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Senior Democrats throw weight behind Harris to take on Trump

Vice-president attracts Pelosi's backing amid flood of endorsements

Richard Luscombe
Rachel Leingang
Callum Jones

Kamala Harris is closing in on her party's nomination to run against Donald Trump in November after picking up a slew of endorsements from Democratic heavyweights, as she praised Joe Biden's legacy at a White House event in her first public remarks since his exit from the race on Sunday.

In one of the most significant, the former House speaker, Nancy Pelosi – who had reportedly been instrumental in persuading Biden to step aside – backed Harris last night amid a flood of support from politicians, unions and other allies less than 24 hours after the 81-year-old president bowed to intense pressure to end his candidacy for a second term in office.

The hugely influential Pelosi had been one of the few remaining senior Democrats yet to publicly support the vice-president.

Hakeem Jeffries, the House minority leader, and Chuck Schumer, the Senate majority leader, were both expected to follow her lead.

"I have known Kamala Harris for decades as rooted in strong values, faith and a commitment to public service," Pelosi's

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▲ *Kamala Harris at the White House yesterday, where she made her first public remarks since Joe Biden quit the election race* PHOTOGRAPH: BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP

Violence against women a 'national emergency'

Vikram Dodd
Police and crime correspondent

About 2 million women are estimated to be victims of violence perpetrated by men each year in an epidemic so grave it amounts to a "national emergency", police chiefs warned today.

Crimes including stalking, harassment, sexual assault and domestic violence affect one in 12 women in England and Wales, with the number of recorded offences growing by 37% in the past five years and the perpetrators getting younger.

The figures are contained in the first national analysis of the scale of violence against women and girls (VAWG) by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC), released today.

Police chiefs also warned of young men being "radicalised" online by influencers such as Andrew Tate. They demand that technology companies act more quickly to take down extreme material.

The report says: "We estimate that at least one in every 12 women will be a victim of VAWG every year (2 million victims) and one in 20 adults in England and Wales will be a perpetrator of VAWG every year (2.3 million). These are cautious estimates as we know much crime goes unreported and in policing, we often only see the tip of the iceberg."

This year, amid horror over the scale of offending, the Guardian launched Killed Women Count, a project reporting on every woman allegedly killed by a man in 2024, whose stories often go untold.

Keir Starmer, the prime minister, has promised to halve violence against women and girls within a decade, with taskforces in each police force including specialist domestic abuse workers responding to 999 calls.

The new NPCC report, which analysed official data, finds:

- One in six homicides in England and Wales are linked to domestic abuse, or 100 out of the 590 homicides in the year to March 2023.
- A total of 20% of all police recorded crime – over 1 million offences a year – count as VAWG. These include sexual assault, stalking, harassment, domestic violence and controlling and coercive behaviour. The true total is estimated in the report to be twice as high.
- Recorded cases of VAWG increased by 37% between

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Tories 'wasted' £700m on failed Rwanda scheme

Eleni Courea
Political correspondent

The Conservative government spent £700m of taxpayers' money on the failed Rwanda deportation scheme which has proven to be a "costly con", the home secretary has said.

Yvette Cooper branded the policy, which was introduced two and a half years ago and sought to send UK asylum seekers to Rwanda for processing, "the biggest waste of taxpayer money I have ever seen".

She told the Commons that over the course of six years the Conservatives had intended to spend £10bn on the policy, but never divulged this figure to parliament.

The home secretary said she had formally notified the Rwandan government that the partnership was over and thanked them for working with the UK "in good faith".

"The failure of this policy lies with the previous UK government, it has been a costly con and the taxpayer has had to pay the price," she said.



▲ *Yvette Cooper says the former government had intended to spend £10bn over 10 years on the scheme*
PHOTOGRAPH: REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Under the Conservatives, the Home Office refused to set out the full cost of the scheme, though an official letter last year stated it had reached £290m. In a report last spring the National Audit Office estimated that the cost of the policy had surpassed £500m.

Ultimately, just four people travelled to Rwanda voluntarily under the scheme, Cooper told the Commons. "We had often warned that it would frankly be cheaper to put them up in the Paris Ritz – frankly now it turns out it would actually be cheaper to buy the Paris Ritz," she said.

Cooper said the £700m cost includes £290m payments to Rwanda, chartering flights that never took off, detaining people and then releasing them, and paying more than 1,000 civil servants to work on the policy.

Labour confirmed it was scrapping the scheme immediately after it won the election on 4 July.

Cooper has announced the formation of a border security command bringing together police, intelligence agencies and immigration enforcement to try to stop people smugglers. Under the government's plans, new offences will be created to allow enforcement agencies to treat people smugglers like terrorists and to penalise social media companies that fail to remove advertisements for small boat crossings.

In her statement in the Commons, Cooper blasted the Conservative government's "unworkable" Illegal Migration Act, which was introduced in March 2023 and cost the taxpayer millions by putting asylum seekers who arrived in the UK in a state of limbo.

She said "legal contradictions" in the act created a situation akin to "Hotel California – people arrive in the asylum system and they never leave", because no decisions could be taken on the cases of asylum seekers who arrived after March 2023 and met certain conditions. The home secretary said she had been "shocked to discover that the Home Office has effectively stopped making the majority of asylum decisions," over the past year adding that it was "effectively an amnesty and that is the wrong thing to do".

Cooper warned that the cost of the "indefinitely rising" asylum backlog in hotel and accommodation support bills was "astronomical". She told MPs: "The potential costs of asylum support over the next four years, if we continue down this track, could be an eye-watering £30bn to £40bn – that is double the annual police budget for England and Wales."

She stressed that Labour had inherited a situation where criminal gangs were "operating with impunity" and that high levels of small boat crossings across the Channel were "likely to persist through the summer".

James Cleverly, the shadow home secretary, accused Cooper of "hyperbole and made-up numbers" and said Labour had "scrapped the Rwanda partnership on ideological grounds".

"The reality is everybody knows, including the people smugglers, that the small boat problem is going to get worse, indeed has already got worse under Labour because they have no deterrent," the shadow home secretary told MPs.

Kit Malthouse, a Conservative MP, challenged Cooper on whether she would resign if the number of small boat crossings is higher next summer than this one.

Richard Foord, the Liberal Democrat defence spokesperson, called for the creation of a resettlement scheme to create a safe and legal route and disincentivise asylum seekers from travelling to the UK before they have made an application.

Continued *from page 1*

Police say 2 million women are victims of male violence

2018 and 2023, running currently at 3,000 offences a day.

● Perpetrators are getting younger, dashing hopes that violence against women may reduce markedly as time passes.

● Child sexual abuse and exploitation increased by more than 400% between 2013 and 2022. Offences committed by children increased to 55.6% of the total. The average age of victims is 13, with suspects averaging 15 years old.

Maggie Blyth, police national lead for VAWG, said: "Violence against women and girls is a national emergency. We need the support and direction of government to intervene and address the current problems within the criminal justice system and lead the way on a whole-system approach to VAWG.

"We need to move forward as a society to make change and no longer accept VAWG as inevitable."

Louisa Rolfe, national lead for domestic abuse and an assistant commissioner in the Metropolitan police, told the Guardian that the victims figure was likely to be even higher because many offences were not reported. "I think it is more, more like 4 million," she said.

Part of the increase is being driven by extreme material on the internet, police said.

Rolfe said there was an increase in non-fatal strangulation among the young, with men believing it was part of a normal sexual relationship, without women's consent, which she described as "really frightening".

She added: "All the academic research will tell you that the difference between non-fatal strangulation and fatal strangulation is millibars of pressure."

Blyth revealed the police counterterrorism command and those tackling VAWG were discussing the impact of influencers and how to counter it. "We know that some of this is also linked to radicalisation of young people online … we know the influencers, Andrew Tate. The element of influencing, of particularly boys, is quite terrifying," she said.

"Misogyny is inherent in some of the ways of working that are behind these crime types, behind boys growing up and their use of violence. This is why the online threat is so significant for us."

Other data shows the fastest growing groups of domestic abuse offenders and victims for domestic abuse are those aged 16 to 19.

Police privately say delays in bringing domestic abuse prosecutions see the majority of victims withdraw support for a prosecution after seven days.

Blyth said the justice system was a problem: "We don't think it is functioning … We know that we've got significant delays within the court system. We know that victims are waiting far too long for a criminal justice outcome. And we know that some victims fall away through that process."

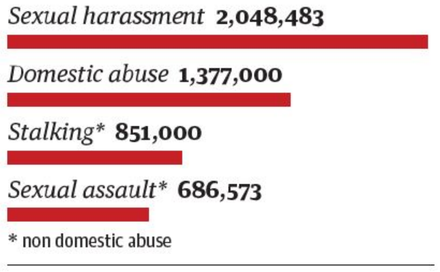
Focus on VAWG intensified after the 2021 rape and murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Met officer, Wayne Couzens, who had previously been investigated for indecent exposure. An official report found wide-scale failings and the second part of the inquiry, expected next year, is also set to be damning.

Police say violence against women and girls should now be treated as seriously as terrorism. They are setting up a new national centre to boost results, with 43 forces across Britain having a multitude of approaches.

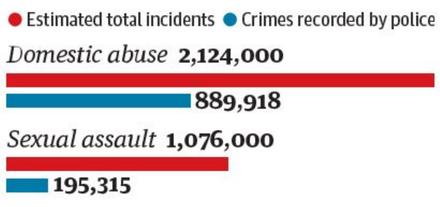
Clare Kelly, associate head of policy at the NSPCC, said: "Tech companies must … step up to stop boys from being targeted with vile misogynistic content and put safety measures in place to prevent grooming and sexual abuse proliferating their platforms. Schools also need support to deliver effective relationships and sex education that is high-quality, inclusive and relevant to the realities of children's lives to embed a culture where girls are safe, heard and empowered."

The safeguarding minister, Jess Phillips, said: "The scale of violence against women and girls in our country is intolerable and this government will treat it as the national emergency that it is."

Violence against women
Estimated number of female victims age 16+ in England and Wales, year ending March 2023



Cases of sexual assault and domestic violence go widely unreported
Estimated incidents versus recorded crimes in England and Wales, year ending March 2023



Source: National Policing Statement 2024 For Violence Against Women and Girls. Crime Survey for England and Wales (ONS), Police recorded crime (Home Office). Note: recorded figures exclude Devon and Cornwall Police

Adieu nuggets: Paris Olympics swaps junk food for Michelin-star catering



Chef Charles Guilloy's green lentil dahl

Sean Ingle
Paris

It's enough to make Usain Bolt wake up in a cold sweat. Chicken nuggets are off the menu at Paris 2024, with Olympians instead being served Michelin-starred dishes and plant-based meat alternatives in the athletes' village.

The Jamaican sprinter famously claimed to have eaten 1,000 nuggets over 10 days when winning 100m and 200m gold at the 2008 Beijing Games. However, the 11,000 athletes in Paris will be nudged to make healthier choices, with four top chefs involved in preparing the food.

Dishes on offer include croissant, poached egg, artichoke cream and shavings of sheep's cheese topped with truffle, which the two-starred Michelin chef Amandine Chaignot suggests should be eaten by hand.

About 1,200 Michelin-starred meals will be served a day out of 40,000 overall, according to Philipp Würz, Paris 2024's head of food. He also confirmed that about 30% of the menu at the Games would be plant-based, with soya-based nuggets offered as an alternative.

Würz admitted that French organisers were keen to raise standards after he read that 20% of athletes' meals during the London Olympics were consumed at McDonald's. "It's a much healthier menu now," he said. "With no McDonald's, no chicken nuggets, and more healthy food."

"Even the star chefs' menus have been developed with sports nutritionists, so it's very high-level cuisine, still respecting what the athletes actually need," he added.

A 3,500-seat restaurant has been built from scratch to serve meals from



There is a 3,500-seat restaurant



▲ While volleyball teams request sandwiches and salads, and Usain Bolt, bottom right, is famous for eating an abundance of nuggets, French organisers are raising food standards

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVE HUNT/AAP

all over the globe and there are also six "grab and go" areas, where athletes can find snacks, a bakery and signature dishes from Michelin-starred chefs.

However, athletes will not be able to wash their meals down with a nice bottle of Châteauneuf du Pape, as the village has a non-alcohol policy.

"The athletes are coming into the biggest restaurant in the world," said Würz. "They are amazed by both the architectural setup of the main dining hall, but also by the quality of the recipes and the food.

"We tried to come up with a very specific plan to harness the French know-how, the *savoir faire* of the French cuisine, which of course, has a reputation all over the planet."

Countries have, however, been allowed to make specific requests – with Team GB asking for porridge to be added to the menu and the South Koreans kimchi.

Würz added that appetites and tastes differ wildly between athletes in different sports.

Beach volleyball and taekwondo teams request cold meat, sandwiches and salads, while the rowing teams require "hot buffets".

Badminton teams predominantly from Asia, he added, are "not big fans of bread", while sports "dominated by European delegations – you would then find a rather basic English, French or German style catering programme".

"Chicken skewers or chicken fillet is very popular, and so is salmon," added Würz. "So for nowadays, a lot of proteins are consumed in rather impressive quantities by the athletes. But the one of the top sellers, like always, is margarita pizza."

The boulangerie will bake 800 baguettes a day across the entire Olympics and Paralympics, and Würz said that about 80% of the food in the village would be from France.

"The meat is 100% French origin," he added. "The cheeses are high level and well-known French cheeses such as comté and brie de meaux. The same goes for pastries – a large variety of French pastries are offered to the athletes.

"We have already had so much positive feedback because this is definitely something that the athletes are not used to when compared to past editions. There is a huge variety of very special and French items that we offer."

Athletes can also find a salad bar and a fruit stall, alongside cheese and dairy stands, desserts, soups, grills, pizzas, daily specials and pastas, and a hot buffet.

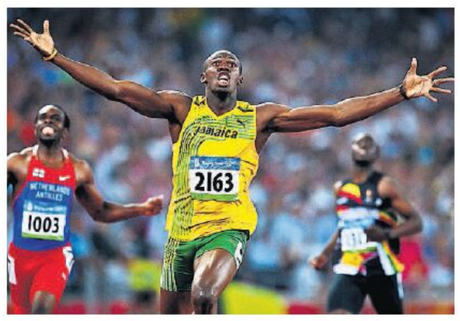
However, Würz conceded that some would still want to consume unhealthy food – especially after they had finished competing.

"There's definitely less junk food," he said. "We've really tried to push the quality high up there. But you always have to provide, let's say, things like hot dogs and burgers. However, we do not provide those at the main dining hall, just at dedicated 'grab and go' outlets."



800

Baguettes to be baked by the on-site boulangerie each day – equivalent to 6km of bread – to complement French cheeses, soups and desserts



Physicist, 98, honoured 75 years after groundbreaking discovery

Mabel Banfield-Nwachi

A trailblazing physicist who gave up her PhD 75 years ago to have a family has received an honorary doctorate from her former university.

Rosemary Fowler, 98, discovered the kaon particle during her doctoral research under Cecil Powell at the University of Bristol in 1948, which contributed to his Nobel prize for physics in 1950.



▲ Trailblazer: Rosemary Fowler

Fowler's discovery helped lead to a revolution in the theory of particle physics, and it continues to be proved correct – predicting particles such as the Higgs boson, discovered at Cern in Geneva, Switzerland.

But she left university without completing her PhD to marry fellow physicist Peter Fowler in 1949, a decision she later described as pragmatic – she went on to have three children in a time of postwar food rationing. She has now been made an honorary doctor of science by the University of Bristol chancellor, Sir Paul Nurse, in a private graduation ceremony close to her Cambridge home. Fowler said she felt "very honoured" but added: "I haven't done anything since to deserve special respect."

Nurse praised Fowler's "intellectual rigour and curiosity" that "paved the way for critical discoveries that continue to shape the work of today's physicists".

At 22, Fowler spotted something when viewing unusual particle tracks – a particle that decayed into three pions, a type of subatomic particle.

She said: "I knew at once that it was new and would be very important. We were seeing things that hadn't been seen before – that's what research in particle physics was. It was very exciting."

The track, later labelled K, was evidence of an unknown particle, now known as the kaon or K meson.

The year after the discovery, Fowler left university, having published her discovery in three academic papers.

Fowler was born in Suffolk in 1926, and excelled in maths and science as a child. She was the only girl in her year to go to university and became one of the first women to be awarded a first-class degree in physics.



▲ *Kamala Harris speaking during a White House ceremony honouring university athletes yesterday* PHOTOGRAPH: BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP

Pelosi endorses Harris amid flood of support for presidential nomination

Continued *from page 1*

statement said. "Politically, make no mistake: Kamala Harris as a woman in politics is brilliantly astute – and I have full confidence that she will lead us to victory in November."

Harris has taken control of the former Biden-Harris campaign and last night travelled to its headquarters in Delaware, where she addressed a crowd after a live phone-in with Biden was played out over the speakers.

"I know yesterday's news was surprising and hard for you to hear, but it was the right thing to do," the US president said, before telling the crowd: "Embrace her, she's the best."

When she arrived on stage, Harris thanked Biden who, still on the phone, responded: "I love you, kid."

"We have 106 days until election day," Harris said. "We believe in freedom and opportunity and justice, not for some but for all. We are going to win."



▲ *Papers covering Joe Biden's decision to quit the presidential race on sale at a newsstand in New York yesterday* PHOTOGRAPH: SHANNON STAPLETON/REUTERS

Key endorsements also came from the Democratic governors Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan and JB Pritzker of Illinois, who had been mentioned as possible challengers to Harris for the nomination in the event that Biden dropped out.

Their blessing for her candidacy, along with that of Kentucky's Andy Beshear, which also came yesterday, leaves a dwindling potential field of alternative nominees with just four weeks to go before the party's nominating convention in Chicago.

"The vice-president is smart and strong, which will make her a good president," Beshear told MSNBC's Morning Joe. Beshear is also thought to be a leading candidate for Harris's running mate if she wins the nomination, a shortlist that includes the Pennsylvania governor, Josh Shapiro, the Arizona senator Mark Kelly and North Carolina governor, Roy Cooper. All have swiftly issued statements expressing their support for Harris's presidential run.

Whitmer, meanwhile, appeared to take herself out of vice-presidential consideration by telling a television station in her home state: "I'm not going anywhere".

Harris earlier had stood in for the president at a White House event celebrating student athletes as he recovers from Covid, making her first public remarks since she was catapulted into contention as the nominee.

"Joe Biden's legacy of accomplishment over the past three years is unmatched in modern history," she said, paying tribute to his "deep love of our country" while avoiding talk of her own candidacy. "I am first-hand witness that every day our president fights for the American people, and we are deeply, deeply grateful for his service to our nation."

Harris received a further boost from grassroots Democrats, who contributed more than $86m (£67m) to

> ***'Every day our president fights for the American people, and we are deeply grateful for his service to our nation'***
>
> **Kamala Harris**
> *on Joe Biden's legacy*

her campaign after Biden endorsed her on Sunday. Donations were on course to top $100m within 24 hours, according to a Democratic fundraising source. The new money comes on top of a $96m cash war chest unearthed by the Biden campaign finance account changing its name to "Harris for President" and in addition to the small-dollar donations reported by ActBlue, the online fundraising platform that said yesterday it had just experienced "the biggest fundraising day of the 2024 cycle".

However, Mike Bloomberg, the billionaire Democratic mega-donor and former presidential candidate, urged the party against picking a nominee "right away". The former mayor of New York insisted in a statement, which did not mention Harris, that Democrats had"more than enough time" to gauge views in key swing states.

"We don't need to get a resolution right away, but we do need to get it right," he wrote. "The decision is too important to rush, because the election is too important to lose."

Other high-profile backers of the party, including Reid Hoffman, co-founder of LinkedIn, and Alexander Soros, son of financier and philanthropist George Soros, have meanwhile been quick to endorse the vice-president.

Harris has also picked up support from the party's progressive wing, including the Massachusetts senator Elizabeth Warren, who ran for the nomination in 2020, and the New York congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who pledged her "full support" to ensure Harris's victory in November.

The backing of Ocasio-Cortez will be seen as a powerful step towards unity among Democrats after her prediction last week of "chaos" if Biden was deposed and claim that a large number of those who wanted him out "do not want to see [Harris] be the nominee".

If elected to the White House, Harris would be the first Black woman and first person of south Asian descent to be president. She has also won endorsements from the leadership of several influential caucuses and political organisations, including the chairs of the Congressional Progressive caucus and the Congressional Hispanic caucus and the entire Congressional Black caucus.

The rounds of endorsements followed weeks of clamouring pushing for Harris's rise.

Her supporters, dubbed the "KHive", shared coconut emojis, a nod to a speech in which she laughed about something her mother used to say: "You think you just fell out of a coconut tree? You exist in the context of all in which you live and what came before you." No coordinated opposition has emerged against Harris or in favour of any other candidate.

With Democrats wading into uncharted territory, the Democratic National Committee chair, Jaime Harrison, said the party would soon announce the next steps.

Biden is the first president in 56 years to call off his campaign. In 1968, Lyndon Johnson stepped down from campaigning, which led to a floor fight for delegates at the Democratic convention, also in Chicago.

The winner of that year's election was Richard Nixon, a Republican.

Analysis
Archie Bland



Pros and cons: a progressive reformer but tied to Biden

After Joe Biden's momentous decision on Sunday to step aside in the US presidential race, Democrats fell in line to describe him as a selfless American hero – and many of them echoed his endorsement of his vice-president, Kamala Harris.

One measure of the hope the decision to drop out and endorse Harris brought with it: stagnant donations immediately rocketed, and by yesterday afternoon Harris was likely to have raised more money in a 24-hour period than any other candidate in US history.

Biden's endorsement and the explicit support of many prominent figures in the party mean there is a very good chance she will run unopposed, or be a strong favourite even if someone stands against her.

In her favour is wariness among the Democratic establishment of a chaotic display to the public in an open battle at the convention – alongside worries that black and female voters could turn away from the party if Harris were to be denied the nomination that some feel she has already earned. But how might she fare politically in a contest against Donald Trump?

Harris does a bit better than Biden in polls pitting her against Trump: they were tied with 44% each in a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll, giving her a two-point advantage over Biden. She also has slightly higher approval ratings than Biden.

While those figures do not make an overwhelming case for her nomination, her supporters argue the numbers could quickly improve as she is introduced to the public with a unified and excited Democratic party behind her. They also point to her recent record on attacking Trump, as well as being a prominent voice for Biden on abortion, as evidence for the theory that she could be a nimble and energetic campaigner against the Republican candidate.

Harris is viewed as a moderate who succeeded in California with a "tough on crime" message before recasting herself as a progressive reformer. The contrast between a 59-year-old former prosecutor, who would be the first woman and the first woman of colour to be elected president, and a 78-year-old convicted criminal is another source of optimism.



▲ *Members of the Democratic party rally in support of Kamala Harris outside City Hall in San Francisco*
PHOTOGRAPH: LOREN ELLIOTT/ GETTY

And Harris's supporters hope that she could shore up Democratic support among the significant number of younger voters and people of colour who polls show have been drawn to Trump.

> *Harris is likely to have raised more money in a 24-hour period than any other candidate in US history*

Another point in her favour is a highly practical one: it will be much simpler for her to access Biden's hefty $240m (£186m) war chest than for any candidate who was not part of his campaign.

Yet while Harris looks like a stronger candidate than Biden, that's a pretty low bar. Democrats who oppose her coronation as the nominee ask: if we're prepared to go through the pain of forcing Biden out, surely we shouldn't then nominate his vice-president?

That argument is bolstered by the evidence of Harris's previous run at the presidency, which sputtered out after her support fell into the low single digits and saw her described by the New York Times as "an uneven campaigner who changes her message and tactics to little effect".

The Washington Post reported on Saturday that many of her supporters say she has become a far more effective political communicator since then. But she struggled to carve out an effective role in the vice-presidency too, saddled with a difficult policy portfolio including immigration and the failed voting rights bill, on which Biden eventually cut her out of negotiations with lawmakers.

Perhaps the most fundamental problem for Harris is that in what could be a "change" election, she will have to run on Biden's record. So far, the Republican playbook appears to be to link her to it indelibly, and to claim that she failed to warn the public about Biden's allegedly declining faculties. It remains to be seen if those attacks will work.

'Thank God' Democratic voters' relief at withdrawal

Alice Herman
Madison, Wisconsin

For many Democratic swing state voters, Joe Biden's decision to drop out of the 2024 presidential election came as a relief.

"Oh thank God," said Cathy Gramze, a retired nurse who lives in the suburbs of Detroit. "My diagnosis has for a long time been that he cannot run again and I am not entirely sure that he should finish his term in office."

Gramze had worried about Biden's fitness long before the debate. His 27 June performance merely confirmed what she had long feared. "A lot of the time he is the president we need, but some of the time he isn't."

Kamala Harris, whom Biden endorsed on Sunday and who has won the backing of most prominent Democratic elected officials, "needs to be the presidential nominee", Gramze said.

For more than a year, voters across the political spectrum said they felt Biden, 81, was too old to run for re-election. Those anxieties increased in the wake of his first debate with Donald Trump, in which Trump lied repeatedly and Biden struggled to push back or even answer questions coherently. After the debate, more than 30 Democrats in Congress called on Biden to end his campaign, with the powerful former Democratic House speaker Nancy Pelosi reportedly ratcheting up the pressure on Biden to drop out of the race last week.

In the last few weeks, polling showed Biden lagging in critical swing states, with large majorities of Democratic party voters indicating they believed he should not renew his campaign. Recent national polls also showed Trump losing to the vice-president, whose path to victory, like Biden's, will involve winning the states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

It wasn't only Democrats who welcomed the announcement. Dan Rose, who has long supported Trump, said he was glad Biden pulled out of the race.

"He doesn't have the calibre we need in a president," said Rose, who said he worries about the economy. Rose, who is from De Pere, Wisconsin, said he will still support Trump but felt Biden had made the right choice in ending his campaign. "The Democrats might be in a pickle now," he added.

If the Democrats are in a pickle, few grassroots party members expressed concern following Biden's announcement.

"How courageous of him to do that," said Chris Fleming, who volunteers for a group organising rural Democratic voters in Wisconsin. This year, Fleming's husband had $15,000 in student debt cancelled by the Biden administration – which she said left her feeling grateful for Biden. "I have nothing but respect for him."

Jake Knanishu, an attorney from Decatur, Georgia, said Biden's departure from the race "relieved, for the most part, concerns about him being able to really present himself as an effective alternative to Trump". Biden's withdrawal gives Democrats a better shot at Georgia, Knanishu said.

He had spoken to a neighbour on Sunday who "saw Joe Biden as kind of Ruth Bader Ginsburg 2.0 – holding on and refusing to pass the torch and maintain stability". Ginsburg served as an associate justice of the US supreme court from 1993 until her death in 2020.

Knanishu said his neighbour "just feels relieved, because she knows that at least we're not going to have that happen again".



◀ *A campaign sign with Joe Biden's name cut out in Northwood, New Hampshire*
PHOTOGRAPH: HOLLY RAMER/AP

‘I’ll do everything in my power’

Harris shoulders fateful burden of beating Trump



▶ *Harris, left, with her sister, Maya, and mother, Shyamala, outside their flat in Berkeley, California, after her parents had divorced*
PHOTOGRAPH: AP



◀ *Harris with classmate Gwen Whitfield at an anti-apartheid protest at Howard University, Washington, during Harris’s first year there*
PHOTOGRAPH: AP

Lauren Gambino
Washington

When Joe Biden addressed the NAACP convention in Las Vegas last week, he set off chants of “Four more years!” when he praised Kamala Harris as “not only a great vice-president” but someone who “could be president of the United States”.

Now she has that chance.

On Sunday, when the president made the extraordinary decision to end his re-election campaign, he made an equally momentous choice: to offer his “full support and endorsement” of Harris to be the Democratic nominee and take on Donald Trump in November.

“It’s time to come together and beat Trump,” the 81-year-old president said. “Let’s do this.”

The announcement, just weeks before the Democrats formally choose their nominee at the convention in Chicago, has plunged an already tumultuous contest deeper into uncharted waters - while thrusting his would-be successor into the spotlight.

“I am honoured to have the president’s endorsement and my intention is to earn and win this nomination,” Harris said. “I will do everything in my power to unite the Democratic party - and unite our nation - to defeat Donald Trump and his extreme Project 2025 agenda.”

With just over 100 days until the election, the task before her is monumental. An assassination attempt on Trump has united Republicans behind him, and appears to have strengthened his hand as Democrats dissolved into a debate over Biden’s fitness to serve.

The question of who would replace Biden has consumed party strategists and members, leading to an intense public debate over whether Harris would be the strongest candidate to defeat Trump in November.

The US-born daughter of immigrants, Harris spent much of her career as a prosecutor, before becoming California’s attorney general. In 2016, she was elected to the US Senate, becoming the first south Asian American and only second Black woman to serve in the chamber, where she distinguished herself by asking tough questions of Trump-era political nominees.



▲ *Harris in 2003, campaigning to become San Francisco’s district attorney, a role she held until 2011*
PHOTOGRAPH: HEARST NEWSPAPERS/GETTY



▲ *Harris, 1986. She studied politics and economics at Howard University*

Many of Harris’s supporters say she is the heir apparent to Biden. She is also the administration’s strongest messenger on abortion rights, a top issue for many voters, especially women.

But sceptics point to her failed 2019 bid for the Democratic nomination, which lacked cohesion and vision, and her shaky start to the vice-presidency, which opened her to withering Republican criticism. Some Democrats are not necessarily opposed to Harris, but believe she would benefit from an open competition to prove to party sceptics, donors and voters she is the best candidate for the job.

They say a fast primary campaign would demonstrate to the American people that Harris is best person for the job, and give would-be contenders a chance to compete - or at least debut as potential running mates.

By anointing Harris, Biden has greatly tipped the scale in her favour. But that does not automatically make her the nominee. Recent polling that considered a hypothetical contest between Harris and Trump found her running close to or stronger than Biden nationally and in the battleground states.

Jaime Harrison, the chair of the Democratic National Committee, called the situation “unprecedented” but said the party was committed to carrying out a “transparent and orderly process”.

Harris has a handful of advantages over other potential challengers. She has been vetted at the national level and has good name recognition. As Biden’s running mate, she would also probably inherit his large war chest of donor funding and massive field operation. She may also benefit from Democrats’ desperate desire to unite quickly and turn the focus back on Trump.

Trump has repeatedly mocked Harris, assailing her intelligence and her laugh, and mispronouncing her first name. On Sunday, Trump called Harris “as much of a joke” as Biden, and said she had been “complicit” in covering up the president’s decline.

The former president has a history of amplifying racist and sexist conspiracies about Harris, including a lie about her place of birth that suggested, falsely, she might be ineligible to serve as president. (Harris was born in Oakland, California.)

Republicans have said they were prepared for a torrent of opposition



research on Harris, stemming from her failed presidential nominee campaign and her years as vice-president.

Like Biden, Harris is unpopular, though her approval rating has increased slightly in the weeks since the party began pressuring Biden to withdraw after his disastrous debate performance against Trump.

"She's the most unpopular vice-president since Dan Quayle – and Dan Quayle is the most unpopular-vice president since Aaron Burr," Frank Luntz, a pollster and consultant, said recently. Burr, remembered as the vice-president who mortally wounded Alexander Hamilton, served under Thomas Jefferson in the early 19th century.

Harris's supporters say her historic nomination could help inspire and mobilise Democrats who had so far been disillusioned by their options.

Santiago Mayer, the executive director of the Democrat-aligned Voters of Tomorrow, said Harris's tour of US college campuses was "incredibly well-received" and helped her understand the unique needs of young people, whom polls show are disillusioned with the entire political system. "We saw the 'Kamalove' that gen Z feels for her and we're incredibly excited to have a younger, more diverse face representing the incredibly successful and pro-youth Biden-Harris agenda," he said.

Democratic groups had already organised an effort to boost Harris's image and defend her against the Trump attacks that would have come regardless of her position on the ticket.

Tory Gavito, the president and co-founder of Way to Win, a Democratic donor network that endorsed Harris, said the vice-president performed especially well with young people and voters of colour, constituencies that Democrats have struggled to excite.

Gavito compared Biden's decision to pass the torch to Harris to an Olympic sprinter crouching at the starting line.

"All this wait period has just given us that kinetic energy to now run," she said. "And I think it's going to just [unleash] a bunch of enthusiasm that gets us ready for November."

From inflation to migration
Where vice-president stands

Gaza

Kamala Harris has technically toed Biden's line on Gaza, but she is viewed as being more forceful when it comes to criticising Israel, and expressing empathy for Palestinians. In March, when she delivered a speech in Selma, Alabama, to commemorate the 59th anniversary of the violent repression of a civil rights march in the city, known as Bloody Sunday, her comments on Gaza were followed by sustained applause.

"People in Gaza are starving. The conditions are inhumane. And our common humanity compels us to act," she said. "Given the immense scale of suffering in Gaza, there must be an immediate ceasefire." She added, after stopping for the applause, "for six weeks".

In the presidential primaries, more than 101,000 Michigan Democrats, about 13% of those who voted, cast ballots for "uncommitted" – a vote for no one – after campaigning by anti-war organisers, winning two delegates to the Democratic national convention.

Abortion

Democrats will be hoping that Harris, if she is the nominee, will have gender in her favour among Democratic voters, particularly since Roe v Wade was overturned by a supreme court with three judges appointed by Trump, who boasted this year: "We broke Roe v Wade".

Harris embarked on a national tour in late 2023 to highlight the threats to reproductive rights posed by a second Trump administration – an issue that Biden has been criticised for shying away from. He has defended Roe v Wade, but has said he is "not big on abortion".

"As a woman on the ticket and the first woman VP and a woman of colour, and then secondly, as an AG [attorney general], she is strongest when her profile is fighting and prosecuting the case. People really like her in that mode," Celinda Lake, a Democratic party strategist and a lead pollster on the 2020 Biden campaign, told the Guardian in March. "She's so comfortable saying the word 'abortion'. She's so comfortable leaning in and speaking to the repercussions."

Trump has run against and defeated a woman before – Hillary Clinton. After Roe v Wade, more people may be motivated by the possibility of a female president who is clearly in favour of abortion rights. It will probably also motivate people who are anti-abortion to vote for Trump.

Migration

Trump will try to show swing voters that his likely new rival has her fingerprints all over two issues he is counting on for victory in November: immigration and the cost of living, Reuters reported.

The Trump campaign is already casting Harris as the "co-pilot" of administration policies it says are behind both sources of voter discontent.

The Trump campaign has for weeks been preparing for the prospect of a Harris candidacy should Biden drop out and she win her party's nomination.

Trump's campaign has signalled it will tie her as tightly as possible to Biden's immigration policy, which Republicans say is to blame for a sharp increase in the number of people crossing the southern border with Mexico illegally.

As vice-president, Harris was charged with addressing the root causes of migration from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, not border policy as Republicans have long claimed. In that role, she announced $950m in 2023 to address the causes of immigration from those countries.

She has been targeted by Republicans who have organised for asylum seekers to be driven on buses to Harris's home several times, including on Christmas Eve.

In February this year, Harris told New York's Spectrum News: "We know, and I think many people have known for a long time, that our immigration system is broken and needs to be fixed."

She was speaking after a bipartisan bill that would have seen the border closed if immigration reached a certain threshold was killed after Trump urged Republicans not to back it.

As a senator, Harris was strongly in favour of expanding work and legal pathways for Dreamers, people brought to the United States unlawfully as children.

Inflation

A second major line of attack against Harris by the Trump campaign team will centre on the economy. Polls consistently show Americans are unhappy with high food and fuel costs as well as interest rates that have made buying a home less affordable.

June inflation figures were better than expected, with prices falling, lifting hopes that the Federal Reserve might soon cut interest rates. As inflation fell 0.1% on a monthly basis in June, having been unchanged in May, the consumer price index's annual increase was also the smallest in a year.

But the cost of living remains high, and people's pockets will be at the front of their minds in this election. The annual increase in consumer prices slowed significantly in June from a peak of 9.1% in June 2022, which was their highest level in 40 years.

In an interview with the NBC-affiliated WDSU, a local news channel, on 21 July, Harris addressed the cost of living.

"The president and our administration's probably highest priority is bringing down the price of gas and cost of living," she said.

"If it wasn't clear before the pandemic it was certainly clear after, when people are sick they need to be able to stay home and not juggle that versus their ability to put food on the table," she added. "So these are some things that we are going to continue to fight for." **Helen Sullivan**

Abortion
Support for rights wins backing of campaigners

Carter Sherman
Reproductive health and justice reporter

The biggest abortion rights groups in US politics are lining up behind Kamala Harris's bid for president, a show of faith in a politician who has already become the face of the White House's fight over abortion rights.

Within hours of Joe Biden's announcement on Sunday that he would drop out of the presidential race and endorse his vice-president, Emily's List, which champions Democratic women who support abortion rights, and Reproductive Freedom for All, which advocates for abortion access, officially endorsed Harris. Emily's List plans to spend at least $20m (£15.5m) in support of Harris.

Planned Parenthood Action Fund, whose endorsement must be ratified by local chapters, has not officially weighed in. However, its chief executive and president, Alexis McGill Johnson, warmly commended Harris for keeping "the needs and experiences of patients and providers front and centre".

Harris has spent much of this year on a tour of the country in support of abortion rights, where she has proved to be a far more effective messenger than Biden. The president was infamously reluctant to even say the word "abortion" and fumbled answers to questions about it in the June debate that ultimately cost him his candidacy.

"Just right off the bat, she's primed to run with the message around abortion rights," said Jean Sinzdak, associate director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University in New Jersey. "Her messaging around abortion and being out there forcefully on the issue is going to be a net positive for her."

Harris, the first sitting vice-president or president to visit an abortion clinic, has described the 2022 overturning of Roe v Wade and the abortion bans that now blanket the US south as "a healthcare crisis" and frames abortion rights as an issue of personal freedom.

"One does not have to abandon their faith or deeply held beliefs to agree the government should not be telling her what to do with her body," she told a crowd in Savannah, Georgia, in February.

Democrats hope that outrage over Roe's downfall, which hobbled Republicans in the 2022 midterms, will boost turnout among their base – especially in battleground states such as Nevada and Arizona.

Donald Trump, his running mate, JD Vance, and other Republicans have attempted to neutralise the importance of abortion rights in the 2024 election by downplaying the issue as well as their party's role in Roe's demise. During last week's Republican National Convention, the issue was conspicuously missing onstage. Neither Trump, who appointed three of the supreme court justices who overturned Roe, nor Vance, who has previously supported a national abortion ban, mentioned abortion.

"Trump and Vance can downplay the abortion message all they want, but the political reality speaks for itself," said Melissa Deckman, chief executive of the Public Religion Research Institute.

Deckman thinks a Harris candidacy will invigorate young women, young women of colour and suburban women.

"We see in our polling that young women in particular are the most staunchly supportive of abortion rights," Deckman said. "I think it's going to be an extremely close election. But I think the benefit for the Democrats is now they have a new narrative. There's some enthusiasm happening, where there wasn't with the Biden campaign."

Before Roe fell, anti-abortion Republicans were far more likely than pro-abortion rights Democrats to identify as single-issue abortion voters.

That picture has changed somewhat. One in eight voters say abortion is the "most important issue" to their vote, while more than half say that it is a "very important issue but not the most important," according to polling conducted before Biden's departure from the race. Two-thirds of the voters who describe abortion as their most important issue say it should be legal in all or most cases. The voters who think it should be legal in all cases tend to be Democratic, black, female or between 18 and 29 in age.

As vice-president, Harris has backed Biden's promise to codify abortion rights into law.

While abortion rights groups are backing Harris, anti-abortion activists are already mobilising against her. SBA Pro-Life America, which plans to spend $92m across eight states in this election cycle, has started calling Harris the "abortion czar".



Abortion has been a hotly contested issue in the US, particularly since the 2022 overturning of Roe v Wade

PHOTOGRAPH: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/ GETTY IMAGES



The crowd in Denver in 2008 when Barack Obama accepted the Democratic nomination

PHOTOGRAPH: NEW YORK DAILY NEWS/GETTY

'This is scary' Democrat delegates face scramble to select Biden's successor

George Chidi

It's been more than 50 years since delegates to a Democratic national convention haven't known their nominee as they walked through the door. Now, in the aftermath of Joe Biden's decision on Sunday not to seek re-election, there's a mad dash.

Delegates are due to convene in Chicago on 19 August, and while the Democratic party seems to be coalescing around Kamala Harris, there's no guarantee that she will be the nominee, and others could still throw their name into contention.

But just a few hours after Biden's announcement, Google documents were circulating asking delegates to pledge support for Harris.

Jonathan Padilla, a delegate from California, said he didn't want to be rushed into making a decision.

"I do want to have deliberation," he added. "There's a lot of frustration in the party, and I think having a process to talk to people from the campaign and to the candidate or people around her is necessary to help us be unified in November." Delegates are, by and large, local volunteers expected to spend thousands of dollars to fly to Chicago and attend the convention.

It's often viewed as a reward for activism and dedication, but it's typically a far less consequential role than it might be next month.

One delegate who isn't yet old enough to drink expressed his mounting anxiety about how things were unfolding. "I'm a young, young person," said the delegate, who requested anonymity because he feared being replaced by his state chair. "This is my first convention. And this is scary." He said he was disappointed with the party for communicating poorly.

"But at the same time, I don't really feel like I have time to be disappointed. I feel like I just need to go knock on some doors."

In a "normal" election year, each state sends a number of delegates to the convention who have been pledged to a candidate. Those delegates are expected to vote for that candidate, on pains of being replaced by a state chair if their vote is wayward. With a majority going to one candidate, as has happened every election year since the 1960s, that's the end of it. A candidate is chosen. That bureaucratic, uncontroversial process has become an open question this year.

In a call on Friday, before Biden dropped out, Elaine Kamarck, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute and a member of the party's rules committee, likened the process of selecting a new nominee to a mini-primary, with delegates as the voting audience. If Biden were to drop out, the process would be "scrunched into three weeks or something. It'd be incredibly tight." The question at the convention would then become whether a consensus had formed on a nominee. But that's not exactly what's happening right now.



Party members dress up for the Democratic convention in 1972

Instead, members of the California Democratic party have begun circulating a Google document asking delegates to pledge their support for Harris publicly and immediately.

A second Google document is circulating to delegates with a form for pledging their support for Harris on a petition. Before the start of the convention, the Democratic National Committee is also planning to hold a virtual roll call, where a nominee would be chosen for legal purposes.

Ohio presents a problem. State law ostensibly requires parties to select their nominees by 9 August to appear on the ballot. Ohio lawmakers changed the law this year, but Democrats worry that the change won't take effect in time.

While some delegates have only just come around to supporting someone other than Biden, others had been pushing for a change during the primaries, long before Biden's disastrous debate.

"I think we were feeling like our message has become even stronger in the past few hours," said Asma Mohammed, the leader of Minnesota's "uncommitted" movement and a Democratic convention delegate. "There are people who have reached out and said, 'You know, you're right. We needed a better candidate.'"

Mohammed has been calling for pushback against the Biden administration's support for the war in Gaza, demanding a plank in the party platform that calls for a ceasefire, an arms embargo and a president ready to support that position. She believes Harris is more sympathetic to her position than Biden was, despite having taken $5m (£3.9m) in campaign donations from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (Aipac).

"We are delegates from our communities, and we are being asked to represent," Mohammed said. "We can't do that if we're only being given one option."

A degree of dissent against the virtual roll call had percolated up from delegates days ago. Delegates Are Democracy and Welcome Party, two organisations formed in recent days to help inform confused delegates about their options, have been hosting webinars.

Although it has been suggested that Biden needs to "release his delegates", they are in fact free agents and can vote for whoever they choose. Biden has endorsed Harris, but he cannot force the delegates to follow his lead.

Quick pivot Republicans shift focus to new opponent

Hugo Lowell
Washington

Donald Trump was scrambling yesterday to pivot his campaign to take on Kamala Harris, with attack ads hitting her current record in office and her past in California, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

The Trump campaign is viewing Harris as the presumptive Democratic nominee, especially after Joe Biden gave her his endorsement, and started preparing opposition research dossiers on her in recent weeks.

Trump-aligned political action committees such as MAGA Inc will unleash a wave of attacks against Harris, including a $5m (£3.8) TV campaign in the battleground states of Pennsylvania, Georgia and Arizona, casting her as the puppet master in the Biden administration.

The bet from the Trump campaign is that Democrats fear the possibility of a backlash from their progressive base if they push aside Harris, who is on track to be the first black female nominee of the party.

Still, senior Trump campaign advisers are uncertain whether Harris will actually become the nominee. As much as Biden's withdrawal has left Democrats floundering, it has also become a headache for the Trump campaign team.

Trump's campaign was always set up to defeat one person – Biden – and Trump's allies in recent weeks even pulled punches to keep the president viable as a candidate because they were so keen to run against him.

The problem for the Trump campaign is that their best attack lines against Biden, on age and mental acuity, cannot be used and, if anything, they might be reprised by Democrats against Trump given he now will be the oldest candidate.



▲ *A Trump supporter in Virginia in a T-shirt now past its use-by date*
PHOTOGRAPH: PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

The millions the Trump-aligned Pacs spent creating attack ads against Biden, including one as recently as last week that was centred around Biden's slip-up about military deaths at the presidential debate last month, have gone to waste.

Biden stepping aside was the Trump campaign's worst-case scenario for the 2024 election, the two sources said.

The Trump campaign in effect issued an internal directive last month telling staffers not publicly to amplify Democratic calls for Biden to drop out, fearing it could help push it over the edge, the Guardian reported.

For weeks, the campaign has been more concerned about running against Harris than Biden, with some senior advisers thinking the vice-president was better at delivering messages on abortion rights and Trump's myriad legal problems.

$5m
Cost of the Trump campaign's TV ads attacking Kamala Harris in three battleground states

Some Trump allies, including people at the MAGA Inc and Save America Pacs, have also noted she can be humorous at times; clips of her quirky phrases – "You think you just fell out of a coconut tree?" – have gone viral on TikTok and other social media sites.

But sources said the Trump campaign also believed Harris had her own drawbacks that would cancel out any momentum she might generate in the weeks until the Democratic National Convention that starts on 19 August in Chicago.

They believe they can portray her as responsible for what they call the "open" US southern border under the Biden administration, and define her by her tenure as a US senator and, before that, as the California attorney general and the San Francisco district attorney.

In doing so, the Trump campaign aims to resuscitate the same issues that dogged her in the 2020 Democratic primary, where she was pummelled for being soft on crime and too lenient on first-time drug offenders when she was a prosecutor in California.

Donations Fresh focus on Trump gifts to vice-president

Ed Pilkington

Donald Trump has moved swiftly to turn his attack machine on to the vice-president after Joe Biden's decision to drop out of the presidential race, dusting off his derisive nickname for her: "Laffin' Kamala Harris".

But as the Republican nominee refocuses his campaign to target Harris, there is one awkward truth that Trump will have to face. What about that check for $5,000 dated 26 September 2011, bearing his distinctive signature, and made payable to one "Attorney General Kamala D Harris"?

Within hours of Biden's historic decision breaking on Sunday, and with a new possible Trump v Harris battle heaving into view, Trump's uncomfortable donation resurfaced on social media. Jared Moskowitz, a Democratic congressman from Florida, posted a photo of the check on his X feed with the words: "Was a wise investment."

Michael Steele, former chair of the Republican National Committee, snarked: "When Trump wrote that check to re-elect Kamala Harris in 2011, I bet he didn't think she'd cash it in 2024!"

In fact, the $5,000 donation was just one of several gifts from the Trump family to Harris at the time when she was working as California's top prosecutor. Records held by the California secretary of state note the largest $5,000 donation, but also give details of a further $1,000 check from Trump to Harris from February 2013 at the start of her re-election campaign as the state's attorney general.

Trump's daughter Ivanka is also listed on the database as having given Harris $2,000 for her re-election committee in June 2014.

The existence of $8,000 of Trump money wending its way into Harris's political coffers may hound Trump on the campaign trail, just as it did during the 2020 presidential campaign when she was Biden's running mate. Then, Fox News uncovered details of how the $5,000 donation came about.

Digging into court documents, the channel reported that Trump had made the payment at the request of New York's then top prosecutor, Eric Schneiderman, who held a fundraiser for Harris in September 2011. Trump was persuaded to buy a ticket for the event at the top price of $5,000, with Ivanka attending.

Trump insisted that the fact that he did this favour for Schneiderman, who was later disgraced after he was accused of physically abusing several women, had nothing to do with the investigation that was then taking place into Trump University.

Contrary to Steele's quip on social media, Harris will not be able to spend the $5,000 on her 2024 presidential campaign, should she secure the Democratic nomination.

