



Are you making your child anxious?

INSIDE TIMES2

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Donor dollars pour in as Harris promises victory

● Democrats unite behind Biden's pick for president ● Together we're going to win this, she says

David Charter Washington Keiran Southern Los Angeles

Kamala Harris declared "we're going to win this" as she received an unprecedented surge of more than \$230 million from Democrat donors keen to see her elected as America's first female president in November.

The Democratic Party rushed to unite behind Harris after President Biden called time on his campaign on Sunday, making it all but certain that she will be their new candidate to take on Donald Trump.

Her fledgling campaign announced that it had received \$81 million in the 24 hours after Biden's withdrawal, a record amount, and a Democratic fundraising committee brought in a further \$150 million.

She received the backing of numerous potential rivals for the nomination as well as senior Democrats, including Nancy Pelosi, the party veteran who helped to orchestrate the campaign pressuring Biden to step aside. "I have full confidence she will lead us to victory in November," Pelosi said. Barack Obama, the former president, has yet to endorse Harris formally.

The Democrats will now hope to present a united front at the party's convention in Chicago next month — just as the Republicans did in Milwaukee last week when they confirmed Trump as their candidate.

"One day down. 105 to go. Together, we're going to win this," Harris posted on Twitter/X as she travelled to the election campaign headquarters she is set to inherit from Biden in his home city of Wilmington, Delaware.

Harris, 59, earlier praised Biden's record as "unmatched in modern history" when she seized the chance to look presidential in front of the White House for an event while filling in for Biden, who has contracted Covid.

"In one term he has already surpassed the legacy of most presidents who have served two terms," Harris said. "I am a first-hand witness that every day our president Joe Biden fights for the American people and we are



Kamala Harris's bid to secure the Democratic presidential nomination has been backed by senior party figures and donors

deeply, deeply grateful for his service to our nation." Biden plans to serve out his remaining six months in office, although his critics argue that if he is unfit to run for re-election he should stand down now.

Republican attacks on Harris were led by Trump on his Truth Social site. "Wow, just watching the Fake News, and they're doing their very best to turn the Worst President in the History of

our Country into a 'Brilliant and Heroic Leader' (He was heroic because he quit!), and to turn 'Dumb as a Rock' Kamala Harris from a totally failed and insignificant Vice President into a future 'Great' President. No, it just doesn't work that way!" he wrote.

JD Vance, Trump's running-mate, accused "elite" Democrats who engineered Biden's departure of being "a threat to democracy". Robert F Kenne-

dy Jr, a former Democrat running as an independent, told Piers Morgan Uncensored that Harris was the "concealer in chief" of Biden's frailties. He added: "I think she has a lot of other vulnerabilities that we are going to hear more and more about and which are essentially going to make her unelectable."

US politics, pages 6-9 Doubts surround Biden's probable replacement, leading article, page 25

Britons no longer think honesty the best policy

Max Kendix Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Britain is growing increasingly tolerant of fraud and theft, a trend that will cost the benefits system an extra £2 billion a year, the government has claimed.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) said that Britain's "growing propensity to commit fraud" — fuelled by a society increasingly tolerant of dishonesty — was making it harder to control the cost of claimants ripping off the benefits system.

Benefit fraud is likely to rise by 5 per cent a year because of a broader social trend in which people are increasingly willing to cheat and steal from businesses and government, the department said in its annual report that assesses the state of the benefits system.

Tolerance of tax evasion and benefit fraud by others has also risen, with officials citing a recent study suggesting that one in five Britons can now be classed as having "low integrity", up from one in 14 just over a decade ago.

Last year a study by the University of Portsmouth measured people's integrity based on whether they were prepared to commit "deviant acts". The original research in 2011 found that 85 per cent of respondents thought that falsely claiming benefits was never justified. Last year the comparable figure was 67 per cent.

In its annual report published yesterday, the DWP said its efforts to combat fraud were running into a "headwind" of an increasingly dishonest society that had consistently pushed up losses in the benefits system.

About £7.4 billion a year is lost to benefit fraud and the DWP warned that the £266 billion welfare budget was a "deliberate target" for organised crime and "opportunistic individuals".

Fraud against business is increasing by 11 per cent a year, twice the pre-pandemic rate, according to figures from the Cifas fraud database analysed by the DWP. Those figures also showed that 12 per cent of people admitted having committed fraud in areas such as car insurance, up from 8 per cent in 2021.

There has also been a "notable uptick Continued on page 2

IN THE NEWS

Cancer testing plea

Prostate cancer specialists say thousands of lives could be saved if GPs start proactively offering blood tests that can help detect the disease to men at the highest risk. Page 2

Benefit cap 'rethink'

Sir Keir Starmer opened the door to the eventual scrapping of the two-child benefit cap as he acknowledged anger in his party over maintaining the policy. Page 12

McKay dig ended

Police digging in farmland for the remains of Muriel McKay, who was kidnapped in a case of mistaken identity, have ended their search without finding her body. Page 19

Israelis 'unwelcome'

A left-wing member of the French parliament has been accused of inciting attacks on Israelis at the Paris Olympics after saying that they were not welcome at the Games. Page 26

Carpentright rescue

Lord Harris of Peckham has struck a multimillion-pound deal to rescue Carpentright, the retailer he built from scratch, in a move that will save more than 300 jobs. Page 29

Player collapsed

Ben Youngs, who retired from playing rugby for England last year, said he thought he was going to die after collapsing during training because of a heart condition. Page 60

News

Today's highlights

- 7am** Liz Kendall, right, work and pensions secretary
- 10.15am** How To Win An Election with political masterminds **Peter Mandelson**, **Polly Mackenzie** and **Daniel Finkelstein**
- 2.45pm** Satirist **Armando Iannucci** on the race for the White House
- 3.30pm** Broadcaster **Elizabeth Day** and author **Sara Collins** discuss their new podcast How To Write A Book

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TODAY'S EDITION

NEWS



MYTH MADE REAL
A Bonnie Prince Charlie shooting legend may be true

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Adam Peaty on his Olympic plans to break world record

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OFFICE POLITICS
Stuart Heritage on the new nicknames for colleagues

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



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Can Kamala Harris beat Donald Trump?

Joe Biden has stepped down as the Democratic presidential nominee and endorsed Kamala Harris. So, what happens next? Are there others in the running? And, crucially, can she beat Donald Trump?

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THE WEATHER



A largely dry day with sunny spells. Any showers clear eastwards in the morning. Full forecast, page 49

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Prostate cancer experts urge NHS tests for high-risk men

Eleanor Hayward Health Editor

Thousands of lives could be saved if the NHS overhauled “dangerously outdated” guidelines that stop men getting tested for prostate cancer, landmark research has concluded. A coalition of Britain’s leading prostate cancer specialists has written a statement calling for GPs to start proactively offering high-risk men blood tests that can help to detect the disease, in a “significant milestone”.

The simple test measures levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA), a protein that can be elevated in men with prostate cancer.

Under existing guidelines, doctors are told not to raise the subject of PSA tests unless men have cancer symptoms. Men aged over 50 without symptoms can request a test on the NHS, but the responsibility lies with them to initiate it and book a GP appointment.

Experts say this means that too many men are in the dark about whether or not they have the disease, as prostate cancer often does not cause any symptoms for several years.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, with 52,000 cases and 12,000 deaths each year in the UK. Unlike breast and bowel cancer, there is no NHS screening programme for those without symptoms. This means about half of prostate cancer patients do not get a diagnosis until a late stage, when it has already spread and is hard to treat.

The use of PSA tests is controversial in medicine, as they have been seen as too unreliable to be used as a routine screening tool. Three quarters of men with a raised PSA do not have cancer, and one in seven men who do have cancer will have a normal PSA result.

However, a new paper argues that improvements in technology mean the balance has now tipped in favour of offering some men blood tests, as those

Case study

When Tony Collier visited a doctor about pain in his groin, he thought that it was just a sports injury caused by running. It turned out to be incurable stage four prostate cancer (Eleanor Hayward writes).

Collier’s cancer had been there undetected for several years and had he been offered a PSA test by his GP the cancer might have been caught while it was still curable.

Collier, from Altrincham in Greater Manchester, has contributed to the new guidance that aims to overhaul NHS procedures in the hope of saving the lives of men in his position.

He said: “I was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer in 2017 after speaking to a sports injuries doctor about what I thought was just a runner’s groin strain.

“Unfortunately, it turned out to be far more serious, and the pain was caused by cancer which had spread extensively to my bones. I was originally given just two years to live and was told at the time that I could have had the cancer for ten years already without having any symptoms.

“I’ve been lucky that new treatments mean I’ve been able to keep the cancer at bay and have now far outlived my original prognosis.

“That’s why I’m so determined to give back and have worked hard over the years to raise awareness and hopefully save lives by getting more men diagnosed earlier.”

with raised levels will be sent for accurate MRI scans to confirm a diagnosis.

The “PSA consensus statement”, published in the British Journal of General Practice, was written by a panel of 15 prostate cancer experts and backed by the charity Prostate Cancer UK.

It argues that from now on GPs should “proactively discuss” the PSA blood test with black men over the age of 45, and men with a family history of prostate cancer — groups who are twice as likely to get the disease. More should be done to ensure that all men over 50 feel empowered to request a PSA test, it argues.

Amy Rylance, the head of improving care at Prostate Cancer UK, said: “It’s been clear for some time that NHS guidelines which prevent GPs from raising the subject of prostate cancer are dangerously outdated and deeply unfair to the men who face double the risk of getting the disease.

“Leaving men in the dark about their risk means too many men are getting diagnosed with incurable prostate cancer, and this disproportionately affects black men and men living in deprived areas.

“Now, the UK’s leading urologists, clinicians and researchers are joining our call to change these rules and finally enable healthcare professionals to initiate life-saving conversations with the men at highest risk.”

The charity said updated guidelines could be implemented within 12 months, meaning men would be offered PSA tests from next year.

The guidance would help to bridge the gap to the first ever national screening programme, which researchers are devising via a landmark £42 million trial, called Transform. This will assess different screening methods, including DNA tests and PSA tests, to find the best method to screen for the cancer, with the aim of cutting deaths from the disease by 40 per cent.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 Fraud on the rise

in shoplifting, which may suggest an increasing motivation to commit fraud/crime in order to ease financial pressure”, the DWP said, with reports to the police increasing by 35 per cent last year. The department linked this rise to the cost of living crisis, but also cited data from the British Social Attitudes survey to conclude that “attitudes towards benefit fraud have softened”.

The most recent data from that survey shows that 27 per cent said it was “not wrong” or only “a bit wrong” for someone on unemployment benefits to take a cash-in-hand job without reporting it, up from 16 per cent in 2016. Although 66 per cent said this was

wrong or seriously wrong, this was down from 80 per cent eight years ago.

“A range of evidence indicates that there is a long-term rising trend in fraudulent behaviour towards organisations and a softening of attitudes regarding fraud in wider society,” the report said.

In the 12 months to March, the government lost about 2.8 per cent of total welfare spending to fraud. This was higher than the previous year and double pre-pandemic levels. The department estimated that the “long-term behavioural trend” would mean a 5 per cent annual increase in losses from fraud each year over the next five years, suggesting taxpayers would lose £9.5 billion a year to fraud by 2029.

The increase is being mitigated by

anti-fraud measures, the government said, including by implementing identity checks when claiming benefits.

Edward Davies, policy director at the Centre for Social Justice, an independent centre-right think tank, said: “The pandemic seemed to somewhere break the social contract and pour petrol on harmful behaviours — we’ve seen that coming through in economic inactivity, school exclusions and now fraud.”

He said, though, that the report made a “pretty bold statement” for a government department.

A DWP spokesman said: “This government will not tolerate fraud or waste anywhere in public services. We are determined to reduce fraud and error and are currently exploring all options on how best to achieve our goal.”

Tories plan to name new leader in November

Steven Swinford Political Editor

Conservative MPs have drawn up plans for a long leadership contest in which the final four candidates will take to the stage at the party conference before the winner is announced on November 2.

The 1922 Committee of backbench Tory MPs and the board of the Conservative Party are expected to start the contest this week.

The committee’s executive body has discussed a contest that would run for just over three months, with a “beauty parade” of four candidates at the Tory conference at the end of September. Rishi Sunak has given his support to the

plans and will stay on until November 2. He believes that doing so is in both the national interest and that of his party.

Under the plans, nominations would open tomorrow, with as many as eight of the 121 Tory MPs planning to stand: Kemi Badenoch, Dame Priti Patel, Robert Jenrick, Suella Braverman, James Cleverly, Tom Tugendhat, Victoria Atkins and Mel Stride.

Some are likely to fall at the first hurdle as they are expected to need the support of a dozen colleagues to take part in the contest. Nominations will close at the beginning of next week.

Candidates will be able to use the summer recess, which begins next

week, to tour the country. The first four ballots will take place when parliament returns in early September, whittling down the number of candidates to four by the time of the Tory conference.

The final four will be given the opportunity to speak on the conference platform and address party members before the final ballots in early October. These candidates will then be reduced to two, who will then be put to a ballot of members. Campaign teams are being set up, but contenders are nervous about announcing their intention to stand until a timetable is in place.

Tories could take leaf out of JD Vance’s book, Melanie Phillips, page 22

British Library wanted Philby archive

Jack Malvern

Even in death Kim Philby caused trouble for the British government, as it agonised over how to handle the personal possessions of the country's most notorious double agent.

Confidential memos released today at the National Archives show that officials fretted over Philby's widow's offer to sell her husband's "Moscow archive" to the British Library for £68,000.

The library wanted the archive but was anxious not to give public money to the traitor's widow. Officials at Downing Street and the Cabinet Office intervened to dissuade the library, even though they preferred the idea of a British institution holding the documents rather than an American university.

M16 advised John Major's government that the archive may contain "damaging material" that a US institution would be more likely to release.

Philby died in 1988 in Moscow, where he was buried as a hero of the Soviet Union for betraying British secrets that led to the deaths of hundreds, if not thousands, of agents. He was the most successful of the Cambridge spies, recruited at university and rising to become M16's chief operator in Washington. He came under suspicion in 1951, was exonerated in 1955 but unmasked in 1963.

He had worked as a journalist for *The Times*, including covering the Spanish Civil War, and he was briefly embedded with the British Expeditionary Force after the outbreak of the Second World War.

Rufina Pukhova, his widow, approached the library in July 1993 as she sought a better standard of living than she could afford on her husband's KGB pension of £25 a month.

Michael Borrie, manuscripts librarian at the British Library, wrote to the Cabinet Office on July 7, 1993, to report Pukhova's offer. "The chief executive feels that these should be in a British public institution, provided they are what they purport to be, and have not been sanitised or made a vehicle for disinformation," he said. "He is not however willing to spend grant-in-aid on them, and is looking for a benefactor. But we must first prevail upon Mrs Philby to send them to London, for a thorough inspection."

The library wondered if Max Has-



Kim Philby was exonerated of accusations of espionage in 1955 before he was finally unmasked eight years later. In the mid-Nineties John Major's government agonised over how to handle the sale of his possessions



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Philby: I spied for Russia from 1933

advantage to the library owning it was that they would be "more biddable" than other buyers in restricting access. Rather than approach the library directly, he arranged for the Department of National Heritage to have a quiet word with the library's trustees.

Sibson wrote: "We suspect that there might be something of an outcry if it became known that a public body had been involved, even in this indirect way, in a transaction which would enrich a traitor's widow."

The library dropped out of negotiations and the archive was later offered at Sotheby's. Butler arranged for an official to visit to the auction house, writing to its chairman: "The government would have an interest in any material which might still be damaging to national security, and it would be

helpful if we could have sight of the relevant items before they are made publicly available."

Sotheby's responded that someone would be welcome to "cast their eye over Philby's personal effects".

It is unclear whether Sotheby's sold the entire archive or if some items were withheld. The bookseller who offered the archive to the library noted that it included Philby's first lecture to the KGB in 1977, correspondence with students and an article about "how to behave when a field agent is arrested".

The auction, which was held in London in July 1994, was a success for Philby's widow. It raised a total of £150,000, including £26,450 for the star lot: a collection of 11 letters to Philby from his friend, the author Graham Greene.

Aides told Blair to resist TV debate

Jack Malvern

Tony Blair was convinced to resist calls for a televised leaders' debate in the run-up to the 2001 general election as staff argued that it would be "neither informative, illuminating, entertaining nor in any way significant in determining the election outcome".

A declassified file at the National Archives shows that if Blair had been tempted to take part, it would have been against his staff's wishes.

At the time, William Hague, as leader of the opposition, wished to draw Blair into a TV contest in the hope of outsmarting him with his debating skills.

A memo written by Bruce Grocott, Blair's parliamentary private secretary, argued that there was nothing to gain

from appearing. "The best illustration of their irrelevance is that whenever the subject is mentioned, the clip is shown of Kennedy/Nixon which was held 40 years ago and which is the only possible example that anyone can trawl of one that was in any way memorable," Grocott wrote in January 2001, five months before the election.

John F Kennedy's debate with Richard Nixon in September 1960 was striking for the Republican leader's refusal to wear make-up, exposing his stubble, and his perspiration under the studio lights. It is questionable whether it affected voters. Kennedy was slightly further ahead on the day of the debate than he was on election day.

The only televised debate with Tony Blair, with his wife Cherie, was ahead in the polls in 2001



a tangible outcome is Joe Biden's recent debate with Donald Trump, which prompted figures from his own party to urge him to step aside three weeks before he reluctantly did so.

Blair's refusal to engage infuriated Hague and Charles Kennedy of the Liberal Democrats but, with Labour well ahead in the polls, party strategists saw no reason to agree.

In his memorandum, Grocott argued that the televising of their weekly encounters at prime minister's questions meant UK voters were well-used to seeing the party leaders go head-to-head. "They are watched by up to one million people and in the course of a parliament cover several hours.

"All previous prime ministers, Labour and Conservatives, whether ahead in the opinion polls or behind, have been consistent in their view that it would not be a good idea to introduce American-style TV debates in Britain and have refused all requests to do so."

Plea for political battle bus to avoid costume dramas

Jack Malvern

Downing Street officials wanted to buy a "battle bus" with a room for Tony Blair to change outfits to make tours of the regions easier, according to a declassified memo at the National Archives.

Political parties regularly hire buses for election campaigns but staff at No 10 suggested in February 2000 that buying one would make regional tours look less like "a travelling circus".

Owen Barder, an economics adviser to the prime minister, said that the vehicle could be fitted with secure telecoms, including fax and email, as well as TV with a video recorder and a high-volume photocopier, with space for the prime minister to change clothes or to consult advisers. He noted that "several hotels in the southwest have benefited from additional facilities being installed

at our expense this week" as secure lines were put in at short notice.

Barder lamented that when Blair visited Exeter University, there was no way to brief him over a secure line about Northern Ireland peace talks.

"The present arrangement by which a comms engineer from the Cabinet Office sets up secure communications in the overnight hotel is expensive and inflexible," he wrote. "The day is characterised by frantic rushing to and from the vehicles with heavy bags of equipment. The amount of equipment we set up at each location adds to the public impression of a travelling circus rather than an efficient and lean machine."

Jeremy Heywood, the cabinet secretary, responded in a handwritten note that it was "OK to scope very privately" but it was "not a big priority".

No such bus ever materialised.



Sit! Clare Gould, of Kalliwyck Gundogs, will be at the Game Fair at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, this weekend, where working dogs will be put through their paces

Optional digital ID can be used as your one-stop proof of identity

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor
Mark Sellman
Technology Correspondent

People will soon be able to prove their identity for paying tax or opening a bank account with a government-backed “digital ID”, ministers say.

A “trust mark” for approved verification products will be created under a data bill in the King’s Speech to make it easier for people to prove their identity as ministers seek alternatives to ID cards.

A “single sign-on” for all government services is also being accelerated to avoid the need to remember multiple passwords under a scheme that approaches a unique citizen’s digital ID.

The government has ruled out ID cards and insists that it will never make digital ID mandatory. Sir Tony Blair, the former prime minister, argues that

digital IDs would be an easy way to prove people’s right to live and work in Britain, and make it easier to manage passports, medical appointments and proof of qualifications.

However, Peter Kyle, the science and technology secretary, wants to avoid rows about civil liberties by focusing on practical steps to make it easier for people to interact with government and commercial services. At present there are 191 ways to set up online accounts with public services, and 44 sign-in methods.

Kyle wants to unify these into a single sign-on alongside measures under which the government would approve commercial identity verification products. These companies check people’s name, date of birth and address against a variety of databases, as well as using AI to assess someone’s age.

Under a Digital Information and

Smart Data Bill promised in the King’s Speech, the government is committed to developing trustworthy digital verification services.

“Digital identity services are already being used by millions of people to save time,” Kyle said. “These cut down admin and increase security, making it much easier to open bank accounts, start jobs, rent flats and much more.

“We will give certified services a trust mark so people can find the digital identity providers that are following our strict security and data-processing rules.”

A public register of products meeting government standards will be published on gov.uk. The government has already started laying the foundations for digital ID, having certified apps from Yoti, the Post Office and Lloyds Bank to prove age and identity.

Officials say that people would still

be able to use paper documents such as passports and utility bills to prove their identity. Privacy campaigners are calling for this right to be written into the bill to ensure that it did not become impossible for people to conduct everyday life without a digital ID.

Susannah Copson, of the campaign group Big Brother Watch, said: “The proposed convenience of digital IDs becomes a problem when they become mandatory for basic functions. That could range from accessing public services to buying alcohol. What matters is that people have a choice. The government should seize the opportunity in the new data bill to create a legal right for people to use non-digital ID to ensure that they stay an option.”

According to TechUK, an industry lobby group, the adoption of Digital ID could add £800 million a year to the UK economy.

Britain ‘far off track’ to decarbonise by 2030 target

Emma Powell, Ben Cooke

Britain is likely to miss a new government target to fully decarbonise the electricity system by 2030 because the country is not on track to build enough new wind and solar farms, energy experts have warned.

Solar and wind power is on course to account for 44 per cent of the nation’s electricity supply by 2030, according to a new analysis from Cornwall Insight. However, this is short of the estimated 67 per cent that the energy sector consultancy believes would be needed to hit net zero, a pledge made by Labour in its general election campaign.

The government has set out a plan to

double onshore wind, to triple solar power and to quadruple offshore wind capacity by 2030, lifting a de facto ban on the construction of new onshore wind power days after the election.

However, the amount of offshore and onshore wind on the electricity grid needs to roughly double beyond existing projections to decarbonise the power system, while solar generation must increase by about a fifth. Wind and solar accounted for 34.3 per cent of the UK’s electricity supply last year, while gas remained the biggest single generation source at 32 per cent of the electricity mix.

Tom Edwards, principal modeller at Cornwall Insight, said the findings

underscored the “urgent need for a step-change” in Britain’s approach to delivering new green energy capacity. “Without significant intervention, we risk falling far short of the decarbonisation goals,” 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 plethora of other policy changes will be needed to make a 2030 zero-carbon power system a realistic target.”

The consultancy said that an extra £48 billion would have to be spent on new clean power to hit the govern-

ment’s goals, in addition to the £18 billion it is predicted that upcoming energy projects will cost.

It comes as a study by the Resolution Foundation think tank has found that planning applications for wind, solar and battery projects are clustered in the richest 40 per cent of neighbourhoods.

A spokesman for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 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 wind farms, consented to more solar power than has been installed in the past year and set out plans for a solar rooftop revolution.”

Quintagram® No 2001

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Profound (4)

— — — —

2 Towards the exterior (5)

— — — — —

3 Twofold (6)

— — — — — —

4 Of the individual (8)

— — — — — — — —

5 Inhalation and exhalation (9)

— — — — — — — — —

A	A	B	B	D	D	E	E
E	E	O	O	G	H	I	L
L	N	N	O	O	P	P	
R	R	R	S	T	T	U	U

Solutions see T2 MindGames p15
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

TV station mergers

UK broadcasters will need to merge to compete, the former chairman of ITV has said. Sir Peter Bazalgette said BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 would have to band together if they wanted to rival Amazon Prime, Netflix and Disney+. He told the Beeb Watch podcast: “One of the main changes there are going to have to be is — across the whole of Europe, actually — many mergers. You need a bigger commissioning pot of money to make programmes that people want to go to your service for.”

Sex harassment case

A property manager has won a sexual harassment case after her boss bombarded her with text messages and suggested they go to his house in Turkey to do “all the fun stuff”. Dilawar Khan, 47, of Norfolk-based Alpha Property Management and Services, made “inappropriate” offers of dinner to Frances MacDonald and spoke about satisfying his “sexual needs”, an employment tribunal in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, was told. Compensation will be assessed later after a judge ruled she had been harassed by Khan.

Bombing survivors sue

The Manchester Arena attack affected a survivor’s life “in every conceivable way”, the High Court in London was told at the start of a case against a man who claims the bombing was faked. The survivors Martin and Eve Hibbert are suing Richard Hall for harassment and data protection. The father and daughter were at the Ariana Grande concert in May 2017 and suffered life-changing injuries. The trial before Mrs Justice Steyn ends on Thursday with a decision later.

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Teenager fatally shot at family fun day in London park is named

Debbie White, Kieran Gair

The schoolboy who was shot dead at a family fun day in front of horrified on-lookers at a park in west London has been named by police as 15-year-old Rene Graham.

The teenager was pronounced dead at Emslie Horniman's Pleasance, near Ladbrooke Grove, at about 7.20pm on Sunday. Four men, two aged 21 and the others 20 and 25, were arrested on suspicion of murder and remained in custody, the Metropolitan Police said.

At the time of the attack it is believed that more than 1,000 people were attending the annual Park Lime event, organised by the Caribbean Music Association, which was billed as a family fun day featuring live music, games and face-painting.

Jediah Ali, a youth worker who planned to attend but changed his mind, was told about the shooting. He said: "One friend described seeing a 15-year-old boy lying with his eyes just open — and he's quite traumatised by that."

Ali, who has lived in the neighbour-

hood for 15 years, said that violence in the area was "not new", adding: "I've got a heavy heart, but I've witnessed this time and time again. The likelihood is that things of this nature are going to keep happening unless the root causes are discovered and treated."

Detective Chief Superintendent Christina Jessah, of the Metropolitan Police, 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."



Rene Graham, 15, was pronounced dead on Sunday

We are keen to speak to other witnesses. 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 that may help detectives."

A crew for the crime thriller *Fuze*, starring Theo James and Aaron Taylor-Johnson, were due to film in the park yesterday but were told by the police to delay their plans as the site of the shooting was cordoned off.

Emslie Horniman's Pleasance is known locally as "Teletubbies Park" because of its brightly coloured children's play area.

Anyone with information can call 101 or report information anonymously to the independent charity Crime-stoppers on 0800 555 111.

ME patient died after 'worst treatment' GP had ever seen

Fiona Hamilton Chief Reporter

A young woman who suffered for years with the debilitating illness myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) pleaded with her GP to "please help me get enough food to live" just weeks before her death at the age of 27.

Maeve Boothby-O'Neill wrote that she did not understand why the hospital was not helping her, that she was so exhausted she had been unable to sit up or chew for months, and that "I am hungry, I want to eat", an inquest was told.

She died less than three months later on October 3, 2021.

Maeve, the eldest daughter of Sean O'Neill, a senior journalist at The Times, had been rendered housebound having suffered from ME, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome, since her early teens. But she deteriorated badly in 2021, suffering from malnutrition because she was too exhausted to eat. She was admitted to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital three times that year but refused a fourth admission after being told there was no treatment to alleviate her condition.

Dr Lucy Shenton, who had been Maeve's GP for years and was fond of her patient, is so traumatised by her death that she will not give evidence at her landmark inquest, which began on Monday at Exeter county court.

Shenton was due to be the first witness at the inquest, which will examine delays in providing Maeve with palliative care and whether different clinical decisions might have saved her life.

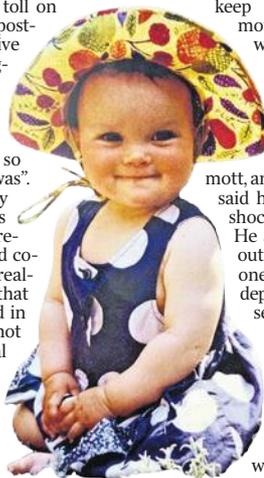
However, Deborah Archer, the coroner, said Shenton was being treated by a clinical psychologist who "felt that the stress and Maeve's tragic death had taken a very significant toll on her". She was suffering post-traumatic stress and to give evidence would likely trigger a mental health breakdown.

O'Neill told the hearing that Shenton said she had "never seen anyone so poorly treated as Maeve was". As Maeve's health rapidly declined, the inquest was told, Shenton's repeated requests for specialised and co-ordinated help were not realised. Shenton said that "several doctors involved in her care stated they do not believe ME is a medical problem".

Maeve was admitted to hospital on March 18 but discharged on the same day when a doctor said he could not "see any medical reason to



Maeve Boothby-O'Neill, above and below, died aged 27 after suffering from ME since her early teens. She was admitted to hospital three times before her death in 2021, and had asked for help with feeding because she could not swallow solids



keep [her] in". Maeve's mother, Sarah Boothby, was calling for her to be given a nasogastric feeding tube and said that Maeve's treatment was the "NHS at its worst".

Dr Paul McDermott, another of Maeve's GPs, said he was "surprised and shocked" at her discharge. He and Shenton had run out of options and someone needed to take an in-depth look: "We were sending her in, then, boom, she comes out the same day."

Maeve was admitted a second time on May 18 and discharged on June 3. Doctors said they were "content" with her nutritional intake. She was

losing weight at a rate of two kilograms a week, could not swallow solids and was taking paltry amounts of fluids.

Maeve lived in a darkened room at her mother's home in Exeter, was so tired that she could not read or watch television and could barely speak.

A psychologist who never saw Maeve questioned whether she was in the early stages of hypomania, but other medical experts agreed that she wanted to live and mental illness was ruled out.

On June 18 Maeve emailed Shenton: "I know you are doing your best for me but I really need help with feeding. I don't understand why the hospital didn't do anything for me when I went in. I have been unable to sit up or chew since March ... Please help me get enough food to live."

She was readmitted on June 23 and discharged on August 17. She did not want to return, as her condition worsened with each visit, but she "doesn't want to die", Shenton recorded.

In September, Shenton wrote in

notes that "if I could do anything I would, it's breaking my heart". Maeve texted her on September 29 that "you are the first doctor who tried to help me get well, this means everything to me". She added: "I only wish I could have been a more treatable patient".

In early October the hospital offered her IV administered nutrition, which Maeve said she would have accepted were it offered earlier but "it is too late". Shenton's notes read: "Her confidence and faith in the NHS has been very low for quite a while because of the sense people don't believe her."

Maeve told her GP she wished she could live but, as there was no treatment for ME, IV feeding and further hospital admissions would just "prolong the agony".

Maeve was described as an articulate and intelligent young woman whose dreams of travelling abroad and going to university were derailed by illness.

The inquest, in Exeter, is expected to last two weeks.

Stars fight 'injustice' of M25 protest prison terms

Ali Mitib

More than 1,100 lawyers, academics, artists and celebrities have called for an urgent meeting with the attorney-general to address the "injustice" of the sentences given to five environmental activists.

Roger Hallam, 58, was jailed for five years last week for co-ordinating the protest that disrupted the M25 over four days in 2022, during which 45 activists climbed gantries on the motorway, forcing the police to stop traffic. Daniel Shaw, 38, Lucia Whittaker de Abreu, 35, Louise Lancaster, 58, and Cressida Gethin, 22, were each given four years in jail after being found guilty along with Hallam of conspiracy to cause a public nuisance.

The jail terms exceed those given to two Just Stop Oil activists who scaled the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge Dartford Crossing in October 2022.

Last week the prime minister faced calls to intervene in the case of the activists, known as the Whole Truth Five, and the UN human rights commissioner described the sentences as deeply troubling and disproportionate. Dale Vince, the millionaire Labour donor, and Chris Packham, the naturalist, called for a meeting with Richard Hermer KC, the attorney-general, with Packham describing the sentence as a "grotesque miscarriage of justice".

In a letter to Hermer, more than 1,100 signatories, including Lord Williams of Oystermouth, the former Archbishop of Canterbury; Sir Geoffrey Bindman KC, one of the country's most distinguished human rights lawyers; and the artist Dame Tracey Emin echoed the call by Vince and Packham.

The letter, which is also signed by Sir David King, the former chief scientific adviser to the government, Chris Martin, the Coldplay frontman, and Sir Philip Pullman, author of the *His Dark Materials* trilogy, described the sentencing as "one of the greatest injustices in a British court in modern history".

Other signatories include the food writer and broadcaster Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Toby Jones, the star of *Mr Bates vs The Post Office*, Danny Boyle, the *Trainspotting* director, Lord Cashman and the singer Annie Lennox.

"With prisons at breaking point ... how can these sentences be seen as anything other than insanity?" the letter says. It adds that the five activists were "fulfilling a necessary service by alerting the nation to the grave risk we all face".

The trial at Southwark crown court was told that the M25 protest caused economic damage amounting to £765,000, and that the cost to the Metropolitan Police was more than £1.1 million.

News US politics

Nancy Pelosi among leading

Keiran Southern Los Angeles
David Charter Washington

Kamala Harris tightened her grip on the Democratic presidential nomination with key endorsements including the backing of party grandee Nancy Pelosi, the former House Speaker.

"I have full confidence she will lead us to victory in November," Pelosi said 24 hours after helping to engineer the pressure on Joe Biden to step aside.

Harris, the vice-president, appears to have all but secured the Democratic nomination for November's presidential election against Donald Trump after donors turned the money taps back on and a series of party heavyweights gave their support, beginning with Biden's own endorsement shortly after abandoning his campaign.

The Harris campaign said yesterday that "everyday Americans" have given \$81 million in grassroots donations, one of the largest ever fundraising days for Democrats.

Harris was further bolstered by a series of key endorsements that cleared the field of potential rivals and showed a desire in the party to unify after a bruising month of in-fighting.

Gretchen Whitmer, governor of the crucial swing state Michigan, had been touted as a potential rival to Harris but issued a statement endorsing her yesterday and will help lead her campaign.

After praising Harris's record as part of the Biden administration, Whitmer accused Trump of driving "our economy into the ground last time he was in the White House". She said: "Vice-president Harris has my full support. We cannot let Donald Trump anywhere near the White House."

JB Pritzker, the governor of Illinois who many believed was a potential rival for the Democratic nomination, also endorsed Harris yesterday. In a statement, he said the vice-president has "proven, at every point in her career, that she possesses the skills, strength, and character to lead this country".

Pritzker, a member of a wealthy family who own the Hyatt hotel chain, added that after working on Hillary Clinton's presidential campaigns, "it's past time we shatter that highest and hardest of glass ceilings and finally elect a woman as president of the United States".

Harris already had the backing of some of the most powerful figures in the Democratic party.

Hillary Clinton, who was beaten by Trump in the 2016 presidential election, issued a joint statement with her husband, the former president Bill Clinton. They said, "we ... will do whatever we can to support" Harris.

Gavin Newsom, the California governor and potential rival, quickly ended any speculation on Sunday with an endorsement of his state's former attorney general. "With our democracy at stake and our future on the line, no one is better to prosecute the case against Donald Trump's dark vision ... than America's Vice President, @KamalaHarris," he wrote on Twitter/X.

Josh Shapiro, the governor of Pennsylvania, a crucial swing state, and among the favourites to be Harris's running mate, endorsed her on Sunday.

"Kamala Harris is a patriot worthy of our support and she will continue the work of generations of Americans who came before us to perfect our union, protect our democracy, and advance real freedom," Shapiro said.

Pete Buttigieg, the transport secretary and another touted as a possible running mate for Harris, said she was best positioned to take on Trump. "Kamala Harris is now the right person to take up the torch, defeat Donald



Kamala Harris alongside players and officials at a National Collegiate Athletic Association event at the White House yesterday. She used the event to praise the record

Trump, and succeed Joe Biden as President," he said.

Barack Obama was the most prominent Democrat who is yet to publicly endorse Harris but this was seen as presentational to avoid creating any impression of engineering a dramatic surge of momentum towards Harris.

Convention delegates from New Hampshire, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida and Louisiana — won by Biden but now free of any mandate to support any particular candidate — all voted to support Harris as the nominee. Delegates in Texas said there would be a call last night to discuss their endorsement of Harris.

While much of the Democratic party is coalescing around Harris, Republicans have scrambled to pivot their attacks from Biden to his vice-president.

Trump, who secured the Republican nomination last week days after surviving an attempted assassination at a rally, appeared in a bullish mood.

"Harris will be easier to beat than Joe Biden would have been," he told CNN. A leading pro-Trump political action committee, MAGA Inc, launched an advert on Sunday alleging that Harris "covered up Joe Biden's obvious mental decline". His supporters also criticised Harris's record on crime and the border.

Trump, meanwhile, argued for a change in the terms of the televised debate that was scheduled with Biden in September hosted by ABC News, writing on his Truth Social platform that ABC was biased against him and the debate should be held on Fox News. **What Biden got wrong and what he can still get right, William Hague, page 21.**

Nation's eyes fix on its ribbon-cutter-in-chief

Tom Peck
Political Sketch



The official White House schedule listed the vice-president's duties for Monday July 22 as hosting a National Collegiate Athletic Association "sports day" on the White House lawn.

And why not? An egg and spoon race under the world's most famous portico with America's champion college athletes is very much the kind of thing a vice-president does.

Brits tend to think of the "veep" as akin to a deputy prime minister, but they are more like a Prince of Wales. They are not so much deputy commander-in-chief as ribbon-cutter-in-chief. Well, until America has its first real abdication crisis on its hands. Then it's time to panic.

Kamala Harris chose to mark the occasion by doing everything she could to ignore it. When she strode out to the podium she will have noticed there were a lot more cameras than she has become used to over the past four years.

One hopes it's not sexist, or even a cliché, to say she looked a million

dollars. Harris lives beneath that instantly recognisable sheen that, for some reason, only American money seems able to buy. The hair and the teeth that, if you look hard enough, you might just be able to see your face in.

Of course, rich and powerful American men acquire it too, that veneer of shimmering perfection. They just don't have to work anywhere near as hard to get there.

Harris praised President Biden's legacy in glowing terms but said nothing of herself. Four long rows of college sporting champions were lined up to witness what they knew was the starting pistol being fired again on the race to the White House. They may have been somewhat confused to see Harris pretending she had not heard it.

Partly, that was administrative necessity. You can't invite a load of college athletes to the White House and then use them as a backdrop for a de facto presidential campaign (even though her opponent would).

You can, however, praise Biden's "leadership" and his "legacy of accomplishment unmatched in modern history", which she duly did. You have to wonder whether any of these bright young folk, standing

there in respectful silence, might have seen all this coming rather better than their elected leaders did. That a presidential candidate who was 77 years old first time around was not going to get any younger, and you might end up in a pickle.

And it truly is a pickle. Presidents don't pick their running-mates because they think they're the second-best person for the job. They're picked to broaden the winning coalition. The late John McCain died a hero of the anti-Trump movement. Yet there is an alternative branch of history, not very far away, where he opened the door of the Oval Office to Sarah Palin. America's gerontocratic shift should have caused it to think rather harder about the truth behind the "one heartbeat away" thing.

Polls suggest that Harris is not the Democrats' best hope, but there is no palatable way to seek an alternative now. She is certainly a system refresh. Pictures matter in politics and narratives take hold. Biden v Trump didn't look like a fight between America's past and America's future, even though it was. The Mar-a-Lago crowd is raging against the dying of the light. America's future is multicultural, whether it likes it or not. The demographic shift was set in stone decades ago. The men in the Maga hats might have more than enough gigawatts of righteous anger, but they haven't got the DeLorean to go with it. There's no going back to a different future.

Democrats to back Harris



ANDREW HARMIK/GETTY IMAGES

of President Biden, who has been absent since contracting Covid last week

America is ready for a female president, but doubts remain

The Democrats' likely nominee will boost the party even though her vulnerabilities are clear, writes Frank Luntz

It has been eight years since Hillary Clinton stood for the presidency, the first woman nominated by a major political party and the first woman to lose the general election. Issues with her candidacy, personality and presentation aside, many people blamed her gender for her loss.

Today, however, with a record number of women in Congress, on the Supreme Court and in leadership positions across the political and business community, America is finally ready for a woman in the White House. But the big question is: is America ready for Kamala Harris?

In the 24 hours since President Biden withdrew his candidacy, Harris has faced zero opposition within her own party. The same Democratic Party that brutally rejected her in 2020 has embraced her now.

She is experiencing a honeymoon of sorts, receiving a free ride from donors once hesitant to contribute to her political efforts, from the media who criticised her relentlessly for not taking them seriously, and from her colleagues, who as recently as earlier this year complained in private that she was not up to the job.

Just look at the number of endorsements she has collected in the past 24 hours, or the fact that she is the presumptive nominee without giving a single speech or participating in a single debate. Make no mistake: this is a coronation, and while that is good for her now, it may not be good for her in the long term.

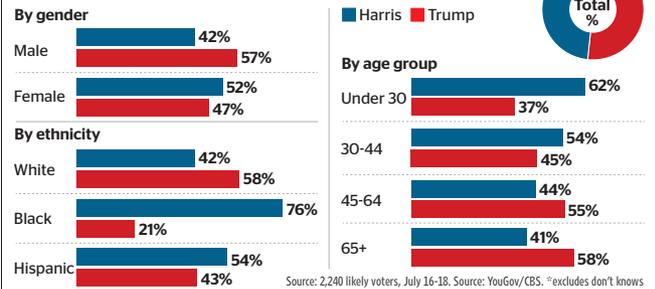
Harris has the opportunity to reinvigorate women, particularly younger women who were turned off by her octogenarian running mate. Her effusive support for abortion rights will play well with that community, increasing turnout where it matters most. Similarly, she is likely to increase participation among African-Americans who were mostly sitting this election out. She can excite them in a way that Biden could not, and Trump cannot.

Despite being the second half of the Biden-Harris team, she is also seen, rightly or wrongly, as a breath of fresh air. The vice-president does not come with the baggage that Biden carries — particularly with regard to the Israel-Hamas war and the botched withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Before her entry, it looked like the swing states of Arizona and Nevada were firmly in Trump's camp because of a Hispanic voter swing to his candidacy. Similarly, Trump's ability to win over younger African-American men took Georgia and North Carolina out of play. In fact,

Harris v Trump - national polling

If the 2024 presidential election were being held today between Kamala Harris and Donald Trump, who would you vote for?*



How to pronounce her name

Phyllis Akalin

Kamala Harris is used to people mispronouncing her name. That's why she released a video in which children explained how to pronounce it correctly when she first ran for Senate in 2016.

Alongside the video, she wrote on Twitter: "People pronounce my name many different ways. Let



Children explained in a video how to pronounce Kamala Harris's name

#KidsForKamala show you how it's done."

Harris also explained how to pronounce her name, which has Indian and Sanskrit origins and means "lotus flower", in her 2019 autobiography *The Truths We Hold*. "Just combine 'comma' with 'la' and you get Kamala."

Her efforts have not stopped Republicans and others from continuing to mispronounce her name. Almost half the speakers who referred to Harris at last week's Republican National Convention pronounced it incorrectly.

During the conference, Bob Unanue, chief executive of Goya Foods, mocked her name as "Que mala", which means "so bad" in Spanish.

Chris Sununu, the governor of New Hampshire, was asked if he was deliberately mispronouncing Harris's name in an interview with Politico last week.

Biden was so weak politically that states like Virginia and Minnesota, dependably Democratic in the past two decades, had become battlegrounds. And with Pennsylvania slipping away, Trump could see victory ahead. But all those electoral calculations are irrelevant now that Harris is the likely nominee.

And that is why her pick of running-mate matters so much. Mark Kelly, the senator from Arizona, or Josh Shapiro, the governor of Pennsylvania, would take those states off the battleground list. Even Michigan's governor, Gretchen Whitmer, gives her an advantage Biden did not have, though one wonders whether an all-female ticket is too much, too soon, for too many voters.

I have no doubt that Harris will go to the Democratic convention next month and deliver a great speech, for unlike her Republican opponent she knows how to stick to the script and not go off-prompter or off-message.

But a significant question remains: how will she handle a debate with Trump, if it happens, and how will she cope with critics on the stump? How will she deal with campaign events when they are not staged in her favour?

Most critically, she is known to have had one critical responsibility as vice-president — immigration — and she failed miserably. Refusing to visit the border for months, not participating in proposed solutions to address the chaos, even asserting that the border was under control — the string of missteps and mistakes are long and detailed. Immigration is the number one issue for tens of millions of American voters, and Trump is sure to amplify the attacks on her record.

As for Trump, he may want to think about his attack lines against his opponent, especially if they can and will be construed as sexist by his critics. It is fairly clear that Trump does not like or respect Harris, and it is equally clear that he does not hold back when he dislikes someone. All this means we are likely to see the most negative campaign in the history of American politics. Let the war begin.

Frank Luntz is a pollster and political analyst

Key contenders for running-mate



Josh Shapiro, 51
Democrats have not taken the White House without winning Pennsylvania since Harry Truman in 1948, and adding its governor to the ticket would go a long way to locking up this battleground.

Shapiro has strong, state-wide bipartisan support and took office in 2022 after defeating the pro-Trump Republican Doug Mastriano. As state attorney-general, Shapiro defeated court challenges to overturn the 2020 election result, and his record would help to rebut claims that Democrats are soft on crime.



Mark Kelly, 60
The party is looking for a hero, and for some they already have one in the senator from Arizona. A navy veteran and former astronaut

who twice captained a space shuttle, Kelly has a back story made for American politics. He is a formidable fundraiser and has support from moderate Republican and independent voters in his state, another battleground.

He entered politics after his wife, the former congresswoman Gabby Giffords, was shot in the head and forced to retire.



Roy Cooper, 67
North Carolina is nominally a swing state but Democrats have not won a presidential contest here since 2008 and have trailed in recent polling. Nominating its governor could put the state back in play.

A friend of Harris since they were attorneys-general for North Carolina and California respectively, Cooper has won statewide races in an era of Republican

dominance, fighting the Republican-held state legislature on abortion and LGBT rights. But he is nearly 28 years older than JD Vance, Donald Trump's running-mate, which could count against him when the Democrats have an opportunity to look to the future.



Andy Beshear, 46
While Vance found fame with *Hillbilly Elegy*, his account of white working-class struggles in Ohio and Kentucky, Beshear could argue that he has done more to help that community. As Kentucky governor he has attracted manufacturing through Biden's Chips and Science Act.

Having won by 5,000 votes in 2019, Beshear won by 67,000 last year. This drew comparisons to Bill Clinton, the last Democratic governor of a Republican bastion to win the White House.

News US politics

The beach house talks that ended Biden's career

Over four days of isolation at his holiday home the president saw the game was up, writes David Charter

President Biden said publicly that only the Lord Almighty could tell him to stand aside, or perhaps a doctor, but in the end he was convinced by the brutal logic of polling data.

Biden was holed up in his Rehoboth Beach holiday home with his family and four close aides as his circle of confidantes dwindled.

He was in an angry and stubborn mood — and still suffering from the effects of his latest bout of Covid — as he reluctantly came to the decision to end his long political career. Most of his campaign staff had just a minute to digest the news before he went public.

Biden arrived at his holiday home on the Delaware coast in the early hours of Wednesday, the day when it became abundantly clear that congressional leaders were pushing him to reconsider his campaign for a second term.

Nevertheless, the 81-year-old president went to bed on Friday night adamant that he would remain the party's candidate having won almost every delegate to next month's convention from every state in the primary contest. Biden was still of the mindset that he had suffered terrible setbacks in the past and always found a way to bounce back. That finally changed on Saturday.

While socially distancing, he conferred with two of his closest and longest serving aides, Steve Ricchetti and Mike Donilon, who brought the polling evidence that there was no longer a path to victory against Donald Trump. A stunning poll in Michigan, a must-win state in the midwest, showed Biden seven points behind Trump, by 42 to 49 per cent.

Moreover Ricchetti and Donilon had the evidence that his vice-president, Kamala Harris, stood a better chance of victory. Donilon, 65, has been with Biden since 1981 and is known as his "conscience, alter ego and shared brain" — trusted without reservation to write speeches and other messages in his voice.

Ricchetti, 67, a former staffer for President Clinton who was a senior aide during Biden's vice-presidency, was also the conduit for senior party figures relaying their views into the Biden bubble. As the chief White House link with Congress during the Biden presidency he is close to Nancy Pelosi, the former House Speaker who became a prime mover behind the scenes speaking to the Biden doubters. Ricchetti reportedly arranged for her to speak to Biden on Saturday.

Two other aides

No time to tell Mr Harris

David Charter

News of Joe Biden's withdrawal from his re-election campaign took most of America by surprise, including Kamala Harris's husband.

Doug Emhoff, 59, was at a spin class in Los Angeles when the president made his decision. Nobody thought to tell him. Biden had informed Harris but her next moves were political; there was no time to call her other half.

A fellow spin participant went up to Emhoff after the class. "How far in advance did you know about that?" they asked him, according to one of those present.

Emhoff, an entertainment lawyer, looked confused. "Know about what?" he asked.

The gym friend showed him Biden's post on social media.

"I gotta go!" Emhoff said as he raced off with his Secret Service minder. In that instant the man known as the second gentleman had come much closer to becoming America's inaugural first gentleman.

He and Harris live in the Brentwood celebrity enclave of Los Angeles, but they had spent the previous day campaigning for Biden almost 2,000 miles apart: Emhoff was in the swing state of Arizona on Saturday and Harris was in Washington.

The blended family of 'Momala' Harris, Times2

were on hand. The first was Jill Biden's chief adviser Anthony Bernal, 51 — a long-serving insider whom the first lady calls her "work husband" and is disparaged by some staff as "Rasputin" — who has become closer to the president in recent months. The second was Biden's deputy chief of staff Annie Tomasini, 47, who has worked with him since serving as the press secretary for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when he chaired it from 2007 to 2009.

It was the counsel of Ricchetti and Donilon, though, that mattered most. They reportedly believed that senior figures who had not so far called publicly for Biden to step aside, including Senate majority leader Chuck Schumer and House party leader Hakeem Jeffries, were preparing to do so soon after an address to Congress on Wednesday by the Israeli prime

Steve Ricchetti relayed the views of senior figures in the party

minister, Binyamin Netanyahu. Time was running out for Biden to salvage his dignity.

By all accounts neither Ricchetti or Donilon actually urged Biden to fold, but they no longer needed to. He was for the first time open to moving on by late Saturday afternoon and asked Donilon to draft a letter setting out his thinking for public release.

No big personal Biden decision about running for office has ever been finalised without a family consultation and he convened a meeting on Saturday evening. His wife Jill was there, and it is believed so was his sister, Valerie Biden Owens, who has played a key role in every election campaign since his first run for the Senate in 1972.

Joining the conversation in person or by Zoom were his son Hunter, who has become more integral to Biden's inner circle in the aftermath of the TV debate with Trump on June 27, and his daughter Ashley. She and son-in-law Howard Krein drove to Rehoboth on Sunday morning to provide extra support.

Biden woke up that morning finally clear that he was pulling out of the race.

The letter was finalised for release, and calls were made to Harris, Jeff Zients, the White House chief of staff, and Jen O'Malley Dillon, the campaign chair. Harris, who was already in Washington, immediately switched into political mode and forgot to tell her husband, Doug Emhoff, who was back at their home in California. He heard about Biden's withdrawal while at the gym.

At 1.45pm Biden convened a call with senior staff from the White House and the campaign to tell them personally. He released his letter on Twitter/X at 1.46pm, catching Democratic National Committee officials, state party chairs and most of his White House staff and campaign team completely by surprise. The campaign staffers had been setting up travel for appearances and fundraisers, including one headlined by David Letterman on July 29 at the home of a family friend in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

Biden had the wherewithal to know that this was a moment to act swiftly once the protracted fight over his candidacy was over, and to do his best to dampen further party infighting by putting out his clear endorsement of Harris less than 30 minutes later.

His voice even more hoarse than usual from a persistent Covid cough, Biden made more than 40 calls to allies and party figures soon after the announcement. He said that he would make public remarks about his decision later this week when he was better — and when his temper had cooled.

In March 2020 he said at the launch of his comeback presidential campaign that he wanted to be a "bridge" to a new generation, but this got lost in the allure of a second term and his deep personal conviction that it was his national duty to stop Trump as long as Trump was seeking to return to office. In the end, though, Biden quit when he realised that the only bridge he was building was from one Trump term to another.



President Biden with his wife, Jill, and security agents on previous visits to

Republicans line up attack against younger opponent

Samuel Lovett New York

Donald Trump's running-mate has condemned the prospect of Kamala Harris becoming the Democrat nominee as a "threat to democracy".

The Republican campaign is rushing to reposition and sharpen its attack lines after the vice-president became the overwhelming favourite to stand against Trump with a wave of Democrat endorsements and donor support.

"The idea of selecting the Democratic Party's nominee because George Soros and Barack Obama and a couple of elite Democrats got in a smoke-filled room and decided to throw Joe Biden overboard, that is not how it works," JD Vance told supporters at a rally in his hometown of Middletown, Ohio.

"That is a threat to democracy, not the Republican Party which is fighting for democracy every single day."

The Trump team must decide how to deploy its resources from a campaign that was built to beat Biden, not Harris.

Yesterday, Trump posted on Truth Social that the Democratic Party "stole the race from Biden after he won it in the primaries". Adverts are due to be

launched to present Harris, 58, as someone who enabled Biden and concealed his "cognitive decline".

Illegal immigration, which has risen sharply over the past four years, will be a key attack theme, especially given Harris's role as the White House's "border tsar".

The Trump campaign also intends to link Harris to inflation. While the rate of inflation has started to slow, consumer prices and mortgage rates have increased since Biden came into office.

The Republican machine has been geared to the assumption that Trump, 78, would face an ageing president plagued by widespread concerns over his physical state and mental acuity.

This line of attack has vanished, leaving Trump instead exposed in an age debate that has been so damaging to the Democrats, but which now threatens his own attempt to return to power.

The Harris campaign is also set to utilise her background as a prosecutor. "Vice-president Kamala Harris has held criminals accountable her entire career — and Donald Trump will be no different," Ammar Moussa, a Harris for President spokesman, said yesterday.

NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES, JOSHUA ROBERTS/REUTERS



Rehoboth Beach in Delaware. Biden convened his family and trusted aides for talks about his future before stepping aside

Trump shooting a 'significant failure'

David Charter Washington

The head of the US Secret Service has admitted in Congress that the attempted assassination of Donald Trump was her agency's "most significant operational failure" in decades.

Kimberly Cheatle began testimony yesterday, facing politicians who have called for her resignation.

"The assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump on July 13 is the most significant operational failure at the Secret Service in decades and I am keeping him and his family in my thoughts," she said.

"I will be transparent as possible when I speak with you, understanding though that at times I may be limited in providing a thorough response in this open setting due to associated risks with sharing highly sensitive protective methodologies."

Asked what went wrong in the run-up to the incident, Cheatle said: "I accept responsibility for this tragedy."

The Secret Service admitted at the weekend that it had rejected calls from the Trump campaign for extra protection over the past two years.

Trump criticised the agency for failing to warn him not to go on stage in



Kimberly Cheatle told Congress she accepted responsibility for the tragedy

Butler, Pennsylvania, on July 13. Cheatle, 51, has said that the roof from where Thomas Crooks fired the shots that grazed Trump's ear and killed a rally-goer was deemed to have too much of a slope to station agents there safely. FBI officials said that Crooks was first noticed by snipers protecting Trump 20 minutes before he opened fire.

"Nobody mentioned it, nobody said there was a problem," Trump told Fox News in an interview broadcast in full last night. "I think that was a mistake. How did somebody get on that roof? And why wasn't he reported?"

Cheatle's agency previously denied

claims that it resisted the Trump team's requests to bolster security but changed its story after more details appeared in the Washington Post.

Anthony Guglielmi, the agency spokesman, last week posted on Twitter/X: "There's an untrue assertion that a member of the former president's team requested additional security resources and that those were rebuffed. This is absolutely false."

At the weekend he said: "The Secret Service has a vast, dynamic, and intricate mission. We work in a dynamic threat environment to ensure our protectees are safe and secure across multiple events, travel, and other challenging environment."

"In some instances where specific Secret Service specialised units or resources were not provided, the agency made modifications to ensure the security of the protectee."

Calls for Cheatle to resign were led by Mike Johnson, the Republican House Speaker, who posted: "We... were millimetres away from losing President Trump. It is inexcusable."

At the conclusion of the hearing, the ranking Democrat on the committee and the Republican chairman said they would be writing a joint letter demanding that Cheatle resign.

Democrats are trying to pull off another shameful deception

Gerard Baker
Comment

Democrats and their media allies have been effulgent in their praise for President Biden after the sudden announcement of his decision not to seek another term.

Their fulsome tributes — "true patriot", "man of honour", "putting his country first" — might be more convincing if most of these same people had not spent the last week or two scheming, conniving and bullying to get the incumbent president to step aside in the face of wilting polling numbers against Donald Trump. Nancy Pelosi, the former House speaker, Barack Obama, the former president, and Chuck Schumer, the Senate majority leader, were all as quick to praise the ageing Biden on Sunday as they had been busily preparing to bury him on Saturday.

Senator John Fetterman, of Pennsylvania, one of the few staunch Biden allies and a man who is rapidly emerging as one of the most independent thinkers in US politics, put it best: "Spare me the soaring accolades from people with their fingerprints on the blades in our president's back," he told Salena Zito, a reporter and fellow Pennsylvanian.

Pretending Biden's farewell was an act of self-abnegation is almost as big a lie as the claim people in politics and the media made for the past six months that he was completely up to the job for another four years. Most of the media have been eager participants in the fraud. As late as a month ago they were dutifully relaying the White House message that there was nothing wrong with Biden. When The Wall Street Journal published a lengthy piece in June with shocking details about his frailties, other media outlets rushed to denounce it.

If Biden had announced he was going earlier this year, the claim that it was an act of selflessness might have had some merit. Coming, as it did, after poor polling numbers following his debate performance last month it looks like a well-orchestrated putsch of breathtaking cynicism.

Following that debate the high priests of the Democratic Party mobilised to oust him. Big donors stopped donating. Congressional supporters stopped supporting. Media shills stopped shilling. The message was driven hard into the White House — withdraw now or face a massive loss of support that will fatally weaken you.

Far from presenting the kind of glorious testament to democracy so many in the media are claiming this to be, this will be remembered as a dark moment for the Democratic Party and American democracy itself. Does anyone truly believe that Biden became unfit for a second term only in the past few weeks? The whole party (with a few honourable exceptions) has spent the last year trying to pull a fraud on the American electorate. Only when they were found out were they forced to own up to the hard truth

that their candidate was in no condition to run again and serve again — and then, in another cynical act that mocks the democratic idea, move to oust the man who won his party's primary contest with 80 per cent of the vote.

Now, to complete this shameful deception and chicanery, the party is going to try, probably successfully, to short-circuit any semblance of a democratic process and hand the presidential nomination to Kamala Harris, a woman who has never won a single primary or presidential vote in her life. Instead of offering the delegates who voted in this year's primaries a chance to choose another candidate, they are aiming to foist on them the vice-president whose very inadequacies have been cited by Biden's aides as reason for him not to step aside in her favour.

Again, the democratically orthodox thing to do here would be for Biden to resign the presidency immediately. If he is too frail to run again (and even to make an appearance in public to announce his decision) how can he be robust enough to serve another six months in office? Instead, the Democrats are planning to pull off another double deception: that Biden is fully fit to be president — but only for a few more months — and that Harris is fully fit to be president — just not quite yet.

The speed at which the Democratic establishment has rallied behind Harris suggests that they think her selection dramatically improves their chances against Trump.

They could be right: at a stroke, she transfers the age problem from the Democrats to the Republicans and at the same time offers voters a chance to break free from the endless Biden-Trump doom cycle of the past six years.

But what are her electoral credentials? When she ran for the 2020 Democratic nomination her campaign was so poor that she withdrew from the contest even before the first primary votes were cast. This record of uncertain electoral appeal goes back further. She first came to real prominence in 2010 when she ran for California attorney-general. In a state that is as Democratic as any in the country she only just made it against her Republican opponent, while other Democrats on the same ballot were chalking up landslides.

Her lack of electoral success might be down to more than the curious incoherent babble, or "word salads", for which she has become famous. She hails from the radical progressive culture of San Francisco — left-wing even by California standards.

As for her personal story, Harris is no tribune of the struggling masses, as she likes to portray herself. She is the product of the modern elite. Her parents were university professors and throughout her career she has been helped up the ladder of preferment by powerful friends and mentors. Having risen like that she deploys her status as a woman and an ethnic minority to portray herself, ludicrously, as a victim of structural racism and sexism. Which makes her, in fact, the perfect Democratic candidate.

Whiff of human stress makes dogs more pessimistic

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

Dogs can sniff out our emotions, a study has concluded, and the smell of human stress makes them pessimistic.

The findings suggest scents emitted by humans can affect a dog's mood and choices, making them more attuned to their owners' emotional state.

Previous studies found the smell of a stressed person can subconsciously affect the state of mind of nearby humans, as well as their decisions.



The study suggests dogs are attuned to their owners' emotional states

Researchers at Bristol University's Veterinary School set out to explore whether a similar odour-enabled "emotional contagion" could be found in canines.

They recruited 18 pairs of pet dogs and owners. The dogs were trained that when a food bowl was placed in one location it would contain a treat and in another location it would be empty. Once a dog had learnt the difference, it approached the bowl with a treat faster than the empty alternative. The

researchers then looked at how quickly the dog would approach new "ambiguous" bowl locations positioned between the original two. They theorised that a quick approach would reflect the animal being "optimistic" about food being present, while a slow approach would indicate "pessimism" and a more downbeat emotional state.

The trials were repeated while each dog was exposed to either no odour or the odours of sweat and breath samples from humans in a stressed state, achieved by asking the humans to do a maths test while the sample was collected, or a relaxed state, which involved them listening to calming music.

The smell of stress made the dogs slower to approach the ambiguous bowl location. "These findings suggest that the stress smell may have increased the dogs' expectations that this new location contained no food, similar to the nearby empty bowl location," the researchers said.

Dr Nicola Rooney, a lecturer in wildlife and conservation and the paper's lead author, said: "Understanding how human stress affects dogs' wellbeing is an important consideration when training companion dogs and dogs for working roles such as assistance dogs." The findings have been published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.



Tortoise on the tracks stops rush-hour trains

We've all heard of leaves on the line causing railway delays but on Friday evening it was a tortoise on the tracks that was to blame (Charlie

Moloney writes). A train had to stop and pick up an escaped tortoise called Solomon who had been spotted moving "at pace" along the tracks outside Ascot, Berkshire, at around



Solomon the tortoise is carried out of Ascot station. He had been picked up, below, by a train that stopped especially, causing delays to other services

6pm. There were delays to services between Ascot in Berkshire and Bagshot in Surrey as he was brought on to the train.

Network Rail Wessex tweeted: "There was a trespasser of an unusual nature on the tracks at Ascot as an escaped tortoise called Solomon was moving 'at pace' (according to the incident report) towards Bagshot. Network Rail teams arranged for the next train heading into Ascot from Aldershot to stop to allow the tortoise to be rescued."

Network Rail apologised for the disruption and reminded people of the dangers of the railway lines. "Trains need several football pitches to stop from full speed and there are less obvious dangers such as the, always on, electrified third rail."

South Western Railway, the operator, said: "We understand that the tortoise was unharmed. He did have a valid ticket and became a bit of a shell-ebriety."

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Athletes swapping Big Macs for Michelin stars in Olympic village

Martyn Ziegler
Chief Sports Reporter, Paris

While competitors at the London 2012 Olympics flocked to eat fast food at McDonald's, at the Paris Games the most in-demand place in the athletes' village is the restaurant area staffed by Michelin-star chefs.

Instead of the chicken nuggets that famously fuelled Usain Bolt to glory, athletes in Paris are feasting on dishes such as "croissant, poached egg, artichoke cream, shavings of sheep's cheese topped with truffle" or "blanquette de veau" — veal in a velouté sauce enriched with cream and egg.

A boulangerie has also been built inside the village to provide the athletes and coaches with fresh croissants, pains



Even the canteen has a touch of class as Paris turns on the style, food wise

au chocolate and baguettes — 800 of them — every day.

Philipp Würz, Paris 2024's head of catering, said he had been told that in London, 20 per cent of all the meals were provided by McDonald's, which is no longer an Olympic sponsor.

"It's fair to reflect that it's a much healthier Olympics in Paris — no chicken nuggets, more healthy food," he said. "It's definitely less junk food. We try to push the quality high."

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

"One very specific French feature that we have is our Michelin-starred chef kitchen, so twice per day the athletes can also go there and really discover high-level French cuisine cooked on site by our



OMITAR DILKOF/AP/GETTY IMAGES; TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER MARC ASPLAND; TONY ESHAULT

Charles Guillois, executive chef at the athletes' village, is among those offering quality dishes after Usain Bolt famously favoured fast food like nuggets at London 2012



Michelin-star chefs. We have four of them and eight recipes, so this has become a very popular spot."

Given such delicious food on offer, most athletes will have to rein in their appetites until their competitions have finished. And for those searching for burgers, they are on offer too.

"Even the chefs' menus have been developed with sports nutritionists, so it's very high-level cuisine, still respecting what the athletes actually need," Würz said. "Once the competition is over, they can also just let it go and fully profit on what everything France offers best. We will also provide hot dogs and burgers — we have dedicated grab-and-go outlets. Of course, the meat is 100 per cent French origin."

The caterers will provide 13 million meals during the Olympics and Paralympics, with three million bananas having been ordered. The most in-demand food by protein-hungry athletes has been chicken skewers and salmon fillets, but also margherita pizza. No wine is on offer, as the village, where Charles Guillois is executive chef, is dry, but close attention has been paid to the cheese. "The cheeses are high level and well-known French cheeses such as Comté and Brie de Meaux," Würz said.

The gourmet chefs include Alexandre Mazzia, a former professional basketball player who has earned three Michelin stars at his restaurant AM in Marseilles. His signature dish involves chickpeas being whipped into a pomade with verbena, served with beets, peas and a seafood broth. Paris 2024 has appointed Grégoire Béchu as sustainable food project manager with the task of reducing the carbon footprint and cutting down on waste.

There are far more vegetarian options on offer than for previous Games. "The *végétalisation*, the plant-based food, is one of the most important commitments for the Games," Béchu said.

Countries can make requests. The Koreans asked for large quantities of kimchi — their salted and fermented vegetable relish — to be made available, with the Chinese having ensured there will be no shortage of sticky rice. As for Team GB, Würz could remember only one specific request — porridge.

Israelis not welcome at Games, says French MP, World, page 26
Eat like an athlete, Times2
Sport, pages 56-59

Military-style counselling to combat the Games comedown

David Brown Paris

Athletes will be offered military-style "decompression" counselling at the end of the Paris Olympics to help them to recover from the "post-Games blues".

The end of months of intense training and of the Olympic fortnight, which begins on Friday, has in the past led to athletes struggling to readjust to normal life. All 327 Team GB competitors are being offered interviews with mental health professionals to help them to reacclimatise.

Adam Peaty, 29, the swimmer who won gold in the 100m breaststroke at the Rio Games in 2016 and Tokyo in 2021 has previously described feeling "lost" after the end of the Games. He is hoping for a third gold in Paris. "I experi-

enced really bad post-Olympic blues after Rio," Peaty said. "I didn't know what to do with myself; I'd achieved my absolute dream and Rio was the time of my life but no one prepares you for what happens afterwards."

Victoria Pendleton, 43, the cyclist who won gold in the keirin at London 2012, has said: "You have all this build-up for one day and when it's over, it's, 'Oh, is that it?' You're relieved but kind of sad and numb."

Carrie McCrea, a mental health expert at the UK Sports Institute, the government agency responsible for investing in high-performing athletes, said the decompression programmes were similar to those for soldiers returning from combat zones.

"We've mirrored the military pro-

cess," she said. "It's a structured interview for about 60 to 90 minutes with somebody who's trained in decompression. So that might be somebody from performance psychology — some clinical psychologists are trained up — and performance lifestyle advisers."

McCrea said the process was designed to help athletes plan for the start of life after the Olympics. "Something we are doing a lot of work on is to engage family and friends because it's not an isolated experience," she said. "It's the planning of their 'time zero', thinking about who's going to be around and for them to understand what I might be feeling, how I might be coming across and what I need from them."

"Post-Games blues is a reality. During the Games you're so connected to

so many people and you come home and everything's dialled down and it can take a while to reconnect into your reality. Meanwhile, the rest of your reality has continued on. It takes a while to recalibrate.

"Essentially, from the point you get back off the plane or train [to the UK] ... what's going to be your plan? The focus is on reconnecting with normal life. Getting people to think beyond the Games. Often people haven't really thought what that looks like."

Greg Retter, head of performance services at Team GB, said the work on decompression began at the Tokyo Games, which were held during a Covid lockdown.

"You spend four or five weeks around people who are driven by the same

goals and wearing the same kit, all being given the same food and you almost become institutionalised. Then literally overnight you are expected to step back into your daily reality and that disconnect can sometimes be challenging," he said.

"The athletes had suddenly had to stop; no training, no competition, nothing. There was a whole piece that was done by the psychology team looking at what was the psychological burden of having to stop like that."

"That process of talking about that and navigating your way back to becoming a full-time athlete again has informed this work. When you come back from a Games, it's a really good opportunity to have that moment to reflect."

News Politics

Starmmer may scrap two-child benefit cap after revolt

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor
Max Kendix

Sir Keir Starmer has opened the door to the eventual scrapping of the two-child benefit cap as he acknowledged anger in his party over maintaining the policy.

Left-wing backbenchers put forward an amendment to the King's Speech yesterday calling on Starmer to scrap the measure, saying it would lift 300,000 children out of poverty.

Although most Labour MPs have accepted the need for patience, Starmer acknowledged "very strong feeling in the Labour Party" about a policy that refuses families benefits for a third or subsequent child.

