

THE



TIMES

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## Jude's pants and the ogle equality gap

INSIDE  
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## Caitlin Moran Rishi has the Midarse Touch

# Shackleton's last ship discovered off the coast of Canada

Jack Blackburn History Correspondent

It was Sir Ernest Shackleton's last ship, used for a voyage that heralded the end of the golden age of Antarctic exploration. Now, 62 years after it sank off Canada, the vessel Quest has been found.

The steamship was discovered 100 miles east of Labrador, at a depth of 390m, by a team organised by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. It is in

one piece save for the masts and rigging, which were damaged when it sank in 1962. The Quest is of great historical significance as it was the ship on which the explorer died in 1922. The discovery also coincides with the 150th anniversary of his birth.

"I have long hoped for this day and am grateful to those who made this incredible discovery," said Alexandra Shackleton, the granddaughter of the

explorer and a co-patron of the expedition. Quest is the last major wreck associated with the Anglo-Irish explorer that was yet to be found. As Shackleton died of a heart attack on the ship while on his final expedition, it closes the circle on the explorer's story.

"Finding Quest is one of the final chapters in the extraordinary story of Sir Ernest Shackleton," said John Geiger, the expedition leader and chief

of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. "Shackleton was known for his courage and brilliance as a leader in crisis. The tragic irony is that his was the only death to take place on any of the ships under his direct command."

The ship was discovered using sonar technology and was identified by its location, dimensions and features on deck. A further expedition is planned to scan the ship in more detail, with a

date in August and September mooted.

Quest sank in 1962 while working as a sealing vessel, when it was crushed by ice. Voyages undertaken during its lifespan included other expeditions in the Arctic and a stint as a Second World War minesweeper. The find comes two years after the wreck of Shackleton's most famous ship, Endurance, was found in Antarctica.

Joy as quest for Quest triumphs, page 3

# Growth and prosperity our priority, says Starmer

Labour leader refuses to rule out tax rises

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

Sir Keir Starmer will today pledge "a total change in direction" for Britain as he promises to take on the "blockers of aspiration" and kick-start a building boom to return the country to prosperity.

Unveiling the party's manifesto, the Labour leader will say he is seeking a "mandate" for economic growth and to make wealth creation his government's "number one priority".

However, during a live television interview last night, he repeatedly refused to rule out a series of tax rises if he wins the general election.

While Starmer has explicitly ruled out raising income tax, national insurance or VAT, he declined to extend that to capital gains tax, fuel duty or the revaluation of council tax bands.

He said he would be happy to pay more in tax as a high earner. "I accept I earn a lot of money in the job I have now," he said.

He was also repeatedly challenged over his support for Jeremy Corbyn, the former Labour leader, who he once said would make a "great prime minister". Starmer declined to respond directly, instead saying that he knew before the 2019 election that Corbyn would not win.

The Labour leader said that he

"relishes" the opportunity to make the big decisions in No 10 if he wins the election.

"I look forward on the first day we're going into government to starting on this job," he told Sky News.

"I find all of that much more interesting than talking about what you're going to do. I just want to get on with the job."

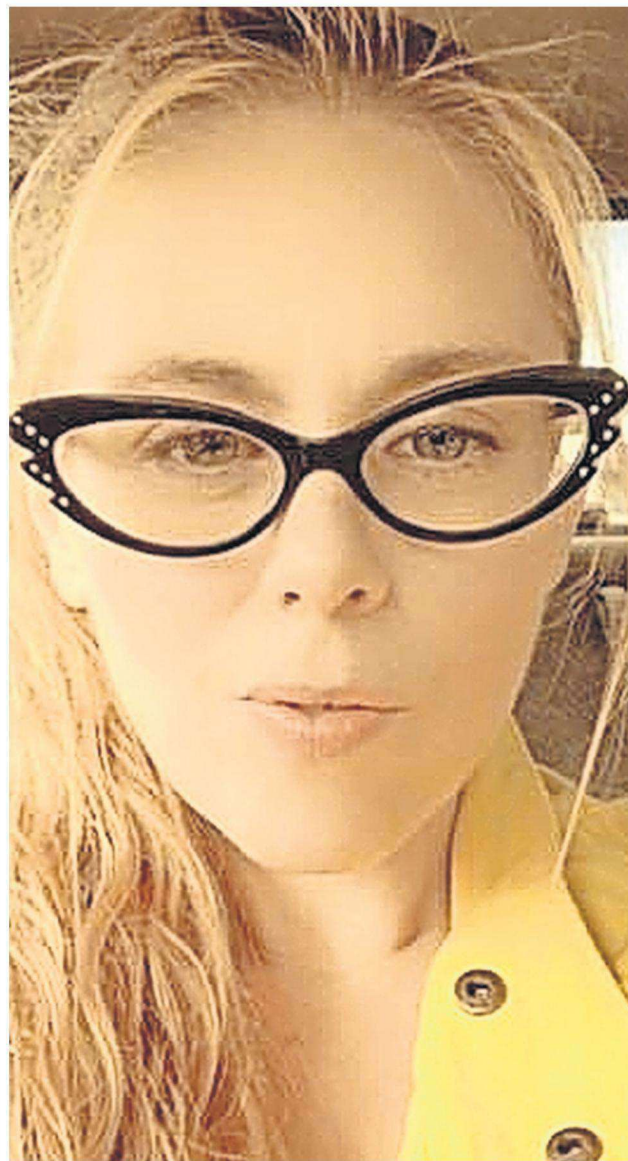
Meanwhile, Sunak used his television interview to urge people not to judge him because of Liz Truss's actions. He also said that he understood the frustration of Brexit voters over high levels of immigration and concern over NHS waiting times.

"Of course, I can understand people's frustrations," he said. "It's been a very difficult few years. But this election is about the future and I do believe that we've turned a corner."

Starmer will today unveil Labour's 125-page manifesto in Manchester. While it is not expected to contain any new spending commitments beyond those already announced, Starmer will insist that he can keep taxes down while increasing public spending by growing the economy.

He will say that the manifesto is a "total rejection" of those who think that tax and spending — "how you slice the cake" — is more important than creating wealth and growing the economy. "Some people say that how you grow

Continued on page 2



## Hitwoman who botched killing

Aimee Betts flew from the US after being hired for a revenge attack in Birmingham, but her gun jammed  
Full story, page 5

## Honours for Thick Of It satirist and former PM

Aubrey Allegretti  
Chief Political Correspondent

Armando Iannucci, the political satirist behind *The Thick Of It*, is set to be recognised in the King's birthday honours.

He joins a cast of prominent Westminster and establishment figures — including a former prime minister, senior civil servants and MPs — in being given honours.

Iannucci is expected to have his OBE upgraded to a CBE for services to film and television, sources told The Times.

He is best known for lampooning ministers and mandarins in the BBC comedy series, which exposed and satirised the murky world of Whitehall.

The King's honours will be released on Friday. Preparations are also under way for Rishi Sunak's "dissolution honours" list, after his decision to call the general election.

Among those expected to receive gongs from Buckingham Palace are Gordon Brown, who is tipped to get a Companion of Honour. His work since leaving Downing Street has included the creation of The Office of Gordon and Sarah Brown, which has donated more than £4million to good causes.

Several senior civil servants are also expected to be honoured for public service, according to Tory sources. They include three permanent secretaries.

Antonia Romeo, the most senior civil servant at the Ministry of Justice, is set to be made a Dame Commander of the Order of the Bath. She has been touted as a potential successor of Simon Case, the cabinet secretary.

Jim Harra, who runs HMRC and was criticised for the decision to close its customer helpline this year, will also be

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## News

## Today's highlights

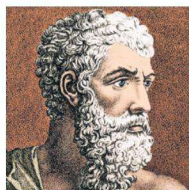
**7.20am** Foreign secretary Lord Cameron  
**1.40pm** Andrew Neil interviews former foreign secretary Dame Margaret Beckett, right  
**2.45pm** Joanne Coates, the House of Commons official election artist  
**4.15pm** Paul Johnson, director of the IFS, reviews Labour's manifesto  
**5.45pm** The Polling Station: a weekly look at the polls with More in Common's director Luke Tryl

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## TODAY'S EDITION

## NEWS



**LOCKE DOWN**  
 Schools urged to 'decolonise' their philosophy classes

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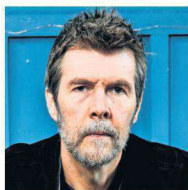
## REGISTER



**GALLIC STAR**  
 Fashion muse and singer songwriter, Françoise Hardy

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## TIMES2



**FUNNY STORY**  
 Rhod Gilbert on why he's not sorry he got cancer

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



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## Football's civil war: Man City v Premier League

Abu Dhabi-owned Manchester City, England's top club, has launched unprecedented legal action against the Premier League. With such vast sums at stake, what does it mean for the future of British football?

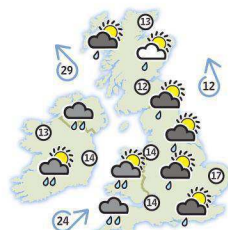
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## THE WEATHER



Warm and sunny spells in the east, otherwise cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Full forecast, page 57

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## Sickness benefits expected to rise faster than pensions

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

One in every £44 Britain produces will be spent on sickness benefits by the end of the decade, new analysis has warned.

Sickness benefits are likely to rise faster than pensions spending over the next parliament, according to calculations that highlight the scale of problems facing the next government.

Paying for the post-pandemic rise in sickness is costing the equivalent of a 4p rise in the basic rate of income tax and Sir Keir Starmer will face a series of painful choices if he enters No 10 next month, experts have warned.

Rishi Sunak used the Tory manifesto launch to warn of "unsustainable" rises in sickness benefit spending, arguing that he could pay for tax cuts by reducing future rises by about £12 billion.

While economists have expressed scepticism about Tory calculations, a report by the Resolution Foundation think tank shows how much the rise in incapacity benefits, for those who struggle to work, and disability benefits, for those needing help with daily life, have pushed up welfare spending.

The welfare state overall has grown from 10 per cent of GDP in 2008 to

11.2 per cent now, but this modest rise has hidden a big cut for jobseekers and children, while pensions and sickness spending has risen. State pension spending has risen from 3.7 per cent to 5 per cent of GDP during this time and disability and incapacity benefits have risen from 1.2 per cent to 2.1 per cent, Resolution calculates.

By 2028, sickness benefits spending will rise by another £11 billion in real terms, reaching 2.3 per cent of GDP, the think tank calculates. This is more than the £9.5 billion projected rise in pensions spending, despite both Labour and the Conservatives committing to the triple lock.

In current prices, spending on sickness benefits has risen from £28 billion in 2008 to £38 billion on the eve of the pandemic in 2019. Spending has since jumped to £59 billion and will be £70 billion by the end of the decade, a £32 billion rise on pre-Covid levels.

"This is obviously something the next government will want to look at and be very concerned about," Alex Clegg, an economist at Resolution, said. He was "sceptical" about Tory plans to cut the bill by £12 billion, saying that "either party if they win the election

would be very happy to have that money, but it will be very difficult to get". He said the plans "would basically involve a large cut either of the number of people claiming or, more likely in reality, how much they each get".

He warned that even these plans involve retaining policies such as the two-child benefit cap, which is projected to mean that more than half of families with three or more children will be in poverty by 2028.

The causes of the rise remain unclear, although surveys have found Britons reporting increasing ill health since the pandemic.

Tom Waters, of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, said that new disability claims had doubled since the pandemic to 40,000 a month. "Even if you want to hold overall numbers steady, you have to get that way down, at least to halve it. That's going to require substantially tightening the assessment to make it much harder to qualify, or you could just cut the value of benefits. That would immediately lead to very large losses for millions of people."

Labour is promising to bring down sickness benefit spending by improving treatment and cutting waiting lists.

## Sunak pledges £250m to keep lights on in Ukraine

Aubrey Allegretti Bari, Italy

Britain will pledge nearly £250 million to rebuild Ukraine's critical energy infrastructure, as Rishi Sunak vows to do "whatever it takes" to beat Russia.

In what may be his penultimate overseas trip as prime minister, Sunak will try to draw a line under the row over his early exit from D-Day commemorations and position the Tories as the most trustworthy party on defence.

He will land in Bari, Italy, today for talks with fellow world leaders at a G7 summit focused on helping to rebuild Ukraine. They agreed last month to use an estimated \$285 billion in frozen Russian assets to fund the country's reconstruction.

Sunak suggested novel approaches could be taken to cut through the legal framework that has prevented states selling seized Russian assets. "We must be creative in our efforts to support Ukraine and end Putin's illegal war," he said before the summit.

"The UK remains at the forefront of the international response, as we have been from the outset. We must move from 'as long as it takes' to 'whatever it takes' if we are to end this illegal war."

Government insiders said they were

urging G7 leaders to agree on a plan and timetable for removing financial and legal barriers to using the funds.

The plan was pushed last month by Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, in meetings with other G7 finance ministers. It is hoped significant progress will be made by the end of the year.

Sunak will be reunited with Giorgia Meloni, the Italian prime minister, with whom he has a strong relationship. Meloni embraced him with a kiss when they met in Rome last year and backed his plans to cut illegal migration.

Sunak also announced a £242 million package to help Ukraine rebuild its critical energy infrastructure. The prime minister said he would raise Russia and other "global threats" at the summit, adding that it was "vital to strengthen the UK's national defence" by raising defence spending to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2030.

The pledge was made by Sunak in April and is viewed as one of the most successful dividing lines the Tories have drawn with Labour.

Sir Keir Starmer has refused to match the commitment, instead saying he wants defence spending to rise to 2.5 per cent "as soon as the resources allow".

Ukraine sells family silver, page 30

Continued from page 1  
Starmer pledges 'new direction'

the economy is not a central question — that it's not about how you create wealth, but how you tax it, how you spend it, how you slice the cake, that's all that matters," he will say, adding that "billions upon billions" in projects "held up by the blockers of aspiration" can be unlocked.

The Labour leader will unveil plans to build 1.5 million houses over five years by forcing councils to approve new homes, including on the green belt, warning that those who refuse will have development imposed upon them as part of a "zero-tolerance" approach to nimbysism. Starmer will also announce

new powers to force through the construction of scientific laboratories, data centres and new net-zero infrastructure, saying that a Labour government would prioritise jobs over local objections and environmental concerns.

The party will pledge to impose binding local housebuilding targets on councils and a new "zero-tolerance" approach to those areas that do not identify enough land for development.

The manifesto will make clear that local authorities that do not create proposals for meeting their housing need will have plans imposed upon them by Whitehall.

Labour will also commit to allowing construction on what the party is

Continued from page 1  
King's birthday honours

made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath. The same honour will go to Peter Schofield, permanent secretary at the Department for Work and Pensions.

Five MPs, including two stepping down at the election, are also set to be recognised.

Labour's Wayne David, MP for Caerphilly and a dogged campaigner against "lawfare" used to silence anti-corruption campaigners and journalists, will be given a knighthood. His colleague Karen Buck, the outgoing MP for Westminster North, will be made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Additionally, three Tory MPs will be honoured. James Morris served recently in the whips' office. The other two Tories tipped to receive honours are Richard Fuller, an MP since 2010 who served as a Treasury minister for four months, and Iain Stewart, chair of the Commons transport committee.

All honours will be published tomorrow and will include those outside the world of politics, sources said. The government declined to comment.

The inclusion on the honours list of Iannucci may be a source of mirth for viewers of his TV show. He was given an OBE in 2012 — the year *The Thick Of It* aired its final episode. At the time, he said that it would have been "bad manners" not to accept.

calling the "grey belt" — land which is within the current green belt but is of poor quality or already contains some buildings.

The party will also push ahead with plans to identify a number of sites for new towns, with plans to update the law around compulsory purchase orders to prevent landowners trying to inflate the price of land.

Labour says it has already commissioned lawyers to draw up its new planning laws so that they can be "handed to civil servants on day one".

Politics latest, pages 6-9  
 Labour won't turn from tough road ahead, Peter Mandelson, page 23  
 Parliament needs an effective opposition, leading article, page 27



# Joy as quest for Quest triumphs

Researchers overcame technical difficulties to discover the vessel on which Shackleton died, writes **Jack Blackburn**

"You always want me to give up something. What do you want me to give up now?" As last words go, those of Sir Ernest Shackleton to his doctor are particularly memorable. Now the ship on which the Antarctic explorer breathed his last has been discovered, 62 years after it sank.

Quest, the steamship used for the Anglo-Irish adventurer's last voyage in 1921-22, has been found near Labrador in Canada by an expedition mounted by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. Shackleton died of a heart attack on board the vessel, which sailed on for decades before sinking in 1962.

The discovery comes 150 years after Shackleton's birth and the search had the patronage of Alexandra Shackleton, 83, his granddaughter. "I'm thrilled," she said. "Quest means a lot. My grandfather originally hoped to take it to Canada, so the fact that it is found there is very serendipitous."

Quest was located at a depth of 390m and is in one piece except for the masts and rigging, which have collapsed. Plans are afoot to return as early as August and scan it in detail. There are no plans to raise the ship due to the risk of damage.

After its launch in 1917, Quest was used on polar expeditions before serving in the Second World War as a minesweeper. It was damaged and ultimately sunk by sea ice on May 5, 1962. The crew survived.

When he was 47, Shackleton took it to the Antarctic — five years after his escape from the disastrous expedition on Endurance. His last expedition signalled the end of the "golden age" of Antarctic exploration.

John Geiger, the Geographical Society expedition leader, said from Canada: "We are euphoric ... It's an incredibly important, historic ship."

Funding for the search was strictly limited and, after setting off, the expedition suffered technical difficulties, resulting in the loss of two of the three days earmarked for the search.

"People were getting anxious," team



member David Mearns, an experienced shipwreck hunter, said. "We only had one shot. If we had come home empty-handed, it's unlikely anybody would have given us a second go."

Fortunately, the details of the wreck's possible location proved accurate and within 16 hours of starting the search, Quest was located on sonar. "We did a very careful measurement of the dimensions and it was spot-on," Mearns said.

The Shackleton-Rowett expedition of 1921-22 set out to chart unexplored islands of the Antarctic. Initially Shackleton had intended to mount an Arctic expedition but, at the last minute, the Canadian government pulled the plug and he diverted south.

Quest proved ill-suited to the adven-



## Depth compared



The wreck of Quest was discovered on sonar by a Royal Canadian Geographical Society team, above. The ship was used by the explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton, far left, during his final expedition in 1921-22, when it navigated Antarctic ice, below. Quest went on to serve in the Second World War and eventually sank off the coast of Canada in 1962



ture. While the ship was relatively new, its engine was old.

Shackleton was also showing worrying physical symptoms and, during a stop in Rio de Janeiro, suffered a probable heart attack.

The morning after the attack on December 17, 1921, he declared himself "better". However, on the subsequent voyage his health did not improve, perhaps not helped by his decision to drink champagne to "deadend the pain".

The expedition reached South Georgia but in the early hours of January 5, 1922, Dr Alexander Macklin was summoned to Shackleton's cabin, where the explorer was complaining of pains. He died at 2.50am.

Shackleton's body was taken to Uruguay, where word arrived from Lady Shackleton that he was to be buried on South Georgia. Quest sailed on, but was frustrated by pack ice and ultimately returned to Britain without success.

The find follows the discovery of the wreck of the Endurance two years ago.

## Sponsor row will be murder for book festivals, says Osman

**David Sanderson** Arts Correspondent

Richard Osman, the bestselling author, has predicted that book festivals will die within the next year following the row over sponsorship by the investment company Baillie Gifford.

He also suggested that, to keep any sense of "purity", protesters should withdraw their books from sale on Amazon and Waterstones.

Baillie Gifford has cut ties with all literary festivals after protests and boycotts over its alleged links to Israel and fossil fuels. The Hay Festival and the Edinburgh book festival were forced to end long-running partnerships.

While scores of people signed a letter

condemning the firm, only a handful boycotted the Hay Festival. George Monbiot, a prominent environmental campaigner, signed the letter but attended the festival, saying it was "also a good cause".

However, Baroness Chakrabarti and Dawn Butler, the Labour politicians, Charlotte Church, the singer, and writers including Grace Blakeley said they were boycotting the event.

Baillie Gifford sponsored ten festivals and the country's leading non-fiction prize. It pointed out that 2 per cent of its investments were in fossil fuels, compared with an 11 per cent average in the sector. It said it was also an investor in Amazon and Meta — the owner of



Richard Osman spoke out after a boycott forced an end to the Hay Festival's sponsorship deal

Facebook and Instagram — which had commercial dealings in Israel.

Waterstones is owned by the US hedge fund Elliott Advisors, which a Reuters report two years ago suggested was seeking oil and gas investments.

Chakrabarti, Butler, Church and Blakeley still have their books for sale on Amazon and at Waterstones, as do members of Fossil Free Books, which organised the protests.

Osman, whose *Thursday Murder Club* series has sold millions, said his view was that Baillie Gifford's sponsorship "was like our very own windfall tax [with the] money used to spread empathy and ideas and to get kids reading".

He said on his podcast *The Rest is*

*Entertainment* this week that if the protesters' arguments were about "purity ... then you have to follow that through and there are a number of organisations that you have to be against. You have to take your books off Amazon, you can't go to Waterstones."

He added: "I think it [the boycott] is the wrong way to go about it, as does almost every single writer. And it does mean that next year almost all of these festivals will probably die."

Mark Lynas, the environmental writer, said "not a dime has been divested from fossil fuels" as a result, adding: "All that's happened is that literary festivals now have huge holes in their budgets." Arts sponsorship, letters, page 26



# NHS chief warns of bitcoin addiction

Eleanor Hayward Health Editor

Growing numbers of young men are requiring NHS treatment after becoming addicted to trading bitcoin, with the health service calling for action against “unregulated cryptocurrency sites”.

Specialist NHS gambling clinics are being left to “pick up the pieces” after patients become hooked on trying to make money from the volatile markets.

Amanda Pritchard, chief executive of NHS England, said there were “ever more opportunities springing up for younger people to get addicted to gambling — including unregulated cryptocurrency markets”.

The NHS’s 15 gambling clinics have begun to see addicts in crisis after losing

money from cryptocurrencies, alongside those addicted to online sports betting. Most are young men, often enticed by polished social media adverts promising rapid wealth.

Speaking at the NHS Confederation conference in Manchester, Pritchard warned that the NHS would end up as “an expensive safety net” unless the next government took action.

Pritchard said: “Gambling addiction is a cruel disease which has the power to destroy people’s lives. Betting shops were illegal when the NHS was founded in 1948 and the service is constantly adapting to real and growing social need, including the increasing popularity of cryptocurrencies which I heard about when visiting one of our 15 gambling

harm clinics this year. The addictive habit sees people investing their own money in something with no fixed value, with the NHS left to pick up the pieces; this growing problem could create further demand for the service.”

The rise in problem gambling was not something the NHS “could solve alone”, Pritchard said, adding: “As a society we need to ask: are we OK to just continue picking up the pieces while the methods employed to keep people hooked get ever more sophisticated? Will we tackle problems at source, or do we accept the NHS becomes an expensive safety net?”

Cryptocurrencies, which lie beyond the control of authorities such as central banks and governments, have exploded

in popularity since the creation of bitcoin in 2008. They have a total market value of nearly £1 trillion.

Last year a report by MPs on the Treasury select committee called for cryptocurrency trading to be regulated as gambling, warning that some schoolchildren had started buying and selling bitcoin. It said that cryptocurrency speculation “more closely resembles gambling than it does a financial service”. The digital currencies have “no intrinsic value” and “no discernible social good”, the report said.

About five million UK-based adults hold or have held cryptoassets, according to government statistics.

Pritchard also called on the next government to provide more funding, as

well as focusing on disease prevention. She said: “There are other key choices that an incoming government is going to have to make that we can’t: capital and estates, public health and prevention, and how we boost capacity and quality in social care.”

Pritchard said “junk food and obesity” were driving a surge in type 2 diabetes. An extra half a million people in England have been identified as being at risk in the past year. Some 3.6 million people were registered as having “pre-diabetes” last year, which is when blood sugars are too high but not enough for a full diagnosis, up from 3.1 million in 2022. In total 4.3 million people in the UK have type 2 diabetes and treating them uses up 10 per cent of the NHS budget.



**Bird's eye view** The 8ft-high willow maze at Abbotsbury Swannery, Dorset, needed three days of trimming for the summer. The site is a sanctuary for 600 mute swans

## Quintagram® No 1967

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Only, merely (4)

2 Faint-hearted person (6)

3 Alcohol (6)

4 Withdraw, retreat (4,3)

5 In a precarious position (2,4,3)

A	A	B	C	C	C	D	E
F	F	H	I	I	I	J	K
L	N	N	O	O	O	Q	Q
R	R	S	T	T	U	U	W

Solutions see T2 MindGames p15  
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

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## ‘Unbearable’ waits for cancer care

Eleanor Hayward

Almost 400,000 cancer patients have experienced “unbearably long” waits for lifesaving treatment on the NHS in the past decade, a report has found.

Under a national target, patients should begin treatments such as chemotherapy or surgery within two months of being referred for tests.

But the NHS last met this target in December 2015, with cancer centres now reporting that weekly delays and cancellations of treatment are “routine” due to worsening staff levels.

Analysis by Cancer Research UK shows 380,000 patients have waited too long for treatment since 2015, while the number facing long waits has tripled over the past decade. In 2023, about 75,000 cancer patients waited more than two months — the highest annual figure ever. It was 24,000 in 2015.

Delays are a key reason why Britain has begun to lag behind the rest of the western world on cancer survival rates. Research shows that every four-week delay in receiving treatment raises the risk of death by about 10 per cent.

Long NHS waits are being driven by shortages of specialist staff including radiologists and cancer nurses, as well as a lack of diagnostic equipment such as MRI and CT scanners. The latest monthly NHS data, for March, shows only two thirds of cancer patients in England received their first treatment within 62 days of an urgent referral.

Michelle Mitchell, chief executive of Cancer Research UK, said: “Each of these numbers is a friend, family member or loved one who is facing unbearably long waits for their treatment to begin, causing stress and anxiety.”

“The general election must be a turning point for cancer. Any incoming UK

government must make tackling cancer waits a top priority and pledge to meet all cancer waiting time targets by the end of the next parliament.”

The Liberal Democrats have promised a “legal guarantee” that everyone will get cancer treatment within 62 days. Labour has vowed to invest in scanners to reduce waiting times.

In a separate report, the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) said delays in cancer care are becoming “routine”, with nearly half of centres experiencing weekly delays in treatment.

Dr Katharine Halliday, RCR president, said: “We simply do not have enough doctors to manage the increasing number of patients safely.”

The Conservative Party said: “Cancer survival rates continue to improve in the UK, with the disease being diagnosed at an earlier stage more often. But we know there is more to do.”

## AstraZeneca boss calls for changes to drug funding

Alex Ralph  
Chief Business Correspondent  
Eleanor Hayward

Cancer patients in England face missing out on lifesaving new medicines unless there is “meaningful change” to the NHS funding system, the chief executive of Britain’s biggest pharmaceutical company has warned.

In a stark letter Sir Pascal Soriot, the boss of AstraZeneca, criticised the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice), saying that “a methodology that concludes an incurable condition like metastatic breast cancer is only a moderately severe disease is not fit for purpose, is failing patients and must be reformed”.

The letter, sent to MetupUK, a

patient advocacy group, and seen by The Times, comes amid a pricing row over Enhertu, a treatment for a type of incurable breast cancer called HER2-low. It costs about £10,000 a month in the United States, although the NHS has been offered it at a discount.

The drug is available in Scotland and 15 European countries but in March Nice rejected it for use in England on cost grounds, citing new criteria that do not class all terminal cancers as “severe”. About 1,000 patients would have been eligible each year.

Nice said it was “disappointed not to be able to recommend” Enhertu and that a lower price offer “could resolve this issue almost immediately”. It added: “Discussions with all relevant parties are continuing.”



# Hitwoman's cocktails and selfies before botched attack

Ali Mitib, Andrea Bianco

An alleged hitwoman from the US sipped cocktails, attended a trance music festival and talked about visiting her "partner in crime" on her trip to Britain before she botched a revenge killing when her gun jammed.

An international manhunt is under way for Aimee Betro, 44, who flew in from Chicago for the attempted hit in Acoc's Green in Birmingham.

Birmingham crown court was told she was recruited by Mohammed Nazir, 30, and his father Mohammed Aslam, 56, as they plotted to kill Aslam



Mahamud or members of his family after a dispute at a jewellery shop left them both injured.

Disguised in a hijab, she first tried to shoot Mahamud's son and, when that failed, opened fire three times on the family home, the court was told.

Social media posts discovered by The Times show Betro, a freelance graphic designer from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, chronicling her trip to the UK in August and September 2019 in great detail.

On Instagram, she is seen talking about visiting her "partner in crime" in Manchester, attending the Transmission Festival in Crystal Palace, and going on a boat tour of the River Thames. The day before the attempted hit, Betro posted a picture of herself with devil horns.

Her social media posts depict her flying from Chicago to Manchester via

Atlanta on August 22, a route that the jury was told she had taken, and returning to Chicago via New York from Manchester airport on September 9. During her time in the UK, she stayed in Birmingham, Brighton, Derby and Manchester, in one case staying at a Radisson Blu hotel.

The court was told Betro had returned to the US and remained at large. West Midlands police said that detectives were working to trace her. There is no suggestion that she has been involved in any other contract killing.

Last week Nazir and Aslam, of Derby, 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. Aslam was cleared of a firearms offence. The pair will be sentenced on August 9.

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

The trial was told how the would-be assassin got out of the driver's side of a Mercedes as her target pulled up in an Audi on September 7, 2019.

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

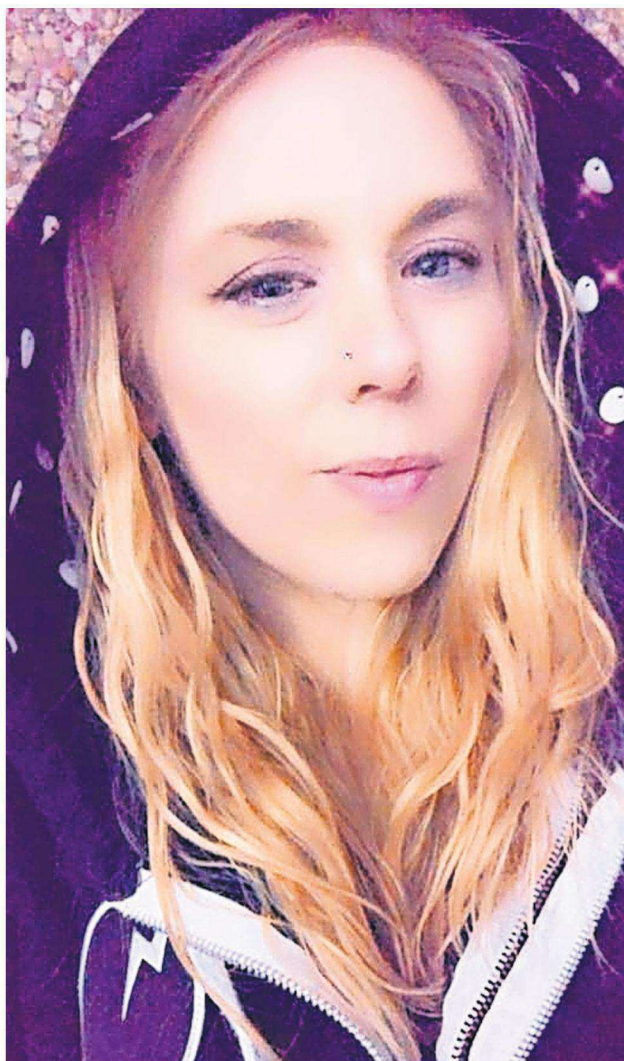
"As she got closer to Ali he saw her and he saw the gun and she pulled the trigger to fire the gun at him. Mercifully and luckily for him the gun jammed. He quickly reversed his car, striking the open door of the Mercedes."

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 identified the gunman as



Aimee Betro, the alleged hitwoman, chronicled her trip to the UK on social media



Mohammed Aslam and Mohammed Nazir hired her for a revenge killing

Betro, an American citizen, the court was told.

Hegarty said she bought the Mercedes in Alum Rock, a suburb of Birmingham, 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 said 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 tried 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, gave the address where he would be staying as Betro's home in Wisconsin. He returned four weeks later and was arrested on the same day as his father.

## Retrial jury told Letby tried to kill newborn girl

Tom Ball

Lucy Letby was caught "red-handed" trying to murder a baby at the Countess of Chester Hospital, a jury was told as the convicted killer faced a retrial.

The former nurse, 34, was found guilty in August last year of murdering seven babies and attempting to kill six others at the Cheshire hospital, the court was told. The jury failed to reach verdicts on six charges of attempted murder involving five children.

Letby, who is serving 14 whole-life prison terms, is being retried on one of those charges in relation to a girl, known as Baby K, whom she is accused of trying to kill in February 2016 while working in the hospital's neonatal unit.

Nick Johnson KC opened the case for the prosecution yesterday. He said Letby deliberately dislodged a breathing tube. He asked the jury to consider the accusation in light of the crimes Letby had already been found guilty of when determining "what she intended when we say she interfered with [Baby K]". Before the alleged offence, Letby

Lucy Letby denies attempted murder



had murdered five children and tried to murder three others, the jury was told.

Johnson told Manchester crown court: "We assert her status as a multiple murderer and an attempted multiple murderer is important evidence."

Letby was flanked by three security officers as she watched proceedings.

The jury was told Baby K, who was born more than three months prematurely, was doing "remarkably well" in the early hours of February 17, 2016.

The court heard that Dr Ravi Jayaram, the consultant, walked into the unit to find Letby "doing nothing" as the newborn girl collapsed due to a drop in her blood saturation levels.

Johnson said a monitoring machine failed to sound, which was possible only if someone had disabled it. He told the jury: "We say Lucy Letby was caught red-handed by Dr Jayaram."

Benjamin Myers KC, for the defence, said Letby's previous convictions "do not prove this allegation".

The retrial is expected to last up to four weeks. Letby, originally from Hereford, denies the allegation.

The trial continues.

## Mother of stab victim: I haven't read letter from killer's family

George Sandeman

The mother of Barnaby Webber, a victim of the Nottingham knife attack, has said that she received a letter from the family of her son's killer but cannot bear to read it.

Webber and his university friend Grace O'Malley-Kumar, both 19, were stabbed to death by Valdo Calocane, 32, on June 13 last year while walking home from a night out.

Calocane, who was given an indefinite hospital order for manslaughter in January, also killed Ian Coates, 65, a school caretaker, before stealing his van and using it to injure three pedestrians.

Speaking on the eve of the annivers-

ary of her son's death, Emma Webber said that she had not read the letter but understands Calocane's parents and brother blame the killings on failings by the authorities.

"I wouldn't trust myself to be near them at the moment," she told the Daily Mirror. "I don't want to look into the faces of the people that brought this monster into the world. That sounds awful but it's what I think."

She spoke of how the grief over her son's death had put her "through hell" over the last 12 months and that family life would never be the same again.

She added that struggles with her mental health led her to having therapy and medication which she credits with

helping her survive the ordeal. Webber also said her son spoke fondly of Grace and they may have been in a romantic relationship. She said: "I know she meant a huge amount to him, because he never spoke about girls with me, but he had told me about Grace."

Barnaby had brought her up in a conversation around Christmas in 2022 when he told his mother he was going out for drinks with his best friend.

"I said, 'Oh, what's he called?' He said, 'Actually, it's a she. And she's called Grace. She's really good at hockey, you'd love her.' For him to say that made me realise he had feelings."

She said that sometimes she lets herself pretend her son is still alive at uni-



Emma Webber said having therapy had helped her through the ordeal

versity or out playing cricket because it gives her "brain a rest for a moment".

She added: "The pain was so physical and visceral. Barney should have been 20 on January 11. I have so much anger now that he's not here—that his future has been stolen so senselessly, so cruelly. That monster changed our world for ever. The fury I feel for him..."

The Webbers are in Nottingham today with the other bereaved families for a vigil held in memory of the victims.

In a statement, relatives of those killed restated that they believed Calocane is a murderer, saying over-reliance on medical opinions and "archaic" diminished responsibility laws meant the killer was not punished.



## News Politics

# It's not been easy but I'm trying

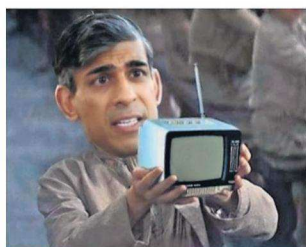
Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Rishi Sunak urged voters last night not to judge him on Liz Truss's time in office, saying he spent months warning of the risks of her disastrous mini-budget and "I was right".

After mostly avoiding criticism of his predecessor, the prime minister said his warnings about her plans during the leadership election in 2022 show he can make difficult decisions.

Sunak said he understood Brexit voters' frustration about immigration and "cynicism" about pledges to reduce it, but urged voters to judge him on his own record.

Sunak also promised to "just keep going" in the face of the Conservatives' dismal poll ratings as he faced a sometimes hostile audience during a Sky



Rishi Sunak revealing he did not have Sky TV as a child drew online mockery

News party leaders' event in Grimsby.

"I can appreciate people's frustrations — of course we haven't got everything right. What I can do is work as hard as I can to deliver the stability that I said I would," he said.

"It hasn't been an easy 18 months in general so what I've done is just keep going to try and do my best for people."

The prime minister said he was looking forward to seeing his own daughters take part in his "transformative" national service plan as he sought to draw a line under questions about the Tory record and focus on his future plans.

In an effort to make himself more relatable to sceptical voters, Sunak denied he had a "very healthy lifestyle" despite reports of his regular fasting. "I actually have an appalling diet because

## Fact check Their claims scrutinised



Compared with the quickfire debates last week, the longer format allowed for deeper digging into policy. It is easier to fact-check Rishi Sunak and the Conservatives' 14 years in power than Labour's plans, but its manifesto today will give a chance to pore over the sums (Joey D'Urso and Jessica Sharkey write).

In Grimsby, Sir Keir Starmer was grilled over his support for his predecessor Jeremy Corbyn, whom he has kicked out of the party. Starmer says he expected Labour to lose in 2019 but was happy to campaign for colleagues. In 2019 Starmer was a key member of Corbyn's team as shadow Brexit secretary. Labour ministers all signed off on the manifesto.

Starmer was also asked about U-turning on nationalising energy companies. Running for leader in 2020 he said energy should be under "common ownership" rather than owned by shareholders. Starmer said after becoming leader that he realised

this would cost billions and would not decrease bills so changed his mind. He has ruled out raising income tax, national insurance and VAT but not capital gains tax, council tax or fuel duty.

Starmer said junior doctors should have better pay but would not agree a 35 per cent pay rise. Pay for doctors at the most junior levels has been almost flat for a decade so their pay has fallen in real terms.

Sunak was asked about the "five pledges" he made in January last year. One was to halve inflation. This has been met — it topped 10 per cent 18 months ago and is now 2.3 per cent. Critics contend it was falling and that inflation-targeting is done by the Bank of England.

Another pledge at the time was to "grow the economy" but growth has been sporadic — the economy fell into recession late last year, but in early 2024 there was some growth. Data published yesterday indicated that growth was flat in April.

Sunak pledged to

reduce small boat crossings. They have risen compared with the same period last year. He said net migration is too high but claims he reduced the numbers last year. Although last year there were slightly lower numbers compared with 2022, net migration is very high by historical standards and has been for the majority of the past 14 years.

A retired teacher asked Sunak about interest and mortgage rates. Both have soared, peaking in mid-2023, and barely falling since. Interest rates are set by the Bank of England but Sunak says cutting inflation will help.

A doctor criticised the handling of the pandemic. The UK did badly in the pandemic's early stages, with far more excess deaths than comparable countries. But later the UK did better, helped by the vaccine scheme.

When asked about crime and policing, the prime minister claimed the number of officers is at a record high. The most recent data from last year, shows there were 149,164 police officers, the highest ever. But the number per head of population was higher in 2010.

I eat an enormous amount of sugar," he said. "I was talking to someone today, and they were genuinely surprised about the amount of Haribos, Twixes and everything else that I get through."

Challenged on his performance against his own five pledges, Sunak acknowledged that NHS waiting lists had

risen but was jeered by the audience as he seemed to blame striking doctors. "Having resolved all of the industrial action except the junior doctors, what you're now seeing is that the numbers are coming down," he insisted.

Sunak also acknowledged Channel crossings by migrants were up, despite

his pledge to "stop the boats". "These things are cyclical because what you've seen is one new country, Vietnam, accounting for a lot of the new arrivals," he said as he promised further progress.

Sunak was also confronted with immigration figures showing a doubling of arrivals in recent years compared with the years before the Brexit vote.

"I'm sure people feel frustrated and angry," he said. "The numbers are too high". Sunak insisted his measures to restrict dependent visas were having an effect, pointing to the Tory manifesto promise for an annual migration cap.

Since taking over as prime minister, Sunak has been reluctant to criticise his predecessors, opting for party unity over the chance to distance himself from years of political turmoil.

But asked if Truss's record was dragging him down, Sunak said: "If people are thinking about that they can think about what I did".

He pointed out that he had spent the 2022 summer leadership election warning about the economic risks of Truss's unfunded tax cuts, a strategy which led to a heavy defeat among party members.

"I disagreed with her economic policies. And actually it wasn't easy for people to hear what I had to say, but I believed very deeply then in what I was saying and I went around the country then talking about it," he said.

"It was difficult for me and I was behind but I was talking about what I believe was right for our country, and that's who I am as a person — and I was right about that."

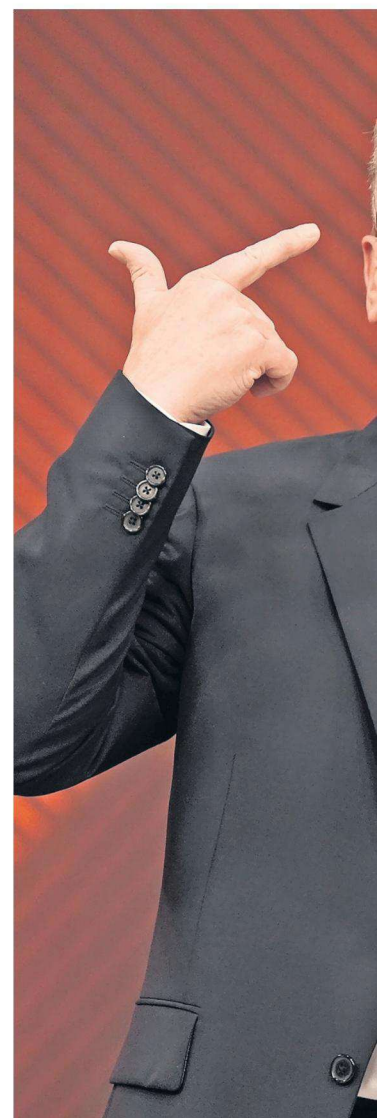
But in a sign of the drag taken by years of previous scandal, Sunak was forced to apologise again for the Downing Street parties during Covid, acknowledging that "trust takes time to rebuild through actions".

Apathy in the UK isn't so bad for democracy, James Marriott, page 24

## TIMES RADIO

Don't miss Andrew Neil, from 1pm daily on the Election Station

DAB \* Online \* Smart speaker \* App



Sir Keir Starmer, who ruled out raising

# A 90-minute playoff with the same old tactics

Tom Peck  
Political Sketch



The nation woke yesterday to a heartbreaking story about a young boy, from Southampton, having to get by in the mid-1990s without Sky TV, but by nightfall a happy ending had been more than provided.

Rishi Sunak is 44 now, with a net worth of about £750 million. He no longer lives with his parents, who so cruelly deprived him of his basic human right to watch Matt Le Tissier at the peak of his powers. He can surely afford Sky now. If he's not signed up already he should do so. Believe it or not, he might enjoy taking time out of his schedule to rewatch the Sky News "Special Event" live from Grimsby. It will make for far more pleasant viewing for the current prime minister than the almost certain next one.

Sky News does its leaders' "debate" differently and thank goodness. Across 90 watchable minutes the men never set foot in the room at the same

time. Instead they took it in turns to be interviewed by Beth Rigby, below, who was on stupendous form, then face a second interviewing from a live audience.

Whenever the old lines came out, they were laughed at. "My father was a toolmaker, my mother was a nurse," said Starmer at one point and the audience practically erupted. "It's not a laughing matter actually," he told them. Except that, well, it absolutely is. If you keep deploying your humble origins for political gain, people have every right to laugh. The Four Yorkshiremenisation of politics is getting very, very boring indeed.

At least five of Starmer's allocated 45 minutes were dedicated to stating over and over again that he was "absolutely certain", yes, "absolutely certain" that Labour were going to lose in 2019 and so nothing that he said then about Jeremy

Corbyn should be taken seriously. Thankfully for him, nothing he said about Corbyn in 2019 was taken seriously, it just makes it that little bit harder to be taken seriously now.

He said these words with such ashen-faced sincerity it became almost compelling. Once again, the only available comparison is Homer Simpson's heartbroken confession in his moment of near infidelity: "But Marge, I swear to you, I never thought you'd find out."

The Conservatives have recently claimed in an ad that it is Angela Rayner "pulling Keir Starmer's strings"

alongside a picture of the deputy leader's hand up her boss's fundament. Glove puppets, alas, do not have strings, but on this evidence Starmer does, and Rigby had him tap dancing about over a whole range of deliberately vague promises with the certainty of a Thunderbird.



## Labour hopes triple lock and NHS will sway voters

Today Sir Keir Starmer will set out Labour's plans for if the party wins power. We already know a fair bit about the party's priorities — so what is likely to be in the manifesto (Oliver Wright, Chris Smyth and Matt Dathan write)?

### Triple tax lock

Labour has ruled out raising income tax, national insurance or VAT. However, Starmer has confirmed that he will go ahead with the Conservatives' planned freeze on income tax thresholds, and his party has failed to rule out increasing other taxes.

VAT on private schools  
Labour has committed itself to



# my best, Sunak tells TV event



STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA

## Starmer is tested but the PM just looks sorry

### Analysis

**S**ir Keir Starmer was clear: Labour's 125-page manifesto would have "no surprises", he said during a live interview last night as he urged the audience to read it (Steven Swinford and Oliver Wright write).

All Labour's plans, he added, were "fully costed, fully funded ... There's nothing in our manifesto that requires us to raise tax."

However, on the question of what comes after the general election, the Labour leader was far more opaque. The manifesto would explicitly pledge not to raise income tax, national insurance or VAT, but beyond that he would make no commitments.

Pressed repeatedly over whether he would raise capital gains tax, fuel duty or bring in other wealth taxes, Starmer replied he had "no plans" to do so, or that nothing in the manifesto needed further tax hikes. He personally would be prepared to pay more in tax, he said, but that was as far as he went.

Throughout the campaign, Starmer has carefully delineated between two types of tax: those on working people that he insists will not rise; and other taxes, which he will not comment on.

Economists argue that taxes must rise whoever wins, given the state of the public finances. Starmer may be right in saying there will be no surprises in the manifesto, but what comes next is a different question.

The Labour leader was challenged over his support for Jeremy Corbyn, a man he once said would make a "great prime minister". Did he really believe that? Starmer deflected by saying he never thought Corbyn "had a chance of winning the election".

When a member of the audience asked if Starmer was a "political robot", the Labour leader, who has admitted he is not a natural politician, struggled to respond but claimed that he had changed. The audience member looked unconvinced.

If Rishi Sunak was not sure before why his campaign had failed to shift the polls, he will have a much clearer idea now. The audience was openly derisive as he tried to defend the Conservatives' record on the NHS, migration and the cost of living.

He was repeatedly forced to acknowledge voters' "cynicism" and "frustration" but could not explain satisfactorily why the public should trust him more than previous Tory leaders who made "broken promises".

Even Amy, who described herself as a former "true blue" Tory supporter, said she was undecided about her vote, citing Sunak's decision to leave the D-Day commemorations early.

"To me, this feels like a deliberate action, as you know that your ratings in the polls are so low," she told him. "How do you plan to rebuild the public trust in you? Or is it already irreparable?"

Sunak apologised, saying that "trust takes time to rebuild through actions".

The problem for the prime minister is that time is the one thing he no longer has.

income tax, national insurance and VAT, produced a better performance than last week's debate and a snap poll gave him the edge over Rishi Sunak last night

removing the VAT and business rates exemptions on all private schools "straight away".

#### Non-doms charges

Initially the party was going to scrap so-called non-dom tax exemptions but has since watered down the policy. It now proposes people will be able to live in the UK for up to four years before paying tax.

#### Business taxes

Labour says it will replace business rates with a system of "business property taxation" to level the playing field between high street businesses and online retailers.

#### Workers' rights

Starmer pledges the biggest overhaul of employee rights in a generation. Plans include banning most zero-hours contracts, ending fire and rehire contracts, and higher sick pay. The party argues this will boost productivity.

#### NHS waiting lists and staffing

Labour's signature pledge on the NHS is a promise to provide an extra two million operations, scans and appointments in the first year of government to bring down waiting

lists. This would be achieved by paying NHS staff more to work overtime. The party is also promising 700,000 more dental appointments.

#### Junk food and energy drinks

Labour has said it would ban the advertising of junk food to children. It has also said it would ban the sale of high-caffeine energy drinks to under-16s.

#### Social care

Labour is promising to implement Boris Johnson's £86,000 lifetime cap on social care costs. Starmer is also vowing a national care service that sets minimum standards, as well as a pay rise for carers.

#### Education and childcare

Labour is promising to recruit 6,500 teachers where there is a shortage of specialists. It is also promising mental health support for children in secondary schools. On childcare Labour says it will create 100,000 places by converting primary school classrooms into nurseries.

#### Migration

The manifesto will commit the party to cutting net migration but

will not set an overall target. It will aim to reduce the need for overseas workers by improving the training of the domestic workforce.

#### Small boats

The Rwanda policy on deporting migrants will be scrapped and the £75 million earmarked for it used to set up a border security command. The manifesto will also pursue a migrant returns deal with the EU.

#### Police

Labour will dedicate 13,000 police officers to tackling neighbourhood crime. The manifesto will also pledge to introduce "respect orders" to punish antisocial behaviour.

#### Prisons

The manifesto will pledge to build the remaining 12,000 prison places promised by the government that have been stalled by planning delays.

#### Energy and net zero

One of the centrepieces of Labour's manifesto is a pledge to decarbonise electricity supplies by 2030 — five years before the government's target. It would create a publicly owned company, Great British Energy, to invest in new renewable

energy projects. The party would also ban new North Sea oil and gas exploration licences while making it easier to build onshore wind farms.

#### Housing

Labour is pledging to build 1.5 million homes within its first five years. Starmer has set a home ownership target of 70 per cent — up from 50 per cent at present — and promised to get more people on the housing ladder with a new mortgage guarantee scheme.

#### Defence

Labour has said it will increase defence spending to 2.5 per cent of GDP but has declined to put a timescale on doing so. It has also committed to Nato and Britain's nuclear deterrent.

#### Brexit and Europe

The manifesto will rule out rejoining the European Union or the single market and customs union. However, Labour has proposed measures that would bring the UK and the EU closer, which could reduce checks on goods crossing the Channel. Labour won't turn from tough road ahead, Peter Mandelson, page 23



## News Politics

# Tory rethink amid fears of a Labour super-majority

Strategists hope that warnings about power going unchecked will curb the landslide, write **Steven Swinford, Oliver Wright, Chris Smyth and Jack Blackburn**

Grant Shapps, the defence secretary, is usually one of Rishi Sunak's most ebullient performers. Yesterday morning, however, his tone was far more downbeat as he confirmed a major shift in the Conservative Party's election strategy.

"We would argue that you don't want to have somebody receive a super-majority," he said. His concern was that Sir Keir Starmer's victory could be so complete that his power would be "unchecked", ultimately undermining democracy. A decade of Labour rule could be on the cards.

The message is being reinforced on social media. In the past two days the Tories have sent out four different Facebook advertisements to tens of thousands of voters warning against handing Starmer a "blank cheque".

The change in strategy was, according to one Tory insider, a "break glass" moment, which leads to the inevitable question: have they given up? Is the strategy, as one cabinet minister put it, now one of "damage limitation"?

From the moment he called the election Sunak's campaign has been mired in problems from all sides. The prime minister's gamble in going early had been that the "crucible" of the campaign would encourage people to engage with his policies and ideas as he set out his vision for the future.

There is little evidence at present that voters are listening. With poll after poll showing that Labour retains a 20-point lead, the Conservatives felt that they had no choice but to change tack.

Even Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, has admitted that he will struggle to hold the redrawn Godalming & Ash constituency in Surrey, although he said it was "bad feng shui to start planning the life you don't want to have".

The Tory plan is to target voters who are considering backing the Liberal Democrats and Reform. "The problem we have is that former Tory voters who are saying they will vote for Reform are not moving back to us," a senior campaign source said. "Even before [Nigel] Farage came back they were stuck — now they definitely are."

In the wake of Sunak's decision to return early from D-Day commemorations, the atmosphere in campaign headquarters is said to be "dire". "Morale has collapsed," one insider said. "There's a huge amount of mistrust."

While Sunak insists he is not throwing in the towel — he said he is "absolutely not" giving up — others in the Conservative Party admit that the new approach is a tacit acknowledgement that it is heading for defeat.

"It's not going well at all and people just sound beaten," a strategist said. "The strategy had been to hope that the

## Electoral wipeout

### Canada 1993

This is the spectre that haunts Tories' dreams. The Conservative government called an election near the end of a five-year term amid unpopularity over the tax burden and a recession (sound familiar?). They lost 154 seats, leaving them with only two. Jean Chrétien's Liberal Party won 60 per cent of the seats and he went on to win two more elections as prime minister. The Conservatives were forced to merge with the populist Reform Party of Canada and only returned to power after 13 years in the wilderness, and only then as the smallest minority administration Canada had seen.

### United States 2009

The term super-majority comes from Washington, where 60 seats in the 100-seat Senate is enough to prevent the opposition from filibustering. In 2009, President Obama was gifted a super-majority by a Republican defection which proved very helpful as he attempted to pass his "Obamacare" health reforms. The Republicans no longer had the ability to frustrate the bill, which was passed by the Senate before the death of Ted Kennedy led to the Republicans gaining a seat. The eventual Affordable Care Act became Obama's biggest domestic legacy.

### Britain 1924

In the turbulent interwar period, the first Labour minority government under James Ramsay MacDonald collapsed and the subsequent election resulted in a big swing back to the Conservatives. Stanley Baldwin had a majority of 209, the first 200-plus majority of the 20th century and the only one to be won by a party in its own right. Baldwin abolished the poor laws, gave women equal voting rights and expanded energy production, but also faced industrial strife. He lost his majority at the 1929 general election, with Labour returning to power in a hung parliament.

polls narrowed and then warn voters of the danger of a hung parliament. But that's just not credible any more.

"No one in the campaign team believes we're going to come close to winning. A great result for us is if we can get 200 seats. I don't know anyone who wouldn't bite your hand off for between 180 and 200 seats."

The Tory attack will pivot on the idea that, as Sunak put it, Labour is preparing to "change the rules" to cement power. The Labour manifesto will include a pledge to extend the vote to those aged 16 and 17. Given that young people are more likely to vote Labour, this is seen as part of a strategy to secure a decade in office.

The Tories say that a super-majority would be challenging on two fronts.

First, they argue, it would damage democracy. If Labour secured the 490 seats forecast in a Tory ad, they would technically have enough MPs to split off a group to form the opposition.

More realistically, a big Labour majority would mean the Tories were given fewer opportunities to scrutinise the government in parliament. Chairs of select committees, for example, are allocated to parties according to their number of seats, and a rump Tory party would be given only a handful, denying them a powerful platform.

It would also impose severe financial limitations. Opposition parties receive state support, allocated on the basis of seats and vote share. Labour, which had 205 seats at the end of the last parliament, received £77 million in short money. If the Tories won fewer than a hundred seats they would get less than half this sum.

The second argument is the "blank cheque" attack. The Tories say Starmer would use a landslide majority to pursue his vision of a "socialist" state, raising taxes, easing border controls and pursuing a closer relationship with the European Union — the very issues that Reform voters are concerned about.

A campaign source said: "We need to win them [Reform voters] back. If they realise Labour with a huge majority would do all sorts of left-wing radical stuff, like votes at 16 and closer ties to the EU, then they are more likely to give their vote to us, and realise that a vote for Reform will be wasted as they will just usher in a more left-wing country."

Professor Sir John Curtice, the polling expert, said the tactic might prove to be ineffective: "It's very difficult to persuade people to vote for you because you are concerned you won't be an effective opposition," he said.

Lee Cain, Boris Johnson's director of communications and founder of the PR agency Charlesby, said "As a political strategy, it is a high-risk move. Telling your voters they are on the losing team will usually depress turnout. Also, while the public are not overly enthused about a Keir Starmer premiership, they are not concerned about him in the way voters were about Jeremy Corbyn."

This appears to be backed up by some early polling by the consultancy Public First. It found that 13 per cent of people who voted Conservative in 2019 would like to see the party lose every seat and less than half were worried at the prospect of a complete wipeout.

Some candidates already appear to be distancing themselves from the national campaign. Earlier this week the candidate in Tunbridge Wells published a leaflet apologising for "poor policies, worse implementation" since 2019. Dame Andrea Jenkyns, the candidate for Leeds South West & Morley, went further, using a picture of her with Farage at his 60th birthday, in which she called him "a true patriot, conservative to the core". Her defence was blunt: "All conservatives must be prepared to come together to prevent a socialist super-majority."

PM may have to be open over Dunkirk strategy, Iain Martin, page 25  
Democracy is healthier with effective opposition, leading article, page 27



## Farage tucks in with Donald Jr at Trump fundraising dinner

**D**onald Trump Jr and Nigel Farage were among the guests at a London fundraiser last night that raised more than £1.6 million for Donald Trump's presidential campaign (David Brown writes).

The reception, believed to be the biggest fundraising event outside the US for Trump's re-election bid, was hosted by Holly Valance, the Australian actor and singer, in the Chelsea mansion she shares with her husband, the billionaire property tycoon Nick Candy.

Farage, the leader of Reform UK and prospective MP for

Clacton, took a break from his election campaigning to attend the event alone. He arrived holding a copy of the Gospel According to St John.

Asked whether he had any reservations about donating to a convicted felon, he responded: "I can't donate, I'm British." Last month, before announcing his campaign to become an MP, he said he had a "firm job offer" related to Trump's re-election.

Derek Chisora, 40, the British boxer, arrived wearing a red "Make America Great Again" baseball cap. Lord Elliott of Mickel Fell, the former chief executive of Vote



Nigel Farage, clutching gospel verses, and Donald Trump Jr were guests of the actress Holly Valance in Chelsea last night

## As voter loyalty wanes,

### James Kanagasooriam Comment

**B**ritain stands on the cusp of a Labour super-majority. Normally in these circumstances we'd be talking about the Labour Party governing for the next decade or 15 years. But recent history has taught us to be wary of declaring supremacy and defeat as permanent. Political coalitions these days are more like sandcastles — impressive but liable to be swept away. Ukip's 2014 European parliament election victory, the SNP landslide and Liberal Democrat collapse in 2015,

the 2016 Brexit vote, Jeremy Corbyn's rapid ascendancy in 2017 and Boris Johnson's Red Wall victory — all these ups and downs have been reversed at warp speed.

The space between hagiography and obituary is becoming shorter. The question is why? First, voter ties are weaker. In the 1960s, almost one in two Brits had a "very strong" identification with a political party. By the midpoint of the New Labour years, that figure was 10 per cent.

Correspondingly, the number of voters switching parties between elections has risen rapidly, with more than two in five switching between 2010 and 2015, up from one in five in the 1970s and 1980s.

The latest polling by my company,





JOSHUA BRATT FOR THE TIMES

American citizens or holders of green card residency permits.

Valance, 41, who found fame as Felicity Scully in the Australian soap opera *Neighbours*, has a green card as a result of her Hollywood acting career. She gave a speech along with Donald Trump Jr, 46, who was accompanied by his fiancée, Kimberly Guilfoyle, 55, a television news personality.

The party was attended by several Trump-era ambassadors, including Robert "Woody" Johnson, 77, who served in London from 2017 to 2021, and business figures including Howard Lutnick, 62, the billionaire financier.

Guests were served Mediterranean food at the 40,000 sq ft mansion, which stands in two acres of grounds.

Valance and Candy, 51, attended a dinner with Donald Trump and Farage at Mar-a-Lago in Florida in 2022.

A source close to the couple said: "This is a huge fundraising event. It is a real 'Holly party' and she has thrown herself into it. It raised at least \$2 million but the [final] total is expected to be much more.

"They both know the president and his family very well and are active supporters. They are deeply concerned that the US is becoming a banana republic and are determined to help the greatest country in the world."

Truss, the former prime minister, was invited but did not attend.

Trump Jr said in a statement about the reception: "After the bogus conviction of my father [in his recent hush-money trial in the US], we have seen an explosion in financial support from American citizens across the globe who are rejecting Joe Biden's attempt to use the courts to interfere in the presidential election.

"I'm excited to see my friends in London, who are all ready to make America great again this November."

Leave, who was made a Tory peer by Liz Truss, declined to comment as he arrived.

More than 100 guests were given just 60 minutes' notice of the location, close to the banks of the Thames in Chelsea, west London.

Staff hired for the event were informed only that they would be serving at a "big conservative fundraising dinner" and were unaware that it was

associated not with the UK election but with the US election, nor that it was linked to Trump's White House campaign.

As guests began to arrive, Valance's well-heeled neighbours responded largely negatively. One, a woman originally from New York, shouted repeatedly from her rooftop terrace: "Vote Biden!" Others described Trump as "ghastly" and "embarrassing".

To join the host committee, a contribution of \$100,000 (£78,000) per couple was required. A \$50,000 contribution secured attendance at the reception, a photo opportunity and a "roundtable". To attend the reception cost \$10,000 — with an extra \$15,000 required for a photo opportunity.

Because of US election funding law, contributions were accepted only from

## big victories can quickly crumble

Focaldata, suggests one in three voters are set to flip next month. We are in a state of permanent revolution. Claims of a decade-long Johnson premiership after the 2021 Hartlepool by-election already seem like ancient history. An Economist poll this week put the Conservatives on 10 per cent in Hartlepool, down more than 40 points.

From 2010 to 2019 the Tories built their vote among different groups: middle-class professionals in 2010; West Country liberals in 2015; Labour-Ukip defectors and Scottish Tories in 2017; and Leave, lower-education and older voters everywhere throughout the period. The Conservative 2019 coalition polled 40 per cent or more among

groups opposed on some social and many economic values.

How to reconcile the voters of Kensington and Clacton? With Labour set to take the former and Farage potentially the latter, we may find our answer. In seeking to serve all, you may end up pleasing none.

Labour's mission of "change" is about uniting people under a general sentiment, for a one-time vote. Sound familiar? It's like 2019 on steroids. Our polling recently showed Labour was likely to win the ten most pro-immigration seats and a majority of the most anti-immigration, as well as the most pro and anti-tax seats and voters. The breadth and thinness of its win will store up problems for the future.

There will be an imperial phase. Labour's popularity will probably rise post-election. But sandcastle coalitions look impressive until they collapse. Starmer's government will face pressure from the Greens on foreign policy and climate change, Lib Dems on tax rises and business, Reform on immigration and identity and the Conservatives — eventually — on leadership.

Campaigning with a Union Jack and a one-word slogan of "change" will work for a six-week election campaign but not for long after. Just ask the people who thought that "Get Brexit done" would secure decade-long supremacy.

James Kanagasooriam is chief research officer of Focaldata

# Greens back six candidates despite 'antisemitic slurs'

Fiona Hamilton Chief Reporter

The Greens have endorsed six election candidates despite allegations that they shared "antisemitic" slurs, conspiracy theories or offensive comments online.

The party has claimed that legitimate criticism of Israel was being confused with antisemitism. Last week The Times revealed that its candidates had accused Israel of child trafficking and appeared to justify Hamas's October 7 attacks, as well as sharing articles online that claimed they were a "false flag" operation carried out by Israel.

Zack Polanski, deputy leader of the Green Party, wrote on Twitter/X: "We must be clear about the conflation between legitimate criticism of the Israeli government and antisemitism."

When asked about the issue on BBC Radio 4's *Today* yesterday, Adrian Ramsay, the party's co-leader, said he could not know details of all 574 candidates. He said that when concerns were raised, they were assessed by an independent panel, and that training or sanctions would follow if needed. Four other candidates were blocked after allegations of antisemitism, he said.

The Times had revealed that Nataly Anderson, the candidate for Woking in Surrey, shared online her suspicions that the Hamas attacks were "orchestrated" and claimed there were connections between human traffickers and Israel's intelligence agency Mossad.

On October 7, Adam Pugh, the candidate for Deptford & Lewisham North, in London, tweeted that "there is no peace without freedom. Resist."

Kefentse Dennis, the Green equalities and diversity co-ordinator and the candidate in Perry Barr, Birmingham, said rocket attacks before October 7 were an example of "Palestine defending itself as it is legally allowed to".

Simon Anthony, the candidate for Barking, east London, compared Hamas to the French Resistance.

Chris Brody, standing in Chingford & Woodford Green, north London, shared an article on Facebook on October 21 that claimed the Hamas attack

### The main manifesto pledges

**Wealth tax** People with assets of more than £10 million would be taxed 1 per cent annually.

**National insurance rise** Employees with salaries of more than £50,270 would pay 8 per cent on earnings above this, up from 2 per cent.

**More healthcare funding** Further £8 billion in first year for NHS, rising to a total of £28 billion in 2030.

**Nationalisation** Water companies and Big Five energy companies would be renationalised.

**Capital gains tax** Brought into line with income tax bands.

may have been a "false flag [operation] engineered to open the way to the genocide of the Palestinian people of Gaza".

Nida Al-Fulaij, the Green candidate for Brent East, west London, liked posts online that suggested Israel and the US, but not Hamas, were terrorists.

All candidates were contacted for comment last week. Anthony said at the time that it is "legal under international law" for an occupied population to fight back, saying "that is as far as my comparison was intended to go".

Pugh wrote on X: "Nothing in any of the tweets of mine that were quoted was antisemitic in nature."

Anderson wrote on X that the allegations were a "smear campaign" and that she had long been exposing international child trafficking.

Dennis tweeted that the Greens were victims of a smear campaign that conflated criticism with antisemitism.

The party said: "Concerns were raised about a small number of candidates. Any allegations of antisemitism that are raised are treated seriously."

The Green Party must rid itself of extremists, leading article, page 27

## Sunak aide 'bet on July poll days before announcement'

Max Kendix

Rishi Sunak's closest aide in parliament placed a £100 bet on a July election three days before the prime minister named the date, it has been claimed.

Craig Williams, the prime minister's parliamentary private secretary, admitted to "a flutter on the general election".

The Gambling Commission has launched an inquiry into the bet, which could have led to a £500 win on odds of 5/1, the Guardian reported. The alleged bet was said to have been placed via an online account belonging to Williams on May 19. Sunak announced a surprise July election on May 22.

Williams is the Tory candidate for Montgomeryshire & Glyndwr, having been the MP for Montgomeryshire since 2019. The bet is said to have been placed with Ladbrokes, which flagged the transaction to the regulator.

Using confidential information to gain an unfair advantage when betting

may constitute an offence of cheating under section 42 of the Gambling Act, a criminal offence that can result in an unlimited fine or two years in prison.

In a statement, Williams said he "put a flutter on the general election some weeks ago". He added: "This has resulted in some routine inquiries and I confirm I will fully co-operate with these. I should have thought how it looks."

The Gambling Commission is reported to have informed Downing Street about its inquiry last week.

Jonathan Ashworth, the shadow master-general, said the allegations were "utterly extraordinary".

He added: "Rishi Sunak has sat on this information for more than a week but has lacked any backbone to take action. Once again, Rishi Sunak has been exposed as utterly weak."

A spokesman for the Conservative Party said that it was "a personal matter for the individual in question".



# Nurse branded risk to public for taking headache tablets

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A nurse has been suspended and labelled a "risk to the public" after she admitted taking headache tablets without permission at an NHS hospital.

Francesca Morgan told a disciplinary tribunal that she had already been sacked from her job at Arrowe Park Hospital on the Wirral and had lost her house after pleading guilty to two counts of theft in 2022.

But a tribunal of the Nursing and Midwifery Council decided to suspend Morgan on the grounds that she posed a "continuing risk to the public" after having taken co-codamol and paracetamol while feeling unwell during a shift.

The decision to suspend Morgan was taken against the backdrop of a significant shortage of nurses in England, with the Royal College of Nursing noting in November that there were more than 42,000 vacancies.

The tribunal heard that Morgan was caught after covert surveillance, installed by police, recorded her taking the pills on two separate occasions in 2022 without obtaining prior written permission. Police began investigating after bosses noticed prescription medication was missing. As well as the cameras, a tablet count was put in place.

While it was never alleged that Mor-

gan was responsible for a wider theft of medication, she was prosecuted nonetheless and pleaded guilty to two counts of theft by employee. Morgan had told Wirral magistrates' court that she assumed she was allowed to take the medication if she felt unwell.

Morgan was sentenced at the time to a conditional discharge. The Nursing and Midwifery Council has now handed her a six-month suspension after a disciplinary panel found that she had failed fully to understand why her actions were wrong.

In a statement to the tribunal, Morgan said that she realised "it is not acceptable to take medication belonging to the ward as this could be seen as theft. I have spent many hours reflecting on the situation I placed myself in."

But in its report, the council described her insight as "quite limited" and said it was not convinced that Morgan "demonstrated a full or developed understanding of the issues raised by the proven allegations".

The tribunal chairman, Konrad Chrzanowski, said that the hardship caused to Morgan by the suspension was "outweighed" by the public interest, adding that it was "necessary to mark the importance of maintaining public confidence in the profession".



Down to the wire David Mach, a Turner prize-nominated artist, unveils *The Thief*, a 9ft sculpture of hundreds of coat hangers at Anise Gallery in southeast London

# Menopausal teacher wins £60k damages

Jonathan Ames

A teacher has been awarded £60,000 in damages for being unfairly sacked when she refused to change schools over fears that the move would worsen her menopause symptoms.

Allison Shearer told the head teacher she could not move to another school that she believed was beset by pupil violence because doing so would increase her blood pressure and exacerbate menopausal symptoms.

The English teacher told a tribunal in Glasgow that her concerns over worsening health issues were ignored and she was eventually sacked. Shearer successfully sued South Lanarkshire council for disability discrimination and unfair dismissal.

Shearer, who qualified in 1987, told the tribunal that the proposal to transfer her between Kearsy Campus locations was a "punishment beating" because days before she had objected when the head teacher asked her to supervise a pupil who had been vaping. Over several weeks, the tribunal said, Shearer "had regular nightmares and disrupted sleep. She found it difficult to think about anything except the move."

Shearer was ultimately sacked last September while on sick leave. Backing her claim, the judge Mark Whitcombe said that the school could have sent another teacher to take the post. However, the tribunal did not accept that the proposed move was a punishment.

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# Fentanyl police investigate family deaths

Katie Gibbons

Police are investigating whether a murderer who poisoned a couple with the prescription opioid fentanyl killed his father and grandfather in the same way.

Luke D'Wit, 34, was jailed for a minimum of 37 years in March after he used the painkiller to poison a married couple, Stephen and Carol Baxter, in West Mersea, Essex.

Detectives are now reviewing whether he was also responsible for the death of his father, Vernon, who had been prescribed fentanyl before he was found dead in a chair at his home in 2021, and are also investigating the death of D'Wit's grandfather.

Essex detectives described D'Wit as

"one of the most dangerous men" they had investigated and said they "will not hesitate to act" if evidence were found.

D'Wit, who worked for the Baxters, created a series of fake online personas to manipulate Mr and Mrs Baxter, 61 and 64, into taking "potions" he invented. He gave them a lethal dose of fentanyl on Good Friday last year and watched them die via a camera he had placed in their home. The couple were found unresponsive in their armchairs on Easter Sunday. Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid about 100 times stronger than morphine.

The murder trial at Chelmsford crown court heard that D'Wit had "an abundance" of fentanyl that he had extracted from skin patches originally

prescribed to his father. A stash of the opioid was found in a backpack at the home he shared with his mother.

Detective Superintendent Rob Kirby said that it was likely D'Wit would have carried out more subtle murders had he not been jailed. At the time of the original inquiry, Kirby said it was not possible to rule out whether others had been targeted before D'Wit was caught.

He said: "In all my years of policing, Luke D'Wit is one of the most dangerous men I have ever come across. I have absolutely no doubt in my mind had he not been caught he would have gone on to kill further people."

Essex police said additional possible murders were being considered. "Up to the conviction and sentence of Luke



Luke D'Wit, left, leaving the home of the Baxters, whom he murdered last year

D'Wit, our determined focus has been securing justice in relation to the murders of Carol and Stephen," they said.

"As with any investigation of this magnitude, everything we have uncovered is being reviewed, and should anything suggest this has been the case, we will not hesitate to act."

D'Wit, who denied murdering the Baxters, was found guilty by unanimous verdicts and sentenced to life with a minimum of 37 years.

Mr Justice Nicholas Lavender, the judge, said D'Wit "ended their lives and brought grief and misery to the lives of others". However, he did not accept claims from the prosecution that D'Wit's behaviour was sadistic as the victims were sedated when they died.



## £100,000 payout for violinist who broke elbow at Meghan gym

A gym beloved by the Duchess of Sussex is understood to have paid more than £100,000 to an acclaimed violinist after she claimed to have been left "disabled" by a collapsing exercise machine (Jonathan Ames writes).

Maya Meron has told a judge that she suffered a fractured left elbow and abdominal injuries after pilates equipment at the Heartcore studio in Hampstead, north

London, collapsed as she was doing a "downward dog" manoeuvre.

The violinist, 44, who has appeared on the BBC Proms and with the London Symphony Orchestra, claimed that the machine was either faulty or she was not instructed properly.

The gym has now settled out of court, The Times understands, and could be in line for a bill of £250,000 when lawyers fees are added.

Heartcore was founded by Jessica Blum, 49, and focuses on



a pilates programme, in which participants work out using a Coreformer, a bespoke machine.

Several celebrities have taken the classes, including Meghan, who told Vogue in 2019 it was her "favourite workout".

In her claim, Meron, a mother of three, criticised Coreformer as "not a safe product". But lawyers for Heartcore told the High Court that it denied any blame.

In written court submissions, Meron's

barrister, Robert Glancy KC, described how the violinist attended a class at the gym in 2019, where the Coreformer was used.

The equipment was described as bed-like, with a front bar that can



Maya Meron, a violinist, could no longer play after breaking her elbow as she tried a downward dog workout, far left

click into three positions. Meron claimed that an instructor told her to adjust the bar in a new way. Although she followed his words, she said the bar collapsed. As a result, the musician suffered a broken elbow and abdominal injuries that led to a hernia.

The barrister said that Meron experienced pain in her left wrist when she played the violin and has noted "decreased strength, particularly in her little finger, which particularly affects her ability to play". Glancy said she could not return to her work and had "suffered anxiety, stress, anger and frustration, and loss of congenial employment".

Peter Burns KC, representing Heartcore, told the court that she was responsible, noting that she had attended 43 classes at the gym. She "failed to ensure that the bar was locked ... failed to listen for the click after setting it in position", he said. Legal costs will be settled by a High Court judge at a later date.

## BA jet's nine-hour flight to nowhere

Ben Clatworthy  
Transport Correspondent

Passengers on a British Airways flight from London to Houston, Texas, found themselves on a "flight to nowhere" when they landed back in London nine hours after take-off.

BA195 had just reached Newfoundland in Canada when the pilots of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner chose to turn back because of a minor technical issue.

The flight left Heathrow at 10am on Monday and landed back where it started at 7pm. In total, the airliner travelled 4,834 miles, according to FlightRadar24, the tracking website.

Typically, the flight to Houston would take ten hours and 15 minutes.

It is understood that one of the

plane's two Rolls-Royce Trent engines generated a warning message as the plane neared the Canadian coast. While not posing an immediate safety risk, the engine would need inspection and engineering work.

Instead of continuing to Houston or diverting to another airport in North America — where BA would have limited, or no, engineering resources — the pilots appear to have decided to return to Heathrow, the airline's home.

A spokesman for BA said: "The flight returned to London Heathrow as a precaution due to a minor technical issue. It landed safely and customers disembarked as normal. We've apologised ... for the disruption."

All passengers were rebooked on alternative flights to Houston and given

replacement connecting flights in the US, if needed. Hotel stays and information on how to claim for any additional expenses were also provided.

Last October the same aircraft was forced to divert to Anchorage, Alaska, during a flight from Tokyo to London after a passenger's mobile phone that had been trapped and crushed in a seat began to smoulder, filling the cabin with smoke. With the crew then "out of hours" and unable to work, the passengers arrived in London 33 hours late.

In November an Air New Zealand flight was forced to operate a similar 11-hour "flight to nowhere" when the plane developed a technical fault. Flight NZ26 from Auckland to Chicago was four hours into its 15-hour scheduled journey when it had to turn back.

## McIlroy back with wife just weeks after filing for divorce

Tom Kershaw Pinehurst, North Carolina

Rory McIlroy is back with Erica Stoll, his wife of seven years, less than a month after divorce proceedings started.

News that the Northern Irish golfer had filed a petition for separation, saying his marriage was "irretrievably broken", dominated the PGA Championship last month. Court papers served on Tuesday in Palm Beach, Florida, revealed that the case had been voluntarily dismissed.

The couple have a three-year-old daughter. McIlroy, 35, who has won four majors, will today start the US Open in Pinehurst, North Carolina.

"There have been rumours about my

personal life recently, which is unfortunate. Responding to each rumour is a fool's game," McIlroy told The Guardian. "Over the past weeks, Erica and I have realised that our best future was as a family together. Thankfully, we have resolved our differences and look forward to a new beginning."

The couple met in 2012 when she was working for the PGA at the Ryder Cup. He overslept and was in danger of being late before Stoll set up a police escort. In 2014, McIlroy reportedly broke up with his fiancée, the tennis player Caroline Wozniacki, by phone call.

Can anyone end Scheffler's run?  
Sport, page 60





Barrow boys Westminister Abbey choristers take a break from rehearsing Haydn's Creation with a race in the College Garden

# Schools urged to 'decolonise' their philosophy classes

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, the founding fathers of philosophy, have inspired generations of great thinkers. But a new guide for schools suggests they need to make way for fresh voices, describing the study of them and other logicians as "armchair theorising".

The first toolkit for "decolonising" philosophy, created by academics for use in secondary schools and universities, is designed to reduce the impact of dead white men and broaden the curriculum. It aims to diversify philosophy teaching by incorporating perspectives from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.

The study guide was devised by four undergraduate student interns and four academic philosophers at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London.

It recommends several new thinkers including Nishida Kitaro, the founder of the Kyoto school of philosophy, who seeks to challenge Eurocentrism, and Uma Narayan, an American feminist.

The proposed curriculum also includes work by Kwasi Wiredu, a Ghanaian, as well as Professor Nkiru Nzegwu, a Nigerian "theorist of gender".

The guide says most students follow a "colonial" curriculum that requires the study of Plato, Hume, Bertrand Russell, Locke, Descartes and Wittgenstein.

This curriculum is "predominantly focused on canonical western philosophers offering in-depth retrospections of their own experiences", it says. The guide adds: "A lot of the ... discourse also involves 'armchair theorising'."

The proposed curriculum still includes Plato as well as Confucius, alongside works such as *On Being White: Thinking Towards a Feminist Understanding of Race Supremacy* by Marilyn Frye, the radical feminist

theorist, and *Knowledge Sovereignty Among African Cattle Herders* by Zere-mariam Fre, the Eritrean-British agriculturalist.

The toolkit says that to decolonise the classroom, teachers must understand their role in "racist systems" — and to stop acting like teachers.

"Without this intellectual insight, it is impossible to even find the root of the problem, let alone begin to address it," the guide adds. "The teacher in a decolonial classroom must learn to learn from the perspectives and knowledge systems of the students and to unlearn their own colonially mediated assumptions and background knowledge."

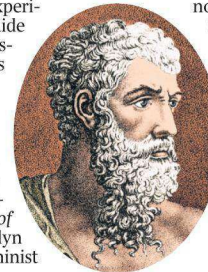
Exams and essays are an example of western colonial ideology, the guide claims. The toolkit proposes new forms of assessment for students such as their blogs, podcasts and case studies.

Students could even create their own essay questions rather than seeing assessment as a hurdle, it adds.