As the Sacramento Bee reported in 2020, she gave away the entire $6,000 he had given her as she began her run for the US Senate, bequeathing it to a civil rights non-profit working in Central America.

The age question Now it is something ex-president will have to worry about

Edward Helmore

With the 78-year-old Donald Trump now certain to face a Democratic candidate younger than he is, the Republican could have the tables turned on him over the questions of age and mental agility he sidestepped while Joe Biden was his opponent.

The age gap between Trump and his likely Democratic party opponent, Kamala Harris, 59, could make him the sole focus of voters' desire for a generational handover of power. And with Biden's often stumbling public appearances now a thing of the past, there is likely to be a fresh focus on Trump's mental acuity and his frequently rambling, confused campaign speeches.

Last month, for example, Trump got the name of his own doctor wrong. Previously he has made high-profile campaign trail gaffes, in which he seemed to think that Barack Obama was still president and mistook his Republican rival Nikki Haley for Nancy Pelosi.

Nearly 60% of US voters said last month that Biden should "definitely" or "probably" be replaced, while Trump's approval rating had risen to 40% since his hush money conviction and the attempt on his life. Harris's rating sits at 39%.

Biden's departure from the ticket upends several aspects of Republican calculations, and means Trump the convicted felon would have to debate Harris the former prosecutor in September if she receives the Democratic party nomination.

The vice-president proved her debating skills in 2019 when she delivered a highly personal attack on Biden on the issue of race that he later described as "hurtful" and which chilled relations between the Biden-Harris camps before she was named as his vice-president.

The political commentator Anthony Michael Kreis posted on X soon after Biden's announcement: "I can't believe the GOP is running an old guy for president. Yikes."

Trump's reaction to his recent assassination attempt – pumping his fist and mouthing "fight, fight, fight!" – has been full of vigour and helped unify his party behind him. After his brush with death he vowed to run a "unity" campaign. That pledge dissolved on Saturday when he returned to disparaging Biden, Harris and the Democratic agenda, and he has been delivering his usual rants, often laced with conspiracy theories and even a bizarre reference to a shark.

After Biden announced he would abandon his re-election effort, Trump responded by saying his erstwhile rival was not fit to run for president and "not fit to serve".

A pro-Trump Super Pac accused Harris on Sunday of being "in on" a cover-up of the president's "mental decline", and characterised her as the driving force behind the Biden administration's policies.

The Democratic strategist Hank Sheinkopf said Trump's "less than gracious" response to Biden stepping down was something Democrats would hope continues. "Trump is reverting to type. Biden is out of the picture and Trump is the only one who can seize defeat from the jaws of victory. Without having Biden as his opponent, and calling him 'Sleepy Joe', who is he going to rail against? How he attacks a woman is very different, but you can already tell from the way he attacked Biden on Sunday that he's not thinking clearly. His vitriol has taken over again."

He added: "Democrats will be able to use Harris as an offensive chess piece in the suburbs of the country, on women's right to chose and reproductive freedom, and hope that Trump screws up by overreacting so they can accuse him of being incapable of controlling himself because of his age. And it becomes a different race."



▲ *Donald Trump at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee last week. Now his mental acuity will be in the spotlight* PHOTOGRAPH: JOE RAEDLE/GETTY

White House

President could still exert power during his final months

Ed Pilkington



The Bidens in 2022 at their home in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, where the president is isolating with Covid
PHOTOGRAPH: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY

When Joe Biden finally ends his self-imposed seclusion at his vacation home in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, this week he will emerge into a very different world than the one from which he isolated when diagnosed with Covid last Wednesday.

He will still be president of the US, and as such the most powerful person on Earth. But it may not feel like it. His hopes of carrying on in that office died at 1.46pm on Sunday when he announced he was standing down from the 2024 race.

Very little is known about Biden's plans for the next six months. Given the speed at which the final demise of his campaign happened, he may not know much himself.

What we do know is that attempts by Donald Trump and his inner circle to force him out of the Oval Office now, on grounds that "if he can't run for office, he can't run our country", are as half-hearted as they sound. Barring suprises, Biden will remain in the White House until noon on 20 January 2025.

The president's immediate diary is empty, but over the weekend the New York Times reported a tentative arrangement for him to go to Austin, Texas tomorrow to attend a postponed civil rights celebration at the Lyndon Johnson presidential library.

Biden may enjoy comparisons with Johnson, another Democratic president who dropped out of his re-election contest in March 1968., but the parallel could be a positive one. As the historian Doris Kearns Goodwin recalls in her recent book An Unfinished Love Story, Johnson was showered with Democratic adulation after he stepped aside, and his ratings bounced from 57% disapproval to 57% approval virtually overnight.

> ***'We can expect him to keep cracking down on immigration'***
>
> **Aubrey Jewett**
> *Political scientist*

A similar abrupt improvement can already be felt in Biden's fortunes. Top Democrats are publicly lauding him for putting country before self with as much passion as a few hours earlier they were calling for his departure.

So it is quite possible that there will be a Biden bounce in the last six months of his presidency. The question is, what will he do with it?

Top of the list is likely to be helping Kamala Harris - or whoever else replaces him as Democratic nominee - win in November. Biden has expended so much of his political capital running as the candidate to protect US democracy against the existential threat of Trump that he would find it hard to turn his back on the fight now.

Whether Harris or an alternative would want Biden on the campaign trail is another matter entirely. The new Democratic candidate will want to emphasise that they come from a younger generation, and to disassociate themselves with some of the less popular aspects of the past four years, such as inflation.

There is plenty else Biden could do to support the candidate. If he can keep inflation on its downward path, that would blunt one of Trump's main attack lines.

It would be a similar story with immigration. The number of immigrants crossing illegally over the southern border fell to a three-year low last month.

"We can expect Biden to continue what he's been doing for the past several months, which is cracking down on illegal immigration," said Aubrey Jewett, a political scientist at the University of Central Florida.

Merely holding the country steady to the benefit of whoever replaces him is unlikely to be ambitious enough for Biden. Though Congress is stymied, with divided leadership, he does have some chance to shape the narrative of his legacy with executive orders.

He may be tempted to use those powers to highlight areas which he considers to be his greatest achievements. They include tackling the climate crisis, having passed the largest investment in renewable energy in US history.

There may be more executive orders coming to cut student debt, a running theme of Biden's presidency to the benefit of millions of low-income Americans.

Then there are the two big conflicts raging around the world as his term draws to a close. Therein lies danger: Biden is at risk of leaving the White House burdened by a reputation as the president who saw the deaths of more than 39,000 Palestinians on his watch, with no resolution in sight.

He has been reported to have grown increasingly frustrated with the hardline government of the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and the failure to secure a pause in the Gaza fighting.

On Ukraine, Biden can be expected to focus on executive actions that would temporarily help shore up Ukraine's military strength before the advent of a possible Trump administration.

There is one other power available to Biden before he steps down: pardon power. He has tried to take the high ground in his dealings with the justice department, keeping a distance from all prosecutorial decisions. He has indicated that he would not pardon Hunter Biden, after his son was found guilty of buying a handgun while using cocaine.

I presume that when he said that, he meant it," said Jewett. But outgoing presidents have repeatedly succumbed to the allure of the pardon power, he added.

"I don't think it's likely, but as a dad he might be tempted."

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▼ *Kamala Harris with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskiy at the Munich Security Conference in February*

PHOTOGRAPH: WOLFGANG RATTAY/AFP

International stage

Biden is a foreign policy expert, but Harris is no novice

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

Despite his recent memory lapses and malapropisms, Joe Biden has a store of knowledge about foreign policy and foreign leaders no other senior Democrat can match.

Indeed, in the final days as he battled to retain his candidacy, his unparalleled experience was cited by his supporters as a reason in perilous times not to force him out. Biden himself has said he knows more about foreign policy than Henry Kissinger did.

European leaders had cherished his succession to the presidency in 2021 after Donald Trump. Without his careful consultations and weighing of the options, it is unlikely the west would have been able to respond as decisively as it did initially in imposing sanctions on Russia and giving military support to Ukraine after Vladimir Putin's invasion. But now there may be a period as a lame duck president in which all his decisions are set against his cognitive ability.

Diplomats had already sensed his star had been waning, including his ability to articulate to Americans the need to defend Ukraine. The sense he is not prosecuting foreign policy arguments domestically with sufficient vigour has become a mainstay of European diplomatic discourse. His performance at the recent G7 summit in Italy raised eyebrows, and gradually some of his instincts have come to be seen as a product of a bygone era.

Biden took office after more than 30 years on the Senate foreign relations committee. By the time he took on the presidency he had a list of overseas contacts unmatched by any predecessor since George HW Bush, also a former two-term vice-president who spearheaded White House diplomatic assignments in the role. Biden has visited Ukraine many times, met Xi Jinping in Beijing, and looked into the eyes of Putin and declared he is a man without a soul. He has known Benjamin Netanyahu for 40 years.

His experience also led him to believe in the power of personal rapport in foreign policy.

That experience has led to a willingness sometimes to overrule military commanders, diplomatic experts and others. "He's got fluency on foreign policy that gives him confidence – he knows he can win the argument," said Senator Chris Murphy, adding: "It allows him to act with boldness and confidence."

Sometimes that boldness led to mistakes, including his handling of the US exit from Afghanistan and a slowness to supply Ukraine with equipment.

So Kamala Harris, if elected, will be a downgrade in terms of knowledge of foreign affairs and foreign leaders, even after what would be an intensive autumn apprenticeship. That does not mean she is a novice. She has been slowly building her foreign policy portfolio, speaking in Britain at an AI conference organised by Rishi Sunak. She attended the 2023 Asean summit in Biden's stead.

For three years in succession she led the US delegation to the Munich Security Conference, in what was clearly an attempt to broaden her knowledge and introduce her to Europe. At the last conference she had to respond to the news of the death of Alexei Navalny.

Several ex-Biden staffers have said they are optimistic that she can chart her own policy on Gaza, and that the president is caught in a time warp about an Israeli polity that no longer exists. In early March, Harris made a speech calling for a six-week "temporary ceasefire" long before Biden publicly said so.

Harris has also expressed sympathy for pro-Palestine student protesters, saying they were "showing exactly what the human emotion should be, as a response to Gaza", though she added she did not "wholesale endorse their points". She has said clearly that too many Palestinians have been killed, and shown herself more sensitive to the protests in swing states. The chance for a mild reset exists that would take her closer to the European mainstream position on the Gaza conflict.

Her chief foreign policy adviser, Philip Gordon, is a Washington veteran who has specialised in both Middle Eastern and European politics, and has been sceptical of US efforts to secure regime change in the Middle East or impose democracy in countries such as Saudi Arabia. Unusually, his PhD was in French Gaullist security policy, and he initially joined the Obama administration as assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs before moving to the National Security Council staff specialising in the Middle East. He differed from his boss in believing limited strikes against Syria after its use of chemical weapons would be effective and justified, and was a strong supporter of the nuclear agreement with Iran.

Given the learning curve Harris is on, Gordon becomes the man on whom she will have to rely as the Biden and Harris teams try to find a way to work alongside one another.

Secret Service

Agency 'failed' over Trump shooting, says director

Joan E Greve
Washington

The US Secret Service "failed" when a 20-year-old gunman was able to take a clear shot at Donald Trump earlier this month, the agency director acknowledged yesterday during a grilling from lawmakers in which she was again urged to resign by members of both parties.

Kimberly Cheatle faced lawmakers' questions at a contentious House hearing in the wake of the assassination attempt against the former US president on 13 July.

In her opening statement, Cheatle acknowledged the Secret Service had "failed" when Thomas Matthew Crooks shot at Trump from a rooftop near the former president's campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

Trump sustained an injury to his ear, and one rally attendee, the former fire chief Corey Comperatore, was killed. Two others were injured.

"I take full responsibility for any security lapse of our agency," Cheatle told the House oversight committee. "We are fully cooperating with ongoing investigations. We must learn what happened, and I will move heaven and earth to ensure that an incident like July 13th does not happen again."

In a particularly damning moment, Cheatle acknowledged agents had been informed of a suspicious individual "between two and five times" before the gunman opened fire.

The Republican chair of the committee, James Comer, called the assassination attempt "a horrifying moment in American history" and demanded Cheatle offer her resignation. Lawmakers repeatedly pressed her on how such a security lapse could have occurred, but the director dodged many of their questions, reminding members an investigation was still in its earliest stages.

Cheatle denied allegations that the Secret Service had rejected the Trump campaign's demands for additional security on 13 July.

Democrats joined in the criticism, and one of them, the California representative Ro Khanna, echoed Republican calls for Cheatle's resignation. Cheatle said the agency hoped to conclude its internal investigation in 60 days, prompting censure from committee members.



▲ *Kimberly Cheatle testifying at the congressional hearing yesterday*

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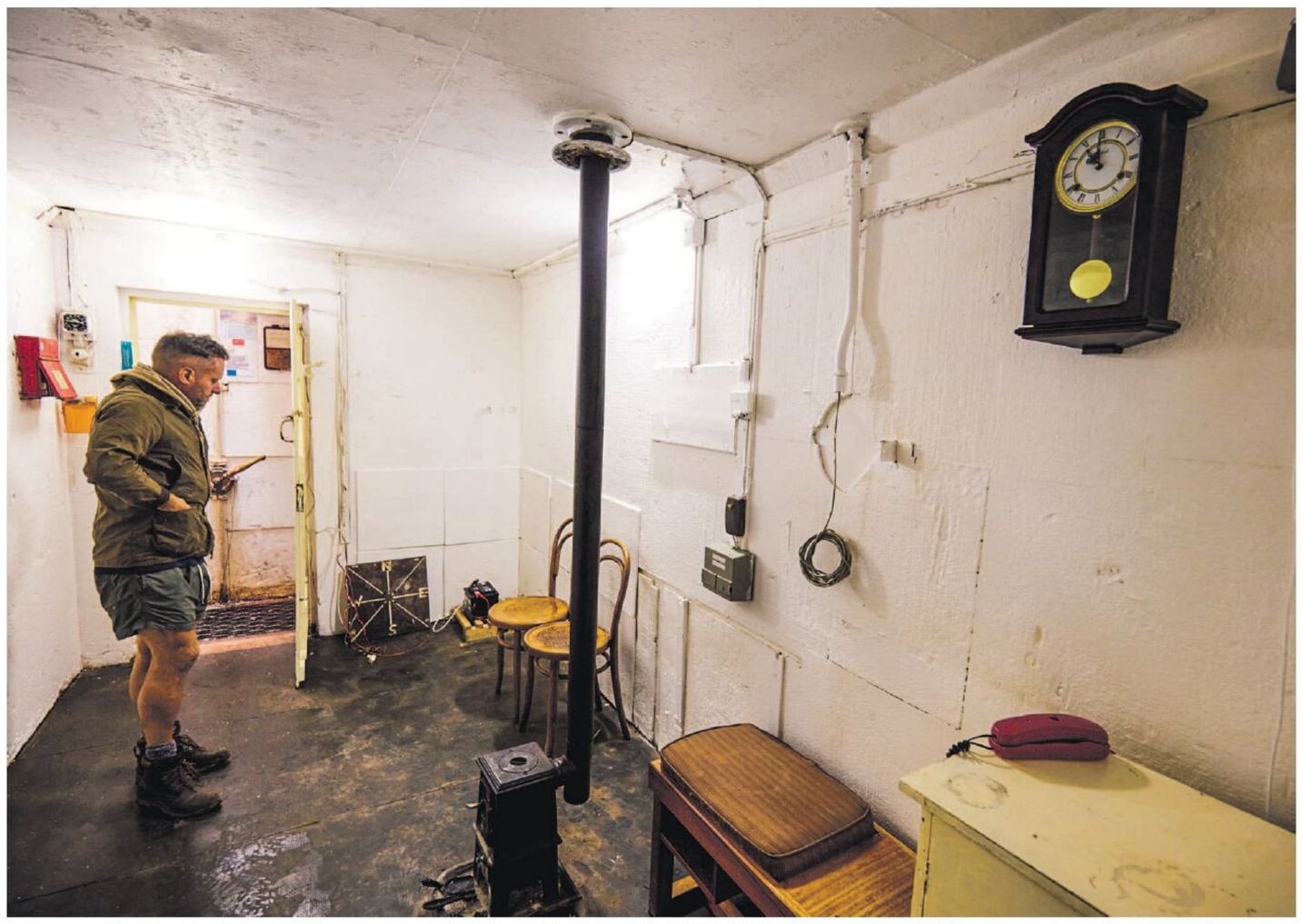




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Bunker mentality

Nuclear shelter goes to auction



Mark Brown
North of England correspondent

It's a property with no windows, no running water and no mod cons except for a phone line. But there is parking, the countryside is phenomenal and when Armageddon happens, it could be perfect.

This week will bring the rare sale of a 1958 nuclear bunker in the Cumbrian Dales near Sedbergh.

It was one of about 1,500 Royal Observer Corps monitoring posts built across the UK at the height of cold war fears of nuclear attack. The idea was that three volunteers could live down there for a fortnight, able to measure fallout after the bombs dropped and broadcast messages to the public.

After decommissioning, most of the bunkers were sold off and are nowadays often sites for mobile phone masts. But on Thursday one will be auctioned online for anyone to buy. It is "secure, dry and in its original condition" and has a guide price of £15,000-£20,000.

Viewings took place over two hours yesterday afternoon and the Guardian went along to see what you get for your money but also to ask: what sort of person wants to buy a nuclear bunker?

"I'm on the edge of a midlife crisis," joked Barney Strange, a paramedic who had come along with his wife, Harvie. "The idea of owning a nuclear bunker is surely every 14-year-old boy's dream, isn't it? It is so secluded ... truly unique. I know this is a cliche, but there is something about buying a piece of history."

Does the thought of sleeping underground in a small windowless room not fill him with dread? "No, not at all. It fills me with a sense of security. I'm not a caver but I love all things underground."

Jim Demitriou, a national valuer with SDL property auctions, was expecting about 20 in-person viewings, a fraction of the interest the sale has generated.

He said the seller had owned the bunker since 2008. "He's kind of felt he's had his fun with it, it's time for somebody else to have fun."

The Dentdale valley surroundings, even on a drizzly, misty July morning, are undeniably breathtaking. It is remote but, counterintuitively, it also has great transport links: it is right next to Dent railway station, the highest mainline station in England.

From the road, you would never know the bunker was there. Behind a bush is a small concrete structure with a metal hatch. You descend 12 metres (40ft) down a metal ladder into what is like a small cellar - or cell.

Nick and Jo Bradley travelled from Read in Lancashire. "We like quirkiness and we love it up here," said Jo. "This is quirky." Nick said they would go away and have a proper chat about what they would do with it.

Warren Bardsley, from Manchester, was interested in the bunker as a retreat as well as its Airbnb potential. "It's amazing, it's unique, there is nothing like it," he said. "But it is also a bit crazy."

Getting down the ladder is not straightforward - at least three people decided against it - but it was easy enough for Dave Moll, from west Cumbria, who is in his 70s and lowered down his walking stick on a rope before getting in. "It is unusual," he said. "It's the quirkiness of it more than anything else."

Demitriou said people registering interest for the auction had all sorts of ideas for the bunker. "Someone has said it would make a great music studio. There are also a lot of people into history who want to buy a piece of post-war Britain for not an exorbitant price. Some people want it as a bolthole where they can be away from everything."

The bunker could have a practical purpose if bombs ever do go off - although not for Strange. "I would rather die along with everyone else, I think."



Barney Strange emerges from the bunker, while Warren Bardsley, above, takes a look inside the 1950s fallout shelter

PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/ THE GUARDIAN

Tributes paid to Trevor Burnard, historian of Atlantic slavery

Mabel Banfield-Nwachi

Tributes have been paid to Prof Trevor Burnard, who died on Friday at 63. He was described as a "prolific academic" who would be remembered for his "brilliance and his compassion", and his work on Atlantic slavery.

Burnard, who was a professor of slavery and emancipation and considered to be one of the foremost experts on Atlantic slavery, joined the University of Hull in 2019, continuing his career-long interest in plantation societies in the Americas and their impact on global economic systems.

His expertise was central in research commissioned by the Scott Trust, the Guardian's owner, which explored the links of its founder, John Edward Taylor, to transatlantic slavery.

As a result of the research, the Scott Trust issued an apology and announced a decade-long programme of restorative justice, including £10m in reparations for descendant communities

Burnard served as the director of the Wilberforce Institute at the University of Hull, which studies slavery and emancipation, until last month.

According to the university, Burnard's leadership "brought with it significant funding awards from prestigious research bodies including the AHRC [Arts and Humanities Research Council], the Australian Research Council, and the Leverhulme Trust, as well as numerous prizes for the far-reaching impact of the institute's work".

Dr Cassandra Gooptar, a lecturer in legacies of slavery who worked closely with Burnard on the Guardian project, described him as a "prolific academic" and a supportive mentor who was "always keen to give credit to junior researchers for their work".

Burnard has many published books, including Writing the History of Global Slavery and Writing Early America: From Empire to Revolution, and was working on another book at the time of his death.



Prof Trevor Burnard served as the director of the Wilberforce Institute

Zahawi seeking backers to fund £600m Telegraph bid

Mark Sweney

The former chancellor, Nadhim Zahawi, has approached billionaire backers about financing a potential £600m bid for the Telegraph newspapers and the Spectator magazine.

Zahawi was originally involved as a middleman, introducing Redbird IMI, a United Arab Emirates-backed consortium, to the Barclay family, which enabled it to repay £1.16bn in loans and take back control of the debt-laden business from Lloyds Banking Group last year. He was subsequently tipped to become the chair of the media group if RedBird IMI completed a takeover.

However, RedBird IMI put the Barclays loans it had converted into control of the Telegraph titles back up for sale after the government published legislation to block foreign states or associated individuals from owning newspaper assets in the UK. Zahawi, who in May was named chair of the Barclay family-owned retailer Very Group, is reportedly in talks with International Media Investments (IMI) about a bid for the newspapers. IMI is an Abu Dhabi-based investment vehicle that holds a majority stake in RedBird IMI.

Among the potential backers he is said to have approached are Reuben Brothers, which owns a large property portfolio as well as a stake in Newcastle United, according to Sky News, which first reported Zahawi's potential takeover plans.

It is not clear whether Zahawi, who has not made a formal offer, is participating in the auction being run by RedBird IMI, which set a deadline of last Friday for the first round of bids for the titles.

Others in the frame include David Montgomery's media group National World; Maurice Saatchi, a former co-chair of the Conservative party and the co-founder of the advertising group M&C Saatchi; and the Belgian media group Mediahuis.

CVC Capital Partners, the private equity group behind the Six Nations tournament and English Premiership Rugby, also reportedly considered making a bid.

In June it was revealed that the parent company, Telegraph Media Group, had tumbled into the red last year after it set aside nearly £280m to cover loans made to the Barclay family that might not be repaid.



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‘It’s economic violence’

Birmingham residents fight to save homes



▶ *Up to 1,900 homes in Ladywood have been listed for potential demolition in one of Europe’s biggest single-site regeneration projects*

PHOTOGRAPH: FABIO DE PAOLA/ THE GUARDIAN

Jessica Murray
Midlands correspondent

When Laura Kudrna bought her home on the Ladywood estate in Birmingham, it brought to an end a 12-year period of renting in which she had moved 20 times. “I was so excited to be able to stay in a home that I thought I would have for life,” she said.

But her new sense of security was shattered when she found out that her property was one of 1,900 dwellings listed for potential demolition in what is thought to be one of Europe’s biggest single-site estate regenerations.

The scale of the proposed project is staggering: 6,000 people could have their homes torn down as part of a £2.2bn project in which 1,266 council houses and 567 properties belonging to private homeowners could be repossessed in a mass compulsory purchase order.

In their place, 7,500 homes will be built in a high-density housing plan on a 61-hectare (150-acre) site. About 1,000 of these will be designated as affordable, council-owned homes, according to a report presented to council’s cabinet.

If the numbers involved seem imposing, the strength of feeling in opposition to the plan is more than a match. Residents said they were furious and accused the council of “psychological economic violence”.

The battle lines have been drawn over familiar terrain. Birmingham council describes the initiative as the most significant redevelopment project in a generation, in a city where there is an urgent need to build more housing.

On the other side of the debate, Kudrna, 39, is leading the Ladywood Unite campaign to voice people’s concerns about the project. They say they understand the need to increase the housing stock but not through the demolition of good homes.

“They appear to be planning to knock down good-quality and new housing for this. It is just so egregious,” Kudrna said. “We are absolutely pro-home building. There’s a lot of great land to build on in Ladywood, like this building is derelict and this building is derelict,” she said, pointing to vacant land nearby. “Why can’t they just build on those instead of coming after our homes?”

The project will be completed in phases over a 15- to 20-year period, and compulsory purchase orders would be used as a last resort, the council said.

Homeowners would be entitled to a compensation package and the council is exploring options to help people living on the site buy the new homes - for example, through shared equity.

The council has said that it intended to take a “build-first approach”, meaning people would not be moved out of their homes until a new property became available on site, and would ensure no one had to leave Ladywood if they did not want to.

Some people said they were sceptical this would happen. George Smith, who is retiring from his job as the head of an academy trust when he turns 60 this summer, had planned to spend his free time enjoying life at the home he bought when it was built 30 years ago. It sits on a modern, well-maintained estate, but it falls within the red line of the proposed demolition zone and is now at risk of being flattened.



▲ *Laura Kudrna, the head of the Ladywood Unite campaign group*

“I own the freehold. I’ve put everything in here. This was a lifelong home. I had no thoughts I would ever need to move and, if I did, it would be on my own terms,” Smith said.

“It’s the real injustice of it all, and at the same time the council are being totally incompetent at meeting with us.”

The regeneration scheme has been beset by problems for months. At a consultation meeting held last year, nearly 100 residents were unable to get into a packed community centre, prompting an angry crowd to form outside.

“There has been a horrible lack of community engagement,” said Kudrna. “We’ve really struggled to get the council to meet us or give us any information. It’s psychological economic violence, truly.”

Marco di Nunzio, an associate professor in urban anthropology at the University of Birmingham, is studying the Ladywood regeneration scheme. “Birmingham is seeing a return to what used to happen in the 60s, taking down entire areas and rebuilding them,” he said. “There are town planning laws which allow, if there is a public interest, the local authority to seize assets.

“But is the Ladywood regeneration project in its present form actually in the public interest if it involves displacing a large number of people to make room for a commercial endeavour, with no binding commitment to deliver social and affordable housing?”

Jayne Francis, the council’s cabinet member for housing and homelessness, said: “We know that much of the community in Ladywood feels frustrated and uncertain about what the scheme means for them, and we’d like to apologise for any distress caused.”

Francis said the council was developing a “community and resident charter” to set out its commitment throughout the project, and that a second round of engagement workshops had begun.

“We will work hard to rebuild trust with the Ladywood community and to make the most of this exciting opportunity to revitalise an area that was primarily built in the 1960s,” Francis said.

Four men arrested after boy, 15, killed at London ‘family fun day’

Caroline Davies

A murder investigation is under way after a teenage boy was shot dead at a “family fun day” event attended by more than 1,000 people in west London.

Rene Graham, 15, was pronounced dead at the scene in Emslie Horniman’s Pleasance Park, near Ladbroke Grove, after being found with injuries, the Metropolitan police said.

Officers were called at about 7.20pm on Sunday to reports of a shooting and have since arrested four men - two aged 21, one aged 20 and one aged 25 - on suspicion of murder.

It is believed more than 1,000 people were attending the annual Park Lime event, which was organised by the Caribbean Music Association and billed as a “family fun day” featuring live music, games and face painting.

Det Ch Supt Christina Jessah said: “A young boy has tragically lost his life and our thoughts remain with his family and friends at this devastating time. We will continue to provide them with specialist support.

“This investigation is at an early stage and we are keeping an open mind as to the motive. It will take us some time to establish the facts and this will be our priority in the coming days.

“We are keen to speak to other witnesses who were in the area at the time of the shooting. There was an event taking place and it’s possible people may have been taking photos or filming. Please check to see if you have captured anything.”

A crime scene remains in place. One bystander, 20, told the Evening Standard: “Everyone was chilling, having a good time when I heard a shot. A guy shot in the air ... Then everyone scattered, we ran. When the crowd cleared he shot the boy. He was on the ground. Everyone was running and taking cover, it was mad.”



▲ *Rene Graham was shot dead at the annual Park Lime event in London*

Another said: “I heard two bangs then the boy collapsed on the ground. It looked like he had been hit in the chest. There was sheer panic, everyone was running. The next thing there were sirens and police everywhere.”

On hearing about the shooting, Father Damian Ryan, a priest at a church bordering the park, said he was “utterly heartbroken” and saddened. “Several months ago ... a couple of hundred yards away someone was murdered,” he said.

“I’ve only been here two years, but other parishioners, people in the community, are saying this is not completely abnormal.”

Starmer considers lifting two-child benefit limit amid brewing rebellion

Eleni Courea
Jessica Elgot

Keir Starmer has indicated for the first time that he will consider scrapping the two-child benefit cap, amid a brewing rebellion by Labour MPs.

The prime minister endorsed comments by Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, who said that removing the cap was among measures the government would look at as part of a review into child poverty.

It came as the Liberal Democrats added another amendment to the king's speech that calls for the end of the two-child limit on child benefits, which is likely to be called today.

Phillipson told Sky News the government would "consider [lifting the cap] as one of a number of levers in terms of how we make sure we lift children out of poverty".

Starmer backed Phillipson during a press conference at Farnborough international airshow, saying: "What the education secretary said this morning, I agree with ... We will make sure that the strategy covers all the bases to drive down child poverty. No child should grow up in poverty."

Labour, Scottish National party, Liberal Democrat and some Conservative MPs are expected to criticise the government on the topic during the king's speech debate over the next two days, with a possible vote if the speaker decides to have one.

In the debate yesterday, Suella Braverman made a plea for her party to back scrapping the cap. "It's clear to me from my work with vulnerable families and parents that the cap isn't working," the former home secretary said.

"The children hardest hit are those under four, and it's affecting predominantly younger children and those in large families. I believe this cap is aggravating child poverty, and it's time for it to go now."

Starmer's remarks marked a change in tone from the government before an expected rebellion from Labour backbenchers who want the cap removed immediately.

Liz Kendall, the work and pensions secretary, held a private briefing for MPs yesterday in which she is said to have underlined that scrapping the measure is under review by the child poverty taskforce announced last week. MPs also expressed anger in the meeting about a briefing to Bloomberg over the weekend in which the row over the cap was described as a "virility test" for the government.

Asked whether there was a split in his party, Starmer said yesterday: "I'm not surprised that there's a real passion about this in the Labour party." He said there was "no silver bullet" and child poverty was due to "a complicated set of factors" that required a broader strategy.

Phillipson told broadcasters that scrapping the cap would be among the measures considered by the child poverty taskforce in the coming months, but cautioned that it was among the most expensive of the measures under consideration.

Starmer will face the first key test of his authority in the coming days over Labour's decision not to scrap the cap immediately.

The Lib Dem amendment is focused on reforms to health and social care but includes "scrapping the two child benefit cap". The party's increased number of new MPs means it has a higher chance of being selected - but party sources indicated they would vote for other amendments on the same issue.



▲ *Speaking at the Farnborough international air show, Keir Starmer said he agreed lifting the benefit cap should be considered* PHOTOGRAPH: HOLLIE ADAMS/EPA



Reform UK From terraces to Commons, new MP Rupert Lowe divides opinion

Ben Quinn

Rupert Lowe is used to dividing opinion. During his years as chair of Southampton football club, such was the antipathy among some fans that many would engage in the abusive chant: "Swing Lowe, Swing Rupert Lowe."

"Understandably, having thousands of people chanting such offensive language is not a pleasant position to be in, but we live in a country with free speech and we must respect that. It did put pressure on my health," the new Reform UK MP said this week.

This month, he angered teachers' unions even before he was sworn in after saying he had a list of schools where he claimed teachers were allegedly "pushing" critical views about the populist rightwing party.

As one of five new Reform MPs, Lowe's Great Yarmouth seat was arguably a more challenging target than those of his colleagues Nigel Farage and Richard Tice - it was Labour under Blair and Tory under Johnson - but in Lowe, the party also has an MP who comes to Westminster with decades of business experience.

Like Farage and Tice, Oxford-born Lowe is a former public school boy intent on waging a libertarian revolt against Britain's "establishment". After university, he was a commodity broker in the City and worked in securities in Japan. When British football clubs emerged as attractive financial assets in the 1990s, he became chair of Southampton after a reverse takeover.

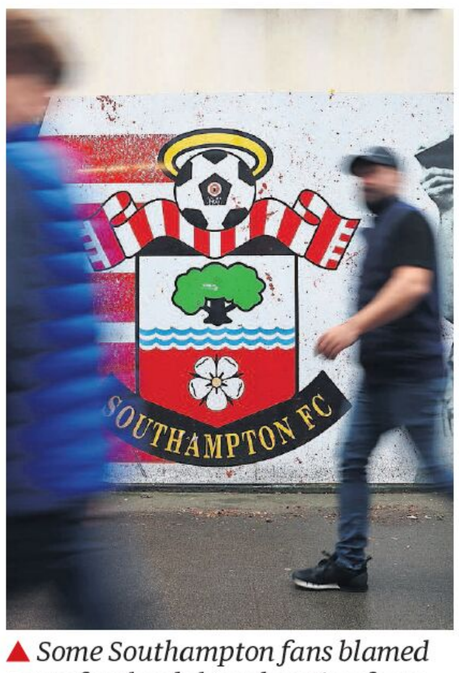
Lowe resigned in 2006 , having been blamed by many fans for relegation in 2005. He made a return but resigned again in 2009 as the club's holding company went into administration.

Today, he looks back with pride and cites achievements such as building a new stadium and enabling the club to compete for many years in the Premier League. "People will always have different opinions, and that's fine. Some at the club did not appreciate what we achieved," he said.

Interviewers recall Lowe pivoting from football talk to railing against the Maastricht treaty. By then, he had already cut his teeth in politics, having stood unsuccessfully in the Cotswolds in 1997 for the Referendum party. After taking a prominent role in the Vote Leave campaign, he became a Brexit party MEP in 2019.

In parliament, he is expected to take a lead on issues including farming and fisheries. Comfortably in the camp of libertarian conservatives, he fervently believes Britain's potential - especially after Brexit - has been held back by too much "state" and "woke". But while seemingly a Tory at heart, his past pronouncements also indicate some even starker positions.

Lowe told a podcast in 2022 that the BBC was a "cancer at the



▲ *Some Southampton fans blamed Lowe for the club's relegation from the Premier League in 2005*

▼ *Reform's MPs Lee Anderson (left), Nigel Farage, Rupert Lowe, Richard Tice and James McMurdock*

PHOTOGRAPH: MAJA SMIEJKOWSKA/PA



heart of Britain". He also stands by his 2020 reference to "the cult of climate change", adding that government policy has been based on "questionable evidence".

In a 2019 interview with The Athletic, Lowe waxed lyrical about England's footballing "bloodstock" but veered into more contentious territory when talk turned to French talent such as Paul Pogba, the Parisian-born star from the city's multicultural suburbs.

"Pogba's originally not from France, is he? He would be from Africa," Lowe said. He said this week: "Paul Pogba is clearly from France – I am not arguing, or did not argue, against that. I was referring to Mr Pogba's lineage in a discussion about football youth academies. Mr Pogba is French."

To his admirers – including those applauding his decision to donate his net MP salary to charities and worthy causes every month – such comments are those of a man who simply speaks his mind.

June Mummery – the fisheries campaigner who encouraged Lowe to run in Great Yarmouth, said: "Clearly he's a wealthy man, but he's also humble … and a grafter. He genuinely cares about people."

Others have been less than impressed. After his comments about schools, the general secretary of the National Education Union, Daniel Kebede, said he was "cynically stoking up division".

While the green benches of the House of Commons are a world away from Southampton's terraces, it seems that Rupert Lowe is once more dividing opinion.

Universities

No plans for bailout, says Phillipson

Sally Weale
Education correspondent

Universities in England facing severe financial difficulties should not expect a government bailout, the education secretary said yesterday, despite warnings from the sector of thousands of job losses, course closures and even bankruptcies.

With 40% of institutions projected to run budget deficits this year, Bridget Phillipson said she was "determined to develop a brighter future for universities" and help to put them on a "sustainable footing in the long term".

Asked if the government would act as a lender of last resort, however, she said it was up to institutions to manage their finances. "Universities are autonomous and there are expectations around how they manage their budgets and I would expect them to do that without seeking any calls on the taxpayer."

About 70 universities are actively engaged in cost-saving programmes, including cuts to jobs and courses, according to Universities UK (UUK), which represents 142 institutions.

Among those affected are Goldsmiths, University of London, with 97 redundancies, and the universities of Lincoln, Huddersfield and Central Lancashire. UUK said it expected "nearly all" universities would have to make savings by the end of the year.



◀ *Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, said universities were expected to manage their own budgets without help from the taxpayer*

Interviewed on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Phillipson would not be drawn on any potential increase to domestic tuition fees, which are unchanged since being increased to £9,250 from £9,000 in 2017, and said there were "no plans" on finances at this stage.

She did, however, offer some comfort to the sector with a staunch defence of international students. After years of uncertainty under the previous government, the education secretary said she would ensure the graduate visa route was maintained.

The significantly higher fees overseas students pay have helped boost university finances and supplement home fees. Recent measures introduced by the Conservatives to reduce immigration have however resulted in a sharp drop-off in international student numbers.

There are also expected to be announcements outlined in parliament later this week about reforms to regulation, as conducted by the Office for Students (OfS). Phillipson will announce a new OfS chair to take over from James Wharton, who resigned this month.

UUK wants the government to ease the regulatory burden on universities to free up money to spend on teaching students. Vivienne Stern, the UUK chief executive, welcomed Phillipson's reassurances on international students but said: "We need to find a solution to this problem, otherwise things will just get worse."

Conservatives

Party agrees to pick new leader in November

Eleni Courea
Political correspondent

The Conservatives will elect a new leader in November after the party agreed to an extended timetable to replace Rishi Sunak.

Four Conservative MPs will be shortlisted by the parliamentary party to make their pitch to colleagues and members at the party conference at the end of September. Sunak will remain acting leader until his successor is agreed.

Among those said to be preparing to throw their hats into the ring are Kemi Badenoch, the shadow communities secretary; James Cleverly, the shadow home secretary; Tom Tugendhat, the shadow security minister; and Priti Patel, Suella Braverman and Robert Jenrick.

The timetable was agreed after a series of meetings of the Conservative party board and the 1922 Committee of backbench MPs, where there were contrasting views about how long the leadership election should be.

"People who argued we shouldn't have a leadership election until next year, others wanted [Sunak] to go immediately," one Tory involved in the discussions said. They said the agreed timetable was a "compromise".

Those who had been pushing for a speedy timetable with a new leader elected by September argued that the alternative would allow Labour to set the narrative and Nigel Farage to position himself as the opposition leader.

A senior Tory said the agreed November timetable was a "foolish decision, which hands Starmer the next election on a plate".

"An act of pure self-indulgence which maximises internal conflict to allow a few media-hungry types to blather on the broadcast media for a little longer before fading into irrelevance. Farage will be cock-a-hoop."

Badenoch is widely seen as the frontrunner, with polling suggesting she is the most popular candidate among grassroots membership. However, the extended timetable opens up the race by giving other candidates the opportunity to make an impression. Two influential former MPs from different wings of the Conservative party – Damian Green and Steve Baker – endorsed Tugendhat over the weekend.

Sketch

John Crace



After his lap of honour, the PM takes the role of Biden mourner-in-chief

Think of it as more a lap of honour. We'd all seen the pictures. A grateful world receives Keir Starmer at the Nato summit in Washington. A saviour in their midst. A week later European leaders bask in the summer heat at Blenheim. An early evening tryst with Emmanuel Macron on a bed of rose petals. All was for the best in the best of all possible worlds. More or less.

But needs must. Call it a formality. Call it a curtesy. Either way, yesterday afternoon the prime minister was in the House of Commons to tell MPs all about how brilliant he had been at Nato and the European Political Community. How it had been very heaven to be alive in that moment. Cometh the hour, cometh the man. It was days like these that made the job all worthwhile. Shooting the breeze with the great and the good. First, though, Starmer had to discharge a most solemn duty. In recent weeks, you might have come away with the impression that Keir had thought that no American president had ever been sharper of mind. The man to lead the US for four more glorious years.

This was all now a misapprehension.

It had never happened. Because the prime minister was sad to say that he had never thought Biden should stand for a second term. Principally because he was now dead. If things don't work out for Starmer in No 10, he has a glorious alternative career ahead of him. As mourner-in-chief at the funeral of those with no friends or relatives. The heartfelt eulogy for someone he had never known.

At least that was the gist of Starmer's opening statement. Biden had been a great, great leader. Cue the muffled drums. Go silently into the dark night. His was a loss not just to the American people but to the whole world. You half expected Keir to burst into tears. You can earn big bucks doing these sorts of international gigs.

The UK would of course work with whoever the US chose as their next president. But we would never see Biden's like again. Pause for a two-minute silence. A silence punctuated only by the president trying to escape the coffin in which the rest of the world had put him. "Let me out".

This must have been galling for Rishi Sunak. It should have been him boasting about how much the president meant to him

This must all have been galling for Rishi Sunak. It should have been him boasting about how much Biden had meant to him. How close they had been. It should have been him who got the photo ops in Washington and Blenheim.

Could have been him if only he hadn't been daft enough to call a July general election. Why hadn't he listened to all his advisers and held out till November? For one last summer of self-love. But nothing has become Rishi's term in office so much as his leaving of it. Hardly a trace of bitterness on offer. Quite unexpected from a man previously so thin-skinned. Maybe at least part of him is relieved that it's all over.

Next up was a Commons statement from Yvette Cooper on illegal migration. Here was her update after spending the last couple of weeks going through the Home Office books. Imagine her bewilderment at finding everything was MUCH worse than she had been led to believe. We were all astonished. And £700m to send four volunteers to Rwanda was just the start of it. She had now discovered that the real cost of the scheme was more like £10bn. She rather glossed over what she was going to do to sort the problem out. Other than "smash the gangs".

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11-year-old girl orphaned after parents and two sisters are killed in Wakefield car crash

Rachel Hall

An 11-year-old girl has been left orphaned by a car crash that killed four members of her family on Sunday in one of two collisions in 24 hours that left 10 people dead.

The crash that killed the family happened close to Wakefield, West Yorkshire, on a rural A road. Among the dead were a couple and their two children. A motorcyclist and pillion passenger - a male and female - were also killed.

The family were named by police as Shane Roller, 33, Shannen Morgan, 30 and their daughters Rubie Morgan-Roller, nine, and Lillie Morgan-Roller, four. Roller and Morgan are believed to be parents to the 11-year-old who was not travelling with her family when the crash happened.

In the other accident, which happened near Cheltenham in Gloucestershire, a black Renault Clio left the road and collided with a tree, killing four men, in the early hours of Sunday.

The unrelated incidents marked a tragic loss of life on British roads in a short period.

In the accident near Wakefield, emergency services received reports of the incident involving a Ford Focus car and a motorcycle on the A61 at 3.54pm.

A Facebook post from Roller's brother Callum read: "Honestly lost for words today we lost 2 of our nieces my sister in law and my amazing brother in a car accident ... I'm absolutely heartbroken I'm gonna miss all of you!

"It's absolutely broken my heart and it's absolutely broke both side of families! You all had a heart of gold and gonna miss you all like crazy! My heart goes out to Shannens side of family and mine! We are all in absolute shock!"



▲ *Shane Roller and Shannen Morgan, parents to Rubie and Lillie Morgan-Roller, all of whom died*



A GoFundMe page set up to raise funds for the surviving sibling has so far raised more than £100,000. The road where the incident took place has been closed between Shaw Lane and Warren Lane and is likely to remain closed for some time as the investigation continues.

Footage of the aftermath of the crash showed a burnt-out car in a grass verge and a large police presence on the A61. It is understood the family's Ford Focus burst into flames after colliding with the motorbike. Debris, believed to be from the motorbike, could be seen strewn in the middle of the road.

Supt Alan Travis, of Wakefield district police, said: "This is an absolutely tragic incident which has resulted in the loss of six lives. Our thoughts go out to the families of those who have died who we are working with to provide support at this time.

"This is truly a horrendous collision, which we are currently in the early stages of investigating."

A former neighbour of the family told MailOnline: "They were a perfect family. Everyone is shocked. But, as a truck driver, I know accidents do happen - especially on that stretch of road. I bumped into Shane in a shop a while back ... so I could not believe it when I heard."

The security minister, Dan Jarvis, the MP for Barnsley North, wrote on X: "Devastating news. My heartfelt condolences go to the family and friends of those who have tragically lost their lives."

The separate incident in Gloucestershire that killed the four men happened shortly before 2am on the A436 in Ullenwood, near Cheltenham.

Residents have repeatedly called for safety improvements to be made to the stretch of road, Paul Hodgkinson, a Liberal Democrat councillor on Gloucestershire county council said, citing concerns about poor visibility and cars travelling at excess speeds.

"It's terrible, I was just horrified that four people have lost their lives and my heart goes out to their families," he said.

He added: "Certainly accidents have been a regular occurrence, with the road being exceptionally busy. One thing that I would say is that residents and I have called for ages for improvements to the road because we feel it is unsafe."

"It would be wrong to jump to any conclusions during an ongoing investigation," Gloucestershire county council said in a statement. "As with any incident of this kind we will conduct a review along with other agencies and take the necessary action where needed."



▲ *The aftermath of the crash on the A61, where the family's Ford Focus collided with a motorbike on Sunday*

Plan to save UK's largest lake 'must cut farming pollution'

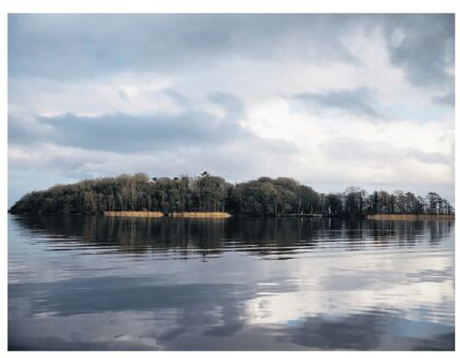
Tommy Greene

There will have to be a move away from intensive farming around Lough Neagh if it is to survive, say campaigners, as the noxious algal blooms that devastated the vast body of water last year returned earlier than ever.

Lough Neagh is the UK's largest lake and supplies more than 40% of Northern Ireland's drinking water. But vast amounts of phosphorus, nitrogen and other substances draining into the lough have brought it to a crisis point.

Late last week the power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland finally agreed an action plan for the lough. The strategy promises farming support measures aimed at reducing pollution pressures across the lough's 1,880-sq mile cross-border catchment area. It also includes real time water quality and safety monitoring, and a pilot programme for buffer zones and tree planting around the banks, in an effort to limit contamination input. It also promises a "scientific review" of industrial sand extraction, which is scarring the lough bed.

However, 17 of the plan's 37 measures could not be taken forward prior to the summer break, with the Democratic Unionist party reportedly blocking the "most controversial" actions - some of which cut across more than one Stormont department.



▲ *Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland is plagued by toxic algal blooms*

It has been reported that the DUP's opposition was linked to proposals on farming and environmental penalties.

The agriculture and environment minister, Andrew Muir, hailed the plan as "an important milestone in charting a new course" for the lough.

However, campaigners criticised Stormont's document for "vague language" and for dilution of certain actions after political opposition.

A proposed restriction on chemical fertilisers became a commitment to consult on the issue in the final text. Alongside prioritising investment in wastewater treatment works, it was one of "key recommendations" put before the executive earlier this year.

Agriculture accounts for 62% of the lough's phosphorous inputs - which create the conditions for cyanobacteria, or blue-green algae, to thrive - while wastewater and sewage discharges make up 24% and 12% comes from septic tanks, of which there are more than double the UK average within the lough catchment.

The devolved Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Department for Infrastructure were contacted for comment.

Stressed people can make dogs feel pessimistic, study suggests

Rachel Hall

The ability of dogs to sniff out human stress levels has been known for some time. But scientists believe they have discovered that when a dog smells a person in distress, it has a knock-on effect on the animal - most notably, it makes them pessimistic.

The research is believed to be the first to test how dog owners' emotional states can affect their pets.

"Dog owners know how attuned their pets are to their emotions, but here we show that even the odour of a stressed, unfamiliar human affects a dog's emotional state, perception of rewards and ability to learn," said Dr Nicola Rooney, a senior lecturer at the University of Bristol's veterinary school and the paper's lead author.

