute!"

A little-known quality McCoist has is a remarkably detailed memory of the games he played in. And not just the games when he scored or which had some particular significance for him. Remind him that he played in Steve Clarke's debut for Scotland, for example, and he's immediately finishing sentences and filling in the blanks. It was September 9, 1987, Scotland 2, Hungary 0 in a friendly at Hampden. "I scored them both. The goalie should have saved the first one. Durranty [Ian Durrant, his great Rangers pal] played me through and I

banged it in. And here's another thing, the goalkeeper had a beard. He looked like Rip Van Winkle."

Is he making that up? "I'm not winding you up! Look it up. There you are, you're getting information here you never thought you'd get."

He liked Clarke as a team-mate and has huge admiration for what he has done as Scotland manager. "Back then he was quiet. I didn't play with him often or know him particularly well. Great career though. I get on great with him. Stevie is perfect for the job, he really is. Doesn't get

carried away when we do well, doesn't get too down when we don't do well. For a Scottish manager that's perfect. Don't get me wrong, I enjoyed Ally MacLeod, but to say Stevie is a contrast to him might be putting it lightly."

Of the 405 goals he scored in a fabulous career — including 355 for Rangers and 19 for Scotland — one of the most memorable came in the summer of 1996. Scotland play Switzerland in Cologne next Wednesday and when the countries previously met at the European Championship it was Euro '96 and McCoist scored the only goal at Villa Park. An un-McCoist-like goal too, from outside the box.

"I had another two chances before I scored," he says. "One of them I probably should have scored and I stand by the other one, I think it was a brilliant save. You won't remember, but I do, as if it was yesterday. The strike gets shown because it was a good goal. It wasn't a typical goal for me. Gary McAllister gave me a short pass, perfect weight, I didn't have to break stride, it just flew in. I remember a chance before it, when the 'keeper made a great save and



another I should have scored. But we came off and we were through."

Scotland were going through to the knockout stage with England, who were trouncing Holland 4-0 at Wembley. But the goal difference was wafer thin and when the Dutch pulled it back to 4-1, the countries flipped. "Patrick Kluijvert scored and that put us out. By the way, a great line for you, I was at a dinner a couple of years back and a few of the English boys were there, David Seaman and them. There was a bit of patter flying about. I said to big Seaman, 'You bandit, letting that one through your legs, that cost us qualification.' He said 'I think you'll find you missing that sitter in the first half cost you qualification.' Good reply from the big man, wasn't it? Put me firmly in my place."

Self-deprecation comes easily to him. The wrestler and actor Graeme "Grado" Stevely — best known as Alan in *Two Doors Down* — has impersonated him on BBC Scotland's *The All Star Euros Sketch Show* for Euro 2024. Stevely has nailed it before, the "make no mistake about it", "I really did", and "to be brutally honest", the McCoist trademarks. "He's very good... the twat. Am I allowed to say twat in your newspaper? He's very good. You know something, I actually quite pride myself on the fact nobody could impersonate me. But he's come along. The fact my boys were all pissing themselves laughing meant I knew he had maybe struck a chord. He's very, very funny."

From the comical to the deeply sombre, for two Scots at least: could England soon be European champions? "You'd better believe England can win it, 100 per cent they can win it. I think England and France are the two best teams in it, although I actually also think Italy could win. England are unbelievably middle to front. They have been knocking on the door in the big tournaments." And Scotland? "Our

midfielders are all comfortable on the ball. That is the big difference in Scotland in the last ten years I think. Losing Lyndon Dykes is a blow because he gave us something different. Che Adams will run in behind and I think we have a goalscorer in Lawrence Shankland. He can finish. I do think we can get out of the group.

"This is a proper football tournament in a proper footballing country. And dare I say it the Scots are a little bit like the Germans in that they love their fitba, love their beer, and love a great time. I just want us to go and have a good time and enjoy ourselves and keep our reputation flying. There is something warped about us, which is great. If the English go and get into trouble we want to behave. We want to be the opposite. If they behaved themselves we'd probably want to cause a riot."

Somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 Scots will descend on Germany, including McCoist's sons. He is dad to five boys, Alexander, Mitchell, Argyll, Arran and Harris. Mitchell has a serious disability and McCoist describes him as the inspiration of his life: "One hundred per cent he is. He is the centre of the family."

For all the 100mph running around, all the air miles, McCoist always tries to be home on Saturdays so he can watch his boys' games. "The boys are and always will be the priority, it's the same for any dad. But I am enjoying the time I get with them now. I was out on the golf course yesterday, as you heard, so I do get a bit of time with them at the golf and I watch them play football."

What I heard — because he was on the phone when it happened — was McCoist squeaking in mock horror because one of the boys had whacked a golf ball which fizzed just past his head. Deliberately, he was at great pains to point out. But he was unscathed. He's not the late Ally McCoist yet. Not that way, at least.

Villa owner considers legal action over rules

Martyn Ziegler Chief Sports Reporter

The Premier League is facing the threat of another legal challenge after Aston Villa's owner Nassef Sawiris revealed that he was contemplating a formal complaint against its Profitability and Sustainability Rules.

Sawiris, Egypt's richest man, told the Financial Times that he believes the Premier League's rules are "anti-competitive" and that he is seeking legal advice about whether to mount a challenge.

The Premier League is involved in an arbitration hearing this week after Manchester City brought a legal challenge against its rules around Associated Party Transactions.

The outcome of that case is seen by some other top-flight clubs as being hugely important for the future of the league, as it could affect the size of sponsorship deals agreed with associated companies.

Villa have sided with City, owned by Abu Dhabi's vice-president Sheikh Mansour, in Premier League votes around financial rules in the past six months.

Sawiris, who announced plans in December to "redomicile" his NNS Group from London to Abu Dhabi Global Market's international finance centre, said: "Some of the rules have actually resulted in cementing the status quo more than creating upward mobility and fluidity in the sport. The rules do not make sense and are not good for football."

"Managing a sports team has become more like being a treasurer or a bean counter rather than looking at what your team needs. It's more about creating paper profits, not real profits. It becomes a financial game, not a sporting game."



Villa have joined City in claiming Premier League PSR rules are anti-competitive

He added that the sanctions for PSR breaches appeared "opaque and seemingly arbitrary".

Villa failed last week in an attempt to increase the Premier League's maximum permitted losses over three years from £105 million to £135 million. The club have previously insisted that they are operating within the PSR limit despite announcing a £119.6 million loss for last season, and the seventh-highest wage bill in the Premier League.

Leicester City have also threatened legal action against the Premier League over a possible PSR breach, and the legal costs of implementing the rules have spiralled.

The Times revealed this week that Premier League spent about £28 million on legal costs in actions involving PSR cases against Everton and Nottingham Forest, as well as City's 115 charges and the associated party arbitration. It is also investigating Chelsea over payments made during Roman Abramovich's ownership and has yet to approve a move by the London club to sell two hotels to a company.

The Premier League declined to comment. It has had limits to financial losses in place since 2013 but it is only since last year, when clubs were charged with breaches for the first time, that those limits have been challenged.

Ten Hag to stay after United explored alternative options

CONTINUED FROM BACK

important to come to the right decision. End-of-season reviews are expected to be a regular occurrence under Ineos.

As well as the former Chelsea managers Tuchel and Pochettino, it is understood that United spoke to Kieran McKenna and Thomas Frank, while the England manager, Gareth Southgate, was also thought to be of interest. However, those were background conversations while they weighed up whether to retain Ten Hag.

Since Ratcliffe's partial takeover of the club in December, the new management team have been analysing every department in the hope of returning United to their former glories. This has included various cost-cutting measures and a clampdown on employees working from home.

While the manager will remain the same, a raft of changes is expected elsewhere at Old Trafford this summer. Omar Berrada will officially begin in his role as chief executive next month while Wilcox, the

former Blackburn Rovers and England winger, started as technical director last month, and Dan Ashworth is expected to join as football director from Newcastle United.

Ten Hag finished third in the Premier League and won the Carabao Cup in his first season in charge but last season was a huge disappointment, despite ending with the FA Cup success.

The United manager was not helped by a spate of injuries, especially in defence, and stated at one point that he would have won 75 of his first 100 matches in charge had it not been for the missing personnel.

Ten Hag said before the FA Cup final that he had already received many offers, one of which was believed to have been from his former club Ajax, but the vast majority of United fans wanted to see him stay at the club.

The Red Army, a United fans' group, called on Ratcliffe to stick with Ten Hag. "Sir Jim, if you care about the match going fans (and proper Utd [fans] everywhere), you'll stand by our manager," the group posted on X. "We want him to stay, do the right thing."



Ten Hag claimed to have had other job offers

No Mbappé, no viewers?

Martyn Ziegler

French football is facing a defining moment with its galactico era coming to an end just as the top league is struggling to sell its domestic TV rights with only two months to go before the start of the new season.

The departure of Kylian Mbappé from Paris Saint-Germain, following on from the exits of Lionel Messi and Neymar a year ago, may not be the cause of the TV rights crisis but the diminishing profile of France's top flight hardly helps.

According to experts and club insiders, the main issue is that the Ligue de Football Professionnel, which runs the top two divisions of French football, is paying the price for rejecting an offer from its long-time broadcast partner, Canal+, for the 2020-24 rights; Canal+ has refused to bid this time around.

The most likely outcome now — in what is viewed by analysts as a highly risky move — is for the French league to sell the matches directly to viewers via telecommunications platforms, in what would be a first for a major football league; it would not guarantee a minimum level of income either.

François Godard, of Enders Analysis, said selling directly to consumers was "very risky" as it was untested. "You are giving up the value of exclusivity," he added. "I am worried they are going to be burning their boats."

Southgate knows he's at the

Jonathan Northcroft

Jena



Euro 2024 to give City £4m

Martyn Ziegler

Manchester City are in line to earn close to £4 million from Uefa for releasing 14 players for Euro 2024.

City are the Premier League club with the highest number of players going to the tournament, and although Uefa has yet to confirm the figures, it is estimated clubs will receive €10,500 (about £8,850) for each day that one of their players is on international duty. Arsenal have the next-highest number of players with 11, followed by Liverpool on ten and Manchester United with eight.

Uefa announced two years ago that the amount of money paid for the release of players for Euro 2024 would rise from €130 million to €140 million. The payments to clubs will be split into three tiers depending on the size of their league — on the basis that those in the bigger leagues will have higher wage bills.

Clubs will be paid for ten days before the tournament plus a minimum of ten days for the group stage and then for as long as their players remain in the Euro 2024 knockout stage. Under a similar scheme for Fifa's 2022 World Cup, City received £3.5 million. That means City will be due a minimum of £2.5 million for their 14 players but, given the experience of previous European Championships and World Cups, they should receive close to £4 million. Arsenal should receive a minimum of £1.95 million.

Clubs are also in line for payments for their players being involved in the Nations League. Uefa increased the total for that tournament to €100 million, a rise of €30 million, so City can expect a further estimated £2 million.

Chelsea were the biggest English beneficiaries from Uefa's benefits programme for 2018 to 2020, earning nearly £5 million.

Holland, his assistant. With the Bild comments he is taking a position of more nuance.

Southgate is not saying he will go in all circumstances, only if England fail to deliver, and he will hope this serves a dual purpose: it may help to reduce noise if he removes speculation about his position; and, by laying things on the line like this, it creates motivation.

He is taking personal ownership of the idea that, for England, it is time to achieve, and he wants players to share it too. His message was also about them. "If we want to be a big team and I want to be a top coach, then you have to deliver in the big moments," he said.

The danger is there will be noise

anyway. Saving your best lines for the foreign media is not a tactic that endears national managers to everyone in their own country's press pack. As for speculation, it will just come in a different form. What next for Southgate? Who next for England? Those questions will build.

Watching him at Ernst-Abbe-Sportfeld he did not look a man ready to relinquish the world he has created during his eight years in charge, where culture work and deep thinking about unity and levity (of the shirt) have been central.

In Jena, this was England, the model tourists, under blue skies and sunshine performing a fun and boisterous workout tailored to an audience dominated by local children crazy about Kane and Jude Bellingham. The players looked relaxed yet sharp. You watched Southgate standing, smiling, a ball tucked under his arm, bantering with Kane and Kieran Trippier as he refereed games of football tennis. He is so good at this stuff. And yet the thought occurred that, next tournament, it will probably be someone else's kingdom.

Ernst-Abbe-Sportfeld belongs to Carl Zeiss Jena, now a mid-table team in Germany's Regionalliga Nordost (fourth tier) but European Cup Winners' Cup runners-up in 1981.

The quirks of the locality England have chosen don't end there. Both Jena and Blankenhain, the village 25 miles away where the team are based, are in the state of Thuringia, once ruled by a line of kings who seemed to specialise in colourful titles. There was Hermann The Hard, Louis The Bearded, Henry The Illustrious and a certain Albert The Degenerate — one of whose several wives was the granddaughter of King John of England.

Blankenhain, with a population of about 6,600, does have echoes of Baden-Baden, with its serene, spacious avenues and affluent feel. It's the kind of place where flowers spew from window boxes and little windmills and fountains sit cutely in the gardens. Outside the castle that will be England's media centre is a giant floral display of a St George cross and a German flag.

Kane, ever the pro, was first player to visit it — at 10am — to look round and do a photoshoot. Later, the entire England squad was there for green-screen filming of TikTok-style poses and goal celebrations, for television to use. They have been enjoying this, the fun part of the tournament cycle,

before all the games and the seriousness and, before leaving St George's Park on Monday, a presentation of their tournament shirts made an impression on everyone.

Every player was given a box, which they opened to find their shirt, and notes about its number and the history and legacy of the position they play. In Kane's were cards of all the previous No 9s to play for England in the European Championship, from Peter Beardsley to Alan Shearer with, on the back, the story of their development journeys, plus there was a Kane card, including his own story.

Yes, Southgate does do this stuff well and players will miss him if it's the last dance. "From a selfish point I would want him to stay. I love working with him and his staff," Anthony Gordon said.

From my youth journey with England the way they have transitioned the whole set-up from youth to senior level has been absolutely amazing. I don't think [Southgate] gets the credit he deserves."

Bellingham's success on the field has brought him a deal with Kim Kardashian's SKIMS clothing company, right. He enjoyed training with Saka yesterday, below, with Luke Shaw, far right, and Kobbie Mainoo, bottom right, involved



Local love for Kane,

Paul Joyce

Jena



players doing stretching exercises under the supervision of FA staff member Suzanne Scott.

The 30-year-old striker had been the first player out at training, which was open to about 500 locals, and soon heard his name chanted by the youngsters in the crowd, who had followed his goalscoring exploits with Bayern Munich this season. Over and over again it sounded, eliciting a wave of acknowledgement from Kane in return.

England will normally train at their own base, but Uefa insisted on one public arrangement. However, everyone looked at ease.

After the stretching had been done, the players moved on to another drill, which involved stepping over a row of five hurdles, before the routine was completed by a third discipline.

A few yards away, four weighted contraptions had been spaced out on the touchline. Resistance harnesses were attached and Southgate's squad

Whether the public are keeping faith is also something he is highly attuned to. He can never forget the contrast of striding around Wembley to the giddy strains of "Southgate, you're the one" at Euro 2020 — which was played in 2021 — to being humiliated at Molineux a year later as he left the pitch to the furious taunts of "You don't know what you're doing" after losing 4-0 to Hungary. He has never wanted to be that unpopular manager whose presence is a weight on his players.

For that reason he considered announcing before the 2022 World Cup that he would quit after those finals only to regather his resolve and change his mind following discussions with his family and Steve

Southgate could be in the final days of his reign



Serbia v England

Arena AufSchalke, Gelsenkirchen
Sunday, 8pm
BBC1, talkSPORT

point of 'now or never'

'If we're not taking care, things could escalate'

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER BRADLEY ORMESHER



CONTINUED FROM BACK

would be available, with fans also limited to buying only two drinks at a time when they visit concession stands at the Arena AufSchalke.

As many as 40,000 England fans are expected to attend the game, with additional steps including a ban on taking drinks to seats inside the stadium, as well as a ban on alcohol and glass in Gelsenkirchen's main square, Heinrich König Platz, on match day.

At overseas tournaments in recent years, England's fans have had an excellent record of behaviour. While there were 599 arrests at Euro 2020, all in the UK, there were no England supporters arrested in Qatar at the 2022 World Cup, only three in Russia in 2018 and 46 in France at the Euros two years before that. But there are concerns with regard to a section of Serbian fans, and for a generation of younger travelling England fans this will be their first overseas tournament.

A Uefa spokesman said: "The local organisers and police decided to only allow the sale of beer with reduced alcohol percentage. The police in Gelsenkirchen also do not want to allow fans to bring their cups to their seats for matches in that venue. There is no such restriction in any of the other venues."

At the World Cup in Qatar, fans had to drink alcohol-free beer after the organisers made an 11th-hour decision to ban alcohol at tournament venues. It caused serious embarrassment to Fifa, for whom Budweiser is a key sponsor.

Here, however, the decision to serve low-alcohol beer is motivated by other factors, with a mob of up to 500 Serbian thugs expected to be among the 8,000 fans following the Balkan side.

Chief inspector Christof Burghardt told Sky News: "I think it's a very high-risk game because of the hooligans both sides have. Serbia has many hooligans. The English guys, with alcohol, they are sometimes very aggressive. So it's a great job to do this, to prepare."

Andreas Schär, the managing director of Euro 2024, also said the measures were to avoid trouble. "The authorities rated that match from the start as a high-risk match," he told the BBC. "If we're not taking care, it could escalate."

while Rice and Trent start striking up a rapport

Stones returns to full training

John Stones has handed Gareth Southgate a boost by shrugging off an ankle injury and returning to full training before England's opening Euro 2024 match with Serbia.

The centre back is key to England's hopes of winning the tournament, but was substituted at half-time against Iceland last Friday. However, he was involved in yesterday's open training session in Jena, along with all other 25 members of Southgate's squad.

Luke Shaw continues to step up his recovery from a hamstring injury, but the left back wore a green bib at the end of the drills, which indicated his participation during a game was non-contact. Southgate has been hoping that Shaw could feature against Denmark on June 20.

took it in turns to be hooked up to those and take part in some gentle movements across the pitch.