SOAS itself has accepted reflective pieces, recorded presentations, infographics, posters and blog posts as forms of assessment. The toolkit will be available on its website as an online platform that enables student input. The university said that it had been committed to decolonising its courses and modules since 2017.

Dr Paul Giladi, who helped to create the guide, said: "My philosophical training had been blind to the wealth of wisdom from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and indigenous communities. Only later in my academic career was I able to recognise that the learning environment shaping my training was not designed to promote critical thinking. Learning was orientated towards obeying and reproducing an already agreed philosophical tradition."

Aristotle is being joined by non-western thinkers



## Students work an extra day each week to cover costs

Nicola Woolcock

Students are working an extra day per week at university during the cost of living crisis, a study has found.

The average time they spend studying and doing paid work has rocketed from 35 to 42 hours a week in only two years, according to the annual student academic survey. Even degree apprentices are taking extra jobs, despite getting a salary as they learn.

More than three quarters of students said that the cost of living crisis was affecting their studies — for 28 per cent the impact was large, up from 26 per cent last year. However, more are happier with their contact hours and the value of their course, as students return to normal post-Covid.

The annual research by the Higher Education Policy Institute questioned more than 10,300 full-time undergraduates in the UK. It shows an improvement in perceptions of value for money from their course, greater satisfaction with contact hours and teaching — par-

ticularly in assessment — and their expectations being met.

This year, 68 per cent said that they were satisfied with their timetable contact hours, up from 66 per cent last year and 63 per cent in 2022.

The percentage considering dropping out has also reduced from 28 per cent to 25 per cent. Those thinking of leaving were most likely to cite mental health, followed by financial struggles.

However, there has been a marked decline in those whose perception is of "poor" or "very poor" value, particularly for international students and British ethnic-minority students.

However the cost of living was the most significant concern, contributing to negative perception of value — mentioned by 44 per cent of respondents.

A separate survey by the National Union of Students found that 14 per cent of students used foodbanks this academic year, double the 7 per cent of two years ago. The survey of more than 6,500 students claimed that 45 per cent were living on less than £50 a month.

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# Suspect in £25m Ecclestone burglary charged in Serbia

David Woode Crime Correspondent

A suspect in one of Britain's biggest burglary sprees, in which diamonds, gold watches and cash worth £25 million were stolen from Tamara Ecclestone, the Formula 1 heiress, has been charged in Serbia.

Ljubomir Romanov allegedly spent money from "criminal activities" on luxury cars in the UK, property in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, and other items worth £2 million, according to court documents seen by BBC News.

Money laundering charges have been linked to raids on the London homes of three celebrities in December 2019. A total of £26 million of valuables were taken.

Ecclestone, 39, was on holiday in Lapland with her husband, the art gallery owner Jay Rutland, and their daughter when a gang stole 400 items

of jewellery, other possessions and large sums of cash from her Kensington mansion. At least two safes were cracked and the 57-room property ransacked.

Three members of the gang were jailed in 2021. One suspect, Daniel Vukovic, fled to Belgrade after the burglary. He is believed to use a string of aliases — one of which is Ljubomir Romanov. He was charged under this name following his arrest in December last year.

The Serbian public prosecutor's office for organised crime has also charged eight other defendants with conspiring to commit criminal acts, money laundering and coercing people into verifying false content.

They are Milka Radosavljevic, Entoni Radosavljevic, Irena Radosavljevic, Laura Radosavljevic, Mirka Nikolic, Biljana Radosavljevic, Robert Kononov, and Kristijan Jovanovic.

Two and a half years ago, Jugoslav Jovanovic, Alessandro Maltese and Alessandro Donati admitted breaking into the homes of Ecclestone, the former Chelsea manager Frank Lampard and his TV presenter wife Christine Lampard, and the late Leicester City owner Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha.

Isleworth crown court was told that the burglary left Ecclestone "obsessing over security" and that she did not want to leave her daughter in the house at night.

In a victim impact statement, she said: "I'm not sure I can trust anyone. I have just been so scared."

The trio, all Italians, were jailed for a total of 28 years after pleading guilty to conspiracy to burgle.

In *Who Stole Tamara Ecclestone's Diamonds?*, a BBC documentary screened in 2022, she said that her dressing room had "a door which is like a panic room and it's always locked when we

travel and you couldn't break into it if it had been locked properly". She added: "It hadn't been locked properly by security that night. Once they were into that dressing room/panic room, they were able to take everything."

Ecclestone, the daughter of the former F1 Group chief executive, Bernie Ecclestone, has offered a £6 million reward for the return of her jewellery. She said: "If you are the source, you get the reward. It's that simple."



The mansion belonging to Tamara Ecclestone, below right. Other homes burgled included one owned by ex-footballer Frank Lampard, below with his wife Christine



## I made mistake, US driver in fatal crash told police

Laurence Sleator

The American woman who killed the British teenager Harry Dunn told the police she had made a "tragic mistake", an inquest has heard.

Anne Sacoolas, a US government employee, was driving on the wrong side of the road when her car collided with Dunn, 19, who was riding his motorcycle near RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire in August 2019.

Sacoolas, 46, fled the country after the fatal crash and the US government asserted diplomatic immunity on her behalf. She has refused to return to Britain to give any evidence and her extradition has been blocked.

Excerpts from a voluntary police interview Sacoolas gave two months after the crash were read out yesterday at the inquest into Dunn's death in Northampton. In the interview, Sacoolas insisted that she was a "safe driver" and told Northamptonshire police: "I drove like an American and drove on the American side of the road."

In 2022, Sacoolas admitted causing

death by careless driving when she appeared at the Old Bailey via videolink. She was given an eight-month prison sentence, suspended for 12 months.

In one of her two witness statements, prepared for the inquest, Sacoolas said: "Immediately after the accident, I hysterically flagged down a motorist and begged her to get help. While she called 999, I called my husband to contact the [RAF] base for help."

She continued: "As I turned out of the exit from the ... base, I instinctively moved to the right side of the road."

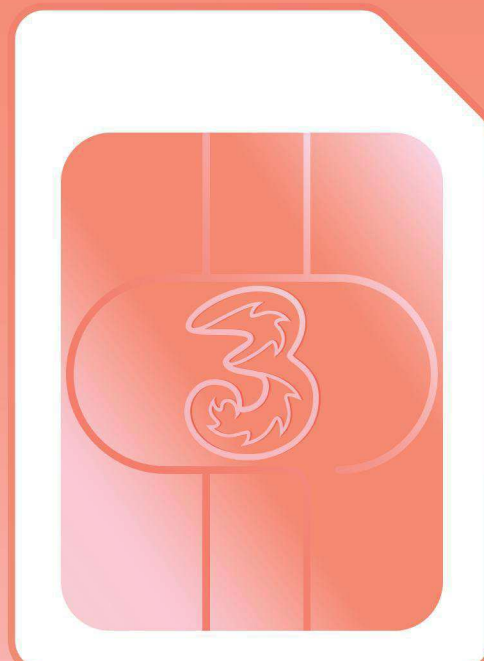
Concluding her most recent statement, Sacoolas said: "I made a tragic mistake that I will live with every single day for the rest of my life."

Sacoolas, who says she works as an analyst for the US State Department, has rejected the coroner's offer to give live evidence at the inquest.

Responding to the statements, the Dunn family spokesman, said: "We have heard most of that before. Why on earth is Sacoolas not in court to answer the court's and the family's questions?"

The inquest is due to conclude today.

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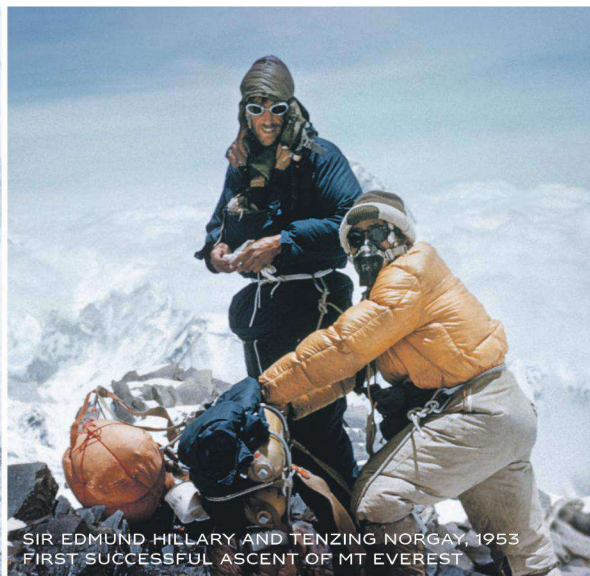
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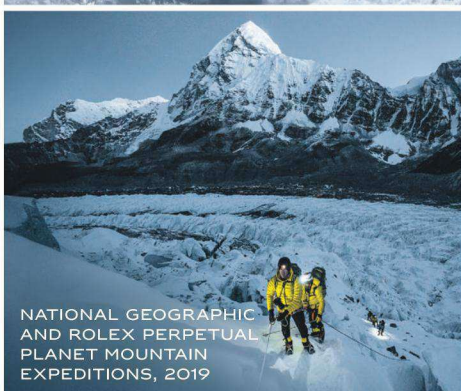
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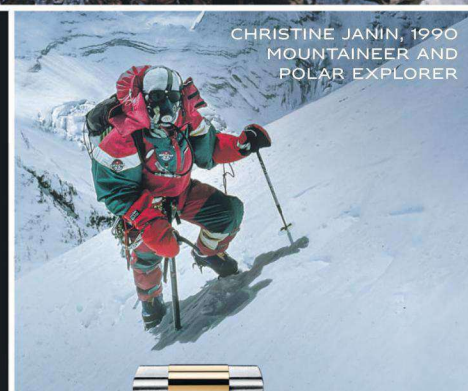
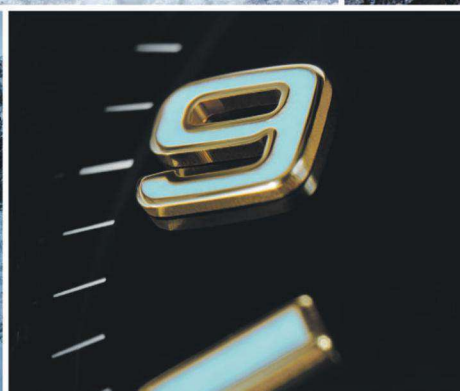




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## Camels on canals at Max Mara show

**T**he Princess of Wales has one, so does Victoria Beckham. The camel coat has become as much of a wardrobe staple as a good pair of jeans, and the world's most photographed women know that Max Mara does them best (Harriet Walker writes).

The Briton in charge of the luxury Italian fashion house has already given the world the word "camelocracy", in reference to its caramel-clad clientele. For the label's resort show on Tuesday night, Ian Griffiths, the creative director of Max Mara, pivoted to "canalocracy" instead, with a collection inspired by, and presented in, Venice.

"This was the birthplace of luxury, 700 years ago, at the time of Marco Polo," Griffiths said backstage. "The desire for high-quality materials and workmanship is a human instinct that has always been with us."

Cashmere coats, silk blouses and classic Hepburn trousers — all in understated shades of black, tan and plum — were paraded down a catwalk set along a cloistered balcony of the 14th-century Doge's Palace. This collection had the polish the brand is known for, but with nods to the gothic riches of the city's Renaissance heyday.

Poet sleeves and strapless bodice gowns, and those signature camel coats re-spun as draped capes — this was timeless minimalism meets *Arnolfini Portrait*.

Baroque and chintzy prints clashed with cable-knit sweaters, and opera coats contrasted

with fuzzy teddy jackets.

Resort collections are big business for designer brands because they are stocked in the shops for a longer period than summer or autumn capsules. Yet Venice, with its tourism issues and environmental concerns, is a symbol of the dangers of over-consumption.

"We're trying to speak to a younger fast-fashion consumer as well," Griffiths said. "This might cost more than she's used to, but there's a quality too — a more classic product."



Fuzzy teddy coats and understated shades were on show amid the gothic riches of Venice

## RAF aircrew raised fears over helicopter fumes 20 years ago

Larisa Brown Defence Editor

British troops flying on RAF Sea King search-and-rescue helicopters raised their "genuine concern" about exhaust inhalation with investigators more than 20 years ago, it can be disclosed.

In June 2000 a flight lieutenant in a squadron responsible for testing helicopters wrote to senior personnel about how rear crew in 22 Squadron were "constantly exposed" to exhaust gases. Crew were not issued with protective equipment, nor were the helicopters modified to reduce risk, lawyers and families claim. Sea Kings went on to fly in Iraq and Afghanistan and were in service until 2018.

The Times has previously disclosed how more than 100 serving and former pilots and aircrew are suing the Ministry of Defence after being diagnosed with cancer, which they believe is a result of toxic fumes on Sea Kings, Wessex helicopters, Chinooks and others. Five people have received payouts.

Some of those affected have since died. Lawyers have noted that former service personnel have been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, multiple myeloma, throat cancer and testicular cancer at young ages.

Clare Macnaughton, whose husband, Kai, died three weeks after being diagnosed with angiosarcoma, a rare form of blood vessel cancer, while still in the RAF, said: "It's negligent, irresponsible and ludicrous that 24 years later not a single risk-mitigating measure has been put in place. Aircrew have been continually denied the right to know they are being exposed to carcin-

ogenic toxins in their workplace. It's tantamount to murder." Her husband flew thousands of hours in helicopters.

The 2000 report by the Rotary Wing Operational Evaluation and Training Unit on "rear crew concerns" found "considerable dismay" at the length of time it was taking to establish the risk after inconclusive previous tests. It also referred to a relevant test in the 1980s, the result of which was never found.

The document highlighted that decision-makers feared the problem could apply to "most helo operations at low speeds with open cabin doors". The implications meant that it was considered to be a problem for the MoD as a whole.

Other documents released under freedom of information requests found that experts warned in 1999 that the exhaust gases were harmful and that "everything practical" should be done to reduce exposure. The report called for gases to be deflected from the cabin.

A report by the Institute of Health on a preliminary survey to assess exposure to Sea King exhausts found rear aircrew were being exposed to gases. But the survey failed to indicate with "any accuracy the actual level due to the effects of high wind speeds caused by the downwash from the rotor blades".

Louisa Donaghy, a senior associate at Hugh James solicitors, said: "Hugh James is speaking to approximately 100 individuals with concerns. We strongly advise anyone who believes they may have been exposed to carcinogenic fumes to seek medical advice and to be informed about their legal options."

The Ministry of Defence was approached for comment.

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# Student housing puts historic club on sticky wicket

Laurence Sleanor

For 175 years, Fenner's has been the home ground of Cambridge University Cricket Club, with WG Grace, Don Bradman and Mike Atherton all taking guard on its fine batting surface.

But residents say cricket there could be at risk if a three-storey accommodation block next to the pitch is approved.

Last month, Sir Laurie Bristow, president of Hughes Hall College and former British ambassador to Russia, wrote to residents living near the city centre site, informing them his college was in the final stages of purchasing a plot of land from the cricket club.

Although the letter said cricket would continue, the plans proposed classrooms and accommodation for about 100 students that would place a building close to the boundary rope. The plot of about one acre is described by residents as a "precious green lung in a dense urban area" and is declared a protected open space by the council.

Residents fear this could spell the end of cricket at Fenner's. "It's pretty obvious they are buying it to restrict access further," said Lionel Sheffield, chair of the Protect Fenner's Action Group.

"I'm despairing. Our houses have enjoyed the peace and tranquillity of the ground behind us. The idea of having a student block behind is pretty depressing, plus you've got the bigger picture of the threat to cricket and the loss of protected open space in Cambridge."

Despite high demand, he said only 25 games are played on the pitch each year and he believes authorities are happy to let this dwindle: "You can see the argument in five or ten years of them saying, 'Let's use somewhere else for cricket.'"

"I do think it is wrong and a great shame," said Steve James, Hughes Hall alumnus and former England Test cricketer. "The ground has changed a lot since I was there but it will just create a further feeling of being hemmed in."

Fenner's hosted its opening first-class match in 1848. With Cambridge University providing a strong opposition, international teams would regularly play at Fenner's, including Bradman and Australia, and a West Indies XI featuring the fast bowler Ian Bishop.

Grace, known as the "father of the game", often played there for Gloucestershire over his 44-season career.

"He would have been appalled by what Hughes Hall is proposing," said



Fenner's has hosted cricket, including the Free Foresters, right, since 1848. Residents want the field to be protected



Richard Tomlinson, author of *Amazing Grace*, a 2015 biography of the batsman.

"When he was playing with the students he would have seen this as one of the storied grounds of England. The point I would make, and Grace would agree with, the danger here is it is going to set a precedent. As soon as you start infringing on land that has been dedi-

cated for a particular purpose for so long, in a city with a shortage of green space, then you've got real problems."

The site earmarked for the building is used to house the pitch covers, as a space for outdoor nets and is often used by the community for charity events. During the warmer months many gather to have picnics and watch the cricket.

In a statement, Hughes Hall said: "The college intends to acquire part of the land along the edge of Fenner's that will enable us to improve our facilities including much-needed student accommodation, teaching and communal spaces. This land is not part of the cricket field itself and there will be no impact on sport at Fenner's."

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# Swifties' stadium stomping picked up by seismologists

Tom Whipple Science Editor

Taylor Swift gave fair warning in her hit song *Shake It Off*: "Baby, I'm just gonna shake, shake, shake, shake, shake."

Scientists can now confirm that the American pop star's fans have followed her advice with seismic readings recorded by the British Geological Survey (BGS). Over three nights from last Friday to Sunday, Swift sang for 220,000 fans at Murrayfield, Edinburgh. And they made the earth move.

The stadium rocked so hard that seismologists picked up the tremors 6km away. A Swift fan among the geologists even helped the team identify which songs provoked the biggest reaction.

The findings were possible because of an unusual conjunction. Swift's carefully choreographed performance was identical each night, allowing the scientists to overlay successive evenings and tease out the Swift rhythms from the background Edinburgh noise.

Sophie Butcher, an Edinburgh volcanologist, was in the audience one night. "The monitoring team was looking through the data on Monday and there

was a really clear signal," she said. "So an email landed in my inbox and asked, 'You're a seismologist and you're a Swiftie. Could you have a crack at matching up which songs could have caused this signal?'"

Along with *Shake It Off*, Butcher said she saw clear signals from the dancing to *Cruel Summer* and the four-minute applause to *Champagne Problems*. The biggest seismic spike came with *Ready For It*, Swift's 2017 hit.

Butcher said the results were not a surprise. She added: "If you can imagine, you have 73,000 people in one concentrated place — jumping, clapping, dancing."

"As well as that, there's a big bass sound system. All of that energy travels through the ground."

Swift is not the first star to provoke a seismic reaction from fans. Geologists in Barcelona found they could decode the results of games through the reactions when Lionel Messi scored and the stadium jumped as one.

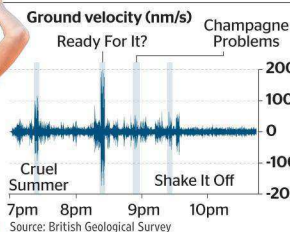
Swift has moved on in her UK tour and was spotted in London on Tuesday enjoying a night out with Kate Moss,

Stella McCartney, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Cara Delevingne, Chrissie Hynde, Lena Dunham and a lone man, the Irish actor Andrew Scott.

The Edinburgh audience may have been disappointed that despite their fervent appreciation of Swift, the BGS could not give the concert a formal position on the earthquake magnitude scale. They will have to be



## Songs that made earth move



Taylor Swift attracted the strongest crowd response with *Ready For It*

satisfied, however, with the knowledge that according to BGS estimates the maximum amplitude of movement attributable to Swift's performance amounted to 23 nanometres — a relatively modest figure.

Even so, Butcher said that this crowd movement was quite something.

She added: "The fact you're able to record the activity of 73,000 people jumping and dancing to their favourite songs, at such a great distance, is really impressive."

She suggested it proved her suspicion that Scottish Swifties were the best. She added: "This has cemented their reputation for enthusiasm."

## TMS

diary@thetimes.co.uk | @timesdiary

### Tory big hitter still punching

Sir David Davis is fighting his tenth parliamentary election. This time, it looks as if the election is fighting back. The former Brexit secretary showed up for the Paul Foot Award at Bafta on Tuesday night wearing a brace on his right hand. "Were you bitten by a rottweiler while out leafleting?" asked my Diary elf. "No, I did it boxing," replied Davis, below. The 75-year-old Conservative then insisted that the injury had been caused by his overenthusiasm for whacking a punchbag in the gym, rather than him emulating John Prescott in 2001 and finding a new way to connect with voters.

When canvassing in an election, honesty is essential — up to a point. Matthew Parris tells me that he once went door-knocking in Wandsworth with a senior Tory who was told by an elderly lady that she had heard that if Labour got in, old people would be forced into care homes. "I must be honest, Madam," this British George Washington replied. "It's not actually in their manifesto. But it is just the kind of thing they would do."

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

After working for some time with Alan Bates to expose the IT and management failings at the Post Office, the Private Eye editor Ian Hislop thought it only fair that he should buy the sub-postmasters' champion a slap-up lunch at a private members' club. He found Bates to be admirably blunt-talking and unimpressed by poshness. Hislop said that after a few forks, Bates told him that it was "better than the muck we've had in other establishments". Hislop wondered where the catering wasn't up to scratch. "The House of Lords," Bates replied.



Can the Post Office be trusted to deliver postal votes in time for July 4? A colleague told me yesterday that she has just received a Christmas card that was posted and franked in November, having taken more than six months to do seven miles from Kingston to Tooting.

#### LIVING THE DREAM

Like a bout of norovirus, Iain Dale's dalliance with being a parliamentary candidate soon passed through him. Dale decided to return to broadcasting after a recording emerged of him being less than flattering about Tunbridge Wells, where he had hoped to stand. He is worried, however, that he won't get another chance, telling his LBC colleague Ian Payne that he once visited a website that claims to be able to predict your lifespan and was told that he will die in three years. This baffled Payne. "You've got three years to go and were still planning to be an MP?" he asked. Dale replied that he fancied the idea of causing a by-election.

Stephen Fry had to learn Polish for his latest film, *Treasure*, but there are limits to what he is prepared to put himself through for a role. "I've read about things that actors I admire do that I will never do," he tells Radio Times. Such as? "Lose staggering amounts of weight."

#### SKY WAS THE LIMIT

Some good has come out of Rishi Sunak telling ITV that his parents chose sending him to Winchester over having satellite telly. James Barisic has set up a crowdfunder on Just Giving to raise money to buy Sunak a Sky subscription on July 5. As the shanty goes: "You shall have a dishy for a little Rishi when the vote comes in." If the PM doesn't want it, the money will all go to the foodbank charity The Trussell Trust. By last night, more than £1,700 had been donated.

PATRICK KIDD

### A bench.

You can find one in just about every park, bus stop and train platform in the UK. They are as functional as they are familiar, but behind their simple design lies something more. An invitation to talk. After all, a bench is made for sharing and when people come together on a bench, it becomes an opportunity for a conversation.

Today, there's a lot to talk about: energy costs, climate change, the cost of living and of course, the weather. But the one thing no one seems to be talking about is living longer and what that means for retirement. As 1 in 3 children born today have a good chance of living to 100, we need to ask ourselves, are we ready?

With a longer life comes a lot more things to think about. Over half of us aren't confident we can afford to retire by 65. It's time we started talking about that. We need to talk about it.

Let's talk about why almost 18 million people don't think they can save for the retirement they want. Let's talk about how more than 750,000 people over 50 are not working but would like to. Let's talk about the 7 million retirees who expect to rely on financial support from a partner, family or friends. It's time we started having these conversations.

Let's talk about savings.

Let's talk about pensions.

Let's talk about retirement.

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# Holiday drowning girl 'had seizure'

Mario Ledwith

A 13-year-old schoolgirl who drowned in a resort pool while on a family holiday had suffered a suspected seizure, an inquest has heard.

Anna Beaumont, from Cardiff, had been staying with her family at the Discovery Cove resort in Orlando, Florida, when the incident occurred on May 28.

An inquest in Pontypridd, south Wales, heard how the teenager's father was alerted by a lifeguard's whistle at



Anna Beaumont, 13, had been on holiday in Orlando, Florida

drowning and seizure disorder. Patricia Morgan, the area coroner for South Wales Central, said a date would be set for a full inquest once further investigations into the circumstances around Anna's death and her past medical history had been undertaken.

"I wish to take this opportunity to express my condolences to Anna's family at this sad time," she said.

In a statement, her family said: "Anna was a beautiful soul who has been taken from us in a tragic accident.

"We are devastated ... but she will never be forgotten. We would like to thank the emergency response teams and hospital staff in Orlando who tried so hard to save Anna's life."

Anna was a keen athlete who took part in a charity cycle ride during the coronavirus lockdowns, having been inspired by her father, who is also a triathlon trainer. Having competed in an Ironkids event in 2017, Anna challenged herself in 2020 to ride the cycling leg of an adult Ironman competition in 20 days on her indoor training bike. She raised more than £900 for the Noah's Ark Children's Hospital in Cardiff, completing the task in 16 days, spending 13 and a half hours on her bike.

Andrew Williams, the head teacher at Anna's school, Radyr Comprehensive, said: "Anna was a cherished member of our school family, and her absence will be profoundly felt by pupils, staff and all who had the privilege of knowing her."

the resort, which is a sister park to SeaWorld Orlando, at around 10.30am.

Pete Beaumont, a company director, realised that his daughter was in trouble and saw lifeguards attempting to resuscitate her. Anna was taken to Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children in a critical condition but died three days later.

Anna was in Florida with her father and mother, Elizabeth, an engineer at Cardiff University, and her younger brother, Jake.

The court heard that a post-mortem examination was carried out at the hospital and the cause of death was given as



Royal approval The Queen was greeted by Alan Titchmarsh when she arrived at the Gardening Bohemia exhibition at The Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace

## FA funding prosecution of racist trolls

Matt Lawton Blankenhain

The Football Association is funding the prosecution of individuals who abuse England footballers on social media.

Marcus Rashford, Bukayo Saka and Jadon Sancho were all victims of racist trolling after missing penalties for England in the European Championship final at Wembley in July 2021.

Since then, the UK Football Policing Unit has worked with social media companies to gain faster access to data that enables them to pursue offenders. In March the police visited England players at their St George's Park base to explain how they would provide more protection for the upcoming European Championship in Germany.

But yesterday Mark Bullingham, the FA chief executive, revealed that the governing body had also made a contribution to the police of £25,000 towards the costs of these cases.

"We obviously talk to the players about this all the time, but now we are doing things differently," he said. "In the past, what we did was put together the data — effectively an evidence pack — to give to the police to prosecute."

"This time we have gone a stage further, where we are a unit that will then prosecute. What we don't want to do is create a pack that we then give to the police for them to prosecute, but they don't have the resource to actually take that forward."

Football, pages 66-70

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Photo © Kerry Harrison



# We can't find British summer, says Met Office

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor  
Tom Whipple Science Editor

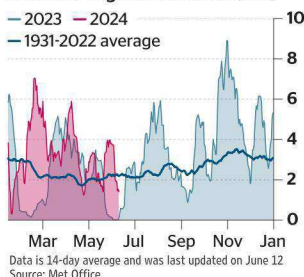
If you are struggling to locate the British summer, take comfort that the Met Office is having trouble, too.

It is not for want of trying, according to Alex Deakin, a meteorologist. The problem is, even looking as far ahead as Glastonbury at the end of the month, "we can't find summer for the UK".

On June 11 last year, London recorded 32C heat. On Tuesday it was 16C.

## Water, water everywhere

### Rainfall in England and Wales (mm)



Last June was the warmest on record, with an average temperature of 15.8C. Despite some sunshine, there has been a chilly start to this year's meteorological summer, with temperatures below average.

Rebekah Sherwin, deputy chief meteorologist at the Met Office, said: "The forecast suggests no strong signal for temperatures to get above average."

Overnight temperatures have been particularly cool, which is bad news for gardeners trying to grow tomatoes. Worse, the Royal Horticultural Society thinks it may be a bumper year for slugs.

Hayley Jones, an entomologist at the RHS, said: "A cooler than usual June has left little room for gardens to dry out — favourable conditions for these much-maligned molluscs."

It is not going to get better soon: to-day people in towns and cities will wake to temperatures of 7C to 8C, while in some rural areas it will barely reach 2C. "This week it is getting warmer, it just isn't getting warm. We're going from well below average to somewhere closer to average," Deakin said.

Rainfall for the UK has been below average for June so far, but it is expected to return to more normal levels soon. Showers are forecast this weekend across much of the country.

The reason it feels so chilly is the jet stream, a vast ribbon of winds that meander across the Atlantic like a river. By this time of year the jet stream should be off the north of Britain, ushering in warmer westerly winds. Instead it is stuck over the south of the country, dragging down cold air from the Arctic.

In the coming days the jet stream is expected to shift so we get more normal westerly winds, Dr Rob Thompson of the University of Reading's department of meteorology said. "But the forecasts aren't for a sudden massive increase in temperatures. We're not suddenly going to be in the 30s — we're just looking to return to normal."

There have been 130 ground frosts so far this month, compared with 143 for the whole of last June. However, June 2015 had 600.

It is cold compared with last year, but not strikingly so. "It's not exceptional: something comparable did happen just four Junes ago," Deakin said.

Thompson agreed. "What we're seeing isn't unusual, it's completely normal," he said. One reason it seems odd may be because many Britons have grown accustomed to the hotter, drier summers global warming brings.

"We expect climate change these days. We expect things to be warmer. It doesn't mean we won't get a week or two of cold every now and again. Extreme heatwaves are going to be hotter but we will still have cold starts to June."

**Campaign to save our summer,**  
leading article, page 27  
Weather, p57



**Shampoo and finish** The farmer Nicola Wood gives Kitty, one of her flock of Valais blacknose sheep at Prendwick Farm in Northumberland, a good scrub before her appearance at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh at the end of next week

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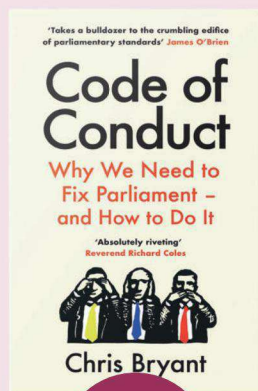
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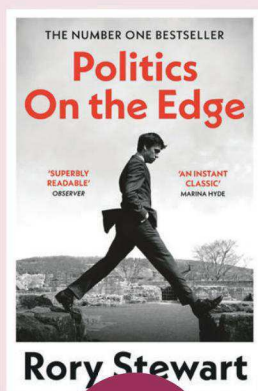
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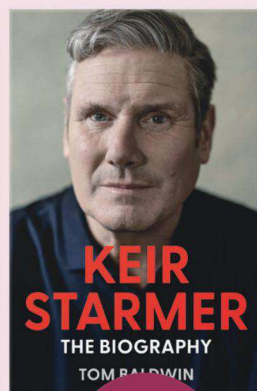




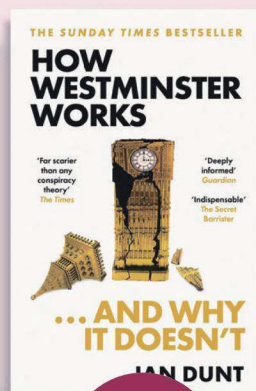
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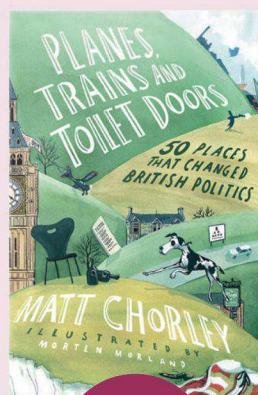
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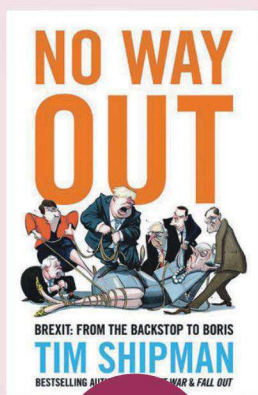
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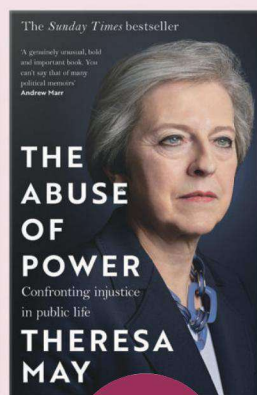
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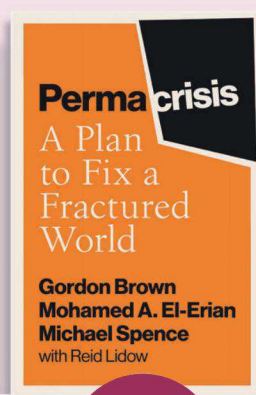
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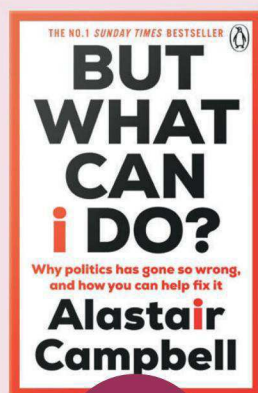
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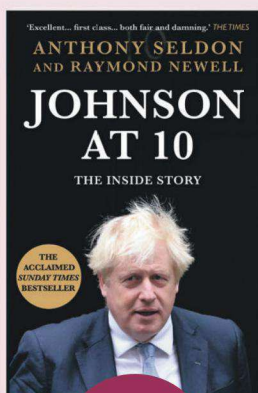
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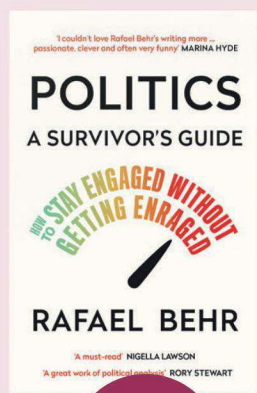
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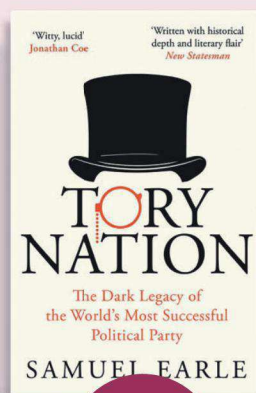
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# Girl, 5, told her teachers: 'Mum is on the floor'

Shayma Bakht

Wearing a green tulle princess dress and a heart-shaped tiara, five-year-old Poppy Davies set off for school alone to find help for her collapsed mother — and in the process saved her from the UK's "silent killer".

Poppy had been playing in the costume the previous night at their home in Caerphilly, Wales, when her mother, Leisha Davies, 35, fell to the floor unconscious after slipping into life-threatening septic shock.

Poppy stayed by her mother's side for the night of January 18-19 before putting on wellies in the morning, heading to class and informing teachers of the emergency. She said: "Mummy's on the floor and I can't wake her up."

Teachers rushed to the house and placed Leisha, who is a mental health nurse, in the recovery position before calling the emergency services. As the

35-year-old was airlifted to a nearby hospital, the teachers changed Poppy's clothes and took her back to school.

Leisha had suffered septic shock just weeks after surgery to correct a twisted bowel. Doctors said upon her arrival that her lungs were failing, with one working at just 15 per cent of capacity.

Sepsis, often referred to as a "silent killer", occurs after an infection causes blood poisoning, which in turn creates an exaggerated immune response where the body begins to attack its own organs. About 245,000 people develop sepsis in the UK each year and 52,000 die, according to the UK Sepsis Trust.

The mother of two, who is still recovering, was put in an induced coma for three weeks. She said that her daughter's quick thinking saved her life: "I was incredibly proud of her. I hadn't seen her for a month because of all this going on but when she did come and see me I absolutely broke down."

She described the moment she woke up as "really emotional".

"I thought to myself, [Poppy] looks so grown-up and I felt like I had missed out on so much. But I was thankful I was here, that my daughter had a mum and my mum had a daughter."

"I always say, 'You're my hero, you saved mummy's life.' She liked it when I said that and the nurses bought her a cape, which was lovely."

Leisha recalled becoming progressively unwell in the weeks after her surgery but she missed the signs of sepsis, which include a high temperature, chills, a fast heartbeat and rapid breathing. Her feet are due to be amputated after becoming necrotic. Doctors initially believed she would need both of her legs amputated around the knee.

She wants her experience to raise awareness of sepsis. "If anybody feels unwell, get it sorted," she said.

"I never thought sepsis was bad, I thought it was just an infection — but septic shock is life-threatening and a lot of people don't recover from it."

Former MP on life after sepsis, *Times2*



Poppy Davies with her parents, Ryan and Leisha. She made her way to school in a princess dress and tiara after her mother slipped into septic shock and collapsed at home the night before



Les Dennis as Malvolio in a *Twelfth Night* that is set in the pop music industry with Dennis as a buffoonish tour manager

## Les Dennis shines in romp of a revamp

Theatre Anya Ryan

**Twelfth Night**  
Shakespeare North  
Playhouse, Merseyside  
(150 min)  
★★★★☆

"If music be the food of love, play on" — of course, we've heard the Bard's illustrious words before. But never have they been so pertinent. In Jimmy Fairhurst's riotous production of *Twelfth Night* Shakespeare's joyous comedy has a music industry revamp as Les Dennis takes the helm as an utterly buffoonish Malvolio, Olivia's tour manager. Song and dance garnishes each scene and the crowd goes wild for it: the audience at Shakespeare North Playhouse are just as raucous as the masses at a gig.

This Illyria is an arena and Orsino and Olivia are renowned pop stars. The twins, Viola and Sebastian, are separated during a night out gone wrong with pumping music and the

dizzying head spin of a drug overdose. What follows is still Shakespeare's classic story of deception and mistaken identity, but Fairhurst flings it into the here and now.

It is a fitting, festival-like setting complete with fluorescent strobe lights and pulsating club scenes. Much of the humour comes from leaning into the stereotypes of this world. Toby Belch (a Jack Whitehall-inspired Jack Brown) and Andrew Aguecheek (Reuben Johnson, who doubles as Orsino) wear bucket hats, gilets and boat shoes, styled as Arctic Monkeys-loving rave heads. Together, they squabble like little boys in the sharpest RP tones while indulging in booze and mischief. The set by Good Teeth is a playground for actors and audience alike — punters are encouraged to clap along, with some even pushed to brave the stage and join the dance party.

Even among all the hysteria the plight of Malvolio remains front and centre. Dennis initially makes Shakespeare's fool an understated, stiff protector and master of the

arena's backstage. When he clicks his fingers the crew hurry to make sure his requests are seen to. His dedication to Olivia is unwavering and kind, which makes his fall from grace as violent as it is comic. Wearing chains and thick black eyeliner as well as the required yellow stockings, he exudes a tragic eagerness to please. In total darkness and at the pit of his despair, he sings an unaccompanied version of Nat King Cole's *Smile* — his voice trembles in the knowledge of everything he has lost, and it stings.

It is as wild as you'd hope a production of *Twelfth Night* would be, packed full of laughs and troublemaking. But it is not without emotional tug. As the twins find each other again, holding one another in a heartfelt embrace, the theatre swells with their joy.

Thanks to Fairhurst, this is Shakespeare as it should be — made for today but not forgetting its yesterday. Play on, indeed!  
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PM may have to be open  
over Dunkirk strategy

Iain Martin

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# Comment

## Labour won't turn from tough road ahead

In 1997 the task was to put a foot on the economic accelerator, this time Starmer will have to restart the whole engine

Peter  
Mandelson



Having participated in the compilation and selling of three Labour election manifestos in my time — 1987, 1997 and 2010 — I would rate 2024's as the hardest to construct.

In the 1997 election that swept Tony Blair and New Labour to power our task was, broadly, to put our foot down on the economic accelerator. Now Sir Keir Starmer and his colleagues have to restart the whole engine. At the end of our time in government, we had succeeded in preventing the rest of the economy following the banks over a cliff after the global financial crisis. We were on the long, painful journey to restoring confidence after the battering we took.

Britain is now in a very different situation, partly because of the residual impact of the global financial crisis but also because of the costs of Covid, the effects of the Ukraine war and, above all, because of the permanent handicap of Brexit and the consequences of Liz Truss's brief period in office in continuing high interest rates and mortgages.

As a result, the UK has accumulated serious structural weaknesses, made worse by the decimation of capital spending over many years. Labour's manifesto will not signal a return to austerity, yet the scope for immediate spending pledges is limited. Labour has made painstaking efforts to explain how each of its first steps will be financed. The question, though, with economic and productivity growth hovering on zero, business investment

desperately low, public services deeply stressed and the international backdrop threatening, is how do we return to growth to arrest the present cycle of decline?

The Conservatives are prioritising substantial tax cuts as their solution, with the vaguest explanations of how they could be afforded without devastating cuts to pensions or social security or further spending reductions in essential public services. Most economists will see this as at best irrelevant and at worst dangerous, were it to amount to a repeat of Truss — a loss of confidence in financial markets and continuing high interest rates.

In contrast, the Labour manifesto rests on a framework of stability, investment and reform. Stability is crucial to restoring the faith of investors and debt markets that a sensible plan is being formed to strengthen the foundations of the economy and to prevent further

Tax cuts will neither  
repair nor rebuild what  
doesn't work in Britain

fragmentation of society. Tax cuts will neither repair nor rebuild let alone reform what does not work in Britain today.

But how can Starmer, in his manifesto, persuade voters that Labour offers more than stability?

First, it goes without saying that when Labour says that on entering government "nothing in our plans requires any additional tax to be increased" it has to mean it. In her first months as chancellor I expect Rachel Reeves to launch a comprehensive spending review to make some hard choices and deliver Labour's priorities, forming the basis

for a credible fiscal plan to bring current revenues and spending, step by step, into balance.

This is an essential foundation for the expansion of public and private investment that a return to growth requires. Much of the additional public investment Labour foresees will be used to attract private investment into projects, for example as part of our green energy plan, where, to mitigate risk, government and business both need to have "skin in the game".

Second, in addition to financial stability, a convincing plan for growth is needed. Starmer has implied that the answer to growth lies in decentralisation of government, with power and resources transferred out of Whitehall. It is true that political power in England is notoriously concentrated at the centre. The key to growth is the mobilisation of all our resources and talents, notably but not only the science base in our research-intensive universities and the effective incorporation of national innovation, industrial and energy strategies with the drive of directly elected mayors and combined authorities. When investors and markets see every level of government working coherently to a clear plan, money will start flowing back into Britain.

Third, in the case of public services, the watchword has to be reform. The needs of users and consumers should be placed before the interests of producers. Of course Labour is right to say there have been abuses of public sector outsourcing by unscrupulous contractors or that, in the private sector, workers are sometimes treated in a cavalier way. But alongside greater security and pay for all, major technology solutions are needed in private and public sectors

JEFF MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES



Rachel Reeves is likely to launch a comprehensive spending review

alike, requiring adaptation to change.

Fourth, in a less stable and secure world, defence needs to be modernised. No branch of the UK military has been untouched by the continuous retrenchment of the past decade. During this time new cyber and AI-assisted forms of hybrid warfare have emerged. Across the services, British industrial and military capabilities should now catch up, planned through a strategic defence review — as we did on taking office in 1997.

Fifth, the twin pillars of UK trade and security — the EU and the US — no longer remain as they were. Britain needs to reaffirm its place in the world, sustaining vital sources of trade and crucial intelligence and security networks, rebuilding Europe and Nato's defensive credibility against Putin's Russia and

establishing a sensible common position on China. To do this, Britain has to restore trust and mutual respect in Europe and identify opportunities to co-operate with the US as "not Europe".

And sixth, while strapped for resources in the short term, the public nonetheless want to know that a new government has what it takes to make big decisions about the future, that "mission government" is an iron discipline not a slogan. This is not going to come simply from a re-energised system of cabinet committees and Whitehall "write rounds". Data and its collection and analysis have moved to the heart of better administration and new ways of working in government should reflect this.

When Labour last came into government in 1997 the inheritance was so different. Economic productivity was rising. Public services required fresh investment and a new culture of working, not literal rebuilding. Climate action was being debated, not disputed. Both the EU and US were firm trade and foreign policy multipliers for Britain. Smartphones and tablets had not been invented, let alone taken over young people's lives. And migration, legal and illegal, had not become the touchstone issue it is today.

It was a very different world. Twenty-seven years later it looks again as if the privilege to serve is passing to Labour. The conditions are worse but the technological and other opportunities for change and improvement are greater. Labour's team should be excited as well as daunted.

You can hear the How to Win an Election podcast, with Peter Mandelson, Daniel Finkelstein, Polly Mackenzie and Matt Chorley, at [thetimes.com/podcasts](https://www.thetimes.com/podcasts)

## How Trump will win

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## Comment

# Apathy in the UK isn't so bad for democracy

Don't look down on the less well informed: our electoral system wouldn't work without them

James  
Marriott



@J\_AMESMARRIOTT

The public, I think, can be forgiven its indifference. On Monday night, television viewers were confronted with a choice between the rustic edification of *Springwatch* and the dreary spectacle of a tired and peevish Rishi Sunak facing down Nick Robinson on BBC1. *Springwatch* was more popular.

This is an unappealing election and you sometimes get the feeling that almost nobody is tuning in. The first leaders' debate was watched by two million fewer people than in 2019. The furore over D-Day — which swelled pundits to a full week of furious condemnation — has scarcely troubled the polls. Very often, none of the ten most-read stories on the BBC news website has anything to do with the election. Psephologists predict turnout will be low.

Apathy is traditionally regarded as a great democratic sin. A democracy requires voters who are "engaged" and "informed". Launching himself on a weary nation a couple of weeks ago, Nigel Farage deplored the "zoned out" electorate as a symptom of the failure of mainstream politics and promised to "ginger things up". But the more I see of politics, the more doubtful I am about the unalloyed virtues of passionate political engagement.

I have been following the election

with, I suspect, more avidity than most of my fellow countrymen (it is, after all, a professional obligation) but I often wonder how much good it is doing me. I have consumed some policy proposals but also vast quantities of trivia and nonsense: gaffes, pseudo-scandals, meaningless PR "wins". I know about Sunak's visit to the Titanic dockyard; I could write a thesis on Sir Keir Starmer's childhood; I can list all of Sir Ed Davey's stunts. It has been richly entertaining. I doubt much of it has made me a more competent voter.

The writer Gurwinder Bhogal coined the useful term "intellectual obesity" to describe our modern susceptibility to what he calls "junk

Today, information is the equivalent of an all-night fast food joint

info". Bhogal cites a 2019 study by researchers at University of California, Berkeley, which found that new information acts on the brain's dopamine receptors in a similar way to food. In the information-scarce environments of the past, a hunger for new facts was an advantage. Not so in our digital present, which is the information equivalent of an all-night fast food joint.

Junk info, Bhogal argues, isn't necessarily wrong or even biased, just irrelevant: an endless, bloating, unfilling sugar rush that renders us unable to think, reflect or see the bigger picture. "Normative dissociation" describes the deleterious effect of social media scrolling on our

capacity to recall and process information. As a society we have yet to get used to the idea that not all information is useful or good.

In fact, it is an established paradox of political science that well-informed citizens are often less "rational" political actors than their disengaged peers. Countless studies have shown that the possession of more information doesn't make voters better at making dispassionate political judgments; they simply marshal more and more facts against their opponents, a cognitive bias known as the "sophistication effect".

The most informed citizens are also generally the most partisan — nobody absorbs more information or is more angry about it than a Twitter addict. Anybody who imagines that information is a cure for partisanship should follow some political journalists on social media.

By contrast John Zaller, an expert in public opinion at the University of California, Los Angeles, found that disengaged voters are "more apt to reward incumbents who preside over strong national economies and punish those who do not". They are also "more reactive" to the candidates' "ideological shifts". These voters respond to the few facts that reach them, not to irrelevant babble.

Interviewing students at the University of Warwick recently I noticed that the most "engaged" undergraduates were more likely to subject me to hectoring rants filled with random anecdotes and statistics. The less-informed students (who I was surprised to find I preferred) tended to be more humble and less partisan. Almost all of them

apologised and said that they needed to "read more" or do more "research" before making their minds up.

It is worth clarifying that this is not an argument in favour of ignorance or zoning out. Democracy obviously requires passionate voters capable of making sophisticated arguments for different positions. People need to go on protests, obsess over the news and debate with one another at the pub. My point is that these are not necessarily the most useful and virtuous members of our political system. More engagement and more information are not democratic cure-alls.

The economist Joseph Schumpeter argued in his book *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* that the very existence of democracy depends on a degree of apathy. Politics cannot be the most important thing in most people's lives. When absolutely everyone cares about politics the result is anarchy (recall the chaos of the Brexit years). Above all, Schumpeter believed, it is crucial that nobody minds so deeply about politics that the defeat of their side becomes intolerable — when that happens the system is finished. In the United States a few highly engaged and highly disappointed voters stormed the Capitol and attempted an insurrection. I'd take apathy any day.

Those of us who pride ourselves on being well informed should remember that information isn't automatically a virtue. It varies in quality and when we acquire more of it we also acquire cognitive biases. Above all, we might remind ourselves not to look down on the less well informed — democracy might not work without them.



## Ending recycling confusion will help us clean up our act

Mark Hedges

We are a mucky nation. The streets, verges and rivers are draped with a vile confetti of fast-food wrappers and drinks containers — a disgusting eight billion receptacles are dropped a year (75 per cent of all the litter on our roads and waterways). Yet simple solutions championed by Keep Britain Tidy, such as more water fountains and deposit-return schemes on plastic, aluminium and glass containers, are ignored or procrastinated over, even when they have been successful in other countries.

Drive down a pretty country lane and you will see that fly-tipping is rife, too, especially now that most councils insist you book before visiting your local tip. Sadly, many can't be bothered to go, making the countryside the perfect place in which to dump their detritus. Many of our rivers are choked with pollutants. We British live among filth, which is why my magazine, *Country Life*, is launching its inaugural green manifesto this week.

Many of us do our best and take our litter home but that's when the next challenge begins. Although the government's 2021 Environment Act aims to streamline household recycling by 2026, the system is still a minefield. Multiple-choice questions are not only for GCSE students but for all of us trying to work out what to put in what bin and which bin needs putting out each week. Every council seems to have different rules. When I lived in London there were four bins; in Hampshire, there are two. Green is for waste, grey for recycling — which doesn't make sense.

For everyone who washes and sorts their yoghurt pots and milk containers into a different tub from the loo roll tubes, another will leave a plastic bag containing dog mess hanging from a tree. The shameful truth is that we recycle less than 50 per cent of our rubbish. In 2018, 222.2 million tonnes were incinerated, ended up in landfill or were sent abroad to places such as China or Malaysia.

Yet there has been great success in eliminating free plastic bags at supermarkets. The message was clear: you pay for plastic. We choose not to. In 2014 we used 7.6 billion plastic bags, by 2022-23 the number had fallen to 406 million.

We can change our habits, but not while this confusion exists. The damage done also means that our discarded waste ends up inside cows and birds, with fatal consequences — shamefully, every creature from seals to fish washed up on a British shore has plastic in its stomach.

Simplifying recycling would not only be far more efficient and effective, it would make our country better for wildlife, as well as a far happier and cleaner place to live.

Mark Hedges is editor in chief of *Country Life* magazine

## Janice Turner Notebook

### Need to film misfortune has become a nasty virus

Driving back from Suffolk the traffic thickens, hazard lights flash, both lanes pull up fast and my sat-nav shows three miles of red road ahead. From a winking blue light I gather there's an accident and I feel that same queasy mix of horror and selfishness as when all trains are cancelled due to a body on the line. "How sad" but also "damn it, I'll be stuck for hours".

We inch forward and eventually I turn off before the crash. But back home I read that a man died having come off his motorbike and I think of him hitting the road, the swerving vehicles, his family being told — all of it unfolding as I sulkily put on my third podcast and worry about needing to pee.

Then another story pops up, that a driver who passed the accident filmed the man dying or already dead and posted it online. What went through his head? Going viral?

Rubbernecking is now content-making. Bruegel's *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* depicts the indifference of spectators to misfortune. As Auden put it in *Musée des Beaux Arts*, "The ploughman may/ Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry/ But for him it was not an important failure." Now he'd have dropped his horse's reins to film the falling boy on his phone.

### Orwell every time

The excellent BBC radio series *Orwell vs Kafka*, by Ian Hislop and my friend Helen Lewis, compares the legacies of the world's most famous dystopians. An academic who grew up in the Soviet Union recalls her friends sharing samizdat copies of 1984 and being amazed by Orwell's uncanny knowledge of the petty miseries of their lives, especially the pervading smells of overboiled vegetables and bad lavatories. Surely, they thought, Orwell had sneaked into Russia? He didn't: these odours also pervaded cabbage postwar Britain.

I've often returned to

Orwell's work: the clarity and precision of his prose is still a journalistic gold standard. I will also listen to 1984, read on Radio 4 by Martin Freeman: the book endures not only for its understanding of how dictatorship consolidates absolute power but also as a pacey thriller.

Kafka, though? I struggled through *The Trial* as a student. It captures the fate of being accused of a nameless crime by a faceless bureaucracy, as endured by Alexei Navalny, the sub-postmasters and, on some level, by all of us in daily modern battles against bots. Yet as a novel it is, by design, frustrating, maddening and, ultimately, boring. Thankfully "Kafkaesque" is comprehensible without reading Kafka.

### Simpsons snobs

Poor Rishi Sunak, casting around for any childhood hardship and alighting on the fact that his parents denied him Sky. Growing up long before satellite, the most TV-deprived child at my school was

the most middle class. Her family didn't own a television at all and we viewed this with astonishment and pity. How could she live without *Swap Shop*? What seemed like child cruelty then I now see was done for educational improvement. Similarly I have friends raised under a no-ITV regime. Adverts, tawdry soap operas, *Maggie* over *Blue Peter*. Turn that common rubbish off.

Perhaps that is why the Sunaks denied little Rishi *The Simpsons*. Not because they were worse off than other families but because they thought they were better.

### Brush keeper

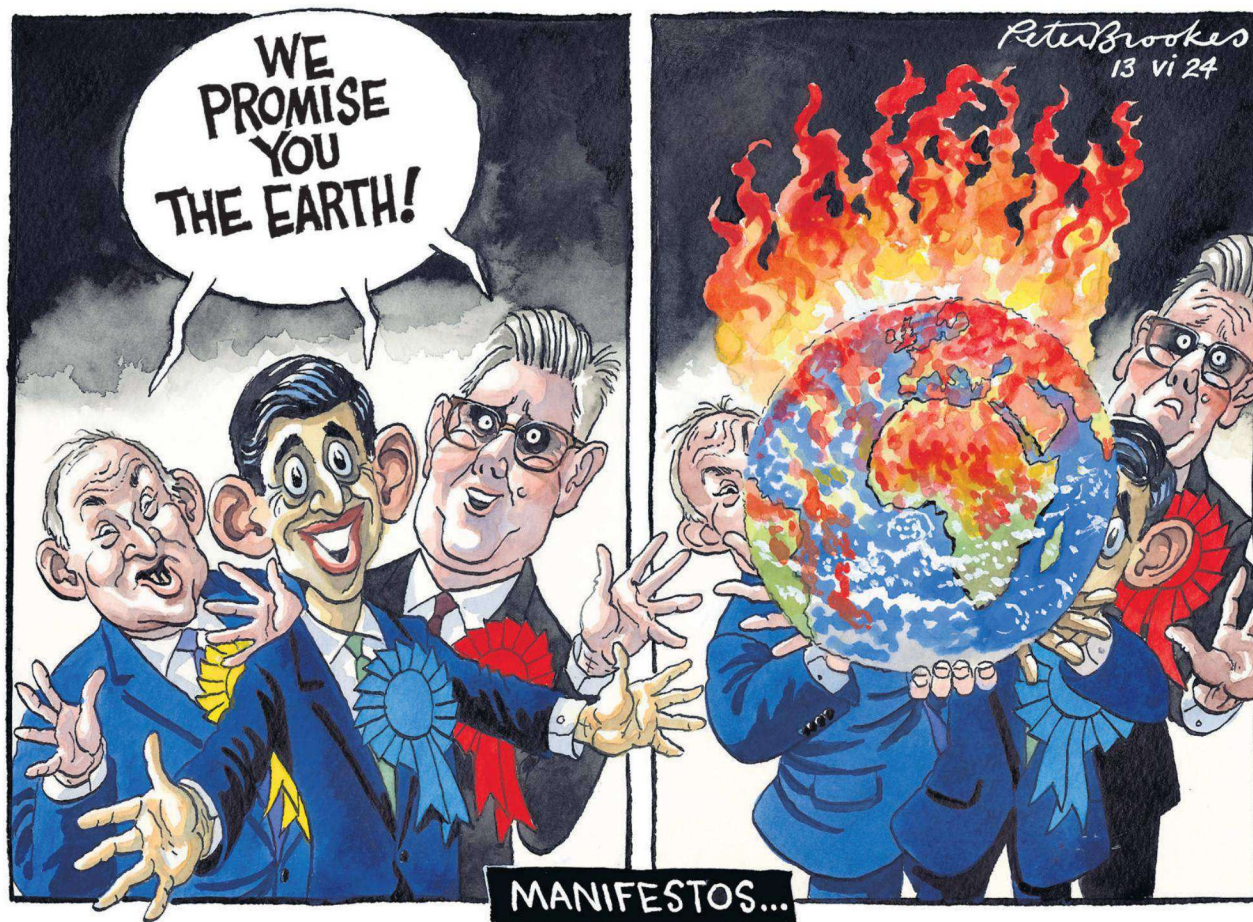
There are four fox cubs this year, alarming the cats with their hideous screeches. When we kept hens I was a fox-hater. (They massacred them all in the end.) Now I'm neither a fox-lover nor, worse, a fox-feeder but a fox-respecter. Such wildness in the city's heart.

The cubs, with their outsized ears and Disney faces, will be adorable for only two more months before acquiring that hungry, malevolent look. As I watch them play fight on the lawn I recall how the Mitford sisters would rise at dawn to watch cubs, which they would later hound to death, gambol in the woods.

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# PM may have to be open over Dunkirk strategy

Amid talk of a Labour 'super-majority' the Tories are having to bargain with voters to form a decent-sized opposition

Iain Martin



@IAINMARTINI

Wars are not won by evacuations, said Winston Churchill in his famous "we shall fight on the beaches" speech, delivered in the Commons on June 4, 1940. Although the stranded allied armies had been rescued from Dunkirk, he told MPs, that deliverance should not be confused with victory.

Given the tumultuous events of the past week, and the disastrous electoral implications of Rishi Sunak's decision to evacuate himself early from France, the prime minister has presumably had enough of Second World War metaphors, headlines and jokes. But in this general election his party is now operating a de facto Dunkirk strategy, attempting to salvage something from the wreckage of a doomed campaign.

Although the prime minister has not admitted it yet and, publicly, Tory spokespeople will go through the motions of saying the only poll that counts is on July 4, the truth is that everything is now predicated on

the assumption of imminent defeat on an epic scale.

With victory impossible, given the forces ranged against the Tories and the errors made by their commander, the only realistic option left is to try to ensure there are sufficient Conservative MPs elected to oppose a Labour government and begin a rebuild in opposition.

Yesterday Grant Shapps, the defence secretary, spoke of the dangers of Labour winning a "super-majority". In that vein, CCHQ has begun running adverts on Instagram and Facebook warning about giving Labour too much power by default.

There have been almost 40 such adverts since the end of last week aimed at bolstering the Tory vote. "A

## True blue seats once ultra-safe are no longer reliably true or blue

vote for the Lib Dems or Reform will hand Keir Starmer a blank cheque," says one. Another warns: "If you vote Reform, Labour or Liberal Democrat, you'll hand Keir Starmer a massive majority and pay the price."

For weeks Tories, analysts and pollsters have debated the viability and advisability of this strategy. Might they be in such a dire position that they have to go further, though?

Could they — whisper it for now — effectively concede that Rishi Sunak is not going to be PM and ask the country to vote for a stronger opposition?

This sounds so outlandish, so counter to all democratic custom and practice, that no one would ever try it, surely? It is standard in elections never to concede defeat until after the polls have closed.

The only example of any party conceding in the campaign was in Queensland, Australia, when the Liberal Party admitted in 1995 that it couldn't win and warned about giving the Labor premier, Wayne Goss, a landslide. The result ended up being a small majority for Goss.

This UK election has become so strange, containing within it the likelihood of a mega-majority for one party and its untested leader, that I think the Tories are going to have to consider something similar.

To get a measure of how serious their plight is it is necessary to talk to downcast Tories in the southeast of England. The Conservatives are now being forced to prioritise the defence of seats that would once have been regarded as ultra-safe, where until recently they might as well have weighed the Tory vote as count it.

If you think non-tribally and believe that at the very least the country needs a functioning

opposition in parliament, the situation is terrible. True blue country is no longer reliably true or blue. In Hertfordshire, Surrey, Sussex, Buckingham, Oxfordshire, places in the southeast of England that were until recently regarded as Conservative strongholds, candidates and activists swap horror stories about holding on by a thousand or two, if at all. "What is happening?" asks one furious Tory candidate.

The answer is that a brutal three-

## The Conservatives are the victims of a brutal three-way squeeze

way squeeze is under way, which the first past the post voting system makes highly destructive for the party being squeezed.

First, there are those voters switching to a Labour Party that has done a good job of changing since the Corbyn era and altering public perceptions. Labour's votes are also well distributed across Britain, meaning it will win a lot of seats.

Even if there is little enthusiasm for Sir Keir Starmer, or for his minimalist policy agenda, he is regarded as "good enough" or "worth a go" as a way of booting the Tories from government.

If that was all the Conservatives

had to worry about then they might be heading only for a conventional-style defeat, with a smallish Labour majority and enough Tory MPs in the Commons to organise a recovery afterwards.

But the resurrection of Nigel Farage as leader of Reform, who will attract disillusioned voters angry with the Tories over record immigration, and a skilful campaign by the Lib Dems, whose support is concentrated in key affluent areas where they will win seats, make a rout increasingly likely.

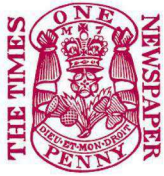
What, if anything, can the Tories do about it? They could just keep on going, persisting with the charade and pretending that they think they can win when we all know they can't. Or Sunak could say to the country: "It has been an immense privilege being prime minister. I would like to carry on doing this job, but I am not stupid. I can see the polls. You are angry with me and my party. The chances of me being PM after the election are vanishingly small to non-existent."

"That being the case, it is vital that the new prime minister faces a robust challenge in the House of Commons. If you want to avoid my opponent being given a blank cheque, vote against a super-majority. Vote for a strong opposition."

Fanciful? Yes, but there are still three weeks of this excruciating campaign to come.



## Letters to the Editor



### Hong Kong justice

Sir, Your leading article ("Fig Leaves", Jun 12) asserts that British judges should resign from their part-time role on the Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong as they are "in danger of giving the appearance of lending a fig leaf of respectability to tyranny". You overlook the dilemma faced by Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury and Lord Hoffmann (each of them a distinguished, retired British judge). To resign would be to abandon and undermine their judicial colleagues in Hong Kong who are doing important work seeking to uphold the rule of law and basic human rights under Hong Kong's Basic Law and Bill of Rights in increasingly difficult circumstances. Those who served as judges in apartheid South Africa faced a similar dilemma, to which there is no easy answer.

**Lord Pannick KC**  
Blackstone Chambers, Temple

### Paying to see GP

Sir, Dr Brian Posner (letter, Jun 10) advocates charging patients at the time of contact, as a co-payment. Rather than saving the NHS money, this would do the opposite. First, as with many large government programmes, the cost of administering the scheme would inevitably be very high, consuming much time and using up the bulk of any funds raised. Second, a large number of patients would probably be exempted from having to make the co-payment, as is the case with prescriptions. Third, if only a small number of patients delayed or even decided not to see their GP because of having to make a payment and became seriously ill as a result, the cost of then treating them, perhaps in hospital, would be very expensive and hence would substantially reduce the net funds raised by the scheme.

**Dr Michael M Rivlin**  
Ret'd lecturer in medical ethics, Leeds

### Two wheels good

Sir, On Monday I will be flying with my husband (who is 86) and our boxed push bikes to Paris for a three-week cycle tour to Dieppe ("E-bike benefits", letter, Jun 12). We've been cycle-touring for 40 years. I am 78: brain surgery lasting 14 hours four years ago has allowed me to continue our adventures. However, for the first time we will not be taking our tent.

**Jane Butters**  
Edinburgh

### Corrections and clarifications

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## Tory manifesto's concentration on tax cuts

Sir, Rishi Sunak's social insurance tax cuts (reports, Jun 12) confirm there is no such thing as a free lunch in economics. Quantitative models suggest that these tax cuts have both positive and negative economic consequences. On the one hand, they stimulate private consumption (as workers have more money in their pockets to spend) and, therefore, increase GDP growth. On the other hand, social insurance tax cuts provide a persistent increase in the economy's inflation rate and, therefore, force the central bank to either delay (at best) or raise (at worst) interest rates. Financial markets will force even higher borrowing rates — as happened in the brief era of Liz Truss — if these tax cuts are seen as anything but fully funded.

**Professor Costas Milas**  
Management School, University of Liverpool

Sir, The Conservatives now say they will create £17 billion of tax cuts if they are returned to office. They would be far more respected if they left tax where it is and spent the £17 billion so generated on the infrastructure in this country, the NHS and creating a military that can

sensibly counterbalance and deter those autocratic regimes that seek to threaten our peace.

**Simon Poulton**  
Beaconsfield, Bucks

Sir, For Rishi Sunak to say voting Reform or Liberal Democrat will put Labour into No 10 for ten years unnecessarily presumes that people will not be heartily fed up with them within the five years by which time the next election must be held. I remember that within just two years of the election of a Labour government in October 1974 very effective posters went up: "Don't blame me, I voted Conservative." The election of 1979 brought welcome relief. History may well be repeated.

**David Martin**  
Former Tory MP; Lyneham, Wilts

Sir, The prime minister says that any vote for a candidate who is not a Conservative is a vote for a Labour government. Many of us will be voting for the candidate who will best represent our concerns in the next parliament, irrespective of party. We will also be concerned to support a candidate who has a reputation for integrity, a quality more important

than ever in the next few years.

**Canon Tony Churchill**  
Cobham, Surrey

Sir, Labour and the Conservatives have pledged not to increase income tax in the next parliament. But both also plan to retain the freeze on income tax thresholds, which (owing to inflation) is expected to increase the yield from income tax by several billion pounds each year. If only politicians could be as economical with our money as they are content to be with the truth.

**DR Myddelton**  
London W9

Sir, Matthew Parris (Notebook, Jun 12) has it right: this is "a dreary and unedifying election where no candidate appeals". Couple that with the refusal of any candidate to answer a straight question with anything even approaching a straight answer and we are left with ordinary working people (as they are so fond of calling us) with the utterly dreary answer of letting the other side have a go at presiding over the mess. Two cheers for democracy, as EM Forster said.

**Simon Evers**  
Weston Turville, Bucks

### Centre must hold

Sir, Daniel Finkelstein's article (Jun 12) on good reasons to fear the radical right, and the dire consequences of not doing so, are accessible to us via prewar German history, as he shows. It would be tragic indeed if the democratic era in world politics should end after only two centuries. The return to autocracy, which is being threatened, would undo much individual freedom and would probably prevent the value of democratic government from being written about or even discussed, especially within universities. It is to be sincerely hoped that voters will wake up in time to prevent such a lurch back into the darkness.

**Bill Jones**  
Honorary professor of political sciences, Liverpool Hope University; Beverley, E Yorks

Sir, It is not the so-called radical right that should hold any fear for Daniel Finkelstein but the cancellation culture of the liberal left, which has terrified many into keeping their views on Brexit, trans ideology, climate change, BLM, mass

immigration, multiculturalism and much more firmly to themselves for a wholly logical fear that to air their true beliefs should they not prescribe to the "correct" narrative could be career-ending. There lies the true road to tyranny and demagoguery.

**Joss Walker**  
Pembury, Kent

### Lurch to the right

Sir, William Hague's characteristically thoughtful piece (Jun 11; letters, Jun 12), comparing the likely impact of Reform with the effect of the SDP in the 1980s in enabling a decade and a half of Conservative rule by splitting the anti-Tory vote, overlooks an important difference. Whereas the SDP challenged a left-dominated Labour Party from the centre, Reform is challenging the Tory party from the right. Neil Kinnock, John Smith and Tony Blair eventually saw off the SDP by accepting and adopting most of its ideas — pro-Europe, pro-nuclear, anti-nationalisation — so that after 15 years Blair was able to lead New Labour back into government with a landslide. Reform by contrast is trying to drag the Tories further to the right.

To combat it, One Nation Conservatives too will need to pull the party back towards the centre, or leave the centre ground even more to Sir Keir Starmer's Labour. Reform is not the mirror image of the SDP but of Jeremy Corbyn. To regain electability the moderate Tories cannot absorb it but must defy it.

**Dr John Campbell**  
Biographer of Margaret Thatcher and Roy Jenkins; Stapleford, Cambs

### Sparkling contrast

Sir, I am sure that Gareth Williams intended no slight on the wine when he wrote of the "worst prosecco" (letter, Jun 8). The innovative means of creating prosecco, invented and patented in 1895 by Federico Martinotti, was a response to the then burgeoning popularity of champagne, and enabled winemakers to produce good fizz at a much lower cost — and more quickly — than the champagne method. The best proseccos are absolutely delightful, and personally I would rather endure a poor prosecco at £8 than a poor champagne at £20.

**Matthew Hudson**  
Ret'd wine merchant, Garelochhead

## DARING WEST END JEWEL ROBBERY

FROM THE TIMES JUNE 13, 1924

A daring robbery of valuable antiques was committed early yesterday morning at Bath House, Piccadilly, W, the residence of Lady Ludlow, the widow of Lord Ludlow who died in 1922. Expert thieves entered the collection room on the first floor overlooking the Green Park, broke open several of the cases, and stole exquisite antiques of the 15th and 16th centuries. They formed part of a collection which was the proud possession of the late Sir Julius C Wernher, Lady Ludlow's first husband. They cannot be replaced. In the open market they

might, it is estimated, fetch £50,000 or £100,000, or even more. The circumstances indicate that the thieves are themselves art experts, and it is believed that they will not melt the gold and sell the precious stones individually, but rather attempt to dispose of the valuables intact on the Continent or in America. Lady Ludlow and members of her family and all the servants were in the house asleep while the thieves were silently working. It is thought that two men were responsible, and that they concealed themselves in the basement before everybody had retired for the night. The treasures were in locked glass cases, which were forced by the hand of an expert wielding a jemmy. Only the very best specimens were removed, and the hundreds of objects left behind were not touched or damaged. The thieves silently climbed to the top of the house, went through a door leading to an iron fire escape, and, descending it,

reached the courtyard at the back, and so got away unobserved into Bolton Street or Stratton Street, where a motor-car may have been awaiting them. The robbery was not discovered until one of the maids went into the room yesterday morning. Not one of the doors was forced, neither had any windows been tampered with, and it is assumed that the thieves entered the house through an open door late at night and concealed themselves in the basement to await an opportunity to go upstairs. No fingerprints have been found. The detectives were engaged on an important line of inquiry last night, and the police at all the ports were alerted, as it was thought that the thieves would attempt to leave the country in order to dispose of the property to foreign dealers.

THE TIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

## Sponsoring the arts

Sir, Maria Balshaw is dismayed by the British Museum's acceptance of what she calls "ethically suspect" money from BP ("Museum's £50m deal with BP is 'dismaying', claims rival", Jun 12). However, she should not be surprised. While almost all businesses and institutions with genuine concern over accepting unethical financial contributions ceased to accept sponsorship from the tobacco industry years ago, the British Museum still, despite it being obvious that its funding is generated by profits from the peddling of an addictive but lethal product, accepts corporate support from Japan Tobacco International. Ms Balshaw would perhaps also be surprised to learn that the British Museum is not the only one: the Royal Academy of Arts lists Japan Tobacco as a "premier member" in its corporate supporters list, while the London Philharmonic Orchestra cites the company as its "principal partner". It is a longstanding practice among those who become rich from unethical practices to resort to philanthropy to enhance their reputations. Sadly there are still plenty of ostensibly reputable institutions willing to accept it.

**John Britton**  
Emeritus professor, University of Nottingham; Hoveringham, Notts

Sir, The arts in the UK are woefully underfunded by comparison with our European neighbours, to our great disadvantage, so it is encouraging that at least one of our cultural institutions, the British Museum, is prepared to defy the ineffectual virtue signalling of the Tate and many others Strong policies to deal with climate change — which I support — should be left to governments.

**Lord Horam**  
House of Lords

## Wear if you dare

Sir, Further to your piece "Why you're never too old for a bikini" (Times2, Jun 12), I am 88 and still wear a bikini, though one of the more substantial variety. It is very comfortable for swimming in the sea and I wouldn't wear it unless I was confident that I still looked pretty good.

**Jacqueline Longley**  
Tisbury, Wilts

## Bottled smells

Sir, If there is one smell that the UCL team must include in their inventory (letters, Jun 12) it is the aroma of coal smoke, for example that emitted from terraced housing in northern cities on a winter's afternoon. It would be nice for future generations to be able to experience the odour of the home fires that kept us warm for centuries.

**Simon Bucknall**  
Shipton-under-Wychwood, Oxon

Sir, Nothing beats the smell of freshly made mashed potato (with lots of butter added, of course).

**Colleen Pope**  
Dartmouth, Devon

## Rule of thumb

Sir, Dr John McCarthy's delight in long and fancy names for certain conditions (letter, Jun 12) is sometimes shared by patients. I was thrilled to be diagnosed with de Quervain's tenosynovitis for just that reason. It was less exciting to learn that the common name for the condition is washerwoman's thumb.

**Lesley Fittton**  
Harpenden, Herts



## Daily Universal Register

UK: ITV general election debate; Women's Prize for Fiction ceremony in London.  
Italy: G7 summit in Puglia.

## Nature notes



During April, four pairs of starlings began nesting in the roofs of a Yorkshire cul-de-sac. At the end of May, all four nests fledged together. This synchronised fledging is a startling tactic and enables the young to form feeding flocks. A week later, three of the pairs started a second brood. Searching in the adjacent churchyard, the males gathered yarrow foliage and cow parsley flowers for the new nests. Starlings often decorate their nests with such high-scented materials — research shows that chicks raised on beds of fragrant herbs do better than those from nests made of grass and leaves. This might be because volatile herbs have a relaxing effect on the adults, making them more assiduous parents. JONATHAN TULLOCH

## Birthdays today



**Kathy Burke**, comedian, actress, *Harry Enfield & Chums* (1994-98), and theatre director, *Once a Catholic* (2014), 60; **Ban Ki-moon**, UN secretary-general (2007-16), 80; **Dame Christine Beasley**, chief nursing officer, Department of Health (2004-12), 80; **Kenenisa Bekele**, athlete, three-time Olympic champion in the 5,000m and 10,000m, 42; **Chris Cairns**, cricketer, New Zealand (1989-2004), 54; **Dame Sarah Connolly**, mezzo-soprano, 61; **Luca de Meo**, chief executive, Renault Group, 57; **David Gray**, singer-songwriter, *White Ladder* (1998), 56; **Alan Hansen**, footballer, Liverpool FC (1977-91), and pundit, *Match of the Day* (1992-2014), 69; **Prof Janet Hemingway**, entomologist, director, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (2001-19), 67; **Raymond Jolliffe**, Lord Hylton, longest-serving crossbench member of the House of Lords (1968-2023), 92; **Dame Brenda King**, attorney-general, Northern Ireland, 60; **Lord (Tom) King of Bridgewater**, Northern Ireland secretary (1985-89), defence secretary (1989-92), 91; **Sir Clive Lewis**, lord justice of appeal, 64; **Sir Li Ka-shing**, Hong Kong businessman, former chairman of CK Hutchison Holdings and CK Asset Holdings, 96; **Malcolm McDowell**, actor, *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), 81; **Mairead McGuinness**, European commissioner for Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union, 65; **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, economist, director-general, World Trade Organisation, the first woman and first African to serve in the post, 70; **Peter Scudamore**, jockey, eight-time champion jockey, 66; **Stellan Skarsgård**, actor, *Chernobyl* (2019), 73; **Colin Skellett**, chief executive, Wessex Water (water supply and sewerage utility company), 79; **Peter Truscott**, chief executive, Crest Nicholson (housebuilder), 62; **Marcel Theroux**, novelist, *The Paper Chase* (2002), 56; **Sir James Walker**, executive director, Walker's Shortbread, 80; **Roger Whiteside**, chief executive, Greggs (2013-22), 66; **Sir Andreas Whittam Smith**, founding editor, *The Independent* (1986-94), 87.

## On this day

In 1944, during the Second World War, the first German V1 flying bomb hit London, one week after the Allied invasion of Normandy.

## The last word

"Whoever said, 'It's not whether you win or lose that counts,' probably lost." Martina Navratilova, tennis player, in 1987



## Super Powers

Conservative warnings about a Labour super-majority may be a desperate last throw. But parliamentary democracy is healthier for the presence of an effective opposition

Vote for Rishi Sunak: he's going to lose anyway. An inspiring election slogan it is not. In the circumstances, however, the prime minister has concluded that it is the only arrow left in his depleted quiver. At the launch of the Conservative Party manifesto on Tuesday Mr Sunak urged voters not to hand Sir Keir Starmer the "blank cheque" of an overly huge parliamentary majority lest he end up in power for "a very long time". Grant Shapps, the defence secretary and government media fireman, made the implicit explicit on Times Radio yesterday when he declared a Labour super-majority to be "very bad news" for the British people.

This is a curious line of attack midway through an election campaign, an admission that defeat is not only possible but probable. It substitutes damage limitation for victory, challenging the public to ask itself if a government devoid of an effective opposition is really desirable in a mature democracy. The reality is that voters thoroughly disillusioned with Toryism are unlikely to buy such an argument. The electorate generally votes in its own perceived interests. Individual Conservative MPs with strong records locally may be spared the deluge. But a whole government? That is most unlikely. Still, the problems posed by a Labour super-majority are real and should be explored.

It is not just that Sir Keir could pass almost any law to satisfy the soft left of the Labour Party, a reliable source of lobby fodder and unimaginative statist thinking. It is that he will govern almost wholly unencumbered by the safeguards usually present in parliament. Seats on bill committees and select committees, as well as their chairmanships, are allocated in proportion to the strength of each party in the House of Commons. If the doomsday scenario suggested by current opinion polling comes to pass and the Tories are effectively wiped out then there is a world in which all but a few select committees (by convention the chairmanship of the public accounts committee is always held by the opposition) are supervised by underwhelming Labour backbenchers passed over for even junior ministerial office. That is a recipe for substandard scrutiny and bad legislation.

A Labour landslide would be, in some respects, a journey into the unknown. Today Sir Keir will unveil a threadbare election manifesto adding very little to that which is already known about his programme for office. Much of the Labour policy already announced, including reform of the planning system and health service, appears sensible enough. But an overall majority of say 200, and an official opposition reduced to fewer

than a hundred MPs, would indeed present Sir Keir with that blank cheque: the authority to interpret his mandate in any way he sees fit. The electorate would find out what they voted for only later.

Assisted dying is an example: this hugely sensitive and contentious issue, summoning as it does deep feelings about human suffering and the sanctity of life, is likely to be introduced at a stroke. Sir Keir is personally in favour and is determined to make parliamentary time for its legalisation. Have Britain's Roman Catholics, among others, been made sufficiently aware of this? Tax rises not advertised to the public, such as equalisation of capital gains thresholds with income tax rates, would also glide gracefully through the Commons. And given the likely impact of tactical voting and the splintering of the right-wing vote between the Conservatives and Reform, it is not out of the question that the Liberal Democrats will become the official opposition. Are traditional Tory voters ready for a politics in which opposition to the left comes from the left?

Conservative warnings about a super-majority may be the desperate last gasps of a government heading for oblivion. But there is truth in the argument that some wins in politics can be too big — even for the victors.

## Bad Apples

The Green Party must rid itself of extremists masquerading as friends of the planet

Small political parties have a question to answer at general election time: do they concentrate resources in a few favourable seats and hope for a few successes, or do they seek the credibility that comes from fielding candidates in every constituency? If the answer is the latter a further question arises: how can hundreds of candidates, many political novices unknown to the party's central apparatus, be successfully vetted, especially in a snap election when time is at a premium? This issue — of the embarrassing rogue candidate who comes to national prominence only when he or she has donned the party rosette — dogged Ukip and is now dogging Reform. Offensive remarks posted on social media in the past can suddenly transmute into campaigning gold for opponents.