"There's a real passion about this in the Labour Party. You'd expect there to be. Child poverty is something that we need to eradicate," the prime minister said. "It's good that we're having a debate about it. What matters is that we turn that into action and reduce child poverty."

He insisted that the government would cover "all the bases" in dealing with child poverty after Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, said a task force that she will co-lead would consider scrapping the two-child limit.

In opposition, Starmer's refusal to promise to end the two-child limit, introduced by George Osborne in 2015, became a test of his commitment to fiscal discipline. Scrapping the limit would cost £3.5 billion a year and Starmer has insisted that he would not end it until there was a clear way of funding the extra benefit payments, worth about £3,400 a year per child.

About 1.6 million children live in families affected by the cap, up 100,000 on last year.

Suella Braverman, the Tory former home secretary, told Starmer: "It is now

Push to get 2m into work

Chris Smyth

Ministers will pledge today to get two million more people into jobs, declaring that "Britain isn't working". Liz Kendall, the work and pensions secretary, will argue that her department has focused too narrowly on paying out benefits as she pledges to make it prioritise getting people into work.

"Nowhere near enough attention has been paid to the wider issues — like health, skills, childcare and transport — that determine whether people get work, stay in work and get on in work," she will say, promising to join up Jobcentres with the NHS and other local services. Kendall will criticise a "dire inheritance" from the Conservatives in which a record 2.8 million people are off work with long-term sickness and 9.4 million are neither in employment nor looking for a job.

time to put child poverty first, and scrap the cap", saying that the policy "isn't working; it's pushing more children and families into relative poverty". In a Commons intervention that caused unease among some Labour MPs, Braverman said: "This cap is aggravating child poverty, and it's time for it to go."

Starmer cautioned that there was "no silver bullet" for the problem. "It's a complicated set of factors that I know

and I can see every day in my own constituency to do with pay, to do with benefits, to do with work, to do with housing, to do with education, to do with health. That is why you need a strategy to deal with it," he said.

However, in an acknowledgement that the task force would have to look at scrapping the limit, he said: "We will make sure that the strategy covers all the bases to drive down child poverty. No child should grow up in poverty."

Phillipson had earlier stressed that the policy would be reviewed. "This was not a policy that a Labour government introduced. We are aware of the evidence around this and as part of the review that we will conduct in the months to come we will consider that," she said.

"Unfortunately it's a very expensive measure, but we will need to consider it as one of a number of levers in terms of how we lift children out of poverty." She told Sky News: "We will look at every measure in terms of how we can address this terrible blight that scars the life chances of too many children."

No 10 later said that Starmer agreed with Phillipson that "nothing's out of the scope of the task force", when asked about the two-child limit.

An amendment calling for an end to the policy was backed by 19 MPs, including John McDonnell, who was Jeremy Corbyn's shadow chancellor, and Diane Abbott. However, none of Labour's newly elected MPs signed, with some expressing irritation with public dissent.

"We can't pull the rug out from under [ministers]," a backbencher said. "Every Labour MP wants to see the end of the two-child cap but we spent the whole campaign saying we couldn't promise to do everything at once."

Parents have duty to have children they can afford, letters, page 24



School fees dilemma for parents

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor
Steven Swinford Political Editor
Chris Smyth

Parents will have to make a decision this summer on whether to keep their children in private schools after the government said it was prepared to impose VAT on fees from January.

Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, told Times Radio that private schools have had "ample time" to prepare and that the government "will move quickly on this". Ministers said when setting out their legislative programme last week that 20 per cent VAT would be imposed on private schools in a budget expected in October.

Government sources have suggested this could allow fees to be imposed from the start of the term in January 2025, rather than that September. Many private schools require parents to give a term's notice before removing children.

Kieran McLaughlin, principal at Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation, said: "It would be a challenge for us if the VAT were imposed in January. We would have no choice other than to pass at least some of the costs on, which

would mean an effective mid-year rise. Also, most schools operate a term's notice for withdrawal of pupils so technically if pupils were going to leave at Christmas they would need to have given notice already or at the very latest the end of the summer holiday.

"This may lead to disagreements between schools and parents. The fairest thing would be to start it at the beginning of the next academic year — this would also avoid putting pressure on state schools who would need to find places in schools mid year and at short notice. This would be bad PR all round.

"We would try to minimise the effect on parents as much as we possibly can."

The policy is expected to raise about £1.5 billion a year, which Labour has said will fund 6,500 more teachers for state schools.

Asked whether VAT would be introduced in January, Phillipson said: "We will move quickly on this. We set out our position on this in 2021, so schools have had ample time to prepare."

She told Times Radio that Rachel Reeves, the chancellor, would set out details in the budget.

Sources close to private school lead-

ership said the announcement came out of the blue and the government had initially been briefing that VAT would be added to fees from September 2025. Parents had not had time to prepare as the election was earlier than expected.

If schools add VAT from January and pass it on in full, that would equal an almost 14 per cent rise in school fees. This could cause turmoil with local authorities trying to find places for children earlier than expected, such as those who thought they could keep paying fees without VAT until next summer.

Julie Robinson, chief executive of the Independent Schools Council, said: "Families will have made choices about education months before an election was called; they cannot adequately plan for their children's futures based on speculation, uncertainty and the possibility of in-year fee rises. There are complex practicalities to consider, and it needs to be dealt with thoughtfully and carefully to ensure the fewest number of children possible have their education disrupted." "The government has said it will engage with key stakeholders on this; we welcome the engagement we have had and look forward to more."

Rwanda deportations aircraft will return migrants to Vietnam

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

The Home Office will use the first flight that was scheduled to deport migrants to Rwanda tomorrow to return failed asylum seekers to Vietnam, The Times can reveal.

Yvette Cooper, the home secretary, revealed in parliament yesterday that the Rwanda deportation scheme had cost British taxpayers £700 million.

Sir Keir Starmer's administration has terminated the deal but the Home Office will repurpose the aircraft and personnel contracted for the Rwanda deportation flights to fly between 40 and 55 Vietnamese migrants back to their home country.

It will be the first migrant returns flight to Vietnam since 2021, according to Home Office sources, and builds on

work started by the Conservative government this year to establish a rapid returns deal with the country.

Vietnamese migrants have made up the largest number of small boat arrivals this year, with more than 1,000 crossing in the first three months and a total of 3,356 since 2018.

The aircraft, pilots and flight attendants contracted to operate tomorrow's flight are being repurposed from the first scheduled deportation flight for Rwanda. The Home Office has refused to disclose the name of the company for commercial reasons.

Cooper branded the £700 million spent on the Rwanda scheme, which led to only four migrants being sent to Kigali voluntarily in May and June, the "most shocking waste of taxpayer money I have ever seen". She told MPs

GUILHEM BAKER FOR THE TIMES, STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA



PM provokes fresh doubts on future of Tempest jet project

George Grylls Defence Correspondent

Sir Keir Starmer has refused to confirm that the £12 billion Tempest programme will go ahead as doubts grow over Britain's continued participation in UK, Italian and Japanese plans to build a sixth-generation fighter jet.

Speaking at the Farnborough International Airshow, where the first model of the plane is set to be unveiled, the prime minister refused to commit to its continued funding after The Times reported last week that it could be axed as part of Labour's defence review.

Asked to confirm that Britain would go ahead with the plans, Starmer told figures from the defence industry: "It is a programme on which we are making significant progress."

"The defence secretary is holding a ministerial-level meeting next week [on] this because of the significant benefits here in this country. There is of course a review going on — but it's important for me to put on record just how important a programme this is."

The Tempest fighter jet is set to replace the Eurofighter Typhoon as the RAF's lead sovereign aircraft. An international consortium had been assembled to bring costs down and there have been talks with Saudi Arabia in an attempt to broaden the coalition.

Some experts have argued that the programme should be scrapped in favour of buying more F-35s given the threat posed by Russia. Justin Bronk, an expert in air power at the Royal United Services Institute, said recently that the Ministry of Defence should abandon large procurement orders because there was not enough time for them to be delivered before a potential conflict in the next five years that would cause the economy to "tank". He said: "We will have to divert everything to fighting that war."

The MoD has set aside £12 billion to develop the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), known as Tempest, with the aim of flying the first aircraft by 2035. However, Treasury officials are concerned about spiralling costs.

Aerial power

Aircraft	Planned to enter service	Retirement	2024 total
Tempest	2035	-	-
Typhoon	2003	from 2025*	127
F35-B	2014	not set	32

*First tranche of 30 aircraft
Source: The Military Balance

Labour's defence review is being led by Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, the former head of Nato; Fiona Hill, Donald Trump's former security adviser; and General Sir Richard Barrons, former deputy chief of the defence staff.

They will have to judge the relative merits of GCAP compared with other major programmes such as Aukus, the joint US-Australian-British plans to build a nuclear-powered attack submarine.

Starmer's refusal to give his unequivocal backing for the aircraft comes after Luke Pollard, the armed forces minister, declined to commit to Tempest's future at an air power conference last week.

Pollard said it was a "really important programme for us" and its partners. However, he said it was "not right for me to prejudge what might happen in the defence review".

The stealth fighter is being developed by BAE, which has predicted that the entire programme will contribute £37 billion to the UK economy, at its Lancashire factory.

A concept model developed by BAE will be on display at Farnborough this week. About the size of a tennis court, the model fighter jet has a larger wingspan than previously expected as experts seek to improve the aerodynamics of the aircraft.

Silence over Tempest's future deeply concerning, leading article, page 25



One of the flights scheduled for Rwanda that never left Britain. Yvette Cooper called the scheme a "shocking" waste of money. Left, Suella Braverman in Kigali, Rwanda

that the Conservative government had planned to spend more than £10 billion over six years on the scheme agreed with the Rwandan government.

The home secretary accused Rishi Sunak's government of hiding the full cost of the scheme, telling MPs: "Most shocking of all, over the six years of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership forecast, the previous government had planned to spend over £10 billion of taxpayers' money on the scheme. They did not tell parliament that." In addition, Cooper said that the costs of asylum accommodation over the next four years would be "an eye-watering £30-40 billion" but she set out plans to process asylum claims from illegal migrants to cut these costs.

James Cleverly, who is now the shadow home secretary, disputed the costs

disclosed by Cooper, calling them "made-up numbers". He also criticised the Labour government's "discourtesy" to the Rwandan government, claiming that it treated the country in an inferior way to how it dealt with European nations.

Since Labour entered government this month, 1,499 migrants have arrived in the UK on small boats, including 114 in two boats on Sunday, which took the total for this year to nearly 16,000. Cooper warned that the high numbers were likely to persist over the summer.

She confirmed that she had informed the Rwandan government that the Labour government would end the Migration and Economic Development Partnership, activating a three-month notice period. The home secretary said that this would save £750 mil-

lion set aside for the scheme for the remainder of this year.

The £700 million spent on the scheme since it was agreed in April 2022 included the £290 million direct payments to Rwanda, chartering flights that never took off, detaining more than 200 migrants earmarked for deportation and the cost of paying for more than 1,000 civil servants to work on the scheme.

Cleverly said: "The home secretary's statement is confirmation that those who entered the UK illegally will now be allowed to claim asylum ... They have officially opened the doors to people smugglers."

The Refugee Council said the government's changes would mean about 70,000 of the 100,000 migrants in the claims backlog being granted asylum.

Pinpoint laser gun takes out drones for 10p a shot

George Grylls

A drone-hunting laser gun has been fired from a British armoured vehicle for the first time — with each shot costing only 10p.

Scientists at the Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory — better known as Porton Down — have been experimenting with lasers as a cheap air defence system.

Taking aim at a swarm of drones, the operator holds down the trigger to generate a beam of light energy capable of knocking them out of the sky.

The range is classified but Ministry of Defence scientists have boasted of its "pinpoint accuracy".

During tests of the Project Swinton system, the

15-kilowatt laser destroyed a swarm of targets more than a kilometre away. The drone-blaster, as yet unnamed, was mounted on a Wolfhound armoured vehicle, but scientists say the light-weight system could be adapted to fit any tank or similar vehicle.

Each shot uses up 10p worth of energy — cheaper than a cup of tea. A US Patriot missile, used by Kyiv to shoot down missiles in Ukraine, costs over £3 million.

Dr Paul Hollinshead, head of Porton Down, told the Royal United Services Institute land warfare conference: "We will absolutely see this technology in the battlespace sooner than we think."



In tests, the 15-kilowatt laser destroyed targets more than 1km away

IT failure still causing flight cancellations

Mark Sellman Technology Correspondent

Europe's biggest travel firm is still cancelling flights and holidays three days after a global IT failure, as one expert warned that the "hidden" disruption may continue for weeks.

Customers of Tui criticised the company after their holidays were disrupted after the incident, which was caused by a software update from the American cybersecurity company CrowdStrike that caused 8.5 million computers running Microsoft Windows to crash worldwide on Friday.

Nick Thomas, a consultant from Leigh-on-Sea in Essex, was due to fly for a two-week holiday with his family of five to Greece early on Monday morning. He arrived at the airport at 4am only to be told that the flight and holiday had been cancelled.

He said: "It was a little bit of a shock. I couldn't get hold of anybody. This is now four o'clock in the morning. My children in the airport are crying their eyes out and I've got a young Tui rep telling me I can't speak to anybody until nine o'clock because that's when they're open."

Thomas, who spent £12,000 on the trip, was told his only option was a holiday in Turkey instead. "We've had to compromise," he said, despite his family being keen to return to a place in Greece they had visited before.

He added that one of his three children had just finished primary school and they were keen to celebrate so he had reluctantly accepted the alternative. A loyal Tui customer who has booked ten family holidays with the company, Thomas said: "I'm never going to book with them again."

Nicki Evans, a primary school worker, said she was still going away with a party of ten to Alicante but her in-laws' Tui flight from Cardiff had been cancelled on Saturday. She said: "Four of us flew from Gatwick with easyJet and six were flying from Cardiff with Tui, all to

land on Saturday around 10am. My family in Wales are still in Wales. After all the messing around they have finally confirmed a flight tonight [Monday] at midnight, four days later!"

Tui apologised to those customers who had been affected, adding: "We understand how frustrating this would have been and recognise that many of these delays happened when our customers were already at the airport."

The company is offering refunds and vouchers worth £200 for adults and £100 for children in compensation.

Doctors and pharmacies are also dealing with the effects of the debacle after the GP booking and prescription ordering system went down and also affected the dispensing company PSUK. A spokesman for the National Pharmacy Association (NPA) said that it had been "quite manic" in pharmacies as there had been a much higher volume of prescriptions coming in from GPs.

Nick Kaye, chairman of the NPA, who has a pharmacy near Falmouth, said that after a dearth of prescriptions from GPs during the past few days, there had now been a surge. He said: "Suddenly you get a load of prescriptions that come in today, the order tomorrow's going to be even bigger and it's in that whole catch-up effect really, which is tricky."

Ellie Reeves, Cabinet Office minister, told MPs: "Small businesses without dedicated IT support systems were heavily [affected] due to disruption to card-only payment systems and ATMs."

The hidden effects of the failure will continue for weeks, according to one expert. Patrick Burgess, an information security expert at the British Computer Society, said that many laptops used by the likes of sales, administration and management teams across the country would have to be recovered and fixed.

He said: "People might see call centres being slower to answer calls and sales taking longer to come through."



Quality of abstraction Sophie Camu, creator of Space to Breathe, a new arts festival in St Monan's, Fife, is displaying more than 70 large-scale works by the groundbreaking British painter Sheila Girling to honour the centenary of her birth

BT fined £17.5m for faulty 999 calls

Katie Prescott
Technology Business Editor

The telecoms industry regulator has fined BT £17.5 million for a fault in the emergency services call system that endured for more than ten hours.

The "catastrophic failure" in the network on Sunday, June 25, last year meant that almost 14,000 attempted 999 calls were not connected, according to Ofcom. BT was "not properly prepared" to handle the failure, with teams unfamiliar with the back-up process and with instructions being "poorly documented".

Warning systems and incident assessment procedures were not sufficient, Ofcom said, while the disaster

recovery platform "had insufficient capacity and functionality to deal with a level of demand that might be reasonably expected".

The phone service for deaf and speech-impaired users, known as text relay, was also affected, preventing them from making calls and leaving them at "increased risk of harm".

Suzanne Cater, Ofcom's director of enforcement, said the fine sent a warning to companies that they should be prepared for network disruption.

A technical error in a file on BT's server led to a litany of problems for call agents, who found their systems restarting when a call came in. Calls were disconnected or dropped out when transferred to the emergency services.

Ofcom said it had considered the seriousness, length and degree of harm when deciding on the size of the fine. It said that BT had reported the error to the watchdog and had co-operated fully with the investigation.

The telecoms group has taken steps to ensure that such an incident does not happen again, such as improving fault-monitoring as well as its disaster recovery platform.

"We take great pride in underpinning the national 999 service and recognise the critical importance our infrastructure plays," a BT spokeswoman said. "The level of disruption to the service ... has never been seen before and we are sincerely sorry for the distress caused."

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Royal Swifties embrace the friendship bracelet trend

Kate Mansey

The royal family has access to a treasured private collection of jewellery, including historic tiaras, brooches and bracelets.

There's also the priceless Crown Jewels, seen last week when the King wore the Imperial State Crown for the state opening of parliament. Made for the coronation of George VI in 1937, it features no fewer than 2,868 diamonds, not to mention hundreds of pearls and a clutch of sapphires, emeralds and rubies. It travelled to Westminster in its own carriage.

The latest accessory worn by senior members of the royal family, however, appears to be far cheaper: a friendship bracelet.

Prince George wore one in the photograph released by his parents yesterday to mark his 11th birthday. Taken by the Princess of Wales in Windsor this month, the black-and-white image shows the prince was also wearing a smart suit but no tie and smiling up at the camera.

His sister, Princess Charlotte, nine wore several friendship bracelets when she appeared alongside her mother to watch the men's final at Wimbledon. More surprisingly, perhaps, the trend has been adopted by the King, who wore one on his visit to Jersey and Guernsey last week: a small red and white bracelet visible beside his cufflinks. On the same trip, the Queen wore a homemade beaded friendship bracelet spelling out the words "You're a bright star" alongside her usual — pricier at £4,800 — Van Cleef & Arpels bracelet.

Fashioned with coloured thread and beads, the homespun accessory and long-time playground craze has had something of a resurgence thanks to Taylor Swift fans. In her song *You're on Your Own, Kid*, from the album *Mid-*

nights, she sings: "So make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it, you've got no reason to be afraid."

Fans have adopted this as a literal instruction, taking bracelets to gigs to swap with fellow "Swifties". This appears to be the source of the Queen's friendship bracelet, which was given to her in Guernsey by Lola Burdett.

Lola's mother, Kelly Hindmarch, said: "Lola's a huge Swiftie and spends most of her time making the bracelets that you see being exchanged at Taylor Swift's Eras tour. She decided she wanted to give the Queen one that said 'you're a bright star' on it."

It is far easier to make the Swift link with younger members of the royal family. The

Prince of Wales, George and Charlotte, posed for a selfie with the singer when they went to see her perform on William's 42nd birthday. The singer posted on her social media channels the following day: "Happy Bday M8! London shows are off to a splendid start."

Prince William, who does not wear a wedding ring, is yet to embrace the bracelet trend — in public, at least. Yet his Swiftie credentials are well known. He joined her on stage at a charity event in 2013 when they joined Jon Bon Jovi for a rendition of his band's song *Livin' on a Prayer*.

The King also appears to be partial to the odd Swift tune. To mark the arrival of the Eras tour in London last month, which was sold out months in



Prince George is the latest royal to be pictured wearing a friendship bracelet. Princess Charlotte wore some at Wimbledon and the King sported one in Jersey



advance, the military band played the hit *Shake It Off* during changing of the guard.

When Charles visits Australia in October on his first visit to the Commonwealth as monarch he is likely to find common ground with Swifties. In Brisbane there have been reports of "the great bead shortage" as fans scour craft shops for material.

The online marketplace eBay reported a 15,200 per cent rise in sales of friend-

ship bracelets. The scale of the phenomenon is such that the Victoria & Albert Museum has hired four "Taylor Swift superfan advisers" to help chart the culture of the fandom and artisanry around handmade signs, friendship bracelets and Swift memorabilia.

Like the security surrounding the Crown Jewels, the royal friendship bracelets are something of a state secret. Buckingham Palace refuses to be drawn on such a hot topic. Nor do courtiers wish to indulge in speculation as to the King's "Swiftie" status (although he is understood to be "pro"). However, a source close to the Palace said: "It is safe to assume that the bracelets are to do with them all being big Taylor Swift fans."

No leaks from Wales as William and Kate seek aide

Kieran Gair

It's a job title you might expect to find on a non-descript government website: assistant private secretary for Wales and the UK.

Read more closely, however, and you might find that your would-be employers require a skill that few would be able to master: the ability to keep conversations between the Prince and Princess of Wales secret.

As William and Kate seek to deepen their ties to Wales, they are seeking someone with Welsh language skills to help them build "productive relationships" with individuals and insti-

tutions across the country. According to the job advertisement, their new assistant private secretary will organise the couple's engagements within Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and help maximise their impact "across constituent parts of the UK".

A conversational grasp of the Welsh language is a must, the advertisement says, but written and spoken fluency is preferred.

The job description continues: "You will have a proactive, hands-on approach while operating in a small and agile team, and a strong understanding of Welsh communities, affairs, government and business."

"Conversational Welsh is essential, and fluent Welsh, both written and spoken, is desirable."

Candidates applying for the role will plan the couple's day-to-day diary and play a key role for the "on the ground" team in delivering their official engagements.

In the 375 hours of work to be carried out each week, they will also assist in writing speeches for the royals, communicate on behalf of them with charities and patronages, and deliver written advice to the couple.

William and Kate will be hoping to build on the King's relationship with Wales after he spoke this month of how

his affection for the country had "deepened with every passing year".

The King, formerly Prince of Wales himself, used his speech to mark the 25th anniversary of Welsh devolution, spoken partly in Welsh, to describe the "great pleasure" it brought him to see William develop his own relationship with "this special land".

One key part of the assistant private secretary's job description is missing, however: the salary.

In 2022, the couple were on the end of a backlash after a job advertisement for a personal assistant to Kate's private secretary was listed by Kensington Palace with a salary of only £27,000.

Games loved by Harry are coming to Britain

Birmingham has won the bid to host the Invictus Games in 2027, with the Duke of Sussex congratulating the city on its success.

The government-backed £26 million proposal saw off competition from US finalist Washington DC and the event will be staged at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in July.

Three new sports — pickleball, laser run and esports — are expected to feature in the 2027 Games.

Harry, who founded the sporting competition for wounded, injured and sick military personnel and veterans, said Birmingham's strong ties to the military community had made it a "formidable contender".

It will be the first time the Games has come home to the UK since the duke staged the inaugural tournament in London in 2014.

Harry, patron of the Invictus Games Foundation, said in a statement: "Congratulations to Birmingham, UK, on winning the bid to host the Invictus Games 2027."

"Your city's strong ties to the armed forces community made it a formidable contender from the very start."

The RAF veteran Stephen 'Hoops' Hooper, Team UK captain for the Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025, said: "This will mean the world to Team UK, not only so their friends and family can watch them compete, but so the British public can cheer them on."

"Birmingham is a special place for wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans, as they all come through here at some point."

"With support from the Royal British Legion for Team UK, Invictus has helped me embrace life again. As we prepare for Canada, it's great to know the Games are coming home in 2027."

A home turf competition now raises the question as to whether Harry's father the King, his brother the Prince of Wales and other members of the royal family will attend the event.

Charles and William backed Harry when he launched the venture ten years ago, joining him at the opening ceremony and they watched the athletics together. But much has changed, with Harry stepping down as a working royal with the Duchess of Sussex and moving to the US. It is not yet known whether Meghan will accompany Harry. She was last seen publicly in the UK at the late Queen's funeral in 2022.

The duke marked the tenth anniversary of Invictus at a special service in St Paul's Cathedral in London in May, but he was without Meghan, and there was no appearance by the King or William.

But the Games hold special memories for Harry and Meghan.

They were first pictured in public together at Invictus in Toronto in 2017.

The UK government-backed bid focused on the NEC, and drew on connection to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Selly Oak, which treats wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans; the Royal College of Defence Medicine, which trains UK clinicians; and the world class Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Stanford Hall.

Pickleball — one of the new sports — combines elements of badminton, tennis and table tennis. Laser run involves shooting a laser pistol and running.

Esports has featured at a previous Invictus as a side event rather than in the main scheduled competition.

A flag-raising ceremony with the veterans minister Al Carns will be staged at the NEC this morning.



Girl, 11, only survivor of family after crash

A girl aged 11 was the only surviving member of her family after her parents and two younger sisters were killed in a crash in West Yorkshire (Seren Hughes writes).

Shane Roller, 33, Shannen Morgan, 30, and their daughters Rubie, nine, and Lillie, four, were all killed in a collision involving the Ford Focus car they were travelling in and a motorcycle at 3.54pm on Sunday. The surviving daughter was named as Poppie.

A man and a woman — the motorcyclist and his pillion passenger — also died in the crash on the A61 between Barnsley and Wakefield.

A GoFundMe page has been set up by Paul Hepple to support Poppie after she “lost her whole world in an instant”.

He said: “With her immediate family gone, she needs support to ensure she has a stable, loving environment where she can heal and grow.”

The site had raised more than £80,000 from more than 5,000 donations last night.

Hepple said the funds would be used to cover Poppie’s living expenses, education, counselling and future care.

Poppie was “bright and resilient” and “known for her infectious smile and kind heart”, he said. “She loves football and



Shane Roller, Shannen Morgan and their children Rubie, nine, and Lillie, four, died in the crash on the A61 near Wakefield

playing outdoors. Poppie is also a huge Taylor Swift fan and finds comfort in her music.”

In a post on Facebook, Roller’s brother Callum said his heart had been “ripped into a million pieces”. He wrote: “You all had a heart of gold and gonna miss you all like crazy!”

He claimed the motorcycle had been on the wrong side of the road. West Yorkshire police said they were investigating.

Superintendent Alan Travis said: “This is an absolutely tragic incident. Our thoughts go out to the families of those who have died who we are working with to provide support.”

Dan Jarvis, the Labour MP for Barnsley North, said the news was “devastating”.

1 in 12 women a victim of violence

Ben Ellery Crime Editor

Violence against women and girls is a national emergency of epidemic proportions and a threat to society “the same size as terrorism”, a police chief has said.

A report has found that more than one million violent crimes against women and girls were recorded by the police in 2022-23, with nearly 3,000 crimes recorded each day.

The study, commissioned by the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing, found that such crimes accounted for slightly less than 20 per cent of all police-recorded crime, excluding fraud, in England and Wales between April 2022 and March last year.

The report, the National Policing Statement for Violence Against Women and Girls, estimated that at least one in every 12 women will be a victim each year: about two million women.

Police chiefs said the figures were “the tip of the iceberg” as they cannot include unreported crimes.

Detective Chief Constable Maggie Blyth, deputy chief executive of the College of Policing, called for government intervention in the “overwhelmed” criminal justice system and said technology companies needed to

Detective Chief Constable Maggie Blyth called for government intervention



How we must tackle the problem

Maggie Blyth and Sir Mark Rowley Comment

One in every six murders is a result of domestic abuse. A staggering one in 20 people, more than two million of them, are perpetrators of violence against the women and girls in their lives. We must act to change this. Policing will play its part but the scale and urgency of the challenge calls for a whole-society response. The report by the

do more to stamp out misogynistic content.

Blyth, who is also NPCC lead for violence against women and girls, said society needed to “no longer accept violence against women and girls as inevitable”.

She said: “Violence against women and girls is a national emergency. It’s at staggering levels and is only getting worse. One in

National Police Chiefs’ Council and the College of Policing sets out the situation, and what urgently needs to happen next.

The same four Ps that are used so effectively in counterterrorism guide our approach: protect individuals, relentlessly pursue perpetrators, prevent people from committing violence against women and girls, and prepare policing to effectively respond.

We are overhauling the training given to officers and are committed to drastically improving the experience of victims, often a barrier to reporting. We are transforming the way we investigate rape, resulting in a 25 per cent increase in arrests and a 38 per cent increase in charges nationally.

In London, the early results from the Met’s data-led targeting of the 100 most harmful offenders suggests we are already seeing more dangerous men brought to justice.

The use of live facial recognition is proving effective at identifying sex offenders. It is the fourth P —

12 women are victims each year and we know that the police-recorded data is only the tip of the iceberg.

“One in six murders in England and Wales are domestic abuse-related. Perpetrators are getting younger — the average age of suspects in child sexual abuse and exploitation cases is just 15 years old. We’re dealing with a problem deeply ingrained in our society.”

Blyth said the creation of a National Centre for Public Protection would support police forces with specialist knowledge and training. She added

preparing — that is now crucial. This means specially trained investigators, better technology to detect offences, and victim support in every case; a centralised hub.

Offending is becoming ever more complex and we need a criminal justice system, already bursting at the seams where it isn’t broken, that is equipped to deal with that. We need social services and healthcare providers to be set up to spot early warning signs of abuse; education partners to teach children about healthy relationships. We need technology companies to introduce robust safeguarding measures.

We welcome the government’s commitment to halving rates of violence against women and girls over the coming decade — but it is not a goal policing alone can meet. We urge them to lead an approach where the whole system contributes. **Detective Chief Constable Maggie Blyth is deputy chief executive of the College of Policing and Sir Mark Rowley is Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police**

that the data from the National Policing Statement was “staggering”, with police records of violence against women and girls increasing by 37 per cent from 2018-19 to 2022-23.

Blyth said the criminal justice system was “under-performing for victims”, with the report stating violence against women and girls was at such a scale “it cannot be addressed through law enforcement alone”.

Violence against women and girls was classed as a national threat to public safety by the Home Office in

February last year and Blyth said a national framework had brought the police response in line with that for counterterrorism.

More than 4,500 officers have been trained to investigate rape and serious sexual offences over the past year, with the report detailing a 38 per cent increase in charges for adult rape for the 12 months to last December.

Child sexual abuse and exploitation offences also increased by 435 per cent between 2013 and 2022, the report estimated, from 20,000 to nearly 107,000.

Arrests for offences related to domestic abuse increased by more than 22 per cent in the year ending March 2023, compared with the previous period, with one in every six murders in 2022-23 being related to domestic abuse.

Sophie Francis-Cansfield, head of external affairs at Women’s Aid, said the report’s findings were alarming, adding that many survivors did not report their experiences, meaning the issue is “much larger than the data shows”.

Francis-Cansfield added: “Women’s Aid agree that violence against women and girls is a national threat, and echoes calls for a whole-system approach to tackling the problem. This includes co-ordination between the criminal justice system, the government and experts, and enhanced training and education delivered by specialist services to those working in statutory services like the police.”

“Without meaningful collaboration and action, women and children will continue to be failed when it comes to being protected and when seeking justice for the abuse they have endured.”

Proof that Bonnie Prince Charlie beat assassination

Jack Blackburn History Correspondent

Visitors to Bannockburn House near Stirling have long been entertained by a yarn that Bonnie Prince Charlie nearly met his end there when an assassin fired at him through a bedroom window.

It was little more than a local legend... but now there is evidence. Volunteers found a hole made by a musket ball behind some 19th-century panelling.

The details are consistent with the little-known story of how during the Jacobite Rising of 1745-46 someone tried to kill Charles Edward Stuart, the grandson of James II of England (also James VII of Scotland) and claimant to the countries' thrones.

A Jacobite historian has said the hole is a "critically important find. It was a completely fresh story to me, and I've been writing about Jacobite history for 30 years," said Professor Murray Pittock, a historian at the University of Glasgow and author of *Scotland: The Global History*.

Forensic-style analysis of the damage has shown that the 21mm-wide

hole is consistent with a piece of shot fired from outside the window. It is also clear that it would have been a very near miss. The identity of the perpetrator, their motive and whether they were in someone else's employ will probably remain a mystery.

Aside from the oral traditions of Bannockburn House, there was no record of this incident. Historians are already working to fit it into the narrative.

The discovery was made after staff at the house spoke to an 89-year-old man whose aunt had been a servant there. He said not only did his aunt know the shooting story but she used to take care of the musket ball hole. Armed with this information, staff looked at the prince's bedroom with fresh eyes.

"We noticed what appeared to be the edge of an inset panel in the wall when cleaning out the room furniture for conservation," Catherine Bradley, lead volunteer researcher for the Bannockburn House Trust, said.

"I suspected that is where it may have been. It is across from a window, now hidden by panelling later put in the room in the 1880s. I didn't have the evi-

dence to look until now." The team at the house immediately sought verification from Pittock and Murray Cook, the archaeologist for Stirling council. The academics were thrilled by what they saw.

"I have visited the bedroom many times over the years and always tried to imagine the prince and the resulting confusion from the musket fire and sounds of smashing glass alerting everyone to the would-be assassin," Cook said. "However, to see the damage and to touch the spot sent a thrill down my spine — [it is] worth visiting Bannockburn House for this alone."

The incident took place after the

prince began using the house as his headquarters during the rebellion against George II. The Jacobites were trying to take Stirling Castle but the prince was ill and convalesced at the house. The length of his indisposition was in part made longer by his blossoming romance with Clementina Walkinshaw, his host's niece, but Pittock now wonders



whether the attempt on his life also played a part. "This is critically important not only for our understanding of the Rising but also for the role the attack may have played in intensifying the relationship between Charles and Clementina Walkinshaw, which led to the birth of his only child," Pittock said.

The announcement coincided with the anniversary of Stuart's arrival in Scotland 279 years ago.

The evidence showed the prince had a lucky escape

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Ambition falls at first hurdle

Lincoln Jopp, the new Tory MP for Spelthorne, has lots of pluck, having been awarded the Military Cross for his courage under fire in Sierra Leone. There was one occasion, however, when this son of a racing driver felt daunted. As a student he was selected to run in the 110 metres hurdles at the Army Athletics Championships. "They announced 'In Lane 1, 2nd Lt Jopp, Scots Guards' and I started preening myself," he said. "Then they said 'In Lane 2, Staff Sgt K Akabusi, physical training corps.'" He looked across and saw the hurdler and relay runner, below, removing his Olympic warm-up top. "Kriss gave me a 1,000-watt smile," Jopp recalled. "And then just said: 'I'll see you at the end.'"

Government's impact on political podcasts continues with Jess Phillips the latest minister to have to give up pontification on receiving a red box. However, Ruth Davidson, her co-host on Sky's Electoral Dysfunction, thinks they only need a locum, telling the forthright Labour MP: "You'll say something that gets you sacked and be back in a year."

MISNOMER MADNESS

Sir Keir Starmer is still getting used to his new job, addressing Rishi Sunak in the Commons yesterday as "the prime minister". These things take time. Michael Portillo once told me of seeing Margaret Thatcher heading to the back benches for the first time in 1990. "How do you think the prime minister is coping?" John Major whispered to him. "She's not the prime minister," Portillo replied. "You are."

JUST THE TICKET

Two of the first three questions in the Lords

yesterday were answered by Peter Hendy, the new rail minister and former chairman of Network Rail. The grandson of the 6th Baron Wynford received a life peerage in 2022 in recognition of a career that included being commissioner of Transport for London for nine years and he is certainly very passionate about the subject. So much so, in fact, that when a prostitute alleged they'd had a nine-month fling in 2013, one of her claims was that he had given her four £10 contactless London travel cards as a *billet-doux*. Hendy didn't comment at the time, though friends said he hadn't spent any public money on the affair. How unromantic, though: a girl hopes to receive pearls and instead she just gets Oysters.

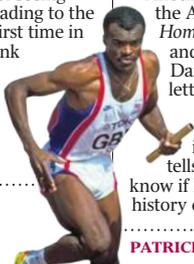
The scientist and broadcaster Adam Rutherford is happy to exploit vanity and superstition when playing in the annual Authors v Actors cricket match. As the wicketkeeper, he throws doubt at a new batsman by asking: "Would I have seen you in anything?" while he admits that if he hits a ball into the air, his tactic is to shout "Macbeth!" to foil the catcher underneath.

WHAT'S IN A NAMESAKE?

I don't know if either the actor or the author version of Brian Cox fancies playing in the fixture, but while the historian Tom Holland is a very keen cricketer, and will bore for England about the six he once hit for the Authors XI off a child's bowling, the thespian Tom Holland sadly prefers golf.

Another confusion is between the Actors XI captain and *Homeland* star Damian Lewis and the military historian Damien Lewis. "I get a lot of letters from women who loved my performance in *Band of Brothers* and ask if I'm single," the writer tells Radio Times. "I don't know if he gets mine about the history of the SAS."

PATRICK KIDD



Summer slimmer rushed to hospital after taking Wegovy

Eleanor Hayward Health Editor

When she ordered the weight-loss injection Wegovy from an online pharmacy in April, Rebecca Freeman hoped it would be a “quick fix” to lose a couple of stone before summer. Instead, it marked the beginning of a terrifying ordeal that has left her unable to work or leave the house.

The 41-year-old beautician developed such extreme side-effects that she was taken to A&E by ambulance, suffering mini-seizures and heart palpitations. More than two months later she has still not fully recovered.

Freeman has shared her story to highlight the need for tighter restrictions on the sale of weight-loss drugs after NHS warnings about patients being rushed to hospital after buying the medication online.

Her symptoms began when she took a 0.5mg dose of Wegovy after four weeks on a “starting dose” of 0.25mg. Wegovy is the brand name for the appetite-suppressing drug semaglutide. Another brand, Ozempic, also uses semaglutide to treat type 2 diabetes.

“Two days after the first 0.5mg injection I woke up in the middle of the night and I thought I was dying. I was really really panicked, and had a heavy sensation in my chest. I couldn’t keep still, my hands and legs were moving,” Freeman told *The Times*. “I felt like I needed to climb out of my own body. I could feel my heart banging through my chest. My chest was really tight, it felt like I couldn’t breathe properly.”

Freeman called an ambulance and was taken to A&E at St Mary’s Hospital in Paddington, west London, where she suffered mini-seizures, with her “eyes rolling back in my head” and blurry vision.

Blood tests showed that she was suffering from dangerously low blood sugar, a common side-effect of the drug, which doctors believe caused the seizures. Freeman was monitored in A&E overnight and given beta-blockers to slow her heart rate. “All of the doctors I spoke to in A&E said I wasn’t the first person they had seen with side-effects of weight-loss drugs.



Rebecca Freeman has suffered mini-seizures and heart palpitations. She says she is still unable to work or leave the house

They’d seen someone the day before with exactly the same symptoms as me,” she said.

Since going to A&E on May 16, Freeman has continued to experience debilitating symptoms as she waits for the medication to completely leave her system — doctors have said that this will take several weeks. A psychiatrist diagnosed akathisia, a condition characterised by an inability to remain still, which they believe was triggered by the weight-loss drug.

Freeman, who did not previously have any mental health problems, is now on powerful benzodiazepines and an antidepressant for anxiety, as well as beta-blockers to lower her heart rate.

The single mother, who runs her own beauty business in north London, has been unable to work since she went to hospital. “It’s been two months now and I’m still really poorly some days,” she said. “All I want is to feel better, I’m just desperate to have my life back.”

Freeman ordered Wegovy from an online pharmacy, paying £179 a month, after an online consultation. She looked into the drug after speaking to clients at her beauty business who had lost weight after buying it online. “The popularity of these new weight-loss injections makes it harder to resist them, because it seems like everyone else is doing it,” she said.

Her body mass index was 30.2, just

above the threshold to be classified as obese, making her eligible for the drug.

Freeman believes that in-person assessments, as well as thorough warnings about side-effects, are essential to protect patients in future.

Wegovy is being introduced on the NHS for patients with severe obesity, and is available privately from online pharmacies.

Drug information for Wegovy, manufactured by the Danish company Novo Nordisk, lists possible side-effects including nausea, dizziness, low blood sugar, inflammation of the pancreas and an increased heart rate. The warning label in the US also lists depression or thoughts of suicide.

Pharmacist struck off for groping female patient

A Boots pharmacist has been struck off for groping a patient who had come in asking for the morning-after pill.

Sajjad Patel, who is married, had “abused his position” by touching the woman’s groin and breasts in an examination that was not clinically justified, a misconduct hearing was told.

The woman was left “frozen [and] freaked out” as he stared at her while moving his hands around her body in front of her daughter, aged two.

Patel left her feeling “incredibly uncomfortable” and “vulnerable” and suffering from nightmares and flashbacks of the incident.

He has been struck off after a General Pharmaceutical Council tribunal concluded any other outcome would “not adequately protect the public”.

Patel worked at Boots in Rawtenstall, Lancashire, at the time of the incident in September 2020. The woman, Patient A, had been “embarrassed” to ask for the pill in the store, so asked for a consultation. Once he had taken her into a small room, he said: “We do things differently now. I need to examine your stomach to check your hormones.”

The next day Patel was arrested and interviewed under caution. He told police he had warned Patient A of the procedure and she had declined a chaperone. He denied putting his hands in her knickers, touching her genitals or breasts and said he had been looking for a bump to the left side of her stomach.

He was suspended in February 2021 after he told bosses he had been formally charged with sexual assault. He was found not guilty at a crown court trial.

He told the panel he denied all sexual touching. However, the panel found it was “more likely than not” that he had touched the woman and that it was sexual in nature.

The panel said: “[Patel] failed in the use of his professional judgment, failed to behave in a professional manner (in particular that he was trustworthy and acted with honesty and integrity) and abused his position as a pharmacist to abuse Patient A’s position as a patient ... his misconduct has brought the profession of pharmacy into disrepute.”

Patel has until August 9 to appeal.

Paralympian: Strictly left me injured

Tom Witherow

A paralympic athlete who competed on *Strictly Come Dancing* said pressure from bosses to perform left him with injuries that still affect him.

Will Bayley, who will compete in Paris in table tennis next month, was left in “horrific pain” in his knee from an accident in rehearsals caused by a jump and it now limited his training.

The 36-year-old, who was born with a debilitating limb condition, claimed that he had told producers he could not do jumps, and that the accident happened after his professional partner, Janette Manrara, had said that his first attempts were “rubbish”.

He blamed *Strictly* bosses, saying that Manrara was “under a lot of pressure by the bosses to perform a certain way”.

Bayley’s torn ligaments forced him to withdraw from the show and he initially thought it would end his sporting career, which has seen him win six Paralympic medals, including gold.

Bayley has complained to an investigation into *Strictly*, claiming a lack of



Will Bayley claimed his dance partner Janette Manrara was “under pressure”

duty of care, *The Sun* reported. He told the paper: “I don’t think anyone was really looking out for me when I injured myself, leaving me with injuries that still affect me to this day.”

Bayley said that he told *Strictly* staff that he was “not sure I can land safely” in the rehearsal involving a jump from a table in week six of the 2019 series.

Of his injury, he said: “My knee will always be a problem. I can now only train for a couple of hours before it’s sore. I felt like it was my fault. The bosses made me feel like that.”

He is the latest celebrity to speak out about *Strictly* after Amanda Abbington and Zara McDermott claimed that they had faced abuse in dance rehearsals.

An investigation into Abbington’s partner, Giovanni Pernice, is expected to report imminently. He denies the claims. McDermott’s partner, Graziano Di Prima, was sacked last week.

A BBC spokesman said that it had “longstanding protocols for dealing with injuries if they occur and that includes contestants receiving all necessary treatment and support”.

A representative for Manrara said: “Janette has never received any complaints and has maintained friendships with all her partners, including Will.”

Tim Davie, the BBC director-general, was due to face questions about the scandal today alongside the publication of the corporation’s annual report.

Thousands are ignoring lane closures on smart motorways

More than 53,000 incidents of drivers ignoring lane closed signs on smart motorways have been recorded since 2021, according to research.

The charity IAM RoadSmart, which conducted the study, said it showed that the government must give “serious thought” about the future of the roads.

Adherence to red X signs is critical to safety on smart motorways that have had their hard shoulder converted into a live running lane.

National Highways staff switch on the closed lane signs when stopped vehicles are detected in live lanes to prevent them being hit from behind and to help and protect the emergency services.

Since September 2022, all police forces have been able to use enforcement cameras to prosecute motorists who illegally pass under a red X or enter a lane beyond one of the signs. This can result in a fine of up to £100 and three penalty points, or more severe penal-

ties in some cases. Figures obtained by IAM RoadSmart showed that 4,393 incidents were recorded in 2021, rising to 20,773 in 2022 and 28,231 in 2023.

Meera Naran, whose son Dev, eight, died in a smart motorway crash on the M6 near Birmingham in 2018, said: “In an emergency, every second counts. The red X provides a layer of safety for the public, emergency services, recovery operators and road workers.”

The IAM RoadSmart director of policy and standards Nicholas Lyes said: “The majority of drivers have serious reservations about the safety of smart motorways. This is something the new government needs to give some serious thought to.”

Smart motorways without a hard shoulder were created to increase capacity at a lower cost than widening roads. Rishi Sunak cancelled all future planned smart motorway projects in April last year, citing financial pressures and a lack of public confidence.

Clinic backs down after suing over bad reviews

Fiona Hamilton Chief Reporter

A cosmetic surgery company accused of trying to silence patients who post negative online reviews has climbed down and paid legal costs.

Signature Medical Limited, which has eight UK clinics, began defamation and harassment cases against patients who were unhappy with their treatment and put unfavourable reviews on Trustpilot and Facebook. In the case exposed by The Times, Signature Clinic's lawyer told one patient, Tracy, that the fear of imprisonment and bankruptcy would stop her "itchy fingers" online.

Now it can be revealed that the company, which trades as Signature Clinic, has settled all but one case before a trial on the issue of defamation. A judge had previously criticised the company for bringing oppressive legal action.

The details of the settlements are confidential but it can be reported that Signature Clinic has agreed to pay legal costs, which experts said was unusual for libel claims. The four defendants have agreed to delete their reviews and not reinstate them.

The patients being sued were given support from the Free Speech Union (FSU), which warned that Signature Clinic's tactics were a clear case of strategic lawsuits against public participation, or Slapps. Slapps have become notorious after actions against journalists designed to stifle free speech.

Signature Clinic brought four defamation cases for damages of up to £10,000 each. Patients included Mohammed, who underwent blepharoplasty to improve the appearance of the eyelids. He says he can no longer completely close his eyes and has blurry vision. Signature Clinic sued him when he refused to take down a review.

Signature disputes that its legal action amounted to a Slapp.

A spokesman said: "We welcome honest feedback from clients and will always try to resolve any issues directly through our customer service channels in the first instance. Taking legal action has always been a last resort." He said that Signature noted the judge's comments in the harassment case and "took a decision to bring the matter to a close rather than appeal".



Light entertainment Celestial Strings Ldn performed Candlelight Concert: A Tribute to Coldplay at Southwark Cathedral in central London on Sunday. The programme at the multi-sensory event included several of the band's hits, including Clocks

Rugby player jailed for lies about NHS surgery

Ellie McDonald

A bodybuilder who said he could not lift anything heavier than an empty kettle after an operation has been jailed and ordered to pay costs of £200,000 following the discovery of Facebook posts that showed him playing rugby and lifting weights.

Sean Murphy, 39, of Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, had undergone surgery after tearing a bicep tendon during a match in 2017. He sued the Wye Valley NHS Trust for £580,000 in compensation after claiming that the procedure had left him unable to play rugby, work as a builder or dress himself.

However, the claim was dismissed in



Sean Murphy had claimed that the operation had left him unable to play rugby or work



2022 after the NHS was tipped off that he was lying, prompting the discovery of photos and videos showing him back on the pitch and lifting weights.

Murphy has been jailed for eight months for contempt of court at the High Court in London. He faces a £200,000 bill in court fees from having to pay back the NHS's costs of the original claim and contempt case. He will also repay £40,000 in interim damages he had received. After a trial in 2022, the claim was dismissed by Judge James Healy-Pratt, who found it was worth about £5,000 and called the claim for £580,000 "fundamentally dishonest".

Last week the case was taken back to court by the NHS trust.

Dig fails to find Muriel McKay's body

Ben Ellery Crime Editor
Ali Mitib

Police digging in farmland for the remains of Muriel McKay have ended their search without finding her body.

Scotland Yard wrote to her family yesterday to inform them that "the search has not been successful in finding Muriel's remains or any evidence relating to her kidnap and murder".

The force has spent the past eight days digging at Stocking farm in Hertfordshire after McKay's killer, Nizamodeen Hosein, 74, told detectives he had buried her body there.

He and his brother Arthur kidnaped and murdered McKay, the wife of the news executive Alick McKay, in 1969, after mistaking her for Anna Murdoch, then the wife of Rupert Murdoch.

Her body has never been found but the Metropolitan Police started a dig after McKay's family contacted Hosein

to ask for his help in finding her body. Hosein, now 76, had spent 20 years in prison for the crime before being deported to his native Trinidad.

At his trial he had refused to admit any involvement in her killing, but in January the family flew to meet him in



Muriel McKay was abducted in 1969 and murdered

Trinidad where he told them he wanted to "clear his conscience" before he died.

Detectives from the Met flew over to interview him and launched the search this month. The farm is where the men held McKay hostage and demanded a £1 million ransom before killing her.

Detective Superintendent Katherine

Goodwin said the cost of the dig was likely to exceed a previous dig at the farm, which cost £160,000.

She said: "I want to express our sincere condolences to her family and friends. This is not the outcome we wanted. However, what we can now conclusively say is the information given by Hosein in the last few years is not correct, Miriam is not in the location that he has indicated."

The family had been campaigning for Hosein to be brought over to the UK to show officers where he claims he buried McKay and Goodwin revealed she had met Home Office officials last week.

However, because he had been deported it would have been extremely difficult to bring him over, she said.

Goodwin said: "If we thought there was a reasonable chance that he might be able to point out the true location, then this would be beneficial to the investigation. However, sadly, I don't be-

lieve this to be the case. He's already provided us with quite a lot of detailed information about the location of Muriel, which has unfortunately been proven to be incorrect. The parameters went way beyond what he said to allow for this margin of error."

McKay's descendants criticised the search, claiming that the police lacked experience and that it was a case of the "blind leading the blind". They said that the search was in vain without Hosein's presence and that they were considering making an application to the Home Office to bring him to the UK.

Ian McKay, her son, said: "They [the police] haven't managed to satisfy us in any way that they have conducted the search properly", adding that he was shown an area being dug up because it "wasn't searched properly in 2022".

"The fact is we needed Nizam there and there's a stubbornness or there's some unwillingness to bring him."

Mark Dyer, McKay's grandson, said: "He's the only person in the world [who knows where she is] so why wouldn't he be here? Why was anybody else there?"

Commander Steve Clayman said investigators had "deep regret" that they did not find her, and acknowledged the time and energy that her loved ones had put into the search.

"There has to be a point in which we have to say we've now done what we can do," Clayman told journalists.

Hosein was in touch with police yesterday with new information, in a video sent via his lawyer.

The family were invited to the site four times during the eight-day search and police said they tried to fix search parameters in collaboration with them.

The property owners said: "It is a very disappointing result. We have been told by the police that they have completed their search and will not seek permission for any future search at our home."

Mauling victim is fourth to die from dog attack this year

Mario Ledwith

A woman died yesterday afternoon after being attacked by a dog at a residential property.

Emergency services were called to the house in the Wood End area of Coventry where they found the woman, who was in her thirties, in a critical condition.

The victim was removed from the property by police and ambulance workers over fears for her safety but she was pronounced dead at the scene

shortly after. The dog that carried out the attack has been seized by West Midlands police.

The force does not believe that the dog is a banned breed, although a full assessment has yet to be carried out. Nobody else was injured during the incident.

The death is understood to be the fourth fatal dog attack in the UK this year after a record number of incidents in 2023, when at least eight people died from dog bites.

There were an average of three

deaths a year recorded from 2001 to 2021.

The emergency services were called to the property on Wexford Road after the dog attack was reported at 12.16pm yesterday.

An ambulance arrived at the scene within six minutes, with two air ambulances landing on a nearby green space shortly after.

A West Midlands ambulance service spokeswoman said: "Ambulance staff arrived with police officers to find a woman inside a property in a critical

condition. With help from police, the woman was rapidly removed from the property due to safety concerns.

"Ambulance staff performed advanced life support but tragically, despite their best efforts, nothing could be done to save the woman and she was confirmed dead on scene a short time later."

Chief Inspector David Amos, of West Midlands police said: "We understand that this is a distressing and tragic incident and we would like to thank the local community for their support and

to our emergency services colleagues who dealt with this incident.

"Our thoughts remain firmly with the family and loved ones of the woman who has sadly died and will be informing the coroner of her death.

"Although the breed of the dog is yet to be confirmed, at this stage we do not believe it to be of a banned breed. However, a full assessment will be required before we can confirm this.

West Midlands police said in a statement that the woman's family had been informed.

Smith still hits the mark with 'forever student' zeal

Pop Will Hodgkinson

Patti Smith Quartet
Somerset House, WC2R
★★★★☆

Introducing *Peaceable Kingdom* during her concert on a balmy night in a Georgian courtyard, Patti Smith made a statement about Palestine, to the predictable raised fists and cheers from the crowd.

Then someone shouted, "Free the hostages" and the mood of righteousness changed to one of tension. "Free f***in' everyone," Smith retorted. "Everyone should f*** for free." Cue laughter from the audience, tension dissipated.

Smith can come across as high-minded to the point of naivety but she is also a fantastic performer. Almost 50 years since fusing poetry and rock'n'roll on her incendiary 1975 debut, *Horses*, she was as engaged as ever, leading a quartet — featuring her son Jackson on guitar — through old favourites, obscurities and some surprising covers. Which other 77-year-old performs a tender tribute to Kurt Cobain called *About a Boy*, followed by a rendition of *Smells Like Teen Spirit* with all the disaffection of an angry teenage boy? Who else lets



MARILYN KINGWILL

Patti Smith gave a reminder that she has continued to create innovative music since her early heyday

her band run through a garage rock version of Jimi Hendrix's *Fire* so she can nip off mid-set and have a nice cup of tea?

Smith's concert on Sunday was also a reminder of how she didn't just make one or two great albums in her heyday and coast from there, but has come up with great music throughout her career. The cheerful, reggae-tinged *Redondo Beach*, from *Horses*, was an inevitable highlight, as was *Because the Night*, that 1977 heartland rock anthem by Bruce Springsteen, which Smith made her own and had a hit with. But then there was *Nine*, from 2012's *Banga*, an ode to William Blake, which with its combination of rock'n'roll passion and droning experimentalism sounded like the Velvet Underground at their most avant-garde.

When Smith performed a rendition of Lana Del Rey's *Summertime Sadness* as a tribute to her husband, Fred "Sonic" Smith of MC5, who died in 1994, she looked almost bemused at the prospect of covering the queen of sultry melancholy. But Smith has the energy of a student, forever enthused at her literary, artistic and musical discoveries and sense of purpose, and that proved inspiring.

An encore of *People Have the Power*, with Paul Simon on guitar, coming shortly after the news of Joe Biden stepping down for re-election as US president, found her shouting: "Use your power!" It was like a moment from a protest march and it was a fitting end to a celebratory night. *New Theatre, Oxford, September 17*

Police ambassador for women was a wolf-whistler in sheep's clothing

Laurence Sleator

A police sergeant who acted as an "ambassador" for women and girls has been dismissed after a panel found he had wolf-whistled at female members of the public and bragged about his sexual prowess to colleagues.

James Endean, an officer with Thames Valley police for 22 years, was sacked without notice last month after an independent panel found him culpable of gross misconduct.

Between early 2022 and March last year, Endean was found to have bullied his colleagues and made repeated sexual innuendos and misogynistic comments towards female co-workers

and members of the public. This was despite the officer being made an ethics champion in 2022 and a White Ribbon champion a year later, to act as an "ambassador" for women and girls in ending violence perpetrated against them by men.

The panel laid out more than 12 allegations against Endean relating to his behaviour. All but one was proved or proved in part. This included "rating" female members of the public based on their attractiveness while on night-time patrols and describing what he would do to them sexually.

Witnesses said that they heard Endean, who worked from Reading police station, say that a female

member of the public was "asking for it", make inappropriate comments about the public such as "look at the legs on that" and was heard wolf-whistling at women more than once.

The panel concluded that Endean also made numerous sexual innuendos about the size of his fingers to female colleagues, once displaying them and saying "these should be on *Britain's Got Talent*" — the ITV talent show. This was denied by Endean who said that during his first years of service he was given the nickname "sausage fingers" by colleagues and his comment was a reference to this. However, the panel said he knew this was an innuendo and his comments reflected "a pattern of

him referring to the size of his own penis in the workplace".

Endean, who was made a sergeant in 2009, was also found to have bullied both male and female officers, "targeting them and humiliating them by his spiteful comments and threats". This included calling one as "thick as shit" and a "f***ing idiot" after they made an error. Some officers tried to avoid working with him.

Luke Ponte, representing Endean, alleged collusion between witnesses to exaggerate claims but this was rejected by the panel. He also told the panel that Endean's life was under "acute strain" in 2022 due to family court proceedings in relation to contact with his daughter.

In its decision summary, the panel said that Endean's repeated misconduct caused "reputational harm" to Thames Valley police and could damage public confidence in the police. "There is a significant public interest, particularly in recent years, in how male members of the police service behave towards women. This is because misogynistic or sexual comments such as those the panel have found proved are likely to deter victims of crime from reporting to the police," it added.

After the allegations were made against Endean he was moved from Reading to Bracknell and Wokingham where he continued to work in a supervisory role.

For most women, trad wives are a freak show

Sarah Ditum

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Comment

Biden's last act must be to strengthen Ukraine

President got some big foreign policy calls wrong but it's not too late to grant Zelensky permission to hit Russian targets



William Hague

I've put six topics on the agenda for the meeting with Joe Biden," David Cameron said to me when I was foreign secretary and Biden, then vice-president, was about to visit 10 Downing Street.

"That's a touch optimistic, prime minister," I said. "In an hour you'll be lucky to get through one."

"Oh, come on, he can't be that talkative."

He was. The PM spoke for a couple of minutes about the situation in Afghanistan, and the vice-president then replied for the next 58 minutes. He was folksy, personable, with limitless memory for people and places — a very different man from the stumbling figure who has just bowed out of the presidential race. But in a room of talkative people, he had no equal. As far as I can recall we never did reach the other five subjects, except for an odd word we squeezed in edgewise as we ushered him out.

From this and other, similar interactions I formed a sceptical view of what Biden might be like as president. I thought he wasn't a good listener and would pull any remaining rug from under our allies in Afghanistan. On the latter my fears were well founded but on the former it would turn out that Biden as president would be a formidable persuader; his fluent, relentless, back-slapping approach would enable him to get a bigger legislative programme through Congress than any president since Lyndon Johnson. Biden achieved this in a more

bitterly divided Congress than LBJ ever faced. He has been able to sign into law far-reaching legislation on building infrastructure, investing in clean energy, developing a stronger semiconductor industry while denying it to China, in the meantime entrenching equal marriage rights and even managing some limited steps on gun violence.

Most importantly, he has managed this while conducting the presidency with civility, respecting democracy, upholding the rule of law and appointing an administration with a high level of expertise and integrity — in every respect a dramatic and welcome contrast with his predecessor and possible successor, Donald Trump.

As he steps down from his party's nomination — in the nick of time to shake up the November election but six months too late for his own dignity and his party's chances of finding a completely fresh alternative to Trump — we should be grateful, in an allied country so dependent on America, that this proud, loquacious, stubborn man has served as president.

Nevertheless, he has made two great errors. The first was to spend without constraint, pumping nearly \$2 trillion into the economy in the wake of Covid, on top of much justified spending on infrastructure and technology. US national debt has consequently reached \$34 trillion and it has done so a full five years earlier than on pre-pandemic assumptions.

A Trump administration would arguably be even more irresponsible with America's finances, planning tax cuts in a country running an annual deficit of 7 per cent of GDP. Unsustainable public finances catch up much more slowly with America than with Britain or France, since



Volodymyr Zelensky has been steadfastly supported by Joe Biden, but with great caution on how US-supplied weapons can be used by Ukraine

most of the world likes holding dollars, but one day they will catch up all the same. Biden has brought closer that future financial crisis — a crisis so big it would affect all of us — while also adding to inflation, bringing higher interest rates and unpopularity to dog his abandoned bid for re-election.

Biden's second big error was indeed foreshadowed in that monologue in Downing Street more than a decade ago. Early in his presidency he pulled out the last US forces from Afghanistan, predictably leading to a total collapse and the return of the Taliban. Millions of people, particularly women and girls, have been plunged into social and political darkness and the credibility of the West has suffered a devastating blow. We may never know how much Vladimir Putin was emboldened by the spectacle of the US abandoning its central foreign policy effort of the previous 20 years, but the invasion of Ukraine was soon to follow.

On the scorecard of history, therefore, Biden has many positive points, and has been far better than the alternative, but he must be marked down for these two big

negatives. Yet even now, since he has six months of his term to go, he can strengthen his legacy and help the West to avoid another calamity, on an even bigger scale than the fate of Afghanistan. Ukraine has been steadfastly supported by Biden but always with great caution on how US-supplied weapons can be used. The main request of President Zelensky on recent visits to Britain and America has been to be allowed to use missiles against targets deeper

US leaving Afghanistan led to total collapse and return of the Taliban

inside Russia. It is time to grant that request.

The grim outlook for Ukraine, particularly if Trump were to be elected, is that it could be another Afghanistan. Brave people have been supported in fighting for their freedom but that support evaporates when they are no longer fresh in our minds or prominent in our news media. We help them survive a war but not quite long enough or decisively enough to actually win it.

If that continues to be the pattern, it will not only be Russia but also China, Iran and North Korea that will take heart: the lesson will be that the West can always be outlasted, it will always lose interest, a new president with different priorities will always come along.

It was always a fallacy on the part of Biden that Afghanistan could be abandoned to focus more on the strategic threat from China. It is an even greater fallacy on the part of JD Vance, Trump's new running mate, that Ukraine doesn't matter because, again, the real problem is Beijing. The failure to follow through on supporting allies, giving them the tools to protect themselves, will only make it more likely that Kim Jong-un lashes out, or Xi Jinping makes a move on Taiwan, or a supreme leader in Tehran makes the final dash to possess the bomb.

Letting Ukraine fire western arms at airfields and other military sites in Russia, not just in the border region near Kharkiv, would make a serious difference to the war and place Ukraine in a stronger position for any peace negotiations to come. Yet the White House is reluctant; Germany — whose Taurus missiles could be especially effective — opposed; and Britain, despite an apparently positive announcement after Keir Starmer met Zelensky, unclear. There is a humanitarian case, as huge Russian bombs are hitting children's hospitals and power plants; a military case, as one side is fighting with one hand tied behind its back; and a strategic case, as the collapse of Ukraine would be a catastrophe for the free world.

Biden can make a crucial difference. It's too late to save Afghanistan but he still has the time and the power to help Ukraine save itself.

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Comment

Tories could take a leaf out of JD Vance's book

Embracing One Nation or neoliberal values, the Conservative Party neglected family and faith

Melanie Phillips



@MELANIELATEST

As soon as JD Vance was chosen as Donald Trump's vice-presidential running mate, a predictable chorus dismissed him as Trump's mini-me. Like Trump, Vance champions those who have been left behind. Like Trump, he opposes mass immigration, the "green scam" and wokery.

Omnivorously interested in ideas, Vance has refused to dismiss everything said by a conspiracy theorist with an enormous following on social media. As a result, he has been branded a white nationalist and Nazi. But of course. Case closed.

Apart from the smears involved in this cartoonish caricature, Vance's views offer an important set of lessons for the Conservative Party, were it in a state to listen.

Vance became famous in 2016 for *Hillbilly Elegy*, his poignant account of his upbringing among the rural working class of Kentucky. His book was seized upon to explain Trump's appeal to the Rust Belt and poor white (and later, black) communities.

His book, however, had a deeper message. As he says, it was about the decline of the family, the community and the manufacturing sector; childhood trauma, opioid abuse and the sense of "dignity, purpose and meaning" these things involved.

At the time, however, Vance likened Trump to Hitler and "cultural heroin". Now JD is on the ticket. Some have assumed this merely shows crass opportunism. Once again, this misses the point. For in the intervening years, Vance underwent a profound personal change.

Renouncing the evangelical Protestantism in which he was raised, he became a Catholic. Influenced by Catholic social teaching about social solidarity, he realised his community had been abandoned and the country broken because the political and cultural elites who ran America either hated it or despised the people he championed. And that was true across the political spectrum.

He is committed to helping others escape the prison of poverty

He understood what the Tories have yet to realise. Politics failed the people because both left and right went down the road of liberty and individualism. No one put the nation first.

The left promoted social liberalism, which paradoxically involved greater state interference in having to grant the supposedly universal rights being demanded. In Britain, "One-Nation" conservatives also embraced liberal universalism. This propelled them into transgender rights, net zero and mass immigration, which reduced wages, overwhelmed public services, destroyed social cohesion and sold the British working class down the river.

The Tories' alternative wing was the neoliberals, who viewed everything

through the prism of economics and believed that competition and the free market were the answer to all issues.

Vance doesn't fit into either of these categories. He shares the values of National Conservatism, the grouping that promotes the integrity of the nation, its historic culture and core institutions and values of which the most important are the traditional family, religion and love of country. Like the NatCons, Vance understands that freedom shouldn't be an end in itself but must be used to create a healthy and civilised world.

Neoliberalism, however, has made a fetish of freedom and individual choice. As Vance wrote in 2019, those conservatives outsourced economic and domestic policy thinking to the libertarians. They believed that as long as public outcomes were produced by free individual choices, it didn't matter what those outcomes ultimately were.

He was appalled by some of the results — for example, that the freedom to consume pornography was more important than promoting marriage and the family. Or that instead of trying to cure Alzheimer's, neuroscientists commanded huge incomes at tech companies like Apple or Facebook where they "quite literally are making money addicting our children to devices and applications that warp their brains". Yet neoliberals, he said, shrug such things aside as merely the consequence of the choices made by people buying and selling labour on an open market.

Vance, who has watched the heart being ripped out of his own Kentucky community by market forces, excoriates big business. Yet he also

denounces the left for deepening working-class dependence on state handouts. Heavily influenced by his own rags-to-riches story, he is committed to helping others transform themselves in order to escape from the prison of poverty and disadvantage by taking control of their lives. He understands that the true enemy of individual fulfilment is not poverty but the lethal vortex of decadence, demoralisation and despair.

Behind his NatCon platform of faith, family and flag stand millions of ordinary people who have voted for the wave of "populist" parties that have been gaining power in Europe by representing these values.

Nigel Farage's Reform is lumped in with this as it, too, represents an insurrection, standing for the independence of the nation, immigration controls and an end to wokery. But while Reform definitely does "flag", it is still infused by a neoliberal agenda; and so "family" is dubious and "faith" is nowhere.

The point about Vance is that his politics is overwhelmingly a moral project. That's really what sends liberals screaming from the room. Regarding morality as an intolerable constraint on their own behaviour, they have outsourced it to abstract causes such as climate change, over which they have no effect at all. But without such personal constraints, civilisation goes smash.

For their part, neoliberals sneer at morality as an abstract and useless concept which doesn't increase the gross national product. That's why the Conservatives no longer have a functioning party.



UNRWA is only vital to Hamas, not ordinary Gazans

Neta Heiman Mina

As a member of Israel's peace movement, I have always believed that strangers can be turned into partners. That belief remains with me today.

On October 7 last year, my 84-year-old mother, Ditzza, was kidnapped from her home in Kibbutz Nir Oz. She was taken by Hamas, an enemy that Israelis are all too familiar with, not by strangers. I imagined her in a deep tunnel, with angry and armed young men lurking out from the shadows. But after my mother was released in the last hostage deal, she revealed that Hamas had handed her to a middle-aged man called Abed.

Abed had kept my mother locked in a dark room of his home, with little food and no access to medication for almost two months. He told my mother that he was a teacher at a school run by UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees).

Last week, UNRWA opened its latest fundraising campaign at the United Nations in New York. Delegates from around the world signed a proclamation that the agency's work is "indispensable" for Gaza, and many countries, including the United Kingdom, quickly committed to providing hundreds of millions more in funding.

Despite the insistence in the declarations, UNRWA is only indispensable to Hamas. Beyond the weapons, rocket launchers, tunnels, dead hostages and server farms found in and underneath their facilities, and octogenarians held captive by their employees, UNRWA has been funneling significant sums of cash straight from donors to Hamas for years.

The money laundering works like this: UNRWA insists on distributing cash aid to Gazans in US dollars, a currency they have to convert to shekels in order to use locally. Hamas, controlling the only licensed money changers in Gaza, charges Gazans a 10 to 20 per cent commission to convert their dollars. More than a billion dollars in cash from donations has been diverted into Hamas's coffers in the past decade.

In New York there was no attempt to counter the money laundering; no path to stopping Hamas's systematic desecration of UNRWA's neutrality; no resolution to have UNRWA work to promote a sustainable peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

Gazans will need a lot of help to get back on their feet, and I continue to hope that we can live side by side in peace. The UK's decision to continue to funnel much of that assistance through UNRWA is a mistake that will only help to bring about an avoidable repeat of this awful war.

Neta Heiman Mina grew up in Kibbutz Nir Oz and now lives in Haifa with her family

Giles Coren Notebook

My wife's life in the fast lane drives me insane

As I prepare to spend the next few weeks driving round Britain with my family from one cold, wet, depressing coastal resort to the next and calling that a summer holiday, I have one question: how, without jeopardising my marriage, can I persuade my wife to drive in the correct lane on dual carriageways and motorways?

I should be very grateful, I know, that she is so keen to share the driving. And I shouldn't just sit there criticising. And as far as accident frequency and police run-ins go, she is unquestionably a better driver than I am. Except that wherever we go, however many lanes are available, she only ever drives in the outside one. The fast one. The overtaking one. At bang on the speed limit or a couple of mph below it.

There is literally no more antisocial thing in the world this side of child murder and public

defecation. But if I ever try to say anything about it, to drop the merest hint that she might want to drive in the far left lane when possible, using the middle and right-hand ones only for overtaking, I cop ten kinds of earful.