"Working dog handlers often describe stress travelling down the lead, but we've also shown it can also travel through the air."

The researchers recruited 18 dogs and their owners for trials in which dogs were trained to recognise that when a food bowl was in one location, it contained a treat, but when in another location, it was empty.

Dogs were faster to approach the location with a treat than the empty location. Researchers then tested how quickly the dog would approach new, ambiguous bowl locations.

A quick approach reflected optimism about food being there, while slowness indicated pessimism. The trials were repeated while the dog was exposed to either no odour, or sweat and breath samples from humans who were stressed or relaxed.

Researchers discovered that the stress smell made dogs slower to approach the bowl location nearest the empty bowls.

These findings suggest the stress smell may have increased the dogs' expectations that the new location contained no food. The researchers suggested this could be a way for the dog to conserve energy and avoid disappointment.


R08
CAMPERDOWN

▼ Firth of Forth, Edinburgh
The aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth passes under the Forth Bridge after being repaired at Rosyth

PHOTOGRAPH: KATIELEE ARROWSMITH/SWNS



Woman with ME asked doctors to help her 'get enough food to live'

Steven Morris

A woman with ME wrote to her GP pleading for help to "get enough food to live" and expressing despair at not getting the care she felt she needed when she was admitted to hospital, an inquest heard.

Maeve Boothby O'Neill, who had severe ME/CFS (myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome) for several years, was admitted three times to the Royal Devon and Exeter hospital but felt doctors there did not take her illness seriously.

Four months before she died, aged 27, Boothby O'Neill wrote to her GP: "I know you're doing your best for me but I really need help with feeding. I don't understand why the hospital didn't do anything to help me when I went in. I am hungry. I want to eat. I have been unable to sit up or chew since March [three months before]. The only person helping me eat is my mum. I can't get enough calories from a syringe. Please help me get enough food to live."

At the start of her inquest in Exeter, it was revealed that Boothby O'Neill's GP, Dr Lucy Shenton, who had worked hard to get her help, would not appear to give evidence because she had suffered post-traumatic stress disorder over the case.

The coroner, Deborah Archer, said: "She felt stress and Maeve's tragic death had taken a very significant toll on her."

Boothby O'Neill had lived with severe ME/CFS for several years, but it became more acute in 2021 when she was often confined to bed and found it almost impossible to get up, wash, eat or drink.

Her family and her GP surgery tried to get help for her and she was admitted to the Royal Devon three times. On the first occasion, in March 2021, she was discharged on the same day after a doctor said they could not find "anything medical" wrong.



▲ *Maeve Boothby O'Neill at the age of 18. She died at 27 after being admitted to hospital three times with chronic fatigue syndrome*
PHOTOGRAPH: PA

> ***'Maeve's confidence in the NHS has been very low because of the sense that people don't believe her'***
>
> **Dr Lucy Shenton**
> *Boothby O'Neill's GP*

As Boothby O'Neill's condition continued to deteriorate, Shenton wrote to NHS colleagues and social services asking for someone to "get stuck in" and not treat her patient as a "medical outlier".

She was admitted to hospital again in May 2021. When she was discharged, the specialist CFS service told her there were "long waiting times" for patients to be seen. Boothby O'Neill was admitted for a third time in the summer of 2021.

After she was discharged, Shenton visited Boothby O'Neill at home and wrote in her notes: "Doesn't want to go to hospital as 'always gets worse when goes in'." But she also wrote: "Doesn't want to die."

On 7 September Shenton wrote: "If I could do anything I would, it is breaking my heart." On 1 October she recorded: "Her confidence and faith in the NHS has been very low for quite a while because of the sense that people don't believe her."

Boothby O'Neill died in October 2021.

Her family believe the two-week inquest could be a landmark case highlighting shortcomings in the medical profession's approach to ME/CFS. In an extract of a statement read out during the inquest, her mother, Sarah Boothby, said Shenton had told her she had "never seen anyone so poorly treated by the NHS as Maeve was".

Barton charged over 'malicious communication'

Emine Sinmaz

The former footballer and manager Joey Barton has been charged with making malicious communications, police have said.

The ex-Manchester City and Newcastle player is due to appear at Warrington magistrates court next week after the Crown Prosecution Service authorised the charge, Cheshire police said.

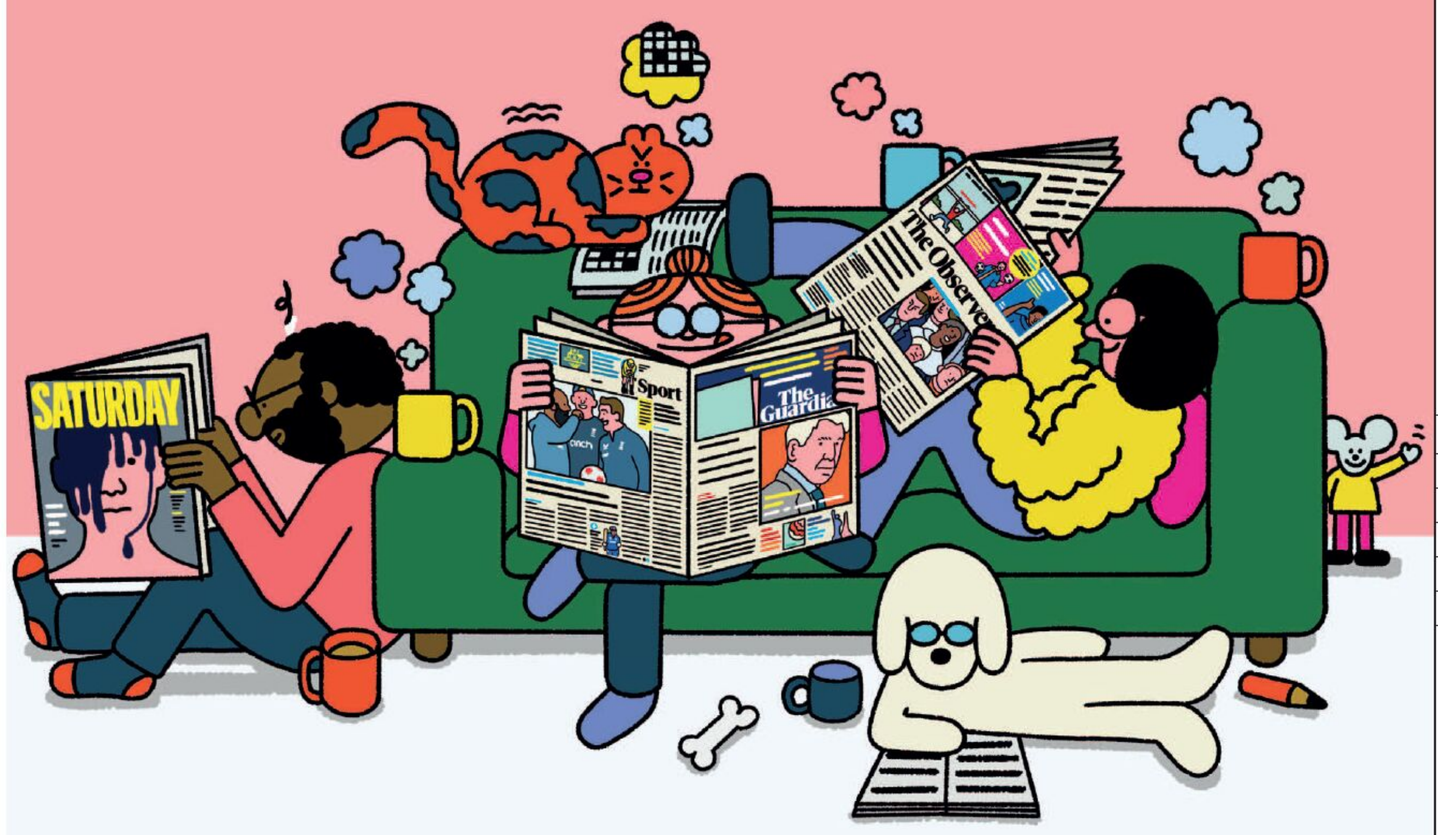
Barton said he had been charged over tweets relating to the football pundit Eni Aluko, which are believed to have been posted during her commentary on a FA Cup match broadcast by the BBC in January.

Cheshire police said: "A man from Widnes has been summoned to court to face charges of malicious communications.

"Following an investigation by Cheshire police, the Crown Prosecution Service has since authorised the charges for Joseph Barton. The 41-year-old will appear at Warrington magistrates court on 30 July."

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Art review

All-ages invitation to make your mark is irresistible



Oscar Murillo: The Flooded Garden
Tate Modern
★★★★☆

Jonathan Jones

Look at me – I'm Jackson Pollock! Doing action painting in the Tate Turbine Hall!

I usually dread interactive art. I prefer to look at art silently, passively and, assuming it's good enough, to absorb its nuances and meanings slowly. Why do some artists insist on making us doers rather than observers? Queuing with my family to enter the oval arena that Oscar Murillo has set up for us, the masses, to paint his latest work, I even started questioning the financial side. Murillo will also open a doubtless lucrative show with Gagosian this summer. And he expects people, especially children, to paint his latest hit for free? Seeing his own fussy works on display in Tate's Tanks, I suppose he needs all the help he can get.

At this point I was not planning to give Murillo my painterly fluids. Yet by the time we got to the point where staff tell you the "rules", I couldn't resist taking one of the long brushes arrayed in plastic trays. Before me expanded a vast forum of canvas where people of all ages were busy adding whatever they felt like to a giant, communally created, immersive painting.

The installation is inspired by Monet's Nymphéas (Water Lilies). The great impressionist repeatedly depicted the garden he designed at his house in Giverny, lingering over the giant pads, pink flowers and still, reflective water of his lily pond. The most radical, abstract and dreamlike of his Water Lilies are in the Orangerie in Paris. The shape and size of Murillo's installation recalls the oval galleries where Monet hung them as a memorial to the dead of the first world war – a space for memory and reflection, resonating like music.

If you want to experience The Flooded Garden in that quiet contemplative spirit, look down on it from the Turbine Hall bridge. From here, it's a lovely oval of blue. The enthusiastically dabbed, smeared and pooled paint may not have the illusionistic depths of Monet, but it does have an aquatic cool that's refreshing.

Is it just fun? As I sink the brush in gooey blue paint, it feels more real than that

Inside the painting arena it is less harmonious. All around you are graffitied names, cartoonish creatures, flowers, clouds. Though one person had painted a luscious wave of abstract blue.

I've always wanted to see big, sublime paintings in the Turbine Hall. Ever since I had a hard hat tour before it opened, I dreamed of seeing Pollocks, Rothkos, Rileys and Twomblys on these vast walls. But they say it isn't safe enough. Now I've got the chance to create the modern painting it deserves.

Is it just summer fun? As I sink the brush in a mound of gooey blue paint, it feels more real than that. More primal. Here in the Turbine Hall's vast cavern, we're connecting with artists who made handprints and dots and portraits of animals in caves 30,000 years ago. Like the stone age artists we've just got to make our mark. It is tempting to stick your hand in the paint and make your impression that way.



▲ *Oscar Murillo joins a group of young artists as they contribute to his Turbine Hall installation*
PHOTOGRAPHS: LUCY NORTH/PA; ANADOLU/GETTY

I put the brush into the paint and roll it about until I've got a top-heavy dollop. With one strong flick I send the blue flying to land in a curly streak. Chance and physics have created something much more alive than anything I could have consciously shaped. And to scale with the place. Let's make this wild! This time I take a run up.

Then a Tate team member intervenes. Please can I stop doing that? The children might copy me. But I was just trying to imitate Jackson Pollock, I try to explain.

The Flooded Garden is irresistible. It taps into a euphoric urge in us all. Paint is energy, it is life. Every kid knows that. Now I remember it, too.

At Tate Modern until 26 August

BT fined more than £17m for 'catastrophic' disruption to 999 service

Mark Sweney

BT has been fined more than £17m for missing 14,000 emergency calls after technical faults caused the emergency call handling service to be disrupted for nearly 11 hours last summer.

The telecoms regulator launched an investigation shortly after the incident on 25 June 2023. Publishing its findings yesterday, Ofcom said the handling of the network fault was a "catastrophic failure".

The watchdog's director of enforcement, Suzanne Cater, said: "Being able to contact the emergency services can mean the difference between life and death, so in the event of any disruption to their networks, providers must be ready to respond quickly and effectively.

"In this case, BT fell woefully short of its responsibilities and was ill-prepared to deal with such a large-scale outage, putting its customers at unacceptable risk.

"Today's fine sends a broader warning to all firms: if you're not properly prepared to deal with disruptions to your networks, we'll hold you to strict account on behalf of consumers."

BT, which manages the emergency services calls system, said it had taken three days to contact each of the callers who had not been connected after what it described as a complex software problem that affected nearly 14,000 call attempts from 12,392 people.

Ofcom said its decision to fine BT £17.5m was based on a number of factors including the seriousness, duration and degree of harm.

The regulator found BT had neither sufficient warning systems in place for the kind of incident investigated, nor adequate procedures for quickly assessing the severity, impact and likely cause of such a software failure.

It also found the company's disaster recovery platform had insufficient capacity and functionality to deal with a level of demand that might be reasonably expected.

"Although there have been no confirmed reports by the emergency authorities of serious harm to members of the public as a result of the incident, the potential degree of harm was extremely significant," Ofcom said.

BT apologised for the technical failure, saying it takes "great pride" running the 999 service and had fallen "short of our own high standards" in this case.

A BT spokesperson said: "The level of disruption to the service on Sunday 25 June last year has never been seen before and we are sincerely sorry for the distress caused."

New Barbie aims to help blind and low-vision children feel included

Chloe Mac Donnell

Mattel is launching its first blind Barbie doll in an effort to make its range more inclusive.

The US toymaker said the doll, which is available online and in shops from today, had been created to help blind and low-vision children feel more represented in society.

The company has worked with the American Foundation for the Blind to ensure that everything from the doll's eyes to its clothing accurately depict people with blindness and low vision.

The doll holds a white-and-red cane while its gaze faces slightly up and out to "accurately reflect the sometimes-distinct eye gaze of a blind individual".

After conducting testing with blind and low-vision children, it was decided the doll should be dressed in clothing with tactile fabric. Details such as loop fasteners and elastic waistbands were created in an effort to make dressing the doll easier. The packaging is also more accessible and includes the word Barbie written in braille on the front of the box.

Lucy Edwards, a disability activist who is blind and appears in an ad campaign with the new Barbie, said: "As a teenager, I felt isolated by losing my eyesight and not seeing role models like me. I was embarrassed by my cane, but knowing Barbie had a cane would have helped me feel less alone on my journey to accept and embrace my blindness."



▲ *Disability activist Lucy Edwards with the first blind Barbie doll*

World



‘We are swimming in blood’: at least 37 killed in strikes on Khan Younis

Ruth Michaelson *Jerusalem*
Malak A Tantesh

The Israeli military has ordered Palestinians to leave neighbourhoods in Khan Younis, including areas that had been designated by the military as part of a humanitarian zone, as at least 37 people were killed in strikes in the southern city yesterday.

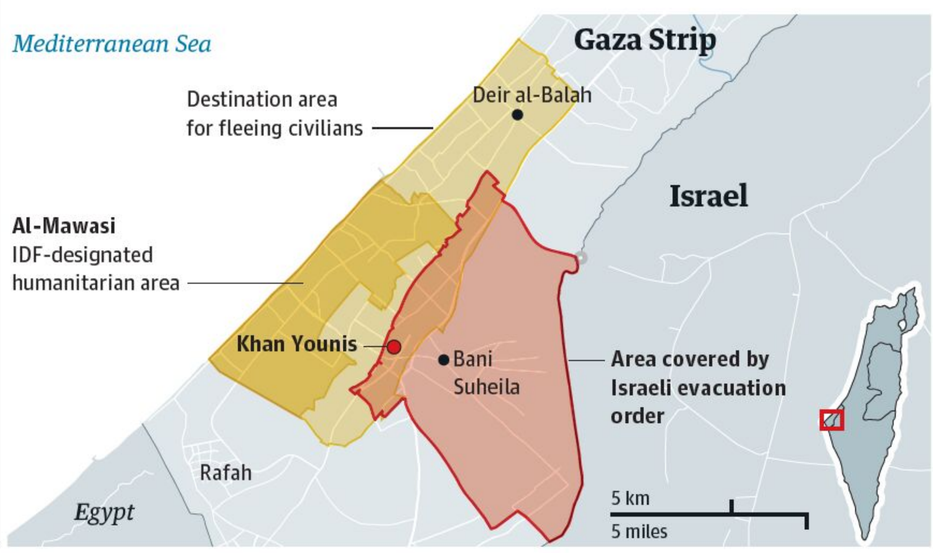
Palestinian civil defence in the territory estimated that 400,000 people sheltering in the city were affected by the order, which included the eastern part of al-Mawasi, a sandy strip of land without infrastructure where Palestinians have sought shelter in tent encampments in recent months.

The military said it planned to start an operation against Hamas militants in Khan Younis and part of al-Mawasi, claiming the area had been used to launch rockets at Israel.

Osama Qudeih said: “They called us to evacuate, we took our children and left. There was no safe place left in the Gaza Strip … We went out walking in the streets, not knowing where to go.”

Another woman collapsed in exhaustion after saying it was her seventh or eighth displacement. “Every day we are displaced,” Kholoud al-Dadas told Associated Press as she clutched her children. “Where are the countries? Where is the world, where are the presidents, where are they? Come and see how we are, our children, and what is happening to us.”

The Israeli military has ordered the evacuation of neighbourhoods in eastern Khan Younis



The military said it was adjusting the boundaries of the designated humanitarian zone in al-Mawasi to keep the civilian population away from areas of combat.

Gaza health officials said at least 37 people had been killed and 120 wounded in attacks on and around Khan Younis, and that more casualties were likely to be buried under rubble or left on roadsides because ambulances had been unable to reach them.

The local Wafa news agency reported that bombardments began immediately after Israeli forces dropped leaflets telling people to evacuate. Columns of smoke were visible over the destroyed city.

Wounded people poured into Nasser hospital in Khan Younis as the facility appealed for blood donations.

Mohammed Sakr, a spokesperson for the hospital, told Al Jazeera they were overwhelmed as cases rushed in, and they were lacking supplies.

“Tens of cases are on the floor. We don’t have beds to place patients on … we are swimming in a pool of blood,” he said.

Not too late to break
Tokyo seniors embrace art of pop and lock
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'Mockery of justice'
Russian-American journalist jailed
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◀ *Palestinians deliver injured people to Nasser hospital in Khan Younis, where medics called for blood donations after strikes on the east of the city. One report said bombardments began soon after Israeli forces dropped leaflets telling people to evacuate*
PHOTOGRAPH: BASHAR TALEB/AFP/GETTY

Much of Khan Younis was destroyed by fierce fighting in the months before yesterday's strikes, but hundreds of thousands of people returned to seek shelter in tents in the eastern part of the city after they were displaced from other parts of Gaza. Images from Khan Younis showed Palestinians fleeing the area in cars and on donkey carts, using whatever means they could find to escape.

Palestinians in the territory, the UN and other international relief agencies have stressed that no safe place remains in Gaza, and that areas designated as humanitarian safe zones are still targeted. A strike on al-Mawasi earlier this month killed at least 90 people and injured hundreds when Israeli forces said they had targeted the head of Hamas's military wing.

More than 39,000 people have been killed in Israel's onslaught in Gaza since 7 October last year, when Hamas militants attacked Israeli territory, killing 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostage. The Palestinian health ministry also said more than 89,000 had now been injured after Israeli attacks across the territory in recent weeks. The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, said there had been "heavy shooting from the Israeli forces at a UN convoy heading to Gaza City". One vehicle had been struck with five bullets while waiting ahead of an Israeli checkpoint near the Gaza River, he said.

"Our teams had to duck and take cover ... The teams were travelling in clearly marked UN armoured cars and wearing UN vests," he said, adding that the convoy had coordinated and approved its journey with the Israeli authorities. The Israel Defense Forces did not respond to a request for comment on the incident.

The Jordanian foreign minister, Ayman Safadi, commented on Lazzarini's description of the attack, calling it a war crime.

"Gaza has not only become a graveyard for children. It has become a graveyard for international law, a shameful stain on the whole international order," he said.

Hamas condemned the attack on Khan Younis on Telegram.

Yesterday's strikes came after a weekend of escalating regional tensions. Israel on Saturday attacked Yemen for the first time, in retaliation for a deadly drone strike on Tel Aviv by the Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

There were also further exchanges of fire between Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement and the Israeli military.

Additional reporting
Associated Press and Reuters



▲ *The Israeli prime minister, with his wife Sara, speaks to reporters before flying to Washington* PHOTOGRAPHY: ISRAEL GPO/ZUMA PRESS WIRE/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Washington Netanyahu heads to US amid fears of growing regional war

Ruth Michaelson *Jerusalem*
Andrew Roth *Washington*

Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to meet Joe Biden and address the US Congress today at a moment of historical political tumult, amid fears of a growing regional war in the Middle East.

The Israeli prime minister arrived in Washington yesterday, a day after the US president bowed out of the presidential race.

Biden will face a major test of his ability to project US influence and restraint on Israel during the lame duck period of his presidency, while Netanyahu will be forced to walk a tightrope as he balances his diplomatic efforts between the Donald Trump-led Republican party and a reinvigorated Democratic campaign that may unite behind vice-president Kamala Harris.

Speaking to reporters at Ben Gurion airport, Netanyahu said Israel was "fighting on seven fronts and when there's great political uncertainty in Washington". He added: "I will seek to anchor the bipartisan support that is so important for Israel."

Netanyahu and Biden's relationship has become strained in recent months and the Israeli leader had been seen as waiting out the Biden administration in favour of a second Trump term. But Biden's exit from the campaign creates new uncertainty for the elections, and could embolden him during talks with Netanyahu, according to analysts and insiders in Washington.

Kori Schake, the director of foreign and defence policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, said: "I actually think the announcement puts him in a stronger position, because the likelihood of continuity of policy into a Democratic administration is more likely now."

But while the Israeli premier's arrival in Washington could smooth the path to a ceasefire deal, his critics fear that Netanyahu will use the visit to seek backing for continuing or even expanding the fighting in what has become Israel's longest war.

Gershon Baskin, a former Israeli hostage negotiator, said: "Netanyahu wants to speak in the US above the heads of Congress and way past Joe Biden to Donald Trump, who in the past called Netanyahu a weak leader."

A senior European diplomat said that expectations of a ceasefire being concluded are limited. "His own political life is tied up in this war in Gaza," said the diplomat. "I think in that sense some sort of conflict has to keep going."

Some of those taken captive by Hamas militants in Gaza and freed during a previous hostage deal are expected to travel with Netanyahu to Washington. Their decision has proved controversial to relatives of some of the 116 hostages believed still in Gaza, who last week called on former hostage Noa Argamani not to fly with Netanyahu "as decoration".

Israeli protesters and even military chiefs are calling for a deal with Hamas, which would see hostages freed in exchange for a pause in fighting. Negotiators from Israel's Mossad intelligence service are expected in Qatar later this week, continuing talks that have dragged on since early this year.

Shortly after Netanyahu's departure, the Israeli military announced that two of the hostages held by Hamas were killed in recent months, adding they are investigating the cause of death including the possibility that at least one was killed by Israeli airstrikes on Gaza.

A ceasefire deal in Gaza could also cool tensions across the region, after a drone sent by Yemen's Houthi militants struck Tel Aviv late last week. Israeli forces responded with airstrikes on the port of Hodeidah.

More than 39,000 people have been killed by a fierce Israeli assault on the enclave, amid widespread criticism of the Biden administration for supplying Israel with weapons.

Despite assurances from US officials that a deal is within reach, those with close knowledge of the negotiations have remained doubtful, accusing Netanyahu of blocking a deal before his visit to Washington and possibly in the longer term.

Nadav Weiman, deputy head of Breaking the Silence, an organisation of former Israeli soldiers critical of the state, said: "From the ground, it doesn't look like we're on our way to a ceasefire. It doesn't look like our prime minister wants a ceasefire or a hostage deal, because more than anything else he cares about himself, and avoiding trial."

Netanyahu's visit comes days after the international court of justice ruled that Israel's occupation of the West Bank was illegal and that it should halt settlement construction immediately.

The chief prosecutor of the international criminal court, Karim Khan, applied in May for arrest warrants for both Netanyahu and Israeli defence minister, Yoav Gallant, accusing them of committing war crimes in Gaza.

Olympics
French MP rebuked for 'indecent' Israel remark

Kim Willsher
Paris

An MP for the radical-left France Unbowed party has sparked outrage after saying Israeli athletes are not welcome at the Paris Olympics and calling for protests against their presence.

Citing Israel's war in Gaza, Thomas Portes told a pro-Palestinian gathering in Paris on Saturday: "We are just a few days away from an international event to be held in Paris, the Olympic Games. And I'm here to say that no, the Israeli delegation is not welcome in Paris. Israeli athletes are not welcome at the Olympic Games in Paris. We have to use this deadline and all the levers we have to mobilise."

Yonathan Arfi, the head of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF), described the comments as "indecent" and "irresponsible", accusing Portes of "putting a target on the backs of Israeli athletes".

Arfi reminded the MP that 11 Israeli athletes were killed by Palestinian terrorists at the 1972 Munich Olympics and said the country's Olympians were "already the most in danger" at the Games.

Portes later said that French diplomats should put pressure on the International Olympic Committee to ban the Israeli flag and anthem at the Games, which open on Friday, "as is done for Russia". "It's time to end the double standards," Portes said.

His comments drew criticism from other politicians. Karen Taieb, one of Paris's deputy mayors, said Portes was "a danger and a disgrace". "What we expect from our elected representatives is the idea of joining together. These people are advocating hatred," Taieb wrote on X.



◀ *Basketball outside the city hall in Paris. A deputy mayor joined criticism of Thomas Portes for saying that Israeli athletes would not be welcome at the Paris Games*
PHOTOGRAPH: JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY

The French interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, said: "The hints of antisemitism in his [Portes'] comments are obvious." Israeli athletes would receive 24-hour protection during the Olympics, he added.

The Socialist MP Jérôme Guedj posted on X: "Of course Israeli athletes are welcome, like all athletes from all over the world. Not for who they are, but for what they do."

Israel's football team is scheduled to play its first match of the Olympics against Mali in Paris's Parc des Princes stadium tomorrow.

On Monday the foreign minister, Stéphane Séjourné, said at a meeting with EU counterparts in Brussels: "I want to say on behalf of France, to the Israeli delegation, we welcome you to France for these Olympic Games."

The office of the Israeli president, Isaac Herzog, said on Sunday he would attend Friday's boat parade on the Seine and a commemoration for the Israelis killed in Munich in 1972.

Exiled Hong Kong pro-democracy activists being denied access to pension savings

Amy Hawkins
Senior China correspondent

Two exiled Hong Kong pro-democracy activists have been blocked from accessing their pensions, depriving them of tens of thousands of US dollars of their savings and raising questions about the complicity of western financial institutions in the persecution of Chinese government critics.

Assets including pension savings belonging to Ted Hui, a former pro-democracy legislator who is now based in Australia, were frozen shortly after he fled Hong Kong in December 2020.

The assets are held by the HSBC. The British bank briefly unfroze Hui's accounts in December 2020, during which time he was able to transfer "the majority of funds" out of Hong Kong, he said. But Hui recently said his pension fund, worth several hundred thousand Hong Kong dollars, remained locked in his HSBC-administered scheme.

The Guardian has learned that another pro-democracy figure who has Australian permanent residence has been blocked from withdrawing pension savings worth more than HK$600,000 (£59,000). The savings are managed by Manulife, a Canadian financial services company.

Hui and the other activist, who does not wish to be named, have been issued with arrest warrants by the Hong Kong police for allegedly violating the city's national security law while in exile. A reward of HK$1m has been offered for information leading to their arrest.

In 2022, Hui was convicted in absentia for his role in the 2019 protests and sentenced to three-and-a-half years in jail.

In November, the second activist attempted to withdraw his pension savings from the fund administered by Manulife, one of the financial institutions approved to manage Hong Kong's compulsory pensions scheme. He was notified in March that the claim could not be processed because his account was under investigation.

The exiled activist said Manulife's decision was "hypocritical". He added: "These companies like Manulife sign up to human rights pledges, but they don't honour those pledges.

"The only reason to deny me is because of the national security law," said the activist, who has no other legal charges against him.

A Manulife spokesperson said: "We do not comment on individual cases. Manulife complies with all laws and regulations in the jurisdictions we operate in."



PHOTOGRAPH: JUSTIN CHIN/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

▲ *Ted Hui being arrested at a 2020 pro-democracy rally in Hong Kong*

Hong Kong's national security law, imposed in 2020 after months of pro-democracy protests, has been widely condemned by international governments and human rights organisations for suppressing free expression in Hong Kong.

Tens of thousands of Hongkongers have left the city since it was imposed amid a wider crackdown on civil society. The Chinese and Hong Kong governments said the law was necessary to restore stability.

Hongkongers are entitled to withdraw their pensions early if they have permanently resettled outside Hong Kong. They must provide proof that they are permitted to reside overseas, such as permanent residence documents or a foreign passport.

In 2023, there were 29,900 claims to withdraw pensions savings early on the grounds of permanent departure from Hong Kong, according to the pensions regulator the Mandatory Provident Fund Authority, down from 31,700 in 2022.

The national security law allows the authorities to freeze the assets of anyone charged with violating national security. But critics say the law, and the way it is used, is politically motivated.

Hui said the impact of being denied access to his savings was emotional as well as practical: "It is a warning sign, targeting many of the high-profile people advocating for freedom and democracy in Hong Kong."

A HSBC spokesperson said: "We are unable to comment on individual matters. We have to abide by the laws and regulations of the jurisdiction in which we operate."

Unafraid of breaking

Seniors in Japan defy their years

Justin McCurry
Tokyo

Head spins and monkey flips are noticeable by their absence. But in their place there is a lot of laughter and a thumping beat, along with the occasional grimace and yelp of frustration.

The 10 people - wearing bright orange and green T-shirts that mark them out as members of Ara Style Senior - do not belong to the demographic you would normally associate with breakdancing. Their average age hovers just below 70, and the oldest is 74.

But on a hot afternoon in an eastern Tokyo suburb, amid nervous smiles and initial timing issues, the group ends with a perfectly executed pose the dance's originators in 1970s New York neighbourhoods would probably agree is not too shabby at all.

Senior breaking is one of a growing category of sports tailored to Japan's large population of older people who, thanks to the country's extraordinary longevity statistics, are determined to keep popping and locking for as long as their bodies will allow.



PHOTOGRAPHS: JUSTIN MCCURRY/THE GUARDIAN



▲ *Members of Ara Style Senior, top and above, during a recent class. Their average age is just under 70*

"At first I thought there was no way I could breakdance at my age," says 69-year-old Hitomi Oda. "And of course, we can't do anything extreme, but it's fun just to do the easy moves and get your body working."

These superannuated b-girls and b-boys, who meet twice a month at a community centre in the capital's Edogawa ward, have the organisers of this summer's Paris Olympics, and the former breaking national champion Yusuke Arai, to thank for this novel approach to fitness in their later years.

"Some of my mother's friends told her they were interested in learning how to breakdance, and when it was chosen as an Olympic sport, I thought: 'Why not give it a go?'" Arai tells the Guardian before a recent class. "There was a time when no one took much notice of breaking, and people said it wasn't a proper sport, so the Olympics are a great opportunity."

The 39-year-old tailors his class to bodies that may not be as supple as the children he has been teaching for almost a decade. "You have to lower the hurdles to make it possible for older people to do the moves, so I begin with a focus on easy moves using the top half of the body," says Arai. "If people feel comfortable about trying something slightly more difficult, we start to move around the floor."

The keen amateurs being put through their paces are part of a strong Japanese tradition in breaking, which will make its Olympic debut in Paris. The country's four-member breakdancing team - including Ayumi Fukushima, a 41-year-old former kindergarten teacher, 25-year-old Ami Yuasa and Shigeyuki "Shigekix" Hanai, 22, - will be among Japan's medal hopefuls.

Arai's class ends with a routine of toprocks and floor moves. "The rhythm and the perseverance mean it stimulates your brain as well as your body," says Kazuharu Sakuma, 71, the only male dancer, who is taking a trial class. He says he will be back. "It's not like you have to memorise the moves ... you just do them two or three times and you realise, yes, I can actually do this." He adds: "I'm hoping it will make it easier to walk up stairs."

Takako Mizutani, a regular who has a background in jazz dance, says: "It doesn't matter if you're not very good at it, it's a lot of fun and a proper workout. I plan to keep breaking for as long as I can."

Russian court jails American journalist after secret trial in 'mockery of justice'

Pjotr Sauer

A Russian court has sentenced Alsu Kurmasheva, a Russian-American journalist for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, to six and a half years in prison after a rushed, secret trial.

Kurmasheva, a Prague-based editor, was arrested last year during a family visit to the city of Kazan in Russia for failing to register as a "foreign agent" and for spreading "false information" about the country's armed forces, under crippling censorship laws enacted in 2022.

Kurmasheva's husband, Pavel Butorin, who also works for RFE/RL, said the case against her was related to a book that she had edited entitled Saying No to War: 40 Stories of Russians Who Oppose the Russian Invasion of Ukraine.

Kurmasheva, 47, who is married with two children, is the second US journalist to be sentenced in Russia in recent years.

She was convicted in Kazan on Friday, the same day that a court in Yekaterinburg convicted the Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich of espionage and sentenced him to 16 years in prison in a case widely described as a sham.



▲ *Alsu Kurmasheva was arrested under draconian censorship laws*

Gershkovich's trial was similarly concluded with unusual haste, raising hopes of a prisoner swap involving the reporter, which has long been the subject of private discussions between Russian and US officials.

The US has repeatedly condemned Kurmasheva's arrest, yet, unlike Gershkovich, Washington has not publicly indicated that it is looking to secure her release.

Kurmasheva has also not yet been designated by the Department of State as "wrongfully detained", a status given to Gershkovich and Paul Whelan, another American convicted of spying in Russia, in 2020.

This designation implies that Washington considers the charges against them to be bogus. Last week, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) launched a petition calling on the US government to designate Kurmasheva as wrongfully detained.

Kurmasheva's verdict suggests that Russia may be seeking to trade her for Russians wanted by the Kremlin, including several deep-cover spies behind bars in the west.

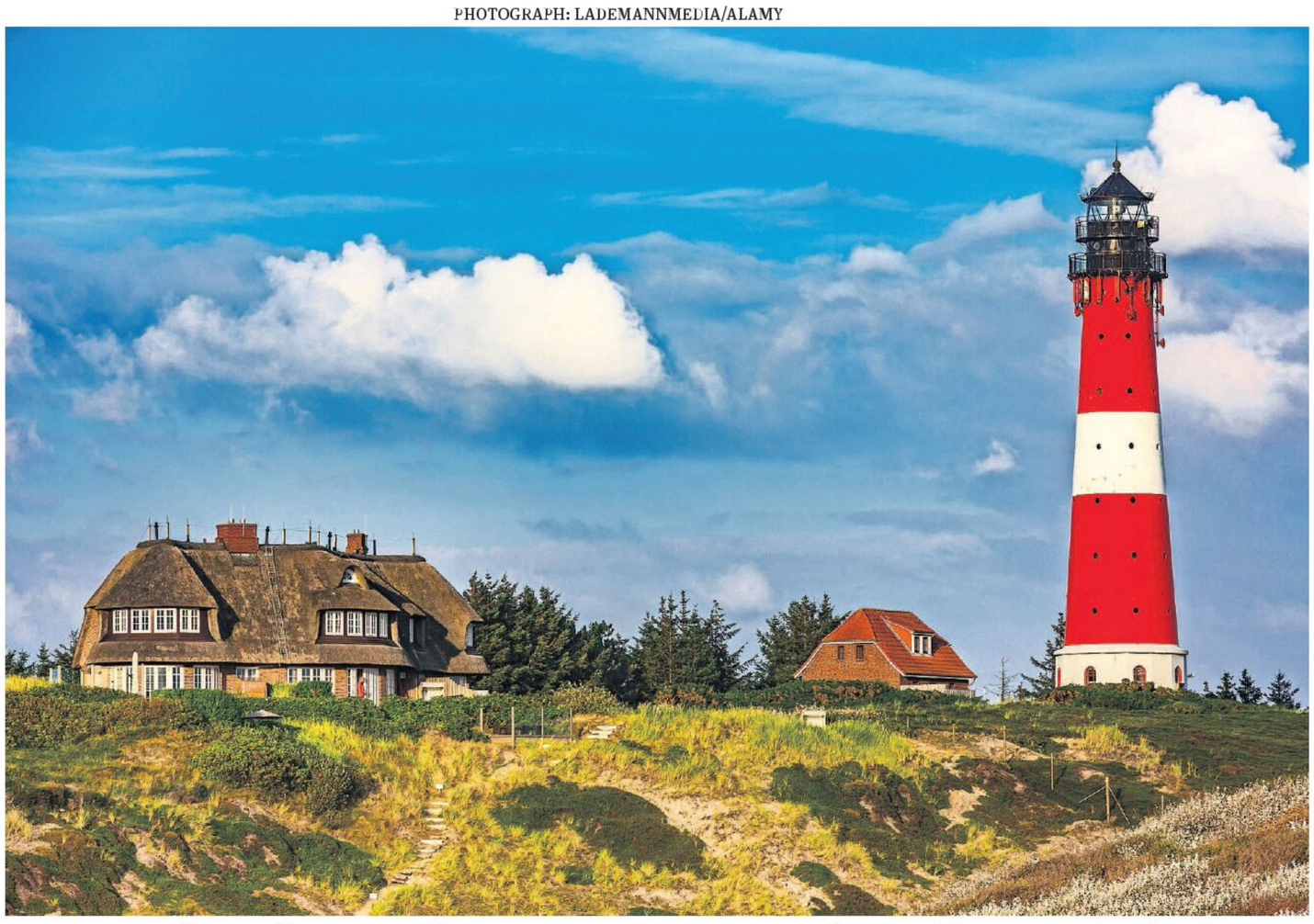
Since the start of the war in Ukraine, Russia has launched an unprecedented crackdown on protesters, independent news outlets and foreign social media networks.

In March 2022, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, signed off on a draconian law imposing a jail term of up to 15 years for spreading intentionally "fake" news about the military, effectively criminalising any public criticism of the war.

Yesterday Stephen Capus, the RFE/RL president and CEO, denounced Kurmasheva's trial and conviction as "a mockery of justice" and said "the only just outcome is for Alsu to be immediately released from prison by her Russian captors".

▼ *Sylt, in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, has long been a holiday destination for wealthy Germans*

PHOTOGRAPH: LADEMANNMEDIA/ALAMY



Anarchy for a short stay: punk protest rocks elite holiday isle

Deborah Cole
Berlin

Punks from across Germany have set up a summer-long protest camp on the North Sea holiday island of Sylt to demonstrate against economic exclusion, environmental degradation and the presence of the far right in one of the country's most exclusive enclaves.

For the third year in a row, the young leftwingers with mohawks, torn T-shirts and facial piercings began descending on Sylt at the weekend, mainly by train, to disrupt the seasonal repose of the elites.

The Aktion Sylt pressure group said it aimed to make "safe retreats for fascist subsidy-collectors, tax-evading Nazi heirs and backward world-destroyers things of the past".

Their presence has been duly registered with the authorities, who have mandated they sleep in tents, use chemical toilets and dispose of their own litter until the site is dismantled by midday on 6 September. Stewards wearing security vests or white armbands must enforce the agreed rules. The punks launched an online donation campaign to fund these upgrades.

Marvin Bederke of Aktion Sylt said he expected up to 300 people – the agreed limit – at the improvised campsite near the local airport, where private planes bring the rich and famous to enjoy the windswept charms of the island. The demonstrators have agreed to move to another field just to the south after a week.



▲ *About 300 members of the group Aktion Sylt are expected at the camp*

The protests began in 2022, when Germany introduced a €9 monthly ticket for unlimited public transport across the country. The punks seized the opportunity for a summer "invasion" of Sylt, to the horror of its well-heeled seasonal residents, which was gleefully documented in the tabloids.

The remote island became easily accessible by car to city dwellers a century ago with the construction of the Hindenburg causeway connecting it to the mainland. Its reputation as a playground for the upper classes grew rapidly, driving up house prices.

In May, a clutch of partygoers were caught chanting a Nazi slogan at an upmarket Sylt club, in a video that went viral. The images struck many commentators as a chilling revelation of how far-right ideology had penetrated bourgeois circles of German society.

A small group of punks gathered on Sylt soon after with a banner reading "Loud Against the Far Right" and promised a large mobilisation for this year's protest camp.

In brief

Czech Republic

Shells for Ukraine plan at risk of falling short

The Czech Republic has secured funding to supply Ukraine with 500,000 pieces of ammunition, but a plan to provide 800,000 shells by the end of the year will fall short unless more donor countries come forward, its foreign minister, Jan Lipavský, has said.

Of the 18 countries signed up to the Czech-led initiative, three were yet to contribute, Lipavský told reporters in Brussels yesterday. "We can deliver up to 800,000 [rounds] by the end of this year if we can find the money – so we need money," Lipavský said.

The first 45,000 shells arrived in Ukraine in June and a further 100,000 are due in July and August. "From September these deliveries will accelerate," Lipavský said.

Launched by Petr Pavel, the Czech president, at the Munich Security Conference in February, the initiative was created in response to an acute shell shortage on the Ukrainian battlefield. It was a time when Russian forces were believed to be outshelling Ukraine by 10 to one, and the US Congress was withholding approval over a $61bn (£47bn) aid package.

Countries that have confirmed their involvement include The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Canada, Norway and Sweden. **Jennifer Rankin** *Brussels*

US

Fakir, last member of original Four Tops, dies

Abdul "Duke" Fakir, the last surviving original member of the Four Tops, died yesterday at his home in Detroit aged 88.

He died of heart failure with his loved ones by his side, his family announced, saying: "Our hearts are heavy as we mourn the loss of a trailblazer, icon and music legend who, through his 70-year music career, touched the lives of so many."

The Four Tops co-founder had been diagnosed with bladder cancer. Billboard reported a source who said on Sunday he was "happy, talking and interacting, and when they turned to do something and turned back, he had slipped away".

The Four Tops were among Motown's most popular enduring acts, peaking in the 1960s. Between 1964 and 1967, they had 11 Top 20 hits and two No 1s: I Can't Help Myself and Reach Out I'll Be There.

Other songs, often sagas of romantic pain, included Baby I Need Your Loving, Standing in the Shadows of Love, Bernadette and Ask the Lonely. **Diana Ramirez-Simon**



Abdul 'Duke' Fakir, far left

Croatia

Gunman kills six people at care home, say police

A gunman killed at least six people, including his mother, in a care home in Croatia, authorities said.

Five residents and one employee were fatally injured when the gunman entered the private nursing home in the north-eastern town of Daruvar yesterday and began shooting, according to police, in a rare instance of gun violence in the Balkan country.

The gunman fled the scene and was later arrested, carrying unregistered firearms, at a cafe. The man had a police record for disturbing public order and domestic abuse, said the Croatian national police chief, Nikola Milina. **Agence France-Presse**



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Business

Ryanair's profits fall by half as it warns of lower fares

Mark Sweney

Ryanair said yesterday that its profits had plunged by almost half between April and June and warned fares would be "materially lower" this summer than last year.

Europe's largest airline reported profits of €360m (£303m) for the quarter, 46% lower than the same period last year despite passenger numbers rising 10% to 55.5 million.

The downbeat results, which missed analysts' estimates, drove the budget carrier's share price down 17% yesterday.

The news also appeared to have a knock-on effect on other publicly traded airline stocks. EasyJet fell 7%, Wizz Air was down 10% and IAG, the owner of British Airways and Iberia, slipped 3.4%

The shares were also under pressure after airports and airlines around the world were hit by a Microsoft IT outage on Friday that led to the cancellation of more than 5,000 flights.

Ryanair said its average fare dropped from €49.07 to €41.93 year on year, but the increase in passenger numbers helped limit the decline in total revenues to 1% at €363bn.

The company said while it expected strong demand this summer, with passenger numbers likely to be up 8% overall this financial year, "pricing remains softer than we expected".

The company said: "We now expect second-quarter fares [July to September] to be materially lower than last summer.

"The final first-half outcome is, however, totally dependent on close-in bookings and yields in August and September."

Close-in bookings refers to the trend of airline customers waiting much longer than usual to book their summer flights.

"Cheaper air fares are great for travellers but bad for airlines trying to repair their finances after the pandemic," said Dan Coatsworth, an investment analyst at AJ Bell. "It puts more pressure on airlines to put bums on seats and fill planes to maximise the revenue potential.

"While travel demand has bounced back since the pandemic, travellers are reluctant to book too far ahead. That's possibly because they are feeling the pressure of persistent high interest rates or because they are holding out for a bargain."

The Ryanair chief executive, Michael O'Leary, said the 15% drop in average fare prices in the last quarter may be a "rebalancing" of the market after the double-digit percentage ticket price increases of recent years.

He added that Ryanair had experienced resistance from customers when it had tried to put up prices, and intended to aggressively market low-cost tickets to keep demand high.

This month Jet2, the Leeds-based travel company that flies from 12 UK airports to more than 65 destinations in Europe, said customers faced "modest" price rises this summer as it adjusted to the shift to later bookings.

Ryanair also said yesterday that it had been hit by air traffic control capacity, which had been restricted by various factors including strikes abroad and increasing the gaps between planes to ensure safe landings during periods of extreme weather.

"In the last 10 days of June, we suffered a significant deterioration in European air traffic control capacity, which caused multiple flight delays and cancellations, especially on first-wave morning flights," said O'Leary, who added that this was the worst summer for air traffic control delays that he had experienced.

"[This makes it] more urgent than ever that the new European Commission and parliament deliver long-delayed reform of Europe's hopelessly inefficient air traffic control services," he said.

46%

Proportion Ryanair's profits fell by between April and June despite passenger numbers rising 10%

'Mortgage prisoners' sue TSB subsidiary over 'inflated interest rates'

Hilary Osborne

A group of Northern Rock customers who claim they became "mortgage prisoners" after the lender's collapse are to go to court today to try to get compensation from the bank that bought their loans.

About 2,500 borrowers whose home loans were sold to TSB's subsidiary Whistletree are involved in a case over what they say are inflated interest rates on their debt.

Rather than being put on TSB's normal standard variable rate (SVR) when they were transferred, they have been charged a separate rate, which is higher. While the TSB rate now stands at 7.25%, Whistletree's equivalent is 9.54%.

The group of current and former Whistletree borrowers are part of a wider cohort of about 47,000 households who had loans with Northern Rock and Bradford & Bingley until the banks failed in the 2008 financial crisis.

Many had taken out interest-only mortgages, some had self-certificated their income, rather than having to prove it, and some took on loans of more than 100% loan to value (LTV). These circumstances mean some have been unable to switch to a new, cheaper deal, hence becoming "mortgage prisoners".

About 27,000 mortgage holders were transferred to Whistletree in 2016. Since then, more than two-thirds of Whistletree customers have switched to a different deal or closed their mortgage, but those on its SVR have paid more than if they were on TSB's equivalent variable rate.

Olivia Selley, senior associate at the law firm taking the action, Harcus Parker, said this meant borrowers may have paid £15,000-£30,000 more than had they been on the better rate.

She said the court proceedings, expected to take four days, would examine whether the decision to put the borrowers on a separate SVR had breached the contract they had with Northern Rock and whether there was an implied term that rates should not be set unfairly or capriciously.

The court's decision, expected in the autumn, will set the terms for further action by the borrowers.

A TSB spokesperson said: "This is a hearing for the court to determine some specific issues that have been raised as part of Harcus Parker's legal action. TSB has always been committed to treating Whistletree customers fairly, does not believe the claim has merit and is defending it vigorously."

Hammerson sells its stake in Bicester Village owner

Sarah Butler

The property firm Hammerson has sold its stake in the group that controls Bicester Village, the cut-price designer goods shopping centre in Oxfordshire, to the luxury market investor L Catterton in a £1.5bn deal.

Hammerson said it would raise £600m in cash proceeds from the sale of its near-40% stake in Value Retail, which also owns nine luxury shopping destinations near Barcelona, Brussels, Dublin, Frankfurt, Paris, Madrid, Milan and Munich.

The property company plans to use the cash to pay down debt, invest in its other centres and return £140m to shareholders. L Catterton, a private equity firm part-owned by the Louis Vuitton and Christian Dior owner LVMH, said: "With its high-quality portfolio, reputation for luxury and commitment to delivering a distinctive experience to customers, Value Retail is well positioned for growth and continued success."