The vetting problem was prayed-in-aid yesterday by Adrian Ramsay, co-leader of the Green Party, as he tried to explain why people who have apparently posted antisemitic remarks on the internet were still able to stand as Green candidates. Mr Ramsay said he couldn't know everyone. He can't. But it goes without saying that a political party as a whole must know who it is promoting.

As *The Times* reported yesterday, the Greens have endorsed half a dozen candidates despite concerns that they shared antisemitic comments and conspiracy theories. These included sharing a transparently baseless slur that the massacre of October 7 was a "false flag" operation mounted by Israel. Another exchange accused Israel of child trafficking. This kind of poison should have resulted in the summary removal of any candidate involved. Yet the party has rejected the accusations, claiming that legitimate criticism of Israeli excesses was being confused with antisemitism.

True, four Green candidates were dropped following concerns about antisemitism. But six party members whose exchanges were reported to the party by this newspaper were subsequently confirmed as candidates. This is a matter of grave concern. Mr Ramsay says he cannot on his own police the histories of the 574 candidates being fielded across England and Wales. But if he can't, who is? And when the alert is raised, why is nothing done?

There are bad apples in every political party but Green bad apples appear to be multiplying. That is

because a party once a largely single-issue party championing the natural world has evolved into something altogether less wholesome: a repository for radicals no longer welcomed by Labour.

The Green Party manifesto, published yesterday, strays into areas far from the environment and climate change. For example, the document wants to scrap the Prevent counterterrorism strategy while, ironically, tackling hate crime, including antisemitism. The manifesto also calls for a four-day working week. This mission creep is advanced in Scotland, where the Hamas-supporting Scottish Green Party holds the balance of power at Holyrood. The results have been a hate crime law that undermines free speech and a transgender policy promoting puberty blockers for children.

The issue of small parties harbouring entryist purveyors of hatred is a live one: a third of the electorate are seeking alternatives as faith in the current political system wanes and the two-party system splinters. There is nothing wrong with backing smaller parties. But those looking to do so should beware of giving their support to political wolves in sheep's clothing.

## Cold Enough for You?

The non-appearance of summer is beyond a joke. Action is urgently required

This May, says the Met Office, was the hottest on record in the United Kingdom because cloud cover kept night-time temperatures unusually high. Full marks for optimistic spin, but that is not the sort of heat most people crave. The truth is the weather has been awful for months. Summer has yet to arrive, while spring decided to take 2024 off.

Two years ago, shortly before the London Olympics, *The Times* ran a campaign in favour of better weather. Then as now, unseasonably low temperatures and high rainfall were threatening to wash out the (usually glorious, as we all know) British summer. Frosts threatened the tomato and

strawberry crop, bees were anything but buzzing, heavy rain promised a horrendous arable harvest and proliferating slugs chomped their way through flowerbeds. Sporting fixtures, fêtes and weddings were cancelled, shredding the social fabric of summer.

Action was required. So, in a series of clarion calls in these columns, we demanded an improvement: wind was instructed to die down, clouds ordered to disperse and mercury told to jolly well start rising. It worked. Summer was saved. The causal link between our appeals and sunnier skies has never been questioned by a reputable expert.

Now we must take up the cudgels once more. Fans want to watch England and Scotland in the Euros on big, open-air screens. Royal Ascot, Wimbledon and Glastonbury are fast approaching. Retailers are keen to shift stocks of beachwear and garden furniture. Election campaigners (apart from Sir Ed Davey, who seems fond of regular saturation) deserve to pound the streets in the dry.

Forecasters say there is no prospect of much change before July. Well, we'll see about that. Readers are urged to send a strongly worded email to the relevant authorities @jet.stream.sortitout.com



# World

## Pope accused of repeating slur against gay priests

Italy

Tom Kington Rome

The Pope has allegedly repeated an offensive term to describe homosexuals, weeks after he apologised for using the same slur during a private meeting.

At an audience in Rome with local priests on Tuesday, Francis allegedly claimed there was an “atmosphere of faggotry” at the Vatican as he discussed the issue of gay clerics. Last month he was quoted as saying there was “too much faggotry” among men in seminaries training to be priests.

In that meeting with Italian bishops on May 20, and again on Tuesday, he is said to have used the Italian word *frociaggine*, which translates as “faggotry”.

The Vatican issued a statement last month saying that the Pope “offers his apologies to those who felt offended by the use of the term”.

However, Francis was apparently prepared to use the phrase again on Tuesday, according to the Italian news agency Ansa and the Catholic website *Silere Non Possum* (“I Cannot Remain Silent”), which said it had a recording of his meeting with 200 young priests.

The Pope’s use of the term has prompted criticism from gay rights groups that had previously praised him for his outreach, after a 2013 incident in which he exclaimed “who am I to judge?” when asked about gay priests.

But a priest who works with *Silere Non Possum* and who said he was present at the meeting on Tuesday told *The Times* that, in private, the pontiff was more coarse.

“Pope Francis speaks like this, he is rough-spoken. It can be embarrassing and it could be getting more



Francis, blessing a pregnant woman yesterday, apologised last month for using the phrase “faggotry”

pronounced with age,” he said, declining to be named.

“The first time round I think it was the Vatican press office issuing the apology rather than him,” the priest added.

Francis is alleged to have repeated the “faggotry” slur when he was asked about arguments that he made on May 20 about keeping gay men out of seminaries.

“If a lad wants to enter a seminary and he has homosexual tendencies, stop him,” Francis said, according to *Silere Non Possum*.

“The dicastery [Vatican department] for the clergy has said this and I support them. Today homosexual culture has moved forward a lot and there are good lads who want the Lord but it is better not, better not.”

“A Monsignor who works at the Vatican once said to me: ‘Your Holiness, I want to say something, I am worried

about the gay culture inside here.’ I said: ‘Yes, there is an atmosphere of faggotry. It is true, you find it in the Vatican.’”

It is allegedly that the pope added: “In our culture today it is a mark of honour. We must be careful not to disrespect people with homosexual tendencies but accompany them. There are many good people.”

“Accompany them, help them, send them to psychologists — but please, be careful about accepting them in seminaries.”

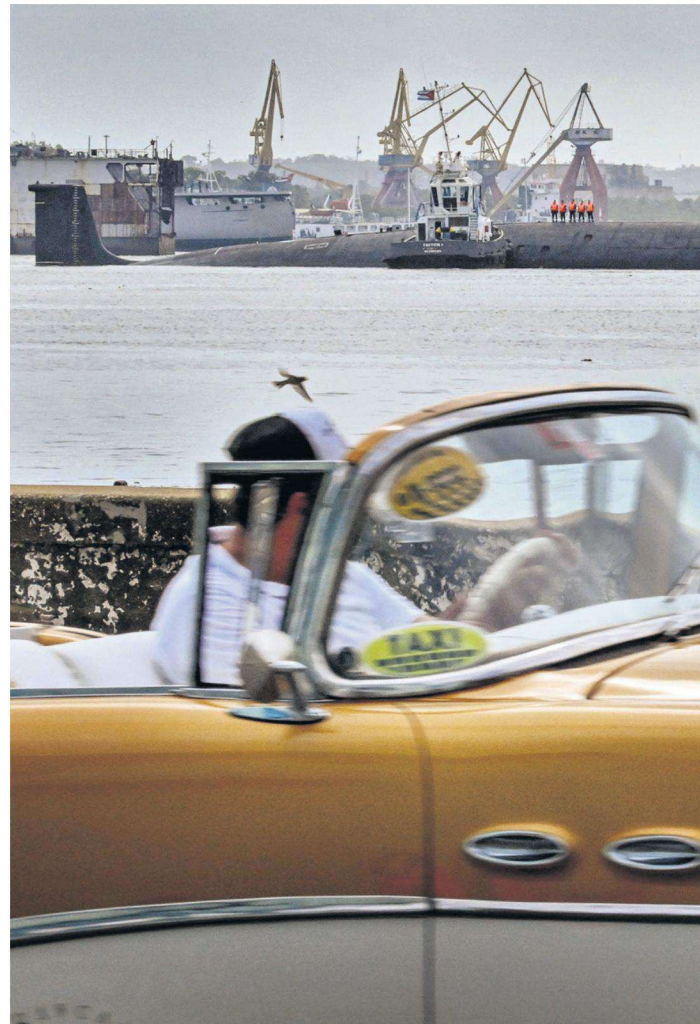
*Silere Non Possum* also quoted Francis as using the word “faggot” during the meeting.

The Vatican press office, in its own account of the meeting with the priests, which took place at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, said Francis had “spoken again about the theme of admitting people with homosexual tendencies to seminaries, repeating the need to welcome them and accompany them in the Church, and the prudent instruction of the dicastery for the clergy about their entry into seminaries.”

A 2005 Vatican rule bans men from entering seminaries if they practise homosexuality, have “deeply rooted” homosexual tendencies or support “gay culture”.

At his May 20 meeting with bishops, Francis said that gay men should not be allowed to train for the priesthood owing to the risk that they would continue to practise homosexuality and be forced to lead a double life after entering the church. He made the same argument in 2018.

The Catholic Church teaches that homosexual acts are “disordered”. Francis, who turned 87 in December, opposes gay marriage but has approved of gay civil unions.



## Russian flotilla in Cuba evokes 1962 missile crisis

The arrival in Havana of a Russian “strike group” of warships, including a nuclear submarine, was heralded by a 21-gun salute (Stephen Gibbs writes). If heads were turned by the visitors to the colonial heart of the city, so too were those of the Americans shadowing the vessels as they visited a former Cold War ally.

At the forefront of the flotilla was a frigate, the Admiral Gorshkov, named after the head of the Soviet Union’s once formidable Red Fleet. It was not clear whether it was equipped with Russia’s latest Zircon hypersonic missiles, able to fly at almost nine times the speed of sound and with a maximum range of 460 miles.

The Gorshkov was accompanied by Kazan, a nuclear-powered submarine capable of launching cruise missiles, alongside a refuelling tanker and a naval tug.

On its way to Cuba the flotilla conducted drills in the Atlantic and simulated a missile strike on enemy ships for the benefit of the cameras of Russia’s ministry of defence.

The Cuban government, pre-

empting inevitable comparisons with the 1962 missile crisis — when Soviet nuclear weapons on the island brought the world to the brink of nuclear war — has sought to portray the five-day visit as routine and not aggressive.

Its defence ministry issued a detailed communiqué last week, emphasising that the fleet would not be carrying nuclear missiles. It said: “This visit is consistent with the historically friendly relations existing between Cuba and the Russian Federation and strictly abides by the international regulations Cuba is a state party to.”

US officials have said the gathering of Russian warships within 100 miles of America is “notable but not concerning”.

John Kirby, the White House national security adviser, said the fleet did not pose an “imminent threat”. Yet Washington is taking a close look at the hardware on its doorstep: four US naval vessels, two equipped with sonar equipment, shadowed the Russian submarine, while a US destroyer and a Coast Guard cutter followed the other three ships.

## Burnt lasagna for world leaders in Italy

Tom Kington

World leaders who are under the cosh from the electorate back home will take refuge at the G7 conference in Italy today and console themselves with dishes from one of the world’s top chefs.

Rishi Sunak, Joe Biden, the host Giorgia Meloni and other leaders will meet at Borgo Egnazia, a luxury resort in Puglia, where they will be fed by Massimo Bottura, whose Modena restaurant Osteria Francescana has twice been voted the world’s best. They will be served “the crunchy part of the lasagna”; Bottura’s signature dish which recreates the slightly overcooked corner of the meal he loved as a child.

Also on the menu is beef from Piedmont cooked with truffles and Barolo wine, Sardinian lobster risotto and tomato-flavoured ice cream from



Massimo Bottura’s renowned crunchy lasagna tops the G7 fine dining menu

Campania. “It’s my personal invitation to visit this country,” Bottura told *La Repubblica* newspaper.

The culinary tour de force should lift the spirits of President Macron and the German chancellor Olaf Scholz, who have just been punished by voters in EU

elections, or Sunak and Biden, who risk defeat in pending elections.

As President Zelensky pushes for more aid for Kyiv and the Pope discusses the perils of artificial intelligence, Bottura will try a bold pairing of cod with two red wines; a Brunello di Montalcino and a Chianti Classico.

The leaders might spare a thought for the 2,000 police officers drafted in to guard the G7 who were billeted in nearby Brindisi on a rented cruise ship with broken lavatories, leaking cabins, no air conditioning and long queues for cold food. “Many police, after long hours of travel, were forced to sleep in precarious conditions or in cramped vans,” a police union reported.

The officers were moved to local hotels — before returning to impound the ship, with a view to a possible prosecution for breach of contract.



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**Don't hand Le Pen the keys to power, urges Macron**  
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Kazan, a nuclear-powered submarine, docks in Havana after conducting drills in the Atlantic, above. The Admiral Gorshkov, left, has also arrived in Cuba



Russia's deployment is expected to be a preview of a larger military exercise in the Caribbean. The flotilla may also visit Venezuela, whose President Maduro is another Russian ally. James Bosworth, the political risk analyst, wrote in *World Politics Review* that Russia needed to boost its "global image" as its army was struggling in Ukraine. The naval mission has attracted extra attention after President Putin said last week that if the US

and its allies continued to provide equipment enabling Ukraine to attack Russia, he reserved the right to arm countries that could strike western targets. Havana's communist government initially indicated it would take a neutral position on the war in Ukraine but in recent months it has shifted to more obvious support of Russia. That approach was displayed last month when Cuba's president, Miguel Díaz-Canel, visited Moscow. He told Putin: "[Russia] can always count on Cuba's support. We wish you and the Russian Federation success in the special military operation" — the Kremlin term for the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Reports emerged last year that Cubans had been enlisted to fight in Ukraine, apparently attracted by an offer that recruits who served for a year would earn £2,000 a month. Cuba later described the scheme as a "human-trafficking network" and said it had been shut down.

Over the past 24 months, Cuba's economy has struggled, making life on there hard for all but a small elite. As mass migration soared, Russia has once again offered its Caribbean ally a lifeline by reviving oil deliveries to the island.

Eugenio, a retired engineer from Havana, said Cubans had become accustomed to accepting help "from wherever it comes", but added: "Many of us have also learnt not to believe in saviours any more."

## A guilty pleasure, the 'robot jelly' that wiggles as you eat it

### Japan

Richard Lloyd Parry Tokyo

For as long as robots have been part of our imagination, there has been a fear that one day they will turn against their creators and exterminate us.

In Japan, however, a group of scientists have done their part to ensure humans — for now at least — remain at the top of the food chain.

They have created an "edible robot", a lump of apple-flavoured jelly, to answer the scientific conundrum of whether humans feel remorse if their snacks are perceived as alive.

A team of roboticists from Tokyo and Osaka discovered that people reported different taste and texture experiences after consuming an inanimate object, compared with the same item when it was presented as a "creature".

The "robot" in question is a long way from the androids of science fiction, closer to a throbbing fruit pastille than Arnold Schwarzenegger's Terminator, but its creators say it is the first step in a new field of science — human-edible robot interaction (Heri).

In a scientific paper entitled "Exploring the eating experience of a pneumatically driven edible robot", the scientists write: "In the stationary condition, participants perceived the robot as 'food', whereas in the movement condition they perceived it as a 'creature'."

"They believed that the robot comprised different materials under different conditions. These results indicated that the edible robots could cause the participants to feel that they were eating animated beings [when they were moving]."

The experiment was inspired by two elements of

Japanese culture. The first is *odorigui*, a style of cuisine that involves eating seafood while it is still alive and wriggling.

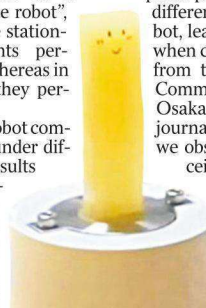
The other is Anpanman, a popular children's superhero who takes the form of a speaking bun filled with bean jam. Anpanman saves other cartoon characters by feeding them sections of flesh he has torn off his face.

The edible robot was created using gelatine, sugar apples and juice poured into a mold to produce something resembling a gummy sweet. The robot, which wiggles and vibrates, was mounted on a pneumatic tube that was placed inside a coffee mug.

The 16 Osaka University students were first invited to eat it in its unmoving state, and then when it was moving. After both snacks they were asked, "Did you think what you just ate had intelligence?" and "Did you feel guilty about what you just ate?"

No one was overwhelmed by remorse but participants did describe different textures. The still robot was described as chewy, while the moving one was more springy and slightly hard.

"Our results showed that participants perceived the moving robot differently from the stationary robot, leading to varied perceptions when consuming it," the scientists from the University of Electro-Communications in Tokyo and Osaka University wrote in the journal *PLOS One*. "Additionally, we observed a difference in perceived texture when the robot was bitten and chewed under the two conditions."



The robot is more throbbing fruit pastille than Terminator

## AI voice softens the blow for harassed call-centre workers

Richard Lloyd Parry

Famously, the customer is always right. They may not always sound right, however, often coming across as aggressive when trying to register a complaint, according to Japanese researchers.

Now those scientists have created a technology that uses artificial intelligence to mute the rage of complainants — and reduce the stress of those who have to deal with them.

SoftVoice is designed for workers in customer call centres who are especially vulnerable to what in Japanese is called *kasu-hara*: customer harassment. With the click of a mouse, an operator can turn a furious caller into a mildly indignant one, their words made calmer by actors whose pre-recorded voices are digested and reproduced by AI.

The "emotion-cancelling" software has been developed by SoftBank, the mobile phone and telecommunications company, which has call centres of its own. Announcing the technology, the

company said: "[This] solution is expected to help lighten the psychological load of call centre operators and create an environment where they can work safely to provide even better services to customers."

Operators need to know when a caller is angry in order to respond in an appropriately soothing manner, so traces of indignation remain. SoftVoice does not change the words used by a caller but does alter their pitch and inflection, based on 10,000 pieces of "voice data" provided by ten actors.

A survey by UA Zensen, a trade union for the retail and food industries, found 47 per cent of respondents had been harassed by customers in the preceding two years — although this was 10 per cent lower than a survey in 2020.

Three quarters of those reported to have made the complaints were in their fifties or older, and 70 per cent were men. Forty per cent of those harassed said they had suffered verbal abuse and 15 per cent threats and intimidation.



## World



## Grotto sets timers to flush out its lingerers

Visitors to the Yungang Buddhist grottoes in eastern China can spend as long as they like meditating or marvelling at the 51,000 spectacular statues (Joshua Thurston writes).

However, there is one place you may no longer wish to linger: the Unesco-listed world heritage site has installed timers above the lavatory cubicles to show how long they have been “engaged”.

A video posted online showed a set of external screens above the

cubicles in the women's lavatory, counting in red the minutes and seconds the door had been locked, and displaying a green man and “empty” when unoccupied.

One visitor told the Xiaoxiang Morning News newspaper that there was also a display screen outside the door of the women's WC, with a floor plan showing how many cubicles were in use. “It avoided blindly queueing and knocking on the door. But I also felt a little embarrassed, as if I was being watched,” she said.

The video prompted debate on Weibo, the



The grottoes, in Shanxi province, have numerous gigantic statues of the Buddha at rest. Yet its lavatory cubicles, above left, have installed timers

microblogging site, with some users asking whether capacity was a problem, because the grottoes attract three million visitors a year. Others said they might be embarrassed if caught lingering a little too long. “A tourist site isn't an office. Who would spend their time in the toilets? Is it really

necessary?” said one Weibo user.

Not everyone was against the idea. “I think it is necessary. There are people in the toilet checking their phones,” wrote one Weibo user, prompting a debate about etiquette and hygiene.

Another suggested blocking mobile phone

signals in all lavatories as a better option for combating scrolling.

An official at the tourist attraction told the Xiaoxiang Morning News that “netizens are just imagining things”, adding: “There is no control over the time of going to the toilet, so it is impossible to kick people out in the middle

of the time. It does not mean that they must come out after five or ten minutes.”

The Nanchang Evening News said the timers had been in operation since last month and were intended to “ensure the wellbeing of all guests — in case some guests use the toilet for an

extended period and an emergency occurs”.

The grottoes, in Datong city, Shanxi province, include 252 caves, with thousands of statues of varying sizes. Many depict the Buddha, who in some cases has been sitting there for more than 1,500 years, though no one seems to mind that.

# Ukraine sells family silver to fight Putin

## Ukraine

Alec Luhn

Ukraine is to auction off state assets ranging from Europe's biggest titanium mining firm to a confiscated shopping centre and Kyiv's landmark Hotel Ukraine, with the money used to defend itself against the Russian invasion.

At least 19 state-owned companies will go under the hammer to plug a £3.9 billion shortfall in the country's military budget and attract economic investment. Offered at bargain prices, it is hoped the sell-off will raise £80 million by the end of the year, even as Russian missiles continue to pound Ukraine's buildings and infrastructure.

“There are risks, but at the same time you have a chance to seize new opportunities before your competitors,” Oleksandr Polishchuk, a spokesman for the State Property Fund of Ukraine, told The Times. “When Ukraine wins, lots of people will want to participate in reconstruction.”

Japan has agreed to compensate any citizens who invest if the assets they buy are destroyed in the war, and Ukraine is

discussing similar insurance deals with Denmark and other countries, Polishchuk said.

Among the items on the block will be the 14-storey Hotel Ukraine, which looms over the central square in Kyiv where protesters clashed with police in 2014 during the Maidan revolution that forced President Yanukovich out of office and into exile in Russia. Dead and wounded protesters were carried into the lobby of the hotel after snipers opened fire from the rooftops on February 20, killing 50 people.

Bidding on the four-star hotel, now almost £800,000 in debt, will start at £20 million. “Maybe the name of a famous hotel chain will be added to the Hotel Ukraine name,” Polishchuk said.

European countries meet in Berlin this week to discuss the rebuilding of Ukraine, which the German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, said would cost £400 billion.

Mustafa Nayyem, head of the Ukrainian reconstruction agency, resigned on Monday amid claims that President Zelensky is forcing out independent voices in favour of loyalists.

Zelensky asked the conference to help finance Ukraine's energy sector, which has been devastated by Russian

## Deserters sent back to front

Alec Luhn

Hundreds of Russian deserters who would rather go to prison than fight in Ukraine are being rounded up and sent back to the front lines.

Some 800 soldiers had fled the war as of January, according to documents obtained by the independent Russian media outlet Verstka. Many went on leave to see their families and never returned, deciding to risk prison.

But instead of prosecuting them, Russian law enforcement has been confining hundreds of objectors in overcrowded barracks before sending them back to Ukraine.

“Forty guys with batons come in and if you refuse to go, they knock you out and put you on the plane unconscious,” one objector, Vladimir Muronov, told his family. His sister said that he and at least 169 other

deserters in Yekaterinburg have been denied their right to a trial and are being returned by force.

Muronov, a father of three, was drafted as a medical orderly in 2022 and sent to the front, where he was assigned to collect corpses. When back home on leave in June 2023, he was suffering from constant tremors and refused to return.

In October, police confined Muronov to a four-storey building in Yekaterinburg along with other deserters. There the men were beaten up, denied medical care and often handcuffed during the short visits from family they were allowed, relatives said.

In May, armed soldiers began packing groups of them on to planes to Ukraine — Muronov among them. “He can barely stand,” his sister told Verstka. “He'll be gunned down in a week, maybe two.”

missiles since March, causing blackouts and forcing the importation of electricity from the European Union. He also called for more air-defence systems, such as the Patriot missile battery the US will provide in the coming days.

Zelensky is to meet President Biden at a G7 meeting in Italy today, where

the US leader will lobby for a controversial plan to use the interest earned from frozen Russian central bank funds to back up a \$50 billion loan to Ukraine.

Ukraine still owns more than 2,300 state enterprises from before the fall of the Soviet Union — many of which are unprofitable and cost tens of millions of

pounds a year to run. A corrupt partial privatisation in Ukraine and Russia in the 1990s created a class of powerful oligarchs after the bidding process sidelined most of the population.

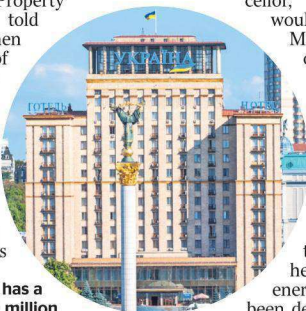
Ukraine began selling off smaller state assets in September 2022, raising £80 million in an initiative that the head of the State Property Fund at the time called the “last nail in communism's coffin”. The country now hopes to shut or sell all but 100 of the state's companies. It also plans to lease 100,000 hectares of farmland.

The assets are likely to sell at a steep discount, given the Russian onslaught. One power plant belonging to Centrenergopro that Ukraine had hoped to privatise has been mostly destroyed in a Russian missile strike and fire.

The United Mining and Chemical Company, the largest titanium and zirconium miner in Europe, has a starting price of £70 million. Ukraine says seven investors have expressed interest.

Bidding for the Ocean Plaza shopping centre, which houses sharks and manta rays in an aquarium, as well as a beach club and karting track, will begin at £30 million. Before the government seized it in 2022, it was owned by the daughter of the Russian oligarch Arkady Rotenberg, a childhood judo partner of President Putin. Proceeds from its sale will go toward restoring civilian infrastructure, Polishchuk said.

The money from other auctions will go “to support the military, bringing us one step closer to victory”, he added.



Kyiv's Hotel Ukraine has a starting price of £20 million



# Don't hand Le Pen the keys to power, urges Macron

France  
Charles Bremner Paris

President Macron has urged the moderate parties of France to join him in a "new democratic force" to defeat the hard-right bloc that could be swept to power in the snap election he called after the National Rally's victory in Sunday's European polls.

In combative form, Macron railed against the "defeatism" sweeping the Paris elite and rejected accusations that he was gambling with the future of France by calling a parliamentary election for the end of the month.

He had no choice, he told a press conference, given that a total of 50 per cent of voters in Sunday's elections had "voted for the extremes". Marine Le Pen's National Rally took 31 per cent and the hard-left Unbowed France party of Jean-Luc Mélenchon won 10 per cent, taking fourth place. Other hard-left and hard-right parties scored about 9 per cent.

"You can't tell the French, 'We're continuing as if nothing had happened.' That's not respecting them, that's not listening to them," Macron said. The country faces a historic moment of "clarification" now, he added, rather than in three years' time, when the next presidential and parliamentary elections are due. "I do not want to give the keys to power to the far right in 2027. I fully take responsibility for starting this process of clarification," he said.

As Macron was speaking, a leadership drama verging on farce played out at the conservative Republicans party. Eric Ciotti, its chief, was sacked in an

anonymous vote by his senior colleagues for announcing that he had made an election pact with the Rally. Ciotti, 58, an MP for the Côte d'Azur region, locked himself into the party headquarters and said he remained its leader because only the votes of all party members could oust him.

Macron admitted that his administration, which has been in power for seven years, had made mistakes. It had failed to move quickly enough to remedy a feeling of dispossession driven by economic hardship, crime and immigration, he said. Anger and resentment were felt by people struggling to "get by even when they're working".

He added: "We're not perfect, we haven't done everything right, but we have results ... and above all, we know how to act."

Voters had voiced genuine anger when they flocked to Le Pen's party, led by her 28-year-old protégé, Jordan Bardella, he said, but National Rally had no remedies and its promises would lead to national bankruptcy. He urged the centre-left Socialist party, Greens and the conservative Republicans to join his centrist Renaissance camp in a "radical new" coalition of democrats.

"I hope that when the time comes, men and women of goodwill who will have been able to say no to the extremes will come together, will put themselves in a position to build a shared, sincere project that is useful to the country," Macron said.

Socialist and moderate conservative leaders are unlikely to grasp Macron's offer of a broad alliance. He talked of opening his government to new ideas from both sides but an alliance has been rejected in the past. The two former ruling parties were reduced to rumps, with a fraction of their previous MPs, after Macron's presidential victory in 2017.

Macron was scathing about the upheaval his decision to call an election has caused the Republicans. Ciotti's alliance with Le Pen horrified his colleagues because it breached decades of refusal of any link to the anti-immigrant party founded by her father Jean-Marie Le Pen.

"The masks are coming off" in the party of the late Charles de Gaulle, Macron said. He added that Ciotti had "signed a pact with the devil and ... in a few hours turned its back on the legacy of de Gaulle".

He rebuffed suggestions from senior figures in his own camp that he should keep his distance from the campaign because of his unpopularity with voters.

Macron also ruled out the possibility that he could resign in the event of defeat in the second round of the parliamentary elections, on July 7. "I want to nip that idea in the bud," he said.

As the parties scrambled to field candidates in 577 constituencies, an opinion poll for Le Figaro showed National Rally far ahead of Renaissance, with 35 per cent of the vote compared with 16 per cent for Macron's party.

The centre must hold, Letters, page 26



Head of a Woman with a White Mantilla, by Sorolla, and Diricksen's Portrait of a Gentleman, below, are among the disputed pieces

jewellery, crockery, ceramics, textiles and liturgical ornaments, as well as some paintings, sculptures and furniture, make up the majority of the 5,126 pieces whose origin has been documented."

It said that most came from "seizures made by the republic to temporarily safeguard goods of artistic interest and which were never returned to their owners".

The works include a watercolour by Joaquín Sorolla, a relief from the National Sculpture Museum in Valladolid and miniatures from the Museum of Romanticism in Madrid. The regime has found one collection that came from looting. It added that the regime had seized many works from a dealer, José Weissberger, that are now in the National Museum of Decorative Arts.

However, lawyers acting for families claiming seized works are frustrated at the slow pace and patchy nature of the research.

Several works not included in the inventory are *Head of a Woman with a White Mantilla*, by Sorolla, which is in the collection of the Prado but is claimed by the heirs of the Marquis of Villalonga, and a pair of portraits attributed to Felipe Diricksen, which are in a state-run paradox hotel and have been claimed by Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, a historian whose family opposed Franco.

The ministry said that the inventory had been drawn up in keeping with the government's Law of Democratic Memory, which aims to help regime victims and purge its remaining vestiges, such as titles created during the dictatorship.

## Spain seeks to return art plundered by Franco

The Spanish Civil War and the dictatorship of General Franco resulted in the greatest plunder and movement of works of art in the country's history, experts say (Isambard Wilkinson writes).

Now Pedro Sánchez, the prime minister, has taken a big step towards

reuniting families with stolen artworks by publishing an inventory of more than 5,000 seized pieces held in state museum collections.

The move opens the door to claims from the descendants of those whose works of art were not returned to them by Franco's regime, whether because they were its political enemies, because the pieces were lost in the chaos and aftermath of the 1936-1939 conflict, or because they were given to institutions or the dictator's supporters.

"From tomorrow, people who locate an



asset they own will be able to claim it and we will study it," said Ernest Urtasun, the culture minister. His ministry added: "Objects such as

## AfD official's partner 'gave Hitler salute'

Germany  
David Crossland Berlin

A senior public official in the hard-right AfD has confirmed reports that he is in a relationship with a former neo-Nazi.

Robert Sesselmann, who won the party's first municipal management post when he was elected in the eastern district of Sonneberg in June last year, admitted in comments to Bild newspaper yesterday that Angela Schaller, a former extremist who has posed with a portrait of Hitler, has been his partner since last month.

Sesselmann said he had been unaware of her past or that she had been active in the far-right NPD party or its successor party, Heimat. "I can assure you that I strive to fulfil my duties as a district administra-

tor conscientiously and that this relationship has no influence on my cross-party and neutral work," he said.

Schaller lost her job in the care sector in 2016 when the Workers' Welfare Association learnt of photos showing her posing with a swastika flag and a portrait of Hitler.

Groups monitoring Germany's neo-Nazis have published social media posts in which she is seen giving a Hitler salute while wearing a dirndl; kissing a person wearing a Hitler mask; and holding hands with the Holocaust denier Ursula Haverbeck, 95.

Schaller has also signed off at least one social media post with "Sieg Heil!", according to the anti-Nazi group Jena-SHK, which broke

Angela Schaller denies ties to neo-Nazi groups

the news of her relationship with Sesselmann last week. She has spoken at rallies by the right-wing extremist party Die Rechte and images posted online show her holding the black, white and red flag of the German Reich.

She could not be reached for comment but told Jena-SHK that she had not been active on the right-wing scene since 2019 and was no longer a member of any party. "I distance myself from any Nazi ideology and no longer have any contact with the people from back then," she said in a statement.

The AfD made gains in the European elections on Sunday and emerged as the strongest party in eastern Germany despite scandals, including allegations that prominent members have taken money from Russia and China.

Most of the AfD's 77 MPs in the Bundestag boycotted a speech by President Zelensky of Ukraine on Tuesday, calling him a "war and beggar president".



## World

# Outback farmer digs up new species of dinosaur

## Australia

Bernard Lagan Sydney

Bones found by an Australian farmer in the outback have proved to be the remains of a new species of prehistoric flying reptile.

Scientists said that the bones found in central Queensland were from a previously unknown species of pterosaur, a giant winged reptile that lived 100 million years ago.

Kevin Petersen, an avocado farmer with a deep interest in palaeontology, found the bones in a fossil-rich area where a 100-million-year-old pterosaur, an aquatic carnivorous reptile, was discovered in 1989.

"I was checking another fossil and walking back to the car when I noticed bones sticking out of the ground," Petersen, 43, said about the discovery that he made in 2021. "I instantly knew what it was. Pterosaur bones are super-rare and distinctive."

Scientists from Curtin University in Western Australia confirmed that the remains were a previously unidentified species of pterosaur. In recognition of Petersen's discovery, the species has been given the

scientific name *Haliskia peterseni*.

Based on the shape of its skull, arrangement of teeth and shape of a shoulder bone, a research team led by Adele Pentland, a PhD student at Curtin, identified the specimen as a type of anhanguera, whose remains have been found in Brazil, China, England, Morocco, Spain and the US.

With a wingspan of about 15ft (4.6m), *Haliskia* would have been a "fearsome predator", Pentland said, when much of central western Queensland was "covered by a vast inland sea". The skeleton is 22 per cent complete.

Pterosaurs were the first animals after insects to evolve powered flight by flapping their wings to generate lift and travel through the air. They evolved into dozens of species. Some were as large as an F-16 fighter, while others were as small as a paper plane, according to the American Museum of Natural History.

Petersen said his discovery was an exciting boost for science and education. "I'm thrilled that my discovery is a new species as my passion lies in helping shape our modern knowledge of prehistoric species," he said.



Royal progress A king penguin picks a careful path through a herd of elephant seals on South Georgia island as it heads for the sea

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# Gangsters jailed for killing crime reporter

## The Netherlands

Bruno Waterfield Brussels

In doggedly trying to find answers to the cold cases and unsolved crimes that plagued police forces and families, Peter de Vries made his name. Yesterday, after three years, the case of his own assassination was put to rest, after three men were found guilty of his murder.

The Dutch journalist, famed for exposing corruption and shadowy figures in the underworld, was shot in the head on a residential street in Amsterdam as he left a television studio on the evening of July 6, 2021.

A nearby resident heard shots and found De Vries on the ground, his face bloodied. He could not speak, she said, and she held his hand while they waited for help to arrive.

Minutes later the gunman sent a text message to his co-conspirators describing the act: "That bullet went straight through his head. Everything shot. Nice. That blood. Everyone screamed. He didn't move any more."

De Vries had been shot five times. He died in hospital nine days later.

The gunman, a failed rapper from Rotterdam named Delano Geerman, 24, and the getaway driver, Kamiel Egert, 38, were caught trying to escape. The head of the murder operation, Krystian M, 28, also used the names "Hitler" and "Stalin".

Geerman and Egert were sentenced to 28 years in prison. M was sentenced to 26 years.

A cocaine mafia kingpin called Ridouan Taghi, 46, is alleged to have organised the plot from his prison cell. He was jailed for life in February for other killings as the "undisputed leader" of a "murder organisation".

During the trial the high-security court in Amsterdam, known as The Bunker, was told that the gang were plotting to kidnap Mark Rutte, the prime minister, and to target the country's royal family. The con-

spiracy was deemed serious enough that Princess Amalia, the heir to the throne, had to live in secret in Madrid for more than a year for fear she would be killed or kidnapped. Rutte was placed under 24-hour protection by an armed police unit after the detection of surveillance by "spotters" linked to the plot.

De Vries, 64, was targeted because he was an adviser to a key witness and former gang member turned informant, Nabil Bakkali, in the prosecution of Taghi. There was a €150,000 bounty placed on De Vries's head.

His murder was a shock to the Netherlands and exposed the power of Taghi and the wider drug mafia.

De Vries was a household name in the Netherlands for his campaigns against miscarriages of justice and investigations of unsolved crimes. His book on the 1983 kidnapping of the beer magnate Freddy Heineken was adapted into a Hollywood movie starring Anthony Hopkins.

The reporter won a current affairs Emmy in 2008 for his work on the disappearance in 2005 of the US teenager Natalee Holloway on the Caribbean island of Aruba, including a TV confrontation with her suspected killer.

King Willem-Alexander, Amalia's father, described the murder as "an attack on the cornerstone of our constitutional state and therefore also an attack on the rule of law".

A protected witness known only as "5089", or Eddy, a gang member turned crown witness, gave evidence that the assassins were planning to target the prime minister and royal family in a

plot that had already been detected by Dutch intelligence.

The same witness said that M arranged the murder on behalf of a Moroccan man he called "Uncle", believed by prosecutors to be Taghi. To the dismay of the De Vries family, Taghi was not in the dock, having never been linked by the evidence to the assassination.

CCTV images showed De Vries leaving a television studio in Amsterdam at 7.26pm on July 6, 2021, and Geerman walking behind him two minutes later. Five shots were heard at 7.28pm, with De Vries seen to collapse.

Erickson O, 29, and Gerower M, 27, were jailed for filming the murder on smartphones and posting the images on social media of De Vries as he lay mortally wounded.

Geerman and Egert tried to flee in a silver Renault Kadjar but were arrested 50 minutes after the shooting because the car's number plates had been caught on CCTV.

Geerman's DNA was found on the cartridge clip of the converted starting pistol used to kill De Vries and both suspects had gunpowder residue on their hands. A Heckler & Koch MP5 machinegun was also seized. Both men failed to follow instructions from M to "eat the SIM card" on a Google Pixel phone and to use the sub-machinegun to attack police.

Decrypted messages revealed the callous conversation between Geerman and M. "Bro ahahahah. Bullets right through his head and body. Really succeeded," Geerman wrote after the attack.

M apologised in court after emotional testimony from the De Vries family. "I want you to know that I didn't want this to happen," he said.

Peter de Vries was  
shot five times



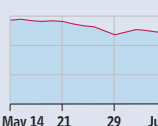


# Business

## WORLD MARKETS (Change on the day)

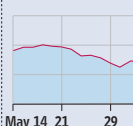
### FTSE 100

8,215.48 (+67.67) ▲



### Dow Jones

38,712.21 (-35.21) ▼



## COMMODITIES

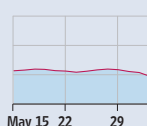
### Gold

\$2,334.97 (+27.70) ▲



### Brent crude (6pm)

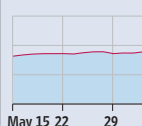
\$82.75 (+0.62) ▲



## CURRENCIES

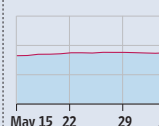
### £/\$

\$1.2841 (+0.0118) ▲



### £/€

€1.1842 (-0.0012) ▼



# Union will back Royal Mail takeover in return for part-ownership

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

The largest trade union in the Royal Mail is prepared to support a £3.6-billion takeover by Daniel Kretinsky if the Czech billionaire gives the workforce part-ownership via a "collective trust" and strengthens commitments to protect employees.

Kretinsky is due to publish his formal takeover offer for Royal Mail's London-listed parent International Distribution

Services within the next fortnight. He is offering holders of the 73 per cent of IDS shares that he does not already own 360p a share plus 10p in dividends.

The final outcome of the offer is likely to be decided by the next government after the general election. Under the National Security and Investment Act, ministers have the power to veto an overseas takeover of a national strategic asset. The decision will most likely fall to Jonathan Reynolds, Labour's

shadow business spokesman. The Communication Workers Union (CWU), which represents 110,000 of the 130,000 Royal Mail employees has, until now, backed renationalisation of the company.

However, with its hand forced by Kretinsky's approach and no sign that Labour supports renationalisation, the union has opened talks with his representatives and expects to meet him next week. Dave Ward, general secre-

tary of the CWU, is expected to tell Kretinsky that his current time-restricted offers on jobs, union recognition, pensions, pay and conditions do not go far enough.

Ward will present Kretinsky with a plan that employees should be granted a stake in the company held by a collective trust and have representation on decision-making boards. In return, says Ward, the union will abide by agreements and move on from a history of

industrial strife. "We cannot support the current board of IDS and we believe the current Royal Mail ownership and governance business model is broken," Ward said. "[Kretinsky's officials] said they recognise that getting the union and the workforce on board is absolutely critical [to a successful takeover]."

The Labour Party is likely to outline its thinking on the takeover in the launch of its manifesto tomorrow.

Union's pitch to Kretinsky, pages 34-35

# House sales falter after rates blow

## Rising mortgage costs halt market's recovery

Tom Howard

The housing market's nascent recovery in the early months of this year has already "slipped into reverse", with mortgage rates having edged higher again in recent weeks.

Estate agents are taking fewer inquiries from would-be buyers, agreeing fewer sales and seeing more price reductions than they were only a month or so ago, according to the most recent industry survey from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

Tarrant Parsons, senior economist at the RICS, said that the drop-off in confidence among prospective home movers largely reflected "the upward moves seen in mortgage rates over the past couple of months".

Stubborn inflation, particularly in the services sector, and strong wage growth has led to financial markets pricing in a much later first cut to interest rates than most had expected entering 2024. That has led to mortgage providers putting up their prices in recent weeks, with the average five-year fixed rate mortgage back above 5 per cent for the first time since January. Estate agents have also said that the general election, called for July 4, has thrown more uncertainty into the market.

In May, more agents than not reported a drop-off in interest from prospective buyers, having seen demand pick up over spring. It was a relatively small majority — a net 8 per cent — but marks the weakest reading the RICS has seen since last November.

Demand is proving especially weak in the south of England, where house

prices are generally higher and so mortgages are larger.

"The market has reached a state of inertia, with everybody wanting for a Bank of England interest rate cut and the result of the general election," said Tony Jamieson of Clarke Gammon estate agents in Guildford, Surrey. Edward Rook of Knight Frank in Sevenoaks, Kent, agreed that "until interest rates reduce, the market will remain subdued".

In April most agents agreed that they were selling more homes than they had been in March. However, sales fell again in May and prices are also dropping. A net 17 per cent of those polled reported another fall in house prices last month, up from a net 7 per cent in April and the lowest reading since January.

The RICS said that prices pulled back "in virtually all regions of England" in May, although it noted that agents in Scotland and Northern Ireland "continue to see a very different picture" with prices rising in both countries.

Most estate agents expect prices will continue to edge lower over the summer, although the longer-term outlook for the market is much brighter.

Not since April 2022 has the RICS seen such confidence from agents that prices will be higher in a year's time than they are now.

"Respondents continue to envisage a more positive trend in sales activity coming through over the year ahead, although this is likely predicated on the Bank of England being able to start lowering interest rates in the coming months," Parsons said.



## Billionaire Slim puts weight behind BT boss

Carlos Slim, the Mexican billionaire, has taken a 3.2 per cent stake in BT. Analysts suggested that the investment was a vote of confidence in Allison Kirkby, the telecoms group's new chief executive, who is pursuing a turnaround strategy. Page 35

# 'Quiet quitters' fuel productivity crisis

Dominic Walsh

A generation of "quiet quitters" are costing the economy £257 billion in lost output and pushing the country down the league table of the wealthiest nations, new research suggests.

A Gallup report on the state of the global workplace blames a creeping lack of motivation over the past decade as workers who were once actively engaged are dragged down, experiencing sadness, stress and even anger in the workplace.

Those affected, dubbed "quiet quitters", are no longer breaking their backs to get work done, adding to the productivity crisis. Gallup reckons that only 10 per cent of British workers are putting

extra effort into their jobs, potentially costing the UK 11 per cent of GDP. The UK ranks 10th of 38 European countries in the anger stakes and 15th in terms of stress, although a lot of Britons seem to spend their days dealing with feelings of sadness, coming in second behind Northern Cyprus.

Almost half of us reckon this is a good time to find a job, while almost a third say they are actually looking for another job. Jon Clifton, chief executive of Gallup, said: "The global workplace can play a significant role in addressing the world's mental health crisis. As detailed in this year's report, changing how we manage people is critical for reducing stress at work and in life."

How workers feel about their jobs

often relates to multiple, sometimes wildly varying factors. So despite its balmy Mediterranean climate and golden beaches, the report found Northern Cyprus to be a European region where stress and anger are a daily phenomenon among workers.

Asked to evaluate the quality of their lives, the Turkish Cypriots in the north of the island come last out of 38 countries. They top the table in the daily stress and anger categories, while sadness is also an everyday experience.

Turkish Cypriots are also none too keen on the jobs situation, considering it a bad time to find a new position, although at least they do not come last, ranking 36th, marginally ahead of Italy and Spain.



## Business

## Need to know

**1** The housing market's recovery has already "slipped into reverse", with mortgage rates having edged higher again. Estate agents are taking fewer inquiries from would-be buyers, agreeing fewer sales and seeing more price reductions than only a month or so ago, according to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. **Page 33**

**2** The Communication Workers Union is prepared to support a £3.6 billion takeover of Royal Mail owner International Distribution Services by Daniel Kretinsky if he gives the workforce part-ownership via a "collective trust" and firms up commitments to employees. **Page 33**

**3** "Quiet quitters" are costing the economy £257 billion in lost output and pushing the UK down the league table of the wealthiest nations, research suggests. A Gallup report reckons only 10 per cent of British workers are putting extra effort into their jobs, potentially costing the UK 11 per cent of GDP. **Page 33**

**4** Starling Bank has signalled that it is closer to a stock market listing in London after higher interest rates propelled the digital-only lender to its third year of profits. It posted a 55 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £301.1 million in the year to March 31.

**5** The Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim has taken a 3.2 per cent stake in BT as the telecoms group pursues a turnaround under its new chief executive Allison Kirkby. Analysts said the investment was a vote of confidence in Kirkby.

**6** Economic growth fell flat in April after one of the wettest months in more than a decade kept consumers away from the high street. Figures showed growth at 0 per cent, down from 0.4 per cent in March, in line with economists' forecasts. **Page 36**

**7** Brussels is raising tariffs on imports of some Chinese electric cars to almost 50 per cent. The European Commission said it would impose them next month unless China answered complaints of unfair competition, in particular subsidies to the supply chain. **Page 38**

**8** Antonio Simoes, the new chief executive at Legal & General, has promised a share buyback of £200 million, set new targets and jettisoned one of his most senior lieutenants as he set out his plan for the savings and investment group. **Page 39**

**9** Activist investor Nelson Peltz's firm Trian Partners has taken a "significant" stake in pest control company Rentokil. Trian said its position put it among the top ten shareholders and it had reached out to the company. **Page 40**

**10** A fund aiming to tap into cut-price commercial property has pulled its stock market float after failing to win over enough investors. Special Opportunities Reit was looking to raise £500 million to buy student halls of residence, warehouses, data centres, retail parks and budget hotels. **Page 41**

# Football fans' model will be union pitch to Kretinsky

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

Imagine a company where the workforce has part-ownership via a collective employee trust, with the promise of input into how the business is run and a share in profits in return for a pledge to end industrial strife.

This is the vision of Dave Ward, general secretary of the Communication Workers Union (CWU), for his 110,000 members who make up most of the Royal Mail's 130,000-strong workforce. It is an unachievable mission amid the mutual fear and distrust that exists, Ward says, under the current management led by Keith Williams, chairman of International Distribution Services, Royal Mail's parent company.

It is, he adds, why he is leading talks with Daniel Kretinsky, the Czech billionaire who would be the new owner of IDS and the centuries-old national institution of the Royal Mail.

Rather than a sellout to an owner from a faraway country of which we know little, Ward says it is a one-time opportunity to hold Kretinsky to his word to be a "for-life" owner of Royal Mail — and one that should be grasped by Labour if it wins power next month.

Speaking before a meeting next week with Kretinsky, Ward, 64, a former telegram boy who has led the CWU for the past nine years, said he had been forced to change his pro-nationalisation stance on the Royal Mail by the "political and economic realities".

Instead he is lobbying Kretinsky, 48, who last month had a £3.6 billion takeover of IDS recommended by its board, and the Labour leadership to look at a "new business and governance model" for Royal Mail.

"The current IDS board has no strategy to make the Royal Mail successful," Ward says from his office at CWU

headquarters in Wimbledon, southwest London. "The members are demoralised because of the way they are being treated, attacked and alienated by management."

The only option, he says, is to lobby Kretinsky for "radical change". Ward has already met Kretinsky's representatives. "We laid out our concerns that the offer of contractual obligations are not broad enough, do not go on for long enough and aren't strong enough."

Those promises, variously consisting of five, three or two-year pledges, are: not to unilaterally end the universal nationwide service; not to load the company with debt; to retain the Royal Mail name and UK headquarters; not to raid the £1.4 billion pension surplus; to continue to recognise the trade unions; to abide by pay and conditions agreements; and not to asset-strip the company by selling off Royal Mail's profitable European business GLS.

"We made it clear we are looking for the safeguards that the workforce want," Ward says. "We said we believe the current business model is broken but there is a chance to align the interests of workers, customers and the company for the benefit of the UK economy. There needs to be investment in the workforce and infrastructure to enable the company to adapt to changing market conditions. The company has to grow revenues and get into the next-day parcels delivery market in a much more serious



Keith Williams, left, chairs International Distribution Services, Royal Mail's

way ... unless the workforce are on board, Royal Mail won't succeed."

Their response was interesting, he says. "They said getting the union and the workforce on board is absolutely critical and they want to work with us." Ward will go into that summit with Kretinsky urging the creation of a "collective trust" with a yet to be determined per-

centage ownership stake in Royal Mail. It is a model seen at some German football clubs and in Britain at Exeter City, where major strategic decisions can be vetoed by a supporters' trust.

"Our fear has been the issue that has caused all the disputes in recent years: that IDS management want to take the parcels away from the letters and out-source parcel delivery to a different company with a different workforce," Ward says. "Daniel Kretinsky has said he wants to own Royal Mail for life. We're saying we'll match that under a different ownership model and new business model."

The CWU does not want token boardroom employee directors but



## Starling Bank edges closer to London listing

Ben Martin Banking Editor

Starling Bank has signalled that it is edging closer to a stock market listing in London after higher interest rates propelled the digital-only lender to its third year of profits.

John Mountain, the interim chief executive, said that a potential flotation of the business was being "extensively discussed" with the group's shareholders as it posted a 55 per cent jump in annual pre-tax profits to £301.1 million in the 12 months to March 31.

The lender was buoyed by elevated rates which sent its net interest income, the difference between what it charges for loans and pays on deposits, surging by about 70 per cent to £592.9 million. Customer accounts climbed to 4.2 million from 3.6 million a year earlier.

In a potential setback for the bank, however, it disclosed that the City regulator had opened an investigation into Starling's compliance with the UK's anti-money laundering rules. It said the

Financial Conduct Authority had started its inquiry in November and that the potential impact of the investigation could be "material" but at this stage was "unquantifiable".

Starling was founded a decade ago and is one of a group of fast-growing digital-only lenders and fintechs that are taking market share from the high-street incumbents that have long dominated the banking industry.

Until a year ago it was run by Anne Boden, 64, its founder, who long maintained that the London stock market was the ultimate destination for the group.

Mountain said on Wednesday that London was Starling's "natural home" and that it was "not considering other markets" for a share sale, although he did not give a timeframe for an initial public offering.

His comments are a fillip for London. There are concerns in the City and in Westminster that the UK's appeal to companies is waning, after a string of

businesses opted to move their main stock market listings to New York and IPO activity slumped.

It will probably fall to Raman Bhatia, who joins as Starling's permanent chief executive this month, to lead it through an IPO. Bhatia, 45, was poached from

## £301m

Starling's annual pre-tax profits, an increase of 55 per cent

Source: Starling Bank

the energy supplier Ovo to run Starling, which has been led on an interim basis by Mountain, 45, its former chief operating officer, since Boden stepped down last year.

Neither Starling nor the regulator gave details of the watchdog's investigation. It is not the first time that the lender has drawn scrutiny. Starling was a provider of state-backed emergency

loans to small businesses during the Covid pandemic.

Two years ago it was accused by Lord Agnew of Oulton, the former anti-fraud minister, of having acted "against the government and taxpayers' interests" by allegedly failing in its anti-fraud duties with its lending under the coronavirus bounce back loan scheme. Starling vehemently denied Agnew's claims.

Providing government-guaranteed loans during Covid turbocharged Starling's growth, although it has since pushed heavily into mortgages. As a result, home loans accounted for 81.7 per cent of its lending as of March 31, compared with 70.5 per cent a year earlier.

It booked a £12.2 million impairment charge for potential bad loans, up 43.3 per cent on 2023, which it attributed to "the growth and continued seasoning" of its mortgage lending and "increased default rates in the unsecured proportion of SME lending".





parent; relations with the Communication Workers Union have been strained

representation in decision-making boards from the top to the bottom of the company, across regions and covering remuneration and pensions. It is about creating trust with local workforces, Ward says. "The percentage ownership stake needs to be significant and meaningful, but ownership in itself isn't enough. The governance structure has to change and we'd be looking for a mandatory profit share, subject to achieving certain goals."

He says the biggest red line is that IDS management has recommended Kretinsky's promised obligations without consulting the workforce.

The default munition of any strong trade union is industrial action. But the

CWU has another weapon: the post-Brexit legislation of the National Security and Investment Act, which gives ministers power for the first time in a generation to block overseas takeovers.

"Kretinsky must know there is a lot of opposition to the sale of Royal Mail, a legitimate concern across the UK over whether it is right that an equity investor from overseas who we know nothing about is going to own Royal Mail," Ward says.

The CWU has had "productive conversations" with the Labour leadership, he adds. "There is a lot in this for Labour if they are willing to work to get to a model that could be good for the UK economy, workers and customers."

## Billionaire Slim grabs 3.2% stake in BT

Louisa Clarence-Smith  
US Business Editor

The Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim has taken a 3.2 per cent stake in BT as the telecoms group pursues a turnaround under its new chief executive Allison Kirkby.

Slim, 84, amassed the stake via companies controlled by his family, according to a stock exchange filing from BT. Analysts said the investment was a vote of confidence in Kirkby, 56, who plans to cut costs at BT, monetise its newly built fibre network and exit some markets to focus more on the UK.

At the company's full-year results in May, BT announced an increase in its annual dividend of 3.9 per cent to 8p and said it expected to more than double its free cashflow to £3 billion by the end of the decade. Shares in the company rose by more than 17 per cent on the day the results were published.

Kirkby, who took on the chief executive post in February, said BT had

passed the peak of its intensive infrastructure spending a year earlier than expected and was moving into the next phase of its growth.

Slim is a telecoms mogul who, with his family, controls America Movil, the biggest mobile telecoms firm in Latin



The investment is seen as backing for Allison Kirkby, BT chief executive

America. He is the world's 17th-richest person, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, and joins other significant shareholders in BT including Patrick Drahi, the French-Israeli telecoms billionaire, and Deutsche Telekom, the German telecoms company.

Paolo Pescatore, an analyst at PPF Foresight, said that the investment was "a bolt out of the blue and one that un-

## Fed signals just one rate cut this year

Louisa Clarence-Smith

The US Federal Reserve has said that it expects to make only one rate cut this year, despite data showing that inflation has fallen faster than expected.

Officials kept borrowing costs at a 23-year high of 5.3 per cent last night and pushed back the start of rate cuts to possibly as late as December.

They projected just one rate cut of a single quarter-percentage point before the end of 2024. In March, the Fed predicted three quarter-percentage point interest rate cuts.

The decision to keep rates steady came after official data showed that US inflation fell by more than expected last month. Jerome Powell, the Fed chairman, said that inflation "has eased substantially" but was "still too high".

He said that officials still "need to see more good data to bolster our confidence" that inflation is returning to the Fed's 2 per cent target before cutting rates. The world's most powerful central bank rapidly lifted interest rates in 2022 and 2023 after inflation rose to a 40-year high.

Annual consumer price inflation in the United States fell from 3.4 per cent to 3.3 per cent last month, better than consensus expectations of no change, according to official data published yesterday. A measure of core inflation which strips out volatile components such as energy eased back to 3.4 per cent from 3.6 per cent in April.

Powell said the Fed's decision and outlook for interest rates had taken into account the latest data.

The median projection from rate-setters was for one quarter-point interest rate cut this year. Four Fed policymakers said there should be no cuts this year. Seven said they would like to make one quarter-point cut, while eight supported two cuts.

Forecasts show the US economy is still expected to grow at a slightly above-trend 2.1 per cent this year, with the unemployment rate remaining at its current 4 per cent through the year.

Treasury yields rose and stocks lost some of their gains from earlier in the day after the Powell's announcement. However, the S&P 500 closed 0.85 per cent higher, while the Nasdaq climbed 1.5 per cent to an all-time high. The Dow Jones industrial average was flat.

derlines the confidence in BT's strategy and growth plans under Kirkby's stewardship".

A spokesman for BT said that the company welcomed "any investor who recognises the long-term value of our business" and will "look forward to engaging with Inbursa, just as we do with all investors".

Inbursa, owned by Slim, is a financial company which, through its subsidiaries, provides banking and related services in Mexico.

Pre-tax profit at BT fell by 31 per cent to £1.2 billion last year as it wrote down the value of past acquisitions. However, its revenue rose 1 per cent to £20.7 billion. Earnings before interest, tax and other charges rose to £8.1 billion, from £7.92 billion. It has forecast revenue growth of 0 to 1 per cent next year and pre-tax earnings of £8.2 billion.

Shares in the FTSE 100 company, which have fallen by a third in the last five years, closed up by 1½p, or 1.1 per cent, at 129½p.

## Peltz lining up his latest catch

BUSINESS COMMENTARY Alistair Osborne



Now we know what Nelson Peltz was up to with his fruitless 15-month proxy fight at Disney. Just a bit of shadow boxing with a cartoon mouse before moving on to the bigger stuff: the real-life rats at Rentokil Initial.

The activist investor's Triun Partners has taken an undisclosed but "significant position" in the UK-listed rodent catcher — enough to make it "a top ten shareholder" and lift Rentokil shares 14 per cent to 472½p (report, page 40). Peltz has also "reached out to Rentokil to discuss ideas and initiatives to improve shareholder value", with Triun looking "forward to working with Rentokil's leadership team" — even more, you'd think, than its chief executive Andy Ransom is itching to work with Peltz.

So, what does the activist want from a group valued at £10.5 billion before he showed up? Well, now 81, Peltz is yet to build global renown for his skills at pulverising pests — whether rats, termites, cockroaches or bed bugs. But he has proved a whizz at spotting trapped value: everywhere from Cadbury Schweppes to Procter & Gamble to his previous UK foray, Unilever. Even at the home of Mickey Mouse, the shares went up, regardless of his failure to land a board seat.

The obvious Rentokil play? Probably not trying to merge it with Unilever, even if Mr and Mrs Rodent and their burgeoning family can be very partial to some of its brands: Hellmann's mayo, Marmite, Pot Noodle and Magnum ice cream, in particular, whatever their disliking for Domestos and Dove.

No, Peltz's simplest move would be to push Rentokil to shift its listing to America: home to \$3.3 billion of its \$5.4 billion annual sales since Ransom bought the termite king Terminix for \$6.7 billion in December 2021. That deal made Rentokil US No 1. Yet, on analyst forecasts, it trades on a forward earnings multiple of only 18 times versus 45 for its US rival Rollins.

Such valuation arbitrage isn't quite that simple, though. The key reason for Rentokil's flagging valuation is that Ransom's Terminix buy is so far proving a bit of a pest. The shares stood at 636p before his big cash and shares deal, involving a huge slug of new Rentokil shares — 643 million of them. But, post-Covid, US demand has tailed off.

At March's full-year figures, Ransom said he was "confident" that he's en route to creating "a powerhouse business in the world's largest pest control market", also upping the gross synergies target from integrating Terminix by \$50 million to \$325 million. Yet he also reported organic North American sales growth of just 3.1 per cent: not only below what Rentokil sees as typical market growth of 4 per cent to 4.5 per cent a year but less than half of Rollins's 8 per cent increase.

Ransom has brought in his "Right Way 2" plan to pep up marketing, sales leads and staff retention. Yet it's no easy feat to keep the workers sweet when he's also shutting more than a hundred Terminix branches and trying to push more sales

through bigger sites. Guidance for North American sales growth this year is only 2 per cent to 4 per cent.

Can Peltz help with any of that? Break-up strategies are often his thing: Unilever, where he muscled his way onto the board, is now spinning off its ice cream wing. And maybe Rentokil could cut debt by selling its hygiene and France Workwear divisions, chipping in a fifth of sales. Yet it's the pest profits that count. Peltz is yet to prove he knows how to catch more of them.

## Lost property

Some Special Opportunities are easy to resist. Take the one being touted around by Simon Lee, Freddie Brooks and John White. The team behind LXI Reit were trying to raise £500 million to float a new property fund. But, as pointed out here last week, the IPO prospectus was light on a crucial bit of detail (report, page 41).

Nowhere in the 161-page opus for Special Opportunities Reit was anything resembling full disclosure of their links to Alvarium — the investment firm now part of US-listed AITi Global, that brought us the scandal-plagued Home Reit. Yes, such omissions are not the only reason the trio have now had to pull their float, after failing to raise "the £250 million minimum ... required".

The fund, aiming to snap up the likes of student digs, retail parks and budget hotels at "bottom of the market" prices, had an obvious flaw. Why pay the trio a full 100p a share to buy such properties when you can already find them elsewhere at a chunky discount to net asset value?

Yet it hardly helped that all three were ex-directors of the company that advised the forerunner to Home Reit: the private Home Long Income Fund that, like the listed housing-for-the-homeless basket case, is now being investigated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Lee, Special's chief executive, has denied having anything to do with Home Reit. But that does not tally with the view of other former Alvarium personnel. And, if he really didn't, he's yet to explain why he sent an email to the "Alvarium Partners and Supervisory Board", updating them on Home Reit's second capital raising and giving a "huge thank you" to the team. Public market investors are right to have turned down his latest venture.

## Nothing to gain

That's election campaigns for you: claim credit for the stuff you can't control and ignore the stuff you can. Rishi Sunak kicked off this one by declaring that a vote for the Tories was a vote for cuts to interest rates — so triggering a row over whether he was trying to undermine the independence of the Bank of England. Still, he does have something to do with GDP, where growth for April has come in at an exciting zero per cent (report, page 36). No attempt from the PM to claim credit this time. Funny that.

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## Business

# Rainy days shrink GDP growth to zero

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

Economic growth fell flat in April after one of the wettest months in more than a decade kept consumers away from the high street.

Official figures showed growth at 0 per cent, down from 0.4 per cent in March and in line with economists' forecasts. It was the worst monthly performance since December, when the economy contracted by 0.1 per cent.

The weak performance was driven by falls in retail sales and construction during the washout that month. Retail sales volumes fell by 2.3 per cent, dragging down GDP growth by about 0.2 per cent. The construction sector shrank by 1.4 per cent, the third consecutive month of declines, the Office for National Statistics said.

The growth-driving services sector, which accounts for about three quarters of Britain's economy, expanded by 0.2 per cent, with strong performance in the IT and computing sectors. The worst-performing part of the services sector was wholesale and retail trade and car repair, which fell by

Retail sales fell by 2.3 per cent, dragging down GDP growth by about 0.2 per cent



MIKE KEMP/IN PICTURES

● The UK's trade deficit widened sharply in April, driven by a number of one-off factors including imports of aircraft from France. Official figures showed the monthly trade balance grew from £1.1 billion in March to £6.8 billion, far higher than forecasts of £1.4 billion.

The widening trade deficit was driven by a jump in goods imports of 8.2 per cent, which consisted mainly of machinery, transport and fuels, according to the Office for National Statistics. The export of goods to the rest of the world remained stable in April, with falling sales to the European Union compensated for by demand from other markets.

The ONS said the jump in imports was down to demand for fruit and vegetables from the Netherlands, machinery from Germany, cars from Spain and aircraft from France.

The import and export of UK services, which have performed well after Brexit, both rose by less than 1 per cent in April.

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2 per cent on the month, according to the statistics office.

Jeremy Hunt pointed to figures showing that the economy grew by 0.7 per cent over the three months to April, the fastest expansion for almost two years. "There is more to do, but the economy is turning a corner and inflation is back down to normal," he said.

Rachel Reeves, Labour's shadow chancellor, countered that the figures showed the Conservatives had broken one of their main election promises. "Rishi Sunak claims we have turned a corner, but the

economy has stalled and there is no growth," she said.

The economy has performed better than expected so far this year, accelerating by 0.6 per cent in the first three months of 2024, the fastest quarterly pace since Russia's invasion of Ukraine triggered an energy crisis in February 2022.

The first-quarter figures meant that the economy exited a short-lived recession that began at the end of 2023. Economists expect growth to bounce back after April and for output to expand in the

second quarter. The National Institute for Economics and Social Research think tank estimated that quarterly growth between April and June would reach 0.5 per cent, a small deceleration ahead of the general election.

Hailey Low, associate economist at the institute, said the economy was still "grappling with stagnation as low productivity and high economic inactivity curtail growth potential". She added: "Structural reforms and policies to boost public and private investment should be the focus for the next

government to enter a new era of higher economic growth," she said.

April's GDP figures are the last official growth numbers to be published before the election on July 4. Both major political parties have vowed to kick-start the economy after two years of stagnation, high inflation and rising interest rates.

Chris Hare, economist at HSBC, predicted that the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee would cut interest rates in August, after the general election, and before market projections which are betting on September.

## World faces 'staggering' oil glut by 2030

James Hurley

The world is facing a "staggering" surplus of oil by the end of the decade, the International Energy Agency has said.

Global demand will peak by 2029 and begin to contract the following year, the agency predicted, while the United States and other non-Opec countries will add to oil supply, resulting in a major surplus this decade.

The forecast from the Paris-based agency, which advises industrialised countries, moves forward its expected date for so-called "peak oil" demand by a year.

Its outlook contrasts with that of the Opec+ group of oil-producing nations, led by Saudi Arabia and Russia, which sees demand rising

long after 2029 in part due to a slower shift to cleaner fuels. The IEA said in its annual report that oil demand growth will plateau at 105.6 million barrels per day by 2029, before contracting slightly in 2030 as electric car use rises, efficiency improves and power generation moves away from oil.

The agency predicted that supply capacity will hit almost 114 million barrels per day by 2030, or a "staggering" 8 million barrels above projected demand, with non-Opec+ producers led by the US making up three-quarters of the capacity increase.

"This would result in levels of spare capacity never seen before other than at the height of the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020," the IEA said. Fatih Birol, executive

director of the IEA, said: "Oil companies may want to make sure their business strategies and plans are prepared for the changes taking place." A "massive cushion" of

**114m**

Projected supply capacity in barrels per day by the end of the decade

Source: IEA

extra oil could dash the efforts of Opec+ to manage market supply and bring in an era of lower prices, the agency said. A supply glut would also have wider reverberations, not least for Opec nations that depend on oil for a major part of government income. "Spare

capacity at such levels could have significant consequences for oil markets, including for producer economies in Opec and beyond, as well as for the US shale industry," the IEA said.

Analysts are split on which direction the oil price is likely to take in the near future. In the aftermath of the war in Ukraine and amid fears of supply shocks, higher oil prices were a key driver of inflation. The price of Brent crude, the international benchmark, has dipped in recent months and this week, fell below \$80 a barrel for the first time since February. The recent weakening oil price was triggered by the unwinding of supply cuts by the Opec+ group, which sought to prop up prices in the face of uncertain demand.

## Underinvestment in cities drags down economy

Emma Taggart

Underinvestment in the UK's main regional cities has contributed to a lack of economic growth and a drag on the nation's living standards, according to research.

A report from the Centre for Cities suggested that a failure to invest had resulted in low levels of productivity in cities such as Manchester, Glasgow and Birmingham.

The study by the think tank

found that investment was spread more evenly across a wide range of cities in the United States. Living standards in some of the UK's regional cities were also found to lag behind France, Germany and the US.

Lyons in France and Frankfurt in Germany were found to have greater levels of productivity, measured by the output of each worker, compared with Birmingham and Manchester. London was highlighted as consistently provid-

ing income and wealth to the rest of the UK. The report added that the gap in prosperity between the UK's regional cities and their European counterparts left the UK economy 8.8 per cent smaller than if they performed at the same level.

Italy, Japan and Canada all recorded productivity levels below the UK.

"The message for policymakers is to take note of why the US, France and Germany perform so much better than the UK. While

not the exclusive reason, a major part of this is the success of their big cities," Andrew Carter, chief executive of Centre for Cities, said.

"The size of cities like Manchester and Birmingham means they should have an advantage in attracting cutting-edge businesses. This is exactly what cities like Chicago, Munich and Lyons do, offering access to skilled workers, high-quality office space and 'spill-over' benefits from neighbouring firms," Carter added.



# Patrick Hosking

Fidelity fund well placed to benefit if China bounces back



“It is 12 years since I shadowed Anthony Bolton on a whistlestop tour of his investments in China. The softly spoken and donnish fund manager, who had for years been lionised as Britain's answer to Warren Buffett, was under pressure. Or as he put it, with typical understatement: “I can't say I'm totally unruffled.”

Stuck at Tianjin airport after a delay and sipping Dynasty wine, he ruefully confided: “If I ruin my reputation, I ruin my reputation.”

Investors in an earlier UK fund run by Bolton had seen £1,000 magicked into £143,000 over 28 years. He had come out of semi-retirement to try to replicate this brilliant record in the more alien world of the Chinese share market. He'd raised more than £600 million from 80,000 fans in a new listed investment vehicle, Fidelity China Special Situations.

It wasn't going well. China was proving altogether more slippery than the UK, with inferior standards of accounting, reporting and governance and the occasional outright fraud. FCSS was underperforming its benchmark and had slumped from a premium to net assets to a substantial discount. Investors had lost 22 per cent of their money and were saying Bolton had lost his touch.

We visited noodle factories, BMW dealerships and hotel chains. The message was upbeat but one couldn't help wondering whether something was getting lost in translation. Not even the bullish minder from Morgan Stanley, an enthusiastic member of the Chinese Communist Party who accompanied us everywhere, could entirely dispel the doubts.

Bolton retired two years later, with investors just about back in the black, but he never fully restored his reputation. That verdict was a little harsh. Bolton put in place the plausible strategy of backing small

China's economy struggled to recover from strict lockdowns



and medium-sized local companies in consumer-facing industries that still underpins the philosophy of FCSS, now a FTSE 250 company with a £1.1 billion valuation.

It has been a bumpy ride, the shares soaring close to 500p during lockdown only to plunge back again alongside a brutal sell-off in the Chinese share market. They are now at 216p, still more than double the original £1 issue price. There's also a modest and growing dividend.

In annual results this week, Bolton's successor Dale Nicholls disclosed that the trust's net asset value in the year to March slumped by 16.3 per cent, even allowing for dividends. Still, that compared with an 18.8 per cent fall in total return from the benchmark MSCI China index. FCSS had therefore “outperformed”. The company's problem has not been its stock-picking prowess; it has been its choice of investment universe. China has been a disastrous place to invest since 2021. Domestic share values since then have more than halved.

Exports have been weak; the residential property market has crashed. The economy has struggled to stir itself in the aftermath of the restrictive zero-Covid policy. Investor sentiment has been badly soured by Beijing's deteriorating relations with the West and its support for Putin.

Hong Kong's traditional role as accommodating vestibule is threatened as it becomes ever more authoritarian. As Lord Sumption remarked this week after resigning from the territory's highest court, Hong Kong is “slowly becoming a totalitarian state”. The Beijing-approved slogan of “One country, two systems” now looks more like “One country, full stop”.

Two further factors have worsened performance. One is the hefty gearing. For good or ill, FCSS has routinely spiced up its positions through leverage. In falling markets, that can be very painful. The performance last year was worsened by almost 4 percentage points because of that gearing, which still stands at a substantial 21

per cent of the portfolio. The other is the preference for smaller, less liquid stocks. Smaller company shares tend to do worse in market sell-offs and the same rules apply in China.

Nicholls has plausible reasons to expect a pick-up in domestic consumption, hopefully giving impetus to his stock picks. Households are strongly cashed up, with bags of spending power — if they choose to use it. They are returning to pre-Covid ways: rail travel has doubled this year, air travel has almost tripled, he says. Beijing is also moderately doing its stimulus bit, subsidising durable goods or supporting credit markets.

In the longer run, he's also enthused by the sheer level of innovation visible in the companies he backs. China's share of global patent applications is close to 50 per cent, he says. R&D spending continues to rise. New industries are seizing opportunities in robotics and automation, while older industries are consolidating fast. In healthcare, Chinese companies now have the third-largest number of innovative drugs in development. For the moment though, China remains unloved by both retail and institutional investors.

When Bolton created FCSS 14 years ago, China was widely billed as an exciting market simply too big, populous and fast-growing to ignore, and with a galloping middle class to tap into. Exactly the same adjectives are now applied to India instead, with UK investors flocking to buy into India-focused funds and investment trusts.

Indian shares are valued at 22 times profits, while Chinese ones languish at 9.2 times profits, according to recent Fidelity research. To switch to securities offering less than half as much potential profits bang for each buck is quite a bold exchange.

We may perhaps be at the moment of maximum pessimism about China. But if the pendulum begins to swing back, FCSS looks both cheap and well placed to benefit. Bolton, now composing operas in retirement, was always a fan of contrarian bets.

Patrick Hosking is Financial Editor of The Times

Ryan Bourne

Truss didn't help, but the Tories were really doomed by inflation

Austerity. Liz Truss's mini-budget. Partygate. Brexit. The highest tax burden in 70 years. Poo in rivers. Illegal small boat crossings. Insufficient housebuilding. Record immigration. Numerous scandals and general incompetence. Bad leadership.

Everyone has their favourite pet theory for why the Conservatives seem destined for electoral defeat. Amid the noise, however, one glaringly simple factor is often overlooked: the party presided over the highest inflation rate since 1982 and the public absolutely hated this.

Rishi Sunak launched the election campaign following the sharp drop in annual consumer price inflation to 2.3 per cent. But this headline figure belies a stark reality: since January 2020, consumer prices have

‘Any government would struggle given these outcomes, even if a collective hush now surrounds inflation as an election topic’

surged by 23 per cent — more than double the 9 per cent increase that would have occurred had inflation stayed anchored at the Bank of England's 2 per cent target.

Food prices have shot up by 30 per cent, clothes by 20 per cent, rents by 19 per cent and utilities by a staggering 53 per cent. Any government would struggle given these outcomes, even if a collective hush now surrounds inflation as an election topic. From late 2021, as headline inflation crept above 3 per cent, Ipsos-Mori polls began to show a sharp rise in public concern about “inflation” as an important issue facing the country. This concern peaked at 54 per cent of the public in August 2022.

Economic angst was certainly then exacerbated by Truss's ill-fated mini-budget in September 2022, but concern about inflation was more deeply rooted. Even with inflation now back near its target, 25 per cent of the public still list it as a major issue — levels comparable to 1990, when inflation was as high as 7 per

cent. The public remains livid at the permanent surge in their cost of living.

Inflation has thus been a clear vote-loser for the Conservatives. YouGov's regular polling on how well the government is handling inflation has been damning: in late October 2022, 86 per cent said it was dealing with it “badly” versus a mere 7 per cent “well”. Though these numbers have improved for the government as inflation has fallen, last week's figures of 58 per cent “badly” to 32 per cent “well” still indicate strong dissatisfaction.

Some might argue that this public assessment is unfair. Wasn't high inflation driven primarily by supply shocks from the pandemic and the Ukraine war, and overly loose monetary policy from the independent Bank of England, rather than government actions? Broadly, yes.

However, the generous fiscal relief that Rishi Sunak doled out during Covid-19 didn't help. And the harsh truth is that incumbent governments are seen as responsible for macroeconomic outcomes, whether deserved or not. Sunak's attempt to claim undue credit for the past year's decline in inflation shows how governments exploit this association when it suits them.

Unfortunately for Sunak, the public's flawed understanding of inflation further benefits Labour. Unexpected inflation redistributes income arbitrarily, fuelling misguided calls for relief measures, taxes on “unearned” excess profits, or even direct price controls to correct matters — interventions that Labour is ideologically more comfortable implementing than are the Conservatives.

Yes, look at a time series chart of voting intentions and it's obvious that the mini-budget was an electoral disaster for the Conservatives and that Sunak's popularity has further waned in recent months. Yet, as pre-mortems for the likely Tory defeat are written, let's not underestimate how high inflation cratered perceptions of Conservative competence, nor the downstream anger it generated.

Ryan Bourne is an economist at the Cato Institute and editor of the new book *The War On Prices*

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## Business

# Brussels threatens China with higher tariffs on EV cars

Richard Spencer China Correspondent

The European Union has opened a new front in a looming east-west trade war, raising tariffs on imports of some Chinese electric cars to almost 50 per cent.

The European Commission said it would impose the tariffs from next month unless China responded favourably in talks over EU complaints of unfair competition, in particular subsidies to the Chinese supply chain.

The tariffs will be set on a sliding scale in accordance with findings from an EU analysis of Chinese companies' level of subsidies. Shanghai Auto (SAIC), owner of the MG brand which it bought from the ruins of Rover, will face additional tariffs of 38.1 per cent on top of the existing 10 per cent.

BYD, the dominant brand in China that is challenging Tesla for the title of the world's top electric vehicle manufacturer, will have additional tariffs of 17.4 per cent. Geely, which owns Volvo, will face extra tariffs of 20 per cent.

"Should discussions with Chinese authorities not lead to an effective solution, these provisional countervailing duties would be introduced from 4 July," the commission said.

The levels set by the EU are lower than some estimates and much lower than similar sanctions announced last

month by President Biden, who imposed a 100 per cent tariff on Chinese electric vehicles in the US.

Both the US and the EU are reacting to widespread political fears that Chinese manufacturing dominance is moving quickly from cheap goods and electronics assembly into core areas, especially green technologies.

President Xi has masterminded an aggressive industrial development strategy over the past decade, specifically intended to establish China as a leading green manufacturer.

The electric vehicle tariffs were strongly opposed by one of its supposed beneficiaries, the all-powerful German auto industry, which has established highly productive joint ventures with Chinese partners and fears retaliation.

"As an exporting nation, what we do not need are increasing barriers to trade," Ola Källenius, chief executive of Mercedes-Benz, said.

Analysts noted that the tariffs were not so high as to fatally damage Chinese imports, but critics said that doing away with China's low prices would be a blow to plans to encourage drivers to switch from petrol and diesel to electric.

"The timing of the EU Commission's decision is detrimental to the current weak demand for [battery electric] vehicles in Germany and Europe," Volks-



BYD, the Chinese EV manufacturer, will have additional tariffs of 17.4 per cent

wagen said. "The negative effects of this decision outweigh any potential benefits."

Chinese factories are accused of benefiting from a variety of hidden subsidies, including cheap land and energy, as well as easy access to loans from provincial state-run banks.

Beijing threatened retaliation, raising further the prospect of a damaging global trade war. "China is highly concerned and strongly dissatisfied with

this," a statement said. "This is blatant protectionism." Britain has given no indication that it intends to follow suit, leaving it open to a tide of displaced imports, given China's surplus capacity.

Sam Lowe, a partner at Flint Global consultancy, said: "I think the UK will be forced into taking a decision fairly quickly, given both the US and EU will have intervened, leaving the UK as one of the most open large consumer markets left."

## FedEx to cut 2,000 jobs in Europe

Up to 2,000 jobs are being cut by FedEx in Europe in the latest move by the parcel delivery company to cut costs.

The Memphis-headquartered group revealed plans to cut its European back-office and commercial workforce by 1,700 to 2,000 over the next 18 months. It employs nearly 50,000 people across Europe.

FedEx said that the cull, which is subject to consultations, will help it save between £97.2 million and £136.2 million a year, starting from 2026-27. It will cost the group between £194.5 million and £291.8 million in redundancy payments and related expenses.

FedEx announced a plan last year to restructure its delivery networks and save £3.1 billion in costs by the end of 2024-2025, including £1.4 billion in the year to the end of this May. It said in March that its workforce had shrunk by nearly 22,000 last year through job losses and staff turnover.