Everything was light-hearted and it was noticeable that Trent Alexander-Arnold and Declan Rice were side-by-side and in deep conversation at the start and also when taking part in the hurdle exercise.

There remains a feeling that they could be partners in midfield for England's opening group C match against Serbia in Gelsenkirchen on Sunday, and strengthening relationships off the pitch will be key to improving understanding on it.

Southgate has admitted that having left out Jordan Henderson, Harry Maguire, Jack Grealish and Marcus Rashford from his travelling party — 240 caps between them — new bonds have to be formed. In addition to losing Grealish, Rice is also without James Maddison, another close friend.

By the time the session had moved from rondos to games of head tennis

under a burning sun, some old allegiances had been reformed.

Alexander-Arnold and Jude Bellingham, seldom apart in Qatar, teamed up, and were a proud scalp for Bukayo Saka and Ezri Konsa. It was in these games that the competitive instincts within the squad came bubbling to the surface. It was all good-natured, of course, but there were some arguments. Anthony Gordon, who partnered Adam Wharton, did not seem cowed.

In a separate game, he stubbornly refused to entertain Bellingham's assertion that the ball had landed in the wrong area of the makeshift court. Instead, Gordon claimed the point and delivered another serve with back spin.

The whooping and hollering was nothing compared to the celebrations when Kieran Trippier jumped on Kane's back, leaving Kyle Walker incandescent in a match-up overseen by Southgate, who had allowed his

assistant, Steve Holland, to impart the opening message of the day.

Walker's thoughts on how training has evolved over the years, and the camaraderie the changes have fostered, would be interesting given that yesterday's workout felt light years away from the fare England had served up on a similar open day in Chantilly back in June 2016.

It took place at the Stade de Bourgognes four days before the European Championship round-of-16 tie with Iceland and, with hindsight, the night of humiliation that followed in Nice was no surprise.

The focus that day had been on delivering crosses. The England manager Roy Hodgson's patience soon broke as he bawled: "The quality has to be better than this." It wasn't, with a 2-1 defeat leading to England's elimination and sealing Hodgson's fate. A final lingering memory from that training day was of players standing around for long periods

while their team-mates did the drill.

Here, everyone was involved all the time, as highlighted by a game in which all 26 players were split into two teams and had to score in mini-nets that were facing the wrong way.

Saka's finish would win it for those in blue and arrived after Aaron Ramsdale and Jordan Pickford had traded goals.

In many ways, that had said it all. Southgate took over with the country still at one of its lowest ebbs after the Iceland debacle. Now, even the goalkeepers are scoring for England.

HAVE A QUESTION FOR OUR WRITERS?

Martin Samuel, Alyson Rudd, Gregor Robertson and Tom Allnutt will field your questions from 1pm today at [thetimes.com](https://www.thetimes.com)

Sport

England need favours

Jos Buttler's side facing vital few days at T20 World Cup

Mike Atherton, page 52



World according to Ally

ITV pundit on memories of the Euros and English hopes

Interview, pages 56-57



ANDREW BOYERS/ACTION IMAGES/REUTERS



Raducanu 'beat umpire as well'

John Westerby

Emma Raducanu made a winning return to action at the Rothesay Nottingham Open but criticised the umpire, saying it felt as if she was playing against two opponents.

Having missed the French Open, Raducanu, the world No 209, won her first competitive match for seven weeks 6-1, 6-4 against Ena Shibahara, a doubles specialist from Japan ranked 65 places lower, in only an hour and ten minutes.

But Raducanu was frustrated with a number of line calls and a decision from Ana Carvalho, the Brazilian umpire, to overturn a call of "out" from a backhand volley played by Shibahara in the third game of the first-round match. "I felt like I was playing two vs one, it was insane," Raducanu, 21, said. "A lot of the time they [umpiring decisions] go both ways. Today I felt like they were all

Continued on page 53

Ten Hag to stay at United

Dutchman keeps his job as manager and is to have talks over contract extension

Matt Lawton, Paul Hirst

Erik ten Hag is staying at Manchester United after the club's new co-owners Ineos abandoned their search for a new manager.

The Dutchman's future has been clouded in uncertainty despite leading his side to FA Cup glory last month, with Sir Jim Ratcliffe, the minority shareholder, assessing the qualities of a number of possible alternatives.

It is understood that United conducted a performance review of the 2023-24 season and broader first-team operations over the past fortnight. Con-

structive conversations were held and the club have now entered negotiations to extend Ten Hag's contract, having concluded that he deserves a chance to show he can work within the club's new footballing structure.

It concludes a difficult spell for the 54-year-old, given the relatively public nature of United's flirtations with other managers. There were discussions directly with — or with the representatives of — a number of candidates, including Thomas Tuchel and Mauricio Pochettino. Ratcliffe met Tuchel in Monaco as recently as last week.

Until Ten Hag led United to victory

over their rivals Manchester City at Wembley, it had seemed more than likely that Ratcliffe would call for a change in the manager's office. The FA Cup triumph was Ten Hag's second piece of silverware since joining in 2022, but that was offset against United's worst-ever Premier League finish of eighth.

Their poor league performance, combined with the desire of Ineos to put its own stamp on the club, led to a review of the manager's position which had been taking place since the cup final. Ten Hag, who flew off on holiday the day after United's 2-1 win over

City on May 25, had been hoping for a swift resolution but was left to wait for more than two weeks while discussions were held over the future of the manager, who has one year left on his present deal.

The review was undertaken by Ratcliffe and the co-chairman, Joel Glazer, who led the decision-making process. They were assisted by the Ineos director of sport, Sir Dave Brailsford, and United's recently appointed technical director, Jason Wilcox.

It took longer than expected to carry out, but United believed it was more

Continued on page 57

Alcohol limit for England

Matt Lawton

Chief Sports Correspondent, Jena

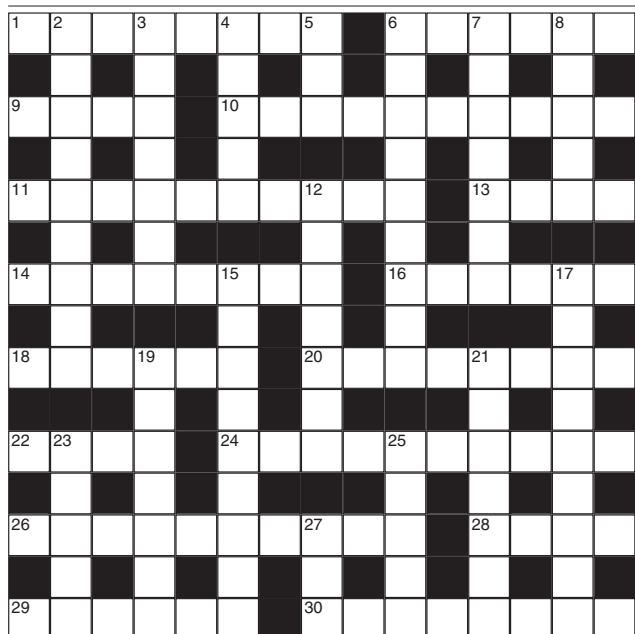
England's opening Euro 2024 fixture against Serbia is the only match at the tournament where just low-alcohol beer will be on offer, amid fears over fan trouble.

Organisers regard Sunday's group C encounter as a "high-risk" fixture that requires extra safety measures, with the German police concerned by the potential threat posed by hundreds of Serbian football hooligans they believe will attend the match in Gelsenkirchen.

Uefa confirmed that the match was the one game at the Euros where beer with an alcohol level of only 2.8 per cent

Continued on page 59

Times Crossword 28,941



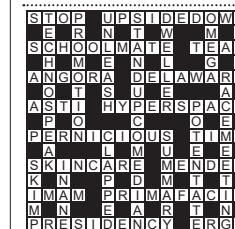
ACROSS

- 1 Enormous cut in arm (8)
- 6 Quarter of bushel on floor in imperial currency (6)
- 9 Not entirely round fruit (4)
- 10 Winding path to reed grass (4,6)
- 11 Spirit in host, pure sadness (10)
- 13 Pull on ends of short rope around well (4)
- 14 Pet like a snake, say, suitable? (5,3)
- 16 Reckon caught in it, one's hooked (6)
- 18 Name of consecutive characters leading India (6)
- 20 Remedy temper quaffing a load of ale (4,4)
- 22 Bird inedible, did you say? (4)
- 24 Little short is featuring new actor (4,6)
- 26 He's forming new gutter, sometimes? (10)
- 28 I love and I appreciate that Greek character (4)
- 29 Physicist with deal for the lecturer? (6)
- 30 English author, really empty, leaves say? (8)

DOWN

- 2 Awful cheat, vile type (9)
- 3 Reach politician while visiting island (7)
- 4 A little plain, dictionary description of language (5)
- 5 Horse has half gone — whoa! (3)
- 6 Where brothers famously given lift, a couple of predators (5,4)
- 7 Glandular decay in professional (7)
- 8 Funny attempt (5)
- 12 Judges etc and boy leading an empire (7)
- 15 Pirate getting bit of a shock maybe finding gun (9)
- 17 Ludicrous rhetoric around opening of serenade for singer (9)
- 19 Free pin and hold the main clicker? (7)
- 21 The Lord has inspired king, in embracing a Roman emperor (7)
- 23 Window that is in airport, unclosed (5)
- 25 Form hole, digger ultimately going in (5)
- 27 Show old vehicle (3)

Yesterday's solution 28,940



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2 4 >

Why
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old for a
bikini



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times2

Here's my tip, and it's free — block these outrageous fee chargers

Carol Midgley



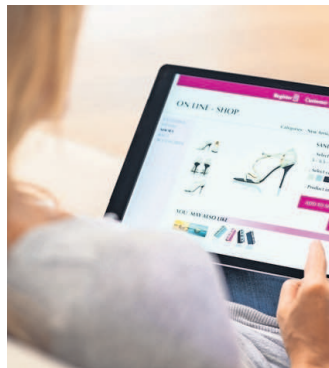
A woman made headlines this week when she bought some clothes online then saw that the seller wanted a tip. The gratuity, it said, would "support the designer's talent". It suggested 15 per cent would be nice, for something she hadn't received yet. "Get out of here!" was her correct response. You could poke a fire with a brass neck like that.

I fully support outrage at the cheek of online hustling, which is the internet equivalent of those tabarded chuggers who run alongside you pretending to like your coat. Even though my first huffy thought was: "Hello? I bitched about this in Times2 more than a year ago, and did I make the news? No. Rude." To refresh memories, I ordered a £32 hair-curling wand online and they had the effrontery to tick a £3.22 tip. Then they pushed it further, saying it would make their "Happy Day!" if I could stretch to £10. Other online sellers have ticked a small tip on an eyeliner but then asked for 20 per cent as a great way to show my "support for the team". Aren't I "supporting the team" by buying from them?

But this isn't the half of it, my friends. Times are hard and it seems that everyone is trying to wring a little more from you when you're not looking or a bit drunk, like a handsy old perv pointing at the sky and saying, "Good Lord, what's that?" then copping a feel.

Such as restaurants that charge you for the privilege of paying your bill. Oh yes. A restaurant in Shoreditch recently got flak after diners noticed that on their bill was not only a 13.5 per cent service charge but also a "checkout fee" of £2.99, added for using the app Sunday to pay. It's nearly as galling as concert ticket sellers that charge a booking fee for tickets that you print yourself. Obviously it's worse in America, where a man paid for two bottles of water at a self-service till and was asked whether he wanted to tip staff "15, 18 or 20 per cent". For scanning his own bottles.

When I donated to a friend's lovely charitable cause on Just Giving recently it added a £16 voluntary "tip" for itself. Quite entitled that, isn't it? I



felt peeved as I went back to make the amount smaller, which is quite tricky to do. But I'd rather give the money to my friend's charity than some faceless platform. I suppose it hopes people won't notice.

Look, please don't think me a tightwad who tells the kids the ice-cream van only plays a tune when it's run out of ice cream, or is the sort of person about whom you'd say, "She's so tight that when she found a pair of crutches she went home and broke her husband's leg." I've never deducted the service charge from a bill even when the food has been like pig slop; I have never not tipped a taxi driver. When I pull a tenner from my purse Jane Austen does not, to my knowledge, blink.

But I did feel miffed recently when my buildings and contents insurance was about to expire and the company sent me a new quote which, for no obvious reason, had nearly doubled to just under £2,000. "Screw that for a game of soldiers," I thought, and resolved to tell them where to shove it. Then I noticed that they'd already taken the money from my credit card via auto-renewal — a full week early. When I called to say I didn't want their rip-off quote, they said my card would be reimbursed but it could take "up to five days". Funny that.

I think this also falls under "hoping you won't notice". So my tip is ... notice. Other tips include: never squat while wearing spurs, never make snow angels in a dog park, and never ever do anything in your "private life" that you wouldn't want to explain to a paramedic.

which, among other things, protests about pollution from cars. Fair enough, but why do it stark naked? Talk about eclipsing the main message.

Judging by the photos of passers-by staring open-mouthed from the roadside I guarantee, sir, that as you cycled

over those bumps with the old chap bobbing merrily, literally no one was thinking: "That reminds me — should I ditch the Nissan and get an electric Renault?" They were thinking: "But there isn't even a towel on that man's seat!" The unspeakable horror.

'Perfect' is making me tense

Forgive my tetchiness, but I have had it with the word "perfect". Dear oh Lord, it's spreading like scabies. I know it's been creeping up for a while but now it's a contagion of verbal Polyfilla. Could I see the wine list please? "Perfect." May I buy two tickets please? "Perfect." I'll have the risotto please. "Perfect." It's moronic, a linguistic arms race to ever more validation. But it's meaningless. It's taking us to a world where your husband says, "Darling, I'm afraid I've got the raging clap but I've been given antibiotics", and you must reply: "Perfect."

On the phone this week the person at the bank said it within about four seconds, simply because I'd given my postcode. It's an Americanism, obviously, and as a tic may be the bastard child of that other atrocity, "Not a problem". As in: Could I have the bill please? "Not a problem." Why ever would it have been? I'm trying to pay. Now I feel I should be grateful I haven't been an inconvenience. And don't get me started on that other horror: "I was today years old when I learnt ..." Oh good, I've run out of space.

Ditto, you madam. "Nice to give the twins an airing and you certainly made the cars slow down, but what of your saddle sores?" Ye gods, imagine the state of the plastic saddles. Actually, don't. I just hope the event was sponsored by Sudocrem. And Dettol.

Sex, please —

It's official: cinemas have had a 40 per cent droop in sex scenes. Kevin Maher and others make the case for more sizzle and pick the top steamy moments

It was the veteran film-maker Peter Greenaway who put it best when he said, "There are only two subjects that matter. One is sex, and the other is death." The director of sizzling arthouse raunch, including *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover*, then added, "Most cinema talks all the time about sex and death. And my cinema deals with sex and death. So what's the problem?" Well, Pete, where to start?

Sex, alas, is out. A deep dive by The Economist found that almost half of last year's 250 highest-grossing movies at the US box office featured no sexual content. It also revealed that the level of sexual content in films had fallen by almost 40 per cent since 2000.

Thrillers and mainstream action films, meanwhile, had become the least sexy compared with previous decades — remember the time when you couldn't have a *Lethal Weapon* movie without a Mel Gibson sex scene in the middle (with Patsy Kensit in 2, and Rene Russo in 3)?

Action movies are now fully sexless and mostly feature lonely incel himbos, such as Chris Hemsworth in the *Extraction* films and Keanu Reeves in *John Wick*, playing grimly taciturn protagonists in fully committed relationships with their enormous and metaphorical rifles.

The villain, of course, is a perfect storm of economic and societal factors that includes the impact of the commanding yet sex-averse Chinese box office, the #MeToo movement and the ubiquity of internet porn (why go out for burgers, so the argument goes, when you've got steak on your laptop?). Mega-budget superhero movies have, since the mid-Noughties, taught Hollywood bean-counters that there are billions to be made from the sex-free adventures of wholesome spandex-clad gym bunnies.

In that time #MeToo has exposed the endemic exploitation of women, both on and off movie sets. Hollywood misogyny has been deemed so rampant that the mere depiction of a woman in a sexualised context on screen has become hugely problematic. Witness even the acclaimed, Emma Stone-produced *Poor Things*, a film that was castigated and possibly even bounced out of best picture Oscar contention because it featured, yup, sex scenes. It's no wonder that when the formerly "sexy" director Luca Guadagnino (*Call Me by Your Name*) made the love triangle melodrama

Challengers, he put all the film's sexual energy into a climactic tennis match. The alternative, clearly, is neither financially viable nor worth the hassle.

This is a shame. Because without sex, as Greenaway knows, there is only death. And though Hollywood can't get enough of death (see last year's *Oppenheimer*, *Avatar: The Way of Water* and *John Wick: Chapter 4*), they're denying an essential part of the human story. "I miss sex in movies," said *Avatar*'s Zoe Saldana, when ruminating on the subject. "Because sex is natural. Guns are not."

And I miss sex too. In movies, obviously. Some of the greatest scenes in film history have featured the beast with two backs. Think of the Oscar winner Halle Berry in *Monster's Ball*, revealing the depths of her character's grief through sex with Billy Bob Thornton's prison guard, during which she unleashes the moving cri de coeur, "Can you make me feel good?" Or Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger, breaking boundaries in a fighty, kissy, sexy clinch in *Brokeback Mountain*. Without these scenes we are all poorer as a culture. Without sex scenes we are ... what? Greenaway knows.

Betty Blue Robert Crampton

I was tempted to choose *Confessions of a Window Cleaner*, classic British Seventies smut. But no, I'm going all foreign and sophisticated, with *Betty Blue*, which most assuredly opens with a bang. You do not, repeat not, want to arrive late. Béatrice Dalle, in and out of a succession of summer frocks (and paint-splattered dungarees), is sensational. I watched it, aged 22, in what passed for Hull's arthouse cinema, in the summer of 1986. I haven't seen it since and had only a hazy recall of the intoxicating ambience of lust, youth and sunshine, plus a rather more vivid

memory of the first ten minutes. I had forgotten how dark things end up.