Rita-Rose Gagné, the chief executive of Hammerson, which owns a string of shopping centres including Birmingham's Bull Ring and Cabot Circus in Bristol, said: "This is a transformational deal for Hammerson, generating cash proceeds of [about] £600m whilst removing an overweight, low-yielding and minority stake, and positioning us for accelerated growth and value creation."

She said the deal helped to focus Hammerson's portfolio on "prime urban real estate" and to concentrate on "higher-yielding opportunities with stronger returns, whilst enhancing returns to shareholders".

The sale marks Hammerson's latest disposal as it tries to reinvigorate its portfolio amid rapidly changing shopping habits. Gagné has sold off assets to focus investment on Hammerson's urban shopping centres where it is repurposing redundant department stores space into a mix of food, leisure, services, shopping and residential developments.

Visitor numbers at shopping centres have come under pressure as a string of department stores have closed, including the collapse of Debenhams and Beales, and closures by House of Fraser, John Lewis and Marks & Spencer. Shopping centres are also facing heavy competition from online retailers and smaller, outdoor retail parks.

Hammerson sold its 50% stake in its Croydon shopping centre redevelopment joint venture to its partner Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield at the end of April. Last year it sold its stake in the Parisian shopping centre Italie Deux to the owner of Ikea.



▲ *Bicester Village in Oxfordshire is part of the Value Retail group, which owns several other luxury shopping sites across Europe* PHOTOGRAPH: ALAMY

Vivendi plans to float Canal+ in London as part of break-up drive

Mark Sweney

Vivendi plans to float its French TV business Canal+ in London, providing a shot in the arm for the capital's stock exchange after a number of high-profile companies opted for rival international financial centres such as New York.

The move is part of a drive to break up the media conglomerate controlled by the billionaire Vincent Bolloré to realise value from its different operations.

Vivendi said the decision to list in London reflected the increasingly international operation of Canal+, which is in the process of a $2.9bn (£2.2bn) takeover of Africa's largest pay-TV operator, Multichoice.

"With close to two-thirds of its subscribers outside of France, a film and TV series distribution network present on all continents, and growth drivers resulting from its recent developments on the African, European and Asia-Pacific markets, a London-based listing would represent an attractive solution for international investors likely to be interested in the group," Vivendi said.

Vivendi's plan will be welcomed after a series of setbacks for the London Stock Exchange in recent years.

The most high-profile company to snub the capital was the Cambridge-based chip designer Arm, one of the UK's few bona fide global tech success stories, which chose to float on the Nasdaq in New York last year in one of the biggest initial public offerings in recent years.

In February, Tui, Europe's biggest package holiday operator, moved its stock exchange listing from the FTSE 250 to Frankfurt.

The building materials group CRH, one of the biggest companies on the FTSE 100, moved its primary listing to the US, following the UK-based plumbing equipment supplier Ferguson.



▲ *Audrey Tautou in Coco Before Chanel, a film made with Canal+, Vivendi's French TV business*
PHOTOGRAPH: ENTERTAINMENT PICTURES/ALAMY

However, London's status as a global financial centre is to receive a major fillip as the Chinese fast fashion retailer Shein reportedly prepares for a £52bn initial public offering in the UK's biggest-ever stock market flotation.

The Canal+ announcement came in a statement updating the market on Vivendi's plans to disaggregate its conglomerate structure. The company said: "Vivendi has endured a significantly high conglomerate discount, substantially reducing its valuation and thereby limiting its ability to carry out external growth transactions for its subsidiaries."

Vivendi began the break-up process in 2021 with the €40bn flotation of Universal Music Group, the world's biggest music company that is home to artists including Taylor Swift, in Amsterdam. That business is valued at €51bn (£43bn) and its share price has risen almost 30% over the past 12 months.

> ***'A London listing would represent an attractive solution for international investors'***
>
> **Vivendi**
> *Canal+ owner*

Paris-listed Vivendi said yesterday its advertising and media-buying business Havas would also be listed in Amsterdam. A third business, the publishing arm newly renamed as Louis Hachette Group, would be listed on Euronext in Paris.

Canal+ is expected to have a secondary listing in Johannesburg, where Multichoice is based.

Vivendi said the three companies to be listed as part of the breakup would keep their operational teams and decision-making in France.

Last year, Canal+ promised a total of $300m to buy a minority stake in Viu, a Hong Kong-based streaming service that has more than 66 million monthly users and 12 million paying subscribers.

The staggered deal, which has an option for Canal+ to take 51% control, will allow the French broadcaster to tap into a vast audience across Asia, the Middle East and South Africa.

Canal+ and the Czech investment business PPF each took a 29.3% stake in the ailing Nordic challenger Viaplay as part of a forced recapitalisation of the business.

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The Guardian Bookshop

Clean energy target for UK will be missed without £48bn in funding, analysts say



▶ *The Labour government has committed to doubling onshore wind power by 2030, among other measures to increase renewable energy*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALAMY

Rob Davies

Solar and wind power generation will fall well below the target needed to decarbonise Britain's electricity grid by 2030 without an injection of £48bn, according to a forecast from one of the UK's leading energy analysis companies.

The government has promised to deliver a zero-carbon electricity system by 2030, which would require the doubling of onshore wind, the tripling of solar power and the quadrupling of offshore wind capacity.

Cornwall Insight, which has emerged in recent years as one of the leading energy forecasters, warned that hitting that target would require a "step change" to close the renewable investment gap.

Under current projections, solar and wind are on course to account for 44% of Britain's electricity by 2030, the analyst said, well below the 67% required to remove fossil fuels from the power generation system. Under its projections, gas would still account for 19% of electricity generation by 2030, more than either solar, onshore wind or offshore wind.

Cornwall said an additional £48bn would be needed, on top of the £18bn that scheduled energy infrastructure projects are expected to cost, in order to meet the government's goal for renewables.

However, it warned that achieving such a transformation would be a "substantial challenge" because of a combination of funding constraints, supply chain problems, limited port capacity and the need to build many more links into the National Grid.

"Attracting that investment is going to be critical to delivery," said Cornwall, adding that schemes such as "contracts for difference", which lock in returns for investors by setting a fixed price for electricity, might be needed.

The Cornwall principal modeller, Tom Edwards, said: "International competition for project development coupled with material shortages are challenging issues that often lie beyond a government's control.

"Additionally, updates to grid connections, increased storage and a whole plethora of other policy changes will be needed to make a 2030 zero-carbon power system a realistic target.

"The swift actions of the new government, such as lifting the de facto ban on onshore wind, are encouraging. However, much more needs to be done to turn decarbonisation promises into a reality."

A government spokesperson said: "We are taking immediate action implementing our long-term plan to make Britain a clean energy superpower.

"In just one week, we have swept away barriers to onshore windfarms, consented more solar power than has been installed in the past year and set out plans for a solar rooftop revolution.

"Investing in clean power is the only way to guarantee our energy security and protect bill payers permanently, which is why we will double onshore wind, treble solar and quadruple offshore wind by 2030."

44%
Proportion of UK electricity that will be generated by solar and wind by 2030 on current projections

Labour's main policy on renewable power is the creation of the state-owned company Great British Energy to invest in wind, solar and other projects. The government has also announced plans to speed up the planning process to get new power projects off the ground sooner.

Last week, the government's climate watchdog, the Climate Change Committee, warned that policies put in place by Rishi Sunak's government had left the UK on course to meet only about a third of the emissions cuts necessary to reach the UK's Paris agreement target of cutting carbon by 68% by 2030.

Carpetright partially rescued by rival Tapi but 1,500 jobs will go

Sarah Butler

More than 1,500 jobs are to go at Carpetright as a rescue deal for the retailer by its rival Tapi Carpets & Floors saves only a fifth of its stores and 300 employee roles.

The multimillion-pound deal, finalised yesterday, includes 54 stores but not Carpetright's head office in Purfleet, Essex, while another 219 shops will close.

The advisory firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has been seeking a buyer for Carpetright since it filed a notice of intention to appoint an administrator earlier in July.

PwC said 1,018 jobs would go immediately in the pre-pack administration deal ,while a further 580 jobs, mostly at the group's head office, were set to go once the handover to Tapi was complete. Customers also face disappointment as PwC said orders placed with stores not included in the deal could not be fulfilled. It suggested affected customers contact their payment card provider about the possibility of obtaining a refund.

Zelf Hussain, a joint administrator, said: "Carpetright has fallen victim to challenges facing many retailers, especially those selling big-ticket items." He said factors including a big reduction in consumer spending due to cost of living pressures, lower home sales and a "debilitating cyber-attack" in April this year had made it "impossible for the business to continue in its current form".



▲ *The deal involves 54 Carpetright shops but excludes 219 other stores*

Tapi has been a bitter rival to Carpetright since it was co-founded in 2015 by Martin Harris, the son of the "carpet king" Lord Harris of Peckham. Harris launched Tapi a year after he and his father stepped down as directors of Carpetright, which Lord Harris founded in 1988.

Martin Harris left Tapi earlier this year, while Lord Harris remains an investor and adviser to the business.

The acquisition of Carpetright would enable Tapi to expand into a number of new areas, the company said. Lord Harris continues to have a role on the board of Tapi, which he co-owns with about 1,000 investors, the largest of which is the executive chair, Will Barker of the US investment firm Camelot Capital Partners.

Tapi, which has 170 stores, said it was "desperately sad not to have been able to save more of the business and customer orders".

Jeevan Karir, the managing director of Tapi, added: "As we looked into the details of the situation, we quickly established that saving the entire business was unviable."

Harland & Wolff is given vote of confidence but no taxpayer cash

Jasper Jolly

The business secretary, Jonathan Reynolds, said yesterday he was confident the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast would continue to build ships for the Royal Navy despite ruling out government support for the struggling company.

Harland & Wolff is part of a consortium on a £1.6bn contract to build three naval fleet solid support ships to supply the Royal Navy's aircraft carriers. However, it has faced months of uncertainty over its future.

The government confirmed yesterday that it had refused to grant a £200m loan guarantee to help the company to refinance. The shipbuilder had hoped to secure a guarantee of up to 80% of any loan value to help it avoid collapsing into administration for the second time in five years. But the guarantee would have put taxpayer money at risk if the shipyard failed.

Harland & Wolff's precarious finances add to a series of industrial policy challenges already mounting up for the new Labour government, including the prospect of job losses at Tata Steel's plant in south Wales, and the proposed takeover of Royal Mail's owner by the Czech billionaire Daniel Křetínský. Reynolds also revealed the government was likely to call in Křetínský's bid for a formal review.

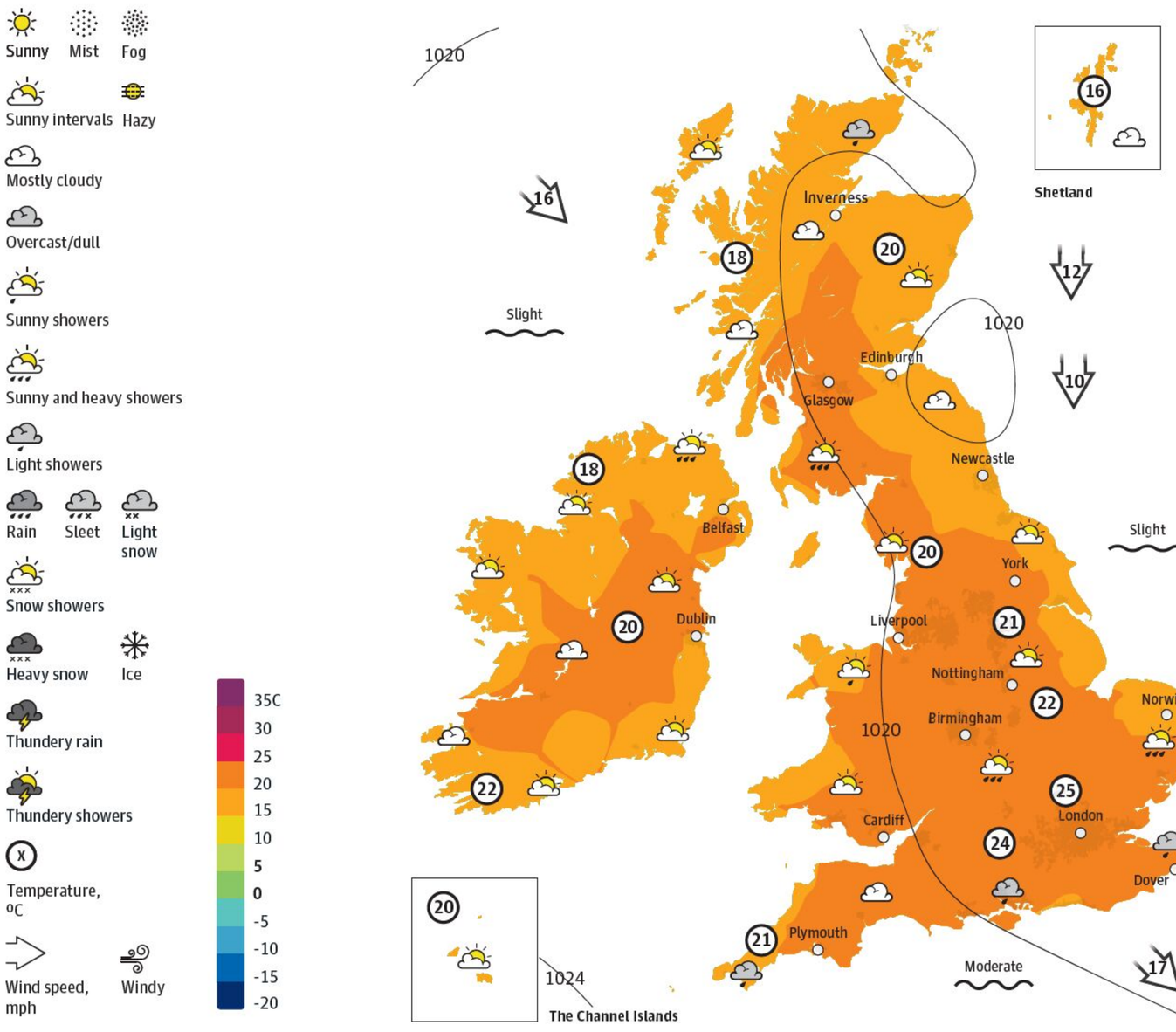
Speaking to reporters at the Farnborough air show, Reynolds said support for Harland & Wolff "would not have been a prudent use of government money".

However, asked if he was confident that Royal Navy ships would still be built in Belfast, the business secretary answered simply: "Yes."

Reynolds said he expected a "market-led solution" to refinancing the company's large debt load, and added that he thought the promise of government support had delayed efforts to find private-sector lenders.

Weather
Tuesday 23 July 2024

UK and Ireland Noon today



Forecast

Low 12 High 23
Tomorrow



Low 15 High 21
Thursday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

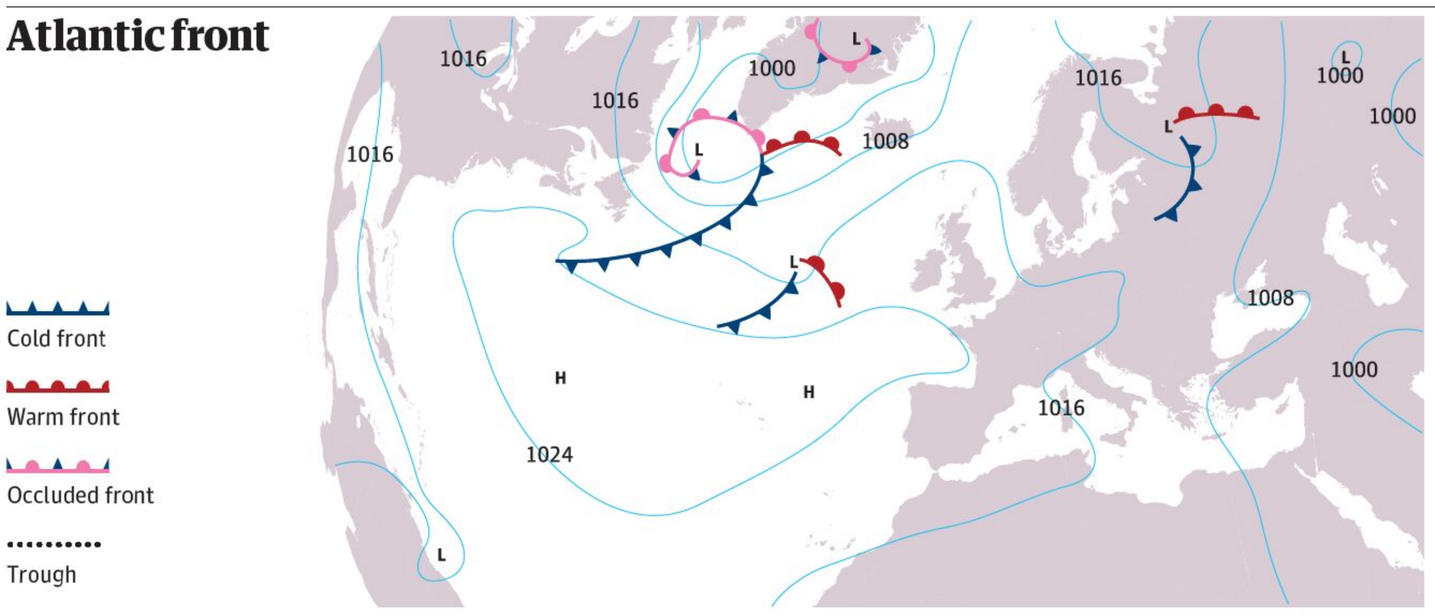
Latest	
21 Jul 2024	425.20
Weekly average	
14 Jul 2024	425.95
22 Jul 2023	421.45
22 Jul 2014	398.98
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	15 – 25	80%	Low
Manchester	12 – 21	80%	Low
Edinburgh	11 – 20	80%	Low
Belfast	12 – 20	5%	Low
Glasgow	11 – 22	40%	Low
Inverness	11 – 20	5%	Low
Leeds	13 – 21	10%	Low
Liverpool	12 – 21	5%	Low
Newcastle	11 – 19	40%	Low
Sheffield	13 – 22	45%	Low

Atlantic front



Weather tracker

More than 230 weather-related events have been reported across Slovenia, which was hit by heavy rain and strong winds on Friday.

In the village of Kokra in Preddvor, a bridge was swept away by a swollen stream, and three houses were evacuated after being engulfed by a landslide.

The storms damaged infrastructure, including a power line supplying Jezersko, a popular Alpine destination, and five German scouts were rescued from a ridge above Lake Bohinj.

The wet conditions follow a period of hot weather across the country, which has been 3-7C above average since 8 July with daily highs in the low 30s celsius.

East of the Philippines, a tropical depression developed into Tropical Storm Gaemi on Saturday, which is moving towards eastern Taiwan.

The storm, which has mean wind speeds of 51mph (82km/h) and gusts up to 67mph, is expected to strengthen as it passes over warm seas south and east of Taiwan.

Gaemi, the third tropical storm of the typhoon season in the Pacific, is projected to develop into a typhoon early this week, hitting the island by Wednesday or Thursday.

Daniel Harris (MetDesk)

Around the world

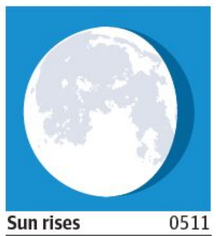
Algiers	31	Lisbon	36
Ams'dam	21	Madrid	39
Athens	36	Malaga	30
Auckland	15	Melb'rne	16
B Aires	18	Mexico C	23
Bangkok	33	Miami	31
Barcelona	29	Milan	32
Basra	47	Mombasa	28
Beijing	37	Moscow	24
Berlin	27	Mumbai	28
Bermuda	29	N Orleans	31
Brussels	21	Nairobi	24
Budapest	30	New Delhi	35
C'hagen	21	New York	28
Cairo	37	Oslo	23
Cape Town	15	Paris	25
Chicago	28	Perth	15
Corfu	36	Prague	26
Dakar	30	Reykjavik	11
Dhaka	31	Rio de J	23
Dublin	20	Rome	33
Florence	36	Shanghai	37
Gibraltar	27	Singapore	32
H Kong	33	Stockh'm	21
Harare	27	Strasb'g	26
Helsinki	25	Sydney	20
Istanbul	32	Tel Aviv	33
Jo'burg	22	Tenerife	26
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	34
K'mandu	28	Toronto	27
Kabul	35	Vancouv'r	21
Kingston	32	Vienna	30
Kolkata	31	Warsaw	27
L Angeles	31	Wash'ton	32
Lagos	29	Well'ton	11
Lima	18	Zurich	26

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**0313**	4.3m	**1555**	4.2m	**London Bridge**	**0359**	7.2m	**1622**	6.9m
Avonmouth	**0932**	12.8m	**2151**	13.3m	**Lossiemouth**	**0146**	4.1m	**1425**	4.0m
Barrow	**0113**	9.3m	**1345**	9.0m	**Milford Haven**	**0826**	6.8m	**2047**	7.2m
Belfast	**0046**	3.5m	**1319**	3.3m	**Newquay**	**0716**	6.9m	**1938**	7.2m
Cobh	**0737**	3.9m	**2001**	4.1m	**North Shields**	**0519**	5.1m	**1759**	5.0m
Cromer	**0827**	5.1m	**2118**	4.9m	**Oban**	**0756**	3.7m	**2021**	4.0m
Dover	**0055**	6.5m	**1317**	6.7m	**Penzance**	**0650**	5.3m	**1912**	5.7m
Dublin	**0111**	4.2m	**1353**	3.9m	**Plymouth**	**0807**	5.2m	**2019**	5.6m
Galway	**0721**	5.0m	**1934**	5.3m	**Portsmouth**	**0110**	4.6m	**1349**	4.7m
Greenock	**0218**	3.5m	**1446**	3.2m	**Southport**	**0038**	9.1m	**1300**	8.8m
Harwich	**0146**	4.0m	**1402**	3.9m	**Stornoway**	**0909**	4.6m	**2118**	5.0m
Holyhead	**0009**	5.7m	**1239**	5.4m	**Weymouth**	**0821**	1.2m	**2035**	1.5m
Hull	**0819**	7.6m	**2101**	7.4m	**Whitby**	**0556**	5.6m	**1833**	5.5m
Leith	**0431**	5.6m	**1706**	5.6m	**Wick**	**0109**	3.5m	**1349**	3.4m
Liverpool	**0057**	9.4m	**1326**	9.1m	**Workington**	**0119**	8.4m	**1347**	8.1m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0511
Sun sets	2101
Moon rises	2227
Moon sets	0724
Last Quarter	28 July

AccuWeather.com

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2024

Lighting up

Belfast	2141 to 0523
Birm'ham	2112 to 0516
Brighton	2059 to 0516
Bristol	2111 to 0524
Carlisle	2129 to 0507
Cork	2136 to 0545
Dublin	2135 to 0529
Glasgow	2141 to 0509
Harlech	2124 to 0523
Inverness	2149 to 0457
London	2101 to 0513
M'chester	2119 to 0513
Newcastle	2125 to 0503
Norwich	2101 to 0502
Penzance	2117 to 0541

Sport

Rugby union

England legend Youngs reveals heart surgery

Page 34 →

Olympics countdown

Secrets behind Emily Campbell's weightlifting

Page 37 →





Paris 2024

▲ *Xander Schauffele continued his fine year by lifting the Claret Jug at Royal Troon and now bids to defend his Olympic title in Paris*
MAJA SMIEJKOWSKA/REUTERS

Parisian intrigue

Schauffele's Open victory adds another subplot to golf's Olympic melodrama

Ewan Murray



A glance at the programme for the Paris Olympics makes you wonder why there was so much fuss attached to golf making a return to the Games in 2016. Yet fuss there was; from players who couldn't be bothered travelling to Rio to others who questioned whether any sport where a gold medal can never be the pinnacle was worthy of inclusion. The strength of negativity made people ponder whether golf's Olympic alliance would last.

Eight years on, the dynamic around Olympic golf has shifted beyond comprehension. Participation numbers in the sport are soaring. Golfers are generally unsure what that gold medal means in the context of their career – in fairness, only four living male and female players have sampled one – but have learned to embrace the Olympics. After success at Royal Troon on Sunday, Xander Schauffele will land in Paris not only as the defending champion but with the Claret Jug in his hand luggage. Schauffele is the first player to win the Open and US PGA Championship in the same year since Rory McIlroy's halcyon summer of 2014. The American has his eyes on a career grand slam.

"Before I had any majors, that was something I always wanted," Schauffele said. "I'm one step closer and still have a long way to go. But if you don't see yourself doing it, you're never going to do it." Schauffele's consistency is demonstrated by top-20 finishes in 11 majors in a row; no golfer has completed such a run in more than two decades.

The International Golf Federation, which pushed for and now administers golf's Olympic return, must be rubbing its hands. Schauffele provides it with public relations it could not buy. His prominence legitimises something that was continually undermined pre-Rio.

Schauffele is far from alone in providing Parisian intrigue. Scottie Scheffler's disastrous putting performance in Troon probably did not receive the focus it deserved. As Paul McGinley adeptly put it: "If I'm him, I'm really concerned that I can putt as badly as he did in a major championship." How the world No 1 responds in the colours of the US will be fascinating. Jon Rahm, without an individual win since the 2023 Masters, has another shot at glory.

At Le Golf National, the scene of European Ryder Cup success in 2018, McIlroy will make his first playing appearance since a missed cut at the Open. His teammate for Ireland is Shane Lowry, who cut a dejected figure after falling short in Troon. What McIlroy and Lowry have to say about events in Ayrshire will provide Olympic golf with more attention. Lowry's popularity within Irish sport is such that it would be no shock to see him carrying his country's flag at the opening ceremony on Friday.

"I'm playing good golf and I'd love to win a medal for Ireland," Lowry said. "Obviously I'd want it to be gold but I'd probably take either three. So I'm very excited about it. I'm looking forward to the week. It is going to be a great test at a great course. That medal isn't going to be around your neck until you're finished on that 18th green, that's for sure, at that place."

Lowry's sentiment chimed with McIlroy's from Tokyo. The four-time major winner insisted he had never tried so hard to be third when part of a seven-man bronze-medal playoff.

There is also the extraordinary case of Joost Luiten. He launched a successful legal case against the Dutch Olympic Committee after they basically decided Luiten was not capable of winning a medal and therefore left his name off the golf team. The next problem was that the IGF had allocated Luiten's place to someone else before the court case finished. After considerable back and forth, Luiten has been placed on standby. He remains irate about the situation, to put it mildly. "It's a big mess," Luiten said after missing the Open cut. "I don't know what to do. I've booked a holiday so I'm looking forward to that. I was just saying to my caddie, even if we do get in, I don't think he is registered properly. You have to do so many forms. It's a big hassle for one week to be honest.

What McIlroy and Lowry have to say about events in Ayrshire will provide Olympic golf with more attention

"The IGF fucked up there. The IGF gave my spot away even though I notified them that I was going to court and asked to hold my spot please. They didn't do that. They came back like: 'It's not our mistake, we're just following the rules.' They probably did but if someone sends you an email saying 'hold my spot, I'm taking somebody to court', the right thing to do is to not just give it away. It's a big mess. They all just make mistakes and nobody owns up to them." It is impossible not to envision some kind of Luiten protest on the 18th green at Le Golf National.

The women's element has further intrigue. Nelly Korda, who won gold in Tokyo, triumphed five times in a row on the LPGA Tour and six times out of seven at the start of this year. Her most recent run has included three missed cuts in a row – including in two majors – and a tie for 26th. Which Korda will turn up in France? Ireland again has strong medal aspirations through Leona Maguire.

It has been a year of adequate rather than stunning major championships. The Olympics has scope to provide the most captivating storylines of all. What once appeared an inconvenience has the chance to gain powerful momentum.

Rugby union

Youngs had heart surgery after collapsing in training

England's most-capped player, Ben Youngs, has revealed he had heart surgery after collapsing during an open training session. The Leicester scrum-half says he is "on the mend" and hopes to be fit for the new season that begins in September.

Youngs was diagnosed with arrhythmia and supraventricular tachycardia, which is a type of irregular heartbeat that causes the heart's upper chamber to beat fast or erratically. The 34-year-old had a two-hour operation in Birmingham following the episode while training with Leicester this year.

"You know when we joked around on the pod quite a while back, and we had this open training session at Leicester, and I said I was doing fitness, and basically I collapsed," Youngs said on the For The Love Of Rugby podcast he co-hosts with his Tigers colleague Dan Cole.

"Well, not collapsed, but I had to stop and lay down as my heart was pounding away, and the rain was hitting me in the face, and I sort of rolled my head to the side and looked at all these admiring fans - 30 of them - that were all packed out in the main stand at Leicester. And I thought: 'This is it, this is how I'm going to go.'

"I basically had a few of these episodes and I've had it my whole life. And it can just kind of spontaneously happen at any stage of your life or career. And so I have had it my whole life, unknown to me."

Youngs, who won 127 caps before retiring from Test rugby after the 2023 World Cup, said: "I've had a couple of episodes throughout my career but have always been checked up and we get the best medical care. The club have been amazing, as they so often are with anything like this. I got checked the first time it happened, [then] a second time it happened again.

"I am on the mend, I am recovering. I'll be fine for the start of the season. There is a 90% success rate, so I should not suffer now. My ticker should be all good and it won't suddenly kick in and go mental." **PA Media**

'I rolled my head and thought: this is it, this is how I'm going to go'



▲ *Ben Youngs says he should be fit for the start of Leicester's season*



▼ *Joe Root (left) embraces Shoaib Bashir as he sparks a West Indies collapse*
ALAN MARTIN/SHUTTERSTOCK

Bashir repays Stokes' faith by laying down Ashes marker

England's young off-spinner caught his captain's attention on a social media clip but the selection is looking inspired

Ali Martin

Word is yet to reach us as to whether England's cricketers ended up at Mega Munch on Sunday night following that surging late victory at Trent Bridge. Just off Nottingham's slightly chaotic market square, it did a sterling job two years ago - the scene of Ollie Pope's first doner kebab, apparently - after so-called Bazball first burst into life.

Although a bit has changed since. Of the XI that beat New Zealand that day with that breakneck chase of 299, only four remained for the 241-run victory against West Indies that secured a first Test series win for England's men since Pakistan in late 2022. Pope, Ben Stokes, Zak Crawley and Joe Root are the survivors, and Matthew Potts is still in the squad, but Jonny Bairstow, Alex Lees, Ben Foakes, Jack Leach, Stuart Broad and Jimmy Anderson have either moved - or been moved - on. So much for it being a cosy club.

Amid this recent turnover, the arrival of the 20-year-old Shoaib Bashir is the most fascinating. Jamie Smith does not keep wicket at Surrey but is in their first-choice XI and even a cursory scan down the scorecards of Cricket Archive shows the amount of time he has spent behind the stumps in his life (answer: a lot). Bashir, however, is not in Somerset's first-choice red-ball side - Leach, fit again, is the senior man this season - and his record when he does play in the County Championship is 16 wickets at 70 runs apiece.

It has been some pick and one that, after Bashir toiled in India for 169 overs and a commendable 17 wickets, paid out a further dividend on Sunday. West Indies were a bit punched out, their spirited efforts across the first two and a half days emptying the tank. But the figures of five for 41 that left Bashir celebrating with a Cole Palmer shiver - "I don't really watch football," he said. "Maybe he copied me!" - were not simply the product of tired, inexperienced minds at the other end.

As Bashir himself noted, his height - "6ft 4in and still growing" - means good bounce but also natural variation from the one that skids on. And much like Moeen Ali, whose fourth-innings record in Test cricket was stellar (and underrated at times), Bashir went wider to the right-handers second time around and was more confident with his changes of pace. That slider to bowl Jason Holder was as tasty as an offering from Mega Munch because of the one that had earlier ripped back in from outside off and went over the stumps by a whisker. "That was the most special one, I reckon," Bashir said.

On top of this, Bashir is remarkably unflappable for someone so young, seen in his mature response to that visa wrangle at the start of the India tour, not getting downbeat after failing to catch his captain's eye at Lord's, or simply the way he brushes off being hit for six like it's a minor inconvenience. "I take things step by step and I think religion helps me with that," said Bashir, a practising Muslim. "I'm always going to stay grounded, stay humble. I'm just trying to enjoy every moment in an England shirt."



Bashir's 6ft 4in height gives him natural bounce and variation

All together, these attributes were the clincher when Bashir was picked in the squad over the left-arm spin of Leach. And a team openly building towards the next Ashes has possibly noted that left-arm spin does not really cut it in Australia. Not since Bert Ironmonger during the interwar period - 74 wickets in 14 home Tests - has an Australian left-arm spinner had a significant impact on their own pitches. The next most? Allan Border's 19 wickets at 40, including 11 in one Sydney Test. Steve O'Keefe, who has recently retired with 224 Sheffield Shield wickets at 25 to his name, won just two of his nine caps at home.

Why? Shane Warne for one, clearly. But maybe the harder Test pitches in Australia tend not to offer much turn from the middle of the strip when left-arm finger spinners bowl to right-handers either; Nathan Lyon, for example, profits in part from the foot holes left by Mitchell Starc. Rehan Ahmed is well liked - and a personal view is that Mason Crane should not be discounted - but England investing in a leggie at home was never going to be straightforward. This meant an off-spinner needed to be sourced and one who generates bounce. And so amusing as it is that Stokes's interest was first piqued by a clip of Bashir bowling on social media, the thinking thereafter goes a bit deeper than a handful of nice deliveries to Alastair Cook.

The question, really, is whether Bashir - still raw and not much of a batter - can be sufficiently hothoused between now and the plane to Australia in 18 months' time; whether two home summers and two winter tours of Pakistan and New Zealand are enough.

It feels peak Bazball in terms of optimism but having a former off-spinner among the coaches helps here, Jeetan Patel sending Bashir out there on Sunday with orders to "show off his skills". The same goes for Stokes, an empathetic captain who, even with challenging fields at times, pumps up more tyres than the good people at Kwik Fit.

These are early days for Bashir and the road ahead will almost inevitably feature bumps along the way. Nevertheless, it has been a promising start.

'More tribalism' is ECB's aim for Hundred reboot

Continued *from back page*

tournament, the WPL, and has "just sent a document and a video to some NFL owners that explains what cricket is". The ambition is for negotiations to conclude in time for the immediate future of the tournament's eight teams to be known before the player auction next March.

"If things take a bit longer and the 2025 season is a bit of a transition season, which it most likely will be, then that's fine," Banerjee said.

The ECB hopes to change the tournament in several ways in coming years, with one priority being to "move it more into a tribalism", creating a generation of fans that will attend every home game and travel for away fixtures, replacing the perception among some attendees that matches are little more than an interesting evening out.

The broadcasting deal with Sky and the BBC runs until 2028. "We see the need for a potential expansion of the competition at some point going forwards," said Richard Gould, the ECB chief executive officer. "That's something that has been discussed over the last five or six weeks with our stakeholders.

"We're not saying exactly how the expansion could and will happen at this point, because there's a lot of factors that would need to come into play on that, but there is an ambition that we would like to see the competition expand at some point."

'Our American friends may like the idea but don't know cricket at all'

Vikram Banerjee
ECB

'I can inspire Black girls to fall in love with cricket'

Teenager Davina Perrin aims to light up the Hundred this summer and attract more ethnic minorities to the game

Raf Nicholson

Lord's, 25 July 2021: a little-known 16-year-old walks to the crease and over the course of an hour hits the half-century which announces her as a future superstar. Her name? Alice Capsey.

That was the women's Hundred, year one. The fourth edition gets under way today at the Oval, and this time a new kid on the block is hoping to replicate Capsey's feat: the 17-year-old power hitter Davina Perrin.

Newish, anyway. Perrin was part of Birmingham Phoenix's squad in the 2022 and 2023 seasons. When she signed for them at the age of 15, she superseded Capsey as the youngest player in the competition – but didn't play a game. This time, she has moved to the Leeds-based Northern Superchargers, and is hopeful the time has come to showcase her talent on what has rapidly become one of women's cricket's biggest global stages.

A record 310,751 fans attended the women's Hundred in 2023, up from 267,000 in year one. So far, every edition has smashed its own global record for total attendance at a women's cricket competition. While there are concerns about the future ownership model – the England and Wales Cricket Board apparently remains intent on selling its stake in the eight franchises to private investors – the powers that be hope another blockbuster year will distract from all that.

Perrin, too, is hoping for big crowds – but her motivations go deeper than personal ambition. She is one of only three non-overseas Black cricketers in the women's competition. "When I step on to that pitch, I'm representing girls of ethnic minorities who are underrepresented across the game, particularly the professional game."

Perrin is well aware Black role models are still few and far between in women's cricket. In 2023, the report of the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket found that racism was "widespread and deep-rooted" within English cricket, and concluded that Black cricket had been "failed" by the ECB. When Perrin was awarded her first contract at the end of the 2022 season by Central Sparks, she became only the third Black female professional cricketer in the country.

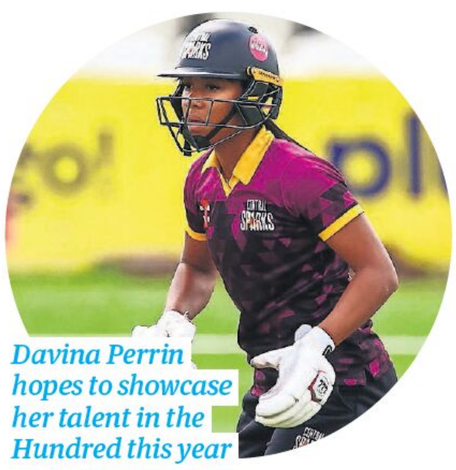
Perrin grew up with a cricket-loving dad (the former Staffordshire player David), and speaks warmly of her club, Fordhouses in Wolverhampton. But her recent involvement with Ebony Rainford-Brent's ACE (African Caribbean Engagement) programme – which provides mentoring support to elite Black cricketers, in response to concerns that they were prematurely leaving the system – has helped her to understand the bigger picture.

"People like Ebony served as role models for me. And I'd like to think that as my cricket grows, I can be a role model for so many more Black girls. I want them to fall in love with cricket and not have to be concerned about the politics surrounding that."

Since being called up to the Central Sparks just before her 15th birthday Perrin has juggled cricket with a sport BTec based at Edgbaston. But having graduated, she is experiencing being a full-time cricketer for the first time. This season, she was promoted to open the Sparks batting in 20-over cricket, helping them to reach finals day in the Charlotte Edwards Cup. "Not too shabby," she says of her 32 from 19 balls in the semi-final against Blaze.

Just like Capsey, Perrin has England ambitions – but she is also one step ahead, having represented her country in the first Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa in 2023. "For many of us, it was our first time playing abroad. I never thought I'd be sat alongside girls from Rwanda and see what their lives are about, see how their cricketing journeys have gone, and how that differs from myself. And we beat the Aussies in the semis!"

She is likely to be a firm feature of the next one, scheduled for January 2025 in Malaysia and Thailand. Beyond that? "I have a voice. I don't just speak with the bat. I also can use my mouth to spread awareness of the situation. I want to be the best I can be, at the highest level possible, and help the game grow."



Davina Perrin hopes to showcase her talent in the Hundred this year

Hundred explained

Teams (men and women) Birmingham Phoenix, London Spirit, Manchester Originals, Northern Superchargers, Oval Invincibles, Southern Brave, Trent Rockets, Welsh Fire
Format 64-match group stage. Top team in men's and women's tables qualify for final and face winners of 2nd v 3rd eliminator
Dates **Group fixtures** Today-15 Aug; **Eliminators** 17 Aug (the Oval). **Finals** 18 Aug (Lord's)
TV Shared between Sky Sports and BBC. Today's games on both

Football

Villa set sights on Félix after signing Onana for £50m fee

Ben Fisher

Aston Villa are targeting a move for João Félix after sanctioning the €60m (£50.5m) sale of their record signing, Moussa Diaby, to Al-Ittihad.

Félix, who joined Atlético Madrid in a €126m deal from Benfica in 2019, is among those under consideration as Villa prepare for the Champions League. Villa last played in Europe's elite competition in 1982-83.

Félix has spent most of the past two seasons on loan from Atlético,



▲ *João Félix spent last season on loan at Barça from Atlético Madrid*

scoring 10 goals in 44 appearances for Barcelona across 2023-24. Chelsea paid €11m (£9.7m) to borrow Félix for the second half of 2022-23 and he is of interest to Unai Emery. Félix is under contract at Atlético until 2027.

The 24-year-old is an intriguing prospect for Emery, who likes players capable of operating across the front line. Villa admire the Athletic winger Nico Williams, who has a €58m (£49m) release clause, but the Spain forward is a target for Barcelona.

Diaby is expected to sign a five-year contract with the Saudi Pro League club Al-Ittihad, who have also approached Manchester City about buying the goalkeeper Ederson. Villa have confirmed the £50m signing of the Belgium midfielder Amadou Onana from Everton.

Diaby's impact waned over the course of last season after his summer arrival from Bayer Leverkusen in a package worth up to €60m. He made 54 appearances, scoring 10 goals and registering nine assists, and played in every Premier League game.

Diaby picked Villa over a move to Saudi Arabia after receiving an offer from Al-Nassr. "I decided to come here for the project," he told the Guardian last December. "In terms of Saudi, I spoke with my agent and my family but my first idea was to come here … everybody knows the Premier League is the best in the world."

Villa have been one of the busiest clubs in the market, with Onana, Ian Maatsen, Samuel Iling-Junior, Lewis Dobbin, Enzo Barrenechea and Ross Barkley arriving, while Douglas Luiz, Omari Kellyman, Morgan Sanson and Tim Iroegbunam have departed.

Howe insists Gordon is still committed to Newcastle

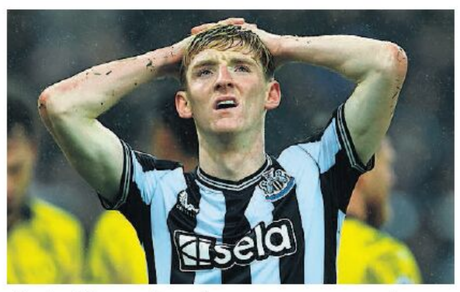
Louise Taylor

Eddie Howe is confident that Anthony Gordon will stay at Newcastle and emphasised that, despite interest from Liverpool, the England winger remained an "integral" part of the club's plans.

Although Howe's future as manager is slightly opaque amid interest from England and a restructuring of Newcastle's hierarchy, he is finalising preparations to take his squad to Japan this weekend. It will be intriguing to see how Newcastle's Saudi Arabian ownership reacts to Howe's very publicly stated concerns about the new sporting director, Paul Mitchell, and performance director, James Bunce, potentially reducing his autonomy.

The comments, made last Friday at Newcastle's Bavarian training camp, surprised directors. However the club's UK-based executives are understood to be sanguine and, during ongoing discussions, are believed to have attempted to reassure Howe that he will not be reduced to a glorified first-team coach.

It is hoped that he, Mitchell and Bunce can bond during the trip to Tokyo. Gordon will not be on the flight because he is on an extended post-Euro 2024 holiday, but Howe said the winger would be greeted with open arms when he returns to Tyneside after the breakdown of a move to Liverpool last month.



▲ *Anthony Gordon saw a move to Liverpool break down last month*

"I'd welcome Anthony back with three arms if I had them," Howe said. "He's an integral part of what we're doing." Howe fought hard to keep Gordon as Newcastle scrambled to raise £60m to satisfy the Premier League's profitability and sustainability rules before 30 June and avoid a potential points deduction.

The former Everton forward, a boyhood Liverpool fan, was believed to be excited by the idea of returning to Merseyside, with Newcastle insiders fearing his head had been turned. Howe, though, seems confident he can ensure Gordon returns fully committed to Newcastle. "Anthony needs a bit of a break but by the time he comes back, he'll be ready to go. He's such an important player for us."

Results

Football

UEFA UNDER-19 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP (N Ireland)
Group B Spain 2 France 2; Turkey 3 Denmark 3

Cricket

ICC MEN'S WORLD CUP LEAGUE 2
Dundee Oman 91 (C Cassell 7-21). Scotland 95-2. Scotland beat Oman by eight wickets

WOMEN'S T20 ASIA CUP
Group B
Dambulla Sri Lanka 184-4 (AMCJK Athapaththu 119). Malaysia 40. Sri Lanka beat Malaysia by 144 runs.
Dambulla Thailand 96-9 (N Boochatham 40; Rabeya Khan 4-14). Bangladesh 100-3 (Murshida Khatun 50). Bangladesh beat Thailand by seven wickets

MEN'S MINOR DOMESTIC ONE-DAY MATCH
Leicester Leicestershire 295-6 (ST Evans 86, LJ Hill 71). Buckinghamshire 299-7 (VL Jani 70, CDR Parsons 75no). Buckinghamshire beat Leicestershire by three wickets

Tennis

ATP ATLANTA OPEN (Georgia, USA)
First round: A Davidovich Fokina (Sp) bt A Cazaux (Fr) 6-2 7-6 (4); **Y Nishioka** (Jpn) bt Z Svajda (US) 7-6 (4) 6-3; **D Goffin** (Bel) bt D Shapovalov (Can) 6-4 3-6 6-1

ATP CROATIA OPEN (Umag)
First round: J Mensik (Cz) bt A Popyrin (Aus) 6-3 6-2; **T Monteiro** (Br) bt T Machac (Cze) 3-6 6-3 6-4; **M Trungelliti** (Arg) bt G Andreozzi (Arg) 4-6 6-3 6-2; **F Cobolli** (It) bt M Navone (Arg) 6-2 6-3; **D Lajovic** (Srb) bt F Misolic (Aut) 6-4 3-6 6-2; **M Dodig** (Cro) bt E Couacaud (Fr) 3-6 6-3 6-2; **L Sonego** (It) bt M Pojlicak (Cro) 6-2 6-7 (1) 7-6 (9)

ATP GENERALI OPEN (Kitzbühel, Austria)
First round: Y Hanfmann (Ger) bt J Munar (Sp) 6-3 6-4; **N Moreno De Alboran** (US) bt A Collarini (Arg) 6-4 6-4; **T Seyboth Wild** (Br) bt J Schwaerzler (Aut) 6-2 7-6 (6); **S Nagal** (Ind) bt L Klein (Svk) 6-4 1-6 7-6 (3); **L Djere** (Srb) bt V Kopriva (Cz) 7-6 (6) 6-3

WTA UNICREDIT IASI OPEN (Romania)
First round: E Avanesyan (Rus) bt L Romero Gormaz (Sp) 6-1 6-2; **C Paquet** (Fr) bt M Carlé (Arg) 6-4 6-2; **P Martic** (Cro) bt N Parrizas-Díaz (Sp) 6-4 6-4; **S Waltert** (Sui) bt E Makarova (Rus) 6-2 6-2; **A Todoni** (Rom) bt A Falei (Rus) 5-0 ret; **S Janicijevic** (Fr) bt G Topalova (Bul) 6-1 6-2; **A Bondar** (Hun) bt M Benoit (Bel) 6-3 6-1; **L Boskovic** (Cro) bt M Timofeeva (Rus) 7-5 6-1; **V Lepchenko** (US) bt M Trevisan (It) 5-7 6-4 6-3; **J Cristian** (Rom) bt N Brancaccio (It) 6-2 6-4

WTA LIVESPORT PRAGUE OPEN (Czech Republic)
First round: O Selekhmeteva (Rus) bt B Palicova (Cz) 7-5 6-3; **J Fett** (Cro) bt A Van Uytvanck (Bel) 6-2 6-2; **M Linette** (Pol) bt M Barthel (Ger) 7-6 (4) 6-4; **K Siniakova** (Cz) bt L Chirico (US) 7-5 4-6 6-3; **L Samson** (Cz) bt T Wurth (Cro) 6-0 6-2; **E Shibahara** (Jpn) bt T Korpatsch (Ger) 7-6 (5) 3-6 7-5; **K Deichmann** (Lie) bt A Schmiedlova (Svk) 6-4 6-4; **D Salkova** (Cz) bt Z Sonmer (Tur) 6-4 6-0; **M Frech** (Pol) bt A Sharma (Aus) 6-4 2-6 6-2; **L Noskova** (Cz) bt K Zavatska (Ukr) 6-3 6-2; **E Lys** (Ger) bt A Soboleva (Ukr) 6-4 6-3

Cycling

TOUR DE WALLONIE (Belgium)
Stage one (Tournai-Fleurus, 178.6km): **1** J Meeus (Bel) Red Bull-Bora Hansgrohe 4hr 3min 11sec; **2** M Mihkels (Est) Intermarché-Wanty; **3** P Penhoët (Fr) Groupama-FDJ both at same time.