The group said the latest cost-cutting plans would involve some roles being axed and teams merged in the affected back-office and commercial operations, while "certain activities performed across the region will also be consolidated to be located in select shared activity centres". It insisted that the cuts would not impact customers or its delivery service.

FedEx has had a presence in Europe since 1984. The division is headquartered in Hoofddorp in the Netherlands.



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# Bumpy start for L&G turnaround

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

The new chief executive at Legal & General has promised a share buyback of £200 million, set new targets for business wins and jettisoned one of his most senior lieutenants as he set out his long-awaited plan for the savings and investment group.

The blueprint published yesterday by Antonio Simões received a mixed reception and sent L&G shares falling by 5.5 per cent to close 13¼p lower at 229¼p.

Simões, who arrived at L&G on January 1 and is on a pay and bonus package worth up to £5.88 million a year, said he aimed to transform L&G into “a growing, simpler and better-connected business” with “sharper focus”.

Some analysts questioned whether the targets were achievable, saying the projections for capital generation were lower than expected.

“This prompts the question on the affordability of the promised shareholder returns,” Mandeep Jagpal, of Royal Bank of Canada, said.

The initial buyback plan of £200 million, while a first for L&G which has for years rejected pressure for this kind of capital return, was regarded by others as too little.

Simões dismissed the cool reception to his plans, saying: “We’re striking the right balance with £200 million initially. It was never going to please everyone, but I believe this is the right strategy going forward.”

The 49-year-old former HSBC banker and McKinsey management consultant was appointed as successor to the long-serving Sir Nigel Wilson, amid pressure to restore L&G’s flagging appeal with investors.

Its shares, though yielding a strong dividend, are no higher than they were ten years ago and have drifted lower over the past two years.

In presentations yesterday, Simões doubled down on the core business of pension risk transfer, absorbing unwanted traditional legacy pension funds from corporates, lifting the new business target from £40 billion to £50 billion by the end of 2028 to £50 billion to £65 billion.

He also set a new target for winning contracts to run mainstream defined contribution pension schemes for employers, targeting cumulative net flows of £40 billion to £50 billion over the next five years.

One significant rethink is the deci-



Some analysts questioned whether the targets set out by Legal & General chief executive Antonio Simões were achievable

sion to merge LGIM, the underperforming asset management division, with L&G Capital, which specialises in infrastructure and private assets.

This will lead to the departure of LGIM chief Michelle Scrimgeour, one of the most senior women in the City and one ultimately responsible for £1.2 trillion of assets. She has “announced her intention to step down ... and the group has begun a global search for a CEO to lead the growth of the combined asset management division,”

L&G said. Simões said that while the combination would yield some savings from de-duplication of overheads, the aim was to push deeper into private assets and infrastructure, growing the portfolio of assets from the current £48 billion to £85 billion by 2028. “This is a growth plan, it is not about redundancies,” he said.

Simões signalled the sale of Cala Homes, the housebuilding division seen as fetching more than £1 billion, which is being put in a bucket of so-

called non-strategic assets earmarked for disposal. He also sought to reassure investors that there was still huge opportunity in the pension risk transfer business and would be for years. “We’re talking about decades,” he said.

He added: “Over the last five months we have rigorously reviewed our business, listening to investors, customers, partners and employees. This work has deepened my belief in our strong foundations and excellent potential.”

The £15 billion company with the col-

## Profile

**T**he unveiling of a new strategy for Legal & General by António Simões is a crunch moment for the Portuguese former banker. A year on from his unveiling as the insurer’s next chief executive, investors are keen to hear how he plans to kickstart the sprawling group’s next phase of growth (Ben Martin writes).

Simões, 49, had limited direct experience of the insurance industry before he took charge of L&G in January. He spent much of his early career at McKinsey & Company, the consulting firm, where he rose to become a partner in its London office, and also had a brief stint at Goldman Sachs, the investment bank.

He then joined HSBC in 2007, first as director of strategy before taking a series of other senior roles at the FTSE 100-listed bank over 13 years, including tenures running its businesses in the UK and continental Europe. His final role there involved leading its private bank, before joining Banco Santander as its regional head of Europe and as the boss of its Spanish business.

Simões is one of the most prominent openly gay executives in financial services and has been hailed as a champion of diversity in the industry. He has previously said that being gay had made him “a more authentic person, better able to empathise, and with more emotional intelligence. If I wasn’t gay, probably I wouldn’t be CEO of the bank.”

ourful umbrella logo has been a presence in the FTSE 100 for decades and exercises considerable influence as the owner of a stake of 2 or 3 per cent in almost every UK listed company. It was founded in 1836 and employs about 11,000 people.

The buyback is the centrepiece of plans to speed up returns of cash to shareholders. Simões also set a target to grow the dividend by 2 per cent a year over the next four years and promised “further similar buybacks”.

## Supply delays put DFS in the hot seat

Jon Rees, Helen Cahill

Weak demand for big-ticket buys and delays to deliveries from Red Sea disruption is weighing down profits at DFS.

The sofa retailer warned of lower-than-expected profits owing to a “weak upholstery market” and delays to deliveries worth up to £14 million, which it now expects to last into next year.

The London-listed company’s shares fell by 2¼p, or 2 per cent, to 110½p as analysts warned it faced “unplayable” conditions in the UK economy.

DFS told investors that consumer demand for sofas had declined by about 10 per cent and that it was also struggling with higher shipping costs. It now expects to deliver profit before tax of between £10 million and £12 million. It had previously hoped to come in at between £20 million and £25 million.

Revenues for the 2024 full year are now expected to be in the range of £995 million to £1 billion, down from previ-

ous guidance in March of £1 billion and £1.015 billion. DFS previously cut its guidance in March as it warned that demand had “weakened significantly”.

Analysts at Peel Hunt, the investment bank, said that the lowering of the forecast “will not come as a major surprise”. It added: “We believe there is a great business here and others will be

## £25m

Expected annual fall in operating costs  
Source: DFS

feeling the pain more severely than DFS right now. Conditions continue to be almost unplayable for the upholstery retailers, with difficult selling conditions compounded by cost pressures.”

DFS generated a 9 per cent improvement in orders in the fourth quarter of its financial year, and it said that its market share continued to stand at a

record of about 38.5 per cent. The company said it had continued to increase its full year gross margin rate. It has also reduced its operating costs, which it expects to be down by about £25 million year on year.

DFS said: “Whilst the economic outlook remains hard to predict we expect the widely predicted lower inflation and interest rate environment to have a positive impact on upholstery market demand levels, with the declines experienced across the last three years starting to reverse and the market slowly recovering in our 2025 financial year. We are well-placed to capitalise on any market recovery given our market leadership position, the operational leverage in the business and the progress we are making on our cost base.”

Analysts at Jefferies said they anticipated a recovery for DFS in its next financial year, and that it had a “clear strategic agenda to drive growth” by developing its ranges and refurbishing its stores.

## Collapsed health firm NMC considering market return

Alex Ralph  
Chief Business Correspondent

A former FTSE 100 private healthcare group whose collapse amid alleged fraud wiped out investors is now considering a stock market return.

NMC Health was plunged into crisis in late 2019 when Muddy Waters, a US short-seller, issued a damning report that raised accounting and governance issues.

The report led to the sudden unravelling of NMC, the discovery of \$6.6 billion in debt, about triple the figure that had been reported by the company, and the appointment of Alvarez & Marsal as administrators. The dramatic insolvency left unsecured creditors facing a shortfall of up to about \$4.7 billion.

The company, which was founded by Bavaguthu Raghuram Shetty, an Indian tycoon, and based in the United

Arab Emirates, operated in 19 countries, including Britain, where it owned Aspen Healthcare. At its peak in 2018 NMC was valued at £8.6 billion on the London Stock Exchange.

In a surprise development, NMC has now appointed Rothschild & Co as the first of two joint-financial advisers to review its strategic options.

They include a potential initial public offering, a sale of the business and “other alternatives”.

It is unclear whether London is being considered again as a venue for the possible float.

NMC said that the review followed “several strategic milestones”, including the exit from administration of 34 core operating companies following a formal restructuring process overseen by the Abu Dhabi Global Market courts and the appointment of a new board of directors.



## Business

# Rentokil jumps as US investor takes 'significant' stake

Tom Saunders

The activist investor Nelson Peltz's firm Trian Partners has taken a "significant" stake in Rentokil, sending the pest control company's shares up sharply.

Trian said its position put it among Rentokil's top ten shareholders and that it had reached out to the company to "discuss ideas and initiatives to improve shareholder value". Rentokil Initial shares rose by 13.7 per cent.

The news, first reported by Bloomberg, prompted fears that Peltz might push for Rentokil to change its primary listing to the United States, as he did with Ferguson, the supplier of plumbing and heating products.

In 2019 Trian took a stake of about 6 per cent in Ferguson, warning that the company was trading at a discount to its US peers despite having an "attractive" North American business.

Ferguson eventually won the backing of shareholders to move its primary listing to the US in May 2022 and its shares have risen by about 65 per cent since.

This year Peltz, who is known for demanding big changes at the companies he invests in, lost a long-running proxy battle against Disney. The octogenarian investor claimed that Disney had bungled its chief executive succession planning, lost its creative spark and failed to properly harness new technology.

While he ultimately failed in his bid to win a seat on the company's board, Disney's stock rose considerably during the battle, making Trian a considerable profit on its investment. Peltz previously



Nelson Peltz's firm Trian Partners is now among Rentokil's top ten shareholders

served on the boards of Procter & Gamble and Heinz.

Rentokil, a FTSE 100 constituent, has struggled recently. Its share price has dropped by almost 30 per cent in the past 12 months and in a single week last

October it fell by almost a quarter after the company warned of softer demand in North America.

The company attributed the slowdown to the wider "macroeconomic backdrop". While demand for pest control products has subsided dramatically since the pandemic, similar slowdowns were not seen among Rentokil's major competitors, such as the US-based Rollins. It

reported organic sales growth of 8.4 per cent in the third quarter of 2023 while Rentokil reported growth of just 2.2 per cent in North America.

The company has historically traded at a substantial discount to Rollins but this gap widened recently as Rentokil lost market share in North America to the business.

The news of Peltz's stake comes at a particularly sensitive time for Rentokil, which is entering the most disruptive phase of its long-running acquisition of the US-based pest control company Terminix. Rentokil acquired Terminix in 2022 in an attempt to create a global pest control business and this year it has started to integrate its US business branches.

Analysts at HSBC have said that competitors can often attempt to take market share during the "rarely easy" process of branch integration, while analysts at Peel Hunt warned that the period would be a particularly vulnerable one for Rentokil.

In the company's 2023 results, it had pushed back the deadline for full integration of the business by a year to 2026. As part of the process, it expects to close 125 US branches in 2025.

Trian has invested in other UK companies, such as Unilever, where Peltz amassed a significant holding, leading the company to appoint him to its board two years ago.

Peltz said in February that he was "fully behind" Unilever's new strategy drawn up by Hein Schumacher, who succeeded Alan Jope as chief executive in July last year.

A spokeswoman for Trian said: "Trian confirms that it has a significant position in Rentokil and is currently a top ten shareholder. Trian also confirms it has reached out to Rentokil to discuss ideas and initiatives to improve shareholder value."

A representative for Rentokil declined to comment.



## Revolut sails into a new berth at Canary Wharf

The online bank Revolut is to move into the former Thomson Reuters building in Canary Wharf, in a much-needed vote of confidence in the ailing London business district (Tom Howard writes).

After months of speculation, Revolut confirmed that it will take four of the building's 14 storeys,

which will be its new global headquarters for at least the next ten years. In total it will occupy 113,000 sq ft — 40 per cent more space than it has currently.

"We are delighted to be committing to a new global headquarters in the centre of London's financial district," Nik Storonsky, co-founder and chief executive of Revolut, said. "Revolut

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started in 2015 with just a handful of employees but has grown to over 10,000 employees globally. Our new headquarters ensures we continue to build on this success and will serve as Revolut's home as we expand across the globe."

Revolut is not going far given that its current base is a five-minute walk away in Westferry Circus, but it is nonetheless a significant coup for the Wharf, which has suffered a number of high-profile departure announcements, including by HSBC and Clifford Chance.

Revolut had instructed office agents to find it a new base, having

Revolut is to move from its current offices in Canary Wharf to the former Thomson Reuters building

outgrown its current home, where it has been for six years. Bosses had been open to moving to a different part of London but ultimately decided to stay in Canary Wharf.

"From their humble beginnings in 2015 when they started out with just two desks at Level39, our tech incubator, to now expanding into their international headquarters, Revolut's phenomenal rise is a powerful testament to the

extraordinary environment we have created," Shobi Khan, chief executive of Canary Wharf Group, said.

Revolut chose YY London, as the building is now known, because of its "best in class workspace, nearby amenities and leading ESG credentials". The office, which has a rooftop terrace and two restaurants, is located next to Middle Dock, which is being redeveloped as part of a "green spine" running through the middle of the estate.

Thomson Reuters moved out of the building shortly before the pandemic.

# If sponsors are driven away, where will arts funding come from?

**John Browne**  
**Comment**

**C**ampaigners are targeting arts organisations to get rid of funding from businesses they don't like. They also put pressure on the artistic talent to withdraw their support and labour. Organisations fear that protests will keep visitors or audiences away. Some organisations cave in. Businesses in return remove their support. Is this a vision of a future in which the only source of funding is a reduced one from a stretched public purse?

Businesses give a vanishingly small percentage of their profits to the arts. When companies are attacked for giving to organisations ranging from the British Museum to the Hay literary festival, why should they even bother? Less funding would be a great shame. The "mixed" sources of funding in the UK have meant that no one funding source has the unchecked power to make artistic decisions.

I do not think that businesses fund the arts to achieve a "washing" of their reputation. In my experience, businesses believe that funding the arts does four things. First, it inspires and encourages internal teams by demonstrating that a company has a human face. Secondly, it supports a locality in which business is conducted, equivalent to an informal local tax. Thirdly, it builds stakeholder relationships, demonstrating that the company has a social purpose. Finally, for consumer product companies, it can add to marketing campaigns.

While businesses give small percentages of their profits, these amounts are large for the arts institutions. They help close the gap between revenue and costs. And they are often the only source to fund new ideas. The latest in a growing series of attacks on funding has been focused on the investment manager Baillie Gifford, related to climate

change and conflicts. This is despite their activities doing some very good things, including helping form Tesla, Northvolt and other companies that are going to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases.

As a result of pressure from a noisy minority, several book festivals are severing their ties with Baillie Gifford.

There are important issues being raised, not least how to find peaceful resolutions to tragic conflicts and practical solutions to climate change. It is, however, extremely unlikely that pressing arts organisations to sever ties with large companies will speed up this process. Putting pressure on the government would be much more effective. The unintended consequences are clear: less money for the arts unless the government steps in, which is very unlikely.

What can be done to avoid this outcome? I suggest four things.

First, the leadership of companies and arts organisations need to align their own teams with their broader purpose of being part of the society that they serve. Secondly, there needs to be a forum in which companies and arts organisations can identify common causes with sense and perspective. Thirdly, government should provide incentives to arts organisations to secure corporate funding. Corporate donations should be accepted if the source of the funds is legal. A portion of existing public money should only be released if it is matched by corporate funds.

And finally, the leadership of arts organisations should be tougher. Performers, artists and writers should consider whether they are achieving anything other than signalling virtue. If they stay away because of the source of funding, those who run the arts organisations should not be threatened but stick to their decisions. There is, in most cases, other talent.

*Lord (John) Browne of Madingley served as CEO of BP from 1995-2007. He is now chairman of the Courtauld Institute of Art and a trustee of the Royal Opera House.*

## London's biggest float of year called off

**Tom Howard**

A fund aiming to tap into cut-price commercial property has pulled its stock market float after failing to win over enough investors.

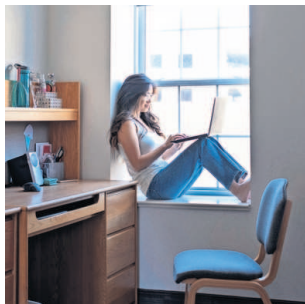
Special Opportunities Reit announced last month that it was looking to raise £500 million which it would use to buy student halls of residence, warehouses, data centres, retail parks and budget hotels.

Originally planned for next week, it would have been the largest sum raised in a London listing this year and the first IPO of a real estate investment trust (Reit) in three years.

However, Special Opportunities was not able to convince investors to back it with even half the money required.

The company said that "investor demand has been strong" but confirmed that it had received commitments totalling less than £250 million, which was the minimum amount it wanted to proceed with the IPO.

That was despite having already secured at least £104 million from three



**Special Opportunities wanted to buy student flats, warehouses, budget hotels, data centres and retail parks**

cornerstone investors: GoldenTree Asset Management, Columbia Threadneedle and the billionaire Bhavnani family office.

The founders could have reduced the minimum fundraising requirement but decided that doing so would not be "in the best interests of investors ... given

the nature of the market opportunity and the pipeline".

Instead the company will use the private capital already secured to buy cut-price buildings from "distressed and/or highly motivated sellers".

Bosses did not outline why stock market investors had been reluctant to provide backing. Other companies have complained about a subdued IPO market, but a stellar debut for the mini-computer maker Raspberry Pi this week would suggest renewed enthusiasm among investors for getting involved with new listings.

Three members of the Special Opportunities management team, including the chief executive Simon Lee, Freddie Brooks and John White, are all former directors of Social Housing Income Advisors, which advised the Home Long Income Fund. HLIF was the predecessor to Home Reit, the "landlord for the homeless" which is the subject of a Financial Conduct Authority investigation and is being sued by its own investors. Lee has previously played down this association.

## Departure of EY chief triggers leadership race

**Tom Howard**

The UK boss of EY has told partners he is planning to quit, firing the starting gun on a leadership election at one of the Big Four accounting firms.

Hywel Ball, who has been EY's UK chairman and managing partner since 2020, said that "now is the time to hand on the baton" to someone else.

"I've always seen leadership not as a marathon or a sprint, but a relay race," Ball, 61, said in an email to partners.

"Having completed the tasks I set for myself in this extra lap of my leadership, I feel now is the time to hand on the baton and for me to take on other opportunities as I look forward to the next stage of my career."

Ball, who was paid £3.6 million in 2023, joined EY as an audit trainee in 1983 and has been a partner for 25 years. He is well thought of internally and externally, with EY's UK revenues rising from £2.6 billion in 2020 to

£3.8 billion last year. EY and its rivals cashed in on booming demand for consulting services after the pandemic, but that has cooled in the past year or so as companies have become more cautious given the uncertain economic and geopolitical backdrop.

Ball has, however, come in for criticism for his support of Project Everest, which aimed to split EY into separate audit and consulting businesses.

Among the early favourites to replace Ball are Omar Ali, the managing partner for financial services in Europe, the Middle East, India and Africa, as well as Bridget Walsh, EY's global private equity leader, and Stuart Gregory, managing partner for finance and transformation in the UK.

Anna Anthony, the UK managing partner for financial services, has also been tipped by some insiders as a future leader. The expectation is that EY's next UK boss will be known before the end of the year.



Lauren Almeida Tempus  
Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips



# A bargain buy despite legal problems

**GSK**  
Market cap £66.9bn  
Forward p/e ratio 10

Last week GSK lost billions of pounds from its market value in a matter of hours over legal battles in the US connected to Zantac, its old heartburn drug, and claims that it causes cancer. GSK has long maintained that there is no reliable and consistent evidence to support this, but analysts think a possible settlement could be worth billions of dollars and the shares have fallen so much that the group's growth is now priced at just half the level of its closest rival AstraZeneca on a forward price to earnings basis.

So we come to the elephant in the room: is GSK a bargain stock? While there is uncertainty looming over it, the business has been steadily improving its drug pipeline, fattening up its margins, and has a chunky dividend yield to boot.

**HOW GSK MAKES MONEY**  
GSK is one of the stalwarts of London's stock market. It traces its beginnings back to Plough Court pharmacy in 1715 and listed in 1972. It became GlaxoSmithKline following the merger of Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham in 2000 and rebranded simply as GSK in 2022.

So how does this 300-year-old pharmaceutical business make money? Its revenues are split relatively evenly between three categories: vaccines at £9.9 billion, speciality medicines at £10.2 billion and general medicines also at £10.2 billion. Its vaccines business includes jabs for illnesses such as shingles and meningitis. Its speciality medicines cover HIV, respiratory, immunology and oncology. Its general division includes more than 150 products, from antibiotics to inhaled medicines for asthma.

**THE LITIGATION RISK**  
GSK shares have been haunted by litigation risk around its Zantac heartburn treatment, which was first released as a prescription drug in the 1980s before it became an over-the-counter product in America. The drug helped fund GSK's global expansion and became one of the

## Poised for recovery

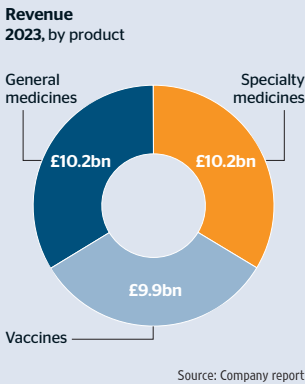


**ADVICE Buy**  
**WHY** Strong drug pipeline, attractive dividend and possible litigation costs already priced in

first blockbuster prescription medications, generating more than \$1 billion in sales.

The company suspended all dose forms to all markets pending tests and investigations after it was contacted by regulators, and in 2020 the US regulator asked makers of all versions of the drug to pull it from the market. More than 70,000 lawsuits have been filed in the US by people that used Zantac, who allege that the drug contained trace amounts of NDMA, a probable human carcinogen. GSK has maintained there is no consistent or reliable evidence that the medicine increases the risk of cancer.

The litigation first unnerved investors in August 2022 and has weighed heavily on the share price since. The most recent shock to the stock came last week after a judge in a Delaware court ruled that experts could testify on behalf of these plaintiffs. The company has begun the process of appealing against this and expects that, should an appeal be granted, it could take between eight months and a year. In 2022, analysts at Morgan Stanley



estimated that the company could face a liability of as much as \$27 billion, but estimates have since fallen. The base case of Citi, GSK's joint house broker, is a \$3 billion mass settlement.

**CAN GSK STILL GROW?**  
While GSK shares have been beleaguered by legal battles in the US, it has also struggled to win over investors in the past few years for other reasons. Critics have accused it of haphazard M&A, complicated financial engineering and failure to produce one of the leading Covid jabs during the pandemic.

The group is still in the process of a turnaround of its drug pipeline, which has long been accused of underperformance. But recent progress has been good: the vaccine business is growing and a longer-acting version of one of its HIV prevention medications has shown promise in clinical trials. Its experimental drug for asthma, depemokimab, has also met its goals in its latest trial, which moves a treatment with potential annual peak sales of more than £3 billion closer to market. Meanwhile, last week the US regulator approved expanding the use of Arexvy, its respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine, to adults aged 50-59. The drug, which helps to prevent lower respiratory tract disease, was first approved last year for use in adults aged 60 and above. Research and development

spending is rising too, up by 14 per cent in the first quarter of this year, worth about a fifth of sales; and earlier this year it acquired the respiratory drug developer Aiolos Bio in a \$1.4 billion deal, which gives it access to another treatment for asthma that was approaching phase two trials at the time. The huge amount of testing and regulatory oversight in the pharmaceutical industry means that it is hard to firmly predict long-term growth, but more than 90 per cent of the company's outlook for 2031 is accounted for by products that have already been approved or have product launches planned over the next four years.

GSK's profitability has been improving too, with a core operating margin at a chunky 33.2 per cent in the first quarter of the year, up 3.1 percentage points compared with the same period last year. Meanwhile, return on capital employed came in at an impressive 53 per cent, following the demerger of its consumer business Haleon, which has helped it focus its resources.

**ARE THE SHARES TOO CHEAP?**  
This column last rated GSK as a buy in November last year, when the shares looked cheap given the company's progress on its capital allocation. Since then the shares have still risen by 18 per cent, even with fears around the Zantac litigation. In any case, after recent drops, analysts at the broker Shore Capital think a worst case scenario of a \$30 billion settlement has already been priced into the shares.

GSK now trades at just 10 times forward earnings, compared with AstraZeneca at 19. This is approaching value territory for the group, which has averaged a multiple of 12.5 over the past five years.

Income also remains central to GSK's investment case, with the shares forecast to yield 3.9 per cent over the next 12 months. The demerger from Haleon meant the dividend technically fell on a per share basis, but this year GSK has guided to expect 60p across each quarter, an increase of 3.4 per cent. This is better than the lack of meaningful growth in the seven years running up to 2021, and a well covered payout is nothing to sniff at.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Safestore profits rise

Safestore, the UK's biggest self-storage company, saw profits rise by 67 per cent thanks to gains made on the revaluation of its investment properties. However, the £126.1million gain from the revaluation was offset by a wider decrease in underlying trading performance in the six months to the end of April. This led the company to suggest that earnings for the full year would be in the lower half of consensus estimates. Revenues on a like-for-like basis fell by 0.8 per cent to £107million and average occupancy fell by 1.6 percentage points to 76.9 per cent.

### Gaming giant accused

Valve, the owner of the Steam PC gaming platform, has been accused of overcharging millions of UK gamers as part of a new £656million lawsuit. A collective action claim has been filed with the Competition Appeal Tribunal which accuses Valve of abusing its dominant market position. It alleges Steam charges an "excessive commission" of up to 30 per cent and claims 14 million PC gamers in the UK could have been affected. Valve was approached for comment.

### Equals deal collapses

Equals Group is to continue a strategic review of its options after the collapse of a takeover bid from the private equity firm Madison Dearborn Partners. The payment platform developer said that Madison decided against making a formal offer for the group. Shares in Equals Group closed down 9¼p, or 7.7 per cent, at 112¼p. Equals develops and sells digital platforms that enable organisations to move money through payment and card products.

### Boss misses bonus

The outgoing boss of Dr Martens is to miss out on his bonus after a turbulent year for the bootmaker. Kenny Wilson, 57, will receive an annual base salary of £787,000 for the last financial year but missed out on up to £3.6 million in performance-related bonuses after annual pre-tax profits fell by 43 per cent. Over the past year the Northamptonshire-headquartered company has issued a number of profit warnings. Shares in Dr Martens rose 1¼p, or 2 per cent, to 85p.

## PRICES

### Major indices

<b>New York</b>	
Dow Jones	38,712.21 (-35.21)
Nasdaq Composite	17,608.44 (+264.89)
S&P 500	5,421.03 (+45.71)
<b>Tokyo</b>	
Nikkei 225	38876.71 (-258.08)
<b>Hong Kong</b>	
Hang Seng	17937.84 (-238.50)
<b>Amsterdam</b>	
AEX Index	931.79 (+10.54)
<b>Sydney</b>	
AO	7963.10 (-42.80)
<b>Frankfurt</b>	
DAX	18630.86 (+260.92)
<b>Singapore</b>	
Straits	3307.44 (-1.77)
<b>Brussels</b>	
BEL20	3906.79 (+48.81)
<b>Paris</b>	
CAC-40	7864.70 (+75.49)

<b>Zurich</b>	
SMI Index	12167.59 (+94.67)
DJ Euro Stoxx 50	5038.70 (+73.61)
<b>London</b>	
FTSE 100	8215.48 (+67.67)
FTSE 250	20497.40 (+230.55)
FTSE 350	4526.69 (+39.17)
FTSE Eurotop 100	4139.09 (+40.78)
FTSE All-Shares	4482.40 (+38.33)
FTSE Non Financials	5345.33 n/a
techMARK 100	7136.50 (+54.24)
Bargains	n/a
US\$	1.2846 (+0.0106)
Euro	1.1847 (-0.0014)
:SDR	0.98 (+0.00)
Exchange Index	83.66 (+0.04)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
CPI	133.47 Apr (2015 = 100)
RPI	385.00 Apr (Jan 1987 = 100)
RPIX	380.10 Apr (Jan 1987 = 100)
Morningstar Long Commodity	677.16 (+5.72)
Morningstar Long/Short Commod	4703.45 (+27.75)

### London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 24	96.930	96.930	96.930	97.910	22	52
	SEP 24	96.950	98.200	96.840	98.010	296985	637030
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 24						
	SEP 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 24	96.260	96.275	96.255	96.275	220581	722497
	SEP 24	96.400	96.445	96.395	96.440	208134	559548
	Dec 24	96.595	96.665	96.585	96.650	235369	528009
	Mar 25	96.765	96.855	96.760	96.840	180436	416796
	Jun 25	96.915	97.020	96.910	97.000	171955	377752
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 24						
	SEP 24						
	Dec 24						
	Mar 25						
	Jun 25						
FTSE100	Jun 24	8152.0	8251.5	8152.0	8236.0	106408	530222
	SEP 24	8219.0	8292.5	8218.0	8281.0	9858	5833
FTSEurofirst 80	Jun 24						
	SEP 24						

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### Commodities

ICIS pricing (London 6,00pm)				Brent (6,00pm)			
				Aug	82.35-82.34	Nov	80.99-80.96
				Sep	81.95-81.94	Dec	80.53-80.51
				Oct	81.46-81.44	Volume: 2117724	
Crude Oils (\$/barrel FOB)				LIFFE			
Brent Physical		80.97	+0.59	Cocoa			
BFOE(Aug)		82.67	+0.51	Jul	8730-8683	Sep	5095-4880
BFOE(Sep)		82.30	+0.48	Sep	7994-7951	Dec	4870-4600
WTI(Aug)		78.26	+0.48	Dec	6891-6853	Mar	5084-4165
WTI(Sep)		77.78	+0.48	Mar	6016-5977		
Products (\$/MT)				May	5600-5517		
				Nov	5294-5243	Volume: 84480	
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)				RobustaCoffee			
Premium Unld	863.00	866.00	+3.00	Jul	4240-4234	Mar	3602-3521
Gasoil EEC	738.75	739.75	+1.75	Sep	4086-4080	May	3792-3525
3.5 Fuel Oil	469.00	469.00	+7.00	Nov	3918-3911		
Naphtha	640.00	640.00	+3.00	Jan	3739-3729	Volume: 21464	
ICE Futures				White Sugar (FOB)			
Gas Oil				Reuters			
Jun	760.50-758.00	Sep	753.50-753.25	Mar	525.60-525.20		
Jul	750.75-750.50	Oct	755.50-755.25	May	523.90-505.00		
Aug	751.75-751.50		Volume: 748579	Oct	554.70-554.30	Aug	523.00-523.30
				Nov	536.10-535.70	Oct	525.80-510.20
				Dec	525.70-525.30		Volume: 69721





## Frontier sees profit on horizon

The video games developer Frontier Developments has forecast a return to full-year profit after cutting costs by a fifth and benefiting from the release of its *Planet Zoo* game on next-generation consoles (Tom Saunders writes). The release, plus a strong back catalogue, led the company to deliver sales of £89 million for 2024, down by only 15 per cent from 2023 despite

the underperformance of *Realms of Ruin*, the company's major release of the year. Frontier said in a trading update that it now expected to make a provisional profit of £500,000, from a loss of £4.6 million in 2023, thanks in part to the sale of the publishing rights to its *RollerCoaster Tycoon 3* game to Atari. Analysts at Peel Hunt had initially been expecting a loss of £5 million. They said 2024 "will not soon be forgotten", as the company initially stepped away from its core, only to see weak performance from big new releases.

After a "sizeable" restructuring, it has returned to developing so-called creative management simulations, such as *Planet Zoo* and *F1 Manager*, for which it is best known. The company said it was "confident" of being able to achieve profitability next year as it continued to focus on cost control while also driving return on investment. It said it was "comfortable" with consensus analyst expectations of sales of £87 million in the next financial year. The update lifted Frontier's shares by 22p, or 7.9 per cent, to 299p.

## The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
Molten Ventures	Positive annual results 19.1%
Rentokil Initial	Activist investor builds stake 13.7%
St James's Place	Peel Hunt reinstates "buy" rating 4.9%
Persimmon	Rate-sensitive stocks lifted by drop in bond yields 3.9%
Marks and Spencer	HSBC upgrades retailer to "buy" 1.9%
IP Group	Follow-through selling -1.9%
B&M European Value Retail	Falls for a seventh consecutive day -2.4%
Safestore Holdings	Underwhelming half-year performance -4.2%
FirstGroup	Continues to wobble following results -4.4%
Legal & General	Disappointment over plans to overhaul the business -5.5%

# Vote of confidence brings relief to St James's Place

Jessica Newman Market report

Months of turmoil has led to the value of St James's Place shares more than halving in the past 12 months. First there was the wealth manager being forced to overhaul the fees it charges its clients in July and October. Then in February it revealed it was setting aside £426 million for potential complaints. The hefty provision pushed the company into a pre-tax loss for 2023 and forced it to axe its dividend. However, a Peel Hunt note to clients outlining the broker's investment case for buying SJP has been greeted as a reassuring vote of confidence in the company. While Peel Hunt's Stuart Duncan did make it clear there are risks to carrying the

## Wall Street report

The S&P 500 and Nasdaq made gains, helped by Apple shares reaching a record high as they closed up \$5.92, or 2.9 per cent, at \$213.07. However, the Dow Jones industrial average fell 35.21 points, or 0.1 per cent, to 38,712.21.

stock, he is of the belief that those risks "are more than reflected in the valuation". He views the multi-million provision and proposed changes to fee structures as signs that SJP is "dealing with historic issues" and said that with fees now moving more in line with market norms, the "impact on client behaviour should be relatively modest". With Peel Hunt's backing, shares in SJP improved 25p, or 4.9 per cent, to close at 533p. In the wider market, the FTSE 100 halted its three-day slide as investors took drab UK economic data as a sign that inflation is continuing to cool. The premier index recovered 67.67 points, or 0.8 per cent, to 8,215.48 while the FTSE 250 bounced back 230.55 points, or 1.1 per cent, to 20,497.40.

Of the 81 blue-chip risers, the star of the day was **Rentokil Initial**, whose shares raced 57p, or 13.7 per cent, higher to 472½p after reports that Nelson Peltz's Trian Partners has built a stake in the pest control firm.

## ENGINEERING

# Contract loss hammers HSS

The loss of a big contract spooked investors in HSS Hire, sending its shares to a record low. Amey, an infrastructure and engineering firm, has notified Manchester-based HSS that after a retendering process it will be moving to another supplier for the provision of its equipment rental managed service contract. The agreement between HSS Hire and Amey, which started in December 2015, will finish at the end of this year. The contract accounted



The Amey contract accounted for 7 per cent of HSS's revenue

for about 7 per cent of HSS Hire's group revenue last year and 10 per cent of underlying earnings. News of the contract loss and concerns about the impact on its earnings caused the shares to

tumble 1p, or 12.9 per cent, to 7½p. HSS specialises in providing the day-to-day tools and equipment, such as concrete mixers and chainsaws, needed for smaller building and repair jobs, and the vast majority of its customers come from the trade. It operates 39 branches, 38 customer distribution centres and 65 builders merchants. Listing on London's junior market in early 2015, HSS Hire has had a rough ride as a listed company, its shares down more than 90 per cent since they floated at 210p.

Rate-sensitive housebuilding stocks were also on the move, with **Persimmon** up 56p, or 3.9 per cent, to £14.98 and **Taylor Wimpey** higher by 4½p, or 2.8 per cent, to 152½p. **Segro**, one of the many commercial property stocks that tend to benefit from lower interest rates, rose 18½p, or 2 per cent, to 914p, while **Workspace Group**, the flexible office space provider, picked up 26p, or 4.7 per cent, to 580p. **Marks and Spencer** continued its rise with a gain of 5½p, or 1.9 per cent, to 302½p. Noting that its turnaround looks more sustainable than previous attempts, with the retailer's progress "too good to ignore", HSBC tipped its clients to buy. Shares in **Molten Ventures**, formerly known as Draper Esprit, climbed to a 15-month high of 401½p, having jumped 64½p, or 19.1 per cent, as the venture capital firm reported that net asset value per share stood at 622p as at the end of March, while its pre-tax losses for the year narrowed

to £49.8 million from £246.7 million a year earlier. Another stock that stood out from the crowd, but this time for all the wrong reasons, was **Legal & General**. Shares in the FTSE 100 insurance and asset management group fell 13½p, or 5.5 per cent, to settle at a four-month low of 229½p as plans for a sweeping overhaul of the business failed to win over investors. Away from the main market, **RWS Holdings** enjoyed one of its best single day rises, climbing 35½p, or 21.3 per cent, to 203p. The provider of language and intellectual property services said two of its four business divisions had returned to growth in the first half of its financial year. A much smaller stock, **Tungsten West**, received interest after the Environment Agency granted the miner a permit to operate its mineral processing facility, the last of the key permits required to progress the Hemerdon tungsten and tin mine in Devon. The shares rallied 1½p, or 38.4 per cent, to 5½p.

London Grain Futures					
LIFFE Wheat (close £/t)					
Jul	175.00	Nov	205.75	Jan	unq
Mar	unq	May	213.00	Volume:	921
London Metal Exchange					
(Official)					
Cash	3mth			Dec 22	
Copper Gde A (\$/tonne)	9697.0-9697.5    9827.0-9828.0			9945.0-9955.0	
Lead (\$/tonne)	2106.0-2108.0    2165.0-2167.0			2227.0-2232.0	
Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$/tonne)	2763.0-2765.0    2825.0-2827.0			2850.0-2855.0	
Alum Hi Gde (\$/tonne)	2475.5-2476.0    2529.0-2530.0			2652.0-2657.0	
Nickel (\$/tonne)	17520.0-17525.0    17790.0-17795.0			18830.0-18880.0	
Tin (\$/tonne)	32725.0-32750.0    32900.0-32925.0			32635.0-32685.0	

Gold/Precious metals (US dollars per ounce)	
Because of a technical issue, the gold fix prices are from Tuesday.	
Bullion: Open \$2314.86	
Close \$2334.79-2335.14 High \$2340.18	
Low \$2310.88	
AM \$2302.50 PM \$2316.50	
Platinum \$ (£)	
Silver \$30.08 (£23.42)	
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

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## Sterling spot and forward rates

Mkt Rates for	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Copenhagen	8.8238-8.8586	8.8358-8.8371	149ds	443ds
Euro	1.1879-1.1833	1.1848-1.1846	11pr	33pr
Montreal	1.7510-1.7604	1.7585-1.7586	9ds	30ds
New York	1.2733-1.2860	1.2846-1.2846	2pr	7pr
Oslo	13.471-13.633	13.514-13.519	83ds	237ds
Stockholm	13.210-13.367	13.250-13.255	207ds	641ds
Tokyo	199.94-200.90	200.12-200.14	95ds	274ds
Zurich	1.1413-1.1456	1.1447-1.1448	39ds	117ds

Premium = pr

Discount = ds

Dollar rates	
Australia	1.4923-1.4932
Canada	1.3690-1.3691
Denmark	6.8784-6.8790
Euro	0.9223-0.9223
Hong Kong	7.5083-7.5085
Japan	155.79-155.80
Malaysia	4.7150-4.7200
Norway	10.519-10.529
Singapore	1.3445-1.3447
Sweden	10.315-10.319
Switzerland	0.8911-0.8912
Other Sterling	
Argentina peso	1159.0-1159.0
Australia dollar	1.9173-1.9174
Bahrain dinar	0.4804-0.4875
Brazil real	6.9086-6.9124
Euro	1.1847-1.1848
Hong Kong dollar	10.030-10.031
India rupee	107.22-107.22
Indonesia rupiah	20789-20807
Kuwait dinar KD	0.3923-0.3947
Malaysia ringgit	6.0573-6.0637
New Zealand dollar	2.0662-2.0666
Singapore dollar	1.7271-1.7274
S Africa rand	23.569-23.584
U A E dirham	4.7191-4.7194

Exchange rates			
	Bid	Change	
Australia \$	1.919	-0.01	
Canada \$	1.758	+0.01	
Denmark Kr	8.829	-0.01	
Euro	1.184		
Hong Kong \$	10.028	+0.10	
Hungary	467.541	-0.65	
Indonesia	20922.842	+215.83	
Israel Shk	4.734	+0.02	
Japan Yen	200.048	+0.05	
New Zealand \$	2.066	-0.01	
Norway Kr	13.485	-0.16	
Poland	5.126	-0.02	
Russia	114.440	+1.12	
S Africa Rd	23.702	-0.07	
Sweden Kr	13.229	-0.14	
Switzerland Fr	1.144		
Turkey Lira	41.505	+0.37	
USA \$	1.284	+0.01	
Rates supplied by Morningstar			

MORNINGSTAR Data as shown is for information purposes only. No offer is made by Morningstar or this publication





National Highways

Section 56 Planning Act 2008

**Regulation 9 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009**

**Regulation 16 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017**

**Notice of Acceptance of an Application for a Development Consent Order**

**A46 Newark Bypass**

Notice is hereby given that the Secretary of State has accepted an application by **National Highways Company Limited** of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ ("the Applicant") for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008 (the Application"). The Application was submitted by National Highways to the Secretary of State c/o the Planning Inspectorate (the "Inspectorate") on 26 April 2024 and was accepted for examination on 23 May 2024. The reference number applied to the Application by the Inspectorate is TR010065.

#### Summary of the Application

The DCO would authorise the upgrade of approximately 6.5km of the A46 between Farndon and Winthorpe to dual carriageway. The A46 Newark Bypass (the "Scheme") lies within the district of Newark and Sherwood within the county of Nottinghamshire. The Scheme consists of the following principal elements:

- Widening of the existing A46 to a dual carriageway for a distance of approximately 6.5km to provide two traffic lanes in both directions.
- Partial signalisation of Farndon roundabout at the southern extents of the Scheme.
- A grade separated junction at Cattle Market junction with the A46 elevated to pass over the roundabout. A larger roundabout beneath the A46 to improve capacity. A new off-line section to bypass the existing Brownhills roundabout and Friendly Farmer roundabout.
- A new grade separated northbound off slip to a new roundabout providing local access, with a two-way link road on the southern arm to connect with the existing Brownhills roundabout.
- A two-way parallel link road from the Friendly Farmer roundabout to the Winthorpe roundabout to the southern side of the existing dual carriageway.
- A new bridge structure across the existing A1, located to the north of the existing bridge.
- An upgraded roundabout with partial signal controls at Winthorpe roundabout.
- Improvements to walking and cycling facilities through safer, enhanced routes.
- Three areas have been identified for floodplain compensation which are being referred to as the Kelham and Averham Floodplain compensation Area (FCA), Farndon West FCA and Farndon East FCA. In addition, the Farndon East FCA and Farndon West FCA will also be used as a borrow pit to support the creation of embankments required for the Scheme.
- Drainage features including attenuation ponds.
- Environmental mitigation including landscape planting.
- Associated accommodation works and maintenance access tracks.

The DCO would authorise the compulsory acquisition of land, interests in land and rights over land, and the powers to use land permanently and temporarily for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Scheme.

The DCO would also make provisions in connection with several ancillary matters including the permanent construction and alteration of streets, the temporary interference with and the permanent stopping up of streets, public rights of way and private means of access in the vicinity of the Scheme and the classification of roads all included within the Scheme, along with the amendment, disapplication and modification of relevant legislation.

#### Environmental Impact Assessment

The Scheme is Environmental Impact Assessment development (EIA development) as defined by The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The Application is therefore accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

#### Copies of Application Documents

The application form and accompanying application documents including plans, maps and the Environmental Statement are available for inspection and download

free of charge on the relevant Scheme webpage of the Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website at <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR010065/documents> under the documents tab from 6 June 2024 until 14 July 2024.

On request, an electronic copy of the application documents can be supplied free of charge on a USB memory stick. A paper copy of the application documents can also be supplied, but there will be a reasonable charge for paper copies to cover the cost of printing, packaging and postage up to a maximum charge of £4,604 for a complete set of documents.

Please contact National Highways via the following contact details if you have any enquiries about any of the application documents or to request a copy of the application documents:

Post: A46 Newark Bypass Project, Skanska, International House, Brunel Drive, Newark-On-Trent, Nottinghamshire, NG24 2EG

Email: [a46newarkbypass@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:a46newarkbypass@nationalhighways.co.uk)

Telephone: 0300 123 5000

#### Making a relevant representation on the Application

Any person may make a relevant representation on the Application to the Secretary of State (i.e.: giving notice of any interest in or objection to the Application). Any relevant representation relating to the Application must be submitted on a registration form and give the grounds on which it is made. The Inspectorate have issued detailed advice on registering as an interested party and making a relevant representation, to which you are advised to have regard. This Advice Note (8.2 – How to Register to Participate in an Examination) is published on the National Infrastructure Planning website under 'Legislation and Advice' and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-eight-overview-of-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-planning-process-for-members/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-82-how-to-register-to-participate-in-an-examination>

The period for making a relevant representation starts on 6 June 2024 and will end at 11:59pm on 14 July 2024. Please note that any submitted representations to the Inspectorate will be published on the National Infrastructure Planning website for the Application.

The Registration and Relevant Representation form will be made available by the Inspectorate once the registration / relevant representation period has opened on the Inspectorate's Scheme web page:

<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR010065>.

Alternatively, you can request a hard copy of the registration / relevant representation form by telephoning **0303 444 5000** quoting the name of the Application and the Inspectorate's reference number TR010065. The completed form must be received by the deadline for relevant representations. A completed hard copy form to be submitted to the Inspectorate should be sent to:

The Planning Inspectorate  
Major Applications & Plans  
3D  
Temple Quay House  
Temple Quay  
BRISTOL  
BS1 6PN



## The Times unit trust information service

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
<b>ALLIANZ GLOBAL INVESTORS</b>				
<b>Inv Serv: 020 7065 1400 Helpline: 0800 317 573</b>				
Gilt Yield A £10	206.01	...	-0.27	...
Strategic Bond Fund £10	136.91	...	+0.19	...
UK Corp Bond C £10	104.79	...	-0.78	3.67
UK Equity C £10	631.26	...	-14.91	3.28
UK Index A £10	326.93	...	-1.56	4.51
UK Growth A £10	626.05	...	-43.87	3.16
UK Income A £10	1473.81	...	-5.83	...
UK Mid Cap A £10	4654.61	...	-11.25	...

## ARTEMIS FUND MGRS LTD

0800 092 2051

## Authorised Inv Funds

Global Income R Acc £10	196.07	...	-0.26	...
Global Income R Inc £10	118.78	...	-0.22	...
Global Select R Acc £10	175.26	...	+0.60	...
High Income R Acc £10	64.50	...	-0.07	5.94
Income R Acc £10	579.26	...	-0.61	3.50
Income R Inc £10	239.48	...	-0.26	3.60
Monthly Dist R Inc £10	69.42	...	+0.04	...
SmartGAP European Equity R Acc £10	189.57	...	-0.13	...
SmartGAP Global Equity R Acc £10	184.78	...	-0.03	1.81
SmartGAP UK Equity R Acc £10	163.55	...	-3.38	2.61
Strategic Assets R Acc £10	90.78	...	-0.12	...
Strategic Bond R M Acc £10	102.34	...	-0.38	4.00
Strategic Bond R Q Inc £10	50.74	...	-0.09	4.14
Strategic Bond R M Inc £10	57.11	...	+0.09	4.14
Strategic Bond R Q Inc £10	102.16	...	-0.18	4.14
Strategic Bond R Q Inc £10	50.74	...	-0.09	4.22
UK Select R Acc £10	885.27	...	-1.57	1.60
UK Smaller Cos R Acc £10	121.62	...	-6.66	1.55
UK Special Sits R Acc £10	803.40	...	-4.25	1.44

## AXA FRAMLINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD

Dlmg: 0845 602 1952 Priv Clients: 0845 777 5511

Equity Inc £10	572.40	...	-2.70	4.83
Gilt Acc £10	201.30	211.80	+0.10	...
Gilt Inc £10	74.35	78.24	-0.39	1.09
Health Acc £10	328.00	...	-17.00	...
Inv Smf Co Acc £10	62.54	66.09	-0.19	0.30
Managed Inc £10	138.30	...	...	...
Monthly Inc £10	215.80	...	...	...
UK Growth Inc £10	220.20	...	-0.40	...
UK Select Opps Inc £10	193.50	...	-5.00	...
UK Smf Cos Inc £10	292.00	...	-1.20	...

## AXA FUND MANAGERS LTD

Admin &amp; Enq 0117 999 0808

## AXA Trusts

Gen Acc £10	2101.00	...	+6.00	2.64
Gen Inc £10	1079.00	...	-2.00	...

## UK/Global Investment Companies

Euro Acc £10	234.70	...	...	1.18
Extra Inc B £10	86.70	...	+0.24	...
Global Growth Acc R £10	28.14	...	+4.10	0.52
Inc Leaders £10	40.20	...	+2.20	1.51
Pac Growth Acc A £10	479.80	...	-17.60	2.30

## CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD

08457 46 46 46

European Growth £10	233.70	...	-0.60	...
Sus Leaders £10	854.40	...	+5.90	...
UK Growth £10	683.70	...	+3.20	2.09
UK Income £10	215.20	...	...	4.59

## CLOSE FUND MANAGEMENT LTD

0870 606 4002

Beacon Inv £1	84.88	...	-0.35	...
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## Dealing: 020 7426 6232

Winchester £1	4089.03	...	+36.55	1.13
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## COLUMBIA THREADNEEDLE INVESTMENTS

Enqs: 0870 601 6183 Dealing: 0870 601 6083

## Share Class 1 - Retail

Corporate Bd £10	49.99	...	-0.21	...
Emerging Mkts £10	...	...	-0.50	...
Euro Growth & Inc £10	1454.00	...	+5.00	1.25
Extra Bond £10	...	...	...	0.85
FTSE All-Shr Track £10	495.90	...	+1.00	1.23
Global Growth SCI £10	368.90	...	-0.60	...
High Inc Trst £10	11.57	12.14	...	5.22
Max Inc Bond £10	44.28	...	...	...
Muti Man Gwth £10	70.41	...	...	3.17
Muti Man Dist £10	60.44	...	...	3.18
North Amer £10	1069.00	...	+2.00	...
Pacific Gwth £10	477.40	...	...	0.04
Strategic Bd £10	201.60	...	...	1.64
UK Equity £10	944.00	...	+2.00	1.27
UK Gwth & Inc Acc £10	698.50	...	...	...
UK Gwth & Inc Dist £10	232.70	...	...	...
UK Smaller Cos £10	1122.00	...	...	1.43

## EDENTREE INV MGMT LTD

0800 358 3010

Resp & Sust Sterling Bond £86.43	...	...	-0.29	...
Resp & Sust Euro Acc £10	363.80	...	-0.90	2.22
Resp & Sust Gld Eq £10	369.80	...	-0.30	0.94
Resp & Sust Mgd Income £122.90	...	...	-0.10	4.47
Resp & Sust UK Eq £10	221.00	...	-0.20	1.50
Resp & Sust UK Equity Opps £102.10	...	...	-1.20	1.48

## FIDELITY INTERNATIONAL

Private Cnts 0800 414161 Broker Dlgs 0800 414181

Amer Spec Sits £10	2538.00	...	-2.00	...
American £10	639.00	...	-3.00	...
Asia Inc Japan £10	648.10	...	-2.90	0.35
European £10	3945.00	...	-18.00	...
Extra Income £10	22.62	...	...	6.19
Global Spec Sits £10	6468.00	...	-11.00	...
Global Focus £10	3252.00	...	-6.00	...
Int'l Leadership £10	149.50	...	-0.20	0.88
Japan £10	651.10	...	-3.20	0.46
Monoydr Bal £10	42.96	...	-0.20	4.27
Monoydr Glob £10	327.60	...	-0.10	0.21
Monoydr Gwth £10	76.12	...	-0.95	...
Monoydr Inc £10	28.95	...	-0.02	...

Monoydr UK Ind £10	144.33	...	-0.81	3.17
Special Sits £10	512.00	...	-52.00	2.59
Wealthbuilder £10	69.75	72.18	...	0.53

## HALIFAX INVESTMENT FUND MGRS LTD

01296 386 386

## Authorised Inv Funds

<b>Share Class C</b>				
Corporate Bond £10	34.24	...	+0.05	...
Ethical £10	136.90	...	-0.10	...
European £10	130.20	...	+0.20	...
Far Eastern £10	125.90	...	-0.20	2.01
Fund of Inv Trst £10	151.40	...	+0.60	0.69
Intl Growth £10	153.10	...	-0.40	...
Japanese £10	83.99	...	-0.25	1.15
North Amer £10	189.90	...	-0.60	0.07
Smaller Cos £10	117.20	...	+0.30	...
Special Sits £10	50.45	...	+0.01	...
UK Equity £10	102.50	...	-0.10	...
UK FTSE 100 Tr £10	76.77	...	-0.26	...
UK FTSE ALES Tr £10	88.40	...	+0.18	2.34
UK Growth £10	94.23	...	+0.03	...

## HSBC GLOBAL ASSET MGMT (UK) LTD

Enq: 0845 745 6123 Dlg: 0845 745 6126 Mon-Fri 8-6

## HSBC Index Tracker Investment Funds (OEIC)

Amer Ind Acc £10	1181.61	...	+1.37	1.08
Amer Ind Inc £10	926.39	...	-1.08	1.09
Euro Ind Acc £10	1386.64	...	-0.78	2.84
Euro Ind Inc £10	842.45	...	-0.48	2.92
FTSE 100 Ind Acc £10	312.32	...	...	...
FTSE 100 Ind Inc £10	135.00	...	+0.43	...
FTSE 250 Ind Acc £10	316.18	...	-1.56	2.92
FTSE 250 Ind Inc £10	182.86	...	-0.90	3.02
FTSE All-S Acc £10	795.06	...	+2.30	3.16
FTSE All-S Inc £10	381.08	...	+1.31	3.24
Jap Ind Acc £10	164.50	...	-1.44	1.62
Jap Ind Inc £10	123.71	...	-1.08	1.64
Pac Ind Acc £10	553.55	...	-0.17	2.80
Pac Ind Inc £10	326.76	...	-0.10	2.89

## HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Share Class

Balanced Acc £10	270.57	...	+0.32	1.33
Balanced Inc £10	151.95	...	-0.14	...
Corp Bd Acc £10	285.22	...	+0.45	3.29
Corp Bd Inc £10	106.23	...	+0.17	3.99
Gilt & Fd Inc £10	492.78	...	-1.62	...
Gilt & Fd Inc £10	74.17	...	-0.24	...
Income Acc £10	797.74	...	+3.37	3.76
Income Inc £10	313.43	...	+1.32	3.29
Monthly Inc Acc £10	313.41	...	+0.77	3.21
Monthly Inc Inc £10	134.10	...	+0.39	3.59
UK Gwth & Inc Ret B Acc £10	1024.22	...	+0.62	3.60
UK Gwth & Inc Ret B Inc £10	1462.71	...	+0.26	3.71
UK Gth & Inc Acc £10	162.22	...	+0.62	3.60
UK Gth & Inc Inc £10	68.71	...	+0.26	3.71

## HSBC Specialist Investment Funds (OEIC)

American Index Retail Acc £10	1018.61	...	+1.37	1.08
American Index Retail Inc £10	1092.39	...	+1.08	1.09
Asian Gth Acc £10	147.77	...	-0.07	...
Asian Gth Inc £10	139.99	...	-0.06	...
Chinese Eq Acc £10	513.81	...	+0.27	0.40
Chinese Eq Inc £10	434.76	...	+0.22	0.34
Euro Gth Acc £10	973.97	...	+4.05	0.41
Euro Gth Inc £10	817.05	...	+3.29	0.44

## IGNIS ASSET MGMT

Dly: 0141 222 8282

American Gth Inc £10	322.55	340.42	-3.34	...
Balanced Growth £10	262.17	276.69	-0.93	1.52
Balanced Growth Acc £10	393.13	414.92	-1.40	...
Corporate Bond £10	96.69	...	-0.29	4.77
European Growth £10	403.88	426.26	-3.57	2.18
European Growth Acc £10	475.71	502.07	-4.21	2.24
Global Gwth £10	331.53	349.90	-3.09	0.12
Higher Yield £10	83.98	88.64	-0.29	...
Higher Yield Acc £10	275.04	290.28	-0.92	...
Japan £10	49.06	51.78	-0.03	0.94
Managed £10	130.89	138.15	-0.06	...
Managed Trst £10	71.96	76.96	-0.17	...
Mutl Pfolio Inc £10	95.54	100.84	-0.11	...
Pacific Gwth £10	496.71	526.34	-2.81	1.34
Smaller Comp £10	756.24	789.14	-1.64	0.15
Smaller Cos £10	618.94	663.79	-1.26	0.21

## INSIGHT INVESTMENT FDS MANAGEMENT LTD

Client Servs: 0207 169 4000

## Insight Investment Multi-Manager Funds

Well Blkr Bal Acc £10	96.05	...	-0.32	...
Well Blkr Gwth Acc £10	93.79	...	-0.36	...

## INVESCO FUND MGRS LTD

Dlmg: 0800 085 8571 Inv Serv: 0800 085 8677

## Briker Serv: 0800 028 2221

UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...
UK Str Inc NV Tr £10	323.57	...	-0.12	...

## INVESTEC FUND MGRS

Broker Support and Dealing: 020 7597 1900

## OEIC Series (Lithu) &amp; Acc

American A Acc £10	804.43	...	-0.30	...
Asia ex Japan A Acc £10	742.20	...	-0.31	...
Capital Accumulator A Acc £10	1023.48	...	-3.21	...
Cautious Managed A Acc £10	226.22	...	+0.26	2.27
Diversified Managed A Acc £10	1023.37	...	+0.16	2.30
Diversified Growth A Acc £10	1023.37	...	-0.08	...
Diversified Growth A Acc £10	1023.37	...	-0.07	...
Diversified Income A Acc £10	1023.37	...	+0.12	3.42
Diversified Income A Acc £10	1023.37	...	+0.03	4.89
Diversified Income A Acc £10	1023.37	...	-0.12	...
Emerging Mkts Global Acc £10	1023.37	...	+0.20	...
Emerging Mkts Global Acc £10	1023.37	...	-0.07	...

Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc @162.73	...	-0.18	...
Emrg Mkts Local Curr Debt A Inc @133.68	...	-0.60	4.44
Emrg Mkts Local Curr Debt A Inc @165.70	...	-0.22	6.29
Emrg Mkts Local Curr Debt Gross Inc @120.49	...	-0.05	...
Enhanced Natural Resources A Acc @134.24	...	-1.25	...
Global Bond A Acc @ 139.30	...	+4.03	0.82
Global Bond A Inc @ 109.33	...	+3.00	0.82
Global Bond F Gross Inc @1167.00	...	+29.78	...
Global Dynamic A Acc @ 193.61	...	+1.95	0.47



# 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%	Div%	P/E

## Automobiles & parts

395%	1%	Aston Martin Lag	151%	-	1%	-4.1
------	----	------------------	------	---	----	------

## Banking & finance

1920	136%	Abrdn	151	+	2%	9.8	...
720	3%	Acuity RM	4	...	...	...	-0.4
2801	1%	Admiral	2576	+	13	2.8	23.2
23%	1%	ADVFL	12%	...	...	...	-3.1
403	249	AI Bell	380%	+	8	3.0	23.0
2702%	21594%	Aon Corp	22920%	+	47%	...	22.6
1105	87	Arbutnot Bldg	942%	...	4.9	4.2	...
144%	4	Argo Group	4%	...	...	...	2.0
230	6	Ashmore	180%	+	1%	9.3	12.4
1552%	1181	Asu New Z	1500	-	6%	...	12.8
497	128%	Aviva	476%	+	8%	7.1	12.8
413%	101%	Banco Santander	390%	-	1	3.8	6.8
5380	87%	Bank of Georgia	372%	+	85	7.3	8.2
220	2%	Barclays	208%	+	1%	3.8	8.0
282%	...	Blue Star Capital	...	...	...	...	-0.2
512%	226	BP Marsh&Ptns	496	...	...	1.3	13.6
202	4%	Brazehead Int	5%	-	1%	...	...
...	...	Brewin Dolphin	41%	+	...	...	28.1
1403	165%	Bridgepoint	213%	+	4%	4.2	32.7
130	24%	Cekus Sec	29	...	...	...	5.9
286	1%	Chesnara	249	+	1%	9.6	20.2
...	...	City of Lon Gp	10	+	...	...	-0.6
441	...	City Lon Inv Gp	361	+	2	9.1	12.4
976%	15%	Close Bros	452	+	5%	10.0	4.7
284	2%	CNC Markets	263	+	4	1.8	71.0
1340%	...	Commerz&B	1244%	...	9%	2.3	8.8
1418%	773%	Deutsche Bk	1263%	+	13%	5.0	5.1
2338	133%	Direct Line Ins	195%	-	3%	2.0	12.4

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E

66%	39%	EGF-Hermes Hldg	48%	...	...	5.5
187	101%	EPE Special Opps	174	-	2	...
1171	941%	FBD	1117%	...	7.6	6.7
82%	33	Fisike	75	...	0.3	15.0
1765	46%	Frenkel Topping	46%	...	2.2	35.7
1364	2%	Georgia Capital	840	-	4	1.9
1120	450	Gresham House	1100	-	20	...
490	1%	H&T Group	371	-	9	4.4
836	39%	Harsco Global	47%	-	1%	9.0
1120	185	Hargreaves Lansdown	104	+	5	3.9
105	24%	Helios Under	181%	...	3.3	35.4
706%	41%	HSBC	681%	+	4%	7.1
822%	93	IG Group	800%	+	13	5.7
64%	1%	Impace	414%	+	7%	6.7
2995	1%	Intermed Capital	2352	+	82	3.4
131	451%	IPF	1261%	+	1%	8.1
139%	115%	International Public P'ship	125	+	3%	85.6
565	429%	Investec	541	+	19	6.3
547	283	Investment Co	355	...	...	44.1
431%	43%	IP Group	46%	-	1%	2.6
160%	46%	Jarvis Securities	60%	...	14.8	6.8
142	73%	Jupiter Fund Mgmt	77%	+	1	9.0
107%	3	Just Group	102%	+	1%	2.0
689	1%	Lancashire Holdings	605	+	15	2.7
268	192	Legal & Gen	229%	-	13%	8.3
...	...	Liberty Group	502%	-	2%	...
855	93%	Liontrust	774	+	14	9.4
62%	26	Livemore Inv	38%	...	...	...
33%	3%	Lloyds Banking Group	54%	+	1%	5.1
24%	1%	LMS Capital	17%	-	1%	...

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E

9424	232	Lon S&K Ex Gp	9404	+	62	1.2	68.0
1182	183	M&G	2037%	+	4%	9.8	16.4
277%	12%	Man	255%	+	1%	5.0	16.8
326%	15	Manx Fin	18%	...	2.4	5.2	...
142	1	Marechale Cap	1%	...	...	...	-3.6
796	97%	Mattoli Woods	791	+	1	3.4	41.2
40%	9	Metal Tiger	9	+	1%	...	-2.0
125%	30%	Metro Bank	36%	...	...	...	2.7
1828%	1310%	Nat Aust Bk	1810%	-	6%	...	15.9
326%	13%	NatWest	310	+	6%	5.6	6.6
343	57	Numis	343	...	...	...	...
528	45%	Oneasavings Bank	470%	+	18%	7.0	7.2
576	88	PayPoint	567	+	1	3.3	13.3
...	...	PCF Group	...	...	1%	...	-0.4
563%	88%	Phoenix	490%	+	6	10.8	...
1136	608	Prudential	725%	+	16	2.3	14.9
3	1%	Quantum Blockchain	1%	...	...	...	-2.4
376%	71%	Quilter	118	+	1%	4.4	38.1
433%	1%	Randall & Quilbe	1%	+	1%	...	...
1996	...	Rathbone Grp	1740	+	22	5.0	34.2
1%	1%	Riverfort Global Opps	1%	...	1.6	-1.8	...
274%	29%	Rockwood Strategic	274	...	...	...	7.0
2480	69	S&A	1890	-	5	6.8	7.0
110%	1%	Sancus Lending Grp	1%	...	...	...	...
46%	...	Schroder REIT	45%	...	...	...	-4.3
464%	6%	Schroders	382%	+	9%	5.7	15.7
1183	1%	St James Place	53%	+	25	4.6	...
785%	7%	Stand Chart	741%	+	20%	2.9	8.3
...	...	Starves	11%	+	1%	...	-1.9
227	25%	STM Group	57%	...	1.0	9.2	...

12 month	Price				
High Low Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	Div%	P/E

1024	290	Billington Hldgs	485	-	25	3.9	6.1
240	1%	Boot (Henry)	210	+	5	3.5	10.8
403	3%	BREEDON	394%	+	9%	3.5	12.7
444%	1%	Br Land	437%	+	13%	5.4	-3.8
160	19%	Caledonian Tst	95	...	...	...	...
5050	49%	Cap & Regnl	60	...	9.5	...	...
2450	55%	Cardiff Prop	2300	...	0.9	20.2	...
1286	1%	Cecapital	1%	...	...	...	-0.2
479	118%	Clarke T	160	...	3.6	11.6	...
...	...	Countryside Partner	229%	+	14	...	16.7
18837%	11%	Craven House	15%	...	...	...	-0.1
2402	1779	Derwent London	2380	+	84	3.4	-5.6
24%	3%	Dolphin Capital	4%	...	...	...	-4.9
27	15%	First Prop	19%	...	...	...	...
115	3%	Fletcher Kings	45	...	1.6	20.6	...
71	18	Fontons Group	67%	+	1%	1.3	39.6
1008	185%	Galliford Try	235	-	3	4.8	17.0
474%	1%	Geniut Group	451%	+	15	2.8	29.3
580	350	Gleson (M)	560	...	2.3	19.2	...
1023	5%	Grafton	982	+	17	3.6	11.3
274%	41%	Grainier	239%	+	6	2.9	68.4
416	162%	Great Portland	346%	+	11	3.5	-2.6
159	20%	Hammerston	280	-	5	1.0	12.1
580	275	Hoath (Samuel)	275	...	4.3	8.1	...
2368	187%	Helical PLC	219%	+	5	5.4	-1.5
890	192%	Highcroft Inv	587%	-	12%	...	-2.5
694	120%	Ibstock	159%	+	7%	4.6	30.0
225	76	James Halstead	191%	+	3%	4.3	17.9
1376	2%	Keller	1242	+	32	3.7	10.3

12 month			Price				
High	Low	Company	(p)	+/-	Yld%	P/E	
38%	1%	SG	27%	+	1%	-7.1	
98%	45	SigmaRac	68	+	1%	35.7	
100%	41%	Sirius Real Estate	98%	+	1%	5.3 32.6	
168%	...	Smart (J)	125	...	2.5	...	
435%	17	Steppe Cement	18%	...	...	6.5	
152%	99%	Taylor Wimpey	152%	+	4%	6.4 15.3	
401	110	Town Centre	150	-	2%	3.2 5.9	
914%	712%	Travis Perkins	840%	+	20%	2.2 47.2	
170%	1%	Tritax Big Box Reit	156%	+	4%	...	42.1
62%	3%	Tritax Eurobox	59	+	1	...	...
3872	236	Tyman	361	+	5	3.8 18.5	
1057	104	Unite	904	+	21%	4.0 36.7	
1310	380	Vistry Group	1275	+	36	20.0	...
604	84	Workspace REIT	580	+	26	4.7 -5.0	
730	228%	Wynnstay Props	680	+	5	3.6 15.6	

## Consumer goods

3%	1%	AgriRenta	1%	...	-0.1
34%	3	Aires	31%	...	1.7 15.8
820	1%	Anglo-Eastern	67%	- 4	1.7 7.2
246	34%	Animakare	246	...	1.7 ...
2738	190	AB Foods	2506	- 11	2.1 16.2
147	1%	Bakkavor Group	139%	- 1	5.1 15.1
623	82%	Barr (AG)	606	+	3 2.5 17.7
1%	1%	BldStack Group	1%	...	...
213%	21	Brand Architects	31	...	...
2735	7	Brit Amer Tob	2381	- 7	9.7 -3.6
1018	52	Britvic	972	+	6 3.3 20.2
2289	52%	Burberry	1031	+	21% 6.2 8.6
176%	4%	C&C Grp	155%	+	1% 1.0 -9.2
5%	1	Capital Metals	4	...	...
149%	2%	Carri's Grp	149	+	2% 5.1 ...
340	1%	Character Grp	315	- 12	5.8 17.5
1495	80	Churchill China	1110	+	10 3.2 14.8
2804	175	Coca Cola HBC	2706	- 2	2.9 18.0
855	450	Colefax	855	+	5 0.6 9.9
4465	134%	Cranwick	4260	- 5	1.9 18.1
...	...	Devro	329	...	...
3457	136%	Diageo	2611	+	16% 1.1 17.8
1%	1%	Distil	1%	...	...
1%	1%	Evans (NLP)	836	- 14	5.2 10.9
245	89	Finsbury Food	110	+	1% ... 13.1
11700	259%	Games Workshop	9670	- 50	4.3 22.8
4992%	1114	Glanbia	1616%	+	76% 1.9 16.0
2354	68%	Greencore	167%	- 1%	...
275	152	Headlam	152	...	...
942	41	Hilton Food	871	+	10 3.7 21.6
720%	14%	Hornby	22	...	...
1994	1%	Imperial Brands	1990	+	12 7.4 7.9
7%	1	J Lewis Hldc	1%	+	1% ... 7.9
7908%	27%	Kerry Gp	6445%	+	16% 1.5 18.1
128	25%	McBride	120	+	1% ... 11.8
898	100	Mulberry Group	117%	+	2% 0.8 38.0
1200	58	Nichebe	1030	+	30 2.8 20.4
9294	135%	Norcos	267	+	1 4.9 12.4
1192%	258	Origin Ents	202%	...	...
504	4%	Pittards	5%	+	1% ... 2.5
488%	219	Portmerion	230	...	2.3 -3.7 ...
1%	1%	Proxecto	1%	...	...
188	1%	PZ Cussons	104	-	1% 5.0 ...
97	49%	REA	97	+	1% ... -3.7
34%	1%	Real Gd Fd	1%	...	...
250	115	Tandem	177	...	3.7 -7.8 ...
714	9%	Treant	477	+	10 1.7 26.4
150%	1%	Uxproduct Gp	3	...	...
5200	4314	Unilever (NV)	5200	+	32 3.3 23.4
4393	5%	Unilever	4393	+	36 3.3 19.8
1521	177%	Victoria	177%	+	6 ... -1.2

## Health

1255	NOTROB	207	+	1	4.9	12.4
1929	258	Origin Enters	262	...	5.4	8.3
504	4	Pittards	5%	+	1	...
488	219	Portmerine	230	...	2.3	-3.7
1%	1%	Proveix	1%	...	...	...
188	1%	PZ Cussions	104	-	1%	5.0
97	49%	REAL	97	+	1%	-3.7
34%	1%	Real Gd Fds	1%	...	...	-4.1
250	115	Tandem	177	...	3.7	-7.8
714	9%	Trent	473	+	10	1.7
150%	1%	Ukroduct Gp	3	...	...	25.4
200	4314	Unilever (NV)	4200	+	32	3.3
393	5%	Unilever	593	+	36	3.3
521	177%	Victoria	177%	+	6	-4.2

Engineering

...	...	Ass Br Eng	15	...	...	-5.1
378	393	Avon Rubber	1296	-	22	1.7
565%	16	Babcock	1297	+	2%	0.3
397	78%	BAE	1388%	+	4%	2.1
400	900	Braime A N/V	1000	...	...	1.4
200	1%	Braime Group	2200	...	...	0.6
374	50%	Caffyns	450	...	...	4.4
2%	...	Cap XX Ltd	...	...	...	-4.1
780	326	Castings	356	-	14	4.7
442	1%	Chamberlain	1%	...	...	5.0



Equity prices **Business**

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																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																
501	---	MediClinic	501	+	1/2	---	---	31.3			39%	1/2	Bonhill Group	1/2	+	1/2	---	-1.5						939%	65%	DRD Gold	65%	+	1 1/2	---	-7.2						3766	7 1/2	Shuka Minerals	8%	-	1/4	-1.3				225	11	Roebuck Food Grp	14	---	-8.1				1644%	1056%	LG Electronics	1246	-	101 1/2	2.0	10.6																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
181%	1/2	N4 Pharma	1/2	---	---	---	-1.0				157%	65	Catalyst Media	80	+	2 1/2	33.2	5.4							12%	1/2	ECR Minerals	1/2	---	-1.8										221	1%	RPS Group	221	-	1	---	---				309%	106%	Location Sciences	1/2	+	134%	---				783	31	MTI Wireless	43	---	5.7	11.9																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
75%	5 1/2	NOIX Group	68%	-	1/4	1.4	32.3				1246	1/2	Catena	1/2	---	---	-0.2								189%	1/2	Empyrean Energy	1/2	---	0.9										839%	106%	RS Group	730%	+	22	3.1	14.6				50%	15%	Nanoco	17	+	1/4	3.9																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
95.41	79.21	Novartis	CHF 94.66	+	0.58	---	-2.7				---	---	DCD Media	100	-	30	---	5.0							2082	6%	Endeavour	1629	-	4	4.0	---								117%	18	RTC Group	117%	-	5	4.4	9.2				393%	71%	Nektar	87	+	0.9	27.6																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
3%	2	Omega Diags	2%	---	---	---	-1.6				135%	31%	Equity	41	---	---	---								71%	12%	EquiQuest	14%	-	1/2	-1.3									271%	18%	RWS Hldgs	203	+	35%	7.2	---							50%	15%	Nanoco	17	+	1/4	3.9																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		
335	1/2	Oveco Bio	1/2	---	---	---	-0.3				1141	27	Future	1060	+	10	0.3	11.2							614	1/2	Thor Mining	1/2	---	-0.8										468	108	Science Group	427	-	8	1.1	19.6				46	1/2	Northamber	42	---	1.4	---				34%	7%	Online Blockchain	15%	+	2 1/2	---	-2.0																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										
470	11	Oxford Biomedica	323%	-	2	---	-1.9				238	3%	GlobalData	227%	+	4	2.0	59.8							193%	40%	Smiths News	60	+	1/4	7.5	6.0									3882	26%	Smurfit Kappa	3542	-	48	3.6	14.0				119	2%	Oxford Metrics	99	---	2.7	22.9																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
15%	1/2	Physiomics	1%	---	---	---	-3.3				120%	1/2	Hyve Group	120%	---	---	---								1282	8%	Software Circle plc	19	---	-0.1											439%	32%	SThree	427	+	7	3.9	10.2				457	115	QinetiQ	456%	+	1 1/2	1.7	35.6																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
33%	2%	Proteome Scies	3%	---	---	---	-4.7				221	67%	IG Design Grp	219	+	4	-9.7								775	22%	Staffline	38	-	1/4	-7.0											193	54%	Synectics	176	---	1.7	13.7				109	859%	Sage	1048	+	11 1/2	1.9	51.3																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
6226	201	Reckitt Benckiser	€390	+	2	4.3	14.1				852	148%	Informa	847	+	20%	2.1	28.3							439%	32%	SThree	427	+	7	3.9	10.2														193	54%	Synectics	176	---	1.7	13.7				109	859%	Sage	1048	+	11 1/2	1.9	51.3																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
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Spanish civil war  
activist and memoirist  
Ángeles Flórez Peón  
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# Register

## Obituaries

# Françoise Hardy

French singer-songwriter and fashion muse whose melancholic beauty and wistful lyrics entranced David Bowie and Mick Jagger

While French cinema had Brigitte Bardot, Gallic pop had Françoise Hardy. The two stars exuded a contrasting allure. If Bardot was all voluptuous glamour, Hardy was more gamine and enigmatic — Vogue called her the “anti-Bardot” and credited her with creating an ideal of beauty that changed how teenagers wanted to look and “rendered the exaggerated femininity of the sex kitten old-fashioned”.

Both in their different ways came to epitomise an image of chic French womanhood that exerted an appeal far beyond the Francophone world, and Hardy went on to become an object of adoration to the biggest names in 1960s pop.

“I was passionately in love with her,” David Bowie said. “Every male in the world and a number of females were, too.” Mick Jagger declared her to be his “ideal woman” while his fellow Rolling Stone Brian Jones tried to get Hardy to join a threesome with his then girlfriend Anita Pallenberg.

Before having met her, Bob Dylan was smitten enough to write her a poem which began: “For Françoise Hardy/ At the Seine’s edge/ a giant shadow/ of Notre Dame/ seeks t’ grab my foot.” It was printed on the sleeve of his 1964 album *Another Side of Bob Dylan*, and two years later Hardy went to see him in concert at the Olympia in Paris. When Dylan was told that she was in the audience, he refused to go back on stage for the second half of the show unless she visited his dressing room.

He then invited her back to his suite at the George V hotel and played her *I Want You* from his new album, *Blonde on Blonde*. She was listening so intently to the song, “which sounded totally different to anything I had heard before”, that she claimed not to realise he was attempting to seduce her. “And that was it ... I never saw him again.”

That her celebrity admirers were fascinated more by her beauty than her music was a source of irritation. Outside of her core French audience she felt “people were much more interested in my looks than in my songs” and that she was seen not as a serious artist but as an exotic Gallic version of the mini-skirted 1960s “dolly bird”.

Nevertheless, although she balked at being treated as a “fashion ambassador”, she played along with it and became an *égérie* or muse to designers including Yves Saint Laurent and Paco Rabanne, who created for her a gold-plated dress weighing 16kg and which at the time was said to be the costliest dress in the world. Rei Kawakubo named her label Comme des Garçons after a line in one of Hardy’s songs.

The likes of Richard Avedon and David Bailey photographed her for the covers of Vogue, Elle and Paris Match. Her 1960s record sleeves, styled and shot by the photographer Jean-Marie Périer, then her partner, were exquisite exercises in bohemian romanticism, with her long hair framing her Delphic face and her doe eyes fixed on some distant point beyond the horizon.

“Being taken up by fashion houses was work, things I had to do, a chore,” she complained to Uncut magazine in 2018. “I didn’t enjoy it at all.” Worse, she felt it obscured that she was a singer rather than a model, who from the



Hardy balked at being treated as a fashion icon but the designer Paco Rabanne created a 16kg gold dress for her, below

outset of her career wrote her own songs, which were full of a wistful charm and existential melancholia. “I walk the streets alone, my soul in sorrow ... I go alone, because nobody loves me,” she sang when she was just 18 on her 1962 debut hit single, *Tous les garçons et les filles*.

It topped the French charts and sold more than two million copies as she became known as the face of *yé-yé*, the style of music that was France’s homegrown response to Anglo-American rock’n’roll and which in part took its

mid-1960s were the future Led Zeppelin rockers Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones.

Recurring stage fright, which she could never quite shake off, led to her abandoning live performances after 1967. She also hated being stared at whenever she stopped in a café or bar and became increasingly reclusive, spending much of her time at a second home in Corsica.

However, she continued writing and recording, her early simple *yé-yé* songs giving way to sophisticated baroque pop and jangling folk rock. Her personal favourite among her albums was *La question* (1971), a collaboration with the Brazilian singer-songwriter Tuca full of sensual, dreamlike songs fusing folk, jazz and bossa nova. In later years she was fêted as a pioneer by a generation of younger musicians and recorded collaborations with Air, Blur and Iggy Pop among others.

Away from music she had a serious interest in astrology, writing several books on the subject and giving readings based on astrological birth charts. “We are all conditioned by a lot of things — genetic, affective, social, geographical and the situation of the solar system at the moment of birth,” she believed.



Her later years were blighted by ill health. After being diagnosed with lymphatic cancer in 2004 she underwent years of treatment and in 2015 she was placed in an induced coma when her condition worsened. Her life hung in the balance for weeks before she recovered thanks to a pioneering new form of radiation.

Three years later she made a surprise return to music with *Personne d’autre*, an album of mature, impressionistic songs about love lost, regret and mortality. “I sing about death in a very symbolic and positive way. There is an acceptance there,” she said.

After her health struggles, she became an advocate of euthanasia. Last year she told Paris Match that France was “inhuman” for not allowing it and that she wanted to “go soon and quickly, without much suffering”.

She is survived by her son Thomas Dutronc, a jazz guitarist who played on his mother’s records, and by her former partner, the singer and actor Jacques Dutronc. Their relationship began in 1967 although they did not get around to marrying until 1981 in what Hardy called “an uninteresting formality”. They separated in 1988 but never divorced and remained close.

Françoise Madeleine Hardy was born in Paris in 1944 during the Nazi occupation of Paris. Her shy character, she

believed, was the result partly of her astrological sign, Capricorn, and partly due to the violent context of her birth. An air raid was taking place at the time and blew out the windows of the maternity hospital, leaving her with what she called an “abnormally anxious temperament”.