The central relationship is exploitative by modern standards, but French film-makers have never cared about that — and, in 1986, neither did I. Prime Video, Apple TV+ and BFI Player



The Last Seduction Janice Turner

The darkest, filthiest of *nouveau noirs* features a glamorous sociopath con artist, Bridget (Linda Fiorentina), who finds herself hiding out in Hicksville. Her attention turns to the handsome naif Mike (Peter Berg), who has no

Pale riders miss the point

I see that thousands of cyclists took to London and Brighton for the World Naked Bike Ride

we're British! 9 hot films to watch



see them both in huge, full-body latex condoms, attempting to heave each other on to a bed. They squeak and squelch. It's as erotic as a verruca sock.

I'd love to be able to claim that it's a razor-sharp parody of Hollywood sex tropes, but it isn't really. It's just bloody funny, particularly when you are 11 years old, which it turns out I still am. Although, weirdly enough, no less excruciating than a regular sex scene when you watch it with your parents. Prime Video, Apple TV+, Paramount+

Dirty Dancing Helen Rumbelow

Sex might have been invented in 1963, but it took until 1987 for sex to be invented for women. That this happened in what many regard as a silly teen movie is partly the point.

Dirty Dancing was radical by subterfuge, a pleasure-taking training manual for teenage girls.

We have Jennifer Grey fully clothed and fully in command as she seduces a semi-naked Patrick Swayze. Every detail we see is as if directed by her: the cameraman must have bust his knees with the shots of Swayze from below, the shameless objectification of his — yes, his, for once — bare chest. "Dance with me," she instructs, on behalf of womankind.

Prime Video, Apple TV+, Curzon

A Room with a View Blanca Schofield

When I first watched *A Room with a View* I didn't get it. I was 10 and I fell asleep. But then at 18, preparing to interrail around Italy, I decided to try again for the Tuscan vibes. It clicked: this is ridiculously romantic, and hot. There's no explicit sex, but the hilltop kiss scene more than suffices. Sticky Florentine sun, poppy-dotted fields, Puccini building to a climax as Julian Sand's lovely existential George finally kisses Helena Bonham Carter's repressed Lucy ... I'm blushing.

There are echoes of this heady Italian summer in Luca Guadagnino's luscious gay romance *Call Me by Your Name* (2017) and it's no coincidence: James Ivory, who directed *A Room with a View*, wrote the screenplay. For a more recent injection of Guadagnino heat, watch *Challengers*: a masterclass in sweaty tension building. Who needs full coitus anyway? Apple TV+



Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie in *Don't Look Now*. Top: Gael García Bernal and Maribel Verdú in *Y tu mamá también*. Top right: Jennifer Lopez and George Clooney in *Out of Sight*. Left: Jennifer Grey and Patrick Swayze in *Dirty Dancing*

clue what kind of woman he's dealing with. After steamy action against a chain-link fence he asks her how she sees their relationship. "You're my designated f***," Bridget says.

What if he wants to be more than that? "Then I'll designate someone else." With Bridget's smoking wardrobe, glinting mind, laconic wit and odd talent for mirror-writing, Fiorentina's depiction of female sexuality in this underrated 1994 film was way ahead of its time. Apple TV+

Shakespeare in Love Susie Goldsbrough

I like a sex scene that doesn't take itself too seriously, so how about a dragged-up Gwyneth Paltrow getting it on with Joseph Fiennes in the ludicrous but lovely *Shakespeare in Love* (even if it is a little tainted now by Miramax associations)?

The brilliantly dumb gag that Will Shakespeare (Fiennes) can't see through his aristo girlfriend's (Paltrow) comedy moustache disguise ends up sparking some genuine homoerotic heat, as we watch the two tearing off each other's doublets. And what sex scene wouldn't be improved by cutaways to a wimpled nurse played by Imelda Staunton furiously fanning herself as she guards the door?

For real raunch, though, films have been handicapped (or should that be handcuffed?) by Hollywood's prudishness. You've got to get your kicks from telly, from the steam-rising-off-the-screen scenes of young Irish amoroussness in *Normal People* to the

blood-spattered erotica of *Game of Thrones*. But the tantric trophy must go to the astonishingly relentless and oddly functional f***ing of *Sex and the City*. From foot fetishes to what to do about your boyfriend's "funky-tasting spunk", no art contains more practical wisdom. Prime Video, Apple TV+, Now

Don't Look Now; Out of Sight Tom Shone

How many times have you seen a couple rip each other's clothes off at the movies? Doesn't anyone care about busted buttons? Nicholas Roeg turned the whole thing on its head with his famous scene in *Don't Look Now*, by cutting between Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie having sex in a hotel in Venice and the touching sight of them helping each other get dressed again afterwards. A postcoital portrait of a marriage — who says familiarity can't be sexy?

Steven Soderbergh pulled off the opposite trick in *Out of Sight*, cutting between George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez tumbling into bed, with scenes from the seduction that preceded it: the murmur of sweet nothings, the clink of whisky tumblers. Sex plus foreplay, all rolled into one. Prime Video, Apple TV+

Y tu mamá también Jonathan Dean

Sex on screen works when it feels like the actors simply have to have it off. You know the feeling, when you are in the room with someone and the gap between you is just sparks. This has

been done well on TV recently in *The Bear*, when the chef Carmy meets his old fling Claire in a supermarket; and this month on Netflix Richard Linklater's *Hit Man* is a sizzle of sexuality.

For this sort of tension spread over a film I always look back at *Y tu mamá también* — Alfonso Cuarón's, erm, cumming-of-age film about two teen friends (Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna) and an older woman (Maribel Verdú) on a road trip that is partly sightseeing, mostly foreplay. You know sex is on its way, but then a threesome happens, sweaty, exploratory, oral and all, and the relief is an eruption, as sexy as sex itself.

The Naked Gun Hugo Rifkind

There is no way in hell I'm answering this question honestly in a newspaper. So forgive me if I answer only a little dishonestly and pretend my favourite sex scene is in *The Naked Gun*.

Not *Naked Lunch*. Very different. *The Naked Gun* is Leslie Nielsen's madcap police film, based on *Police Squad*. Remember? His love interest is Priscilla Presley. First she unzips her clothes right down the middle. Then he does the same, no matter that he's wearing a suit and tie. Then she says, "I want you to know I practise safe sex," and he says, "So do I." Then we

fashion



Who says you have to be under

'Bikinis are just easier. Easier to buy, and to wear'

Anna Murphy

Hello, my name is Anna and I'm a bikini-holic. What's more, I am far from the only fiftysomething I know who is. My friends and family of similar vintage are bikini wearers pretty much to a woman. And we have got decades in us yet — Helen Mirren is still slaying in one at 78.

One of the biggest fashion fallacies out there is that bikinis are for the young; that they are a phenomenon you age out of. And I am not saying this as some kind of age-agnostic statement of bravado, nor because I am not subject to all the usual droops and disappointments that come as the decades pass.

Bikinis are just easier. Easier to buy. Easier to wear. Or the right bikini is at least (more on this in a minute). Every few years I set out to buy a one-piece, because I really do rather like that whole Busby Berkeley vibe. The problem is I am different sizes on my

top and bottom halves, and I am also long in the body. So first there's the hopeful phase, then there's the hopeless phase, with nothing in between but the feeling next to my skin of overstretched and/or saggy polyamide. The fact that both these infelicities can coexist is emblematic of a search in which I am forever the doomed Lancelot rather than the conquering Galahad.

Sure, the advent of the world wide web has proved something of a game-changer during my lifetime, but up there for me when it comes to technological advances has to be the genesis of a bikini that is expertly engineered but doesn't look as if it is. Well into my twenties, itsy-bitsy was pretty much the only way to go if you were bikini shopping in this country. You had to go to Italy or Spain for more forgiving options. Every time my summer holiday comes around I give thanks for the degree to which this has changed.

What makes me especially happy is that big pants are now easy to find and styled so as to channel Marilyn Monroe as opposed to 1950s PE knickers. I don't want anything below my belly button showing thanks to an abdominal scar, but that's just me. Plenty of women my age rock what might be called medium pants, and one friend — a mother of three, incidentally — still wears pants of a

dimension last seen in a 1980s hair removal advert. Props to her.

My favourite brand by some margin is Marysia, which is incredibly expensive, yet works out in terms of price per wear, in that I have now had mine for about 15 years. I love the scalloped edges. I love the posh textured stretch crepe. I love the fact that some of the pieces are reversible, so you get two different colours for your (admittedly considerable) buck. I love the fit of both the Santa Monica big pants and the sporty Palm Springs top, and that they are now available in recycled fabrics (£198 and £237 respectively, net-a-porter.com). I keep an eye out online for when anything is reduced. But we now have options, praise be, such as the White Company's dark grey (£35 each for the top and bottoms, thewhitecompany.com) or John Lewis's green and white spots (£30 and £18, johnlewis.com). Now all we need is a summer.



'I cried when my coral-print one died'

Hilary Rose

Look, I'm ridiculous. Nobody in this country needs *nine* bikinis, least of all someone who spends a vanishingly small amount of time on a beach. But when I do go on holiday, I want choices. I don't want to wear the same bikini every day, any more than I want to wear the same outfit every night, or indeed the same underwear. I reckon four or five bikinis is about right for a week's holiday, and the same amount of beach cover-ups, because having to wear a coral cover-up over a green bikini would annoy me.

My bikinis are all the same style — not because I'm boring (although I am) but because I'm woefully top heavy. I simply haven't found any other styles that suit, so I wish you joy from your triangle, strapless and bandeau styles. I look at the minimalist Eres swimwear that fashionable people pop up in every summer to say they swear by, and I can't tell you how much I wish I could join them.

COVER: MARIO BRENNIA/JASON FRASER



Top, £95, bottoms, £69, awaythatday.com

... and here's the Gen Z favourite! Hannah Rogers

Ten years ago it was Triangle neoprene bikinis that the Instagram set loved. Then Hunza G came along and made crinkly one-size-fits-all cossies cool. But this summer there is a new trendy brand all my friends want to buy swimwear from. Have you heard of Away That Day?

Chances are you have been in the presence of one of its signature Palma bikini tops (£95, awaythatday.com). The British label — founded in 2019 by Ingemae Kotze, a former stylist — has sold more than 20,000 of the tie-back style, which is identifiable by its plunging neckline separated in the middle by U-shaped hardware.

I have one; so do most of my friends — and I have spotted it in one of its ten shades on every recent holiday. At a pool party last summer another guest and I even turned up in the same colour (sapphire blue, if you are asking) and yes, we both had the £59 matching high-rise Maui bottoms.

Away That Day is not cheap. But you don't need me to remind you that swimwear shouldn't be. You don't want it to fall apart. When I ask friends what they love about their ATD pieces, they all shout out the quality and expensive feel of the eco-friendly fabric. Most are made from ECONYL, aka regenerated nylon.

But here's the big point. The Palma seems to look good on everyone. The fit of this bikini is so flattering on many women I know — all of whom are a different shape and size — I have started to compare it to the magic jeans shared between pals in Ann Brashares's tweenage novel.

How? It helps that it runs from a size XS (UK 6; A-B cup) to 3XL (UK 18; F-FF cup). But there is something clever in that U-shape. It strikes a perfect balance of supportive and sexy, by this 31-year-old's standards, anyway.

A fellow DD-cup colleague and I agree that it offers ample lift. Another contemporary explains that it's a nice mix of "classy and itsy-bitsy". As for the bottoms, you can pick your fighter in regard to bum coverage on the bottom. Now, are you cheeky, medium or modest?

35 to pull off a bikini?

Instead, my bikinis are all minimally underwired and non-seamed (because I hate bikini tops that look like bras), halterneck for extra hoist, and the bottoms are briefs. Normal briefs, not high leg or — god forbid — string. I have no truck with big bikini bottoms, because people who think they're hiding a multitude of sins are kidding themselves. The sins are still there, just with a layer of fabric over the top.

My bikinis are all by Heidi Klein or Elizabeth Hurley Beach and, unlike the rest of my wardrobe, which is mostly navy blue, they're colourful: coral, green, turquoise, pale blue. Some are printed, but not enough, since I've decided printed is more flattering on my regrettable boobs than block colour. I cried when my cream and brown coral-print bikini died, but rejoice that I still have the matching cover-up.

The bikinis live and travel in their own little zip-up plastic pouches. This means I can have a swim minutes before I have to leave the hotel, then chuck my wet swimwear in my suitcase for the flight home.

I always take a Davy J one-piece for swimming, because I take swimming very seriously and a halterneck bikini would quickly be around my ankles. So, yes buy a bikini and wear your body with pride. Consider holding your stomach in too.

Above, from left: top and bottoms, £35 each, thewhitecompany.com; top and bottoms, £14 each, F&F at tesco.com; top, £29, bottoms, £25, omnes.com; top, £59, bottoms, £49, shop understatement.com. Left: top, £35, cover-up and trousers, £79 each, mintvelvet.com

'I pack three — one for each holiday physique' Lesley Thomas

I have nothing against a swimsuit. I wear one once or twice a week, all year round. Give or take July and August, my very basic M&S cossie is accessorised with black neoprene booties and matching gloves. In the cold months a bobble hat is added. As you may gather, swimming in UK waters is no place for serving looks as far as I am concerned — unless hot menopausal girlie is a thing. And I don't mean the hot kind of hot.

A Mediterranean beach is a different matter. I am packing for Greece soon and there is no way a swimsuit will make the cut. Everyone looks good in a bikini, whatever their age or girth. I feel the same way about red lipstick; it's a question of finding the right one. I want to feel the sun and warm sea on as many skin inches as possible. Swimsuits get in the way. And if you're of the opinion that a woman can be too old for a bikini, I must tell you that a) you're wrong, and b) young people look better in everything, including swimsuits, so wear what you want.

I pack three bikinis — one for each

of my holiday physiques. There's only one matching set, a lime green Heidi Klein that has been with me since 2018. It's my poshest one and is somehow "containing" while giving the appearance of being flimsy. A halterneck with scalloped edges such as this can look quite relaxed, but there's a whole lot of bosom-hoicking going on. The bottoms — apparently controversially in midlife — are side-tied and a little bit low. In fairness, this bikini does not look great after a good lunch. Call me a victim of internalised misogyny, but I usually step up the Pilates before a beach holiday, so I may only feel super-comfortable exposing so much belly for the first couple of days. I love a breakfast buffet and can't compromise on this.

The other two bikinis are, in truth, four separate tops and bottoms because being too matchy makes me feel a bit icky after a while. H&M has great cup-sized bikini tops so there are a couple of those in the case — leopard or striped. There's a Ganni navy and white check bottom: pretty yet sturdy and this brand can be relied upon in this respect. Then there's always a big, high-waisted retro bottom. The thing to note about this style is that it's easier to wear if the leg is cut a bit high. Big-pant bikinis can cinch the waist a little — which can be useful by day five. But honestly, by this time I am so relaxed I don't care.

fashion



Men, will you wear England's official Euros collection?

M&S has kitted out the squad.
Jeremy Langmead gives his verdict

A few years ago I was invited to watch one of the world's most successful football teams being photographed in their shiny new official outfits. I won't say which fashion label was dressing them that year, but by the end of the morning I felt truly sorry for them. Not only had the designers forked out a fortune to dress them in outfits they would rarely be glimpsed in, but the reaction from them was less than enthusiastic.

Understandably they were probably feeling tired and anxious in the weeks leading up to the tournament, and spending a few hours posing for a photographer in an outfit they didn't choose was not top of their wish lists. But the reality was they just didn't like the clothes. Footballers can afford to choose very expensive clothes for themselves, so they are not excited to wear not very expensive clothes that they didn't choose.

Over the decades numerous fashion houses have attempted to create outfits that will look and feel good for players who will be representing their club or country on and off the pitch. The trouble is that they nearly always put them in suits. Especially so with the England team. We've seen them paraded in excessively baggy suits that made them look like a Madness tribute band; lifeless grey suits that appeared to be borrowed from a mortgage brokers' convention; and ill-fitting tan suits that gave the impression they were reluctantly attending a summer wedding.

Even Italy, Europe's menswear

Left: overshirt, £50, polo shirt, £45, shorts, £35. Below: blazer, £70, trousers, £45. All marksandspencer.com



fashion capital, has fallen foul of the style critics. In 2021 Giorgio Armani dressed the national team in black trousers and dove grey collarless seersucker jackets that made them look as if they worked front of house for Raymond Blanc. This year he's more on the button, having styled them in blue cotton-knit blazers and denim trousers.

Happily, Euro 2024 has England among the favourites not only to win the trophy but also to lead in the style stakes. M&S, the official tailor to the men's and women's senior teams, has come up with a slim-fitting collection that looks as if it's designed for a team of young, athletic players, will appeal to football fans as it emulates many of the styles already popular on the terraces, and is an easy-to-wear collection of off-duty wardrobe staples such as overshirts, bomber jackets, cargo pants and knitted polos. The clothes are made from performance fabrics in a simple palette of black, tan and off-white, and all are offered at accessible price points: a bomber for £60, a smart polo knit or trousers for £45. A similar overshirt or bomber jacket at Stone Island, the fashion label that has been popular with stylish football fans for decades, will set you back £425 or £960 respectively.

Wes Taylor, who was M&S's director of menswear when it signed the contract with the Football Association, said the players told him that they wanted something that better reflected who they really are. They were right to make that point, and M&S has clearly taken it on board.

My only word of advice with all the tan pieces on offer is not to wear them all at once. We've had no summer so far this year, and anyone who is pale and pasty could end up being mistaken for a digestive biscuit. You need to mix the tan with some black or navy items. Other than that you're on to a winner. And hopefully so is the team.

I'm wearing the

Anna Murphy has ditched her trainer habit of 20 years. Now she's switched — to ballet flats with a difference

It came about by accident. Or, to be more precise, because of an accident. I had taken my goddaughter to one of my full-throttle yoga classes six weeks ago. I can't pretend that I hadn't enjoyed, just a little bit, cracking out crazy poses at 52 that she, at 19, couldn't. I know. Terrible of me. So of course what happened next was written in the stars.

En route to our Sunday lunch afterwards, clad in my perennial flatform trainers, I twisted my ankle. Properly twisted my ankle, with a loud, excruciating crunch. Only after a few head-spinning minutes of agony was I able to hobble to the restaurant, and then I couldn't do yoga for two weeks. So I certainly wasn't going to go anywhere near those trainers again.