And her logic is flawless. Yes, it's true, if she drives in the left-hand lane she will only have to pull out again eventually when she comes to a slower vehicle. Yes, I can see how the middle lane would be stressful because you have cars on both sides. Yes, changing lane is terrifying, so just sitting in this nice empty one for the whole length of the M4 is probably safest. Yes, 70mph is the speed limit so there is no reason why anyone should be going faster than that, so she isn't really in the way. No, it's none of my business where she drives.

So I sit there, slouched down in the passenger seat, trying not to make eye contact with the angry car, van, lorry and milk float drivers forced to pass us on the inside,

or the furious, helmet-tapping motorcyclists.

Every now and again, as we cruise the length of England at moderate speed, exclusively in the overtaking lane, I'll involuntarily twitch my head towards the vast empty miles of tarmac to our left, or make a reflex leftwards steering motion with my empty hands held out in front of me at ten-to-two. But my wife will only glance at me and say, "What are you doing? You had better not be criticising my driving." In fact, sometimes, as she cruises the long, empty, four-laners so far to the right I'm just grateful she's staying on our side of the carriageway, she'll turn and bark "what?"

even when I haven't said or done anything at all.

Which tends to suggest that she knows perfectly well what she's up to and is only doing it to wind me up.

But she couldn't be, could she?

Team Reem

The online fashion magazine SheerLuxe is in trouble for creating an AI

lifestyle editor-cum-influencer who gives style and fashion advice, and even reveals what she "had for lunch". She is called Reem, which is thicko street slang for "cool", is of non-white appearance (obviously) and describes her own style as "elevated, polished, fashion-forward and a little bit extra". And readers are furious, calling the whole thing a con. But I'm on Reem's side. As far as I'm concerned, anyone who buys anything or wears anything or does anything because of what a fashion influencer says deserves everything they get. And why, for the love of God, would anyone think that the real lunch of an actual fashion journalist was any more interesting or newsworthy than the pretend lunch of a fake one?

Monty's done

For years Monty Don told us not to mow our lawns for the sake of looks, drought protection and biodiversity. But now the thinking gran's spade muffin has changed his mind — just when I'd got my head round it — and declared that "mown lawns can and perhaps should be part of" a garden. Great. Thanks for the heads up, Monty. Does this mean I'm good to crack out the gnomes, decking, fake herons, Astroturf, wind chimes and widdling concrete angels again too?





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For most women, trad wives are a freak show

We may enjoy content about families with multiple children — but it's not going to spark a baby boom any time soon

Sarah Ditum



@SARAHDITUM

How do you fix the population crisis? The latest figures from the ONS show that, in the year ending mid-2023 in England and Wales, births outstripped deaths by just 400 — which, when you're talking on the scale of nations, is as near to nothing that it makes very little difference.

This is a global decline. The Lancet predicts that 97 per cent of countries will have fallen below replacement birth rate by 2100. And so far, no country has worked out how to break the pattern. Financial incentives, like the ones tried by Hungary's right-wing government, barely make a dent. Nor do the family-friendly policies of the social democratic Nordic states.

It might help, of course, if government policy in the UK didn't seem to be so focused on making things actively unpleasant for families, and specifically women who have children. Even the things that are supposed to help are implemented in ways that make them seem more like a punishment for procreation.

Child benefit, for example, which has gone from being a universal benefit to a means tested one, capped at two children by George Osborne: the Labour MP Rosie Duffield has called this "social cleansing" (because it makes it harder for low-income families to have more children), although there's no sign yet that the Labour government will revoke it.

Or state-funded childcare, which was introduced by Jeremy Hunt. Unfortunately, the funding didn't cover the actual costs of looking after a child: many nurseries — already over-subscribed and understaffed in many cases — had to charge parents more money to cover the shortfall.

Meanwhile, maternity care is so dismal that as many as 20,000 women a year are estimated to develop postnatal post-traumatic stress disorder. Fixing that is unlikely to be enough to bring about a baby boom, but given the population pressures (not to mention basic humanity), wouldn't it be a good idea if we didn't in effect have a hostile environment for pregnant women?

The birthrate doesn't feel like a crisis yet. But for nations that are ahead of us on the trend, such as Japan, the consequences are already starting to show. A smaller workforce. Shrinking tax income. Children turned into such a scarcity that, according to a website that tracks noisy neighbourhoods, the

sound of them "playing and romping" is a public nuisance.

Yet while real children are fading away, content about children is surging. Specifically, content about the rare super-fertile families. This weekend, the Sunday Times profiled Ballerina Farm — the brand name of Hannah Neeleman, a Juilliard-trained ballet dancer turned beauty queen, homesteader and mother of eight (not unrelatedly, she and her husband are Mormons).

With over nine million followers on Instagram, she's the pinnacle of

Buying in to this need not involve having any children of your own

what has been labelled the "trad wife" trend: women who have turned the performance of femininity into a pastel-tinted spectator sport on social media. In Neeleman's case, she was back in her Spanx and competing in the Mrs World pageant 12 days after having her most recent baby.

In Britain, we have our own version, although predictably less glamorous. This weekend, the newest series of *22 Kids and Counting* began on Channel 5, following Noel and Sue Radford and their... Well, you can probably figure out how many children they have from the title, but

now the older ones are becoming parents in turn, the exact number of kids involved is still ballooning.

Ballerina Farm sells *Little House* on the *Prairie*-esque aprons; the Lancashire-based Radfords have a pie business. That tells you everything you need to know about the difference in the way the two families present themselves. American glamour v British bathos. Nor do the Radfords seem to be particularly religious. They just really like having children.

For some commentators, trad wives specifically and the media obsession with large families generally is a sign of something sinister: the American writer Anne Helen Petersen called trad wife content "regressive, anti-choice politics in a housewife offering you quick and easy morning glory muffins". Think the Nazis' "*Kinder, Küche, Kirche*" slogan, but with a flattering Instagram filter.

It's very easy to suspect productions like *Ballerina Farm* or *22 Kids and Counting* of being pro-natalist propaganda, because they are: these are adverts for a hyper-fecund way of life, and audiences are being invited to buy in. But "buying in" needn't involve having any children of your own.

In fact, from the perspective of the families making this kind of content, they're probably less interested in influencing viewers to conceive and more interested in influencing them to purchase some branded

homewares or ready meals. The children are the hook but they're not — from a commercial perspective, at least — what's really being sold.

And while some of the people watching will experience a twinge of longing for a massive brood of their own, most will be feeling something between pity and *schadenfreude*. A life of sourdough and homeschooling can look beautiful but even the women who daydream about doing it themselves know, deep down, that there's a lot of drudgery behind the alluring pictures.

For others, it's an exercise in pure hate-watching. To a large chunk of female viewers, these families aren't something to aspire to, they're a vision of a terrifying alternative reality where you drown in your own fertility. For those who might wish they'd been able to have more children, or have any, at least you can be grateful that you aren't Neeleman, wriggling into a sequined gown for the pageant when you've barely stopped bleeding.

In a low-fertility world, big families are simply a freak show. And if you think we've got problems now, just wait. If the Lancet predictions are correct, in a few years you won't need 22 children to score a reality show: three kids and counting might be enough to be a novelty.

Hugo Rifkind is away

Letters to the Editor



Letters to the Editor should be sent to
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1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF



Public sector pay

Sir, You report that the chancellor is "minded to accept" recommendations from the independent pay review bodies for an above-inflation pay rise of 5.5 per cent for teachers and nurses, with similar deals for other public sector staff, at an estimated cost of £8 billion ("Reeves ready to offer teachers and nurses 5.5% pay increase", Jul 22). But this does not include the cost of generous public sector pensions. Taxpayers pay an annual contribution of more than 28 per cent of salary for teachers and civil servants, and more than 23 per cent for the NHS, so the real cost, including pensions, is much higher than £8 billion.

In making their case for higher pay, public sector unions conveniently overlook the value of public sector pensions, which are worth much more than private sector ones. The new Labour government should make it a priority to sort out public sector pensions — something governments have dodged for decades — by reducing the generosity of future pensions earned. It should start by making MPs' pensions less generous, reinforcing Sir Keir Starmer's promise that his government really is about "change" and about "service".
John Raffe
Pensions consultant, Hognaston, Derbyshire

Sir, The recommendations of the independent pay review bodies appear reasonable but the key issue is that any pay rises should be fully funded. To expect hard-pressed school budgets to subsidise government underfunding would be a health tax on children's futures.
Mark Banham
Primary school governor, Beechingstoke, Wilts

Solar power plan

Sir, The new government is to be applauded for its plans for solar power but these should not be at the expense of agricultural land. The UK needs to be able to produce its own food rather than rely on imports, which contribute to our carbon footprint. The energy minister needs to consider putting solar panels on existing buildings and land that is already covered in concrete, or think more radically: in France public car parks have canopies of solar panels. If we allow our agricultural sector to be destroyed to accommodate housing or solar farms it will cost us more in the long term. This is not nimbyism but common sense.
Gill Holden
Blaxhall, Suffolk

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Harris's run for the Democratic nomination

Sir, As US President, Joe Biden achieved more in his first term, with three landmark pieces of legislation, than most presidents achieve in two terms. His place in history is secure. But his decision not to stand for a second term is absolutely right, if somewhat late, and gives the Democratic Party a chance to find a new, and younger, Trump-vanquisher.

It's an opportunity it may be about to miss. The party is coalescing around a single candidate, Kamala Harris. She may be the best available but what is the evidence? Her 2020 campaign for the nomination was a calamity: having started as favourite, she couldn't articulate what she stood for, quickly ran out of support and money and withdrew before the first primary. And her term as vice-president, admittedly a thankless job, has been unremarkable.

What the Democrats need is not a coronation but a contest. They need to know if they have someone who can craft a speech as profound as the best of Obama's. They need to know if they have a candidate who, like Bill Clinton, can speak to a town hall meeting and convince everyone in the audience, and the millions watching, that he is talking to each of them individually. They need a candidate

who can hold Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Hence they should try something new: let's call it a blitz primary. They should twist the arms of their best three candidates to declare and organise a handful of events at which these candidates would speak. They should then invite the 4,700 delegates to vote, announcing the winner at the party's convention. It would swamp the airwaves and it might just capture the public's attention. With Donald Trump as the alternative, Democrats would readily unite behind the winner. It's their best chance.

Lord Darroch of Kew
British ambassador to the US 2016-19

Sir, Selecting Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee for this year's election would be the least divisive way for the party to proceed. It might also help to steady the frayed nerves of America's free world allies, concerned at the prospect of a renewed Trump presidency. Harris would represent a "business as usual" approach to international affairs; a continuation of the conventional approach of the past four years. But lacking President Biden's half-century worth of foreign policy knowledge does make Harris more of a wild card

than the sitting president. US allies will need to learn more about her views before plumping for them over Trumpian tough love, which they may not have enjoyed but which has certainly improved the sharing of Nato's financial burden.
Dr Alan Mendoza
Executive director, the Henry Jackson Society

Sir, The decision by President Biden not to stand for re-election is indeed an important moment in history. But for Britain and Europe, there is a further message. With Biden gone, we have almost certainly seen the last truly Atlanticist US president. His commitment to traditional American leadership already feels a throwback to an earlier age. A Trump, Harris or other Democrat presidency will show beyond doubt that the torch has been passed, if not to a different generation then to a different type of American leader, under different political pressures. This is therefore a crystallising moment not just for America, but for those in western capitals who must now confront the scale of change in the international landscape.

Sir Nigel Sheinwald
British ambassador to the US 2007-12

Child benefit cap

Sir, Further to Rosie Duffield's article "The two-child benefit cap is social cleansing. Starmer must end it" (Jul 20), I find it offensive to compare the two-child benefit cap to the subjugation of women as breeders in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Indeed, it is quite the opposite. The cap is not about "women's autonomy over their own bodies" but about the financial role of the state in bringing up children. We all agree that child poverty is a stain on our society. Parents, not only women, have a duty to make the right decision about the size of their family based on their own financial circumstances.
Anne-Laure McLeman
Poole, Dorset

Sir, Paul Johnson, the director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, seems to suggest in his article "There are good reasons to reverse the two-child limit on benefits" (business, Jul 22) that the cost of this change could be easily met: he writes that "merely managing to slow down the increase in spending on disability benefits could pay for it".

But disability is not a choice: having children is.
Jeremy White
Buxton, Derbyshire

Defence review

Sir, Further to Max Hastings's review of the challenges involved in defence procurement ("Every decision on defence is going to hurt", Jul 20), Australia is a hostage as much as the Royal Navy is to the acquisition of SSN-Aukus, the replacement for Britain's Astute-class nuclear attack submarines that will also provide Australia's initial sovereign SSN capability. With British nuclear-powered SSN attack submarines now using the same reactor as the much larger ballistic missile submarines, Astute was more than 50 per cent bigger than its predecessor, and SSN-Aukus will be 35 per cent larger again. These large submarines take a long time to design and build and have some shortcomings regarding operational flexibility. Instead of persisting with SSN-Aukus and in line with Hastings's idea of developing more co-operative European defence

systems, the highly capable French Suffren-class SSN is worthy of consideration. At about half the size of SSN-Aukus, Suffren could provide an attractive solution for both the UK and Australia, with potentially lower cost and much earlier availability.
Jon Stanford
Convener, Submarines for Australia; Sandringham, Victoria

Sir, Max Hastings says that our aircraft carriers "were commissioned for political expediency". Not so. The operational requirement was identified in the strategic defence review of 1998 led by George Robertson and was reaffirmed by the MoD in the "New Chapter" of 2002-03, so the ships remained as an operational requirement from 1998 until their order in 2008. More broadly, the revilement of our carriers is not reflected in the domestic dialogue of other nations. In the US, France, India, Japan and China discussions reflect the knowledge that their carrier battle groups have huge geopolitical impact and are a game changer in maritime operations.
Admiral Lord West of Spithead
House of Lords

BOOKS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

FROM THE TIMES JULY 23, 1924

One of the chief preoccupations of a man who is starting upon a holiday is the choice of the books to take, preparation for the wet days which often suggest that he is expecting to spend the whole time indoors. Bitter experience would appear to have shattered all his confidence in our climate, and in the mountains it is as well to be prepared for the worst. Some there are who set apart these days for the improvement of their minds, others who prepare to relax their minds while they harden their muscles. Yet there is a good deal to be said for living on the country,

taking no thought for the morrow and trusting to luck for the mental food that chance may throw in your way. To start thus unprovided certainly adds a spice of adventure to the tamest holiday. Hotels on the Continent frequented by English and Americans are pretty safe. They almost invariably have a library where one may find an exciting antiquity like a novel by Lady Shagbottle housed cheek by jowl with the jettison of the jaded tourist, obliged to shed such ballast to make room for the bargains she has been picking up in the way of silks or whatnot. If you are making a long stay you soon learn to watch the approach of the manageress with her salvage from a parting guest with a thrill of expectation. I have even found a Shelley stranded in this way, abandoned regretfully, one likes to think, and only of dire necessity, possibly after he had served his purpose of local allusions in Italy.

Steamers, of course, always have a good library. But in the smaller English hotels there is a different story. Literature is rarely left about, for there is no need to throw out ballast. You can generally count on a cheap edition of a novel or two, should you in desperation ask for a book to read in bed. Often a Shakespeare is forthcoming, brought with apologies, as a last resource in a country inn. One evening we even batted on a pocket edition of Smith's Classical Dictionary, to our no small edification. Doubtless it had once belonged to a promising schoolboy. Once only have we had the good fortune to come upon a collection of really good modern books in a country inn, and it still stands out in our memory like the good deed in a naughty world.

THETIMES.COM/ARCHIVE

Missing emperors

Sir, The purple emperor season is coming to a disappointing end. In the spring, good survival rates of hibernating caterpillars gave hope for a bumper year. The terrible weather in late spring and early summer meant that the surviving caterpillars took far longer to develop and far longer as pupae. This meant that many succumbed to predators and disease. The early flight season, which still had good numbers of purple emperors in some areas, was severely hampered by the terrible weather, which made feeding, mating and egg-laying very difficult. Sightings around the country seem to have been low.

On Friday, only the second really warm and sunny day in the Midlands for weeks, I visited Fernyn Woods in Northamptonshire. A few emperors had been seen there earlier but I did not see any and there were very few other butterflies. This is the first year since I started watching in 1970 that I have registered a duck.

Returning to my garden and surveying our deep-purple buddleia, full of enticing flowers, I have seen almost nothing except for a fleeting visit from a silver-washed fritillary.
Prebendary John Woolmer
Cropston, Leics

Books I have read

Sir, I was reassured by Claire Cohen's article about the habit of compiling reading lists ("The reading arms race: I've got through more books than you", Times2, July 22). I have kept lists for more than 40 years and others do the same: Art Garfunkel details every book he has read since 1968 on his website. My book lists are a diary and a great aide memoire. Seeing a title I can often recall where I was and what I was doing when I read the book, and also where and when I bought it. Every New Year's Day I use my lists to choose the most enjoyable book of the year, which I then recommend to friends (last year's winner was Simon Mawer's *Ancestry* but it is always a tough choice). Reading should never be competitive or a chore, rather relaxing and fun. For the record, I am on 47 books for the year so far. I have never yet made a century.
Dr Kenneth Bogle
Edinburgh

Mini allotments

Sir, You report on the problem of surplus wheelie bins in Mousehole ("Villagers see red over infestation of green bins", Jul 22). Residents there are missing a great opportunity to reuse the bins as small vegetable gardens. In my experience, carrots are particularly successful as they have long roots, and the wheelie bin's height limits attacks by the carrot root fly.
John Purkiss
Tealby, Lincs

Suncream savvy

Sir, During these lovely but brief days of summer I have found a trick to putting suncream or insect repellent on my back that may be of help to other single readers. You take an old long-handled wooden stirring spoon and apply the cream to the back of the bowl: it's simple to apply lotion to the entire back, no contortions required.
Grant Weiss
Lewdown, Devon

Letters to The Times must be exclusive and may be edited. Please include a full address and daytime telephone number.

Daily Universal Register

UK: BBC publishes its annual report.
US: President Biden and Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, meet at the White House.

Nature notes



White umbellifers succeed one another all summer long. Cow parsley is familiar to everyone; it likes nitrogen and thrives

in areas of human habitation and alongside roads. Its tiny cousin pignut appears from May to June on uncultivated ground such as old churchyards and traditional meadows. Hemlock and hemlock water-dropwort are toxic; both mimic cow parsley on first glance, but bloom later, in damp areas. The former has purple-spotted stems; the umbels of the latter are rounded rather than flat. Hogweed's leaves are broad and less feathery than its relations, while wild carrot, also in flower now, usually has a red dot in the centre of each umbel. Low-growing yarrow persists the longest, often into October. MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today



David Essex, pictured, singer-songwriter, *Rock On* (1973), and actor, 77; Prof Christopher Andrew, former official historian, *M15, The Secret World: A History of Intelligence* (2018), 83;

Alan Barnes, saxophonist, composer, *The Sherlock Holmes Suite* (2007), 65; Jo Brand, comedian, writer and actress, *Going Forward* (2016), 67; Jonathan Brearley, chief executive, Ofgem, 51; Prof Sir Ross Cranston, High Court judge (2007-17), Labour MP (1997-2005), 76; Alex Fraser, chief executive, London Institute of Banking and Finance, 65; Graham Gooch, cricketer, former England captain and coach, Test career 1975-95, 71; Martin Gore, musician, Depeche Mode, *Just Can't Get Enough* (1981), 63; Woody Harrelson, actor, *Cheers* (1985-93), *The People v Larry Flynt* (1996), 63; Fran Healy, singer-songwriter, Travis, *Why Does It Always Rain on Me?* (1999), 51; Dr Penelope Hewitt, emeritus consultant anaesthetist, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, 86; Jakub Hrusa, conductor, music director-designate, Royal Opera House, 43; Mike Hulme, professor of human geography University of Cambridge, *Climatism and Its Discontents: Why Net-Zero Obsession is Unfair to the World's Poor* (2024), 64; Alison Krauss, singer, *Raising Sand* (2007), 53; Sergio Mattarella, president of Italy, 83; Len McCluskey, general secretary, Unite (2011-21), 74; Judit Polgár, chess grandmaster, title achieved at the age of 15 years and 4 months, 48; Daniel Radcliffe, actor, Harry Potter film series (2001-11), 35; Robin Simon, founding editor, British Art Journal, 77; Slash (Saul Hudson), guitarist, Guns N' Roses, 59; David Strettle, rugby union player, England (2007-13), 41; Prof Michael Wood, historian and broadcaster, *The Story of China* (2016), 76.

On this day

In 1967 five days of rioting began in Detroit after a police raid on an illegal drinking club, resulting in 43 deaths and 343 injuries. More than 7,000 National Guard and army troops were called upon. It was the bloodiest incident in the Long Hot Summer of 1967, when there were 159 race riots.

The last word

"Every person is responsible for all the good within the scope of his abilities, and for no more, and none can tell whose sphere is the largest." Gail Hamilton, American essayist, *Country Living and Country Thinking* (1862)



Bowling to the Inevitable

Joe Biden's belated realisation that he is unfit to run for a second term gives the Democrats a chance in the US election. But doubts surround his likely replacement

It is hardly surprising that so many senior Democrats have rallied around Kamala Harris as the party's presidential nominee. The last few weeks have been agonising for the party. The soaring ratings of Donald Trump, bolstered by horror at his attempted assassination, have come as the Democrats have tried, with increasing desperation, to persuade President Biden to step down. Preoccupied with the turmoil of his plummeting ratings, the ever more visible signs of his frailty, and the refusal of big funders to back his bid for re-election, they have been unable to focus on the Republican nominee's weaknesses.

With the drawn-out and painful departure of Mr Biden, the Democrats now desperately need unity, motivation and conviction. Despite her obvious weaknesses, her undistinguished record as vice-president and her poor popularity ratings, Ms Harris is the easiest choice. She has the endorsement of Mr Biden — whom many Democrats are now attempting to build up as an exemplary president. She would be able to inherit most of the money already amassed for a Biden-Harris ticket. And she would be the first woman from the ethnic minorities to lead the country — making it all but impossible for a party committed to social progress to block her. There are also hopes that she could win back black voters turning in ever

larger numbers to the Republicans. That does not guarantee that she would make a good candidate or rise to the occasion. Nor would it necessarily be good for the Democrats to avoid a series of quick primaries if others entered the race.

Barack Obama, who withheld an early endorsement, suggested that a contest would be better democracy, even if this left the decision agonisingly late, perhaps until the party convention on August 19. But Ms Harris would be quick to switch the focus back to the Republicans, where, despite his present impressive poll lead, Mr Trump is vulnerable, especially among the millions who dislike his person and his politics but would not vote for a candidate who would be 86 on leaving office.

Much of the blame for the present mess lies with Mr Biden. His elevated assessment of himself, blindness to his own failings and allegedly fierce temper towards all those trying, discreetly, to report growing national disillusion persuaded him that only he could defeat his old rival, for whom he evinces a visceral — and mutual — antipathy. Throughout his long career in US politics, Mr Biden has surrounded himself with a small clique of trusted advisers, who, like his loyal wife, have been loath to see or tell him hard truths. He has long been aware of his weakness under tough questioning; hence his refusal to give many press conferen-

ces and his disastrous performance during his single presidential debate — a moment when most Americans, aghast, first grasped the seriousness of his decline. With a few honourable exceptions, the American media was blind to these failings.

Despite their present gloom, the Democrats should know that Mr Trump's lead is not unassailable. He is himself now 78, and if elected would be the oldest decedent to take office. Ms Harris is almost two decades younger, as would be any of the Democratic governors now seen as possible contenders. Most have swiftly ruled themselves out of the race, probably on the calculation that this will be a difficult campaign and they will have more time to build up their profiles and their cash for entry into the 2028 contest.

Ms Harris, if chosen, will need swift support to bolster her profile and performance. Her weakness has been the huge influx of illegal immigrants on her watch; she will also have to account for whether there was a cover-up about Mr Biden's health. Mr Biden remains in office as president for another six months and there must be a risk that America's enemies seek to exploit a lame-duck occupant of the White House. Republicans would do well to announce they will not countenance this, instead supporting Mr Biden if military force is required before his term ends.

Storm Warning

The government's silence over the future of the Tempest fighter is deeply concerning

Politicians of both main political parties have over the last 70 years made some abysmal decisions about Britain's defences. Influenced by a Treasury long on accountancy and short on strategic insight, they ended Britain's capacity to develop combat aircraft alone and almost lost a war.

Duncan Sandys, the Conservative defence secretary in 1957, started the rot by slaughtering new fighter projects, declaring that surface-to-air missiles could do the job. The RAF was forced to buy American Phantoms to plug the resulting gap.

Labour's Denis Healey, supposedly a success at defence, continued the vandalism, cancelling the TSR2 bomber in 1965. The following year he sank CVA-01, the navy's future fleet carrier. Like many decisions based on fiscal short-termism, this yielded greater costs later. During the 1982 Falklands war the lack of a big carrier fielding a robust air group contributed to the loss of six ships and more than 100 men at sea. Now, Sir Keir Starmer and the new defence secretary, John Healey, are in danger of making the same disastrous errors.

Tempest, a sixth-generation stealth fighter

being developed with Italy and Japan, is being targeted by the Treasury. Officials in search of savings are suggesting that the Ministry of Defence should choose between Tempest or a future attack submarine planned with Australia under Aukus. This is a false and highly dangerous choice propounded by myopic civil servants.

Both projects are vital to the maintenance of Britain's defence industrial base and involve agreements with close allies. The economic and diplomatic fallout from the ending of either would be enormous and irremediable. And even extended delay in either could be just as fatal.

Britain has stolen a lead on a proposed Franco-German stealth fighter by clinching a development deal with Japan. Saudi Arabia is also interested, but dithering over Tempest could push Riyadh into the arms of Paris (though German dithering is also hampering the French proposal).

By failing to dispel rumours over the future of Tempest during his visit to Farnborough, Sir Keir left a shadow over 21,000 high-quality jobs, many in the Labour heartland of Lancashire, including

1,000 for graduates and apprentices. How does that tally with his mission of improving skills?

Aukus is just as vital to maintain Britain's nuclear submarine building capacity at Barrow, like stealth aircraft a competency that would be lost forever if these projects do not proceed. Mr Healey will have some explaining to do when he meets ministers from Britain's Tempest partners today.

Advanced combat aircraft are now so expensive that only the US, China and (possibly) Russia can make them alone. But manned stealth aircraft are vital: gambling on drones to replace them is to repeat Sandys' folly. Doubt around Tempest is music to American ears: the US craves a monopoly of western fighter production. Buying American means buying American control. Cancellation of the fighter project would be a disaster for British and European defence. The capability to produce advanced weaponry is an unavoidable condition of genuine national sovereignty.

Tempest and Aukus must survive. Siren voices at the Treasury must be ignored. If not, the government can expect a veritable storm of protest.

Bat Crave

Fewer insects means some chiropterans are being driven to the edge of starvation

For image-conscious petrolheads, the uncanny absence of insects splattered on a car windscreen after a long drive is a welcome perk of modern motoring. For Britain's bats, however, it is a matter of life and death. Conservationists across the country report a dramatic increase in the number of underweight and starving chiropterans. This year's sodden summer — and decades of pesticide use — have annihilated the butterflies and moths on which bats rely for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Little wonder, then, that the populations of two of Britain's 17 species of bat — the long-eared brown and the horseshoe — have plummeted by

more than a tenth in five years. Champions of the much misunderstood creatures believe they have been forced to fly further and further in search of food. No species has died out in Britain since the mouse-eared bat in 1991. Will another soon follow? Artificial light, climate change and development are all fierce headwinds, against which these winged mammals are struggling to take flight.

To lose Britain's bats would be a tragedy of biodiversity and an entirely avoidable loss of nocturnal friends (the oldest fossilised specimen ever discovered is 5.2 million years old). Homebuyers and developers may grumble: surveying sites for habi-

tats is an expensive business and can stymie building proposals. Churches, whose eaves make happy homes for bats, spend many thousands protecting pews and artefacts from droppings. Some unwilling housemates would doubtless be happy to see these shy little lodgers disappear. They would be wrong, of course.

Though seldom seen by most Britons, bats are a unique and mysterious ingredient of Britain's natural landscape. The volunteers feeding the malnourished bats and tracking their dwindling numbers should be saluted. What belfry would be complete without them hanging around?

World

Israelis not welcome at Games, says French MP

France
Charles Bremner Paris
Anshel Pfeffer Jerusalem

A left-wing member of the French parliament has been accused of inciting attacks on Israelis at the Paris Olympics after saying that they were not welcome at the Games.

Thomas Portes, an MP for the hard-left France Unbowed party, sparked outrage and raised already high tensions over security when he told a gathering in support of Palestinians: "The Israeli delegation is not welcome in Paris. Israeli athletes are not welcome at the Olympic Games."

The crowd cheered as Portes, 38, urged critics of Israel's Gaza offensive to "use all available levers to mobilise people" to demonstrate against the country's presence at the Games.

The opening ceremony will take place on Friday with an innovative parade on the River Seine rather than in a stadium. Two years ago, President Macron overrode objections from security experts who said that the river ceremony was too risky.

Portes's constituency is in Seine-Saint-Denis in the northern suburbs of Paris and houses the athletes' village and the Olympic stadium. His comments have been condemned by Gerald Darmanin, the interior minister, for "putting a target on the backs of Israeli athletes", while his remarks carried a "whiff of antisemitism".

Yonathan Arfi, head of the Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions, said that Israeli athletes faced the greatest danger of all Olympic participants as he referred to the killing of 11 Israelis and a German police officer by Palestinian terrorists at the Munich Games in 1972. Darmanin said that exceptional measures were being taken to ensure the safety of Israelis, while Stéphane Séjourné, the foreign minister, said: "The Israeli delegation is welcome in France."

France Unbowed, the party led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon, embraced Gaza

Military to investigate latest deaths of hostages in Gaza

Samer Al-Atrush
Middle East Correspondent

Two more Israeli hostages kidnapped by Hamas on October 7 last year have died in captivity in Gaza, according to the Israel Defence Forces.

The military said that it would investigate the circumstances that led to the deaths of Alex Dancyg, 76, and Yagev Buchshtav, 35. They were among more than 250 people kidnapped when Hamas militants attacked Israel and killed almost 1,200 people.

Their bodies were still being held by Hamas, officials said, and confirmation of their deaths came after an intelligence review. "The circumstances of their death in Hamas captivity are being examined by all professional authorities," the IDF said.

Dancyg, a historian, had been kidnapped from the Nir Oz kibbutz close to the border with Gaza. Buchshtav and his wife, Rimona, 36, were kidnapped from Nirim, also close to the border; she was released in a swap for Palestinian prisoners in November.

More than 100 of those kidnapped have been released by



The bodies of Alex Dancyg, left, and Yagev Buchshtav are still being held

Hamas in exchange for prisoners or freed by the military. About 116 remain in Gaza, of whom Israel has said more than 40 are dead.

Israel is negotiating a deal with Hamas through American, Egyptian and Qatari mediators to release more hostages in exchange for a ceasefire. The talks have been complicated by Hamas's demand to permanently end the war in Gaza, which has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians according to the health authorities in the Hamas-run territory. Israeli leaders say that the war has to continue until Hamas is eradicated.

The Hamas-controlled health ministry said yesterday that 37 Palestinians were killed in Israeli airstrikes and shelling near the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis.

as a central cause during its election campaign and its members' harsh rhetoric drew accusations of antisemitism, even from left-wing allies.

Verbal and physical assaults on Jews in France have risen threefold since Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel and the subsequent war in Gaza. Hundreds of armed Israeli security personnel are

in Paris to protect the country's 88 athletes and dozens of delegates in an operation run by the Shin Bet and Mossad intelligence services.

In France's biggest security effort, 30,000 police and 15,000 soldiers have been deployed to the city, along with 1,800 foreign officers, including British police. The police intelligence service

has thwarted at least two plots to attack the Games, including one by a Chechen at a football venue, the French authorities said.

The Israeli delegation departed for Paris yesterday with Yael Arad, president of Israel's Olympic Committee, saying it was a "victory" that the team was heading to the Games. "Our first victory is that we are here and going, and that we didn't give up and have been competing in hundreds of competitions since October 7," Arad said.

"It's no secret that these Olympic Games are a little more difficult for all of us. But we have full confidence in the organisation of security."

President Herzog of Israel is set to attend the opening ceremony as well as a commemoration of the 1972 massacre, which has been moved from Paris's city hall to the Israeli embassy for security reasons. Israel's football team plays Mali tomorrow at the Parc des Princes stadium in southwest Paris.

More than a dozen Israeli athletes have been sent online threats, including that they will be killed in a repeat of the Munich massacre. The delegation's flag-bearers at the opening ceremony, the judoka Peter Paltchik and the swimmer Meiron Cheruti, were also sent "invitations" to their own funerals.

Foreign officials have raised questions regarding the apartment buildings that line the Seine from which people will be able to watch the opening ceremony. Laurent Nuñez, the Paris police chief, has said the apartments would not be searched.

Portes said that he fully stood by his remarks. Israel should be treated like Russia, he said, with its Olympic athletes competing without national identification. However, leading members of the Socialist party, which allied itself with France Unbowed in this month's elections, deplored his words. "No one has forgotten Munich 72," tweeted Carole Delga, the president of the Occitanie region. "Thomas Portes's remarks are adding to the threat against the safety of the Israeli delegation."



Let the Games begin Variations of the

West 'must wake up to threat of Putin's tyranny'

Ukraine
George Grylls Defence Correspondent
Marc Bennetts

Western countries need to "wake up" and prepare for the threat of a third world war, Ukraine's former top general has said.

Valery Zaluzhny, now ambassador to the UK, was ousted from his position as military commander-in-chief after a power struggle in Kyiv in February but remains immensely popular at home, with polls suggesting he would win a presidential election should he run.

He told the Rusi Land Warfare Conference in London that total war with Russia required politicians to make unpopular decisions. He was dismissed after petitioning President Zelensky to mobilise half a million troops into the army in an effort to halt the Russian

advance. Zelensky has since cut the age of conscription from 27 to 25 and introduced harsher sanctions for draft dodgers but avoided more sweeping measures.

Zaluzhny, warning of the dangers of



Valery Zaluzhny said politicians 'should mobilise the nation'

Russian "tyranny", said that wartime leaders should prepare their citizens to make sacrifices. "Perhaps the most difficult and the most important component is the society readiness, which is based on honest and transparent communication between the government

and people, saying it must agree to temporarily give up a number of freedoms for the sake of survival," he said. "Politicians can and should mobilise the nation. For this goal the state can potentially engage military and other resources that include the economy, finances, population and partners."

Citing military theorists including Carl von Clausewitz and Sun Tzu, Zaluzhny told the audience that Ukraine was ready to share its battlefield lessons but warned that the West was on the precipice of a global conflict on a par with the First and Second World Wars.

"Is humanity ready to calmly accept the next war in terms of the scale of suffering? This time the Third World War? Free and democratic countries and their governments need to wake up and think about how to protect your citizens and their countries. We are ready

to share all our knowledge." Quoting Vegetius, the Roman scholar, he said: "If you want peace, prepare for war. Yes, that is absolutely true."

Dmytro Kuleba, the Ukrainian foreign minister, arrives in China today for talks on ending the war in Ukraine. China has refused to blame Russia for the war and has given it an economic lifeline with its energy purchases.

"The main topic of discussion will be the search for ways to stop Russian aggression and China's possible role in achieving a sustainable and just peace," the Ukrainian foreign ministry said. The Chinese foreign ministry said Kuleba's trip came at Beijing's request.

President Zelensky has said Ukraine will present a "fully ready" peace plan in November and that Russian officials "should" attend. Moscow has signalled that it will turn down any invitation.

New York's

United States
Will Pavia New York

The New York skies are cloudy and the passengers aboard the "Hamptons Streamliner" all feel a curious floating sensation as we take off for Long Island.

"We will be serving a selection of bagels," says a lady in a black uniform, sounding like an air steward. "There is a drinks menu in the seat-back pocket."

Then she spoils the illusion by saying we will soon enter the Midtown Tunnel.

We are aboard a new service from Blade, a helicopter taxi company that charges \$1,000 to lift wealthy New Yorkers over the clogged roads and in 45 minutes drop them in the Hamptons. The service, costing up to \$195 each way, is technically a bus, but a very

Moroccan former minister jailed for criticising king
Page 28



Venus de Milo adorn the entrance to the National Assembly in Paris for the return of the Olympics after 100 years, with the opening ceremony on Friday evening

Tour success brings joy to gulag state

Eritrea
Jane Flanagan Africa Correspondent

There is rarely cause for celebration in Eritrea, but a historic winner at the Tour de France has brought huge joy to the gulag state.

News that Biniam Girmay had become the first African to take home the race's coveted green jersey has sparked spontaneous mass gatherings in his home nation — events that, for any other reason, would be met with force.

Girmay, 24, said it felt “unreal” to claim one of the Tour's most prized awards on Sunday, awarded to the rider that led the points classification. Videos from Asmara, the capital where he grew up and trains, show its streets packed with crowds chanting “Bini”, standing on the roofs of honking cars and waving sparklers and flags. Girmay's achievement is the first success in any large sporting event for the country regarded as Africa's North Korea.

Life is usually a cheerless grind under Eritrea's autocrat Isaias Afwerki, a former rebel commander who has not held a national election in 33 years and imposes mandatory military conscription that drafts his citizens into indefinite servitude. “These are not scenes we ever see in Eritrea. The crowds are not being told what to do by the government, they're just celebrating like crazy,” said Abraham Zere, a journalist who is reporting on Girmay's career in exile from Eritrea, where independent media operations are banned.

Girmay has become a unifying figure for Eritreans, a scattered population responsible for one of the highest rates of illegal migration into Europe. While many professional cyclists relocate to tax havens in Europe, Girmay has kept his base at home, where he lives with his wife and young child. Fans gather from dawn to watch his training rides up the winding Red Sea escarpment to Asmara, one of the world's highest capital cities at 2,325 metres (7,628ft).

Eritreans became fascinated with cycling in the 1930s when the country was an Italian colony and they watched the white outsiders racing through their streets. Eighty years after the Italians left, cycling is enmeshed in the national identity. Girmay secured his *maillot vert* ahead of last year's winner, the Belgian Jasper Philipsen, at the final stage in Nice. Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia won the yellow jersey for best overall time.

Girmay, a sprint specialist, became himself the first black African to win a



Biniam Girmay won the green jersey for best sprinter at the Tour de France

elite fly off to Hamptons by super-luxury bus

luxurious one. “It's like a private jet on the ground,” Lee Gold, a spokesman for the company declares before we set off.

He urges me to visit the lavatory. It is surprisingly spacious, with a tiled floor and a broad white sink. By bus lavatory standards, this is the Palace of Versailles.

The feeling that we are suspended in the air is thanks to the 19 “hover seats”, spaced out like dentist's chairs, each with a little table that folds out from the arm rest. The attendant stoops beside one and presses a button; there's a whooshing sound and the seat seems to loosen itself from its pedestal. Made by Bose, which makes noise-cancelling headphones, these are motion-cancelling seats.

“My mind is blown,” says a young venture capitalist behind me as his seat

begins to hover. As the bus grinds and jolts along 42nd Street the seats sway and tilt, like little sailing boats rolling through the waves.

A corporate executive named Kevin, dressed for the beach in a shirt, shorts and cap, is floating at the back. He says he had considered catching a seaplane from the East River but opted for this instead. “The river looked a little choppy,” he says.

Getting out across Long Island to the Hamptons has always been one of the thorniest of first-world problems. Long Island really is long, with single-lane roads that fill with slow traffic.

A ride on a crowded coach costs \$40. The rail journey is \$30 and involves a change at a jam-packed station in Queens. The train is full of “college kids looking to lose their minds for the

weekend. Good for them,” says Kevin. He did it once himself. He'd rather not now.

The luxury bus fills a gap in the market, he says. There is fast wi-fi and room to work. No conversation. Every so often, as I talk to Kevin, the attendant asks us to keep it down. “It's worth it,” Kevin says, very quietly. “For the people paying this, time is money.”

The attendant begins serving coffees and hot bagels. You can have your bagel with cream cheese or a cream cheese with a “mystery flavour”, she says. She will not spoil the mystery.

In front of me a fashion designer named Andréa boldly orders the mystery cream cheese and then regrets it when the mystery is revealed to be mango. “I wasn't a fan,” she says.

It was the Jay Gatsby of cream

cheese: very alluring until you knew what it was.

The bus hits another series of bumps in the road. I'm out of my seat, and without my weight upon it the chair rolls and jerks and the little table flaps around like a toupee in a gale. My phone is flung into the aisle.

The attendant comes striding up quickly and switches off the chair. It subsides into stillness, like a politician after a rally. We crawl onward in a never-ending queue of cars, out beyond the city and through lush meadows and fields of corn, and little high streets lined with designer boutiques, arriving after two and a half hours beside a red-brick train station in East Hampton.

There, after one last wistful glance towards the float and the palatial lavatory, we all get off the bus.

World

'Green' champagne bottle carries a lot less body

France

Adam Sage Paris

Champagne is synonymous with luxury and excess the world over, but a drive to cut costs has prompted manufacturers to invest in a lighter bottle.

With the price of glass soaring after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the glass packaging group Verallia, which has its headquarters in France, says it has created a champagne bottle that weighs 800 grams — 35 grams lighter than existing bottles.

The move follows four years of research by the company and tests by Telmont, the champagne house in which the Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio has a minority stake.

French winemakers last year unveiled the Borelaise Air, a bottle designed for claret and other still wines that weighs 300 grams, compared with the standard weight for a wine bottle of 405 grams.

Bottles for champagne need to be sturdier than those destined for other wines because they have to resist the pressure of the bubbles inside. An ordinary wine bottle could explode if filled with champagne. At the start of

the 20th century, champagne bottles weighed 1,300 grams but, by 2010, the champagne trade association, Comité Interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne, had set the official weight at 835 grams.

Verallia said that it had been able to cut the weight further through an "optimal distribution of the glass to sustain ... the internal pressure specific to champagne". The company added that Telmont had carried out trials over a number of years to ensure the bottles did not explode.

The firms are also claiming an environmental triumph, with production of the lighter bottles emitting 4 per cent fewer greenhouse gases than heavier counterparts.

The newspaper Le Figaro suggested that a cut in transport costs was also a motivation. With the price of glass having risen by up to 70 per cent since the invasion of Ukraine, largely because of energy production costs, the search for cheaper bottles remains intense. Sources said that the 800-gram bottle could help producers to save money if the champagne trade body decreed that it had to be adopted by all the region's houses.



Old friends Michael Douglas, who turns 80 in September, was guest of honour at a patron saint festival held in Valldemossa, Mallorca, honouring local octogenarians, each of whom is given a porcelain figure on their birthday. He owns a house in the area

TIMES Travel Offers

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Former minister jailed for criticising 'absent' king

Morocco
Isambard Wilkinson

Morocco has sentenced an 82-year-old former minister to five years in prison after he criticised King Mohammed VI's absences from the country and suggested abdication.

Mohamed Ziane, a former human rights minister who was close to the monarchy, also hinted that the king may have lost interest in ruling due to his "romance" with a mixed martial arts champion convicted of assault.

Ziane was arrested shortly after the statements in 2022. On Saturday a court sentenced him for "involvement in misappropriation of public election funds" for the party he founded. Ali Reza Ziane, his son and lawyer, dismissed the charges as "baseless". He said that the sentence against his father, who is in poor health, "amounts to a life sentence".

Ziane's remarks were made as a controversy simmered over the king's relationship with Abubakr Azaitar, who was convicted in Germany over offences, including assault. Officials regard Azaitar and his family's influ-

ence over the king, 60, as a danger to the crown and their own positions.

Media reports about the relationship and the king's long sojourns abroad prompted Mohammed to embark on a whirlwind of official activities last year to restore his authority.

Ziane had told El Independiente, a Spanish news website: "The fact that Mohammed VI is outside Morocco is totally abnormal. You can't run a country by Zoom." He suggested that he should abdicate in favour of his son, Crown Prince Moulay Hassan.

"If he can't take it any more or is not interested, doesn't want to or doesn't see himself continuing as monarch under this pressure for reasons of health or for reasons of fantasy or romance, that's his problem. If he doesn't want to be king, let him not be king."

Ali Reza, who will appeal against the sentence, said: "We do not ask for a pardon

but that the freedom of expression be respected."

Ziane had already made veiled criticisms about the monarch's gold and phosphate businesses, saying the country's natural resources were "the wealth of the people and not for private exploitation". The king's fortune has been estimated at \$5 billion.

Ziane was also the lawyer for detainees in the popular uprisings that shook the northern Rif region between 2016 and 2017 and was responsible for the legal defence of the journalist Taoufik Bouachrine, who was sentenced in 2018 to 15 years in prison for sexual offences.

Human Rights Watch, a New York-based NGO, has denounced the "tactics" of the Moroccan authorities, which it says silences political dissidents. The king and Princess Lalla Salma, whom he married in 2001, have been separated since at least 2017.

King Mohammed VI has faced scrutiny for his absences from Morocco



PM to testify at wife's corruption inquiry

Spain
Isambard Wilkinson Madrid

Pedro Sánchez, Spain's prime minister, will testify as a witness next week in an investigation about allegations of corruption and influence peddling against his wife.

He will be questioned by Judge Juan Carlos Peinado at his official residence, Moncloa Palace. Begoña Gómez is alleged to have used her husband's position as leverage within her professional circles, notably with Juan Carlos Barrabés, a businessman who was seeking public funding. Barrabés, who received €23 million

in government contracts, has said that he held eight meetings with Gómez at Moncloa Palace, with Sánchez present on two occasions.

Alberto Núñez Feijóo, leader of the conservative opposition Popular Party (PP), demanded that the prime minister resign. "It is regrettable that the first time we are going to hear Sánchez talk about corruption it has to be before a judge because he has been called to testify," he said.

Sánchez has said the allegations against his wife are an effort to undermine him and his government. On Friday Gómez invoked her right to remain silent under questioning by a

judge. Sánchez caused political turmoil in April when he announced on Twitter/X that he was taking five days off to consider whether it was worth continuing as prime minister because of "attacks" by right-wing media on his wife. Shortly after he returned to work, saying that he had decided to continue in office, it was revealed that his wife was under investigation.

It is the first time that a sitting Spanish prime minister has been called to testify in a judicial case since Mariano Rajoy was summoned as a witness in 2017 in a corruption case that led to the conviction of several members of the PP.

Business

WORLD MARKETS (Change on the day)



COMMODITIES



CURRENCIES



Rapidly expanding economy set to hand Reeves an early bonus

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

The economy is on course to expand much more rapidly than anticipated, which could hand Rachel Reeves a fiscal windfall in her first budget.

According to closely watched forecasts published by the EY Item Club, the economy will expand by 1.1 per cent this year, a sharp upgrade from its previous projection in April of 0.7 per cent.

Gross domestic product also is pre-

dicted to grow by 2 per cent next year and in 2026, which is among the most optimistic forecasts from City analysts.

Inflation would remain close to the Bank of England's 2 per cent target "over the coming years", the consultancy said, adding that this, coupled with strong pay growth, would fortify household finances and would lead to higher consumer spending. They also said that the Bank would lower its interest rates twice this year from

5.25 per cent to 4.75 per cent, starting in September.

The growth upgrade reflects the economy outperforming expectations for the past year. The Office for National Statistics recently lifted its first-quarter growth estimate to 0.7 per cent, the strongest in the G7 over that period.

Reeves has made reanimating GDP growth a pillar of her economic strategy after more than a decade of

underperformance since the 2008 global financial crisis. Boosting growth will be necessary for the chancellor to prevent spending cuts without raising taxes or borrowing while remaining within the fiscal rules of cutting the debt stock within five years and capping the deficit at 3 per cent of GDP.

According to the International Monetary Fund, Britain's GDP must increase by about 2.6 per cent every year from 2025-26 to allow Labour to

achieve this. Analysts said that Reeves and Sir Keir Starmer should step up public investment to complement private sector capital spending, which would signal to international investors that Britain is on a healthy trajectory.

"Combining higher public investment with a concerted effort to build on the UK's recent success in business investment could provide an economic shot in the arm," Peter Arnold, the chief economist at EY UK, said.

Harris moves to rescue Carpetright

Deal will save 300 jobs, but 1,000 more at risk

Isabella Fish Retail Editor

Lord Harris of Peckham has struck a multimillion-pound deal to rescue Carpetright, the flooring retailer he built from scratch about 35 years ago.

Tapi, the rival flooring chain he later co-founded, has purchased the Carpetright brand, intellectual property, 54 stores and a pair of warehouses in a pre-pack administration that will save more than 300 jobs. The deal does not include Carpetright's head office in Purfleet, Essex, or 200 other stores, leaving about a thousand jobs under threat.

Known as the "carpet king", Harris, 81, helped to launch Tapi in 2015 after he stepped away from the Carpetright business, selling all his shares in 2014. He sits on the board at Tapi and leads its buying team. As part of the deal, he has regained ownership of Harris Carpets, his family's first carpet brand, which was sold off with Carpetright.

PwC had been seeking a buyer for the loss-making Carpetright after it filed a notice of intention to appoint the auditor as an administrator this month.

Tapi is understood to be the only company to have made an offer that rescues both jobs and stores. Other options included liquidating the business entirely. Saving the whole business had been "unviable", Tapi said, because a large number of locations boasting both stores would have made that option subject to clearance by competition authorities. A big portion of the Carpetright store estate is also unprofitable, with Meditor, its owner, funding those losses through additional debt.

Meditor, a British hedge fund headed by Talal Shakerchi, 60, the asset man-

ager and poker player, had ruled out trying to buy back the business or putting any money in. He is understood to have come under fire for transferring Carpetright's intellectual property and assets to a subsidiary owned by Meditor, called Nestware, in December, suggesting that the owner had been preparing to launch a restructuring process for several months. It also meant that Tapi had to purchase Carpetright's intellectual property in a separate deal.

"Our goal, initially, was to try to save all of Carpetright," Jeevan Karir, 47, the managing director of Tapi, said. "However, as we looked into the details of the situation, we quickly established that saving the entire business was unviable."

"The business has been materially loss-making for a number of years and it has significant debt held by the owner. We then turned ourselves to trying to save a number of stores."

Tapi has pledged to make Carpetright staff a priority for new roles in the coming year. The company also has offered to pay for one-to-one services and workshops to provide support and guidance for those whose roles have been affected by the restructuring.

As in any pre-pack administration, many customers, suppliers, sub-contractors and landlords are likely to be left out of pocket. However, in an unusual move, Tapi has vowed to honour deposits for customers who paid for flooring via debit card or cash in the stores it acquired.

The story of Tapi, derived from the French word for carpet, has been one of rapid expansion. In 2016, a year after its launch, it operated only 15 stores; today Continued on page 32



Cam-do Cefinn, the workwear fashion label headed by Samantha Cameron, has enjoyed a sales boost after a shift to less formal "post-pandemic" attire. Page 31

Ryanair hits share prices of rivals

Tom Saunders

The value of London's three listed airline groups and of Ryanair collectively shrank by more than £3 billion yesterday after the Irish budget carrier followed rivals in warning that a post-pandemic price boom was ending.

Michael O'Leary, the chief executive of Ryanair, whose Dublin stock market value shrank by €3.2 billion to €15.5 billion, said that average fares had been 15 per cent lower than in the same quarter last year as the airline had been forced to engage in "more price stimulation" than expected.

It said its first-quarter profits had almost halved, falling by 46 per cent to €360 million, well below consensus expectations of €538 million.

When it published its results in May, Ryanair had forecast that fares would be "flat to modestly ahead of last summer" during the peak summer season, pointing to capacity constraints in the European short-haul market and the recovery in air travel demand since the pandemic.

However, ticket price rises have not kept pace with the double-digit increases over the past two years. The final outcome for pricing in the second quarter will depend on bookings in late summer, although the company said that pricing continues to deteriorate at the moment.

Analysts at Deutsche Bank warned that Ryanair's commentary on fares would weigh on share prices across the sector. By the close of trading yesterday easyJet had lost £247 million from its stock market value to £3.5 billion, while International Consolidated Airlines Group, British Airways' parent, lost £284 million to £8 billion. In the FTSE 250 Wizz Air was down £234 million to £2.1 billion.

Airlines in Europe have faced disruption most recently from the global technology failure on Friday after CrowdStrike, the cybersecurity company, released an update that affected IT systems worldwide. Profits tumble at Ryanair, page 34

Business

Need to know

1 Britain is likely to miss a new government target to fully decarbonise the electricity system by the end of the decade because the country is not on track to build enough new wind and solar farms, energy experts have warned. **Page 4**

2 Sir Keir Starmer has refused to confirm that the £12 billion Tempest programme will go ahead as doubts grow over Britain's continued participation in UK, Italian and Japanese plans to build a sixth-generation fighter jet. **Page 13**

3 Europe's biggest travel company, Tui, was still cancelling flights and holiday packages three days after a global IT failure, as one expert warned that the "hidden" disruption across industries may continue for weeks. **Page 14**

4 Lord Harris of Peckham has struck a multimillion-pound deal to rescue Carpetright, the flooring retailer he built from scratch about 35 years ago. Tapi, the rival flooring chain he later co-founded, has purchased the Carpetright brand, intellectual property, 54 stores and a pair of warehouses in a pre-pack administration that will save more than 300 jobs. **Page 29**

5 The economy is on course to expand much more rapidly than anticipated, which could hand Rachel Reeves the chancellor, a fiscal windfall in her first budget. According to forecasts published by the EY Item Club, the economy will expand by 1.1 per cent this year, a sharp upgrade from its projection in April of 0.7 per cent. **Page 29**

6 The value of London's three listed airline groups and Ryanair collectively shrank by more than £3 billion yesterday after the Irish budget carrier followed rivals in warning that the post-pandemic boom in pricing was coming to an end. **Pages 29, 34**

7 LVMH and the luxury goods conglomerate's billionaire founder have bought a stake in Bicester Village, plus eight other upmarket outlet shopping centres in Europe, for £1.5 billion.

8 Rents are rising rapidly throughout Britain, with a shortage of homes and strong demand pushing up costs to new records. The average advertised rent outside London has risen to £1,314 per calendar month. **Page 32**

9 London's stock market has received a double boost with the news that Vivendi, the French media group, plans to list its Canal+ television business in Britain and that Anglo American Platinum, the South African miner, is aiming for a secondary listing in the UK. **Page 35**

10 A privately owned British biotechnology company has struck a DNA manufacturing licence agreement with GSK. Touchlight has agreed a non-exclusive deal for the FTSE 100 Big Pharma group to use its "doggybone" DNA technology for the development and production of mRNA-based products. **Page 37**

Gusbourne joins the great British wine estate sale

Scarcely a month after the Chapel Down winery was put on the blocks, Lord Ashcroft has hoisted a "for sale" sign over the nearby Gusbourne wine estate in Kent (Dominic Walsh writes).

The former deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, who once described the business as "a big hole that you pour money into", has a 66.76 per cent stake, acquired in 2013.

Winemaking in the area dates back to Roman times, although the first modern vines were planted in Appledore, Kent. Andrew Weeber, 78, its founder, was a South African orthopaedic surgeon who "fixed" the knee of Paul Gascoigne, the former England footballer. Gusbourne issued a

statement to the stock market saying that its majority shareholder had informed the company that he would "like to open



discussions with the board to explore various strategic options for his shareholding, including a possible sale of his 66.76 per cent shareholding, a strategic merger with a similar company and a possible capitalisation of all or part of his debt".

The Aim-quoted company said that, after consultation with the Takeover Panel, it had entered "an offer period" and would work with the peer "to ensure this process maximises the value for all shareholders". It said that talks with potential suitors had yet to take place.

Ashcroft said he had been through a similar process with Impellam, the managed services and HR technology group, which had joined forces with HeadFirst. "Now, at the tender age of 78, I am reviewing my options and would like to conduct a similar exercise with regards to Gusbourne," he said.

The sales of two of the biggest English



Gusbourne's majority shareholder is Lord Ashcroft, inset, who says he is "reviewing his

Hammerson sells Bicester Village stake in £1.5bn deal

Tom Howard

LVMH and the luxury goods conglomerate's billionaire founder have bought a stake in Bicester Village, plus eight other upmarket outlet shopping centres in Europe, for £1.5 billion.

L Catterton, a private equity fund backed by LVMH and the family office of Bernard Arnault, is buying a stake of about 40 per cent in Value Retail, the designer outlet landlord, from Hammerson.

"We have deep experience investing in luxury retail and we are eager to leverage our operational expertise and global network of established relationships to partner with Value Retail and propel the business forward," said Michael Chu, co-chief executive of L Catterton, which previously has invested in brands such as Sweaty Betty and Gant.

Hammerson, which owns some of Britain's biggest shopping centres including the Bullring in Birmingham and Cabot Circus in Bristol, said the sale price had been "attractive", despite it being almost a quarter below what the nine "village" malls — on the outskirts of Barcelona, Brussels, Dublin, Frankfurt, London, Paris, Madrid, Milan and Munich — were last estimated to be worth.

After accounting for debts, Hammerson will receive only £600 million in cash for what some see as the "jewel in the crown" of its portfolio. Nevertheless, Hammerson shares were up by a penny, or 3.3 per cent, at 30p at the close last night.

"This long-awaited transaction is positive news and is arguably transfor-

Behind the story

Hammerson has made one misstep after another in recent years, but the long-awaited sale of Bicester Village and its other high-end shopping "villages" feels like a possible turning point (Tom Howard writes).

In 2012, under previous management, Hammerson sold its London offices to go all-in on retail, thereby missing out on much of offices' post-financial crisis revival.

While values and rents for offices in the capital would continue to rise, investors grew wary of shopping centres. By 2018, after

collapses suffered by several big retail chains, it was starting to become clear that valuations and rents of shopping centres were going down. Yet Hammerson sought to double-down on its all-in retail strategy and acquired Intu Properties, an ailing rival, in a deal that ultimately was canceled.

During all this, the future of retail property was being upended by online shopping, which was growing rapidly. With rents and valuations falling, Hammerson became overleveraged. Compared with the summer of 2014, its shares have lost almost 90 per cent of their value.

Rita-Rose Gagné has been steadying

the ship for four years, selling assets to bring down debt. After the sale of Value Retail, Hammerson's loan-to-value will be about 23 per cent — less than half what it was a couple of years ago.

"We've restored completely the balance sheet and given capacity to grow," she said.

With cash in the bank, Hammerson has suggested it will look to buy out any unhappy partners and to develop some of its malls. Gagné said she was also "alert to [other] opportunities" that may crop up.

Either way, after what has felt like a fire sale over the past few years, Hammerson is back in growth mode.

Retail equated to almost half Hammerson's portfolio in value terms. Once the deal with L Catterton is completed, which is expected to be this year, the company will own and operate ten shopping centres, including The Oracle in Reading and Westquay in Southampton, worth about £2.7 billion.

"We have done a huge amount of work in the last two or three years to realign the portfolio," Gagné, 61, said. "Now it's time to turn that page and grow. This deal gives us a huge opportunity to do that." She defended the sale price, which she insisted was "really good" given the illiquid, passive and complex nature of the stake.

Of the money that Hammerson will collect from the sale, it will use £95 million to repay some debt, while £350 million will be reinvested in the remaining portfolio, including potentially buying out partners at some of its malls. The rest will be returned to shareholders via a £140 million share buyback and Hammerson also will top up its dividend payments. It has been paying out between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of its adjusted earnings as dividends, but is increasing that to between 80 per cent and 85 per cent.

The sale of the Value Retail stake will have a "significant and immediate" effect on the company's balance sheet, which has long been a source of worry. Hammerson's loan-to-value, a key metric for property companies, will drop from 44 per cent to 23 per cent.

"This is a transformational deal," Gagné said. "We are at a point in the cycle where I can now be on the front foot to capture the exceptional value creation opportunities."

mational for Hammerson," Matthew Saperia, an analyst at Peel Hunt, the broker, said.

Rita-Rose Gagné, the chief executive of Hammerson, has made clear since she joined towards the beginning of the pandemic that owning a passive,

minority stake in designer outlet shopping centres did not fit within her strategy. Over the past four years she has overseen sales of several "non-core" shopping centres in an effort to focus the business exclusively on large, city centre "destination" malls. Value



options"; the estate recently added mainland China to its markets



winemakers come amid improving quality and growing consumer interest in the product, although some analysts fear a looming surfeit in supply. Last September Berry Bros & Rudd and the Symington port family acquired Hambleton Vineyard in Hampshire after it hit financial problems.

Gusbourne recently added the Chinese mainland to its list of export markets for its vintage sparkling wines as it seeks to cash in on a growing taste for English fizz. Its international sales account for 21.2 per cent of total net revenue.

Jonathan White, 42, the chief executive,

said its biggest markets were Scandinavia, Japan and the United States. It has added China and the Caribbean this year, lifting its total number of markets to 35, and is targeting India and the Middle East.

In the year to the end of December, Gusbourne increased its net revenue by 13 per cent to £7.05 million, with gross profit up 30 per cent at £4.81 million. Adjusted losses narrowed from £1.13 million to £669,000. Its British wine sales rose by 16.5 per cent to £4.9 million, while international sales improved from £1.4 million to £1.5 million.

In addition to vintage sparkling wines, Gusbourne is one of the few British makers of red wine, producing a pinot noir that retails at £40. Its sparkling wines range from £45 to £195 for its Fifty One Degrees North. Shares in Gusbourne were down by 1½p, or 2.3 per cent, at 64½p last night.

Zahawi lines up £600m Telegraph bid

Katie Prescott

Nadhim Zahawi, the former Conservative chancellor, is putting together a £600 million bid for Telegraph Media Group.

The former politician, who has links with the former owners of The Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph, has been sounding out billionaire backers for the offer, according to Sky News, which first reported the fledgling plans.

Zahawi, 57, is close to the Barclay family, who controlled the Telegraph newspapers for 20 years until Lloyds Banking Group put the holding company into receivership in June last year, acting after the breakdown of talks with the family about the repayment of £1.2 billion of overdue loans.

An auction process started last year was put on ice after RedBird IMI, an Abu Dhabi-backed investment group run by Jeff Zucker, a former boss of CNN, repaid the Lloyds loan in an

attempt to take control of the papers. However, The Daily Telegraph, The Sunday Telegraph and The Spectator magazine were put back on the market after the government blocked the RedBird IMI acquisition over concerns about foreign state ownership.

Zahawi acted as a middleman



Nadhim Zahawi is a former Tory chancellor

between the UAE and the Barclays as it tried to win back the titles and he was made chairman of Very Group in May, the retail company owned by the family. Among those he is believed to have approached to fund the offer is the Reuben family, who own a stake in Newcastle United FC, Sky News said.

The deadline for first-round bids for

the Telegraph group expired on Friday and RedBird IMI will now assess its options with its advisers at Robey Warshaw and Raine, two boutique banks. The timetable for the sale will emerge in the next few weeks.

Other bidders for some, or all, of the titles include private equity businesses and news organisations such as Mediahuis, of Belgium. RedBird Capital, an American private equity group, could decide to forge ahead with an offer, buying out RedBird IMI, which is a joint venture between the American investment firm and International Media Investments, which is based in Abu Dhabi.

Zahawi, who arrived in Britain as a refugee from Iraq as a child, was one of Britain's richest MPs. He co-founded YouGov, the listed polling company, and has close business links in the Middle East. He stood down as an MP at the general election.

RedBird IMI would not comment on the proceedings.

Sam Cam in post-pandemic style switch

Isabella Fish Retail Editor

A shift from smart workwear to a "post-pandemic style" has paid off for Samantha Cameron's fashion label.

Cefinn reported a 16 per cent rise in sales to £4.4 million in the year to the end of October 2023, according to figures seen by The Times.

The brand was launched by the wife of Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, the former prime minister, and takes its name from their children's initials. Its customer base increased by 39 per cent over the course of the year and that momentum has continued into this year. Sales in May alone were up by 63 per cent compared with the same period the year before.

Cefinn was created predominantly as

a workwear brand, but it broadened its offering after a slowdown in sales during the pandemic. Offices largely became more relaxed about corporate attire, while many workers began to spend a large proportion of the week working from home in casual clothing. To cater to the changing demand, Cefinn produced more casual clothing, such as knitwear, and outfits for wearing at special events, which it described as "hugely popular areas of growth".

Online sales, which made up 65 per cent of total sales in the period, were up 19 per cent in its last financial year. The remaining 35 per cent were sold through wholesale partnerships with Net-a-Porter, Trilogy and Matches-fashion. Sales outside Britain accounted for 18 per cent of the group's total.

However, the business made an annual loss of £358,000, which the company said reflected the nature of an "evolving, contemporary business". Cefinn said the loss also had been driven by "the wholesale decline felt across the high-end fashion industry", as well as by further investment in its direct-to-consumer business to make up for the decline in wholesale revenue. Its losses widened from £163,000 the year before.

While her husband was prime minister, Cameron studied design from No 10 before she launched Cefinn in 2017. Previously she had been creative director of Smythson, the luxury label. Her brand received £2.5 million from the investment firm of Lord Brownlow of Shurlock Row, the Conservative Party donor, in 2018.

Public pay rises will not be in isolation

BUSINESS COMMENTARY Patrick Hosking



Rachel Reeves is reported to be minded to accept recommendations from public sector pay review bodies that teachers and NHS workers be given 5.5 per cent pay rises from next April.

The chancellor's decision is largely being seen through the prism of its effect on the public finances. With only a 3 per cent pay rise budgeted for, the concession will cost about £3.5 billion if confined to nurses and teachers and anything up to £10 billion a year if offered across the wider public sector workforce of six million.

It's hard to see how taxes won't have to go up somewhere to foot the bill unless a very speedy pick-up in growth comes to the fiscal rescue.

But there's another aspect to all this: the effect on the labour market and wages across the country. The public sector does not operate in a vacuum. It competes with private sector employers for sometimes scarce skills.

Teaching assistants last year switched to become supermarket checkout staff. NHS nurses were moving to private clinics and vice versa. There is also two-way traffic between the state and private sectors in skilled jobs such as IT and finance and in lower-skilled areas like cleaning and guarding.

If anything, the wages pendulum is swinging back to state employees. Wages growth in the public sector has outpaced the private sector for three successive months, with an annual 6.3 per cent playing 5.5 per cent, according to the latest data.

The proposed pay rise, however desirable for the retention of staff in schools and hospitals and to improve morale in battered public services, is going to drive up wages everywhere else. That, in turn, puts pressure on private employers to raise their prices further.

The labour market has been cooling a little, but not enough to be confident of avoiding a fresh pick-up in inflation. An across-the-board pay rise of 5.5 per cent next year is incompatible with a 2 per cent inflation target, at least without huge productivity improvements.

A settlement of this nature, if confirmed, should be ringing alarm bells at the Bank of England. It's another reason not to cut the base rate next week.

Incomes take off

Having said that, one corner of the economy, the budget airline industry, is having to cut prices. Michael O'Leary, of Ryanair, says fares fell by 15 per cent in the quarter to June as passengers buckled under and he expects another tough quarter to September.

The warning was enough to put a bit of a dampener on the first day of the airshow at Farnborough. Airline share prices tumbled. Partly, the moon is to blame. The timing of Easter means one shouldn't read too much into one quarter's data. Inevitably, too, the explosion of demand for foreign travel at its cost after the lockdown years is starting to fizzle out. Discretionary spending is now being diverted to other areas.

In the UK, at least, disposable incomes are continuing to improve, according to the Asda Income Tracker. Even after rising bills for mortgage and rent and other essentials, the average family now has £237 a month spare. That is up from £212 a year ago. It may not have felt like it at Luton and Gatwick, but slowly the consumer squeeze is easing.

No place to start

The ink is not yet dry on the new listing rules — indeed, they don't come into force for another six days — but already a first company has announced plans to take advantage of this watering down of shareholder protections.

Hammerson, the property developer, has struck a deal to sell a big chunk of its business without the normal need to ask stockholders for permission. The deal, representing 42 per cent of the business, would have been caught by the old 25 per cent threshold for a vote.

Neither large transactions such as this nor related-party transactions will have to be put to the vote under the new regime, which represents a big shift in power from the owners to their agents, the management.

To be fair, the disposal of the outlet villages division stake has been relatively well telegraphed and got a warmish reception yesterday, the shares rising by 3 per cent.

However, if anyone needed the protections of the old regime, it is the long-suffering shareholders of Hammerson, where 90 per cent of their wealth has been wiped out in ten years.

This is the company that initially tried to keep secret a £5 billion takeover offer from the French rival Klépierre and then embarked on a reckless and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to acquire Intu. Whatever the merits of this disposal, mismanaged Hammerson shows how outside shareholders need rights and veto powers.

A pox on proxies

The City "blob" seems to have struck a blow against the hated proxy voting agencies. These are the painstaking wonks hired by shareholders to put company resolutions under the microscope and to make voting recommendations. They are the poor souls who have to make sense of deliberately opaque executive bonus schemes. Boards hate them. Shareholders hide behind them.

The Financial Reporting Council, in a waffly update to the corporate governance code, yesterday said it wanted to increase the transparency of their activities, though it didn't say how. There is a case for more daylight. Agencies that sell advisory services to the very companies they are supposed to be scrutinising can look like they are demanding money with menaces. The case for better disclosure of such conflicts is fine, but don't shoot the messengers.

patrick.hosking@thetimes.co.uk
Alistair Osborne is away

Business

Higher rents increase pressure on tenants throughout the UK

Tom Howard

Rents are rising rapidly throughout Britain, with a shortage of homes and strong demand pushing up costs to new records.

The average advertised rent outside London has risen to £1,314 per calendar month, according to Rightmove, the property search website, and have increased by 6.8 per cent over the past year.

Rents are rising fastest in northeast England, where annual rental inflation remains above 10 per cent. In Wales, where rental growth is slowest, rents are still 4.1 per cent higher than they were a year ago. In London, the average monthly rent has hit £2,661. That represents a year-on-year increase of 3.7 per cent, although the annual rate of inflation has slowed since the peak of 16 per cent hit in 2022.

The data reinforces the difficulties facing renters, whose monthly rental bills have gone up by almost 40 per cent since the start of the pandemic.