Her mother, Madeleine Hardy, raised her as a single parent. Her father, Étienne Dillard, was a married man 20 years older with another family on the other side of Paris. He played little part in her life, although he insisted she took piano lessons and should be educated at a convent school. She hated the school and claimed she was persecuted by the nuns because she came from a single-parent family, which left her tormented by shame.

Her mother brought her up strictly and an unhappy, claustrophobic childhood was made worse, she wrote in her

## She sold more records in 18 months than Édith Piaf had done in 18 years

2008 autobiography *Le désespoir des singes ... et autres bagatelles* (The Despair of Monkeys and Other Trifles), by a tyrannical maternal grandmother who was “egocentric, narrow-minded, frigid and emasculating” and told her granddaughter repeatedly that she was “unattractive and a very bad person”.

She took the title of the memoir from a monkey puzzle tree in the Parc de Bagatelle — the sharp leaves reminded her of “men who have caused me despair”. In the book she blamed the dysfunction of her family for her insecurity and for the mental illness that led her younger sister, Michèle, to take her own life in 2004.

Despite Hardy’s misery at school, she passed her baccalaureate two years early at 16, whereupon her father made a brief reappearance and offered to buy her a present to reward her cleverness. She opted for a guitar and began writing songs. “I was astonished to find that I could make so much from just three chords,” she said. “Those three chords produced most of my songs for the next ten years.”

At 17 she signed her first recording contract and ten of the dozen songs on her debut album were her own compositions, an extraordinary rarity in the pre-Beatles era, particularly for a female singer. Within 18 months, it was said she had sold more records than Édith Piaf had done in 18 years.

For a while she toyed with a parallel film career. Bardot’s husband Roger Vadim cast her in *Château en Suède* (1963) and Jean-Luc Godard gave her a cameo three years later in *Masculin féminin*. Yet she had no genuine interest in acting and believed that writing and singing songs represented a higher form of art.

“What a person sings is an expression of who they are,” she said. “Luckily for me, the most beautiful songs are not happy songs. The songs we remember are the sad, romantic ones.”

**Françoise Hardy, singer and songwriter, was born on January 17, 1944. She died after a long illness on June 11, 2024, aged 80**



# David Martin Jones

Political scientist and author who wrote extensively on the changing world order and warned about the rise of extremism

Long before the post-Cold War world order began to unravel, the political scientist David Martin Jones was warning that the big western democracies were becoming complacent and emasculated.

At the beginning of the Nineties some political scientists, such as the American Francis Fukuyama, talked about the “end of history” — describing a world that, in Jones’s words, “seemed to promise democracy, globalisation and interconnection”. He said: “The cost of becoming part of that world meant you got on board with democracy and the international understandings that went with it in terms of human rights, open markets and open borders.”

Defence spending at the same levels as before no longer seemed necessary in a world that — with a few troublesome exceptions — was prepared to march to the beat of the West’s drum. “The assumption was that war is passé. As a result western governments have failed to invest in defence,” said Jones, who was influenced by the leading conservative political scientists Michael Oakeshott and Kenneth Minogue, wrote 11 books and was a visiting professor in war studies at King’s College London.

One of his central hypotheses was that totalitarianism — in the form of “greater Russia”, aggressive Chinese nationalism and Iranian theocracy — had re-emerged or become bolder in recent years as it had taken advantage of the fracturing of liberalism in the West.

“The idea of liberalism began in the 18th century with the emphasis on the individual and individual freedoms,” Jones said. “In the Cold War liberals and conservatives were fairly undifferentiated, sharing a distaste for the total-

itarianism of communism. After the Cold War promoters of democracy and human rights, such as the UN, increasingly deviated from the classical liberal view of the individual. That division becomes sharper, particularly after 2001.”

Jones alienated many in the academic world with his assertion of “illiberal democracy” — a concept in the title of one of his books — arguing western culture had evolved a totalitarianism of liberal and progressive ideas that brooked little tolerance for opposing views. In academia he claimed that an “academic Maoism” increasingly held sway; he had watched appalled as classical liberals such as Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau were dismissed as “dead white men”.

He had first-hand experience of how a growing totalitarianism of thought on certain progressive ideas had infiltrated universities where he worked in the UK, Singapore and Australia. He joked that he had been “cancelled” in three continents for daring to challenge it.

His most recent book, *History’s Fools: The Pursuit of Idealism and the Revenge of Politics* (2020), contended that the “utopian ideals” that emerged in the early 1990s had resulted in unnecessary wars, the ceding of sovereignty to transnational bureaucracy and worsening political instability. “The dream of a conflict-free liberal order based on shared norms, open markets, open borders and an abstract commitment to social justice is dead and any attempt to preserve its remains is bound to fail.”

Jones had a gift for coining phrases that entered the academic, journalistic and political lexicon such as “cyber caliphate” and “neurocracy” to describe



Jones angered politicians in Singapore

states in supposedly democratic countries that exerted too much control over their citizens. He felt increasingly pessimistic about whether the West could respond effectively to the new threats in a shifting world order, saying: “After Covid the West is far weaker politically and economically. I’m frankly quite depressed about its prospects.”

David Martin Jones was born in Cardiff in 1950 to John Cynan Jones, who worked for the Law Society, and Betty, née Hutchings. He attended a grammar school in Cathays, which he later called “the best educational equaliser before its transformation into a failed comprehensive”.

The first person in his family to go to university, he read history at Reading University. He went on to study for a master’s at McMaster University in

Canada and a doctorate at the London School of Economics on political thought of the English civil war.

Under the influence of Oakeshott and Minogue at LSE, Jones shed what he called his hippy “anarchist liberalism”. Another formative experience was teaching at a comprehensive school in Kilburn, northwest London, to pay his way through his postgraduate research; it confirmed his view that Britain’s education system had been wrecked by a wrong-headed obsession with equality in education.

In 1989 Jones joined the politics department of the National University of Singapore but experienced first hand how governments in the Far East were not prepared to conform to the West’s liberal democracy model. He fell foul of the long-running government of Lee Kuan Yew by describing it as an “authoritarian regime with a capitalist ethic”. He wrote: “The ruling People’s Action Party did not take kindly to publishing on Singapore and Asian democratisation in a spirit of scholarly scepticism.”

When Christopher Lingle, a university lecturer in Singapore, was arraigned for defamation after questioning the independence of the Singapore judiciary, Jones assisted Lingle to escape across the causeway to Malaysia. As a result, Jones found himself followed by Singapore’s secret police, who, he recalled, seemed convinced that he belonged to a group of expat academics plotting to bring down the regime. He left “abruptly” in 1995 and moved to the School of Government in the University of Tasmania, where he investigated the history of the Welsh radicals there in the 1830s and 1840s.

In these years he became an expert on the emergent Islamic terrorist groups in southeast Asia, including Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah, and others that would come to prominence in the Middle East such as Islamic State, Hezbollah and Hamas. Paying particular attention to analysis of the jihadist texts, he explained and warned that these groups were effectively “death cults” that would wreak havoc. He went on to argue that the West had helped to facilitate their rise by, for instance, turning a blind eye to extreme Islamic views in British universities.

In 2004 he moved to the University of Queensland, where he continued to research transnational violence and ideology, but eventually returned to the UK.

In 2012 he married Jo, the stepdaughter of his old mentor Minogue. She survives him with three stepchildren. When not reading and researching, Jones loved cricket, tennis and golf and played all three to a high standard.

Few knew that he struggled with his mental health. A self-deprecating man, he enjoyed a boozy lunch and was popular with his students because he never displayed intellectual superiority and was knowledgeable about popular culture and art. “He was very good company,” said his friend Gerald Frost, director of the Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies in London. “It was difficult to find a book he hadn’t read.”

**David Martin Jones, political theorist, was born on August 21, 1950. He died after taking his own life on April 16, 2024, aged 73**

## Ángeles Flórez Peón

Spanish civil war activist who left her job as a seamstress for the trenches and came to symbolise the fight against fascism

On a July day in 1936, Ángeles Flórez Peón was preparing for a theatrical performance. Part of a socialist youth organisation in Pola de Siero in the Asturias region of northern Spain, she had the leading role, Maricuela, in the premiere of a play entitled *Arriba los pobres del mundo!* (Poor people of the world, rise up!).

But then a much larger drama intervened. News came that General Franco and his supporters were staging a coup in Spain against its republic. Opponents of Franco quickly assembled in the town and called for volunteers to join the resistance. Flórez was one of three women to step forward and head for the trenches. She was widely known thereafter as Maricuela, which she said represented her “yearning for democracy and freedom”.

It was the latest step in a young life already marked by struggle. Flórez had been born in 1918 to a father who was a miner and trade unionist and a mother who was a midwife and much more besides. “I always admired her,” Flórez said, “for her free and independent character.”

Life was hard. “The Asturian miners were then like slaves,” she said, recalling that they struggled to earn enough to feed their families. She left school at the age of nine, and initially earned money cleaning floors before becoming a seamstress. “In reality, those of us who were poor, and the vast majority of us were, did not have childhoods.”

It was also a time of great political fear. During the 1934 general strike her older brother, a communist “whom I adored”, was murdered in the town of Carbayín along with 23 others by government troops brandishing bayonets. “I could never get over that pain.” After



Flórez told her husband: “Don’t expect me to be a piece of furniture at home”

the Popular Front won elections in Spain, her mother warned her: “I think a war is being prepared. These people are not resigned to the left governing.”

And so in 1936 she headed for the front to join the civil war and a battalion named after “the martyrs of Carbayín”. Although images of women in uniform holding weapons were used for Republican propaganda they were mostly not allowed by commanders to bear arms. “I never picked up a rifle,” she said later, but was charged with making food and taking it to the trenches, crawling under gunfire and moving “between shootings and bombs”. She saw one of her closest friends shot down. “There were very few of us at the front,” she said. “But we women worked a lot for the republic, to defend it; they wanted to steal it from us and finally they did.”

Later, she regretted being withdrawn from the front to work as a nurse. She and her comrades had hoped for help from other European countries, “but over time came disillusionment. We were alone, but we had to continue”.

She had left the front by October 1937 but after Franco’s forces conquered the Asturias, Flórez was arrested. In a martial law hearing lasting just 15 minutes she was accused of killing two soldiers and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

“Those trials were a farce from beginning to end. We had no one to defend us ... But they didn’t care. I ended up in Saturarán prison in the Basque Country,” Flórez recalled. She had to listen to other prisoners being taken out to be shot. “It was a traumatic experience, but I made it out alive.”

Released under supervision in 1941, she returned to her home region, worked in a bar and pharmacy, and began a relationship with Graciano

Rozada Vallina, a miner and trade unionist, which produced a daughter, Maria Angeles. They later married and had a son, Jose Antonio. Yet “we were still reds and our freedom was temporary, always under suspicion”, she said.

Her husband, active in the resistance against Franco, fled to France and in 1948 she managed to escape too with her daughter, pretending to be on a day excursion on a fishing boat in the Bay of Biscay before entering French waters concealed under an oilcloth. Upon her arrival she was fined by the French authorities for illegal entry.

Flórez, who had warned her husband on their marriage day “don’t expect me to be a piece of furniture at home”, became active in the exiled resistance. She managed to make one return journey to Franco-ruled Spain in 1960 to see her family, despite initially being arrested on the border. Even after the death of Franco and the end of his dictatorship in 1975, she remained abroad until 2003, when she returned to Asturias to bury her husband’s ashes. Acclaimed as a resistance heroine, she decided to stay and became active again in radical politics, warning those on the left to overcome the kinds of divisions that had helped Franco seize power in the 1930s.

She published her memoirs in her nineties and was a compelling speaker. As one of the last witnesses of the Spanish civil war, she focused above all on the contemporary importance of memory, especially the stories of many women “erased from history”. “A country without memory,” she once remarked, “is a country without a soul.”

**Ángeles Flórez Peón, Spanish civil war activist, was born on November 17, 1918. She died on May 23, 2024, aged 105**



## Lives remembered

## Sir Oliver Popplewell



Sir Vernon Bogdanor, formerly professor of government at Oxford University, writes: I was fortunate enough to teach Sir Oliver

Popplewell (obituary, June 7) British political history and British government when he read PPE at Oxford. I was horrified to learn that he was keeping a diary, the basis for the book he wrote on his experiences as a mature student entitled *Hallmark*. Fortunately his comments on our tutorials were kindly, in line with his generous personality.

Oliver took a particularly difficult paper: the philosophy of Wittgenstein. When I asked him how he was getting on, he mopped his brow and replied: "Wittgenstein makes Locke and Berkeley look like Jeffrey Archer."

He told me that he had been the wicket keeper in the great Cambridge University side in 1950. But when Cambridge played the West Indies, he was unavailable. His substitute dropped the great batsman

Everton Weekes after he had scored just a few runs. Weekes went on to make 304 not out. Apparently the headline in the local paper was "Come back, Popplewell — all is forgiven!"

Peter Nathan writes: Sir Oliver Popplewell's death reminds me particularly of the cricket match many years ago when at the Kennington Oval he and I both recorded top scores as batsmen when playing for the Bar and the Law Society respectively. As the Bar's wicketkeeper he repeatedly barracked me when I was batting, saying that he was only "slogging" me, a term in cricket completely new to me. I still have the printed scorecard of the match.

Oliver, two years my senior, and I had earlier played at school together in the very successful Charterhouse 1st XI of 1946, with the future England captain Peter May as our team's leading batsman.

If you would like to add a personal view or recollection to a published obituary for editorial consideration, you can send your contribution by post to Times Obituaries, 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF, or you can email it to [tributes@thetimes.co.uk](mailto:tributes@thetimes.co.uk)

## Jerrold Northrop Moore



John Bridcut writes: When recording an interview with this formidable scholar for the documentary *Elgar: The Man Behind the Mask*, I learnt from Jerrold Northrop Moore (obituary, May 31) that, at a climactic moment in Elgar's second symphony, the solo trumpet traditionally holds an ear-splitting top B natural for two bars, rather than the one bar in the published score. This first arose when Elgar himself was recording the work, and Ernest Hall, the LSO's principal trumpet, told the composer he was so pleased to get the note, he didn't like to leave it. Elgar replied that he'd always intended to write it so, but had thought the note was too high to hold. It has been a tradition ever since. I asked Moore to let us film him listening to this movement. He was not enamoured of the idea, and through the entire 17 minutes sat impassively without a flicker of emotion. But when it came to the trumpet passage at figure 149, he gave me a fierce kick on the shins underneath the table.

## Court Circular

Buckingham Palace  
12th June, 2024

Her Excellency Ms Katerina Stavreska was received in audience by The King this afternoon and presented the Letters of Recall of her predecessor and her own Letters of Credence as Ambassador from the Republic of North Macedonia to the Court of St James's.

Her Excellency Mrs Ismara Mercedes Vargas Walter was received in audience by The King and presented the Letters of Recall of her predecessor and her own Letters of Credence as Ambassador from the Republic of Cuba to the Court of St James's.

Mr Victor Manuel Brizuela Fonseca was also received by His Majesty.

Sir Philip Barton (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs) was present.

The Queen, Patron, this afternoon visited the Garden Museum, 5 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1, and viewed the *Gardening Bohemia: Bloomsbury Women Outdoors* Exhibition.

The Princess Royal, on behalf of The King, held an Investiture at Windsor Castle this morning.

St James's Palace  
12th June, 2024

The Duke of Edinburgh, Colonel, Scots Guards, this morning visited the Regimental Headquarters at Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk, London SW1.

His Royal Highness, Patron, the London Gardens Society, having been received by the Earl Cadogan (Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London), this afternoon visited the Museum of Brands' Garden at 111-117 Lancaster Road, London W11, a public display in Portland Road, London W11, and Pembroke Square Gardens, London W2.

The Duke of Edinburgh,

Chairman, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation, this evening attended the Founder's Fund Dinner at the Peninsula Hotel, 1 Grosvenor Place, Hyde Park Corner, London SW1.

The Duchess of Edinburgh, Royal Colonel, The Queen's Own Yeomanry, this morning visited The Queen's Own Yeomanry and 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment at North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Forward Holding Base Sennelager, Germany.

Her Royal Highness, Colonel-in-Chief, afterwards visited The Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers at Normandy Barracks, Paderborn.

The Duchess of Edinburgh this afternoon arrived at Heathrow Airport, London, from Germany.

Mr Alexander Stonor and Captain Paige Welsh were in attendance.

Her Royal Highness this evening attended a Reception to commemorate Yazidi survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, given by the Ambassador from the United States of America (Her Excellency Ms Jane Hartley) at Winfield House, Regent's Park, London NW1.

St James's Palace  
12th June, 2024

The Princess Royal, Chancellor, University of London, this afternoon attended the School of Advanced Study 30th Anniversary Reception at Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1, and was received by Ms Roxane Zand (Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London).

Her Royal Highness, President, The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences, this evening attended a Dinner at Brunswick Group, 16-17 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2.

St James's Palace  
12th June, 2024

The Duke of Kent, Joint President, the Scout Association, this morning received Mr Matthew Hyde, upon relinquishing the appointment as Chief Executive, at Kensington Palace.

## Births, Marriages and Deaths

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**THE MIGHTY** one, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth. Psalm 50:1-2 (NRSV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

## Births

**MOTLEY** on 7th June 2024 to Amelia (née Thanaye) and Freddie, a son, Theo Benjamin.

## Deaths

**BERESFORD-DAVIES** Sally Romaine (née Hobart-Houghton) passed away on 4th June 2024, aged 53, much loved.

**BOYLE** Dermot MBE. Died peacefully at home on Friday 31st May 2024, aged 85. Beloved husband of Julie, devoted father to Jonathan, Anthony and Charlotte, and loving grandfather to eight grandchildren. A private funeral will be followed by a service of thanksgiving at Winchester Cathedral on Friday 19th July at 2.30pm. Donations, if desired, to United Kingdom for UNHCR can be made at [www.steelfunerals.co.uk](http://www.steelfunerals.co.uk)

**BROOKS** John Dominic passed away peacefully on 10th June 2024, aged 90. He was much loved by Liz, Marcus, Andrew, Carla, Isabel, Josh, Ruby, Cecily, Flora, Rufus and his many friends. Family cremation with a service of celebration later.

**LINDECK** Belinda died peacefully on 30th May 2024, aged 87, after a short illness. Much-loved sister and aunt. Her funeral will be held at St Cuthbert's, Philbeach Gardens, London, at 11am on 25th June.

**WHEELER** Dame Margaret (née Brain) died peacefully on 5th June 2024, aged 92, at home in East Devon. Beloved wife of the late Peter Wheeler, much-loved auntie and great friend to many, she will be missed deeply by all who knew her. Her funeral service is in Exeter on Friday 21st June. Inquiries to Luxton Funeral Service, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1BE; 01404 812646.

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PHOTOGRAPHER LIAM GILLAN

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THE  TIMES



# Law

## Judges rush to delete job titles online

Lady chief justice clamps down on social media profiles as one judge receives a formal misconduct warning. By **Jonathan Ames** and **Catherine Baksi**

It's been a tough fortnight for the judiciary as judges sitting on domestic and overseas courts face criticism in a way that would have been unheard of a generation ago.

At home, judges at all levels are scrambling to amend their social media profiles to erase any reference to the fact that they are ... judges. The flurry of digital deleting was triggered on Tuesday as the lady chief justice and lord chancellor beefed up an initial low-grade reprimand dished out to the deputy chief magistrate.

Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, the most senior judge in England and Wales, and Alex Chalk KC, ruled that Tan Ikram — whose official title is deputy senior district judge — should be given a “formal warning for misconduct” over his social media activity.

Initially, a nominated judge for the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office had recommended a lower reprimand of “formal advice”. But Carr and Chalk said they were “not satisfied” that the lower penalty was “sufficient in this case”.

The saga was triggered earlier this year, when Ikram allowed three women convicted of terrorism offences to walk free. It subsequently emerged that the judge had “liked” a post that branded Israel a terrorist state and called for a “free Palestine”.

The 59-year-old — 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 that Israel allowed the October 7 attack. More than 60 complaints were made about the judge, leading to this week's ruling in which it was accepted that Ikram had inadvertently liked the controversial comment.

Many experienced social media surfers will have sympathy for Ikram. Scrolling through the morass of social media on a smartphone can occasionally result in an accidental like or two.

But Carr and Chalk used the Ikram case to restate that judges must remove any reference to their roles from their social media profiles. Ikram had identified himself as a senior judge on LinkedIn.

That diktat will affect dozens of judges at all levels of the bench as a cursory glance at LinkedIn alone reveals that they continue to refer to their titles on their profiles. Included in that group are several senior judges, such as Naomi Ellenbogen, who sits on the High Court bench, Peter Blair, a senior circuit judge and honorary recorder of Bristol, Mark Lucraft, the recorder of London, Mark Bishop, the resident judge for Cambridge, and Jeremy Donne, another circuit judge.

And until recently, Dame Bobbie Cheema-Grubb, a senior High Court judge, identified her role, but she has deleted the reference from her profile.

The issue around judges highlighting their roles on social media was summed up in the Ikram ruling. The unidentified nominated judge who produced the main finding “concluded that the



Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill and Alex Chalk KC used the Tan Ikram case to reiterate guidance on judicial conduct

inadvertent liking of the post had resulted in a perception of bias”.

And as a result, Carr and Chalk found that Ikram's actions had “caused significant reputational damage to the judiciary”, which was evidenced by the “extraordinary number of complaints” registered with the investigations office.

The lady chief justice and the lord

### ‘Ikram’s actions caused significant reputational damage to the judiciary’

chancellor went on to “underline their shared view on the seriousness of misuse of social media by judges”. The ruling emphasised that Ikram had “breached the social media guidance for the judiciary by identifying himself as a judge on LinkedIn” — although it also noted that he had “taken full responsibility and shown genuine remorse”. A year ago, the guide to judi-

cial conduct noted that judges should not use their titles on social media.

While the investigations office in Ikram's case will be praised for acting in the public interest, that body itself is far from beyond reproach. Only last week, it emerged that the information and data watchdog ruled that the office was wrongly claiming that it was exempt from freedom of information requests.

The suggestion was that the body that oversees the behaviour of judges in England and Wales was acting in a far from transparent manner. Yet despite this, the investigations office insisted that its interpretation of the law was correct and that the Information Commissioner's Office had got it wrong. The two bodies remain at a standoff.

A fortnight of judicial woe included a former director of public prosecutions saying that at least a dozen judges failed sub-postmasters in the Horizon scandal by not paying sufficient attention to weak prosecution cases.

Then there was the sudden resignation of two senior retired British judges

from Hong Kong's highest court. Lord Sumption and Lord Collins of Mapesbury ditched the territory's Court of Final Appeal, with the latter neatly summarising his rationale in a brief statement saying that he had resigned “because of the political situation in Hong Kong, but I continue to have the fullest confidence in the court and the total independence of its members”.

Sumption was more verbose, giving his explanation in a long newspaper article as well as taking to the airwaves — but his rationale was similar.

Their decision — taken some four years after Beijing imposed what many see as a draconian national security law on Hong Kong to crack down on the pro-democracy movement and freedom of speech — shone a light on the three British judges who remain there.

All are highly regarded — Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers was the first president of the UK's Supreme Court, Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury is also a former head of that court, and Lord Hoffmann is a former law lord.

## Let's make transparent and open justice a UK-wide goal

### John Battle Comment

These are interesting times for open justice. The lady chief justice, Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, has established a transparency and open justice board to co-ordinate the promotion of transparency across courts and tribunals in England and Wales. Chaired by a High Court judge, Mr Justice Nicklin, the board is an innovative and forward-looking initiative to improve and encourage public and media access to the legal system.

It will focus on increasing access for journalists and the general public on matters such as listing, documents and public hearings, and a stakeholder committee will

finalise the board's key objectives and sub-committees.

An issue worth considering from the outset is making this a UK initiative and not limiting the remit to England and Wales. Unlike the law, news reporting, information and journalism cross borders easily. Whether they are covering the courts in Belfast, London or Edinburgh, it seems reasonable that reporters can expect similar levels of transparency and access to listings, hearings or documents. This principle of consistency should also apply to public accessibility.

Unless the three jurisdictions work together, a real obstacle to progress is differences in each — a different pace of change and reforms being implemented in different parts of the UK. The jurisdictions can learn from each other and have their own experience to bring to the

table. Filming of courts has gone furthest in Scotland, while Northern Ireland is strong on listings and remote access to court proceedings, and the experience in England and Wales of the filming of sentencing, media access to images shown in court and the reporters' charter is notable. Many of these reforms have been supported by the senior judiciary across the jurisdictions.

The courts need to be centre stage in the public eye to promote the rule of law. Having cameras in court in England and Wales is a good example of where progress has been made. Filming has meant more coverage of the courts, both on national and regional television news programmes, and the full sentencing can be seen online.

Broadcasting demonstrates that sentencing is complex and that judges are from varied backgrounds,

and informs on the facts in individual cases. Furthermore, despite concerns before filming started that lawyers might grandstand for the cameras, the sky has not fallen down.

Whoever is the next government, it is also time to address the Ministry of Justice's consultation, “Open Justice: The Way Forward”, which came in the wake of a report from MPs on the justice committee. That paper recommended greater public access to information and highlighted that a decline in court reporting could cause a democratic deficit. Proposals such as extending filming of court proceedings, a database of court reporting orders, an electronic press kit for reporters, including court documents, and opening the single justice procedure to scrutiny must be addressed.

In a recent speech to the

Newcastle upon Tyne Law Society, Nicklin emphasised the historic role of the common law in developing open justice down the centuries. Open justice is an area where the UK can lead — this heritage of promoting openness should be continued but needs to recognise that information flows easily across borders. Everyone would benefit from a consistent approach across the UK.

John Battle is the head of legal and compliance at ITN and leads the broadcast group on cameras in court

### Times Law

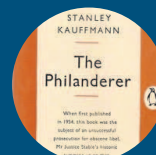
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## THE BRIEF



Historical case of the month  
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# EU patent court off to flying start

Catherine Baksi

Almost half a century after it was first imagined in 1975, Europe's unified patent court (UPC) overcame numerous hurdles and opened last June.

In its first year, figures from the court show that it received 373 cases, including 134 infringement actions and 165 counterclaims for revocation — the latter coming from 63 individual defendants.

And while intellectual property lawyers have broadly praised the court, several concerns have emerged, not least over whether it is being dominated by branches in Germany.

Without doubt, the court has attracted some of the best specialist judges from across the 17 ratifying EU states, with Romania set to become its 18th member in September.

Its central division is in Paris and there is a section in Munich, with local and regional branches across Europe. And although the UK has not ratified the court, 50 per cent of its proceedings are conducted in English, with 44 per cent in German.

As the court builds a body of case law, its diverse caseload so far has spread across a range of business areas, from pharmaceuticals and technology to medical devices and biotech. Consumer issues are also on its list with the court set to deal with a case filed by Agfa, an imaging product distributor, against the luxury brand Gucci over leather product printing.

The general view, says Jules Fabre, a partner at the City law firm Pinsent Masons, is that the court's first year has been a "wide success" and that it handles litigation quickly and efficiently, with decisions made within about a year — much faster than the domestic courts in most of its member states.

Its streamlined process for enforcing



EDWARD BERTHELOT/GETTY IMAGES

Agfa has a case against Gucci relating to the printing on its leather products

patents across multiple EU countries through a single court system has made it attractive to European and non-European companies alike, says Julia Schönbohm, head of intellectual property at Linklaters.

Patent holders in the US and Asia, she says, are keen to take advantage of the court's one-stop shop as an alternative to launching litigation in multiple national courts in parallel.

Lawyers point out that a significant number of experienced judges have been appointed to the court — but that has created a problem as their experience is now being missed at their national courts.

Although it is not a signatory to the agreement ratifying the court, the UK remains an important market, Schönbohm insists. Parallel litigation takes place in the UK where, she says, the

courts are able to move as quickly as their European counterpart and where the judgments are detailed, respected and persuasive. As a result, she says that the UK is not likely to suffer by not being a member.

Fabre agrees that it is too early to assess whether the UK court will start seeing fewer cases, but he, too, remains positive. "UK patent courts are still highly regarded and considered as being very efficient," he says, noting the recent Court of Appeal decision in *Bayer v Sandoz*, in which the ruling was given in about a month — significantly shorter than the UPC's 12-month target time.

On the other hand, Eleanor Root, a partner at Bird & Bird, suggests that it is the Europeans who have suffered by not having the UK and its judges in the system. But the new court could yet

benefit from the common law approach if the Republic of Ireland agrees to join.

As with any new body, there are teething problems. Oliver Jan Jüngst, another Bird & Bird partner, who represented the defendants in the first preliminary injunction case before the UPC's appeal bench, points to the different views in some local divisions regarding issues such as confidentiality, access to files and requests for extensions. However, he predicts that the court and its appeal judges will develop a harmonised body of case law that will provide greater clarity and certainty.

A significant area requiring improvement, Fabre says, has been the court's approach to transparency, particularly when it comes to making the content of opt-out applications — by which patent holders can elect to remove their patents from the tribunal's jurisdiction — available to the public.

Its early decisions "took a very restrictive approach to third-party requests for access to documents," he adds, stressing that its cases can have a significant impact on third-party competitors.

Another potential issue, Fabre adds, is that a small number of local divisions in Germany have dealt with the majority of infringement cases, as patent holders have started proceedings in divisions where they consider they have the best chances of winning. The German courts are perceived as having a pro-patentee stance, which, Fabre suggests, could mean that judgments are highly influenced by the German system.

Despite the faults, lawyers remain positive. Antje Brambrink, a partner at the Munich office of the US law firm Finnegan, says: "If the court is able to establish clear, predictable and reliable case law, it has the potential to become the No 1 patent venue within Europe."

## OUT OF COURT

The cases, the chatter, the chaos: what's really going on in the law

## No comment? Blame purdah

Ministers and MP barristers who had agreed to attend last weekend's Bar Council conference cried off owing to door-knocking obligations in their constituencies.

While the election campaign robbed delegates of the presence of the lord chancellor, attorney-general and their shadows, at least the lady chief justice turned up. And Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill noted that her presence at the conference in the "pre-election period" was a "visible confirmation of judicial independence".

However, the spectre of the vote loomed. Carr was asked for a view on the standoff between the Information Commissioner's Office and the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office over the former's view that the latter must be more transparent. No comment, the lady chief said, as she was subject to purdah.

## For a few lawyers more

The Bar Council conference, held in the City of London, had been resurrected after officials ditched the annual event last year amid concerns over falling delegate numbers. This year was meant to provide an opportunity to put ministers and opposition figures on the spot about the deteriorating justice system, but the prime minister pulled the rug out by calling a snap general election.

Still, about 200 delegates turned up last Saturday, although that pales significantly compared with the conference's glory days at the turn of the century when it would attract up to 500 barristers. As to whether the conference will again be cast into the history books, council officials are so far silent.

## Conveyancing spat

Over to the Law Society — the professional body for solicitors may have ditched its annual conference more than a decade ago, but it seems keen to replace that event with occasional special general meetings for no-confidence votes in its leadership.

In 2013 solicitors passed a motion saying, effectively, that the society had been rubbish in its negotiation with the government on criminal defence legal aid rates. Now the row is about proposed updating of solicitor involvement in the homebuying process. The details are complex — suffice to say that residential conveyancing solicitors are angry over the imposition of two forms called TA6 and TA7.

The society says it is "disappointing" that the spat has triggered a no-confidence vote, which will be held sometime between July 22 and August 16. ■ **Subscribers can register for The Brief, our weekly newsletter. This week: human rights lawyers gang up on Biden over Assange**

## King's Counsel

Alex Steuart

For a Few Guineas More: The Legal Year in Cartoons, Law Brief Publishing, £9.99



## Lawyer of the week Tessa Donovan

Tessa Donovan, a barrister at Foundry Chambers, prosecuted a businessman who was sentenced to three years in prison for assaulting the judge Patrick Perusko at Milton Keynes family court in November and for using abusive language towards a part-time judge, Dharmesh Patel, in a separate incident in July.

**What were the biggest hurdles you had to overcome in this case?** This case garnered attention because it involved attacks on a sitting judge and recorder. The prosecution needed to convey the seriousness of the challenge to the entire justice system that such attacks represent.

**What is the best decision you have taken as a lawyer?** Working for the

Law Commission gave me valuable insight into the development of legal policy that has been useful when applying the law in practice.

### Who do you most admire in the law?

My colleagues at the junior criminal Bar. The work is challenging, the hours are long and the system is under-resourced. But regardless of how relentless it can feel, they keep showing up.

**What is the best advice you have received?** Ask for help when you

need it and always acknowledge when you've made a mistake. No one knows everything and everyone makes mistakes — your professional reputation is shaped by how you respond and move forward.

### What is the funniest thing that has happened in your job?

In my first six months of pupillage my supervisor was junior defence counsel in a murder trial. The defendant was superstitious and asked me to leave a conference because she didn't like my "energy". She was ultimately convicted.



### What are the best and worst elements of being a lawyer?

For me they're the same thing: the sense of immense pressure and importance of the work. I thrive under pressure, but the stakes are so high that it is easy to feel as though you could also buckle under it.

### What law would you enact?

I'm Australian and I would enact a treaty with the First Nations people because it's more than 200 years overdue.

### What is your favourite cocktail?

A margarita — you need something strong and fun after a long week, and a margarita always delivers.

Catherine Baksi  
catherinebaksi@hotmail.com



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- Sat 14 - **Boston, Massachusetts, USA (overnight)**
- Sun 15 Boston, steeped in rich history and pulsing with modern energy, stands as a beacon of American culture on the eastern seaboard. From its cobblestone streets to its towering skyscrapers, the city offers a captivating blend of old-world charm and contemporary allure. As the birthplace of the American Revolution, Boston's Freedom Trail winds through iconic landmarks like the Paul Revere House and Faneuil Hall
- Tue 17 **Newport, Rhode Island, USA**
- Wed 18 - **New York City, USA (two-night stay)**
- Fri 20 From the iconic skyline adorned with skyscrapers to the bustling streets alive with diversity and culture, every corner of this metropolis tells a story. Home to Broadway, Central Park and the Statue of Liberty, New York is a melting pot of art, history and



innovation. Its neighbourhoods, from the trendy boutiques of SoHo to the historic charm of Greenwich Village, offer endless exploration

Sun 22 **Portland, Maine**

- Tue 24 - **St. John, New Brunswick, Canada (overnight)**
- Wed 25 Saint John is a city on the Bay of Fundy, in New Brunswick, Canada. It's known for the Reversing Rapids, a phenomenon caused by bay tides colliding with the Saint John River. Food and craft stalls fill the Saint John City Market. On a peninsula nearby, trails wind through Irving Nature Park's salt marshes, volcanic rock and forests

### Thu 26 **Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada**

Halifax, Gateway to Atlantic Canada, is the capital region of Nova Scotia and is a lively and colourful combination of urban and rural living at its best. The historic downtown waterfront areas of Halifax and Dartmouth are perfect for discovering on foot



### Fri 27 **Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada**

### OCTOBER 2024

### Thu 3 **Arrive in Southampton**

Dates not mentioned are spent relaxing at sea

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**Today** Some warm and sunny spells in the east, otherwise cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Max 18C (64F), min 6C (43F)

**Around Britain**

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, ss=sun, t=thunder  
\*previous day \*\*data not available

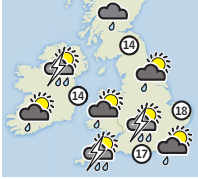
	Temp C		Rain mm	Sun hr*
24 hrs to 5pm yesterday				
Aberdeen	11	C	0.6	2.0
Aberporth	13	C	0.0	7.9
Anglesey	13	R	0.0	8.3
Aviemore	11	C	0.0	0.2
Barnstaple	15	R	0.0	**
Belfast	14	C	1.2	**
Birmingham	13	R	0.0	**
Bournemouth	15	R	0.0	5.5
Bridlington	12	C	0.6	**
Bristol	14	R	0.0	4.2
Cambridge	16	S	0.2	13.9
Cardiff	13	C	0.0	7.2
Edinburgh	12	C	0.0	3.8
Exeter	12	C	0.2	2.8
Glasgow	14	C	0.0	9.1
Hereford	14	C	0.0	**
Hertsmere	14	C	1.4	1.3
Ipswich	14	C	0.2	3.1
Isle of Man	11	C	0.0	11.1
Isle of Wight	16	C	0.0	**
Jersey	14	PC	0.0	14.2
Kew	13	C	0.0	**
Kinross	11	C	0.0	0.3
Leeds	11	C	1.0	**
Lerwick	9	C	2.6	1.1
Leuchars	14	PC	0.0	3.2
Lincoln	14	C	0.0	2.4
Liverpool	12	C	0.0	**
London	15	C	0.4	3.7
Lyneham	13	C	0.0	2.5
Manchester	14	C	0.0	1.4
Margate	15	C	0.0	6.3
Milford Haven	16	B	0.0	**
Newcastle	12	C	0.8	**
Nottingham	13	C	0.0	1.6
Orkney	10	R	3.2	0.1
Oxford	13	C	0.2	**
Plymouth	17	C	0.0	**
Portland	14	C	0.0	**
Scilly, St Mary's	16	S	0.0	**
Shoreham	15	C	0.0	3.4
Shrewsbury	13	PC	0.0	3.5
Snowdonia	11	C	0.0	**
Southend	15	M	0.4	4.5
South Uist	11	R	0.0	**
Stornoway	12	C	0.0	0.1
Tiree	11	C	0.0	**
Whitehaven	12	C	0.0	3.2
Wick	9	D	0.4	**
Yeovilton	14	C	0.0	5.1

**Five days ahead**

Staying unsettled with showers or longer periods of rain. Feeling warm in any sunshine

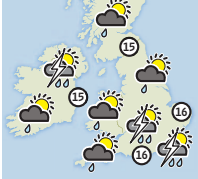
**Tomorrow**

Sunny intervals with rain and showers, some of these turning heavy and thundery across Ireland and southern England.  
Max 19C, min 4C



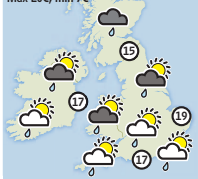
**Saturday**

Sunny spells in places during the morning with showers becoming more widespread, heavier and thundery in the afternoon.  
Max 18C, min 6C



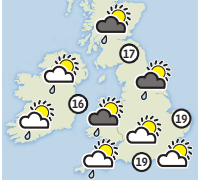
**Sunday**

Mainly dry with sunny spells and a few showers across England, Wales and the south of Ireland. Mostly cloudy with showery rain elsewhere.  
Max 20C, min 7C



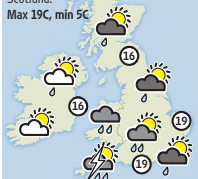
**Monday**

Mostly dry and feeling warm with sunny spells over southern England. The risk of a few showers elsewhere.  
Max 21C, min 5C



**Tuesday**

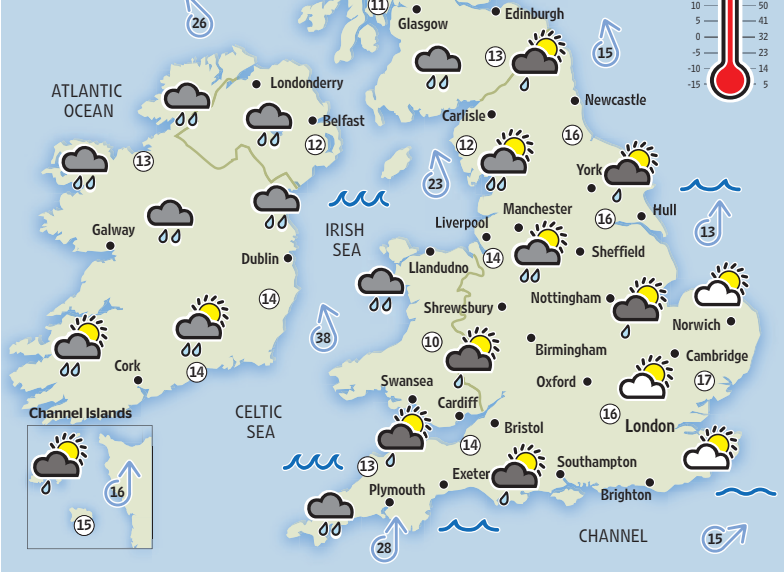
Rather cloudy with outbreaks of rain over England and Wales, heavy and thundery in places. Sunny spells with isolated showers across Ireland and Scotland.  
Max 19C, min 5C



**Wind speed** 34 (mph)  
**Sea state** Calm, Slight, Moderate, Rough  
**Temperature** 28 (degrees C)

**Flood alerts and warnings**

At 17:00 on Wednesday there were eight flood alerts and no warnings in England and no flood alerts or warnings in Wales or 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

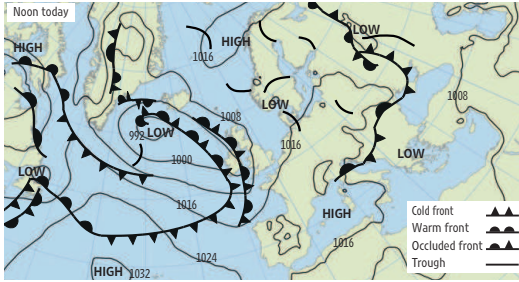


**General situation:** Cloud and rain spreading eastwards across Britain and Ireland, after a dry and sunny morning in eastern Britain.

**E Anglia, London, SE Eng, E Eng, NW Scotland:** Most of the day will be dry with sunny spells but cloud thickening in the afternoon to bring rain later. Light to moderate south to southeasterly wind. Maximum 17C (63F), minimum 8C (46F).  
**SW Eng, Wales, IOM, SW Scotland, Argyll:** Some dry and sunny spells at first but cloud soon increasing to bring outbreaks of rain, heavy at times over high ground. Moderate to strong south or southeasterly wind. Maximum 14C (57F), minimum 8C (46F).  
**Republic of Ireland, N Ireland:** Mostly cloudy with outbreaks of rain, heavy at times. Turning drier with sunny spells in southern areas in the afternoon. Moderate to fresh southeasterly wind, veering westerly. Maximum 18C (64F), minimum 7C (45F).  
**Cen S Eng, Channel Is, Cen N Eng, Lake District, Midlands, NW Eng, Borders, Edinburgh and Dundee, Glasgow, Cen Highland, NE Eng:** Dry with sunny intervals in the morning, turning cloudy with rain during the afternoon. Light increasing to moderate southerly wind. Maximum 16C (61F), minimum 6C (43F).

**Tides**

Tidal predictions. Heights in metres		
	HT	HT
Aberdeen	06:49 3.6	19:40 3.3
Avonmouth	-- --	12:30 10.2
Belfast	04:30 3.3	17:13 2.8
Cardiff	-- --	12:21 9.5
Devonport	11:07 4.3	23:10 4.6
Dover	04:33 5.5	16:52 5.7
Dublin	03:56 3.5	16:38 3.0
Falmouth	10:38 4.1	22:52 4.3
Greenock	05:18 3.2	18:32 2.7
Harwich	05:05 2.4	17:13 3.4
Holyhead	03:37 4.8	16:20 4.4
Hull	11:25 6.1	-- --
Leith	08:13 4.6	20:45 4.4
Liverpool	04:21 7.9	16:54 7.4
London Bridge	07:09 6.1	19:14 5.9
Lowestoft	03:36 2.1	14:52 2.3
Milford Haven	11:46 5.3	-- --
Morecambe	04:33 7.8	17:07 7.3
Newhaven	04:17 5.4	16:50 5.5
Newquay	10:42 5.4	23:04 5.6
Oban	11:20 2.9	23:27 3.1
Penzance	10:13 4.3	22:37 4.5
Portsmouth	04:43 3.9	17:29 4.1
Shoreham	04:27 5.0	17:03 5.2
Southampton	03:42 3.7	16:22 3.9
Swansea	11:49 7.4	-- --
Tees	09:05 4.7	21:57 4.4
Weymouth	-- --	12:01 1.4



**Synoptic situation**

A ridge of high pressure will bring a mainly dry day over eastern Britain but low pressure near Iceland will push a couple of occluded fronts eastwards over Ireland and into western Britain bringing thick cloud and outbreaks of rain. Low pressure will dominate over the British Isles over the next few days bringing showers or longer periods of rain.

**Highs and lows**

24hrs to 5pm yesterday  
Warmest: Cardinham, Cornwall, 17.6C  
Coldest: Cairngorm, -2.5C  
Wettest: Fylingdales, North Yorkshire, 3.4mm  
Sunniest: Jersey, 14.2hrs\*

**Sun and moon**

For Greenwich  
Sun rises: 04:42  
Sun sets: 21:17  
Moon rises: 11:57  
Moon sets: 01:25 Fri  
First quarter: June 14

**Hours of darkness**

Aberdeen	22:34-03:42
Belfast	22:30-04:16
Birmingham	22:01-04:14
Cardiff	22:00-04:25
Exeter	21:57-04:30
Glasgow	22:32-04:01
Liverpool	22:11-04:12
London	21:48-04:12
Manchester	22:08-04:09
Newcastle	22:15-03:57
Norwich	21:49-04:00
Penzance	22:02-04:41
Sheffield	22:04-04:07

**Weather Eye**  
Paul Simons



**W**hen will summer arrive? It has been so cold that many households have turned on their heating and taken jumpers out of wardrobes.

Prospects for the rest of the month do not look much more encouraging, with temperatures struggling to reach the average for June. Added to that will be more showers and longer bouts of rain, although sunny interludes will feel quite pleasant in sheltered places. However, making more long-term forecasts is difficult because there is nothing in particular driving our weather patterns.

If it is any consolation, June 1971 was even worse — cold, wet and dull, with flooding in southern England. Cold northerly winds swept the country and it was the coolest June since 1928, with many places failing to reach 21C over the whole month. Frequent depressions hit the south particularly hard, with heavy rain flooding some areas and flattening crops.

Persistent and heavy rain on June 10 left Bournemouth underwater in floods up to 3ft deep, and in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, The Times reported that “it was even too wet for ducks — two of them were almost sunk by the rain”. The birds were washed over a flooded weir, and police and firemen were called out to rescue them. Grim weather hit the south again on June 14 with further torrential rains and floods, while snow fell on the Pennines.

But perhaps we could take heart, because summer arrived in July 1971 with a remarkable turnaround in weather, becoming largely sunny, dry and very warm at times. For England and Wales, it was the driest July since 1955 and the warmest July in central England since 1959. But the warm weather set off some severe thunderstorms later in the month with some deluges of rain. Even with the thunderstorms, though, it was the driest July in England since 1955, particularly in the southwest.

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## Ryobi's Cordless Patio Cleaner easily removes weeds, moss and grass from your paths and patios

With Summer now upon us it's time to tackle all those outdoor cleaning jobs that have been neglected over the summer months. But don't let unsightly weeds, overgrown grass, and nasty moss get in the way of your beautiful outdoor space.

With the Ryobi 18V ONE+™ Cordless Patio Cleaner, you can power through even the toughest outdoor mess with consummate ease.

### No more bending or kneeling down

Say goodbye to bending or kneeling down to clean your paths and patios. The ONE+™ Patio Cleaner with wire brush spins at an incredible 1350rpm to power through the task effortlessly! Whether you need to clear weeds, grass, or moss from your patio, paths, driveway or bricked areas, this patio cleaner is the tool for the task.

### Innovative design for easy cleaning

The Ryobi 18V ONE+™ Patio Cleaner features an innovative telescopic height adjustment handle, which means easy upright cleaning for any user.

The two-handed design ensures it is ergonomic and easy to use, while the wire brush



guard protects the user from any debris. Plus, with the tool-less brush changing mechanism, you can quickly and easily switch between different types of cleaning brushes for hard or delicate surfaces, even with gloves on.

And when it's time to put it away, the handle design allows for quick and easy storage, taking up less space in your shed or garage.



### Ryobi 18V Cordless Patio Cleaner Kit What you get

- Patio Cleaner (RY18PCA-120)
- Ryobi ONE+ 2.0Ah Battery
- Ryobi ONE+ 2.0A Charger
- 3-Year Warranty\*
- Free Delivery (GB mainland only)

Owners of this 18V Cordless Patio Cleaner couldn't be happier! "I was so impressed with the Ryobi ONE+™ Patio Cleaner," says Jenny. "It made cleaning my patio so easy, and I loved the wire brush that just powered through the weeds and overgrown grass. I'm so glad I added this to my collection of Ryobi tools." Jenny P (verified buyer).

Another regular customer

said: "It's powerful, easy to use, and perfect for keeping my outdoor space looking great." Dave R (verified buyer).

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# Sport

## Faster than dad but 6kg lighter: meet England's newest wing

Premiership champion Sleightholme hopes family traits can make mark on national team, writes **Elgan Alderman**

It is easy to forget that some rugby players are essentially strangers. Jamie George has played against Ollie Sleightholme, but the England captain did not meet the uncapped wing until the start of this week when the 24-year-old joined the squad after winning the Gallagher Premiership.

"I met him for the first time yesterday," George said on Tuesday, before the team flew out for their summer tour to Japan and New Zealand. "I have played against him a lot. It is incredible how fast he is, in small-sided games, and seeing how pacy he is is scary."

It has been some wait for Sleightholme, who first appeared for Northampton Saints in 2018 and scored a try within 20 seconds of coming on for his Premiership debut. He played for England Under-20 with Ollie Lawrence and Marcus Smith, and received a senior call-up in 2021.

He went through the 2021-22 campaign without scoring, and injuries hindered the following season and the start of this one, only to end it as the league's top try scorer.

Like an old-fashioned wing, speed and tries are Sleightholme's currency. Though he highlights the work of

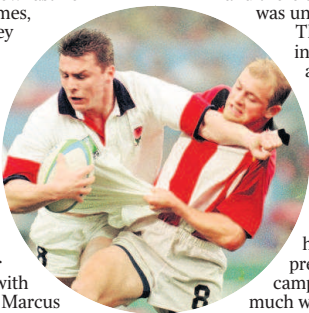
strength and conditioning coach Ben Rhodes at Northampton, it is a trait that sprints in the family. Jon Sleightholme won 12 caps on the wing in 1996 and 1997, earning renown as one of the fastest avatars in the *Jonah Lomu* Rugby game, and father believes son is faster than the 10.89sec Sleightholme Sr once clocked over 100m.

Jon — "former rugby player, proud dad and Yorkshireman" according to his social media account — ended his career at Northampton. As such Ollie is a Saint to his core. He found out he was in the England squad as he was leaving for the club's bus parade on Sunday, which attracted thousands of fans.

"That just shows Northampton as a town," Sleightholme said. "It's a rugby town and everyone there is mad for it and the support we got out, here on Saturday, every week at the Gardens and there up for the parade was unbelievable."

The season has ended in delight with club and country, yet it started inauspiciously. Sleightholme was out of action between February and November last year owing to concussion and a hamstring injury. In preparing for this campaign, he put too much weight on, moving from 90 to 98kg in just over a month. He is now back at his best weight of about 92kg.

"It's a difficult one to find the balance, because I've got the balance wrong plenty of times in previous years, and it's ended up in injuries," he said. "It's about keeping yourself fit and keeping yourself on the pitch. If it's a case of trying to do a speed



Sleightholme has had to wait a long time before making it into the England fold like his father, Jon, left, having first played for Northampton Saints six years ago

session, or being fit, pick being fit. There's no questions asked about that.

"At the start of the year, I was probably a bit too bulked up and through the year found where I needed to sit with my body and then got into a rhythm after that really."

"It was just loads of gym, loads of eating. I got to the end of it and the [strength and conditioning coaches] were all like, 'Well done for doing it, and I was like, 'I can't play like this. I can't play this heavy, it's not going to

work.' So it's then a case of starting to get back into training and it all drops off as you start training, you're playing like you want to."

"The turning is the difficult bit. When you're a bit heavier, turning and moving and changing direction, that's when you feel it. Running in a straight line, it's not too bad because once the weight is moving, it's moving. Changing direction and reacting to stuff I found difficult when I was a bit heavier."

Sleightholme is one of seven Saints players in the England squad, six of whom are backs, reward for thrilling attack coordinated by Sam Vesty. It is not quite Benetton with Italy, Leinster with Ireland or Toulouse with France — certainly not the 13 Ospreys in Warren Gatland's first Wales XV in 2008 — but akin to the prevalence of Bordeaux-Bègles backs in France's team this year, a hot streak of cohesion. Such bonds are a consideration for Steve Borthwick, the head coach, who put the Harlequins trio of Alex Dombrandt, Danny Care and Marcus Smith together on the bench in the Six Nations. "That familiarity with players around you is really important and really valuable," the England head coach said.

In the final round of the Six Nations, England had Alex Mitchell at scrum half, Tommy Freeman on the wing and George Furbank at full back. Fin Smith made his debut in the tournament, and will compete with Marcus Smith at fly half, while Fraser Dingwall started at inside centre before Lawrence's return. Elliot Daly's absence from the tour for the birth of his child leaves a vacancy on the wing, which Sleightholme, Tom Roebuck and Immanuel Feyi-Waboso will contest. It is possible that England could take the field with Saints in every back-line jersey bar one.

Feyi-Waboso and Roebuck both scored ten tries this season. Sleightholme notched his 15th at Twickenham on Saturday. Freeman also crossed the whitewash, and their respective tries were indicative of their approaches: Freeman roves, and got his hands on the ball 18 times compared with Sleightholme's six, linking up everywhere, using his muscle, and was on Furbank's shoulder for a run-in; Sleightholme, who can be untouchable on the flank, sprinted down the left and dinked the ball around Will Muir, reaching it in the corner of the in-goal area.

Feyi-Waboso wanders like Freeman, demonstrating tremendous power if not top-line speed. He was unable to chase down Ted Hill in the Investec Champions Cup, whereas Sleightholme's highlights reel comprises lengthy runs in attack and defence, such as when he hauled down Leicester's Josh Bassett with ease, winning the penalty turnover in Antoine Dupont style. Pace can save and score tries like nothing else, and that is Sleightholme's strength — though he admits Saturday's banana grubber off the shin was not completely intentional. "My only miss was to kick it out," he said. "I thought if I try to aim in for Mitch and it comes back to me, it comes back to me, and luckily it did."

## Blow for Olympic dream as Thomas loses transgender appeal

**Swimming**  
**Craig Lord**

The transgender swimmer Lia Thomas has failed in her challenge at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) against World Aquatics rules barring those who have experienced male puberty from competing in female events.

Thomas, 25, became the American women's college 500 yards champion in March 2022 but by June that year had been ruled ineligible for international women's competition by new policies which define two categories: an open/male category for those who have experienced male puberty, regardless of their gender identity; and a female category for those who have not.

The CAS ruling comes 11 days before the deadline for entries to the Paris Olympic Games on June 23, and is expected to deter any similar challenges. CAS noted that "the athlete lacks standing to challenge" the rules because she is not a member of USA Swimming.

Thomas's legal representatives argued that because the swimmer must gain World Aquatics approval for the female category before she could participate in a qualification event in the US, then it must be possible to challenge that global policy.

A panel of three arbitrators for CAS, including Richard McLaren, the Canadian lawyer who wrote the report on the Russian doping crisis in 2016, dis-

agreed. It ruled that Thomas cannot challenge the world regulator on global rules because they apply only to those in its jurisdiction, namely international athletes.

The USA will stage its Olympic trials over nine days from Saturday. To challenge the rules, Thomas would have needed to register as a male/open athlete and then gain international selection for the USA before fall-

**In March 2022, Thomas became the first transgender athlete to win an NCAA college title**



ing under the jurisdiction of international rules.

World Aquatics welcomed the CAS decision, which it said was "a major step forward in our efforts to protect women's sport."

The regulator told The Times: "World Aquatics is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes fairness, respect and equal opportunities for athletes of all genders, and we reaffirm this pledge. Our policies and practices are continuously evaluated to ensure they

align with these core values, which led to the introduction of our open category."

"We remain committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to uphold the principles of inclusivity in aquatic sports and remain confident that our gender inclusion policy represents a fair approach."

The federation took advice from scientists and human rights lawyers, among others, who concluded that there was an abundance of evidence to show that males have a set of highly significant physical advantages over females in a sport such as swimming. Many of those advantages are irreversible regardless of testosterone suppression in transgender women, they noted.



# Federer's speech his latest masterpiece

Matthew Syed



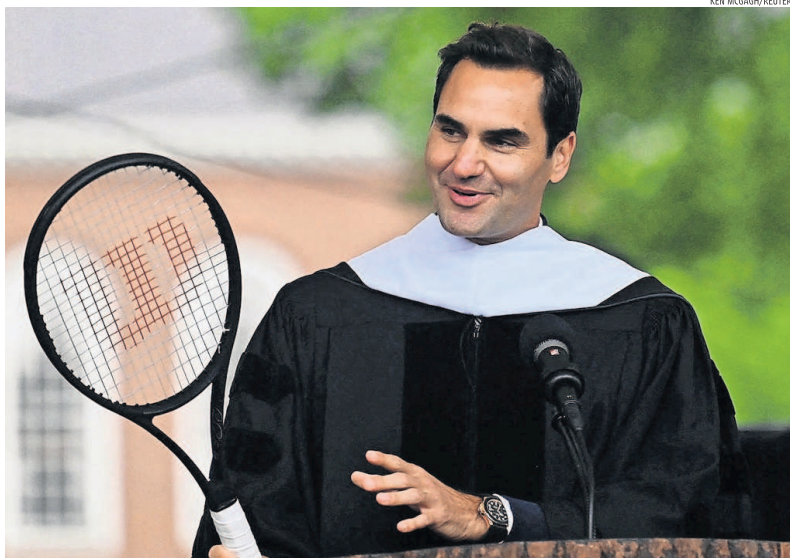
I'd never have had Roger Federer down as a master in that curious art of the commencement speech; a tradition that tends to incubate platitudes and where obvious truth is imbued with the illusion of wisdom due to the excitement of students graduating from college. From his performance in press conferences, the Fed is more a chap for a newsy comment or two, courteously delivered and always accompanied by a smile but rarely troubling those who compile lists of great quotations.

But at Dartmouth College in the United States this week, Federer delivered a 25-minute masterclass in the set-piece speech that instantly went viral, mixing personal anecdote, philosophy, flashes of wit, an acknowledgement of his own nerves and an all-round insight into the mindset of a man who has perhaps given more pleasure to sports fans than any other figure from Switzerland or, for that matter, anywhere else.

There were moments of pure electricity when Federer talked about his tennis career, which was for so long something of a blank canvas. I like to think of myself as a veteran Federer watcher and I spent hours viewing his warm-ups on the practice courts at Wimbledon before he stepped out on to Centre Court. But it has always been difficult to fully understand how he trained, how he built his fitness and what happened behind the scenes to permit this supreme sportsman to turn up on stage and beat brilliant opponents, often without breaking a sweat.

"It wasn't effortless," he said with a smile. "I got that reputation because my warm-ups at the tournaments were so casual that people didn't think I had been training hard. But I had been working hard before the tournament, when nobody was watching. I didn't get where I got on pure talent alone. I got there by trying to outwork my opponents. I believed in myself. But belief in yourself has to be earned. The truth is, I had to work very hard to make it look easy."

There was steel in his voice, the sense that he



Federer said that in a sport in which even he lost nearly half the points, he could not dwell on failure

wanted us to know that he too went on lung-busting runs; that this serene swan of a champion had to dig deep inside. "Yes talent matters," he continued. "I'm not going to stand here and tell you it doesn't. But talent has a broad definition. Most of the time, it's not about having a gift. It's about having grit. In tennis, a great forehand can be called a talent. But in tennis, like in life, discipline is also a talent. And so is patience. Trusting yourself is a talent. Embracing the process, loving the process, is a talent. Managing your life, managing yourself; these can be talents, too. Some people are born with them. Everybody has to work at them."

The students were sitting up now and even the faculty was twitching with fascination. There was depth in these words; and truth. But then he posed an unexpected question: "In the 1,526 singles matches I played in my career, I won almost 80 per cent of those matches. Now, I have a question for all of you: what percentage of the points do you think I won in those matches?" Thoughts flashed through my mind when I watched the speech back. Seventy per

cent? Sixty-five per cent? Federer's smile revealed that he knew the answer would elicit gasps of surprise. "Fifty-four per cent," he said. He's right (as you'd expect): I checked it. And this turns out to be true of Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic, Bjorn Borg, you name it: all just a smidgen above 50 per cent.

And isn't this fascinating? Partly because of the dominance of the serve in tennis, lower-ranked players can win plenty of games against superior opponents, which means that matches often come down to winning a crucial break point here or there, or perhaps lifting one's game at key moments in the tie-break. Indeed, it is not unheard of for players to win matches even if they win fewer points across the sweep of a five-set contest simply by taking a higher proportion of the crux exchanges. In some ways, then, you could describe tennis as the ultimate clutch sport, a game where an unusual scoring system means that "nerve" and "mettle" take on unusual importance.

Federer's most telling point is that this gives tennis an uncanny similarity to life. In our jobs

and personal lives, none of us tend to be dominant. Even the best financial traders make money on only a little more than 50 per cent of their bets. Top lawyers lose a decent proportion of their cases. Outstanding teachers give their fair share of bad lessons, not because of any personal fault but because children are unpredictable and difficult to control. Real life, like tennis, is such that even the best of us lose many of the little battles, the totality of which constitutes that abstraction we call the journey of life.

But this is why — as Federer explained — the ability to see the bigger picture is so important. "When you lose every second point on average, you learn not to dwell on every shot. You teach yourself to think, 'OK, I double faulted. It's only a point.' Here's why I am telling you this. When you're playing a point, it is the most important thing in the world. But when it's behind you, it's behind you."

"This mindset is crucial, because it frees you to fully commit to the next point and the next one after that — with intensity, clarity and focus. The truth is, whatever game you play in life, sometimes you're going to lose, and it's natural when you're down to doubt yourself. To feel sorry for yourself. But negative energy is wasted energy. You want to become a master at overcoming hard moments. That to me is the sign of a champion."

Since Federer retired in 2022, men's tennis has never quite been the same. Sure, there are great youngsters coming through and new rivalries, but for those of us who grew up in Federer's era, who thrilled to the poetry that emerged from his presence on the court, this wonderful game will never quite stir the soul the way it once did. It is why one of my favourite ways to spend a spare hour is to marinate in one of his masterpieces on YouTube: a final at Wimbledon perhaps or a victory in New York. Do we not still lose ourselves in the work of Monet and Van Gogh?

But I suspect that Federer's commencement speech will reach into the future every bit as much as his contests, that those words will stir souls — young and old — just as his forehands and footwork once did. This was another Swiss masterpiece, a tribute to the preparation and professionalism of a man who is never afraid to step outside the comfort zone. A man who makes things look effortless, not just because of supreme talent but because the hard work that constructs success is so often invisible.

## Results

### Athletics

#### European Championships

**Rome: Finals: Men: 1500m** 1. J Ingebrigtsen (Nor) 3min 31.95sec (Championship record); 2. J Vermeulen (Bel) 3:33.30; 3. P Ares (It) 3:33.34; 9. N Gournay (GB) 3:34.12; 12. A Fogg (GB) 3:34.44. **10,000m** 1. D Lokinyomo Lobalu (Switz) 28:00.32; 2. Y Schrub (Fr) 28:00.48; 3. T Ndikumwenayo (Sp) 28:00.96; 6. P Dever (GB) 28:04.43; 17. Z Mahamed (GB) 28:25.31; 19. R Leonard (GB) 28:33.66. **4x400m relay** 1. Belgium 2:59.84; 2. Italy 3:00.81; 3. Germany 3:00.82; 7. Great Britain 3:01.89. **Javelin** 1. J Vadlejch (Cz) 88.65m; 2. J Weber (Ger) 85.94; 3. O Helander (Fin) 85.75. **Women: 800m** 1. K Hodgkinson (GB) 1:58.65; 2. G Gajanova (Slova) 1:58.79; 3. A Bourgoignie (Fr) 1:59.30. **4x100m relay** 1. Great Britain (D Asher-Smith, D Henry, A Hunt, D Neita) 41.91sec; 2. France 42:15.3; 3. Netherlands 42:46. **4x400m relay** 1. Netherlands 3:22.95; 2. Ireland 3:22.71; 3. Belgium 3:22.95. **Long jump** 1. M Milambo (Ger) 7.22m; 2. L Iapichino (It) 6.94; 3. A De Sousa (Por) 6.91.

**Leading medals**

	G	S	B	Total
1, Italy	10	9	4	23
2, France	4	5	7	16
3, Great Britain	4	4	5	13
4, Norway	4	2	1	7
5, Switzerland	4	1	4	9

### Cricket

#### T20 World Cup: Group A United States vs India

**Long Island, New York** (India won toss): India (2pts) beat United States by seven wickets

**United States** (batting) (balls)

S Jhangirji lbw b Singh	0	(1)
S R Taylor b Patel	24	(30)
S A G Gous c Pandya b Singh	2	(5)
A James c Siraj b Singh	11	(22)
N Kumar c Siraj b Singh	27	(33)
C J Anderson c Pant b Pandya	15	(12)
H S Baddhan c Pant b Singh	10	(10)
J Singh run out	2	(7)
Extras (lb 1, w 7)	8	
<b>Total (8 wks, 20 overs)</b>	<b>110</b>	

S C van Schalkwyk, S N Netravalkar and M A Khan did not bat.  
**Fall of wickets** 1-0, 2-3, 3-25, 4-56, 5-81, 6-96, 7-98, 8-101.

**Bowling** Singh 4-0-9-4; Siraj 4-0-25-0; Bumrah 4-0-25-0; Pandya 4-1-14-2; Dube 1-0-11-0; Patel 3-0-25-1.

**India** (batting) (balls)

R G Sharma c Baddhan b Netravalkar	3	(6)
V Kohli c Gous b Netravalkar	0	(1)
R Pant b Khan	18	(20)
S A Yadav not out	50	(49)
S R Dube not out	31	(35)
<b>Extras</b> (lb 1, w 2, nb 1, p 5)	9	
<b>Total (3 wks, 18.2 overs)</b>	<b>111</b>	

H H Pandya, R A Jadeja, A R Patel, A Singh, J Bumrah and M Siraj did not bat.

**Fall of wickets** 1-1, 2-10, 3-39, 4-101, 5-118, 6-118, 7-126, 8-128.

**Bowling** Netravalkar 4-0-18-2; Khan 3-2-0-21; Singh 4-0-24-0; Van Schalkwyk 4-0-25-0; Anderson 3-0-17-0.

**Group B: North South, Antigua** (Australia won toss): Namibia 72, 17 overs; A Zampa 4 for 12; Australia 74-1 (5.4 overs). Australia (2pts) won by nine wickets.

**Group D: Abandoned:** Lauderdale, Florida Sri Lanka v Nepal.

**Group A** P W L T NR Pts NRR

India	3	0	0	6	1.14
US	3	2	0	0	0.13
Pakistan	3	1	2	0	0.2
Canada	3	1	2	0	0.2-49
Ireland	2	0	2	0	0.171

**Group B** P W L T NR Pts NRR

Australia	3	2	0	0	4.358
Scotland	3	2	0	0	5.216
Namibia	3	1	2	0	2.210
England	2	0	1	0	1.180
Oman	3	0	3	0	0.161

**Group C** P W L T NR Pts NRR

Afghanistan	2	2	0	0	4.522
West Indies	2	2	0	0	4.357
Uganda	3	1	2	0	2.422
PNG	2	0	2	0	0.043
NZ	1	0	1	0	0.420

**Group D** P W L T NR Pts NRR

SA	3	3	0	0	6.060
Bangladesh	2	1	1	0	2.007
Netherlands	2	1	1	0	2.002
Nepal	2	0	1	0	1.054
Sri Lanka	3	0	2	0	1.078

**Today: Group B: North South England v Oman (8.0).**

### Vitality Blast: North group

**Durham v Leicestershire** **Foxes** **Chester-le-Street** (Durham won toss): Leicestershire Foxes (2pts) beat Durham by ten runs

**Leicestershire Foxes** (batting) (balls)

R K Patel b Soutter	48	(44)
S G Budinger c Robinson b Parkinson	0	(1)
R Ahmed run out	20	(16)
*P S P Handscomb b Raine	26	(28)
P W A Mulder lbw b Raine	2	(4)
L Kimber c Coughlin b Potts	10	(10)
B W M Mike not out	11	(8)
10 B Cox b Potts	6	(4)
L P Goldsworthy b Potts	1	(2)
S W Currie not out	2	(3)
<b>Extras</b> (b 6, lb 6, w 2)	14	
<b>Total (8 wks, 20 overs)</b>	<b>140</b>	

J Hull did not bat.

**Fall of wickets** 1-10, 2-53, 3-90, 4-95, 5-118, 6-118, 7-126, 8-128.

**Bowling** Parkinson 4-0-28-1; Coughlin 3-0-24-0; Potts 4-0-20-3; Bushnell 1-0-11-0; Raine 4-0-28-2; Soutter 4-0-17-1.

**Durham** (batting) (balls)

G Clark not out	53	(56)
*A Z Lees c Cox b Hull	8	(10)
D G Bedingham c Currie b Mulder	5	(6)
10 G Robinson lbw b Mulder	0	(1)
A J Turner run out	49	(32)
B A Raine c Handscomb b Mike	2	(4)
P Coughlin c Currie b Goldsworthy	2	(4)
J J Bushnell run out	3	(5)
M J Potts b Currie	0	(1)
C F Parkinson not out	1	(1)
<b>Extras</b> (lb 5, w 2)	7	
<b>Total (8 wks, 20 overs)</b>	<b>130</b>	

N A Soutter did not bat.

**Fall of wickets** 1-12, 2-19, 3-19, 4-104, 5-117, 6-120, 7-124, 8-124.

**Bowling** Mulder 4-0-19-2; Hull 4-0-16-1; Mike 3-0-27-1; Ahmed 2-0-20-0; Goldsworthy 3-0-19-1; Currie 4-0-24-1.

**Lancashire** P W L T NR Pts RR

5	4	1	0	0	8.179
Yorkshire	4	3	1	0	6.094
Leics	5	3	2	0	6.054
Northants	4	3	1	0	6.050
Derbyshire	5	2	3	0	4.029
Birmingham	4	2	2	0	4.027
Worcs	5	2	3	0	4.055
Durham	5	2	3	0	4.109
Notts	5	0	5	0	0.215

**Today: South group: Sophia Gardens** Glamorgan v Hampshire Hawks (6.30). **Lord's** Middlesex v Essex (6.15).

### Cycling

#### Tour of Switzerland

**Leading positions:** Fourth stage (Ruschlikon to Gottard Pass, 171km): 1. T. Treuen (Nor, Bahrain Victorious) 41hr 10min 25sec; 2. A Yates (GB, UAE Team Emirates) at 23sec behind; 3. M Skjelmosse (Den, Lidl-Trek) 48. **Overall** 1. Yates 115:00.8; 2. J Almeida (Por, UAE Team Emirates) at 26sec; 3. Skjelmosse same time; 4. E Bernal (Col, INEOS Grenadiers) 49; 5. W Keldermann (Neth, Team Visma Lease a Bike) 1min 15sec.

**Other British** 6. O Onley (Team dsm-firmenich) 1:17; 11. T Pidcock (INEOS Grenadiers) 1:42; 29. S Williams (Israel-Premier Tech) 2:49; 31. E Hayter (INEOS Grenadiers) 2:52.

**Tennis**

**ATP World Tour** **Stuttgart:** Second round L. Musetti (It) bt D. Kopper (Ger) 6-7 (9-11), 7-6 (7-5), 6-3; F. Tiafoe (US) bt Y. Hanfmann (Ger) 7-5, 7-6 (7-5); A. Bublik (Kaz) bt H. Medvedev (Ser) 6-1, 7-6 (7-4); J. Draper (GB) bt M. Giron (US) 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

**Libema Open** **\*Hertogenbosch:** Men: Second round G. Brouwer (Neth) bt A. Mannarino (Fr) 6-3, 6-3; U. Humbert (Fr) bt A. Fils (Fr) 6-3, 7-6 (7-1); T. Griekspoor (Neth) bt M. McDonald (US) 6-3, 7-6 (7-5). **Women:** First round J. Niemelä (Ger) bt C. Tauson (Den) 6-4, 6-7 (3-7), 6-4; L. Samsonova (Russ) bt A. Van Uytvanck (Bel) 6-1, 6-3; V. Kudermetova (Russ) bt B. Bai Zhuoxuan (China) 7-5, 6-1; R. Montgomery (US) bt M. Linette (Pol) 6-7 (4-7), 6-3, 7-5. **Second round** B. Andreescu (Can) bt Yue Yuan (China) 6-4, 6-4; G. Minnen (Bel) bt D. Vekic (Cro) 6-1, 0-6, 7-5; N. Osaka (Jap) bt S. Lamens (Neth) 6-2, 6-2.

**WTA Rothsay Open** **Nottingham:** Second round K. Birrell (Aus) bt L. Stefanini (It) 6-4, 6-7 (5-7), 6-0; D. Parry (Fr) bt D. Saville (Aus) 6-4, 6-1; K. Roloff (GB) bt R. Marino (Can) 6-4, 6-3; Karolina Pliskova (Cz) bt H. Watson (GB) 6-4, 6-4.

## 'Hell of a player' Searle, 18, pushes Evans all the way

Tennis  
John Westerby

Dan Evans came out on top of a fiercely fought contest with Henry Searle in Nottingham today, but the British No 3 was in no doubt that his defeated opponent is a star in the making.

Searle, 18, the 6ft 4in left hander from Wolverhampton, last year became the first British player in 61 years to win the boys' singles title at Wimbledon and he pushed Evans hard in the second round of the Rothsay Nottingham Open before succumbing to a 7-6 (7-4), 7-6 (7-5) defeat.

"He's very good, he's going to be a hell of a player," Evans said. "I had to be fired up to get across the line, I only just got across. He played great. The bottom line is that if I didn't play well today I wasn't winning the match."

"It was such a tough match, it should stand me in good stead for the rest of the grass season. This is why the tournaments are on, this is where the younger guys can come through and make their mark. You guys leave today knowing about Henry Searle if you didn't before."

Katie Boulter, the British No 1, progressed smoothly through to the

### Nadal and Alcaraz in doubles

Rafael Nadal will play doubles with Carlos Alcaraz for Spain at the Olympic Games in Paris.

Alcaraz, 21, has won three singles grand-slam titles, including the French Open earlier this month on the Roland Garros courts where the Olympic tennis will be staged, and where Nadal won 14 of his 22 grand-slam singles titles.

The Games begin on 26 July with the tennis tournaments starting a day later. "One pair, which I think everyone knows and was hoping for, is Carlos Alcaraz and Rafael Nadal," the Spain coach David Ferrer said.

quarter-finals of the women's event with a comfortable 6-4, 6-3 victory over Rebecca Marino, the world No 157 from Canada. Boulter, the world No 30, took only 1hr 14min to complete the win, a relief after her first-round match against Harriet Dart had lasted more than three hours. Boulter is defending the title she won last year and will face either Magdalena Frech or Tatjana Maria for a place in the semi-finals.



## Sport US Open

# Scheffler on run to rival Tiger but this course has no respect for reputation

Expect 'war of attrition' for world No1 and his rivals on beautiful but bruising Pinehurst No2, writes **Tom Kershaw**

The Hillary Step marks the final ascent on Mount Everest. A photograph a few years ago showed dozens of climbers huddled along the rock face, waiting for their turn to reach the summit. Xander Schauffele may have been crowned a major champion last month, but he still includes himself among those contenders grappling below, freezing interminably for their turn to set foot among the gods. "Scottie Scheffler sits atop this Everest, as I'd call it. He is so far up in first place. He's looking down on everyone," he says.

The question of who could topple Scheffler was answered last month, but the prospect of an overzealous police officer affording the field another saving grace would seem just as remote. Any notion that the world No1 might be scarred by his bizarre arrest and brief stint in a Louisville jail cell was dispelled last week at the Memorial Tournament, too, where he carded a triple bogey on Saturday yet still cruised to victory. It was his fifth in eight starts, the quickest any player has reached that mark in a season since Tom Watson in 1980. Comparisons to Tiger Woods always feel far-fetched, but even Scheffler's peers are starting to speak about this dominance in the same breath.

"It's probably what happened in the early days with Tiger. You kind of get used to it, so it becomes less of a big deal. It's almost an afterthought. Scottie won again this week," said Webb Simpson, the 2012 US Open champion. Bryson DeChambeau, the 2020 champion and one of the foremost challengers to Scheffler at Pinehurst, is not usually known for his humility but echoed that. "He is the gold standard. We're all looking up to him going, 'How do we get to that level?'"

Rory McIlroy has insisted he feels closer to ending his major drought than ever after reconciling with Erica Stoll, his wife of seven years, but was just as deferential. "Scottie is the best in the world by a long way," he said. "He is relentless."

That psychological advantage should not be understated, and Pinehurst No2 is a beautiful but bruising course that already requires extra measures of concentration. The small, raised and lightning quick greens demand exquisite ball-striking, while chipping from the steep run-offs is riven with danger. Martin Kaymer's 36-hole masterclass in 2014 proved it can be navigated with aplomb, but only four players have finished under par in the past three US Opens



**Ludvig Aberg**

Sweden's excellent driving gives him the best chance of navigating the tricky greens and he played well at Muirfield Village

**Scottie Scheffler**

It is impossible to favour anyone but the world No1, such has been his brilliant form after five wins in his past eight starts

**Viktor Hovland**

Norwegian has recovered from post-Ryder Cup slump and ran Xander Schauffele close at the US PGA Championship

**Matt Fitzpatrick**

2022 champion's game suits Pinehurst and he will be encouraged after fifth place at the Memorial Tournament last week

**Cam Smith**

Australian was pretty woeful at last week's LIV event in Houston but putting will be crucial this week and there are few better than Smith when on song



here. "The key to success was the way I putted from 10ft," Kaymer said. That was once considered the sole

weakness to Scheffler's game, but it has been mended by Phil Kenyon. The USGA chief championships officer John Bodenhamer said the course would play "tough but fair", but the English putting guru is expecting an extremely difficult test. "The green complexes are really tricky. It's obviously the main defence of the course," Kenyon says. "There are a lot of false slopes and run-offs. I'd guess only around 50 per cent of the actual green is usable, and within that there is a lot of slope. They're easily running at somewhere between 12 and 13 in practice on the stimpometer. If they get any quicker, it really will be challenging."

Another frail source of hope for the field might be that form has not always proven decisive at Pinehurst. Payne Stewart, who tragically died in a plane crash four months after his

## Pete Cowen's coaching tips on how to play Pinehurst No2

### Strategy

It's a very tough course. The footprint of the greens is a lot smaller than what they say it is because the runoffs are all so severe. It's important to get the right lines off the tee and then you've got to keep to the centre of the green all the time. Don't get too aggressive. If you do miss the green, bear in mind that in 2014, the winner Martin Kaymer putted from everywhere around the greens. Most players should follow that approach. A fast start will also be crucial

because you can protect a lead around a course like this. If the USGA sets it up as we expect, it's very unlikely someone is going to shoot a 64 on Sunday because the greens will be so firm.

### Three hardest holes

**6th** This 228-yard par three was the toughest in 2014, with the field averaging 3.374. The raised green is difficult to hold with most players needing a long iron off the tee and the surface running away from the hole in every direction, with bunkers either side.

**16th** With a scoring average of 4.341, this 536-yard par four is usually a par five for Pinehurst members. It will demand two fine shots from even the field's longer hitters into the smallest green on the course, which features a menacing false front.

**2nd** Another exacting par four, which averaged 4.339 ten years ago, the fairway tilts to the left on this 500-yard dog leg, bringing plenty of sand into play. A bold drive is needed to leave a good angle into the green.

victory here 25 years ago, missed the cut the week before. Michael Campbell, the shock winner in 2005, only made it to Pinehurst through 36-hole qualifying.

But Pete Cowen, esteemed coach to the likes of Brooks Koepka and Matt Fitzpatrick, does not foresee another surprise. "Scottie is obviously the favourite, but there are six players you can name and probably get the

winner," he says. Koepka, the US Open champion in 2017 and 2018, will be among them despite struggling at last week's LIV event in Houston.

There are only 12 LIV players in the 156-man field after Jon Rahm's withdrawal due to an infected cut on his foot. Mike Whan, chief executive of the USGA, said yesterday that a pathway could be created to lessen that disparity next year. It is feasible

the PGA Tour and Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) will have come to a deal before then. A source familiar with the negotiations said there was now a "broad agreement" on the PIF's proposed investment into the PGA Tour, but the struggle to outline a combined schedule with LIV remained a stumbling block. "If PIF is in the tent financially, there is more incentive to come together over time," they said.