I had a look around for some replacements, and came to realise that I have wearied of trainers entirely. Partly it's the ubiquity of them, and also the degree to which almost every brand seems to put you in a certain tribe. Even before Rishi Sunak's #sambagate I never liked that. I am not a Salomon XT-6 hipster, or a Veja mum, or a billionaire Tory prime minister (for now) trying to make like he is one of us. But I couldn't find a pair that was suitably invisible and not also utterly dull.

In truth, the seeds of sneaker-related doubt had been sown before then. I had already given up wearing them with mididresses, a combination that revolutionised the way many of us dressed a couple of decades ago but that now looks a tad tired.

So what would happen if I gave up on them altogether? I decided to find out, embarking on a trainerless life, only putting on a knackered old proper sports pair if I was exercising.

Reader, I am loving it. It's reminded me how dreary any kind of fashion default can make you, and what fun it is properly to shop your wardrobe or, in this case, shoe cupboard. Why was I — such a shoe lover that as a child I would make miniature ones out of Plasticine — putting on the same footwear at least 70 per cent of the time? Partly, of course, because my trainers were comfortable, or at least they were until I fell off them. But I also wore them out of laziness; I didn't have to think about what I put on my feet.

The key for me has been to identify the footwear I own that doesn't sacrifice any of the ease and comfort, and to put each pair in a neat row at the bottom of my spare bed for ready access. They have to be flat as well as, in an ideal world, attached to the foot. And what I have also pinpointed is



that they need to have a certain aesthetic flexibility, so that they can, like trainers, be worn with lots of different outfits. When it comes to pairing them with a smarter ensemble — one of those aforementioned midis, or a suit — I also need them to add a certain edge rather than looking too classic which, on me, ends up appearing fusty.

The hands-down winners are my Ganni feminine buckle ballerinas, a style that was launched in 2021. "The modern twist of the buckle adds a hint of rebellion," says Ditte Reffstrup, Ganni's creative director, of a shoe that was, she adds, a "slow burn" at the beginning. It's since proved so popular that it's become part of the Danish

“I've embarked on a trainerless life; I wear an old pair just to exercise in

It shoe of summer

JEREMY MOELLER, CHRISTIAN VIERIG/GETTY IMAGES



Street stylers in New York and Berlin

brand's Icons range, and is available in ten colours.

At £325 these represent an investment purchase, yet an investment is exactly what mine have proved to be, especially given that I went for go-with-anything snakeskin. My summer frocks look so much better with these than trainers ever did, but there's no risk of me appearing too "lady", as might be the case with conventional ballerinas, say, or kitten heels. A paler shade such as my snakeskin, or white, or even tutu pink, will lighten your overall look in the same way that white trainers do, but come across as far more interesting.

There are now countless more parsimoniously priced versions of similar. Mango's square-toe buckled black ballet flat is £49.99 (mango.com), Cos's more lozenge-shaped is £115 (cos.com). Raid's in black or red patent is so heavily "inspired" as surely to be verging on illegal (£28, asos.com). Warning: I haven't bought from this brand, and a price so low makes me worried, but it has plenty of positive reviews on Trustpilot. M&S Collection has a more delicate take in black patent or a mid-pink leather (£45, marksandspencer.com).

I also live in Essen's foundation flats, another reinvention of the ballet pump known as the slipper shoe, which may not have a strap but stays on the foot perfectly (£199, essenthelabel.com). Everlane's day glove ticks similar boxes (£132, everlane.com). Both come in some lovely light shades for summer. I like M&S Collection's woven take too, in black, tan or stone (£45, marksandspencer.com).

My two end-of-the-bed pairs cover almost every kind of day for me, a city dweller, looking just as good with track pants — I am living in Baukjen's flatteringly flat-fronted pants with red side stripes, (£67, baukjen.com,) paired with a jacket, tailored or combat — as they do with black tie. Every time I wear them I get compliments, and several women I know have gone off to secure their own. Who needs trainers?

@annagmurphy

Buckles



£45, marksandspencer.com



£109, mintvelvet.com



£109, mintvelvet.com



£160, prettyballerinas.co.uk



£345, ganni.com

Slip-ons



£45, marksandspencer.com



£199, essenthelabel.com



£142, everlane.com



£35, marksandspencer.com



£132, everlane.com

BP's new romance rules are long overdue: offices are crucibles of lust

Workplace trysts break up marriages and damage your career, says **Esther Walker**

When I was in my twenties I fell completely and insanely in love with someone at work. We flirted like mad over email for two months and had one chaste drink in the pub. When he casually revealed he had a girlfriend, my world caved in. Three months after that, a colleague revealed that my crush had moved in with that girlfriend. I was so distraught a friend gave me a Valium. It took me about a year to get over it all.

A whole year! I know. Everyone laughs like a drain when I tell this story. "You didn't even kiss?" they say, wiping away tears of hilarity at how pathetic I am. But no, no kissing. Perhaps we hugged once. Maybe this made my obsession worse? I don't know. But I do know this: workplaces are fiery crucibles of hormones and lust. When someone is in that obsessive state they do wild things with no thought whatsoever as to what might happen next.

So I think BP is quite right to tighten up the rules on relationships at work. After its former boss was dismissed for failing to disclose details about personal relationships, the company last week told employees they must declare any "intimate" relationships with colleagues from the past three years.

Now, lots of people meet their husbands or wives at work, which is why BP hasn't put a blanket ban on relationships. There's a birth rate crisis, people! But making employees confess to what has been going on after hours puts the brakes on inappropriate relationships, such as someone very senior with someone very junior, and the inevitable affairs. Power imbalances and moral shadiness are the two dynamics that go really wrong, that really make a mess of things.

My crush did genuinely like me (she says defensively) but he was taken and wasn't going to cross a line. And thank goodness because I had absolutely zero cautionary instincts. When you are young and inexperienced and in that situation, it just seems very romantic. It makes even less sense because I had witnessed the terrible fallout from office romances at other places I had worked. By

the time of Crush-Gate I was in my third job. At jobs one and two I saw romances trash lives, break up marriages and cause endless weeping in the ladies' loo. And I knew that no matter how sneaky and clever you think you are being, every single person in the office knows what you are up to. Yes, you — and you. We all knew about it. Everyone talks about it and they are all waiting for it to go tits up.

And when it does go tits up, who suffers? Almost always the woman. I have never understood the phrase "sleeping your way to the top". Once a woman has slept with someone from the office, unless marriage is on the cards, a clock starts ticking, the doom countdown until she inevitably leaves. When office romances end, it is the career of the woman, not the man, that is suddenly vulnerable.

Every single person in the office knows what you're up to

This is extra cruel when she may have had good reason to believe that marriage really was on the cards. I did eventually get over my crush — without needing any more Valium. Then I met my future husband at a party, got my claws well into him, and that was that.

Both at the time and still now I am so relieved that nothing ever happened with my crush. I am grateful to him for being so uptight and neurotic about it. He behaved exactly as if there was, indeed, a policy where all

relationships had to be declared. He wasn't like that for my sake, I'm sure, but I benefited hugely from it all the same. It meant that I was able to leave on my own terms to take up a more senior job, rather than scuttle away in embarrassment.

My crush came to my leaving party and somewhere in a box of things from my old flat there is a picture of us together. Is his arm even around me? I can't remember. But from recollection we both look really happy. We have a saintly glow.



Esther Walker

times2

Naomi Klein has a conspiracy theory — it's all the fault of yoga teachers

From exercise mats to the school gates, scepticism in science is rising in the middle classes, the author tells **Helen Rumbelow** — and fitness gurus are culpable

In Britain — as well as the US — there is an ominous measles problem. The disease that killed two people a week here in the 1960s, has come roaring back. But this is not only a measles problem, it's part of a growing distrust in the scientific establishment and government messages, accelerated by Covid.

Who is now susceptible to dark fears about the safety of vaccines, the legitimacy of climate change science, or even to the rumours that swirled in the early months of the illness of the Princess of Wales? Not who you might think, says Naomi Klein, the Canadian academic and author who spent the pandemic examining those who now succumb to conspiracy ideology. It's no longer the nutty outsider in a tinfoil hat, at the extremes of the political or wealth spectrum.

Klein, 54, is most famous for her million-selling debut book, *No Logo*, published in 1999, after which The Times called her “probably the most

influential person under the age of 35 in the world”. Her research has found that distrust has spread to the mainstream: young, aspirational, affluent, educated and otherwise surprisingly normal people; your school gate friend, yoga instructor or amiable “life hack” podcast host.

Their ideas are propagated under the guise of glossy Instagram influencers. As she writes in her book *Doppelganger*, “this is where the white, wealthy, libertarian streak in the wellness industry can become lethal”.

“So many of those fit and beautiful influencers stopped merely offering encouraging words to motivate our workouts and green juicing,” she writes, “and started whispering to us alarmingly about dark forces coming to poison us, and eventually to gag, jab and dominate us.”

Their messages are spread via two mainstream activities: the gym and yoga classes, and their online equivalents, says Klein. Their social media doesn't look as obviously



Naomi Klein

cranky as some rancid corners of Facebook: they are the glowing fitness gurus on Instagram, who preach a gospel of individual self-optimisation that stands in opposition to more civic-minded messages.

Underestimating this leaves us vulnerable to communicable diseases and the viral spread of wild ideas, says Klein. Did Covid help to build trust in vaccines, since the Covid jab proved largely safe and effective?

“I think quite the opposite,” says Klein, from her home in rural Canada,

where she lives with her film-maker husband and son. “We need major public education about childhood vaccinations. I think we are almost back to zero, after so many years of so much misinformation. Even someone like Robert Kennedy Jr, now running for president, this is his main issue.”

The Vaccine Confidence Project at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine found that in 2023 people in most countries showed falling confidence in routine childhood immunisations. This was especially

***Doppelganger* by Naomi Klein (Penguin £10.99). To order a copy go to timesbookshop.co.uk or call 020 3176 2935. Free UK standard P&P on online orders over £25. Special discount available for Times+ members**

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QUOTE TIMES





through the looking glass and started making prolific and paranoid claims, such as, on Twitter, that the Covid vaccine was actually “a software platform that can receive uploads”.

There was even a viral rhyme on social media about their twinning: “If the Naomi be Klein, you’re doing just fine/ If the Naomi be Wolf, oh buddy. Ooof.” Klein was taking flak for Wolf’s surprising transformation. But she also found her conspiracy mindsets fascinating. Wolf was Klein’s “White Rabbit” into this shadow world.

“Conspiracy culture gets the facts wrong, but the feelings right,” she says. “There’s always a little bit of truth in the conspiracy or it wouldn’t work.”

Klein’s father was an obstetrician and she was inculcated as a child with a faith in science. But one of these “feelings” conspiracy culture gets right is that the medical establishment often lets people down. Her father installed one-way mirrors in the labour rooms at his hospital so he could covertly supervise his less experienced staff, which he justified as an attempt to raise standards.

This made Klein squeamish: did the consent of the women not matter? Klein tells me that for women there is a “bad births to conspiracy pipeline”, where substandard or disrespectful maternity care leaves them more sceptical about medicine in general.

It is also the case, Klein says, that “Big Food” and “Big Pharma” are extremely profit driven, with less than ideal consequences. Also governments and the medical establishment gloss over the rare bad outcomes for vaccines, not trusting people to calculate the risk-benefit ratio.

“The communication around Covid vaccines was often problematic,” she says. “There were small numbers of adverse effects. There was a real reticence to give this any airtime.”

All of these factors planted seeds of doubt, and they were doing so in a community already weakened by individualism. As Robert Putnam charted in his 2000 book, *Bowling Alone*, civic engagement has fallen in terms of membership of Rotaries, Women’s Institutes, clubs, societies and political parties.

Klein says we have supplanted an urge to improve the fabric of our communities with a drive to improve ourselves alone, or as she writes, “We turn toward the body when life feels out of control.” Klein says she can

relate. When she had thyroid cancer a decade ago, now successfully treated, she leant hard into yoga. Her yoga “grew obsessive” as it became the one place her body would obey. But Klein also recognises the dangers.

“Yoga became a carrier,” she says. “Not all yoga, but I think there’s a reason why yoga studios were very much a hotbed for conspiracy culture.”

Personal trainers, yoga teachers and influencers in the fitness and beauty fields wielded unchallenged authority. There is a “hushedness in yoga studios, you’re not meant to talk”.

“These figures positioned themselves as having access to a higher form of knowledge because they had taken a six-week yoga teacher training class, or maybe even been to India once,” she says. “That got us into a world of trouble.”

Online fitness influencers use their looks in a complex but alluring mix — “beauty is central to it”, she says, citing as an example the anti-vaccine Instagram lifestyle guru Kelly Brogan.

“All this was sold in a package of rejecting Big Pharma or Big Agra, a pseudo-politics. But it was really about perfecting yourself, it wasn’t a collective project,” she says.

As a result, the average woman scrolling Instagram is exposed to far more conspiracy ideas than in previous decades. This year, many otherwise sane women I knew traded conspiracy theories about the absence of the Princess of Wales from public life. Conspiracy felt to them like the most rather than least plausible option. “In the past people might have been satisfied with just accepting a top-down story,” says Klein. “But now there are these technologies that allow people to communicate their various suspicions, spin out a story and turn that quest into a social experience. There’s some pleasure in unlocking theories with people you will never meet in person. It’s gamified.”

Conspiracy theorists are correct in identifying the feeling that “the game is rigged”, Klein argues, in that big corporations probably don’t have your best interests at heart. But while there are darker machinations, “otherwise investigative journalists would be out of a job”, they are more predictably about putting profits first than the fantasies of control that populate conspiracy theories — such as the myth of computer chips in vaccines.

“A good understanding of political economy is an effective, if not foolproof, armour against these conspiracy theories. Without understanding the incentives involved, you’ll be more prone to believe that there’s some sort of nefarious plot.

“Shame or mocking is not a good way to change people’s minds,” she says, but in the case of vaccines, Klein believes that the best remedy against misinformation is a trusted, regular relationship with the same GP. “But that relationship is being eroded, it’s enmeshed in a much broader crisis in public health.”

Klein would love to see a new era of influencers, where they showcase “the rewards and pleasures of what it might mean to be a little less focused on the self and a little more on what we can do together”.

In the meantime Klein has unfollowed Wolf and all related accounts. “Following her taught me a lot about these different worlds,” she says with a polite smile. “But as a figure, she’s of minor interest.”

As an oldie, I’ve been working hard to do nothing — I’m a pro

Loafing is an art form; at my age it’s about maintaining a pulse, says Alan Jones

Recently an annoyingly busy contemporary asked me: “What do you do all day?” His question set me thinking about how we oldies should use our remaining time. The received wisdom is to stay active, maintain an interest in something, anything — or dare I say it, “give back”.

That’s fine up to the age of 75 but beyond, it’s ten seconds to midnight, so keeping a pulse trumps dashing hither and thither. I’m now dedicated to perfecting the art of loafing around.

Loafing, undeservedly in my view, gets a bad press, largely through critics conflating it with laziness and giving up. Really, it is a legitimate lifestyle choice and a step up from pottering. Mentally and physically I’m in a good place; I journey from my sofa to the fridge with alacrity and a sense of purpose. I move, with neither creak nor groan, like a young fella — a result of my devotion to the “don’t let the old man in” philosophy.

I’m proud to say I can still pull my socks on standing up and with no visible means of support — apart from the standing leg, of course. Daily feedback tells me it’s a disturbing watch, but we persevere.

I advocate loafing with missionary zeal but off meet with resistance: I’ve attended three funerals this year (sad, but it’s life-affirming to get out for fresh air) — all contemporaries who chose to become overactive oldies. At the second funeral a survivor exclaimed: “Live life to the full!” I urged restraint but he was having none of it. His was the third funeral.

The resolve required to embrace indolence is initially alarming. It demands focus to avoid springing into action. Think about location. City living has too many whoops, toots and mayhem. This is why we repaired to the country — out here you never hear anyone having a good time.

It’s a misconception that loafing is about doing nothing. The uninitiated will glimpse you sprawled over the sofa and see a comatose lard-bucket, but the cognoscenti will know that, though supine, there is *unobservable* action taking place. They’ll smile, aware you’re performing your pelvic duties, while wondering how your internal organs are shaping up.

Personally I see loafing as a solitary pursuit. Arguably, co-loafing with a loved one can be much more fun but, as we now know, too much of that and it’s good night, Vienna. Anyway, someone has to do the cooking. Do have the conversation.

Have no truck with that “live life to the full” shtick. Curb your enthusiasm, measure out your days with coffee spoons and do go gentle into that good night — you’ll feel all the better for it.



“At a recent funeral a survivor exclaimed: ‘Live life to the full!’ I urged restraint

times2

Your weekday brain boost

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Samurai difficult

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.

3		7		2				9	7	8
	6	2	9	3	7			2		6
	7	1	6	3	4			3		
			9	8	1	3	7			
1					4			5	2	6
	3		9		8	3	9		2	5
		7	2	3			7	2		
						4				4
				5			8	9	1	
				4	9	3			6	
		5								
	8	2				9	2		9	4
						7	6			7
6		3	7	6		5	9	4	2	7
		9	8		3	4				8
					7					
	7		9	8	4					
5		6			9					
	1	6	7							1

Suko

18	17	
22	17	
23	7	15

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

		2			5
				6	1
				5	2
	5		1		
1	4		5		

Solutions in tomorrow's Times2

Sudoku easy

5						3		
		6					2	
		7		3	9			
	3	8		2	1		7	
		9				4		
	4	8		6	3			
	1			7		5	8	
7			1			2	3	
9		2				7	1	

Killer gentle

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.

13		8		21			3	
8		17		11		10		13
	7	6	8	11		22		
				15		17	7	
19				5	9			
15	6	13	23		6		12	
				14		18	7	
7								15
11		13		15				

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.

	2	2	5	1	5	3	4	4	
									4
									3
									2
									2
									7
									4
									2
									2

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.

	<			<	

Solve Times puzzles interactively with same-day solutions at thetimes.co.uk

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.