Golf

BARRACUDA CHAMPIONSHIP (California)
Leading final scores (US unless stated): **262** N Dunlap 65 69 66 62; P Fishburn 65 68 64 65. **264** V Whaley 65 68 64 67. **265** M Meissner 67 63 65 70. **266** T Pendrith (Can) 66 66 70 64; P Rodgers 69 68 64 65. **267** C Ramey 66 67 65 69.

DANA OPEN (Sylvania, Ohio)
Leading final scores (US unless stated): **264** C Wannasaen (Tha) 66 65 66 67. **265** Ryu H (Kor) 67 68 65 65. **270** L Grant (Swe) 67 65 70 68; S Cheng (Tai) 69 67 66 68.

Baseball

MLB
LA Dodgers 9 Boston 6

Fixtures

Football (7.45pm unless stated)
Champions League
Second qualifying round: First leg Dynamo Kiev v Partizan Belgrade (7pm); Lugano v Fenerbahce (7.30pm)
Premier Sports Scottish League Cup
Group A Aberdeen v Airdrieonians; East Kilbride v Queen of the South. **Group B** Buckie v Dundee Utd (8pm); Stenhousemuir v Ayr. **Group C** Kelty Hearts v Peterhead; Queen's Park v Elgin. **Group D** Dundee v Annan; Inverness CT v Arbroath. **Group E** Cove v Livingston; Spartans v Forfar. **Group F** Alloa v St Johnstone; East Fife v Brechin. **Group G** Montrose v Edinburgh City; Partick v Clyde. **Group H** Hamilton v Ross; Stirling v Stranraer
Cricket
The Hundred Men
Oval Invincibles v Birmingham Phoenix, Kia Oval (6.30pm)
The Hundred Women
Oval Invincibles v Birmingham Phoenix, Kia Oval (2.45pm)
Women's Asia Cup
Group A India v Nepal, Dambulla (2.30pm); Pakistan v United Arab Emirates, Dambulla (9.30am)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Lingfield Park **2.00** Felicity **2.30** Twisted Tiara **3.00** Candy (nb) **3.30** Clever Currency **4.00** Forever Proud **4.30** Delta Legend **5.00** Rogue Soldier
Musselburgh **2.15** Bits And Bobs **2.45** Wondrous Ways **3.15** Laudable **3.45** Ghathanfar (nap) **4.15** Union Island **4.50** Myboymax **5.25** Judgment Call
Wolverhampton **5.10** Take A Pull **5.40** Next Second **6.10** Dillydingdillydong **6.40** Liberated Lad **7.10** Court Drive **7.40** Perfect Focus **8.10** Reve De Magritte **8.40** Newfangled

‘I wouldn’t be in the Olympics if I didn’t think I’d win gold’

GB’s super-heavyweight hope Delicious Orie tells **Donald McRae** about his bond with Anthony Joshua, his early life in Russia and his plans for stardom



‘It’s horrific,” Delicious Orie says as, turning his attention briefly away from hopes of winning an Olympic gold medal in Paris, the British super-heavyweight born in Moscow to a Russian mother and a Nigerian father considers the war in Ukraine.

Orie spent the first seven years of his life in Russia before the racism his dad endured became unbearable and his family emigrated to England. Rather than thinking of all he needs to do to emulate his hero, Anthony Joshua, and become an Olympic champion, Orie now considers how he might have ended up as a Russian soldier during the invasion of Ukraine. “If Mum and Dad didn’t decide to go, and migrate, I could have been forced out there,” Orie says. “I’m in my 20s, I’m healthy, and it’s a really scary thought. I’m just very fortunate not to be involved in that horrific event.”

Orie spoke Russian, and only a few English words, in those first seven years. It was only when his parents arrived in London 20 years ago that he began to learn a language in which he is now an eloquent speaker as he charts his life story and unexpected embrace of boxing. Orie, like Joshua, came to the ring late compared to most leading amateur boxers but he now stands on the verge of another life-changing journey in Paris.

The aim is for Orie to win gold and then turn professional with the kind of fanfare that made Joshua a multimillionaire world heavyweight champion. But, before we turn to that challenge, Orie reflects on his past with an intelligence which confirms he will adjust smoothly to stardom – as long as he can handle his dangerous business between the ropes.

We talk more about Russia first and Orie says: “I remember it being tough and feeling the hardship my parents experienced. Mum and Dad did a very good job of shielding me but, at school, you naturally noticed the way kids behaved. I was physically different to everybody and comments would be made. It’s only when you’re in a different environment that you think: ‘Wow!’ But growing up it was normal and my mother spoke to me in Russian.”

His parents had met in Moscow as students. “My dad was from Lagos and he found a university course in Moscow to try to make a better life for himself. He met my mum in his 20s but it was tough with her being Russian. My mum tells me of the difficult conversations she had with family members and friends. So that’s why, for my mum, it was quite an easy journey moving to the UK. She thought: ‘I love this man and I love my children and I want the best for them.’ She knew it was inevitable we’d experience hardship even more in our teenage years.”

It was difficult for his father to find work in Russia and he also suffered overt and violent racism. “He got beat up on public transport,” Orie says. “There was one occasion where he was kicked while minding his own business. One of the worst parts is that he didn’t get any help until he got home and Mum had to look after him. That’s just one example of what went down in the 1990s.”

The adjustment to life in London was challenging for little Delicious. “I came here when I was in year 4 and it was difficult. Russia and England are so different in terms of culture and language and, as a kid, you want to fit in. But in south-east London, in Thamesmead, I appreciated the variety of people – some of whom came from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia.”

‘I could have done a PhD but I got on Team GB and had to choose because economics is tough’

Life became easier, he says, when “in early secondary school, we moved to Wolverhampton”, adding: “I started to identify myself as British because I had mates and adjusted to the culture. I was already into basketball as that had started in London because I was quite a big kid and athletic. I was inspired by Luol Deng.”

Deng and his family were refugees from war in Sudan and, living in Brixton, his talent for basketball was spotted. He played college basketball for Duke and Deng made it to the NBA where he became a two-time All-Star with the Chicago Bulls before also playing for Miami Heat, Cleveland Cavaliers, Los Angeles Lakers and Minnesota Timberwolves.

Orie is excited to hear that I interviewed Deng many times in the UK and US: “That’s where my spark came, from basketball and Luol Deng. I became driven to follow his path and go to college in America and play in the NBA. I had that dream from when I was 10. I was decent and played for good teams and in the England trials but it came to a halt when I was 18.”

As a stateless person, Orie could not go to college in the US. “My

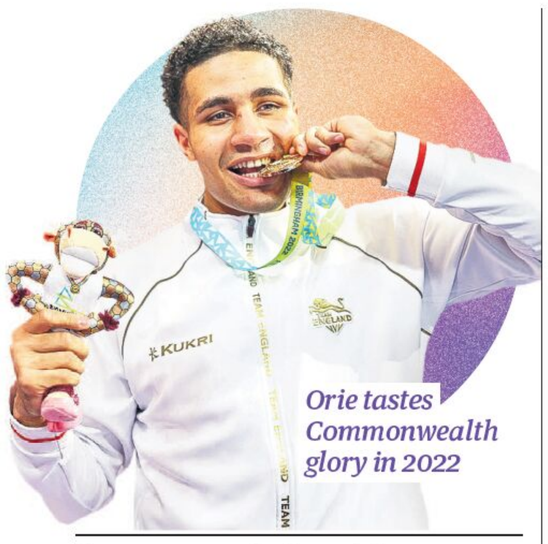


Delicious Orie’s hunger for success

After his pro basketball dreams were shattered, the Moscow-born Briton discovered his talent for boxing

ANDREW FOX/ THE GUARDIAN

In News
800 baguettes a day but chicken nuggets off the menu in athletes' village *Page 3* →



Orie tastes Commonwealth glory in 2022

dreams were shattered. I was a UK resident but I didn't have British citizenship or a passport. So I was unable to travel and get an American scholarship. I had worked so hard for eight years and it was all over just as some of my mates got scholarships to places like Arizona. It broke me."

Orie's sombre expression suddenly changes. "But Anthony Joshua came along at the perfect time. I didn't know anything about boxing. The only boxers I'd heard of were Mike Tyson and Muhammad Ali. But I remember watching Sky Sports and seeing Joshua for the first time. It was his first world title fight against Charles Martin in 2016. I was like: 'This guy is amazing. What a specimen!'

"So I did a quick Google search, found out his family are from Nigeria, he started boxing at 18 and he's a big guy at 6ft 6in. It was like Luol Deng Part 2. Pure inspiration. I thought: 'I'm going to chase *this*.' I walked into Wolverhampton Amateur Boxing Club, and said: 'I want to be a boxer.' I had never boxed before, never done martial arts, never had a fight in school. I didn't even know how to skip."

How did his family feel about him boxing? "My dad wasn't really for it," Orie says before breaking into a wide smile. "But now he's my No 1 fan." He explains that, at the same time he was "internally driven, and by my parents too", to go to university. "I wanted to study economics and I was able to get a student finance grant. That opened the door to go to Aston University and also then move my amateur boxing club to Birmingham where the real journey started with my first amateur fight at 19."

Apart from winning Commonwealth gold in 2022, and at the European Games last year when he secured Olympic qualification, Orie has a first-class degree in economics, maths and management. "I could have gone on to do a PhD but I had just got on Team GB and I had to make a decision because economics is tough. But I'm still reading a lot about economics and keeping up to date with world affairs."

He is an ambassador for Aldi and brings a charm to his media appearances which, assuming he does well in Paris, will result in him becoming the cheerful face for many more sponsors. Orie seems settled in his personal life and he tells me happily about his partner, Sophie, with whom he lives in Birmingham. "We met at university and we've been together for five years. She studied psychology and she has a real passion for it and is a great help to me. Sophie is fully British. I just absolutely love and embrace that British culture – Sunday roasts, the English countryside, all of that beautiful stuff. That's me, man!"

He is also besotted with Abba and during his workout before our interview he hits the pads hard while Dancing Queen and The Winner Takes It All resound through the gym in Birmingham.

Orie is seeded No 2 for these Olympics and could be on course to face the reigning champion Bakhodir Jalolov, the giant Uzbek who, since winning gold in Tokyo, has built a 14-0 record in the professional ranks. Each of those pro bouts ended in a stoppage. "He is a top opponent," Orie says of Jalolov, "so I have a real competition on my hands. But it's not just him. You've got the bronze medallist from Tokyo, Kamshybek Kunkabayev of Kazakhstan, and a few good Europeans and some top operators from America. But I've always been the underdog. So it's very familiar territory."

Orie became close to Joshua when he joined the former world champion's camp in 2019 and sparred with him often. "That was a fantastic experience. I wouldn't have been inspired by boxing if I saw some brute become world champion. I couldn't relate to that. But AJ brought professionalism and class. He spoke well and looked good. He was very approachable and sometimes would catch me off-guard. He would ask me questions. Normally it's the other way round but he's been very helpful. AJ tells me to stay true to myself and make sure I listen to the right people. That's important, especially when I win an Olympic medal, a gold medal, and things get out of hand."

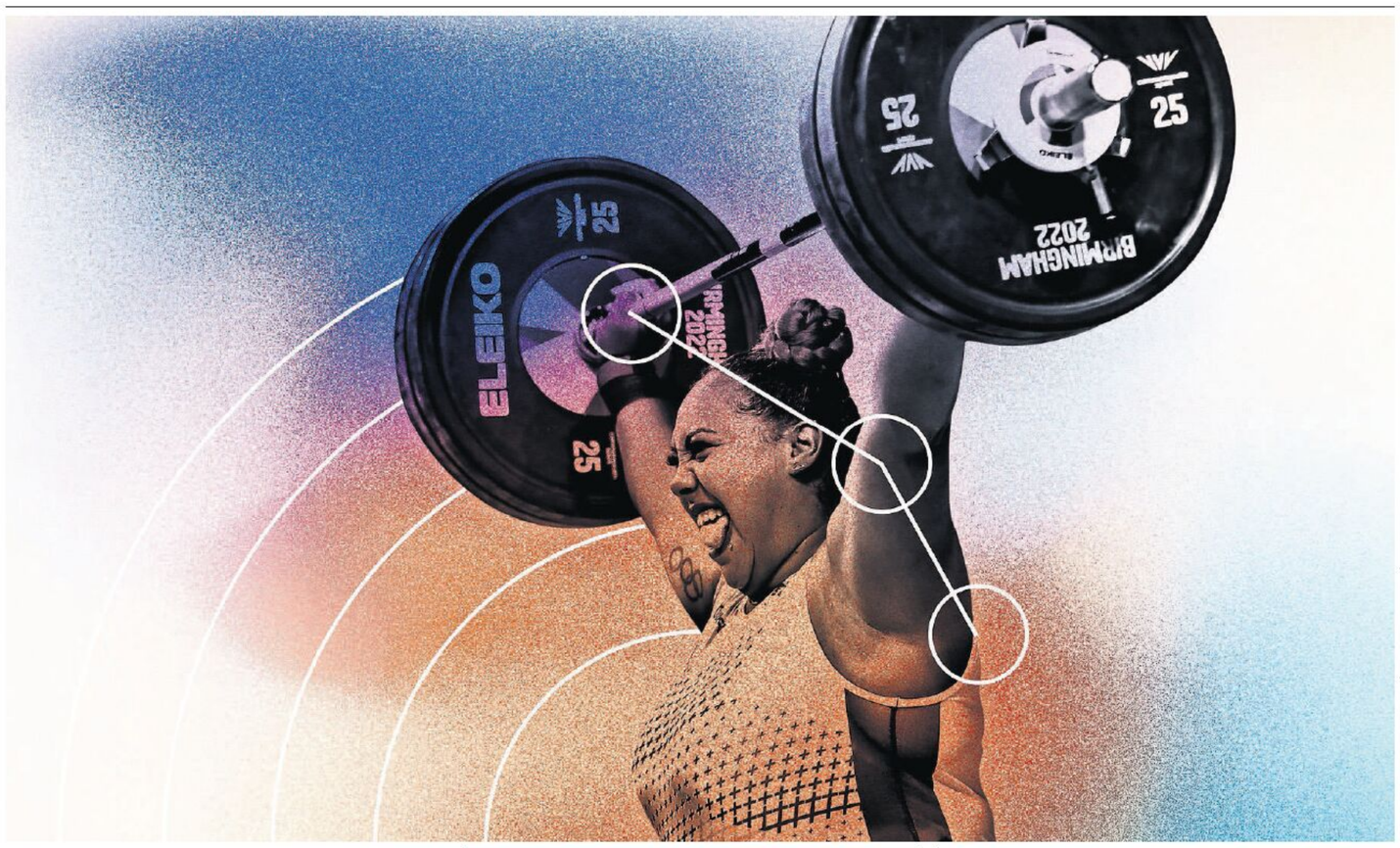
The 27-year-old laughs before becoming more serious when I ask if he is ready for the dangers and traps of professional boxing. "I've figured it out after dabbling a bit on the pro scene. I'm going to try to portray a different image. I want to appeal to the layperson, not just boxing fans. I've had conversations with all the big promoters and I know it's a business. I can't wait to be involved in it but it's important to take it one step at a time."

Orie will stay rooted in the real world where the conflict between Russia and Ukraine cannot be forgotten. "I've given up on politics. I'm more interested in economics but we feel it personally as a family. My mum has family on both sides – obviously in Russia but she has relatives and friends in Ukraine, too. It's ridiculous: young men on the battlefield for the sake of a few individuals in power."

In Paris he will be bolstered by a real sense of perspective and good fortune that his journey has brought him instead to the Olympic Games. "I wouldn't be boxing in the Olympics if I didn't think I would win a gold medal," Orie says. "It's just written. I have to do it."

Midas touch

How to snatch like weightlifter Emily Campbell



GUARDIAN DESIGN/PA ARCHIVE/PA IMAGES

Tokyo silver medallist is aiming to go one better in Paris, combining technique with strength and flexibility, writes *Alexandra Topping*

Emily Campbell is one of the strongest women in the world, and is the only super-heavyweight female athlete from Europe to qualify for Paris. The 30-year-old will compete in the +87kg category, and is one of Team GB's great medal hopes after winning silver at the Tokyo Olympics.

In 2022 she broke the Commonwealth Games women's weightlifting record to take gold, lifting 124kg in the snatch and 162kg in the clean and jerk, recording an overall weight of 286kg. "I think she's capable of lifting more," says Dave Sawyer, British weightlifting's national coach who has guided Campbell since she took up the sport. "Emily is the complete package," he adds at the Atlas Gym in Alfreton, Derbyshire. "She has the technique we are looking for. She has the amount of muscle she needs to move the weight and a positive mental attitude "

How to perfect the snatch

When Campbell comes to the weightlifting platform she plants her feet firmly under the barbell, keeping them hip width apart.

As she starts the pull, pushing through her feet to lift the bar she uses the full force of her legs, back and shoulders in unison. Campbell trains hard, focusing on different muscle groups by using exercises such as RDLS (Romanian deadlifts with barbell and dumbbells), weighted hyperextensions, wide-grip deadlifts and back squats. Sawyer says: "In every area, her legs, her glutes and her back, she is very, very strong."

When he first started working with Campbell nine years ago, she weighed around 95kg. Now she weighs between 128kg and 131kg. "Her fat content has gone down and her muscle structure has improved massively," he says. She also has good flexibility in her ankles, hips and shoulders, and incorporates body conditioning, stretching and physiotherapy into her training.

"Emily has been disciplined with herself to keep her body in good condition." She applies that discipline to every lift, Sawyer says. With her feet firmly planted, she takes her time through the pull, pushing her chest forward, pulling her shoulder blades together and her shoulders up as she lifts the bar.

"For the first part you have to go slowly, with self-control with just enough force on the bar to get it moving," Sawyer says. "If you look at Emily, the bar is staying as close to her body as possible. Any deviation from that and the bar becomes heavier. You have to be in control of that weight, you don't let the weight be in control of you."

Campbell's arms remain straight with the power coming from the lower body. "You don't lift weights with your upper body, it's always the big muscle groups coming together," he says. Her glutes come into action at the top of the pull.

With the barbell as high as it can be at the top of the pull – the so-called "weightless moment" – timing is crucial to unleash the explosion of strength required to get the bar overhead. Quick as a flash Campbell sinks under the bar, straightening the legs a split second later. "Getting under the bar is one of the fastest single movements in sport," says Sawyer.

Then her arms punch out at the top of the lift, with the elbows locked. "They have to go straight to lock, if there's any bend in the elbows it's a failed lift so the triceps need to be strong," says Sawyer. With the weight of a large fridge over her head, she then has to stay steady until the buzzer sounds, and the weights can crash to the floor.

Campbell's stoop









In the snatch, Emily Campbell's stance and grip are wide (📷1) with feet under the bar; as she pulls the bar is kept close to the chest (📷2) before firing the bar above her head as she sinks into a half-squat (📷3) and straightening her legs a second later with elbows locked and arms straight (📷4).

Medal factories

How Team GB are shaping up in key Olympic sports

Big names targeting gold in athletics and swimming while British rowers hope to improve on Tokyo showing

Athletics

Star name Keely Hodgkinson *(women's 800m)*

For all the financial strife at UK Athletics, which lost £3.7m last year, its high-profile stars and strong relay squads should ensure that it hits its target of six to eight medals in Paris. There appear to be three medal bankers. The most certain? Keely Hodgkinson, who smashed all her main rivals in Eugene in May and should win gold in the women's 800m - especially in the absence of the Tokyo champion, Athing Mu.

The breakout star? The 24-year-old pole vaulter Molly Caudery, who won the world indoor championships in March and has jumped higher than anyone else this year. Then there is Josh Kerr in the men's 1500m. His showdown with the Norwegian Olympic champion, Jakob Ingebrigtsen, will be one of the races of the Games. Don't be surprised either if Matt Hudson-Smith equals or betters the 400m silver he won at the 2023 world championships - an event in which Charlie Dobson could also take a medal.

Elsewhere, Britain's relay teams usually deliver at least two or three medals - with the women's 4x100m team most likely to win gold. And watch out for the 17-year-old Phoebe Gill, who could make the women's 800m final and perhaps even sneak a medal. **Sean Ingle**

Swimming

Star name Adam Peaty *(men's 100m breaststroke)*

British Swimming has come a long way since London 2012, when they won just one silver and two bronze medals between them. They won eight, including four gold, at the Tokyo Games, which was their most successful in more than a century. Adam Peaty has done as much as anyone to bring about this change in fortune and he will be the centre of attention again in Paris. But Peaty has spent a hard three years searching for his best form and will need to find something close to it to beat China's Qin Haiyang and win his third consecutive Olympic title in the 100m breaststroke.

The Olympic champion, Tom Dean, didn't even qualify for the 200m freestyle. He was beaten in qualifying by Wales's world champion, Matt Richards, and Duncan Scott, who will also compete in the 200m individual medley. Their strength in depth in that event makes them clear favourites for the 4x200m relay, and they have good chances in the shorter relay events, too. The head coach, Bill Furniss, admits that the women aren't quite at the same level as the men, but the world champion Freya Colbert will be a contender in the 400m individual medley. **Andy Bull**

Cycling

Star name Emma Finucane *(women's track sprint events)*

The dominance of British cyclists on the world stage may have stalled at the Tour de France but at Olympic level the medal factory remains unrelenting. Team GB have topped the cycling medal table at the past four Olympics and, at Paris 2024, it would be a shock if that were to change.

Six gold medals at the Tokyo Games - across track, BMX and mountain biking - revealed the breadth of talent across the disciplines and that is to continue in Paris. British Cycling's new platform of social change, achieved through diversity, inclusion and tackling social inequality, has led Stephen Park, the Team GB performance director, to suggest "winning itself is not enough, it's about the impact of winning".

Some well-known names from previous Olympics - such as Laura Kenny and Katie Archibald - are not competing. However, buoyed by the development of yet more new technologies - including faster skinsuits, new bikes and 3D printed products - allied to the surge of fast-rising young talents such as Emma Finucane and Josh Tarling, both from Wales, Park has reason to be optimistic. But the golden boy may well be Tom Pidcock, gold medallist in his debut Olympics, reigning world mountain biking champion, and stage winner in the Tour de France. The Yorkshire terrier withdrew from the Tour de France after testing positive for Covid-19 but in the men's Olympic road race and the mountain biking disciplines, he remains a contender for gold. **Jeremy Whittle**

Boxing

Star name Delicious Orie *(men's super-heavyweight)*

Boxing was one of the great success stories for GB at the Tokyo Olympics where the most talented and experienced British squad in history won six medals. Their successors face an immensely difficult task to reach even a third of that haul. Rob McCracken, the performance director of GB Boxing, says: "Paris has been a very challenging Olympic cycle - as it is shorter and we've had to deal with the legacy of Covid and political issues that have prevented us from competing at certain events. So to qualify six boxers is a great achievement."

Winning one or two medals is a respectable goal for a programme deep in a rebuild. Three would be a dream. Charley Davison is the only team member with Olympic experience and she lost in the second round in Tokyo. She fights in the extremely competitive bantamweight division but remains a medal contender. Pat Brown, at heavyweight, and the welterweight Rosie Eccles could do well with favourable draws.

The star is undoubtedly Delicious Orie, a charismatic super-heavyweight. He is the lone British fighter to be seeded but in the semi-finals he is likely to face Bakhodir Jalolov, the formidable Uzbek who won gold in Tokyo and has since been campaigning as an unbeaten professional. Orie would love to emulate his hero, Anthony Joshua, who won the Olympic title in 2012 and became a money-spinning pro. But he and the entire team face the hardest test of their boxing lives. **Donald McRae**

← *Delicious Orie interview, page 36*

Rowing

Star name Helen Glover *(women's four)*

The inquest was long and searching after Team GB flopped so dismally in Tokyo. Back then they managed only a silver and a bronze in rowing: scant return for a bumper £24.6m investment that had promised a new golden era. But insiders were adamant that the situation was far from terminal and that a few tweaks, along with the benefit of experience, would turn near misses into podium finishes.

That has been borne out and there is a buoyancy in the camp that suggests the good times are ready to roll again. Excellent performances in last year's world championships were backed up by a table-topping show at the European equivalent in April; there is genuine momentum and a palpable confidence that the ghosts of three years ago will be banished.

The appointment of Louise Kingsley as British Rowing's director of performance has been fundamental to the uplift: the former Paralympic team guru has struck the right balance between a winning mentality and a happy, relaxed environment.

A number of her charges look primed to thrill in Paris, the seasoned Glover leading the challenge in an exciting women's four while a formidable men's eight will be among those to watch closely. Tom Ford and his sister, Emily, are among the Tokyo team returning for another crack; Lola Anderson, in the quadruple sculls, is one of the new breed who have added a tantalising shot of dynamism before this summer. **Nick Ames**

Artistic gymnastics

Star name Max Whitlock *(men's pommel horse)*

Over the past three years Great Britain's women's artistic gymnastics team has gone from strength to strength. They followed their Olympic bronze with a silver medal at the Liverpool world championships, their greatest team performance at a world championships. After positioning themselves perfectly as one of the top medal contenders going into the Paris Olympics, injuries have complicated things: Jessica Gadirova, Jennifer Gadirova and Ondine Achampong have all been forced out of the Games due to injury.

The British team still have the ability to contend for a team medal but they will be significant underdogs. Individually, Alice Kinsella could challenge for a

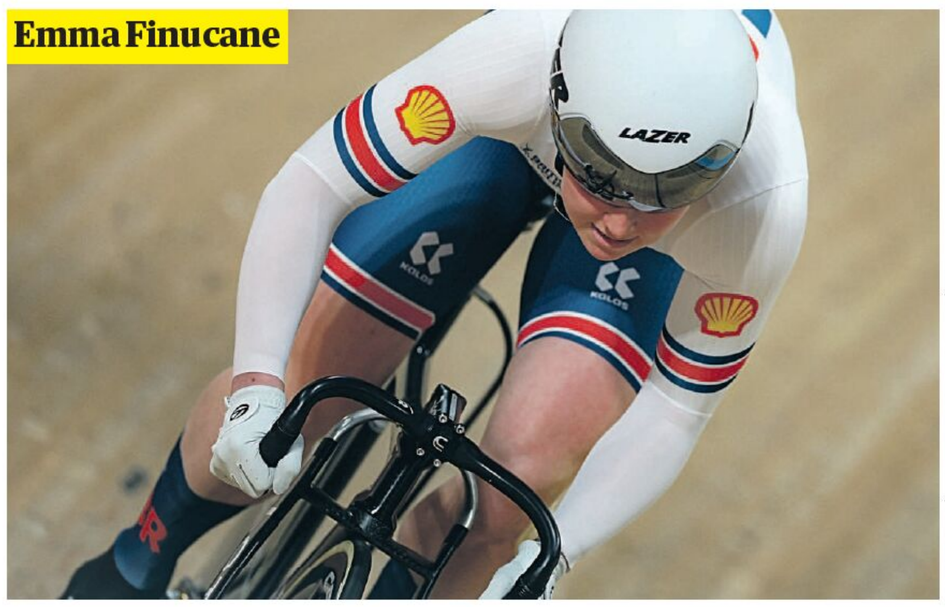
Keely Hodgkinson



Adam Peaty



Emma Finucane



Delicious Orie

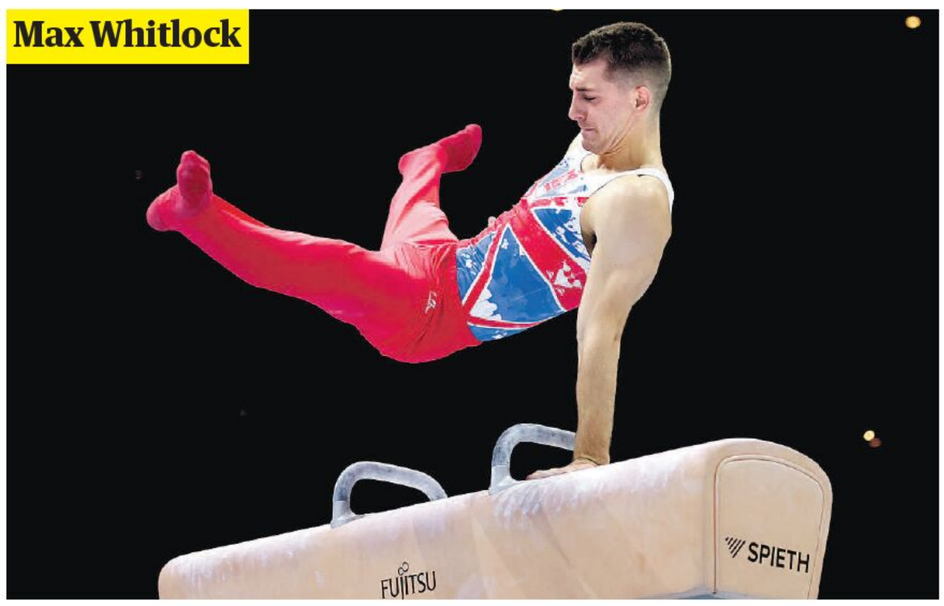


ADAM VAUGHAN/EPA-EFE; ANDREW FOX/THE GUARDIAN; RYAN PIERSE, NAOMI BAKER, MICHAEL STEELE/GETTY IMAGES; JOHN WALTON/PA; SANDRA MAILER/SHUTTERSTOCK; OLI SCARFF/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; ADAM

Helen Glover



Max Whitlock



Alex Yee



Tom Daley



women's all-around medal. Becky Downie's bar routine is complex enough to compete among the best bar workers but it has now been a few years since she was able to do so.

GB's best medal chances will come in the men's events. Whitlock will be looking for a pommel horse three-peat in his final Olympics. Jake Jarman, the vault world champion, stacks up among the best on vault and floor. **Tumaini Carayol**

Triathlon

Star name Alex Yee

(men's race and mixed relay)

Triathlon has been one of Team GB's medal bankers over the past three Olympics and should be again in Paris, despite there being no Brownlee brother for the first time since Athens 2004. That speaks volumes for the supply line of talent, as well as the culture installed by the performance director, Mike Cavendish.

On the men's side, Yee has a favourite's chance of upgrading the silver he won in Tokyo. The 26-year-old was a talented enough runner to compete at the 2018 European Athletics Championships in Berlin when barely out of his teens and has continued to improve his swim and bike since coming so close to Olympic glory in 2021. He will be joined by Sam Dickinson, who was in the England team that won the 2022 Commonwealth Games gold.

If anything, the women's side looks even stronger with Beth Potter, having won last year's test event in Paris, two-time Olympic medallist Georgia Taylor-Brown, and world championship silver medallist Kate Waugh in the squad.

With GB having a strong shot of a gold medal in the mixed relay, there is a hope within the squad that they might even outdo their Tokyo performance, where Taylor-Brown and Yee claimed silver in their individual events, before the team gold that followed. **Sean Ingle**

Other sports

Star name Tom Daley

(men's 10m synchro diving)

A meaty chunk of Britain's success from London 2012 onwards has been built on having medal winners in between 15 and 20 sports, and Team GB officials expect that trend to continue in Paris. Daley, naturally, will get a lion's share of the headlines after coming out of retirement to compete in his fifth Games, where he will defend his 10m synchro title. However, the expectation is that sports such as diving, canoeing, equestrian, taekwondo, sailing and shooting will all contribute to the medal target of 50-70 set by UK Sport.

The statistical wizards at Gracenote predict that Team GB will get five diving medals - with Daley and his partner, Noah Williams, taking bronze, and Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix winning another two. They also forecast four canoeing medals, including golds for Joe Clarke and Kimberley Woods.

The equestrian events are usually strong for Team GB and Paris should be no different with Oliver Townend the favourite for gold and three other medals predicted. Meanwhile, if Charlotte Dujardin gets a medal of any kind in the team or individual dressage she will go ahead of Laura Kenny as GB's most decorated female Olympian with seven medals (though Kenny is likely to have more golds).

There is likely to be more success in the sailing, where four medals are forecast, and in the modern pentathlon, where Joe Choong is favourite to retain his Tokyo 2020 title. In shooting and taekwondo, GB will hope to win three and four medals respectively. **Sean Ingle**

World Cup dressing room made available for 50 athletes

Katarina Johnson-Thompson to benefit from access at the iconic Stade de France venue

Sean Ingle



Zinedine Zidane led France to World Cup glory at home in 1998

Katarina Johnson-Thompson will be one of only 50 track and field athletes at the Paris Olympics allowed to use the same iconic dressing room as France's 1998 World Cup winners, the Guardian can reveal. The home changing room at the Stade de France is regarded as an inner sanctum of French sport, with the shirts worn by the stars of that famous team, including Zinedine Zidane and Thierry Henry, still hanging on its walls.

Now organisers hope that by making it available to just the 25 decathletes and 25 heptathletes in Paris - out of 1,810 athletes overall - it will inspire France's world record-holder, Kevin Mayer, to win a decathlon gold medal. And, as a result, will spark renewed interest in athletics in France.

The plan is the brainchild of Alain Blondel, the sports manager for athletics at Paris 2024 and a former European champion decathlete, who told the Guardian that he wanted to link France's football success 26 years ago with their Olympic ambitions over the next fortnight.

"It was at the end of the 90s that French sports people started to understand that it was possible to win," Blondel said. "That was a switch for many of us. And that if the football team were able to do it, why not us? And that's the link that we would like to have.

"This stadium is made for ball sports, for football and rugby. And while there are lots of changing rooms, there are two big ones in the central part of the stadium - and one will be dedicated to the combined events."

The news - which until now has been a closely guarded secret - means that Team GB's heptathlon world champion Johnson-Thompson, who is a huge football fan, will also get the unique opportunity to use the dressing room when she bids for her first Olympic medal along with Britain's other heptathlete, Jade O'Dowda. To be fit for the Games Johnson-Thompson has undergone a number of painkilling injections in her troublesome achilles, which she said on Sunday "seems to have settled down now".

Blondel said: "The only athlete we have told about this is Kevin Mayer, but we need to have history and to have stories. And it's a part of our storytelling to offer some athletes the opportunity to be in this museum - well, it should not be a museum because it's a place that needs to live, but it's a part of history. So guys, you're a part of history like those guys nearly 30 years ago."

Blondel also confirmed that the Paris 2024 programme had been deliberately structured so that Mayer and the European championship bronze medallist Makenson Gletty would compete at the start of the track and field programme.

"It was important for me to start with the decathlon," he said. "So a year ago we discussed with World Athletics about having Kevin, the main medal possibility for France, going first. The decathlon is a show and our aim is to bring the mood and the goodwill in the stadium from the first morning, and it will be like a wheel rolling until the end."

Pogacar pulls out with fatigue after Tour win

The Tour de France champion, Tadej Pogacar, has been ruled out of the Paris 2024 Olympics, the Slovenian Olympic Committee said yesterday.

Pogacar, who won his third Tour de France on Sunday to complete a Tour and Giro d'Italia double in 2024, was not selected because of fatigue.

The 25-year-old has previously won one-day classics including the Tour of Flanders, the Giro di Lombardia and Liège-Bastogne-Liège. He was one of the favourites, alongside the Dutchman Mathieu van der Poel, for the Olympic road race, a gruelling 225km course in and around the French capital on 3 August.

Instead, Pogacar is aiming for the "triple crown" by adding the world road race title in Zürich. He finished third last year as Van der Poel took gold and the rainbow jersey in Glasgow. Pogacar said: "I know Mathieu looks good in the rainbow jersey, but I want to take it from him."

The triple crown has been achieved only twice in men's cycling, by Eddy Merckx in 1974 and Ireland's Stephen Roche in 1987. **Reuters**

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Sport

From Russia with gloves

Meet Team GB's big boxing hope Delicious Orie



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Villa's thriller?

Emery keen on bold move for Portugal star João Félix



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KATIE CHAN/ACTION PLUS/SHUTTERSTOCK

Paris 2024

KJT follows in Zidane's footsteps

Heptathlete one of only 50 Olympians to use 1998 World Cup winners' Stade de France dressing room

Exclusive
Page 39 →

ECB 'speed dating' to find new investors for Hundred

Simon Burnton

The Hundred season that starts at the Oval today will be the last in its current form, with expansion from eight teams possible and changes of ownership inevitable as the organisers launch into "speed dating" with potential investors.

Negotiations between the England and Wales Cricket Board, would-be investors and existing host counties and clubs are set to accelerate over the second half of the year in a process described by the ECB's Vikram Banerjee as "kind of a bit like very strange speed dating" that will ensure "that everyone's got a partner in a weird kind of school disco sort of moment".

Potential investors have been invited to send delegations to attend games over the next four weeks, with the final scheduled for 18 August. "Many of them know cricket very well, know the Hundred very well and may not feel the need to come," said Banerjee, the ECB's director of business operations. "Others, some of our American friends for example, may like the idea of what we've got but don't really know cricket at all so they'll come along and see what English cricket's about.

"We'll then start the process in earnest in September, building off the momentum that hopefully is created from the tournament, with the aim that the 2025 season becomes the first season of different. What different looks like we can't tell just yet."

The ECB is selling its 49% share in each team, with investors seeking majority control of teams needing to reach a separate deal to buy some or all of the 51% stake owned by host counties.

In its search for investment the ECB has met the owners of every existing Indian Premier League franchise, as well as those in control of any independent teams in the equivalent women's 34



▲ *Oval Invincibles will aim to retain the men's Hundred they won in 2023*

City plot Palace raid

Guardiola targets Eze with De Bruyne future uncertain

Ed Aarons

Manchester City are weighing up an approach for Crystal Palace's Eberechi Eze amid growing uncertainty over the future of Kevin De Bruyne.

De Bruyne has one year on his contract and is wanted by the Saudi Arabian side Al-Ittihad. He admitted last month that he could be tempted to leave City because of the "incredible money" on offer in the Saudi Pro League but reports over the weekend that he has agreed a contract with the team who recently appointed Laurent Blanc as manager are understood to be wide of the mark.



Eberechi Eze signed a new contract at Crystal Palace in November

City, though, are believed to be preparing for the 33-year-old's potential departure and see Eze as a possible replacement. Pep Guardiola is understood to rate the 26-year-old highly and City came close to bidding for Eze last summer before signing Matheus Nunes from Wolves for about £50m.

Palace are determined to hang on to their star attacker after selling Michael Olise to Bayern Munich. The contract Eze signed last November has three years to run and is believed to contain a release clause with a minimum fee of £60m.

Eze has also attracted interest from Arsenal and Tottenham this summer but it remains to be seen whether they can afford such a hefty fee given the restrictions on spending imposed by the Premier League's profitability and sustainability rules. Arsenal are closing in on the signing of Riccardo Calafiori after agreeing to pay €40m (£33.6m) plus €5m in bonuses to Bologna for the Italy defender, who should complete his move once the Serie A side agree terms over a 50% sell-on fee to the Swiss club Basel.

Palace have an interest in signing Arsenal's Emile Smith Rowe but face competition from Fulham. Palace have had an offer for their long-standing target Ismaïla Sarr rejected by Marseille. Southampton are reported to have made a £12m bid for Jesurun Rak-Sakyi, although Palace are believed to prefer to loan out the 21-year-old forward.

Joe Biden has quit. But can Donald Trump be beaten? *The panel, page 3*

Taiwan has found a way to rebuild trust in politics *Polly Curtis, page 4*

My family were all Nazis – literally all of them *The long read, page 5*

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The Guardian Tuesday 23 July 2024

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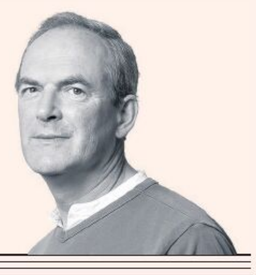
Opinion and ideas



Joe Biden in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, 13 July
PHOTOGRAPH: SAMUEL CORUM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Uncertainty for the Democrats – but far worse for Trump

Simon Tisdall



To borrow from Shakespeare, "Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it." Joe Biden might have clung on. He could, in his pain and pride, have fought and failed and lost the presidency to a gloating Donald Trump. He could have let his stubborn Irish heart rule his greying Yankee head. But in the end, finally, Biden, old and ill, bravely did the right and honourable thing.

Likening the departing US leader to the Thane of Cawdor is risky, all the same. The latter's sudden demise opened the way to even greater tragedy, as students of Macbeth and disputed successions know well. Whether Kamala Harris, Biden's handpicked heir, can rise from the ashes of a burnt-out presidency is the great question of the hour. Never in modern times has the Oval Office – the world's biggest, most awesomely powerful job – been so totally up for grabs with a few frenetic weeks to go.

The unforgiving deadline is 19 August, when the Democratic party national convention opens in Chicago. Thursday 22 August is the day the successful nominee must make her or his acceptance speech. After that, there's no going back, no time for second thoughts. From then until election day on 5 November, it will be all-out war, a fight to the political death with an extremist Republican ticket in arguably the most consequential election since John F Kennedy narrowly defeated Richard Nixon in 1960.

Will Harris get her party's nod, or face a damaging internal competition? She has big advantages. The vice-president since 2021, she can count on nationwide name recognition – unlike Trump's far-right white nationalist running mate, the deservedly obscure JD Vance. She has black and Asian-American roots, a potential plus with minority voters. She is the first woman to hold the vice-presidency. And at 59, she is definitely not Joe Biden.

Before joining the White House, Harris was a well regarded prosecutor and senator from California. In office, she has earned a reputation, among those who care to look, for championing women's rights, education and climate action – and for fighting Republican voter-suppression schemes. She is underestimated and mocked by opponents, as vice-presidents typically are. But she has taken hard knocks and kept going. And she could inherit the $100m Biden-Harris campaign war chest.

For the US's independent and undecided voters, Harris, crucially, is also not Donald

* **Simon Tisdall** *is the Observer's foreign affairs commentator*

Uncertainty for the Democrats – but far worse for Trump

Simon Tisdall

← *Continued from front*

Trump. Instead of a grudge match between two grumpy old men, battering each other bloody like cranky Monty Python knights, a fresh choice may soon be on offer – in terms of personality, energy, policy, tone, trustworthiness and moral integrity. It's a choice that could bring a generational leap. Come January next year, it's possible a new, younger morning in the US may dawn.

All the early signs suggest a Harris bandwagon is gaining momentum. Potential rivals such as governors Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania and Gavin Newsom of California have endorsed her, perhaps preferring a shot at the vice-presidential spot to a divisive fight. Most Democratic senators and House members are on board. Nearly $50m in donations poured in in the first 24 hours. Yet doubts remain. Senior figures like Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi hover on the fence. As of now, Harris's polling and favourability ratings are not much better than Biden's. A TV debate showdown with Trump on 10 September, assuming she gets the nomination, could be make-or-break, as proved the case for Biden in June.

How Biden's successor will be picked is still unclear. The fact the president has endorsed Harris will carry considerable weight with party moderates. The so-called progressive left may have different ideas. Having teetered on the brink of pariahdom, Biden, by stepping aside, has instantly accrued political capital to add to that accumulated during a relatively successful domestic presidency. It will be hard to deny him his choice – and Harris's potential rivals will be loath to be cast as agents of division.

With his huge haul of committed convention delegates gained during the primary season, could Biden simply deliver the nomination to Harris? No. Now he is not standing, those delegates are free to vote for whomever they choose. If the process unravels uncontrollably into a month-long popularity contest, in which rival candidates compete to make their case, the choice of nominee could come down to a nail-biting, last-minute vote or series of eliminatory votes on the floor of the Chicago convention.

What an extraordinary, riveting, prime-time spectacle that would make. Even if Harris is ultimately chosen by acclamation, what an awe-inspiring exercise in open, real-time democracy it could be. And how utterly dismaying for Trump and his Republican fib-meisters, mudslingers, cable muppets and poll-manglers. The entire nation, indeed the entire democratic world, would fixate on the drama, would be present, in a very real sense, at the creation.

From the crumbling ruins of Biden's presidency, a new leader may arise, a new champion for American values, the antidote and cure for Trump and Trumpism. The old guy (he is 78) is already spitting blood from his golf cart. Despite his insults, he knows a fresh candidate will be better equipped to call him to account, expose his crimes, skewer his lies.

What happened on Sunday was a personal political tragedy. It was a lesson in the impermanence of power. It showed how, in a healthy democracy, seemingly unassailable leaders can be brought low. But it was also a moment of tremendous hope, of renewal, of resurgence. What had begun to look dismayingly inevitable – the return of Trump and his repellent brand of mawkish, divisive, egocentric authoritarianism – is suddenly not inevitable at all. Amid anxiety and sadness, the relief is palpable. The adrenaline flows anew. Now let the battle truly commence.

Thank you, Joe, for finally getting it. You beat the pandemic, you led the recovery, you extended healthcare, created jobs and showed the way on the climate crisis. You were wrong on Gaza and Afghanistan, too cautious on Ukraine. But you were a decent man and, for the most part, a good president for the US and the world. For all this and more you will be gratefully remembered. But leaving is the best thing you ever did.

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'Comment is free... but facts are sacred' CP Scott

US election

Biden's retirement from the race means Democrats can embrace a fresh start

Joe Biden's announcement on Sunday marked the beginning of the end of an American political life filled with second acts. None was more remarkable than his defeat of Donald Trump in 2020. His acceptance that he could not do so again will burnish what his vice-president yesterday described as an "unmatched" legacy. Elected to relief rather than elation, as the man saving the US from a second Trump term, he became the president who helped it recover from the pandemic, pushed through a landmark green infrastructure package and sought to shape a fairer economy.

He could now be a lame duck, beset by Republican attacks on his capacity to continue as commander-in-chief. But he could cement his record, emboldened by the certainty of departure from office. His decision to quit his re-election bid was belated, yet in sharp contrast to Mr Trump's delusional egotism.

Kamala Harris now appears as queen of the comeback. She floundered in the race for the 2020 nomination and was seen to struggle as vice-president, though few shine in that role. Yet Mr Biden has endorsed her as his successor, as have other top Democrats, including potential challengers. Not much more than 100 days before the election – and with early voting beginning in just two months – few want to snub her and take chances on a little-known alternative, especially if it complicates campaign finances.

Ms Harris would not only be the first woman of colour to win a presidential nomination. She would be a 59-year-old running against an often incoherent 78-year-old; a voice of warmth against a vindictive demagogue; a former prosecutor running against a convicted criminal. A woman who has staunchly advocated abortion rights would take on the man who ensured Roe v Wade was overturned – and whose running mate has extreme views on abortion, pushing for police to have access to reproductive health records. She has been somewhat more critical of Israel over the war in Gaza than Mr Biden, perhaps shoring up progressive support. And people have regretted underestimating her: she had Mr Biden on the ropes over his attitude to segregationist senators and opposition to school integration policies in a 2019 debate, and skewered William Barr, Mr Trump's attorney-general, in a Senate hearing.

There is nonetheless a strong case for an open convention – reportedly the preference of Barack Obama and some donors. Some fear that the party is repeating the mistake it has just made with Mr Biden: ignoring qualms because it assumes it has no choice. Ms Harris is familiar to voters, unlike potential rivals, but unpopular. Polls suggest she outperforms Mr Biden in a contest with Mr Trump, but doesn't erase the latter's small lead – and does more poorly in battleground states. Republicans are already turning her thankless task of overseeing border issues against her, and accuse her of covering up her boss's frailty.

A contest for the nomination carries some risks – Democrats don't want to see their nominee damaged by a bruising process – but it could generate excitement, push Mr Trump out of the limelight and produce a strong running mate. If delegates rallied behind Ms Harris, that would strengthen her bid. If another candidate proved even stronger, all the better.

Democrats rightly believe that this election could prove existential for American democracy. But that hasn't proved sufficiently persuasive for voters. Polls suggest that they want change, and were uninspired by Mr Biden's request to let him "finish the job". The Democratic nominee must grasp the opportunity born of his debate disaster and create the sense of a fresh start, not only for the party's campaign, but for the US itself.

Leeds unrest

Our cities deserve better than cynical attempts to sow communal discord

The renowned social historian David Kynaston observed at the weekend that multicultural Britain has made huge progress compared with 60 years ago, when local Conservatives ran a notoriously racist election campaign in the West Midlands constituency of Smethwick. He is, of course, quite right. It is impossible to imagine a serious political figure delivering a speech like the inflammatory 1968 "rivers of blood" address by Enoch Powell. But the response of some on the contemporary right to the recent disorder in Leeds shows that there is no room for complacency.

After rioting broke out in the deprived multi-ethnic district of Harehills following the removal of children from a Roma family into care, the home secretary, Yvette Cooper, swiftly condemned the violence, which saw a police car tipped over, officers attacked and a passing bus set on fire. A series of arrests have since been made, with more likely to follow. Leeds city council has, meanwhile, announced that it will undertake a review of the case that sparked the unrest, which took place in an area with a large Roma population. That review should also seek to address known causes of alienation and mistrust in a troubled community.