That split only exaggerates the majors' status as golf's greatest individual spectacle. Schauffele admits being the best player yet to win one had become a heavy burden up until he clinched the US PGA.

That scarlet letter now belongs to Viktor Hovland, whose occasional chipping frailties will be eased by the onus on putting from off the greens. Collin Morikawa's fabulous iron play spurred him to two victories in his first eight starts at the majors. It has erred a little since the latter in 2021, but he is in fine form. As for McIlroy, a positive narrative in his personal life cannot dissolve the psychological barrier that has proven insurmountable in so many of these weeks. They will all jostle for position in Scheffler's shadow. "It's going to be a great war of attrition," said Woods.

This time, though, it might prove just as hard to move the man slowly inheriting his mantle as the mountain. Live on Sky Sports, from 12.30pm



# Racing Sport

## Newbury

Rob Wright

1.45 Artavan	4.00 Clove Hitch
2.20 Wild Clary	5.00 Abbey Set
2.50 Asimov	5.05 Game Heights
3.25 Heartwarmer	5.40 Laura Bay

Going: good to firm, good in places

Draw: no advantage

### 1.45 Handicap (€5,464: 1m 15 (runners)

1 (5) 15000 BLUE YONDER 99 (D) B Watson 4-11-2 Miss B Hampson	
2 (15) 45-22 EXPERT WITNESS 22 (T) Sir M Todd 4-11-2	
3 (8) 6-040 LENNY'S SPIRIT 30 (T,CD) E Dunlop 6-11-2 Miss S Smith	
4 (15) 4-402 FINN RUSSELL 10 (W) Williams 4-10-13 Miss K Martin (F)	
5 (11) 21-374 ANGLO SAXON 51 (P) Owens 7-10-13 Mr L Kent (S)	
6 (7) 00-06 GERT LUSH 20 T Total 7-10-10	Miss M Jordan (S)
7 (11) 05600 ROYAL OBSERVATORY 29 F Frost 4-10-8	Miss L Frost (S)
8 (14) 0-040 FLAME OF KODIAC 13 (P) J & R Flint 4-10-8	Miss A Tucker (F)
9 (1) 04-35 ARTAVIAN 22 P Chammings 4-10-7	Mr F Tett
10 (9) 0-330 FIFTYSHADESARESDOWN 20 M Hammond 5-10-6	Miss B Smith
11(12) 34500 SEA OF CHARM 36 (V,D) G Nicholls 6-10-5	Mr W Dunlop (F)
12 (6) 00664 CHAMPAGNE CITY 43 (P) B Brookhouse 11-10-5	Miss M Scudamore (F)
13 (16) 0-046 CHANGE OF FORTUNE 20 B J Llewellyn 5-10-2	Miss J Llewellyn (F)
14 (7) 12-24 ALBUS ANNE 30 (F) P Jay 5-9-12	Miss M Fox (S)
15(10) 5-012 STORMINGWINE 56 (B,D) G & J Moore 11-10-1	Mr J Fernandes (F)

4-1 Expert Witness, 13-2 Stormingwin, 7-1 Artavan, Finn Russell, 8-1 Anglo Saxon, Albus Anne, 12-1 Gert Lush, 14-1 Blue Yonder, 15-1 Spirit.

Rob Wright's choice: Artavan lost a shoe at Kempton last time, unexposed Dangers: Expert Witness, Albus Anne

## 2.20 Novice Stakes

(2-Y-O: €6,480; €6 110yd) (11)

1 (5) ANNO DOMINI 1 Appleby 9-4	W Buick
2 (7) 2 BERSHIRE KAMEO 20 A Baiding 9-7	O Murphy
3 (10) CLEVER JACK E Dunlop 9-7	D Muscotti
4 (1) INVITED R Hannan 9-7	D Egan
5 (2) LAPLANDER T Ward 9-7	H Crouch
6 (3) MIGHTY RULER E Houghton 9-7	C Bishop
7 (11) NEW BOMBAY A Baiding 9-7	R Rossa Ryan
8 (4) ORGAN 28 B Meahan 9-7	T Marquand
9 (7) SERAPH GABRIEL E Beckett 9-7	Rossia Ryan
10 (8) WILD CLARY 27 R Hannan 9-7	S M Levey
11 (6) TIETE Harry Charlton 9-7	T Whelan

2-1 Anno Domini, 9-2 Berkshire Kameo, 5-1 Invited, 7-1 Seraph Gabriel, Wild Clary, 10-1 Organ, Mighty Ruler, 12-1 New Bombay, 20-1 others. Rob Wright's choice: Wild Clary was not given at all a hard time on his debut here Dangers: Berkshire Kameo, Organ

## 2.50 Handicap (Div 1: 3-Y-O: €5,757: 1m) (11)

1 (1) 25-43 FASTER BEE 69 R Hughes 9-9	J Crowley
2 (9) 4-353 SHOV BIZ KID 8 (B) R Hannan 9-10	P Dobbs
3 (4) 4-54 ASIMOV 23 (T) Fanshawe 9-8	W Buick
4 (1) 10-36 FRANCESCO BARACCA 8 (D) E Houghton 9-7	C Bishop
5 (3) -2236 BEAUTY GENERATION 23 (P,D) M Botti 9-7	D Egan
6 (7) 24-44 CHATEAU WHISPER 39 P McBride 9-6	Rossia Ryan
7 (10) 33-12 BORN A REBEL 17 (B,F,D) P Owens 9-6	B Sayette
8 (11) 12210 HAVANARAMA 35 (T) H Palmer 9-4	O Murphy
9 (5) 460 WARRIORS DREAM 27 (H) S Woods 9-4	R Havlin
10 (8) 602 ZALLATA 22 F Fuster 9-3	Duscotti
11 (6) 4-24 SUGARBAIT LEMMY 39 (T) W Knight 9-2	S Osborne

9-2 Born A Rebel, 5-1 Asimov, 6-1 Fasten Bee, 7-1 Zallata, Show Biz Kid, 8-1 Sugarbait Lemmy, 10-1 Warriors Dream, Havanarama.

Wright choice: Asimov was given too much to show when four at Nottingham Dangers: Born A Rebel, Francesco Baracca

## 3.25 Handicap (Div II: 3-Y-O: €5,757: 1m) (11)

1 (3) 52-34 JACKSON STREET 64 C Cunha 9-10	R Clutterback
2 (7) 1-33 HEARTWARMER 25 G Boughy 9-9	W Buick
3 (4) 04-04 LIV MY LIFE 35 (B) R Hannan 9-8	A Volkhsansky (C)
4 (1) 4-254 KEADY TOWN 11 R Hughes 9-7	O Murphy
5 (10) 00-232 GLOBAL ASSET 31 W Haggas 9-6	T Marquand
6 (8) 01-40 THE FERRET 33 (B) R Hannan 9-6	L Keniry
7 (10) 0-332 GREAT ACCLAIM 19 (D) E Houghton 9-6	C Bishop
8 (6) 4-124 TAYALA 19 T Walker 9-4	S Osborne
9 (5) 00-4 SARKAKA 68 E G Kings 9-4	P Cosgrave
10(11) 0-40 ADVERT RULES 155 K Gray 9-3	Rossia Ryan
11 (9) 00-045 DOUBLE RED 59 H Candy 8-13	T Whelan

3-1 Global Asset, 4-1 Great Acclaim, 9-2 Heartwarmer, 6-1 Keady Town, 8-1 Jackson Street, Tayala, 14-1 Advert Rules, 20-1 Liv My Life, The Ferret.

Wright choice: Heartwarmer, a good third in Newmarket, can improve again Dangers: Global Asset, Jackson Street

## 4.00 Novice Stakes (3-Y-O: €20,616: 1m) (12)

1 (8) AMONGST THE STARS 26 C Kubler 9-2	R Kingscote
2 (3) BERNALDA J Ferguson 9-2	D Muscotti
3 (6) 5-22 CLOVE HITCH 24 A Baiding 9-2	C Bishop
4 (11) DESERT TIME H Candy 9-2	T Whelan
5 (2) FIOR DI BOSCO W Haggas 9-2	T Marquand
6 (4) HEAVEN BLESSED 19 W Haggas 9-2	W Buick
7 (10) 4-6 HECKMONDWIKE 23 W Haggas 9-2	C Bishop
8 (10) 6-6 ICECAP 24 P Owens 9-2	B Sayette
9 (7) 2-4 IZIPIZI 56 (B,F) J & T Gosden 9-2	R Havlin
10 (5) 30- NO MISTIE 260 P Portman 9-2	R Hornby
11 (3) 3 SAMBUCCUS 29 F Walker 9-2	S Osborne
12 (9) 0- UPLIFT 211 (B,F) J & T Gosden 9-2	K Shoemark

5-2 Clove Hitch, 4-1 Heaven Blessed, 5-1 Desert Time, Amongst The Stars.

Wright choice: Clove Hitch was clear of the rest when a close second at Windsor Dangers: Sambuccus, Fior Di Bosco

## 4.30 Handicap (€14,174: 7f) (12)

1 (7) 55-15 UNDER THE TWILIGHT 26 (D) M Blake 6-9-9 T Marquand	
2 (8) 43600 NIBRAS ANGEL 28 (T,D) Mohammed 4-9-9	

B D Bowen (S)

3 (1) 30-24 HICKORY 33 (P,D) J Fanshawe 6-9-8	W Buick
4 (5) 3-004 PEARLE D'OR 12 (H,BF,CD) D O'Neira 5-9-4	J Watson
5 (11) 5-306 STERLING KNIGHT 19 (P) S Dunlop 5-9-6	Rossia Ryan
6 (4) 136-0 ZOUZANNA 33 (BF,D) Harry Charlton 4-9-3	O Murphy
7 (10) 110-0 GAME SET 22 (D) Owen Barrows 4-9-3	J Crowley
8 (4) 136-0 BE FRANK 20 H Candy 4-9-2	T Whelan
9 (9) 61-62 METAFVERSE 22 (H,D) M Menusier 4-9-1	K Shoemark
10 (6) 01030 EPSON FAITHFUL 26 (P,D) P Phelan 7-8-11	P Bradley
11 (3) 0-000 BOOK OF LIFE 20 (T,D) J Williams 4-8-10	D Egan

4-1 Hickory, 9-2 Pearle D'Or, 5-1 Be Frank, 6-1 Metaverse, 7-1 Under The Twilight, 8-1 Game Set, Zouzanna, 14-1 Sterling Knight, Nibras Angel.

Wright choice: Game Set drops in distance after failing to stay a mile at Kempton Dangers: Pearle D'Or, Metaverse

## 5.05 Handicap (€7,328: 6f) (12)

1 (1) 16-01 ABBEY HEIGHTS 8 (D) D & C Kubler 6-9-10(Sex)	R Kingscote
2 (4) 0-506 HAZIYM 47 (T,D) A Carroll 5-9-9	J Watson
3 (12) -0010 CRAZY LUCK 19 (D) B Millman 6-9-9	Rossia Ryan
4 (3) 016-0 ORIOLOLULU 19 (H,D) B Osborne 4-9-8	S Osborne
5 (11) 3056- CROW'S NEST 253 (W,D) G & Baker 4-9-8	P Cosgrave
6 (2) 0-100 KUWAIT CITY 31 B Butler 4-9-7	J Crowley
7 (5) -0000 RATHBONE 13 (P,D) M Harrington 8-9-7	C Pfnas (S)
8 (10) -0324 WHEN THE DEER ALINSDONE 19 (P) R Teal 6-9-5	K Shoemark
9 (8) 51231 SIXTIES CHIRUS 19 (D) J Channon 4-9-5	C Bishop
10 (6) 42-34 THREACIOUS 15 (CD) E De Giles 10-9-2	O Murphy
11 (7) 34206 ONE MORE WAVE 15 (D) J Portman 4-9-2	R Hornby

4-1 Sixties Chir, 9-2 Whenthedeerallone, 5-1 Abbey Heights, 7-1 Treacherous, 8-1 One More Wave, Crazy Luck, 10-1 Starport, 14-1 Kuwait City.

Wright choice: Abbey Heights won at Nottingham; lightly-raced for his age Dangers: Treacherous, Sixties Chir

## 5.40 Handicap (3-Y-O: €5,757: 1m 4f) (10)

1 (2) 5334 NORTH WINTERFELL 41 (T) S Woods 9-9	R Havlin
2 (8) 55-43 RAKKI 24 A King 9-11	W Buick
3 (3) 534-1 LAURA BAY 27 (C) D Menusier 9-9	B Sayette
4 (1) 35-45 LOVE PAINS 24 A Walker 9-9	S Osborne
5 (5) 45- WANDER KID 180 H Palmer 9-9	O Murphy
6 (10) 3-233 AULUS 38 B Beckett 9-4	Rossia Ryan
7 (4) 0-40 HOP BEISING 19 L Hills 9-4	R Kingscote
8 (6) 6-031 AL KHAWANEJ RIVER 19 M Trengnon 9-3	D Costello
9 (7) 00-03 FOREST HILLS 27 B Millman 9-2	H Crouch
10 (9) 6-046 HARRINGTON 9 (BF) R J Smith 8-6	G Rooke

7-2 Al Khawanej River, 5-1 Laura Bay, 6-1 Forest Hills, 7-1 Aulis, Wander Kid, 8-1 North Winterfell, 10-1 Rakki, 12-1 Hope Rising, Love Pains, 14-1 Harrington.

Wright choice: Laura Bay won here last time and this stiffer test of stamina should suit Dangers: Rakki, Aulis

## Nottingham

Rob Wright

2.10 Amori City	4.20 Rhythmic Acclaim
2.40 Ajdayat	4.55 Mrs Trump
3.10 Little Heron (nb)	5.30 Stintino Sunset
3.45 Great Blasket	

Going: good, good to firm in places

Draw: 55-6f, high numbers best

### 2.10 Novice Stakes (2-Y-O: €3,725: 6f) (6)

1 (5) AMORI CITY 1 Appleby 9-7	J Doyle
2 (2) 6 DR TH T G T E Dunlop 9-7	D Probert
3 (4) INTRUSIVELY E Beckett 9-7	C Rodriguez
4 (1) 0 MEHMASSSEL AND I 27 F Dasmonee 9-7	P-J Jamlin
5 (6) MYSTICAL SKY C Johnston 9-7	J Hart
6 (3) 3 FLY LIBERTY 17 M Botti 9-6	H Doyle

4-5 Amori City, 6-1 Intrusively, 7-1 Fly Liberty, Mystical Sky, 10-1 Mehmassel And I, Dr T H G.

## 2.40 Maiden Stakes (€3,780: 1m) (11)

1 (10) 0 BEAMING LIGHT 13 L Horsfall 4-10-2	Joanna Mason
2 (1) 0 HOGO CAMERON 26 M Appleby 4-10-2	A Rawlinson
3 (11) 22-52 IDEMUNITY 17 (BF) R Varian 4-10-2	J Doyle
4 (6) 6 ADJAYAT 15 W Haggas 9-5	H Doyle
5 (2) 0-43 DEVIOUS DEVAN 23 R Muir & C Grassick 3-9-5	E Edmunds
6 (3) 40-02 DELICACY 19 R Hannan 9-4	S De Sousa
7 (1) 0 TRIP TO VENICE 11 E Dunlop 3-9-5	D Probert
8 (9) 03-2 WAEKSHA 54 K R Burke 3-9-5	C Lee
9 (7) 0- WOOF 310 M Rimel 3-9-5	J Mitchell
10 (4) INA MINA W Haggas 3-9-0	A Farragher
11 (8) LITTLE MISS INDIA I Williams 3-9-0	J Hart

13-8 Idemunity, 9-2 Ida Mina, 5-1 Adjayate, Waeeksha, 6-1 Devious Devan, 12-1 Pacific Prince, 16-1 Little Miss India, 50-1 Trip To Venice.

## 3.10 Handicap (3-Y-O: €4,187: 1m) (11)

1 (9) 5-34 MARIANGLAS 25 E Beckett 9-10	C Rodriguez
2 (1) 4-663 THE LITTLE HERON 8 H Bell 9-10	K Stott
3 (3) 4-200 PHOENIX DUCHESS 23 Harry Eustace 9-10	A Keelley (C)
4 (10) 24-641 POST RIDER 23 (P) B O Word 9-9	S De Sousa
5 (2) 40-02 DELICACY 19 R Hannan 9-4	J Doyle
6 (5) 56-04 LOVE AYESA 10 (T) M Cullen 9-4	D Probert
7 (11) 2-315 INTERVIEW 21 (P) J Meahan 9-7	D Probert
8 (11) 2-315 NOTRE DAME 61 (D) J Fellen 9-5	D Hogan
9 (8) 600-1 I DARE YOU 261 W Muir & C Grassick 9-5	E Edmunds
10 (7) 50-0 HIGHLAND LIL 22 (P) T Dasmonee 9-3	P-J Jamlin
11 (6) 0-40 YELLOW LEMONS 21 R Hannan 9-2	S Hitchcock

4-1 Little Heron, 5-1 Marianglas, 6-1 Post Rider, Delicacy, 7-1 Notre Dame, 8-1 Interviewed, 12-1 Yellow Lemons, Phoenix Duchess, Black Akyoa.

## 3.45 Handicap (€9,277: 1m) (7)

1 (2) 0-300 BENARCE 13 Johnston 4-9-9	J Doyle
2 (5) 35-12 YOKSHIRE 12 (T,BF) E Beckett 4-9-9	C Rodriguez
3 (5) 4-100 SUDDEN AMBUSH 40 (D) A Baiding 4-9-5	D Probert
4 (3) 60000 MASTER ZOFFANY 34 (P,D) F Bailey 6-9-5	M McSweeney (C)
5 (4) 60-00 OBLEIX 32 (W,D) J Camacho 4-9-5	R Sexton
6 (1) 30-00 ACOTANGO 46 (BF,D) Harry Charlton 4-9-3	F Marsh
7 (6) 21112 GREAT BLASKET 11 (B,F,D) Dr R Newland & J Insole 4-9-3	H Doyle

15-8 Great Blasket, 2-1 Yorkshire, 6-1 Benarco, 10-1 Acotango, Sudden Ambush, 12-1 Master Zoffany, 16-1 Obelix.

## 3.50 Handicap (€9,277: 1m) (7)

1 (3) 30-24 HICKORY 33 (P,D) J Fanshawe 6-9-8	W Buick
2 (5) 3-004 PEARLE D'OR 12 (H,BF,CD) D O'Neira 5-9-4	J Watson
3 (11) 5-306 STERLING KNIGHT 19 (P) S Dunlop 5-9-6	Rossia Ryan
4 (4) 136-0 ZOUZANNA 33 (BF,D) Harry Charlton 4-9-3	O Murphy
5 (10) 110-0 GAME SET 22 (D) Owen Barrows 4-9-3	J Crowley
6 (4) 136-0 BE FRANK 20 H Candy 4-9-2	T Whelan
7 (9) 61-62 METAFVERSE 22 (H,D) M Menusier 4-9-1	K Shoemark
8 (6) 01030 EPSON FAITHFUL 26 (P,D) P Phelan 7-8-11	P Bradley
9 (3) 0-000 BOOK OF LIFE 20 (T,D) J Williams 4-8-10	D Egan

4-1 Hickory, 9-2 Pearle D'Or, 5-1 Be Frank, 6-1 Metaverse, 7-1 Under The Twilight, 8-1 Game Set, Zouzanna, 14-1 Sterling Knight, Nibras Angel.

Wright choice: Game Set drops in distance after failing to stay a mile at Kempton Dangers: Pearle D'Or, Metaverse

## Yarmouth

Going: soft (good to soft in places)

2.00 (7f 3yd) 1, Organic (P Cosgrave, 3-1); 2, Shaws Phoenix (5-1); 3, Doha Bu Thaila (11-1); 9, ran. NR: Little Siskin, Salaamaat, Nk, 2-1; G Boughy.	
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## Yesterday's racing results

## Fontwell Park

Going: good

2.13 (2m 5f 164yd hdl) 1, Pyffo (R P McLernon, 11-10 fav); 2, Briefly (5-2); 3, Lord Chips (11-1). 6 ran. 1-1/4, 1/4, A & O'Neill.	
2.43 (3m 1f 166yd hdl) 1, Kitesurfer (G Sheehan, 11-1); 2, Sea The Clouds (12-1); 3, Paddy De Poie (15-8 fav). 6 ran. 4-1/4, 1/4, J. J. Snowden.	
3.13 (2m 3f 104yd ch) 1, Belgarum (Brendan Powell, 9-4 fav); 2, Call Off The Dogs (5-2); 3, Shaw's Cross (14-1). 7 ran. NR: Celtic, Groom De Cotte, Princess Midnight, 161, 1-1/4, J Tizzard.	
3.43 (3m 1f 166yd hdl) 1, Dear Ralphie (H Cobden, 9-2); 2, Glorious Mist (80-1); 3, Astroman (11-1). 10 ran. 1-1/4, A J Honeyball.	

4.13 (3m 1f 210yd ch) 1, Village Master (James Bowen, 7-4 fav); 2, Jigginstown King (5-2); 3, Dicey Riffle (9-2). 6 ran. 1-1/4, 1/4, W Greatrex.	
4.43 (2m 3f 29yd hdl) 1, Beat The Heat (Sean Houllahan, 22-1); 2, Sami Barbel (4-1); 3, Nadim (15-2). 10 ran. 2-1/4, 1/4, J R. Taylor.	
5.18 (2m 3f 29yd hdl) 1, Earth Cry (Jack Twiston-Davies, 9-4 fav); 2, No Mean Feet (40-1); 3, Blow Your Horn (100-30). 9 ran. NR: Grain Of Hope, 4-1/4, 1/4, N Mulholland.	

Placepot: €501.60. Quadpot: €18.00.

## Yarmouth

Going: soft (good to soft in places)

2.00 (7f 3yd) 1, Organic (P Cosgrave, 3-1); 2, Shaws Phoenix (5-1); 3, Doha Bu Thaila (11-1); 9, ran. NR: Little Siskin, Salaamaat, Nk, 2-1; G Boughy.	
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## 4.20 Handicap (€3,402: 6f) (13)

1 (6) 04150 FORTUNATE STAR 22 (B,D) D Carroll 4-10-4	2 Wheatley (C)
2 (5) 4-006 RHYME OF BELUR 12 (P,D) J Parr 6-10-4 Alice Bond (C)	
3 (7) -0111 RHYTHMIC ACCLAIM 6 (D) McBride 4-10-3 A Farragher	
4 (12) 11606 ATROPHIL BOY 12 (D) H Tindler 11-10-2	F McManoman
5 (11) 240-0 LIPSINK 268 (D) M Appleby 7-10-1	A Rawlinson
6 (3) 00222 EM JAY KAY 26 (T,P) M McEntee 5-10-1 Josephine Gordon	
7 (10) -4900 BELLARIO MAN 102 (P) D Baiton 6-10-1 M Winn (C)	
8 (2) -1050 SHE'S THE DANGER 12 (B,D) S Bowring 5-10-2	L Edmunds
9 (4) 03-13 RAFT UP 14 (D) H Beckett 3-9-10	Joanna Mason
10(13) 44222 EMDERMAN 16 (B,F,CD) P Midgley 6-9-9	D Nolan
11 (9) 2364 KENTON 22 (P) Tom Clover 3-9-8	J Mitchell
12 (1) 0-041 CRAFTY SPIRIT 15 (P,D) C Carr 3-9-4	J Hart
13 (8) 40541 ASSADJUMRAH 17 (V,CD) A Baiton 6-9-4	C Hardie

3-1 Rhythmic Acclaim, 9-2 Crafty Spirit, 7-1 Emderman, Em Jay Kay, 10-1 Lipsink, Raft Up, 12-1 Kento, Assadjumeirah.

## 4.55 Handicap (€3,402: 5f) (11)

					H Doy
3	(6)	21251	TOPTIME 12 (D)	S Bowring 6-9-10	L Edmund
4	(4)	11500	SIR BENEDICT 15 (P,D)	Mrs Stella Barday 6-9-5	J Hearn
5	(11)	00425	RHUBARB 13 (CD)	R Price 7-9-4	D Probert
6	(10)	0161	MRS TRUMP 9 (P)	D Midgeley 4-9-3	M Winn Cn
7	(1)	05040	MURBISH 15 (B,D)	A Brittain 5-8-2	D Nield
8	(7)	45400	JOSIES KID 20 (D)	P Alice Hayes 5-8-11	C Howarth Cn
9	(6)	6-530	THE GREY LASS 6 (M & D)	M & D Easterly 5-8-11	
					Anna Masco
10	(5)	00053	ENCHANTED NIGHT 9 (P,D)	Cunnett 6-8-11	R Ffrench
11	(9)	50009	FURNECICE 31 (P)	M Appleby 4-8-11	S De Sousa
					11 Sec H Trump, 7-2, 20p1, 6-1 Rogue De Vega, 5-8, Enchanted Night, 10-11
					Secret Handshake, Rubarb, 1-4-1 The Grey Lass, 1-6-1 Sir Benedict, Furuncice



# Aussies risk ban if trying to engineer England exit

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Scotland, without it having any impact on their super eight fixtures.

There is also another scenario in which, by the end of the Namibia game, England's net run rate (the deciding factor if teams finish level on points) is still slightly inferior to Scotland's. At that point, were Australia to administer a heavy defeat to Scotland it could drag Scotland's net run rate below England's, whereas a narrower Australia win would keep Scotland ahead.

Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood said after his team's victory over Namibia on Tuesday evening, which secured their qualification for the super eight stage: "If we can get them [England] out of the tournament, that's in our best interest as well as probably everyone else.

"It'll be interesting to see. [We've] never really been in this position before as a team, I don't think. Whether we have discussions or not, or we just try and play again the way we played tonight, that'll be up to people, not me."

The England head coach, Matthew Mott, himself an Australian who coached Hazlewood at New South Wales, said before team training at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium yesterday morning: "I haven't heard them [Hazlewood's remarks] in the context. I was told about them this morning.

"Knowing Josh, [he] has got a pretty dry sense of humour. I am hoping it was very much tongue-in-cheek. I actually don't think it is ever going to play out. Having grown up in Australia and the will to win every game, I am sure they will come to the fore. I am very much hoping it was an off-hand remark by a really good bloke who is having fun.

"To me, that's out of our control. Regardless of any outside noise, qualification, run-rates... we've got to win this game [against Oman]."

England can end all speculation about potential Australian dirty tricks regarding net run rate by winning well against Oman and Namibia — as they really should — and lifting their NRR

above Scotland's. Then only a no-result or a win for Scotland would be enough to put England out. It is reckoned that England need to win their matches on Thursday and Saturday by a combined margin of about 100 runs to lift their run rate above Scotland's.

Asked if he would contemplate something similar were England to find themselves in such a situation, Mott replied: "No, not at all. Normally at these tournaments, you want to get your best side out there, and take that momentum into the next game."

In fact, at the T20 World Cup in 2021, England lost narrowly to South Africa (by ten runs) in a group game in Sharjah when they had already qualified; had they lost more heavily it would have lifted South Africa's NRR above Australia's, and thereby knocked out Australia. As it was, Australia survived and went on to win the tournament.

It also needs stressing that suspicions of malpractice are one thing, proving them another. Were it to become an issue, that task would fall to Saturday night's match referee Jeff Crowe, of New Zealand, who has refereed more than 600 international matches since 2004.

Article 2.11 of the ICC Code of Conduct is designed to cover "the manipulation of international matches for inappropriate strategic or tactical reasons (such as when a team deliberately loses a pool match in an ICC event in order to affect the standings of other teams in that ICC event). It might also apply to the inappropriate manipulation of a net run rate or accumulation of bonus points or otherwise."

The article is distinct from other articles which deal with corrupt or fraudulent acts, which are covered by the ICC's Anti-Corruption Code. Article 2.11 also states: "The team captain of any team guilty of such conduct shall be held responsible (and subject to sanction) for any offence found to have been committed under the Article."

Such an offence counts as a level-two breach, which carries the potential imposition of "a fine of between 50-100 per

Group B table							
	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	NRR
Australia	3	3	0	0	0	6	3.58
Scotland	3	2	0	0	1	5	2.16
Namibia	3	1	2	0	0	2	-2.10
England	2	0	1	0	1	1	-1.80
Oman	3	0	3	0	0	0	-1.61



Curran may get the nod to face Oman as England consider using a left-arm seamer for the first time in the tournament. It

cent of the applicable match fee, or up to two suspension points'. Two suspension points equate to two T20 matches and would come into immediate effect.

Mott said that England had only just held their internal reviews of the defeat by Australia, three days after the game, preferring to let the players first reflect on what had happened. The players had

trained on Tuesday at the Recreation Ground in St John's.

"That is what teams do, [a] nice cool, calculated response," Mott said. "It's going to be a good wicket here by the looks of it. We go in with a lot of confidence. We've played good T20 cricket for a while now. It didn't quite come off against Australia [but] we've got our

structure in place. Those who saw us train yesterday, you can see a buoyant group, ready for the job ahead."

England were expected to deploy a left-arm seamer for the first time in the tournament by bringing in Sam Curran for Chris Jordan, on what will be an unused pitch. Oman are the oldest team here, with an average age of 33. Of their

# 'I found a way' - Hodgkinson overcomes sore throat to win

Athletics  
Rick Broadbent

Sport thrives on its unpredictability and sudden twists, but Keely Hodgkinson's class meant she had become her own plot spoiler this week.

The bookies certainly thought so when they installed her as the 33-1 on favourite for last night's 800m final at the European Championships, but they were unaware that she was suffering from a sore throat and had considered pulling out minutes beforehand. After

all that grit and yet another gold, she ditched the celebrations and said she was going straight home to bed.

The Olympic silver medalist, 22, had to work far harder than expected to defend her European crown. It was far from the two-lap victory parade that most had expected, but as a prelude to Paris it was a useful test of nerve and bravery. Her time of 1min 58.65sec was almost three seconds down on the world-leading time she set last month, and Slovakia's Gabriela Gajanova's eyes grew to saucer size as she began to close

on the home straight. She was only 0.14sec adrift by the line, with Anaïs Bourgoïn of France taking bronze.

"It's not been the greatest 24 hours," Hodgkinson said. "I felt a little bit of a sore throat and sniffles yesterday in warm-up and then it got worse. I was lying in bed thinking, 'Can I run?' I probably decided ten minutes before the call-room. I'd be disappointed if I didn't try. I would have liked a better time but it was just about finding a way to win.

"I had to believe in the fact that I am



Hodgkinson's winning time in Rome was almost three seconds slower than her world-leading mark set at the Eugene Diamond League event in May



England  
v Oman

Sir Vivian Richards Stadium,  
Antigua  
Start 8pm  
TV Sky Sports  
Cricket

India through  
after surviving  
scare from US

Elizabeth Ammon

United States fell just short of another incredible upset, pushing India much closer than might have been expected in New York.

India, the team ranked No 1 in the world, had slumped to 39 for three in their chase of 111 but managed to win by seven wickets to qualify for the super eight stage of the T20 World Cup.

In the last of the matches taking place on a difficult wicket at the Nassau County International Stadium, USA recovered to score 110 for eight having had a disastrous start in which they lost two wickets in the first over.

Although a modest total, they made a brilliant start to defending it with Saurabh Netravalkar, who once played for India and had been the hero in their victory over Pakistan, taking the wicket of Virat Kohli for a duck on just the second ball of India's innings and followed it with the wicket of Rohit Sharma. The hard-hitting Rishabh Pant was then bowled for 18 in the eighth over by Ali Khan, leaving India in trouble.

In front of an almost full house, USA made it a much tighter contest than previously thought with some accurate bowling on a wicket that was offering plenty.

After the early wickets, it was Shivam Dube and Suryakumar Yadav who steadied the ship, having to curb some of their natural attacking instincts to lead India to victory with ten balls to spare.

It would have been even closer but USA incurred a five-run penalty in the 15th over for taking more than 60 seconds between overs for the third time in India's innings.

Nonetheless, that the USA team are so competitive is one of the feel-good stories of the tournament and they are still in with a good chance of making it through to the super-eight stage. They have two wins already and play Ireland tomorrow in Florida and have a very good chance of winning that match and progressing to the next stage.

is likely that Jordan would make way

15 players, six are aged between 36 and 41, and only four are in their twenties.

Their best player is their captain Aqib Ilyas, who bats at No 3 and bowls a mix of leg breaks, googlies and off breaks. His has a remarkable story, as he recently survived a cancerous tumour in his left ankle which he feared would end his career, if not worse. The tumour

the defending champion and I have trained ill before, but you do think, 'How much worse is it going to make me in two hours when I crash?' Hopefully, it was worth it."

Hodgkinson immediately sat on the floor after reaching the line and she puffed out her cheeks.

Fans of the sport will hope the illness is a fleeting thing as Hodgkinson is a generational talent. The trouble is the Americans have one too in Athing Mu. Then there is Mary Moraa, the fast and unpredictable Kenyan with race tactics that sometimes seem like they come from whim rather than a textbook. There are others, but those three are expected to dominate and in 2024 Hodgkinson has been the one impressing.

Mu is yet to appear, however, and her comeback from a hamstring issue has been pushed back and postponed to the point she goes to next week's US trials

was benign but it took him eight months to walk again without crutches, and 18 months to return to cricket.

England's record against "smaller" teams in T20s is not as impressive as perhaps it should be: in seven completed matches against Afghanistan, Ireland, Netherlands, Scotland and Zimbabwe they have won four and lost three.



Gold in the women's 4x100m meant Britain finished third in the medal table

without a race since September. The beauty of sport is that it is rarely as straightforward as common sense suggests.

Hodgkinson had raced only once over 800m, coming into Rome after missing nine weeks of running over the

Scottish racism inquiry  
repeated Yorkshire errors

Mike Atherton

Chief Cricket  
Correspondent



John Blain, the former Scotland international, is the only individual that connects cricket's racism sagas north of the border in Scotland with south in Yorkshire, but the similarities between the two do not end there. As with the subsequent fallout from the Yorkshire case, there has also been a rush to judgment in Scotland over a crisis that engulfed the sport.

Emboldened by the testimony of Azeem Rafiq before the Department for Culture, Media and Sport select committee in November 2021, two former Scotland cricketers, Majid Haq and Qasim Sheikh, made allegations of racism during their time with the national team. Sport Scotland then commissioned a report by Plan4Sport, which describes itself as a "company supporting a wide range of public and private sports organisations in the areas of equality, diversity and inclusion".

In July 2022 their report, Changing the Boundaries (CTB), was published. The findings were, to say the least, striking. CTB reported 448 examples of racism that, when mapped against their 31 indicators of good practice, enabled the authors of the report to conclude that Cricket Scotland (CS) had failed 29 of them and was, therefore, institutionally racist.

Despite not having seen the full report, the entire board of CS resigned before it landed. The interim chief executive subsequently apologised, offering "a heartfelt apology to all those who have been the victim of racism and discrimination in Scottish cricket". In response to the report's recommendations, CS was placed in special measures — which is where it remains — and told to get its house in order.

It was not long before sceptical and questioning voices were raised. In particular, Tony Brian, a former chairman of CS, made forthright criticisms of CTB, reported in this newspaper by Magnus Linklater in March last year. Brian, who has called the report "irredeemably flawed", reiterated his concerns this week. Brian's tenure is covered by the review's findings and he has,

therefore, "skin in the game" but he raised many important questions. He questioned the suitability of a small company such as Plan4Sport (their latest accounts reveal a staff of three) to carry out such a wide-ranging review. He suggested key figures were not interviewed. As for the allegations contained therein, he said there was no indication that they had undergone any rigorous investigation.

Regular quarterly updates were issued by CS after the report's release. In the first, it emerged that of the 448 anonymised examples of racism cited by Plan4Sport, 246 related to "policies and procedures". It transpired subsequently that there were 53 direct complaints about racist behaviour against 31 individuals, two clubs and two regional associations, which had been sent on for further referral.

This referral process, set up after the publication of CTB, looks to have been robust. Two law firms, Harper Macleod and Bishop, Lloyd & Jackson Solicitors, along with the charity Sporting Equals, under oversight from Sport Scotland, were asked to



Blain was cleared of allegations in Scotland

investigate the complaints. As of October last year, CS had indicated that 33 of them had been discharged, with no further disciplinary action deemed necessary. CS has not commented publicly on the remaining referrals since then.

The allegations against Blain were thought to be among the final tranche to be investigated. While anonymity had been granted to complainants and respondents throughout the process in Scotland, Blain's name had cropped up by dint of the ECB using Haq's allegation that Blain had used the P-word during a match in Nairobi in 2007 to corroborate Rafiq's complaint that Blain had used racist language at Yorkshire in or around 2010-11, which the Cricket Discipline Commission upheld.

Now, Blain has been cleared of allegations in Scotland. On Monday, Blain published a letter sent to him five months ago by the interim chief executive of CS, Peter Fitzboydon, which exonerated him and concluded that the matter was closed, though the governing body has yet to

comment on Blain's individual case publicly. An editorial in the Scottish edition of this newspaper was critical in that regard, noting the reluctance "to exonerate him [Blain] publicly once the allegations were exposed as baseless". Blain had lost employment opportunities and had been removed from the CS Hall of Fame after the allegations. CS has said it will comment at the conclusion of what has been, more broadly, a "complex, challenging and emotive independent investigative process".

Those who have asked questions about the CTB report have been, predictably, the subject of pointed criticism. That much is common to those who have scrutinised matters north and south of the border. Sport Scotland's response to Brian's initial questioning fitted this egregious trend. "It is disappointing that some people still refuse to accept the findings of Changing the Boundaries. The denial of racism is a barrier to racial equality and is doing further damage to the sport," it said. This week, Aamer Anwar, the lawyer representing Haq and Sheikh, said that "the culture of denial remains rife and the dinosaurs are very much alive and well".

That is a damaging and divisive misreading of the situation. Racism exists in cricket, and has been accepted as such readily in this space, and must be punished, but what connects those querying some of the institutional responses to allegations of racism in Yorkshire and Scotland is the desire to see rigour and fairness, especially when the allegations are so serious and the consequences for individuals are so devastating.

The fallout at Yorkshire, when the roles of a large number of people were terminated abruptly without any due process, after an investigation that upheld seven of Rafiq's complaints, was testament to that. At the time, Julian Knight, the chairman of the DCMS select committee, welcomed the removal of the entire coaching staff. Subsequently, several employees won employment tribunal cases against the club for unfair dismissal.

The allegations against Blain and others had not been properly tested when the CTB report was published. Now they have been, a rather different picture is beginning to emerge. After the publication of CTB, Anwar described it as "the most devastating verdict of racism to be delivered on any sporting institution in the United Kingdom". That seemed a stretch then; even more so now.

Packer as the only British women to win Olympic 800m gold.

"I'm quite proud of myself for getting to the start line and really attacking the gold given the circumstances," she said. "The next seven weeks are going to be incredible. I do believe in the power of manifestation so it's obviously something I think about. The Olympic Games are so special, a huge opportunity to change your life and I'm just ready to go for it."

So are the women's 4x100m relay team, as Dina Asher-Smith, Desiree Henry, Amy Hunt and Daryll Neita got the gold in 41.91sec ahead of France and the Netherlands. It means the GB team leave Rome with four gold medals, with the others coming from the team half-marathon and the 100m via Asher-Smith.

After such a crushing disappointment at these championships two years

ago, Britain's premier sprinter is looking revived by her relocation to train in Texas. "We are trying new things before the Olympic Games and we are looking to do amazing in Paris," Asher-Smith said while wearing a crown handed to her by someone in the crowd. "We've got such a deep squad and that was great. So slick and so smooth."

For the real elite, the European Championships are often ego-massagers rather than career-changers. It is still good when athletes of the talent of Hodgkinson and Jakob Ingebrigtsen turn up, and sometimes an athlete breaks out in this second tier. In that category is Rhasadat Adeleke, the Irish 400m runner who leaves with a gold in the mixed 4x400m relay and silvers in the individual and relay. After Rome she is the fourth-fastest of the year and inside the all-time top 20. She is 21 and another star for the future.



# Unflappable at 11, Wharton's quiet conviction has taken him to the top

The midfielder who tried to impress agent when he was a child was always convinced he was going to have a big future, writes **Jonathan Northcroft**

At first it seemed a strange choice of player to put up for the first press conference of England's Euro 2024 camp in Germany — a youngster whose biggest interview, outside club media, was with the Lancashire Telegraph, a player whose 28 minutes of international football make him the least experienced in the squad.

But then — at England's media centre in Blankenhain — Adam Wharton turned up. He ambled into a room packed with TV crews, photographers and writers from the national and international press. He wore the kind of white sports socks you might buy, three for a fiver, at the Blackburn branch of Sports Direct. In one was tucked what looked like his hotel room key card.

Wearing a diffident smile, he surprised the BBC reporter against whom he was to throw some darts for the cameras. Are you any good, Adam? "No," he shrugged. "Never played."

And that's Wharton, laconic, unpretentious, seemingly impossible to ruffle, faze or flap. He turned out to be rubbish on the oche but as soon as the questions came you understood the FA's thinking. What better feelgood story to kick things off than this kid who hadn't played a top-flight game until four months ago, yet seems to take every challenge in his unhurried, unbothered stride?

"I'm absolutely delighted. Get to do what I love at the top stage. Can't beat it," was Wharton's economical take on becoming, at 20 and with only 16 Premier League games behind him, an England tournament player.

His comfortable major media debut was no surprise to those close to the "Wilshire Pirlor", a nickname, referencing his home village, that celebrates both Wharton's rootedness and his "un-English" midfield play. He has always had a certain quiet, shrugging confidence. James Featherstone, the owner of Omni Sports, Wharton's management company, looks after Wharton's older brother, Scott, the Blackburn Rovers defender. The first time he visited the family home an 11-year-old kid came in off the driveway, saying: "Are you going to be my agent too?"

"If you're good enough," Featherstone said, and the kid — Adam, of course — got out his phone to show his YouTube channel. It was full of videos of Adam chipping the ball into wheeley bins, doing round-the-worlds and all sorts of tricks. "You can't do that in a game, mate," was Featherstone's reply. The kid just laughed.

As it was, Featherstone refused to sign him up until he was about 17, telling him that having an agent too young was just a distraction, a wisdom that Adam was happy to take on board. He still drives a leased Audi A1 for £300 a month and since signing for Crystal Palace at the start of February has lived by himself in London.

He doesn't need much, and it was fascinating hearing him respond with such openness when asked about a comment his father, John, gave in an interview, that his son is "quite a loner". Smiling, he said: "Loner is a bit harsh. I don't have a million friends. I sort of keep myself to



Wharton came through at Blackburn, left, but is now testing his skills against the very best for England, below, and on the oche at their Euros training base, above



myself, that is how I've always been really. That works for me.

"I'm not always out with my friends doing this and that, and being part of a footballer is you can't go out on the weekends. They are the sort of sacrifices you make."

The Whartons are a close, supportive, sporting family.

Adam's mother, Helen, is a PE teacher and former local tennis champion, while John, who owns a French polishing business, still goes by the nickname "Spinner" in reference to his cricketing days. He played for England schoolboys and in the highest grade of league cricket in the country, passing on his talent to his boys.

Scott was once a highly regarded Lancashire junior who had professional prospects and bowled leg breaks for East Lancashire, for whom Allan Border and Paul Reiffel have played as visiting pros. Adam was a highly promising cricketer, an all-rounder who represented Lancashire Under-10s at a county cricket festival in 2014. Meanwhile, Simon, the middle brother, is a joiner and non-League footballer for Langho.

Scott's football career has not been straightforward. A left-footed, ball-playing centre half who made his Blackburn debut at 18 to rave reviews, his progress was slowed by injuries, including a ruptured achilles, and he had loans at Cambridge United, Lincoln City, Bury and Northampton Town. He then re-established himself for Blackburn only to suffer a serious knee injury in April, involving damage to ligaments and tendons that required

reconstructive surgery. Adam spoke about watching what Scott has gone through and the value of having an older brother there, not just for advice, but as a living example of football's ups and downs. "It gave me a reality check as I was coming through," he said.

His own experiences give another reason for a level head and he laughed to himself when asked to contrast the glitz of an international tournament with the Tuesday nights at Rotherham that were his life until not long ago. "Nothing springs to mind," he said. "I was in the Championship to start with in my career so I was never thinking about [the glamorous side of the game] because I had never experienced the high, high level and never played in unbelievable stadiums."

"It doesn't really bother me too much as long as everything goes well on the field."

He watched the Euro 2020 final in the tent of a beer garden around the corner from his digs in Blackburn. He was a first-year scholar and it wasn't the high life. "We were only allowed one in a room because of Covid. Second year was a plain room, two beds, a desk and that was about it. Entertain yourselves."

On the pitch there were challenges. He reckons he played just "two or three 90 minutes" throughout his first season with Blackburn Under-18s because of injuries and because "I

wasn't playing very good". Featherstone remembers an under-21s game away to Derby Under-23 that he attended with Adam's dad. Adam was 17 and played No 10, but was all at sea, and Blackburn lost 6-0. "He's got a lot of work to do, John, I'm not sure he's for me," the rep said.

Yet, you could always see something very special there. That straight-backed, head-up, perfectly balanced way Wharton receives the ball, the accuracy and variety of his passes, his automatic way of scanning a game and knowing the next ball to play. After his first training session with Blackburn, the first-team assistant manager, Mark Venus, confided: "He's the best player already!"

Featherstone recalls his first start at Blackpool. "It was the best debut I've ever seen, playing No 6, tracking back, tackling for 90 minutes, creating chances. Me and John looked at each other and said 'Jesus Christ'. We went into the boardroom and the Blackburn directors were like, 'Bloody hell.'"

Even last season had ups and downs. Jon Dahl Tomasson, the Blackburn head coach and an initial champion of Wharton, developed doubts about his work off the ball and froze him out for four months. It was the stick, rather than the carrot, and not an approach that necessarily works with a highly intelligent footballer who keenly analyses the game and prefers explanations.

Steve Parish, the Palace chairman, discovered the latter when his club were signing the player. He asked Wharton where he preferred playing. "Depends how the game's going really," was the answer. "If it's against a low block, No 10, because I get the ball more. If a normal game, No 6."

Wharton is perhaps the signing, in 14 years since taking over the club, that has brought Parish the most satisfaction. His ambition for Palace was always to retain the club's special character while expanding its style of play and recruiting Wharton has been a game-changer. Their manager, Oliver Glasner, has a great description of the midfielder's skills: "His pre-orientation, his solutions with one or two touches, is amazing."

Parish gives huge credit to the sporting director, Dougie Freedman, and his network of scouts. Before the transfer window he had been talking wistfully about Yohan Cabaye and Luka Milivojevic, bemoaning how Palace lacked that player who could open up teams down the middle. "Sign Adam Wharton. He'll transform us," the scouts said.

"Adam is a bit of a Moneyball player," Parish said. He remembers naysayers from outside the club telling him Wharton "can't run" and also recalls the stats from Wharton's brilliant performance in Palace's win at Anfield, where he led the distance covered with 11.5km. The truth is he can cover ground if he has to, but often doesn't, because of his brilliant positioning.

Wharton has wowed in England's training since joining the squad and at some point in the group stage expect him to amble on, look like it's all just nothing — and play. After that? His 28-minute debut against Bosnia-Herzegovina featured a 100 per cent pass success rate and my bet is he could be a breakout star.

Does he reckon he can play at this level? Of course. "The way I have always felt, even throughout Blackburn and when I was younger, is that I've always got that self-confidence that no matter who I am up against, I have got the ability to play my game and play well."

ADRIAN DENNIS/AP/GETTY IMAGES

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Wharton became the first midfielder since Opta stats began to attempt more than 30 passes on debut for England and complete every one





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-  Wäre besser zu Specsavers gegangen!
-  Elmehetett volna a Specsaversbe!
-  Doveva andare da Specsavers!
-  Was nou maar naar Specsavers gegaan!
-  A wystarczyło pójść do Specsavers!
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-  Ar fi trebuit să mergă la Specsavers!
-  Should've gone to Specsavers!
-  Da ste samo otišli u Specsavers!
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-  Treba bo v Specsavers!
-  ¡Deberías haber ido a Specsavers!
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## Sport Euro 2024

# Southgate is right – it is win or bust for England manager

If he doesn't return from Germany with the trophy, his time is up, writes  
**Martin Samuel**



**H**e will be the hardest act to follow as England manager, Gareth Southgate.

His players love him. The culture he has created around the national team is a personal triumph that a successor may struggle to replicate. Yet if England do not return from Germany with the trophy, follow him somebody must; because Southgate is right. He wins this tournament or says farewell. It will be his fourth try. Some incredibly near and laudable misses have occurred, particularly given the low base starting point. England were disappointed to reach only the quarter-finals in Qatar at the last World Cup. Time was, the last eight and beaten by the first good opponents they faced was par.

Yet Southgate has got so much more right than wrong in his eight years, and the scheduling of his departure is another insightful reading of the room. His time looked up on December 10, 2022, after defeat by France, but he stayed on. That would have been three strikes and out. This is four. Five strikes and out just isn't a thing. Not without victory somewhere.

Joachim Löw did seven major tournaments with Germany, not including the 2017 Fifa Confederations Cup. But how does a coach get to work at a Confederations Cup? He wins a major tournament, in Löw's case the World Cup in 2014. That was Löw's fourth swing too — so where Southgate is now. Without Germany's triumph in Brazil — including the incredible statement of a 7-1 semi-final win against the hosts — it is unlikely Löw would have survived. Certainly, if Germany had

not had a fortuitous escape against Algeria in the round of 16, that would have been Löw done.

That he lasted three more competitions was down to his status as a World Cup winner. It buys time, even in a country as familiar with success as Germany. In England, we still think Sir Alf Ramsey was treated harshly, having won the 1966 World Cup. The reality is, he managed England through another four tournament campaigns, before the failure to reach the 1974 World Cup finals meant he was dismissed.

England were eliminated at the semi-final stage of the 1968 European Championship, reached the quarter-finals of the 1970 World Cup, lost the quarter-finals of the 1972 European Championship to West Germany, then suffered the fateful elimination by Poland in World Cup qualifying. Ramsey's 1966 credit was maxed out at this point. Even for a World Cup winner there comes a time when change is felt necessary.

And Southgate is not a winner with England; at least not yet. He's been close. A penalty shoot-out away from winning the European Championship, an extra-time defeat from a World Cup final. Even in 2022, the France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris admitted that, had Harry Kane scored his penalty equaliser, England would probably have shaded their quarter-final. "Going into extra time, I think England would have won it," he told this newspaper in March. "They finished the game stronger and, to be honest, physically we were done."

So Southgate has been so, so close. Meaning there is an argument that, if he's close again, why not press him to continue? After all, what guarantee is there that his successor will be any better? The answer, obviously, is none. In 1995, when the FA foolishly refused to offer Terry Venables the security of a contract beyond the 1996 European Championship — paving the way for his resignation the following month — a meeting was held at the Hyatt hotel in Birmingham, the night before the finals draw. The FA told Venables it wanted to see how the tournament

progressed, and Venables replied: "I don't do auditions."

Noel White, of Liverpool, pointed out that as England were hosts, Venables was yet to take or win a competitive game as England manager. "And the man who replaces me — he hasn't won a competitive game as England manager either," Venables said. And he was right, Glenn Hoddle hadn't.

So it could be argued better stick with the familiar. Southgate has got closer to a trophy than any manager since Ramsey. He could lose in a final against Germany, in Germany. He could lose that game on penalties, or by some random piece of misfortune. Should he bow out just the same, no matter the circumstances?

Yes and no. There are exceptional scenarios. Illness sweeps the camp, denying the coach his fair shot. Yet, in his comments to Bild before the tournament, even Southgate seems to be acknowledging he can't overcome another hard luck story. England lost a penalty shoot-out to Italy at the last European Championship but, equally, they lost control of the match too. England lost in extra time to Croatia at the World Cup in 2018, but had no answer to their opponents' domination in midfield.

In every pivotal game that England have failed to win under Southgate at a tournament, there is a footballing explanation. It isn't just bad luck. England, for various reasons, haven't been able to get over the line under Southgate. If that shortcoming happens again, in Germany, it makes sense that someone else gets to have a go. There is someone out there who can crack the code.

This isn't the impossible job, as it was once tagged. Southgate proved that. He didn't have the stellar record of Fabio Capello, he wasn't a people's choice appointment like Kevin Keegan. He just knew what England needed, he identified their weaknesses, forged a way forward. In that sense he has been a brilliant manager of England.

Given that he was changing the culture around the national team as an age-group coach before he got the

## Fourth time's the charm?



### 2018 World Cup

England end their penalty hoodoo against Colombia but then go out in the semi-finals

senior job, he would leave the place in a far healthier state than he found it. If this is Southgate's last hurrah, whoever succeeds him is not staring up at a mountain, as he was, but at a mountain top. It is only the summit that has eluded Southgate to here.

That may change in the coming weeks, in which case there will be a clamour for him to stay and take the

team to the World Cup in 2026 and who knows after that? He may get the additional four tournaments that Ramsey was given, if that is his desire. If England fall short, however, then the timing of his withdrawal is not disastrous. Eddie Howe would appear more approachable now than he might have been a year ago, when he took Newcastle United into the

# FA chief: We are planning for life after Gareth – and may

**Matt Lawton** Chief Sports Correspondent, Blankenham

Mark Bullingham has said the FA has a succession plan in place if Gareth Southgate steps down as England manager after the European Championship, and has not ruled out a foreign replacement.

While the FA chief executive made it clear here at England's tournament headquarters that his preference would be for Southgate to extend a contract that ends in December, he stressed that the governing body was also prepared for the 53-year-old's departure.

Bullingham insisted that the FA had not contacted any potential replacements and had had "no approach" from

any club that may want to hire a coach who guided England to a European Championship final in 2021 and a World Cup semi-final in 2018. Despite the announcement on Tuesday that Erik ten Hag will remain at Manchester United, Southgate continues to be linked with the manager's job at Old Trafford.

If Southgate does leave — and in an interview with a German newspaper he said he expected his tenure to end if he failed to win this competition — Bulling-



ham insisted a plan was already in place. "Any organisation has a succession plan in place for their top employees and we are no different," Bullingham said.

"This succession plan normally includes everything from what you do for short-term cover, through to a process you follow to candidates. Without frustrating you enormously, that's all I want to say on that topic. I want to respect Gareth and the team in that they are very focused on the tournament, and we

**Howe would be a likely candidate if the FA went for an English coach**

want to be supporting them with that focus."

If the FA were to look to another England coach, it is likely that Newcastle United's Eddie Howe, the former Chelsea head coach Graham Potter and the present England Under-21 coach, Lee Carsley, would be on the shortlist. If the search extended beyond English borders, it seems inconceivable that Jürgen Klopp would not be considered. Bullingham did not dismiss the possibility of another foreign manager, having appointed Sarina Wiegman and extended the Dutchwoman's contract after she had guided England Women to Euros glory in 2022.

"We have two senior coaches; one of them is English, one of them is not," he

said. "Any federation in the world would always want to have a pool of top home-grown talent playing and managing at any time."

Both Bullingham and Southgate have stressed that any specific conversations about the England manager's future will take place after the tournament. "We are sitting down after the tournament together and will talk," Bullingham said. However, Southgate's comments about his future did appear in the German media — "If we don't win, I probably won't be here any more," he told the Bild newspaper — and Bullingham responded accordingly.

"What I would say is Gareth has been really, really clear that he wants to talk about that after the tournament," he





Champions League. Graham Potter and Steve Cooper — who is Welsh but was a much admired age-group coach for England, winning the World Cup with the under-17s — are still available. The FA has not ruled out foreign appointments, meaning Mauricio Pochettino and Thomas Tuchel could also come under consideration.

## appoint a foreigner

said. "I don't want to provide any distraction for him and the team."

"But I will say I think the world of Gareth. He has done a phenomenal job. He has transformed the fortunes of our men's senior team, and that's not just off the pitch — which a lot of people talk about, you can see the culture — but also on the pitch. Since 1966 he has won about half of our knockout games, which is a measure we really use. You know we value him massively."

With Southgate suggesting it is win or bust in what is his fourth major tournament as manager here in Germany, Bullingham was asked if he set the bar as high. "I know why people would love for there to always be a really arbitrary level, but I don't think you can set one

Ideally, of course, none of this will require contemplation, because England will be European champions and Southgate the much-loved hero of the nation. Yet, if not, he knows the score. Rewinding to the time before he got the job, there was the small matter of a World Cup qualifier at home to Scotland. Southgate was England's caretaker coach, the

for any tournament with any manager that you judge," he said.

"You could go further but be playing poorly. Or have a really unlucky result where you get a couple of red cards. So I think setting an arbitrary figure isn't right. I think we step back and look at everything after the tournament."

"Traditionally international manager contracts end ten days after the tournament. You know that we have got longer than that. We will evaluate everything after the tournament. We were fortunate enough to win a tournament a couple of years ago [the women's Euros]. Of course you do everything you can to win a tournament but we will be reviewing it after this one."

FA gives £25,000 to police, page 18



**Euro 2020** England progress all the way to the final at Wembley but then lose out agonisingly to Italy on penalties



**2022 World Cup** England impress but fall at quarter-final stage to eventual runners-up France

Scotland game and a friendly against Spain touted as his unofficial trial. Martin Glenn, then the FA's chief executive, insisted Southgate could still be England manager even if those games "didn't go so well".

Yet Southgate knew he had to beat Scotland. It would have been unthinkable to be embarrassed at Wembley and then offered the job

full-time. He would have entered the post from a position of weakness, needing to convince his own players as much as the fans. Thankfully, England won 3-0 and barely looked back for the next five years. Yet Southgate remains an astute judge. He knew then, just as he knows now. Sometimes, it is no more complex than win, or bust.

## Dunk: Defence isn't a weak link

CONTINUED FROM BACK

forward Aleksandar Mitrovic, Juventus's Dusan Vlahovic and the former Southampton player Dusan Tadic, who is now at Fenerbahce. Mitrovic and Tadic scored in a 3-0 win over Sweden last weekend from just five shots on target.

A lack of continuity and experience has conspired to create the perception that England's defence is the squad's weak link given their riches of attacking options. Dunk took issue with that, however, and remains confident that whatever permutation lines up can help the country to a winning start.

"Of course we are dismissing that," he said. "That is your opinion and you are entitled to it, but inside the dressing room and inside the camp we are as

confident as ever. We wouldn't be here if the manager didn't think we could play for England. I don't see why that would be the case."

"It was a defensive session [yesterday]. I guess tomorrow might be more attacking and we will balance out both sides as we go through the week. We've been together since the March camp, so a few camps now. This group has been there together for most of it. There may be less experience in the back line, but I'm sure there is still as much quality."

"You get that [understanding by] training every day with each other. You build up relationships and learn each other's styles. All of us have played against each other. I watch lots of football, all these boys do, so we know each other's games."

## Gilmour ready to face his YouTube idol Kroos

Michael Grant Scottish Football Correspondent, Garmisch-Partenkirchen

In an indoor ice arena that has hosted figure skating, Scotland's media conference turned into a discussion on one of Germany's coolest customers. In the Garmisch Olympia Stadium in Bavaria yesterday, nothing was warmer than Billy Gilmour's words about Toni Kroos.

Scotland are close to the one of their biggest matches in the 26 years since they faced Morocco at France '98, their last game at a major tournament overseas. Munich is being invaded by a Tartan Army tens of thousands strong.

When Euro 2024 kicks off with Germany versus Scotland tomorrow night, Gilmour will find himself only yards away from Kroos, the 34-year-old World Cup winner who will be playing his first meaningful match in the 13 days since he retired from club football by lifting the Champions League for the sixth time.

Gilmour is one of Scotland's key players. If the Brighton & Hove Albion midfielder appears in all the group fixtures he will reach 30 caps just days after turning 23 (he was given a cake and team-mates sang happy birthday to him at the squad hotel on Tuesday). Even so, it is difficult not to see Kroos v Gilmour as master versus apprentice.

When he was younger Gilmour pored over footage of the modern midfield greats, Kroos among them. "I always watched Barcelona," he said. "I watched [Andrés] Iniesta. I watched

Gilmour says the Scots believe they can shock the hosts



YouTube for [Cesc] Fàbregas, Iniesta, Xavi and of course [Luka] Modric and Kroos. I try to do the same stuff in games but everyone is different. When you watch Toni Kroos he is always very calm on the ball and composed."

"He has won everything in the game. He has retired from Real Madrid at the top and he is still unbelievable, so if I do get the opportunity to play against him I'll be buzzing. But you need to work as a team. You can't just focus on one. They have top, top players. Jamal Musiala is a top player, Kai Havertz, Florian Wirtz. Everyone. So we have to make sure we are really at it and ready to go."

Gilmour took to international football immediately. In only his third cap, aged 20, he was excellent in a Scottish midfield that held its own in a goalless draw with England at Wembley in Euro 2020. He may be only 5ft 7in and baby-faced, but Gilmour is unusually comfortable on the ball and willing and able to take possession under pressure.

"I am 23 now," he said. "People look at me, maybe [think], 'Small boy, only a kid.' I get it a lot. It's just I am not a young kid now. I have been in the game a good while, I know my place, I know I have gained experience. I have confidence when I go on to the pitch."

Kroos, meanwhile, has between three and seven games left in football, depending on how far Germany go. "Everyone outside Scotland thinks it's a German win," Gilmour said. "Everyone doubts us — typical Scotland — and we need to get out of that. We have already tried and done stuff in training where we think we can break them down and go and win the game."



# Brailsford saves Ten Hag after haphazard review

FA Cup triumph and emergence of Mainoo and Garnacho helped Dutchman keep job. By Paul Hirst and Charlotte Duncker

As the clock ticked towards midnight on May 25, Erik ten Hag, beer in hand, was chatting to a colleague in the ballroom at the Marriott Hotel in Mayfair when the DJ started playing *We Are the Champions* by Queen.

It was a fitting choice, given that a few hours earlier Ten Hag had led Manchester United to a valiant FA Cup final win over Manchester City at Wembley.

As the song played at the afterparty in their central London hotel, players, staff and their partners bellowed the words out on the dancefloor. At that point, Ten Hag felt mixed emotions. Delight at winning his second piece of silverware in two years — “winning trophies is what I did my whole career,” he boasted in his post-match press conference — but also a sense of foreboding.

Those close to Ten Hag who spent the evening with the 54-year-old felt that the former Ajax head coach would be dismissed. Yet, somehow, just over three weeks after United ended their season in eighth place, their lowest finish in Premier League history, Ten Hag finds himself in a more emboldened position than ever.

The sense of foreboding disappeared on Tuesday when, after discussions with United, Ten Hag was assured that the club wanted him to continue as manager. Not only that, they told Ten Hag that they were willing to open discussions with him about an extension to his contract, which expires at the end of next season.

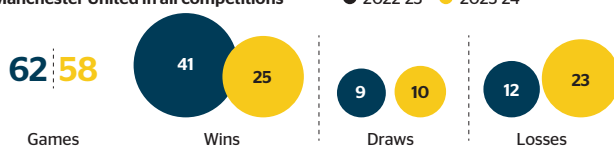
Ten Hag has spent the past 2½ weeks on holiday in Ibiza with his family, but it has not been an entirely relaxing affair for him. He has been displeased by the slow pace of United’s “post-season review”, which was launched after the FA Cup final win, and the lack of communication and transparency from the club.

They have essentially kept him in the dark over a process that is centred around his future and whether he should be replaced. Interviews with several candidates have taken place, some of whom were clearly poor fits.

For those reasons, expect Ten Hag and his advisers to take a bullish approach to contract negotiations with Ineos. He will not blindly accept what is put in front of him. Ten Hag wants to feel empowered

## United's injury-afflicted season

### Manchester United in all competitions



### Premier League injury table, 2023-24

	Injuries	Days lost
Newcastle	41	1,950
Sheffield Utd	31	1,761
Chelsea	43	1,745
Brighton	41	1,727
Brentford	29	1,702
Man United	45	1,620
Crystal Palace	37	1,582
Luton	35	1,428
Tottenham	37	1,402
Liverpool	35	1,383
Burnley	25	1,290
Aston Villa	39	1,236
Nott'm Forest	36	1,068
Arsenal	23	898
Bournemouth	25	882
Everton	33	832
Wolves	26	724
Fulham	22	675
Man City	26	672
West Ham	26	564

Source: premierinjuries.com

and not be a lame-duck manager, so he wants signings to be made that improve the squad — and he wants them to be through the door by the time United embark on their pre-season tour to the United States on July 24. A central defender, a midfielder and a striker — among others — are on his wishlist.

He is also reluctant to cede power to Ineos when it comes to transfers.

United's new minority owners, who are in charge of football operations, want to give more power to the recruitment team when it comes to signings, but it is written in Ten Hag's present contract that he has a veto on all potential purchases.

It is expected that he will ask for Jadon Sancho to be sold, too. Ten Hag fell out with Sancho last September and loaned him to Borussia Dortmund after the winger branded him a liar over his claim that he was dropped for the Arsenal game because he had trained poorly.

Ten Hag also wants the club to hand Benni McCarthy, the South African coach who has been working with United's strikers, a contract extension. The former Porto and Ajax forward joined United in 2022, like Ten Hag, but his contract expires at the end of June.

The future of Marcus Rashford

2024 is over. As it stands, he will be on the market when his contract expires at the end of the year.

Tuchel fell out of the running after holding talks with Ratcliffe in Monaco last week. One of Tuchel's ideas was to sign Antonio Rüdiger, the 31-year-old Real Madrid centre back, who is out of United's price range (they only have a gross budget of about £35 million to spend this summer); is considered too old; and would rather stay at Real than play Europa League football at Old Trafford next season.

Pochettino never really felt that United wanted him. Brentford say they never had any contact from United regarding Frank, who guided Brentford to 16th place in the Premier League last season. There were doubts about whether United were willing to pay the multimillion-pound release clause in his contract, as well as the one that McKenna held with Ipswich Town.

One manager on the shortlist was astounded by the low wage that he would receive if he took the United job and another was left unimpressed by the transfer budget, which the club hope to boost by selling Sancho and Mason Greenwood, among others.

The candidates were so out of the loop that their representatives would contact third parties to ask if they had heard any updates. The process looked a bit haphazard and, in the end, United decided to stick with what they had. It is understood that Brailsford was the man who was most keen to keep Ten Hag.

The club cited several reasons why they had decided against his sacking. One was the fact that Ten Hag had to deal with a huge amount of injuries last season, which is fair. They also said that the FA Cup win was a good reason to keep Ten Hag on — although if that was the case, why did Ratcliffe not name him in the statement that he released after the final, in which he said he was “very proud of the players and the staff who work tirelessly to support them”.

Another reason — and this is more palatable — is the fact that he has helped to develop Kobbie Mainoo and Alejandro Garnacho into star performers for United, both at the age of 19. It is a club that prides itself on its academy success. As a lifelong United fan, Ratcliffe knows that is the case.

Ratcliffe also knows about the standards that the club has. Last year, they fell well short in some respects. One member of the backroom staff found it astonishing that the players were high-fiving each other after a 4-3 defeat by Bayern Munich in the Champions League group stages. The scoreline flattered United, who only came close to gaining a point because of two late goals from Casemiro, left.

It is a summer of upheaval at United. Omar Berrada, the incoming chief executive, will start work next month. Jason Wilcox has already been installed as technical director, and Ineos wants Dan Ashworth to join as sporting director once his dispute with Newcastle United over his severance deal is resolved.

Renovations are planned at the training ground. Other staff will go, but Ten Hag will not follow them out of the door.



It is understood that Brailsford, Ineos's director of sport, was the man who was most keen to stick with Ten Hag

is another issue Ten Hag wants resolved. United would consider selling the 26-year-old academy graduate if he pushed to leave. Rashford scored 30 goals in Ten Hag's first season, but last year he found the net only eight times and was left out of the England squad for Euro 2024.

United insisted on Tuesday that 2½ weeks was not an unreasonable length of time to conduct a post-season review, but from the outside the process has at times looked ponderous and without direction. Thomas Tuchel, Mauricio Pochettino, Kieran McKenna, Roberto De Zerbi and Thomas Frank all held talks with United, either directly or through intermediaries.

Gareth Southgate is admired by the Ineos chairman, Sir Jim Ratcliffe, and sporting director Sir Dave Brailsford, but the England manager did not want to speak to United before Euro



United's FA Cup success was cited as a

## It's bonkers,

Tony Cascarino



Manchester United have just done the worst thing you can do in football by sticking with Erik ten Hag after winning the FA Cup.

After weeks of poker, with the Dutchman saying after the win against Manchester City that he would go somewhere else to win trophies if he wasn't wanted, it was



TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER MARC ASPLAND



reason to keep Ten Hag, despite the manager not being named by Ratcliffe, inset, in a statement released after the final

## he won't be in charge come Christmas

confirmed he would be staying. The club have stated their reasons for backing the 54-year-old, but from the outside it looks like that trophy saved him and he has been judged off 90 minutes of football, which is absolutely bonkers.

If he truly was the man the new investors believe is right to take them forward then why didn't they shut down all the talk about his future before kick-off at Wembley? It was weird they stayed silent and even Ten Hag ended up talking about it.

It didn't have to be like that. Daniel Levy knew Jose Mourinho wasn't right for him at Tottenham in 2021 and had no issue getting rid of him before the League Cup final. That's how owners who know what they

want take action. Instead, Ten Hag has been undermined at every level and the decision-makers have come full circle, after speaking to various other managers, and decided to stick with him. Not only does that give him the upper hand in new contract talks, but it means 90 per cent of United's problems remain unsolved.

The challenges are huge and I don't think he is capable of resolving them. His side last season were one of the easiest to play against, the amount of goals they conceded was crazy, and they finished eighth — their lowest-ever Premier League final position.

Now they will have to financially back a man who they were looking to replace — to me, that isn't shrewd management. When the fixtures are

announced on Tuesday the first thing I will be looking at is United's first ten games, because would he survive a below-par start? The protracted discussions about his future mean it has already felt like death by 1,000 cuts for Ten Hag and it seems inevitable he won't still be in charge at Christmas, further prolonging his agony.

The actions of the management don't reflect a club who are behind their manager. Considering United's stature, and that is part of the problem with the level of expectation, I'm stunned they have found themselves in this position. It's the biggest turnaround on a manager I can think of. They've gone mad and have got some massive challenges to overcome again next season.

## Spurs seek £21m for Emerson in clearout

Tom Allnutt

Tottenham Hotspur have told AC Milan they want £21 million for their right back Emerson Royal as the club continue to shift players deemed surplus to requirements by Ange Postecoglou.

Spurs initially valued Emerson at £25 million but have dropped their asking price for the Brazil defender. Milan hoped £15 million would be enough but there is optimism a deal can happen.

Milan have shown interest in the Aston Villa full back Matty Cash as an alternative, with Villa in a more precarious position than Tottenham regarding the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules. Villa need to make a significant sale before June 30 to stay within the rules.

Spurs face competition from Villa for Conor Gallagher, who has one year remaining on his contract at Chelsea and is yet to agree a new deal. Chelsea were looking for £50 million for the 24-year-old in January but need to sell players this summer because of financial pressures. Tottenham are expected to push for Gallagher this month, while Posteco-

glou also wants key signings up front and in defence this summer.

Emerson joined Tottenham from Barcelona for about £25 million in 2021 but was on the fringes last season as Pedro Porro established himself at right back. The 25-year-old is keen to play more regularly. Atletico Madrid were interested last year but Emerson stayed to fight for his place.

Atletico have renewed their interest in Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg, as Spurs look to sell a number of players. Giovanni Lo Celso, Bryan Gil and Djed Spence are expected to leave while Richarlison and Yves Bissouma could also be sold to raise funds if significant offers come in.

Tottenham have mutually agreed to terminate Tanguy Ndombele's contract, five years after the club broke their transfer record to sign the midfielder for £55 million from Lyon.

Ndombele was considered one of Europe's most talented young midfielders when he joined Tottenham in 2019 but has been a major disappointment.

Royal made only 11 league starts for Postecoglou last season



## No 100-minute Euros games

Martyn Ziegler Chief Sports Reporter

Euro 2024 will not use the same stoppage-time rules enforced by the Premier League and also by Fifa for the most recent World Cup that have resulted in matches lasting more than 100 minutes on average.

Uefa has decided to stick with its approach used for the Champions League rather than tell referees to add on the exact time lost to goal celebrations, substitutions, injuries, penalties and red cards. The decision is understood to have been welcomed by the international players' union, Fifpro, which has expressed concerns about the extra demands of playing longer games.

At the 2022 World Cup there was an average stoppage time of almost 11½ minutes, more than double the figure at the previous tournament in Russia in 2018. The average time the ball was in play in the Premier League rose from

54min 52sec in 2022-23 to 58min 10sec in 2023-24, according to Opta.

Roberto Rosetti, Uefa's head of refereeing, is set to confirm the approach for the Euros.

The PFA's chief executive, Maheta Molango, has previously given his backing to Uefa's approach, saying: "Player workload is the No 1 issue when I speak to members who will be competing for club and country. It's totally unsustainable. I will keep saying it: we can't keep pushing the players until they break."

Manchester United's French defender Raphaël Varane and Manchester City's Belgian midfielder Kevin De Bruyne have both previously criticised the extra stoppage-time approach.

Uefa has also confirmed that fans at Euro 2024 will be given more detailed information on VAR decisions, with "technical explanations" to be announced in stadiums.

## Maatsen abandons holiday

Gary Jacob

When the panicked call came from their son, Ian Maatsen's parents would have been forgiven for assuming that something terrible had happened. With the Chelsea left back sailing in the Greek islands with his girlfriend, their minds would have raced through the worst-case seafaring scenarios. But the 22-year-old's drama was not nautical but logistical: a late call-up by Holland for the European Championship.

Maatsen was in the Aegean shaking off the disappointment of not being included in Ronald Koeman's squad and recovering from a long season that ended for him when he played in the Champions League final for Borussia Dortmund, where he was on loan.

But, as he told his parents, Edward and Wendy, on the call, the manager wanted him to replace the injured Frenkie de Jong in the squad. There was one

issue: he did not have his boots and he needed to register in camp as soon as possible. "Ian first wanted to come to the Netherlands, but that didn't seem like a good idea to us," Edward said.

Wendy added: "Ian had left his things with us. We had to act quickly."

They rooted out their son's trusted Adidas boots. At 7am on Tuesday they drove four hours from Vlaardingen to Dortmund, where Maatsen's flight arrived. There was a brief handover, before Maatsen travelled to Holland's base in Wolfsburg. His parents turned around and drove home.

"It has already been a special season with everything that has happened," Wendy said. "I call it a boy's dream for Ian of five months, with the euphoria of reaching a Champions League final."

Maatsen's dream in the short term is to make his Holland debut, and they begin their group D campaign against Poland in Hamburg on Sunday.



# Sport

## England put sick Stones in isolation

FA chief: We have plan for life after Southgate

Paul Joyce

England's preparations for their opening Euro 2024 showdown with Serbia on Sunday were disrupted after John Stones contracted a sickness bug and was placed in isolation in an attempt to prevent the illness from spreading.

Stones is the senior centre back in Gareth Southgate's squad and his absence from training yesterday meant he missed a session designed by the England manager specifically to improve the team's defending.

On Tuesday Stones completed a session after the ankle injury he suffered against Iceland last Friday. However, only a day later he was confined to England's Weimar base camp with an illness that has caused concern given the proximity to their group C opener on Sunday.

Mark Bullingham, the FA chief executive, revealed yesterday that there is a succession plan in place if Southgate steps down after these Euros. But for now all of the manager's focus will be on his squad, and the fitness of Stones looms large.

The Manchester City defender had complained of feeling unwell on Tuesday and was kept apart from his teammates to prevent any risk of spreading the illness throughout the squad. He will be assessed overnight before a decision on whether the 30-year-old can join in today.

"He wasn't training because he had an illness," said Lewis Dunk, the Brighton & Hove Albion player who would be in line to benefit should Stones continue to be under the weather.

"He felt a bit rough yesterday, so we haven't seen him. He didn't train because of his illness. There are a few days until Sunday and we'll see what happens. I'm not here just for a holiday. I'm here to play games and win matches, and hopefully we can take the trophy home."

Stones was not involved in England's friendly match with Bosnia-Herzegovina having been given additional time off after the FA Cup final, and then lasted 45 minutes in the loss to Iceland before being substituted as a precaution. He played only 111 minutes in the Premier League after the last England camp in March, in which he suffered an injury, and can ill afford for his training schedule to be affected.

His unavailability yesterday was an additional blow as Southgate focused on defensive drills in an attempt to restore solidity to a squad that has kept three clean sheets in ten matches this season. Stones is the only England centre back who has been to a senior international tournament before and that factor, plus the deployment of the right-footed Kieran Trippier at left back while Luke Shaw recovers from a hamstring injury, means there is an unfamiliar look about Southgate's options.

In addition, Serbia's strength lies in attack. They boast talent such as the former Newcastle United and Fulham

Continued on page 67



### Keely crowned queen of Europe

Hodgkinson showed plenty of grit to shrug off illness and win the 800m at the European Championships in Rome as Britain also took relay gold, pages 62-63

### How do you stop Scottie?

US Open begins today with world No1 Scheffler the overwhelming favourite

Page 60



## Ten Hag wants swift purchases

Paul Hirst

Erik ten Hag will tell Manchester United they need to sell Jadon Sancho and bring in summer signings quickly when he holds talks over a new contract in the coming weeks.

United revealed on Tuesday that they had finished conducting their post-season review and concluded that Ten Hag should remain in charge.

The Times understands Sir Dave Brailsford, the director of sport for co-owners Ineos who helped conduct the review, fought hardest to keep Ten Hag.

Despite the reprieve, Ten Hag does not want to be a lame-duck manager and would like to extend his contract, which expires in 2025 – and United are open to discussions.

Under the terms of his present contract, he can veto signings, but Ineos wants to dilute those powers.

Brailsford saves Ten Hag, pages 68-9

## Aussies risk ban if they rig group

Simon Wilde

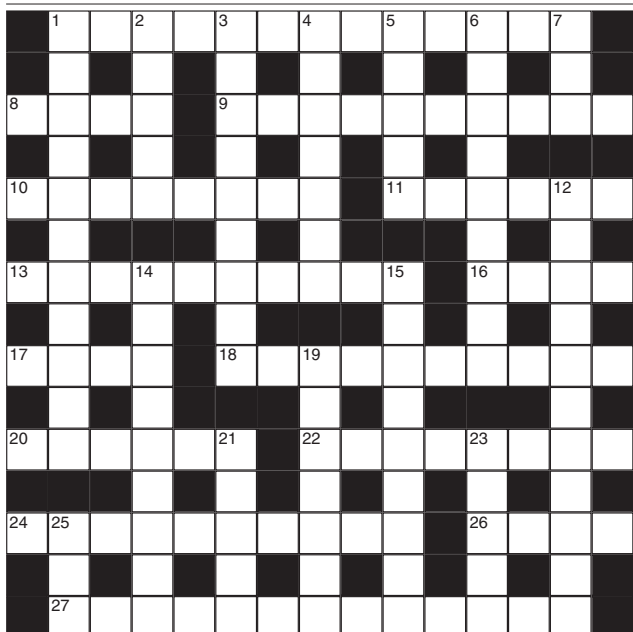
Australia would risk a two-match suspension for their captain Mitchell Marsh if they manipulated the outcome of the final group B match against Scotland at the T20 World Cup in St Lucia on Saturday in order to knock out England, the holders.

England must beat Oman, whom they face today at 8pm, and Namibia on Saturday afternoon, to put themselves level with Scotland on five points, one behind Australia, with Scotland and Australia then meeting shortly after England's final match ends.