	23	9	3	24	23	17	6		10	15	10	23
10			26			19		24		10		9
3	23	5	21	26	5	9		20	24	16	6	9
2		10		5		20		9		25		25
21	10	12	21	10		17	5	4	9	22	13	
18					22	2		13		10		17
10	23	17	9	23	2		8	23	13	19	17	6
12		5		10		3		10				9
	3	23	13	20	1	9		3	10	12	21	10
5		18		8		12		12		24		17
21	7	13	13	12		11	12	2	13	14	9	23
9		24		9		23				24		9
22	5	12	12		16	2	10	20	24	22	9	

A	X	C	X	E	F	G	H	X	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	B	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13												
14	15	16		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24														

Yesterday's solutions

SAMURAI

3	1	9	5	6	4	2	7	8
2	7	4	8	3	9	1	5	6
8	6	5	1	7	2	3	9	4
9	8	1	4	5	3	7	6	2
5	2	3	6	1	7	4	8	9
7	4	6	9	2	8	5	3	1
1	3	8	2	9	5	6	4	7
4	5	2	7	8	6	9	1	3
6	9	7	3	4	1	8	2	5

2	4	5	8	1	7	3	6	9
1	9	8	3	2	6	8	9	1
7	3	6	4	9	5	1	8	2
5	6	3	7	4	1	9	2	8
9	2	7	5	6	8	4	3	1
4	8	1	9	3	2	6	7	5
6	7	4	2	5	9	8	1	3
8	5	9	1	7	3	2	4	6
3	1	2	6	8	4	5	9	7

MINI SUDOKU

6	4	8	3	6	5	2	1	4
5	7	2	4	1	2	5	6	3
3	9	2	1	5	3	8	4	2
1	8	5	6	7	3	1	9	4
2	4	1	7	9	6	8	2	3
9	3	4	8	1	2	5	7	6
7	8	4	3	6	2	5	9	1
5	2	9	1	8	7	4	6	3
3	6	1	9	5	4	7	8	2

SUDOKU

5	9	6	3	2	4	7	8	1
7	8	4	5	9	1	2	6	3
1	3	2	6	8	7	5	4	9
2	5	1	9	4	3	8	7	6
8	7	9	2	1	6	3	5	4
6	4	3	8	7	5	1	9	2
3	6	8	1	5	9	4	2	7
9	2	7	4	3	8	6	1	5
4	1	5	7	6	2	9	3	8

KILLER

5	9	6	3	2	4	7	8	1
7	8	4	5	9	1	2	6	3
1	3	2	6	8	7	5	4	9
2	5	1	9	4	3	8	7	6
8	7	9	2	1	6	3	5	4
6	4	3	8	7	5	1	9	2
3	6	8	1	5	9	4	2	7
9	2	7	4	3	8	6	1	5
4	1	5	7	6	2	9	3	8

SUKO

6	4	8	3	6	5	2	1	4
5	7	2	4	1	2	5	6	3
3	9	2	1	5	3	8	4	2
1	8	5	6	7	3	1	9	4
2	4	1	7	9	6	8	2	3
9	3	4	8	1	2	5	7	6

TRAIN TRACKS

	3	2	2	3	5	7	2	3

FUTOSHIKI

1	3	<	4	<	5	2
4	1	5	2	3		
2	5	1	3	4		
5	2	3	4	1		
3	<	4	2	1	5	

CODWORD

A	W	A	Y	H	A	N	D	B	O	O	K
Q	A	D	D	C	B	I	E	P	E	R	
U	A	P	L	A	S	M	A				
A	C	H	E	D	F	R	E	S	H	E	N
M	U	A	L	I	T						
P	A	R	E	N	T	A	L				

The curious case of the woman who fell to Earth

James Jackson TV review



The Fall: Skydive Murder Plot

Channel 4
★★★★☆

The first shot of **The Fall: Skydive Murder Plot** is of a woman casually glancing up at the wide blue Wiltshire sky above her with a look of anticipation. Given the title of this programme, it is a shot loaded with portent. Victoria Cilliers was a highly experienced skydiver, but the jump she was about to take in 2015 would become anyone's worst nightmare. Her standard parachute wouldn't open, nor would her reserve. Don't even try to imagine the terror of this.

Cilliers fell 4,000ft, her parachute flapping "like a bag of washing was

above her" (as one observer put it) — yet survived. The field on which she landed was freshly ploughed, and she got away with several broken bones and spinal injuries, which isn't great but, as falling without a parachute goes, is better than the alternative.

The woman in these introductory scenes was not Cilliers, however, but the actor MyAnna Buring. Was this drama or documentary? The latter, and while there's nothing surprising about dramatic reconstructions, this true-crime three-parter is turning out to be as unusual for its style as its story.

As we learn how Cilliers's army-sergeant husband, Emile, had tampered with the parachute, how it wasn't the first time he'd try to kill her (the previous tampering was with a gas valve); how he'd been having an affair (still to come: sex clubs and escorts — no, this was not the ideal marriage it ostensibly looked), we see the two detectives who cracked the case not just being interviewed but hovering around on set watching the actors playing them in the reconstructions.

Yes, this is a series on a mission to break new walls. We also kept seeing actors being prepped for their scenes, such as the director talking Buring through how to approach a particularly emotive re-enactment. What next? The director being interviewed about their feelings interviewing the interviewees?



Victoria Cilliers survived a 4,000ft fall while skydiving in 2015

This stylised approach risks being a distraction, yet by episode one's last shot, of Cilliers herself arriving on set to explain first hand the whole shebang, you couldn't help but lean forward. Game on. The story becomes as much about her as her husband.

Emile was a "narcissistic sociopath", as one of the detectives put it, and possibly a bit dim if a) he thought he'd get away with his method of murder, and b) he thought that coming on to DS Hennah during his police interview would work. But given that he had clearly tried to kill his wife, why did she then protect him during his first trial? How much hold did he have over her? Or rather, how desperate was she to get back to the apparent normality she'd known before the "accident", with all the pitch-dark questions it now raised? Perhaps in her mind there was the question of what she'd one day tell her children about all this.

Certainly, the real Cilliers we see here — composed, smartly presented — is a contrast to the one we see with Buring's portrayal of her as she was several years before (Buring's howl of anguish was startlingly powerful). And so this becomes more interesting for showing the same woman in two states of mind: back then, as someone struggling to process what has gone so wrong in her life; and now, as someone who has accepted what happened, a survivor in more ways than one.

Radio choice

Ben Dowell



Jessica Fostekew: Sturdy Girl Club

Radio 4, 6.30pm

The comedian Jessica Fostekew takes a very look at what are described as "the most unladylike sports going". In this episode she looks at CrossFit, a mix of strength, gymnastics and athleticism. Fostekew talks to Lucy Campbell, CrossFit champion and 2022's 16th fittest woman in the world, about muscularity, finding a community and the continued sexualisation of women at the top of their game. Fostekew, above, also gamely demonstrates how it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between the sound of a woman lifting a heavy weight and the sound of a baby elephant on a steam train.

OUR TV NEWSLETTER

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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. Political interviews and conversation
1.00pm Andrew Neil. News-making interviews, comment and analysis 2.00 Jane Garvey and Fi Glover. Jane and Fi's trademark entertaining style plus live discussion on the day's news 4.00 John Pienaar with Times Radio Drive. A full round-up of today's developments 7.00 The Evening Edition with Kait Borsay. Engaging evening conversation
10.00 Carole Walker. The main stories of the day 1.00am The Story 1.30 Highlights from Matt Chorley 2.00 The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show 9.30 Vernon Kay. Pet Shop Boys pick their Tracks of My Years 12.00 Jeremy Vine 2.00pm Scott Mills 4.00 Sara Cox 6.30 Sara Cox's Half Wower 7.00 Jo Whalley's Shiny Happy Playlist 7.30 Jo Whalley 9.00 The Folk Show with Mark Radcliffe. Mark returns to his show, following an extended break. Featuring a collaboration by Peggy Seeger and the BBC Philharmonic 10.00 Trevor Nelson's Magnificent 7. Seven of *Rhythm Nation's* biggest hits, uplifting tunes and essential throwbacks 10.30 Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation. The DJ introduces a mix of R'n'B and soulful tunes 12.00 DJ Borg 3.00am Alternative Sounds of the 90s with Dermot O'Leary (r) 4.00 Owain Wyn Evans

Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
Petroc Trelawny presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show, featuring listener requests
9.30 Essential Classics
Georgia Mann plays the best in classical music, featuring new discoveries, some surprises and plenty of familiar favourites
1.00pm Classical Live
Tom McKinney showcases music from the 2024 Hay-on-Wye Festival and beyond.
Lortzing (Overture — *Zar und Zimmermann* LoIwV. 38); Ligeti (Concert Romanesque); Elgar (The Wand of Youth Suite No 2 Op 1b — No 6 "Wild Bears"); Le Beau (Piano Quartet in F minor Op 28); Britten (Divisions for piano left hand and Orchestra Op 21); Howell (2 Pieces for muted strings); and Dubignon (Sakulare Suite after works by JS Bach)

3.00 Live Choral Evensong

Live from York Minster with music by Lucy Walker, Judith Bingham, Annabel Rooney, Bairdow and Warren. Introit: Oculi omnium (Lucy Walker). Responses: Philip Moore. Psalms 65, 66, 67 (Turle, Garrett, Ashfield, Talbot). First Lesson: Job 22 vv21-30. Canticles: Oriel Service (Judith Bingham). Second Lesson: Matthew 5 vv13-24. Anthem: Round me falls the night (Annabel Rooney). Te Deum laudamus in D (Bairdow). Voluntary: Heather Hill (Warren, transcribed Benjamin Morris). Robert Sharpe (Director of Music); Benjamin Morris (Assistant Director of Music)

4.00 Composer of the Week: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

Donald Macleod looks at Orlando Gibbons entry into the new musical group formed by King James VI's only surviving son, the Prince of Wales, the future King Charles I. Gibbons (Fantasia No 1 for Two Trebles; *May let me weep*; Byrd (Fair Britain Isle); Gibbons (Fantasia of Four Parts — MB 20/12; O God, the king of glory; In Nomine for 5 Viols; Fantasia No 2 for 3 Viols; *Glorious and Powerful God*; See, see the word is incarnate; *Fretwork*; and O Lord, in thy wrath)

5.00 In Tune

With live music from mezzo-soprano Helen Charlston and lutenist Toby Carr

7.00 Classical Mixtape

A selection of classical favourites mixed with jazz, folk and music from around the world

7.30 Radio 3 in Concert

Ian Skelly presents a performance by the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Simon Rattle, that was recorded at the Isarphilharmonie, Munich in April this year. Schoenberg (*Gurrelieder*).

9.45 The Essay: Bohemians in T-Shirts

The story of Jackson Pollock, a keen T-shirt wearer, as he struggles towards his abstract vision and the role of Pollock's wife Lee, an artist in her own right, in his success (r)

10.00 Night Tracks

Hannah Peel presents a soundtrack for late-night listening, from classical to contemporary and everything in between

11.30 Round Midnight

Soweto Khn presents the best in jazz

12.30am Through the Night

Radio 4

FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz
5.30am News Briefing
5.43 Prayer for the Day
5.45 Farming Today
6.00 Today
With Amol Rajan and Emma Barnett

9.00 More or Less

Numbers and statistics used everyday (4/7)
9.30 To Catch a Scorpion
The investigation goes deep into Scorpion's gang, meeting the men arrested and imprisoned for people smuggling (5/8)

10.00 Woman's Hour

Nuala McGovern presents the magazine offering a female perspective on the world
11.00 The Public Philosopher
Professor Michael Sandel and a studio audience consider the ethics of AI (r)

11.45 Book of the Week: All That Glitters

By Orlando Whitfield. Inigo joins Modern Collections as his star continues to rise (3/5)

12.04pm You and Yours

Reports on consumer affairs and public interest stories

1.00 The World at One

News, analysis and comment, presented by Sarah Montague

1.45 Understand: The UK Election

Alex Forsyth and Adam Fleming unpick key elements of the General Election (3/10)

2.00 The Archers

Emma has some news, and Josh has concerns for a friend (r)

2.15 Drama: The Interrogation

By Roy Williams. Detective duo Matthews and Armitage interview Carly. Though she bit a police officer, the motivation to converse with Carly lies elsewhere (5/5) (r)

3.00 The Law Show

A weekly guide to law and the legal decisions that have a bearing on everyone in the UK led by Dr Joelle Grogan. Last in the series

3.30 The Artificial Human

Aleks Krotoski and Kevin Fong investigate driverless cars, and discover the practical, legal, ethical and technical needs that autonomous vehicles will need to meet (3/6)

4.00 The Media Show

The latest news from the media world

5.00 PM

6.00 Six O'Clock News

6.30 Jessica Fostekew: Sturdy Girl Club
The comedian explores the stories of women in crossfit, a sport combining strength, gymnastics and athleticism, which has trumpeted equality from its inception, but still has a long way to go in dealing with the sexualisation of the women at the top of their game. See *Radio Choice* (1/4)

7.00 The Archers

Plans start to take shape for Harrison. Meanwhile, Stella is in complete panic mode

7.15 Front Row

Arts programme

8.00 The Moral Maze

New series. Michael Buerk presents an episode recorded at the Hay Festival examining the morality of democracy (1/10)

9.00 Being Roman with Mary Beard

Robert Harris joins Mary Beard to uncover the story of a Pompeii hustler (6/6) (r)

9.30 Three Million

Kavita Puri meets the granddaughter of a senior colonial figure who is only just learning about her family's role in the famine

10.00 The World Tonight

News round-up with Anna Foster

10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Photographer

By Max Porter (3/5)

11.00 Athena's Cancel Culture

Athena Kugblenu explores the world of offence in modern times (3/4) (r)

11.15 Chloe Petts' Toilet Humour

The comedian explores the history of the toilet, from ancient Rome to today (2/5)

11.30 The Bottom Line: The Decisions That Made Me a Leader

Evan Davis speaks to co-founder of lastminute.com, Martha Lane Fox (2/6)

12.00 News and Weather

12.30am Book of the Week: All That Glitters (r)

12.48 Shipping Forecast

1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only

8.00am Hazelbeach 8.30 These Days 8.45 Exile 9.00 Robin Ince's Reality Tunnel 9.30 Soundstage 9.45 Daily Service 10.00 Here's Looking at You, Parents 11.00 Paul Temple and the Gilbert Case 11.30 A Change in the Weather 12.00 Winston in Love 12.30pm Hancock's Half Hour 1.00 Hazelbeach 1.30 These Days 1.45 Exile 2.00 Dilemma 2.30 Two Doors Down 3.00 Thackeray 3.45 Inner Balance 4.00 Here's Looking at You, Parents 5.00 Paul Temple and the Gilbert Case 5.30 A Change in the Weather 6.00 Winston in Love 6.30 Hancock's Half Hour 7.00 Hazelbeach. Nick gets a job with a dominatrix 7.30 These Days. By Lucy Caldwell 7.45 Exile. By Adrian Beale 8.00 Dilemma. With Roisin Conaty, Samira Ahmed, David Reed and Robin Ince 8.30 Two Doors Down. Comedy with Stella McCusker 9.00 Thackeray. By Olwen Wymark and Barbara Clegg 9.45 Inner Balance. By Kate Atkinson

10.00 Comedy Club: Robin Ince's Reality Tunnel. Robin discusses appreciating art and his favourite creatives 10.30 I Think I've Got a Problem. Tom knocks himself out. Last in the series 11.00 Chain Reaction. Presenter Victoria Coren Mitchell interviews actors and comedian Sandi Toksvig 11.30 Big Booth Too. Comedy with Bosthy Graffeo

Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909

5.00am Wake Up to Money 6.00 5 Live Breakfast 9.00 Nicky Campbell 11.00 Naga Munchetty 1.00pm Nihal Arthanayake 4.00 5 Live Drive 7.00 5 Live Sport. A look ahead to England's Euro 2024 campaign 9.00 5 Live Sport: The Euro Leagues Podcast 10.30 Nick Bright 1.00am Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz

5.00am Early Breakfast 6.00 talkSPORT Breakfast with Alan Brazil 10.00 Jim White and Simon Jordan 1.00pm Hawksbee and Jacobs 4.00 talkSPORT Drive with Andy Goldstein 7.00 Kick Off. Debate on sporting issues 10.00 Sports Bar 1.00am Extra Time

Talk

Digital only

5.00am James Max 6.30 Mike Graham 10.00 Julia Hartley Brewer 1.00pm Ian Collins. Monologues and debates 4.00 Jeremy Kyle 7.00 Kevin O'Sullivan 10.00 Petrie Hosken 1.00am Paul Ross

6 Music

Digital only

5.00am Chris Hawkins 7.30 Lauren Laverne 10.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00pm Craig Charles 4.00 Huw Stephens 7.00 New Music Fix Daily 9.00 6 Music's Loud and Proud Double Headers. With Felix Muffi and I. Jordan 11.00 Artist in Residence: Bloc Party 12.00 Freak Zone Playlist 1.00am The Story of Pop 2.00 The Story of Pop (r) 3.00 6 Music Live Hour (r) 4.00 6 Music's Jukebox

Virgin Radio

Digital only

6.30am The Chris Evans Breakfast Show with webuyanycar 10.00 The Ryan Tubridy Show 1.00pm Jayne Middlemiss 4.00 Ricky Wilson 7.00 Bam 10.00 Olivia Jones 1.00am Sean Goldsmith 4.00 Steve Denyer

Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz

6.30am Classic FM Breakfast with Dan Walker 9.00 The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour with Dan Walker 10.00 Alexander Armstrong 1.00pm Anne-Marie Minihall 4.00 Margherita Taylor 7.00 Relaxing Evenings 10.00 Calm Classics 1.00am Bill Overton 4.00 Early Breakfast

television & radio

Viewing Guide
Toby Earle

Inside No 9
BBC2, 10pm

Top pick Time for one last surprise from one of the best British shows of the century. After 10 years, 54 episodes, a website and countless collective gasps at the ingenuity

of Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith, this 55th and final screen outing will close the door on No 9. Will Pemberton and Shearsmith be dressed up to the nines for the occasion? Will it feature a cat o' nine tails? Will it be set on cloud nine? The answer to all of those questions is probably "nein". No advance viewing was

permitted and the information for this finale is as follows: "Plodding On is the final episode of the award-winning anthology of films, written by and starring Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith." This series could never have ended without a denouement shrouded in secrecy. Any melancholy Pemberton

and Shearsmith may harbour as this chapter of their partnership concludes is surely eclipsed by their pleasure in keeping the audience guessing. At the launch of the final series in March at the BFI in London, they stated there was not a future for *Inside No 9*. Two months later, it was announced a stage version, named

Stage/Fright, would play in the West End next year. Might this finale tie in to that production? While delivering a staggering consistency of the highest quality, the pair have also challenged our expectations of genres, characters and storytelling techniques. And yet we are blissfully stumped.