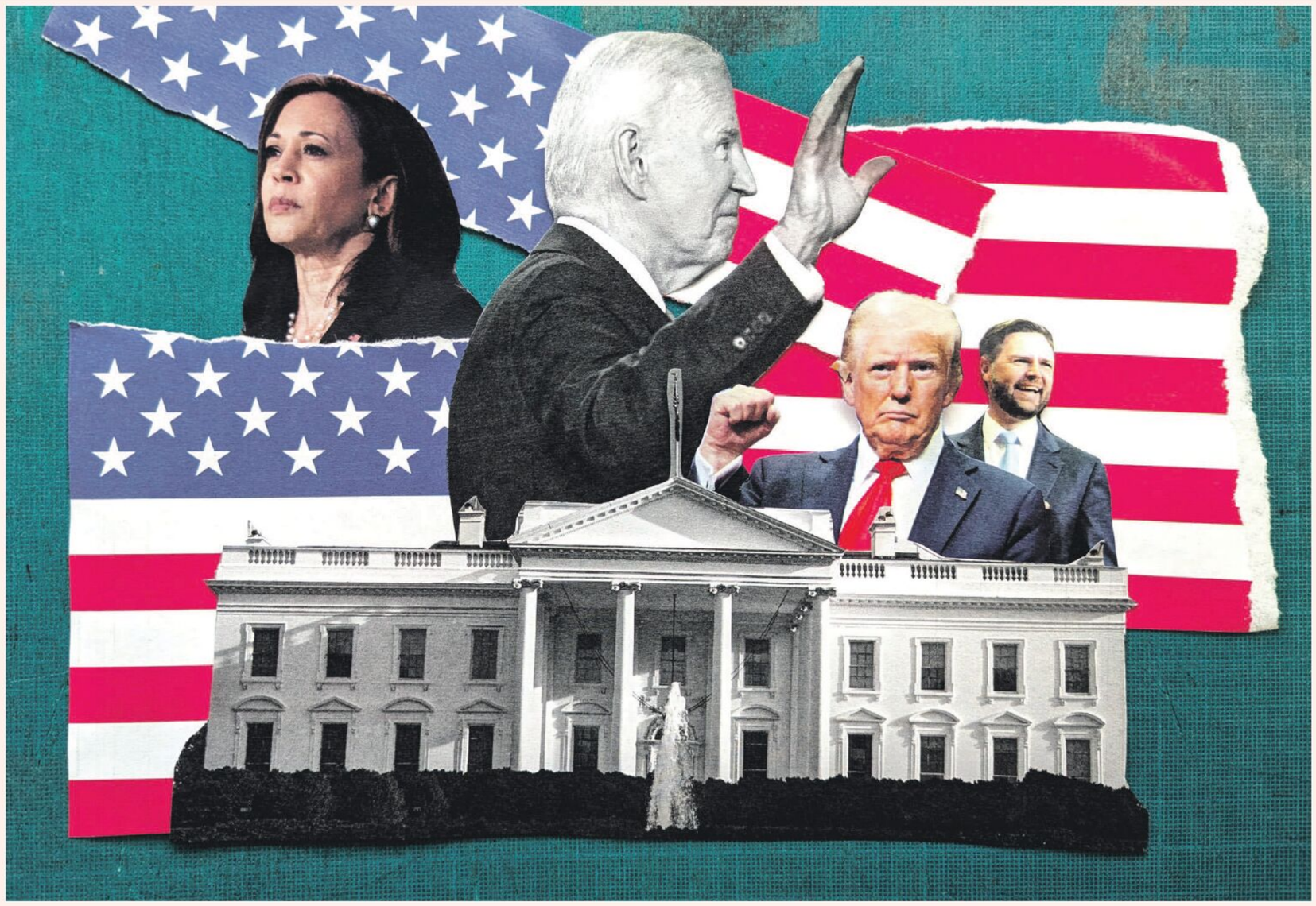
These measured responses contrasted starkly with interventions from the Reform party's Nigel Farage and Lee Anderson, who capitalised on the incident to ventilate a wider xenophobic agenda that they do not bother to conceal. Ignoring the facts of the case entirely, Mr Farage asserted that "the politics of the subcontinent are currently playing out on the streets of Leeds". For his part, Mr Anderson stated: "Import a third world culture and you get third world behaviour ... I want my country back." The former minister for immigration Robert Jenrick, who seeks to drag the floundering Conservative party deeper into similarly divisive terrain, lamented failed integration strategies and called for a radical rethink on immigration.

As an exasperated editorial in the Yorkshire Post rightly complained, Mr Farage passed judgment on a city "without a clue of the issues" involved locally. He will not care about that though. His strategy – now as an elected parliamentarian – is to use any opening to develop a British version of the "American carnage" rhetoric deployed by Donald Trump, whatever the cost to social cohesion.

That, in turn, will give oxygen and legitimacy to street leaders of the far right such as Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, the co-founder of the English Defence League. As footage of the Harehills unrest circulated online – itself a factor in the escalation of tensions – Mr Yaxley-Lennon claimed that the area's newly elected Green councillor, Mothin Ali, was an active participant. In fact, Mr Ali played a courageous peacemaker role, shielding police officers from violent protesters and defusing tensions. That did not prevent the pushing of a false and Islamophobic social media narrative.

During a parliament in which they will posture as the true rightwing opposition to Labour, we can expect more pernicious takes from Mr Farage and Mr Anderson. The Powellite politics of the 1960s may belong to a dark chapter of Britain's past. But Reform's insidious form of revivalism must be contested vigorously and vigilantly.

Biden has quit. But can Trump be beaten? Our panel responds



COMPOSITE: GUARDIAN DESIGN/ AFP/GETTY IMAGES/ REUTERS/AP

Moira Donegan



With abortion now on the agenda, the race will change

The best time for Joe Biden to drop out of the presidential race would have been several weeks ago, in the panicked days after his disastrous debate performance. The American public saw on that stage a man incapable of prosecuting a vigorous campaign against Donald Trump, and one unable or unwilling to make a reasoned defence of abortion rights, the Democrats' strongest issue. The weeks that followed have been filled with hand-wringing from the pundit class, backbiting and leaks to the press. Biden could have spared his party, and his country, this chaos.

The second best time is now. In withdrawing, Biden has given the country a fighting chance to defeat Trump and avert the worst of what the hard right has planned for the US. Many politicians – most conspicuously Trump – have shown there is nothing they value more than their own aggrandisement. Biden has shown that there is something he prizes more highly than himself.

Most importantly, with Biden out and Kamala Harris stepping up to the plate, the Democrats may now have a candidate who is an eloquent, comfortable and active advocate for abortion rights. Biden shied away from abortion, and his discomfort was dragging Democrats down, leaving a public health crisis, a civil rights emergency and a crucial Republican liability on the table. With that issue now squarely on the agenda, the race will be dramatically changed.

Moira Donegan is a Guardian US columnist

Richard Wolffe



This presidential election is now about old versus new

The Trump campaign can pretend like they have a plan to run against Kamala Harris, but there are no plans that are worth the pixels they're written on. Whoever becomes the Democratic presidential nominee has already turned the Trump narrative on its head. Instead of strength versus weakness, this election is now about old versus new. For Democrats, it will be hard – but not impossible – to seek to draw the greatest possible contrast with Donald Trump. And the greatest contrast to an old racist misogynist is a woman of colour.

The drive to lock up the nomination for Harris will be intense. But it is unlikely to happen without Harris proving herself on the public stage. It will be a messy mixture of high-minded rhetoric and low-minded horse-trading. Is there enough time for an orderly process? You betcha! The Biden meltdown lasted all of three weeks, and the president was accused of dragging things out. The Trump assassination attempt was one week ago, and it might as well have been last year.

There is a month before the end of the Democratic convention, which is more than enough time for several candidates to rise and fall before the balloons drop on the party's presidential nominee.

Richard Wolffe is a Guardian US columnist

Osita Nwanevu



Biden's bullheadedness will tarnish his legacy

The paeans being written to the heroism and courage of Biden are extraordinary – it's rare to see history being so quickly and blatantly rewritten. The truth is that Sunday marked the end of one of the more shameful sagas in American presidential politics – a crisis made and extended by the inertia of the Democratic party as an institution and the bullheadedness of a man who should have understood the risks a re-election campaign would pose to the country years ago.

It's been reported that Biden's own staffers were informed mere moments before his decision to withdraw was publicly announced on X – one final illustration of the remarkable insularity the last month has revealed within the White House. For weeks they charged ahead, ignoring all contrary data until Biden's position became fully untenable. And one has to wonder now the extent to which their behaviour has been reflective of how this administration has handled substantive policy matters behind the scenes, perhaps most especially the war in Gaza, which Biden has backed with an implacability that has baffled experts. Well before June's fateful debate, that war fundamentally tarnished what might have been remembered, on the basis of Biden's domestic policy record, as a respectable and even transformative presidency.

Osita Nwanevu is a Guardian US columnist

Simon Jenkins



Harris lacks experience, but this need not be a defect

Much has been made of Kamala Harris's shortage of accomplishments as vice-president, but accomplishments are rare in that office. Biden initially saddled her with the poisoned chalice of the border crisis with Mexico. It was insoluble. Domestic policy is also riven with divisions on abortion and crime. On the first, Harris has been an outspoken campaigner. On the second, she has written a trenchant book.

Harris's urgent task is to weld a shattered Democratic party into a fighting machine capable, if not of stopping Trump in his tracks, then at least of electing a Congress able to hamper his wilder ambitions.

Many past presidents have lacked experience of high office, but this need not be a defect. Harris's inquisitorial powers as an attorney and in Senate committees have indicated a keen intelligence. So long as Harris listens to advice, she could win.

Simon Jenkins is a Guardian columnist

Ben Davis

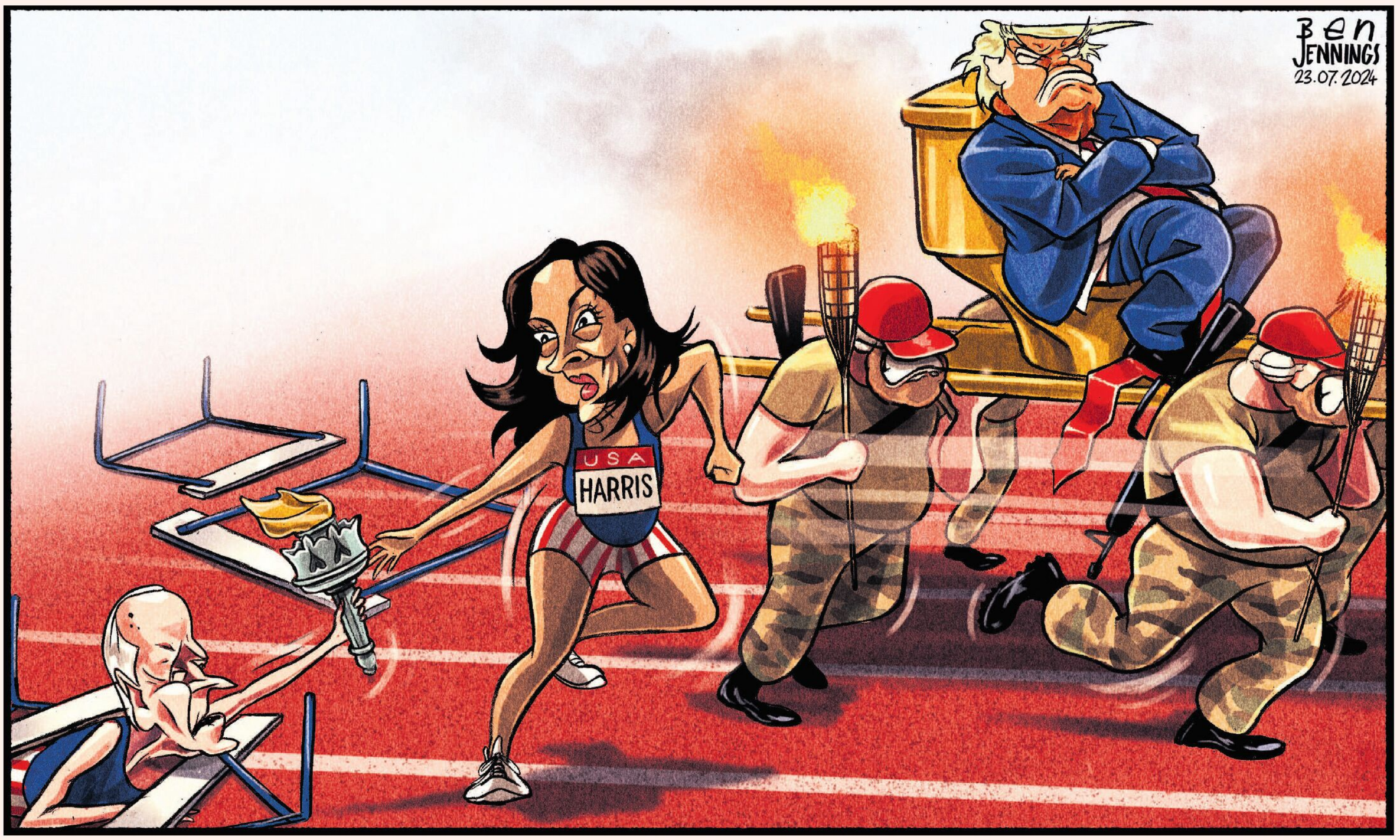
This is what the Democrats badly needed: fresh energy

Joe Biden's dropping out of the race at this late stage is unprecedented and risky. The risks of a Trump presidency are far higher, though. A move to a candidate in Kamala Harris who can forcefully make the case against Donald Trump, do town halls and press conferences, and inject energy into the campaign offers Democrats a chance to catch up and beat Trump.

Had Biden done these things, he could have held on after his shocking debate performance. But the fact that he was unable to make his case publicly and energetically confirmed people's fears. Both Biden's defensive posture over the last few weeks and the slow-motion movement against him by party elites caused great harm. Biden bowing out and endorsing Harris may mean that episode is soon forgotten.

Endorsing Harris, rather than entertaining ideas for some sort of "blitz primary", was also the smart move. It allows the party to start campaigning vigorously again immediately. It puts the kibosh on any sort of "donor coup" that would result in a more conservative candidate that many progressives feared. Currently, Trump is still the favourite in this election, but a Harris campaign gives Democrats a much higher ceiling than the Biden one did. Trump is still deeply unpopular, and Harris has a great chance to capitalise. We will see if she takes it.

Ben Davis works in political data in Washington DC



Taiwan found a way to rebuild trust in politics

Polly Curtis



How do you build back trust in government? Globally, the trust crisis is blamed for the rise of populism. In the UK, the new government has come into power with a blizzard of policy announcements and a focus on what Keir Starmer calls "the fight for trust" – one that "defines our political era".

Some insist that the key is delivery. Others counter with the example of the US, where Joe Biden's solid delivery record failed to shift his political fortunes. Some believe revamping the rules on standards and ethics is the answer. But there are countries that have bucked the global trend, ramping up trust – and there is a lot we can learn from them.

In 2014, the Taiwanese government's approval rating was less than 10%. Anything it suggested was automatically distrusted. Then, an uprising prompted a chain of events that would transform it into one of the most trusted democratic governments in the world.

On 18 March 2014, a coalition of students and civil society groups occupied the parliament. The protesters included civic hackers using technology to promote transparency and experiment in digital democracy. During the occupation, they demonstrated a different way of operating – through listening and building consensus, rather than directing and opposing.

After the protest something extraordinary happened. The government invited the protesters in – some became mentors to ministers, others were appointed to champion involvement in government departments, and a new team – the Public Digital Innovation Space – was established.

Over the following years, the government instituted new forms of digital democracy that engaged citizens to design the rules governing Airbnb and Uber, to crowdsource the pandemic response and to design a crackdown on deepfakes on the internet.

The technology used is based on an open-source civic tech tool called Polis, which asks people to agree or disagree with statements and offer their own. Its unique algorithm maps the results not by what divides the population, but by the areas where people who might usually disagree find consensus. It flips the traditional polling method on its head. It's a tool we at Demos have experimented with this year in partnership with the Cabinet Office in Whitehall and community groups in Grimsby, Lincolnshire.

What can other nations learn from Taiwan? Delivery matters: Taiwan is a well-run country. But you also have to rebuild the relationship between a state and its citizens. Trust goes both ways. In Taiwan, a tech-savvy nation with near universal high-spec broadband coverage, this meant radical digital democracy.

But the key ingredients can apply here: humble policymaking (meaning that policymakers start by acknowledging they don't have all the answers), in-real-life methods to engage citizens, and a commitment to listening. In the British context, some of this is not even that radical. Councils have been experimenting with citizens' assemblies to engage people in the climate agenda, for instance.

In the UK, Demos recommends citizens' panels to feed into the government's new mission boards; citizens' assemblies on a small number of big policy questions (such as social care), or moral questions (assisted dying); community conversations; and co-creation for designing new public services.

Participation can help to engage citizens in solutions where difficult trade-offs are required. For example, the government is promising to push through new developments that are likely to be unpopular at a local level, putting its MPs under pressure to rebel. Creating ways for the public to participate in the design and implementation of these processes could help navigate this fraught landscape.

There are already some signs of progress. The government is setting up customer panels to scrutinise the water companies, and proposed reforms to the House of Lords come with a promise to "seek the input" of the public.

The government has the opportunity, like Taiwan, to make a unique contribution to what others have called the "global playbook against populism". But at the moment, its offering seems limited to a commitment to deliver on its promises and strengthen the rules of politics. It needs to go further and rebuild the political class's relationship with citizens. To give trust is to get trust.

* **Polly Curtis** *is the chief executive of the cross-party thinktank Demos*



SS officer Gerhard Bast, scarred from duelling, in June 1944 COURTESY OF MARTIN POLLACK

My family and other Nazis

My father did terrible things during the second world war, and my other relatives were equally unrepentant. But it wasn't until I was in my late 50s that I started to confront this dark past

Martin Pollack

My family were all Nazis. My grandfather and grandmother. My mother and my father. My stepfather, my uncle – literally all of them were hardcore Nazis during the second world war.

And after? Not a single one changed their convictions or voiced any regrets for the Nazi crimes. On the contrary, they denied or justified them, including the Holocaust and mass murder committed with their knowledge and, worst of all, sometimes their active participation. We were not exceptional – in Austria and Germany, there were many families like ours.

The official postwar version of events stated that Austria had been the first victim of Hitler's expansionist politics. The four victorious allies – Britain, France, the US and the Soviet Union – specifically approved this interpretation, which, some believe, got Austria and Austrians off the hook for their complicity in Nazi atrocities.

But not all Austrians accepted this version. Large parts of Austrian society still felt strong ties to national socialism, an aggressive Greater German ideology that rejected the notion of Austria as a separate country with its own history and mentality, and cultivated a deeply rooted antisemitism and anti-Slavic sentiment. My family, like many others, held on to their belief in Hitler and the Third Reich until they died. "We are not Austrians but Germans," was the oft-repeated credo fed to me as a child. "And we will forever be proud of it."

I was born in 1944, a year before the end of the war. When I was 10 I was sent to boarding school, far away from Linz, where I had lived with my mother and stepfather, and from Amstetten, where I had often stayed with my Nazi grandparents. Why my relatives sent me away is still a mystery to me. Maybe they were attracted by the fact that the school was high up in the mountains, surrounded by woods, far from the corrupting influence of the cities, from the Jewish, anti-German spirit, as my grandmother put it. Another bonus was that we had to learn a trade in school – I became a carpenter.

What they didn't know was that the school was very liberal in spirit. Not a single teacher was an old Nazi, which was an exception in Austria in the 50s. As I spent most of my time in school, I was removed from the influence of my Nazi relatives, and soon began to doubt the wisdom of their beliefs, their Great German ideas, their antisemitism and hatred for Austria and democracy. In school, we were taught other beliefs.

My mother had married Hans Pollack, a man 20 years older than her, in about 1930. I was never told that he was not my biological father, but I gradually became aware of it. I was regularly sent to Amstetten to stay with grandparents, who welcomed me with open arms as their boy Gerhard's son. My sister and brother in Linz, who were older than me, never went to Amstetten. They didn't even know my grandparents there. A strange, confusing situation – but I just accepted it.

I remember when my mother told me for the first time that my real father's name was Gerhard Bast, and that he had been an officer of the SS and a leading member of the Gestapo. I was 14, old enough to understand what that meant. She didn't tell me what he had done during the war – maybe she didn't know herself, at least not in detail. He had died in 1947, when I was three. Learning all this, I experienced a shock. I was totally confused and had no idea how to react. I had nobody with whom I could discuss my feelings, not even my schoolmates – they were compassionate, but didn't really understand my situation. So I had to come to terms with the horrible news by myself. It took me a long time, but I managed somehow to carry on with what might be called a normal life.

By the mid-1960s, I had ceased all contact with my family and was studying in Vienna. Out of the blue, my uncle got in touch to say my grandmother was dying. He asked me to come to Amstetten, an hour and a half by train west of Vienna. I rushed to see her one last time. She had been the best grandmother imaginable – she loved and pampered me without limits. But she was also a stubborn, tough woman. And a Nazi to her very core. I came too late. My uncle greeted me at the door with the words: "She died like a German woman." I realised then that the family hadn't changed one iota. Nor would they.

It's not easy to explain my family's strong affiliation to nazism. Doubtless their background and socialisation played an important role. Until the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy after the first world war, they had lived in the so called *Untersteiermark* ("Lower Styria"), in what is now Slovenia. German nationalists like my great-grandfather mistrusted the Habsburgs, who they considered friends of the Slavs, who they despised.

In the late 19th-century, hostilities and clashes between Germans and ethnic Slavs were frequent. My grandfather and two of his brothers were sent to Graz to study. They had already absorbed a militant German nationalism at home: in Graz they joined Germania, a German fraternity (*Deutsche Burschenschaft*) characterised by a strong racial antisemitism and anti-Slavism.

The student Burschenschaften were nurseries of violent German nationalism. Run through with what today is called toxic masculinity, their members engaged in duelling, drinking, brawling and, after Hitler entered Austria in 1938, brutal and sometimes murderous attacks on Jewish and socialist professors in universities across Austria. Graz was considered a bulwark against the imagined onslaught of Slavs – Slovenes, Croats and Serbs.

The aftermath of the first world war had deepened the fears of my family that Germans would soon be overrun by a hostile majority of Slavic *Untermenschen* planning to rob the hard-working Germans of their rights and positions. Today, rightwing politicians across Europe accuse migrants of exactly the same. Conspiracy theories such as "the great replacement" remind me of claims I heard in my childhood. My family instilled in me the idea that we were the true victims upon whom Jews and Slavs preyed.

Nowadays, we see this offender-victim role-reversal all around us. Vladimir Putin and his followers constantly claim that they never planned an aggression against Ukraine, but were always on the defensive against the enemies that surround them: a western alliance still seeking to destroy a peaceful Russia in the hope of fulfilling Hitler's original aims. That's why Putin constantly rails against fictitious Nazis ruling Ukraine. Putin's narrative has been increasingly adopted by the far-right across Europe, not least in my country by Austria's Freedom party, the FPO, which won the greatest number of votes in June's European parliamentary elections.

Almost 80 years after the end of the war, how is it possible that such strong echoes of national socialism remain apparently attractive? Why are people, living in peaceful times, in a democracy with all its benefits, planning to undermine and destroy that very system while aiming to revive the ideology and methods of the past? Hate speech, xenophobia, racism, thoughts of the superiority of a master race, the admiration of a strong man, a *Führer,* who rules with an iron fist, are gaining ground as if nazism had never happened. This afflicts not only Germany and Austria, but also other countries, including those with deeply embedded democratic traditions.

Is this a sign of some kind of collective amnesia? Are we, the children of Nazis, in some way responsible? Were we too complacent, thinking that democracy would survive without us actively fighting for it? I sometimes think my family members would have become admirers of Putin and his ilk. They were convinced that democracy was poison and only a strong man can save us.

In 1918, Austria lost its status as a vast empire of more than 50 million people and became a weak, defeated and very unstable country of fewer than 7 million. Many German speakers found themselves stranded as a minority in new states such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, where the hated Slavs ruled the roost. Clashes with their Slovene neighbours, a growing xenophobia and the belief in the superiority of the German race – this was the atmosphere in which the male members of my family were raised.

Following in my grandfather's footsteps, my father studied in Graz and like him joined the Germania fraternity, which after the first world war became even more radical. In 1931, at 20, he became a member of the Nazi party, and at the same time, joined the SS, at this point a small organisation of thugs always ready to fight their political adversaries – socialists, communists, Christian socialists or the police. Spurred on by the fraternity's hard drinking and passion for duelling, my father got to know a new circle of friends, including Ernst Kaltenbrunner, later chief of the Reich security main office, a leading perpetrator of the Holocaust.

After the *Anschluss* in 1938, when Hitler's troops marched into Austria and absorbed the country into the German Reich, my father got a job in the Gestapo in Graz. He seemed an ideal candidate, a convinced Nazi since before Hitler seized power. He had been imprisoned for his anti-Austrian activities, the same as my grandfather, a sure-fire recommendation for a career in the Gestapo, the SS and its intelligence agency, the SD. After Graz he was assigned to different German cities. In January 1941, he was sent to Linz, where he became acting chief of the Gestapo.

Linz was not any old Austrian city. Hitler had lived some years there in his youth, and remained sentimentally attached to the place. He went to school in Linz, albeit with little to show for it. One of his schoolmates was the man who would later become my stepfather, Hans Pollack, who remembered Hitler very well. Once he told my family about a school outing for his class and Hitler's, who was one class above. They passed a meadow with high, dried grass. Hitler set fire to the grass, then climbed a tree to hold a flaming speech to his schoolmates, who

She was the best grandmother imaginable. But she was also a stubborn, tough woman. And a Nazi to her very core



Gerhard Bast with his parents in Amstetten in 1944

COURTESY OF MARTIN POLLACK



were not impressed, but thought he was mad.

My father had many duties as a chief of the Gestapo. He was responsible for the enforcement of Nazi laws against forced labourers, any so-called enemies of the Reich and, of course, Jews. No case seemed too small to escape his attention. A friend of mine, a historian, came across the tragic story of an old man living near Steyr. This man was the only Jew in the village. Born in 1868 in Bohemia, Max Gorge moved to Austria, where he found employment as a linen weaver. When he retired, he lived in the town of Gaflenz. A poor old man hardly able to make ends meet. But he was not overlooked by the Nazis. In his files my friend found a letter signed by my father asking the authorities to register and report all Jews, without exception. Gorge was sent to Vienna in early 1942, and from there presumably to a death camp, but not before he had been punished with two weeks in prison because he had neglected to add the first name "Israel" in his papers.

Would Gorge have survived without the intervention of my father? I doubt it, but this is not the point. My father had in effect signed his death sentence. One might ask if it's really worth delving into such a seemingly unimportant case. Weren't there countless cases of mass murder, of millions killed in concentration camps or the killing fields in eastern Europe? Indeed, my father was also involved in mass murder by his own hand. But I still think individual cases like Gorge's are important, because they prepared the ground and the spirit for what came later.

Nobody had forced my father to join the Gestapo and SS. He did it of his own free will, knowing what would be expected of him. He could have chosen another way. He could have become a lawyer like his father and his uncle – they were also involved in crimes, but not on the same level. So why? I have often asked myself this question, but never found a satisfactory answer. He was not a monster, a sadist, but a good friend, comrade in mountaineering and hunting, beloved of my mother. An ordinary man. There were many like him.

Nobody had forced my father to join the Gestapo and SS. He did it of his own free will, knowing what would be expected of him

Pollack's mother and father in Slovenia in 1942

COURTESY OF MARTIN POLLACK

Of course his deep involvement in the murderous Nazi regime was partly an outcome of his upbringing, but this doesn't minimise his guilt. He knew what he was doing. He had studied law and learned to distinguish between right and wrong. But people with moral qualms never rose to a position such as head of the Gestapo in Linz.

In a strange twist, my father's career in the secret police came to an abrupt end in November 1943. As chief of the Gestapo, he was invited to go hunting near the concentration camp of Mauthausen. During the hunt he accidentally shot one of the beaters, a boy. One might have thought that as a high-ranking Gestapo man and SS officer he would have got away with a reprimand, but in these matters the Nazis were strict. He was sentenced to four months in prison. He was not required to serve out the sentence, but was instead sent to the front to lead a Sonderkommando, a taskforce whose function was to clean up behind the front and eliminate Jews, partisans and other so-called enemies of the regime. It was a death squad.

That hunting accident near Linz marked a dramatic rift in his life. Until this point, my father had been a so-called desk offender. Now he became an active perpetrator.

It took me many years before I started researching my father's life. I had to wait until my mother died: it would have been too painful and awkward a process while she was still alive. But even after her death in 1978, I postponed the search. I told myself it wasn't the right time, that I had too much work – the typical excuses. I was in my late 50s when I began to search seriously, when I felt I couldn't put it off any more.

I started by requesting his SS files from the federal archives in Berlin. In the course of my research, I learned that my father met the men of his special command in July 1944 near Białystok in Poland. This was a deeply unpleasant surprise for me. I hadn't known that he had done duty in Poland, a country to which I feel intimately bound. I studied Polish literature in Warsaw, and still consider Poland my second homeland. I first went to Poland just 20 years after my father had been sent there in an entirely different capacity.

In Białystok, the Sonderkommando 7a, also named *Sonderkommando Bast* after my father, took a group of old Poles as hostages and moved with them on to Warsaw. They set up camp outside the city in the summer of 1944, where the Warsaw Uprising was raging, as citizens fought to liberate the city from Nazi occupation.

When I started researching this, I came across documents that threw light on my father's role. He was sent with his men into the city, heavily armed and in civilian clothes, to liquidate, as he put it, whoever they came across – unarmed civilians, insurgents or otherwise, men and women. He showed no mercy.

Was he blindly following orders? That's only part of the truth. As commander of a taskforce, he was his own boss. So why did he do it?

Why do people turn so easily from being "ordinary men", as the historian Christopher Browning describes them, into ruthless murderers, convinced that they are doing the right thing, and that they are serving a just cause? The historical record shows that when the state sanctions murder against minorities, people are more likely to perpetrate violence.

And when the conflict is over, they get on with their normal life as fathers and husbands. Society doesn't seem to have much of a problem with reintegrating them. This is also true for the next generations. Most of my peers are still reluctant to face the reality of Nazi crimes, or to admit that many of their grandparents and parents had supported the Nazi regime as willing followers, or maybe even taken part in the crimes. They demand we draw a thick line under the past, and let bygones be bygones.

Anyone who insists on digging up the shameful past in which so many Austrians participated in the most gruesome crimes will not have a warm reception in my country. There are still large parts of society that think we should let the past rest.

In many cases, even the worst perpetrators slip back into their former professions as doctors and lawyers, engineers and craftsmen. Society needs them. After the total moral disaster of the second world war, we were sure that humanity had learned its lesson, that such crimes would never happen again, that the perpetrators would be outcast for a long time. *Nie wieder* ("never again"), was the universal slogan – but, as we know, it was short-lived.

My parents met in Linz and began an affair, when my mother was still married to Hans Pollack, and my father, Gerhard Bast, was still chief of the Gestapo. I was born in May 1944. My mother divorced Pollack early in 1945 to marry my real father. Not a wise decision, given that the war was lost and my father would soon find himself on a list of war criminals.

My father was apparently the great love of her life. And he was 20 years younger than Hans Pollack. This might have been part of the attraction. My real father knew Pollack, but not very well. Pollack was also a Nazi, but they didn't socialise as far as I know. When I was 18, I was asked by my mother if I wanted to change my name from Pollack to Bast – when I was born she was still married to Pollack, so his name is on all my papers. I thought about the change of names for some while, but then refused. Maybe this was motivated by the growing distance I was trying to put between myself and my father's family in Amstetten, and the evil he embodied in my eyes.

And now another generation watches on helplessly as evil gains ground – in Europe and beyond. I cannot and will not judge other people, but I know that I, as the son of a perpetrator, am not allowed to let this pass. Many people say that it is time to forget, to let the past rest – why dig up these gruesome things again and again?

But I believe we have a duty to remember. Yes, we can look ahead, but without forgetting the past. We must cherish the memory of the victims – and preserve the memory of the perpetrators and their crimes. Many victims have disappeared without a trace – nameless, faceless, they have been burned to ashes in the ovens of extermination camps or thrown into pits somewhere to be forgotten for ever.

I wrote a book in 2014 called *Kontaminierte Landschaften* ("Contaminated Landscapes"), which dealt with this subject. These were the places where terrible things happened, mass murders whose victims had often been buried on the spot. I came across them regularly when researching the book about my father. In Poland and in Slovakia, where he served with his men, I found numerous "contaminated landscapes", most of them anonymous, where his victims had been buried. Buried is not the right term: the murderers just threw some earth on them. In some cases they didn't even bother to do that. Some were exhumed shortly after they were killed, but others have never been found – or rather, have never really been looked for. Let them lie in some hidden place. No stone, no Christian cross or Jewish matzeva to tell anybody who passes by to stop and consider that human beings have been buried here.



Gerhard Bast aged three, with his first rifle, in Ljubljana in 1914

COURTESY OF MARTIN POLLACK

Anyone digging up the shameful past in which so many Austrians participated will not have a warm reception in my country

From Poland, my father was sent with his men to Slovakia to fight the uprising against the fascist regime there. Slovakia was then an ally of Hitler's Germany. In Slovakia, I found many contaminated landscapes that my father's men had left behind. They were sent there to hunt – literally hunt – Jews and partisans. My father was a passionate hunter and he was at home in the mountains. During my research, I came across an incident in the mountains near the town of Ružomberok in central Slovakia. In the small village of Bully, members of the Special Command 7a found a group of Jews hiding in the hut of a poor farmer's wife. My father ordered them to be shot – along with the woman who had given them shelter. Some time later they were exhumed by local people and their remains, bodies and clothes, noted down precisely.

When the book was published in Czech, I received a letter from a woman in Prague who told me that a young couple with two children among the anonymous dead were her relatives, her uncle Jenö Kohn, a pharmacist in Banská Bystrica, with his wife and two children. And she sent a photograph of her uncle, a young, good-looking man. She wrote that she was glad that she had found out what had happened after such a long time.

That's exactly what this process of bringing up the past is about. To try to give back to at least some nameless victims their faces and names, maybe even part of their history. The perpetrators had done everything to make them disappear for ever, to be erased from memory as if they had never existed.

In March 1945, the Special Command 7a was disbanded. My father went to Linz, where my mother was still living with my stepfather. Soon after, my mother divorced him to marry my father.

It was not the ideal time to start a new life. The war was virtually over. The Third Reich, which my father had served so faithfully, had collapsed, the Russians were advancing rapidly. Like many of his comrades, my father found himself on a list of war criminals and went underground.

In the beginning, the search for convinced Nazis to be put on trial seemed to be taken seriously, but soon the eagerness faded – more so in Austria than in Germany. The so-called denazification was not popular among most Austrians who had been followers of the regime or at least passive bystanders. Despite the fact that the great majority of Austria's Jews had perished in the camps, antisemitism was still thriving. We can see it is rapidly gaining ground again today – perhaps my country's greatest contemporary disgrace.

My father was on the run for two years, first in Austria, then in South Tirol, now part of Italy, where he found shelter and work with a rich farmer. Everybody knew he was not a lumberjack as he pretended to be. The scars on his face from duels betrayed him. But nobody cared.

In March 1947, my father planned his return. My mother and I were to meet him in Innsbruck and accompany him on his onward flight to Paraguay, a safe haven for old Nazis like the notorious Josef Mengele. My mother only wanted to take me along. She planned to leave her other two children, my half-sister and my half-brother, behind with their father. My father already had the necessary papers from the Red Cross, which was then actively aiding Nazis to leave Europe for Latin America by issuing thousands of exit visas.

My father intended to cross the Italy-Austria border at the Brenner Pass. There he hired a young local man to guide him over the frontier, which was strictly guarded at night. His young South Tirolean guide was convinced that my father was carrying part of the legendary Nazi gold in his rucksack. He shot him, then hid my father's body in a bunker. There was no gold in the rucksack, just some clothes and other worthless things. The body was found weeks later.

After my father's death, my mother was in deep shock. I was too small to understand what was going on. We were then living in a village in the countryside as our house in Linz, Pollack's house, had been bombed in late 1944. In those early years nobody told me anything – not about my real father, his plan to take my mother and me to Paraguay, or his death. Some time after my father's death, my mother remarried Pollack – or rather, he remarried her. She had three children and no work. Pollack adored her. Without him, she would have been lost. In my family we didn't talk much about the past – and I didn't ask questions. I was not forbidden to ask, I just didn't ask. That was it.

Last year, I received the Austrian police file about the murder on the Brenner Pass in March 1947. My father had been shot three times, twice in the face and once in the chest. Details I really didn't want to know. His life, a study in sustained violence and inhumanity, had been ended by a crime. Today we are confronted with the rise of violence and naked force again. Democratic Europe seems ill-prepared for this. People seem to prefer to close their eyes and ears once more. Let my family's story be a warning. ●

✻ **Martin Pollack** *is a journalist and author. He lives in Vienna*

This is an edited version of the Krzysztof Michalski Memorial Lecture, given at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna (iwm.at) in June 2024

Letters

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Country diary

Langstone, Havant

Over the past few weeks, a young magpie has become a regular visitor to my garden. While many froglets have already emerged from the pond, taking up residence in the long grass and stands of purple and yellow loosestrife, this clever corvid has realised that it can wade into the shallows and feast on the squirming late-hatched tadpoles. One afternoon, appetite satiated, the magpie hopped on to my raised vegetable bed and flopped down on a bare patch of soil, spreading its wings and fluffing its feathers. As the sun's warmth penetrated its plumage, the bird fell into a trance-like state, its head lolling.

After basking for a while, the magpie roused and began shuffling forwards and backwards, pecking at the ground and its still-splayed wings. Ants have nested in the corner of the bed and the bird appeared to be provoking them to defend their colony by spraying formic acid on its plumage. Many species engage in anting, but research examining the possible functions of this curious behaviour has failed to draw a definitive conclusion.

The most widely accepted explanation is that the chemicals released by the ants act as a natural fungicide and insecticide, inhibiting the growth of microorganisms and killing parasites that can cause irritation, damage the feathers and even cause life-threatening anaemia if present in large enough numbers. Other theories are that it's a form of food preparation, allowing birds to consume ants without being harmed by ingesting the caustic substance, or that it's an act of self-stimulation, with the formic acid having similar euphoria-inducing or stupefying effects to alcohol or recreational drugs.

Corvids can be parasitised by ticks, feather mites, fleas and hippoboscid flies (also known as louse flies or flat flies), due to their dorsoventrally flattened bodies, which help them slip between the feathers. As a wildlife rehabilitator, I've experienced the horrors of hippoboscid flies abandoning a patient and scuttling into my hair, so as I watched, I could appreciate why the magpie would brave an acid shower to rid itself of these blood-sucking hitchhikers. Satisfied with its ant ablutions, the bird shook out its plumage, plucking off one final insect before taking flight.
Claire Stares

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Ignoring Russia's fears over Nato was a mistake

Simon Jenkins, describing his horror at our new prime minister considering whether to allow Ukraine to use British missiles for strikes deep into Russia, is a rare voice of reason in a chorus of relentless escalation (It's worrying to see the prime minister cheerleading for war. Will Ukraine turn into Starmer's Iraq?, theguardian.com, 15 July). Western leaders across the board seem to have forgotten the promises made to Mikhail Gorbachev more than 30 years ago, assuring him of our commitment to not extend the borders of Nato into the old Soviet bloc.

Since then, we have seen numerous former Soviet states join Nato, leaving Russia encircled to the west, with hostile missiles, troops, tanks and planes now pointing in its direction from its own backyard. Russian discomfort at this situation over the past 20 years has been ignored, and it is my belief that the invasion of Ukraine was entirely due to the fear that Ukraine too would be accepted into the Nato alliance.

There doesn't seem to be a single western leader or military strategist who is seeking to understand the Russian position; they seem to think it's perfectly acceptable for Nato to extend its sphere of influence into Russia's back garden.

Those who forget the lessons of history are destined to repeat its mistakes. Ironically, our best hope of averting the third world war may turn out to be the election of Donald Trump. He is a narcissistic maniac, but he would appear to be the only leader who appreciates the danger of this new era of western imperialism. He alone understands the futility of pouring billions into a war that Ukraine cannot win without Nato troops on the ground and planes in the sky. Nato appears to have a severe case of groupthink; meanwhile, the survival of human civilisation is in grave danger.
Jonathan Gorse
Milland, West Sussex

● Simon Jenkins thinks that Putin "needs to be extricated" from the "terrible mistake" he made in marching on Kyiv and that it is the duty of Nato and the west to oblige him in this, presumably by pressurising Volodymyr Zelenskiy to give up territory in the east. He also slates Zelenskiy for the deaths of thousands of conscripts, with no mention of the many thousands of deaths that Putin's "mistake" has inflicted on his own countrymen, never mind Ukraine. Placating Putin with territory will not work.

What Nato and the west need to do, and should have done from the start, is to offer Ukraine the support it needs to push Putin back to the extent Ukraine itself decides is sufficient. And Jenkins needs to extricate himself from the dreadful mistake of thinking otherwise.
Karen Miller
Beckenham, London

● Vladimir Putin may well have made a terrible mistake invading Ukraine, but he decided to burn the bridges by declaring the Donbas and Crimea to be Russian territory – he cannot negotiate any compromise without losing face (and, by implication, his power).

That is the dilemma for the west. Losing Ukraine to Russia will encourage further expansion, Moldova and Georgia being obvious targets. The Baltic states and, ultimately, Poland have reasons to be wary.

I always favour diplomacy, but I fail to see how meaningful peace negotiations could take place in the current situation. Of course, Putin's empire, wedded to a course of permanent expansion, will eventually collapse, like all empires. But at the moment, sadly, I see no alternative to stopping this expansion by all means necessary.
Dr Wolfgang Heinemann
Bochum, Germany

Here's how we can fight back on water bills

Public fury at the water industry can be channelled to achieve lasting change (Letters 15 July). There are parallels with the revolt that brought down the poll tax. Our campaign – Boycott Thames Water – seeks to overturn the false narrative that taking water back into public ownership is unaffordable.

If the Ofwat proposals pass, a water levy will be imposed on every household to pay for the failure of the water companies. The huge percentage hike, on top of inflation, will apply to everyone, irrespective of means. It is a poll tax in all but name. A government committed to fiscal propriety should not stand by and allow this. Many people simply cannot afford water to remain in the hands of rapacious private monopolies.

Supporters of groups like ours have been refusing to pay the wastewater element of their bill for months, sometimes years. Water companies cannot cut off domestic supplies, so long as we maintain a dispute they cannot take recovery action. The grounds for prolonging the dispute are many, from the fly-tipping of our wastewater to the imposition of payment towards interest on their loans.

It is not coincidental that the poll tax and water privatisation happened around the same time. We hope a Labour government committed to change can be persuaded by mass action to return water to stewardship based on fairness and care for the environment. The next billing round will be October. The next step for angry consumers is to cancel their direct debit.
Paul Kaufman
Boycott Thames Water

Hone the senses with martial arts and dance

Proprioception doesn't have to be restricted to the individual, nor are ideas of senses outside the classical five restricted to the modern day (The life-changing power of proprioception, 18 July). I'm a medieval historian of education and physical training, and there are discussions of using proprioception in wrestling and longsword combat manuals from the 15th century.

The idea is to sense the opponent's strength and intentions through physical contact. Those who want to develop their proprioception should consider martial arts that involve grappling or fencing, including historical European martial arts (Hema). It's great fun and there are more clubs than you might think.
Dr Craig Hambling
Colchester, Essex

● Proprioception is something that the Chinese have known for 2,000 years and anyone interested in the skills set out in the tests doesn't need to jump from rooftops (AKA parkour); they just need to find a tai chi class. I am 70 and can easily do all these exercises, but then I've practised tai chi for 20 years. There is evidence of the benefits to health and mobility through tai chi.
Ann Furtado
Stroud, Gloucestershire

● I'm in my 60s but did the "rock pass" drill in the article with ease. My proprioception has no doubt been aided by years of moving with many partners to the accompaniment of Afro-Cuban music. There are clubs for it, and it's the most fun you can have with your clothes on.
Mark Robertson
East Boldon, Tyne and Wear

Corrections and clarifications

● The Environment Agency budget is more than £2bn a year, not "more than £200m" as we said (How the Environment Agency lost its way, 13 June, Journal, p5).

● An interview with Nadia Almada said she was the only trans person to win Big Brother, in series five ('I made my own rules', 17 July, G2, p6). Luke Anderson won series 13.

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What is art for, if not political discourse?

In your article (RA removes two works inspired by Gaza war after antisemitism accusations, 19 July), the Royal Academy states: "We recognise that an exhibition for young people and artwork by young people is not an appropriate environment for volatile public discourse." Really? Then what is its purpose, if any?
Simon Lauris Hudson
Pontefract, West Yorkshire

● Melvyn Ellis (Letters, 19 July) asks how we can still rely on nature to predict the seasons. Well, I would invite him to my part of the Pennine foothills where, last week, while walking my Yorkshire terrier, I came across holly bushes covered in berries. So Christmas has come early in West Yorkshire.
Dr Mark Wilcox
Holmfirth, West Yorkshire

● Regarding your article (What lies behind the alarming increase in whale strandings?, 20 July), the largest pilot whale stranding in the UK was not on the island of Sanday but at Thorntonloch Beach near Dunbar in 1950, when 147 pilot whales were stranded.
Dr James Herring
Author of Stranded: The Whales at Thorntonloch in 1950

● Royal Mail elastic bands (Letters, 22 July) are useful when looped over a button as a stopgap to ease the waistband of a skirt or trousers on the way back from a big dinner.
Trish Durrant
Bristol

● Once you've filled your 35mm film canister with elastic bands, you could then wrap it with elastic bands.
Adam Guest
Cromer, Norfolk

● Surely there are now more uses for 35mm film canisters than there are canisters available to be used?
Gary Bennett
Exeter



Toumani Diabaté

Mali's celebrated master of the kora who enjoyed playing with musicians from all over the world

The Malian musician Toumani Diabaté, who has died aged 58 after a short illness, was the undisputed master of the kora, the stately 21-stringed harp that is the most important classical instrument of west Africa. He played at festivals and concerts around the world, and worked both as a soloist and with an array of other artists, ranging from his own Symmetric Orchestra to the guitarist Ali Farka Touré, the London Symphony Orchestra, and musicians from Spain, Cuba and Brazil.

He came from a caste of musicians and historians, the griots, and could trace his family back 71 generations to the era when the Mande empire controlled much of west Africa.

His exquisite playing mixed the ancient and modern, as he switched from pieces that dated back hundreds of years to his own compositions that he said reflected influences ranging from other African artists to Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding and Pink Floyd. His kora work melded bass lines with melodies and improvisation – it was as if several musicians were performing at once – and as a devout Muslim, he said: "Music was a gift to me from God, the kora was a gift to me from God."

Meeting Toumani in 2007 at his home in Bamako, the Malian capital, was a reminder of his extraordinary range. He walked with the help of a stick (he had polio as a child) and sat in his garden playing the kora while discussing ancient Malian history and explaining that the role of griots was "to make communication. I'm doing a griot's job."

Taking constant calls on his mobile phone, he switched to discussing playing with Björk at Glastonbury, and explained why the kora is a "really deep and spiritual instrument", but then warning how it can attract African spirits, the jinns, "if played after midnight".

Even so, it was nearly 2.30 in the morning when he joined his Symmetric Orchestra at the Hogan club, where he proved that the kora can also be a glorious dance instrument. The following day he performed at a government function, explaining he had played to "more than 100 visiting dignitaries", including Jimmy Carter and Colonel Gaddafi.

Diabaté performing in Bamako, Mali's capital, in 2006. He liked to remind people that 'our music is older than Beethoven'
REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

Before I left he asked his son Sidiki (then aged 15) to play for me, to show how a new griot generation could mix kora with a beat box.

Born in Bamako, Toumani was the son of Sidiki Diabaté Sr, known as "the king of the kora", who played in Mali's National Instrumental Ensemble, along with Toumani's mother, Sidiki Sr's first wife, the singer Nene Koita. But he insisted that he was never taught by his father, or anybody else. "I taught myself," he told me, "listening to my father and grandfather."

Toumani made his first appearance with a group from Koulikoro, north-east of Bamako, at the age of 13, before joining the band backing the singer Kandia Kouyaté when he was 19.