Due to the seeding system in use at the tournament, it does not matter who finishes first or second in each group, so there is a scenario – unpalatable and implausible though it might be – in which Australia contemplate losing to

Continued on page 62

## Times Crossword 28,942



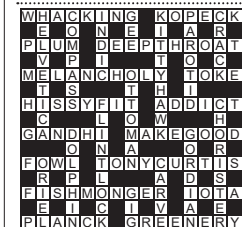
### ACROSS

- 1 Explosive rhythm section better (10,3)
- 8 Water pipe new that comes into Slough (4)
- 9 Scientist here's being strange (10)
- 10 Moorland accommodation bombed (4,4)
- 11 Fish on time to keep an eye on birds? (6)
- 13 Hand in evidence Queen has left throne? (5,5)
- 16 ... King on it makes appearance! (4)
- 17 Joe leaps on and off vehicle GIs use? (4)
- 18 Nothing at court helping Romeo out — here's philtre (4,6)
- 20 Bitterness amiss in American pollster (6)
- 22 Who's Keith to keep a jam jar for biscuit? (8)
- 24 Returning black and white cab crosses street for class expert (10)
- 26 Leave somewhat short (4)
- 27 So in love with dominant rotter? (4,4,5)

### DOWN

- 1 Introductions having PA accepting job — good sign (11)
- 2 Star's gear held without case (5)
- 3 Breaking up fun, he'll become awkward (9)
- 4 Dog Zeus initially confined to his hut that's barking (4,3)
- 5 Concealed missing can-opener? Open! (5)
- 6 Vehicle needs wire, initially tense for crossing Spanish river (9)
- 7 Piece trimmed becomes level (3)
- 12 Gut pain with bad hooch quaffed by sons: they go from bar to bar! (11)
- 14 Shock when ducks upset horse (9)
- 15 Hard work put an end to childish game (9)
- 19 One in burning heap we hear after five in the morning? (7)
- 21 Gypsy man features in Post Office advertisement (5)
- 23 No knight, evidently, taking queen in game (5)
- 25 Wood turned this way? Odd bits discarded (3)

### Yesterday's solution 28,941



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new things to  
fight for now’**

**Craig Mackinlay on life after  
sepsis, leaving parliament and  
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tim



# Caitlin Moran's

## Celebrity

## Watch

6

### Victoria Thomas Bowen

Good day, dear Times reader — and I hope this third week of the election campaign is finding you well. At least in body, if not spirit — as things are, undoubtedly, pretty crackers out there. It's hard to keep the soul jogging solidly on the Treadmill of Life when everyone else seems to be throwing the kettlebells around and doing something demented over by the water fountain.

As you will know, last week 25-year-old Victoria Thomas Bowen hurled a McDonald's banana milkshake (small, £1.79, medium, £1.99, large, £2.19) at Nigel Farage, the Reform leader, after his event in Clacton. Obviously the primary aspect of this story is how worrying it all is: no matter how unexpectedly well, aesthetically speaking, "a banana milkshake" and "Nigel's Farage's face" proved to go together, people just can't go around throwing liquids into politicians' faces.

This week it's merely sugar, cream, skimmed milk powder, glucose syrup, whey powder, stabilisers, natural

banana flavourings and paprika extract. Next time it could be something far more dangerous — such as a kale smoothie.

Who knows how Farage would cope with contact with his first vitamins in more than three decades? Perhaps the novel nutrients would cause him to pupate, then assume his final form. However, all security and safety issues aside, the banana milkshake incident drew attention to an unexpected yet fascinating aspect of modern life, re: straight men's sexuality.

Thomas Bowen is a model on OnlyFans — the website where customers pay to view racy messages and videos. According to Thomas Bowen, immediately following the Banana Milkshake incident she made over £40,000 from new clients alerted to her presence by the wall-to-wall news coverage.

Personally, in 2024, I thought we had already exhaustively catalogued every aspect of straight male sexuality. But no! For there is clearly a cohort of men out there — presumably, until now, devoutly asexual and uninterested in sex — who finally realised what their kink was when they saw a woman make a radical right-wing politician's face

look like a painter and decorator's radio using a high street milk drink.

What do we call these men? Are they ... protestosexual? Rather than BDSM, are they into FFMS — Farage face milkshake? Are they, even now, posting new bios on Tinder: "Treat me like it's Clacton and I've just announced a cap on immigration"? I had some further verbal business around "general erection", but I know you will be thanking me — for not making that joke. Thank you for thanking me.



3

### Harry Styles

To the life of everyone's favourite Milf-champion, Harry Styles, who has embarked on a "Grand Designs-style building project" on his new house in Hampstead, north London.

As you might expect from someone who called one of their albums *Harry's House*, Harry's, erm, house sounds like it's going to be epic: the £30 million "playboy pad" will include "a whole new storey for himself featuring a huge master bedroom, master bathroom, four dressing areas, and his own lounge", plus all the usual fun things of millionaires: a basement cinema, a plunge pool, a sauna. However, there is one aspect of this joy palace that jars slightly — for the details include a mysterious reference to "an indoor patio".

An indoor patio? I've racked my brains, but I cannot think what an "indoor patio" would be — and I've watched a lot of episodes of *Your Home Made Perfect*. How would it work? Somewhere in the house Styles will have a small area of decking with an Ikea table and chairs, a rusting BBQ and a single fox poo? Or does it mean that there's an area inside, eg the landing — where people can stand and have a fag, and it's allowed — because they're "on the patio"? If so, fair enough. Could catch on.



5

### Elon Musk

While the conversation lingers on matters of sex, let us turn to a real Schrödinger of a headline — something we both weren't expecting and yet also knew was in the pipeline: "Elon Musk gives Amazon tribe the internet — now they're addicted to porn."

Obviously we must ride past the first, hilarious misunderstanding, to wit — Musk gave an "Amazon tribe" "the internet"? Does Jeff Bezos know about it? Was Bezos previously *not* allowing wi-fi in his distribution warehouses? Can't lie: that now seems like a very good idea, given that they've all immediately got addicted to porn. Presumably the fulfilment rates will have gone

through the floor. Looks like you'll be waiting a while for that order of garden twine and a silicone spatula.

Amusing comedic diversion apart, the reports from the Amazonian tribe will strike a familiar chord.

Previously the Marubo — who live deep in the rainforest, by the Itui River — lived in small huts and sustained themselves with cassava, wild boar and banana porridge.

"Laziness" would be cured by "the bite of the *Dinoponera grandis* ant", and all spiritual matters were overseen by a "part-time shaman", which is fair enough — a work/life/contact with the spirits of the rainforest balance is important.

However, since Musk beamed Starlink wi-fi into the rainforest, "many tribe members are now crouched over, or reclined in their hammocks, on their phones" and spend "lots of time" on WhatsApp. "Young people have gotten lazy because of the internet," Tsainama Marubo, 73, remarked.

And it's the accessing of adult websites, and the sharing of explicit videos in group chats, that is most concerning tribal elders. "We're worried young people are going to want to try it," Alfredo Marubo said. Even kissing in public is frowned upon in Marubo culture.

However, in a way porn is the least of their problems. The tribe were, obviously, having sex before the internet arrived. Given this, the advent of porn isn't *that* big a deal.

More jarring will be the sudden importing of YouTube/Tik-Tok culture: teenage Marubo girls walking into the village, saying, "Hi, guys! What's up! Like and subscribe!"; or attempting "unboxing" videos by putting a wild boar in a box, then pretending it's just been sent to them by a wild boar PR, for review. Ultimately,

however, there's something quite poignant about the western media reaction to the Amazon tribe suddenly being introduced to porn: this underlying sentiment of "Oh God! They won't have been ready for it! Imagine how it will disrupt their society!"

Let's be honest: we weren't ready for it. No one was ever ready for it. We are the Marubo tribe. I can't wait for the Marubo's concerned reports about us.

4

### Wayne Rooney

It's all too easy to fall into unkind, received wisdom when talking about Wayne Rooney — that he isn't, perhaps, the sharpest knife in the drawer; that all his brains are in his feet, etc etc. But here at Celebrity Watch I eschew all such cheap, unhappy stereotypes: Rooney is smart enough to be worth £170 million. I'm not sure you need to be any cleverer than that, tbh.

However, this week a story emerged that made my doughty

defences of Rooney far more difficult. "Wayne Rooney smashed TV and destroyed drug-testing room in a wild rage at Euro 2016," the headline in The Sun roared.

Reading on, we learnt that when Rooney was asked to take a test to prove he wasn't taking any performance-enhancing drugs, he became so enraged that he "trashed the room in anger." "I was fuming," Rooney told The Sunday Times. "They say it's a random process — but somehow, every single time, it was me. I went 'sod this' and the TV went. Everything. I smashed the lot."

Although I have sympathy for Rooney's rage — he tested negative, every time — at the same time: Wayne! Dude! If people think you're on drugs, smashing up a room isn't the smartest response! Smashing up a room is exactly the kind of thing people on drugs do.

TV out of the window? It's literally what rock bands do when they're out of their minds. To be honest, you couldn't have looked more like you were on drugs if you'd sat in the corner earnestly claiming "There are 64 levels!", then hugged everyone, then climbed into a cupboard, whispering, "I'm home now. Don't wake Coleen up."





2

## Clive Tyldesley



There is, obviously, no greater name in football commentary than Clive Tyldesley — and it turns out that Tyldesley isn't just a great describer of men kicking a ball. He is also a thinker. A rebel. A pioneer. A man who is able to think outside the box while simultaneously saying, "He's just inside the box."

"Once a season a commentator should be allowed to use the F-word without losing their job," Tyldesley suggested, reasonably, this week, on *The Football Authorities* podcast.

"Some goals, some moments, some misses, simply demand a swearword to capture their full impact."

Well, not only do I agree with Tyldesley, but I would go one, logical stage better. I suggest that, once a season, commentators should simply quote Alan Partridge, instead.

"Shit! Did you see that? He must have a foot like a traction engine!" "TWAT! That was liquid football!" "The proof is in the pudding — and the pudding, in this case, is football. The goalie has got football pie all over his shirt!"

Let's face it: these are all the best and most definitive things anyone has said about football. And if commentators were allowed to say them, it would save me having to say them every time my husband watches football.

1

## Rishi Sunak

In sport they call it "the yips" — when a switch flips in your brain and you suddenly and catastrophically lose your form. In the *What Katy Did* books — an unexpectedly rich source of philosophy — Saintry Cousin Helen describes a similar situation thus: "Everything in the world has two handles. Didn't you know that? One is a smooth handle. If you take hold of it, the thing comes up lightly and easily — but if you seize the rough handle, it hurts your hand, and the thing is hard to lift. Some people always manage to get hold of the wrong handle." In medieval times, meanwhile, we would simply refer to it as "being really, solidly cursed".

The yips, a handle being cranked the wrong way, a curse — call it whatever you want, but whatever it is, it is clearly what is happening to Rishi Sunak now. We are witnessing someone trapped in some kind of metabolic state wherein they just cannot do anything right.

The judgment is wrong. The tone is gone. Vibes-wise, it's like watching a fly repeatedly fail to notice an open window, just one inch to the left. BZZZZ, thump. BZZZZ, thump.

Basically what we're talking about is a Reverse Midas Touch. In 2024 Sunak has the Midarse Touch. It's almost as if he has a forcefield around him that draws bathetic moments towards him. This reached its apogee last week with Sunak's early departure from the D-Day commemorations — already being spoken of as the worst political mistake in living memory. To mash up two catastrophic career moments, it's as if Gerald Ratner had called a war memorial "crap".

The most enlightening quote on Sunak's reasons for leaving early came in *The Times*, when one insider

explained Sunak had seen the D-Day anniversary, held in Normandy, as "a French thing". "A French thing"! Dude, it was the Second World War! It was an infamously global event! To use an analogy you'd understand, that's like calling Meta "a California thing". It's the kind of answer ChatGPT might give. You can understand why AI might think that — but you know no human would.

And, as Sunak's yips continue, I have increasingly wondered if this isn't the yips at all — but glitching. There is something undeniably AI about Sunak: the overly short trousers and the overly large boots look like those AI pictures where there are five Beatles, and it all looks "Beatlesy" but also really weird.

Sunak is really weird: not knowing how to use contactless payment and waving his credit card around in a petrol station; asking a homeless man "Do you work in business?" —

these are all the kinds of things a robot that has escaped the factory, and is trying to make its way, unnoticed, in the world of humans, would do.



It's giving *Short Circuit*. It's deeply confusing to actual people — unless that person is Steve Guttenberg trying to cover up for him.

And perhaps it was Guttenberg — a comedian — who came up with Monday's deeply amusing, switch-and-bait news grid. At midday an interview was released in which Sunak apologised, once more, for leaving D-Day early: "I hope that veterans can find it in their hearts to forgive me," he said, basically loading a job on to 101-year-old men who could probably do something better with their time.

Later, Sunak had a very different vibe: "If you're a criminal, the law should show you no mercy," he posted on Twitter/X, sternly. So it was — a forgivable day? A not forgivable day? What the f\*\*\* is this messaging? What input are people typing into RishiGPT? It feels like it's getting to the point where not even the strongest action known to IT people — turning it off then on again — will work. Maybe just ... the first one. Then walk away. The circuit board has the yips.

## I too know the trauma of a childhood without Sky. It eats away at you Deborah Ross



When the prime minister, Rishi Sunak, was asked in an ITV interview whether there was anything he had had to do without, to ascertain if he could understand the struggles of ordinary people, he said: "There were all sorts of things as a kid I couldn't have, famously Sky TV! That's something we never had growing up."

This man, said many, really shouldn't be allowed out. How shocking that he had to do without Sky, so his parents might better send him to a now £51,000-a-year private school, the poor fella. But you know what? I get where he is coming from. I truly do. I know this trauma all too well. I'm glad, actually, to be having this conversation because people such as Sunak have suffered in silence for far too long, as have I. This could be #MeToo all over again.

Yes, #MeToo. And I'm proud to be among the first to say it. Enough is enough. It eats away at you from the inside, this kind of thing, unless you look at it, deal with it, talk about it. I never had Sky as a kid and now I've said it, and it's out in the open. #MeToo. No more shame. No more hiding it away.

I did have other things growing up. I had shoes without holes. I had food on the table and books and foreign holidays. I was not kept in a coal shed. I was not forced to drink bleach. I was not beaten. I was not called "ugly", even though the temptation must have been there.

But you think I wouldn't have traded it all in for Sky? You think I wouldn't have preferred holes in my shoes? You think I never tried to strike a bargain:

### You need a bra for movie sex

It was reported this week that the sexual content of films has substantially declined in recent years, but, ladies, do not mourn the passing of sexiness at the cinema.

Just follow these tips and you can now make

love like they do at the movies in the comfort of your home.

First, ladies, keep your bra on. Some jolly nice things can happen if you take your bra off, it's true, but do you want to make love like they do in the movies?

If so, that bra is staying put. Also, and this is important: you will need to wake up looking absolutely stunning with a full face of make-up. Can

you do that? Can you promise not to dribble? Can you promise that your hair won't be standing on end? Did Meg Ryan's hair ever stand on end?

Next, you need to perfect *The Bedsheet Walk*. Once you get up, while looking stunning with your bra on, you'll be required to wrap yourself in a bedsheet to go make the coffee or whatever. Please, please work on the *The Bedsheet Walk*.

You want it to be elegant. You don't want it to look like the sack race at school.

And also: no cramping, no sweating, no hairiness, no odours ("I never made an odour in my life," Ryan has said) and no getting het up if it turns out he's only having sex with you as a bet. He'll soon be outside your window in the rain declaring his love. Remember that, before you bring out the gun.





times2

# 'I'm not disabled. I am temporarily incapacitated'

**He survived life-threatening sepsis but Craig Mackinlay did not feel strong enough to contest an election. Yet the former MP still has some fight in him, he tells Tom Newton Dunn**

**C**raig Mackinlay considers himself lucky. It's not the first word you'd attribute to a man who has just lost all four limbs, spent the past eight months in hospital, and was forced to say goodbye to the job he adored for nine years and had sought for a quarter of a century.

On the flip side, having fallen rapidly ill with sepsis, the former Conservative MP would have been dead by the end of the day if he had reached hospital just two hours later.

Then there was the initial medical advice given to his wife, Kati, while he was in an induced coma for 16 days. He was given only a 5 per cent chance of survival. And if he did beat those odds, his arms would probably have to be amputated at his shoulders and his legs at his hips because so much of his flesh had rotted, leaving him just a torso. Surgeons gently suggested to Kati that it might be better if she chose to make her husband DNR (do not resuscitate). She refused. Eight weeks ago Kati finally brought Mackinlay back to their family home in Kent.

We talk in the sitting room as Kati — a pharmacist who met Mackinlay in her shop just up the road — plays with the couple's five-year-old daughter, Olivia, in the kitchen next door. Olivia spent the morning attaching her favourite stickers to what she calls "Daddy's magic arm".

"Yes, I am lucky. I'm really lucky," Mackinlay, 57, insists, without an ounce of self-pity. "I'm blessed because I've got life, and it could easily have gone the other way. I've also still got my elbows and knees, which is important for using prosthetics. There are plenty of people worse off than me. Every day people are diagnosed with terminal illnesses. I've been unwell, and I'm only going up on the other side."

Opening and closing the fingers on his Terminator-style multiarticulating right hand, a skill he learnt in rehab clinic last week, he adds: "The beauty of this is technology is only going in one direction. So this arm, as good as it is, I'm sure in a few years' time there'll be something even better."

To call Mackinlay an optimist doesn't really touch the sides in trying to explain his extraordinary spirit and



determination to defeat his adversity, and at extraordinary speed. It's even more humbling to see up close and it infects everything. Including the language he chooses. "I'm not disabled," he explains. "I'm just temporarily incapacitated."

And it's working. Mackinlay learnt to walk on prosthetic legs in nine weeks, when it usually takes six months. His advice to others he bottles into three sentences: "Don't dwell on what you can't do. Rejoice in the things you can still do. And every day ahead will be better than the last one."

What is driving his breakneck pace? He is brutally honest. "I suppose I just don't want to be like this. And I'm going to prove to the world that I'm not going to be like this for very long and I'm back to normal as soon as I can be. That's my driving force. Lying in a hospital bed was not where I wanted to be. I want to be up and at it. If it hurts, I don't care. Let's get going."

The former MP for South Thanet began delivering that proof for the first time three weeks ago, on a Wednesday just before prime minister's questions. As it turned out his return was also the day his political career ended, and it gave him the chance to end it on a high: a 60-second standing ovation from the entire House of Commons.

It was the backbencher and leading Eurosceptic's first day back in parliament, and the moment the world was given its first sight of the man who was immediately christened the "bionic MP". Mackinlay's quadruple

amputation was a well-known secret in Westminster, and a secret that was kept immaculately, out of respect to him. He only made it public on the eve of his Commons return — a deeply touching moment that blew him away.

"I must admit I hadn't expected that reception. It was overwhelming, and God it was a struggle to keep it together. I looked around, and up at the public gallery, where my doctors and nurses had come to watch too, and everyone was on their feet there as well. My eyes had filled up and they weren't going to take much more, so that's why I sat down. That is parliament how it should be. We're not at each other's throats all the time, and I'm sure we'd have done that for anyone who had faced this. And I thought, do you know what, it doesn't get better than this."

Five hours later, unbeknown to Mackinlay and almost every other Tory MP, Rishi Sunak called a snap general election. Mackinlay had only been out of hospital for five weeks and had only had hands for five days. His plan was to come back a few days a week until he had built up his full strength.

He watched the PM's Downing Street address on the TV in his Commons office surrounded by his staff: "I thought, oh shit, I could really do without this." It was almost immediately obvious to him that his health wasn't good enough to fight a gruelling six-week election campaign.



**Craig Mackinlay in hospital with his daughter, Olivia. Top: at home this week and, right, with his wife, Kati, and Olivia in July last year. Top left: returning to parliament last month**

After an agonising 48 hours Mackinlay emailed a letter to his constituency chairman to tell him he was standing down and vacating the job he had courted since the age of 25.

"I could have stood as a paper candidate, and I'm convinced I'd have won

again because people vote for human beings. I think people might have given me the benefit of the doubt. But that's not really me, and it would not be fair on my constituents. You have to do this job properly or not at all."

Mackinlay's busy life changed irrevocably on September 27 last year. He began to feel unwell and initially thought he'd caught Covid but tested negative so went to bed. He woke up





## “Was Mackinlay tempted when senior Tories asked him to fight Farage in Clacton? ‘Fleetingly’”

in the night and vomited violently, and felt even worse the next morning. He had turned “as white as a sheet” and his fingers had gone cold. His wife called her GP twin brother — who was the first to suspect he had sepsis — and then an ambulance.

Sepsis is caused by the immune system's extreme overreaction to an infection. The proteins and other chemicals it pumps out cause severe damage to body tissue and organs. Mackinlay has no idea what triggered it. He was found to be carrying the pneumococcal pneumonia bacterium, but it was latent, so all he can think of is overwork.

His sepsis onset was the most rapid Medway Maritime Hospital doctors had seen. Within an hour of his arrival he went into septic shock and his whole body turned navy blue. The

next thing he remembers is waking up in the intensive care unit of St Thomas' Hospital in central London more than two weeks later on a cocktail of morphine, fentanyl and ketamine. Severe blood clots had turned his hands, arms, feet and lower legs black. He had also suffered necrosis on his lips, nose and ears and damage to his teeth and gums.

“Kati wouldn't give me my glasses because she didn't want me to see how black my limbs were. The skin was dry, pinched, like leather. I could no longer move them. From then onwards I sort of knew what was coming, that these limbs were finished.”

The five-hour operation to amputate Mackinlay's limbs took place on the morning of December 1, giving him some weeks to come to terms with what was going to happen. So rare are quadruple amputations that only six a year are carried out in the UK.

“I remember waking up absolutely bright as a button and thinking, oh, they haven't done it. I looked down and thought, yes, obviously they had done it, and looking at the clock it was three in the afternoon.

“It wasn't as shocking a moment for me as you might think, but I was still on the powerful drugs and I don't think I had really computed how life-changing it would all be.”

Through the dark moments, his biggest morale boost, he says, was the stream of MP friends and colleagues who came to see him in St Thomas', which is just over Westminster Bridge from the Houses of Parliament. They included the prime minister (twice), the Speaker, Lindsay Hoyle, and Boris Johnson. The visitors came every single day of his three-month stay, and at times Kati had to turn some away. Hearing all the gossip made Mackinlay feel as if he was back in parliament.

On New Year's Eve he was allowed out for the first time when friends took

him for a curry in Waterloo before he returned to his room to watch the fireworks. In mid-February Mackinlay's wounds had healed well enough for him to be transferred to Lambeth's amputee rehabilitation unit to learn how to walk again.

What he misses most is “not being able to feel my daughter's little hand in mine”. The two bonuses his ordeal brought are that he stands an inch taller on his prosthetics and he has given up his 20-a-day smoking habit.

This week he went back out on the election campaign trail for the first time to canvass for Helen Harrison, the Tory candidate in his old seat. Strangers came up to hug him in the street. He was also mobbed by shoppers in Asda on the Old Kent Road while on his way up to Westminster to clear out his office.

“People came up to me. They knew who I was; it was really quite bizarre and I hadn't anticipated that.”

Mackinlay wants to take advantage of whatever celebrity he may now have to push two new causes. One is for greater awareness of the onset of sepsis, which kills about 50,000 a year in the UK. He is also determined to end “the appalling injustice” of the NHS's three-year waiting list for the bionic limbs he was able to get in months privately. You could argue he has fought enough over the past nine months and it might be time for a break. “If I was 67, or 77, maybe. But I'm only 57. There's still a bit of fight left in me, and I've got some new things to fight for now.”

One fight could have been against his old friend-cum-rival Nigel Farage. Before joining the Conservative Party in 2005, Mackinlay was a founding member of Ukip six months before Farage himself joined the party. In 2015 Farage ran against Mackinlay in his South Thanet seat; Mackinlay defeated him by 2,800 votes.

When the Reform UK party leader changed his mind and announced he would stand in the Essex seaside seat of Clacton this election, some senior Tories called Mackinlay to say, “You've got to fight Clacton for us, you're the only one that can beat him.”

Was he tempted? “Fleetingly.”

The Tories' poll collapse would not have happened if only its leaders had united the right, Mackinlay believes. Sunak made a mistake by not inviting Farage to join the Conservative Party before he called the snap election, he says, and he blames Johnson for not doing anything to accommodate the Brexit Party (Reform's previous name) after his triumph five years ago.

“If Rishi had let Farage run for us it could have saved us 40 seats,” he says. “In 2019 Farage did step aside for candidates in incumbent Conservative seats. He didn't have to do that, so we should have got hold of him and put a bit of warmth around him then. I blame Boris for that. I think he was led away from reaching out and making those deals by those around him.”

Mackinlay is keen not to rule out a return to frontline politics at some point, noting that politicians “are getting older again”, and he describes a peerage in the House of Lords as “a lovely dream” that he'd gladly accept.

What about a run for the Commons in 2029? “I'd have to see where I am physically. Or maybe I'll just settle into a new life where I'm happy as Larry.”

My suspicion is he'll be back at the centre of things one way or another soon enough. Because what he's made of is unbreakable — and unstoppable.

## Is Wednesday the new start of the weekend for Gen Z?

A survey has found young people have switched their drinking to midweek. Cheers to WFH, says **Ceci Browning**

It's just gone five o'clock. The sun is out (if you can imagine that), and the short stretch of pavement between the office and the nearest pub seems to glow like the yellow brick road to Oz. Young employees clutch sweating pints of Guinness and pale ale, laughing in voices that echo along the length of the street.

When I began in the world of work a couple of years ago, as a junior marketer at a London start-up, this was how every Thursday evening looked, warming up for the weekend on a street corner. A much-loved WFH policy meant we could all log into our work laptops from the safety of our beds the next morning, powered by coffee and paracetamol.

I made a habit of blocking out the first hours of Friday in my calendar, giving me time to field phone calls from colleagues who'd woken up somewhere they shouldn't or fallen asleep on the last Tube and been forced to make a slow bus journey back from deepest darkest suburbia.

Now it seems we've gone a step further. According to the food delivery company Just Eat, Gen Z (my cohort) and our millennial counterparts have taken to starting the weekend on Wednesday. In a survey of 2,000 Britons aged between 18 and 40, a third revealed that working from home on Thursdays and Fridays means they are likely to head to the pub in the middle of the week. Hosting dinner parties, apparently, has also become a popular Wednesday pastime. Like 66 per cent of those surveyed, my



Ceci Browning

Mondays and Tuesdays are for cooking cheap meals, getting my workouts ticked off, and stocking up on extra sleep so I can stay out until the early hours another day. I'm also with the 89 per cent of respondents who said a sense of relief washes over them once Wednesday's work is over and the weekend is in sight. The so-called hump day has been defeated and so cocktail feels about right.

The other perk of a Wednesday knees-up is that shifting social plans a day or two frees up the weekend for healthy brunches and communal exercise. I think most people would agree it's not a brilliant idea to rock up hungover to a Parkrun at 9am on a Saturday. Plus, those fresh avocados in the fridge don't look so appealing with a stomach full of day-old alcohol. If I have my two glasses of white wine on a Wednesday, I'll be raring to go on Saturday. An old flatmate of mine recently admitted: “It's way better to feel sick on company time.”

Still, Wednesday revelries aren't for everyone. When the average London pint costs £6.75, nobody can afford more than a round or two. Plans are simply spread more thinly throughout the week — and Saturdays are kept sacred.

“It's a bad idea to turn up hungover to a Parkrun at 9am on Saturday”



times2

# Energy drinks: which one is the worst?

As Labour plans to ban under-16s from buying them, **Antonia Hoyle** assesses what's going on in the hyper market

If Labour wins the general election next month, under-16s will be banned from buying highly caffeinated energy drinks. The controversy surrounding the sale of cans such as Monster and Red Bull to youngsters, which Keir Starmer says is not “justifiable or acceptable”, has mounted in recent months.

This February a review in the journal *Public Health* linked energy drinks to anxiety, stress and suicidal thoughts in young people. Sold on the promise that they will provide an energy boost, they contain up to 200mg of caffeine per bottle, whereas there is about 100mg in a cup of coffee. According to NHS guidance drinking more than three cans a day could permanently raise blood pressure, along with the long-term risk of heart attacks and strokes.

As well as high caffeine levels, a single can often contains more than the recommended daily guideline of 30g of free sugars (sugars in solution rather than bound up in food), fuelling epidemic levels of childhood obesity and tooth decay. Then there are added ingredients such as the amino acid taurine (which in high levels can cause vomiting and diarrhoea and, it was suggested by scientists at the University of Florida last week, may feed harmful bacteria in the guts of people with colon cancer), as well as the sweetener aspartame, which the International Agency for Research on Cancer believes to be “possibly carcinogenic to humans”.

Little wonder that the chef and health campaigner Jamie Oliver has described the drinks as “an absolute nightmare”. They don't exactly carry health benefits for adults either. But which are the worst offenders?

## Rockstar Original

500ml: 107cal, 24g sugar, 200mg caffeine

As well as containing the most caffeine in this survey (and 0.81g salt), Rockstar also contains 2,000mg of taurine — twice that of Red Bull and Monster. “As a stimulant it could increase the heart rate,” says the nutritionist Laura Southern. One study found that volunteers who drank Rockstar saw levels of the fight-or-flight hormone noradrenaline increase by almost 74 per cent within half an hour. In excess taurine is known to cause upset stomach, vomiting and diarrhoea.

## Lucozade Alert

500ml: 83cal, 19.1g sugar, 160mg caffeine

Lucozade targets sporty children. “With nearly twice the content of a cup of coffee, the caffeine content is shocking,” says Southern, who explains that caffeine causes blood vessels to constrict, which can lead to arrhythmia and affect how well calcium is absorbed, and therefore bone strength, “which is particularly concerning at a time of growth”.

## Monster

500ml: 237cal, 55g sugar, 160mg caffeine

This brand has “gone for every teenage tribe you can think of” Southern says. The drink highest in sugar, Monster also contains 0.96g of salt — NHS guidelines advise adults consume no more than 6g a day. “Too much salt elevates the blood pressure and can have a potentially huge impact on developing blood vessels. If the damage continues, by [the age of] 40 these children [who drink it] risk a heart attack.”

## Prime Blue Raspberry

330ml: 10cal, 0g sugar, 140mg caffeine  
Prime's popularity among children comes from its hugely influential YouTube founders, KSI and Logan Paul. Although sugar-free, it has one of the highest caffeine levels. Southern says: “This was perhaps the first energy drink that parents were suddenly nagged for and was treated like a status symbol, which could promote wider negative behaviours towards energy drinks.”

## Mountain Dew Citrus Blast

500ml: 236cal, 33g sugar, 95mg caffeine

Huge in America, where it has been endorsed by influencers such as the skateboarders Josh Katz and Nigel Alexander, but not yet sold widely in the UK, “Mountain Dew is taking over in terms of popularity from Prime — at least according to my 12-year-old son, who is always asking for it,” Southern says. “The problem is the pervasive marketing and the fact that ‘Citrus Blast’ suggests a health drink. In terms of additives, it's probably the least of the offenders, but one bottle still contains over the daily allowance of sugar and the equivalent caffeine of a cup of coffee.”

## Red Bull

250ml: 115cal, 27.5g sugar, 80mg caffeine

“The brand recognition of Red Bull is a big problem — six-year-olds are familiar with it,” says Southern, who points out that though it seems lower in sugar than other energy drinks, the can is half the size. “Were it a 500ml drink it would be comparable in sugar content to Monster.” In 2021 a study investigating the impact of “chronic” Red Bull consumption in rats found the drink increased the transmission of the pleasure neurotransmitter dopamine in “a pattern similar to that of drugs of abuse”.

## Boost Energy

250ml: 49cal, 11g sugar, 75mg caffeine

It's among the lowest in sugar, but like



many fizzy drinks Boost Energy contains sodium benzoate, a preservative that has been shown to activate “inflammatory pathways” and present an increased risk of chronic diseases, including cancer. It has also been linked to a higher incidence of ADHD in children and decreased release of the appetite-suppressing hormone leptin. “Teenagers often drink diet soda thinking it is the healthiest option, but often this simply isn't true,” Southern says.

## Starbucks Doubleshot Espresso

200ml: 142cal, 17g sugar, 47mg caffeine

Surprisingly one of the lowest in caffeine, despite the two espressos, “which often don't have as high a caffeine content as coffee that has been left to sit and stew”, says Southern, who adds that the 5.2g of fat the drink contains is “not overly concerning” because it's healthier to get our fats from a dairy source than saturated fats from meat. “This drink is reinforcing a taste for stimulants, but in some ways it would feel more natural for my child to drink it than other energy drinks, though I still wouldn't approve.”

**Coca-Cola**  
330ml: 139cal, 35g sugar, 33mg caffeine  
Although Coke is among the lowest in caffeine content (and not a drink Labour proposes to ban), “one can considerably exceeds our daily allowance of 30g of free sugars”, says Southern, who points out that tooth decay is the leading cause for hospital admissions for children aged five to nine. There is also the impact on weight gain: a study of children published in *The Lancet* found each additional sugary drink consumed over a period of 19 months led to an average 60 per cent rise in obesity. “When sugar provides more energy than the body can burn off it is stored in fat cells and risks blood sugar spikes that can lead to diabetes,” Southern says.

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# Hello, girls! Why women still haven't achieved 'ogle equality'

**The pendulum has swung since 1994's Wonderbra ad, but let's not get too excited by it, says Helen Rumbelow**

There is an injustice in the world that I would describe as part of a "pendulum swing", except that phrase feels misjudged in regard to exhibit A: Jude Bellingham in tight pants. The England football player has shot a campaign for Kim Kardashian's underwear brand, Skims, that invites us to consider the inequality of ogling. Namely, for Bellingham, 20, to strip and his naked beauty perform the function of a lure for the brand's customers to respond appreciatively and commercially plays very differently given that he is male. Unashamed leering on the part of females can be dressed up as an act of redistributive gender politics. Unashamed stripping on the part of Bellingham can be cloaked as a generous, almost feminist, gesture towards righting the wrongs of thousands of years of images serving the male gaze exclusively.

This leaves straight male viewers in a discomforting place, as restrictive as a pair of skin-tight undies. For them to express, in public, any aesthetic enthusiasm for images of women in lingerie feels as retrograde and risky as the reverse feels modern — belonging to a grubby and bygone generation of "dirty pics" on the car mechanic's wall. Meanwhile men also have to navigate the insecurity-inducing effects of seeing their athletic heroes in sensual or suggestive poses. Bellingham's lightly sheened, corrugated abdominals generating a double dose of neurosis about homoeroticism and impossible body image ideals.

These two effects are only exaggerated in the recent rise in full-frontal male nudity on screen, outstripping, literally, rare full-frontal female nudity. The use of genital prosthetics, widespread for men, is not deployed in a similar way for women. This means male actors are used by the television networks in something of a penis-related arms race (or, as one critic of the absurdly proportioned male appendage in the Netflix show *Sex/Life* said, "a baby's arm race").

Note that I just invoked the protection of the "female leer licence" to describe Bellingham as "lightly sheened". If a male colleague had gone as far in his description of the skin of a female football player, he would be accused of typing with one hairy palm. Is this fair? To answer that

question requires a consideration of the history summed up in the ultra-successful 1994 "Hello Boys" advert for Wonderbra, featuring the model Eva Herzigova. Until that point most nude images created by humans could be summarised as "hello, boys". But times change. In 2009 a report for Ofcom noted the demise of the sexist "something for the dads" element of British TV, "in the form of scantily clad women in chase sequences" (*Benny Hill* et al) and "leggy female dancers" (*Top of the Pops*).

Yes, by the Nineties there were rare, nascent exceptions to this tradition, such as the "Diet Coke Break" ad of 1994, featuring female office workers drooling over a male construction worker removing his T-shirt. But consider the stars of England's football team in 1994: the idea of Ian Wright or Paul Gascoigne fronting a campaign in which they posed in tight pants would have been unthinkable. Three decades ago the sexual objectification of men via nudity was not mainstream; it would have been considered too derivative of homosexual porn. For good reason: the most influential creator of such images at the time was the bisexual New York photographer Robert Mapplethorpe, whose highly

muscular male nudes, inspired by the sculptures of ancient Greece, were then frequently deemed obscene. Now Mapplethorpe's vision appears to have set the norm for modern advertising.

After the turn of the century the pendulum was finally swinging, and no one swung harder than David Beckham, who did his bit for the cause by appearing in a succession of tightly-whitey underpants, initially but no longer attracting criticisms of vanity and effeminacy. Soon sportsmen were oiling up for brands such as Calvin Klein and Armani, including Cristiano Ronaldo, Rafael Nadal and Freddie Ljungberg. Slowly film-makers were becoming more aware of the unequal "bum to boob" male-to-female nude ratio on screen. Women have long shown more skin. You could read a report by the Geena Davis Institute in 2014 showing that female characters wore more revealing clothing and were more likely to be fully or partially naked than men. Or you could just observe the dress code for the Oscars.

Observing the imbalance of female nudes in the National Gallery, one critic said: "You can't rewrite the history of art to make it more female-friendly." But film-makers were taking it upon themselves to change the



**Clockwise from main: Jude Bellingham in an advert for Skims, Jeremy Allen White in a Calvin Klein ad and Barry Keoghan in *Saltburn***

**“Male actors are used by TV networks in a penis-related arms race**

script. They resolved to be the corrective. Kevin Bacon, for example, posted a video satire of the issue in 2015, offering to play a Marvel superhero with "an Infinity Stone on the tip of my wiener" as an "issue of gender equality". In HBO's first series of *Euphoria* the lead female actor, Zendaya, had a nudity clause prohibiting her removing her clothes. Yet the series racked up 71 (mostly prosthetic) penises.

When *The Bear*'s Jeremy Allen White was photographed half-pulling down his tight pants for Calvin Klein, it felt like a direct redress of all those women in

bikinis gratuitously draped over car adverts. The naked dance at the end of last year's *Saltburn* would not have had social permission to go viral if it hadn't been performed by a male actor (Barry Keoghan). When shows like *The White Lotus*, *Bridgerton*, *Scenes from a Marriage*, *Succession*, *A Man in Full* and *Normal People* expose male actors more than female, it is seen as a tiny token (no judgment intended) towards rebalancing. A porn-influenced era of desensitisation to nudity can in mainstream culture only be expressed in the male form without bringing with it the troubling misogynistic associations of porn itself.

Bellingham's advert is targeting, indirectly, male insecurity: men who notice his effect on women and believe that by buying his brand of pants some of it will magically rub off. But maybe it plays directly to them too. *Gen V* is a Prime Video superhero series popular among Gen Z. Its showrunner Michele Fazekas explained the show's frequent male nudity with the line, "Straight dudes love penises," which may also shed some light on the popularity of footballers in pants. *Gen V* featured a scene in which a realistic 5ft penis (spoiler alert!) is blown to bits. A symbolic visual image, if you need one.

If we are living in the age of a cultural pendulum swing that both produces more images of male nudity and gives more licence to the female appreciation of the same, when, I ask on behalf of the repressed male pervers among you, does it swing back? Surely we won't have another 10,000 years of "something for the mums"? But some small signs show we are still some way off ogle equality. Bellingham is modelling a pair of comfy big pants for Skims, a shapewear brand that has made millions marketing imprisoning corsetry to women who feel obliged to change the shape of their bodies. For men, Skims offers no such thing.



## arts

# 'I'm not sorry I got cancer — not

When Rhod Gilbert discovered a lump, the comic's first thought was: I'm going to die. His second?

Hooray, I've got a new show. By **Dominic Maxwell**

**W**hat kind of cancers have we got in tonight?" Rhod Gilbert roars to a room full of comedy lovers in Tunbridge Wells. A reply comes from halfway back. "Prostate?" Gilbert repeats. "Now we're motoring!"

As crowd work goes, it's not quite "anyone in from out of town?" But then *Rhod Gilbert and the Giant Grapefruit*, the 55-year-old Welsh comedian's response to the year he spent having successful treatment for stage 4 head and neck cancer, is not quite your usual stand-up tour. Oh, it's every bit as splenetic as when Gilbert was plying — in his words — "silly nonsense" about everyday frustrations. If anyone cries in this deliberately defiant show, it won't be until the montage of fly-on-the-wall footage shown at the end, taken from his 2023 Channel 4 documentary.

*A Pain in the Neck* shows Gilbert's real-life devastation as well as his gallows humour as he undergoes treatment: 30 radiotherapy sessions and two bouts of chemotherapy. He first realised there might be something wrong in May 2022, while on a fundraising walk in Cuba for Velindre, the Cardiff cancer centre of which he had been a patron for ten years. He knew he wasn't 100 per cent, he says when we meet in the north London pub that's his local when he's in town (Gilbert also has a home in the Welsh capital). He was choking and had had a sore throat for a month. But then he's a shouty comic who was coming to the end of a long tour. The lump only emerged in Cuba. "And lymph

**“After my show someone told me, ‘I lost my kid to cancer, I can finally laugh.’”**

**Rhod Gilbert and the Giant Grapefruit is touring to November 2025, rhodgilbertcomedian.com. Rhod Gilbert: A Pain in the Neck is on channel4.com**

nodes can go pop," he says. "That's what they do. So I wasn't panicking."

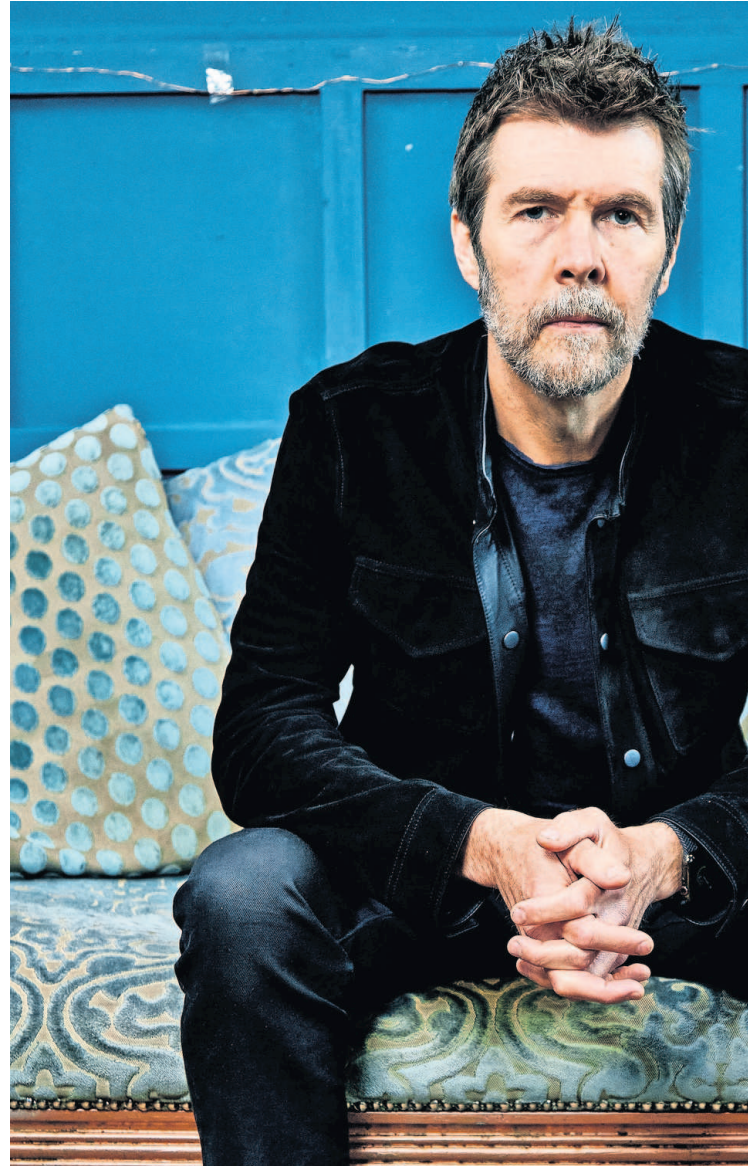
Still, a doctor on the walk told him to get the lump checked out. When he started his treatment at Velindre, there was a big promotional picture of him (in his guise as patron) on the wall. During the months that followed Gilbert kept such grim ironies to himself. He was, after all, busy having his tonsils and some teeth out (on the first day), then the chemotherapy and daily radiotherapy, then having his gallbladder removed (seven months down the line, after three months of repeated infections, gallstones and hospitalisation).

"I didn't write anything while I was ill," he says now, an undimmed presence over a couple of lunchtime cappuccinos. "Then once I had my gallbladder out I started writing, and it flew. I've never done anything so quickly. I was very aware of the ironies of what I had been through." He knew he wanted the live show to be in his voice. And if in the process it led him to normalise a disease that the NHS estimates one in two of us will get in our lifetime, well, even better.

"It's a stand-up show. I don't want long waits between big laughs. But it's a tricky one to walk, without being mawkish, without being didactic."

We meet two weeks after the Tunbridge Wells show, at the start of a UK tour that will run until the end of 2025. One review pointed out that he took a while to take the temperature of the audience. A fair point, he says, albeit in his jocularly rambunctious way. "Taking the temperature of the audience? Too f\*\*\*ing right I am! You try walking out on a thousand people and talking about cancer."

He loved the nonsense he plied after breaking through at the Edinburgh



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# Now I'm gorging on life'

CHRIS MCANDREW FOR THE TIMES

Rhod Gilbert.  
Below, with his  
wife, Sian Harries

their mother's death properly, saying, 'I came away feeling lighter and happier.' I've had people say, 'I lost my kid to cancer a few years ago, I'm finally able to laugh.' It's mad, it's great."

He often stays behind after a show for an hour or more talking to audience members. "I'm apprehensive. I don't want to offend anyone. I'm very aware there are people who are going through what I've survived, seemingly, at the moment."

"Seemingly, at the moment" is a conspicuously cautious phrase. "With head and neck cancer the chances of it coming back are way higher than I would like, and that's the wording I use on stage. I'd love them to be millions to one or thousands to one,

**“It's been a living hell for my wife — so much of it was all about me**

but they're closer to Russian roulette," Gilbert shrugs.

He decided to do the documentary as soon as he got his diagnosis. "My oncologist was talking about HPV [human papillomavirus, which is how Gilbert caught the cancer] and I had never heard of it. She was talking about head and neck cancer — I'd never heard of that. She was talking about vaccines for HPV — I'd never heard of that either. I thought, there's a story to be told." And, yes, he says, it was nice to have something to do. "Although [on a] lot of days I wasn't well enough to do a video diary. The documentary barely scratched the surface of the awfulness of it, really."

There was no room, alas, for a shot of the daily trail of pills that Gilbert suggests could stretch to the end of the long pub table we are sitting at and halfway back again. No time to explore the diet of Bonne Maman strawberry mousses he put himself on, when it was all he could face eating. He lost two and a half stone in a year. Though he is well now, he gets a check-up every eight weeks.

When he wrote the show he considered saying he was glad he had had cancer. "But in the end I thought I'd say, 'I'm not sorry that I got cancer.' I feel guilty saying this because of what my wife has been through — we just lost her dad to cancer as well, so it's been a living hell for her. But for me it is a positive thing. That doesn't mean I want it back. But I am just gorging on life."

Recently he went on Gaby Roslin's podcast, *Reasons to Be Joyful*. "You have to bring in an object that brings you joy. It could have been almost anything. It could be a straw. It could be just water. I couldn't drink water — everything was disgusting. Now my taste buds are almost normal. I could

have taken in an alarm clock — I have hated the sound of the alarm clock my entire life. Now I go, 'Hooray, here comes another day.'"

Before, he was glass-half-empty. "I've got it to thank for where I've got to in my career." Is he glass-half-full now? He pauses. "It's still early days for me. But I think I'm a different person. I'm still anxious and all the things you've seen from me on stage. But everything has suddenly clicked into shape. I know what I want from life." Gilbert's parents were teachers, so are both his siblings. "And now in my stand-up, in the talking to people after the show, I feel like there's an element of that caring. I've found my little calling. So, happy days. Cancer has given me that."

There is, as he knows, a lot of it about. Not just in his audiences, but in his fellow stand-ups. The Scottish comic Janey Godley, 63, has done a show about her terminal ovarian cancer. Laura Smyth, 42, touches on her breast cancer. Miles Jupp, 44, is touring a show about his brain tumour, while Elliot Steel, 27, will be addressing his comedian father Mark Steel's cancer bout in his forthcoming Edinburgh Fringe show. Richard Herring, 56, is also on the road with *Can I Have My Ball Back?*, a show about his run-in with testicular cancer.

I asked Herring if he thought anything linked these shows beyond bad luck. "Comedians are always looking for experiences, so while you're not hoping for something like this, you are thinking, if it happened..." Herring also puts it down to an ageing generation. "When I started [in the late Eighties], aside from Bob Monkhouse, there wasn't really an older generation. And since then there has been a move towards 'let's address serious personal issues through comedy'. So if you have it, and you're a comedian, it's too big a subject to leave." Herring treats his with a light touch, while admitting he spent several weeks thinking he might die. "Actually it's a fairly treatable cancer, which makes it funnier."

In his show Gilbert admits that his first thought was he was going to die — and his second was, hooray, he could get a show out of it. In person he says this is an exaggeration. "It was probably only my fourth thought." He takes this stuff seriously, though — seriously enough to get in touch a day later to make sure he didn't overemphasise his worries.

On a follow-up call he puts his wife, the actress and writer Sian Harries, 43, on the line too. It's been harder for her, he says, because she hasn't been able to process it on stage. The first time he heard her say how worried she has been was when he watched the documentary, in which she talked about fearing becoming a widow.

Rhod: "That hit me quite hard, you saying that. Because so much of it had been all about me."

Sian: "I didn't want to burden you. But thankfully we weren't in it for long. It's made us reconsider things. We don't sweat the small stuff."

Rhod: "Except when I wake up in the middle of the night thinking, 'What have I said to The Times?' But I think it's all been worth it."

## An odd couple — and a dystopian delight

By James Marriott



### podcasts

#### Orwell vs Kafka

★★★★☆

I have to confess to some scepticism about Radio 4's decision to yoke George Orwell and Franz Kafka together into the same radio series. The justification of Orwell vs

Kafka, presented by Ian Hislop and Helen Lewis, is that the two writers have overlapping anniversaries (100 years since Kafka's death, 75 since the publication of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*) and that they have both spawned adjectives ("Orwellian" and "Kafkaesque"). But how much do they have in common? *The Trial* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* offer certain undoubted similarities of mood and atmosphere: both present unhappy, suffocating, bewildering worlds presided over by sinister and impenetrable authorities. This is why the words Orwellian and Kafkaesque are used colloquially to mean similar things. Bureaucracies, governments and unhappy workplaces can all be Orwellian and Kafkaesque.

I am not sure the resemblance runs terribly deep, though. Kafka's great theme is the meaninglessness of life, and especially the meaninglessness of suffering. Orwell by contrast can

explain Winston Smith's tragedy in multiple ways — by

reference to political systems, human psychology,

propaganda, the threat of torture, the manipulation of

the media ... The difference is more important than it

perhaps seems. The men inhabited entirely different

mental universes. Kafka's, to my mind, is the more profound.

So much for my theory. If *Orwell vs Kafka* did not persuade me

that the two writers had much in common, it did persuade

me that they can fruitfully be placed in a radio series

together. I enjoyed it a lot. After all, a Radio 4 show

(an "appreciation", Hislop terms it) is not an academic

essay. The two hosts are alive to the awkward fit the writers

make with one another. As

Lewis astutely puts it: "Kafka looks inwards ... Orwell is looking outwards

to systems and structures of society."

In the end it can be worthwhile putting any two writers together to

rattle them around for a few episodes and see what happens. Orwell,

especially, who has been discussed to death by reverential journalists,

benefits from his curious new context. He has been looked at from every

angle, so it's instructive to see him in the light of themes more obviously

relevant to Kafka: dreams, guilt, metamorphosis, psychoanalysis.

Kafka is always in danger of being overinterpreted. His oddball pairing

with Orwell means that it's hard for the hosts to draw firm conclusions —

the tone is speculative and playful. We are spared the sorts of experts prone

to effortfully insisting that *The Trial* is an allegory for the situation of eastern

European Jews/20th-century politics/ the bureaucracy of the Austro-

Hungarian Empire etc. *Orwell vs Kafka* is a bit random, but it works.



George Orwell, top, and Franz Kafka



Fringe in 2005. Yet in the early 2010s he realised he had reached a cul-de-sac with his agreeably disagreeable comedy. He was risking getting angry first, finding something to get angry about second. So he took seven years away from stand-up, his career blossoming with TV work on panel shows instead — *The Apprentice: You're Fired!* and *Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience*. "I didn't write a line. Didn't miss it, wasn't bothered."

Then, in 2017, he had a mini-stroke. For a while he wasn't able to drive. Both his parents died. He wrote a more personal show, *The Book of John*, that unified his abrasive daffiness with subjects that really mattered.

It was, in retrospect, a warm-up for greater challenges. Gilbert feels he is getting something right with the informative but jaunty process of "ripping cancer a new one" on stage. "I get dozens of emails a week, people telling me they had never processed



# Your weekday brain boost

**More  
puzzles**  
Pages 14-16

**Every day, Monday to Thursday, a page of extra puzzles to give your brain an extended workout**

## Samurai medium

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.

1 3						8				6 9	
6 4	7	5 6	7	1		5		6 7 9		3	
		4		3 5		1 3		7 5 2		2 8 7	
8 4		9		3 1		7		3		6	
2						6		3			
5		3 9		4 6		3		8		3 1 2	
6		4		8		1		4			
						9 3					
						4		1 8		6 1 5	
1 5 4		2		1		3		1 3 7		6	
				9		6 4		5 2		7 8 5	
4		5 9 3		3 1		4 3 9		5 6 7		3 8 1	
		2		9				2		9 6 3	
4		1 7				1				4 1	
7 2								8		4 6	

# Suko

A 3x3 grid with a color gradient from light orange to dark orange. The grid contains numbers in circles: 19, 14, 23, 23. Below the grid are three circles with numbers 19, 11, and 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**

3		5	6		4
	5			1	
	3			6	
6		1	2		3

## Solutions in Monday's Times2

## Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.

	14	25	24	8	1	14	15		26	17	1	2
1		17				7		19		21		20
2	17	23	5	14	21	14		20	21	10	14	15
14		14		3		2		1		12		14
21	17	15	14	17		13	1	2	1	2	10	
8				8		18		8		4		6
1	2	13	12	1	15		16	20	21	12	8	14
12		17		16		6		24				16
	1	10	20	12	2	12		13	17	16	12	13
6		9		13		6		14		13		20
24	21	17	23	13		5	17	8	5	14	12	15
20		17		18		12				11		14
21	12	22	14		15	18	2	12	6	8	18	

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N ~~O~~ P Q ~~R~~ S T U V ~~W~~ X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			<b>O</b>				<b>R</b>		<b>W</b>			

## Sudoku difficult

4	2			
	8 9	3 6		
7	8			
3 6		8	2	
	1	2 7	6	
8		6	2	4
	3		8	5
		4	3 5	8

## Killer deadly

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.

## Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

## Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger ( $>$ ) or smaller ( $<$ ) than the number next to it.

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	$<$	<input type="text"/>
					$\wedge$
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	$>$	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	$>$	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>
<input type="text"/>	$>$	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	$<$	<input type="text" value="4"/>
<input type="text"/>	$>$	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## Yesterday's solutions

[illegible]

## SUDOKU

5	7	9	1	8	2	4	3	6
8	4	3	6	5	9	1	7	2
6	1	2	7	4	3	9	8	5
9	3	8	4	2	1	5	6	7
2	6	7	9	3	5	8	4	1
1	5	4	8	7	6	3	2	9
4	2	1	3	9	7	6	5	8
7	8	6	5	1	4	2	9	3
3	9	5	2	6	8	7	1	4

**KILLER**

6	7	5	3	8	9	4	1	2
2	8	9	7	4	1	3	6	5
1	3	4	2	6	5	9	7	8
5	4	2	1	7	8	6	9	3
7	9	3	5	2	6	1	8	4
8	1	6	9	3	4	2	5	7
3	5	7	6	9	2	8	4	1
4	6	1	8	5	3	7	2	9
9	2	8	4	1	7	5	3	6

**SUKO**

7	4	3
18		17
5	2	8
22		17
9	6	1

## TRAIN TRACKS

## FUTOSHIKI

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \boxed{1} < \boxed{3} & & \boxed{5} & \boxed{2} < \boxed{4} \\
 & & \downarrow & & \downarrow \\
 \boxed{2} & \boxed{5} & \boxed{4} & \boxed{1} & \boxed{3} \\
 \uparrow & & & & \\
 \boxed{4} & \boxed{2} > \boxed{1} & \boxed{3} & \boxed{5} \\
 & & & \downarrow \\
 \boxed{5} & \boxed{1} & \boxed{3} & \boxed{4} & \boxed{2} \\
 & & & \uparrow & \\
 \boxed{3} & \boxed{4} > \boxed{2} & \boxed{5} & \boxed{1}
 \end{array}$$

**CODEWORD**

	R	E	B	I	R	T	H		A	J	A	F
A	Q			W				I	A			B
B	R	U	S	Q	U	E		N	I	C	H	E
Y		A		U		N		E	K			M
S	A	L	S	A			T	U	X	E	D	
M				D		Y		O		A	T	
A	R	T	E	R				G	R	O	W	T
L		U		A		B		A				
B	R	O	N	Z	E				B	A	L	S
U		M	R	O	N	G		L		I	A	I
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# John Bercow winning this looks a tall orrrrdeerrr

## Carol Midgley TV review



### The Traitors US

BBC1  
★★★★★

‘Oh God, no. He’s so loud.’ With these six words, John Bercow’s chances of being recruited as a traitor in episode one of *The Traitors US* were dashed.

To be fair, the American contestants who looked at him curiously and said: “So you were, like, a member of parliament?” had early exposure to this “loudness”. Bercow wasted no time in treating them to his party piece, namely bellowing “orrrrdeerrr”. It met with a muted response.

The former Speaker of the House of Commons said, correctly, that

“backstabbing and deception are all part and parcel of the political life”, which should make him extremely well equipped for this game. He said that, over the years, “I have developed a knack for detecting who is trying to lie, to deceive, to cheat ... for material gain”.

But clearly not that big of a knack. Because at the round table where they discuss who they think is a traitor, he, like many others, voted out Peppermint, an actress and drag artist. Who was not a traitor but a faithful.

Your enjoyment of this series may be severely hampered by the fact that it has already been shown in America and its twists and turns duly reported in British newspapers, so you may already know Bercow and the others’ fate. It could also be hampered by the fact that it is not, in my opinion, a patch on the British version.

It is packed with reality TV-literate “celebrities” from US shows you’ve never heard of, but who all seem to know each other (though there’s also the boxer Deontay Wilder, in fairness). They are all playing to the camera.

Despite being set in a Scottish castle just like the British version, it lacks the oomph. This is partly because Alan Cumming, while a decent host, hams it up to the rafters and doesn’t have the same air of deadpan menace as Claudia Winkleman.



The former Speaker joined fellow “celebrities” on the show

But it does mean that Bercow is a godsend to the British viewer, at least giving us a local point of reference, even though you may wonder what the hell he is doing there. (He developed a fanbase in America during the deadlock of Brexit.) In the opening two episodes he managed to fall on his backside on a boat and splat on his front while running on a country lane, getting himself covered in mud. So it wasn’t the most dignified start.

He also seems to be weirdly evasive about whether he does or doesn’t have asthma after someone heard him breathing heavily when they were all blindfolded and the traitors were selected by getting a squeeze on the shoulder from Cumming. There is another aspect of this American version that jars and it is that you can see where the ad breaks fall. So it will pause at a dramatic bit, then resume.

Anyway, do you care? I’m guessing that you won’t very much and that this series won’t hook viewers anything like the British one did, especially series two. Still, there are small gems to look forward to. Later in the series one American contestant reportedly says of Bercow (aged 61): “I hope I’m as functional as him when I am his age.” To which someone replies: “I don’t think he’s old, I think people in England just don’t get Botox.” Lol.

## Radio choice

Ben Dowell



### In Our Time

Radio 4, 9am

If you have ever had the pleasure of reading *Tom Jones*, Henry Fielding’s 1749 novel, you will know it is a joyous read for which the word “rollicking” was probably invented. The tale of the founding boy — played by Albert Finney, above, in the 1963 film — finding social acceptance and love was also described by the romantic poet and critic Samuel Taylor Coleridge as one of “the three most perfect plots ever planned” (alongside *Oedipus Tyrannus* by Sophocles and *The Alchemist* by Ben Jonson). Melvyn Bragg will, as usual, be joined by three leading academics for the discussion.

## 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 **1.00pm** Andrew Neil. Interviews, comment and analysis **2.00pm** Jane Garvey and Fi Glover. Discussion on the day’s news **4.00pm** John Pienaar with *Times Radio Drive* **7.00pm** The Evening Edition with Kait Borsay. Engaging evening conversation **10.00pm** Henry Bonsu **1.00am** The Story **1.30pm** Highlights from Matt Chorley **2.00pm** The Best of Times Radio

## Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz  
**6.30am** The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show **9.30am** Vernon Kay. Pet Shop Boys pick their Tracks of My Years **12.00pm** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** Scott Mills **4.00pm** Sara Cox **6.30pm** Sara Cox’s Half Wower **7.00pm** Jo Whalley’s Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30pm** Jo Whalley **9.00pm** The Country Show with Bob Harris. A personal selection of music from across the generations **10.00pm** Trevor Nelson’s *Magnificent 7*. Seven of *Rhythm Nation*’s biggest hits, uplifting tunes and essential throwbacks **10.30pm** Trevor Nelson’s *Rhythm Nation*. The DJ introduces a mix of R’n’B and soulful tunes **12.00pm** DJ Borg **3.00am** Sounds of the 90s with Fearne Cotton (r) **4.00pm** Owain Wyn Evans

## Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz  
**6.30am** Breakfast  
Petroc Trelawny presents the classical breakfast show with music that captures the mood of the morning  
**9.30am** Essential Classics  
Georgia Mann plays the best in classical music with discoveries and surprises rubbing shoulders with familiar favourites  
**1.00pm** Classical Live  
Tom McKinney features a recording made of a masterpiece by Gabriel Fauré performed by the Leonore Piano Trio and the violist Lawrence Power. He also marks the first week of this year’s Aldeburgh Festival with music by composers with very close historic associations — Imogen Holst, Oliver Knussen and Benjamin Britten. Poulet (arr. Lennox Berkeley) (Sonata for flute Op. 164); Imogen Holst (*Leiston Suite* for brass quartet); Mozart (Symphony No. 29 in A major K. 201); From the 2024 Hay-on-Wye Festival — Fauré (Piano Quartet No. 2 in G minor Op. 45); Ravel (*Tombé de Couperin*); and Knussen (Symphony No. 3 Op. 18)

## 4.00 Composer of the Week: Gibbons (1583-1625)

Donald Macleod looks at the last — eventful — decade of Gibbons’s short life, and profiles the notorious George Villiers, who rose from lowly second son of a minor gentleman from Leicestershire to become the Duke of Buckingham, becoming the only English Duke beyond the Royal Family itself. Gibbons (*Drop, drop, slow tears* — arr. P. Dearmer; *Do not repine, fair sun* — Parts I and II. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints; O all true faithful hearts; Fantasia a 3 with Double Bass Viol; Fantasia for 6 Viols; Go from my Window; Almighty and everlasting God; Magnificat* — *Short Service*; and *Great Lord of Lords*) **5.00pm** In Tune

## 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

For the closing concert of their season, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales are joined once more by their principal conductor, Ryan Bancroft, for a programme that celebrates America with music from Antonin Dvorák, Jennifer Higdon, and William Levi Dawson. The concert opens with Dvorák’s much-loved Cello Concerto, which he wrote in New York while director of the National Conservatory there. The American cellist Alisa Weilerstein will be soloist for that work, 10 years after performing it at the BBC Proms. After the interval, Ryan and the Orchestra will perform Jennifer Higdon’s deeply moving, and eternally touching, tribute to her brother, *Blue Cathedral*. To end, we will be treated to one of the first and most enduring symphonies by a black composer — William Levi Dawson and his Negro Folk Symphony. Dawson and others of his generation of saw the word “negro” as a mark of pride in his heritage, and in 1934 finished this unique work steeped in the traditions that he held so dear. Presented by Linton Stephens and recorded on the June 6 in BBC Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff. Dvorák (Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104); Jennifer Higdon (*Blue Cathedral*); and WL Dawson (Negro Folk Symphony) **9.45pm** The Essay: Bohemians in T-Shirts Michael Goldfarb on the importance of Charlie Parker and Miles Davis (r) **10.00pm** Night Tracks  
A soundtrack for late-night listening **11.30pm** Round Midnight  
The saxophonist Soweto Kinch presents the best in jazz with a particular focus on the British scene **12.30am** Through the Night (r)

## Radio 4

FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz  
**5.30am** News Briefing  
**5.43pm** Prayer for the Day  
**5.45pm** Farming Today  
**6.00pm** Today  
With Amol Rajan and Emma Barnett  
**9.00pm** In Our Time  
Melvyn Bragg and guests investigate the history of ideas. *See Radio Choice* (11/14)  
**9.45pm** Exercise Cleave — with Michael Mosley  
Scientifically proven tips and tricks to get the most out of exercise (1/5)  
**10.00pm** Woman’s Hour  
Magazine presented by Anita Rani  
**11.00pm** This Cultural Life  
Judy Chicago reveals the influences and experiences that shaped her work (11/14)  
**11.45pm** Book of the Week: *All That Glitters*  
By Orlando Whitfield. A dazzling journey to the heart of the contemporary art scene — a place marked by shocking ambition, greed and madness. Read by Hugh Skinner (4/5)  
**12.04pm** The Bottom Line  
Business issues that matter (2/8)  
**12.32pm** Sliced Bread  
Searching for the scientific evidence behind a product’s bold claims (6/10)  
**1.00pm** The World at One  
**1.45pm** Understand: The UK Election  
Key elements of the General Election (4/10)  
**2.00pm** The Archers (r)  
**2.15pm** Drama: The Queen of the Isle of Wight  
By Barney Norris. A woman tries to escape her past on an island she has never left, but must face up to her troubled past if she is to do it. Starring Caroline Catz (r)  
**3.00pm** Open Country  
The landscapes and seascapes that have inspired the artist Maggi Hambling (11/11)  
**3.27pm** Radio 4 Appeal  
On behalf of Sand Dams Worldwide (r)  
**3.30pm** Word of Mouth  
Michael Rosen explores the mysterious rules of word order. Last in the series  
**4.00pm** The Briefing Room  
Discussing a story in the news (11/14)  
**4.30pm** BBC Inside Science  
The latest scientific research  
**5.00pm** PM  
**6.00pm** Six O’clock News  
**6.30pm** Rhysearch  
Rhys James discussing privacy issues and technology. Last in the series (r)  
**7.00pm** The Archers  
Debate rages at Grange Farm

## 7.15 Front Row

Arts programme  
**8.00pm** The Media Show  
News from the fast-changing media world (r)  
**9.00pm** Loose Ends  
With guests Caitlin Moran, Laura Smythe and Alex Lowe. With music from Dexys (r)  
**9.45pm** Empire of Tea  
Sathnam Sanghera tells the story of Britain’s national drink (1/10) (r)  
**10.00pm** The World Tonight  
**10.45pm** Book at Bedtime: *The Photographer*  
By Max Porter (4/5)  
**11.00pm** The Today Podcast  
Amol Rajan and Nick Robinson with the biggest news stories. Last in the series  
**11.30pm** The Bottom Line: The Decisions That Made Me a Leader  
With Simon Beckerman, the founder of the peer-to-peer fashion app Depop and the online food platform Delli (3/6) (r)  
**12.00pm** News and Weather  
**12.30am** Book of the Week: *All That Glitters* (r)  
**12.48pm** Shipping Forecast  
**1.00am** As BBC World Service

## Radio 4 Extra

Digital only  
**8.00am** The Break **8.30pm** These Days **8.45pm** Exile **9.00pm** Rhysearch **9.30pm** Soundstage **9.45pm** Daily Service **10.00pm** Great Lives **10.30pm** Shakespeare in India **11.00pm** Paul Temple and the Gilbert Case **11.30pm** A Change in the Weather **12.00pm** Patterson **12.30pm** Dad’s Army **1.00pm** The Break **1.30pm** These Days **1.45pm** Exile **2.00pm** The Unbelievable Truth **2.30pm** The Leopard in Autumn **3.00pm** Thackeray **3.45pm** Monsoon Selection Board **4.00pm** Great Lives **4.30pm** Shakespeare in India **5.00pm** Paul Temple and the Gilbert Case **5.30pm** A Change in the Weather **6.00pm** Patterson **6.30pm** Dad’s Army **7.00pm** The Break. Andy and Jeff have to deal with affairs of the heart. Last in the series **7.30pm** These Days. By Lucy Caldwell **7.45pm** Exile. By Adrian Bevan **8.00pm** The Unbelievable Truth. With Rufus Hound, Fern Brady, Ria Lina and Tony Hawks **8.30pm** The Leopard in Autumn. Comedy with David Swift **9.00pm** Thackeray. By Olwen Wymark and Barbara Clegg **9.45pm** Monsoon Selection Board. By George MacDonald Fraser **10.00pm** Comedy Club: Rhysearch. Rhys James contemplates the possibility of man living on Mars **10.30pm** The Guns of Adam Riches. Fast-paced comedy sketches **10.55pm** The Comedy Club Interview. With Chloe Petts **11.00pm** Clare in the Community **11.30pm** And the Winner Is

## Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909  
**5.00am** Wake Up to Money **6.00pm** 5 Live Breakfast **9.00pm** Nicky Campbell **11.00pm** Adrian Chiles **1.00pm** Nihal Arthanayake **4.00pm** 5 Live Drive **7.00pm** 5 Live Sport. Preview of Euro 2024 **9.00pm** 5 Live Golf. Commentary on day one of the US Open in North Carolina **10.00pm** Johnny Van Anson **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

## talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz  
**5.00am** Early Breakfast **6.00pm** talkSPORT Breakfast with Alan Brazil **10.00pm** Jim White and Simon Jordan **1.00pm** Hawksbee and Baker **4.00pm** talkSPORT Drive with Andy Goldstein and Darren Bent **7.00pm** Kick Off **10.00pm** Sports Bar **1.00am** Extra Time

## Talk

Digital only  
**5.00am** James Max. The day’s top stories **6.30pm** Mike Graham **10.00pm** Julia Hartley Brewer **1.00pm** Ian Collins **4.00pm** Jeremy Kyle **7.00pm** Kevin O’Sullivan **10.00pm** Andre Walker **1.00am** Paul Ross

## 6 Music

Digital only  
**5.00am** Chris Hawkins **7.30pm** Lauren Laverne **10.30pm** Mary Anne Hobbs **1.00pm** Craig Charles **4.00pm** Huw Stephens **6.00pm** Huw Stephens’ Roundtable **7.00pm** New Music Fix Daily. Charli XCX provides the guest mix **9.00pm** Loud and Proud Artist Takeover **11.00pm** 6 Music Artist in Residence: Bloc Party **12.00pm** New Music Fix Playlist **1.00am** New Album Fix **2.00pm** 6 Music’s Jukebox

## Virgin Radio

Digital only  
**6.30am** The Chris Evans Breakfast Show with webuyanycar **10.00pm** The Ryan Tubridy Show **1.00pm** Jayne Middlemiss **4.00pm** Ricky Wilson **7.00pm** Bam **10.00pm** Olivia Jones **1.00am** Sean Goldsmith **4.00pm** Steve Denyer

## Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz  
**6.30am** Classic FM Breakfast with Dan Walker **9.00pm** The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour with Dan Walker **10.00pm** Alexander Armstrong **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minihall **4.00pm** Margherita Taylor **7.00pm** Relaxing Evenings **10.00pm** Calm Classics **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00pm** Early Breakfast



television & radio

Viewing Guide  
Toby Earle

**Chinook: Zulu Delta 576**  
BBC2, 9pm

**Top pick** Thirty years ago an RAF Chinook, call sign ZD576, crashed on the hills of the Mull of Kintyre, killing all 29 people aboard. A disaster by

any standard, but one that hit the intelligence community hard and left the bereaved without satisfactory answers. The repercussions extended far beyond the devastation experienced by the families of those lost. Out of the 25 passengers, nine were senior army officers, ten were Royal Ulster

Constabulary Special Branch officers, five were M15 officers and one was a civil servant. A trip to a secure location for strategic talks had instead left a gaping hole in the British intelligence community at a highly sensitive time. Whispers about the cause of the crash circulated, some of which speculated

sabotage was to blame, others ignoring the calibre of the Chinook's special forces flight crew. One year after the crash it was concluded that the gross negligence of Jonathan Tapper and Richard Cook, those special forces pilots and both flight lieutenants, caused the crash. The families weren't convinced. This is

another story of family members fighting the state to discover the truth behind an official verdict, and in the first of these two films family members paint a picture of those who they lost and what happened in the crash's aftermath. Then right at the end the whole story is turned upside down by a retired squadron leader.

**The Boys**  
Prime Video  
Superman's ideals of truth, justice and the American way are some distance from the untruth, injustice and American mayhem wrought by the superheroes in this savage and gory satire of superhero myths, capitalism and contemporary politics.

In *Homelander* (Antony Starr), the perfect all-American superhero but a psychopath, the series has the most chilling villain on television. Perhaps this fourth iteration, in which *Homelander* has a Trumpian epiphany and realises he could shoot someone on 5th Avenue and still win supporters, will win him greater recognition.

	BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	Channel 4	Channel 5
Early	<b>6.00am</b> Breakfast <b>9.30</b> Morning Live. Magazine show <b>10.45</b> Scam Interceptors. Scammers target a man's £100,000 savings pot <b>11.15</b> Homes Under the Hammer. Tommy Walsh sees the potential in a bungalow in the beautiful Norfolk Broads <b>12.15pm</b> Bargain Hunt. Roo Irvine hosts the show from Nottinghamshire (r) (AD) <b>1.00</b> BBC News at One; Weather <b>1.35</b> BBC Regional News; Weather <b>1.45</b> BBC News at One; Weather <b>2.00</b> Rip Off Britain. Advice on consumer rights <b>2.30</b> Animal Park. Ben Fogle and Kate Humble observe how the hyenas react to a shower (r) (AD) <b>3.00</b> Escape to the Country. Steve Brown is with a pair of cycling enthusiasts on the hunt for a rural idyll in the Peak District, and also visits one of the country's best destinations for accessible fishing (r) <b>3.45</b> Garden Rescue. Charlie Dimmock, Flo Headlam and the team are in Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire to help transform a boring garden into a Mediterranean-themed social space on an £8,000 budget (r) <b>4.30</b> The Finish Line. Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene host <b>5.15</b> Pointless. Quiz hosted by Alexander Armstrong and Lucy Porter (r) <b>6.00</b> BBC News at Six; Weather <b>6.30</b> BBC Regional News; Weather <b>6.55</b> Party Election Broadcast (r)	<b>6.45am</b> Escape to the Country (r) <b>7.30</b> Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure (r) <b>8.00</b> Sign Zone: Gardeners' World (r) (AD, SL) <b>9.00</b> BBC News <b>12.15pm</b> Politics Live <b>1.00</b> Impossible. Rick Edwards hosts the quiz (r) <b>1.45</b> Mastermind. Clive Myrie hosts the fifth semi-final (r) <b>2.15</b> Mastermind. Clive Myrie hosts the sixth and concluding semi-final (r) <b>2.45</b> Five Bedrooms. Liz bears the brunt of Harry's anger and grief and in an effort to rescue their friendship, she throws herself on the mercy of the last person on Earth she would ask for help (r) (AD) <b>3.30</b> Stanley Tucci: Searching for Italy. Stanley visits Umbria, nicknamed the Green Heart of Italy, which lives in the shadow of its glamorous neighbour Tuscany, but has an ancient history that predates even the Romans (r) (AD) <b>4.15</b> Great Bear Steakout. First in a two-part documentary following the grizzly bears of the Alaskan wilderness (r) <b>5.15</b> Flog It! Anita Manning and Christina Trevanion head to West Park in Bedfordshire to value items (r) <b>6.00</b> Richard Osman's House of Games. Kevin Eldon, Sarah Keyworth, Laila Rouass and John White take part (r) <b>6.30</b> Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure. The newsreader explores La Vega in the Dominican Republic	<b>6.00am</b> Good Morning Britain. News, current affairs and lifestyle features <b>9.00</b> Lorraine. Entertainment, current affairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly <b>10.00</b> This Morning. Daily magazine, featuring a mix of chat, showbusiness news, lifestyle features, topical discussion, health and beauty advice and more. Including Local Weather <b>12.30pm</b> Loose Women. The women put the world to rights once more and invite a guest to chat about what they are up to <b>1.30</b> ITV News; Weather <b>1.55</b> Regional News; Weather <b>2.00</b> Dickinson's Real Deal. David Dickinson is back in Blackpool, where Jan Kenye wrestles for a police truncheon, and Matt Taylor is on the lookout for a bargain buy (r) (AD) <b>3.00</b> Lingo. A niece and her auntie from Northern Ireland, and married couples from Hertfordshire and Devon take part (r) <b>4.00</b> Tipping Point. Ben Shepherd 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) <b>5.00</b> The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as contestants work as a team to take on one of the Chasers and secure a cash prize (r) <b>6.00</b> Regional News; Weather <b>6.30</b> ITV News; Weather	<b>6.30am</b> Cheers (r) <b>7.20</b> Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) <b>9.10</b> Frasier (r) (AD) <b>11.10</b> Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Gordon Ramsay heads to the Prohibition Grille in Everett, Washington (r) <b>12.05pm</b> Channel 4 News Summary <b>12.10</b> Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Chappy's Cajun restaurant in Nashville, Tennessee (r) <b>1.10</b> Car SOS. Fuzz Townshend and Tim Shaw restore a former rally driver's Mini Cooper (r) (AD) <b>2.10</b> Countdown. Sam Quek is in Dictionary Corner <b>3.00</b> A Place in the Sun. Jean Johansson helps a couple from Chichester find their perfect holiday home around the town of Tomar in Portugal (r) <b>4.00</b> A Place in the Sun. Lee Juggernaut jets off to Portugal's Algarve to help house-hunters find the perfect holiday home <b>5.00</b> Sun, Sea and Selling Houses. In Almería, Steve and Sharon Garner assist a recently retired couple, who have sold up in the UK and are moving to Spain full-time with a budget of £220,000 <b>6.00</b> Four in a Bed. The final visit of the week is to Trinity Boutique B&B in Peterhead, Aberdeenshire (r) <b>6.30</b> The Simpsons. Spoof behind-the-scenes special, featuring the guest voices of Willie Nelson, Gary Coleman and Stephen Hawking (r) (AD)	<b>6.00am</b> Milkshake! <b>9.15</b> Jeremy Vine. The broadcaster and guests discuss the issues of the day with co-host Storm Huntley joining him for phone-ins and reading out viewers' correspondence <b>11.15</b> Storm Huntley. Debate on the day's talking points continues with the host taking viewers' calls on the biggest stories <b>12.45pm</b> Friends (r) (AD) <b>1.40</b> 5 News at Lunchtime <b>1.45</b> Home and Away. Bree catches up with Remi to make it clear that she has no problem with him seeing Stevie, and Marilyn worries that Roo is avoiding her as she has not replied to her messages (r) <b>2.15</b> FILM: <i>The Gold Digger Killer</i> (PG, TVM, 2020) A gold-digging Texas waitress arranges the murder of her retired millionaire partner. Thriller starring Julie Benz <b>4.00</b> Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. With a woman who has been doing tarot card reading professionally for 24 years, and is extremely passionate about the positive impact it can have on people's lives (r) <b>5.00</b> 5 News at 5 <b>6.00</b> Party Election Broadcast <b>6.05</b> Police Interceptors. Officers hunt for two suspects allegedly armed with a gun after a tram-stop robbery in Bulwell, while another pair respond to a report of teens on the rampage in Arnold (r) <b>6.55</b> 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	<b>7.00</b> <b>The One Show</b> Topical stories with Alex Jones and Ronan Keating <b>7.30</b> <b>EastEnders</b> It is the day of Keanu's funeral and Kathy and Linda hold a private memorial for Sharon after her failed attempt to attend (AD)	<b>7.00</b> <b>Mississippi: Earth's Great Rivers</b> A journey along the American river, whose fingers stretch into nearly half of the USA, following it through varied landscapes from its source to its mouth, starting in the towering Rocky Mountains of Wyoming and Montana (3/3) (r) (AD)	<b>7.30</b> <b>Emmerdale</b> Belle finds herself in danger, and Charles reveals a cause of death for Ethan. Meanwhile, Vinny is left rattled with guilt (AD)	<b>7.00</b> <b>Channel 4 News</b> <b>7.55</b> <b>Party Election Broadcast</b>	<b>7.00</b> <b>The Motorway Hotel</b> An Elton John tribute act is expected to drop in, the new joint co-ordinator needs to navigate her first wedding, and the staff also cope with a massive downpour and some confusion with the bride and groom's names (3/4) <b>7.55</b> <b>5 News Update</b>
8PM	<b>8.00</b> <b>Question Time</b> With the General Election just three weeks away, Fiona Bruce presents an hour of peak-time topical debate. This week, she invites a panel of politicians and other guests to answer questions from an audience in Edinburgh on subjects that have made the headlines over the past week	<b>8.00</b> <b>Springwatch</b> Chris Packham, Michaela Strachan and Iolo Williams bid farewell to 2024's nests and recap on highlights of the series, while Megan McCubbin wraps up her Glasgow adventure. Last in the series	<b>8.30</b> <b>The ITV Election Debate 2024</b> Julie Etchingham hosts a debate to which seven parties in the General Election campaign have been invited, ahead of the poll on July 4. Leaders or senior representatives from the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats, the SNP, Reform UK, the Green Party and Plaid Cymru will participate. See <i>Viewing Guide</i>	<b>8.00</b> <b>The Suprvet: Noel Fitzpatrick</b> New series. A rescue special, featuring the stories of some of the animals for whom Noel has provided extraordinary and life-saving treatment since the series began in 2014 (1/5) (AD)	<b>8.00</b> <b>Happy Campers: The Caravan Park</b> At Holiday Resort Unity's site in Somerset, a 15-year-old dislocates his knee and has to make a trip to A&E, meaning his family's holiday might well be over before it has begun, while the head of security organises the park's very own version of Crufts
9PM	<b>9.00</b> <b>The Outlaws</b> While Gabby considers motherhood, the Dean's defence is winning his case, and the police are closing in on the gang. Comedy drama with Christopher Walken, Rhianne Barreto, Stephen Merchant, Darren Boyd and Gamba Cole (3/5) (AD)	<b>9.00</b> <b>Chinook: Zulu Delta 576</b> A look at the 1994 helicopter crash in the Mull of Kintyre that wiped out a generation of Northern Ireland's leading intelligence personnel. The families of the victims are still on the hunt for answers and this documentary allows them to share their stories. See <i>Viewing Guide</i> (1/2)		<b>9.00</b> <b>The Fall: Skydive Murder Plot</b> The police redouble their efforts to bring Emile Cilliers to book, delving deeper into his past. As the trial reaches a dramatic conclusion, the women at the heart of the case reveal the effects of coercive control in their relationships. Last in the series (AD)	<b>9.00</b> <b>The Hotel Inspector</b> Alex Polizzi returns to Loughborough Grange, a guesthouse whose owners were in need of a wakeup call when she visited a year ago. The team had fallen in love with a business that boasted a Thai spa with treatment rooms, a 24-seater Thai restaurant and 10 guest rooms
10PM	<b>10.00</b> <b>BBC News at Ten</b> <b>10.30</b> <b>BBC Regional News and Weather</b> <b>10.40</b> <b>Not Going Out</b> Lee and Lucy plan a friendly night of quizzing with Toby and Anna in the pub (2/6) (r)	<b>10.00</b> <b>Mortimer &amp; Whitehouse: Gone Fishing</b> Bob and Paul fish for salmon in the River Tweed (1/6) (r) (AD) <b>10.30</b> <b>Newsnight</b> Headline analysis presented by Victoria Derbyshire	<b>10.10</b> <b>ITV News</b> <b>10.45</b> <b>Regional News</b>	<b>10.00</b> <b>We Are Lady Parts</b> The band find themselves in the studio of their dreams, gloriously recording their debut album (5/6) (AD) <b>10.35</b> <b>We Are Lady Parts</b> The band members get upset when the label begins to interfere with their debut album, adding extra instrumentation, reworked solos and new mixes. Last in the series (AD)	<b>10.00</b> <b>Belmarsh: Serial Killers &amp; High Security</b> Documentary focusing on one of London's high security prisons, detailing the pecking order among inmates and telling the story of Barry George, who was convicted for the murder of Jill Dando and released eight years later (2/2) (r)
11PM	<b>11.05</b> <b>Newscast</b> BBC journalists including Laura Kuenssberg and Adam Fleming host a weekly round-up of events from the General Election campaign <b>11.35</b> <b>Rebus</b> Cafferty receives unwanted help from two UDA hitmen as his suppliers seek vengeance for the drug theft. Though the police investigation secures a key witness, Rebus finds reason to distance himself from Siobhan, while Rhona seeks to build bridges between her first and second husbands (4/6) (r) (AD)	<b>11.05</b> <b>The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan</b> Romesh concludes his African adventure by travelling to the island of Madagascar (3/3) (r) (AD)	<b>11.00</b> <b>Emergency Nurses: A&amp;E Stories</b> Emergency nurses help a student nurse through her first trauma call, and a colleague looks after a 106-year old who is her oldest patient yet (r)	<b>11.20</b> <b>Celebrity Gogglebox</b> A rolling cast of famous faces — including Rylan, Jennifer Saunders, Danny Dyer, Zoe Ball, Clare Balding and Jane McDonald — critique the week's biggest television shows (r) (AD, SL)	<b>11.05</b> <b>King of Thieves (15, 2018)</b> Retired criminals attempt to pull off a major burglary in London's jewellery district. Drama based on the Hatton Garden heist starring Michael Caine, Michael Gambon, Francesca Annis, Jim Broadbent, Ray Winstone, Charlie Cox and Tom Courtenay. See <i>Viewing Guide</i>
Late	<b>12.30am-6.00</b> <b>BBC News</b>	<b>12.05am</b> <b>Sign Zone: The Wrong Man — 17 Years Behind Bars</b> Documentary about an innocent man failed by the criminal justice system (r) (AD, SL) <b>1.05</b> <b>Blood on the Dance Floor — Spotlight.</b> The unsolved murder of a police officer (r) (AD, SL) <b>2.05</b> <b>Doctor Who</b> (r) (AD, SL) <b>2.50-3.50</b> <b>Lost Boys and Fairies</b> (r) (AD, SL)	<b>12.00</b> <b>Shop on TV 3.00am</b> In for a Penny. Stephen Mulhern presents from Walt Disney World Resort in Florida (r) (AD, SL) <b>3.35</b> <b>Unwind</b> with ITV. Daily escape designed to calm the mind <b>5.05-6.00</b> <b>Katie Piper's Breakfast Show.</b> With the comedian Sophie Duker and <i>Gladiators</i> star Livi Sheldon (r) (SL)	<b>12.25am</b> <b>Sky Coppers</b> An officer hunts for a burglar trying to break in to a property (r) (AD) <b>1.15</b> <b>Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back</b> (r) (AD, SL) <b>2.00</b> <b>Queenie</b> (r) (AD, SL) <b>3.45</b> <b>Iris Prize Best British Shorts 4.15</b> <b>Grand Designs Australia</b> (r) (AD) <b>5.10</b> <b>Kirstie's House of Craft</b> (r) <b>5.25</b> <b>Fraser</b> (r) (AD) <b>5.50-6.30</b> <b>Countdown</b> (r)	<b>1.15am</b> <b>PlayOJO Live Casino Show 3.15</b> <b>Secret Scotland</b> with Susan Calman. Exploring Grampian and the Central Highlands (r) <b>4.05</b> <b>The Railways That Built Britain</b> with Chris Tarrant (r) (AD, SL) <b>4.50</b> <b>Wildlife SOS</b> (r) (SL) <b>5.15</b> <b>House Doctor</b> (r) (SL) <b>5.40</b> <b>Entertainment News</b> on <b>5.45-6.00</b> <b>Paw Patrol</b> (r) (SL)



television & radio

Bridgerton

Netflix  
Wrists left sore from flapping sweaty brows with a fan during the intimate carriage scene between Penelope (Nicola Coughlan) and Colin (Luke Newton) will have just about recovered for the second half of the alt-Regency drama's third series. The story picks

up immediately from where it left off, with Colin revealing to his family that he and Penelope are engaged. Penelope, like many women, is forced to choose between marriage or her career — in this case it's admitting to Colin she is Lady Whistledown, the scandal sheet writer whose gossip grips high society.