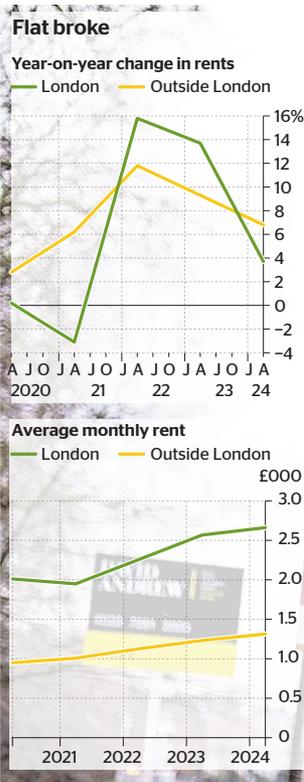
"The market remains out of balance and difficult for tenants," Tim Bannister, Rightmove's head of property data, said. "We need landlord investment to increase stock and to help to achieve a healthier supply-and-demand balance in the market."

Rightmove's data shows that for every rental property that comes on the market, there are 17 would-be tenants. That is down from 26 last summer, but is still more than twice as many as in 2019.

Letting agents have said repeatedly that the rapid increase in rents is being driven by an imbalance between supply and demand. Even with a pick-up in recent months, the number of homes available to rent remains 20 per cent below pre-Covid levels, while the number of tenants looking for somewhere is up by 22 per cent.

"Recently, we have observed an increase in available properties coming to market, but we haven't noticed much of a reduction in demand from tenants, which remains robust," Lucy Beasley, lettings manager at Jones Robinson in Newbury, Berkshire, said.

Although rents are predicted to con-



tinue rising to new records they are, at least, not going up as quickly as they were. The 6.8 per cent year-on-year rise in rents outside of London is down from 8.5 per cent back in April and is much lower than the peak annual rental inflation of 12 per cent recorded in 2022.

Although most analysts now think that there has not been an "exodus" of landlords in response to recent tax and regulatory changes, the consensus is that there has been a drop in the number of new landlords entering the market, while existing landlords have not been adding to their portfolios as

aggressively as they were. At the same time, demand from would-be renters has been increasing.

Rightmove is calling on the new Labour government to encourage investment into the private rented sector. "There is an opportunity to encourage landlords to continue to invest in good-quality homes, for example through tax changes or a general sentiment change in government towards working alongside and with landlords," Bannister said. "Support for both tenants and landlords will be key to achieving long-term stability in the rental market."

Landlords bought 10 per cent of all homes sold in Britain in the first half of this year, the smallest proportion since the 2008-09 global financial crisis. Hamptons, the estate agency, said it was landlords' lowest share of purchases since it began tracking the data in 2010. In 2015 Hamptons estimated that landlords bought about 16 per cent of all homes put up for sale. However, regulatory and tax changes have put off landlords from expanding. There will be 113,630 new buy-to-let purchases in Britain this year, Hamptons estimates, almost half as many as in 2015.

'Fastest rise in disposable incomes in three years'

Jack Barnett

Disposable incomes in Britain have risen at the fastest pace in three years, but remain below a peak reached in 2021.

According to research carried out by Asda, the supermarket, and the Centre for Economics and Business Research, a consultancy, weekly disposable incomes have accelerated by 13.5 per cent over the past three months on an annual basis, the fastest pace since 2021.

The improvement in average household finances was driven by a slowdown in inflation and by strong nominal wages growth. According to the Office for National Statistics, inflation stabilised at the Bank of England's 2 per cent target for a second month in a row in June, while average wages increased by 5.7 per cent.

However, households are still reeling from the impact of rising living costs. Asda and the CEBR said that weekly average nominal incomes had hit £1,005 in June. Of this, £613 was spent on essential bills and a further £151 on taxes. After accounting for these costs, average weekly spending power was £240 last month, up by £2.73 from May but still 2.7 per cent below the peak of £246 recorded in March 2021.

"A second consecutive month of inflation being at target has helped to support household spending power, given that earnings growth is significantly stronger," Sam Miley, managing economist and forecasting lead at the CEBR, said. "Though inflation may pick up slightly in the coming months, it is still expected to fall short of income growth for some time. This means that improvements in spending power are set to continue, supporting consumption and the wider economy."

The recovery in real incomes in London has outpaced that of other regions. Spending power in the capital is now 3 per cent above its pre-Covid high at £351 per week. Incomes in London are higher compared with the rest of the country thanks to stronger productivity growth and a greater density of high-paying jobs.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

Founder rescues flooring firm

that number is about 170. Tapi's largest shareholder, and executive chairman, is William Barker, 35.

Carpetright, still one of the biggest flooring retailers in the UK, has struggled to keep up with Tapi's competitive pricing and ranges. Its business model has not changed significantly since it was founded in 1988 and it has struggled to keep up with the shift of retail to online. It was hit by a cyber-attack in April that left it unable to trade from its stores for almost a week.

Annual revenue at Carpetright is understood to have dropped to about £200 million in the past year, compared with £372.6 million in the 14 months to January 1, 2022, and £493.2 million for the 18 months to October 31, 2020. The chain had more than £150 million in external debt and has lost more than £25 million annually in recent years.

Carpetright was founded in east London by Harris, who stepped down as its chairman in 2014. The business was delisted from the London Stock Exchange in 2019 and it was bought by Meditor, which had taken on almost 30 per cent of its shares and more than £40 million of its debts the year before.

Carpets provide perfect playing field for Harris

Profile

The story of Lord Harris of Peckham is a textbook example of "rags to riches" success (Isabella Fish writes).

As a youngster, Phil Harris, as he was, helped out on his father's market stall in Peckham, south London, carrying rolled-up rugs to and from the stall. His father's death cut short his education and left the 15-year-old in sole charge of a market stall and two shops, one in Peckham and another in Penge.

It wasn't Plan A. He had wanted to be a professional footballer. However, an aptitude for maths and an

entrepreneurial spirit meant that he was able to transform his father's market stall into Harris Queensway, Britain's biggest carpet and furniture chain.

He made his first fortune in the carpet business when he sold Harris Queensway in 1988, reaping £69 million.

Harris became known as one of the richest people in the country, a member of the House of Lords, a regular donor to the Conservative Party and a board member of Arsenal FC. He is a keen philanthropist and has spent millions of pounds to support education projects in Britain, including the Harris Federation, which

operates about 50 primary and secondary schools nationwide.

After Harris Queensway was sold in a deal that valued the business at about £450 million, Harris could have put his feet up. Instead, he built another flooring business. He opened the first branch of Carpetright in Canning Town, east London, in 1989. By 2007 it had grown to become Britain's biggest flooring retailer, with 500 or so shops, and it was valued at £800 million on the London Stock Exchange.

Harris stepped down as the chairman of Carpetright in 2014 after 50 years in business, selling all his shares. The

company had suffered falling sales and had endured a series of boardroom changes. The slump in financial performance was caused largely by a loss at Carpetright's non-UK business, mainly in the Netherlands.

But he wasn't done with carpets. He and his family created a new carpet and hardwood flooring brand called Tapi in 2015.

Martin Harris, his son, stepped down as the chief executive of Tapi four years ago and no longer maintains ties with the business. Harris Sr is a board member at Tapi and heads its buying team. His grandson, Charlie,

is also involved in the business.

Now the "carpet king" is to be reunited with the carpet and hardwood flooring retailer he built four decades ago. Tapi has bought Carpetright's brand name and intellectual property in a deal that will also hand him ownership of Harris Carpets, the first of the family's brands.

A close friend and colleague said the carpet boss, who turns 82 next month, still worked seven days a week, shared between Tapi, the Harris Federation, Arsenal and the House of Lords. "He has the best memory I've ever seen and is a detail-orientated retailer. He can remember every single carpet and price going back years. He also can remember all the store staff and spends a big portion of his time helping with any issues that pop up in their personal lives."



Mehreen Khan

Amid all the attention on the US, investors have forgotten France



Global markets were given a jolt last week, interrupting a bullish streak that stretched into last year. The S&P 500, America's benchmark index, suffered its worst three-day run of the year, putting an end to a rolling series of record closes that had been notched up since April. In Europe, the Stoxx 600, an index of European stocks, suffered its worst trading run in ten months.

The selling was coupled with a surge in volatility, which is now at its highest level since the collapse of a series of regional banks in the United States in March 2023.

The bearishness can't be explained by economic data alone. After months of anticipation, it looks as though the US Federal Reserve will cut interest rates in September, while measures of economic performance and inflation in advanced economies are better than forecasters had expected. Looser monetary policy and decent growth should look like the vaunted "soft landing" that investors have been praying for.

Yet any market euphoria is being tempered by the other big driver of sentiment in 2024. Politics.

Traditionally, elections have been largely irrelevant for financial markets, where the trading psychology for the past three years has been determined by the interest rate environment. Politics, though, is now a source of unwanted distraction for investors who, in the words of Ehsan Khoman at MUFG, a Japanese investment bank, usually "anchor their attention on one predominant theme at a time".

Last week's burst in trading volatility was sparked by the assassination attempt on Donald Trump and has been exacerbated by President Biden's decision to step aside from America's presidential election. Biden's withdrawal, the first since 1968, has affected polling numbers, which show that Trump's odds have narrowed from 66 per cent to 58 per cent when voters are asked to choose between the Republican

President Macron gambled on an election that did not pay off



candidate and the Democrats led by Kamala Harris.

For the past month investors have homed in on the "Trump trade", positioning for the potential inflationary consequences of the former president's promise to crack down on immigration, extend federal tax cuts and hit America's trading partners with a minimum 10 per cent tariff, rising to 60 per cent in China's case. The main consequence has been rising yields on longer-dated US government bonds as investors demand a larger premium to hold the debt of the world's largest economy. This is in contrast with a decline in shorter-dated treasury yields, which are falling in anticipation of Fed rate cuts in the next few weeks.

With Biden gone, there's been no clear unwinding of the Trump trade. Meanwhile, the dollar, being eyed for a big devaluation by a Republican administration, has been trading on the back of monetary policy expectations rather than politics. The same is true for stocks in dominant tech companies, which so far have been immune to threats from JD Vance, Trump's running-mate, who is a supporter of blocking Big Tech mergers.

The consequences of the US election are legion, but investors have little visibility on them. Trump 1.0 was unpredictable and capricious. His policy promises three months before the election are in no way guaranteed to be his priorities if he's back in the White House. His threats against Jerome Powell, the Fed chairman he picked for office, could grow into a full-blown drumbeat pushing for his removal or, equally, they could disappear altogether.

Financial markets are merely reacting to the news cycle rather than parsing any meaningful signal from the pre-election noise. This has been the case, too, in France, another politically volatile large economy, where investors' received wisdom about the impact of parliamentary elections has proven off the mark.

A reminder. Last month President Macron announced surprise legislative elections to try to consolidate his grip on power against a resurgent hard right. The gamble didn't pay off, with his centrist party coming

second, behind an alliance of the left and greens, with the populist right, led by Marine Le Pen, in third place.

The result defied pre-election polling, which had put the populists in front, giving them the possibility to form a hard-right government for the first time since the Vichy regime in the 1940s. Instead, no party commanded a clear majority, leaving Europe's second largest economy without a parliamentary government two weeks after the vote.

This is the outcome that investors and analysts had welcomed, as it ameliorates the fiscal ambitions of the far left, which has been investors' main fear over that posed by the hard right. Since the elections, investors have bought the euro and have narrowed the spread between French and German government bonds, a "fear gauge" in the eurozone.

However, traders are ignoring the implications of political paralysis in an economy that has the second highest deficit in the eurozone and needs to carry out tens of billions of euros of fiscal consolidation. Under the EU's fiscal rules, a French government will need to start negotiating the terms of its deficit reduction this summer, with a view to having a draft budget by September, to be approved by parliament in October.

There are serious doubts over how any of this can proceed as parties haggle over government formation. If they fail, there is the possibility of a technocratic administration taking charge, but it may have to use emergency powers to pass through a contentious, austerity-laden budget.

France's fiscal situation is alarming. Without belt-tightening, the country's debt will rise from 110 per cent of GDP to 129 per cent by 2029, according to UBS. Even with some fiscal consolidation, the debt ratio is on course to rise to 117 per cent.

Traders, though, unable to focus on more than one political risk at a time, are sanguine on French assets. In contrast with the unpredictability of a Trump administration, in France's case the political cycle and budgetary requirements are set in stone. This complacency could morph into panic very quickly.

Mehreen Khan is Economics Editor of The Times

Paul Hudson

Let's make Britain the life sciences powerhouse that it deserves to be

With change comes opportunity. A new government with a new outlook could transform the UK into a life sciences powerhouse.

It's simple. Build an internationally competitive life sciences sector to attract investment. Ensure medicines reach patients to prevent people from going to hospital. Free up NHS capacity and keep people in work, supporting economic growth. It's a virtuous circle. And it would put UK life sciences back on to the world stage.

The UK has fantastic science. From the academic heritage in world-class universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial to newer initiatives such as the Clinical

'To achieve this, the country needs to invest more in healthcare'

Research Network in my home town of Manchester, the country punches well above its weight and there is a lot to celebrate. Yet this science is being exported out of Britain, inward life sciences investment is declining (it has fallen by almost 50 per cent in the past few years) and the nation's population is missing out on the economic and health benefits that a thriving life sciences sector could bring.

At the heart of the problem is the fundamental issue of access to medicines, vaccines and technologies. When a doctor prescribes a medicine to a patient, they assume they will be getting the best. In reality, they will receive only the best medicine available in the UK. And this is something many aren't aware of.

In fact, for every 100 patients receiving a new medicine in its first year of launch in European Union countries, only 21 patients here will do so. Only last month Sanofi had a cancer treatment rejected by the system, despite it being widely available in other countries, as it would not have been deemed "cost-effective" in England, even if it had been offered at zero price. This is not an isolated example. It is something that is happening for many healthcare companies, across every

disease area, despite the fact that the UK often has among the lowest medicines prices in the world.

If Britain set an ambition to become a world leader in patient access to innovative medicines, that alone would send a powerful message to global boardrooms and would open the floodgates of investment, while ensuring better outcomes for patients.

To achieve this ambition, the country needs to invest more in healthcare. UK government spending on medicines is the lowest among its European peers, accounting for a mere 9 per cent of overall healthcare spending (compared with Italy at 17 per cent, Germany at 17 per cent and France at 15 per cent). The new government might be facing significant fiscal constraints, but healthcare is a long-term investment and this is false economy.

The ABPI (Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry) and the NHS Confederation estimate that the economy could be enabled to achieve productivity gains amounting to almost £18 billion through improved uptake of innovative medicines.

Furthermore, the life sciences industry is a net positive contributor to the UK's economy that is not adequately recognised and measured. In 2021, life sciences contributed more than £43 billion in gross value added to the economy compared with average spending of less than £25 billion on medicines in recent years, a contribution that could grow substantially with a re-energised life sciences sector.

The UK has such great potential in life sciences. There is now an opportunity to bring the Treasury, health and other key government departments together with the life sciences industry with the common goal of investing in health, to support patients and the economy for the long term.

I am therefore fully committed — and I know other life sciences leaders are, as well — to partnering with the UK government to improve health outcomes for patients and boost the economy, making the UK the life sciences powerhouse it deserves to be.

Paul Hudson is chief executive officer of Sanofi

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Business

Air fares weigh heavily at Ryanair as profits tumble

Tom Saunders, Martin Strydom

First-quarter profits nearly halved at Ryanair after a sharp fall in air fares and Europe's largest airline has warned that ticket prices for its key summer months will be "materially lower" than last year.

Ryanair said its post-tax profit had fallen by 46 per cent to €360 million in

the three months to the end of June, down from €663 million in the same quarter last year and below market forecasts of €538 million.

"While second-quarter demand is strong, pricing remains softer than we expected and we now expect quarter-two fares to be materially lower than last summer," it said. The airline

previously had suggested that fares would be "flat to modestly up".

The news sent shares in Ryanair tumbling by 282 cents, or 17.2 per cent, to €13.62 in Dublin and the shock reverberated around the sector on the London stock market. EasyJet, Ryanair's great rival, fell by 32½p, or 7.1 per cent, to 426¼p, while International Consoli-

dated Airlines Group lost 5¼p, or 3.4 per cent, to 164¼p. Wizz Air, the London-listed eastern European budget carrier, sank by 226p, or 10 per cent, to £20.30.

Neil Sorahan, 52, Ryanair's chief financial officer, said it appeared that "consumers may just be drawing a little bit of breath after two years of double-digit fare growth". However, he said the company believed that fares were likely to rise in future years, driven up by capacity constraints arising from aircraft delivery delays and consolidation.

Eurocontrol, the air traffic management organisation, has said that average daily flights this year are at only 96 per cent of pre-Covid levels, which Sorahan believes will increase to between 97 per cent and 98 per cent during the peak summer period.

"Both Boeing and Airbus alike are way behind on their deliveries and unlikely to catch up any time soon. So again capacity will be constrained on that front for the next five or six years," he said. "I think we'll probably see Air Europa get the green light for IAG to take them over sometime this summer."

IAG, the owner of British Airways and Aer Lingus that owns a 20 per cent stake in Air Europa, is paying €400 million to buy out the remaining shares

● **Boeing has reported a "significant" improvement in production at its 737 Max factory. The aerospace manufacturer agreed to plead guilty to a criminal fraud conspiracy charge after an investigation related to two fatal 737 Max crashes and production at its factory had since slowed. However, Stephanie Pope, Boeing's chief operating officer, said that changes Boeing had made subsequently at the factory were "transformational" and that there had been a "significant improvement in the flow of our 737 factory".**

from Globalia, the Spanish tourism company. The deal is being scrutinised by the European competition watchdog, which has set an August 20 deadline for its decision.

Revenue per passenger, a proxy for fares but including charges for baggage, seat allocation and priority boarding, fell by 10 per cent year-on-year at Ryanair. Michael O'Leary, 63, the airline's chief executive, said that average fares were 15 per cent lower than during the same quarter last year as the company was forced to engage in "more price stimulation" than had been expected.

Like other European airlines, Ryanair has been hit by disruption caused by air traffic controller staff shortages across Europe and more recently the global technology outage. Sorahan said the airline had recovered from the technology issue on Friday and that cancellations had been kept to a minimum.

However, he added: "We would have taken on a lot of delays. We burnt more fuel than we needed to do. Crews ran out of hours, aircraft ended up in the wrong place. So that all comes at a cost."

The fall in profits came despite a 10 per cent increase in passenger numbers to 55.5 million in the three-month period. In June Ryanair carried 19.3 million passengers, a record for the company and a rise of 11 per cent year-on-year. However, the load factor, or the proportion of available seating capacity that was filled with passengers, fell by from 95 per cent in June 2023 to 94 per cent last month.

Canal+ was behind the Amy Winehouse biopic *Back to Black*, starring Marisa Abela, and the Paddington films. Vivendi, its owner, chose London for Canal+'s listing because of its international credentials and investor base, the company said



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London turns the tide with Canal+ flotation plans

Katie Prescott, Emma Powell

London's stock market has received a double boost with the news that Vivendi, the French media group, plans to list its Canal+ television business in Britain and that Anglo American Platinum, the South African mining company, is aiming for a secondary listing in the UK.

The moves offer welcome relief for the City, which has suffered a decline in the number of initial public offerings in recent years, coupled with a wave of businesses leaving London in the hope of winning better valuations on New York's stock exchanges.

Vivendi had chosen London for Canal+'s listing because of its international credentials and investor base, the company said. Controlled by Vincent Bolloré, the French tycoon, the conglomerate is being broken up in an attempt to raise its valuation. Bolloré, 72, is splitting Vivendi into three divisions that will be launched on different stock markets. A fourth will remain in Paris, managing its investments, including a 10 per cent stake in Universal Music.

Making the case for London, Vivendi said that two thirds of Canal+ subscribers were outside France, that it had a film and television series distribution network in every continent and that it was enjoying strong growth in international markets.

Along with Canal+, Havas, the advertising group, will be hived off and listed in Amsterdam, while publishing and distribution companies will be listed in Paris under the Louis Hachette Group.

"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," the company said. It has said previously that the move is

designed to "bring out the true value" of its assets.

Bolloré is a scion of a well-known French business family and runs the Bolloré Group, founded in Brittany in 1822 as a paper manufacturer. He is worth \$9.6 billion, according to Forbes magazine. Yannick Bolloré, 44, his son, is chairman of Vivendi's supervisory board and is chairman and chief executive of Havas. Vivendi has almost 73,000 employees and made €10.5 billion in revenue in 2023.

The Bolloré Group has a 30 per cent stake in Vivendi and also has interests in European oil logistics and industrial activities such as storage and recycling. Canal+, launched in 1984, has made English-language co-productions through its StudioCanal division and associated network of production companies, including the Amy Winehouse biopic *Back to Black*, *Paddington* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*.

Separately, Anglo American Platinum, otherwise known as Amplats, said it expected its demerger from Anglo American, its parent company, to be completed next year and that it was planning a secondary listing in London.

Amplats is listed on the Johannesburg exchange and a secondary London listing would be intended to broaden its investor base, Craig Miller, 51, chief executive of Amplats, said. "The planned demerger will create a more focused, independent global leader in the [platinum mining] industry," he said as he unveiled half-year results.

Pre-tax profits fell by almost a quarter to 8.35 billion rand (£350 million), after average realised platinum group metal prices also declined by about a quarter to \$1,442 an ounce, weighed down by weaker palladium and rhodium metal prices. Anglo American is set to report its half-year results on Thursday.

Anglo American's shares closed down 12p, or 0.5 per cent, at £22.34.

Vodafone sells another slice of Vantage Towers for €1.3bn

Katie Prescott

Vodafone has sold a further stake in Vantage Towers for €1.3 billion as it continues to cut its debts.

The FTSE 100 telecoms group has been reducing its ownership of the infrastructure business as part of a deal struck in 2022 with KKR and Global Infrastructure Partners. That transaction was completed in 2023, when Vantage Towers was taken off the Frankfurt stock exchange and Vodafone moved its holding into a joint venture with the two investment funds called Oak Holdings, which it has been selling at €32 a share. This latest move takes the total it has made so far from the sales to €6.6 billion, leaving Vodafone with 44.7 per cent ownership.

Vantage Towers is a telecoms infrastructure company that provides services to mobile network operators, utilities and technology companies. It was established by Vodafone and was spun off into a separate entity, going public in 2021. It manages 85,000 tower sites, including in Spain Portugal and Britain, leasing space on its towers for antennas and other telecoms equipment.

Like other players in the European

telecoms industry, Vodafone has struggled with the size of the investment needed to pay for rapid advances in digital infrastructure. It is one of the world's biggest telecoms groups, providing services to more than 330 million customers in 15 countries.

Under Margherita Della Valle, 59, who took over as its chief executive last year, Vodafone has been reshaping its operations. The company is trying to merge with Three in the UK in an €18 billion deal. In March Vodafone sold its Italian business to Swisscom for €8 billion and last October it signed a €5 billion deal to sell its Spanish business to Zegona Communications, a London-listed investment vehicle.

In its full-year results, published in May, the company said its figures were "slightly ahead of guidance and analyst consensus", with the "early benefits of our transformation coming through". Group revenue fell by 2.5 per cent to €36.7 billion. It said it had generated annual services revenue of €29.9 billion, which was up by 6.3 per cent when stripping out its businesses in Italy and Spain.

Vodafone's share price closed largely flat at 70½p. The stock has fallen by more than 50 per cent over the past five years.

Partnership news boosts Ocado shares

Isabella Fish

Ocado has bolstered a partnership with one of its key retail partners.

Shares in the retail and warehousing group jumped by 46p, or 12.2 per cent, to 424p after it said that Kroger, a leading grocery chain in the United States, had placed a large order for new automated technologies.

The partnership expansion will go some way to allaying investors' fears over Ocado, which has suffered a series of blows, including a recent decision by Kroger to close three sites powered by the British group's automation.

Before yesterday, Ocado shares had fallen by about 50 per cent this year and it has been ejected from the FTSE 100.

Tim Steiner, Ocado's chief executive, said: "Today marks another exciting milestone in our partnership with Kroger. Our current customer fulfilment centres are already helping to deliver a game-changing quality of service to their customers across the USA."

Last week Ocado nudged up its cash flow and earnings forecasts. Group revenue rose 12.6 per cent to £1.5 billion.

Easing insurance costs hit comparison site's sales

Emma Powell

The owner of Moneysupermarket.com has suffered a marked decline in sales growth as a slowdown in the rate of price rises for insurance premiums caused fewer people to shop around for better deals.

Mony Group said increases in revenue at its core insurance business had slowed to 6 per cent during the second quarter, lower than the 14 per cent recorded for the first six months of the year. Overall revenue growth was at 1 per cent in the three months to the end of June, down from 5 per cent over the first half of the year.

Growth in insurance is expected to return to more normal levels during the second half of the year as the price comparison specialist laps its "exceptional" performance of last year.

Moneysupermarket, the price comparison site, takes a fee from every product sold via its platform. It boosted revenue to £224 million, from £214 million over the same period last year, and pre-tax profit to £58.1 million during the first six months of the year, from £53.3 million. It said it was confident that it would deliver annual results in

line with market expectations for adjusted earnings of between £135.8 million to £143.7 million.

Revenue for its money business was flat quarter-on-quarter as a better performance in credit card switching was offset by weakness in customers looking for loans, made less affordable by the rapid increase in interest rates.

The FTSE 250 constituent was rebranded this year, changing its name from Moneysupermarket.com Group to reflect its expansion beyond the original price comparison website to encompass its other sites including MoneySavings-Expert, which advises consumers, Quidco, the cashback provider, and third-party businesses.

Moneysupermarket was founded in 1993 and was listed on the stock market in 2007. The company claimed that it had helped users to save about £1.7 billion on their household bills during the first six months of the year.

It declared an interim dividend of 3.3p a share, a 3 per cent increase on last year.

The shares edged lower by 0.3 per cent, or ½p, closing at 227p and taking the decline since the start of this year to 17 per cent.

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Global Bond	132.94	...	-0.47	2.59
UK Corp Bond	104.79	...	-0.78	...
UK Equity	6317.26	...	-14.91	...
UK Divd	338.05	...	+1.07	5.05
UK Growth	8989.69	...	+13.11	5.27
UK Index	1423.31	...	-5.83	...
UK Mid Cap	4654.61	...	-11.35	...

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Global Income R Acc	203.36	...	-0.49	3.11
Global Income R Inc	123.19	...	-0.30	3.09
Global Select R Acc	172.93	...	-0.10	...
High Income R Acc	65.90	...	+0.04	5.91
Income R Acc	599.73	...	+2.23	3.50
Income R Inc	245.98	...	+1.34	3.60
Monthly Dist R Inc	71.10	...	-0.01	4.69
Smart400 European Equity R Acc	1851.84	...	+3.77	2.04
Smart400 Global Equity R Acc	1900.50	...	+1.12	...
Smart400 UK Equity R Acc	1020.90	...	+1.83	2.69
Strategic Assets R Acc	91.26	...	+0.14	2.88
Strategic Bond R M Inc	104.23	...	-0.20	3.78
Strategic Bond R M Inc	51.38	...	-0.10	4.09
Strategic Bond R Q Acc	104.05	...	-0.20	4.13
Strategic Bond R Q Inc	51.48	...	-0.10	4.23
UK Select R Acc	899.97	...	-5.13	1.62
UK Select R Inc	1958.00	...	+1.97	1.55
UK Smaller Cos R Acc	1027.17	...	+1.97	1.55
UK Smaller Cos R Inc	823.24	...	+2.88	1.47

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Equity Inc	572.40	...	-2.70	...
Gen Acc	201.30	211.80	+10.00	...
Gen Inc	74.35	78.24	+3.89	1.09
Health Acc	3289.00	...	+0.00	...
UK Smaller Cos Acc	62.56	66.69	+4.19	0.20
Managed Inc	138.30	...	...	...
Monthly Inc	217.30	...	+1.10	4.39
UK Growth Inc	223.30	...	+2.10	...
UK Select Opps Inc	1958.00	...	+1.40	...
UK Small Cos Inc	301.50	...	+0.90	...

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Gen Acc	2101.00	...	+6.00	...
Gen Inc	1079.00	...	-2.00	2.70

UK Global Investment Companies

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Euro Acc	234.70	...	...	1.18
Extra Inc	86.74	...	+0.24	...
Global Growth Acc	288.10	...	+4.10	...
Global Growth Inc	129.20	...	+0.20	...
Gen Acc	478.80	...	-17.60	2.30

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
European Growth	230.70	...	+2.00	1.71
Sat Leaders	837.50	...	+2.60	1.53
UK Growth	687.00	...	+5.30	2.09
UK Income	218.20	...	+0.50	...

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Beacon Inv	84.88	...	+0.35	...

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Share Class 1 - Retail

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Corporate Bd	49.99	...	-0.31	...
Emerging Mkts	116.50	...	-0.50	...
Euro Growth & Inc	1402.00	...	+7.00	0.24
Extra Inc Bond	45.07	...	+2.90	1.83
FTSE All-Share Track	440.50	...	+2.90	1.83
Global Growth 1st	365.90	...	-2.30	1.23
High Inc	11.57	12.14	+0.57	5.22
Max Inc Bond	44.28	...	-0.40	...
Multi-Mgmt	70.41	...	+2.20	3.18
Multi-Mgmt Dist	64.44	...	...	...
North Amer	1088.00	...	-8.00	...
Pacific Growth	477.40	...	-0.04	...
Pacific Growth	204.80	...	-0.30	1.67
UK Equity	344.00	...	+2.00	...
UK Growth & Inc	1588.50	...	+0.50	...
UK Growth & Inc Dist	234.70
UK Smaller Cos	1122.00	1.43

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Resp & Sust Shelling Bond	186.81	...	-0.19	4.36
Resp & Sust Equi Ent	359.60	...	+3.20	2.34
Resp & Sust GHI Ent	367.80	...	-2.00	0.93
Resp & Sust Mgd Income	1123.40	...	+0.40	4.52
Resp & Sust UK Acc	226.30	...	+1.70	1.51
Resp & Sust UK Equity Opps	598.60	...	+0.90	1.51

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Amer Spec Sits	2605.00	...	-13.00	...
American A Acc	6594.00	...	-13.00	...
Euro Opps	4234.00	...	-4.20	0.35
European	3868.00	...	-38.00	0.60
Extra Income	22.81	...	...	6.11
Global Spec Sits	6465.00	...	-41.00	...
Global Focus	3201.00	...	-21.00	...
High Income	192.50	...	+0.20	...
Japan	661.00	...	-3.20	0.46
MoneyMdr Bal	43.38	...	-0.22	4.39
MoneyMdr Growth	327.60	327.60	-0.10	...
MoneyMdr Gwth	76.12	...	-0.95	...
MoneyMdr Inc	29.34	...	-0.01	5.06

HALIFAX INVESTMENT FUND MGRS LTD

01296 386 386

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Share Class - C

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Corporate Bond	34.83	...	-0.05	3.73
Ethical	139.60	...	-0.40	0.18
European	129.40	...	-0.09	1.83
Far Eastern	125.40	...	-1.30	1.94
Fund of Inv Tr	151.70	...	-0.10	0.69
Int Growth	353.30	...	-0.90	0.67
Japanese	84.66	...	-1.11	1.15
North Amer	191.50	...	-2.10	0.06
Special Cos	116.40	...	-0.40	1.48
Smaller Sits	90.34	...	-0.17	1.03
UK Equity Inc	103.50	...	+0.60	5.89
UK FTSE 100 Tr	78.88	...	+0.53	2.33
UK FTSE All-Share	88.05	...	+0.55	2.25
UK Growth	95.02	...	+0.51	2.37

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HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC)

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Amer Ind Acc	1195.70	...	-9.17	1.03
Amer Ind Inc	537.45	...	-7.49	1.04
Euro Ind Acc	1370.28	...	+15.29	2.89
Euro Ind Inc	833.79	...	+9.28	2.46
FTSE 100 Ind Acc	313.38	...	+2.06	3.11
FTSE 100 Ind Inc	135.48	...	+0.89	3.19
FTSE 250 Ind Acc	332.45	...	+1.21	2.96
FTSE 250 Ind Inc	192.39	...	+0.20	2.95
FTSE All-Share	800.82	...	+4.89	3.17
FTSE All-Share	384.83	...	+2.35	3.25
Jap Ind Acc	126.74	...	-1.53	1.62
Jap Ind Inc	145.40	...	-1.15	1.65
UK Growth & Inc	625.40	...	-4.10	5.23
UK Growth & Inc	331.41	...	-7.49	2.80

HSBC GLOBAL ASSET MGMT (UK) LTD

Enqs: 0845 746 6232 Dg: 0845 745 6126 Mon-Fri 9-6

HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Share Class

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Balanced Acc	273.62	...	-1.01	1.30
Balanced Inc	151.95	...	-0.14	...
Corp Bd Acc	289.68	...	-0.67	3.84
Corp Bd Inc	105.79	...	-0.25	3.94
Gth & Fd Inc	494.78	...	+1.62	...
Gth & Fd Inc	74.17	...	+0.21	2.93
Income Acc	892.27	...	+5.71	3.82
Income Inc	309.03	...	+2.19	3.94
Monthly Inc	313.41	...	+0.77	...
Monthly Inc	134.50	...	+0.52	4.10
UK Gth & Inc Ret B Acc	1164.13	...	+1.12	2.64
UK Gth & Inc Ret B Inc	1648.13	...	+0.46	3.75
UK Gth & Inc Acc	164.13	...	+1.12	3.64
UK Gth & Inc Inc	663.13	...	+0.46	3.75

HSBC Specialist Investment Funds (OEIC)

American Index Retail Acc @1195.70 -9.17 1.03

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
American Index Retail Inc	1093.45	...	-7.19	1.04
Asian Gth Acc	147.77	...	-0.07	...
Asian Gth Inc	130.99	...	-0.06	...
Chinese Eq Acc	513.81	...	+0.27	0.40
Chinese Eq Inc	434.76	...	+0.22	0.34
Euro Gth Acc	973.97	...	+0.05	0.41
Euro Gth Inc	817.05	...	+3.39	0.44

IGNIS ASSET MGMT

Dp: 0141 222 8282

Client Serv: 0207 163 4000

Balanced Growth

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Balanced Growth	262.17	276.69	-0.93	...
Balanced Growth	393.13	414.92	-1.40	1.49
Corporate Bond	95.69	...	-0.89	4.77
European Growth	403.88	426.26	-0.57	...
European Growth Acc	475.71	502.07	-4.21	...
High Yield	333.53	349.80	-3.09	...
Higher Yield	83.98	88.64	-0.29	...
Higher Yield Acc	275.04	290.28	-0.92	...
Japan	49.06	51.78	-0.03	0.94
Managed Trust	130.89	138.15	-0.06	...
Managed Trust	71.86	76.36	-0.17	2.64
Mind Pfl Inc	95.54	100.84	-0.11	...
Pacific Gth	498.71	526.24	-2.81	1.34
Smaller Comp	756.24	798.14	+1.64	0.15
Smaller Cos	628.94	663.79	+1.36	0.21

INSIGHT INVESTMENT FUNDS MANAGEMENT LTD

Client Serv: 0207 163 4000

Well Bldr Bal Acc

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Well Bldr Bal Acc	96.05	...	-0.32	...
Well Bldr Growth Acc	93.79	...	-0.36	...

INVESCO FUND MGRS LTD

Ding: 0800 085 8571 Inv Serv: 0800 085 8677

Bkr Serv: 0800 028 2211

INVESTMENT FUNDS

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
UK Str Inv N/Tr	323.57	...	-0.12	...

INVESCO PERPETUAL FUNDS

Childrens Acc

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Childrens Acc	536.55	...	+3.18	...
Corp Bond Acc	217.05	...	-0.52	3.46
High Income Inc	236.15	...	+1.38	2.01
Income & Grn Inc	442.00	...	-2.02	1.68
Income Inc	1331.99	...	+5.24	3.36
Money Acc	98.80	...	+0.40	3.56
Monthly Plus Inc	94.61	...	-0.09	5.86
UK Aggressive Inc	154.28	...	-0.29	2.15
UK Growth Acc	1025.84	...	+0.28	...
UK Sm Cos Equity Acc	1467.80	...	+3.17	1.32
UK Sm Cos Growth	82.54	...	+0.04	...

Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc

Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc @1242.73 -1.62 1.07

	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc	1242.73	...	-1.62	1.07
Emerging Mkts Equity B Acc	1036.47	...	-0.48	4.56
Emerging Mkts Equity C Acc	1036.47	...	-0.17	6.47
Emerging Mkts Equity D Acc	1036.47	...	-0.05	...
Emerging Mkts Equity E Acc	1036.47	...	-1.25	...
Global Bond A Acc	139.30	...	+0.03	0.82
Global Bond A Inc	109.33			

Mubadala walks off with Bugaboo

Bugaboo, the maker of upmarket pushchairs and children's products that was popularised by *Sex and the City*, is to change hands in a deal worth hundreds of millions of pounds (Dominic Walsh writes).

Mubadala Capital, a wholly owned subsidiary of Abu Dhabi's Mubadala Investment Company, said it had acquired a majority stake in the chain, a portfolio company of Bain Capital Private Equity. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Bugaboo, which dates from the late 1990s, is widely recognised as the No 1 brand globally for premium juvenile products.

It is the third largest

juvenile products transaction globally and the largest on record in the premium category, according to those involved.

Bugaboo was spawned by Max Barenbrug, its co-founder, as part of his graduation project and since then it has spread its wings into car seats, travel cots and other accessories for infants.

Its products soared in popularity after one of its pushchairs appeared in an episode of the *Sex and the City* television series. Its Donkey 5 Mono carrycot and seat travel system sells for an eye-watering £1,215.

This is the Bain consumer team's 30th deal globally in the past 12 months. It is also Bain's fourth this year with an enterprise value of at least €500 million.



Bugaboo is deemed the top brand globally for premium juvenile products

Bain, which bought the business in 2018, had been exploring options for Bugaboo but the process had been slowed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and inflation.

Nigel Walder, a partner and the head of Bain's European consumer team, said it had become the first global player in the consumer space to achieve so-called B Corp status for social and environmental performance.

Mubadala was provided with debt financing by Citigroup First Abu Dhabi Bank and the London branch of Natixis Corporate & Investment Banking, as the arrangers and underwriters. Bugaboo was represented by Barclays Bank Ireland, acting through its investment.

Touchlight's 'doggybone' DNA technology is big hit with GSK

Alex Ralph

A privately owned British biotechnology company backed by celebrity and wealthy investors has struck a DNA manufacturing licence agreement with GSK.

Touchlight has agreed a non-exclusive deal for the FTSE 100 Big Pharma group to use its "doggybone" DNA technology for the development and production of mRNA-based products.

The company, a contract and development manufacturer that is based at a converted Victorian waterworks on the banks of the Thames near Hampton Court Palace in west London, was founded in 2007 by Jonny Ohlson, a former Soho House director and Saatchi & Saatchi advertising executive.

Touchlight said that the licence agreement had the potential to "substantially" accelerate GSK's production of multivalent mRNA vaccines, including for use against seasonal epidemics and pandemic threats.

The financial terms of the agreement were not disclosed, but the deal includes an upfront payment,

Keira Knightley, the actress, is among the well-known investors in Touchlight



technology access fees, clinical and regulatory milestone payments and royalties on GSK's mRNA products manufactured with Touchlight's technology.

Touchlight said that its dbDNA platform, named after the apparently dog-bone shape of the vectors — DNA molecules that are used to carry a particular DNA segment — could produce "high-purity" DNA faster than traditional plasmid DNA production.

Having split off its Haleon consumer business, GSK's specialisms include vaccines. This month it restructured a partnership first reached during the pandemic with CureVac, a German company, to acquire full rights globally to develop, manufacture and commercialise mRNA candidate vaccines for influenza and Covid.

Messenger RNA-based vaccines use a technology whereby proteins, or antigens, can be produced by the body's own cells, enabling the immune system to prevent or fight disease. The technology has the potential to expand the range of diseases that can be prevented or treated and to significantly speed up development and manufacturing. It was at the forefront

of the rapid creation of vaccines to combat Covid.

Ohlson, 61, the executive chairman of Touchlight, said that the adoption of the company's technology was "gathering pace and becoming an important part of the advanced therapy supply chain. Our technology delivers the speed, scalability and high-quality DNA products that are essential for the next generation of mRNA therapeutics."

Touchlight, which employs 162 people, has raised about £110 million since it was founded, most recently £92 million in 2021, when it was deemed to have a valuation of about £650 million. Its backers include Sir Andy Murray, the tennis player, Keira Knightley, the actress, and Nick Mason, the Pink Floyd drummer, who Ohlson met during his time at Soho House.

Clive Dix, the biotechnology sector veteran and the former deputy chairman of the government's vaccine task force during the pandemic, is also an investor and is the company's former chairman.

Shares in GSK rose by 2p, or 0.1 per cent, to close at £15.24½.

Ceres gets power boost from fifth manufacturer

Emma Powell

A London-listed fuel-cell specialist has lifted its annual profit forecast after signing a licensing agreement with a fifth manufacturer.

Ceres Power said its revenue this year would be between £50 million and £60 million, higher than a previous consensus prediction of £46.5 million.

The unnamed manufacturing partner is in the Asia Pacific region and is the second to be signed up by Ceres Power this year after it secured a deal with Delta Electronics, a Taiwanese company, in January. The clean energy

business, which moved from the junior stock market to the main market last year, also counts Bosch, the German engineering group, and Doosan, a South Korean industrial conglomerate, among its customers.

Revenue for the first six months of the year is expected to be between £27 million and £29 million, up from just under £12 million a year ago. However, the company has yet to make a profit, reporting a pre-tax loss of £53.6 million last year. Analysts at Peel Hunt, the broker, expect it to announce a loss of £40.2 million this year.

Ceres licences its designs to third

'The group is likened to Arm, which licenses its technology to third parties'

parties that will produce its solid oxide fuel-cell technology, paying an upfront fee and royalties for each unit made. Phil Caldwell, 54, the business's chief executive, has likened Ceres Power to Arm Holdings, the British chip designer that helped to revolutionise mobile phones by licensing its technology to third-party manufacturers such as Apple. William Tudor Brown, a former chief technology officer at Arm, sits on the board of Ceres.

Ceres was spun out of Imperial College London in 2001. Its shares rose by 14p, or 7.5 per cent, to close at 200p last night.

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Business Markets

Lauren Almeida Tempus
Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips



Still standing out from the crowd

CROWDSTRIKE

Market cap \$72.2bn | Forward EV/Ebit 69

Given recent events, it's unlikely to be the most surprising news this week. CrowdStrike, one of the biggest cybersecurity names in Silicon Valley, has lost about a quarter of its market value in the past five days. This, you will remember, was the \$78 billion business at the heart of the global IT meltdown on Friday that caused havoc in airports, hospitals and businesses worldwide.

What will surprise many, though, is that it started this week as the most-bought share among customers of AJ Bell, the broker, as hopeful retail investors chased what could be a rare value opportunity in American technology.

In an industry in which reputation is so vital and as the rest of the world now mops up its mess, it could prove to be a risky gamble. The investment case behind CrowdStrike is facing serious questions.

CrowdStrike supplies cloud-based antivirus software for "endpoint" devices such as PCs and laptops. It was co-founded in 2011 by George Kurtz, its chief executive, a former manager and chief technology officer at McAfee. It was listed on the market as recently as 2019, but since then its top line has grown at an annual average rate of 66 per cent and last month it joined the S&P 500, the benchmark share index for corporate America.

The company operates at a huge scale, commanding about 15 per cent of the global security software market, according to Gartner, the research firm. It runs a subscription-based model, which means that most of its sales are recurring. As of the end of its last financial year, more than 90 per cent of its sales came from subscriptions, where it boasted a chunky gross margin of 78 per cent.

The questions for investors centre on whether CrowdStrike's customers will cancel their contracts or whether the company will provide any financial compensation or credit to its clients.

The most important point to note

Quite striking



ADVICE Hold
WHY Strong underlying quality means premium still looks justified

is that it was not a security incident that caused the IT failure. It was a defect in a content update, rather than a breach. This goes some way to mitigating any reputational damage and, while the incident has hurt businesses around the world, CrowdStrike has been transparent and deployed a fix relatively quickly.

Wall Street's analysts appear to agree that the mass replacement of its software, which is embedded in most of its clients' daily operations, is highly unlikely. But there is speculation that, because of the extent of the IT breakdown and potential lost revenue, CrowdStrike may have to share credits, discounting or additional free products with its customers. This could affect its top line. Investors should beware, too, that the incident happened in the final two weeks of CrowdStrike's present quarter, which the company has said in the past is typically its most important. This will significantly limit the possibility of any earnings beat when it is expected to report in late August.

CrowdStrike has been subject to much scrutiny over the past week,



Financial years ended January 31
Source: Company report

but it has been the standout performer in its sector. Before Friday, its shares were up by more than a third this year. It has been one of the best-performing software stocks during a year in which the industry has grappled with fierce competition from AI-driven technologies. In its most recent quarter, annual recurring revenue rose by a third to \$3.6 billion and net new ARR rose by 22 per cent, compared with expectations of about 12 per cent. Meanwhile, its free cashflow margin reached a record 35 per cent, demonstrating its ability to convert growth into cash. This success was mostly thanks to selling add-on modules and the company reiterated its ARR target of \$10 billion in five to seven years.

There is plenty of room for growth. CrowdStrike has increased its total addressable market from \$25 billion when it was floated to about \$100 billion through the organic growth of its core endpoint security business, as well as expanding into other markets such as vulnerability management, identity protection, log management and cloud security.

The uncertainty looming over the business may prompt investors to turn to CrowdStrike's biggest rival, the \$121 billion Palo Alto Networks. It is a firewall business that works to stop unwanted entry to

a network. Its suite of subscription-based software products also includes security services such as endpoint protection, access logging and threat intelligence. It is a more mature business, with a lower enterprise value to earnings before interest and tax ratio of 49, compared with CrowdStrike at 69 or so.

Okta, the authentication and authorisation service, is another contender, although it is worth bearing in mind that this business also suffered a severe hit to its reputation in 2022 when it was affected by a data hack. The \$17 billion business has staged an impressive recovery since then, with its sales growing by three quarters in the past two years.

It is possible, therefore, that CrowdStrike will be able to win back market favour. But if the shares continue to languish, the company may be drawn into the wave of consolidation rippling across the cybersecurity sector. Reports circulated this month that Alphabet, Google's parent company, was in advanced talks with Wiz, a cybersecurity start-up, over a potential \$23 billion deal in what would be its largest acquisition to date. Cisco closed a \$28 billion takeover of Splunk, a cybersecurity and analytics company, this year. Darktrace, the Cambridge-based cybersecurity business, was taken private in 2024 for \$4 billion by Thoma Bravo, a private equity firm.

CrowdStrike is still one of the most highly favoured stocks in cybersecurity, with 84 per cent of analysts who cover the company rating it as a "buy" (although it is possible that some brokers may downgrade their view in the next few weeks, especially as potential compensation costs become clearer). Dan Ives at Wedbush, the California-based broker, one of the most influential technology analysts, believes that CrowdStrike still remains "the gold standard" and he thinks that the incident "will only be a dark chapter for the company and will not impact the long-term bull story".

Bering in mind its huge addressable market, strong profitability and deep expertise in the sector, we are inclined to agree.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Entain bets on veteran

Entain has appointed a veteran of the gambling sector as its next chief executive as it seeks to rebuild investor confidence. Gavin Isaacs, 60, an Australian who also holds an American passport, will join the FTSE 100 owner of Ladbrokes and Sportingbet on September 2. It completes a wider boardroom reshuffle prompted by the exit of Jette Nygaard-Andersen, who left in December after pressure from activist shareholders. Shares in Entain, which also owns Coral and Foxy Bingo, closed up 1 1/4p, or 1.8 per cent, at 656p.

More insolvencies loom

Insolvencies are at risk of rising further, experts warned, as the number of companies in significant financial distress rose by 8.5 per cent to more than 601,950 in the past three months. Figures from Begbies Traynor, the corporate restructuring firm, showed that, on an annual basis, the figure had surged by more than a third from 439,815. The research underscored the challenging conditions businesses face after the fastest increase in interest rates in decades.

Fears for tax perk

Scrapping inheritance tax relief on shares in London's junior stock market could cause a slump in the value of companies quoted on Aim, the investment industry has warned. There is speculation on how Rachel Reeves, the chancellor, plans to raise revenue. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has estimated that axing the tax relief could raise £1.6 billion for the exchequer by 2029-30 but this could harm the Aim market, Nicholas Hyett at Wealth Club, an investment service, said.

Minister hint on Mail

Jonathan Reynolds, the business secretary, expects the government to call in the proposed £5.3 billion takeover of International Distribution Services, the Royal Mail owner, by Daniel Kretinsky, the Czech billionaire. He said it would be "reasonable to expect [the deal] to be called in". The bid has been approved by the IDS board but needs a go-ahead by the government, which has the power to block a deal. Shareholders vote on the takeover in September.

PRICES

Major indices

New York	Zurich
Dow Jones 40,415.44 (+127.91)	SMI Index 122,966.74 (+123.30)
Nasdaq Composite 18,007.57 (+280.63)	DJ Euro Stoxx 50 4,897.44 (+70.20)
S&P 500 5,564.41 (+59.41)	
Tokyo	London
Nikkei 225 39,599.00 (-464.79)	FTSE 100 8,198.78 (+43.06)
	FTSE 250 2,113.68 (+71.00)
Hong Kong	FTSE 350 4,538.36 (+22.61)
Hang Seng 17,635.88 (+218.20)	FTSE Eurotop 100 4,061.11 (+42.81)
	FTSE All-Shares 4,495.46 (+22.02)
Amsterdam	FTSE Non Financials 5,554.56 n/a
AEX Index 916.95 (+9.64)	techMARK 100 6,947.70 (+25.45)
Sydney	Bargains n/a
AO 816.60 (+42.80)	US\$ 1,291.3 (-0.0018)
Frankfurt	Euro 1,186.5 (+0.0000)
DAX 18,407.07 (+235.14)	:SDR 0.98 (+0.00)
Singapore	Exchange Index 84.45 (+0.29)
Straits 3437.26 (-10.30)	Bank of England official close (4pm)
Brussels	CPI 134.07 Jun (2015 = 100)
BEL20 4,033.01 (+49.16)	RPI 387.30 Jun (Jan 1987 = 100)
	RPIX 381.90 Jun (Jan 1987 = 100)
Paris	Morningstar Long Commodity 677.16 (+5.72)
CAC-40 7,622.02 (+87.50)	Morningstar Long/Short Commod 4,703.45 (+27.75)

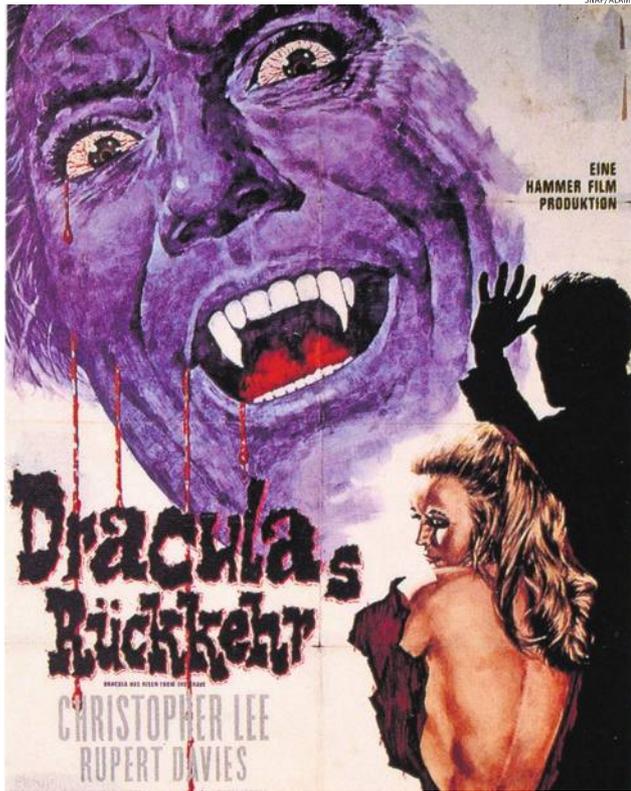
London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	SEP 24	98,220	98,230	97,590	97,940	22,867	738,479
	Dec 24	97,920	98,210	97,920	97,120	4	184
3-Mth Sterling	SEP 24						
	Dec 24						
3-Mth Euribor	SEP 24	96,485	96,485	96,465	96,470	78,148	527,179
	Dec 24	96,740	96,745	96,715	96,725	1,232,79	62,007
3-Mth Euroswiss	SEP 24	97,005	97,015	96,965	96,980	1,035,46	446,955
	Dec 24	97,225	97,235	97,165	97,185	1,069,56	355,092
FTSE100	SEP 24	8,195.0	8,251.5	8,171.5	8,216.5	6,351.6	485,208
	Dec 24	8,271.0	8,289.5	8,271.0	8,273.5	3	397
FTSEurofirst 80	SEP 24						
	Dec 24				661.90		

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Commodities

ICIS pricing (London 6,00pm)	Brent (6,00pm)
Crude Oil (\$/barrel FOB)	Sep 82.17-82.16 Dec 79.88-79.86
Brent Physical 83.05 -1.22	Oct 81.19-81.18 Jan 79.40-79.38
BFOE(Sep) 82.40 -0.87	Nov 80.44-80.43 Volume: 2311,496
BFOE(Oct) 81.46 -0.79	LIFFE
WTI(Sep) 79.97 -0.79	Cocoa
WTI(Oct) 78.36 -0.82	Sep 6,792-6,760 Dec 4,450-4,380
Products (\$/MT)	Dec 5,958-5,934 Mar 5,084-5,125
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)	Mar 5,138-5,116 May 4,315-4,095
Premium Unld 858.00 861.00 -16.00	May 4,911-4,885
Gasoil EEC 735.25 736.25 -10.50	Jul 4,366-4,704
3.5 Fuel Oil 453.00 453.50 -15.00	Sep 4,574-4,944 Volume: 73,342
Naphtha 646.00 660.00 -18.00	RobustaCoffee
ICE Futures	Jul 4,756-4,600 Mar 4,032-4,020
Gas Oil	Dec 4,580-4,566 Mar 3,904-3,450
Aug 746.75-746.50 Nov 746.50-746.25	Nov 4,208-4,195 Volume: 12,717
Sep 748.75-748.00 Dec 742.00-741.50	White Sugar (FOB)
Oct 749.75-749.50 Volume: 69,705	Reuters
	Aug 513.80-512.90
	May 511.20-510.30
	Oct 512.20-507.20
	Dec 520.60-519.70 Dec 538.00-500.00
	Nov 516.50-515.50 Volume: 84,720
	Mar 516.50-515.50



Amazon strikes Hammer blow

Amazon has acquired Britain's Bray Film Studios, home of the famous Hammer horror movies that retain a cult following, as the American company looks to expand its filming and production business in Britain (Emma Taggart writes). Amazon's Prime Video division said it

had bought the film studios in Water Oakley, Berkshire, for an undisclosed sum. Bray Film Studios had worked with Amazon Prime Video previously for the production of the latter's second season of *The Lord Of The Rings: The Rings Of Power*. It is still best known as the place where gothic horror and fantasy films were made from the mid-1950s to the 1970s. Christopher Lee was a regular performer in titles produced there, including *Dracula*, *The Curse of Frankenstein*

and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Amazon's first production to take place at Bray Film Studios after the deal will be the second season of *Citadel*. The Russo brothers' spy series stars Richard Madden and Priyanka Chopra Jonas. Bray Film Studios was founded in 1951 after Hammer Films, a British production company, bought an 18th-century Berkshire country house named Down Place. Today the studios consist of five sound stages, workshops and office space.

The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
Ocado New orders from American grocer Kroger	12.2%
Rentokil Initial Tipped as takeover target	7.8%
Hammerson Sells stake in Value Retail	3.3%
Travis Perkins Positive analyst's note	1.9%
Entain Appoints new chief executive	1.8%
Mony Growth in insurance division slows	-0.3%
Dow Jones Extends run of losses	-0.8%
Whitbread Concerns about decline in consumer spending on travel	-0.8%
Hochschild Mining Investors track fall in gold prices	-3.5%
Wizz Air Negative sector read-across	-10.0%

Travis Perkins piles on the weight thanks to upgrade

Emma Taggart Market report

Momentum was building behind Travis Perkins at the start of the week after the FTSE 250 company received a boost from JP Morgan, which double-upgraded its rating to "overweight". The bank thinks that the builders' merchant will benefit from an increase in construction as the new government seeks to boost housing construction. Its analysts also believe that Travis Perkins will be helped by the strategic exit of its loss-making French Toolstation business and a review of its operations in the Benelux region. The broker upgrade from "underweight" sent shares in Travis Perkins up 17p, or 1.9 per cent, to 936p.

Wall Street report

Technology stocks led indices higher after President Biden ended his re-election bid. The S&P 500 rose 59.41 points, or 1.1 per cent, to 5,564.41 and the Dow Jones industrial average was up 127.91 points, or 0.3 per cent, at 40,415.44.

or 0.5 per cent, to close up at 8,198.78. Rentokil Initial rose to the top of the leaderboard after The Sunday Times reported that Philip Jansen, the former BT Group boss, was considering a takeover bid for the pest control group. Its shares rose 34 1/2p, or 7.8 per cent, to 483p on the back of that takeover speculation. Shares in Entain rose 1 1/2p, or 1.8 per cent, to 656p after the gambling group behind Ladbrokes said that it had appointed Gavin Isaacs as its new chief executive. Burberry was on the rise, too, with the luxury British retailer adding 22 1/2p, or 3.2 per cent, to 719 1/2p as shareholders reassessed after it had issued a profit warning and installed a new chief executive last week. Analysts at Stifel said they thought a strategy shift from the retailer would mean "a stronger entry-level offer, but within a genuine luxury context". A profit warning and disappointing quarterly results from Ryanair weighed heavily on London's listed

TECHNOLOGY

CrowdStrike reels from outage

CrowdStrike shares continued to fall sharply yesterday as IT issues persisted around the world (Louisa Clarence-Smith writes). The American cybersecurity firm is reeling from a faulty update to its security software on Friday that crashed computers powered by Microsoft's Windows operating system. While the majority of faults were fixed over the weekend, some companies, including Delta Airlines, continued to feel the impact as the



Satya Nadella says Microsoft is working with CrowdStrike

new week got under way. Satya Nadella, Microsoft's chief executive, said his company was working with CrowdStrike to resolve the issue. Shares in CrowdStrike closed down by another

\$41.05, or 13.5 per cent, at \$263.91 in New York last night. Over the past four days the company has lost more than 30 per cent of its stock market value. Financial analysts downgraded the stock amid concerns about the impact of the crisis on the company. At least six brokers cut their price targets on CrowdStrike. "The globally disruptive nature of this event will likely have an impact on CrowdStrike's financial and operational performance," JP Morgan analysts said.

airlines. In a negative sector read-across that traversed the Irish Sea, easyJet stumbled by 32 1/2p, or 7.1 per cent, to 426 1/4p, while International Consolidated Airlines Group fell 5 1/2p, or 3.4 per cent, to 164 1/4p. Wizz Air gave up 226p, or 10 per cent, to £20.30. Hotels came under pressure, too, as Ryanair's woes led to concerns about a decline in consumer spending on travel and tourism. Shares in Whitbread, the owner of Premier Inn, fell 4 1/2p, or 1.4 per cent, to £28.56. The oil majors were little-moved as oil prices fell to their lowest level in a month, with Brent crude, the international benchmark, down 72 cents at \$82.40 a barrel. Shell dipped (if you can all it that) 1/2p, or 0.02 per cent, to £27.93 while BP rose (if you can call it that) 1/2p, or 0.1 per cent, to 457 1/2p. The more UK-focused FTSE 250 added 71 points, or 0.3 per cent, to end the day at 21,138.68. Ocado was the biggest riser on the mid-cap index after the online grocer announced

that Kroger, its American partner, had bought its new technology solutions for use in its customer fulfilment centres. Shares in Ocado added 46p, or 12.2 per cent, to close up at 424p. On Aim, Tristel, a maker of disinfectants, rose 40p, or 8.9 per cent, to 490p after the Cambridge-based company said it expected its annual profits to beat forecasts. Strong half-year results at Brave Bison sent shares in the digital marketing company up 1/2p, or 16.5 per cent, to 2 1/2p. It reported adjusted pre-tax profits of £1.8 million for the six months to the end of June, up 20 per cent from the same period last year. There was good news, too, for SpaceandPeople, a retail promotions and brand marketing specialist, which advanced 7 1/2p, or 9.1 per cent, to 90p after it said that Network Rail and Southeastern Trains had chosen it for a five-year contract to provide exhibitions, events, promotions and sampling at their managed stations.

London Grain Futures				
LIFFE Wheat (close £/t)				
Nov	196.45	Jan	unq	Mar
May	205.10	Jul	unq	Volume: 791
London Metal Exchange				
(Official)				
Cash	3mth	Dec 22		
Copper Gde A (\$/tonne)				
9127.0-9127.5	9250.0-9251.0	9570.0-9580.0		
Lead (\$/tonne)				
2050.0-2050.5	2095.0-2097.0	2193.0-2198.0		
Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$/tonne)				
2659.5-2660.5	2725.0-2726.0	2782.0-2787.0		
Alum Hi Gde (\$/tonne)				
2258.5-2259.0	2316.0-2316.5	2475.0-2480.0		
Nickel (\$/tonne)				
15845.0-15850.0	16120.0-16130.0	17265.0-17315.0		
Tin (\$/tonne)				
30100.0-30200.0	30325.0-30375.0	30160.0-30210.0		

Gold/Precious metals

(US dollars per ounce)

Because of a technical issue, the gold fix prices are from Friday.

Bullion: Open \$2411.37

Close \$2388.61-2388.93 High \$2411.64

Low \$2384.43

AM \$2415.80 PM \$2403.50

Platinum \$ (£)

Silver \$29.04 (£22.48)

Palladium \$ (£)

European money deposits %

Currency	1mth	3mth	6mth	12mth
Dollar	0.13	0.20	0.29	0.55
Sterling	4.20	5.30	4.74	0.81
Euro	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.50

Money rates %

Base Rates Clearing Banks 5.25 ECB Refi 4.25 US Fed Fund 5.25-5.50

Halifax Mortgage Rate (SVR) 8.74

Sterling spot and forward rates

Mkt Rates for	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Copenhagen	8.8468-8.8676	8.8531-8.8546	149ds	424ds
Euro	1.1886-1.1861	1.1866-1.1865	11pr	32pr
Montreal	1.7720-1.7790	1.7758-1.7760	11ds	33ds
New York	1.2906-1.2940	1.2913-1.2915	3pr	7pr
Oslo	14.053-14.208	14.169-14.176	81ds	214ds
Stockholm	13.770-13.859	13.854-13.857	229ds	669ds
Tokyo	201.91-203.60	202.83-202.84	99ds	265ds
Zurich	1.1458-1.1493	1.1492-1.1494	44ds	118ds

Premium = pr Discount = ds

Dollar rates

Australia	1.5066-1.5067
Canada	1.3752-1.3753
Denmark	6.8560-6.8567
Euro	0.9188-0.9189
Hong Kong	7.8076-7.8071
Japan	157.03-157.08
Malaysia	4.6848-4.6898
Norway	10.973-10.978
Singapore	1.3457-1.3467
Sweden	10.728-10.731
Switzerland	0.8897-0.8901

Other Sterling

Argentina peso	1195.8-1195.8
Australia dollar	1.9455-1.9457
Bahrain dinar	0.4833-0.4904
Brazil real	7.1564-7.1603
Euro	1.1865-1.1866
Hong Kong dollar	10.081-10.082
India rupee	108.04-108.05
Indonesia rupiah	2090-20948
Kuwait dinar KD	0.3937-0.3961
Malaysia ringgit	6.0474-6.0539
New Zealand dollar	2.1610-2.1615
Singapore dollar	1.7383-1.7388
S Africa rand	23.831-23.893
U A E dirham	4.7429-4.7431

Exchange rates

	Bid	Change
Australia \$	1.945	+0.02
Canada \$	1.777	
Denmark Kr	6.852	
Euro	1.186	
Hong Kong \$	10.082	-0.01
Hungary	461.940	-1.41
Indonesia	20945.789	+33.88
Israel Shk	4.688	-0.02
Japan Yen	202.594	-0.63
New Zealand \$	2.160	+0.01
Norway Kr	14.178	+0.12
Poland	5.079	
Russia	113.575	-0.06
S Africa Rd	23.643	+0.03
Sweden Kr	13.851	+0.07
Switzerland Fr	1.149	
Turkey Lira	42.502	-0.20
USA \$	1.291	

Rates supplied by Morningstar

Business Equity prices

Dividend yields Please note dividend yields are supplied by Morningstar. The yield is the sum of a company's trailing 12-month dividend payments divided by the last day's closing share price.

12-month high and low High/Low prices for UK equities are based on closing prices. Investment trust high and low prices are based on intra-day figures.