His breakthrough came when the broadcaster and academic Lucy Durán visited Bamako to find musicians for a festival in 1987 of Music of the Royal Courts promoted by the South Bank Centre, London, and BBC Radio 3. The cast for a concert in the Queen Elizabeth Hall included Kouyaté, Sidiki Diabaté Sr, and his son Toumani – who stayed on in London for seven months, and in one afternoon recorded the first solo kora album, with no over-dubs. Produced by Durán and released on Joe Boyd's Hannibal label, Kaira (1988) was hailed as a classic that introduced Toumani (and the kora) to a western audience.

He began to branch out, collaborating with the Spanish flamenco group Ketama on the album Songhai (also 1988), and in 1990 forming his Symmetric Orchestra, which included musicians from right across what had once been the Mande empire.

> **Music was a gift to me from God, the kora was a gift to me from God**

A second African-flamenco set, Songhai 2 (1994), was a major success in Spain, and was followed by Djelika (1995), with backing from Bassekou Kouyate, a virtuoso of another traditional stringed instrument, the ngoni, and New Ancient Strings (1998), a kora duet album with Ballaké Sissoko, as a tribute to the album that both their fathers had recorded together.

He collaborated with the American bluesman Taj Mahal on Kulanjan (1999), an album much praised by Barack Obama, and with the American free jazz trombonist Roswell Rudd on Malicool (2002).

Two years later he worked on a remarkable couple of albums for World Circuit, recorded at the Mandé hotel, near the Niger river in Bamako. In the Heart of the Moon was the memorable album recorded with Touré, which won them a Grammy. This was followed by the long-awaited effort from the Symmetric Orchestra, Boulevard de l'Indépendence (2005). He accompanied Touré on his last concert tour before his death in 2006, during which they recorded Ali and Toumani (released in 2010), which won another Grammy.

Constantly changing musical direction, Toumani released The Mandé Variations (2007), an album of solo kora instrumentals that was the follow-up to Kaira. The next year he gave a concert with the LSO, released as the album Kôrôlén (2021), as a reminder that "our music is older than Beethoven".

In 2010 he played on the AfroCubism fusion set and the following year recorded A Curva da Cintura with the Brazilian poet Arnaldo Antunes and the guitarist Edgard Scandurra. Reacting to the chaos in Mali, and wanting to provide a reminder of "the tolerance of Sufi-inspired Islam", he was joined by his son for one of his finest duet sets, Toumani and Sidiki (2014).

For his final experiments in global fusion he joined the American banjo star Béla Fleck in The Ripple Effect (2020) and then Kayhan Kalhor, the Iranian master of the kamancheh spike fiddle in The Sky Is the Same Colour Everywhere (2023).

Just as Ravi Shankar transformed the image and popularity of the sitar, Toumani brought a new, worldwide audience to the kora.

In 2008 he was appointed a UN goodwill ambassador for his work highlighting HIV/Aids through his music, and in 2014 received an honorary doctorate in music from Soas University of London.

He is survived by two wives, Fanta Sacko and Sira Diallo, and by his sons with Fanta, Sidiki and Balla.

Robin Denselow

Toumani Diabaté, musician, born 10 August 1965; died 19 July 2024

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Other lives



Pamela Cullen

London manager for the National Film Development Corporation of India in the 1970s and 80s

Pamela Cullen, who has died aged 100, was a trailblazer in her consular career and within the Indian film industry for more than 50 years, becoming one of Bafta's oldest voters.

In the 1940s, Pam worked as a journalist reviewing films. Around this time she became a member of the Free India movement, which led to her employment as films officer in the Indian high commission in London in the 50s.

Subsequently, in the late 70s to late 80s, the Indian government made her the London regional manager of their National Film Development Corporation of India. In this role she formed professional and personal friendships with Indian film figures, championing their work at special screenings and helping to fund their films and, notably, gaining permission for Richard Attenborough to film Gandhi in India in the early 80s. She also hosted a lunch reception for the comic Charlie Chaplin.

In 1983, the Indian president awarded her the Padma Shri, a civilian honour, for her work.

She became personal friends with the future prime minister of India, Indira Gandhi, and maintained correspondence with her family right up to this year, as well as forging links with many other high-profile people including VK Krishna Menon, the independence activist, and Ram Gopal, the classical Indian dancer.

Pam arranged the actor/director Raj Kapoor's press schedule in the golden age of Indian cinema. She got to know Satyajit Ray, then a shy young film director, during his early visits to London. Consequently, on her retirement in 1995, she set up the Satyajit Ray Foundation in his memory, which recognised new film-makers by supporting them and screening their films.

Born in Wandsworth, south-west London, to Violet (nee Langford) and Charles Cullen, a former accountant who never returned to work after suffering shellshock during the first world war, Pam constantly challenged authority, from climbing over the wall to escape from St Philomena's Catholic high school for girls in Carshalton (questioning the nuns about Catholic ethics when caught), to becoming a member of the Communist party in the 40s and 50s. During the second world war, she had a secretarial role within the Fire Brigades Union, providing support to fellow Londoners during the blitz by fire-watching at night.

Pam remained in south London throughout her life, living in Streatham during the 40s, and then Thornton Heath from the mid- to late 50s onwards. Unsurprisingly, she outlived many of her family and friends, among them my grandmother Harbala Bhatt, whom she had met at India House.

Pamela became a mentor to me: she sparked my interest in films and helped me secure my first job. She was a self-educated woman and a DIY enthusiast who loved the latest gadgets. I learned so much from her.

She is survived by two cousins.

Natasha Kapadia



Pamela Cullen with Richard Attenborough. They were good friends and she helped him to gain permission to shoot much of his 1982 film Gandhi in India

Mike Nolan

Draughtsman, building services engineer and dedicated founding member of the Bristol Irish Society

My friend Mike Nolan, who has died aged 86, was one of the founding members of the Bristol Irish Society when it was created in 1989.

The society brought together existing Irish associations around the city, and Mike was its first treasurer as it began to organise annual cultural festivals, Irish language classes, dance sessions, stalls selling books and music, and lectures on Irish culture and history.

He was also chair of BIS when, one autumn evening in 1993, two men, one of whom was a member of an Orange Lodge, burst into the society's dockside headquarters brandishing pickaxe handles. In a frenzied sectarian attack, they beat him badly. Mike was seriously injured and his assailants received long prison sentences. Afterwards he was strong in his condemnation of sectarianism and stressed the society's non-political, non-religious outlook. "To me the answer to bigotry is dialogue," he said.

The son of Ivy (nee Reed) and Cyril Nolan, Mike was born in the Indian capital of Delhi and brought up in the city of Lucknow, where his father worked as an inspector on the railways. The family had its roots in Ireland, and when India gained its independence, the Nolans moved to Cork, where Mike attended Christ the King (Coláiste Chríost Rí) school.

While apprenticed to the Irish Electricity Board he worked at the local Morrogh's Woollen Mill, where he would wink through the window at Mary Donovan as she inspected bales of material for imperfections. Mike was soon escorting Mary to dances at the rowing club in Blackrock.

Having qualified as an electrician, Mike moved to London to pursue work opportunities and started evening classes to become a draughtsman, which led him to be employed in the Cricklewood drawing office of the aircraft manufacturers Handley Page. When Mary joined him in 1961 they married and settled in Kingsbury, north-west London, an area with a large Irish population.

A transfer to John Laing Construction took Mike and Mary to the village of Frenchay in north-east Bristol, and over the ensuing years Mike worked for other companies, including Vic Lawson Associates and Mercury Communications, while Mary took posts in the NHS and became a seamstress in a local hospital.

With their four children they moved in 1986 to the Fishponds area of Bristol, where Mike became a founding member of the BIS.

He remained extremely active in the society for many years, and deposited its files with the Bristol Archives last year. He also supported the society's successor organisation We Irish, which continues to organise cultural events in the Bristol region.



Having retired from Cable and Wireless as a senior building services engineer in 2000, Mike was able to spend more time cultivating his garden and the fruit and vegetables of which he was so proud.

He is survived by Mary, their four children, Kevin, Paul, David and Susan, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Mike Jempson

Nick Hartley

Chief economist at Oftel and later head of economics and statistics at the Department of Trade and Industry

Nick Hartley, who has died aged 80, was a respected economist and in the 1990s served as head of energy, economics and statistics at the Department of Trade and Industry.

His reputation was made as chief economist at Oftel (the Office of Telecommunications) for six years from 1984. He was then chief economist at the Department of the Environment (1990-94), before becoming head of energy, economics and statistics at the DTI, a post, he liked to point out, once held by Harold Wilson. In 1996, Nick joined the economic consultancy Oxera, from where he was seconded to the Cabinet Office to head up a report on energy policy.

Born in London, the only child of Nancy (nee Fulton), a dressmaker, and Edward Hartley, a publican, Nick went to St Clement Danes grammar school, Hammersmith, where he and I met in 1955. Sitting side by side in assembly for the headteacher's address to the new boys, he introduced himself: "Hello, I'm Hartley, like the jam."

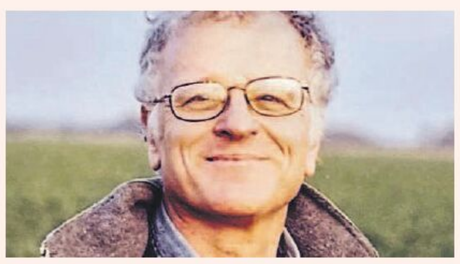
In the sixth form we were told by our economics teacher, Jack Harvey, to apply to St Catharine's College, Cambridge, to study the subject there. We arrived in 1962 during a winter so cold that the River Granta froze, and Nick and I would walk on it to Grantchester.

After graduating, Nick passed the civil service exam and became assistant principal at the Department for Education, where he worked for JAR Pimlott setting up polytechnics (1965-69).

He then moved to the Treasury as an economic adviser (1969-84). He was seconded from the Treasury twice, in 1970-71 to do an MPhil at York University, and in 1974-77 to the Royal Commission on the Press.

Latterly he was a companion of the Guild of St George, a charity for arts and crafts founded by the writer and philosopher John Ruskin who, Nick said, "was asking all the right questions about the way work and society should be organised".

Nick travelled throughout Italy with Ruskin's work in mind, and artistic interests were central to his life. He wrote several books, including The Prince of Privateers: Bridger Goodrich and his Family in America, Bermuda and Britain (2012), a life of one of his forebears who was on the British side in the American war of independence, and Monuments Officer (2012), a novel.



An enthusiastic theatregoer, as an undergraduate he played Lucky in a production of Waiting for Godot. After hearing Bob Dylan's second album in 1962 he became a lifelong fan of the musician. He was also an enthusiastic reader of the magazine Cahiers du Cinéma, so after watching a film at Cambridge, whether Hammer horror or Truffaut, he would give notes on "auteur theory".

The novelist and playwright Nigel Williams described Nick as having a "unique brisk theatricality". Perfect words with which to preserve my own memories of him, particularly as the briskness often involved the sort of expansive gestures that put any wine glasses on a table at risk.

Nick is survived by Jenny (nee Stern), whom he married in 1975, and by their sons, Ned and Gabriel, and granddaughters, Violet, Hazel and Hana.

Geoff Howard-Spink

Birthdays

Christopher Andrew, emeritus professor of modern and contemporary history, Cambridge University, 83; **Alan Barnes**, saxophonist, 65; **Jo Brand**, comedian and actor, 67; **Kate Buffery**, actor, 67; **Gail Emms**, Olympic badminton player, 47; **David Essex**, singer and actor, 77; **Prof Anne Ferguson-Smith**, geneticist, 63; **Helen Geake**, archaeologist and broadcaster, 57; **Graham Gooch**, cricketer, 71; **Martin Gore**, musician, 63; **Lauren Groff**, novelist, 46; **Fran Healy**, singer and songwriter, 51; **Jakub Hrůša**, conductor, 43; **Alison Krauss**, singer and songwriter, 53; **Len McCluskey**, former general secretary, Unite, 74; **Judit Polgár**, chess grandmaster, 48; **Daniel Radcliffe**, actor, 35; **Robin Simon**, art historian, 77; **Prof Michael Wood**, historian and broadcaster, 76.

Yesterday's solutions

Killer sudoku
Easy

9	7	1	3	4	5	8	2	6
6	8	3	2	7	9	4	1	5
4	5	2	1	8	6	7	3	9
7	2	6	8	3	1	9	5	4
5	1	4	9	2	7	6	8	3
8	3	9	6	5	4	1	7	2
1	6	8	5	9	3	2	4	7
2	4	5	7	6	8	3	9	1
3	9	7	4	1	2	5	6	8

Medium

3	2	8	1	7	4	6	9	5
6	5	7	2	8	9	4	3	1
9	1	4	5	3	6	8	2	7
2	7	1	8	6	5	9	4	3
8	3	9	4	1	7	5	6	2
4	6	5	3	9	2	7	1	8
1	9	3	7	4	8	2	5	6
7	4	2	6	5	3	1	8	9
5	8	6	9	2	1	3	7	4

Codeword

U	N	F	I	T	■	S	O	U	L	F	U	L	■	■
N	■	E	■	E	■	C	■	N	■	L	■	A	■	■
M	A	Z	U	R	K	A	■	A	B	U	Z	Z	■	■
A	■	■	■	R	■	M	■	B	■	■	■	I	■	■
S	U	B	M	I	T	■	F	L	O	R	I	N	■	■
K	■	I	■	F	■	O	■	E	■	I	■	E	■	■
■	P	L	A	Y	F	U	L	■	A	S	K	S	■	■
P	■	L	■	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	I	■	S	■
O	B	O	E	■	A	D	V	E	R	B	S	■	■	■
N	■	W	■	G	■	O	■	Q	■	L	■	U	■	■
D	R	Y	E	R	S	■	D	U	R	E	S	S	■	■
W	■	■	■	O	■	M	■	A	■	■	■	H	■	■
E	J	E	C	T	■	E	X	T	R	U	D	E	■	■
E	■	L	■	T	■	S	■	O	■	R	■	R	■	■
D	O	L	L	O	P	S	■	R	A	N	K	S	■	■

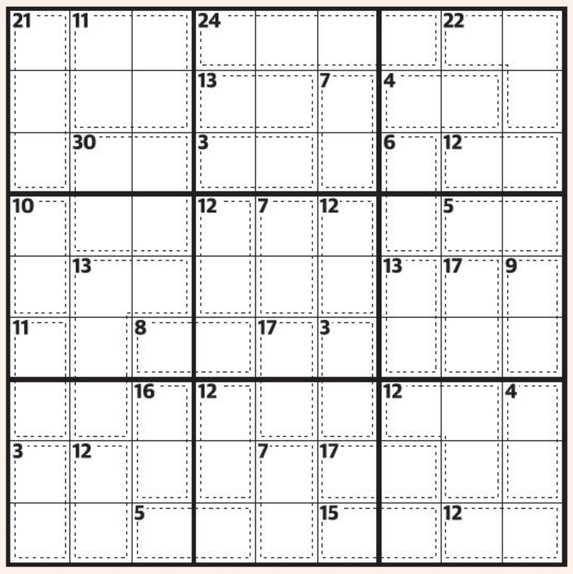
Cryptic crossword
Solution No. 29,441

T	H	E	T	R	O	T	S	■	C	O	R	S	E	T
E	■	D	■	E	■	O	■	■	■	N	■	P	■	H
A	G	I	T	P	R	O	P	■	S	T	R	I	P	E
B	■	C	■	A	■	T	■	■	■	H	■	L	■	F
A	L	T	R	I	G	H	T	■	Y	E	L	L	O	W
G	■	S	■	D	■	F	■	S	■	D	■	A	■	O
■	■	■	■	■	F	A	R	E	D	O	D	G	E	R
A	■	C	■	W	■	I	■	L	■	T	■	E	■	D
S	T	A	G	E	C	R	A	F	T	■	■	■	■	■
B	■	N	■	L	■	Y	■	E	■	S	■	A	■	G
E	D	I	B	L	E	■	E	S	P	O	U	S	A	L
S	■	S	■	D	■	■	T	■	R	■	T	■	U	■
T	A	T	T	O	O	■	W	E	I	R	D	E	S	T
O	■	E	■	N	■	■	E	■	E	■	R	■	E	■
S	E	R	V	E	R	■	I	M	P	L	A	N	T	S

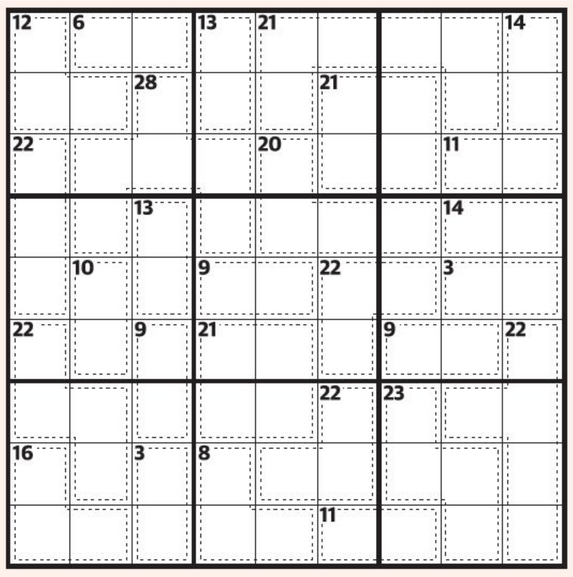
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.



Medium



Codeword

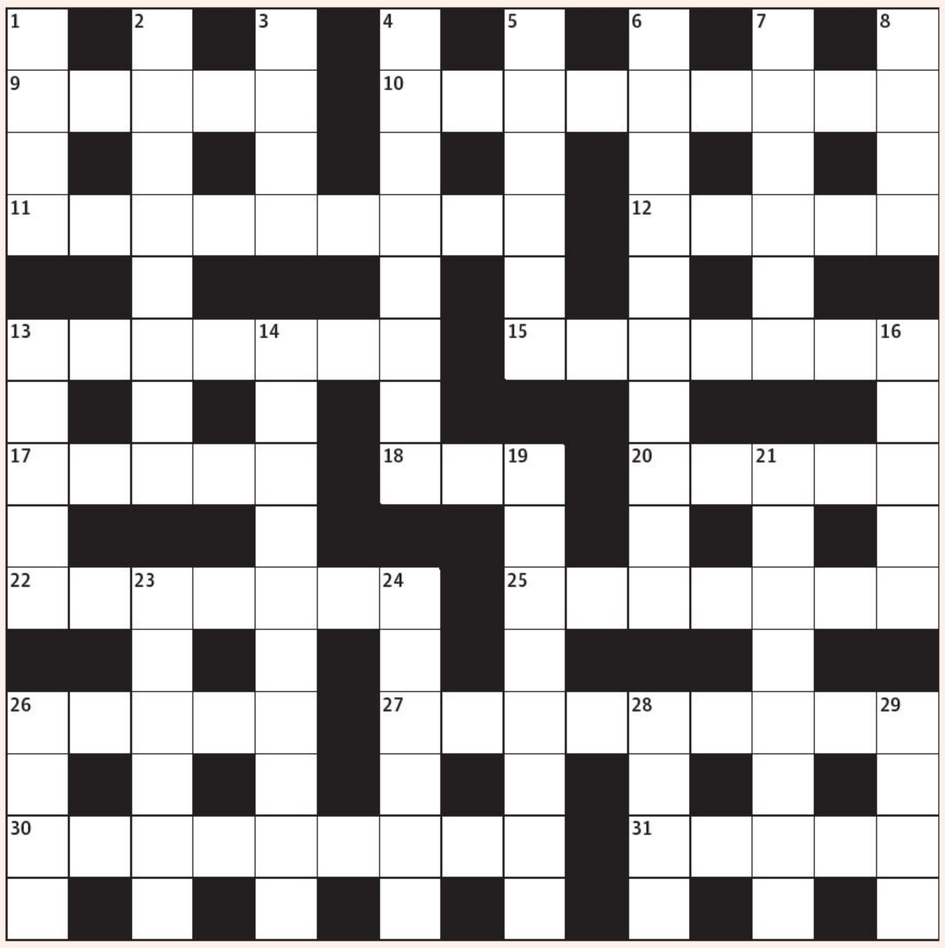
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.

8	■	21	■	8	■	12	■	9	■	6	■	21
15	7	17	8	22	■	2	16	14	4	25	8	26
24	■	1	■	1	■	26	■	16	■	18	■	16
8	22	20	8	3	12	3	■	26	11	1	3	17
3	■	20	■	■	■	25	■	■	■	24	■	19
20	17	7	11	12	12	18	■	9	3	1	18	21
26	■	■	■	16	■	8	■	25	■	16	■	■
21	24	23	1	21	22	■	20	16 A	17	17	1	18
■	■	7	■	26	■	21	■	13	■	■	■	8
24	12	20	8	21	■	26	3	16	10	10 F	1	24
17	■	14	■	■	■	12	■	■	■	12	■	12
16	17	12	14	9	■	3	8	13	8	3	8	18
9	■	21	■	16	■	8	■	1	■	22	■	1
9	3	1	5	5	17	7	■	24	23	16	1	14
7	■	21	■	8	■	21	■	8	■	26	■	9

~~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 F	11	12	13
14	15	16 A	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,442 set by Vlad



Across

9/10 Lost in London (I am close to King's Cross eastern boundary) (5-5,4)
11 Skipped school (retired hurt, LOL) (9)
12 Complain win against one side's overshadowed (5)
13 Dizzy missing end of Grand National (7)
15/26D 'Won't ed see daily covers?' - gnarled old Fleet Street worker (7,4)
17 Half of those on bus superannuated (5)
18 Passover is a festival (3)
20 New farmer's content to have fifty in field (5)
22 Driving impatiently in South London? It's commonplace (7)
25 Don't stop thinking of teacher receiving fine (5,2)
26 Object to government lacking depth (5)
27 Not in reality the best players? (5,4)
30 Upset president involved in underworld contract (9)
31 Scrubs up? (5)

Down

1 Sticks up for superior (4)
2 No way coffers filled with money in disused currency (8)
3 Expecting Republican to get put away - dope! (4)
4 Helen's mum picked up on road north to Delaware's state capital (8)
5 Leaving bash held back in old country (6)
6 Sexual liaison lifted simple-minded singer (Jim, that is) in club (10)
7/29 Show strange alien forms (4,2,4)
8 Dieter's World is hit (4)
13 Contribution from bad Vlad set down (5)
14 10 anticipating Tory levelling-up policy? (7,3)
16 Royal servants taking over country (5)
19 Comic before getting tip from mover and shaker (8)
21 Letters posted when cycling separately causing complaints (8)
23 Useless in practice so it ought to be returned (6)
24 Stupid to follow up oath (6)
26 See 15 Across
28 Old birds back from tea in seconds (4)
29 See 7

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The Guardian







The Kamala Harris cheat sheet

19 things to know about the woman who could be president







G2

Tuesday 23/07/24

Life & Arts

Restaurant critics
How they stay healthy
page 4



Melvyn Hayes
'I lied to get the part'
page 8

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Nell Frizzell



I am a hot, sweaty woman – and I refuse to be ashamed

There is a particular summer weather that I love. Hot, overcast and damp. Days when the air feels like the breath of a particularly big and lusty dog. The days when thunder is imminent. Days when you use a council tax bill as a makeshift fan on the train.

Why am I so drawn to this heavy, expectant, clamminess? This overcast sense of excitement? Because – and this is not the time for euphemism – I am a sweaty woman. I contain rivulets. Along my temples, under my breasts, across both armpits, behind my knees; I am as slick and shiny as a pebble on the seashore. And when the weather turns humid, you meet me where I stand.

Suddenly, I have comrades, complaining that their thigh is welded to their plastic chair; dabbing at their top lip with a sleeve; staining their ill-planned shirts with continent-shaped sweat patches. You people become my people; slipping through life on a sweaty sheen.

One reason I sweat is because I move a lot. I cycle to meetings, arriving with a rucksack imprint of damp across my back in both July and January. When I run, I feel the slickness trickling down my belly and I do not care. Take me out dancing and I'll show you a woman who refuses to take a breather just because her mascara is dripping off her chin. In life, when given the choice between poise and motion, I will always pick motion. Such is my health privilege, as a physically able woman. But so is my choice, as someone who rails against a misogynistic view of women as placid, passive and pretty.

Sweating has rarely been encouraged – particularly for women. The ancient Egyptians daubed themselves with incense and scented wax to cover the smell of their perspiring bodies, while Britons were dousing themselves and their clothes with various scented powders and pomades, even when washing fell out of favour. In 1888, the first commercial deodorant – tellingly called Mum – hit the market, quickly followed by Everdry antiperspirant in all its aluminium chloride glory. For as long as people have beaded and dripped, it appears that we have tried to hide it.

> For as long as people have dripped, we have tried to hide it

Teenage girls in the 90s (you may identify us by our amoebic eyebrows and continuing faith in the transformative power of conditioner) were implicitly told that pretty much all normal physical processes (eating, menstruation, weight fluctuation, masturbation, yawning, illness and of course sweating) were somehow unfeminine, uncool and – most serious of all – unattractive. Now, I'm not going to slide out here on a tsunami of elbow sweat, and claim that body odour and dripping foreheads should be recognised as the throbbing aphrodisiacs they truly are because, well, I'm not convinced. I like cleanliness. I also like people who smell like washing powder. But it is worth saying that the sooner you can come to accept the expirations of your own body, the easier it will become to like it. And the more you like your body, the easier it will be for other people to express their admiration for it too.

Finally, in a time of increasing global temperatures, we are simply going to have to lose our fear of sweat. To sit under the arctic blast of an air conditioner as the world burns under the weight of motorised cooling is not how I want to go. In economically developed countries, we are going to have to learn from the global south about coping in heat and managing sweat. The fabrics we wear, how we build our homes, when we rest and what we eat are going to have to change, of course. But ventilation, siestas, cotton and trees will only get us so far. We are also going to have to stop feeling queasy about perspiration. Looked at from an engineering point of view, isn't it remarkable that our bodies know to dampen the surface of our skin to cool the core temperature. It is amazing that we have, within our biology, a ready-made coping strategy.

So, stop flinching away from the realities of climate and your corporeal body. Accept that sweat, like blood, milk and tears, are what keep us alive. And if you see a woman cyclist wiping her forehead on a Plants of New Zealand tea towel at the traffic lights, just say nothing.

Forget adult food. Crisps and Coco Pops are delicious

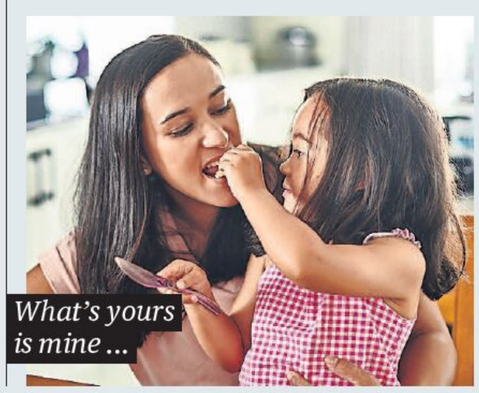
I don't want to undermine my international standing as a gourmand (I'm the woman who once ate the entire Bella Italia Valentine's Day menu in a single sitting) but I think I may be giving up on so-called "adult food".

It probably says something about my life, in terms of nutrition, shopping and planning, but this week I have eaten: three packets of Pom-Bear crisps, a bowl of Coco Pops, two Bear yoyo bars, a Petits Filous yoghurt and an ice lolly in the shape of a rocket. They were all absolutely delicious.

The thing about eating children's snacks is that they offer the twin hedonism of theft and blandness. I have never actually bought a packet of veggie straws or a small box of raisins with the express intention of eating them myself – but, as a parent, these things just exist tantalisingly within my orbit. Along with pizza crusts, fish fingers, carrot sticks, cartons of juice and small cubes of cheese, they are almost wantonly easy to steal off my own child. And so I rustle them.

Perhaps one of the most excruciating hangovers of my life was spent on a slow train through the Trent valley, on the way back from Liverpool, with a restless, breastfeeding toddler on my lap, during which I ate three – yes, three – packets of completely flavourless corn puffs. The best that could really be said for them was that they were slightly less oily than either normal crisps or my hair. And yet, if asked to identify one of my life's truly great snacks, I'd pick them every time. It wasn't great when we pulled into Euston and my son had nothing left to eat but ultimately it was worth it. Sometimes, morality quails in the face of maize.

We don't actually know if Hippocrates ever said, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food". But I bet he would have gone hog wild for a malted milk biscuit.



What's yours is mine ...

Pass notes

3



№ 4,724

Hello Kitty

Age: Fifty. Created in 1974, introduced the following year.
Appearance: Whiskers, pointy ears, cute.
Japanese, right? Hello Kitty, designed by Yuko Shimizu, was introduced as a character by Sanrio, an entertainment company that's all about *kawaii*, which basically means cute. Hello Kitty first appeared on a coin purse.
Arrrrww! Originally known as White Kitten Without a Name.
Also without a mouth! Adds to the kawaii. Anyway, it – she – became British because Britain was fashionable in Japan at the time. Shimzu borrowed the name from Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-Glass. Alice, you'll remember, has a cat called Kitty.
And Hello Kitty has been successful? Just a bit. By 2010, Hello Kitty, described by the New York Times as a "global marketing phenomenon", was worth $5bn a year. She's a tourism ambassador in Japan and a Unicef children's ambassador, there are thousands of branded products, films, theme parks ...
Not bad for a cat. Whoa, hold that right there. Who said anything about a cat?
Er, you did. You said White Kitten Without a Name and mentioned Alice's cat. Plus, I'm looking at other clues – the pointy ears, whiskers, the name Hello Kitty ...
Yeah, I know, but here's the thing: Sanrio is now claiming Hello Kitty is not a cat.
What is she? "She's actually a little girl, born and raised in the suburbs of London," according to Jill Cook.
Now I'm really confused. Who's Jill, and what does she know? Jill Cook is the director of retail business development at Sanrio. She broke the news on NBC's Today show, as it was celebrating the brand's 50th anniversary.
What else did she say? That Hello Kitty lives in a big pink house, enjoys baking cookies, has a boyfriend named Dear Daniel and her own pet cat called Charmmy Kitty. It's not just Jill Cook saying this stuff, either.
Who else? King Charles! At a recent state banquet with Emperor Naruhito, the king toasted "one particular individual who turns 50 this year. Raised in a London suburb with her twin sister, a self-made entrepreneur worth billions of dollars ... I can only wish a very happy birthday to Hello Kitty."
So what I thought was a cute, welcoming, inclusive Japanese cat is in fact a spoilt London brat with a lifestyle that is out of reach for most of us? Pretty much.
Do say: "Well, when one has royal fans and marketing partnerships with luxury brands such as Grind Coffee and Cambridge Satchel, there are certain standards to keep up."
Don't say: "Yeah, but still no mouth. Oi, Dear Daniel, no kisses today!"

COVER: REUTERS; GETTY IMAGES; REX/SHUTTERSTOCK; BLOOMBERG

Skip dessert, walk everywhere

Food writing is called 'the best job in the world' – but how do you keep it from killing you? Four restaurant critics reveal their secret health tips

After 12 years as the New York Times' restaurant critic, Pete Wells announced last week that he was leaving the role due to ill health – largely a side-effect of dining out decadently on a regular basis. "My cholesterol, blood sugar and hypertension were worse than I'd expected even in my doomiest moments," he wrote after a medical checkup. "The terms pre-diabetes, fatty liver disease and metabolic syndrome were thrown around." He had become obese, he says, and knew something needed to change.

With this in mind, we asked four leading restaurant critics how they mitigate the health risks posed by working in what is often deemed "the best job in the world".

Grace Dent
Restaurant critic for the Guardian

In a bid to stay alive in the face of much pommes dauphinoise and clotted cream, I battle every day. It's me v crème caramel; me v limitless opportunity. Me v my sleepy, ageing, lady metabolism.

It is the best job in the world. I can't complain. But the thing is, it will kill you. We all know it – the food writer crowd, that is – even if we don't discuss it, as it's a little taboo. But I have seen my colleagues get bigger and, increasingly, sicker. Eventually, they can't do the job as they're not well enough to walk from the car park to the dining table, or from a regional railway station up a very small incline. Then they die and everyone mutters, "How sad, such a nice bloke," while flinging CVs at their editor.

My weight is never steady. I've been much bigger and smaller. Nowadays, to stay at a UK size 10, at 6am every morning an app on my phone called HappyScale tells me: "TIME FOR YOUR WEIGH IN". I comply, standing on electronic scales, while shouting expletives. There is nothing Happy about this experience.

Take last Saturday, when I ate a Middle Eastern meze breakfast (date loaf, shakshuka), a Somali feast at lunch (with pasta and rice) and Uzbekistan dumplings for dinner, then arrived home to a gift box of bespoke bakewell tart brownies. That's 4,000 calories in under 12 hours. So I walk a minimum of six miles a day, I lift weights and I am now three years teetotal because, previously, every time I went to a restaurant, the maître d' would send me a free martini.

My biggest tip is learn how to say no to – or at least regift – little presents pushed in your hands by strangers, and to extra courses at dinner, and to free hampers left on your doorstep. I use the Olio app to redistribute extra goodies after I've tasted a fraction.

These days, I only review with regular dinner dates who have massive appetites. Thank you Charles, Hugh and Tom – all men whom I require no social battery to dine with, who will let me try a taste of 11 dishes, then polish off what's left. They are the reason I still have both feet.

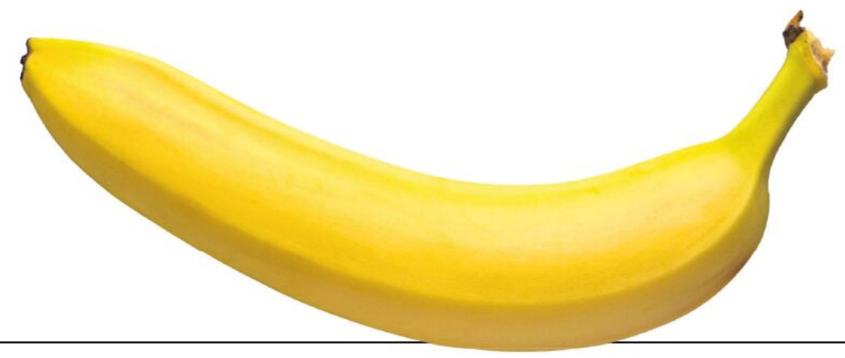
And, after a day or two of feasting, there is the compulsory fast. On down days, I roam the house like a giant guinea pig, surviving on water, oats and seeds, trying to claw back calories – but sometimes still snacking on

> **In my first 12 months as a critic, I dined out almost every single night**
> **Leonie Cooper**



Walking six miles daily … Grace Dent

and bring a banana



cooking chocolate while standing at the cupboard. It's still the greatest job in the entire world. I plan to carry on for ever – and inevitably die trying.

Chitra Ramaswamy
Restaurant critic for the Times (Scotland edition)

I had been in the role four gloriously gluttonous years when it happened. The tummy ache to end all tummy aches, so extra it ran all the way from front to lower back. Acute diverticulitis, the consultant explained after looking at my CT scan. Apparently I'd been living my entire life with a bunch of tiny pouches hanging off my colon, and, 45 years in, something had finally got stuck in one. The pouch became infected, swollen, then burst, flooding my body with terrifying amounts of infection. In a bed on the colorectal ward where I would spend the next five nights, the first question I asked was whether I'd have to give up my job. "I'm a restaurant critic," I whispered, with a soupçon of shame. "I know," the consultant replied brightly. "Don't worry, it'll be fine." I was advised to take a fortnight or so off. Be more careful when I returned: eat more fibre, avoid poorly digestible foods, consume less alcohol, red meat and coffee. Basically, do the things many of us in anxious middle age are trying and failing to do.

The fortnight leading up to this episode had been … excessive. In Edinburgh, I had reviewed not one but two tasting menus: 30 courses in two meals. There was lamb doused in a melted tallow candle made with the rendered-down fat from the saddle. Gougères pocked with mutton cured in juniper. Dry-aged turbot and caviar, chawanmushi (savoury egg custard) and laminated brioche studded with caper berries and … I'll stop. There are many cardinal rules of restaurant reviewing and one is: don't bang on about all the delicious things you get to eat. Another is: don't describe red meat as "melt-in-the-mouth" because the ghost of AA Gill will come for you. And the biggest one of all? Never, ever moan about the hardships of being a restaurant critic because you'll be exposed for the massively privileged, greedy arse that you are. Oh dear.

The good news? I'm a female greedy arse. (Not only that, but the esteemed Jonathan Nunn, founding editor of Vittles magazine, tells me I'm the first restaurant critic of colour for a UK national newspaper in history. Chew on that, diverticulitis!)



Avoiding alcohol … Chitra Ramaswamy

Anecdotally, or at least according to stereotype, my sex means I won't get obese, get a fatty liver, become an alcoholic or die young due to being a restaurant critic. I'll just get thinner, sassier, wear better specs and develop ever more withering ways to take down terrible service. This is welcome.

Look, I love my job. If, like me, you're buoyed up by the fact that there are (at least!) three opportunities for happiness every single day – at breakfast, lunch and dinner – then it really is the best job in the world. That doesn't mean I want it to kill me.

So what do I do? I offset my once-a-week excess – and it isn't always excess; we do sometimes review poke bowls – by eating a simple, high fibre, mainly vegetarian diet at home. I often review at lunchtime, ostensibly because I have young kids, but it also means I drink no (or at least less) alcohol. I walk everywhere. I no longer clear the plates when reviewing. And I make sure I never review when ravenous, which is hard because, like all foodies, I'm hungry whenever I'm not eating. Boiled down to the deepest *jus*, my restaurant critic's maxim appears to be the same as my golden rule of mothering: take a banana.

On down days I survive on water, oats and seeds, like a giant guinea pig
Grace Dent

Fay Maschler
Restaurant critic for Tatler

I started reviewing restaurants for London's Evening Standard in 1972 after winning a competition to replace Quentin Crewe, a witty and wise gamechanger in that role. The "prize" was a three-month contract. I left 48 years later. Now, I review restaurants for Tatler. It is good to keep skin in the game, which remains such an intriguing one, especially as restaurants continue to diversify, proliferate, pontificate, baffle, horrify, astonish and impress.

Recently, it was suggested by my gastroenterologist that I have an ultrasound of my stomach. Making desultory conversation, as you do when someone is gliding a sensor over your tummy slicked with gel, I said to the doctor doing it, "I seem to have lost my appetite recently." Rather too crisply she replied, "Well, maybe you have had enough to eat." Maybe I have, but we must all eat something pretty much every day in order to stay alive – a fact that encourages everyone to think they could or should be a restaurant reviewer.

Appetite does tend to dwindle as you get older – I am 79 – and I try to ensure that what I eat is reasonably nutritious. Many restaurants these days are helpful in this endeavour as they become more conscious of healthy eating and careful sourcing. At home, I am consoled by toast – toast with almost anything on it, but did you realise how much vitamin B there is in Marmite? In terms of snacks, raw nuts (walnuts especially) and medjool dates fill the cracks. Fortunately, I don't have a sweet tooth – except for the sugars in wine – and in a restaurant I will usually ask my companion to order dessert and just nibble a bit.

Something I have embraced over recent years is fasting. This is undeniably no longer the province of hermits or cranks – anyone who skipped breakfast now tells you they are doing intermittent fasting – but, as the late, lamented Dr Michael Mosley pointed out, is a viable, realisable way of keeping weight in check.

At a wellness clinic I visited in Spain some time ago, the chief doctor/guru said, rather mournfully, "You seem to have a strong constitution." I think I am fortunate in this being true. My attempts at exercise are lamentable, especially recently since I fractured a vertebra falling on stairs in a restaurant – and I wasn't even pissed. That has been a setback.



Skipping dessert … Fay Maschler

My dear pal and fellow restaurant critic Marina O'Loughlin, late of this parish, said, "Just say you are careful about carbs and so live on martinis and reblochon." It is not far from the truth.

Leonie Cooper
Food and drink editor for Time Out London

I've been a full-time restaurant critic for just under two years, which makes me small fry in the grand scheme of eating for a living. Still, in my first 12 months, I dined out almost every single night and my first major project was an overhaul of Time Out's annual list of the 50 best restaurants in London. For this, there was a stint of eating out twice a day, lunch and dinner, and not one meal was at a salad bar. This was rich, creamy and salt-addled cuisine and, because it would be rude not to, mostly washed down with wine.

It was thrilling to explore the city I love by literally gobbling it up. Then, at the beginning of this year, I noticed my jeans were tighter, my tummy rounder. I didn't feel sluggish or spent, but a year of high-intensity eating had definitely had an effect on my body.

Running seemed to be the easiest route to something resembling health. I tried to do it at least four times a week, jogging around my local graveyard in a vain attempt to make myself more aware of my mortality. I don't think I ever enjoyed a run and actively hated many. Still, I persisted.

However, a couple of weeks ago while jogging, I slipped and landed on my cheekbone and hip, resulting in a black eye and bum bruise similar in shape and size to Halley's Comet. It was the perfect excuse to never run again. Handily, I had just taken up reformer pilates, enticed by the promise of a workout you can do lying down, and three sessions a week is my current fast-track route to fitness.

In another attempt to defuse the incendiary device I have placed inside my arteries, I have started trying not to eat everything on the plate. This is hard because 1) It's likely delicious or, at the very least, expensive and 2) I feel deeply for a chef who sees a critic leaving a half-eaten mound of food. I don't hate it – I'm just trying not to die!

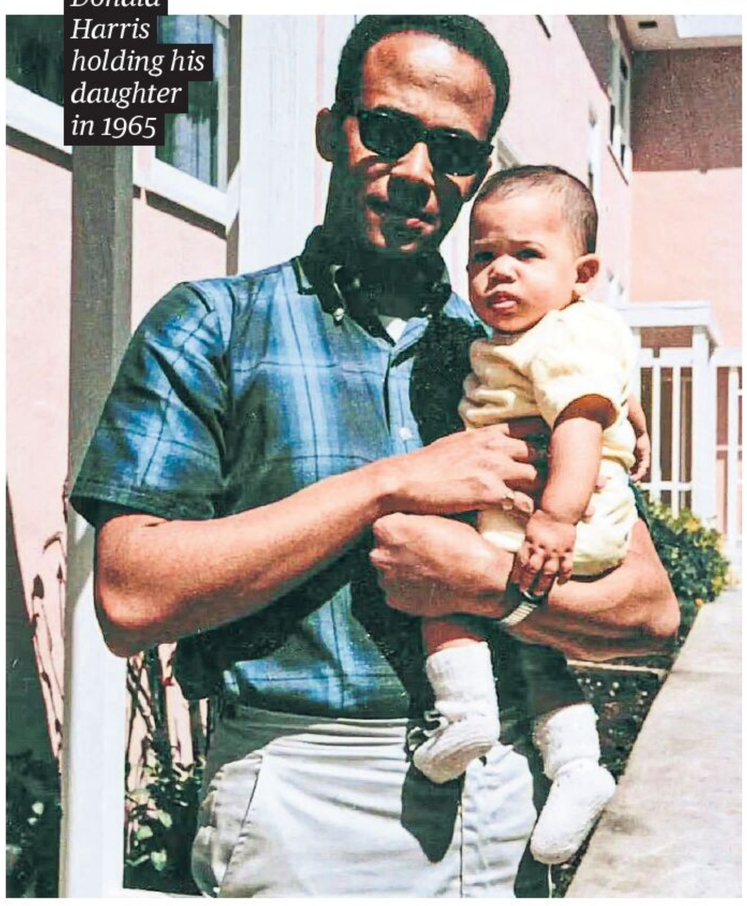
Despite all of this, I'm doing far better health-wise than I was a decade ago when working full-time as a music journalist at NME. Five gigs a week with dinner replaced by pints, and, if I was being kind to myself, cheesy chips at 11.30pm seems a much more damaging lifestyle.

Now, drinking on an empty stomach is nigh-on impossible, and I'm convinced that a glass of *pét-nat* (sparkling wine) is better for you than a tray full of Guinness. I may have higher cholesterol these days (though I am too scared to actually check), but I certainly have fewer hangovers.



Doing pilates … Leonie Cooper

PHOTOGRAPHS: MARTINA LANG/THE GUARDIAN; MURDO MACLEOD/THE GUARDIAN; GETTY IMAGES; JESS HAND/TIME OUT; ALAMY



Donald Harris holding his daughter in 1965



Harris with her mother, Shyamala





Everything you need to know about Kamala Harris

Zoe Williams answers all your questions about the new frontrunner in the Democrats' presidential campaign

How to pronounce her name

After Kamala Harris was named as Joe Biden's running mate in August 2020, Donald Trump said she was "totally unlikable" and a communist; he twice called her "this monster". While "monster" is a dehumanising term, the pronoun flags what seems to me to be a racist subtext: not "a" monster, but "this" thing we have all agreed is a monster.

But he also strategically mispronounced her name, elongating the middle "A" to make it sound more foreign. It's important, therefore, not to get it wrong by accident. It doesn't rhyme with Pamela; it doesn't sound like Tony Soprano's wife. It's "comma" with a "la" at the end and the stress on the first syllable.

Who her parents are

Harris's father, Donald, came to the US from Jamaica in 1938 to study economics at Berkeley. He then taught at Stanford, where he is now professor emeritus. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, also studied at Berkeley, having graduated from the University of Delhi. She died in 2009, after spending her career working in breast cancer research. The couple met as civil rights activists and separated in 1969, when Harris was five.

In Harris's memoir, The Truths We Hold, she writes about her Indian grandparents and their experiences of political activism. Her grandmother was an informal community organiser (she was uneducated and fought on the ground for contraception and against domestic violence); her grandfather was a diplomat and fought for refugee rights, among other things. Broadly speaking, Harris says, she has always preferred to make change from inside institutions rather than outside. However, she doesn't have an instinctive distrust of outsider activism that characterises more establishment figures.

She was at the coalface of educational desegregation

At her elementary school, Thousand Oaks in Berkeley, Harris was part of only the second year group to be "bussed", whereby kids from deprived areas were sent to schools in more affluent areas to diversify the pupil intake. She speaks very warmly about the pragmatism and immediate, real-life impact of the policy, which came in for huge amounts of criticism. She recalls in her memoir being part of "a varied bunch": "Some grew up in public housing and others were the children of professors. I remember celebrating varied cultural holidays at school and learning to count to 10 in several languages."

Her political self was built at Howard University

Founded in 1867, the Washington DC university known as the Mecca was built specifically to crack open professions - medicine, education and the church - to 4 million formerly enslaved people.

When Harris arrived there in 1982, the fight for racial equality born of the civil rights movement had forked. One side argued that US institutions were inherently racist and would always be unjust as they stood; the other side argued that by improving Black representation in the law and politics, equality would be created from within. Harris was very much in the second camp.

When she went back to address students in 2017, she made that case explicitly: "You can march for Black lives on the street, and you can ensure law-enforcement accountability by serving as a prosecutor or on a police commission. The reality is, on most matters, somebody is going to make the decision - so why not let it be you?"

Her decision to be a prosecutor remains thorny ...

In the summer of 1988, Harris got an internship in the district attorney's office in Oakland. She realised that being a prosecutor was her calling - much to the incredulity of friends and peers, given the US's "deep and dark history of people using the power of the prosecutor as an instrument of injustice", as she wrote in her memoir. She makes a solid case that she was working from within to create justice, but it has been levelled against her, notably in 2019 when she was standing for the Democratic presidential nomination. Tulsi Gabbard, then a Hawaii Democratic congresswoman, claimed that she "put over 1,500 people in jail for marijuana violations and then laughed about it when she was asked if she ever smoked marijuana".

Harris maintains that prosecutions for low-level drug offences were rare while she was attorney general in California and she made a policy of not pushing for jail time. She wrote of drug prosecutions: "The cases were as easy to prove as they were tragic to charge. In the rush to clean up the streets, we were criminalising a public health crisis."

... but she knows that mass incarceration is a scandal

African Americans are incarcerated at five times the rate of white Americans and their sentences are almost 20% longer than those given to white men. If a Black man is stopped while driving, his car is three times more likely to be searched; if he is arrested, his bail is higher. "It is truly appalling," she wrote in The Truths We Hold. "It's one thing to say that Black lives matter. But awareness and solidarity aren't enough. We need to accept hard truths about the systemic racism that has allowed this to happen."

She may be a brat

Charli xcx announced yesterday on X: "Kamala IS brat," referring to the wave of hedonism and messiness



With President Biden in June



PHOTOGRAPHS: THE WHITE HOUSE; KAMALA HARRIS CAMPAIGN; SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE/HEARST NEWSPAPERS/GETTY IMAGES; RYAN COLLERD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES

to which young women are aspiring in light of her new album, Brat. Harris's team, understandably delighted, changed the colour on their X feed to the neon green of the album cover.