Presumed Innocent
Apple TV+
The Old Bailey has probably had fewer cases than the legal drama powerhouse David E Kelley, the writer and creator of *Ally McBeal*, *Boston Legal* and *Goliath* and maestro of the "rich families in crisis" genre with *The Undoing* and

Big Little Lies. This thriller unites those camps. It finds chief deputy prosecutor Rusty Sabich (Jake Gyllenhaal) investigating the murder of a colleague. The tone is moody and fraught, the murder set against a backdrop of office conflict and Sabich's desire to keep an incriminating secret buried.

	BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	Channel 4	Channel 5
Early	6.00am Breakfast 9.30 Morning Live. Magazine show 10.45 Scam Interceptors. The team investigate the scammers hurling a barrage of abuse at their victims 11.15 Homes Under the Hammer. A double dose of Dorset dwellings and a missing toilet in Cumbria (r) 12.15pm Bargain Hunt. From the Kent County Showground in Detling (r) (AD) 1.00 BBC News at One; Weather 1.35 BBC Regional News; Weather 1.45 BBC News at One; Weather 2.00 Rip Off Britain. Advice on consumer rights (r) 2.30 Animal Park. The park says goodbye to a hippopotamus and Megan McCubbin tries to count the macaque monkeys (r) (AD) 3.00 Escape to the Country. Briony May Williams helps a couple find a new home in the Suffolk countryside with enough space for their six Irish wolfhounds (r) 3.45 Garden Rescue. The team head to Wiltshire to help a pair transform their unsafe plot into a Chinese inspired family space with a woodland twist on a budget of £7,000 (r) 4.30 The Finish Line. Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene host 5.15 Pointless. Alexander Armstrong is joined by co-host Lucy Porter (r) 6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather 6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather 6.55 Party Election Broadcast (r)	6.30am Homes Under the Hammer (r) 7.30 Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure (r) 8.00 Sign Zone. Rick Stein's Food Stories (r) (AD, SL) 8.30 Great British Railway Journeys (r) (AD, SL) 9.00 BBC News 12.15pm Politics Live. The latest stories from Westminster and beyond 1.00 Impossible. Rick Edwards hosts the quiz in which contestants compete for the chance to win £10,000 with a single "impossible" answer knocking them out for the day (r) 1.45 Mastermind. The fourth semi-final of the quiz (r) 2.15 Five Bedrooms. Harry's future looks bleak (r) (AD) 3.00 Stanley Tucci: Searching for Italy. Stanley visits Piedmont (r) (AD) 3.45 The Farmers' Country Showdown. Coloured Ryeland sheep go on display at the Mid Devon Show (r) 4.15 Big Cats About the House. An injured cheetah needs Giles's help. Last in the series (r) (AD) 5.15 Flag! IT Experts James Lewis and Thomas Plant search the queue for silver showing Birmingham's anchor hallmark, and Paul Martin visits the home of the father of the Industrial Revolution (r) 6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games. Kevin Eldon, Sarah Keyworth, Laila Rouass and John White take part (r) 6.30 Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure. The newsreader travels to Santo Domingo	6.00am Good Morning Britain 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. Including Local Weather 12.30pm Loose Women. Topical studio discussion from a female perspective 1.30 ITV News; Weather 1.55 Regional News; Weather 2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal. David Dickinson and his team travel to Cheltenham. Here, Jo Brayshaw discovers a unique vinyl on her podium, and Henry Nicholls goes for gold (r) (AD) 3.00 Lingo. Adil Ray hosts the game in which three pairs of contestants use their skills to find words from the fewest letters possible (r) 4.00 Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jackpot (r) 5.00 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as four contestants answer general knowledge questions and 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 Liberal Democrats (r) 6.30 ITV News; Weather	6.30am Cheers (r) 7.20 Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) 9.10 Frasier (r) (AD) 11.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (r) 12.05pm Channel 4 News Summary 12.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. A Greek restaurant in Seattle with a menu unchanged since 1984 (r) 1.10 Car SOS. Fuzz Townshend and Tim Shaw restore a Vauxhall Astra (r) (AD) 2.10 Countdown. Sam Quek is in Dictionary Corner 3.00 A Place in the Sun. Looking for a three-bedroom property in and around the southern Costa Blanca in Spain (r) 4.00 A Place in the Sun. Ben Hillman helps a man from Scotland find the perfect holiday home on Gran Canaria with a budget of £120,000 5.00 Sun, Sea and Selling Houses. Mother-and-son team Sharon and Shaun help a retired IT professional find a holiday home, while Darren and Natalie help a couple upgrade their Spanish dwelling 6.00 Four in a Bed. The third visit of the week is at Cobblehouse Country Cabins in Turfiff, Aberdeenshire where the B&Bers try their hand at fly fishing on the River Deveron (r) 6.30 The Simpsons. Otto breaks up with his new bride, so big-hearted Bart invites her to stay with the family, much to Marge's displeasure. With the guest voice of Parker Posey (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. Rachel reveals the identity of the father of her baby (r) (AD) 1.10 Friends. Ross and Rachel argue about why they slept together (r) (AD) 1.40 5 News at Lunchtime 1.45 Home and Away. Eden answers the phone to a distressed and angry Imogen in the wake of Levi's affair bombshell, and Mackenzie comforts Levi — sorry for everything he has been through (r) 2.15 FILM: <i>Blood in the Water</i> (12, TVM, 2024) A young lawyer travels to collect her sister's body, after her sudden death. She soon becomes suspicious of foul play. Thriller starring Lindsey Dresbach 4.00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. A woman has been running the Mad Munk for two years, after a rocky start she never thought she would still be running it — but her team has promised to throw an anniversary party (r) 5.00 5 News at 5 6.00 Party Election Broadcast. By the Liberal Democrats 6.05 Police Interceptors. A driver who has breached a restraining order leads officers on a half-hour, white-knuckle ride across Nottinghamshire (r) 6.55 5 News Update



The King, the Prince and the

Roya Nikkhah and Kate Mansey reflect on the King honouring the D-Day forces and calling for goodness in every land, while the Prince of Wales joins world leaders. Plus, don't miss Kate's 'siege of Royal Lodge' scoop!

7PM	7.00 The Panorama Interviews with Nick Robinson Speaking to Rhun ap Iorwerth, Party Leader of Plaid Cymru, ahead of the General Election 7.30 EastEnders As Linda prepares for Keanu's funeral, Sharon finally tells Albie about his death, and Yolande and Patrick return (AD)	7.00 The One Show Presented by Alex Jones and Jermaine Jenas 7.30 Grand Tours of Scotland's Rivers Seasoned traveller Paul Murton sets off downstream to explore various rivers in Scotland (r)	7.00 The Leadership Interviews: Rishi Sunak — Tonight Paul Brand interviews the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak. See Viewing Guide 7.30 Emmerdale Belle tries to convince herself that everything is going to be okay, Vinny tries to kiss Gabby, and Ruby vows to turn herself in (AD)	7.00 Channel 4 News 7.55 Party Election Broadcast By the Green Party	7.00 The Motorway Hotel Wedding coordinator Emily and operations manager Ness head to the local wedding fair to try to sell the charms of a hotel next to the M6 to dozens of brides and grooms-to-be (2/4) 7.55 5 News Update
8PM	8.00 The Repair Shop The team of experts restore a woman's 1990s BMX bike, an authentic gown that once belonged to drag performer Danny La Rue, a painting from Holloway Fire Station depicting a fire with three bold yellow-helmeted firefighters in the foreground and a dynamometer (AD)	8.00 Springwatch Chris Packham and Michaela Strachan begin the deliberation of which nests will fledge before the end of the series, while Lolo Williams takes a dive into the secret lives of little owls and little terns on the Dorset coast (11/12)	8.00 Coronation Street Toyah receives frightening news about Leanne, Summer arrives home with a new boyfriend to show off, Ken requires round-the-clock care and the Websters' fortunes finally improve (AD)	8.00 Location, Location, Location The property duo Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer catch up with two sets of house-hunters they previously helped, who wanted to make the switch from London life to family life	8.00 The Motorway The entire motorway must be shut down after a high-speed motorbike crash on the Spaghetti Junction, just outside Birmingham. The patrollers worst fears are confirmed when they find a man lying in the carriageway. Plus, a pair of officers discover an abandoned caravan
9PM	9.00 Who Do You Think You Are? Footballer turned presenter Alex Scott finds out about the Jewish ancestry on her mum's side and travels to Jamaica for the first time in her life, to learn about the ancestors of her grandparents, who were part of the Windrush generation (3/7) (r) (AD)	9.00 The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan Romesh concludes his African adventure by travelling to the island of Madagascar (3/3) (AD)	9.00 Long Lost Family: Born Without Trace A woman who was left in a shopping basket under a hedge in Birmingham and another who was left in an East London phone box, search for their families with help from Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell (AD)	9.00 The Fall: Skydive Murder Plot Victoria Cilliers, in her first in-depth TV interview, describes her recollection of the parachute jump and what made her question her marriage. Husband Emile is bailed to continue his work in the army, but the subsequent trial does not go to plan (2/3) (AD)	9.00 Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts There is a shortage of space on the specialist wards that admit casualty patients, meaning the department is at risk of complete gridlock. An ambulance rushes in a woman vomiting blood, so doctors prepares resus for her arrival (AD)
10PM	10.00 BBC News at Ten 10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather 10.40 The Traitors US Strangers unite to embark on a game of detection and backstabbing, in the hope of winning a cash jackpot. Three of the contestants coined "the Traitors" will devise a plan to steal the prize from the other contestants, known as "the Faithful". Hosted by Alan Cumming (1/12) (r)	10.00 Inside No 9 The final episode of the award-winning anthology of stories. See Viewing Guide (6/6) (AD) 10.30 Newsnight Analysis of the day's events with Victoria Derbyshire	10.00 ITV News at Ten 10.30 Regional News 10.45 Peston Political magazine show hosted by Robert Peston, featuring major interviews with MPs, topical guests and cultural figures	10.00 Queenie It is Queenie's birthday, and although she has made progress she wonders if some hurdles with her mother are just too big (7/8) (AD) 10.35 Queenie As Queenie makes steps towards healing in a new flat of her own, she still has some decisions to make about her future (8/8) (AD)	10.00 Trauma Room One A patient is sped into theatre after a stroke. Plus, a woman is rushed in for emergency surgery after breaking her back, and a consultant neurosurgeon must act quickly to avoid paralysis (5/8) (r)
11PM	11.40 The Traitors US As the Traitors attempt to complete their line-up, the first murder is committed. Some hard truths are revealed and the first player is banished from the game (2/12) (r)	11.05 Unspun World with John Simpson The week's major global news stories 11.30 The Conversation (12, 1974) An obsessive electronic surveillance expert makes the unprofessional mistake of getting personally involved in a dangerous case. Thriller starring Gene Hackman and John Cazale. See Viewing Guide	11.40 Absolutely India: Mancs in Mumbai The brothers take on a junior girl's hockey team (6/6) (r) (AD)	11.10 Married to a Psychopath The story of the hunt for Malcolm Webster, who targeted wealthy women for their money. The programme explores the crimes from the perspective of the detective behind the investigation to re-open a cold case (1/2) (r) (AD, SL)	11.05 999: Emergency Call Out A team responds to a hit-and-run involving a cyclist, with medical support for the victim taking place alongside a police investigation into the identity of the driver. Plus, a paramedic and a special sergeant respond to a 16-year-old boy who has started fitting (9/10) (r)
Late	12.45am-6.00 BBC News	1.20am Sign Zone: Race Across the World The teams head to the second checkpoint in Sokcho, South Korea (r) (AD, SL) 2.20-3.20 The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan. Travel series (r) (AD, SL)	12.05am ITV Studio Sessions Clara Amfo is joined by singer-songwriter Cat Burns. Last in the series (r) 12.30 Shop on TV 3.00 The Leader Interviews — Tonight. Ahead of the General Election, Rachel Younger talks to Ed Davey of the Liberal Democrats (r) (SL) 3.25 Unwind with ITV 4.40-6.00 D-Day 80 at the Royal Albert Hall (r) (AD, SL)	12.10am Married to a Psychopath (r) (SL) 1.05 The Piano: The Final (r) (AD, SL) 2.15 FILM: Two of Us (12, 2020) Romantic drama starring Barbara Sukowa (r) 3.50 Iris Prize Best British Shorts 4.20 Grand Designs Australia (r) (AD) 5.15 Kirstie's House of Craft (r) (AD) 5.25 Frasier (r) (AD) 5.50-6.00 Countdown (r)	12.05am Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders (r) 1.00 Casino 3.00 Secret Scotland with Susan Calman (r) 3.50 How to Give Up Sugar (& Lose Weight) (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

The Leadership Interviews: Rishi Sunak — Tonight

ITV1, 7pm
Rishi Sunak has just about dried out after standing in a rain-lashed Downing Street to announce a general election, an announcement that caught many by surprise. Since then numerous Conservative

MPs have revealed they are standing down, while Sunak has announced plans for a new National Service that his government had said a few days earlier wouldn't be introduced. Paul Brand will grill him on his credentials for the country's top job, his plan to win and whether he is leading his party to a defeat.

The Traitors US

BBC3, 7pm/8pm
When the former speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow first appears in this series of the hit reality show, you might think your television or screen is out of orrrrdeeeerrrrr, orrrrdeeeerrrrr. But no, that really is Bercow residing in

Château Cumming: the American version of the game has the actor Alan Cumming presiding over the tactical bloodbath as a band of Traitors seek to avoid identification by murdering Faithfuls. Again, in case it hasn't sunk in, Bercow is competing and in the opening episode he must help to build a beacon.

Painting Birds with Jim and Nancy Moir

Sky Arts/Now, 9pm
If ever a bird watcher feels out of sorts, they might have had a funny term. This migratory bird is what Jim and Nancy are searching for in Leinster, with Jim keen to see them up close. "I'm looking forward to seeing little

terns and seeing them in action, doing what they do," he says, and is then asked what they do. "I don't know," he replies. "We'll find out when we go and see them." What they do on this trip — Jim and Nancy, not the singer Imelda May and visit Rockabill island, home to breeding terns.

Film The Conversation

BBC2, 11.30pm
This paranoid thriller is one of the high points of the director Francis Ford Coppola's brilliant run of form in the early 1970s. Gene Hackman stars as a surveillance expert while Coppola favourite John Cazale and a young Harrison Ford co-star. (12, 1974)

Sky Max

6.00am NCIS: Los Angeles (r) 7.00 DC's Legends of Tomorrow (r) (AD) 8.00 The Flash (r) 9.00 Stargate SG-1 (r) 11.00 NCIS: Los Angeles (r) 12.00 The Flash (r) 1.00pm MacGyver (r) (AD) 3.00 Hawaii Five-0 (r) 4.00 S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) 5.00 DC's Legends of Tomorrow. The team visit 1927 Chicago (r) (AD) 6.00 Stargate SG-1. The team offers sanctuary to former Goa'uld conqueror Apophis (r) 7.00 Stargate SG-1. Daniel is trapped in the body of a dying man by Ma'chello (r) 8.00 A League of Their Own: Mexican Road Trip. The gang explores the city of La Paz (r) (AD) 9.00 The Walking Dead. Rick and his team rescue Glenn and Maggie from Woodbury (r) 10.00 Banshee. Hood offers himself to Mr Rabbit in exchange for Max (10/10) (r) (AD) 11.00 Brassic. Comedy series (r) (AD) 12.00 There's Something About Movies (r) (AD) 1.00am Brit Cops: Rapid Response (r) (AD) 2.00 Road Wars (r) 3.00 Hawaii Five-0 (r) 4.00 S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) 5.00 Highway Patrol (r) (AD)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Fish Town (r) 7.55 True Blood (r) 10.05 Billions (r) (AD) 12.15pm Game of Thrones (r) (AD) 1.20 The Sopranos (r) 3.30 True Blood (r) 5.45 Billions (r) (AD) 8.00 House of the Dragon: War Room. A look ahead to season two (r) (AD) 9.00 The Sympathizer. With the General's order to eliminate the spy in their ranks weighing on him, the Captain seeks help to craft and execute a plan timed for Independence Day (r) (AD) 10.10 The Pacific. The marines nervously prepare to launch an attack on Peleliu airfield, where they undertake a manoeuvre that places the entire company in danger (r) (AD) 11.15 The Wire. Drama set in Baltimore telling the story of a drugs-and-murder police investigation from the points of view of the law and their targets. Starring Dominic West (r) 12.30am The Newsroom. Will tries to protect Neal following his receipt of confidential documents (r) 1.35 The Deuce (r) (AD) 2.50 Game of Thrones (r) (AD) 4.00 Fish Town (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Good Fight Club (r) (AD) 7.00 Discovering: Roy Scheider (r) 8.00 The Directors (r) 9.00 The Seventies (r) (AD) 10.00 Branson (r) (AD) 11.05 Italia 90: Four Weeks That Changed the World (r) (AD) 12.00 Mr Dynamite: The Rise of James Brown (r) (AD) 2.15pm FILM: Wig (15, 2019) Exploring the history and influence of the Wigstock drag festival 4.00 The Directors (r) 5.00 Discovering (r) 6.00 The Seventies. Crime in the US (r) (AD) 7.00 Branson. Documentary (3/4) (r) (AD) 8.05 Italia 90: Four Weeks That Changed the World. The end of the tournament (3/3) (r) (AD) 9.00 Terry Venables: A Man Can Dream (r) (AD) 11.00 FILM: Bobby Robson — More Than a Manager (12, 2018) Exploring the career of the much-loved former football manager (AD) 1.00am Italia 90: Four Weeks That Changed the World (r) (AD) 2.00 The Truth vs Alex Jones. The defamation lawsuits brought by Sandy Hook parents against Alex Jones (AD) 4.10 The Directors (r) 5.05 Discovering: Roy Scheider (r)