Automobiles & parts

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
395%	132%	Aston Martin Lag	152½	+ 5%	-	-4.1

Banking & finance

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
236%	136%	Abrdn	167½	+ 8%	-	7.7
7%	3%	Acuity RM	3½	-	-	-0.4
2837	2058	Admiral	2629	+ 63	2.8	23.7
19	10%	ADIFV	13	-	-	-3.2
425%	249	AJ Bell	425½	- 1%	2.6	21.6
2646%	2152%	Aon Corp	23182½	+ 247%	-	22.9
1105	877%	Arbutnot Big	1002½	- 7%	4.6	4.5
7%	4	Argo Group	4	-	-	-0.1
232%	166%	Ashmore	166½	- 3%	9.9	11.4
1559%	1248%	Aus New Z	1516½	- 11%	-	13.0
497	369%	Aviva	490½	+ 8%	6.3	13.1
414	289	Banco Santander	378½	+ 14	4.1	6.6
5420	3065	Bank of Georgia	4350	+ 40	5.3	4.9
230%	129%	Bardays	230½	+ 2%	3.5	8.9
½	-	Blue Star Capital	½	-	-	-0.1
527%	350	BP MarshPins	527½	- 5	2.0	14.5
14%	4%	Breavehart Inv	4%	-	-	1.7
-	-	Brevin Dolphin	515	+ 1	-	28.1
289%	166%	Bridgepoint	269%	- 5%	3.2	29.9
37	26%	Colas Sec	29	-	-	5.9
286	244%	Chinara	252	- 1	9.4	20.5
-	-	City of Lon Gp	10	+ 1	-	-0.6
424	301	City Lon Inv Gp	376	- 6	8.6	13.0
976%	299%	Close Bros	55	- 13%	8.5	5.4
339%	89%	CMC Markets	311	- 3	2.6	8.0
1323%	767%	CommerzBk	1313½	+ 29	2.2	8.5
1401%	799	Deutsche Bk	1303½	+ 38%	3.0	5.3

Investment trusts

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
225%	147	Direct Line Ins	188½	+ ½	2.1	11.9
66%	38%	EFG-Hermes Hldg	66½	+ 4%	7.6	7.6
187	145	EPE Special Opps	169	-	-	-
1156%	929%	FBD1	1117½	-	-	6.7
87%	46%	Fiske	75	-	0.3	15.0
61%	42%	Frenkel Topping	44	-	2.3	33.8
1374	837	Georgia Capital	1086	+ 2	2.4	2.4
1120	105%	Gresham House	1100	- 20	-	30.5
490	355	GST Group	408	+ 2	4.1	8.4
51%	39%	Hansard Global	47%	-	9.3	9.9
1153	69%	Hargreaves Lansdown	1153	+ 8%	3.7	19.9
186	115	Helios Under	177½	-	3.3	8.5
720%	575%	HSBC	667½	+ 7%	7.3	7.2
861%	611	IG Group	861½	+ 10%	5.3	11.7
590	388%	Imper	412	+ 7%	6.8	13.2
2394	1255%	Interned Capital	2138	+ 48	3.7	27.6
135	100%	IPF	135	+ 4	7.8	6.6
139%	115%	International Public Pship	129½	+ ½	8.6	6.4
605%	439	Investec	587	+ 7%	5.6	7.9
35%	28%	Investment Co	355	-	4.1	4.1
61%	41%	IP Group	41%	+ ½	1.2	-2.5
152%	46%	Jarvis Securities	62	- 1	8.7	6.9
115	73%	Jupiter Fund Mgmt	85	+ ½	8.1	-
112%	68%	Just Group	112	+ ½	1.8	10.0
689	540%	Lancashire Holdings	609	- 5	2.5	5.0
256%	205%	Legal & Gen	229½	+ 2%	8.9	31.5
61%	5%	Liberty Group	502½	- 2%	-	16.2
85%	52%	Livemore Invest	671	+ 14	10.9	8.3
38%	27	Livemore Inv	37	- ½	-	-
59%	39%	Lloyds Banking Group	58½	- ½	4.6	8.4

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
24%	15%	LMS Capital	18½	- ½	-	-3.9
9674	8038	Long Std Ex Gp	9436	+ 14	1.2	68.3
238%	183%	M&G	206½	+ 2%	9.6	16.6
277%	202	Man	256½	+ 4%	5.1	16.8
26	15	Manx Fin	19	-	2.4	5.4
2%	1	Marechale Cap	1%	-	-	-4.0
798	490	Mettlall Woods	796	- 1	3.3	41.4
-	-	Metal Tiger	9	+ ½	-	-2.0
1139%	28%	Metro Bank	38½	+ ½	2.8	2.8
1959%	1430%	Nat Aust Bk	1898½	- 16%	-	16.6
338%	176%	NatWest	338½	+ 3	5.0	7.2
343	332%	Numis	343	-	-	-
491%	280%	Oneasavings Bank	491½	+ 7%	6.6	7.5
665	447%	PayPoint	665	+ 3	2.8	15.6
-	-	PCF Group	½	+ ½	-	-0.4
560%	441%	Phoenix	530	+ 3%	9.0	-
1101	687%	Prudential	701	- ½	2.3	14.4
3	¾	Quantum Blockchain	¾	-	-	-2.3
123%	71%	Quilter	123½	+ ½	4.2	39.7
60%	-	Randall & Quilter	-	-	-	-
1950	1458	Rathbone Grp	1754	- 2	4.9	34.5
½	½	Riverport Global Opps	½	-	1.6	-1.8
274%	162%	Rockwood Strategic	272½	+ 1%	7.0	7.0
2450	1800	S & U	1900	-	9.4	9.0
½	½	Sancus Lending Grp	½	-	-	-0.1
47%	39%	Schroder REIT	47	+ ½	7.3	7.3
464%	347%	Schroders	388	- 2%	5.5	16.0
1183	40%	St James Place	572	+ 9	4.2	-
785%	573%	Stand Chart	730½	+ 5%	2.9	8.2
12	4%	Starvest	11½	+ ½	-	-1.9

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
1264	910	Big Yellow Group	1180	- 24	3.7	11.6
592	290	Billington Hldgs	510	-	3.9	6.4
235	170	Boat (Henry)	226	-	3.2	11.7
418	304%	BREEDON	413½	+ ½	3.2	13.3
444%	291%	Br Land	404½	+ 1%	5.6	-3.5
160	90	Caledonian Tst	135	+ 5	-	-
67%	49%	Cap & Regnl	67½	+ 2%	8.7	35.6
2450	2300	Cardiff Prop	2300	-	0.9	20.2
1%	1%	Carecapita	1%	-	-	-0.2
163%	118%	Clarke T	159	-	-	11.5
-	-	Countryside Partner	229½	+ 14	-	16.7
19%	11%	Craven House	15%	-	-	-0.1
2402	1779	Dorling London	2230	- 14	3.5	-5.2
4%	4	Dolphin Capital	4%	+ ½	-	-5.1
23%	15%	First Prop	18%	-	-	-
47%	33	Fletcher King	46	-	1.6	21.1
71	34%	Foxtons Group	67	+ 1	1.3	39.4
307	193%	Galliford Try	307	+ 1	3.7	22.1
495	261%	Genfit Group	488	+ 2	2.5	31.6
619	353	Gleeson (MJ)	573	- 18	2.2	16.6
1035	751	Grafton	1022½	+ 2%	3.5	11.8
274%	218%	Grainger	241	- 1%	2.8	68.8
36%	29%	Greent Portland	340	- 3	3.4	-3.3
30	20%	Hammerston	30	+ ½	5.1	-
175	95%	Harworth Gp	171	- 3	0.8	14.8
425%	275	Health (Samuel)	290	-	3.8	8.6
279%	185	Helical PLC	231	- 5	2.0	-1.6
880	587%	Highcroft Inv	587½	- 12%	-	-2.5
196%	120%	Hobstock	185½	- ½	3.7	34.9
225	178	James Halstead	186	-	4.4	17.3

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
946%	679%	Segro	922½	+ 14%	3.0	-
38	23%	SIG	26½	-	-	-4.9
70%	45	SigmaRoof	69½	+ ½	3.6	5.5
101%	78%	Sirius Real Estate	94%	-	5.5	12.8
168%	117%	Smart Q	125	-	2.5	-
30%	15	Stepper Cement	15	-	-	5.3
157	104%	Taylor Wimpey	155½	- ½	6.1	15.7
160	110	Town Centre	140½	- 1	3.4	5.5
936	682%	Travis Perkins	936	+ 17	1.9	52.5
170%	130%	Tritax Big Box Reit	162½	+ ½	4.3	4.7
68%	44	Tritax Eurobox	67	-	-	-
396%	236	Tysan	387½	+ 4	3.5	19.8
1057	851	Unite	922½	- 4%	3.7	37.9
1336	682	Vistry Group	1313	- 7	20.6	-
92	69%	Warehouse REIT	85½	- ½	-	-1.1
645	458	Workspace Grp	601	- 16	4.5	-5.1
730	625	Wymstap Prop	690	-	3.7	15.9

Consumer goods

12 month High	Low	Company	Price (p)	Yld (%)	Div (%)	P/E
1%	½	Agriterra	½	-	-	-0.1
34%	22	Airea	29	-	1.9	14.5
766	628	Anglo-Eastern	628	- 4	3.7	6.2
246	168%	Animakera	245	+ 1	2.0	-
2738	1929%	AAF Foods	2480	- 26	2.1	16.5
156	81	Bakkrav Group	152	- 2	4.7	16.0
630	471%	Barr (AG)	611	- 8	2.4	17.8
½	½	BiStack Group	½	-	-	-0.3
34%	20%	Breit Architects	29	-	-	-1.4
2735	2267	Brit Amer Tob	2589	+ 24	9.0	-4.0
1265	785%	Britvic	1265	-	2.5	24.8
2257	704%	Burberry	719½	+ 22%	8.7	9.7
176%	130	C&C Grp	157	+ 1%	3.2	-9.3
5%	1	Capital Metals	1%	-	-	-0.8
149%	93%	Carr's Grp	144½	+ 2%	4.4	-
340	238	Character Grp	312	+ 9	6.2	11.1
1470	1000	Churchill China	1170	-	3.0	16.6
2004	2065	Coca Cola HBC	2794	+ 38	2.0	16.6
895	655	Colefax	855	- 5	0.6	9.9
4615	3170	Cranwick	4650	+ 30	2.0	19.2
-	-	Devro	329	-	-	17.8
3457	2463%	Diageo	2505	+ 14%	3.2	17.0
½	½	Distil	½	-	-	-6.6
894	670	Evans (PLP)	870	+ 16	5.2	11.4
110	89	Finsbury Food	110	+ ½	-	13.1
11700	9125	Games Workshop	10250	+ 60	4.1	24.2
1614%	1138%	Glanbia	1529	-	1.9	15.1
181%	68%	Greencore	181½	+ 4%	17.2	-
243	133	Headlam	142½	+ 1%	7.1	14.8
942	637	Hilton Food	897	- 10	3.5	22.3
38%	14%	Hornby	26			

Equity prices Business

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Medilink, M4 Pharma, NIOX Group, Omega Diags, Ovoca Bio, Oxford Biomedica, Physionics, Proteome Sciences, Reckitt Benckiser, RUA Life Sciences, Sareum Hldgs, Smith & Neph, Spire Hcare, Synalgen, Tissue Regenex, Totaly, Tristel, ValiRo.

Industrials

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Accsys Tech, BASF, Bayer DM50, Biome Tech, Bytrol, Camb Glb Timber, Coats Grp, Croda, Copper (James), Elements, HardiCo, Johnson Math, Mond, Robinson, DS Smith, Swire Pacific, Symp Environ, Synthomer, Takeda Pharm, Velocis, Vitrex, Wynstay Group, ZoteFoams.

Leisure

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes 888 Hldgs, Access Tech, Best of the Best, Carnival, Celtic, Comins's Pizza, Entain, Flutter Ent, Gaming Realms, Heavtree, Hermes Pacific, InterContinental Hotels, Minoan Gp, Mitch & Butlers, On The Beach, Rank Grp, Restaurant Gp, Rotab, Sportech, SSP, Tasty, Tintrol, Tui, Webis Holdings, Wetherspoon JD, Whitbread, Young & Co, Young & Co - N/V.

Media

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Aeora Comms, Altitude Group, Arcontech Grp, Ascential, Auto Trader, Bloomsbury Pub.

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Bonhill Group, Catalyst Med, Calceas, DCD Media, Elbiquity, Future, GlobalData, Hyve Grp, IG Design Grp, Informa, ITV, Jaywing, Live Company Grp, ME Group, Mediatest, Merit Grp, Mirado, Mission Group, Moneysupermarket, News Corp A, News Corp B, Next 15 Group, Pearson, Primorus Inv, Quarto, Reach, REACT Grp, Relx, Rightmove, SpaceandPeople, STV Group, System1 Group, 21st Cent Fox Inc A, 21st Cent Fox Inc B, Vela Tech, Wilmington, WPP, Zinc Media.

Natural resources

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes ADM Energy, Advance Energy, AFC Energy, Afentra PLC, Alba Mineral Res, Allen Metals, Alumina, AmineX, Amur Mins Corp, Anglo Amer Plat, Anglo American, Anglo Asian Mng, Antofagasta, Arc Minerals, Ariana Res, Armadale Cap, Asiamet Rsrc, Atalaya Mine, Baron Oil, Beowulf Mining, Bezzant Res, BHP Group, Border & Shm Pet, Bougainville, Bowleven, BP, Cadence Min, Cadogan Petrol, Caledonia Mining, Caspian Sunrise, Centamin, Cent Asia Metals, Chaarat Gold, Chariot Oil & Gas, China Nonfer Gold, Clontarf Energy, Conder Gld, Corros.

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes DRD Gold, ECR Minerals, Empyrean Energy, Endeavour, EnQuest, Eurasia Mining, Ferropo, Fresnillo, G3 Exploration, Galantas Gold, GCM Resources, Getem, Glencore, Global Petrol, Goldfield, Goldstone Res, GreatH Gold, Griffin Mining, Gulf Keystone, Harland & Wolff, Hochschule, Horizonte Min, Hunting PLC, Independent Res, Indus Gas, Ionville, ITM Power, Jubilee Metals, Karel Diam Res, KEFI Gold and Copper, Kenmare Res, Lamprell, Landore Res, Lansdowne O&G, Leeds Group, Lexington Gold, MC Mining, Metals Explor, Nostra Terra, Nostrum O&G, Oil Search, Oilex, Oriole Resources, Ormound Mining, Orasur Mining, Pan African Res, Pantheon Res, Parkmead Grp, Pathfinder Min, Petra Diamonds, Petrol Resources, Petro Matai, Petrofac, Petronet Res, Phoenix Global, Plexus Holdings, Polymetal Intl, Pourvair, Prospex Energy, Praton Motor Power SA, Providence Res, Quadric, Rambler Metals, Reabold Resources, Red Rock Res, Rio Tinto Ltd, Rio Tinto, San Len Energy, Sarcoco Energy, Serabi Gold, Serica Energy, Shanta Gold, Shell, Shuka Minerals.

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Soud Energy, Star Energy, Sunrise Resources, Tertiary Minerals, Thor Mining, Total Eng SE, Tower Resources, Tullow Oil, UK Oil & Gas, URU Metals, Vest Res, Victoria O&G, W Resources, Westmount Eng, Wood Grp (J), Woodbio, Xtract Resources, Zephyr Energy.

Professional & support services

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Alprint Grp, Andrews Sykes, Ashtead, Asimilr Group, AsselCo, Avisen, Begbies Traynor, Blanco Tech, Bunzl, Capita, CEP, Christie Group, Compass, Cromas Security, DCC, De La Rue, Diploma, Discoverie, Driver Group, Essentra, Experian, Ferguson, FHH Group, Hargreaves Serv, Impellam Grp, Ince G, Intertek, IWG, Johnson Srvc, Journeco, Kier Gp, Latham (J), Lathams, Loko's Store, Lon Secor, LSL Prop Services, Macfarlane, Maintal Hldgs, Malvern Intl, Mears Group, Mittle Gp, MobilityOne, Newmark Sec, Norm Broadbent, Northern Bear, NWF Grp, PageGroup, PCH-PAL, Petards, PHSC, PHS House Egg, Record, Renew Hldgs, RenewW, Rentokil, Restore, Ricardo, Robert Walters, Reebok Food Grp.

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes RPS Group, RS Group, RTC Group, RWD Hldgs, Science Group, Serco, Smiths News, Smurfit Kappa, Software Circle, Staffline Gp, Threos, Synthetics, Thruvision Group, Triba, Vianco, Westminster, ZIGUP plc.

Real estate

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Shaftesbury Cap, B&M European, Crown (N), Gard Cardy, CVS Group, DFS Fun, Dunelm, Frasers Group, Greggs, Halfords, Howden Joinery, Indupac, IQ-AL, JD Sports, Kingsfisher, Marks & Spencer, Mothercare, Naked Wines, Next, Oxo, Pendragon, Pets at Home, Saga, Sainsbury's, WH Smith, Sosandar, Studio Retail, Tesco, Topps Tiles.

Retailing

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes A0 World, B&M European, Crown (N), Gard Cardy, CVS Group, DFS Fun, Dunelm, Frasers Group, Greggs, Halfords, Howden Joinery, Indupac, IQ-AL, JD Sports, Kingsfisher, Marks & Spencer, Mothercare, Naked Wines, Next, Oxo, Pendragon, Pets at Home, Saga, Sainsbury's, WH Smith, Sosandar, Studio Retail, Tesco, Topps Tiles.

Technology

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Aferian plc, Alfa Financial, Allied Minds, Aptitude Software, Bangor, BATH Adv Coms, Berkeley Res, Blackbird, Celebris Tech, CloudCo Group, Coreco, Craneware, Crimsan Tide, CynCan Hldgs, Dillstone Group, EQTEC, FDM Group, Filtron, First Derivats, G8 Group, GreshamTech, Hika, Ingotec, Intercede, Iomart, IQE, K3 Business Tech, LG Electronics.

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Location Sciences, MTI Wireless, Nanoco Go, Netcal, Northamber, Online Blockchain, Oxford Metrics, Parity, Pennant Intl, Haytech, Pulsar Group, QinetiQ, RM, Sage, Seeing Machines, Shearwater Grp, SmartSpace Swarc, Softcat, Spirit Comms, SRT Marine, Tele. Ericsson, Touchstar, Tracsis, Trakmo, Triad Grp, Wandisco, Water Intel, Xaar, Yougene, Zoo Digital.

Telecoms

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes ADEPT Technology, Airtel Africa, BT Group, Currys plc, Gamma Comms, Helios Towers, Just Eat Taway, Mobile Streams, Mobile Tornado, Telecom Plus, Vodafone.

Transport

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Braemar Ship, EasyJet, Esken Limited, FirstGroup, Fisher (James), International Airlines, IDS, Irish Cont Us, Jet2, Mobicio Group, Ocean Wilson, Sutton Harbour, Wincanton.

Utilities

Table with 6 columns: 12 month High/Low, Company, Price (p), % change, Yld%, P/E. Includes Centrica, ContourGlobal, Drax Group, Jersey Electricity, National Grid, OPG Power, Pennon, Rurelec, Severn Trent, SSE, United Utilities.

▲ AIM company; # Price at suspension; % Ex divd; % Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue; % Ex all; % Ex capital distribution; % figures or report awaited; ... No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index. Investment Cos sector Nav Dse or Prrm supplied by Morningstar.

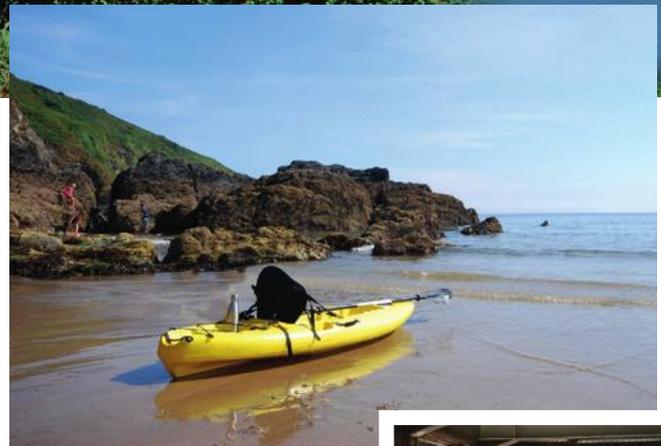
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All Blacks hooker who took up charity work
Norm Hewitt
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Register

Obituaries

Sir Kenneth Grange

British industrial designer who influenced the way millions lived with creations such as the InterCity 125 and the Kodak Instamatic

"I've designed my own coffin," Sir Kenneth Grange said. "It fits me like a glove and the lid is behind it—it's just a matter of taking the bookshelves out, screwing the lid on and away we go. I imagine it will stand in the room where we'll have a wake, with a photo of me in it."

Grange's down-to-earth approach to design influenced the way millions of people lived in the second half of the last century. He was credited with the classic teardrop-shaped parking meters, Kenwood kettles and food mixers, Wilkinson Sword razors, Kodak Instamatic cameras, Parker pens, Imperial typewriters, Morphy Richards irons, Ronson cigarette lighters, Bendix washing machines, bus shelters, black taxis, Royal Mail postboxes and an ice cream scoop.

The start of his career coincided with the 1951 Festival of Britain and the emergence of mass-produced televisions, washing machines, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners, all needing sleek design to make them as attractive as possible. Grange's approach reflected a less deferential, more practical and user-friendly culture. He rejected Britain's traditional "we have always done it this way" attitude in favour of challenging design to justify itself in terms of convenience, utility and efficiency. Tall, lean, angular, with an accent reminiscent of the actors Jim Broadbent and Michael Caine, he said: "I always felt that a designer was only as good as the team he had the fortune to join and that team is a three-cornered affair: the maker, the designer and the user. The whole of my working life has been an education at the elbow of engineers."

His first major job came in 1958 when the Council of Industrial Design (now the Design Council) asked him to take a fresh look at the UK's planned parking meters because it disliked the original 1935 American version. He worked on a replacement "to my first wife's distress, on our honeymoon". He also designed the teardrop's electronic version in 1982.

Grange optimistically said he could refashion the Kenwood Chef food mixer in three days. When he realised he did not have enough time, he knocked up a model of half the mixer and held a mirror next to it. "I think Kenneth Wood said yes to the design as much as anything because of the ingenuity of my way of selling it to him," he said. "We clicked personally and I did everything for Kenwood for the next 35 years."

Some of his biggest jobs came from his dissatisfaction with a design. He was assembling the Kodak stand for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair when he openly disparaged the longstanding but out of date Box Brownie camera. The next day Kodak's development head phoned to say: "I hear you are going to design a camera for us." The result was the Instamatic, which chimed with the 1960s mood and sold 25 million models around the world.

In 1968, when British Rail asked Grange to enliven the colour scheme for a new high-speed train, he believed he could also produce a more streamlined design for the power car. He said: "We made models night after night, take them down to Imperial College London and pay a bloke a few quid



Grange in 2019. He came up with a more dynamic colour scheme for high-speed trains, refashioned the Kenwood Chef mixer and helped to design the Kodak Instamatic camera



to let us use the wind tunnel." That became the InterCity 125 and was Grange's proudest achievement. "If I'm standing on a platform and in comes my train, I puff up my chest and I feel pretty good," he said. "It started off with a paint job and ended up a major piece of my reputation."

Kenneth Henry Grange was born in east London in 1929, the son of Harry Grange, a policeman, and Hilda Grange (née Long), a machinist. Although Kenneth won a scholarship to a fee-paying school in the City, his parents were three-piece suite and flowered wallpaper people. "My mother would know how many daffodils there were on the wall," he said.

"Because she loved the wallpaper with a real enthusiasm. It was homely, highly personalised emotional romanticism." Her proudest possession was a huge steel spring, a leaving present from the factory where she worked during the Second World War and she gave it pride of place by the fireplace.

"I fondly like to think something in the genes or her temperament must have rubbed off on me," said Grange. "You didn't eat terribly well, but you didn't eat badly, and life was pretty good for a kid. I was of an age where repair was commonplace and you'd never think of not repairing something, be it your bicycle or your trousers. Whatever it was, it was repairable and that makes a big difference to a person's outlook. Inevitably, as a small boy I must have started to learn how things were made, as I was in the process of repairing them. Understanding how things are made has been a preoccupation of mine ever since."

At the outbreak of war, Harry was moved across London to Wembley, to be a bomb disposal officer, and the family followed. Kenneth was moved from a school offering a classical education to one where "making and creativity" were prioritised. "And I owe a lot to that happy accident," he said.

One day he stood on a bridge over the North Circular road and in the distance saw a V2 rocket land. "Pieces of railway

engine went up into the sky, wheels and axles," he said. "Then I heard the explosion. I didn't feel scared, because it was so far away."

At school, aged 14 and against his modest character, he raised his hand when the teacher asked if anybody wanted to try for a scholarship to Willersden School of Art. He succeeded and for the first two years divided his time between regular lessons and art. Then he had to choose between fine and commercial art. "I chose commercial art because I needed the money," he said.

Grange did National Service with the Royal Engineers as a technical illustrator, which led to a series of jobs assisting architects. "All my taste, all my ideology, came from them," he said. "It was the place where I grew up. My basic canvas was a lot to do with architecture and I followed the modernist movement like day follows night."

He trained as an architect and, although he never qualified, it gave him a vital grounding in design. He learnt about the purpose of buildings, the sort of buildings that best serve today's lifestyles and the most suitable design for the objects used in them.

After the war the government set up the Council of Industrial Design to help them. Grange was inspired by Gordon Bowyer, a Festival of Britain architect. He babysat for him at his Georgian house in Greenwich, populated by Reg

Butler sculptures and English modernist painters. "It was a simple, modern interior inside an old fabric," Grange said. "That, I think, is a really elegant, warming mixture."

In 1958, while freelancing for Jack Howe and Partners, he was given a long-term commission by the Atomic Energy Authority that he offered to share with Howe. Instead, Howe encouraged him to set up Kenneth Grange Design and handle it all himself.

He joined four other designers in 1972 to form Pentagram Partners, which grew into the world's largest independent design consultancy. In his 25 years there he designed bus shelters, London taxis, rural post boxes and the Wilkinson Protector razor. He believed the secret of his success was to work 80 hours a week. "At that rate you don't have to be very good to overtake the competition," he said.

Grange blamed his addiction to work on the failure of his first marriage after only six years or so. "I was a selfish beast and we just drifted apart," he said. He married Apryl (née Swift) in 1984, and she too had to compete with his career for his attention. "It's a bugger living with a designer," he said. "We keep sticking our noses in. She can't buy a tea towel without me having an opinion." Apryl survives him. He had no children.

Also in 1984 Grange was appointed

At college Grange chose commercial art because he needed the money

CBE for his work at Pentagram, and in 2013 he was knighted for services to design. He won ten Design Council awards, the Duke of Edinburgh's prize for elegant design and the Prince Philip designers prize for lifetime achievement. He also won the Gold Medal of the Chartered Society of Designers and was a member of the Royal Society of Arts Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry.

In 2022, Grange featured in the BBC Two series *Secrets of the Museum*. He co-wrote two books, *Living by Design* and *The Compendium*.

He was happiest in his workshop, which he called his temple. "Farting about is second nature to me," he said. "I can't help it." While tinkering he usually listened to *Englishman in New York* by Sting, Eric Clapton's *I Shot the Sheriff* and the aria *All Men Surrender to Love's Power* from *Eugene O'Neill*.

His *Desert Island Discs* luxury was a trombone. "I played the trombone in the Salvation Army boys' band, and I'd like to get back to that."

The object he would have most liked to own was an Aston Martin car. "They're as good a piece of motor styling as you can get," he said. "A piece of sculpture, really."

Sir Kenneth Grange, industrial designer, was born on July 17, 1929. He died on July 21, 2024, aged 95



Ronnie Faux

Veteran Times journalist whose beats ranged from Scottish politics to 'extreme leisure activities', notably three climbs of Everest

Ronnie Faux was working as the Scottish correspondent of *The Times* in 1976 when he received an unexpected letter from a British Army officer asking if he would be interested in writing about the preparation and training for an attempt to climb Everest via its notoriously difficult south face.

The opportunity to escape from "writing about Scottish politics and North Sea oil" was enticing. A 1969 profile in the *Times* house magazine had noted that their reporter's "natural habitat is clinging to a rope on inaccessible mountain tops" and he had no hesitation in accepting, providing he could talk his news editor into releasing him from his regular duties.

Permission was duly granted and he spent a fortnight with the army expedition training in the Lake District as they prepared for the far greater challenge of the Himalayas. His commitment and fitness must have impressed, for once the training had ended Lieutenant Colonel Harry Streater, the leader of the expedition, asked Faux if he would like to accompany them to Nepal.

The paper once more agreed, not least because *The Times* had played a proud part in the conquering of Everest when its reporter Jan (then known as James) Morris (obituary, November 20, 2020) had been a member of Sir Edmund Hillary's 1953 expedition.

The only journalist to accompany the expedition, Morris's exclusive report of the first successful ascent was announced in *The Times* on the day of Elizabeth II's coronation.

If the mission Faux joined was not quite as pioneering, it was in its way filled with even more drama. As Faux reported in *The Times*, two SAS men, Brummie Stokes (obituary, January 18, 2016) and Bronco Lane (obituary, March 28, 2024), were selected as the summiteers while the rest of the expedition made camp at about 20,000ft on the Western Cwm, reached by climbing through the dangerous Khumbu icefall.

Faux was content enough with that. "I'd done a lot of climbing ... simply enjoying the mountains," he remembered. "It was as high as I wanted to go and I had no ambition to go any higher."

That was perhaps just as well for, although Stokes and Lane made the sum-

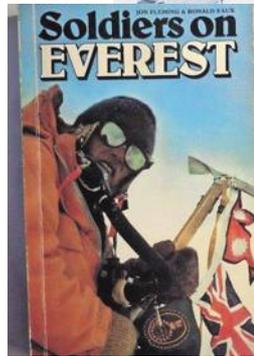
mit, on the way down they got stuck at 28,000ft by white-out conditions. With their oxygen supplies running perilously low and the temperature at minus 20C, they were forced to dig a hollow in the snow where they spent the night hitting each other at regular intervals to keep themselves awake, aware that to have fallen asleep would undoubtedly have proved fatal. The next morning, two soldiers from the Parachute Regiment were sent out on a search party. They had expected to find their colleagues dead but somehow they had survived as only the second and third climbers in the history of mountaineering ever to spend a night in the open at that height and live to tell the tale. However, both men lost their toes and Lane some of his fingers to

An RAF man said a clean death may be better than using the ejector seat

frostbite before they were flown off the mountain by helicopter.

Faux, who was 41 at the time, recounted these events in *The Times* in a series of detailed reports that he wrote by hand and then passed on to "a Nepalese messenger chap who put them in a forked stick and trotted off to Kathmandu where the army organised some sort of radio connection to London". He chronicled the full story in the book *Soldiers on Everest*, co-written with Jon Fleming, another of the soldiers on the climb.

He joined two further climbs of the world's highest mountain. He was with Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler in 1978 when they made the first ascent without oxygen masks and via a route deemed impossible. "A complete breakthrough, and of course it made big stories and big spreads in the paper," Faux recalled in a 2019 episode of the podcast *The Adventure Trail*. His final climb was in 1986 with a British team attempting the pinnacle via the northeast ridge.



Faux tackled the dangerous Cresta Run in St Moritz, Switzerland, and wrote a book on the 1976 Everest climb

However, mountaineering was not the only derring-do activity Faux covered for *The Times*. In 1981 when Harold Evans took over the editorship, Faux proposed the creation of a new post covering high-risk leisure pursuits and wrote his own job description, listing 14 subject areas he wanted to cover, including not only mountaineering but sailing, caving, deep sea diving and flying.

Faux proceeded to spend several years as the "extreme leisure corre-

spondent". There were sailing expeditions around the Pacific and the Caribbean and he learnt to fly a glider and a light aeroplane. He even got to train with the Red Arrows. He recalled an RAF instructor teaching him how to operate the ejector seat but telling him that a "clean death" in a crash might be a preferable way to meet his end.

Ronald Faux was born in 1935 in Burnley, Lancashire, the son of Florence and Horace Faux, a journalist. At

the age of five he was "dragged across the border" and grew up in Bingley, Yorkshire, where he attended the local grammar school. He got his first job in journalism as a junior reporter on the *Keighley News* but was then called up for National Service in the Royal Navy, where he celebrated his 21st birthday with the traditional custom of all his shipmates pouring their rum rations down his throat. He ended up in hospital having his stomach pumped.

The Admiralty put his shorthand skills to good use by employing him as a stenographer in court martial proceedings. On his discharge, his shorthand found more conventional use on the *Bradford Telegraph & Argus* and then *The Yorkshire Post*, while he honed his mountaineering skills on an Outward Bound course in Eskdale, Cumbria, under the instruction of Eric Sipton, a veteran of numerous early attempts to scale Everest.

After moving to the capital as the London correspondent of the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, he met his future wife Frances, who was working at the Festival Hall, in 1962. Their courtship included a trip to the Alps on a motorbike and climbing the Matterhorn. They married in 1966 and took their honeymoon skiing. She survives him along with their daughters Sarah, an ultrasonographer, and Catherine, who runs a soft furnishing business.

After joining *The Times* in 1964, he worked as a general reporter and then yachting correspondent, which led to him being sent to Mexico City to cover the 1968 Olympics. When he arrived there had been a bureaucratic mix-up over his accreditation but he found that "a Scotland Yard card padded with pesos" worked just as well as an official access-all-areas press pass.

He retired in 1994 after 30 years with *The Times*, many of them spent as the paper's Scottish and later its northern correspondent, but continued to write for the paper as a freelancer from his home in the Lake District, contributing obituaries of many of the famous mountaineers with whom he had climbed.

Ronald Faux, journalist and author, was born on November 8, 1935. He died after a fall on July 16, 2024, aged 88

Norm Hewitt

All Blacks hooker known for causing trouble on and off the pitch until he gave up alcohol and took up charity work

No New Zealand rugby player performed the haka, the traditional pre-match Maori war dance, with more exuberance than Norm Hewitt, a scrum-monger who did not go in for niceties on the pitch. This entertaining ritual was generally respected by the opposition but not, at Old Trafford in 1997, by Richard Cockerill, the England hooker who eyeballed and goaded him in the most provocative manner.

Hewitt, known as Stormin' Norman, had a troubled backstory. In the words of Michael Laws, his biographer, he was "a bully, a drug dealer and an All Black, who was to transform himself". He was the hooker in New Zealand's scrum, a thickest man with whom it was best not to take liberties. Yet Cockerill did just that. "I didn't realise how far you should stand away and who was leading the haka," Cockerill said. "I went up, stood straight in front of him and then I just thought, 'Jeez, he's a big boy, isn't he?' And it just got out of hand."

After the All Blacks' ritualistic foot-stomping, tongue protrusions, body slapping and chanting, the two firebrands pushed each other before the kick-off and, after the All Blacks had

won 25-8, their coach John Hart called Cockerill's behaviour "totally disrespectful of our culture". Hewitt reckoned that if he had had a patu, a Maori club, with him, things would have taken a turn. "It was a big game and we were going to war and he's my enemy, kill-or-be-killed scenario."

Not surprisingly, Hewitt's biography was titled *Gladiator* and he was lauded for his love of the physical side of the game. There was also some rugby, although Hewitt was to play for the All Blacks in only nine Tests, without scoring a try. A drunken attempt to break into a stranger's motel room in Queenstown in 1999, when he went crashing through the window, was the first indication to the outside world of a man with problems. "I was at a crossroads ... and had to make some key decisions. One was to stop drinking," he said.

Redemption followed. Hewitt

became religious and eschewed alcohol, advocating leadership building. He confronted a past that included four generations of family violence, the catalyst being a documentary he made with Manu Bennett, the actor who

Hewitt had assaulted when they were schoolboys at Te Aute College. "I was trapped in a prison," he said. "The nine-year-old boy who was beaten by his father." When he was 11, Hewitt said, he tried to cut his wrists in a lavatory. "My mother found me and she just hugged me. I was able to ask my father, 'I was nine when you beat me to the point that I thought I was going to die.' When my father said it didn't happen, my mother said it did. For the first time, I saw my father cry, the remorse for the beatings. For my own son and my mum to be present, for my father, a 75-year-old man, to hug me and to say sorry. I

became that nine-year-old boy again. I didn't realise how much I had yearned for that."

Norman Jason Hewitt was born in 1968 and grew up in Porangahau, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, the son of Russell and Mabel Hewitt, who as publicans ran the Wanstead Tavern. Of Maori descent, he was educated at the nearby Te Aute College and was to play rugby for Maori All Blacks, New Zealand A, Hurricanes, Hawke's Bay and Wellington. Although in the All Blacks squad from 1993 until 1999 and playing in the 1995 World Cup, his appearances were restricted by the presence of Sean Fitzpatrick, the captain and the best hooker in the world, among others.

He was later to find fame in another sphere before a very different audience. In 2005, he won *Dancing with the Stars*, a television programme, alongside a professional dancer in Carol-Ann Hickmore. This was the first season of the competition in New Zealand and he incorporated elements of the haka and gained the first perfect score of the series, donating his winnings to a literacy charity. He became involved in youth work, drug and alcohol prevention and

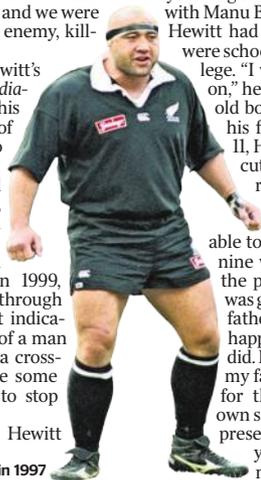
opened a free gym in his garage for anyone to either work out or hang out.

Hewitt is survived by his wife, Arlene Thomas, a former world aerobic champion, and his children, Elizabeth and Alexander. In the last year of his life he suffered from motor neurone disease, the same affliction that led to the deaths of his rugby contemporaries Jarrod Cunningham, Joost van der Westhuizen and Doddie Weir.

The change in perception of Hewitt was illustrated by the remarks of a government minister, Ruth Dyson, who had declared in 2000 that he was a poor role model, but in 2016 described him as "courage personified" in his work to prevent violence.

"I was a real arsehole at times and treated people with disrespect and arrogance," admitted Hewitt. "Sometimes I didn't care if we won or lost. I just wanted to hurt people on and off the field. I wasn't ready to heed the message before 1999."

Norm Hewitt, rugby player, was born on November 11, 1968. He died as a consequence of motor neurone disease on July 15, 2024, aged 55



Hewitt performing the haka in 1997

Lives remembered

Oliver Walston



Magnus Linklater writes: Your obituary of Oliver Walston (July 19) rightly described his energy and his enthusiasm.

He was also a consummate organiser. At Eton, he planned an illicit trip to Paris during a day holiday, when boys had to answer a roll call in the morning and afternoon. There were three of us, and Oliver arranged for three of our fellow pupils to answer for us, while we caught the bus to Heathrow. Timing was critical. He arranged for a friend to whisk us from Le Bourget airport to the centre of Paris by motorbike. There we sampled a glass of vin rouge and a baguette on the Champs Élysées, before

racing back for the return flight, and checking in at the end of the day — just in time.

Perhaps more important was the way he organised the extraordinary campaign to “send a tonne” of grain to east Africa, then in the grip of famine. He persuaded British farmers to donate part of their harvest (which they did), then shipped it to Ethiopia, travelling himself to ensure the grain went directly to starving villagers. He made a documentary about it and when it got to the bit where children were scrabbling in the dust for ears of corn, I turned round to see tears pouring down his face.

Tony Porter writes: Oliver Walston made land dismissed as useless for generations productive. That would be enough to earn him praise but he had other gifts. I got him to talk to the sixth-form students at the

school where I was teaching and his opening remarks were typically inouciant. “Last year was a bad year,” he said. “I had to sell my Porsche.” The next time I heard him speak was in Thriplow church where he struck precisely the right note at the funeral of his childhood nurse. A man for all seasons.

Dr Richard Taylor



Stephen Bridge writes:

I worked closely with Dr Richard Taylor (obituary, July 10) during my four years as deputy hospital administrator/general manager of Kidderminster General Hospital from 1984 to 1988. Richard gave me an excellent refer-

ence that helped me to gain promotion to become chief executive of Papworth Hospital, a position I held until I retired in 2016. Shortly after becoming an MP, Richard invited me to lunch in the House of Commons, where we enjoyed simple food, which he said reminded him of hospital canteens. We reminisced about when we would get the hospital switchboard to bleep us at 9pm, so that we could escape early from the League of Friends meetings, which started at 7.30pm and often went on past 11pm. As the hospital’s senior doctor, Richard pulled rank and his bleep went off more frequently than mine, but he always used to apologise and tease me the next day.

If you would like to add a personal view or recollection to a published obituary, you can email tributes@thetimes.co.uk

Births, Marriages and Deaths

To book a Birth, Marriage or Death announcement in the Register, visit newsukadvertising.co.uk for help, please call 020 7782 7553 or email BMDs@thetimes.co.uk

IF YOU feel you must brag, then have enough sense to brag about worshipping me, the LORD. What I like best is showing kindness, justice, and mercy to everyone on Earth. Jeremiah 9.24 (CEV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

BELL on 11th July 2024 to Olivia (née Bland) and Charles, a daughter, Lucia Clara Elope.

Forthcoming Marriages

MR J. H. SHEPHERD-CROSS AND MISS E. F. ROTHMAN
The engagement is announced between Jack, elder son of Mr and Mrs Harry Shepherd-Cross of Quainton, Buckinghamshire, and Emily, third daughter of Mr and Mrs James Rothman of Balcombe, West Sussex.

Deaths

CASKEY Jean (née Stirling) of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, on 16th July 2024, aged 93. Died at home surrounded by her family. Widow of John, much-loved mother to Michael, Mark, Nicola and Susan, grandmother to Sarah, Jennifer, Meaghan, Jocelyn, Thomas and William, step-grandmother to Jonathan, great-grandmother to Orla and Rory. She will be greatly missed. A funeral for family and friends will take place on Thursday 25th July 2024 at St Botolph’s Church, Longthorpe. No flowers please. Donations to Sue Ryder Thorpe Hall Hospice. Inquiries to John Lucas Funeral Directors Ltd, 01733 561128.

FRENCH David John died on 1st July 2024, aged 70. Husband to Helen, father to Diana, Marianne and Angela, and brother to Yvonne. Funeral at 1pm on 30th July at St Saviour’s Church, Splott, Cardiff. No flowers please. Donations, if desired, to www.tworhythms.co.uk

GILROY Angus Hugh died on 10th July 2024, aged 87. Beloved husband of the late Elizabeth, father of Fergus and Margaret, and grandfather of Harry, Lara, Wilfred and Rose. Memorial service at 2pm on Thursday 5th September at St Mary’s Church, Billingshurst. No flowers please.

JONES Desmond died peacefully on 18th July 2024, aged 87. A pioneer of UK theatre. Desmond founded the Desmond Jones School of Mime and Physical Theatre. Revered and loved by his many students from all over the world. He was a lovely man and will be so missed by his loving family.

MCLAREN The Hon Christopher Melville died on 11th July 2024, aged 90, at Hammersmith Hospital. Adored husband of Janey, dearly loved father of Robert and Lara, grandfather of Lucas, Scott and Eliza, and father-in-law of Ellie and Jes. A wonderful friend to many. He will be greatly missed. Cremation was held at Mortlake Crematorium on Monday 22nd July for immediate family. Donations if wished to the Samuel Courtauld Trust (development@courtauld.ac.uk). There will be a memorial service to celebrate his life in autumn.

REES Michael John passed away on 8th July 2024. Michael’s funeral will take place at Selmeston Church on Friday 2nd August. Private family and invitation only. London memorial to be arranged. Donations to St Wilfrid’s Hospice (Eastbourne) c/o Cooper & Son Funeral Directors, 42 High Street, Lewes, BN7 2DD, 01273 475557.

WAKE Michael John Clayton died peacefully on 8th July 2024, aged 86. Beloved husband of the late Penny, father to Lottie, Robin and Beth, grandfather to Daisy, Florence, Ruby, Charlie, Harry, Angus, Georgie and Milly. Funeral service to be held on Monday 5th August 2024 at 11.30am at St Laurence’s Church, Ludlow. No flowers please.

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

To place notices for these sections please call 020 7782 7553

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 11.30am three days prior to insertion



Court Circular



St James’s Palace
22nd July, 2024
The Princess Royal this evening departed from Heathrow Airport, London, for France and was received upon arrival later at Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris, by His Majesty’s Ambassador to the French Republic (Her Excellency Dame Menna Rawlings).

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Notice is hereby given that creditors of the Company are required, on or before 9 September 2024, to prove their debts by delivering their proofs (in the format specified in Rule 14.4 of the Insolvency (England and Wales) Rules 2016) to the Joint Liquidators at KRE Corporate Recovery Limited, Unit 8 The Aquarium, 1-7 King Street, Reading, Berks RG1 2AN or info@kreer.co.uk. If so required by notice from the Joint Liquidators, creditors must produce any document or other evidence which the Joint Liquidators consider is necessary to substantiate the whole or any part of a claim. Note: The Directors of the Company have made a declaration of solvency and it is expected that all creditors will be paid in full.
Date of Appointment: 9 July 2024.
Office Holder Details: David Taylor and Paul Ellison both of KRE Corporate Recovery Limited, Unit 8, The Aquarium, 1-7 King Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2AN.
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The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) launched an investigation into claims of overpriced car finance.

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This controversial commission model, which was banned by the FCA in 2021, is said to have unjustly enriched dealers at the expense of millions of consumers, costing drivers an estimated £165 million annually.

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Weather Eye
Jeremy Plester



Today A largely dry day with sunny spells. Any showers clear eastwards in the morning. Max 25C (77F), min 7C (45F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder **=previous day **=data not available

Table with 4 columns: Location, Temp C, Rain mm, Sun hr*. Lists weather for various UK locations like Aberdeen, London, Manchester, etc.

Five days ahead

A mostly dry period of weather with sunny spells and isolated showers, heavier at times

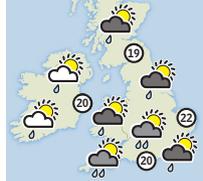
Tomorrow

Mainly dry across Britain with some long spells of sunshine. A band of showery rain will spread eastwards into western areas.



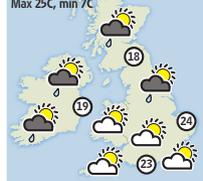
Thursday

A band of showery rain will spread in from the west, heaviest across western and northern Britain.



Friday

A mostly dry day with patchy cloud and sunny spells. The chance of an isolated shower across Ireland and northern Britain.



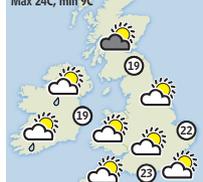
Saturday

Largely dry with the longest spells of sunshine across southern areas.



Sunday

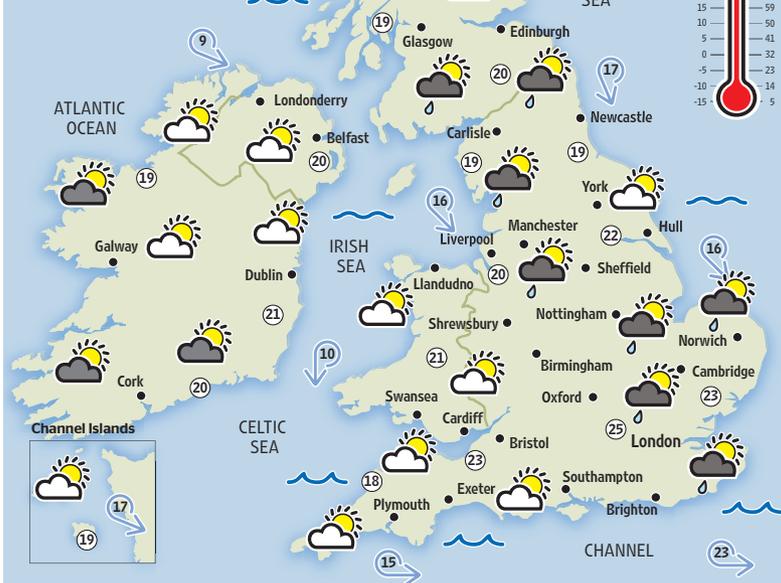
A dry day with long spells of sunshine. The slight chance of an isolated shower across Ireland in the afternoon.



Wind speed: 34 (mph)
Sea state: Calm, Slight, Moderate, Rough
Temperature: 23 (degrees C)

Flood alerts and warnings

At 17:00 on Monday there were no flood alerts or warnings in England, Wales or Scotland.



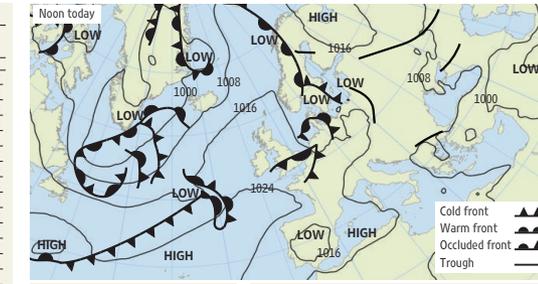
General situation: A mostly dry day with some long spells of sunshine. Any showers in southeastern areas will clear eastwards during the morning.

Wales, Midlands, London, E Anglia, SE Eng: A scattering of showers, some heavy further east, will clear eastwards in the morning.

SW Scotland, Borders, Lake District, NE Eng, IoM, NW Eng, Cen N Eng, E Eng: A rather cloudy morning with a few scattered showers further north.

Tides

Table with 3 columns: Location, Time, Height (metres). Lists tidal predictions for various UK locations.



Synoptic situation: An area of low pressure over southern Scandinavia will push an occluded front eastwards across southern Britain today.

Highs and lows: 24hrs to 5pm yesterday. Lists temperature ranges for various locations.

The world

Table with 3 columns: Location, Temp C, Rain mm. Lists weather for various international locations like Alicante, London, New York, etc.

The curtain rises on the Olympics this weekend with most of the events taking place on the French mainland. One exception will be the surfing contest, which will take place at Teahupo'o, on the French outpost of Tahiti.

It is widely regarded as the most challenging surf break on the planet and for the average hobbyist would be considered petrifying and something to avoid — even some of the best in the world have been known to refuse to paddle out here when the surf gets large.

It is the coral reef that makes the waves such a challenge, as each wave arrives at the shore, seawater drains off the reef, forcing the bottom of the wave to suck downwards.

This time of year, southern hemisphere storms are at their most powerful but Teahupo'o requires a very specific combination of wind, ocean waves and tides to put on a show.

Really good days are few and far between but if big waves arrive during the competition window, it will be quite a spectacle.

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Pidcock, right, has not yet looked ready to challenge for a Tour title, and Rodríguez, below, was also not in contention this year for the team bankrolled by Sir Jim Ratcliffe, far left

Why Cavendish could be answer to the profound decline of Ineos

Manxman knows what it takes to win at the Tour, an art lost by a team fading into irrelevance, writes David Walsh



By the standards they set for themselves, it was a disappointing Tour de France for Ineos Grenadiers. Relating their results to the team's £50million budget, it was a disastrous three weeks. The team that once dominated the race have fallen so far that those now at the summit can hardly see them when they look down. By the time the Tour got to the second rest day, Ineos had faded to irrelevance.

Close to the end, ITV's interviewer Daniel Friebe spoke with the team's chief executive John Allert. It was a slightly uncomfortable conversation as Friebe gently probed the team's lack of impact. Allert, who previously worked in Formula 1, said the team went to the Tour with two objectives: to win stages and to challenge for the podium. He admitted they had done neither.

Allert said the team had "done the best they could do" while admitting results "weren't in line with what we want to achieve". Tom Pidcock and Michal Kwiatkowski got into breakaways because they weren't a threat to the general classification riders, and though they both rode strongly, they were beaten in sprints.

Carlos Rodríguez rode well for 2½ weeks without threatening to challenge Remco Evenepoel for the lowest step on the podium. Allert spoke highly of Rodríguez's talent and character, point-

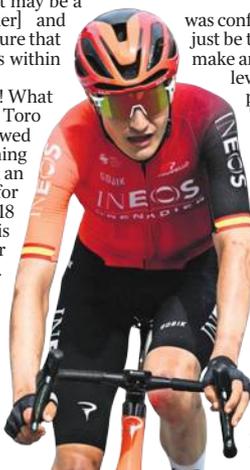
ing out that of the riders in the top ten, he's the youngest. All true but there is a greater truth. For all of his qualities, Rodríguez is not going to beat Tadej Pogacar, Jonas Vingegaard or Evenepoel in the Tour de France.

Allert accepts there's been a drop in performance. "We're not where we used to be and not where we want to be. Transition is an uncomfortable place to be. But we know what's going on in terms of planning and we know what's going on in terms of rider recruitment. Whether or not the winner of next year's Tour is on the Ineos bus, what we do know is that there is generational change and it seems to be speeding up in this sport.

"Riders who were winning the Tour ten years ago, let alone 20, 30 or 40 years ago, there's no way they were in their early twenties. The rider of next year's Tour or the one after that may not be Pogacar or Jonas. It may be a younger generation [rider] and we're focused on making sure that that younger generation is within Ineos Grenadiers."

I thought: "Whoa, whoa! What about Isaac del Toro?" Del Toro is a Mexican rider who showed terrific promise when winning last year's Tour de l'Avenir, an elite-level stage race for national teams made up of 18 to 22-year-olds. The race is often thought of as a Tour de France for young riders. Greg LeMond, Miguel Indurain, Laurent Fignon, Egan Bernal and Pogacar all won the Tour de l'Avenir before going on to win the Tour de France.

Such were his results beforehand that when Del Toro won L'Avenir, it



was confirmation that he could just be the next young rider to make an impact at the highest level. With more than passable English, Del Toro looked made for Ineos Grenadiers. "Do you not think we realised that?" an Ineos insider said. "We tried to recruit him but were told we didn't have the budget and he ended up going to UAE Team Emirates."

More than halfway through his first year on the World Tour, Del Toro's results have been excellent. Ineos's failure to get him makes one won-

der if the aim isn't to keep the team respectably strong while being careful about the cost. Are Ineos still trying to compete against UAE, Visma or even Red Bull-Bora-Hansgrohe?

Earlier in the Tour, the Ineos performance director Scott Drawer spoke with Stephen Farrand at the Cyclingnews website and offered an upbeat assessment that didn't inspire confidence. "Our owners are hell-bent on developing our own talent," he said. "We're not going to buy the top guys in, we're going to develop our own. That's more exciting for coaches. That's more exciting for riders. If we're going to win grand tours again, our investment and work has to be on young talent.

"I think we've been caught between what we once were and where we want to try to get to. We're not thinking about next year, we're thinking about what are the demands of the sport in 2030. If

Rise and fall

The highest finishing positions of the Ineos Grenadiers

	Giro d'Italia	Tour de France	Vuelta a España
2010	17	16	N/A
2011	20	24	1
2012	7	1	4
2013	2	1	27
2014	22	18	2
2015	6	1	8
2016	17	1	2
2017	17	1	1
2018	1	1	15
2019	9	1	20
2020	1	13	2
2021	1	3	4
2022	2	3	7
2023	2	5	31
2024	3	7	

Team Sky withdrew from the Vuelta a España in 2010 due to the death of an assistant

you think about next year, everyone else will be ahead of us. So we're certainly trying to be a bit more creative and rebuild."

Drawer comes from a scientific background, Allert has spent most of his working life in sports marketing. They are both articulate and intelligent, and when they speak about the team they say similar things. The team will develop their own talent. They have a long-term aspiration to ride for the Yellow Jersey in the Tour and they're concerned about what kind of team they will need to be in 2030.

Perhaps with the Olympics behind him, 2025 will be Pidcock's year. That, though, is an optimistic view. When Pidcock won at Alpe d'Huez in the 2022 Tour it seemed he could one day go on and be a contender for the Yellow Jersey. Now with Pogacar and Vingegaard having raised the bar so high, Pidcock has a lot of ground to make up. There is no certainty he has the wherewithal to get to their level.

Josh Tarling, a young and very talented time trialist for Ineos, was asked if he may one day be a Tour contender. "I'd like to. I've got to get skinny first, though," he said. "I'd like to, but they're f**king good, you know? We'll see."

Ineos have regressed. When Drawer and Allert speak of 2030 and "developing our own talent" and not being in the market for "buying in top riders", there is a sense that we may be witnessing well-managed decline. Not having the director of racing Steve Cummings at this Tour was a strange and unexplained decision. Cummings knows the sport and the Tour like no one else in the team. Not having him on the race was a mistake.

There is someone who could take Ineos back to where it once was: Mark Cavendish. He knows the sport, knows the people in the sport, understands what it takes to win and he has a rare talent for turning a group of bike riders into a band of brothers. And, of course, he's now available. Cavendish's passion for the sport and the emotional intelligence that he brings to his relationships with bike riders seem to me precisely what Ineos need.

This, of course, presumes that Ineos really want to turn things around. One thing is for sure, Cavendish wouldn't be talking about 2030.

Pogacar misses Paris Olympics to focus on completing 'Triple Crown' with world title

Tadej Pogacar will not compete in 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, was not selected because of fatigue, the committee said in a statement.

The 25-year-old Slovenian wants to complete the "Triple Crown" instead, by adding the World Championships, which take place in Zurich in

September, to his Tour de France-Giro d'Italia double.

Pogacar is the first man to win the Giro and the Tour in the same season since Marco Pantani in 1998, and only the eighth rider to do so. The Triple Crown has only been achieved twice in men's cycling, by Belgium's Eddy Merckx in 1974 and Irishman Stephen Roche in 1987, and Pogacar has now given himself more time to recover.

"For sure it crossed my mind to do the Vuelta [a España, which starts on

August 17], people tell you to go do this or that, so of course it was there," Pogacar said. "But I'm trying to let it go in one ear and out the other.

"For me, putting a cherry on top of this season would be to have a really nice August, to relax a bit, to prepare well for the World Championships.

"Next I want to take the world championship jersey. I know that Mathieu [van der Poel, the champion] looks good in the rainbow jersey, but I want to take it from him."

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Youngs on mend after collapse

reveal the extent of his conditions.

"We have one every World Cup, you have to get [the screening] done before you can participate," Youngs said. "When I've done it, it's always flagged something up — my heart will just miss a couple of beats — that's not that uncommon.

"In the last World Cup, they

injected me with dye and they basically did a full MRI of my heart while the dye pumped around. There's loads of checks, but not everything always gets picked up. I could go three years without an episode, but recently I've had a few.

"I've had [the conditions] my whole life, [the episode] could have happened when I was younger, it could have happened when I was much older. The fact it's happened now is a good thing."



Sport Cricket

Bashir is the first YouTube cricketer but won't be last

Mike Atherton

Chief Cricket Correspondent



Once upon a time Jason Holder was the young kid on the block. As a teenager he played a walk-on part in the documentary *Fire in Babylon*, about the great days of West Indies cricket, but on Sunday he was the tormented elder statesman trying to hold the centre together against a 20-year-old off spinner, Shoaib Bashir, as things fell apart for his team.

Were Bashir to clip up the best of his five-wicket haul on Sunday afternoon at Trent Bridge, he would do well to find two balls to Holder. The first, the second ball of the 27th over of the innings, was a lovely, curling, flighted off break that spun sharply back through Holder's defensive prod. The second, the last ball of the 33rd over, was quicker and beat Holder on the outside and bowled him.

These two balls summed up the best of Bashir's spell, the line being perfect each time and the variation, either natural or called for, allowing him to beat both edges of the bat, inside and outside. The best modern off spinners, stymied by covered pitches, have found a way to bring both slip and short leg into play, and create some uncertainty at a time when DRS demands greater precision from batsmen.

It was, of course, this type of clip, a short reel posted on X and YouTube of the best of Bashir bowling to Alastair Cook in a County Championship match last summer, that got Bashir noticed for the first time when it did the rounds on social media. It's a well-worn anecdote now but bears repeating briefly, how Brendon McCullum, Ben Stokes and Rob Key took note of it, liked what they saw, and fast-tracked Bashir into

Brilliant Bashir

Shoaib Bashir ranks second, third and fifth among the youngest English bowlers to take a Test five-wicket haul

Player	Age at start of Test	Figures
Rehan Ahmed	18y 126d	5/48 v Pakistan (Karachi, 2022)
Shoaib Bashir	20y 133d	5/119 v India (Ranchi, 2024)
Bashir	20y 146d	5/173 v India (Dharamsala, 2024)
Bill Voce	20y 177d	7/70 v West Indies (Port of Spain, 1930)
Bashir	20y 279d	5/41 v West Indies (Trent Bridge, 2024)
James Anderson	20y 296d	5/73 v Zimbabwe (Lord's, 2003)
Anderson	21y 15d	5/102 v South Africa (Trent Bridge, 2003)
Jack Crawford	21y 31d	5/79 v Australia (Melbourne, 1908)
Steve Finn	21y 53d	5/87 v Bangladesh (Lord's, 2010)
Finn	21y 61d	5/42 v Bangladesh (Old Trafford, 2010)

the England squad for the India series last winter.

To say that Bashir was selected from a clip alone would clearly be false. After that initial sighting he was picked for a Lions camp in Abu Dhabi before Christmas, where confirmation of his talent and temperament allowed a more rounded assessment of his capabilities. It was not quite the moonshot it has been painted to be, but it is true that a short social-media clip of his bowling was important in kick-starting the selection process.

Why? Two reasons: the first is that it got widely viewed in the first place. In days gone by, selectors would have to be on site. Not all games were covered by scouts or selectors and, in the days before streaming services existed, very little county cricket was actually seen by those not at the ground. Now, there is no great shot, great catch or great delivery — or in the case of Cook versus Bashir, a play and miss or two — that is not available to view.

The second is that clips show the best of players, rather than their humdrum ordinary moments, and therefore they show the potential and upside in a cricketer. If that is already good aged 19 or 20, what can it be in ten years' time?

The average age of an international spinner when they get to their prime, by setting the high watermark of their international ranking against age, suggests they don't reach their full potential until their early thirties. Bashir has a decade to go to get to that point.

Which is why, reflecting on Bashir's performance at Trent Bridge, when he became the youngest England spinner to take a third five-for in Test cricket, Stokes was keen to emphasise what might be, rather than what is right now. "His ceiling is so high," Stokes said. In this, the England captain was echoing the thoughts of Key last December, when Bashir was picked for the first time.

"Every now and again you catch a glimpse of a couple of balls where you think that's something special," Key, the ECB's managing director of men's cricket, said. "You see the potential. Someone like Bashir, his ceiling is very high. This is the start of the journey where hopefully we'll see a world-class spinner in the future. We're hoping we're putting him on the road to someone who can end up being world-class. He certainly has the potential."

It is not just at the highest level that "best of" clips are being put to good use. Many counties have begun to assess

Bashir celebrates dismissing Alick Athanaze, one of five wickets during the second innings



young cricketers through the use of video clips to democratise the pathways and broaden access. In February last year Warwickshire hailed as a success their pilot scheme, set up in 2022, whereby young cricketers were encouraged to send in videos to be assessed by the club's coaches.

They noted that they had received more than 200 video submissions from

prospects wanting to join the pathways, more than half of which were from youngsters they had not seen or heard of before. Sixty were selected for trials eventually, with ten making it on to the final county pathway structure.

Surrey launched their video submission assessment process in 2023 with the aim, the club said, "of making the talent identification process of young

Players soon realised it was just like T20

Tymal Mills

Southern Brave fast bowler on The Hundred



I really look forward to this time of the year. I've been lucky enough to play with the same team since the Hundred has been going so we've got really good continuity with the players and the coaches and a really good team spirit.

In the first year we were all very apprehensive, excited and didn't really know how it was going to work, but after we played a practice game we all kind of relaxed a little bit and discovered it was not too dissimilar from just playing another T20 game.

Every Hundred game feels like a big game. They've got a real sweet spot at the moment with it only being eight

group matches; it makes every game kind of a big occasion. You can't really be losing more than two or three games, or you'll be out, so there's real jeopardy.

At Southern Brave we get excellent crowds. Most of our games are sold out and the women's games in the afternoon get really good crowds too because they're very successful.

Our atmosphere at the Utilita Bowl is always great. They seem to have done a good job in getting a real fanbase and even during the T20 Blast I'm still seeing people around with Southern Brave kit on. The crowd are certainly behind us and there are always a lot of kids that come, which is great. The ticket prices help — it makes it affordable.

I've taken a bit of notice of what the plans are for the next phase of the Hundred with selling off the teams. We'd be kidding ourselves if we thought money doesn't come into it. Everybody wants to get paid well.

I'm lucky enough to play in franchise

cricket tournaments all around the world. I see the good, the bad, the great and the not so great. It goes with each tournament — I've been to the IPL a few times and high-profile tournaments so I've seen what can be done with financial backing.

You have to be careful — when you're looking to expand or sell, you want to try to build on what's already there rather than ripping it up and starting again — but I feel investment could take the competition to the next level and the money will also help county cricket, grassroots cricket, disability cricket, women's cricket and help bring the next bunch of players through.

The Hundred is a really good competition for visibility of the game and I've definitely noticed in the last couple of years I get recognised more away from the grounds. Visibility matters to increase the profile of the sport and having games on terrestrial television and all games on Sky helps that.

Elizabeth Ammon

Avram Glazer, the co-owner of Manchester United, wants to expand his stake in cricket by investing in one of the eight Hundred franchises this year.

The sale of shares in the Hundred teams could raise more than £500 million and there have already been expressions of interest from potential investors, including blue-chip companies such as Microsoft, Google and Adobe, Indian Premier League franchise owners, sovereign state funds, English football clubs and NFL teams.

Glazer, 63, has already invested in cricket having bought the Desert Vipers in the UAE ILT20, and is now interested in becoming a part-owner of one of the Hundred franchises.

However, his involvement may not be with the Manchester Originals team based at Emirates Old Trafford because the franchise are understood to be concerned about public attitudes with-

in the city towards the Glazer family and the negative perceptions of how they have run United since 2005. It is understood there are also concerns about further polarising football fans within the city and whether a franchise that was part-owned by one of the United co-owners would alienate Manchester City fans, with the added complication that Old Trafford's main sponsor is Emirates.

The Hundred host teams will have some say in who their partner investor is and the ECB has confirmed that the successful bidders will not just be the ones who put forward the highest price but ones who are also aligned with Hundred teams' vision and values. It is understood that there have been a number of other potential investors also interested in buying the Manchester franchise.

The ECB has had initial conversations with other football club owners too, including an early conversation with

GARETH COPLEY/GETTY IMAGES

England v
West IndiesThird Test, Edgbaston
Friday, 11am
TV: Sky Sports Main
Event & Cricket

cricketers in the county more open, easy and equitable". Cricket Wales followed suit this year, saying: "Ultimately we want to leave no stone unturned to find, nurture and develop the talent that undoubtedly exists across Wales."

Potential is in the eye of the beholder, and it still requires those who know what they are looking for. Some, frank-

ly, will have no idea. Others may not be brave enough to back their judgment. This selection panel have certainly been brave and backed theirs by picking Jamie Smith, Gus Atkinson and Bashir this summer, against more conventional or cautious alternatives. Two Tests against West Indies have reflected well on the idea of potential, and on those who can spot it.

to add franchise to portfolio

representatives of the owners of Aston Villa about a possible link with the Birmingham Phoenix team based at Edgbaston, although it is unclear whether these talks have progressed any further. Investors would make presentations to the teams and the ECB setting out how they intend to manage the team and ensure that the women's competition continues to grow and thrive. The host venues will have the power of veto and will not have any investor imposed upon them.

Each of the eight teams have had a broad value attached to them and the two London sides are expected to attract the most. A source close to the sale process said that the Lord's franchise is likely to become a "hard-fought bidding war" which could reach more than £300 million.

In an attempt to woo other potential investors, the ECB has sent videos explaining cricket to NFL owners before the Hundred franchises go on

sale. American football owners often invest in other sports; for example Shahid Khan, owner of the Jacksonville Jaguars in the NFL, also owns Fulham FC, while the Glazer family also owns the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Vikram Banerjee, the ECB's director of business operations, admitted he had spoken to owners from sports all over the world — and several have been invited to attend this year's competition, which begins today.

"We have sent a document and video to some NFL owners to explain what cricket is," he said. "In terms of fan engagement — how they can build a stadia experience and bring in the next generation — those guys are amazing and we can bring that blend together."

Richard Gould, the chief executive of the ECB, said that the formal sale process would begin in September and is expected to take about three months, with the intention that the owners will have taken over by March next year.

Big hitters and England stars – your Hundred guide

Elizabeth Ammon

The fourth edition of the Hundred begins today with a double header at the Kia Oval between Oval Invincibles and Birmingham Phoenix.

All matches are double headers with the women playing first. Each team is allowed to field three overseas players.

TEAM-BY-TEAM GUIDE – MEN

BIRMINGHAM PHOENIX

Captain Moeen Ali.

Head coach Daniel Vettori.

Overseas Tim Southee (NZ), Sean Abbott (Aus), Adam Milne (NZ).

The Phoenix won only two matches last season. They will have a boost when they are joined by Ben Duckett, Chris Woakes and rising star Jamie Smith after England's Test series against West Indies finishes.

Player to watch Young Warwickshire all-rounder Jacob Bethell.

LONDON SPIRIT

Captain Dan Lawrence.

Coach Trevor Bayliss.

Overseas Andre Russell (WI), Jimmy Neesham (NZ), Nathan Ellis (Aus), Shimron Hetmyer (WI).

After a disappointing 2023 season, Spirit have enlisted some big hitters in the West Indies duo of Russell and Hetmyer and have some pace in their ranks with Ollie Stone and Richard Gleeson.

Player to watch Essex's Michael Pepper has scored over 500 runs in the T20 Blast.

MANCHESTER ORIGINALS

Captain Jos Buttler.

Coach Simon Katich.

Overseas Usama Mir (Pak), Fazalhaq Farooqi (Afg), Sikandar Raza (Zim). Jos Buttler is likely to miss the start with a calf injury and they're also without seamers Josh Tongue and Jamie Overton, both injured, but Mir was the leading wicket-taker in this year's Pakistan Super League.

Player to watch Leicestershire's 6ft 8in young left-arm seamer Josh Hull.

NORTHERN SUPERCHARGERS

Captain Harry Brook.

Coach Andrew Flintoff.

Overseas Matthew Short (Aus), Mitchell Santner (NZ), Nicholas Pooran (WI), Ben Dwarshuis (Aus).

It's very exciting that Ben Stokes and Flintoff are joining up and the latter's first act as head coach was to change up his squad a bit by bringing in the big-hitting Pooran. It's a good seam attack too, with Matthew Potts, Dillon Pennington and Reece Topley.

Player to watch Surrey's Tom Lawes.

OVAL INVINCIBLES

Captain Sam Billings.

Coach Tom Moody.

Overseas Adam Zampa (Aus),

Donovan Ferreira (SA),

Spencer Johnson (Aus).

The champions have made a few changes from last year.

Dawid Malan has come into the side and there will be no Jason Roy.

Player to watch

Scotland's Mark Watt.

Player to watch

Yorkshire's leg spinner

Katie Levick.

Player to watch

Wales' seamer Sam Cook.



Brook will hope he and coach Flintoff, below right, can inspire Northern Superchargers; Ecclestone, below left, is Manchester Originals' star spinner

SOUTHERN BRAVE

Captain James Vince.

Coach Stephen Fleming.

Overseas Finn Allen (NZ), Kieron Pollard (WI), Akeal Hosein (WI), Daniel Hughes (Aus).

Reached the eliminator last year and have boosted their batting with the big-hitting Laurie Evans. They also have the pace of Tymal Mills, George Garton and Chris Jordan to balance with spinners Danny Briggs and Rehan Ahmed. Jofra Archer is set to play most of the tournament.

Player to watch Sussex all-rounder James Coles.

TRENT ROCKETS

Captain Lewis Gregory.

Coach Andy Flower.

Overseas Rashid Khan (Afg), Imad Wasim (Pak),

Rovman Powell (WI),

Riley Meredith (Aus).

Joe Root will be available for

some matches later in the

tournament and they have an elite

spinner in Khan.

Player to watch The Essex seamer Sam

Cook.

WELSH FIRE

Captain Tom Abell.

Coach Michael Hussey.

Overseas Haris Rauf (Pak), Matt Henry (NZ), Glenn Phillips (NZ).

Fire took a bit of a blow when Shaheen Shah Afridi withdrew from his contract, but having Jonny Bairstow available for the whole tournament is a boost.

Player to watch Spinner Mason Crane at his new home ground.

TEAM-BY-TEAM – WOMEN

BIRMINGHAM PHOENIX

Captain Ellyse Perry.

Overseas Perry (Aus),

Sophie Devine (NZ),

Richa Ghosh (Ind),

Suzie Bates (NZ).

Phoenix came bottom last year

but they have Amy

Jones as their top

pick in the draft, as well

as their star all-rounder

Perry.

Player to watch

Yorkshire's leg spinner

Katie Levick.

Player to watch

Wales' seamer Sam Cook.

Player to watch

Wales' seamer Sam Cook.

Player to watch

Wales' seamer Sam Cook.

Player to watch

LONDON SPIRIT

Captain Heather Knight

Overseas Deepti Sharma (Ind), Meg Lanning (Aus), Erin Burns (Aus), Georgia Redmayne (Aus).

The England quartet of Knight, Danielle Gibson and the two spinners Charlie Dean and Sarah Glenn, along with the exciting prospect of the Australian star Lanning, make this a very strong Spirit team.

Player to watch Cordelia Griffith.

MANCHESTER ORIGINALS

Captain Sophie Ecclestone.

Overseas Laura Wolvaardt (SA), Kim Garth (Aus), Beth Mooney (Aus).

A good batting attack will be led by Emma Lamb and Mooney, with some excellent bowling options in the seamer Lauren Filer and spinner Ecclestone, who has had a very good summer with England.

Player to watch Eve Jones.

NORTHERN SUPERCHARGERS

Captain Hollie Armitage.

Overseas Phoebe Litchfield (Aus), Georgia Wareham (Aus), Annabel Sutherland (Aus).

The three Aussies will hope to lift them one better than last year's runner-up's spot.

Player to watch Bess Heath.

OVAL INVINCIBLES

Captain Lauren Winfield-Hill.

Overseas Marizanne Kapp (SA), Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka),

Amanda-Jade Wellington (Aus), Laura Harris (Aus).

Having won the first two

editions, last year was a

disappointment but they

have England players Alice

Capsey and Winfield-Hill in

their ranks.

Player to watch

Bowler Sophia Smale.

SOUTHERN BRAVE

Captain Georgia Adams.

Overseas Smriti Mandhana (Ind),

Chloe Tryon (SA), Lauren Cheatle

(Aus), Charli Knott (Aus).

The champions have a team made up

of a lot of local players, coached by

former England captain Charlotte

Edwards, and a well-balanced squad.

Player to watch The 16-year-old Tilly

Corteen-Coleman is a rising star.

TRENT ROCKETS

Captain Nat Sciver-Brunt.

Overseas Alana King (Aus), Ash

Gardner (Aus), Heather Graham (Aus).

They have two of the best all-

rounders in the world in Sciver-Brunt

and Gardner.