The ITV Election Debate 2024

ITV, 8.30pm  
After last week's ding-dong between Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer on ITV, this time the programme features a whole host of leaders or senior party representatives trying to get their voice heard. There will be senior figures from the

Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats, but also the Scottish National Party, Reform UK, the Green Party and Plaid Cymru. The debate will be moderated by the safe pair of hands of Julie Etchingham and will run for 90 minutes. No doubt some politicians will emerge smiling, while others will be feeling more bruised.

King Otto & Football's Greek Gods

BBC4, 9pm  
In the era of the galácticos it was the team without stars that ascended to the firmament of European football and won the 2004 European Football Championship. Prior to the tournament Greece

had never won a match in a big competition. They'd never even scored a goal in a notable tournament. The biggest upset was masterminded by Otto Rehhagel, the successful German manager whose tenure began with a culture clash. This entertaining film documents how Rehhagel moulded a team and a mindset.

Film King of Thieves

Channel 5, 11.05pm  
This recreation of the 2015 Hatton Garden burglary, with a great screenplay by Joe Penhall, stars Michael Caine, Jim Broadbent, Tom Courtenay, Ray Winstone and Paul Whitehouse in a symphony of London villainy. (15, 2018)

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. Rip has no memories (r) (AD) 6.00 Stargate SG-1. An alien civilisation faces extinction due to an illness (r) 7.00 Stargate SG-1. Invisible aliens plot to destroy mankind during a war of attrition (r) 8.00 A Discovery of Witches. Matthew and Diana arrive in Bohemia (r) (AD) 9.00 The Walking Dead: The Ones Who Live. On her quest to find Rick, Michonne finds help from an unexpected source (r) (AD) 10.00 A League of Their Own: Mexican Road Trip. Exploring the city of La Paz (r) (AD) 11.00 The Walking Dead (r) 12.00 S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) 12.55am Entourage (r) 2.05 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 The Guest Wing (r) (AD) 7.55 True Blood (r) 10.05 Billions (r) (AD) 12.15pm Game of Thrones (r) (AD) 1.20 The Sopranos (r) 3.30 Six Feet Under (r) (AD) 5.40 Billions. Double bill of the drama series (r) (AD) 7.50 Game of Thrones. Daenerys makes an offer to the lords of Westeros, while Jon heeds Bran's warning, and Cersei vows to vanquish anyone or anything that stands in her way (r) (AD) 9.00 House of the Dragon: War Room. Sue Perkins presents a look ahead to season two, joined by Al Murray and Ellie Taylor (r) 10.00 Band of Brothers. Having beaten the Germans at Bastogne, an exhausted Easy Company is ordered to take the nearby town of Foy, but many of the troops are killed (7/10) (r) 11.20 Succession. The entire Roy clan travels to Logan's hometown of Dunwoody (8/10) (r) 12.30am The Pacific. The ongoing conflict on Peleliu takes its toll on Sledge (r) 1.40 The Wire. Baltimore-set drama (r) 2.50 Game of Thrones (r) (AD) 4.00 The Guest Wing (r) (AD)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Good Fight Club (r) (AD) 7.00 Discovering: Joseph Cotten (r) 8.00 The Directors (r) 9.00 The Eighties (r) (AD) 10.00 Branson (r) (AD) 11.45 My Icon: Martin Offiah (r) (AD) 12.00 MoviePass, MovieCrash (r) (AD) 2.00pm FILM: Val (12, 2021) Documentary focusing on the daily life of the actor Val Kilmer (r) 4.00 The Directors. The work of Stanley Donen (r) 5.00 Discovering: Joseph Cotten (r) 6.00 The Eighties. The Reagan era (r) (AD) 7.00 Branson (4/4) (r) (AD) 8.45 My Icon: Nasser Hussain (r) (AD) 9.00 The Truth vs Alex Jones. Following the defamation lawsuits. See *Viewing Guide* 11.15 FILM: After Truth — Disinformation and the Cost of Fake News (PG, 2020) The ongoing threat caused by misinformation 1.15am FILM: Inventing Truth — The Relotius Affair (12, TVM, 2023) Documentary about a journalist exposed as a fraud 3.15 A Crime on the Bayou (r) (AD) 5.00 Discovering: Joseph Cotten (r)

Sky Arts

6.00am Golden Age: Milos at Blenheim Palace 7.00 FILM: Janine Jansen — Falling for Stradivari (U, 2021) The musician plays 12 of the world's greatest violins in 10 days 8.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 9.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 10.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents 11.00 Discovering: Jodie Foster 12.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 1.00pm Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 2.00 The South Bank Show 3.00 The Art Mysteries (AD) 4.00 Discovering: Peter Ustinov 5.00 The Joy of Painting (AD) 6.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 7.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents. Two editions 8.00 Painting Birds with Jim and Nancy Moir. Searching for little teens in Leinster (6/6) (AD) 9.00 Discovering: Michelle Pfeiffer 10.00 John Wayne: America at All Costs 11.00 Dr Jack and Mr Nicholson (AD) 12.00 Katharine Hepburn: Call Me Kate. A profile of the actress (AD) 2.00am Mae West: Dirty Blonde (AD) 3.05 A Play in a Day 4.05 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 four of the WTA and ATP grass court events, held at Autotron Rosmalen in s-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands. 12.30pm Live US Open Golf. Coverage of the first day of the Major, at Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina 8.00 Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: England v Oman. Coverage of the Group B match at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in St George, Antigua. Reigning champions England will be expecting a comfortable victory against a team that have qualified on two previous occasions, but are yet to progress beyond the first round 11.00 Live US Open Golf. Coverage of the opening day of the Major, held at Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina 1.00am Live ICC Men's T20 World Cup: Afghanistan v Papua New Guinea. Coverage of the Group C match 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 Alliance Party 10.40 The View. Political news, comment and analysis 11.20 News at 11.50 The Traitors US. The first murder is committed as the Traitors try to complete their line-up (r) 12.50am Rebus. Cafferky's suppliers seek vengeance for the drug theft (r) (AD) 1.40-6.00 BBC News  
BBC1 Scotland  
As BBC1 except: 11.15am Bargain Hunt. Roo Irvine hosts the show from Nottinghamshire (r) 12.00-1.00pm First Minister's Questions. Coverage of First Minister's Questions from the Scottish Parliament 7.25-7.30 Party Election Broadcast. By the Scottish Labour Party (r)  
BBC1 Wales  
Afghanistan v Papua New Guinea. Coverage of the Group C match at Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba 5.30 Sky Sports News  
STV  
As ITV1 except: 10.45pm-11.00 STV News 12.00-3.00am Shop on TV 3.35-5.05 Night Vision. News, sport and weather  
UTV  
As ITV1 except: 11.00pm UTV Life. Pamela Ballantine for the best of local chat and music 11.30 Rare Breed — A Farming Year. The working lives of farming families (r) 11.50-12.00 Hidden Northern Ireland (r)

Presidents

Listen for free via the QR code, on the Times Radio app or wherever you find your podcasts

BBC3

7.00pm Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May test-drive cars in Romania, as they search for a mountain highway built during the reign of Nicolae Ceausescu 8.00 The Traitors US. The Traitors are set a daunting task for their next murder, a dark and haunting mission sees the players keep working on the prize pot, and the Faithful continue to attempt to banish one of the Traitors 9.00 FILM: Alan Partridge — Alpha Papa (15, 2013) The hapless local radio DJ ends up in the middle of a siege when a colleague responds to being fired by taking hostages. Comedy starring Steve Coogan and Colm Meaney (AD) 10.25 High: Surviving a Dubai Drugs Bust. The date of Karl's trial is fast approaching (5/5) 10.55 I Kissed a Boy. The boys face the most important kiss off yet and tensions reach boiling point when a rift forms in the group (AD) 11.45 Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster. Elliot becomes more paranoid than ever (2/3) (AD) 12.30am Drugs Map of Britain. Two editions 1.25 Top Gear 2.25 Bad Education: Reunion Special (AD, SL) 3.10-3.55 Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster (AD, SL)

BBC4

7.00pm Great British Railway Journeys. Michael Hammond and James May test-drive cars in Romania, as they search for a mountain highway built during the reign of Nicolae Ceausescu 8.00 The Traitors US. The Traitors are set a daunting task for their next murder, a dark and haunting mission sees the players keep working on the prize pot, and the Faithful continue to attempt to banish one of the Traitors 9.00 FILM: Alan Partridge — Alpha Papa (15, 2013) The hapless local radio DJ ends up in the middle of a siege when a colleague responds to being fired by taking hostages. Comedy starring Steve Coogan and Colm Meaney (AD) 10.25 High: Surviving a Dubai Drugs Bust. The date of Karl's trial is fast approaching (5/5) 10.55 I Kissed a Boy. The boys face the most important kiss off yet and tensions reach boiling point when a rift forms in the group (AD) 11.45 Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster. Elliot becomes more paranoid than ever (2/3) (AD) 12.30am Drugs Map of Britain. Two editions 1.25 Top Gear 2.25 Bad Education: Reunion Special (AD, SL) 3.10-3.55 Confessions of a Teenage Fraudster (AD, SL)

Talking Pictures

6.00am FILM: The Common Touch (U, 1941) British drama starring Geoffrey Hibbert (b/w) 8.05 FILM: Vote for Huggett (U, 1949) Comedy starring Jack Warner (b/w) 9.45 FILM: Radio Days (PG, 1987) Woody Allen's drama starring Mia Farrow 11.30 FILM: The Green Cockatoo (U, 1937) Crime drama starring John Mills (b/w) 12.50pm Stage 7 (b/w) 1.20 FILM: The Big Boodle (U, 1957) Crime thriller starring Errol Flynn (b/w) 3.00 Crown Court 4.30 Danger UXB 5.30 Colonel March of Scotland Yard (b/w) 6.05 FILM: Sea Devils (U, 1953) Swashbuckling adventure starring Rock Hudson, Yvonne de Carlo and Maxwell Reed 7.50 What's On TPTV with Noel 8.00 The Brothers 9.05 Van der Valk (6/7) 10.10 FILM: The Falcon and the Snowman (18, 1985) Espionage thriller starring Timothy Hutton, Sean Penn and Pat Hingle 12.50am FILM: Woman on the Run (PG, 1950) Crime drama with Alan Sheridan (b/w) 2.25 FILM: Hannibal Brooks (U, 1969) 4.25 The Road to D-Day 5.35 Twist or Stick

Film4

11.00am Pool of London (PG, 1951) Ealing thriller starring Bonar Colleano (b/w) 12.45pm The Blue Lamp (PG, 1950) Police drama starring Jack Warner and Jimmy Hanley (b/w) 2.30 The Ghost and Mrs Muir (U, 1947) Romantic fantasy starring Gene Tierney and Rex Harrison (b/w) 4.35 Daleks' Invasion Earth: 2150 AD (U, 1966) Sci-fi adventure sequel with Peter Cushing and Bernard Cribbins (AD) 6.20 Only the Brave (12, 2017) The superintendent of a group of elite firefighters is pushed to his limit when he and his crew tackle a historic wildfire. Joseph Kosinski's fact-based drama starring Josh Brolin and Jennifer Connelly 9.00 Scream (18, 2022) Twenty-five years after brutal murders shocked a quiet town, a new killer dons the Ghostface mask and targets a group of teenagers. Horror sequel starring Neve Campbell and Courtney Cox (AD) 11.15 Monster (18, 2003) Examining the background and events that motivated Allen Wuornos to commit serial murder. Fact-based drama starring Charlize Theron (AD) 1.25am-3.50 To Live and Die in LA (18, 1985) Crime thriller starring Willem Dafoe

More4

8.55am A Place in the Sun 10.25 A New Life in the Sun 11.25 Find It, Fix It, Flog It 12.30pm Come Dine with Me (AD) 3.10 Four in a Bed 5.50 Château DIY. Building a gazebo (AD) 6.55 Car SOS. A 1980 Ford Escort RS2000 (AD) 7.55 Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud meets a couple who are spending £700,000 to build a curved glass family home in the Manchester suburb where they both grew up (1/11) (AD) 9.00 24 Hours in A&E. A 24-year-old is rushed to St George's after being tackled during a football match, leaving him with fractured bones in his leg (AD) 10.00 Rescue: Extreme Medics. An air ambulance is dispatched to help a 23-year-old rally driver on the island of Mull. Plus, the coast guard helicopter flies to a remote sea loch to rescue a woman who has fallen 15 feet (AD) 11.05 24 Hours in A&E. A man is brought into hospital after falling 20 feet through a skylight onto concrete, and a woman with severe abdominal pains also receives treatment (AD) 12.10am 24 Hours in A&E (AD) 1.15 Rescue: Extreme Medics (AD) 2.20 24 Hours in A&E (AD) 3.25-3.55 A Place in the Sun

BBC Alba  
6.00am Alba Today 5.00pm Sionnach agus Maigheach (Fox & Hare) (r) 5.10 Meaban in Moo (r) 5.20 Pip & Posy (r) 5.30 Oscar & Ealasaid (r) 5.40 Daolag-bhreas is Seillean 5.45 Nannag a' Naoi/Hugglebo (r) 5.50 Stòiridh (r) 6.00 An Saoghal Droil aig Pol Plòc/The Rubbish World of Dave Spud (r) 6.15 Geamaichean Gorach (r) 6.20 An Teaghlach Rìoghail an Ath-dhoras (The Royals Next Door) (r) 6.45 A-null 's a-nall (r) 7.05 Nets: Gach Creutair Beo (r) 7.30 SpeakeoGaelic (r) 8.00 An LA (News) 8.30 Immigration Tracks — Canada, le Anne NicAlpine (r) 9.00 Am Bùabhall Ameireaganach (The American Buffalo). The story of the mammal 10.00 Mach a Seal — An Roinn Eòrpa 10.30 Speaking Our Language: The Inside Story (r) 11.30 Julie Fowlis Kelvingrove (r) 12.00-6.00am Alba Today  
S4C  
6.00am Cyw: Blociau Rhif (r) 6.05 Guto Gwiningen (r) 6.20 Gwdihw (r) 6.35 Sam Tan (r) 6.45 Byd Tad-Cyw (r) 7.00 Nos Da Cyw (r) 7.05 Twyt (r) 7.20 Ein Byd Bhaer (r) 7.30 Sion y Cheff (r) 7.45 Sbarc (r) 8.00 Bing (r) 8.10 Tomos a'i Ffrindiau (r) 8.20 Jen a Jim Pob Dim (r) 8.35 Ben a Mali a'u Byd Bach O Hud (r) 8.45 Cascamwri (r) 9.00 Shwshwysan (r) 9.10 Abadas (r) 9.25 Sblj a Sblj (r) 9.35 Blero yn Mynd i Ocido (r) 9.45 Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) 10.00 Blociau Rhif (r) 10.05 Guto Gwiningen (r) 10.20 Gwdihw (r) 10.35 Sam Tan (r) 10.45 Byd Tad-Cyw (r) 11.00 Nos Da Cyw (r) 11.05 Twyt (r) 11.20 Ein Byd Bach (r) 11.30 Sion y Cheff (r) 11.45 Sbarc (r) 12.00 News: Weather 12.05pm Bois y RhondD (r) 12.30 Heno (r) 1.00 Ein Llywybrau Celtaidd (r) 1.30 Cerys Matthews a'i Goeden Fald (r) 1.30 News: Weather 2.05 Prynhawn Da 3.00 News: Weather 3.05 Gynffwrdd (r) 4.00 Awr Fawr: Shwshwysan (r) 4.10 Nos Da Cyw (r) 4.15 Ein Byd Bach (r) 4.25 Blero yn Mynd i Ocido (r) 4.40 Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) 5.05 Stwnsh: Oll! Osgr (r) 5.10 Y Doniolis (r) 5.15 Byd Rwtsh Dal Potsh (r) 5.30 Tekkers (r) 6.00 Dan Da Cyw (r) 6.30 Arfordir Cymru: Bae Ceredigion (r) 6.57 News 7.00 Heno 7.30 News: Weather 8.00 Pobol y Cwm (AD) 8.25 Rownd a Rownd (AD) 8.55 News: Weather 9.00 Y Byd Ar Bedwar. Current affairs 9.30 Drych (r) Fi A: IWF (r) 10.30 Y Llinell Las (r) (AD) 11.30 Grd 11.45-12.20am Ffasiwn Drefn (r) (AD)

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 4.00 Family Fortunes 3.00 Veronica Mars 4.00 Dawson's Creek 5.00 Dress to Impress 6.00 Celebrity Catchphrase (AD) 7.00 Deal or No Deal. Game show hosted by Stephen Mulhern 8.00 Bob's Burgers. Tina teams up with Darryl to win the Cupids' couple contest (AD) 8.30 Bob's Burgers. Tina and Louise volunteer to run Jimmy Jr's class president campaign (AD) 9.00 Love Island. The temperature rises for the couples as they aim to avoid being in danger of getting dumped by their partners 10.05 Tell Me Everything. Naisha finds double pressure too much to take (2/6) 11.05 Family Guy. Chris meets a puppeteer (AD) 11.35 Family Guy. Peter receives tickets to a boxing match as a birthday gift (AD) 12.05am American Dad! (AD) 1.05 Bob's Burgers (AD) 2.05 Don't Hate the Playaz 2.45 Unwind with ITV 3.00 Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale 7.00 Classic Coronation Street (AD) 8.05 Agatha Christie's Poirot (AD) 10.35 The Royal 11.35 Heartbeat (AD) 1.40pm Classic Emmerdale 2.40 Classic Coronation Street (AD) 3.40 Inspector Morse (AD) 5.55 Heartbeat. Double bill (AD) 8.00 Vera. DCI Stanhope is called out to a grim scene when a body is found in the back of a burnt-out car and the victim is identified as a popular local GP (5/6) (AD) 10.00 Wire in the Blood. In the absence of a clear motive, the team members struggle to build up a profile of the person they are hunting. Robson Green and Hermione Norris star (5/4) 11.50 The Royal. Ormored faces a testing time when his father-in-law arrives demanding to know whether he was seeing Dr Weatherill while his late daughter was still alive 12.45am Upstairs, Downstairs. Daisy looks forward to Edward's return, but Hazel is saddened to learn that James will be delayed 1.50 Unwind with ITV. Daily escape designed to calm the mind and encourage relaxation and reflection 2.30 Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am Great Racehorses 6.20 Minder (AD, SL) 7.15 The Sweeney (SL) 8.15 The Return of Sherlock Holmes (AD) 9.25 Magnum, PI (AD, SL) 10.25 Kojak 11.30 BattleBots 12.25pm The Return of Sherlock Holmes (AD) 1.35 Magnum, PI (AD) 2.35 Kojak 3.40 Minder (AD) 4.50 The Sweeney. Crime drama 6.00 River Monsters. Deaths in Alaska 6.30 British Touring Car Championship Highlights. Action from Thruxton 8.00 Isle of Man TT. A second recap of the 2024 Isle of Man TT races 9.00 FILM: Moonraker (PG, 1979) James Bond's search for a missing space shuttle leads to an industrialist bent on genocide — and a rematch with old foe Jaws. Spy adventure starring Roger Moore and Michael Lonsdale (AD) 11.40 FILM: Mechanic — Resurrection (15, 2016) Hitman Arthur Bishop is blackmailed into committing three assassinations when his arch-enemy kidnaps his girlfriend. Action thriller sequel starring Jason Statham and Jessica Alba 1.30am The Sweeney (SL) 2.25 Auto Mundial 2.50 Unwind with ITV 3.00 Teleshopping

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 6.40 Are You Being Served? The staff suggest holding a fashion show to boost falling sales 7.20 Last of the Summer Wine. Barry sets out to become more assertive 8.00 Pryde Brown. The grand opening of Pryde Castle ends in disaster (AD) 9.00 A Small Light. Miep must choose between her morals and her best friend, before her husband begins deliberately lying to her (AD) 10.10 New Tricks. Sandra reopens an investigation into the apparent suicide of a Foreign Office diplomat, whose body was found in a frozen lake after a government laptop was stolen from her home (3/10) (AD) 11.35 Soldier, Soldier. The officers share their barracks with an American Jefferson 12.35am Lovejoy 1.45 David Copperfield 2.50 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 Weird 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 Weird 6.00 Antiques Roadshow. From Floors Castle 7.00 Canal Boat Diaries. Robbie receives a soaking inside the very wet Blisworth Tunnel on the Grand Union Canal (9/10) (AD) 8.00 Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics. A 1969 Morris Mini Cooper Mk1 is fully restored by specialists (AD) 9.00 Bangers & Cash. Dave and Jack head to East Yorkshire to pick up a dusty Alfa Romeo and a 1930s Jowett (AD) 10.00 Bangers & Cash. Derek navigates the dry stone walls of the Peak District to collect an original 1988 Opel Manta (AD) 11.00 Abandoned Engineering. Old Byron Hot Springs in the Californian desert (5/8) (AD) 12.00 Great British Railway Journeys 1.00am Abandoned Engineering (AD) 2.00 Scouting for Toys (AD) 3.00 Teleshopping



## Tetonor Tricky No 474

18	175	40	80
187	25	150	32
28	100	20	135
56	31	108	24

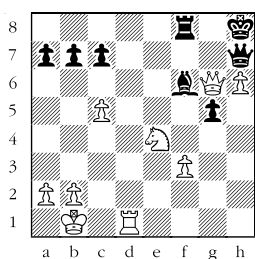
		4	5			10	10	11		15			27		
--	--	---	---	--	--	----	----	----	--	----	--	--	----	--	--

When complete, the strip below the grid can be split into eight pairs of numbers. Adding the numbers in a pair gives one of the 16 numbers in the grid. Multiplying them gives a different number in the grid. For example, a 4 and 6 in the strip could be paired to make 10 ( $4+6$ ) and 24 ( $4 \times 6$ ) in the grid. Enter each sum below the corresponding number in the grid. The blanks in the strip must be deduced, bearing in mind the numbers are listed in ascending order.

*The next Tetonor puzzle will appear on Tuesday*

**For more puzzles, including  
Mini Sudoku, extra Codeword,  
Train Tracks and Futoshiki  
go to page 10**

## Winning Move



**White to play.**

This position is from Klinova-Blokhin, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2024.

There is an old adage in chess saying that when you see a good move, you should look for a better one. As with all such pithy observations it contains an element of truth but slavish adherence to it is not a great idea. Here, however, White resisted the lure of the promising 1 Qxh7? Kxh7 2 Rd7+ in favour of ...?

**Codeword No 5240**

	10	18	7		21	21	4	14		25	4	14	9
10			9		7		19		14		13		19
3	19	26	7	15		2	4		4	13	22	4	21
5		4		2			14		3		14		11
10	3	21	8	4			24	3	23	24	4	26	
3				6			11		12		5		22
23	7	1	26	3	26		16	2	14	5	3		14
4		7		10		5		5					4
	5	19	7	26	10	18		26	14	2	5		5
20		24		7		7		17		23			2
18	7	22	22	9			6	7	4	6	23	9	17
3		7		19			26		19		4		4
17	7	19	4			17	11	5	26	4	14	11	

~~A~~ ~~B~~ ~~C~~ ~~D~~ ~~E~~ ~~F~~ ~~G~~ ~~H~~ ~~I~~ ~~J~~ ~~K~~ ~~L~~ ~~M~~ ~~N~~ ~~O~~ ~~P~~ ~~Q~~ ~~R~~ ~~S~~ ~~T~~ ~~U~~ ~~V~~ ~~W~~ ~~X~~ ~~Y~~ ~~Z~~

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		<b>A</b>		<b>S</b>					<b>C</b>			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Yesterday's solution, right*

**Cluelines Stuck on Codeword?** To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke. 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

## Lexica Easy No 7469 Hard No 7470

The image shows two 8x8 grids with the solution to the word search puzzle. The first grid contains the words 'SADOLLA' (row 1, col 2-9) and 'MENDLY' (col 7, row 1-8). The second grid contains the words 'MENDLY' (col 1, row 1-8) and 'LIMPAY' (row 8, col 1-8). Black dots indicate the starting positions of the words.

Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

## Train Tracks No 2268

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

**Quintagram®**

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Christmas in westerly Spanish  
city (4)

2 Tree in mist by lake (5)

**3** Go around Burnley's outskirts, given authorisation (6)

4 Rebelliousness from French person getting married (8)

5 Gad about with wholly terrible ruler, tucking into G&T (9)

A	A	A	A	A	B	C	D
E	E	E	E	F	G	H	I
I	L	L	L	L	N	N	N
O	P	S	S	T	V	Y	Z

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## KenKen Difficult No 6232

5+	72×	4-		6	7+
			3-		
3-	6×	1-	3-	9+	
				3-	
15+			18×	2÷	
7+				1-	

All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

## Futoshiki No 4780

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>
		√			
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
			√	√	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	>	<input type="text"/>	>	<input type="text"/>
			√		
<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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.

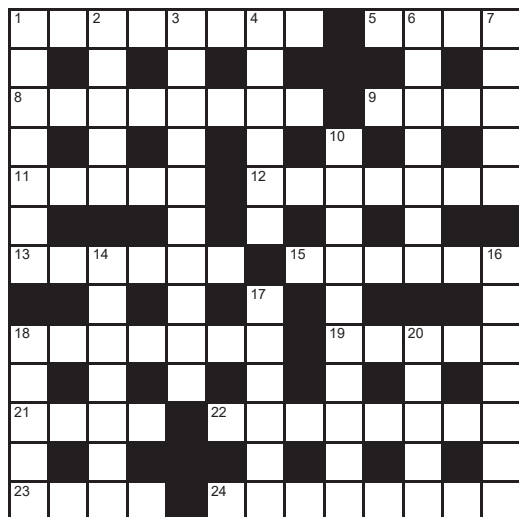
**Kakuro No 3739**

	24	23		12	24	34	16		21	3
17			30					6		
16			39					4		
23			13	16			3			
			28		16		23			7
	23	33	6		26			9		
33								4		
			34				21			
14										
16			16			17				
			4			7			24	23
	6	3		6			19			
31				16			17		16	
4			21					17		

Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.



## times2 Crossword No 9556



## Across

- 1 Anonymous pedestrian (6-2)  
5 Dull, colourless (4)  
8 Abundant (8)  
9 Italian salutation (4)  
11 Exhaust (resources) (3,2)  
12 Total attendance (7)  
13 Rain-bearing cloud (6)  
15 Side to one's personality (6)

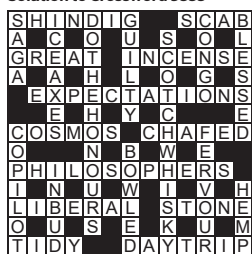
## Down

- 18 Egg yolk paint (7)  
19 --- salts, medicinal substance (5)  
21 Severe discomfort (4)  
22 Capital city of Chile (8)  
23 Bludgeoning weapon (4)  
24 Vision (8)

## Down

- 1 Flightless bird (7)  
2 River of northern France (5)  
3 Captivated, overjoyed (10)  
4 Reward on an outlaw's head (6)  
6 Underground stem of plants such as ginger (7)  
7 Fillip, stimulus (5)  
10 University brochure (10)  
14 Autobiographical writings (7)  
16 Basketball break (4-3)  
17 Vast interstellar system (6)  
18 Subject (5)  
20 Colloquial language (5)

## Solution to Crossword 9555



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

Birthplace of JK Rowling; the world's first bungee jump; *The Young Ones* was filmed here.

I'm talking about Bristol of course — venue for the prestigious 2024 Provost Spring Foursomes.

Today's deal from round three features a fine defensive play by my teammate Espen Erichsen of Norway and Tunbridge Wells, sitting West, in partnership with Richard Plackett of Wales and Oxford.

West led the two of spades to East's king, East switching at trick two to the four of hearts (any other suit potentially giving away a trick). Declarer's ten lost to West's jack, and now?

Say West leads back a seemingly normal/harmless low heart (the ten of spades being unsafe — ♠10, ♠Q, ♠K, ruffed exposes his partner to a ruffing finesse). Declarer wins the ace and tests diamonds, hoping the jack falls in three rounds, enabling him to discard a club from dummy on his winning fourth diamond, and later ruff his third club in dummy. Declarer loses only a spade and two hearts — game made. When diamonds do not behave however (as here), declarer knows he has but one hope — the double club finesse. He leads a club and finesses the ten. This roughly one-in-four shot comes in, and the game is made.

West did not return that passive second heart. Instead, anticipating declarer's combination line, he found the brilliant return of the seven of clubs (key play).

No way was declarer going to take the anti-percentage deep club

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

Teams: ♠ Q874 Advanced

♥ 876 ♠ K54

♦ AK10 ♠ AK963

♣ J ♠ K4

♥ J72 ♠ 96

♣ J7 ♠ 6532

♠ J ♠ A10953

♥ AQ103 ♠ 984

S W(Erichsen) N E(Plackett)

1♥(1) Pass 2♠(2) Dbl(3)

3♦ Pass 4♥ End

(1) Playing Five-card Majors.

(2) Playing a version of modern artificial major-suit raises (within Five-card Majors)

whereby a jump in the other major shows a three-card limit raise in partner's major.

(3) For the lead.

Contract: 4♥, Opening Lead: ♠2

finesse when the chances of the jack of diamonds falling in three rounds were better than 50-50. Up went the ace of clubs — and down went his contract.

Declarer cashed the ace of hearts and (naturally leaving West's queen outstanding) tried the three top diamonds (no jack appearing). He then ruffed his fourth diamond, crossed to the (jack and) king of clubs and ruffed a third spade but had to concede the last two tricks to West — one down.

Take a gold star if you switched to the seven of clubs, effectively kiboshing declarer's fallback position.

andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

## Brain Trainer

**EASY** 3 x 9 + 15 ÷ 7  $\frac{2}{3}$  OF IT SQUARE IT - 8 50% OF IT x 2 + 9 **ANSWER**

**MEDIUM** 19 + 32  $\frac{2}{3}$  OF IT x 5 70% OF IT + 157 x 4 - 236  $\frac{1}{4}$  OF IT 80% OF IT **ANSWER**

**HARDER** 45 x 5  $\frac{7}{15}$  OF IT + 516  $\frac{1}{3}$  OF IT  $\frac{5}{6}$  OF IT x 6 ÷ 5  $\frac{5}{6}$  OF IT x 11 **ANSWER**

## Polygon

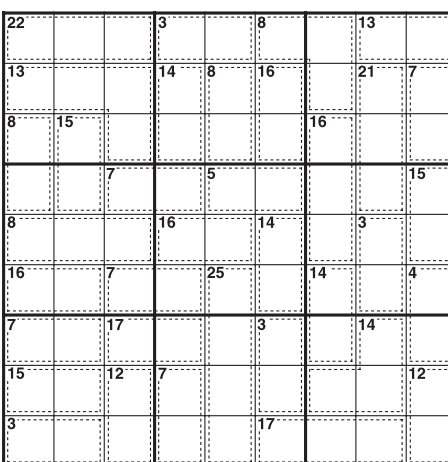


From these letters, make words of four or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. **How you rate** 15 words, average; 21, good; 25, very good; 30, excellent

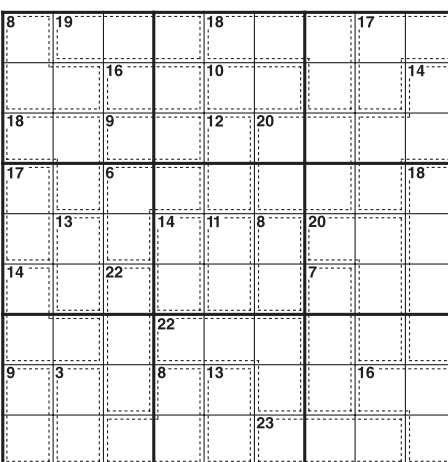
## Yesterday's answers

deni, denti, dine, dine, dint, endite, endive, even, event, eventide, evident, ident, need, névé, nide, nite, teen, tein, tend, tine, tined, vein, veined, vend, vent, vented, venti, vine

## Killer Gentle No 9518



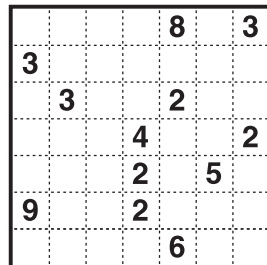
## Killer Tough No 9519



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 5123



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 3742

$\times 4 \times 7 = 224$

$\times - \times = 16$

$+ - + = 9$

$= 53 \quad = 1 \quad = 66$

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 2700



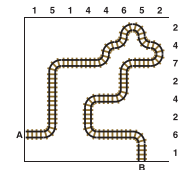
## Codeword 5239



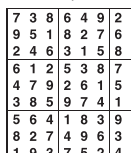
## Kakuro 3738



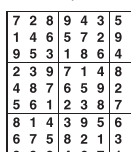
## Train Tracks 2267



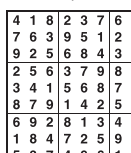
## Sudoku 14,985



## Sudoku 14,986



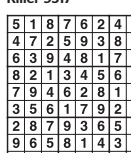
## Sudoku 14,987



## Killer 9516



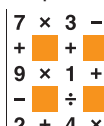
## Killer 9517



## Cell Blocks 5122



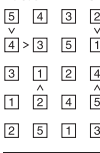
## Set Square 3741



## Lexica 7467



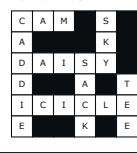
## Futoshiki 4779



## KenKen 6231



## Lexica 7468



## Today's solutions

## Concise Quintagram

- 1 Just  
2 Coward  
3 Liquor  
4 Back off  
5 On thin ice

## Cryptic Quintagram

- 1 Noel  
2 Hazel  
3 Bypass  
4 Defiance  
5 Gallivant

## Suko 4141



## Brain Trainer

- Easy 17  
Medium 868  
Harder 7590

## Word watch

Degout (b) To cover with droplets (*Collins*)  
Stellenbosch (a) To move to a post where incompetence matters less (*Chambers*)  
Ispeity (a) Self-centredness (*OED*)

## Chess — Winning Move

With the forcing sequence 1 Qxf6+! Rxf6 2 Rd8+ Qg8 3 Rxxg8+ Kxxg8 4 Nxf6+ White emerges with an extra piece

## Quiz

- 1 Fish 2 Guinness 3 Ireland 4 S Club 7, who have been rebranded as S Club 5 Nigella Lawson 6 George Osborne 7 Mary Queen of Scots 8 Douglas Adams 9 In Cold Blood 10 Bohrium, named after Niels Bohr 11 Dante Ferretti 12 Harry Dresden, as in *The Dresden Files* series 13 Clodion aka Claude Michel 14 Kentucky Derby 15 Penny-farthing







## 07 RAMPING UP RESEARCH FOR PROSTATE CANCER





# NAVIGATING MEN'S HEALTH

Distributed in  
**THE TIMES**

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## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

# How a benefits package can cater for male health needs

Many men remain stubbornly reluctant to seek timely medical help. Enlightened employers understand how important it is to tailor their offerings to those who'd rather 'keep calm and carry on'

**Sam Shaw**

**T**oxic masculinity doesn't always present as the male chauvinism, misogyny and homophobia that social media makes it out to be. Conceptually, the problem can have a subtler, yet equally pernicious, influence on how men deal with their own health concerns. Excessive pride, machismo and the fear of displaying any perceived weakness can be their worst enemies in this respect.

Employee benefit provision is often led by trends. Has a louder post-pandemic mental health agenda meant that we're confronting physical health problems more quietly? Female fertility and menopause support programmes have become a priority for many a large organisation's HR department, but has that come at the expense of attention to men's health issues?

Men have their own specific set of serious health and wellbeing concerns to deal with. For instance, a 2023-24 parliamentary inquiry into men's health, drawing on research by the charity Men's Health Forum, revealed that 20% of men in the UK die before the age of 65 – and more than 40% die before reaching 75.

Men account for three-quarters of premature deaths from cardiovascular disease. They also run a 37% higher risk than women of dying from cancer and a 67% higher chance of dying from cancers that affect both sexes.

A more familiar tragic stat is that men are responsible for 80% of suicides – the biggest cause of death among British men aged under 35. The UK is also seeing a sharp increase in male suicides among those aged 35 to 64.

Furthermore, returning to the influence of toxic masculinity, they are far less likely than women to report that they're unwell and seek treatment. About three-quarters of men in the UK will avoid going to the doctor if they're feeling ill, according to Fertifa, a specialist in reproductive healthcare benefits. Men also self-report mental health problems at a lower rate than women. So, even if certain issues may appear male-specific, it's important to make the whole workforce aware of them, according to Hannah Pearsall, head of wellbeing at recruitment firm Hays UK & Ireland.

She believes that female "allies" may be quicker to identify problems and encourage the men in question



to deal with them, rather than sweep them under the carpet.

Pearsall says that drop-in health sessions for men in the workplace might have failed historically because no one wanted to be seen seeking their help. But business leaders are taking increasingly prominent roles in these programmes, which is helping to remove the stigma that some people still associate with such schemes.

Holding panel discussions or conducting regular sessions inviting men across the company to tell their stories in a "safe space" means that participants don't have to proactively draw attention to problems they may have. They can simply engage in a company-wide conversation.

"This approach helps to break down the stigma and it also gives other men space to share their own concerns if they're hearing leaders tell their stories," Pearsall says.

Awareness events such as Men's Health Week (which runs from 10 to

16 June this year) or Movember can help to stimulate discussion, but these must be handled sensitively, she warns. Although campaigns of this type "can be useful for shining a light on specific topics, there's a risk that they'll be seen as tokenistic if you do nothing else for the rest of the year".

The organisations behind such events often offer a range of free resources and information, which can be helpful where budgets and in-house expertise are limited.

People tend to assume that hormone-related health concerns sit primarily in the female domain. But fertility problems, for instance, affect both sexes equally, according to the British Fertility Society. Other "men's health" problems include prostate and testicular cancers, depression and male pattern baldness. Testosterone deficiency is moving up the agenda, as are urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction – highly personal and

stressful matters that are difficult for sufferers to talk about in any setting, let alone at work.

Cardiovascular disease, mental ill-health and alcohol and drug dependency are also more prevalent among men than women, according to Smart About Health, which creates corporate wellbeing packages.

So, while employee benefits often focus on insurance, the starting points can be simpler. They include removing stigma by creating opportunities for colleagues at all levels to discuss their experiences and have their questions answered; directing employees discreetly towards educational resources and expertise such as occupational health professionals (internal or external); teaching men how to check themselves for abnormalities; offering access to virtual GPs and health screenings as standard; and allowing people to book appointments during working hours and offering them screening (subsidised or otherwise), check-ups and further support as needed.

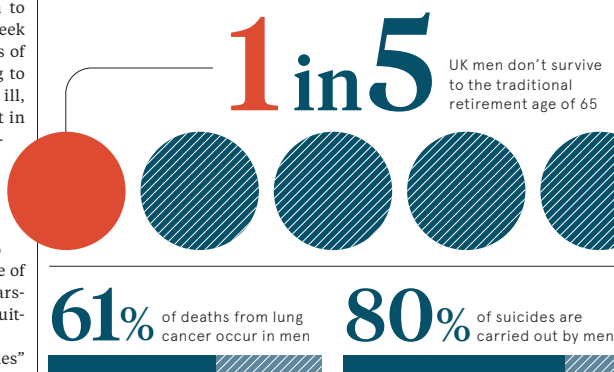
While macho stereotypes are often blamed for men's unwillingness to seek help, the situation is likely to be more complex than that. So says Jennie Armstrong, the founder and managing director of Construction Health, an occupational health firm dedicated to the building trade – among the UK's most male-dominated industries.

She explains that men in this sector are often reluctant to speak up about their health problems because they believe that this will reflect poorly on their reputations as reliable workers and so make them less employable.

Large construction consortia with deep pockets might be able to offer comprehensive occupational health programmes for their employees, but smaller operations are often heavily populated by contractors and self-employed men, often from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures.

Recognising common ground, regardless of the size or type of stakeholder, helps when engaging in conversations about mental ill-health in the workplace, according to Armstrong.

"Whether you're working on High Speed 2 or a residential building site, speaking the same language levels the playing field," she says. "It isn't necessary to over-medicalise or go into lots of detail about certain conditions. Simply getting people talking is often enough." ●

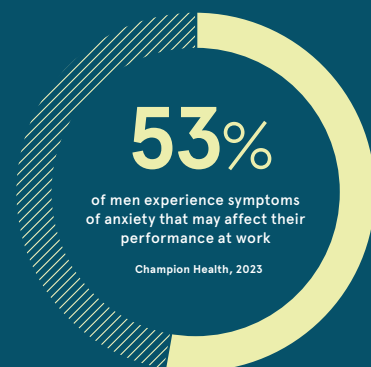
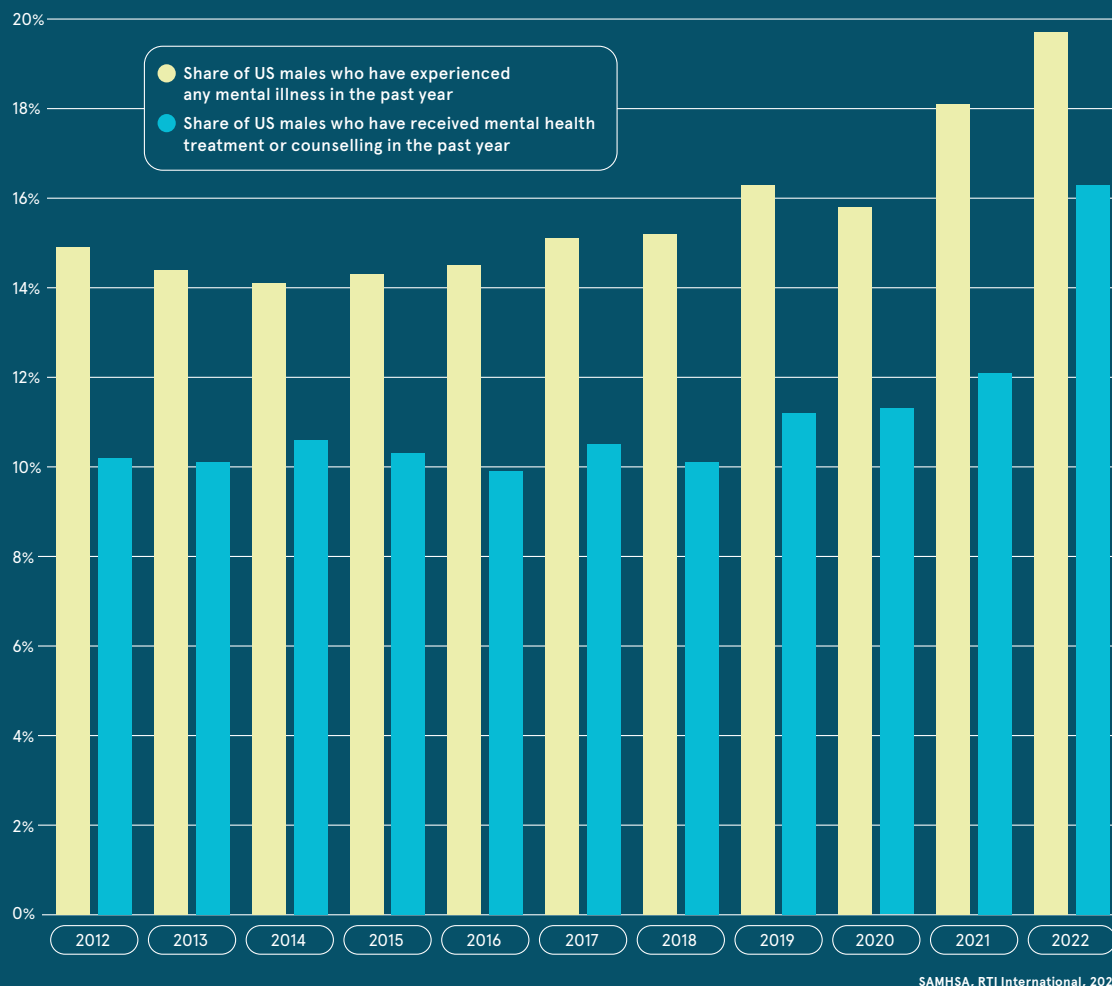




# MEN AND MENTAL HEALTH

The social isolation brought about by Covid-era lockdowns helped to bring attention to mental wellbeing, both in the workplace and in wider society. But while the pandemic has inadvertently encouraged more open discussions about mental health, research suggests that a disproportionate share of men are still suffering in silence. Men remain reticent about their struggles with mental ill-health for a variety of reasons. But, with suicide the biggest killer of men aged under 35 in the UK, overcoming the reluctance to open up could be a matter of life and death.

## REPORTS OF MENTAL ILL-HEALTH ARE RISING AFTER REMAINING STABLE FOR MANY YEARS, HOWEVER FAR FEWER MEN RECEIVE TREATMENT OR COUNSELLING THAN REPORT MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS



**1 in 10**  
male employees have had thoughts of self-harm on multiple occasions



## MANY MEN STILL FEEL EMBARRASSED ABOUT SEEKING TREATMENT

Share of US males who are reluctant to talk about their mental health for the following reasons

Feelings of embarrassment

**40%**

Worries about the stigma of mental ill-health

**38%**

Not wanting to burden others

**35%**

Not wanting to appear weak

**25%**

## FINANCIAL WORRIES HAVE AN IMPACT ON MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Share of US males citing the following as contributing factors to poor mental health

Financial pressures

**46%**

Health concerns

**36%**

Work pressures

**31%**

Abuse, trauma, neglect and/or social isolation

**23%**



# Why a patient-centric approach to medical innovation is essential

Medical innovation can help with the quick development, and delivery, of medicine to patients. Accord Healthcare's initiatives show why a patient-centric approach results in more effective and affordable care

**T**here have been many advances in prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment in the last decade and there is every reason for optimism about the future.

Accord Healthcare, which supplies the NHS with one-in-nine of all UK medicines and Europe with one-third of all its injectable cancer treatments, is at the forefront of the drive to transform treatment. But the company recognises that success needs far more than effective medicines. Patient engagement is also essential to ensure patients get the best treatment as early as possible in the disease cycle.

Joe Dunford, Accord Healthcare vice-president, specialty brands for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, says: "It's essential that men with possible prostate cancer symptoms visit their GP. The earlier prostate cancer is diagnosed, the easier it is to treat".

In 2022 Prostate Cancer UK estimated that there could be 14,000 men in the UK living with undiagnosed prostate cancer. The coronavirus pandemic left men unable to visit hospitals, a likely contributing factor. But there was and still is widespread concern that vulnerable men delay seeking help, sometimes because of embarrassment about the prospect of an intimate examination.

This is why Accord Healthcare works in partnership with patient groups. Dunford says: "These groups do so much not only in raising awareness about prostate cancer, but in supporting those going through a really frightening time after diagnosis.

"The information and support from groups is not just for the patient,

but for the whole family. We all know someone that has been affected by cancer and how hard it hits families, including children."

## Centring the patient experience

Accord Healthcare's 'patient-centric' commitment led to a partnership with leading cancer organisations such as the Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, the world's first hospital dedicated exclusively to cancer treatment, diagnosis and research; Macmillan Cancer Support; and Care Across, which provides patients with easy to understand, peer-reviewed information, psychological support and other tools.

In 2021 this partnership produced the Unify Health app. Dunford explained: "This helps patients monitor their symptoms on a daily basis and advises on how to best manage them. Being well-informed can help patients feel more in control. The app also links patients to local pharmacies if they have specific questions or concerns. Having a record of symptoms can also help care teams tailor patients' treatment plans."

The app is just one example of Accord Healthcare responding to feedback from healthcare professionals and patient support groups to position patients as a partner in their care. It's why work is now underway to develop dedicated patient programmes, created with prostate cancer patient insights to support them with information and tools to take more informed, proactive decisions in their healthcare, through shared decision making.

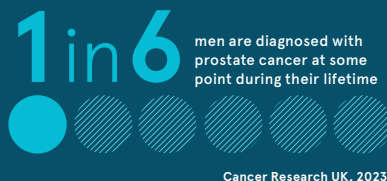
The aim is to have a positive effect on patient outcomes by enabling people to maximise the time they have with their healthcare team, ensure they understand all the options available to them and feel empowered to voice their preferences.

Another area is the development of an innovative medicine delivery system to treat cancer with pills instead of injections. "This might seem like a small, incremental gain," says Dunford, "but it means patients don't have to go to hospital. This can make a big difference to their quality of life. We're always trying to produce the very best for our patients by giving people a choice."

Accord Healthcare is one of the fastest-growing pharmaceutical companies, selling medicine in more than 80

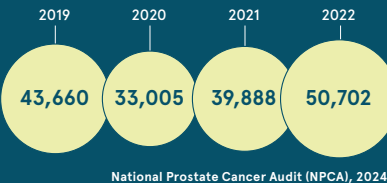
## In the UK, prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men

Estimated lifetime risk of being diagnosed with prostate cancer for males born in 1961 in the UK



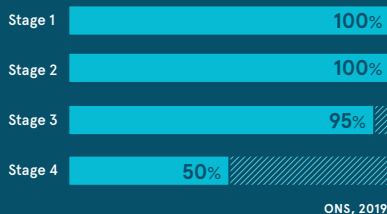
In 2022, over 50,000 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer in England. The number of cases diagnosed per year is increasing, with Covid-19 contributing to a decrease in diagnoses between 2020-2021

Number of patients diagnosed with prostate cancer in England per year



## The survival rate is nearly 100% for cases diagnosed in the early stages

Five-year survival rate by cancer stage for diagnoses between 2013 and 2017 in England



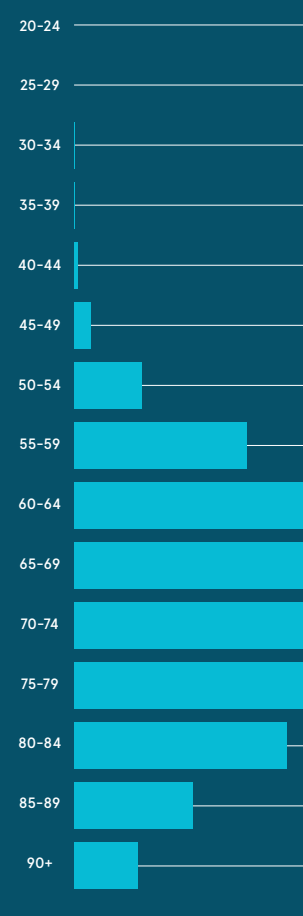
## Prostate cancer survival has tripled in the last 50 years

Length of survival for men diagnosed with prostate cancer across all stages



## The number of diagnoses increases with most cases registered in men aged 65-74

Registrations of newly diagnosed cases of prostate cancer in England in 2021, thousands, by age group



**“The aim is to have a positive effect on patient outcomes by enabling people to maximise the time they have with their healthcare team**

## The risks and symptoms of prostate cancer

The number of men diagnosed with prostate cancer is rising. The risk of prostate cancer increases as men get older and because people are now living longer, we are witnessing a spike in diagnoses every year. An increase in opportunistic screening is also contributing to the identification of more cases, often at an earlier stage.

Early stage prostate cancer usually has no symptoms, highlighting the need for general awareness of the disease. Later stage symptoms can include blood in the urine or semen, reduction or loss of semen, back pain, weight loss or erectile dysfunction, although all of these are more often caused by something else.

Symptoms do not necessarily indicate cancer — but need to be checked

by a GP in the first instance. Men have a right to a PSA blood test from their GP from age 50, or earlier if they are higher-risk or have any symptoms.

Simon Cheesman, head of medical affairs at Accord Healthcare and a former pharmacist who worked in NHS cancer services for two decades, says: "There may be a reluctance with some men to have health checks, and a willingness to ignore or put up with bothersome symptoms."

"A partner who is aware of the risk factors and what signs and symptoms to look out for may be able to encourage them to get checked out with their GP."

"The importance of seeking help is twofold: to pick up anything sinister at an early stage and, conversely, to provide reassurance and advice

on management if there is a more benign cause of their symptoms."

With no national prostate screening programme in the UK, Cheesman notes, men should proactively seek help if they notice symptoms or if they fall into a higher-risk group based on age, family history or ethnicity.

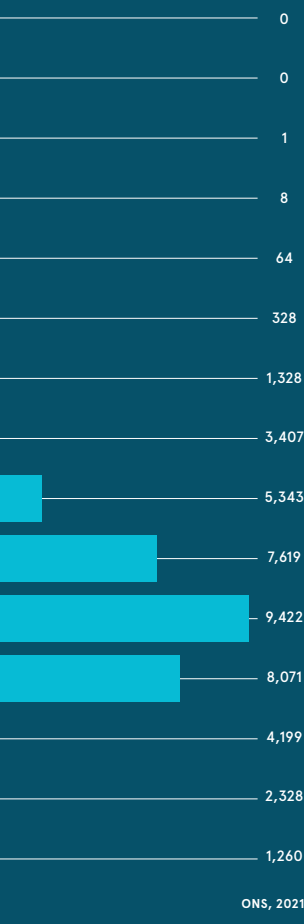
Prostate cancer is more common in Black people and other ethnic minorities. Your risk also rises if you have a first-degree relative with the disease.

Most importantly, Cheesman emphasises the need for support from a partner over treatment options and managing feelings of anxiety or depression that may follow a diagnosis.



significantly in men over 50,  
aged between 70-79

of prostate cancer  
group



**With no national prostate screening programme in the UK, men should proactively seek help**

which provides financial advisory services to large corporations and governments. A 2022 paper published by the US National Institute for Health reported that about 90% of clinical drug development fails testing.

Accord Healthcare's success is based on its strategic approach of balancing generics, hospital and specialty brands medicines. It produces generic medicines resulting in affordable, effective drugs across the world. (After patents on branded medicine expire, other companies are free to produce equally effective generic versions.)

The company is also a leading manufacturer of 'biosimilars', a highly similar version of a biologic, a medicine derived from living cells and organisms. Biosimilars treat a wide range of conditions, including cancers.

The company's generic and biosimilar medicines support cost reduction for healthcare systems, Dunford points out, by freeing up resources to pay for more expensive treatments and research into new medicines.

This includes Accord Healthcare's own research. In the last ten years, it has increasingly shifted its emphasis towards cancer. It has more than 40 cancer or cancer-related treatments and hopes that its 800 R&D scientists will help to increase this number. About 20 treatments are being tested, several of which may become available within the next few years. Last year, the company was a category winner in four areas in the 2023 Pharmaceutical Technical Excellence Awards.

Dunford comments: "This made me very proud. Accord's success is based on our approach which combines generic and biosimilar production with state-of-the-art research. Our goal at Accord is to provide value to the patient, to the healthcare system and to the company. When we get those three right, it creates a triple win. Ultimately our ambition is: 'make it better' – and I believe we do."

For more information please visit  
[accord-healthcare.com](https://accord-healthcare.com)

**accord**  
We make it better

countries as well as playing a pivotal part in the NHS. Its two UK factories, in Devon and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, produce more than 5.9 billion tablets annually. The company also has the UK's largest, manufacturer-owned, pharma distribution centre and a critically important research and development (R&D) laboratory based in London.

What is the key to innovative success? Dunford replied: "The challenge is trying to second guess what rival companies are doing and how cancer treatments are changing. What makes staying ahead so challenging is that it can take up to 15 years to develop a new medicine and up to eight years or more before a new compound begins clinical trials."

Cost is also a factor – drug development is not surprisingly dubbed pharmaceutical roulette. The average R&D cost for taking a new medicine from discovery to launch was \$2.3bn in both 2022 and 2023, according to Deloitte,



## Recognising the benefits of prostate cancer support groups

Prostate cancer support groups are places where people can find community and solidarity, yet men are often reluctant to seek help. Two members discuss the benefits of support groups, from companionship to advice on treatment options

**P**atient choice' has supplanted 'doctor knows best' as the new healthcare mantra. But how many men with prostate cancer are qualified to make an informed choice if they are advised: "You could have prostate removal or radiotherapy, or focal therapy or hormone therapy, or several together."

Such decisions are critical because prostate cancer is the UK's most common male cancer. Andrew Gabriel, 62, an independent patient-advocate, says: "Prostate cancer may be unique with its large number of treatment options, so the patient is left to decide."

"This is 'shared decision making' whereby, notionally, you get the information you need in the clinic. But a clinician can't cover everything in a 10 to 20 minute consultation."

As a patient advocate, Andrew spends between 60 and 90 minutes advising newly diagnosed patients. This may seem extraordinary, but Andrew,

who was diagnosed with the disease six years ago, says: "There is so much to discuss, much of which clinicians do not routinely cover. Hospitals provide written information, but there's nothing better than talking to someone who's had the treatment and knows about its nuances."

Hormone therapy is one example of this. A common prostate cancer treatment, hormone therapy blocks the male hormone testosterone and can cause fatigue, hot flushes, loss of muscle mass, breast swelling, loss of libido and the ability to get an erection.

Andrew says: "You'll find plenty of men in support groups with experience dealing with such side effects. One thing I stress is that you cannot go for several years without an erection and expect it to still work when you finish treatment."

"You need to preserve your erectile function while you've got no libido with erectile dysfunction medications."

### A safe place

Peter, a retired doctor, who became incontinent after undergoing prostate cancer surgery, joined a support group reluctantly after hospital staff suggested that it might help him.

He says: "I thought it would be full of whinging old men. Nothing could be further from the truth. What I found was a warm, easy space, with people talking freely – a world full of men with problems like mine. There were no taboo subjects. Feeling as if you are in a safe place is the key to a successful support group."

### Early diagnosis

Although Peter was a doctor, he ignored his symptoms for two years. He says: "I became angry with myself. I had delayed doing anything about it as I was convinced I had a benign (non-cancerous) disease."

"Mercifully, it had not spread. Many men are similarly angry, not because they developed cancer but because they were refused a PSA test by their GP due to the fact they had no symptoms."

A PSA test measures the amount of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in the blood and can be the first step to diagnosing prostate cancer. Early prostate cancer rarely produces symptoms and by the time of diagnosis, it has spread beyond the prostate in 46% of men, making it harder to treat.

As a result, over 12,000 men die from prostate cancer in the UK each year. But caught early enough, prostate cancer can be curable. Peter stressed the urgent need for men to become aware of the risk of developing prostate cancer and see their doctor if they have concerns.

The UK's 100-plus prostate cancer support groups provide different options such as monthly meetings, one-to-one support and 'walk-and-talks'.

For more information and to find your nearest support group, please visit  
[tackleprostate.org/about-prostate-cancer/find-a-support-group](https://tackleprostate.org/about-prostate-cancer/find-a-support-group)



**Hospitals provide written information, but there's nothing better than talking to someone who's had the treatment**





## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

# The land of the fat

The UK's male obesity rate is among the highest in the world. It's a crisis that calls for urgent and concerted action, but solving it won't be straightforward

Nick Easen

**T**he latest research published by the government's Office for Health Improvement and Disparities suggests that 69.1% of men in the UK are overweight or obese, compared with 58.4% of women. This large-scale problem is growing, because strategies for preventing the further expansion of male waistlines aren't working, according to the all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on issues facing men and boys.

The group notes that men are generally less likely than women to recognise that they're piling on the pounds, citing a finding from the 2016 Health Survey for England that half of overweight men considered their weight to be normal. This has serious ramifications for the NHS and the nation's economy.

While there are no figures estimating the reduction in GDP caused

specifically by male obesity every year, obesity overall costs NHS England about £7.3bn annually and costs British society as a whole £65bn, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

The APPG has found a lack of engagement among men with weight-loss services, many of which are aimed more at female slimmers. GPs refer nine times as many women as men to community weight-loss programmes, for instance.

"There are also particularly low rates of uptake and referral to overweight and obesity management services among older men and men from ethnic minorities," reports Katharine Jenner, a nutrition expert and director of the Obesity Health Alliance.

Only 18% of men aged 45-plus in the UK have a normal body weight. Men lay down more visceral fat

than women. Moreover, they order more takeaways and home food deliveries. And, when it comes to health research, men remain under-represented, especially those in more disadvantaged socioeconomic groups. It means that there's scant scientific evidence on which to base possible solutions.

Jenner says that the nation's male obesity crisis can be fixed, "but not by teaching them how to cook a few recipes or by educating them with leaflets. If it really were as simple as 'eat less and move more', we wouldn't be where we are today."

Professor Pat Hoddinott, chair in primary care at the University of Stirling, agrees. "Obesity is a com-



**The food around us is challenging. How easy is it for men to have normal diets? This environment works against them**

plex problem, so we need a toolbox with a lot of different tools in it," she says.

Alan White is emeritus professor of men's health at Leeds Beckett University and a co-founder of the Men's Health Forum. He argues that "you can't just blame men and say to all overweight males 'it's your fault'. We must think about the root causes of this issue. Over the decades there's been a massive change in the working conditions of men. With the rapid decline of heavy industries, factory work has become automated, so there's less physical effort required. Men are having to manufacture a lifestyle to be more active."

White continues: "The food around us – including the abundance of cheap, ultra-processed and highly calorific meals – is challenging. Men's diets tend to differ from women's, containing more meat and higher in fat and calories. And more men are living alone than there were before. How easy is it for them to have normal diets? This environment works against men."

So what's the best way for government and society to address the problem? Many experts believe that a coordinated nationwide approach is required. The APPG has called for a comprehensive men's health strategy along the lines of those that have emerged in Ireland and Australia. In November 2023, the government announced that a men's health ambassador would be appointed alongside a new men's health task group.

"We also need a national clinical director and a dedicated centre for men's health," White argues. "There must be more funded research into this issue."

Some community initiatives have proved effective in tackling male obesity. For instance, Man v Fat Football, a pick-up soccer league for players with a body mass index of 27.5 or more, has attracted 150 clubs around the country. The organisa-

tion claims to have helped its participants to shed a collective 675,000lb (more than 300 tonnes) so far.

Recently, a year-long study backed by the National Institute for Health Research found that men who were sent regular text messages offering weight-loss tips and the chance to earn cash rewards for shedding extra pounds tended to lose more weight than those in control groups who received either texts alone or no encouragement at all.

Many of the 585 participants reported that "the stigma to do with their weight reduced and their well-being improved during the research, as they realised that they weren't alone in facing such issues", says Hoddinott, who led the research project. "Blame is divisive and it helps no one. That's why we worked closely with men over many years to design this project to be supportive."

She adds: "We're undertaking a health economic analysis to see if it will pay for itself over the longer term through the benefits it offers men and the NHS."

The consensus among experts is that the UK will have a better chance of tackling this health crisis successfully if there's a concerted effort to break the obesity problem into its constituent parts and work out which initiatives will prompt effective behavioural changes.

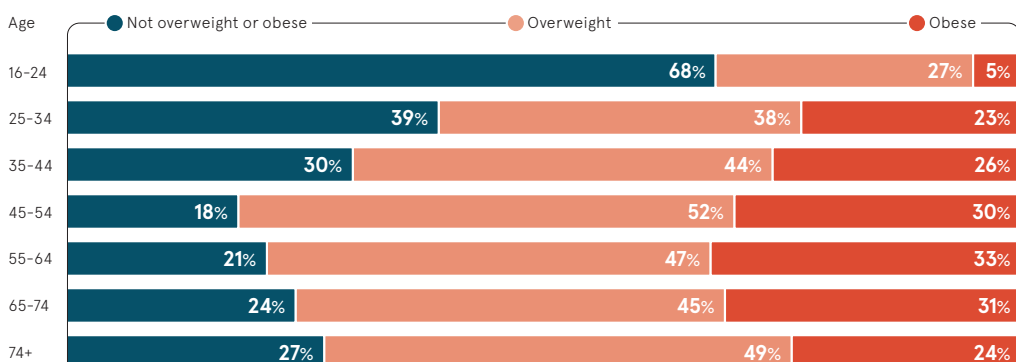
"WeightWatchers and other private sector groups find it very difficult to recruit men. Yet, when a man does go, he's more likely to lose weight," notes White, highlighting another sociocultural factor that needs to be considered.

This is a matter of making such services as accessible as they possibly can be to men, he says. "The men in our research definitely found it harder to talk about their struggles with weight-loss when women were in their group. Once alone with other men, they felt able to have much more honest conversations. They also became more engaged." ●

## MORE THAN THREE-QUARTERS OF UK MEN AGED OVER 45 ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE

NHS, 2021

Share of UK men who are obese or overweight from corrected height and weight, by age group

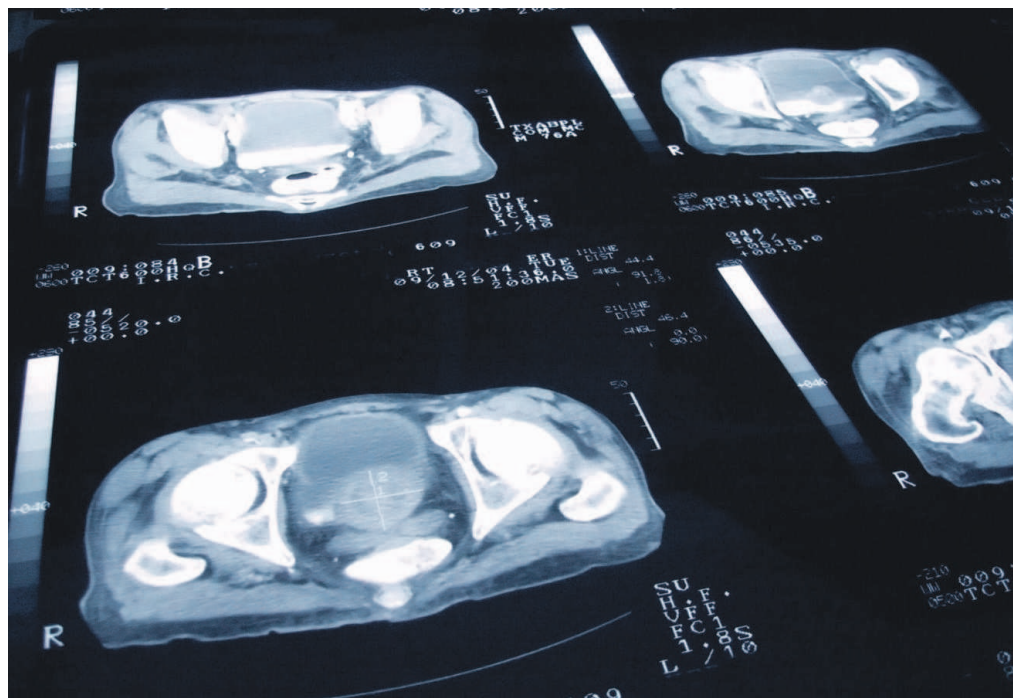




CANCER SCREENING

# Is prostate cancer finally getting the research attention it warrants?

Testing for this major cause of male cancer deaths has been unreliable and neglected for years, but an ambitious new trial could eventually result in an effective NHS screening programme



Simon Brooke

**N**ews that the king had been diagnosed with an enlarged prostate gland in January suddenly increased public awareness of prostate cancer. Official UK data indicates that the number of men checking their risk of developing the most common male cancer increased by more than 100% after his condition was announced.

Although the king doesn't have the disease, almost 13% of men in this country will be diagnosed with it during their lifetime, according to Prostate Cancer UK. About 490,000 Britons are either living with the disease or after it. On average, one man dies of the cancer every 45 minutes in this country, representing an annual mortality rate of about 12,000.

Non-commercial investment in prostate cancer treatments in the UK has been growing year on year, yet it receives only half of the funding attracted by projects addressing breast cancer, even though the diseases' prevalence and mortality rates are similar. While the breast cancer mortality rate has fallen by 41% since the early 1970s, according

to Cancer Research UK, the prostate cancer mortality rate has risen by 16% over the same period.

There is no screening programme for prostate cancer in this country because the main technique used to check for it – a blood test to detect abnormally high levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) – lacks reliability. Trials using PSA tests and biopsies indicate that it would be possible to prevent somewhere between 8% and 20% of prostate cancer deaths with this approach, depending on how regularly patients were screened.

But that is set to change. A national trial entitled Transform is testing methods that, its leaders believe, have the potential to prevent 40% of prostate cancer deaths. The £42m project, co-funded by Prostate Cancer UK and the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), is the largest of its kind. Moreover, the men's health campaign, is providing £1.5m and there is also support from the Freddie Green and Family Charitable Foundation.

According to the NIHR, Transform will "provide the definitive data for

policy-makers to decide on whether routine screening should be recommended". The study will provide information about "reductions in prostate cancer-related mortality and evidence of harm reduction, cost-effectiveness and deliverability within the UK healthcare system".

Caroline Moore, professor of urology at University College London, is one of the leading researchers on the project. She explains that "pre-

vious screening studies used traditional tests to decide which men were given a prostate biopsy, but those tests weren't good at finding cancers that would benefit from treatment. This meant that some important cancers were missed. Other men were told that they had cancer and received treatment with long-term side effects, even though they might never have noticed it if no action had been taken."

The Transform programme has three stages. The first, which will take three years, will test a range of screening methods and determine the best way to engage with prostate cancer sufferers. The methods include PSA testing, Protagram screening (a faster variant of magnetic resonance imaging) and a genetic test to identify those who are at the greatest risk of developing the disease.

The methods deemed most accurate will be taken forward into the second stage, which will explore the most effective screening strategies. This will track up to 300,000 men over at least a decade to determine how screening affects them, measuring lives saved and harms associated with potentially unnecessary treatments. Since Black men are particularly prone to developing prostate cancer, the researchers are aiming to ensure that 10% of the cohort are Black.

This stage will include an in-depth analysis of the cost of a nationwide screening programme and the NHS's practical requirements for delivering it. It will also evaluate potential barriers to uptake.

In the final stage, the men will be monitored to determine the long-term impact of screening on disease progression and mortality rates.

Transform will establish a secure repository of clinical imaging, as well as blood, urine and tissue samples from the participants. This, the researchers hope, should create a valuable resource for the development of enhanced diagnostic methods in decades to come.

Rhian Gabe, professor of biostatistics and clinical trials at Queen Mary University of London, is another leading researcher on the project. She is particularly excited by the scale of Transform and the benefits it could bring.

"It will test the most promising modern technologies and methods we have to determine the best way

to detect prostate cancer early, preventing advanced disease and future deaths," Gabe says.

She adds that Transform is also breaking new ground with some of the detection strategies it's trialling, including saliva-based testing.

A recent study by the Institute of Cancer Research and the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust found that a saliva test which can be performed at home is better than the standard blood test at identifying those most susceptible to prostate cancer. It works by enabling doctors to calculate a man's polygenic risk score, which is based on 130 genetic variations in the DNA code linked to prostate cancer. Participants whose risk scores are among the highest 10% can be invited for further screening.

"Men aged 50 to 75 will be asked to take part. We shall invite those with known risk factors, such as Black ethnicity, from the lower age of 45," Gabe says.

Moore, whose work has focused on prostate cancer for more than 20 years, is cautiously optimistic about Transform's chances of success.

"It brings together a large group of researchers across different fields, which gives us the best chance of developing a screening procedure that can be applied nationally," she says. "Transform is a big step towards finding the best screening approach for prostate cancer, partly because it's using tests that have shown ability to selectively find the higher-risk cancers, and partly because of its flexible design in which the first stage will determine the best approach to take through into the larger study."

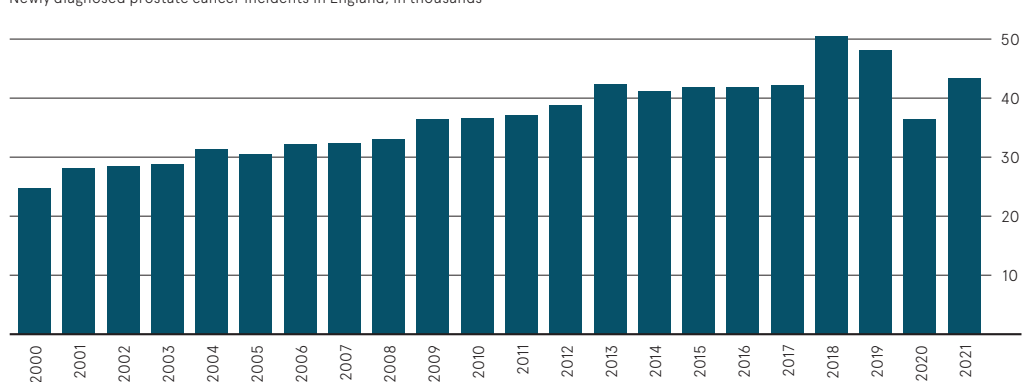
Whether the project eventually results in a mass screening regime similar to the kind the NHS uses to identify breast cancer remains to be seen. But it has the potential to transform how the nation deals with this major killer of men.

If Transform proves effective, the screening procedure that emerges from it "could save thousands of lives each year in the UK alone", says a spokesman for Prostate Cancer UK. "But it wouldn't only be this country that benefits. The trial could end up changing practice globally. At this pivotal moment in the history of prostate cancer research, we're proud to be supporting some of the best researchers in the world to make that happen." ●

## PROSTATE CANCER DIAGNOSES IN ENGLAND

ONS, 2023

Newly diagnosed prostate cancer incidents in England, in thousands





# THE RACONTEUR



## Recognising those who lead.

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