Sky Arts

6.00am Verdi: Stiffelio 8.05 The Joy of Painting (r) (AD) 9.05 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 10.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents 11.00 Discovering: Whoopi Goldberg (AD) 12.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 1.00pm Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 2.00 Classic Literature & Cinema (AD) 3.00 The Sky Arts Book Club Summer Reads Special 4.00 Discovering: Jodie Foster (AD) 5.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 6.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 7.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents 7.30 Alfred Hitchcock Presents 8.00 Portrait Artist of the Year 2022 (AD) 9.00 Painting Birds with Jim and Nancy Moir. The couple go in search of little terns in Leinster. Last in the series. See Viewing Guide (AD) 10.00 The Eighties. The impact of Aids (AD) 11.00 Greatest Albums Live. Simple Minds 12.00 The Top: The Comeback Special Live at the Royal Albert Hall 2.30am Discovering 3.00 Wonderland: From JM Barrie to JRR Tolkien 4.00 Cheltenham Literature Festival 5.00 Auction

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News 7.00 Good Morning Euros 8.00 Good Morning Euros 9.00 Good Morning Euros 10.00 Live Tennis: The Libema Open. Coverage of day three of the WTA and ATP grass court events, held at Autotron Rosmalen in s-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands 3.00pm Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: USA v India. Coverage of the Group A match from Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. India won the inaugural staging of this event in 2007, but a second title has so far eluded them, while USA have qualified for the tournament for the first time 7.30 US Open Golf. Preview to the 2024 US Open, at Pinehurst Resort and Country Club 10.00 SSN Euro Report 10.30 Back Pages Tonight 11.00 Sky Sports News 1.00am Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: West Indies v New Zealand. Coverage of the Group C match, which is being staged at Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba 5.30 Sky Sports News

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: 6.55pm-7.00 Party Election Broadcast. By the Social Democratic and Labour Party 10.40 FILM: George Best — All By Himself (2016) Documentary 12.10am The Traitors US (r) 1.10 Celebrity Bridge of Lies (r) 1.55-6.00 BBC News

BBC1 Scotland
As BBC1 except: 3.00pm-3.45 Politics Scotland 10.40 The All Star Euros Sketch Show 11.10 The Traitors US (r) 12.10am The Traitors US (r) 1.05 Weather for the Week Ahead 1.10-6.00 BBC News

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: 6.55pm-7.00 Party Election Broadcast. By Plaid Cymru (r) 9.00-10.00 Max Boyce at 80 (r) 10.40 BBC Wales Live 11.10 The Traitors US (r) 12.10am The Traitors US (r) 1.10-6.00 BBC News

ITV1 Wales
As ITV1 except: 6.25pm-6.30 Party Election Broadcast. By Plaid Cymru

STV
As ITV1 except: 6.25pm-6.29 Party Election Broadcast: 10.30 STV News 10.40 Scotland Tonight 11.05 Peston 12.00 ITV Studio Sessions (r) 12.25am-3.00 Shop on TV 3.25-4.40 Night Vision

UTV
As ITV1 except: 6.20pm-6.30 Party Election Broadcast. By the Social Democratic and Labour Party

BBC Scotland
7.00pm Scotland Sings (r) 8.00 Life on the Bay 8.30 Scotland's Home of the Year. Last in the series (r) (AD) 9.00 The Nine 10.00 Two Doors Down (r) (AD) 10.30 Best of Only an Excuse? (r) 11.00 Icons of Football (r) 11.30-12.00 Growing Up Scottish (r)

BBC Alba
6.00am Alba Today 5.00pm Lon le Linda (r) 5.15 Na Clangairean (r) 5.30 Peicinn/Petit (r) 5.35 Gasta a' Ghraineag (Happy the Hoglet) 5.45 Su Pic (Peek Zoo) (r) 5.55 Stoiridh (r) 6.00 Donnie Murdoch (Danger Mouse) (r) 6.10 Geamachean Goralan (r) 6.15 Stri (r) 6.20 Bogaisean is Gumbal/Bottersnikes and Gumbles (r) 6.35 Dùbhlain CBCB Alba (r) 6.40 Pròiseact Plann (r) 6.50 Thar na Loidhne/Crossing the Line (r) 7.30 SpeakGaelic (r) 8.00 An Là (News) 8.30 Gàrraidhean Mòra 9.00 Duncan Mackenzie (Dileab nan Beann) (r) 10.00 Julie Fowlis Kelvingrove (r) 10.30 An Clò Mòr (r) 11.00 Sar Sgeoil (r) 12.00-6.00am Alba Today

S4C
6.00am Cwyl: Olobobs (r) 6.05 Digbi Draig (r) 6.20 Cymlybauchyn (r) 6.30 Patrol Pawennau (r) 6.45 Dathlu 'Da Dona (r) 6.70 Brethyn a Fflwff (r) 7.05 Pablo (r) 7.20 Caru Canu a Stori (r) 7.30 Cwawc a'i Ffrindiau (r) 7.45 Cwm Ceta a Twrch (r) 8.00 Timpo (r) 8.10 Amser Maith Maith yn Ôl (r) 8.25 Halibab (r) 8.35 Octonots (r) 8.45 Fferm Fach (r) 9.00 Odo (r) 9.10 Anffieailfach Bach y Byd (r) 9.20 Bendibwmblws (r) 9.30 Pentre Papur Pop (r) 9.40 Deian a Loli (r) 10.00 Brethyn a Fflwff (r) 10.05 Pablo (r) 10.20 Caru Canu a Stori (r) 10.30 Cwawc a'i Ffrindiau (r) 10.45 Cwm Ceta a Twrch (r) 11.01 Dsydu Gydya Gwyl: Nos Da Gwyl (r) 11.05 Jena a Jim a'r Gwyliador (r) 11.20 Octonots (r) 11.35 Sblj a Sblj (r) 11.40 Amser Maith Maith yn Ôl (r) 12.00 News: Weather 12.05pm Richard Holt: Yr Academi Felys (r) 12.30 Heno (r) 1.00 Codi Huyl (r) 1.30 Garddio a Mwy (r) 8.25 Maifoff 'Ma (AD) 8.55 News: Weather 9.00 Pawb a'i Farn: Etholad 2024 10.00 Ceffylau, Sheikhs a Chwobois (r) 10.30-11.35 Yr Analwch (r)

Presidents

Listen for free via the QR code, on the Times Radio app or wherever you find your podcasts

BBC3

7.00pm The Traitors US. New series. Game of detection and backstabbing. See Viewing Guide 8.00 The Traitors US. The first murder is committed as the Traitors attempt to complete their line-up. See Viewing Guide 9.00 Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster. With a trail of crime stretching across several continents as he continues to live life on the run, Elliot becomes more paranoid (2/3) (AD) 9.45 The Young Offenders. A birthday party is planned for Jock and Siobhán's daughter (AD) 10.15 The Young Offenders. The actor joins Remember Death in Paradise. The actor joins forces with the acclaimed TV writer and producer to look back on the show's origins and share some stories from behind-the-scenes 10.15 Death in Paradise. Richard Poole meets a sticky end at a university reunion (1/8) (AD) 11.15 Fever Pitch: The Rise of the Premier League. The rise of the celebrity footballer, symbolised by David Beckham (3/4) (AD) 12.00am Kissed a Boy (AD) 1.05 Bot Dreams: Now or Never (AD) 2.05 Back to Life (AD) 2.55-3.55 Roman Kemp: The Fight for Young Lives. Documentary (AD, SL)

BBC4

7.00pm Great British Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo travels from Belfast to Portrush (AD) 7.30 Villages by the Sea. The history of Robin Hood's Bay on the North Yorkshire coast 8.00 Full Circle with Michael Palin. The actor crosses the equator en route to Borneo and Java 8.50 Michael Palin: The Art of Travel 9.00 Rise of the Nazis: The Manhunt. The return of the documentary, picking up in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, when the hunt began to capture high-ranking Nazis (AD) 10.00 Don Warrington and Tony Jordan Remember Death in Paradise. The actor joins forces with the acclaimed TV writer and producer to look back on the show's origins and share some stories from behind-the-scenes 10.15 Death in Paradise. Richard Poole meets a sticky end at a university reunion (1/8) (AD) 11.15 Fever Pitch: The Rise of the Premier League. The rise of the celebrity footballer, symbolised by David Beckham (3/4) (AD) 12.00am Kissed a Boy (AD) 1.05 Bot Dreams: Now or Never (AD) 2.05 Back to Life (AD) 2.55-3.55 Roman Kemp: The Fight for Young Lives. Documentary (AD, SL)

Talking Pictures

6.00am Burke's Law (b/w) 7.00 FILM: The Great Van Robbery (PG, 1959) Drama starring Denis Shaw 8.20 FILM: Portrait of Alison (PG, 1955) Mystery starring Terry Moore (b/w) 10.00 Together 10.30 The Buccaneers (b/w) 11.05 FILM: Hide and Seek (U, 1964) Crime drama starring Ian Carmichael (b/w) 12.55pm FILM: Serious Charge (PG, 1959) Drama starring Anthony Quayle (b/w) 3.00 Saddle Up 3.05 FILM: The Adventures of Bullwhip Griffin (PG, 1967) Western adventure with Bryan Russell and Roddy McDowall 5.15 Saddle Up 5.20 Johnny Ringo 5.55 Bonanza. The Cartwrights employ a robber to look back on the show's origins and share some stories from behind-the-scenes 7.00 Dixon of Dock Green. Drama series 8.05 The Human Jungle (b/w) 9.05 Gideon's Way (b/w) 10.10 FILM: The Nanny (15, 1965) Hammer thriller starring Bette Davis (b/w) 12.00 Tell Me Another 12.30am Maigret (b/w) 1.35 FILM: Millions Like Us (U, 1943) An Aboriginal film drama starring Patricia Roc (b/w) 3.35 FILM: Hide and Seek (U, 1964) Crime drama starring Ian Carmichael (b/w) 5.25 Sherlock Holmes (b/w)

Film4

11.00am Gunfight at the OK Corral (PG, 1957) Western starring Burt Lancaster 1.25pm Three Hours to Kill (PG, 1954) Western with Dana Andrews 3.00 Mission: Impossible — Fallout Interview Special 3.05 Buchanan Rides Alone (U, 1958) Western starring Randolph Scott 4.45 Hobson's Choice (U, 1953) Comedy starring John Mills (b/w) (AD) 6.55 Keeping Up with the Joneses (12, 2016) Action comedy starring Zach Galifianakis, Isla Fisher, Jon Hamm and Gad Elad (AD) 9.00 Bad Boys for Life (15, 2020) Miami detective Mike Lowrey is targeted for assassination by a crime lord's widow. Action sequel starring Martin Lawrence, Will Smith, Paola Nunez and Vanessa Hudgens (AD) 11.25 Hustlers (15, 2019) Strip club employees band together to turn the tables on their Wall Street clients. Comedy crime drama starring Jennifer Lopez and Constance Wu (AD) 1.35am-3.55 Sweet Country (15, 2017) An Aboriginal family drama about a white man in self defence and goes on the run as a posse gathers to hunt him down. Period drama starring Hamilton Morris and Bryan Brown (AD)

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. In Essex and Suffolk (AD) 3.10 Four in a Bed 5.50 Château DIY (AD) 6.55 Car SOS. A 1984 Opel Manta GTE (AD) 7.55 The Dog House. A lively French bulldog meets a drag queen and his partner, while the luckiest dog on Woodgreen animal charity's books goes on two dates (8/8) (AD) 9.00 Emergency Helicopter Medics. Crews treat a painter with a possible bleed on the brain, a motorcyclist with a broken leg and severely deformed wrist, and a woman who has been trampled by a foal (AD) 10.00 999: On the Front Line. A postal worker slips on sewage and may have broken his hip, and paramedics are sent to a possible cardiac arrest and find their patient in a bin (6/8) 11.05 24 Hours in A&E. A 53-year-old man is brought in by ambulance after a work-related accident on a building site, and in his hour of need he turns to his lifelong friend (AD) 12.10am Emergency Helicopter Medics (AD) 1.15 999: On the Front Line 2.20 24 Hours in A&E (AD) 3.25-3.55 A Place in the Sun

Drama

6.00am Teleshopping 7.20 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 4.10 Tenko 5.15 Birds of a Feather 6.00 Waiting for God. Comedy series 6.40 Are You Being Served? 7.20 Last of the Summer Wine. Marina decides the time has come to give up on men 8.00 The Bletchley Circle. Part two of two. With corruption in vice squad, the women realise that catching the gang red-handed is their only option and plot to infiltrate the crime ring (4/4) 9.00 New Tricks. Jack announces he is quitting the team — but before they can question him, they are given a case to solve (1/10) (AD) 10.00 New Tricks. The case of a missing PE teacher is reinvestigated when the remains of a body are discovered near the elite public boarding school where he taught (2/10) (AD) 11.20 Soldier, Soldier. A prank in the Officer's Mess causes trouble for Tucker 12.20am Lovejoy 1.35 David Copperfield 2.35 Classic Holby City 4.00 Teleshopping

Yesterday

6.10am Hornby: A Model World (AD) 8.00 Abandoned Engineering (AD) 10.00 The World at War 11.00 World War Weekend 12.00 Great British Railway Journeys 1.00pm Antiques Roadshow 2.00 Bangers & Cash (AD) 4.00 The World at War 5.00 World War Weekend 6.00 Antiques Roadshow. From Castle Howard 7.00 Canal Boat Diaries. Robbie takes a tumble at Buckly Locks in Northamptonshire and has a problem with his power supply (8/10) (AD) 8.00 Great Coastal Railway Journeys 8.30 Great Coastal Railway Journeys 9.00 Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics. The team attempts to take on their biggest restoration yet — a Series 1 Land Rover (AD) 10.00 Bangers & Cash. Derek heads off to collect some vintage motorcycles from a garage in the north-east of England (AD) 11.00 Abandoned Engineering. Exploring a theme park in Buenos Aires built in a time of terror and dogged by controversy (3/8) (AD) 12.00 Great British Railway Journeys 1.00am Abandoned Engineering (AD) 2.00 Scouting for Toys (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 Deal or No Deal 2.00 Family Fortunes 3.00 Veronica Mars 4.00 Dawson's Creek 5.00 Dress to Impress 6.00 Catchphrase and Quiz Show Special (AD) 7.00 Deal or No Deal. Stephen Mulhern hosts as more contestants take on the Banker 8.00 Bob's Burgers. Tina, Gene and Louise join a go-kart league, while Bob and Teddy serve home-brewed beer at the restaurant (AD) 8.30 Bob's Burgers. Bob wants to become a member of the Community Garden (AD) 9.00 Love Island. More drama from the villa 10.05 G'wed. The pupils pair up for a Diversity and Inclusion week presentation 10.40 Family Guy. Death tries to show Peter what his life would be like without alcohol (AD) 11.05 Family Guy. Animated comedy (AD) 11.35 American Dad!. Double bill (AD) 12.35am Bob's Burgers (AD) 1.35 Extraordinary 2.10 World's Funniest Videos 2.40 Unwind with ITV 3.00 Teleshopping

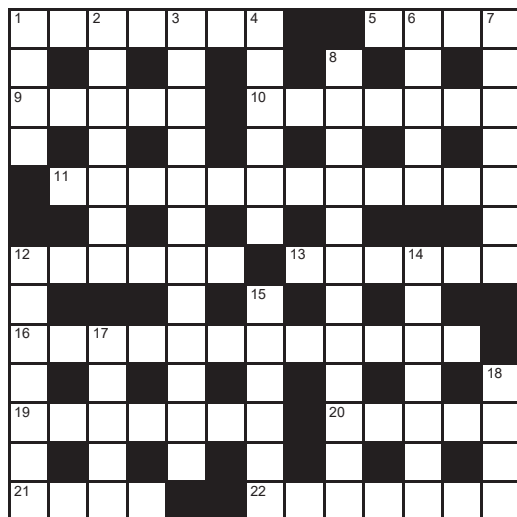
ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale 7.00 Classic Coronation Street (AD) 8.05 Agatha Christie's Poirot (AD) 10.30 The Royal 11.40 Heartbeat (AD) 1.40pm Classic Emmerdale 2.40 Classic Coronation Street (AD) 3.45 Inspector Morse (AD) 5.55 Heartbeat. Double bill (AD) 8.00 Midsomer Murders. A disused abbey that is believed to be cursed is about to be turned into a pub, a decision that has angered many superstitious locals — but someone is found murdered in a similar manner to a famous historical execution (AD) 10.00 Wire in the Blood. One of Tony's PhD students is suspected of carrying out an alibi — he is disabled with severe arthritis (2/4) 11.55 The Royal. Ormerod faces a taxing time when a prison van overturns on the moors. The driver is killed, a guard is seriously injured and one of the convicts escapes 12.50am Upstairs, Downstairs. Rose receives bad news 2.00 Unwind with ITV. Daily drama designed to calm the mind and encourage relaxation and reflection 2.30 Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am The Derby Through the Years 6.15 Minder (AD, SL) 7.15 The Sweeney (SL) 8.10 The Return of Sherlock Holmes (AD) 9.15 Magnum, P.I. (AD, SL) 10.25 Kojak 11.30 BattleBots 12.25pm The Return of Sherlock Holmes (AD) 1.35 Magnum, P.I. (AD) 2.35 Kojak 3.40 Minder (AD) 4.50 The Sweeney 6.00 BattleBots. The quarter finals 6.55 The Chase Celebrity Special 8.00 Isle of Man TT races, with highlights of the first races for the Supersport, Sidecar, Superbike, Superstock and Supertwin classes 9.00 FILM: Total Recall (15, 1990) A construction worker discovers his memory has been erased and travels to Mars to uncover his true identity. Sci-fi thriller starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Rachel Ticotin (AD) 11.15 All Elite Wrestling: Collision. Hard-hitting action from AEW's newest show, featuring stars including FTR, The House of Black, Thunder Rosa, and more 1.00am The Sweeney (SL) 2.05 The Protectors (SL) 2.30 Unwind with ITV 3.00 Teleshopping

times2 Crossword No 9555



- Across**
- 1 Riotous celebration (7)
 - 5 Protective crust over a healing wound (4)
 - 9 Wonderful, fantastic (5)
 - 10 Burnt ceremonial substance (7)
 - 11 Thoughts of how matters may or should turn out (12)
 - 12 Universe (6)

- 13 Rubbed painfully (6)
- 16 Scholarly thinkers (12)
- 19 Generous in amount (7)
- 20 Core of a peach or plum, eg (5)
- 21 Neat, orderly (4)
- 22 Excursion not requiring an overnight stay (3,4)

Down

- 1 Ancient Icelandic tale (4)
- 2 Mountaineering tools (3,4)
- 3 Perform some kind of social custom (2,3,7)
- 4 Responsible for a crime (6)
- 6 Brazzaville's country (5)
- 7 Consecrated (7)
- 8 Spirit made with barley (6,6)
- 12 Relief aviator (2-5)
- 14 Passionate feeling, zeal (7)
- 15 Mode of dismissal in cricket (6)
- 17 Bearing nascent flowers (2,3)
- 18 Fibre used to make rope (4)

Solution to Crossword 9554

MODICUM LETUP
ARROUUEEL
SWISS RESERVE
TFMTTMA
INTREPID MIND
FTFEN
FORTIFICATION
ECCCO
FIVE MATTRESS
ITWTOXE
ROSSINI THUMB
TISOULA
HATCH NAMETAG

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

Top Tens
C. Defence
3. Quick Defence
(i) Which switch

When dummy has a long, strong suit, a suit that will provide declarer with discards for her losers, the defence must try to win quick tricks.