Player to watch Josie Groves is

England's under-19's captain.

WELSH FIRE

Captain Tammy Beaumont

Overseas Shabnim Ismail (SA), Jess

Jonassen (Aus), Hayley Matthews (WI).

There is some starburst in the

overseas pace bowler Ismail and all-

rounder Jonassen.

Player to watch Freya Davies has a

point to prove to England selectors.

Oval Invincibles v Birmingham Phoenix

Women, today 2.15pm. Men, 6pm
TV: Sky Sports Main & Cricket

Sport Formula 1

Verstappen is losing his head – could he be about to lose his title as well?

Molly Hudson

Motor Racing Reporter



It is usually Red Bull against the world. Max Verstappen the mercurially talented and direct driver, and his team of engineers, who see a softer side of the three-times world champion and feel he is often misunderstood.

On Sunday at the Hungarian Grand Prix, however, even they were the target of his ire — although it would be easier to list who wasn't. Verstappen turned the airwaves blue in his communications with his race engineer Gianpiero Lambiase, a key ally and friend, as his frustration grew at the strategy that left him stuck behind Lewis Hamilton, with whom he later collided.

His anger had not abated by the time he stepped out of the cockpit, telling his critics they "can all f*** off", and then adding: "I don't think we need to apologise. We just need to do a better job."

Verstappen is understood to have been frustrated at not only the strategy but also the communication, when Red Bull elected to enable Lewis Hamilton and later Charles Leclerc to undercut him. He also felt the comments from Lambiase, including complaining he had driven too fast as the tyres got up to temperature, were "stupid".

Verstappen had been awake until 3.20am in the early hours of Sunday, having taken part in a three-hour stint in a 24-hour team sim race at the virtual Spa-Francorchamps circuit.

This is not an uncommon routine for Verstappen, who did a similar thing before winning in Imola in May. He argues that it is no different from drivers going out for meals or in the case of Lando Norris before the Imola race, staying up to watch the Tyson Fury-Oleksandr Usyk fight.

It is his way to switch off and relax, although it is surely not the optimal way of doing so, particularly when his competitors are so much closer than they have been in the past two seasons.

Christian Horner, the Red Bull team principal, said he trusted his driver's judgment, but repeatedly said that discussions would be held privately about how the race unfolded and the various issues around it.

The main problem at Red Bull is the temperamental nature of the car. When it is reliable, it remains the quickest on the grid, but at times they have struggled.

During the race at the Hungaror-



Verstappen, top right, had his lead in the title race cut to 76 points after Sunday's collision. Norris, below, believes it may still be possible to overhaul the world champion

ing, Verstappen was unable to make the changes he wanted to prevent understeer, because of the implications that would have had on the balance of the rest of the car.

"Our window seems to be very peaky, and that's what is making it difficult for the engineers and difficult for the drivers — we have to take the balance of the car and make that window broader," Horner said.

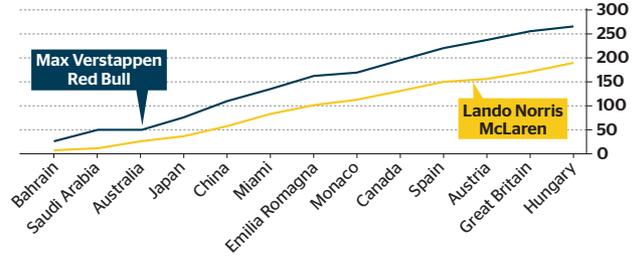
Red Bull have dominated the sport in recent years but their lead over McLaren in the constructors' standings is only 51 points, while Norris has reduced Verstappen's advantage in the drivers' championship to 76 points with 11 races left.

"I've been in this business for 20 years, that [the field converging] is what happens," Horner added. "It doesn't mean you accept it, you've just got to work harder to find the incremental gains and execute good races and be on the top of your game. We know we need to improve in the second half of the year."

When asked if the felt everyone within the team had fully grasped the reality of the situation — the possibility of

How title race has progressed

The gap between the championship leader Max Verstappen and Lando Norris is 76 points, with 11 races remaining



losing the championship — Verstappen, winner of the past three world titles, said: "At least with me, they know that I don't make excuses. I'm always very real about that. But maybe not everyone is on the same wavelength."

"That doesn't frustrate me, but I do think some people need to wake up a little bit. We don't need to go into details about who those are."

Those at the Red Bull factory have clearly recognised the urgency for improvement, with the sizeable upgrade brought to Verstappen's car in Hungary coming ahead of schedule — the package was not expected to be ready until

after the summer break between July 29 and August 23.

There has also been notable effort made to calm tensions behind the scenes, with Oliver Mintzlaff, the Red Bull Austria managing director, keen to create a peaceful environment. Jos Verstappen, Max's father, was refusing to speak to Horner in Austria but did so in Hungary. Mintzlaff, Helmut Marko, the Red Bull senior adviser, and Chalerms Yooivithya, the Thai shareholder, had lunch together before the Hungarian Grand Prix.

Throughout the season, Verstappen has used the cockpit as an escape from

the speculation about Horner's future or the feud between his boss and his father. In the midst of the title race, where even that is not going smoothly, it is little wonder his temper is frayed.

Yet as Norris pointed out, Hungary was only McLaren's second victory of the season — a first for Oscar Piastri — the same number as Mercedes and Ferrari have achieved, and those teams are nowhere near the title race. The seven points Norris lost from finishing second rather than first in Hungary could be the difference at the end of the season.

"I know a lot of people are going to say the gap between me and Max is pretty big, but if Red Bull and Max make the mistakes like they did today, and continue to do that, and as a team we continue to improve and have week-ends like we've had this weekend, we can turn it around," Norris said.

"It's still optimistic. It's still a big goal to say we can close 70 points. When you're thinking of the seven points that I gave away, it crosses your mind, for sure. So, it was not easy."

The support of Piastri will be crucial if McLaren are to overhaul the reigning world champion. Verstappen has enough of a buffer to afford a few lower finishes, even if Norris starts to win consistently. If the Australian can consistently beat the Dutch driver too, however, the title race really could be on.

Results

Cricket

Men's ODI
Scotland v Oman
Forshire's Scotland won toss and elected to bowl; Scotland beat Oman by eight wickets

Oman

1P S Athavale c Jarvis b Cassell	34 (56)
*A I Sulehri c Greaves b Currie	0 (3)
K Sanavale b McCullen	3 (10)
Z Masood lbw b Cassell	10 (23)
A Khan b Cassell	0 (1)
K Khan c Greaves b Cassell	0 (2)
S Khan c Leask b Cassell	1 (6)
M Khan c McCullen b Cassell	17 (19)
A F Butt not out	5 (15)
K c Leask b Main	4 (5)

B Khan c Cross b Cassell	0 (2)
Extras (b 1, lb 10, w 4, nb 2)	17
Total (21.4 overs)	91
Fall of wickets 1-3, 2-22, 3-49, 4-49, 5-49, 6-55, 7-78, 8-85, 9-90.	
Bowling Currie 7-1-20-1; McCullen 5-1-24-1; Cassell 5-4-1-21-7; Main 4-1-15-1.	

Scotland

H G Munsey b B Khan	23 (26)
C Tear c Athavale b Butt	4 (7)
B J McCullen not out	37 (43)
*R D Berrington not out	24 (28)
Extras (lb 1, w 6)	7
Total (22 wks, 17.2 overs)	95
1MH Cross, MA Leask, CNGreaves, JA Jarvis, C Cassell, G T Main and B J Currie did not bat	
Fall of wickets 1-8, 2-47.	

Bowling Butt 4-2-11-1; 3-0-10-0; Khan 5-2-0-36-1; Khan 2-0-23-0; Khan 3-0-14-0.

Tennis

ATP Atlanta Open
Atlanta, Georgia, United States: First round
A Davidovich Fokina (Sp) bt A Cazaux (Fr) 6-2 7-6 (7-4), Y Nishioka (Japan) bt Z Svajda (US) 7-6 (7-4) 6-3.

ATP Generali Open
Kitzbuehel, 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 (8-6), S Nagal (Ind) bt L Klein (Slovakia) 6-1 6-7 (6-3), L Djere (Serbia) bt V Kopriva (Cz) 7-6 (8-6) 6-3.

ATP Plava Laguna Croatia Open
Umag, Croatia: First round
J Mensik (Cz) bt A Popyrin (Aus) 6-3 6-2, T Monteiro (Br) bt T Machac (Cz) 3-6 6-3 6-4, F Cobelli (It) bt M Navone (Arg) 6-2 6-3, M Tringoliti (Arg) bt G Andreozzi (Arg) 4-6 6-3 6-2, D Lajovic (Serbia) bt F Misolic (Aut) 6-4 3-6 6-2.

WTA Iasi Open
Iasi, Romania: First round; E Avanesyan (Russ) bt L Romero Gormaz (Sp) 6-1 6-2, P Martic (Cro) bt N Parrizas Diaz (Sp) 6-4 6-4, C Paquet (Fr) bt M Carle (Arg) 6-4 6-2, S Waltert (Switz) bt E Makarova (Russ) 6-2 6-2, A Todoni (Rom) bt A Falei (Beta) 5-0 ret, S Janicijevic (Fr) bt G Topalova (Bu) 6-1 6-2, A Bondar (Hun) bt M Benoit (Bel) 6-3 6-1, L Boskovic (Cro) bt M Timofeeva (Russ) 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 Prague Open
Prague, Czech Republic: First round; O Selekhmeteva (Russ) bt B Pallicco (Cz) 7-5 6-3, M Linette (Pol) bt M Barthel (Ger) 7-6 (7-4) 6-4, J Fett (Cro) bt A van Uytvanck (Bel) 6-2 6-2, K Siniakova (Cz) bt L Chirico (US) 7-5 6-6 6-3, E Shibahara (Japan) bt T Korpatsch (Ger) 7-6 (7-5) 3-6 7-5, L Samson (Cz) bt T Wurth (Cro) 6-0 6-2, K von Deichmann (Liechtenstein) bt A Schmedlowa (Slovakia) 6-4 6-4, D Salkova (Cz) bt Z Sonmez (Tur) 6-4 6-0, M Frech (Pol) bt A Sharma (Aus) 6-4 2-6 6-2, L Noskova (Cz) bt K Zavataska (Ukr) 6-3 6-2, E Lys (Ger) bt A Soboljeva (Ukr) 6-4 6-3.

Fixtures

Football

Scottish League Cup (7.45 unless stated)
Group A Aberdeen v Airdrieonians; East Kilbride v Queen of South. Group B Buckie Thistle v Dundee Utd (8.0); Stenhousemuir v Ayr. Group C Kelly Hearts v Peterhead; Queen's Park v Elgin. Group D Dundee v Annan; Inverness v Arbroath; Group E Cove Rangers v Livingston; The 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 County; Stirling v Stranraer.

Cricket

The Hundred Oval Invincibles v Birmingham Phoenix (women 2.45, men 6.30).

Calafiori on the cusp of completing Arsenal move

Transfer window watch

Gary Jacob, Tom Allnutt

Arsenal were last night hoping to announce the signing of Riccardo Calafiori after they agreed a deal with Bologna for the Italy centre back worth £33.7million plus £4.2million in add-ons.

Jakub Kiwior has been reluctant to move in the opposite direction and the Poland centre back hopes for interest from AC Milan or another Italian club.

Arsenal are in talks to offload Eddie Nketiah, the forward, to Marseille, who have also considered Hwang Hee-chan, the Wolverhampton Wanderers forward.

Speaking at Arsenal's pre-season training camp in Thousand Oaks, California, Mikel Arteta, the club's manager, said that new signings were key to Arsenal's chances of winning the Premier League title after running Manchester City close for the past two seasons.

"We need to upgrade in everything we are doing," he said. "We have to improve in every area."

When quizzed about Calafiori specifically, Arteta replied: "There's no update unfortunately but we know there are certain positions that we want to improve and give the squad better resources where we are short, but we will try our best. The main thing is to focus on falling in love with the players we have and make them better."

Arteta is interested in signing the Real Sociedad midfielder Mikel Merino, and a forward.

Tottenham Hotspur have valued Richarlison at about £60million after Al-Ahli, the Saudi Pro League side, indicated an interest in signing the Brazil forward.

Richarlison scored 11 league goals last season, having managed only one in his first campaign at the club after a £60million move from Everton. The 27-year-old had previously said that he would not leave England in response to speculation about renewed links with Saudi Arabian clubs who showed interest in signing him last summer.

Richarlison has three years left on his contract and is recovering from a hamstring injury which ruled him out of the Copa America. Tottenham, who travelled to Japan yesterday for their summer tour, have targeted bringing in a new forward.

Midfielder Pierre-Emile Højbjerg has signed for Marseille on loan for a year, with an obligation to make the transfer permanent in a deal worth £17million. Tottenham have also inserted a sell-on clause into the deal, meaning they will take a portion of his next transfer fee.

Højbjerg has attracted interest from several clubs,

including Napoli and Atletico Madrid. Marseille's new head coach, Roberto De Zerbi, has spoken to the 28-year-old personally to convince him to move to France.

Højbjerg is the latest player to leave Spurs after Eric Dier and Ivan Perisic joined Bayern Munich and Hajduk Split respectively on permanent deals and Joe Rodon moved to Leeds United.

Chelsea have confirmed the signing of Caleb Wiley for £8.5million from Atlanta United. The United States left back, 19, has signed a six-year deal with the option of a further season. It is expected he will move on loan to Strasbourg, who are part of the same ownership group as Chelsea. He is part of the US squad for the Olympics this month.

The west London club plan to sell Trevoh Chalobah, the defender who has not travelled on the pre-season tour to the United States. Chelsea want about £25million for Chalobah, whose contract until 2028 is worth around £80,000 a week.

West Ham United are inching closer to a deal for Jhon Durán, the 20-year-old forward who has been made available for £40million by Aston Villa.

The east London club have had several offers turned down for the Colombia forward, who scored five goals in 23 Premier League appearances last season and was given permission to discuss a move to Chelsea last month. Durán joined Villa for an initial £14.75million from Chicago Fire in January 2023, becoming Unai Emery's second signing at the club. He played once for Colombia on their way to this month's Copa America final, where they were beaten 1-0 by Argentina.

Aston Villa have completed the signing of Amadou Onana for £50million from Everton.

The midfielder made 72 appearances for Everton, including 37 last season in all competitions after joining from Lille for £30million in 2022.

Villa are also close to selling Moussa Diaby in a £50million deal to Saudi club Al-Ittihad after one season.

Antonio Conte has stepped up his efforts to re-sign Romelu Lukaku from Chelsea, who want as much as £40million for the forward.

Napoli have been willing to pay about £20million for Lukaku, who played under their new coach Conte at Inter Milan, scoring 47 league goals across two seasons and helping them to win their first Serie A title in 11 years in 2021.

Ipswich Town, who are newly-promoted to the Premier League, are currently in talks with Blackburn Rovers over Sammie Szmodics, the forward who was the Sky Bet Championship top scorer with 27 goals last season.

The deal for Calafiori is set to be £38m



ALEJANDRO PAGNU/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

midfielder Rodrigo De Paul said on Thursday that criticism of the chant had been overblown.

"You don't analyse the songs that much. I can understand people who have suffered racism and don't like it, but then there is a place for everything," De Paul told the streaming channel, Olga en Vivo. "If someone or a team-mate of Enzo's feels offended, the way to go about it is to call him if you know him personally, not to put it on social networks."

Chelsea flew to the United States today for their pre-season tour and will face Wrexham in Santa Clara tomorrow. Fernández is not due to join up with Chelsea for two weeks, unless he opts to return early.

Chelsea's new head coach, Enzo Maresca, will have to decide how to handle Fernández's return after Wesley Fofana, Chelsea's French defender, described the video of the Argentina players singing as "uninhibited racism" while other Chelsea players have unfollowed Fernández on social media. Fifa are investigating and the French FA have lodged a formal complaint.

The FA is still investigating Rodrigo Bentancur's comments after the Tottenham Hotspur midfielder told a Uruguayan television channel last month that South Korean people all "look the same" as Son Heung-min. Bentancur could face a ban if charged.

Bentancur apologised to Son, who confirmed he spoke to his team-mate and that they were "united". Asked about the issue last week, Ange Postecoglou, the Spurs head coach, said: "The most important person in that is Sonny and he'll guide us on that. It's been dealt with and I'm sure there will be further actions behind it. With all these kinds of things it's easy to jump in and make judgments, but the most important people are the ones affected."

Fernández greeted at old club with racist chant

Chelsea are aware of River Plate fans singing racist chants in support of Enzo Fernández after the midfielder celebrated

Argentina's Copa América success by visiting his former club (Tom Allnutt writes).

Chelsea have already initiated an internal disciplinary procedure after Fernández posted a video of Argentina players singing a racist and homophobic song, which includes lyrics about French players coming from Angola.

Fernández apologised, admitting there was "no excuse" for the "highly

offensive" chant. He has been given time off by Chelsea after the competition and it was his decision to return to River Plate on Sunday, the club he joined as a six-year-old boy.

Fernández was given a standing ovation at El Monumental as he pulled on a River Plate shirt and waved to the fans, who then started to sing the same chant Fernández apologised for. It comes after the Argentina

Barton is charged over Aluko tweets

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Police statement read. "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 Tuesday, July 30."

Barton wrote on X on Sunday: "I'm up next month for 'malicious communications' charge at Warrington Mag for Eni Aluko tweets. Crazy times we're living in. Haven't the police got enough on their hands? British system is becoming a Banana Republic. Lawfare used against its own citizens for having a dissenting voice."

Aluko won four league titles with Chelsea and Juventus and playing 102 games for England, scoring 33 goals.

She retired in 2020 and moved into broadcasting.

Barton won one cap for England, coming off the bench for 11 minutes in a friendly against Spain in 2007. He played for six clubs including Manchester City, Newcastle United and Queens Park Rangers. He has managed Fleetwood Town and Bristol Rovers, who sacked Barton in October last year, with the team 16th in League One.

Barton wrote on X on January 5: "How is she even talking about Men's football. She can't even kick a ball properly. Our coverage of the game [involving] EFC [Everton] last night, took it to a new low. Eni Aluko and Lucy Ward, the Fred and Rose West of football commentary."

Aluko, 37, told BBC Breakfast in February that Barton's insults amounted

to the "one of the worst cases of social media abuse" she had experienced. "I can only describe it as waves caving in on you," she said. "There were several tweets. He continued to double-down even after ITV came out in mine and Lucy Ward's defence, and actually was deliberately trying to get worse and incite other people to say the same. This is probably one of the worst cases of social media abuse I've ever experienced."

In a statement at the time, ITV said: "For Joey Barton, an ex-professional player with a significant social media presence, to target two of our pundits, Eni Aluko and Lucy Ward, with such vindictive remarks based on gender and to invoke the names of serial killers in doing so is clearly contemptible and shameful on his part. Football is for everyone."

Sport Paris Olympics 2024

'Relay more pressure than penalty kicks for England'

Great Britain's Olympic 4x100m champions Mark Lewis-Francis, Marlon Devonish, Darren Campbell and Jason Gardener talk to **Rick Broadbent** about the night they struck gold in 2004



Four faces fill a computer screen and rewind 20 years to a hot and heady night in Athens when they not only defied common sense and America's alpha sprinters, but forged a bond that will never be broken. "These guys are not friends," Darren Campbell says. "It's beyond that. They are my brothers."

For those of a certain generation the men's 4x100m Olympic final from 2004 was one of the greatest races. Jason Gardener to Campbell to Marlon Devonish to Mark Lewis-Francis, four stories linked by perfect handovers and the finest margin. In the end Lewis-Francis, just 21, the prodigy who had been criticised for not turning his world junior title into more, held off Maurice Greene by 0.01sec. That single lap remains on an eternal loop for dream-chasers, but the story went far beyond underdogs biting back and was one of revenge and redemption before love and family.

It began with a history of bungled batons at the 1996 and 2000 Olympics. Scepticism turned to cynicism. Linford Christie had grown old and Dwain Chambers had been banned for doping in 2003. The team, including Campbell, was duly stripped of a World Championship silver medal. On the BBC, Colin Jackson bemoaned the disappearance of the "A-plus" boys. It got worse when Campbell got injured and failed to make the 200m final in Athens. Michael Johnson also told the BBC that he publicly doubted the extent of Campbell's issue. Hurt by the insinuations, Campbell confronted Johnson at an MTV party in Greece and had to be dragged away.

"On my last run in the camp I tore my hamstring," Campbell says. "At that point I didn't understand the severity, but I remember Linford crying. If there's a shot, though, I won't give up. I got knocked out of the individual [event] but I was healing as



The quartet were awarded MBE medals to add to the golds that they earned in Athens in 2004 and they retain a strong bond 20 years on from their triumph

the days went on." In desperation, he sought out a herbalist moored on a boat in the Aegean Sea. "When Michael Johnson said what he said I knew those words could affect the rest of my life," he says. "I'd have to walk around Britain with people thinking I'm a guy who fakes stuff. Well, I'm not that guy. The relay becomes the only way to redeem myself."

In the hustle and bustle of the Olympic Village, the team and the coach Steve Perks had realised the only place to have quiet meetings and air their thoughts and fears was the boiler room. "I told them I was happy to go home and would not take offence if that was what they wanted," says Campbell, the oldest of the four at 50. "They told me they wanted me to stay and I thought, 'right'. I had to take away something that was on my name by winning gold."

Devonish, now 48, adds: "The boiler room was where we had our secret conversations. We made mistakes in the semi-final and they had come from over-thinking."



Lone British success

In the past eight Olympic games, Britain's only medal in the men's 4x100m relay came in 2004. In 2020, Britain won silver - only to lose the medal after CJ Ujah failed a doping test

Year	Result
Barcelona 1992	4th
Atlanta 1996	Did not finish
Sydney 2000	Disqualified in heats
Athens 2004	Gold
Beijing 2008	Disqualified in heats
London 2012	Disqualified in heats
Rio 2016	5th
Tokyo 2020*	Disqualified for CJ Ujah's failed drugs test

*Held in 2021 due to Covid pandemic

The confidence was growing, according to Gardener, through years of setbacks, lessons and intertwining paths. He had roomed with Devonish when they were 15, and now they were in a windowless bunker with bare pipes and discarded boxes. "Mark was the last to join the team and was always on the sidelines waiting to get the nod ahead of Dwain Chambers," Gardener says. "Darren is a wonderful person to get

the troops up and said to Mark, 'We're going to give you the baton in the lead and you're going to do what Dwain could not do — and stay in front'. Mark loves that positive energy."

Lewis-Francis interjects at that point to confirm this. Curiously, all these decades on at 41, he still seems like the kid brother in this band. "When Darren said that to me I was walking on air. I knew it was going to be special. There were amazing athletes in that American squad but we got into their heads, not purposely, but they were shouting in the call room and we were calm and quiet and I think they saw our aura. I remember looking at Marlon and just gave him a little nod as if to say, 'Let's go.'"

This burgeoning belief in shock-making, despite the Americans being much faster on paper and having the 100m champion in Justin Gatlin and the 200m winner in Shawn Crawford, was transferred as if by osmosis. "You could look and feel and taste it," Devonish says. "We just needed to keep calm and execute. Do that and there was every chance." Lewis-Francis adds: "I had such belief in Marlon's hand." The speed of the baton would outrun American idols.

The pressure, though, was huge. There was the media ready to pounce on another fumble, and the weight of shared expectation and burden of time. Campbell knew this was his final Olympics. Now or never.

To explain this tension, Campbell moves forward to 2018 when he suffered a bleed on the brain. He is not a man for melodrama, having grown up in a two-bedroom council flat in Manchester and been through the murder of a friend when only 18. He once told me: "My mum is not really a crier but there was an open casket at the funeral and my friend was shot in the head. That never leaves you."

So when he talks about mortality in sporting terms, you can be sure he means it. "It is one of the highest levels of pressure," he explains. "Every four years you have to turn up for one day at a certain time and your best



has to be good enough because there are seven others in the final who have the same dream. And you might have had the dream for ten or 20 years. That's the level. That's why people say that it's life and death. It's not because I know life and death, but it's not far off because it's your life's work and legacy.

"What you do at the Olympics will define your career. It's more pressure than guys taking penalties for

France predicted to pip Britain to third in Olympic medal table

Martyn Ziegler

Great Britain and host nation France are set to battle it out for third place in the medal table at Paris 2024, according to new analysis.

The latest analysis by Nielsen's Gracenote predicts the USA will top the table ahead of China, while Team GB are expected to win more medals than France. However, Gracenote predicts the French to secure more gold medals — and it is gold medals on which the medal table is based.

Keely Hodgkinson and Adam Peaty are among the British athletes tipped for Olympic glory in the detailed analysis of countries' medal hopes.

The analysis predicts Hodgkinson

will win the women's 800m gold and Matthew Hudson-Smith will triumph in the men's 400m.

Peaty should retain his 100m breaststroke crown and mountain bike reigning champion Tom Pidcock is also rated as the favourite. Josh Kerr, the men's 1,500m world champion, is predicted to win bronze and diver Tom Daley to get a silver.

Gracenote, which tracks results in world championships and other elite competitions, predicts the USA to win 112 medals (39 gold), China 86 medals (34 gold), France 60 medals (27 gold), Britain 63 medals (17 gold) and Australia 54 medals (15 gold).

However, previous Gracenote analysis for the Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2021

Team GB medals

Year	Athletes	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Rank
2000	Sydney	11	10	7	28	10th
2004	Athens	9	9	12	30	10th
2008	Beijing	19	13	19	51	4th
2012	London	29	18	18	65	3rd
2016	Rio de Janeiro	27	23	17	67	2nd
2020	Tokyo	22	20	22	64	4th
2024*	Paris	17	20	26	63	4th

*Gracenote predictions

Olympics significantly underestimated Britain's gold medal haul and medal total.

Simon Gleave, head of analysis at Nielsen's Gracenote, said: "British over-performance against the data at those two Olympics could be down to a multitude of factors like world championships not being of the same importance to Britain as the Olympics, competitors outperforming their previous performances or just luck."

"Sport is inherently difficult to predict which is why it is so compelling to watch. Our virtual medal table attempts to provide an accurate view based on the data between Olympic Games but athletes and teams can over or underperform these forecasts."

BGB THOMAS SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES



2004 Men's 4x100m final

Gold	Jason Gardener, Darren Campbell, Marlon Devonish, Mark Lewis-Francis	38.07s
Silver	Shawn Crawford, Justin Gatlin, Coby Miller, Maurice Greene	38.08s
Bronze	Olusoji Fasuba, Uchenna Emedolu, Aaron Egbele, Deji Aliu	38.23s

sneering articles about his mental strength, but he didn't. "It's about knowing your purpose," he says. "The work had been done beforehand."

The paroxysm of joy spread through four minds, an Athens stadium, a far-off nation's living rooms and through the next 20 years. "When I see these guys I see the smiles in their eyes," Gardener says. He says he should watch the race more often. Lewis-Francis says three-quarters of them live roughly in the same area in South Wales and the South West and are waiting for Devonish to come home from his job in China so they can be together again. Devonish, a performance coach and PE educator at the British International School in Shanghai, says media students interview him and maths classes calculate his speed. A colleague told him students benefited from seeing "the greatness and the failures in person".

As for Campbell, he is now the head of sprints and relays for UK Athletics, with a strategy part-devised by Gardener, a former UKA president. His health issues have only made him appreciate his team-mates more. "Anyone can be a friend but in your darkest moments will they reach out and remind you of what you're capable?" His "brothers" rang him after his brain bleed when he was in a "depressive moment" and made him go for lunch. "I did not want to leave the house and my life was at threat, but they reminded me of how strong I can be. "The illness had made me forget the whole journey. I will never be able to do enough to show how grateful I am to have them in my life — and it came from a magical moment."

Our Race; the untold story of an all-time sporting shock by *Trystan Bevan and Ben Mercer* (Outlier Press)



England. We are rivals, we race at trials, we have to get selected and then we have to run individual events before, two days later, coming together as a team."

Fifteen minutes before the final Kelly Holmes won the 1,500m. Campbell told his friends they had to do the same now, but Gardener false-started. Anyone else doing so would now be disqualified. Nerves and synapses fired.

Lewis-Francis, above right, roars with delight after beating USA star Greene, above left, to the line by just 0.01sec, before savouring the taste of victory, right, with Devonish, Campbell and Gardener after the medal ceremony

And then they were into the 38 seconds that would change their lives. Gardener narrowly trailed Crawford but made up for it with a perfect changeover. Campbell powered down

the back straight, narrowly behind Gatlin. Coby Miller went marginally too soon and the USA surrendered their lead. Devonish, the only member of the team not there for the individual events, then gave a masterclass of bend running. And so it was left to Lewis-Francis. He could have thought of all those

Murray is set for one last hurrah

After his anti-climactic send-off at Wimbledon, Andy Murray returned to court at Roland Garros yesterday as he prepares to close his career at the Olympics in Paris. The two-times Olympic gold medallist is ranked 121 and could face a seed in the singles first round on Saturday or Sunday. The Scot, 37, is also set to play in the doubles.



CLAUDIA GRECO/GETTY IMAGES

GB stars' panic alarm app

CONTINUED FROM BACK

used to monitor all forms of contact made with athletes, be it on public social media platforms, direct messages, emails and handwritten letters.

Using a team of specialists who also work in conjunction with the National Stalking Clinic and the Stalking Threat Assessment Centre, the BOA and its security staff can determine if an athlete is at risk to the point where the police and other relevant authorities need to be notified.

Last year the British badminton star Kirsty Gilmour was the target of malicious trolling from people who had bet on the result of a match she had contested. "Apparently I'm part of a mafia.

I'm a bitch. A prostitute. Why? Because I lost a badminton match," she wrote for the BBC. "Welcome to the world of being a professional athlete. Particularly a female one. It ain't pretty at times."

All communication and other forms of contact with Team GB athletes will be assessed throughout the Olympics. British athletes have also downloaded a new emergency response app for their phones.

The security operation is huge in Paris, with 35,000 police officers on the streets and transport system. But the app gives athletes instant access to assistance, in the form of a panic alarm, while also allowing security staff to identify their whereabouts at any given time.

Sport Paris Olympics 2024

Peaty: I can break world record to sink Chinese rival

Swimming
Craig Lord

Adam Peaty believes he can break his own 100m breaststroke world record to defeat his Chinese rival Qin Haiyang in their duel in the pool at the Olympics.

Peaty, 29, will aim to get Great Britain's Paris Games off to a flyer by winning a third successive Olympic gold medal over the distance on Sunday — saying he is back to his best after taking a break to protect his mental health.

However, the Englishman must overcome Qin, who was one of 23 Chinese swimmers to test positive for a banned substance before the Tokyo Games three years ago but cleared of wrongdoing after the World Anti-Doping Agency accepted China's explanation that mass contamination was to blame for the adverse findings.

Peaty set his world record of 56.88sec in South Korea five years ago but feels he is getting close to those levels again, having clocked 57.94 at the Olympic trials in April.

"Can I go faster? Absolutely," he said. "Especially with the confidence and belief built at trials in London, because I feel like there's way more in there. With the new strategies we've been working on — absolutely."

Peaty has swum faster than the Asian record set by Qin, 25, on 14 occasions. However, Qin appeared to have unstoppable momentum last year when he



became the first man to claim the 50m, 100m and 200m breaststroke titles at the World Championships.

As well as being one of the 23 swimmers cleared by Wada after testing positive for the heart booster drug trimetazidine in 2021, Qin also tested positive for clenbuterol in 2017. In both instances he was cleared on the grounds that he had inadvertently ingested the substances via contaminated meat.

Wada failed to make the 23 positive tests public, with the details revealed only after documents were unearthed by the German broadcaster ARD and The New York Times this year. It led Peaty to call for greater transparency from the anti-doping governing body. He is trying not to dwell on the issue now, however. "It would just be a distraction to think of anything else, because there's nothing really I can do," he said.

Qin clocked 59.57 as an 18-year-old in 2017, which remained his best time until he swam 58.66 on the eve of his 24th birthday last year and then beat that with a 57.94 at this year's Chinese Spring Championships. In Tokyo, Peaty became the first British swimmer to retain an Olympic title.

But the long five-year cycle going into the Covid-delayed Games took its toll. Burnout and mental breakdown followed and the 2022 and 2023 seasons were devoted not to swimming excellence but, simply, recovery.

Peaty said in April last year that he had been "on a self-destructive spiral" of binge drinking and an inability to cope with "the devil on my shoulder telling me, 'You can't have what you want, you can't be happy.'"

After "an incredibly lonely journey", Peaty is back, having worked with his coach Mel Marshall — who has been poached by Australia and will leave the British team after the Olympics — and Steve Peters, the former British Cycling psychiatrist. His team also includes Dr Kate Jordan, and Matt Ashman and Richard Chessor, from British Swimming's sports science and sports medicine unit.

He boasts eight world and 16 European titles but victory in Paris would make Peaty only the second male swimmer after the American great Michael Phelps to claim gold in the same event at three separate Olympics.

"To win once at an Olympic Games is the greatest thing a swimmer can do. Twice is phenomenal but to do it three times would be sensational," he said.

Race craft and speed are equally important in the hunt for Olympic gold. Peaty knows that a low 57-second time may make it a tight race from which he would emerge with "head held high, whatever, and not be blown apart like I once would have been". However, he added with a smile: "Of course I want to win, and it's my intention to do just that."



Two years behind the scenes with Keely Hodgkinson, GB's golden girl-in-waiting

Rick Broadbent

Keely Hodgkinson is something else. Part of it is the talent. She is blindingly good. She won an Olympic silver medal in a glamour event at 19 and her progress is such that I will be surprised if she does not upgrade that to take the 800 metres gold in Paris, albeit that the field will be deep and wide and global. More than that, though, she has star quality and a big, vibrant personality. I remember sitting down with her three years ago in Leeds and it was clear she had a sense of humour and an edge that was almost Daley Thompson-esque in its pointed playfulness.

I love a couple of stories about her. Her coach, Trevor Painter, said he once gave a talk on social media to young athletes and used one of her tweets as a cautionary example. She takes up the tale: "It was in answer to some cringy tweet from a girl saying, 'I love it when someone calls me Princess.'" Hodgkinson's reply: "I'd rather clap with shit in my hands." On another occasion, Piers Morgan waded into the Tokyo celebrations to rage that she had lost the race and a silver medal should not be celebrated. Hodgkinson ignored it other than to



tweet "Keely", a reference to him misspelling her name.

She is fun, sharp and, when it comes to the track, fierce. And when she won the gold at the European Championships in Rome in June, I also loved the fact her parents were there, celebrating in the same bar frequented by journalists, in Team Keely t-shirts, proud as punch and living their collective dream. If it was 2012 she would be rivaling Jessica Ennis-Hill as the face of the Games, but this is her time. And it is only the beginning.

These pictures by a brilliant photographer and colleague provide a unique insight into the making of an athlete who is going to go down in history as one of the best we have ever had. She is not satisfied with silver and is improving, as shown by her race in London on Saturday. Painter's wife, Jenny Meadows, was a very successful athlete herself, but one whose career was blighted by Russian drug cheats. She has had her belief restored by Keely who is the unofficial aunt to her daughter. Meadows once told me that Hodgkinson's true ambition is no less than to be a legend. After Ann Packer and Kelly Holmes, she is on the cusp. A generational British treasure.

Pictures by Michael Steele, left

Swimming medal hopes

Saturday July 27

8.44pm: Men's 4x100m freestyle relay Duncan Scott, Tom Dean, Matt Richards and Alex Cohoon in action.

Sunday, July 28

8.44pm: Men's 100m breaststroke Adam Peaty goes for a third gold.

Monday, July 29

7.30pm: Women's 400m individual medley Freya Colbert is third fastest in the world this year.

7.40pm: Men's 200m freestyle final Matt Richards, the 2023 world champion, and Duncan Scott, Tokyo Games runner-up, fight for medals.

Tuesday, July 30

9.01pm: Men's 4x200m freestyle Dean, James Guy, Richards and Scott defend the crown.

Friday, August 2

7.30pm: Men's 50m freestyle Ben Proud is ranked second in the world.

7.43pm: Men's 200m individual medley Scott and Dean in action.

Saturday, August 3

8.34pm: Mixed 4x100m medley relay Great Britain defend their title.

Sunday, August 4

6.06pm: Men's 4x100m medley relay Britain won silver in Tokyo.

Daley and Glover set to carry flag at ceremony

Martyn Ziegler, Matt Lawton Paris

Tom Daley and Helen Glover are the favourites to be chosen as flagbearers for the British team at Friday's opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics.

It will be diver Daley's fifth Olympics and rower Glover's fourth Games, and it is understood the pair are the leading contenders to be the men's and women's flagbearers for when the British Olympic Association (BOA) makes its decision on Wednesday.

Glover, 38, won gold in the coxless pairs at London 2012 and Rio 2016, while Daley, 30, has one gold and three bronze medals.

The strongest competition to Daley for the honour has come from an athlete with an even longer Olympic pedigree — the dressage rider Carl Hester, 57, who is taking part in his seventh Olympics having first appeared at the 1992 Games in Barcelona.

Those who have also been considered as the men's flagbearer include the gymnast Max Whitlock, who has three gold and three bronze medals from four Games, and swimmer Adam Peaty, who has won three golds and two silvers from the Rio and Tokyo Olympics. The BOA said it has yet to make a decision on the men's or women's flagbearers.

Olympic success is one of the criteria looked for but it is not critical. Mark Foster, the swimmer who carried the flag in 2008, never won a medal, for



▲ **22 JANUARY 2024** This shows Keely being treated by physio Anita Vanderlingen during her winter camp. January was a difficult month for Keely. She not only caught a bug but also had a knee issue. The picture on the wall served as a reminder of how close Keely came to winning the 800m gold at the World Championships in Eugene from rival Athing Mu. Canon EF R3, 15-35mm lens @ 24mm, iso 500, F3.5, 1/200 sec



▲ **6 MAY 2024** Not many 19 year olds have a mural painted and displayed in their home town, but Keely has! Street artists Kelzo and Entise produced this beautiful design after Keely's Olympic silver in Tokyo. Canon Ef R3, 70-200mm@150mm, iso 400, F2.8,1/125 sec



▲ **8 MAY 2024** Keely briefly studied at Leeds Beckett University and has strength and conditioning coaching with Dane Mitchell once a week. Canon EF R3, 24-70mm@46mm, iso 1000, F3.2, 1/200sec



Daley is set to compete in his fifth Olympics

example. The BOA has said that chosen athletes will "exemplify Olympic values and uphold Team GB values of pride, responsibility, responsibility, respect and unity".

A panel headed by Team GB's chef de mission Mark England will make the decisions. One possible issue is that many athletes prefer not to take part in the opening ceremony in order to focus on preparing for their events.

Daley competes on Monday three days after the opening ceremony, while Hester, who has a gold, a silver and a bronze, is also scheduled to start competing early next week.

The men's flagbearer in Tokyo was the rower Moe Sbihi, and the women's was the sailing champion Hannah Mills. Before the IOC changed the rules for 2020 there was only one flagbearer per team, with Sir Andy Murray chosen in Rio in 2016 and Sir Chris Hoy at London 2012.

The other contenders for the women's flagbearer included the multi-medal-winning dressage rider Charlotte Dujardin, 39, appearing at her fourth Games, and Laura Roper, 36, the first British hockey player to win three Olympic medals.

It is also a fourth Games for the British heptathlete Katarina Johnson-Thompson, the 31-year-old double world champion for whom Olympic medal success has so far proved elusive.

The flagbearers will join fellow British athletes on their boat down the River Seine where the ceremony is taking place, and then disembark with the flags for the official opening at La Place du Trocadero, opposite the Eiffel Tower.



Keely's journey to the Olympics. By Michael Steele

▲ **7 JUNE 2022** Routine and repetition is very much the way of life in athletics, and I've lost count of how many training sessions I've shot Keely in over the past 2½ years. But new angles and opportunities are always there. A 1km loop around the DW Stadium, home of Wigan Warriors and Wigan Athletic is a good example. This photo is made by the local youngsters on their bikes, who were totally unaware of the superstar running past them. There's a canal alongside, just to the left of the frame but no real angle to make a picture.

Canon Eos 1DX Mark iii, 70-200mm @70mm F4.0, 1/1250, iso400

TO VIEW THE FULL GALLERY GO TO THE TIMES.COM/SPORT



▲ **21 JANUARY 2024** Sundays always involve longer distances. Keely does gym and track work through the week and takes Fridays as a rest day. I was hoping for a gravel road and a rural South African landscape during her winter training camp in Potchefstroom. This image fits the bill. The road was long and flat but with a steady climb for the last 100 metres.

Canon EF R3, 600mm lens@F4.5, iso 250, 1/2000 sec



▲ **20 JULY 2024** This was a big day in many ways for Keely. Her first competitive appearance at the London Stadium after illness scuppered her chance in 2023 and a venue which inspired her as a ten year-old while following the London Olympics. This frame shows Keely heading into the last lap ahead of setting a personal best and world-leading time. Canon Eos R3, 15-35mm 1/2000th sec f3.5. ISO 400.

Sport

The decline of Ineos

Once-dominant cycling team are now irrelevant to rivals

David Walsh, page 51



Britain's greatest relay

The night Team GB shocked all-star Americans in Athens

Interview, pages 56-57



I feared I was going to die, says Youngs

Ex-England No 9 had heart surgery after collapse

John Westerby

Ben Youngs has revealed that he thought he was going to die after collapsing during training because of a heart condition that has led him to have surgery.

Youngs, 34, who retired from international rugby after last year's World Cup as England's most-capped men's player, underwent a two-hour operation to address his arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) and supraventricular tachycardia (SVT — quickened heart rhythms) after the incident during pre-season training with Leicester Tigers. He hopes to be fit for the start of the Gallagher Premiership campaign in September.

Speaking on *For the Love of Rugby*, the podcast he hosts with his Leicester team-mate Dan Cole, Youngs told how he had experienced a few episodes throughout his life, but that the latest forced him to have a procedure that comes with a 90 per cent success rate.

"I had to stop and lay down as my heart was pounding away, and I thought, 'This is it, this is how I'm gonna go,'" Youngs said. "But I'm on the mend, I'm recovering. I'll be lacing up the boots in no time and back out there with the boys."

"It's a good thing it's happened during the off season, so I can get fixed and actually the recovery time is not too long at all, so I'll be all good for the start of the season."

Youngs expressed his relief, too, that such heart conditions had been

checked at a time when care was at hand — in a professional sporting environment — rather than at a later time of life when medical assistance was less likely to be available.

"Thank goodness it's been picked up now," he said. "Without being too dark, [if] you had an episode like that in the sea, or in a swimming pool, you don't want to think about that. Put it this way, I'm glad it's been done and it's sorted, because you don't want an episode like that in those circumstances."

Youngs described how his operation in Birmingham involved the surgeon accessing his heart after making an initial incision near his groin.

"The operation's crazy," he said. "They go in through my groin, they go into my vein in my groin, up all the way up to my heart. They're trying to trigger the heart, they gave me another drug and it got my heart [rate] going and it got to like 250 beats [a minute], and they find the place where it was."

"It's a 90 per cent success rate, so I should not suffer now, my ticker should be all good."

Youngs won the last of his 127 England caps in the World Cup third-place play-off against Argentina in Paris last year, 13 years after he had made his debut. He also won two caps for the British & Irish Lions, against Australia in 2013.

Before the World Cup, he had customary heart screenings, along with the rest of the England squad, which would often signal an abnormality but did not

Continued on page 51



Daley returns to carry the flag

Tom Daley, pictured with diving partner Noah Williams, toyed with retirement after winning gold at the Tokyo Olympics, but he will be back for Team GB in Paris. He and the rower Helen Glover, a double gold medalist, are favourites to be chosen as flag-bearers for the opening ceremony on Friday. Story, page 59

Barton charged over his tweets

Tom Allnutt

Joey Barton has been charged with making "malicious communications" after he insulted Eni Aluko, the television pundit and former England striker.

Barton, 41, is due to appear in court on July 30 after an investigation by Cheshire Police, who said the charges relate to messages sent between January 1 and 18.

During that period, Barton compared Aluko and Lucy Ward, who were working as pundits for ITV, to the serial killers Fred and Rose West. Barton, who has more than two million followers on X, formerly Twitter, has repeatedly abused and insulted female football broadcasters. He wrote that Aluko was "only there to tick boxes".

"A man from Widnes has been summoned to court to face charges of malicious communications," a Cheshire

Continued on page 55

Team GB need extra security

EXCLUSIVE

Matt Lawton

Chief Sports Correspondent, Paris

Great Britain's Olympic stars are being protected here in Paris by a specialist security team that includes forensic psychiatrists and psychologists who can even assess the potential threat of online abusers.

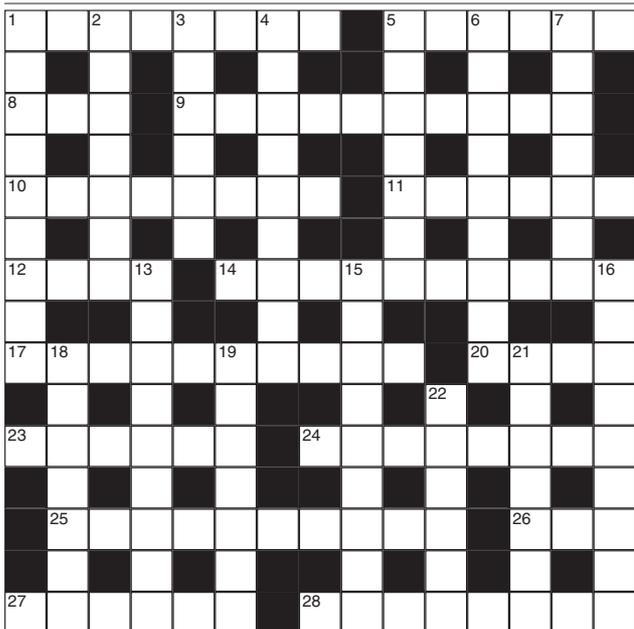
The British Olympic Association has hired Theseus, a London-based "fixated risk management" firm, which is working in tandem with Team GB's on-the-ground security staff.

The BOA is bringing 327 athletes to the Games, with women outnumbering men and some already the subject of online abuse in recent months.

Theseus, which has a relationship with the BOA dating back to 2016, is

Continued on page 57

Times Crossword 28,976



ACROSS

- Glaring malevolently, putting support round farm animal (8)
- Initially some plays only occasionally featured such burlesques (6)
- Worry principally about endless evil (3)
- Repulsive new audience accommodation a university installed (10)
- Hang about, initially investigating expensive underwear (8)
- Crazy, sacrificing last of rhubarb for pineapple! (6)
- One of two giants crushing head of reckless spirit? (4)
- Revolutionary directions: encrust rich tart (10)
- Swindle at seat of Irish kings? A harmless lie (10)
- Means to reverse large sailing vessel (4)
- Tension revealed by female teacher avoiding motorway (6)
- Insufficiently cook goulash at first, being of little influence (8)
- Talk with woman, the mistress of the house (10)
- Bishop attending cricket club (3)
- Required to be worked like dough, we're told (6)
- Find out about article made of tanned hide once (8)

DOWN

- Nameless bird, ultimately with scant illumination (9)
- Marmalade cat in Florida city? (7)
- Singer allowed to entertain pub (6)
- Sustained robin finally, one trapped in your and my outhouse (9)
- Extremely sensitive singer consuming a fish (3,4)
- A coy girl unhappily accepting Heath's first minority government (9)
- Obscure king crossing bar, a hazard at sea (3,4)
- Gloomy detectives in burial ground (9)
- Eurasian rose, say, worker planted in row (9)
- Fill in rowing crew about northern lake in French (9)
- Object in lorry leaving Edinburgh for starters (7)
- Trendy regular sweetheart, not unknown as an alternative (7)
- Car British Leyland originally made, ultimately capable of being caught (7)
- Change sides? That's a fault (6)

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Doug Emhoff and
Kamala Harris

Kamala's crew

The private life of the woman who would be president

‘Posh shoplifting’? Just because it’s organic, doesn’t mean it’s OK

Robert Crampton



GETTY IMAGES

Forty-four years ago, in October 1980, when I was 16, a radio and TV personality called Lady Isobel Barnett, the star of a popular show called *What’s My Line*, was fined £75 for stealing a can of tuna and a carton of cream, total value 87p, from her village grocer in Leicestershire.

Police found a “poacher’s pocket” in her coat. Two days after her conviction, Barnett told an interviewer she had been shoplifting for years. Two days after that, she was found dead in the bath. The coroner ruled she had knowingly taken a fatal overdose of painkillers.

This tragic tale goes to show that, in those days, shame was still a powerful — probably too powerful — force in British society, perhaps particularly so among the middle and upper classes. Respectable people were simply not supposed to steal stuff, the social consequences of getting caught were too ghastly to contemplate.

Nowadays, it seems, the social shame of not having the correctly on-brand loaf of artisanal bread on the kitchen table outweighs the risk of any potential shame in being busted. Yep, we’re back on the fascinating topic of “posh shoplifting”.

Three weeks ago I wrote how Tesco was having to put security tags on olive oil. Yesterday brought news that Planet Organic blamed “posh totty” customers for much of the theft it suffers. Richard Fowler, head of security at the comically expensive health food chain, has identified three varieties of culprit: “the homeless, opportunists ... and [wealthy people who] shop in Planet Organic on a daily basis, they spend a lot of money with our business. [They think] ‘Today I’m a little short of money, so I’m entitled to steal something.’”

The Chiswick branch in west London is especially prey to posh totty predation, Fowler says.

I think he’s on to something. Except, he’s probably being a bit hard on the homeless, your average rough sleeper being unlikely, in my view, to risk arrest for swiping a litre of Rebel Kitchen coconut water. And he’s also being charitable in ascribing “today I’m a little short of money” as a



motive for posh thieves. He’s right about the entitlement though.

I hate to say it, because I’m all for healthy eating, not to mention saving the planet, but there is undeniably a sense of prerogative shared by many members of the organic-fancying community, an air of “the good I am doing is so great, so worthy, so vital” that on occasion it obviates the need to behave with common decency.

Or indeed, the need to obey the law, by doing something so tiresome and trivial as paying. Those 500g of unsulphured apricots, goes the argument, are so important, not just to my wellbeing but to the very future of life on earth, that stumping up £8.79 for them is somehow morally wrong.

It’s the same bogus logic that enables some smug cyclists to blithely run red lights and risk mowing down pedestrians. I once chided a fellow cyclist for doing exactly that. He could not compute the criticism.

“But I’m on a bike, mate!” he protested, in that whiny voice favoured by amoral hippies. I bet there are some Planet Organic shoplifters, possibly in the Chiswick area, who (in the unlikely event that plod ever feels their collar) explain laughingly, “But officer, it’s for the planet!”

As I say, shameless.

We’re not beside the seaside

One child in ten in the UK, according to a totally disinterested survey by Cadbury Flake 99, has never been to the seaside. That statistic doesn’t surprise me, given how hard up some people are. What I do find peculiar is the further finding that seven out of ten parents admit to seldom taking their kids to the beach. And when I see the word “seldom”, I read it as “almost never”, rather than “every once in a while”.

And yet, the survey also reveals, two thirds of us consider seaside trips “a national institution” and 90 per cent claim happy childhood memories of such coastal away days — paddling, piers, parental entombment in the sand, a consequent frantic hunt for buried car keys etc. In other words, mum and dad loved going to the beach when they were small, but most of them don’t now take their children. A mismatch.

It doesn’t look good. Either lots of people are lying about loving the seaside, or they aren’t, but they’re too lazy, or mean, to carry on the tradition. Of course, the fact that these days the seaside is awash with sewage doesn’t help.

Britain’s finest bag lady

Respect to Eleanor Dunne, 59, from Southampton, who has been using the same

ten Waitrose carrier bags on rotation for her thrice-weekly shop for the past 21 years. “They have been around nearly as long as my children,” Dunne reveals, thriftily. I bet she keeps nine of them inside the tenth “mother” bag, a classic “bag-of-bags”

arrangement I happen to favour myself.

She has some way to go, though, to outdo my war-generation parents in the recycling stakes. Once, trying to reduce clutter in the family home, I spent half an hour arguing with first my dad, swiftly and supported vociferously

by my mother, about the potential future usefulness of three broken bits of bamboo in the garage. “They’ll come in handy one day,” I was told. Later, we moved on to the several dozen empty yoghurt cartons in the kitchen cupboard.

The blended

She’s ‘adored’ by her two stepchildren, and friends with her husband’s ex-wife.

What does all this say about the woman who could be Potus? By Rhys Blakely

In the autumn of 1969, a little black girl boarded a school bus in California for the first day of term. It picked her up from a middle-class neighbourhood to the east of San Francisco, where her mother was raising her and her sister in an apartment at the top of a modest stucco house. It dropped her off at a school in the more affluent and much whiter Berkeley Hills.

The 40-minute ride — one of hundreds being made each morning to make the local publicly funded education system less segregated — would have given the young Kamala Harris a window seat on America’s fierce debate over race. And while she might have been just five years old at the time, she has presented it as the first leg of a personal journey that has put her within touching distance of being the Democrats’ nominee for the White House.

Long before the crisis over Joe Biden’s cognitive state, Harris’s rise into the top tier of US politics had been tumultuous. The first black person and the first woman to serve as vice president, she’s seen her personal popularity ratings sink uncomfortably low. Her racial heritage has been questioned by crack-pot conspiracy theorists, while her background as a tough-on-crime prosecutor has risked putting her at odds with the progressive wing of her party.

Scrutiny of her personal life, always inevitable, is sure to become even more extreme. She’s already been rebuked by her Jamaican-born father — with whom she appears to have a difficult relationship — for making a joke suggesting that most Jamaicans smoke pot, while her political team were forced to reprimand her niece, Meena Harris, a 39-year-old lawyer and Tony Award-winning theatre producer, for looking to exploit her fame by selling “Vice-President Auntie” jumpers and swimsuits.

A past romance with a California politician known as “the Ayatollah” who was twice investigated by the FBI for corruption (but never charged) will come under the magnifying glass again. So will Harris’s husband — a former entertainment industry lawyer who has been, by a long stretch, her most devoted champion on social media.

Yet it’s not hard to see how her early years might have left an indelible mark. When I covered the US West Coast for *The Times* between 2011 to 2015, I’d be sent by the arts editor to the Berkeley Hills — the site of Harris’s elementary school — for interviews with authors, artists and composers, who invariably lived in large, shabbily elegant homes.

I’d travel there knowing the city’s reputation for political activism, as a centre of the civil rights and anti-

Vietnam war movements. Drive a short distance south, however, and you’re in the city of Oakland, where Harris was born — where the stories more usually involved shootings and race riots.

As a politician, she’s sought to plant a foot in both worlds. As an aspiring politician in California, her picture would appear in the society pages, courting Democrat kingmakers — but she made sure she sang her campaign office in a down-on-its-luck corner of San Francisco.

The childhood bus rides were part of a scheme that started in 1968, when the decision was made to desegregate Berkeley’s 14 elementary schools. On learning about the pioneering project, Martin Luther King Jr wrote of how “hope returned to my soul and spirit”.

But for the children at its heart, it was often tough going. “Racism didn’t go away because we were bused,” Doris Alkebulan, 58, part of the first group of black students in Berkeley to be bused to a majority white school, told the *New York Times* in 2019.

“**Scrutiny of her personal life will become even more extreme**

when Harris was running against Joe Biden to be the Democratic presidential nominee. (Harris entered the bussing scheme in its second year.)

Her new school had previously been 95 per cent white; now 40 per cent of the pupils were black. Alkebulan remembered how white children would tell their bused-in black peers: “Oh, we can’t play with you,” and explain the reason with a racial slur.

“I didn’t even know I was black until then,” she said.

For Harris the question of race has perhaps been especially complex. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, a scientist who worked on breast cancer, moved to the US from India at the age of 19. The high-caste Brahman daughter of a diplomat from Madras (now Chennai), Shyamala had a much larger influence on her life than Harris’s father, Donald Harris. He moved to the US from Jamaica in 1961 and became a Stanford University professor of economics.

The couple met as students at the University of California, Berkeley, and married in 1963. Kamala was born the following year and her sister Maya — a lawyer who was one of three senior policy advisers for Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign — in 1967. Shyamala and Donald divorced in 1971 and Shyamala, Kamala and Maya moved back to California, having left

family of Kamala 'Momala' Harris

COVER AND BELOW ALAMY; GETTY IMAGES; KAMALA HARRIS, MEENA HARRIS/INSTAGRAM



Left: Kamala Harris with her husband Doug Emhoff and great-niece Amara. Above: Ella Emhoff



Harris with her niece Meena



Harris with, from left, Cole, Doug and Ella Emhoff

the state for Donald Harris's work.

Harris has often spoken of her mother, who died in 2009, as a role model and counsellor. "She was one of the very few women of colour in science," she told the *New Yorker* in 2019. "When I decided to run, she said, 'Honey, you watch out for what's going to happen, because there are still certain myths about what women can do and cannot do ...'"

"And she said, 'Two of those myths are that women can do certain things but not necessarily be in charge of your security or your money.' In spite of the fact that who is the lioness protecting those cubs at all costs? Who is it invariably sitting at that kitchen table in the middle of the night trying to figure out how to get those bills paid?"

Growing up, it seems that Harris was often surrounded by African-American intellectuals. Mary Lewis, who helped create the Black Studies

department at San Francisco State University, was close to Shyamala.

And as a child Harris was cared for by Regina Shelton, who ran a daycare centre in the flat beneath her family's — a place decorated with posters of towering figures such as Harriet Tubman, the black abolitionist who escaped slavery in the south in 1849 only to return there more than a dozen times to rescue scores of other enslaved individuals.

Harris would study as an undergraduate at Howard University, an historically black college, before returning to San Francisco for law school. Professionally, she first made a name for herself as a sex-crimes prosecutor. By the time she was 40, she'd been elected district attorney of

San Francisco in 2004, the first woman and the first black person to hold the position.

In 2011, she was elected attorney-general of California, the state's "top cop" — again, she was the first woman and the first person of colour to hold the job. In 2016, in the same election that gave Donald Trump the Oval Office, she became one of the Golden State's two senators.

Along the way, there was a brief romantic association in the 1990s, the story of which Harris has complained still clings to her like "an albatross". Willie Brown, who was 30 years older than her, had been a defence attorney representing pimps and prostitutes before he won a seat on California's State Assembly, where he served as speaker and earned the nickname "Ayatollah". He played a version of himself in *The Godfather Part III*, appearing chummy with Michael Corleone.

He and Harris saw each other while he was still married but amicably parted from his wife. Around this time Harris's profile was rising and appearances in the press, often in the society pages, were becoming more frequent. When she ran for local office herself, she chose Bayview-Hunters Point, one of San Francisco's less affluent areas, for her campaign headquarters.

"It's the hood," Amelia Ashley-Ward of the *Sun-Reporter*, the city's oldest black newspaper, told the *New Yorker*. "Right above her offices, you had the

public housing. There was always crime. But she was right there in the hood. She would walk up and down the street, the liquor stores, the bars, and talk to people."

All of that seems to have been a world away from the life of the man she'd marry. Douglas Emhoff, now 59, was born in New York and raised in Los Angeles, the son of Barb, a housewife, and Mike, a shoe designer. He built a career as a media industry lawyer before becoming Harris's husband — and her most faithful booster on social media.

He'd previously been married, for 16 years, to Kerstin Emhoff, a film producer. They have two children, Cole, now 30, and Ella, 25 — named for the jazz musician John Coltrane and the singer Ella Fitzgerald. According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, Emhoff and Harris met after Christette Hudlin, a PR executive and close friend of Harris, set them up on a blind date in 2013, when she was attorney-general of California.

They married a year later, at a low-key ceremony, where Harris's sister Maya officiated and the small number of guests were reportedly sworn to secrecy. As well as stepmother to Emhoff's two children, Harris seems to have become friends with his first wife.

"When Doug and I got married, Cole, Ella, and I agreed that we didn't like the term 'stepmom,'" she wrote in an essay for *Elle* in 2019. "Instead, they came up with the name 'Momala'."

"I am so thankful to Doug, to Kerstin (Doug's ex-wife), and most of all, to Ella and Cole," she added. "I can say one thing with certainty, my heart wouldn't be whole, nor my life full, without them."

For their part, her stepchildren have described Doug and Kamala as "almost vomit-inducingly cute and coupley" and have said that they adore her.

Don't expect America's voters to warm to her as enthusiastically. Biden has endorsed Harris, as have prominent figures like the California governor Gavin Newsom. But at the time of writing, Barack Obama, who was neutral during the 2020 Democratic primaries, is yet to commit.

Some of her party fear she's a closet reactionary posing as a reformer; many more US voters will deplore being presented with the choice of her or Trump. And don't discount the headwinds of sexism and racism: by 2016, I was based in Washington DC for *The Times* and was reporting regularly on the Clinton and Trump campaign trails. Chatting to locals in swing states, it was almost always possible to find a non-negligible minority who said they'd hesitate to vote for a female.

The US journalist Dana Goodyear summed up the concerns when Harris was last campaigning for the White House, writing that "a liberal black woman president may present too much of a challenge for mainstream America". It's a sentiment you can imagine the little girl on the bus vowing to disprove.

Those memory lapses may not be dementia. There are other causes

Dr Mark Porter

Nearly half a million people have now been diagnosed with dementia in England, a 5 per cent increase on the year before. It's a huge number but is set to rise further as there are still lots of people who remain undiagnosed. Half of us will be affected in some way, at some stage — either because we get it, we care for a relative who does or, in the cruelest of blows, we face a combination of the two.

Treatment has advanced in recent years and we now have drugs that can slow deterioration, but we are a long way from a cure and the outlook for most, however early they are diagnosed, remains bleak. Many of my patients understand this and sometimes delay seeking help because they don't see the point of a formal diagnosis. However, it's a mistake to put it off. Here's why.

First, symptoms such as memory lapses and confusion may not be due to dementia at all. They could be a clue to another, far more treatable cause. Part of the routine investigation of someone with cognitive impairment will include blood tests looking for vitamin B12 deficiency and an underactive thyroid, both of which are common and easily remedied. And they can pick up other anomalies too — anything from anaemia to deranged calcium and salt levels — that can mimic dementia symptoms.

Depression and anxiety are other common causes of cognitive impairment, and are often missed in older people. And poor vision and hearing exacerbate issues and, where identified, should be corrected with glasses and/or hearing aids.

Indeed, there is evidence that even in people with confirmed dementia wearing a hearing aid can slow progression, with hearing loss now regarded as one of the most important modifiable risk factors (alongside smoking and high blood pressure).

And then there is a sub-group of people with milder symptoms that don't quite meet the criteria for dementia. They may occasionally struggle to remember passwords and the names of their favourite TV programme or actor, but they fare reasonably well on formal testing at a memory clinic. For some this mild cognitive impairment (MCI) will eventually progress to dementia, but for most it will not. Indeed, over a three-year period about a third of people with MCI improve, while another third remain the same. Why some get worse while others don't is always clear but factors might include resolving underlying health issues (such as depression), improving social factors (such as interaction if isolated) and correction of any visual and hearing loss.

Medication is another possible factor. Many older people take lots of different medicines, some of which can have profound effects on the

brain. I have told this story before but it warrants repeating. Many years ago a colleague of mine started a woman in her eighties on a pill (oxybutynin) to help her bladder control. When he rang a couple of weeks later to see how she was faring her husband answered and replied: "Oh her bladder is much better, thank you doctor, but she forgot my name this morning ..."

Other common culprits that can aggravate confusion include sleeping tablets, old-fashioned antihistamines (Piriton), diazepam (Valium), the antidepressant/nerve pain treatment amitriptyline, and opioid painkillers such as codeine.

Finally, there is a small group where a CT scan of the brain may reveal another, sometimes treatable, cause: anything from an old bleed following a

“ Medication can help maintain independence for longer

previous head injury, to fluid on the brain (hydrocephalus) or a tumour.

By the time most people book in to see their GP they, or their families, friends or neighbours, will have been worried for some time, typically months and sometimes years, but occasionally people can become acutely confused and this is concerning. If symptoms develop over hours or days it suggests a more pressing problem ranging from an infection to a stroke or transient ischaemic attack. And people with established dementia can have "off days" due to these same triggers too.

Even if it is confirmed that you or your relative has dementia, early diagnosis still has advantages. We might not have a cure but medication can help to maintain your independence for longer, and the sooner it is started, the greater the benefits are likely to be. Although access to NHS memory clinics (which initiate treatment) and specialist scans is not as easy or fast as it should be in many parts of the country.

However, early diagnosis isn't just about the medical benefits. Confirmation can also help you to access any benefits and social care you are entitled to, and give you and your family time to plan for the future: everything from booking a dream trip to seeking professional advice about legal and financial matters.

There are plenty of situations in medicine where it pays to procrastinate and do nothing — not least because nature is a wonderful healer — but dementia isn't one of them.

Dementia danger signs

- There are a number of different types of dementia and they can cause different symptoms. However, two types — Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia — account for most of the people affected in the UK and, outwardly at least, have much in common.

- While memory loss tends to be more pronounced in the early stages of Alzheimer's, both conditions lead to a gradual and progressive decline in cognitive ability that can affect everything from concentration and navigation skills to speech and being able to carry out everyday tasks such as cooking or dressing.

- For more information on the diagnosis and treatment of dementia, and guidance on the help and support that is available, visit alzheimers.org.uk



Wine gums and

You don't have to be sporty. Load up on leafy greens and take your tea black — you might not win any races but your body will thank you, says Peta Bee

On Friday, the fittest and fastest humans will begin dazzling us with displays of athleticism as the Paris Olympics get under way.

Uppermost in the minds of athletes will be how to fuel their way to success and so unparalleled attention to detail has gone into planning what Team GB's athletes will eat and drink to make it on to the podium. In the athletes' village up to 60,000 meals will be served in a dining hall that seats 3,500 but additional arrangements mean our athletes will not go hungry.

"For this Games what we are offering our athletes nutritionally has gone up another level to previous Olympics," says Wendy Martinson, lead performance nutritionist for Team GB. "Everything in sports science has gone up a notch for Paris and no stone is being left unturned to make sure athletes are fuelled and hydrated optimally." That will include thousands of snacks in the form of energy gels, cereal bars, bananas and wine gums, an array of fluids and any approved ergogenic aid that might provide that winning edge. "In our exclusive Team GB areas we have sleep pods and ice baths alongside snacks and drinks that are available all day so if anyone misses a meal they can grab something," Martinson says. "If athletes don't fuel right they are in trouble." But how do Olympians eat and can we adopt any of their nutrition tricks ourselves?

Chew caffeine gum (or have an espresso)

In his autobiography Mo Farah describes how his typical pre-race routine involved drinking "some coffee to wake me up" 20 minutes before a race. That included the 10,000m final at the London 2012 Olympics when Farah says he took a second espresso to ensure he was "pumped up" for the event. "As I make my way out to the track I feel this massive caffeine high come on," Farah recalls. "I'm buzzing. My hands, my legs — everything is shaking." It worked: he won.

A comprehensive review conducted by leading sports scientists for World Athletics and published in the International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism has since found that there is only enough evidence to show that five supplements enhance performance and caffeine is one of them (the others are creatine, nitrate/beetroot juice, beta-alanine and bicarbonate of soda). Studies have shown that consuming caffeine can prevent fatigue and feelings of pain by blocking a chemical called adenosine that is responsible for making us feel drowsy. In doing so it improves focus, alertness, motivation and reaction

time, and can be helpful in sports from judo to marathon running. It's no wonder athletes are devoted to it.

"A large proportion of athletes in Paris will use caffeine in some form," Martinson says. Caffeine gum is increasingly popular, with research by pharmacologists showing it is absorbed quickly for faster results. You don't have to be an Olympian to reap rewards. In February, exercise scientists from Sheffield Hallam University found that recreational runners who chewed gum supplying 300mg of caffeine 30 minutes before a Saturday morning Parkrun ran an average 1728 seconds faster than those who were given a placebo.

Drink black tea

Approximately 40,000 teabags are among the dietary items dispatched to Paris for members of Team GB as part of what support staff called a "home-from-home strategy". Caffeine-containing drinks including tea and coffee were once considered a fast route to rehydrating for athletes but that theory has long since been overturned with some studies showing tea is as effective at rehydrating as water: useful in a Paris heatwave. Antioxidants in tea could also aid recovery, with researchers from Rutgers University finding that it helps to reduce muscle soreness after intense exercise. "Tea provides fluid and is a source of polyphenols, which are very good for recovery," Martinson says.

Have a few wine gums or jelly beans

Athletes love a sugary treat for an instant energy boost and approximately 35 large boxes of jelly sweets such as wine gums and jelly beans will be delivered to Paris for consumption by Team GB competitors. The attraction is their significant carb content, with 17g of pure carbs in every four wine gums. "Carbohydrate snacks may go in and out of vogue with the general population but they are always very much in vogue with athletes," Martinson says. Just remember that you are not Jake Wightman or Keely Hodgkinson. With an average 170 calories in a 52g pack of wine gums it is easy to pile on the pounds if your sweet tooth takes over.

Take a daily beetroot shot

George Morris, a sports physiology researcher at St Mary's University, Twickenham, who works with Olympic athletes, says that beetroot shots are a popular choice because they contain inorganic dietary nitrates, "one of the few ingredients proven to have an ergogenic or performance-enhancing effect". Nitrates are converted by the body to nitrite and then nitric oxide, which is known to relax and widen

beetroot: eat like an athlete



Beetroot shots improve stamina

blood vessels, leading to better endurance capacity.

One study at the University of Exeter showed that beetroot shots improved stamina by enabling people to exercise for up to 16 per cent longer than usual. Other food sources of nitrates include rocket and baby spinach leaves, radishes, Swiss chard and oak leaf lettuce. Nitrates are also available in capsule form but, as is often the case, real food is the winner. In a study researchers at Indiana University found beetroot juice beat nitrate supplements on various aspects of sports performance and recovery because of the phytonutrients in beetroot which amplify the beneficial effects. "Wherever possible, we would recommend real food over supplements because of the additional nutrients and compounds provided," Morris says.