Rereading xcx's definition of brat, however, it doesn't sound exactly like Harris: "You're just that girl who is a little messy and likes to party and maybe says dumb things sometimes. Who feels herself but then maybe also has a breakdown … It's very honest, very blunt, a little bit volatile." Harris may be straight-talking, but it's hard to imagine her doing dumb things and you don't get the impression of volatility. When I think of a brat, I don't think of her trying to get elected. Nevertheless, to the extent that brat means "lives her life and doesn't care what you think about that", then yes, Harris *is* brat. And she has had to be.

She has faced personal attacks …

Shock jocks and some Fox anchors have been even more critical of Harris than the Republican politicians, describing her baselessly as dishonest and unfit. Rush Limbaugh – inspired by a piece in the Spectator that described her as a "mattress" – speciously asserted that she had slept her way to the top. For a while, T-shirts were available on Amazon that read "Joe and the Hoe". Listening to the radio in the past hour, I have heard a presenter reference the insult "cackling Kamala"; a society that won't allow you to laugh is basically trying to exclude you from public life. Some voters have said they find her "condescending", a retread of the "schoolmarmish" tag that finds female leaders annoying by definition.

… and racism

The racism she experiences is densely layered, containing anti-Black tropes – the "angry Black woman" is there in Trump's assertions that she is "angry", "mean", "aggressive" and "disrespectful". Tucker Carlson said "she'll bulldoze her elderly, sentimental boss". Those Limbaugh assertions about her sexual manipulation shaded from misogyny to misogynoir, recalling the hypersexualised Jezebel.

But her racial identity is also heavily policed. The radio host Mark Levin said: "Kamala Harris is not an African American, she is Indian and Jamaican. Jamaica's part of the Caribbean. India is out there near China. I only point that out because if you dare raise that, you're attacked, but the truth is she's not, and so I just wanted to make that clear."

The truest thing I ever read about all this was from a political studies fellow, Danielle Casarez Lemi, quoted in the New York Times: "She's going to be tasked with managing those perceptions of her identity, and that's time that could be spent on the ground, building relationships with people and formulating policies."

This is exactly what has happened: the most common critique of Harris is that nobody knows what she stands for. The injustice of that – constantly blaring over someone with bigoted hullaballoo and then complaining that you can't hear them – makes you think: what a country, what a world.

She stands for a lot

This is Harris on Trump, writing in The Truths We Hold: "We've seen an administration align itself with white supremacists at home and cozy up to dictators abroad; rip babies from their mothers' arms in grotesque violation of their human rights; give corporations and the wealthy huge tax cuts while ignoring the middle class; derail our fight against climate change; sabotage health care and imperil a woman's right to control her own body; all while lashing out at seemingly everything and everyone, including the very idea of a free and independent press. We are better than this."

Much of the legislative work for which she was known as a senator tried to create a pathway for people who migrated to the US as children to become citizens, a proposed act known as Dream. Being bipartisan, it got a lot of nakedly xenophobic measures tacked on to it, including $25bn for Trump's notorious wall, so she ended up voting against the bill, even though she had co-sponsored it.

She really likes Doritos

On the night of the 2016 election, she went out for a large family dinner, went home, watched the results come in, dread for the country mingling uneasily with celebration, ate a family bag of Doritos and "didn't share a single chip".

She failed her bar exam the first time

She passed on the retake; no biggie. But when she describes it in her memoir, it's not to kickstart a homily, merely to observe that, "in studying for the bar, I had put forward the most half-assed performance of my life". I find that endearing.

> **On the 2016 election night, she ate a family bag of Doritos and didn't share a single chip**

It sounds as if she and her potential running mate get on well

Gavin Newsom, the California governor who was tipped as a potential runner for Democratic leader, endorsed Harris immediately after Biden resigned, ending rumours about his candidacy and signalling a call to the wider party to unite behind the vice-president. It's possible that this is not just tactical and that they do, in fact, like each other. When she was elected district attorney of San Francisco in 2004, he was sworn in as mayor the same day. "There was a palpable sense in the city that a new chapter was opening up," she wrote in her memoir.

One of her first major initiatives as a prosecutor was on recidivism

She created Back on Track, an initiative to reduce reoffending rates by creating networks and opportunities for people leaving prison. This scaled up to become policy across California; the model has since been used elsewhere in the country, including Philadelphia and Atlanta. One group of participants in the early stages of the project wrote a song about her and called themselves ContraBand.

She went to war against mortgage companies after the financial crisis

After becoming attorney general of California, in 2011, she was immediately mired in the foreclosure scandal. Attorneys general nationally were working to get compensation from mortgage companies for their aggressive repossession tactics and all states had been offered a flat deal worth between $2bn and $4bn. She rejected that out of hand – it wasn't enough money and it didn't entail enough accountability. In the end, she got $25bn, "a tremendous victory for the people of California".

She officiated the first gay wedding in California

The ins and outs of the legal wrangle, how bitterly it was fought, we will have to save for another day. But marriage equality was capsized by conservatives, then restored in June 2013 – and she performed the ceremony for Kris Perry and Sandy Stier.

She and her husband were wildly efficient about romance

Harris was set up on a blind date with Doug Emhoff by a friend; the morning after, he emailed her all his availability for the short and medium term. After their third date, they agreed to commit to each other for six months, then evaluate. They performed so well in their appraisal that they were married the following year, in 2014.

Her husband has faced sexism, too

Emhoff in known in the manosphere as "the world's biggest cuck", which is to say he is considered cuckolded by her job, work being construed by this metaphor as a form of infidelity. Dark times ahead, folks. A less rude epithet for him is "wife guy", meaning one who owes his fame to his wife, or is too uxorious.

She doesn't like the term 'stepmom'

Emhoff's children call her Momala. It's pronounced *mom*-a-la.



'I lied to get the part' ... Hayes, right, in his breakthrough film No Trees in the Street

'I thought I'd arrived!'

He was tipped to be the next Richard Burton. But he ended up as crossdressing Gunner Gloria in It Ain't Half Hot Mum instead. Melvyn Hayes looks back with **Stuart Jeffries**

One day in 1957, Melvyn Hayes was on the set of a film called Woman in a Dressing Gown when a man sat down next to him. "I was getting paid £5 a day and I'd been on location for three days," the actor recalls. "All I had to do was walk up to a house and put a newspaper through a letterbox. That was my part. Finished. I said to this bloke, 'I can't believe the waste of money on this film. Take me. You could have got a newspaper boy on £1 a day to do what I'm doing.' Then I said, 'What do you do then, you lazy bugger?' And he said, 'I'm the producer.'"

Hayes, now 89, giggles at the memory of the cheek of himself at 23. Back then, £5 a day was a decent whack. His first job in showbiz, in the early 1950s, was as assistant to The Great Masoni, a magician who tasked Hayes with "disappearing twice daily for £4". His chief film role so far had been in the 1955 drama documentary The Unloved, in which he played a boy in a home for delinquent kids.

The producer sitting next to Hayes, Frank Godwin, was struck by his chutzpah. Godwin was looking for an actor to play a cockney tearaway in his next picture, No Trees in the Street, and he realised he might have found him. But there was a problem: the character of Tommy - an impoverished teenager who descends into criminality, murdering a sweet old pawn-shop proprietor after she only offers him 12/6 for a jacket - was supposed to be 18. "So," says Hayes, "I lied to get the part."

The director, J Lee Thompson, gave Hayes the role after a screen test opposite Sylvia Syms. Syms had lit up the 1958 classic Ice Cold in Alex, playing Sister Diana Murdoch, the nurse who defrosts captain John Mills's ardour in the midst of Britain's retreat from Tobruk to Alexandria during the second world war.

In No Trees in the Street, Syms exchanged stifling desert locations for suffocating East End interiors, playing the strait-laced sister to ingenue Hayes's delinquent teen. "I couldn't believe I was with all these great stars," says Hayes now. Besides Syms, there was Herbert Lom as a crooked bookie and Stanley Holloway as a down-at-heel professional gambler. "All those incredible actors!" says Hayes. "I'd arrived - or I thought I had."

Today, Hayes is known chiefly for his role in It Ain't Half Hot Mum, the sitcom that, between 1974 and 1981, attracted up to 17 million viewers a week, but has been airbrushed from BBC schedules for its perceived racism and homophobia. He was cross-dressing Gunner "Gloria" Beaumont, an effete member of a concert party of British squaddies stationed in India during the second world war.

However, back in the 1950s, Hayes was preparing to be a dramatic lead. Had Thompson only brought the sentiment-free approach to No Trees in the Street that he later deployed so effectively in the 1962 thriller Cape Fear, starring Robert Mitchum and Gregory Peck, Hayes might have found himself a global star. It didn't happen - partly, he thinks, because the director was insufficiently ruthless with the moralising script. "After we finished shooting," says Hayes, "Thompson said to me: 'I think I made a mistake. I should have made you the first star of an 'angry young man' picture.'"

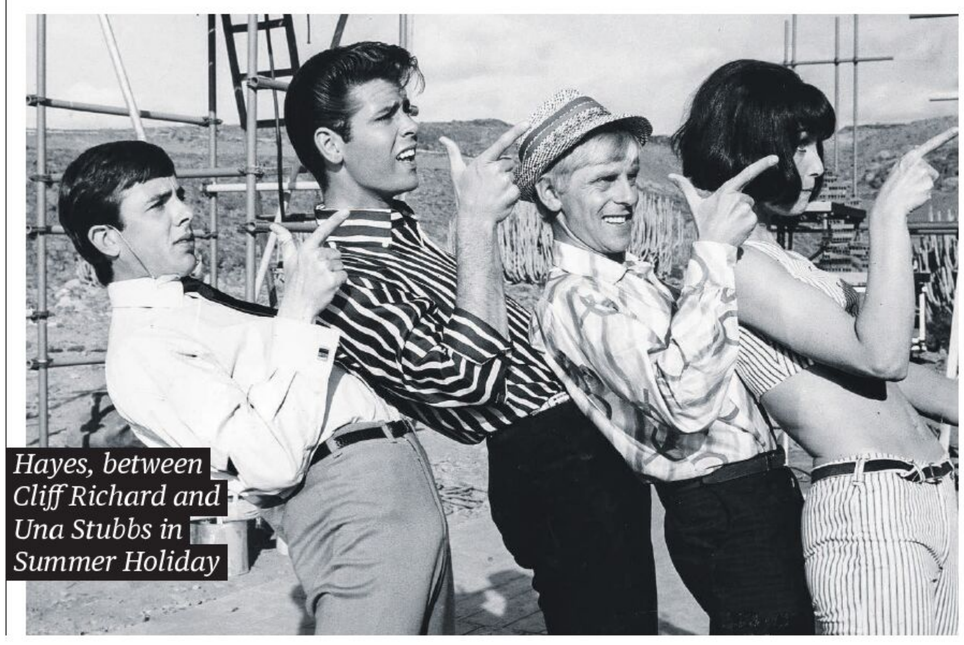
We're talking because No Trees in the Street is being screened next weekend at the Cinema Rediscovered festival in Bristol. Hayes is taking along no fewer than 17 members of his family. The screenplay - by Ted Willis, adapted from his own play - starts with a young scamp running across an old bomb site. The year is 1958 and the boy, played by a very young David Hemmings, collides with an old copper, who finds the kid is carrying a switchblade and gives him a clip round the ear. We then cut to these same streets 20 years earlier, as that copper recalls what this manor was like before the Luftwaffe levelled it.

Thompson conjures up that 1938 scene eloquently. Fascist troublemaker Oswald Mosley's name hasn't quite been whitewashed from the walls, there's a thriving Jewish grocery store and a billboard tells us the Czechs are mobilising. "I loved the way J Lee shot the East End of the 1930s," says Hayes. "It's teeming with life and all those Jewish shops that don't exist now."

Some of the most poignant scenes involve Hayes, weedy in a sleeveless jumper, being thrashed by his mother for not getting a proper job, or for hungrily tearing into a crust of bread. He's a little boy with a vulnerable face trying to act tough and, near the bitter denouement, holes up from the cops like Al Pacino in Dog Day Afternoon. Hayes couldn't have been happier on set. "I had a chair with my name on it. I didn't dare sit on it!" When the producers found out he was driving to the shoot in what amounted to a toy car, they got him a proper one. The film's opening credits included the words: "Introducing Melvyn Hayes."

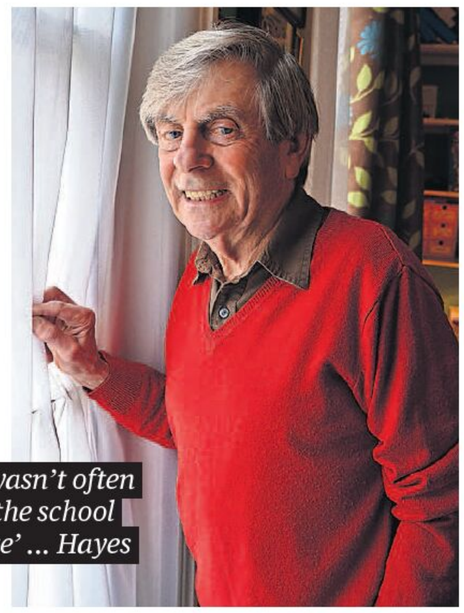
Hayes still remembers the review that ran in the Evening News singling him out. "It said: 'This is the face that will hold you in 1959.'" The suggestion was that he was going to be a star, perhaps joining the ranks of Richard Burton, Tom Courtenay and Albert Finney. "I had to ring them up a few months later to tell them that didn't happen."

What does Hayes think of his performance now? "I played the role for the truth of it. It must have worked somewhere, because a



Hayes, between Cliff Richard and Una Stubbs in Summer Holiday

The Evening News said: 'This is the face that will hold you this year.' I rang them later to tell them it didn't happen



'I wasn't often at the school gate' ... Hayes

wonderful director called Mario Zampi got in touch and said: 'You're just going to be offered dramatic parts from now on. So before you pack up comedy, do this one film for me." The film was Bottoms Up!, a spin-off of Whack-O!, a sitcom about an alcoholic, swindling, sadistic teacher who takes pleasure in caning his students – until they decide to rebel.

Bottoms Up! was a flop. "I rang up the manager of the cinema in Clapham," Hayes recalls, "saying that I was in Bottoms Up! and asking for a couple of complimentary tickets. He said, 'The place has been empty all week, so I don't think so.'"

Nor did Hayes gravitate towards dramatic roles. Instead, he joined pop legend Cliff Richard's cheerful 1960s foray into film, starring opposite Una Stubbs and others in The Young Ones, Summer Holiday and Crooks in Cloisters. Rather than an angry young man he became the cheeky chappie of the swinging 60s.

Hayes next landed a part in Here Come the Double Deckers! He played the grownup minder of a bunch of kids who lived in a London bus (one of whom was Brinsley Forde, later frontman for Aswad, *see right*). Then came It Ain't Half Hot Mum. Hayes beat John Inman – the future star of Are You Being Served? – to the role of Gloria. "John would have been great," says Hayes. "He was a wonderful actor."

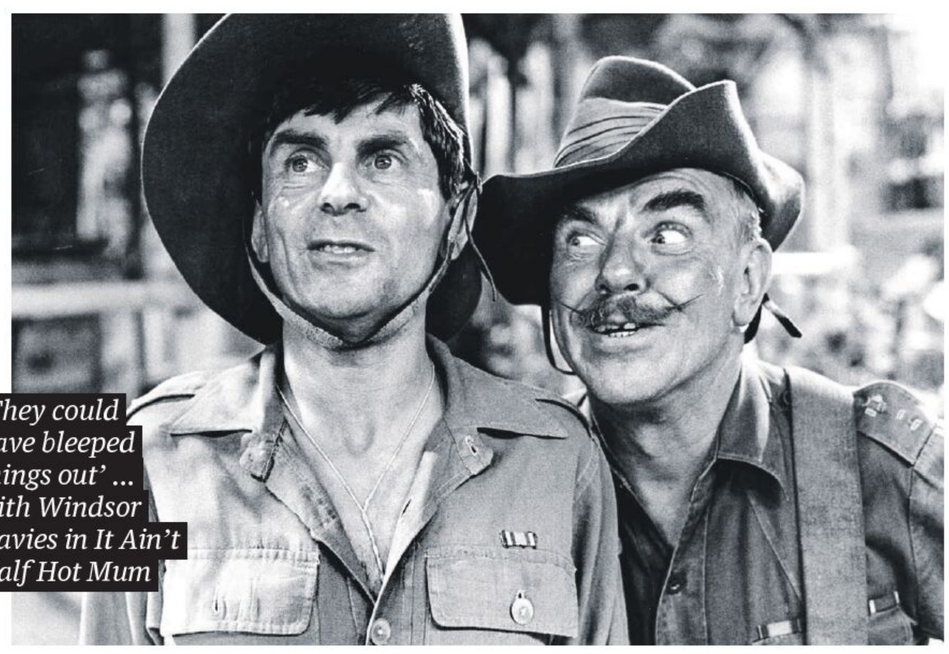
Hayes is angry about how the show has been treated by the BBC. "They could have bleeped things out, or put up some disclaimer. But to take it off air and treat it as an object of shame was just wrong." Nor does he agree that it was racist.

This is not an opinion that was shared by the late sociologist Stuart Hall, who included it in It Ain't Half Racist, Mum, his programme about TV's lamentable depictions of people of colour. One of the sitcom's characters, Rangi Ram, was played by a white actor called Michael Bates in brownface. However, Hayes points out that not only was Bates a fluent Urdu speaker, but the sitcom was also admired by British Asians. "Asian people would describe it to me as 'our show' – partly because it was the only one where you'd hear any Urdu."

Hayes is now devoting his energies to finishing his autobiography. "It's only taken me 36 years." What's it called? "It's Taken Me a Long Time. Actually, it's got a second title." What? "If You Ain't Got Your Socks." Why? "Because my dad used to say to me, 'Remember son, if you ain't got your socks, you can't pull them up." Sage advice. "I really wrote it so my children would know why I wasn't often at the school gate."

Hayes has six kids from three marriages, hence the large contingent attending the No Trees in the Street screening. "I haven't seen it for years," he says. "I remember Herbert Lom, such a sweet man, saying to me years after we made it, 'Remember No Trees in the Street, Melvyn? You were great.'" Hayes pauses then says: "I wonder if I was. I suppose I'll find out."

No Trees in the Street is screening at Watershed, Bristol, on Sunday



'They could have bleeped things out' ... with Windsor Davies in It Ain't Half Hot Mum

PHOTOGRAPHS: STUDIOCANAL; ALLSTAR; SHUTTERSTOCK

Don't Turn Around by Aswad

'Top of the Pops showed our video at the end of the show – just as millions of people were tuning in for EastEnders. Soon afterwards, we went to No 1'



Crossover hit ... Brinsley Forde, Drummie Zeb and Tony 'Gad' Robinson in 1988

Tony 'Gad' Robinson
Bass, keyboards, backing vocals

When the band formed we were just out of school and trying to find our way in music. Growing up in England with West Indian parents, we had listened to the Rolling Stones or Rod Stewart as well as reggae. My first band was a rock group with some white friends.

Early Aswad were roots reggae. We didn't have the experiences to sing about Jamaica, so we sang about our lives in London. Our label, Island Records, weren't aiming for the pop charts initially, but when we were making the Distant Thunder album they asked for something more radio-friendly. They suggested covering Rod Stewart's The First Cut Is the Deepest or Don't Turn Around, written by Diane Warren and Albert Hammond, as a rock ballad.

We recorded both songs but it was obvious that Don't Turn Around was the one. Tina Turner and Luther Ingram had each recorded versions which hadn't been hits, but I thought the chorus was wicked. We worked on the new arrangement with Chris Porter, who'd produced George Michael. We recorded our parts manually – to us, in those days, computers were something that only Nasa had!

We'd been around for years without a hit but the song climbed from No 83 to 66, then once it got into the Top 40 it gathered momentum. We needed a video quickly, so we filmed in Spain at a location where they'd made spaghetti westerns. The girl in it was a model but she had really good interplay with Drummie [Zeb, drummer and singer]. Top of the Pops showed the video at the end of the show, just before EastEnders, so millions of people who were tuning in for the soap heard Don't Turn Around. Soon afterwards we went to No 1.

The writers told us they always knew it was a potential hit. Diane Warren said that a man singing "Don't turn around / I don't want you seeing me crying" gives it more vulnerability and makes it more potent. I hadn't really listened to the lyrics before but I started taking notice.

Chris Porter
producer

I was desperate to get into the music business but was still doing small building jobs with some musician friends. After we converted Thin Lizzy singer Phil Lynott's garage into a studio, he recommended us to producer Tony Visconti, who wanted some alterations to his. Tony liked my work and asked if I'd ever considered training as an audio engineer.

It was an amazing offer so I spent all my waking hours in the studio, sometimes sleeping under the recording console. I'm pretty sure it was Aswad's programmer Pete Gleadall who recommended me to them. Reggae was a somewhat niche market apart from Bob Marley, and the request was to deliver a crossover hit. I definitely felt some trepidation when I met the boys. I wasn't part of the reggae scene – I'm a middle class white boy from the shires! – and was probably considered a pop "lightweight", but we worked well together and had fun in 80s Ladbroke Grove.

Most of the recording took place in Island's Sarm West studio in west London, where Marley had recorded. I didn't listen to the previous versions of the song, I just approached it based on the melody and lyric. Computers, samplers and Midi keyboards were another way of moving away from a traditional reggae sound.

I wanted to hear both Drummie and Brinsley Forde singing it but in the end chose Drummie's voice as it was warm and expressive, less reggae, which I thought would help cross over. I realised the chords were similar to the Righteous Brothers' You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling, so Drummie sang a bit of it on the 12in version to pay homage.

When Don't Turn Around came out I was in the US on George Michael's Faith tour and arrived back at Heathrow to discover it was No 1. I think some Aswad fans felt the group had moved too far from their roots, but I'm sure the band could put up with any criticism when they were sitting at No 1.

Interview by Dave Simpson. Aswad's Live in London album is out now

PHOTOGRAPHS: GENTLE LOOK/GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY


Sophie Morgan (second left) and fellow campaigners last year

Review Sophie Morgan's Fight to Fly, Channel 4

Laying bare the disgraceful reality of flying while disabled

★★★★☆



Frances Ryan

'This is like my legs. And I'm sitting there thinking: 'Oh my God, they're going to break it,'" says the broadcaster Sophie Morgan after her wheelchair is damaged by airline staff at the start of this searing documentary.

For Morgan, this was a defining moment. Since becoming paralysed as a teenager, the 39-year-old has frequently suffered poor treatment when flying. Within days of her wheelchair being broken, she is on the set of Loose Women to launch the Rights on Flights campaign. It calls for the Civil Aviation Authority to impose fines when an airline fails a disabled customer and, in the long term, for the redesign of aircrafts to enable disabled passengers to stay in their wheelchairs while they fly, as they can on trains.

No one who has used a wheelchair in public needs to be convinced that transport, especially air, is often shamefully inaccessible. But Morgan knows she doesn't have the luxury of preaching to the converted. To create change, first she has to convince non-disabled decision-makers that this matters.

"We normalise the discrimination of disabled people," she says. "The feeling is we're asking too much." To prove her point, Morgan holds up her phone to the camera to show a tweet she has just received in response to her campaign: "Do you ever shut the fuck up about your disability?"

Luckily for us, she doesn't. Watching Morgan, it's almost impossible not to cheer her on from the sofa. She has relentless energy, whether that is turning up to an event at parliament when she is sick or managing to get a selfie with President Biden when visiting Washington DC to hear about new legislation.

And yet it's clear that Morgan is relentless because she has to be. When Morgan shows the accessibility manager at Stansted a clip of a disabled customer being mistreated by staff and asks why such behaviour happens, the silence feels so long that there is a risk it will run into the ad break.

By far the most powerful moments come when the programme turns into a Dispatches-style undercover job. Morgan asks a group of disabled friends and campaigners to fly via three airlines and airports that have been criticised previously by disabled passengers. What follows is a jaw-dropping, maddening sequence of discrimination and incompetence. Paralysed passengers are shown stuck on a plane after everyone else has left because assistance didn't turn up. Others are told they can't board at all because their wheelchairs are too heavy, despite having been given approval. Several young women are manhandled out of their wheelchairs; one is bruised. As I watch yet another mobility aid get smashed, I am reminded why I haven't flown for a holiday in more than 20 years.

This is about practicalities, of course, but much of it is a matter of basic dignity and who is said to deserve it. At one point, we see one of the undercover campaigners, Spencer – who has a spinal-cord injury – ask a flight attendant whether the plane has an aisle chair in order for him to be able to transfer out of his seat to use the bathroom. They don't. We watch as he drags his body along the floor of the plane to get to the toilet.

In the most difficult scene to watch, we see Solomon – who has muscular dystrophy – stranded on a plane because a hoist fails to arrive. As the camera pauses over the sight of Solomon lying abandoned across three plane seats, the staff talking apologetically over him, the sense of degradation is palpable.

In the final minutes, Morgan gets a glimpse of the freedom she has been craving. Invited for a flight in a zero-gravity plane, she floats through the air unencumbered. I imagine I am meant to be most moved by this scene, but it is actually an earlier one – in which Morgan is shown a prototype for a wheelchair plane seat – that gets me. As Morgan rolls her wheelchair into the perfectly designed slot, you can practically feel the relief in her. The fix is so simple; almost insultingly so.

You find yourself coming back to the elephant that has been sitting quietly in the corner for the hour: if this problem affected anyone other than disabled customers, would this multibillion-pound industry have solved it decades ago? As one crying passenger says to camera: "We're treated like luggage, like cattle. And this can't continue any more."

Elsbeth
9pm, Sky Witness



Giving The Good Wife's disarmingly daffy lawyer Elsbeth Tascioni (Carrie Preston) her own Columbo-esque "howcatchem", transplanted from Chicago to New York, is such a no-brainer that you wonder why this spin-off has taken so long. Even better, The Wire's Wendell Pierce also features, as Captain Wagner, her boss at the NYPD, who recognises that this scatterbrained sleuth may just be on to something. In the first episode, she investigates a suspicious apparent suicide.
Ellen E Jones

What's On
Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Midsomer Murders
8pm, ITV1
Organic baking is usually considered a safe pursuit, but not in the UK's most dangerous fictional county. So when an artisan baker and his pastry-promoting wife revamp an old watermill, they ruffle a few of the locals' feathers. An incident with poisoned rolls follows.
Hannah Verdier

Roy Clarke Remembers Keeping Up Appearances
8pm, BBC Four
With British sitcoms being principally obsessed with class, it's no surprise to see the enduring success of Hyacinth Bucket. Her celebrated creator, Roy Clarke – also the brain behind Last of the Summer Wine and Open All Hours – reflects on her legacy and the genius of Patricia Routledge, the star who played her.
Ali Catterall

The Body Detectives
9pm, Channel 4
An eerie but cathartic documentary series in which a team identify some of the 1,000-plus anonymous bodies in the UK to bring closure to the families. They start off by looking for George Johnston, who vanished off the Norfolk coast in 1984 while on a holiday with his family after trying to help another family in distress.
Hollie Richardson

Battle in the Box
9pm, U&Dave
It's a fun concept: stick pairs of comedians in boxes and get Jimmy Carr to set them tasks through which they can win their freedom. But while Fatiha El-Ghorri and Josh Jones have a great time, Katherine Ryan looks bored stiff with Tom Rosenthal, who asks: "What are we doing with our lives, Katherine?" **HR**

Fugitive: The Mystery of the Crypto Queen
10pm, Channel 4
Who is Ruja Ignatova, the titular "crypto queen", wanted by the FBI for a $4.5bn cryptocurrency scam called OneCoin? And, after disappearing in 2017, where is she now? This mind-blowing three-part investigation starts by meeting some of the first investors in the UK, the US and Uganda. **HR**

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.30** Rip Off Britain (T) (R) **10.15** Expert Witness (T) (R) **10.45** Close Calls: On Camera (T) (R) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.35** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** News (T) **2.0** Rick Stein's Cornwall (T) (R) **2.30** Animal Park (T) (R) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **4.30** The Finish Line (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **Sort Your Life Out With Stacey Solomon** (T) (R) A family discover they own 521 odd socks, 75 Barbies and 28 games controllers.
9.0 **Death in Paradise** (T) (R) The team, headed by a new detective inspector, Neville Parker, investigate the death of a woman found electrocuted in a bathtub.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **Town of Steel** (T) A report on Tata Steel's plans to return to profitability at its Port Talbot plant.
11.40 **Paddy & Molly: Show No Mersey** (T) (R)
12.10 **Paddy & Molly: Show No Mersey** (T) (R) **12.40** Weather (T) **12.45** News (T)

BBC Two

6.30 **Bargain Hunt** (T) (R) **7.15** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: The Great British Sewing Bee (T) (R) **9.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Make Me a Dealer (T) (R) **2.30** The Hundred (T) Oval Invincibles Women v Birmingham Phoenix Women (start time 2.45pm).

6.0 **The Hundred** (T) Oval Invincibles Men v Birmingham Phoenix Men (start time 6.30pm). Coverage of the first round from the Oval, London.
9.30 **Mock the Week** (T) (R) Dara Ó Briain and Hugh Dennis are joined by Angela Barnes, Ed Byrne, Sean McLoughlin and Glenn Moore.

10.0 **Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps** (T) (R)
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.05 FILM **Before I Go to Sleep** (Rowan Joffe, 2014) (T) Thriller, with Nicole Kidman.
12.30 **Sign Zone** The Turkish Detective (T) (R) **1.20** The Turkish Detective (T) (R) **2.10** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **2.55** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Cooking With the Stars (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) (R) **5.0** The Chase (T) (R) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.0 **Midsomer Murders** (T) An organic bakery in the newly restored Larkton's Mill causes resentment among several villagers, but a series of incidents surrounding the business ends in a murder. Crime drama, with Neil Dudgeon, Nick Hendrix, Jo Martin and Laila Rouass.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 **Goodwood Festival of Speed Highlights** (T)
11.40 **Made in Britain** (T) (R) A look at the craftspeople who make acoustic guitars.
12.05 **Shop on TV 3.0** The Best of Saint & Greavsie (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Taste of Malta (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.25 **Cheers** (T) (R) **7.15** Everybody Loves Raymond (T) (R) **9.05** Frasier (T) (R) **11.05** Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes (T) (R) **11.10** Undercover Boss USA (T) (R) **12.05** News (T) **12.10** A New Life in the Sun (T) (R) **1.10** Car S.O.S (T) (R) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** A Place in the Sun (T) (R) **4.0** The Great House Giveaway (T) **5.0** A New Life in the Sun: Where Are They Now? (T) (R) **6.0** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **6.30** The Simpsons (T) (R) **7.0** News (T) **7.55** Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes (T)

8.0 **Worst House on the Street** (T) Scarlette and Stuart help married couple Ian and Steph renovate a derelict three-bedroom house.
9.0 **The Body Detectives** (T) New series. Following the work of an organisation that revisits forgotten cases, starting with the 1984 disappearance of George Johnstone.

10.0 **Fugitive: The Mystery of the Crypto Queen** (T)
11.05 **Women on Death Row** (T) New series.
12.10 **Embarrassing Bodies** (T) (R) **1.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **2.0** Car S.O.S (T) (R) **2.50** Becoming Elizabeth (T) (R) **3.55** Love It Or List It Australia (T) (R) **4.50** Frasier (T) (R) **5.45** Countdown (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake! 9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.30** Storm Huntley (T) **12.45** Friends (T) (R) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM When Mum Becomes a Murderer (Paula Elle, 2024) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Police Interceptors (T) (R) **7.0** Our Great Yorkshire Life (T)

8.0 **The Yorkshire Vet: At Home With the Greens** (T) Jean gets to see her farm from above when Peter Wright takes her on a helicopter ride.
9.0 **London '48: How Britain Saved the Olympics** (T) How the 1948 Olympic Games came into being, as the world struggled to cope after the second world war.

10.30 **The Cannibal Next Door** (T) (R) The case of Armin Meiwes.
11.30 **Crimes That Shook Britain** (T) (R) Rachel Nickell's death.
12.30 **Police Interceptors** (T) (R) **1.25** Live Casino Show (T) **3.25** Christmas Criminals: Caught on Camera (T) (R) **4.15** Inside the Balmoral: Scotland's Finest Hotel (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Coastal Path** (T) (R) The north Cornish coast. **7.30** Railway Walks With Julia Bradbury (T) (R) A journey through the Highlands.

8.0 **Roy Clarke Remembers Keeping Up Appearances** (T) The comedy writer looks back on one of his many hits.
8.15 **Keeping Up Appearances** (T) (R) Daddy sustains an injury.
8.45 **Butterflies** (T) (R) Ria is angered by a fox hunt.
9.15 **Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners** (T) (R) Presented by David Olusoga.

10.15 **Storyville: Attica – America's Bloodiest Prison Uprising** (T) (R) The 1971 riot at New York's Attica Correctional Facility.
12.05 **Art on the BBC: Constable – The Rural Rebel** (T) (R) **1.10** Paris (T) (R) **2.10** Railway Walks With Julia Bradbury (T) (R) **2.40** Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three

7.0pm Celebrity MasterChef **8.0** Gavin & Stacey **8.30** Ghosts US **8.50** The Catch Up **8.55** Ryan Tricks on the Streets **9.0** FILM The Impossible (2012) **10.40** This Country **11.10** This Country **11.40** Gavin & Stacey **12.05** Brickies **12.35** Brickies **1.05** My Mate's a Bad Date **1.30** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond **2.0** This Country **2.30** This Country **3.0** Brickies **3.30** Brickies

U&Dave

6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **7.35** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Top Gear **10.0** Extreme Salvage Squad **11.0** Extreme Salvage Squad **12.0** Storage Hunters UK **12.30** Storage Hunters UK **1.0** Storage Hunters UK **1.30** Storage Hunters UK **2.0** James May: My Sisters' Top Toys **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Top Gear **5.0** Gordon's Great Escape **6.0** Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey **7.0** Would I Lie to You? **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Richard Osman's House of Games **9.0** Battle in the Box **10.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **11.0** Taskmaster **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** Would I Lie to You? **1.20** Big Zuu's Big Eats **1.55** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **2.20** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **2.45** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.10** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4

6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Goldbergs **9.30** The Goldbergs **10.0** Young Sheldon **10.30** Young Sheldon **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Goldbergs **2.30** The Goldbergs **3.0** Modern Family **4.0** Young Sheldon **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** Celebrity Come Dine With Me **8.0** Below Deck **9.0** Gogglebox **10.0** Naked Attraction **11.05** First Dates **12.05** The Big Bang Theory **12.40** The Big Bang Theory **1.05** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.35** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **2.05** Modern Family **2.30** Modern Family **2.55** Below Deck **3.45** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.35** The Neighborhood **5.0** The Neighborhood **5.25** Brooklyn Nine-Nine

Film4

11.0am FILM Arthur's Hallowed Ground (1986) **12.35** FILM The Man from Colorado (1948) **2.40** FILM Father Goose (1964) **5.0** FILM An Affair to Remember (1957) **7.20** FILM Table 19 (2017) **9.0** FILM Jumanji: The Next Level (2019) **11.25** FILM Sick of Myself (2023) **1.20** FILM Blood Simple (1983)

ITV2

6.0am CITV **9.0** World's Funniest Videos **9.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **10.0** Love Bites **12.0** Dress to Impress **1.0** In With a Shout **2.0** Supermarket Sweep **3.0** Charmed **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Dress to Impress **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** In With a Shout **8.0** The Masked Singer US **9.0** Love Island **10.05** Extraordinary **10.35** Family Guy Guy **11.35** American Dad! **12.35** Shopping With Keith Lemon **1.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.15** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max

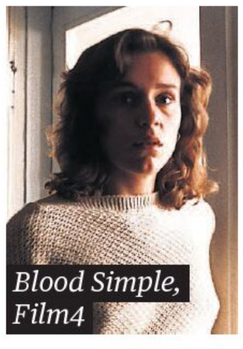
6.0am NCIS: New Orleans **7.0** SEAL Team **8.0** The Flash **9.0** Stargate SG-1 **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **12.0** The Flash **1.0** MacGyver **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** S.W.A.T **5.0** SEAL Team **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **7.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Agatha Raisin **10.0** The Walking Dead **11.0** The Force: Manchester **12.0** An Idiot Abroad **1.0** The Force: Manchester **2.0** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** S.W.A.T **5.0** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts

6.0am Classic FM Live: A Film Music Spectacular **8.0** The Joy of Painting **8.30** The Joy of Painting **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **10.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Matt Damon **12.0** Battle of the Bagpipes **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Freddie Mercury: Auction Special **3.0** Landscape Artist of the Year Canada **4.0** Discovering: Frances McDormand **5.0** The Joy of Painting **5.30** The Joy of Painting **6.0** Tales of the Unexpected **6.30** Tales of the Unexpected **7.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **8.0** Dickens: Phantoms and Fictions **9.0** The Warhol Effect **11.0** Stephen King on Screen **1.0** Wonderland: Gothic **2.0** The V&A Presents Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser **4.0** Cheltenham Literature Festival **5.0** The Art of Architecture

Sky Atlantic

6.0am Fish Town **7.55** Six Feet Under **10.05** Gomorrah **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** The Sopranos **3.30** Six Feet Under **5.40** Gomorrah **7.50** Game of Thrones **9.0** True Detective: Night Country **10.25** House of the Dragon **11.45** Winning Time: The Rise of the Lakers Dynasty **12.50** We Own This City **1.55** The Leftovers **3.0** Game of Thrones **4.10** Fish Town


Blood Simple, Film4

Radio

Radio 3

6.30am Breakfast **9.30** Essential Classics **1.0** Classical Live. Another chance to hear last Saturday night's Prom featuring Sir Mark Elder's final concert with the Hallé, performing James MacMillan's Timotheus, Bacchus and Cecilia, and Mahler's Symphony No 5. **4.0** Composer of the Week: Silvestre Revueltas (2/5) **5.0** In Tune **7.0** BBC Proms 2024: Prom 6. Ryan Bancroft conducts the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales and Crouch End Festival Chorus in Verdi's Requiem, with soloists soprano Latonia Moore, mezzo Karen Cargill, tenor SeokJong Baek and bass Soloman Howard. **8.45** New Generation Artists. Geneva Lewis plays Busoni's Violin Sonata No 2. **10.15** BBC Proms 2024: Prom 7. Counter-tenor Jakub Józef Orliński joins the ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro for a programme of early baroque music, including Monteverdi, Marini, Cavalli, Frescobaldi, Sartorio and Strozzi. **11.45** 'Round Midnight. Soweto Kinch is joined again by tuba player Theon Cross. **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4

6.0am Today **9.0** The Life Scientific. Prof Dawn Bonfield shares her optimism on engineering's power to change the world. (5/7) **9.30** Inside Health (1/6) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Screenshot (R) **11.45** Child (R) **12.0** News **12.04** Call You and Yours **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Escape from the Maze. The IRA tell a mother they must take away her 12-year-old son. (7/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** The Words. Drama, by Maryam Hamidi. An interpreter is reunited with a boy she helped seek asylum. With Mohsen Ghaffari and Shireen Farkhoy. **3.0** The Gatekeepers (R) **3.30** Beyond Belief. At the Bradford literature festival, three poets join Giles Fraser to consider whether poetry can bridge the gap between the physical and metaphysical worlds. (4/8) **4.0** Art That Conquered the World: The Hay Wain. James Fox asks how Constable's painting became one of the most famous in the world. **4.30** You're Dead to Me (R) **5.0** PM **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** Do Gooders. Workplace comedy set behind the scenes of the charity sector. (1/6) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** The Today Debate **8.45** In Touch **9.0** Crossing Continents (1/8) **9.30** The Bottom Line (R) **9.59** Weather **10.45** Book at Bedtime: Yellowface. By Rebecca F Kuang. (7/10) **11.0** Jon Holmes Says the C-Word. Jon and his guests discuss the moment a patient is told they have cancer. (3/10) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News and Weather **12.30** Child (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today

Radio 4 Extra

6.0am Julie Enfield Investigates: Terminus (2/5) **6.30** Detective (1/8) **7.0** Greywing (1/6) **7.30** The Goon Show **8.0** Miracles R Us (2/4) **8.30** Dark Matter (7/10) **8.45** Why Mummy Swears (2/5) **9.30** A Walk of One's Own: Virginia Woolf on Foot (2/4) **9.45** Daily Service **10.0** A Good Read (2/8) **10.30** Erin's Model World **11.0** Julie Enfield Investigates: Terminus (2/5) **11.30** Detective (1/8) **12.0** Greywing (1/6) **12.30** The Goon Show **1.0** Miracles R Us (2/4) **1.30** Dark Matter (7/10) **1.45** Why Mummy Swears (2/5) **2.0** Quote - Unquote (6/6) **2.30** A Whole 'Nother Story (6/6) **3.0** Rogue Herries (1/4) **4.0** A Good Read (2/8) **4.30** Erin's Model World **5.0** Julie Enfield Investigates: Terminus (2/5) **5.30** Detective (1/8) **6.0** Greywing (1/6) **6.30** The Goon Show **7.0** Miracles R Us (2/4) **7.30** Dark Matter (7/10) **7.45** Why Mummy Swears (2/5) **8.0** Quote - Unquote (6/6) **8.30** A Whole 'Nother Story (6/6) **9.0** Rogue Herries (1/4) **10.0** Comedy Club: Scott Bennett - Stuff **10.30** The Consultants (1/4) **10.45** Warhorses of Letters (1/4) **11.0** Clare in the Community (1/6) **11.30** Dave Podmore's World of Cricket (1/4) **12.0** A Good Read (2/8) **12.30** Erin's Model World **1.0** Julie Enfield Investigates: Terminus (2/5) **1.30** Detective (1/8) **2.0** Greywing (1/6) **2.30** The Goon Show **3.0** Miracles R Us (2/4) **3.30** Dark Matter (7/10) **3.45** Why Mummy Swears (2/5) **4.0** Quote - Unquote (6/6) **4.30** A Whole 'Nother Story (6/6) **5.0** Rogue Herries (1/4)

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch



Solution no 16,914

■	■	■	F	O	O	L	P	R	O	O	F	■	■	■
C	■	T	■	R	■	P	■	A	■	U	■	R	■	■
U	S	A	G	E	■	I	N	V	I	T	E	E	■	■
P	■	L	■	E	■	A	■	E	■	M	■	E	■	■
B	A	K	E	L	I	T	E	■	M	A	S	S	■	■
O	■	I	■	O	■	E	■	S	■	N	■	T	■	■
A	N	N	U	A	L	■	A	U	R	O	R	A	■	■
R	■	G	■	D	■	D	■	P	■	E	■	N	■	■
D	O	P	E	■	C	O	M	P	O	U	N	D	■	■
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Sudoku no 6,558

9	7	8	1	5	4	3	2	6
2	5	1	7	3	6	4	9	8
3	6	4	8	9	2	7	1	5
5	4	2	9	1	3	6	8	7
8	3	9	5	6	7	1	4	2
6	1	7	4	2	8	9	5	3
7	8	3	2	4	9	5	6	1
1	9	6	3	8	5	2	7	4
4	2	5	6	7	1	8	3	9

Word wheel

HYDRAULIC

Suguru

1	2	1	2	4	3
3	4	3	5	1	2
2	5	1	2	3	4
1	4	3	4	1	5
2	5	1	2	3	4
1	3	4	5	1	2

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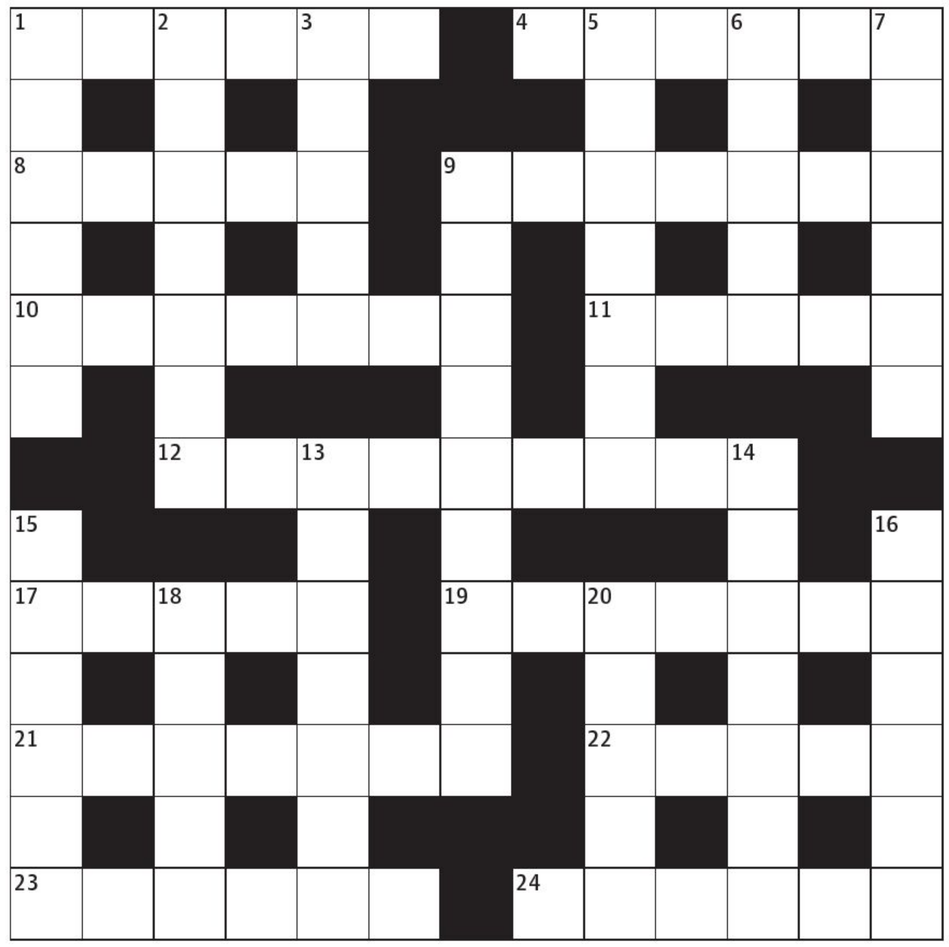
Quick crossword no 16,915

Across

1 Worldwide (6)
4 Sanctuary (6)
8 Handle (an awkward question) (5)
9 Chewy (meat) (7)
10 Chewy (pasta) (2,5)
11 Secretly tie the knot (5)
12 Brief __, 1945 film directed by David Lean (9)
17 Heavenly creature? (5)
19 From the distant past (7)
21 Further (a cause) (7)
22 Live (5)
23 Most bashful (6)
24 Thwart (6)

Down

1 Loud laugh (6)
2 Behind (7)
3 Accessory (3-2)
5 An excessive amount (of something) (7)
6 (Slang) unfamiliar vocabulary (5)
7 Chaos (6)
9 Guess or gamble (9)
13 Cold-hearted (7)
14 Rare metal, Re, used in the process for making lead-free petrol (7)
15 University setting (6)
16 Liberty or The Little Mermaid? (6)
18 Comical - Disney character (5)
20 Narrow opening (5)



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Sudoku no 6,559

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

			4					1
			2			7		
		3		1		6	5	
5	1				9			
		6					9	
			8			2		5
	4	9			8			6
		2		4				
6					2	3		7

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

					5
2		4	2		
5					
		5		3	

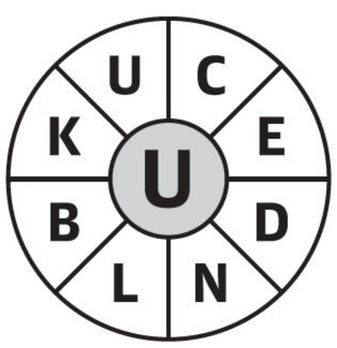
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 words connected with winter in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

U	G	P	T	H	A	I	L	S
C	H	I	L	L	Y	S	L	O
W	T	P	M	A	D	E	Y	E
B	A	N	S	O	E	T	T	E
L	Y	R	E	T	S	U	L	B
I	E	S	N	O	W	M	A	N
Z	H	L	R	U	A	Y	C	E
Z	W	F	C	R	E	E	O	Z
A	G	I	A	I	N	R	L	O
R	M	I	N	S	C	G	D	R
D	N	O	T	D	P	I	E	F

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-34. Good-29. Average-21.



Trivia corner

What's the name of the album Charli xcx released before Brat?
a. Sucker
b. Charli
c. Crash
d. How I'm Feeling Now
Answer top right