In these exercises, declarer is in 4♠, and dummy has a very strong diamond suit. Partner has led a high-for-hate heart. You know it must be right to switch to a club, and must try to win as many tricks in the suit as quickly as possible. But which club do you lead?

- (A) Dummy — 864 East (you) — (i) ♣QJ3 (ii) ♣Q53
- (B) Dummy — 1064 East (you) — (i) ♠A732 (ii) ♠AJ92
- (C) Dummy — 164 East (you) — (i) ♣Q1052 (ii) ♣AQ105

Answers:

- (A)(i) Switch to the normal ♣Q, hoping partner has (say) ♠A1072 over declarer's ♠K95.
- (A)(ii) Switch to the unusual ♣Q, hoping partner has (say) ♠AJ102 over declarer's ♠K97.
- (B)(i) Switch to ♠2 (it's fine to underlead an ace after dummy is tabled), hoping partner has (say) ♠KJ5 over declarer's ♠Q98.
- (B)(ii) Switch to ♠J, a surround play (just beating dummy's ♠10), hoping partner has (say) ♠K53 over declarer's ♠Q87.

(C)(i) Switch to the normal ♠2, hoping partner has (say) ♠K73 over declarer's ♠A98.

(C)(ii) Switch to ♠Q, hoping partner has the king (in which case any club will do); however, the surround play ♠Q is best if declarer has (say) ♠K98 and partner ♠732.

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

♠QJ87	♠96	♠A1043
♥86	♥K753	♥10
♦63	♦J98	♦AQ102
♣A652	♣KQJ10	♣8743

S	W	N	E
1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	End		

West led ♠Q v 4♥. As East, plan the defence.

Dummy's clubs are threatening — this is a quick defence, as declarer will discard losers on dummy's clubs. You must win ♠Q with ♠A (knowing declarer holds ♠K) and switch to diamonds, dummy's weakness.

You need partner to have either ♠K or ♠A. If partner has ♠K, it doesn't matter which diamond you lead. If declarer has ♠K (and partner has ♠A), you must switch specifically to ♦Q (lead ♦2, and declarer runs it to dummy's ♦J).

Declarer beats ♦Q with ♦K, draws trumps and leads ♠Q98. However, West alertly hops up with ♠A and fires through ♦7. You hold ♦A10 over dummy's ♦J9 — one down. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

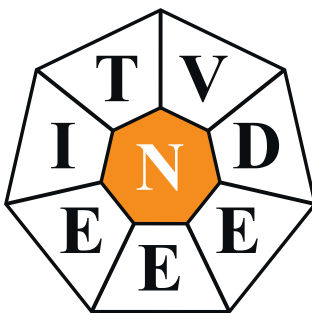
Brain Trainer

EASY 90 $\div 5 + 7 \div 5 \times 3 + 19 \frac{1}{2} \text{ OF IT} - 5 \times 4 + 15$ **ANSWER**

MEDIUM 27 **SQUARE IT** $\times 2 - 68 \frac{50}{100} \text{ OF IT} - 32 \frac{2}{3} \text{ OF IT} + 84 \frac{1}{2} \text{ OF IT} \times 4$ **ANSWER**

HARDER 381 $+ \frac{2}{3} \text{ OF IT} \times 9 \frac{7}{15} \text{ OF IT} + \frac{2}{3} \text{ OF IT} \times 2 - 355 \frac{4}{5} \text{ OF IT} - 428 \frac{70}{100} \text{ OF IT}$ **ANSWER**

Polygon

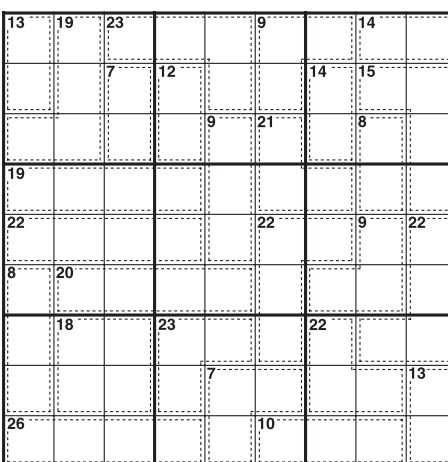


From these letters, make words of **four** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. **How you rate** 11 words, average; 15, good; 22, very good; 29, excellent

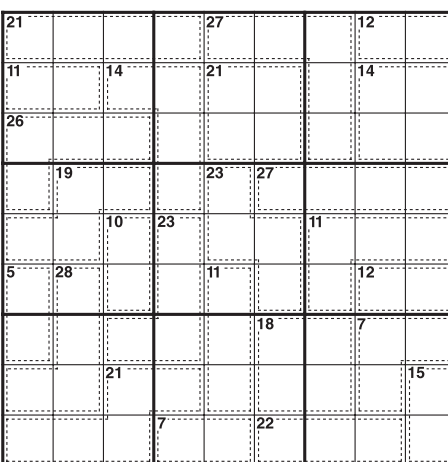
Yesterday's answers

fir, firm, for, form, fort, forty, frit, fro, from, fry, miry, mort, mortify, orf, rift, rim, rimy, riot, rot, roti, ryot, tiro, tor, trim, trio, troy, try, tyro

Killer Tricky No 9516



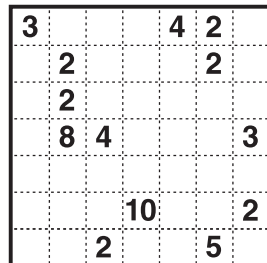
Killer Deadly No 9517



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 5122



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 3741

$\times - = 13$

$9 \times + 5 = 14$

$- \div - = 36$

$= 14$ $= 1$ $= 7$

Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2699

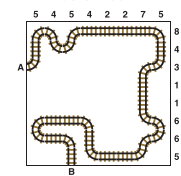
TSARINA L L
H B O BROQUES
ELECTOR N T O
L T A QUBBEAN
AUTO A O G
N I INDONESIA
D N N E Y N
ORGANISER M D
F O C SPUA
NOTICE B O A
O E E DROPSIN
DEFENCE A I C
F T NARRATE

Codeword 5238

K I T T Y B A N J O
F A N A T I C U C
L A C T H U M M O O
A U T B U N
M I S S R U B P O U T
B I R E R A R
O R Y X V L P O G O
Y A C H T L E A Z V
N A C H L A Y L A Z E
N A C H L A Y L A Z E
C O O F L I N G B U S
E W A D N O Y
S N I D E Q U O T E

Kakuro 3737

6 8 2	9 5 8 7
2 4 1	8 7 6 9 5 4
7 9 4	8 6 1 2
1 3	4 2 1 7 3 1
7 9	1 3 9 2
8 3 7 9	1 3
1 2	1 3 8 9 2 1
3 1	6 7 1 9 8
6 4 8 9 5	4 7 9
6 8 9 7	2 1 3

Train Tracks 2266

MindGames

For extra
puzzles
See page 10

Word watch

David Parfitt

Trichotillomania

a An illness affecting finches
b A compulsion to pull out one's hair
c An obsession with the number 13

Garagiste

a A supporter of state intervention
b A hot-air balloon pilot
c A small-scale winemaker

Bursiculate

a Resembling a small pouch
b To pay out wages
c (Of pods) to pop and scatter seed

Answers on page 15

Sudoku Difficult No 14,985

9			8				4	3
		6		1	5			
	1			3		7	9	
4	7		2					
	8			7		1	6	
		4		8	3			
8			4				1	5

Fiendish No 14,986

	2			3			1	
		6				9	3	
9	5				6			2
				1		8		
				5	9			
				3		7		
8	1				5			7
		5				3	4	
	9				7			5

Super fiendish No 14,987

				3				
	6				1			
9	2	5	6		4			
		6		7		8	1	
	4				8			9
						5		
6		2			3	4		
1				2		9	6	
	3	7				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 Who has replaced Richard Tice as the leader of Reform UK?

2 In 1959, the Explorer 6 satellite took the first photograph of which planet from orbit?

3 The Razzies or Golden Raspberry Awards honour the best of the worst in which entertainment industry?

4 The Bee Gee twin brothers Maurice and Robin Gibb were born on which island in the Irish Sea?

5 Acqua di Giò is a men's fragrance by which Italian fashion house?

6 A quarrel is a type of square-headed bolt that



is usually shot from which weapon?

7 The "nation's favourite meerkat", who is the "author" of the 2010 book *A Simple Life*?

8 Which 1888 John William Waterhouse painting was inspired by Tennyson's lyrical

ballad of the same name?

9 Which 1990 Roald Dahl film adaptation was filmed at the grade II listed Headland Hotel in Cornwall?

10 Charles Dickens called which Canadian walled city the

"Gibraltar of North America"?

11 Which US muckraker called corrupt officials "boodlers" in his 1904 book *The Shame of the Cities*?

12 Which British palaeolithic archaeologist wrote the 2020 book *Kindred: Neanderthal Life, Love, Death and Art*?

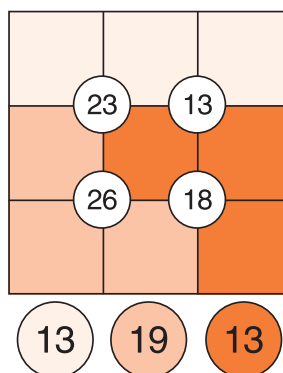
13 Which East German novelist (1934-84) spent the last decade of his life on the Isle of Sheppey?

14 In 2023, which tennis player defeated Corentin Moutet to win his 200th grand slam singles match?

15 Who is this Swiss sculptor and painter?

Answers on page 15

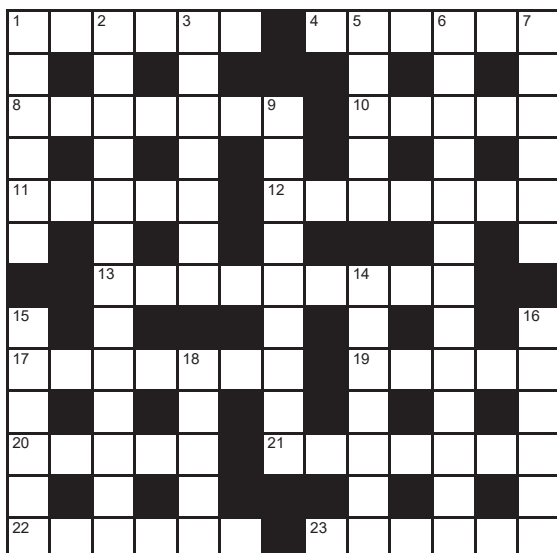
Suko No 4140



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 2700 by Pedro



Across

- Newspaper feature in support of statuary? (6)
- Region in South Africa — or region of ancient Greece (6)
- Flashy military pilots getting suspicious cut (7)
- Protection US soldier provided in the main, after retreating (5)
- That fellow in pub backed treatment for alcoholism? (5)
- Current measuring device encountered in more than half of America (7)
- Right name, possibly, for traumatic experience (9)
- Stick seen behind a little creature in stream? (7)
- Item of music, quiet, on the radio (5)
- Cheese — French, originally — in legal case (5)
- Left-winger taken aback about blokes in distress (7)
- Still likely to be gutted on a regular basis (6)
- Small toboggan circling start of deep mud (6)

Down

- Copper not common in poison (6)
- Socialist Worker sales campaign? Car from abroad appears? (4-4,5)
- Bloke picked up claim to find a lot of correspondence (7)
- Item from Biblical book son held in part of hand (5)
- Title for bishop, just left-wing, never confused internally (5,8)
- Claim a strand of hair twisted up (6)
- Sign of life and courage on patrol (9)
- Computer program modified real clothing (7)
- Out-of-date about book and unlikely to change? (6)
- Married? Agree to lose initial spirit (6)
- Liver and kidneys, say, not available, entirely running short (5)

Yesterday's solution on page 15

Let's talk about money with Bread & Honey

How much money would you need to make you happy? Are couples always better off financially? Why don't we all just escape to the country? And is the second wine on the menu really the worst?

Join hosts Georgie Frost and Martyn James, plus special guests, as they delve into the thornier money issues for the brand new video series from Times Money Mentor — where nothing is off the table.



To watch our **Bread & Honey** series go to the **Times Money Mentor** YouTube channel or scan the QR code



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THE TIMES
money mentor

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Under our expertise and direction, you may even discover a different way to explore, a culture about which you had no previous knowledge, or a group of like-minded people.



Mostar Bridge, Bosnia

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UP TO
15%*
BOOK BY
JULY 31

BOOK BY WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2024

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Mostar Bridge, Bosnia



Kravica Waterfall, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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continuing to rural Blagaj and Medjugorje, before taking to subterranean Vjetrenica, the world's most biodiverse cave. Witness the Adriatic's natural wonders with optional excursions to the Kravica Waterfall and Pelješac peninsula, before crowning the tour with a visit to iconic Dubrovnik - the 'Pearl of the Adriatic'.

What we love

Historical discoveries and natural wonders are in no short supply across this tour of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina - the perfect introduction to the stunning Adriatic.



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Highlights & Inclusions



Seven nights' half-board accommodation at the four-star Hotel Nova, Neum



Seven breakfasts and seven three-course dinners



Tour of Mostar and Blagaj with samples of local delicacies at the village's Dervish house



Embark on an optional pilgrimage through the sacred town of Medjugorje with wine tasting and traditional lunch



Return flights to Dubrovnik



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Nine breakfasts, one lunch and five dinners



Visit to the Hassan II Mosque



Tour of Rabat



Return flights to Marrakesh



Coach travel and transfers throughout

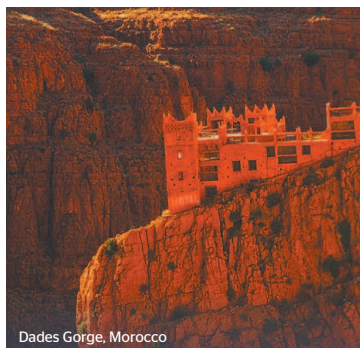


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Discover Morocco's stately past, with time spent amongst the country's medinas, dunes and dramatic wadis.

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pauses across the striking Berber-Roman ruins of Volubilis. Explore Fes, as you pass alpine Ifrane, and board a 4WD for a sunset journey across the rolling dunes. Witness the vast wadis of Todra, Dadès and Rose Valley along the tour's return leg before returning to Marrakesh via the picturesque Atlas Mountains.

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landscapes and time-honoured traditions. Pass through the Western Ghats to Ooty, the queen of the hill stations, before visiting vibrant Kochi, historic Madurai and Pondicherry, India's French colonial gem. Bookended by stays in bustling Bangalore and Chennai, this is the perfect introduction to India's spectacular south.

What we love

A thrilling Kalarippayattu performance and a tour of Madurai's ancient temples are two enchanting highlights of this journey through India's beautiful south.



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Highlights & Inclusions



14 nights' hotel half-board accommodation at hotels in Bangalore (one night), Mysore (two nights), Ooty (two nights), Kochi (two nights), Periyar (two nights), Madurai (two nights), Pondicherry (two nights), Mahabalipuram (one night). 2024 departures will stay one more night in Chennai prior to morning return flights



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An overnight cruise across the emerald waters of the Unesco-listed Halong Bay follows a day's exploration of captivating

Hanoi. Continue to the port of Hoi An, Imperial capital Hué and Ho Chi Minh City, before following the Mekong River by boat. Survey the Cu Chi tunnel complex and the former French colony, Phnom Penh. A visit to Cambodia's legendary Angkor Wat and centuries-old ceremonies in Laos' Luang Prabang conclude the tour.

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Highlights & Inclusions



17 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation in Hanoi (two nights), aboard a Halong Bay paddle steamer (one night), Hoi An (two nights), Hué (one night), Ho Chi Minh City (three nights), Phnom Penh (two nights), Siem Reap (three nights) and Luang Prabang (three nights), plus two nights on the plane



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Charleston, North America



Highlights & Inclusions



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Wormsloe Plantation, Georgia

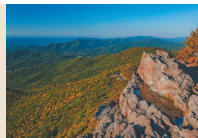
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Beginning in the nation's political epicentre, Washington D.C., explore the American capital's most iconic landmarks, from Capitol Hill to the Whitehouse, before

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Breathtaking sights await with a journey through Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains and the famous Skyline Drive - this is North America's wilderness at its scenic best!



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Highlights & Inclusions



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15 meals, including 11 breakfasts and four lunches



Guided tours of Lima, Cusco, the Sacred Valley and Arequipa



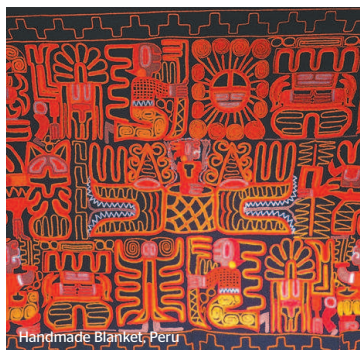
Return flights to Lima and Internal flights



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