Rehydrate with electrolytes, isotonic drinks and milk

Paris reaches boiling point in summer with daytime temperatures typically topping 30C in July and August. With added humidity and some competitions scheduled for the hottest part of the day, reducing heat risk and dehydration for athletes is critical. "Team GB have planned for the Paris heat meticulously," Martinson says. "Hydration is important at any Olympics and we will have a vast selection of electrolyte hydration tabs

which are added to water and other fluids as well as cooling ice jackets and ice baths for athletes to use."

Some sports will monitor urine osmolality, a measure of fluid concentration and electrolyte balance and all athletes will be monitored for signs of dehydration. "The body is good at regulating to higher fluid demands but keeping tabs on thirst will be key," Morris says. "Athletes will be instructed to ensure urine stays a pale straw colour, which is an indicator of good hydration."

Isotonic sports drinks containing electrolytes lost in sweat, such as potassium and sodium, will be readily available. "Studies have shown that small amounts of sodium increase the urge to drink, improve palatability and help with fluid retention during intense exercise," Morris says. "But if you are not an elite athlete you can make your own isotonic drink by adding a small pinch of salt to a glass of full-sugar squash."

Milk is another option and a favourite of elite competitors. Researchers at Newcastle University and Middlesex University who gave 18 athletes either 500ml of milk or the same amount of a calorie-matched carb-based drink after a sprint training session found milk to be a more "valuable recovery intervention" because it prevented a drop in muscle power and function.



Caffeine can prevent fatigue



Yoghurt supports muscle recovery

Eat yoghurt for peak performance

It's no coincidence that Team GB has an official yoghurt partner, with unlimited supplies of Danone's GetPRO range of high-protein yoghurt-based snacks available for athletes at holding camps and the team's performance lodge in Paris. Natural yoghurt contains casein, a protein that supports muscle recovery and repair. But the benefits don't end there. Spanish researchers reported last year that yoghurt has multiple benefits for endurance athletes including supporting their immune system and reducing the oxidative stress of exercise. It can even help with the mental side of sport, with a team from Southwest University in China showing that yoghurt which is rich in beneficial "probiotic" bacteria enhances gut health, which seems to regulate pathways linked to exercise-related psychological fatigue in athletes. "There are many health and performance benefits to yoghurt but it doesn't have to be a specific variety of yoghurt to make a difference," Martinson says. "Athletes tend to opt for the plainest and most natural types, such as Greek yoghurt."

“A large proportion of athletes in Paris will use caffeine in some form

Three ways to treat an achilles tendon

1 Perform slow-motion calf raises
The achilles is the largest tendon in the body and its role is to transmit powerful contractions of calf muscles that enable you to walk and run. According to researchers behind the University of Oxford's UK Study of Tendo Achilles, about 11,000 people suffer ruptured achilles each year, so how can you protect them? Calf raises with eccentric loading are designed to stress muscles against gravity and will strengthen the tendon. Stand on tiptoes on the edge of a step or platform, raise your left leg off the platform and then lower your right heel in slow motion towards the end of your ankle range. "Take six seconds from tiptoe to the bottom of the move before returning to the start position," says the sports physiotherapist Paul Hobrough. "By loading the achilles in this way, cells respond with proteins to protect the tendon and make it stronger." Aim for three sets of 15 repetitions on each leg on alternate days.

2 Vary your footwear
Any sudden change in footwear can put strain on the achilles tendon, says the podiatrist Emma McConnachie, spokeswoman for the Royal College of Podiatry. "If you usually wear even a small heel it can shorten your achilles tendon and switching to flat shoes in summer months can lead to achilles pain for some people," she says. That can also happen if you are a runner who has switched from cushioned trainers to minimalist shoes with little support. A recent study from the University of Michigan found that loading of the achilles tendon spiked when runners switched from conventional trainers to those with little or no cushioning. "A gradual transition is important when changing footwear," McConnachie says.

3 Stretch your calf muscles

Tired and tight calf muscles transfer the burden of walking and running to the achilles tendon, resulting in soreness. It is vital to release tension in the calves by stretching them daily, according to the yoga instructor Lexie Williamson. "Your achilles tendons connect the two main calf muscles to the back of your heels," Williamson says. "If you have weak or tight calves you are at risk of the achilles becoming irritated or inflamed, so stretching is very important." Start with the bent-legged dog. On all fours, spread your fingers wide and lift hips towards the ceiling, keeping feet hip-width apart. "Bend the legs deeply to straighten your back. Slowly straighten your legs a little but keep your back straight and hold for 20-30 seconds to feel a deep stretch in the calf muscles."

Peta Bee



health

Do you worry like Gwyneth? Don't make your child anxious

The actress has said that she is worried about her children's generation. **Anna Maxted** asks the experts how to stop yourself — and your children — fretting

Hosting a recent Instagram Q&A for her 8.6 million followers, Gwyneth Paltrow was asked what she worries about most for her children, Apple, 20, and Moses, 18. "I guess one I worry about for both of them is anxiety," she replied. "This is, as we know, the anxious generation. So that's probably what I worry about."

You and me both, Gwyneth. Why did no one tell us we wouldn't worry about our children any less the older they got — we'd actually worry more? In the past Paltrow has spoken of feeling emotional when Apple moved from their home in Montecito, California, to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. "It was horrible. It was truly horrifying," she said. "I was sick to my stomach, bursting into tears." And now she is facing an empty nest as Moses goes across the country to Brown University in Rhode Island after the summer break.

Of course it's counterproductive to

“They have to find a way of working this stuff out for themselves

worry because stressed parents make for tense children. Plus there's always something to be worried about. Far better for them, and us, if we can learn how to stop panicking and break the stress cycle. But how?

Support your young adults but don't overprotect them

If our young adults are struggling, our instinct is to rescue them, according to the consultant clinical psychologist Dr Beth Mosley, author of *Happy Families: How to Protect and Support Your Child's Mental Health*. But ultimately this perpetuates anxiety because our children don't learn how capable they are. "They don't then develop the skills of managing those challenges," she says. Be it heartbreak or a job they don't get, "they have to find a way of working this stuff out for themselves for them to prosper, grow and develop".

We help by "learning to tolerate the pain of things not going so well for your child, not going into rescue mode". Step in too soon and it sends the message that you don't believe



Gwyneth Paltrow, left, with her daughter Apple Martin last year

that your child can manage this on their own. So offer "scaffolding": "be in the background, giving them a sense of 'I'm here if you need me but I believe you can do this'". Mosley listens to her children rather than launching

into panic-driven advice mode. This encourages them to solve problems for themselves — plus, "a parent being interested and not trying to over-correct builds a stronger sense of self".

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Reframe your anxious feelings

The language Mosley uses to help children to manage their anxiety or stress works for her too. “I remind myself that this feeling isn’t telling me that I’m at threat, it’s telling me I’m just about to do something brave,” she says. The aim is that you start to associate anxious feelings with “I’m about to do something brave”, not “something terrible is about to happen”. That reframing is powerful because it gives you more courage and stops you feeling “a victim to anxiety”, Mosley says, adding: “It helps you think, ‘What do I need if I’m going to be brave? I need an encouraging voice, not a voice of self-doubt.’ That little switch you can flip in your head, as a parent and for your child, builds a different approach to dealing with situations that create anxiety.”

Show them you are resilient

When her son was at university, heartbroken after a relationship break-up, Mosley knew he’d worry about her. “Your children might try to protect you from what’s going on in their life because they don’t want to worry you more,” she says. “Help your children understand that you can manage the worry yourself.” Many struggling teens she works with tell her, “I don’t want my mum to know, she’s got enough on her plate.” Mosley tells them, “If your mum understands what’s going on with you, I guarantee she’ll worry less.”

Too often we guilt-trip our children: “If you do this, I won’t sleep tonight!” Mosley notes that sometimes we impose worry on them because we think it will make them take fewer risks. Instead, model the attitude that “things go wrong in life, that’s OK — it’s how we support each other and manage that that’s more important”. Show them you believe nothing is insurmountable. Her son is 19, and when she looks back on anxiety-making situations, “He’s had modelling on how we do this, we don’t completely, utterly freak out ... we think, ‘OK, this is shit, but let’s find a way through this. Let’s see what we can learn.’”

Stop reassuring your anxious child

“Anxiety is phenomenally contagious,” says the consultant clinical psychologist Dr Elizabeth Kilbey, who specialises in child and adolescent mental health. “It is a cycle. Anxious children make anxious parents, anxious parents make anxious children, and round and round we go.”

Research shows that anxious parents can contribute to their children’s anxiety by giving reassurance. “Reassurance feels like you’re being kind,” she says, but ultimately it’s unhelpful.

“It’s underpinning a message that there’s something to be genuinely afraid of, and much of anxiety is built on a perception of something that could happen rather than the reality.” Reassurance doesn’t assuage that concern. “So if your child is worried about going to the dentist and you tell them it will all be OK, they’re no more likely to get to the dentist,” she says. “What anxiety needs is leadership. It needs somebody to take charge of the situation.” Offer support, acknowledging what they’re feeling — “I can see that’s so difficult/anxiety-provoking for you” — followed by a confidence statement: “I know that you can handle this.” Note: not “I think”, but “I know”.

Don’t let them avoid what they’re anxious about

“Anxiety needs to be challenged, unfortunately,” Kilbey says. Research also shows that parents help to perpetuate their child’s anxiety by “parental accommodations”, ie yielding to it. But, “You have to get into the cycle of exposure — challenging the anxiety, which is really uncomfortable. Avoidance and reassurance are the bedrock that maintain the anxiety cycle.” So if you cede to your child’s fear, instead of their going to the dentist and discovering it’s OK, which increases the likelihood of a return visit, “they stay at home, constantly being ridiculously fearful of the dentist”. The same goes for your tendency to avoid what makes you feel anxious. Better to stick with it because once through, you’ll be less anxious, she says. “It’s really important to model that for your children, to show them that that process is possible.”

Try to pinpoint what you’re anxious about and deal with it

A friend was going through an anxious time with work. His wife noted that whenever their teens called him, he’d answer with the words, “What’s wrong?” Kilbey says: “Anxiety is very subtle. It can creep in slowly.” You often don’t notice its symptoms. It can take another person to make you aware that, for instance, every time you pick up the phone, you assume the worst.

What can we do? “It’s about acknowledging that we are feeling anxious.” Recognise it, and know what “activates” it (it’s rare that we’re anxious about everything) and when it’s starting to rise. Then develop some strategies, such as talking to a friend, she says, “because it’s really hard to contain somebody’s anxiety — which can become this large, very contagious swelling of emotion — if you yourself are feeling overwhelmed.”

Don’t have cyclical conversations about the same worry

My teen overheard me talking about a relative’s health, was rattled and kept wanting to discuss it. “Anxiety is about things we don’t feel we’re in control of. It’s that ‘what if?’” Kilbey says. Worry often has a ruminative component. “It can become loud background noise and it’s hard to quieten that down or distract yourself, especially for children, because that amount of mental control is hard.”

In particular if there’s no new information, try to take their mind off those thoughts instead of engaging with their content, Kilbey says. You might say: “Are those thoughts popping up for you again? That must be really difficult. Do you want to have a conversation about something else? Shall we watch something?”

It can also be useful to ask children to write a list of what they can definitely control, what they might be able to control and what they can’t control. “The weather’s a brilliant example,” Kilbey says. “We have no control over that at all. So is there any point ... worrying about it?” But we can control what we wear. “Let’s focus on that bit, then.” She says: “The mind will want to churn on something. It’s about what we give it to focus on, and building up the skills to consciously direct our attention.”

Lessons in making a wedding cake — when you’re a complete novice

Here’s what I learnt the hard way, says Ben Rowell

At a wedding recently I sat next to an actress turned TV cook whose latest book was on cakes, so naturally we fell to examining that day’s centrepiece.

“Quite generic sponge. Not really fresh. Not actually sure what the flavour is,” she said.

“Peel-off icing,” I said, throwing mine over my shoulder.

“Mind you,” she said, lowering her voice, “I’ve never made a wedding cake. I’ve always refused. I even said no to my best friend and we nearly fell out for ever.”

“Crumbs,” I said, silently adding: “Can you call yourself a baker if you haven’t made a wedding cake?”

“But it would ruin a whole week! It would definitely ruin the weekend and the day itself. It would be horrendous!”

“Tell me about it,” I said, affecting my confectioner’s thousand-yard stare. When my sister was getting married she asked me to make a cake for her wedding. She was probably just trying to find a role for a middle brother. And because bloody *Bake Off* was then at its height and because, after all, it was my sister’s wedding, there would need to be tiers (fruit cake then sponge) and piping and ... little statuettes. Come to think of it, had I ever made a sponge?

I am a competent cook, with a style described by one friend as “violent”. I did once make a croquebouche (profiterole tower) at a party from scratch while drunk but that was an emergency, a unicorn event. Could I repeat it for my sister’s wedding?

I made a test chocolate cake. Slathering the sponge with warm ganache, the bastard split apart vertically into unequal chunks. I sent a photo to my baking adviser, specially appointed for her romantic novels set in a bakery/café, and she replied: “Oh my God. Give up now — seriously!” So I sacked her. Henceforth I would rely on my own learnings.

It’s not about the sponge ...

I won’t bore you with my six-week apprenticeship in sponge-making. Obviously I was doing lemon and chocolate (most popular flavours, Google said). Picture a kitchen filled with washing up, floor to ceiling, end to end, a fat man trapped in the middle in a sugar coma. And still the cakes were only so-so. A house guest found me at 6am one morning, icing bag in hand, telling a cake on a turntable to eff off. “You’ve become a perfectionist!” she exclaimed. I was just trying to avoid disappointing people. At a particular low point I found myself in my local craft store (ribbons? Little men?) and spotted — lo! — it had a baking counter.

“Good morning. I’ve got to make a wedding c... Hold on, what are all these polystyrene things?”

“Cake dummies,” said the lady. “If you have tiers, they save weight. The real cakes stay in the kitchen.”

What?

“Is this your first wedding cake?” she asked kindly.

I came to rely on this lady, “Baking

Ben”, for technical advice and moral support. Still I ignored the idea of bought-sponge as beneath me, and her strong suggestion that I use fondant throughout as beneath both of us.

Another stroke of luck was picking up a complete set of cake tins, plus other kit, at a boot fair for £30 from a lady who was retiring her own wedding cake business. What was the hardest bit, I asked. “Oh, the transport. Definitely.” Poor dear, I thought she was just getting on.

It’s the transport, you moron

Cakes freshly made and frozen, then filled, then iced (lemon buttercream and pale lemon royal, Callebaut white chocolate curls), they were packed into military-grade cake-carriers filled with polystyrene chips, and then we set off for Somerset on the hottest day of the year. In a traffic jam on the M5 I checked the temperature in the boot: 32C. On arrival, the cakes were rushed into a spare fridge in a barn, the chocolate curls slightly melted. No problem: on advice I’d brought more, frozen.

I forgot to warn the teenagers partying in the barn overnight not to munch my cake-toppings (crystallised citrus, chocolates). The next morning, in my disappointment with myself, I managed to pull out a fridge shelf along with the massive fruitcake, the shelf dropping onto the lemon cake below. So I had to re-ice and bellowed at my wife: “White chocolate buttons, now. Taunton petrol station. Go!” Then I carried the cakes, individually, to the marquee 400 yards away. The marquee was already 28C. It was 10am. I cut dowels, put on pillars, assembled the cake. Checked for level. Pinned on a cartoon topper drawn by a political cartoonist friend. Admired disproportion of the whole. By midday I had already sweated through both my wedding shirts. I downed a pint of cold champagne.

5pm. The cake was probably in better shape than its maker. And I had one duty left: to help my sister serve the cake. I don’t think anyone believed that I made the thing. Two women quizzed me: cake syrup? (Yes.) Lemon curd? Recipes? We calculated that I used 24 lemons in one cake. And then I got a handshake. It’s a rule never to take compliments unless from professionals, but these women, mother and daughter, were better than that: they were WI members.

You make one cake ...

Wedding cakes cost from £300 to £1,000 and up. Your typical four-tier, professionally made, elegant fondant sponge cake is £650. And if you’re foolish enough to make one, how on earth would you refuse other friends and relations? I’ve made four more and each has made me a gentler, more precise cook. They also brought a tiny dollop of joy. I’ve retired now (before Gen A start getting married). At my own wedding a couple of years ago, we didn’t even have a cake.

“I sent a photo to my baking adviser who texted back: ‘Give up now — seriously!’”



times2

Are you a Hot-Desk Hazmat or an Agenda Bender at work?

There's a slew of new nicknames for colleagues — none of them flattering. **Stuart Heritage** reveals his own list

A new study has revealed that British office workers are coming up with more and more nicknames to describe their colleagues. The study, conducted by the office meeting platform Meeting Canary, has unearthed names such as Negatron (for the office pessimist), the Duck Shuffler (for someone who messes up a done deal) and the Testiculator (for someone who waves their arms and talks bollocks a lot). This is all well and good, but perhaps we can find more current examples of office nicknames.

The Hot-Desk Hazmat

Back in the old days when everyone had their own desk, you at least knew that whatever filth you found in the morning was your own. Sadly, thanks to the Hot-Desk Hazmat, this is no longer the case. Have you ever got to work and found your desk covered with teetering piles of paper? Have you ever found your chair broken or your mouse sticky? Have you ever been gripped by the nauseating realisation that someone has eaten a grapefruit at work and neglected to wipe down their screen afterwards? This is because you work with a Hot-Desk Hazmat. You have my sympathy.

The Parental Pitstopper

You've just had a baby. Your kindly employer has given you a generous parental leave package. And yet you will not go away. Every week you'll turn up, apparently just to "check in", even though you are physically exhausted and covered in milky vomit and your colleagues don't need the hassle of constantly keeping you in the loop. You refuse to let go of your old life or admit that the place won't fall apart if you're not around. You are a Parental Pitstopper and you've just realised how boring it is to look after a baby all the time. Join the club.

The Phone-o-phobe

It's wrong to tar an entire generation with the same brush but, generally speaking, the Phone-o-phobe will be younger than you. They may be sharp, bright and willing to do anything for the job but that will all stop the moment you ask them to pick up a telephone and speak to a stranger out loud using their voice. Maybe they'll try to sneak around the request with

This keyboard's sticky — he's been using it

She made that meeting take twice as long



“Why are you being so evasive, Zoom Shadow? What have you got to hide?”

an email or text, or maybe they'll just shrink away in fear and completely neglect to make contact at all. Either way, you'll end up hectoring them about it like a ghost from the ancient past, which isn't a great look.

The Blunderbuss

In the name of equality, the Blunderbuss will almost certainly be older than you. They are so old, in fact, that they have stopped learning how to do new parts of their job and you're starting to suspect that they're doing that on purpose. On TikTok they call this sort of behaviour “weaponised incompetence”: the act of pretending not to know how things work so that others will do something for you. A Blunderbuss is easy to mock but be warned, this phase comes for us all. Yours sincerely, someone who still demands that everyone emails everything to them even though it would take seconds to figure out Slack.

The Home Office Hermit

Nobody remembers what the Home Office Hermit looks like. There was a time when they might have made an effort to physically come to work, but that passed long ago. Now they exist as digital information only, as words on a screen or noise through a speaker. Does the Home Office Hermit hate you? Would you recognise them if you saw them in the street? Nobody knows. Either way, when the Home Office Hermit does

actually come in, remember to freeze in your tracks at first sight, like when a mysterious stranger enters a Wild West saloon.

The Zoom Shadow

When a big online meeting ends, quickly poll everyone about who was the most suspicious character. I guarantee you that it'll be whoever blurred their background on Zoom. Why are you being so evasive, Zoom Shadow? What have you got to hide? What could possibly be behind you that you don't want the world to discover? Nude photos? Nuclear codes? The bodies of all your victims? Everyone else has learnt how to curate a selectively revealing backdrop, yet you'd rather shroud your entire workspace in a nefarious fog. We're on to you, Zoom Shadow. May God have mercy on your soul.

The Zoomnesiac

Listen, we all struggled with Zoom at first. Back when the pandemic hit, it was a new technology that we all had to learn together to keep the wheels of productivity turning. But here's the problem: most of us learnt it quickly, yet each time the Zoomnesiac has to join a video conference, it's like the very first time they've had to do it. They'll come on muted. They'll share the wrong screen. They'll need the chat function explained to them over and over again. Sometimes, if you're lucky, the Zoomnesiac will incorrectly

end the call and then slag everyone off on-mic. That, and only that, makes their existence worthwhile.

The Staregazer

While we're on the subject of Zoom, a quick word about Staregazers. Since videoconferencing was introduced, everyone has grown used to people not making true eye contact with each other because they're looking into the eyes of the person on the screen. But the Staregazer has somehow trained themselves to stare directly into their webcam for the entire duration of a meeting, so all you get from them is unbroken eye contact. It's like they're boring straight into your very soul. There is something genuinely chilling about the Staregazer, as if you're having a meeting with a diagnosed psychopath. Please, just gawp blankly at the screen like the rest of us.

The Agenda Bender

Finally, an oldie but a goodie. Put simply, the Agenda Bender is someone who enjoys making meetings last longer than is required. Maybe they'll go off on a tangent. Maybe they'll ask a question nobody else needs the answer to. Maybe they'll ask for the entire meeting to be summarised, even though they've been sitting through it like everyone else. If you've got actual work to do, the Agenda Bender needs to burn in hell as rapidly as possible.

Nick Merriman is under no illusions. “Widening the audience is what I was hired to do,” he says. Five months into his new job, the chief executive of English Heritage (EH) is surveying his domain — or at least a massive medieval chunk of it, towering over the white cliffs of Kent.

We are at Dover Castle, where EH has just opened a new attraction allowing visitors to explore the network of tunnels built to defend the besieged castle during the First Barons’ War (1215–17, in case you’d forgotten), as well as the barracks in which soldiers lived — literally cheek by jowl, two to a bed — in the 18th century. It’s been brought to life with big screens, interactive exhibits and (my favourite) an adventure playground in which all the equipment is ingeniously based on the machinery used during the average 13th-century siege. All of which bears out Merriman’s thesis that, in the heritage world, “the best way to diversify and widen your audience is to concentrate on getting families coming”.

That mantra worked for him in his previous jobs, running the Manchester Museum and then the Horniman Museum in south London, which was proclaimed Museum of the Year in 2022 after he instigated a radical “reset agenda” prompted partly by the climate crisis and the Black Lives Matter movement. But although he describes EH as “a national museum that happens to be dispersed across 400 sites”, it’s obviously a vastly bigger challenge, with its annual turnover of £140 million, 6 million visitors each year and 1.2 million members.

And challenge is the right word. Since 2015 its trustees and management have been dealing with a kind of ticking time bomb. That was the year in which EH cast aside its government-quango shackles and became an independent charity that would eventually have to sustain itself financially. The “eventually” happened last year, when government funding that had been gradually reduced, year on year, finally ended.

“Now we have to raise that £140 million all by ourselves, every year, through membership, ticket sales, sponsorship and all the usual cafés and shops,” Merriman says. “We are increasing our efforts to attract philanthropists and legacies but it’s a big task. And a bad-weather summer doesn’t help.”

There’s also the legacy of Covid. “But not just Covid,” Merriman says. “We are also in a cost of living crisis and working to mitigate that in different ways. For example, we have set up a partnership with the Trussell Trust to offer free tickets to EH sites for people using food banks. We offer discounts to people who come to our sites by public transport rather than car. And with Hyundai we are offering travel bursaries to schools struggling to pay transport costs for visits to our sites.”

Merriman claims that “in the next couple of years we will be back to pre-Covid visitor numbers — it’s just taken longer than people expected”. Nevertheless, he knows that he’s up against some tough competition. EH is vying — not just for visitors but also members, sponsors and private donors — with the National Trust, the Canals and Waterways Trust, the national



‘This is our last chance to save Stonehenge’

New English Heritage chief executive Nick Merriman tells **Richard Morrison** about his big challenges, from the controversial A303 tunnel to the culture wars

museums and galleries, and all the commercial visitor attractions.

“I was quite involved with the National Trust before taking this job up,” Merriman says. “I think we both want to see ourselves as collaborators rather than competitors. In many ways we do complement each other. They are more about the countryside, coastline and historic houses. We’re about the deeper history of England, going back to prehistoric times.”

Maybe, but there aren’t many people who have the money and enough passion for visiting old places to take out annual memberships to both organisations, are there? “It’s true, people do have to make choices,” Merriman concedes. “Quite a few people tell me they flip their membership between EH and the



Above: Stonehenge. Top: Nick Merriman

National Trust depending on where they are going on holiday. A lot of our sites don’t get the public profile they deserve. We have about 100 sites for which we charge admission but only 20 of those get significant visitor figures and earn income. And, of those, Stonehenge gets more visitors and income than all the rest put together.”

Ah yes, Stonehenge. A huge money-spinner for EH but also, for the past 30 years, a source of seemingly unresolvable disputes and negative headlines, as the row over the proposed tunnel for the nearby A303 drags on and on. Can Merriman, who trained as an archaeologist, understand why other archaeologists are up in arms?

“I understand the worries but there are misconceptions about the archaeological damage that tunnelling

might do,” he says. “For most of the tunnel’s length it will be far too deep to impact on any archaeology, which is likely to be within a metre or two of the surface. It’s only at the western exit that there’s cause for concern. But the fact is that archaeology is, by definition, destruction. It only ever proceeds by excavation. And the excavations around the tunnel entrances could hugely increase our knowledge about the site.”

And presumably, like his EH predecessors, Merriman believes a tunnel will bring many more benefits than disadvantages? “Absolutely. This very ugly road would be removed, the prehistoric landscape round the stones would be restored and there would be big economic benefits to

“**All we are trying to do is seek to tell a broader and better history**”

southwest England in having the road widened. I really feel that this is the last opportunity to sort this out for a generation.”

The future of the Stonehenge landscape is one contentious issue he faces. Another is the link between Britain’s historic sites and the slave trade — and how much this is emphasised in the way that a site’s history is presented. The National Trust has become sourly entangled in that debate over the past few years. Merriman contends that the issue is less applicable to EH’s properties.

“The vast majority of our sites are actually pre-slavery and pre-empire,” he says. “So the complex historical issues we present are much more to do with civil war, religious persecution, the dissolution of the monasteries and so on. Where we do have a property with links to the British Empire — for example, Osborne House [Queen Victoria’s summer residence on the Isle of Wight, which is full of references to India and the British Raj] — I regard the future interpretation of those sites as a really positive opportunity.”

An opportunity to show that English history, and therefore English Heritage, is relevant to someone whose own family heritage is not English? “Exactly,” Merriman replies. “So, for example, if your family history is from the Indian subcontinent, the relationship between Britain and India and the close relationship that Victoria, the Empress of India, had with her Indian servants, is a really positive story to discover.”

Of course those on the other side of the so-called culture wars might say that such an emphasis distorts British history in order to conjure up a sort of false inclusivity. Merriman rejects that view. “All we are trying to do, those of us engaged in heritage interpretation, is seek to tell a broader and better history because it is more nuanced,” he says. “No way are we trying to distort history. One of the hallmarks of EH is that everything we do is absolutely academically rigorous. But there are other stories that haven’t been told. And one happy consequence of doing that is that people who don’t currently feel that EH sites are for them might begin to feel included.”

The horror show of air travel for the disabled

Ben Dowell TV review



Sophie Morgan's Fight to Fly

Channel 4
★★★★☆

There was an exquisite moment at the end of **Sophie Morgan's Fight to Fly** (Channel 4) when the presenter and disability activist took to the skies and experienced zero gravity, her wheelchair, normally her constant companion, floating free of her body. You probably needed a 34in ultra-wide screen TV to fully capture Morgan's Cheshire Cat grin.

Back on earth it is a very different story. Disabled people may have made progress in some areas of public transportation — trains, Morgan showed us, can be surprisingly

wheelchair-friendly now. But air travel? That is the next front.

Aviation is a competitive industry and, if you travel economy, seats are small and cramped, which might be annoying enough for the non-disabled, but for the people with disabilities sent undercover by the programme, it was a horror show. Most of the time, staff tried their best. It is not a normal human instinct to be unkind to someone in difficulty, but the main problem was the apparent lack of training in many cases and inadequate equipment. However, an online video reportedly showing Stansted ground staff berating and patronising a female wheelchair user was horrific, though it allowed Morgan to demonstrate her journalistic chops by putting the airport's highly discomforted accessibility manager on the spot.

Other video showed wheelchairs being broken, one disabled person claiming they felt treated like "luggage" and a young man crawling to an onboard lavatory. Another showed two passengers hearing an intercom announcement saying that their wheelchairs were the reason for the flight's delay. This, said Morgan, was "cruel" and it was hard to disagree. How many able-bodied holidaymakers have happily walked towards an aircraft exit and not noticed the wheelchair user left in their seat?



Sophie Morgan proved a forceful advocate for disabled people

There are a lot of these sorts of campaigning films on TV and it was hard not to be mindful of the fact that a typical one these days might examine the environmental impact of flying. But given that so many of us still take to the skies, there is no reason why disabled people shouldn't enjoy the same rights as everyone. And there is no more forceful advocate than Morgan.

Disabled following a motoring accident when she was 18, she has campaigned ever since and brought her plain speaking and sometimes swery game to this programme. Describing access as the "biggest bitch of my life", she said she was determined to prove the dictum that "well-behaved women seldom make history". She also spoke from the heart, showing the pain caused by one moment of thoughtlessness. Even being called "special" on a form carried a particular sting, she said.

Her point that we have normalised the discrimination of disabled people was hard to deny, but her programme was careful to end on a positive note. She showed what is possible when visiting a design facility with a prototype that simply lifted the bottom of an airline seat to allow a wheelchair to slide into the vacant space. After seeing that, her smile was almost as beatific as when she was floating free and weightless.

Radio choice

Ben Dowell



Crossing Continents

Radio 4, 9pm

The Palestinian slogan "From the river to the sea" has become better known in recent months, and its emotive use at demonstrations continues to be hotly debated. In this two-part programme the reporter Tim Whewell, above, travels from the River Jordan — the river of the chant — to the Mediterranean — the sea. It is a tiny stretch of land — little more than an hour by car with no stops. The shortest line doesn't even pass through Gaza. However, events are a subject everyone he meets — shepherds and teachers, soldiers and gardeners, artists and activists — has a view on.

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5.00am James Hanson with **Early Breakfast**
6.00 Rosie Wright and Stig Abell with **Times Radio Breakfast** **10.00** Matt Chorley
1.00pm Ed Vaizey. The Conservative peer and former MP sits in bringing his take on the day's news **2.00** Jane Garvey and Fi Glover. Jane and Fi's trademark entertaining style plus live discussion on the day's news **4.00** John Pinaar with **Times Radio Drive** **7.00** The Evening Edition with Kait Borsary **10.00** Darryl Morris **1.00am** The Story **1.30** Highlights from Matt Chorley **2.00** The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Gaby Roslin Breakfast Show. With guest Michael Palin **9.30** Gary Davies. Gary Davies sits in for Vernon Kay **12.00** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** Scott Mills. With guest Marisha Wallace **4.00** Sara Cox **6.30** Sara Cox's Half Wower **7.00** Jo Whitley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30** Jo Whitley **9.00** The Jazz Show with Jamie Cullum. The singer Hohen Ford talks about her musical beginnings **10.00** Trevor Nelson's Magnificent **7 10.30** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation. Fareedah Aleem shares her Musical Youth **12.00** OJ Borg **3.00am** Class of '84 (r) **3.30** Class of '84 (r) **4.00** Owain Wyn Evans

Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
 Petruc Trellayev explores the fascinating history of the Roman Ford of Vindolanda, which today is one of Europe's most important Roman archaeological sites
9.30 Essential Classics
 Georgia Mann plays the best in classical music with discoveries and surprises rubbing shoulders with familiar favourites
1.00pm Classical Live
 Tom McKinney revisits the best of the current season of Proms concerts. The Halle performs music by James MacMillan and Mahler's much-loved 5th Symphony. Starting this edition, a concert of chamber music by Beethoven given by the Juilliard Quartet in Tokyo featuring both finales in one concert to his late string quartet in B flat. Mendelssohn (*Hebrides Overture*); Beethoven (*String Quartet No 13* in B flat, Op 130; *Grosse Fuge* in B flat, Op 133); James MacMillan (*Timotheus, Bacchus and Cecilia*); and Gustav Mahler (*Symphony No 5*)

4.00 Composer of the Week:

Silvestre Revueltas
 Kate Molleson and Alejandro Madrid explore Silvestre Revueltas's friendship with fellow composer Carlos Chavez. Revueltas (*Colorines; Batik; Cuauhahuac*; String Quartet No 4 "Musica der Feria"; *Redes* — Part 1 "The Child's Funeral")
5.00 In Tune
 Live music and interviews from the world's finest classical musicians
7.00 Live BBC Proms 2024
 The BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales, Crouch End Festival Chorus and Ryan Bancroft perform Verdi's *Requiem* with a stunning line-up of soloists. Presented by Penny Gore, from the Royal Albert Hall, London. Verdi (*Requiem*)
8.45 New Generation Artists
 Geneva Lewis performs Busoni's Violin Sonata No 2, a late romantic work seldom heard, which has its roots in the music of Beethoven and in the chorales of Busoni's idol JS Bach
10.15 Live BBC Proms 2024
 The counter-tenor Jakub Jozef Orlinski joins the ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro for a programme of early Baroque music, including Monteverdi, Cavalli and Strozzi. Presented by Hannah French, from the Royal Albert Hall, London. Monteverdi (*L'incoronazione di Poppea* — "E pur io toro qui"; *Voglio di vita uscir*); Marini (*Per ogni sorte di strumenti musicale*, Op 22 — *Passacaglia*); Caccini (*Le nuove musiche* — "Amarilli, mia bella"); Frescobaldi (*Arie musicali*, Book 1 — "Cosi' mi disprezzate"); Kerll (*Sonata for two violins and continuo* in F); Strozzi (*Cantate, ariette e duetti*, Op 2 — "L'amante consolato"); Cavalli (*Pompeo Magno* — "Incomprendibil nome"); Pallavicino (*Demetrio* — *Sinfonia*); Netti (*La Filli* — "Misero core"; *La Filli* — "Si, si, si, scioglia si"; *La Filli* — "Dolcissime catene")
 Sartorio (*Antonino e Pompeiano* — "La certezza di sua fede"; *Netti (L'Adamiro* — "Quanto piu la donna invecchia"; *L'Adamiro* — "Son vecchia, pazienza"); Jarzebski (*Canzoni e concerti* — *Tamburetta*); and Morattelli (*La faretra smarrita* — "Lungi dai nostri cor")
11.45 Round Midnight
 Soweto Kinch is joined by the UK tuba player Theon Cross, who gives the saxophonist Sonny Rollins his flowers. Plus, there's a new release from pianist Ashley Henry, as well as music from Alan Barnes, Petter Eldh, NALEDI, Tim Garland and Seonaid Aitken

12.30am Through the Night
 Featuring performances of music by Lidholm, Lang, Lassus, Wolfe and Martin

Radio 4

FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz
5.30am News Briefing
5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.45 Farming Today
6.00 Today
 News and analysis with Mishal Husain and Nick Robinson
9.00 The Life Scientific
 Professor of Practice in Engineering for Sustainable Development at Kings College London, Dawn Bonfield, speaks to Jim Al-Khalili about inclusive engineering (5/7)
9.30 Inside Health
 Quest to demystify health issues (1/6)
10.00 Woman's Hour
 Nuala McGovern presents the magazine offering a female perspective on the world
11.00 Screenshot
 Ellen E Jones and Mark Kermode celebrate Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (3/6) (r)
11.45 Child
 India Rakusen explores the complicated subject of nutrition (7/27) (r)
12.04pm Call You and Yours
1.00 The World at One
1.45 Escape from the Maze
 The IRA tells a mother they must take away her 12-year-old son (7/10)
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Drama: The Words
 By Maryam Hamidi An interpreter is reunited with a boy she helped seek asylum, and they reflect on their shared experiences. Starring George Haffari and Shireen Farkhoy
3.00 The Gatekeepers
 An Ethiopian academic who holds Meta partly responsible for the death of his father (7/8) (r)
3.30 Beyond Belief
 How poetry can bridge the gap between the physical and metaphysical worlds (4/8)
4.00 Art That Conquered the World: The Hay Wain
 How Constable's painting became one of the most famous in the world
4.30 You're Dead to Me
 Exploring LGBTQ life and culture during the Weimar Republic (3/13) (r)
5.00 PM
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Rhysearch
 The comedian Rhys James considers changes in population (5/5) (r)
7.00 The Archers
 Alistair faces humiliation, while Lily gets a secret
7.15 Front Row
 Arts programme

8.00 The Today Debate

Mishal Husain presents topical discussion
8.45 In Touch
 News for people who are blind or partially sighted. Presented by Peter White
9.00 Crossing Continents
 Tim Whewell presents the first of two editions in which he explores the contested land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. See **Radio Choice**
9.30 The Bottom Line
 The business of private education (7/8) (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
 With Julian Worricker
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Yellowface
 By Rebecca F Kuang (7/10)
11.00 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
12.00 News and Weather
12.30am Child
 India Rakusen explores the complicated subject of nutrition (7/27) (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only
8.00am Miracles R Us **8.30** Dark Matter **8.45** Why Mummy Swears **9.30** A Walk of One's Own: Virginia Woolf on Foot **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** A Good Read **10.30** Erin's Model World **11.00** Julie Enfield Investigates — Terminus **11.30** Detective **12.00** Greying **12.30pm** The Goon Show **1.00** Miracles R Us **1.30** Dark Matter **1.45** Why Mummy Swears **2.00** Quote — Unquote **2.30** A Whole 'Nother Story **3.00** Rogue Herries **4.00** A Good Read **4.30** Erin's Model World **5.00** Julie Enfield Investigates — Terminus **5.30** Detective **6.00** Greying **6.30** The Goon Show **7.00** Miracles R Us. By Lesley Bruce **7.30** Dark Matter. By Michelle Paver **7.45** Why Mummy Swears. By Gill Sims **8.00** Quote — Unquote. With Georgie Morrell, Lissa Evans, and Daliso Chaponda **8.30** A Whole 'Nother Story. Jenny returns from America. Last in the series **9.00** Rogue Herries. By Hugh Walpole **10.00** Comedy Club: Scott Bennett: Stuff. Stand-up show recorded at The Stand in Newcastle **10.30** The Consultants. Comedy sketches with Neil Edmond. From 2003 **10.45** Warhouses of Letters. Comedy starring Stephen Fry and Daniel Rigby **11.00** Clare in the Community. By Harry Venning and David Ramsden **11.30** Dave Podmore's World of Cricket. Comedy with Christopher Douglas

Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909
5.00am Wake Up to Money **6.00** 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Chris Warburton **11.00** Naga Munchetti **1.00pm** Gethin Jones **4.00** 5 Live Drive **7.00** 5 Live Olympics **8.00** 5 Live Sports **9.00** 5 Live Live **9.30** 5 Live Sport **10.00** 5 Live Rugby League **10.30** Gordon Smart **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz
5.00am Early Sports Breakfast **6.00** Breakfast with Jeff Stelling **10.00** Jim White and Simon Jordan **1.00pm** Hawksbee and Baker **4.00** Drive with Andy Goldstein and Darren Bent **7.00** Kick Off **10.00** Sports Bar **1.00am** Extra Time with Paul Ross

6 Music

Digital only
5.00am Nathan Shepherd **7.30** Nemone **10.30** Mary Anne Hobbs **1.00pm** Craig Charles **4.00** Huw Stephens **7.00** New Music Fix Daily **9.00** Riley & Coe **11.00** 6 Music Artist in Residence: Wolf Alice **12.00** 6 Music's Indie Forever **1.00am** Masterstapes **1.30** Masterstapes **2.00** Love, Death and the Lady: The Life and Music of Shirley Collins **3.00** 6 Music Artist in Residence: Wolf Alice **4.00** The 6 Music Playlist

Virgin Radio

Digital only
6.30am Nick Grimshaw on The Chris Evans Breakfast Show **10.00** The Ryan Tubridy Show **1.00pm** Jayne Middlemiss **4.00** Ricky Wilson **7.00** Bam **10.00** Olivia Jones **1.00am** Sean Goldsmith **4.00** Steve Denyer

Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz
6.30am Classic FM Breakfast with Aled Jones **9.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour with Aled Jones **10.00** Alexander Armstrong **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minihall **4.00** Margherita Taylor **7.00** Relaxing Evenings **10.00** Calm Classics **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00** Early Breakfast

television & radio

Viewing Guide

Ben Dowell
London '48: How Britain Saved the Olympics
Channel 5, 9pm

Top pick
With Hitler's Berlin Games of 1936 leaving what this programme rather euphemistically calls a "sour taste", the

Olympics were in the doldrums after the Second World War. The planned events in Tokyo in 1940 and London in 1944 did not go ahead for reasons that do not need to be stated and by 1948 the public appetite wasn't exactly insatiable. Most people in this country were either grieving, piecing together their lives or repairing their

hollowed-out cities. But guess what? We still had the pluck to host the event, London meeting the challenge with what became known as the "Austerity Games". This rundown of those days tells the story of its inception in the face of press hostility. Twelve thousand tonnes of German bombs had dropped on London and

Britain was also heavily in debt, owing our allies the United States \$110 billion in today's money. Our bodies were broken too, with athletes having far less knowledge about nutrition than we do today. Even if we had the savvy, there was little food to go around. Poignantly we hear about hard-pressed families donating an

extra loaf to competing British athletes. Unsurprisingly, our showing was not great and the Americans — fed on lots of red meat — did better. Our best performances were in the nautical events — sailing and rowing — where one of the medallists was Ran Laurie, father of the actor Hugh. All in all, a jelly good show.

Midsomer Murders

ITV1, 8pm
Neil Dudgeon's DCI Barnaby and his sidekick DS Winter (Nick Hendrix) are flour-deep in the world of artisanal baking in the latest instalment of the tongue-in-cheek detective show. The intrigue surrounds the baker Tom Larkson and

his pâtissière wife Chrissie, who have revamped her family's old water mill in Lower Blissingham with a state-of-the-art water turbine, bringing the glamorous couple huge success and a dedicated online following. Many of the old village businesses are now struggling, traffic has increased and resentment is rising.

	BBC1	BBC2	ITV1	Channel 4	Channel 5
Early	6.00am Breakfast 9.30 Rip Off Britain. A woman explains how she had to cook Christmas dinner on a camping stove (r) 10.15 Expert Witness. A bio-archaeologist helps police investigate a body found in a lake (r) 10.45 Close Calls: On Camera. A group of students face life-threatening weather on a hike (r) 11.15 Homes Under the Hammer. Featuring properties in Shropshire, St Albans and Burnley (AD) 12.15pm Bargain Hunt. From Oswestry, Shropshire (r) 1.00 BBC News at One: Weather 1.35 BBC Regional News: Weather 1.45 BBC News at One: Weather 2.00 Rick Stein's Cornwall. Rick boards the King Harry ferry (r) (AD) 2.30 Animal Park. Ben Fogle and Kate Humble meet a new pancake tortoise (r) (AD) 3.00 Escape to the Country. A newlywed couple look to escape south London and set down roots in the stunning countryside of Cumbria (r) (AD) 3.45 The Repair Shop. Items include a pair of racing boots, a 1960s electric organ and a grandfather clock (r) (AD) 4.30 The Finish Line. Quiz hosted by Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene (r) 5.15 Pointless. Quiz show hosted by Alexander Armstrong and Stephen Mangan (r) 6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather 6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather	6.30am Bargain Hunt. A special show about film, TV and theatre collectibles (r) (AD) 7.15 Escape to the Country. A retired couple from Belfast want to move closer to their family in Herefordshire (r) 8.00 Sign Zone: The Great British Sewing Bee. The semi-final sees the contenders inspired by three design icons — Balenciaga, Gaultier and Chanel (r) (AD, SL) 9.00 BBC News 12.15pm Politics Live. The latest stories from Westminster and beyond 1.00 Impossible. Rick Edwards hosts the quiz in which contestants compete for the chance to win £10,000 with a single "impossible" answer knocking them out for the day (r) 1.45 Make Me a Dealer. Contestants from Essex and Shropshire take part in the antiques challenge, presented by Paul Martin. The pair are shown the tricks of the trade before an auction showdown (r) 2.30 Live The Hundred: Oval Invincibles Women v Birmingham Phoenix Women. (Start-time 2.45). Coverage of the opening match of the season, which comes from The Kia Oval, London. The Invincibles won this title in 2021 and 2022, but failed to progress beyond the group stage last year. Birmingham will be looking to improve this time around after finishing bottom of the table without a win in 2023	6.00am Good Morning Britain. News, current affairs and lifestyle features 9.00 Lorraine. Entertainment, current affairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and celebrity gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly 10.00 This Morning. A mix of celebrity chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather 12.30pm Loose Women. More celebrity interviews and topical debate from a female perspective 1.30 ITV News; Weather 1.55 Regional News; Weather 2.00 Cooking with the Stars. Chris Eubank, Jason Watkins, Claire Richards and Indiyah Polack turn their attention to Indian cuisine. Presented by Emma Willis and Tom Allen (r) (AD) 3.00 Tenable. Quiz show hosted by Warwick Davis. A team of five siblings take on a series of top 10 list questions (r) 4.00 Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jackpot (r) 5.00 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as contestants from London, Leeds, Kent and Hertfordshire take on one of the ruthless Chasers in the hope of taking home a big cash prize (r) 6.00 Regional News; Weather 6.30 ITV News; Weather	6.25am Cheers (r) 7.15 Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) 9.05 Frasier (r) (AD) 11.05 Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes. Table-tennis player Bly Twomey gives an insight into her life (r) (AD) 11.10 Undercover Boss USA. Baseball star Deion Sanders meets inspiring sports coaches (r) 12.05pm Channel 4 News Summary 12.10 A New Life in the Sun. A fire door threatens the launch of a restaurant in France (r) 1.10 Car SOS. Restoring a 1997 Peugeot 106 Rallye (r) (AD) 2.10 Countdown. Katharine Merry is in Dictionary Corner 3.00 A Place in the Sun. A couple search for a suitable holiday home on Greece's south-west Peloponnese peninsula (r) 4.00 The Great House Giveaway. A carpenter and an electrician renovate a three-bedroom detached house in Wednesbury, West Midlands 5.00 A New Life in the Sun: Where Are They Now? A family in Portugal have found new ways to make the most out of their holiday village. Plus, catching up with two bar owners in France and a golf course owner in Spain (r) 6.00 Come Dine with Me. A civil servant is the second to host in Swansea (r) 6.30 The Simpsons. Bart meets an eccentric loner and falconry expert who saves him from the school bullies (r) (AD)	6.00am Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine. The broadcaster discusses the issues of the day 11.30 Storm Huntley. Debate on the day's talking points continues 12.45pm Friends. Monica and Chandler go house-hunting (r) (AD) 1.10 Friends. Joey's agent dies (r) (AD) 1.40 5 News at Lunchtime 1.45 Home and Away. Felicity's concerned when Cash reveals he's not going to Stevie's funeral, while John and Dana are still in isolation and both regret opening the mysterious shipping container (r) (AD) 2.15 FILM: When Mum Becomes a Murderer (PG, TVM, 2024) After her friend's death, a teen discovers her mum isn't who she says she is and she must solve her friend's murder before she's next. Thriller starring Maitreya Scarwener 4.00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. An Essex job is determined to live a healthier life on the Costa Blanca, roping in his mate, and trying to convince him to join him for a walk and a visit to the mud baths (r) 5.00 5 News at 5 6.00 Police Interceptors. A dangerous driver tears across the pavement and takes off towards Nottingham city centre, the firearms team tackles reports of an illegal gun, and a disqualified driver slips off a motorbike (r) 6.55 5 News Update



A dangerous business: inside the

Our gripping new investigative podcast, *Cocaine Inc.* sheds light on the global cocaine industry, where profits are counted up in millions and losses measured out in murders. Follow the trail with us across four continents.

7PM	7.00 The One Show Live weekday magazine show hosted by Alex Jones 7.30 EastEnders Sonia and Reiss look for ways to make more money, Elaine is concerned for Linda, while Tommy continues to cause problems for Kat	6.00 Live The Hundred: Oval Invincibles Men v Birmingham Phoenix Men (Start-time 6.30). Coverage of the match from The Kia Oval, London. The visitors won this meeting last year as they produced an impressive 41-run victory at Edgbaston. Birmingham made 160-8 in their 100 balls, before dismissing their opponents for 119 with a ball to spare, but it was the Invincibles who went on to win the title	7.30 Emmerdale Gain and Charity head to Wales in search of Belle and Tom, Laurel approaches Jai with a request, and Ella is in her firing line (AD)	7.00 Channel 4 News	7.00 Our Great Yorkshire Life Julian Norton meets up with the three peak park ranger Ian Colledge as they head up Whenside, the highest mountain in Yorkshire
8PM	8.00 Sort Your Life Out with Stacey Solomon Stacey and the team help another family declutter, laying out their belongings in a warehouse only to find they own 521 odd socks, 75 Barbies and 28 games controllers (6/6) (r) (AD)	9.30 Mock the Week Dara O Briain and Hugh Dennis are joined by guests Angela Barnes, Ed Byrne, Sean McLoughlin and Glenn Moore (4/7) (r)	8.00 Midsomer Murders An organic bakery in the newly restored Larkton's Mill causes resentment in Lower Blissingham, with many of the old village businesses struggling, traffic having increased and rumours that owners Tom and Chrissie Larkton are planning to expand. The complaints are not taken too seriously until several people are dosed with a dangerous hallucinogenic, with Barnaby and Winter called in to investigate, and the situation escalates when a farmer is murdered. Crime drama starring Neil Dudgeon and Nick Hendrix. See Viewing Guide (3/4) (AD)	7.55 Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes (AD)	7.55 5 News Update
9PM	9.00 Death in Paradise The team, headed up by new detective inspector Neville Parker (Ralf Little), investigates the death of a woman found electrocuted in her hotel bathtub. Featuring guest appearances by Steve Pemberton and Samantha Bond (5/8) (r) (AD)	10.00 Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps Jonny is given an ultimatum to either dump his friends or face a return to being single (6/8) (r) (AD)	10.00 Midsomer Murders An organic bakery in the newly restored Larkton's Mill causes resentment in Lower Blissingham, with many of the old village businesses struggling, traffic having increased and rumours that owners Tom and Chrissie Larkton are planning to expand. The complaints are not taken too seriously until several people are dosed with a dangerous hallucinogenic, with Barnaby and Winter called in to investigate, and the situation escalates when a farmer is murdered. Crime drama starring Neil Dudgeon and Nick Hendrix. See Viewing Guide (3/4) (AD)	9.00 The Body Detectives New series following the work of an organisation dedicated to revisiting forgotten cases, giving a name and a story to each unidentified person and helping to provide the families the solace they seek. See Viewing Guide (AD)	9.00 London '48: How Britain Saved the Olympics How the 1948 Olympic Games came into being, as the world struggled to cope in the aftermath of the Second World War, and the Games were held for the first time in 12 years. With Britain in the midst of poverty and rationing, hosting the event seemed unlikely, but existing venues were renovated, and the British people pulled together to make the Games a success. See Viewing Guide
10PM	10.00 BBC News; Weather 10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather 10.40 Town of Steel Tata Steel's plans to return to profitability at its Port Talbot plant, in which jobs are expected to go under a transition from so-called 'virgin steel' to 'greener steel'	11.05 Before I Go to Sleep (15, 2014) A woman who cannot retain memories after a traumatic accident is contacted by a mysterious neuropsychologist who offers to help her learn the truth about her condition. As she tries to piece together events of her past she begins to fear that neither her husband nor the doctor are who they seem to be. Thriller starring Nicole Kidman and Colin Firth. See Viewing Guide	10.00 ITV News at Ten 10.30 Regional News 10.45 Goodwood Festival of Speed Highlights A celebration of motor racing from its beginnings to the present from Goodwood Estate in West Sussex, focusing on the drivers of yesterday and today	10.00 Fugitive: The Mystery of the Crypto Queen New series charting the case of Bulgarian-born German woman Rujia Ignatova, who is wanted by the FBI for orchestrating a \$4.5billion cryptocurrency scam. See Viewing Guide (1/3) (AD)	10.30 The Cannibal Next Door The shocking story of one of the world's most notorious cannibals, Armin Meiwes, who found a willing victim online who agreed to be dismembered and eaten for sexual pleasure (r)
11PM	11.40 Paddy & Molly: Show No Mersey Molly attempts to make weight for her fight and avoid penalties, and her mum comes to Vegas for an emotional heart-to-heart. Paddy and friends cheer Molly on from home in Liverpool (5/8) (r)	12.03am Sign Zone: The Turkish Detective Thriller (r) (AD, SL) 2.10-2.55 The Bidding Room (r) (SL)	11.40 Made in Britain A look at craftsmen making acoustic guitars, and the mass production of cooking oil (r) (AD)	11.05 Women on Death Row New series. Shawna Forde was sentenced to death after the murders of Raul Flores and his daughter Brisenia in 2009. In this documentary, she and those close to the case reflect on the crime (1/6)	11.30 Crimes That Shook Britain A look at the circumstances surrounding the murder of 23-year-old Rachel Nickell in July 1992 (6/6) (r)
Late	12.10am Paddy & Molly: Show No Mersey Paddy receives concerning news (r) 12.45-6.00 BBC News		12.05am Shop on TV 3.00 The Best of Saint & Greaville. A look back at some of the most memorable moments from the popular series (r) (SL) 3.50 Unwind with ITV 5.05-6.00 Ainsley's Taste of Malta. Ainsley is in central Malta where he explores the ancient city of Mdina and learns about the history of pastizzi (r) (AD, SL)	12.05am Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes (r) (AD, SL) 12.10 Embarassing Bodies (r) (AD) 1.05 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (r) (SL) 2.00 Car SOS (r) (AD, SL) 2.50 Becoming Elizabeth (r) (AD, SL) 3.55 Love It or List It Australia (r) (AD, SL) 4.50 Frasier (r) (AD) 5.45-6.25 Countdown (r)	12.30am Police Interceptors: Pursuit and Capture (r) (AD) 1.25 PlayOJO Live Casino Show 3.25 Christmas Criminals: Caught on Camera (r) 4.15 Inside the Balmoral: Scotland's Finest Hotel (r) 5.05 House Doctor (r) (SL) 5.35 Entertainment News (r) 5.40 Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (r) 5.45-6.00 Paw Patrol (r)

television & radio

The Body Detectives

Channel 4, 9pm

A fascinating series following the work of Locate International, which is dedicated to discovering the identities of unidentified bodies in the UK. In this episode, the ex-detective Dave Grimstead and his team investigate the

disappearance of George Johnstone, who vanished off the Norfolk coast in 1984 while on holiday. George entered the sea to help a family in distress but was never seen again. Trying to find his final resting place requires the help of a pathologist, a forensic oceanographer and an expert in facial reconstruction.

Elsbeth

Sky Witness/Now, 9pm

A spin-off comedy drama starring Carrie Preston's lawyer Elsbeth Tascioni from *The Good Wife* and *The Good Fight* who was sharp of mind and prone to saying dumb things. Here our heroine is an ingénue in New York, where she works as an outside

observer for the Justice Department to ensure the NYPD does things by the book. Her meddling brings results — and some hilarity — even if it annoys cops like Captain Wagner (Wendell Pierce of *The Wire*). It's an engaging premise that will appeal more to fans of *Only Murders in the Building* than Elsbeth's mother shows.

Fugitive: The Mystery of the Crypto Queen

Channel 4, 10pm

In 2017 Ruja Ignatova, the Oxford-educated alleged architect of the OneCoin crypto scam, boarded a Ryanair flight from Sofia to Athens, never to be seen again. Speculation has increased that she may have been

murdered, having managed to evade police, possibly via mafia contacts. The story has already been the subject of a BBC Panorama programme but this is more in-depth, giving the full grim details of a criminal enterprise which is thought to have brought in up to £4 billion for Ignatova and her associates.

Film Before I Go to Sleep

BBC2, 11.05pm

Nicole Kidman stars as Christine, who has an Etch A Sketch for a brain that is wiped clean every night by sleep. Each morning she is reintroduced to her husband, Ben (played by Colin Firth), who explains the facts of her life. (15, 2014)

Sky Max

6.00am NCIS: New Orleans (r) **7.00** SEAL Team (r) (AD) **8.00** The Flash (r) **9.00** Stargate SG-1 (r) **11.00** NCIS: New Orleans (r) **12.00** The Flash (r) **1.00pm** MacGyver (r) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) **5.00** SEAL Team (r) (AD) **7.00** Stargate SG-1. The Tollans share their technology with High Chancellor Travell (r) **7.00** Stargate SG-1. The team meets a new race, but it turns out to be a danger zone (r) **8.00** Agatha Raisin. The sleuth finds herself the prime suspect in a murder case when a fellow hotel guest is found murdered (r) (AD) **10.00** The Walking Dead. Rick and his band of survivors take Noah to his home in Shirewind Estates with hopes of finding sanctuary (r) **11.00** The Force: Manchester. Following the work of Greater Manchester Police (r) **12.00** An Idol Abroad. Karl Pilkington visits Brazil (r) (AD) **1.00am** The Force: Manchester (r) **2.00** Road Wars (r) (AD) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0. McGarrett and Danny track down the uranium (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T. (r) (AD) **5.00** Highway Patrol (r)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Fish Town (r) **7.55** Six Feet Under (r) **10.05** Gomorrah (r) **12.15pm** Game of Thrones. Tyrion defends King's Landing against Stannis Baratheon's assault (r) (AD) **1.20** The Sopranos (r) **3.30** Six Feet Under (r) **5.40** Gomorrah (r) **7.50** Game of Thrones. Theon Greyjoy stirs his men into action, and Jon proves his worth as a brother of the Night's Watch to Qhorin (r) (AD) **9.00** True Detective: Night Country. As the truth about what happened to Annie and the Tsalal men unfolds, Navarro and Danvers each confront the demons from their past (6/6) (r) (AD) **10.25** House of the Dragon. Fantasy drama set 200 years before the events of *Game of Thrones* and telling the story of House Targaryen. Starring Matt Smith and Emma D'Arcy (r) **11.45** Winning Time. The Rise of the Lakers Dynasty. Buss attempts to charm Red Auerbach, and Claire creates conflict (2/10) (r) (AD) **12.50am** We Own This City. Saiter is taken on a raid (r) (AD) **1.55** The Leftovers (r) (AD) **3.00** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **4.10** Fish Town (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am 100 Foot Wave. Documentary (r) (AD) **7.00** Discovering: Emma Thompson. A profile (r) (AD) **8.00** The Directors. Joel and Ethan Coen (r) (AD) **9.00** The 2010s (r) **10.00** Lockierbie (r) (AD) **12.00** FILM: *Undeclared* (12, 2011) Documentary following three members of an American football team **2.10pm** The Wimbledon Kidnapping (r) (AD) **4.00** The Directors (r) (AD) **5.00** Discovering: Emma Thompson (r) (AD) **6.00** The 2010s. Donald Trump's political rise (r) **7.00** Lockierbie. A Libyan double agent provides evidence to bring two suspects to court (r) (AD) **8.00** Lockierbie. Thirty four years later, a new suspect is taken into custody (r) (AD) **9.00** Kings from Queens: The RDM DMC Story. The group's fame grows exponentially (2/3) (r) **10.00** Ibiza Narcos. A look at how greed and infighting among drug dealers led to bloodshed (r) **11.00** Chernobyl: The Lost Tapes (r) (AD) **12.50am** Stasi FC (r) **2.00** Trees and Other Entanglements (r) **5.00** Discovering: Emma Thompson. A profile of the actress (r) (AD)

Sky Arts

6.00am Classic FM Live Film Music Spectacular **8.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **9.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.00** Discovering: Matt Damon **12.00** Battle of the Bappies (AD) **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected. Double bill (AD) **2.00** Freddie Mercury: Auction Special **3.00** Landscape Art Kidnapping (r) (AD) **4.00** Discovering: Frances McDormand **5.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **6.00** Tales of the Unexpected. Double bill (AD) **7.00** Painting Birds with Jim and Nancy Moir. The couple search for the red-billed chough (AD) **8.00** Dickens: 'Pantomime and Fictions. Exploring Charles Dickens' eerie and supernatural tales **9.00** The Warhol Effect. The last decade of Andy Warhol's life and the artistic legacy he left (AD) **11.00** Stephen King on Screen. Exploring the film adaptations of the author's works (AD) **1.00am** Wonderland: Gothic (AD) **2.00** The V&A Presents Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser **4.00** Cheltenham Literature Festival **5.00** The Art of Architecture. The Holy Trinity Church, Paris

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News **7.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **8.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **9.00** Live Tennis. Coverage of the day's action on the WTA and ATP Tours, as the season continues with a number of clay- and hard-court tournaments around the world **2.15pm** Live The Hundred: Oval Invincibles Women v Birmingham Phoenix Women (Start-time 2.45). Coverage of the match being held at The Kia Oval, London **6.00** Live The Hundred: Oval Invincibles Men v Birmingham Phoenix Men (Start-time 6.30). Coverage of this evening's cricket match which is being staged at The Kia Oval, London **9.30** Sky Sports News. Round-up of the sports news, with live analysis and comment **10.00** Sky Sports News at Ten **11.30** Back Pages Tonight **1.00** Sky Sports News **12.00** Live Tennis. The Atlanta Open. Coverage of day two of the ATP 250 event, a hard-court tournament at Atlantic Station, Atlanta, Georgia **4.00am** Sky Sports News **5.00** Sky Sports News

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: **9.00pm-10.00** Spotlight. Jennifer O'Leary investigates the murder of 21-year-old showjumper Katie Simpson, who was believed to have attempted suicide but was later found to have been murdered
BBC1 Scotland
As BBC1 except: **7.00pm-7.30** River City. Armed with the truth about Lou's death, Amber confronts Shaw (r) (AD)
BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: **8.00pm** Weatherman Walking: The Welsh Coast. Derek Brockway walks from Porth Neigwl to Abercrom on the Llyn peninsula (r) **8.30-9.00** Britain's Busiest Mountain: Our Lives. Following the lives of the people that work on Snowdon, or Yr Wyddfa, the most popular mountain in Britain (r)
BBC2 N Ireland
As BBC2 except: **10.00pm-10.30** Barra's Wild Days Out. Barra Best visits Murlough National Nature Reserve near Dundrum (r) **11.05** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps. Jonny receives an ultimatum to dump his friends or face a return to being single (r) (AD) **11.35-12.30** Sign Zone: Countryside. Charlotte Smith and Sean Fletcher are at Hengistbury Head in Dorset, where a project is set to save large swathes of the coastline from being lost (r)
STV
As ITV1 except: **10.30pm-10.45** STV News **12.05am-3.00** Shop on TV **3.50-5.05** Night Vision. News, sport and weather



cocaine industry

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BBC3

7.00pm Celebrity MasterChef. Finals week continues as the four best cooks face their penultimate challenge — the Chef's Table (AD) **8.00** Gavin & Stacey. The newlyweds begin leading separate lives in their home towns (AD) **8.30** Ghosts US. Alberta bonds with a poltergeist who is attached to a newly arrived guest, and Isaac and Nigel have separate bachelor parties **8.50** The Catch Up. A round-up of the day's news **8.55** Ryan Tricks on the Streets. Ryan reveals the organiser of a local soup kitchen **9.00** Kyle: The Gunman Who Divided America. Documentary about one of America's most controversial figures, Kyle Rittenhouse (AD) **10.00** FILM: *The Impossible* (12, 2012) A family spending Christmas in Thailand are separated in the 2004 tsunami and struggle to find each other in the ensuing chaos. Drama starring Naomi Watts and Ewan McGregor (AD) **11.40** This Country. Kurtan organises a surprise present to celebrate Kerry's birthday (AD) **12.10am** This Country (AD) **12.40** Brickies (AD) **1.40** My Mate's a Bad Date **2.00** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond (AD) **2.30** This Country (AD) **3.30-4.00** Brickies (AD)

BBC4

7.00pm Coastal Path. Paul Rose explores the north Cornish coast, touring Tintagel Castle **7.30** Railway Walks with Julia Bradbury. Julia Bradbury begins the longest walk yet, a journey through the Highlands. Last in the series (AD) **8.00** Roy Clarke Remembers Keeping Up Appearances. The writer looks back on the show **8.15** Keeping Up Appearances. Daddy has an accident while chasing a milkwoman on his bike **8.45** Butterflies. Rias is angered by a fox hunt **9.15** Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners. Part two of two. Exploring how, in 1834, the government arrived at the decision to compensate Britain's slave owners. Last in the series (AD) **10.15** Attica: America's Bloodiest Prison Uprising — Storyville. Detailed account of the uprising at New York State's Attica Correctional Facility in 1971, when 29 convicts and 10 hostages were killed as the police battled to regain control **12.05am** Art on the BBC: Constable — The Rural Rebel. A TV history of John Constable (AD) **1.10** Paris. Art historian Sandrine Voilet presents a guide to Paris (AD) **2.10** Railway Walks with Julia Bradbury (AD) **2.40-3.35** Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners (AD)

Talking Pictures

6.00am Glimpses: Seen at the Zoo in 1948 **6.05** FILM: *Broken Blossoms* (PG, 1936) Drama (b/w) **7.50** What's On TPTV with Noel **8.00** Sherlock Holmes (b/w) **8.35** FILM: *Bulldog Drummond's Bride* (U, 1939) (b/w) **9.45** Eartha Kitt: Just an Old-Fashioned Girl **10.05** FILM: *The Steel Bayonet* (PG, 1957) (b/w) **11.50** Look at Life **12.00** Worzel Gummidge **12.30pm** A Case for PC 49 **2.10** FILM: *My Dear Secretary* (U, 1948) Comedy (b/w) **4.15** FILM: *Lady in the Fog* (PG, 1952) Mystery drama (b/w) **5.55** The Beverly Hillbillies (b/w) **6.30** Scotland Yard. A man's body is recovered **7.05** The Capone Investigation (6/6) **7.35** Dangerous Assignment (6/6) **8.05** Rumpole of the Bailey (1/6) **9.10** FILM: *Man in Black* (PG, 1949) Thriller starring Betty Ann Davies (b/w) **10.45** Cellular Club with Caroline Munro **10.50** FILM: *They Live* (15, 1988) Sci-fi **12.40am** Cellular Club with Caroline Munro **12.45** FILM: *Don't Look in the Basement* (PG, 1973) **2.20** Cellular Club with Caroline Munro **2.25** FILM: *Your Witness* (PG, 1950) (b/w) **4.25** The Rogues (b/w) **5.25** For the Love of Ada

Film4

11.00am Arthur's Hallowed Ground (PG, 1986) Comedy with Jimmy Jewel **12.35pm** The Man from Colorado (PG, 1948) Western with Glenn Ford (AD) **2.40** Father Goose (U, 1964) Comedy with Cary Grant **5.00** An Affair to Remember (U, 1957) Romantic drama with Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr (AD) **7.15** Youth Interview Special. With Michael Caine **7.20** Table 19 (12, 2017) Dumped by the best man via text, a former maid of honour decides to pitch up at her friend's wedding anyway. Comedy starring Anna Kendrick and Craig Robinson **9.00** Jumanji: The Next Level (12, 2019) Adventure sequel starring Dwayne Johnson (AD) **11.25** Sick of Myself (15, 2023) Overshadowed by her boyfriend, a woman plots to reclaim the attention of Oslo's cultural elite. Drama starring Kristine Kujath Thorp and Erik Saether. In Norwegian with subtitles **1.20am-3.20** Blood Simple (18, 1983) A man's plot to murder his wife and her lover is ruined by a seedy private eye. Thriller with Frances McDormand and John Getz

More4

8.55am Food Unwrapped (AD) **9.30** A Place in the Sun **10.25** A New Life in the Sun **11.25** Find It, Fix It, Flop **12.30pm** Come Dine with Me **3.10** Four in a Bed **5.00** Château DIY (AD) **6.55** Car SOS. Restoring a Jaguar MK2 (AD) **7.55** Grand Designs. Architect Kevin McCloud follows a couple knocking down an old Thames boathouse and building a cutting-edge home in its place — in the middle of a community that is dominated by traditional houses (4/12) (AD) **9.00** 24 Hours in A&E. A teenager is rushed to hospital with a lacerated wrist after putting his hand through a pane of glass, while another is diagnosed with a chronic condition (AD) **10.00** Rescue: Extreme Medics. A trauma team leaves Glasgow to a remote part of Snye for a man trapped under a 650kg all-terrain vehicle, while a 51-year-old cyclist has a head-on collision with a digger bucket in rural Aberdeenshire (1/5) (AD) **11.05** 24 Hours in A&E. A 52-year-old cyclist is rushed in after being hit by a car, and a 92-year-old former Baptist minister suffers a fall (AD) **12.10am** 999: On the Front Line **1.15** Rescue: Extreme Medics (AD) **2.20** 24 Hours in A&E (AD) **3.25-3.55** Food Unwrapped (AD)

ITV2

6.00am CITY **9.00** World's Funniest Videos **9.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **10.00** Love Bites (AD, SL) **12.00** Dress to Impress (AD) **1.00pm** In with a Shout **2.00** Supermarket Sweep **3.00** Charmed **4.00** Dawson's Creek **5.00** Dress to Impress (AD) **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase. With Jay Blades, Sally Lindsay and Nicky Campbell (AD) **7.00** In with a Shout. The Smiths from London and the Taylors from Suffolk compete **8.00** The Masked Singer US. The Group C finalists sing some life-affirming songs **9.00** Love Island. The couples face more testing times in the run-up to the finale of the contest **10.05** Extraordinary. Kashi's priorities push Carrie towards charming royalty **10.35** Family Guy. Mayor West becomes the prime suspect when a murder is committed (AD) **11.05** Family Guy. Peter and Lois send Chris to space camp to boost his self-esteem (AD) **11.35** American Dad! James Bond spoof (AD) **12.05am** American Dad! (AD) **12.25** Shopping with Keith Lemon **1.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.15** Unwind **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale (AD) **7.00** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **8.05** Agatha Christie's Poirot. The sleuth investigates a murder on board a train (AD) **10.25** The Royal (AD) **11.35** Heartbeat (AD) **1.40pm** Classic Emmerdale (AD) **2.40** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **3.50** A Touch of Frost. Jack searches for a missing child (AD) **6.00** Heartbeat. A trio of Australian sheep-shearers arrive in Aidsfield, but a missing watch puts one of them behind bars (AD) **7.00** Heartbeat. A man dies falling from a bridge, and foul play is soon suspected (AD) **8.00** Long Lost Family. A woman put in a children's home at two weeks old (AD) **9.00** Long Lost Family. The stories of men who were brought up in the care system (AD) **10.00** Unforgotten. Cassie and Sunny interview each of the four suspects (3/6) (AD) **11.00** Unforgotten. Cassie and Sunny discover Walsh was chased by all four suspects (4/6) (AD) **11.50** The Royal. Joan and Marrianna bid farewell to their friends at the hospital (4/12) (AD) **12.40am** Upstairs, Downstairs. Period drama starring Jean Marsh **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am Football League Legends **6.10** Minder (AD, SL) **7.10** The Professionals (AD, SL) **8.10** Dempsey and Makepeace (AD) **9.15** The Champions **10.20** Kojak **11.25** BattleBots **12.30pm** Dempsey and Makepeace (AD) **1.35** The Champions **2.40** Kojak **3.45** Minder (AD) **4.50** The Professionals (AD) **5.55** BattleBots **7.00** The Chase Celebrity Special. With Jacqui Oakley, Dev Griffin, Fallon Sherrock and Johnny Vegas. Presented by Bradley Walsh **8.00** World Superbike Highlights. Action from the sixth round of the season **9.00** World Rally Championship Highlights. Action from the Rally Latvia, the eighth round of the World Rally Championship, held in Liepaja **10.00** All Elite Wrestling: Rampage **11.10** FILM: *High Plains Drifter* (18, 1973) A mysterious stranger rides a town of outlaws, but has a dark plan in store for its inhabitants. Western adventure, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood. With Vera Bloom and Marianna Hill **11.55am** Auto Museum **1.40** Motorsport Mundial **2.05** The Protectors. Harry protects a writer (SL) **2.40** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

U&Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.10** London's Burning **8.00** Doctors **9.15** Classic Holly City **10.35** Classic Casualty **11.40** The Bill **12.00pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** London's Burning **3.00** Born and Bred **4.10** Howards' Way **5.20** Birds of a Feather **6.00** Waiting for God. Diana breaks Tom out of hospital and Geoffrey believes his wife is evil **6.35** Are You Being Served? Mr Humphries is forced to take over the perfume display **7.15** Last of the Summer Wine. Howard's bicycle starts acting very strangely in front of Pearl **8.00** Mrs Sidhu Investigates. Mrs Sidhu's (Meera Sidhu) first day catering for Sharpenote, a high-end health club, takes a morbid turn when two bodies are found in the spa (1/4) (AD) **10.00** New Tricks. Part one of two. The body of a policeman that has lain untouched under a basement for 30 years is found (1/10) (AD) **11.20** Silent Witness. The murder of a prominent anti-fundamentalist Muslim drags the Lyell team into the dangerous world of counter-terrorism. Stars Richard Lintern (AD) **1.35am** Footballers' Wives **2.40** Classic Holly City. Medical drama series **4.00** Teleshopping

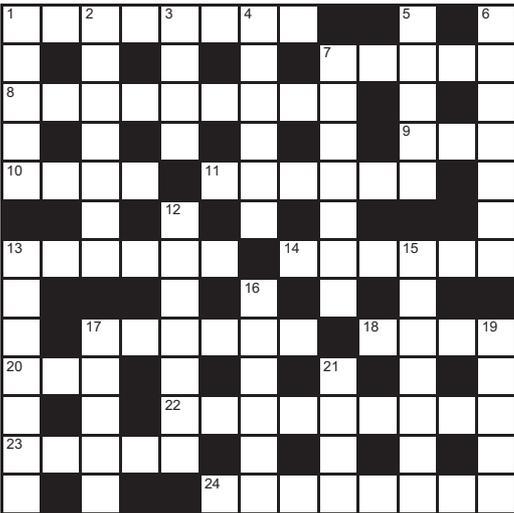
U&Yesterday

6.10am Underground Worlds **8.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **10.00** The Buildings That Fought Hitler (AD) **11.00** Secret Nazi Bases **12.00** Find It, Fix It, Flop **1.00pm** Antiques Roadshow **2.00** Bangers & Cash **4.00** WWI — Battles for Europe **5.00** Secret Nazi Bases **6.00** Antiques Roadshow. From Bedfordshire **7.00** Find It, Fix It, Flop. It. Simon O'Brien recycles some historic oak while Henry Cole tries to get to grips with an old Ford Escort **8.00** Secrets of the London Underground. Tim Dunn and Sidly Holloway gain access to the disused station at South Kentish Town (4/10) **9.00** Bangers & Cash. A 1971 Jaguar E-Type and a 1932 Morgan three-wheeler Supersport (AD) **10.00** Bangers & Cash. A 1970s Ford Bug three-wheeler divides opinion, while a retired engineer reluctantly auctions off his late father's treasured 60s Jaguar Mark 2 (4/10) **11.00** Abandoned Engineering. Featuring a forgotten complex with an explosive history within a dense Polish woodland (3/11) (AD) **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys **1.00am** Secrets of the Railways (AD) **3.00** Teleshopping

SAC

6.00am Cwv: Og y Draenog Hapus (r) **6.10** Jen a Jim Pob Dim (r) **6.25** Abadas (r) **6.40** Sali Mali (r) **6.45** Fferm Fach (r) **7.00** Cymlyubaichyn (r) **7.10** Sam Tan (r) **7.20** Crads Bach y Traeth (r) **7.25** Parbu Canu a Ffari Aholi (r) **8.00** Bins (r) **8.10** Caru Canu a Ffari (r) **8.20** Gwdihw (r) **8.35** Octonots (r) **8.45** Sbarc (r) **9.00** Y Sioe 2024 **12.00** News; Weather **12.05pm** Y Sioe 2024 **2.00** News; Weather **2.05** Y Sioe 2024 **5.00** Stwnsh; Mwy o Stwnsh Sadwrn **5.25** Prys ffryfed (r) **5.35** Lego DREAMZZz (r) **6.00** Ffasiwn Drefn (r) (AD) **6.30** Tanwen ac Ollie (r) (AD) **6.57** News **7.00** Heno o'r Sioe **7.30** News; Weather **8.00** Pobl y Cwm (AD) **8.55** News; Weather **9.00** Y Sioe 2024. Ifan Jones Evans and Mari Llovgreen enjoy all the highlights from the second day **10.00** Dai Llanilar: O Sion a Stan Tr. Sion. Nia Roberts pays tribute to the late Dai Llanilar **11.00** Y Byd ar Bedw. Dot Davies shares a light on the 11,000 child carers in Wales (r) **11.30-12.35am** Y Sioe 2024. Highlights (r)

times2 Crossword No 9590



- Across**
 1 Explosive device detonated by a clock (4,4)
 7 Leafy shelter (5)
 8 Nut with a green kernel (9)
 9 Lubricant (3)
 10 Finished with scores level (4)
 11 Signal fire or light (6)
 13 Model of the solar system (6)
 14 Hinder, thwart (Y, not I) (6)
- Down**
 1 Lukewarm (5)
 2 Wrongly perceive (speech) (7)
 3 Bird's bill (4)
 4 Austrian composer (6)
 5 Faint (5)
 6 Introductory musical piece (7)
 7 Refuse to buy as a protest (7)
 12 One who weeps feebly (7)
 13 Minor domestic tasks (3,4)
 15 Sicilian dessert wine (7)
 16 Double-cross (6)
 17 Romantic poet (5)
 19 Metric unit of mass (5)
 21 Witness's pledge in court (4)

Solution to Crossword 9589



Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

Partner David Gold and I arrived late last month in the inland town of Herning, Denmark for the 56th European Team Championships and it was swelteringly hot. Our hotel bedrooms were small and airless and, long story short, we immediately checked out and found an Airbnb, a great improvement. There's nothing more important than sleeping well at these long events (this was 11 days). The aim was to finish in the top eight (out of 30) and so qualify for "the bowl" (the Bermuda Bowl, the ultimate tournament in our game). Things began OK-ish and we were lying sixth after three days.

Dealer: West, Vulnerability: Both

Teams

▲ KQ93
 ▼ KQJ
 ▲ A Q J 1082
 ▼ A 652
 ▼ A 85
 ▼ A 132
 ▼ A 73

S	W	N	E
Pass	1♣	3NT(1)	
Dbf	Pass	Pass	4♦(2)
Pass	Pass	5♣(3)	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	End

Contract: 6♠, Opening Lead: ♦6

more prosaic approach of bidding his diamonds a couple of times. The play in 6♠ began in exactly the same way and our East rued that he hadn't ducked the seven of clubs. Declarer may well have repeated the club finesse, enabling East to win the king, force dummy with a top diamond and leave declarer unable to return to hand to draw West's remaining spade. "I wasn't ready," admitted East. I love that honesty and can say that team spirit was fabulous throughout our journey, all happy (or, at least, prepared) to admit to our mistakes. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

This was an interesting board from the fifth match, v Finland. As partner Gold said at the team meal that evening (we'd been sitting out this match), perhaps North can work out from East's 3NT-then-4♦ that he has solid diamonds and the king of clubs. To justify his double of 3NT, South must therefore have both major-suit aces. Maybe North should simply jump to 6♣ at his second (or third) turn. This slam would be a comfortable make — 6♣ less so.

Declarer ruffed the opening diamond lead and cashed the king-queen of spades. He then crossed to the ace of hearts and ran the seven of clubs. East won the king and led a top diamond but declarer could ruff with dummy's remaining spade, cross to the nine of clubs (phew — West following), draw West's third spade with his ace and claim.

At the other table, the English East had not given away his hand by jumping to 3NT, preferring the

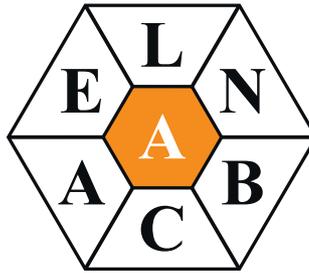
Brain Trainer

EASY 24 x 4 - 3 ÷ 3 + 6 x 2 + 14 1/2 OF IT + 9 x 2

MEDIUM 62 + 1/2 OF IT + 75 x 2 + 1/2 OF IT + 99 2/3 OF IT - 49 x 2 + 97

HARDER 231 + 377 x 7 - 993 x 3 - 877 75% OF IT - 974 70% OF IT - 862

Polygon

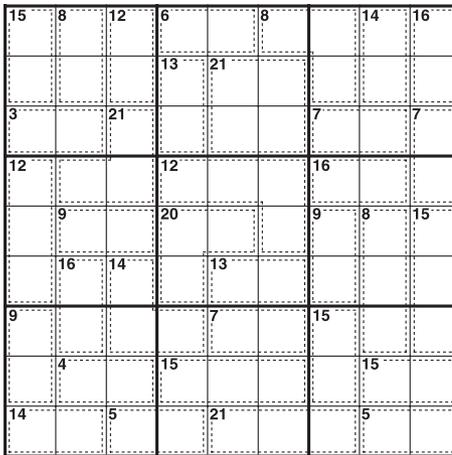


From these letters, make words of three or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. How you rate 18 words, average; 24, good; 28, very good; 33, excellent

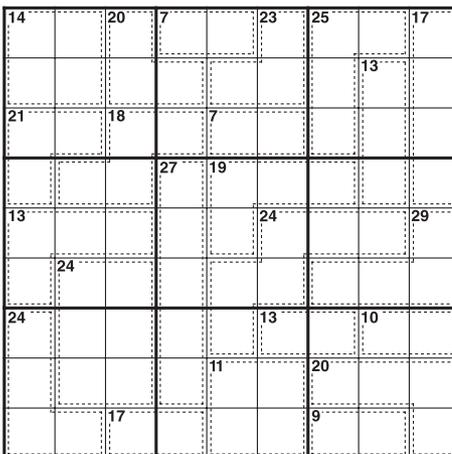
Yesterday's answers

aah, aha, ash, ashy, awash, away, ayah, dah, dash, day, hay, sad, saw, say, shad, shady, shaw, shay, sway, wad, wada, wash, washday, washy, way, whyda, yah, yaw

Killer Moderate No 9586



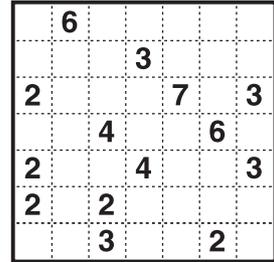
Killer Tough No 9587



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Cell Blocks No 5157



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Set Square No 3776

+ + 3 = 8
 × + ×
 + × = 105
 - - +
 × - 2 = 38
 = = =
 4 2 23

Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2734
 KINDERGARTEN
 A Y A Y E M O D
 L I M I T R A V I O L I
 E P A A E T S
 I N H A B I T L O I T R E
 D E E O N
 O Y S T E R P I C N I C
 S H B N H
 C H A P E R A T A P I A
 O N I E L N
 P A N A C H A G H O S T
 E O H C E S E
 U N A U T H O R I S E D

Codeword 5273
 J A C K A L A C H E
 A M N I T R U P I S
 G U A V A T R U M P E T
 A L L C A A E P E
 P I G S K I N O D O U R
 E A A Y U N
 S M O C K U S A G E
 P R E M I X C I T A S
 R E M I X C I T A S
 I Y C R O J A O
 V A R I O L A R E N E W
 E O H C E S E
 Y R M W S I Y
 C H U B L O O F A H

Kakuro 3772
 1 2 9 7 9 7 9 7
 3 1 8 9 7 5 6 8 9
 6 8 9 8 6
 2 3 1 6 8 6 9 4 2
 9 5 2 1 7 9 3 5
 8 4 5 3 9 8 1 3
 5 1 3 4 2 3 5 2 1
 2 1 1 4 2
 8 6 5 4 3 2 1 9 8
 9 7 1 3 1 3 9 8

Sudoku 15,087
 4 8 7 9 6 3 5 2 1
 1 9 3 2 7 5 6 4 8
 5 2 6 8 1 4 7 9 3
 6 7 5 4 3 1 2 8 9
 9 4 1 6 2 8 3 7 5
 2 3 8 7 5 9 1 6 4
 3 6 9 1 8 7 4 5 2
 7 1 4 5 9 2 8 3 6
 8 5 2 3 4 6 9 1 7

GK Crossword 243
 T H E S T A N D C R A V A T
 O H R E A S L
 T H E R E P A I R S H O P
 S L N D I T I
 A P N O F A S U B P O E N A
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 G R E E N P E A C E F T S E
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 E D D Y E R M I N T R U D E
 T O S A D E
 B O T T L E S C O M S A C K
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 C E M E N T H O I S E I N I

Sudoku 15,088
 6 7 1 9 2 5 3 4 8
 4 9 2 8 3 7 5 6 1
 3 5 8 6 4 1 9 7 2
 2 6 9 5 7 4 8 1 3
 7 8 3 1 6 2 4 5 9
 5 1 4 3 9 8 7 2 6
 1 4 7 2 8 9 6 3 5
 8 2 6 7 5 3 1 9 4
 9 3 5 4 1 6 2 8 7

Cell Blocks 5156
 2 2 3
 7
 9 2 6
 2 3
 4
 7

Set Square 3775
 4 × 9 + 8
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 2 × 3 - 1
 + × -
 5 + 6 - 7

Lexica 7547
 R A R E L Y
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Sudoku 15,089
 6 8 1 4 7 9 2 5 3
 3 7 5 6 1 2 8 9 4
 4 2 9 8 5 3 1 6 7
 2 5 6 3 4 8 9 7 1
 1 9 7 2 6 5 3 4 8
 8 3 4 7 9 1 6 2 5
 5 6 8 9 3 4 7 1 2
 7 1 3 5 2 6 4 8 9
 9 4 2 1 8 7 5 3 6

Futoshiki 4813
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 [2] < [1] [2] < [3]
 [4] > [3] [5] [2] [1]
 [3] > [2] [1] [4] [5]
 [1] [5] > [4] > [3] [2]

KenKen 6265
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 3 5 4 1 6 2
 6 3 1 4 2 5
 2 1 3 6 5 4
 5 2 6 3 4 1
 4 6 5 2 1 3

Lexica 7548
 M L K E I
 S I L K E N
 T E D
 H E C T I C
 N

Today's solutions

Concise Quintragram
 1 Deep
 2 Outer
 3 Double
 4 Personal
 5 Breathing

Cryptic Quintragram
 1 Class
 2 Oberon
 3 Rabbit
 4 Sweater
 5 Mushroom

Suko 4175
 5 9 1
 2 15
 6 3 2
 2 15
 8 7 4

Brain Trainer
 Easy 106
 Medium 803
 Harder 3,135

Word watch
 Howavard (b) A strongly built breed of dog (Colinus)
 Proseuche (c) A place of prayer (Chambers)
 Jument (a) A beast of burden (OED)

Chess — Winning Move
 1 Qxh8+! Rxd8 2 Rxd8 is overwhelming. Now 2... Kxh8 3 Nx7+ and 4 Nxd6 wins easily but there is nothing better, eg 2... Ng8 3 Rdh1 Kf8 4 Rh7+ with carnage

Quiz
 1 Tongue 2 Massachusetts 3 Mercury 4 The Shard 5 Raleigh 6 Oliver! 7 Rolling Stones 8 The Taming of the Shrew 9 Sex and the City 10 Saturn 11 Bristol 12 Peter Strickland 13 Inejiro Asanuma 14 Second World War 15 Polo

AI FOR BUSINESS

06 HAVE FIRMS BEEN TOO QUICK TO DEPLOY AI?

10 GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE GOVERNANCE GAP

12 HOW AI WILL IMPACT DECISION-MAKING



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WORKPLACE

Employers fear the consequences of shadow AI

Workers are increasingly using AI without employer approval, raising legal and security risks for businesses. Clear policies are needed to curb the danger

Emma Woollacott

AI has caused significant consternation across workforces, with fears the technology will replace employees. Even so, many workers are happy to use generative AI in their jobs – but perhaps not in ways their managers would like.

Some bosses claim to encourage innovative uses of AI to streamline workflows. However, too many employees are using the technology in ways that are not sanctioned by their employers, in a phenomenon known as 'shadow AI'.

According to Deloitte, just 23% of those who have used GenAI at work believe their manager would approve of how they've used it. Crucially, the unofficial use of AI in the workplace is putting organisations at legal, financial and reputation risk.

So why are so many workers using AI on the sly? And what can employers do to clamp down on the practice?

The University of Sussex and marketing firm Magenta are undertaking a research project into how GenAI is being used in the communications industry. The aim is to produce a best practice framework for businesses, which can be adapted and tailored to their own needs.

According to the survey's preliminary findings, workforce IT is rife with shadow AI. One in 20 workers told the researchers that they're using AI in total secrecy – and many more are at least partially secretive.

"More people talk about it with their co-workers than their managers and they aren't always open about the extent to which they are using it," says Greg Bortkiewicz, a senior consultant and digital lead at Magenta. "In many cases, their employer simply hasn't asked if they are using it."

The main reasons for using GenAI in secret include fears of accusations of laziness or incompetence and embarrassment over needing help, according to the survey.

Moreover, many workers say there's no need to tell their employer about their use of AI because it doesn't really matter. Managers must take notice of this sentiment, because the use of shadow AI does matter – a lot.

Shadow AI can pose significant legal, ethical, operational and security risks. It can also expose companies to substantial fines under regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the EU and the California Consumer



Privacy Act (CCPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in the US.

Security threats are a particular concern. Only a quarter of ChatGPT accounts used in the workplace are corporate accounts, according to research from data security firm Cyberhaven. These non-enterprise accounts feed information into public models, posing considerable risk to sensitive data, explains Cyberhaven CEO Howard Ting.

"Alarmingly, a substantial portion of sensitive corporate data is being sent to non-corporate accounts. This includes roughly half of source code, research and development materials and HR and employee records," he says.

Indeed, 38% of UK office workers admit that they or a colleague have fed sensitive information – such as customer, financial or sales data – into a GenAI tool, according to research from data management firm Veritas Technologies.

"The financial implications are also significant," says Luke Dash,

CEO of compliance platform ISMS.online. "Misuse of AI can lead to unexpected costs for damage control, compliance fines and compensatory damages, diverting resources from sanctioned initiatives and affecting overall profitability."

Despite these risks, organisations are failing to impose strict policies on the use of AI in the workplace. Market research firm Sapio Research recently found that fewer than half of businesses have restrictions on the information that can be submitted to an AI, limitations on which roles can use GenAI, guidance on acceptable use or strict limitations on access.

The ISO 42001 standard for AI management systems is a good starting point for a shadow AI policy. This outlines best practices for the management of secure and ethical AI systems, including elements such as data privacy compliance, security protocols and continuous risk assessments.

More broadly, policies on shadow AI should address the types of AI

tools that may be used, any approvals that should be sought before using the technology and any limitations on using AI-generated copy or outcomes, says Chris Hogg, a partner at Bloomsbury Square Employment Law.

The policy should also include directions on oversight and due diligence. It should clearly state who has responsibility for evaluating and approving the use of new AI technologies and spell out the consequences for breaches of the policy.

"A clearly worded policy reduces the risk of employees using shadow AI as there are clear parameters for them to follow," Hogg says. "It also makes it easier to take action against employees who continue to use shadow AI to the detriment of the business."

Nicholas Le Riche, a partner in the employment practice at law firm BDB Pitmans, agrees. "Crucially, the policy should expressly confirm that it applies to the use of AI on both an employee's own device as well as work devices and it should also explain that content generated by AI applications will be monitored," he adds.

Regular reminders can help keep staff on track. Cyberhaven Labs found that when workers are presented with a pop-up message warning them when they do something potentially dangerous, such as pasting source code into a personal ChatGPT account, ongoing risky behaviour falls by 90%.

Global digital product studio and B Corp Ustwo recently developed a policy covering shadow AI. "Our AI control serves as a formal document within our ISMS (information security management system) and across our company policies, providing clear rules and transparency for anyone who wishes to understand our approach to AI," says head of IT Greg Rochford.

The policy details everything from data collection and training to innovation strategies, Rochford explains, along with the deployment of AI within Ustwo and for the company's clients.

Such clear policies not only strengthen internal security, but they also reassure clients that their data is being handled responsibly, says Rochford.

As organisations ramp up the use of AI across their workforce, managers would be wise to ensure that employees using this technology are doing so out in the open, not hidden in the shadows. ●

HOW EMPLOYEES ARE USING GENERATIVE AI

Share of UK workers using GenAI at work for the following purposes



Deloitte, 2024

INSIGHT

‘The challenge is effectively scaling up AI adoption’

Professor Alan Brown suggests some guiding principles for making large-scale AI work

The buzz surrounding AI is inescapable. Every day, new AI capabilities are announced, upgraded models are released and unexplored applications come into focus. Alongside this avalanche of news is an increasingly polarised debate about AI’s impact on society. The ‘AI doomers’ claim that we are witnessing the beginning of the end, while the ‘AI boomers’ believe the future has never looked brighter.

How should organisations interpret these advances? What critical aspects of AI will shape their future? And, what does this mean for ongoing digital transformation projects?

The expectations of return on investment for AI have been ambitious. For instance, a study by the Alan Turing Institute in March 2024 found that AI could be a driver of massive productivity gains in the UK Government, potentially automating 84% of repetitive tasks in the coming years.

But will these possibilities become reality?

Serious doubts are emerging about whether AI will live up to expectations. Headline breakthroughs are struggling to reach the bottom line. Slow integration with existing systems and concerns about security and privacy are stalling the rollout of AI in larger organisations, while small-scale AI use elsewhere is not yielding significant gains beyond a few narrow applications in customer service and marketing.

The true challenge lies in effectively scaling up AI adoption. To succeed, critical questions need answers: How can we translate learnings from pilot projects into enterprise-wide transformations? What obstacles must be overcome to seamlessly integrate AI into existing workflows? How can early successes develop into measurable, substantial benefits?

Leaders and decision-makers are struggling to move from the initial phase of AI experimentation to AI value-creation. To progress, they need guidance that recognises their specific issues and focuses on the challenges of AI adoption. They need a set of concepts to help them understand the risks and opportunities they face in using AI technologies. They want to see examples of AI success and must acquire knowledge of AI’s core capabilities to ask better questions about what’s available, what’s on the horizon and what’s still a long way off from being deployable.

Finding ways to deliver AI at scale is becoming the key focus for organisations. Several best practices are emerging. First, scaling up AI from pilot programmes to enterprise-wide initiatives demands meticulous planning and substantial investment. Starting small is vital. Pilot projects conducted in controlled environments allow for testing and refinement before broader implementation. This cautious approach mitigates risks and paves the way for informed decision-making.

Second, progress depends on starting with a robust foundation. AI will exert pressure on existing systems and skills. Ensuring technological and organisational infrastructures are equipped to support AI is critical. This includes robust data management, powerful computing resources and a skilled workforce.

Finally, change management is vital for successful AI adoption. People are integral to this process. Successful case studies demonstrate how leaders must consistently communicate their vision, address concerns and provide necessary training to secure buy-in from all stakeholders. This supports the ultimate goal of continuous improvement. AI is not a set-and-forget solution. It requires ongoing monitoring and refinement. Delivering AI at scale requires feedback mechanisms that track AI performance, learn from outcomes and continually enhance AI applications.

Many organisations are adopting AI to rejuvenate stalled and stagnant digital strategies. By understanding AI’s true potential, leveraging it for digital transformation and scaling up solutions effectively, leaders can transition from merely surviving in the age of AI to thriving in it. ●



Professor Alan Brown
AI director, Digital Leaders

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Rack to the future: how AI factories can transform enterprise IT

As AI adoption surges, the need for advanced infrastructure and expertise is pushing organisations to seek more robust and specialist solutions

With the rapid rise of generative artificial intelligence, more CIOs and VPs of Infrastructure are looking to optimise their IT infrastructures to unlock the technology's potential. Today, 42% of IT professionals at large organisations report that they have actively deployed AI while an additional 40% are actively exploring using the technology.

Yet as IT environments evolve at an unprecedented pace, many data centres are proving incapable of providing the foundation for organisations to develop and implement AI applications at scale.

This is because AI demands more resources than traditional computing, meaning the need for processing power has surged exponentially. Some estimates suggest that data centre power demand will grow 160%

by 2030. At present, data centres worldwide consume 1 to 2% of overall power, but this percentage is on course to rise to 3 to 4% - if not more - by the end of the decade.

As a result, AI requires specialist data centre and physical infrastructure systems, including high-density racks and



Organisations need to have a clear understanding of how AI can benefit their business before thinking about the infrastructure to support those plans

highly energy efficient cooling - things are currently beyond many organisations' existing data centre understanding and capabilities.

At the same time, a third of organisations (33%) said limited AI skills, expertise or knowledge is hindering the successful adoption of AI in their business. More than one in five (21%) said they lack the necessary tools or platforms for developing AI models.

So, what can those enterprises do to address those challenges? The answer is that they must look beyond their existing data centre infrastructure. They need an environment that brings together the necessary ingredients - compute, storage and networking power, data intelligence and talent - to develop and implement cutting-edge generative AI models.

Today, they need AI factories, specifically designed to help organisations leverage the power of AI. But what is an AI factory and how do they differ from more traditional manufacturing factories that we're used to seeing? Put simply, an AI factory is a data centre that produces actionable AI. AI factories, which include servers with GPUs and high speed networking from Nvidia will become a significant portion of all data centres as AI takes even greater significance in the coming years.

"Car factories take atoms and mould them into cars. An AI factory takes data and moulds it into knowledge,

or predictive knowledge," explains Michael Schulman, senior corporate communications manager at Supermicro. "It's a factory, but it's not a factory many people are used to."

AI factories versus traditional data centres

With CIOs taking the lead on their organisations' ambitious digital transformation plans, it is important they understand the benefits that AI factories can deliver if they are to unlock next-gen business value through process automation and workflow optimisation.

As part of this, they must develop holistic infrastructure strategies built on unified systems and service level agreements (SLAs) to their constituents that deliver results while minimising down-time, keep energy intensive servers cool and high-performance hardware working optimally and sustainably.

"With an AI factory, you have to think a little bit differently than with an enterprise data centre," says Schulman. "Servers are going to draw much more power than they ever did before - but many existing data centres are limited in the amount of power that they can get from their local utility, which affects what they can deliver to the servers, when scaling is needed."

It's not just about power demands. "Organisations must rethink their networking, because for AI training you need fast networking - hundreds to thousands of servers that need to communicate with each other. All that comes into play with liquid cooling," says Schulman.

So how can AI factories help enterprises unlock gains on a hardware, server and rack and data centre level?

Firstly, simply CIOs must think beyond the server level - instead Schulman says organisations must think at the rack level.

"The rack is the new server," he says. "Rather than having 'one of these' and 'one of these' and trying to hook them up and figure it out themselves, it's much more efficient to buy a rack of servers at a time and think of that as a unit. It's a little different, but companies like Supermicro and others can do that efficiently now."

Indeed, components created by Supermicro and Nvidia combine to create comprehensive AI solutions for businesses.

Says Schulman: "It's better for the customer because if you get a rack full of stuff that's already been tested with the application, you just have to plug in the power, the network, the cooling system and you're ready to go. It's much more efficient and for time to production, you have it all tested by an experienced vendor, rather than trying to do this yourself."

"Again, you can buy a car that's ready to go, or you can go buy the tires and the seats and everything else and hope it all works together."

Liquid cooling technology

At a rack and data centre level, liquid-cooling technology is essential for optimising AI hardware performance and reducing total cost of ownership (TCO).

Research suggests that more than a third of enterprises (38.3%) expect to employ some form of liquid cooling infrastructure in their data centres by



How CIOs can make the case for infrastructure investment

Proper planning, long-term strategies that align with wider business goals and customised solutions are all vital for the successful adoption of AI within enterprises. However, unlocking the necessary investment requires CIOs to make a compelling case to the wider boardroom.

It is down to the CIO to highlight the enterprise benefits that can be driven by investing in innovative IT infrastructure such as advanced chips, GPU racks and liquid cooling. They must make the case for investment clear to their boards and C-suite colleagues and stress factors like total cost of ownership (TCO) and the return on investment (ROI). Some are simple to demonstrate – the significant reduction in electricity costs thanks to liquid cooling, for example.

But importantly, CIOs must be able to translate the technology into business outcomes, such as enhancing customer experience, improving operational efficiency and the capacity to do more, enabling better decision-making and ensuring sustainable growth.

“In the bigger picture, what does an organisation want to do? What do they need to become successful? How do they look successful to the CEO? Then you have to measure the results of the AI implementation. How many minutes does it save a day? Or processes does it eliminate? There’s a whole range of things,” says Schulman.

Crucially, every enterprise needs an AI champion. Someone who will make the case for investment and be able to lay out every aspect of the build, from the power and cooling requirements to server types – and understand what they need to deliver. This is all built into the costs behind the AI factory.

As part of this, businesses must consider whether it makes sense to pay a team of five people for three months to get the right environment in place when it may make more sense to partner with a specialist that can undertake the heavy lifting and help drive greater time and cost savings?

Says Schulman: “How am I going to do this the easiest way? How am I going to get up and running as quickly as possible? If it takes me a year to get my data centre array, maybe that’s too long compared to my competitors. So, what are my competitors doing and how do I get this whole data centre for AI up and running as quickly as possible?”

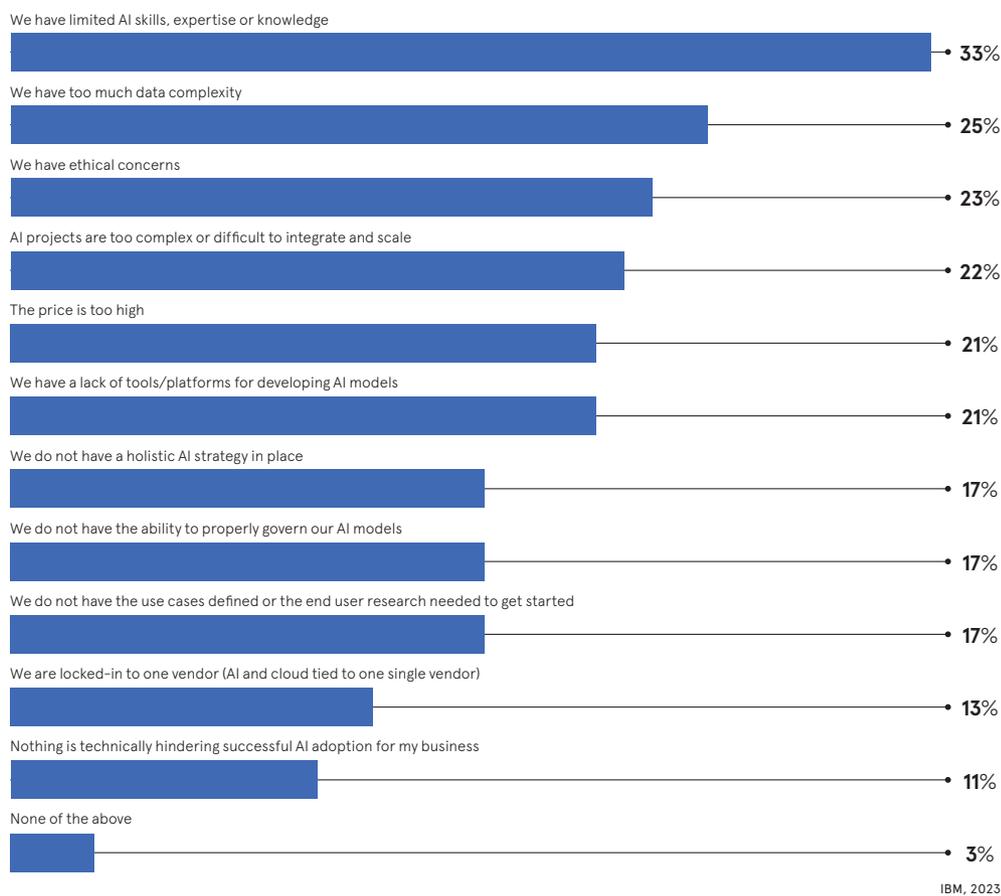
At its core, investing in an AI factory is about accelerating transformation, so you can start realising those benefits – such as operational efficiencies and better smoother customer service – much faster. And with time to production an important consideration, working with a third party could see you gain a significant advantage over the competition during this era of rapid transformation.



Crucially, every enterprise needs an AI champion. Someone who will make the case for investment and be able to lay out every aspect of the build

THERE ARE MANY BARRIERS TO THE SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION OF AI IN GLOBAL BUSINESSES – YET THE MAJORITY COULD BE NAVIGATED WITH ACCESS TO THE RIGHT SPECIALIST EXPERTISE AND PARTNERS

Barriers that hinder the successful adoption of AI among IT professionals at companies currently exploring or deploying AI



IBM, 2023

2026, up from just 20.1% as of early 2024. That’s because air-cooling has its limits – it’s inefficient and incapable when servers are running at higher temperatures.

Servers that are application optimised for AI, high-performance computing (HPC) and analytics require the latest in CPU and GPU technologies, which run hotter than previous generations. Multiple CPUs and GPUs per server are needed for performance intensive computing, driving up the electricity demands for the server as well as at the rack level. AI factories and HPC centres need to be designed for servers to work constantly, 24*7*365. This reduces the TCO but does require consideration of cooling technologies. Supermicro works closely with a number of its technology partners, and brings to market entire clusters powered by a number of Nvidia technologies.

“Liquid cooling is going to be required, because of the progression of CPUs and GPUs – they’re getting so hot, that it must be planned in advance. You can’t just turn up the air conditioning,” says Schulman.

The good news is that liquid cooling solutions can reduce OPEX spending by up to 40%, and allow data centres to run more efficiently with lower power-usage effectiveness (PUE), enabling data centre operators to deploy the latest and highest performance CPUs and GPUs for AI workloads and HPC.

“Our simulations show the cost is extremely minor for a liquid-cooled data centre compared to an air-cooled data centre, based on various construction models. Then over time, there’s a significant savings in OPEX because there’s less money being sent to the public utility for electricity. And that’s reflected in PUE, in how efficient the data centre is. So, all of this needs to be thought about for your AI factory,” adds Schulman.

Creating an AI factory roadmap

So how should organisations be thinking about their approach to innovative IT infrastructure as innovation demands ever more energy and processing power? And what might an implementation and adoption roadmap for an AI factory look like?

Some organisations might want to start small but have the infrastructure ready to scale up. CIOs must consider their SLAs – what are they promising users in terms of response times? Are you envisioning the best response time requiring multiple high-end servers, or could you go with fewer and save power? These are some of the trade-offs that businesses need to weigh up.

The technology within AI factories can also help shape an organisation’s implementation roadmap. For example, by using liquid cooling, businesses use less power. By not paying as much for power, they can invest in more hardware within

the same power budget, helping to maximise investment.

“Different organisations are going to want to go different ways once they start to figure out the economics; there are choices all around with this new era of AI,” says Schulman.

Ultimately, says Schulman, organisations need to have a clear understanding of how AI can benefit their business, before thinking about the infrastructure to support those plans.

“This is not about running 80 billion model parameters like ChatGPT; it’s about how the enterprise is looking at AI to improve their business,” he says. “How do enterprises move their business forward and make more money using AI and what do they have to think about to get started? Then you can figure out the AI factory piece.”

For more information please visit supermicro.com/ai



THE BIG DEBATE

Should businesses hold back on AI adoption?

The rush to roll out AI is backfiring on some businesses, with projects failing to deliver the desired results. Is it time for a more measured approach?

Sam Birchall

AI adoption has become synonymous with progress and innovation. Just over half (59%) of companies surveyed in IBM's 2024 *Global AI Adoption Index* are exploring or deploying AI and plan to accelerate their investments. But in their eagerness to embrace the new technology, some businesses' AI projects are ending in failure.

McDonald's recently decided to abandon its AI drive-through trials after videos of mistaken food orders went viral, including a customer receiving ice cream topped with bacon and another getting £166 worth of unwanted chicken nuggets. The fast food giant, which has been testing voice recognition technology to process orders since 2021, will remove its AI system by the end of August.

In February, Air Canada had to compensate a customer after its chatbot misinformed him about the company's refund policy. A small claims court agreed with his claim that the AI assistant had falsely assured him that he could secure a discounted air fare.

Such mishaps are costly and can tarnish a company's reputation. Some believe they signal the need for a more measured approach to AI deployment to ensure these strategies are sustainable and evolve with business needs. Others argue that firms cannot afford to sit idly and should accept failure as an important and sometimes unavoidable part of the experimentation process.

Some believe they signal the need for a more measured approach to AI deployment to ensure these strategies are sustainable and evolve with business needs. Others argue that firms cannot afford to sit idly and should accept failure as an important and sometimes unavoidable part of the experimentation process.

The Believer

Chris Carreiro
CTO, Park Place Technologies

In the haste to implement AI tools, organisations often grapple with increased hardware requirements and ballooning cloud costs. The need for more capacity and speed can escalate quickly, leading to high usage costs.

But financial strain is not the only potential drawback of rushed AI deployment. A hurried approach can result in misaligned use cases, unclear objectives and poorly defined timelines. These missteps can derail even the most promising AI projects from the start.

Rushing to the finish line without adequately preparing end users can also hinder adoption success. Without clear communication about the value of the technology and robust training, users may struggle to leverage the AI solution effectively, leading to underutilisation and potential failure of the initiative.

In the race to integrate AI, slow and steady is a strategy that allows organisations to scale their tech infrastructure at a sustainable pace,

effectively managing costs and avoiding unnecessary upgrades.

Choosing the right use cases from the start requires careful thought and planning. A clear objective, return on investment and timeline can only be established with a measured approach. Rushing this process can lead to misaligned projects that veer off course.

The starting point of AI integration is just as important as the finish line. A measured approach provides ample time to articulate the value proposition to end users, ensuring they receive comprehensive training and consistent reinforcement. This paves the way for successful adoption and utilisation of the AI solution.

A measured approach to AI isn't just smart, it's also strategic. It will likely result in improved operational efficiency and strategic growth. It also ensures a perfect blend of old and new skills within IT teams, keeping companies ahead of customer needs and increasing loyalty.



Beyond these immediate benefits, a paced approach to AI integration helps to foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation. As AI evolves, so must our understanding of the technology. By not rushing into an AI-driven future, we create space for thought leadership, innovative problem-solving and the development of strategies that stand the test of time. That's the real power of patience in AI integration.

“Rushing to the finish line without adequately preparing end users can hinder adoption success”

The Doubter

Catherine Wilks
Client partner, Slalom

AI isn't just a buzzword or a trend. It has produced real, tangible benefits, including productivity, growth and innovation. But there's no reward without risk.

Businesses are not moving fast enough to implement this technology, which means they're losing out

on the benefits and risk being outpaced by competitors. And, in a tight labour market, ignoring the AI hype can hamper an organisation's ability to recruit and retain talent.

There are, of course, risks that AI will be used by bad actors. For sectors such as banking, where there's been scaremongering around AI and fraud, the only way to fight increasingly sophisticated cybercrime is to leverage those very same AI tools and technologies.

By its very nature, AI is designed to learn and improve. The more people are using AI, the smarter the tech gets. Businesses must begin experimenting, prompting and better understanding this innovative technology now. The more we use AI, the smarter it will get and the greater an impact it will have.

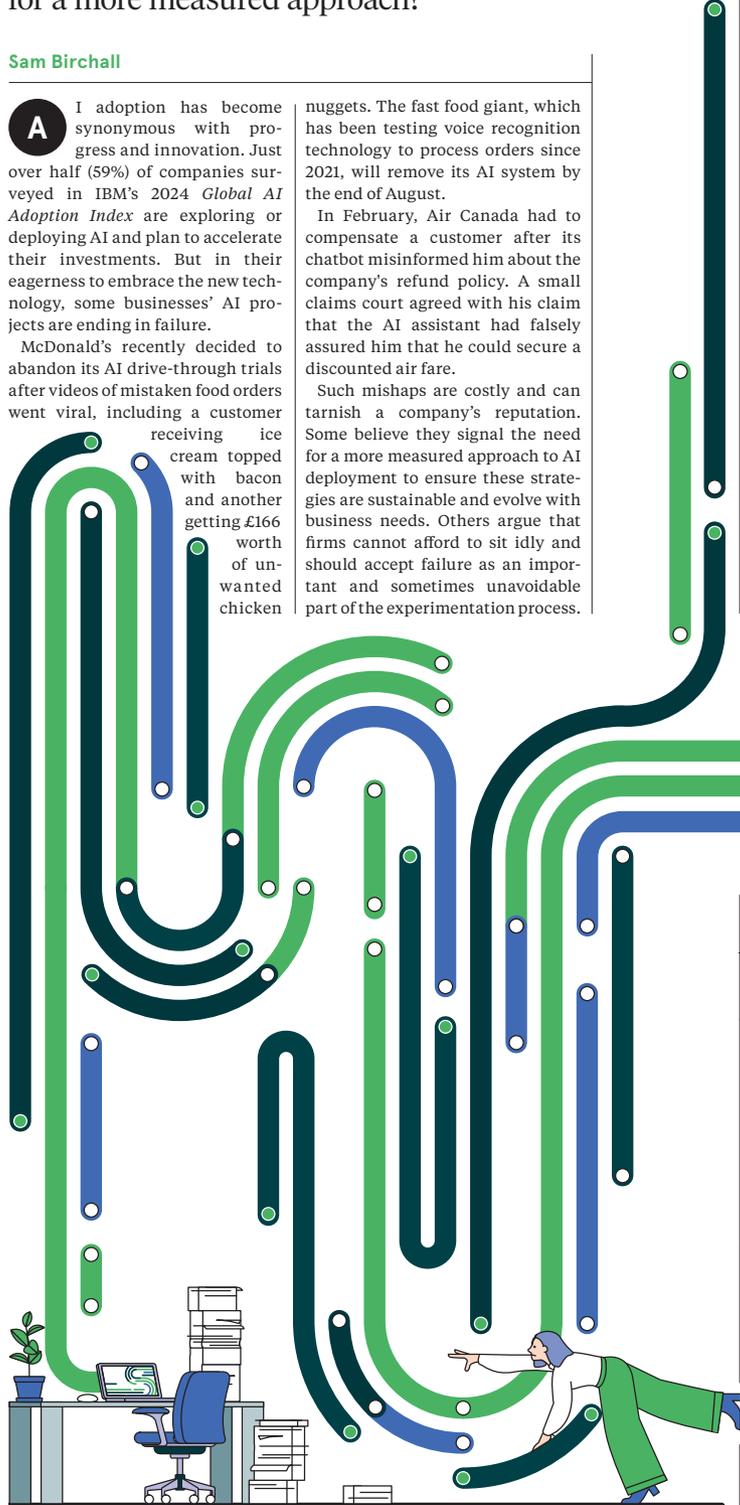
“The benefits this technology can deliver are too lucrative for us to ignore”



Although I encourage organisations to embrace AI, that does not mean business leaders can ignore safeguards for their workforce and company. This includes creating the right culture, providing open communication and upskilling employees. These are important for helping staff to use AI effectively.

To make the greatest impact, businesses should be placing AI at the very heart of their transformation strategy, not merely using it as a 'proof of concept' or to address individual challenges.

The reality is that AI will be used for both good and bad. The negative consequences are likely to occur whether businesses decide to experiment with AI or not. But the benefits this technology can deliver are too lucrative for us to ignore. ●



From AI to ROI: it's time to build an innovation-ready enterprise

To successfully deploy and scale AI, firms need to understand the full scope of opportunities – and challenges – that lie ahead

The meteoric rise of GenAI has ushered in a new age of disruptive innovation. Just eighteen months after ChatGPT blazed a trail for the technology, thousands of businesses are now using it to unlock fresh insights, automate mundane tasks and create new content. Even firms that haven't yet embraced AI can't deny its impact; we are clearly on the cusp of a technological shift that will rival – and potentially exceed – the introduction of the internet or mobile devices.

"You can't ignore it," says Steven Huels, general manager of the AI business unit at Red Hat, a leading provider of enterprise open-source solutions. "It's not going to go away. It's going to have far-reaching impacts on your business, your competitive nature, [etc.]"

Indeed, Gartner estimates that 85% of enterprises will have used GenAI application programming interfaces (APIs) or deployed GenAI-enabled applications by 2026. Nevertheless, many organisations are struggling to get projects into production quickly – and crucially cost-effectively.

Often that's because they lack the talent, partners or tools to successfully enhance their applications with AI. The lack of alignment between rapidly evolving tools can lower productivity and complicate collaboration between data scientists, software developers and IT operations, for instance. Complex administrative processes may further undermine efforts to scale AI deployments.

While popular cloud platforms seem to offer the scalability and attractive toolsets enterprises need, they often come with a significant degree of user lock-in, which can limit architectural and deployment options. To achieve the kind of scale that will deliver real value, companies also need to ensure repeatable and consistent handoffs between model developers, application developers and operations, along with effective AI lifecycle management.

"If you're building an enterprise application, that code is managed, it has a lifecycle – there's a roadmap for how it grows and how it impacts your business," says Huels. "[It's] the same philosophy for enterprise AI."

Finding the right approach

Given how quickly the AI landscape is evolving, it's perhaps not surprising that many enterprises are still figuring out how to deploy and scale the technology. Fine-tuning a foundation model with company data once

seemed like the best approach, for example. But considerable funds, time and data expertise are needed to achieve this – something many organisations lack.

Although fine-tuning is often very effective when it comes to meeting a specific AI use case, Retrieval augmented generation (RAG), which enhances the accuracy and reliability of generative AI models with facts drawn from an external knowledge base, allows enterprises to incorporate data into a pre-trained model in a faster and more cost-effective way.

"Every customer has a knowledge base," says Huels. "Whether it's a product knowledge base, a customer knowledge base, a support knowledge base – they have this readily available. With RAG they don't have to burn their data into the model, so it gives them the ability to try different models as they are emerging and swap them out."

Regardless of which approach they adopt, the fast-moving nature of AI means that enterprises will still need to make some speculative bets on emerging tools, partners and technologies in this space. "Some [bets] will pay off, some won't," says Huels. "But underneath that you need a core platform that allows you to make those bets without compromising your entire data centre and AI strategy."

Red Hat's OpenShift AI is designed to be that core platform. It provides organisations with an environment and set of tools to create AI applications for unique use cases and deploy them at scale across hybrid cloud environments. IT, data science and development teams can quickly access core AI libraries and frameworks and collaborate with ease, for example, helping to simplify projects and accelerate timelines.

OpenShift AI also provides IT operations with a security-focused platform that is simple to monitor and manage. The modular, open-source nature of the platform stands in contrast to the more prescriptive AI suites available from the big cloud providers too. And it can easily be extended with partner tools that will further enhance AI development and deployment.

"You get consistency in deployment, but you're giving your end users a lot of choice in which tools they can use," Huels explains. "So, if... your developers prefer a no-code/low-code model development environment, [for example], you can plug that into our platform."



The fast-moving nature of AI means that enterprises will need to make some speculative bets on emerging tools, partners and technologies

Open-source innovation

This should set enterprises up for a future where GenAI models are integrated into ever more applications and environments. "You're going to see increasing advancements on making these generative AI models smaller, more accessible, [and] able to run in environments that don't require extensive capital outlays," says Huels.

Many of the innovations that drive this shift will be open source. "There's no denying the role open source plays not just in the model side, but the framework side, the development side," says Huels. "It is going to be the key driver of AI innovation going forward."

The open-source community is also likely to play a key role in the development of AI standards too. "The reason Enterprise Linux did so well was because a lot of it was built in the open," says Huels. "You had multiple eyes from varying backgrounds looking at the same sets of code, making sure things were operating the way they were supposed to – [that] they were optimised, they were secure. You're starting to see that more with open model development."

Regulations around AI are also likely to increase in future, though hopefully against a backdrop of better public understanding of the power and limitations of the technology. Ultimately, says

Huels, "We want that innovation to still occur, but we want it to occur in a way that [means] we have confidence that it [AI] is still acting in our best interest and not against us."

No matter what the future holds though, platforms like OpenShift AI will clearly play a vital role in helping organisations to deploy and scale the technology at pace. In fact, says Huels, "Enterprises who refuse to adopt AI are going to find themselves in a spot where it's really hard for them to compete against companies who are taking advantage of it."

For more information please visit redhat.com



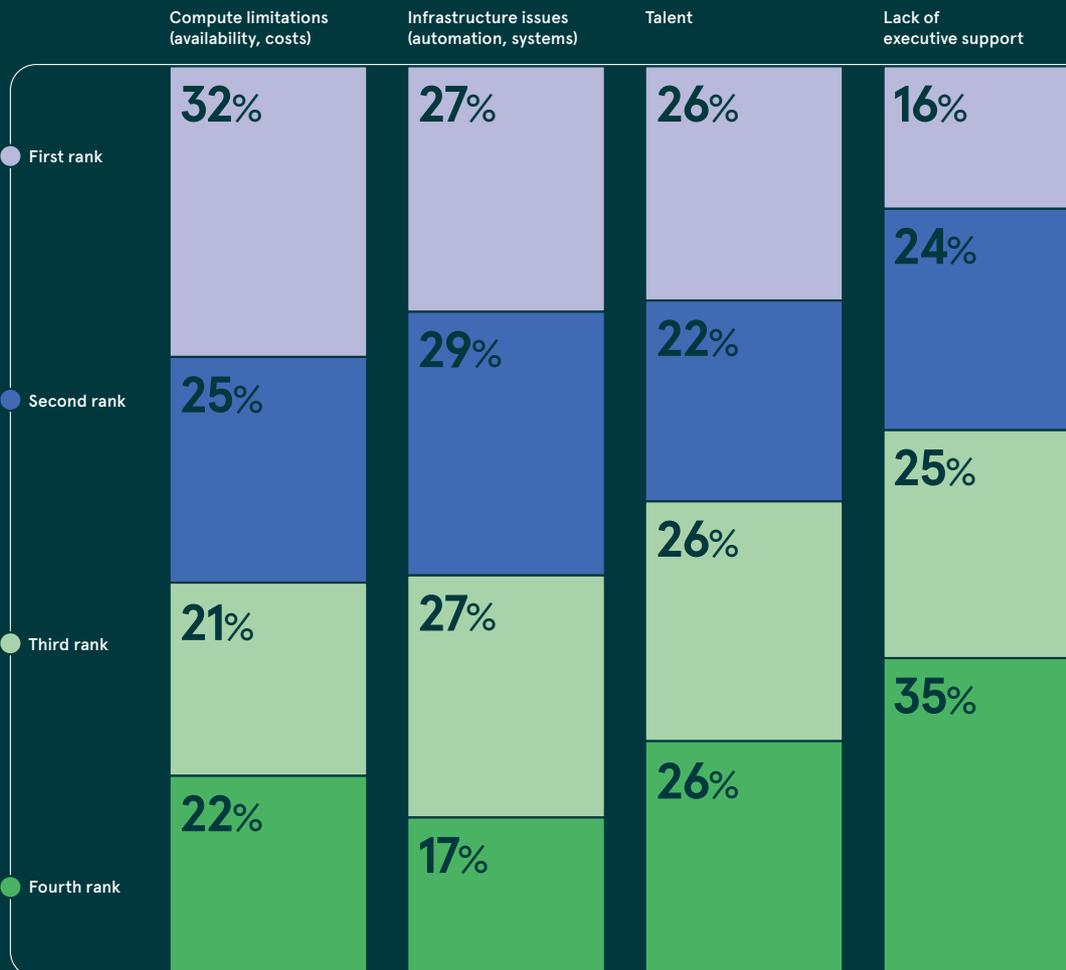
SUPPORTING AI AT SCALE

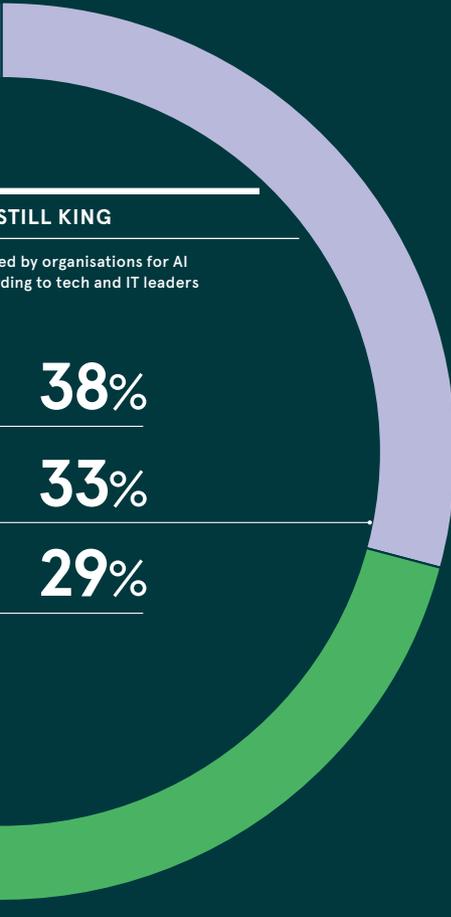
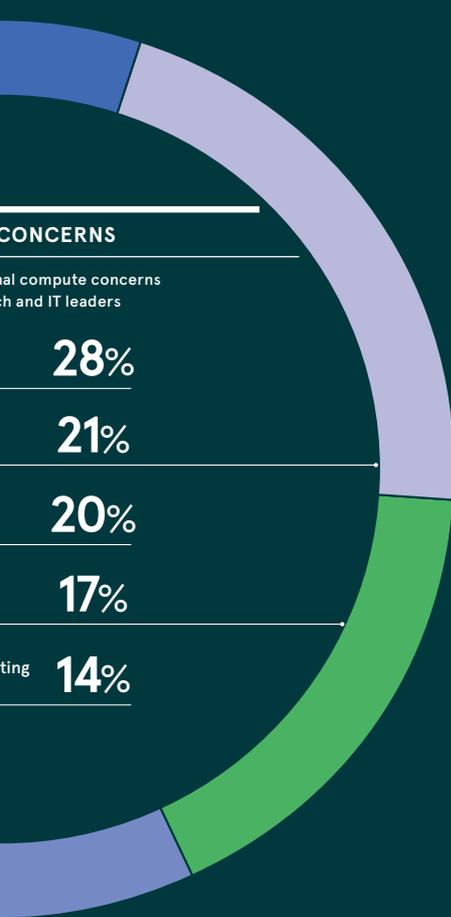
Although some firms have leveraged AI tools in ways that are reliable and produce measurable benefits, full integration of AI has been limited even at the most innovative companies. Tech leaders argue that businesses must scale up the adoption of the technology to reap its transformational benefits. But this requires significant support infrastructure. Compute resources are not infinite, higher energy consumption raises financial and environmental concerns and technical talent is scarce.

AI Infrastructure Alliance, ClearML, FuriosaAI, 2024

COMPUTE LIMITATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES TO SCALING UP AI

Tech and IT leaders' ranking of the biggest challenges in scaling up AI implementation at their organisation

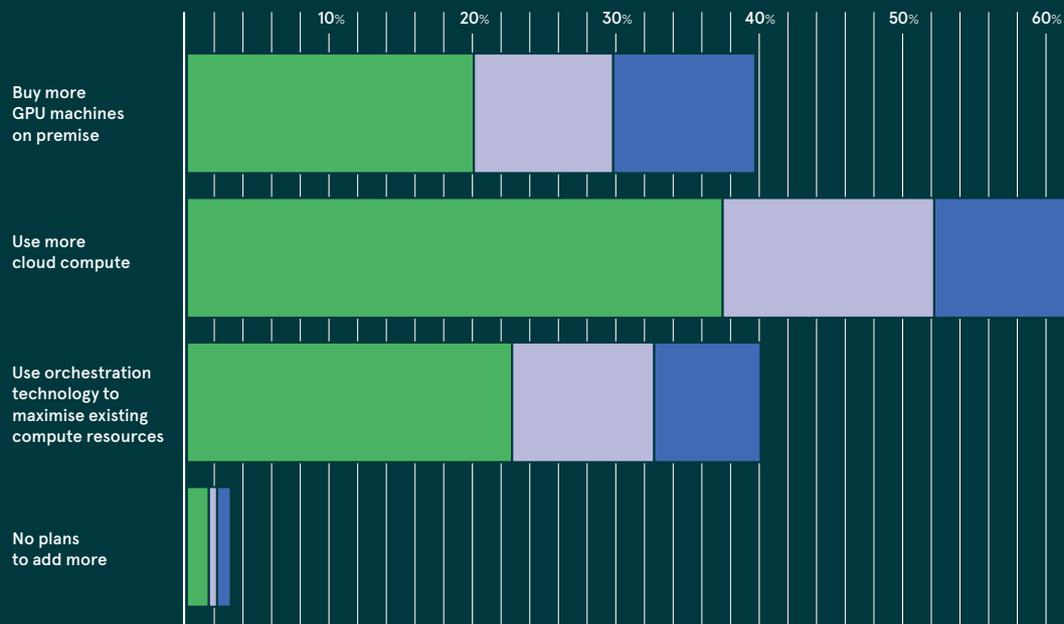




HOW DO FIRMS PLAN TO ADDRESS THEIR AI INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS?

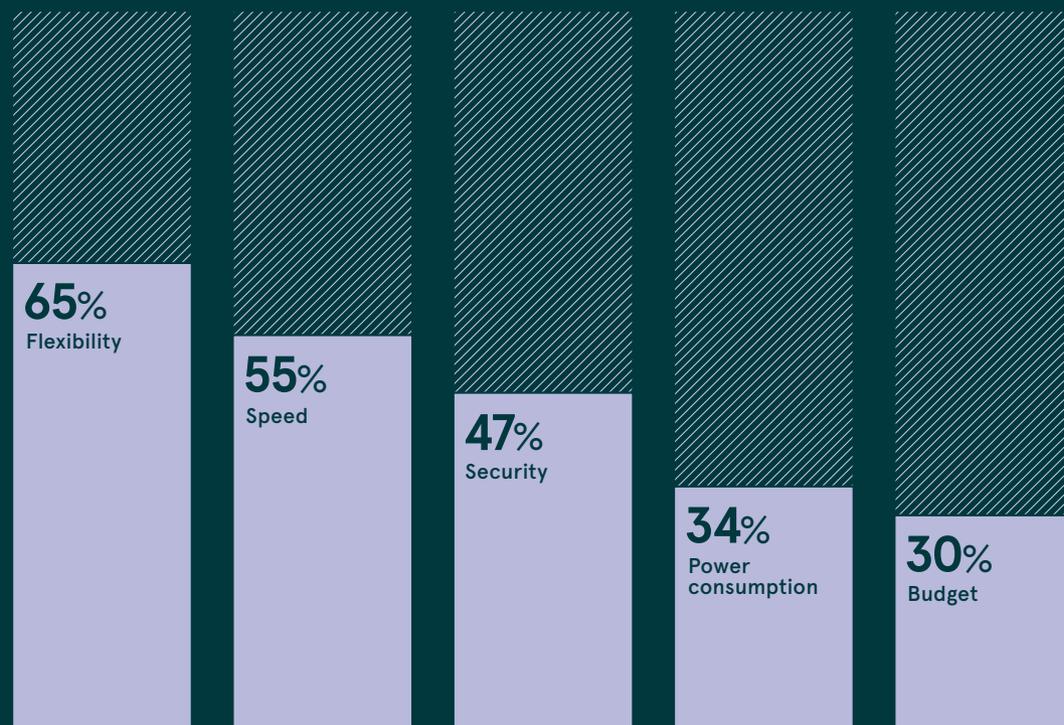
Plans for expanding AI compute infrastructure in 2024, according to tech and IT leaders, by company size

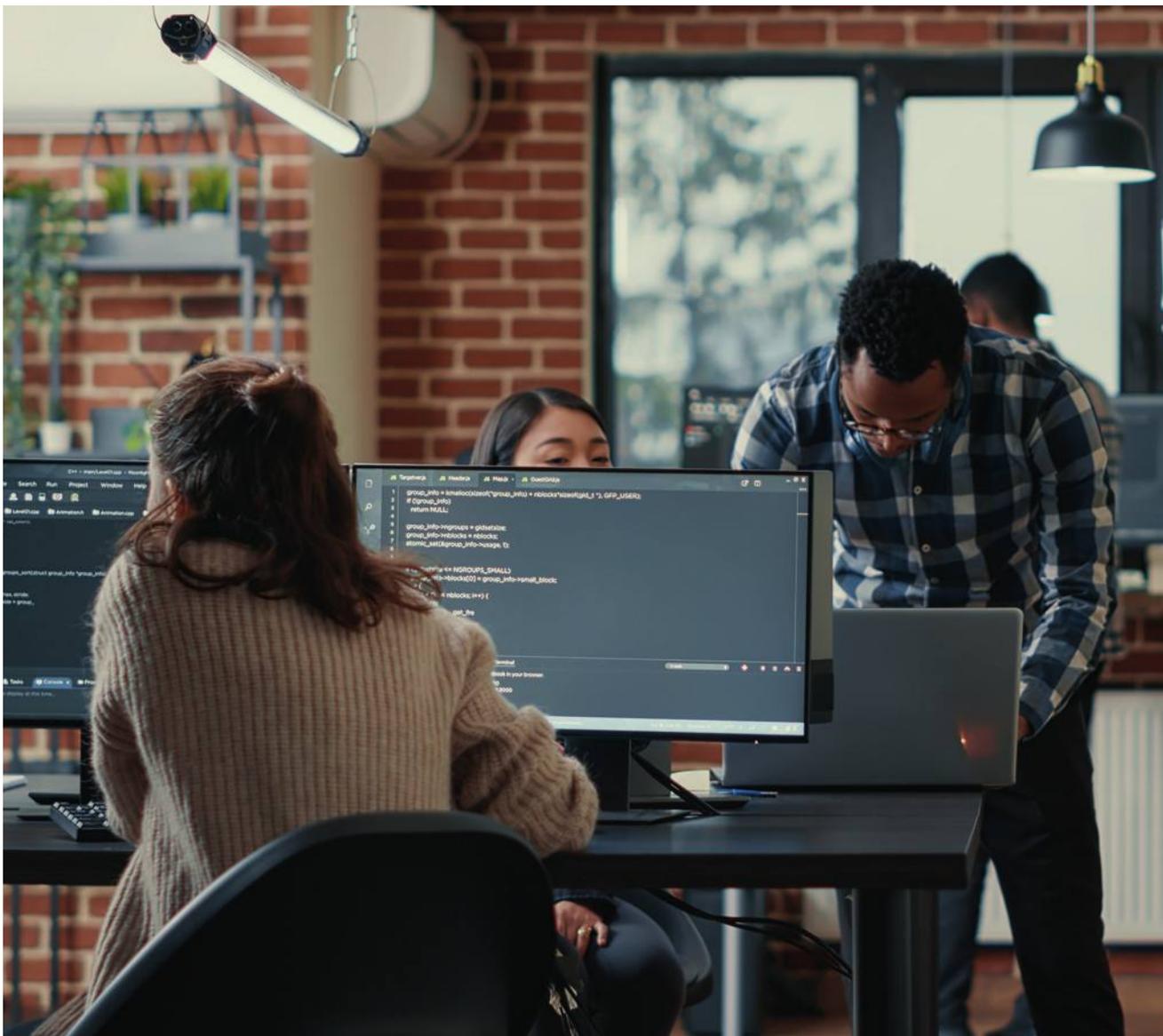
● 500-2,000 employees ● 2,001-10,000 employees ● 10,000+ employees



WHEN IT COMES TO SUPPLEMENTING COMPUTE INFRASTRUCTURE, FLEXIBILITY IS KEY

Tech and IT leaders' key considerations in expanding compute infrastructure





GOVERNANCE

Mind the AI governance gap

A gap has emerged between organisations' speedy implementation of AI and their ability to address the special governance concerns posed by the technology

Nick Easen

Many businesses have embraced AI, keen to exploit the potential of the powerful and affordable tools. But for too many, governance has become an afterthought in the scramble to deploy the technology.

It's easy to see the attraction of the pervasive, rapidly developing plug-and-play tools, powered by customer data and intellectual property. However, a gap has emerged between organisations'

speedy implementation of AI and their ability to address the special governance concerns that arise.

The use of AI exposes businesses to unique risks and therefore demands close scrutiny and careful due diligence. It not only has the ability to expose private information and infringe IP rights, but there are also challenges over bias and ethics, cybersecurity for AI, and corporate governance practices at external AI vendors.

It doesn't help that there's no universal blueprint for AI governance. The EU AI Act mainly tempers riskier forms of the tech, while a fragmented set of regulations globally means businesses face many questions when it comes to putting the right guardrails in place. It's no wonder that the AI governance gap is one of the top risks threatening business growth in 2024, according to KPMG.

Antonis Patrikios, privacy, cyber and AI partner at global law firm Dentons, likens the AI governance challenge to "GDPR on steroids". However, GDPR – the EU's General Data Protection Regulation – primarily concerns the chief data officer and IT departments. AI governance is an ecosystem challenge, requiring input from teams such as procurement, legal and information security. But many businesses aren't taking a joined-up approach.

Because the risk landscape is so varied, the chances are high that things will fall between the gaps, says Steve Wright, CEO of IT consultancy Privacy Culture.

"Many teams still work in silos. IT teams often don't work hand in glove with the person involved with AI governance," he explains.

Although there are some resource-rich organisations that have been particularly proactive about AI governance, most firms will have to settle for a wait-and-see approach, Wright says. "While GDPR, for instance, had an end date for compliance, this is not the case with AI so far."

At this stage in the evolution of AI, companies must take the initiative to safeguard their AI tools, rather than rely on global governance structures. Closing the AI governance gap for organisations means creating a framework around two elements: one external and one internal.

The external element involves scrutinising third-party providers. It is essential for businesses to ask the right questions about AI accountability at the outset of any contract with vendors.

Corporations increasingly want to utilise private instances of a large language model in the cloud. They want to know where that cloud infrastructure is located and to use retrieval augmented generation systems – where company data sits outside of the training sources – so businesses don't share vast tranches of raw data with the LLM itself. Moreover, they want a human in the loop for quality assurance.

As for the internal component, firms should focus on ensuring top-notch data management systems, since AI data input is one of the most significant factors that businesses can control. Strong internal AI governance also means considering privacy by design, mapping AI systems in use and implementing robust ethical guidelines.

A proactive approach to AI governance is vital. "The core challenge for businesses is that AI policies, protocols and contracts can quickly become outdated as technology, regulations and market standards rapidly evolve," notes Alexander Amato-Craverio, a director of emerging technology at law firm Herbert Smith Freehills.

With so many moving parts in AI governance, how can organisations gauge success? There are a number of frameworks being developed around the world.

Businesses can expect more from the European Commission. When the EU AI Act was formulated, EU technocrats had a future conformity assessment or CE mark in mind, similar to a BSI kitemark for AI.

Wright thinks a European roadmap, which organisations can test against, is likely coming in the near term. The question, he says, is whether the UK should follow suit.

"The concept of a conformity assessment that will rubber-stamp



The core challenge for businesses is that AI policies, protocols and contracts can quickly become outdated as standards rapidly evolve

AI before it's released to the mass market, like a physical product approval for consumer goods, is a good idea," he adds.

An AI kitemark would help businesses bridge the internal AI governance gap. Many organisations are struggling to work out the bare minimum of resources needed within their organisation to account for responsible use of the technology.

The UK's Information Commissioner's Office has an AI risk assessment tool to help in this process. Many businesses also use the US National Institute of Standards and Technology AI Risk Management Framework and the OECD's responsible AI governance framework.

Patrikios says one of the biggest issues with filling the AI governance gap is that there aren't enough trained people for technical roles in data and security, among others.

"The talent shortage right now is similar to the lack of data protection officers that occurred around 2016, two years before the GDPR came into force," he explains, adding that some organisations, such as the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP), are training people on AI governance. Patrikios is one of the IAPP's AI trainers.

There are also calls for a C-suite role for AI specialists. Chief AI officers could champion strong governance, secure budgets and deal with internal and external accountability. Their remit would cover the highly technical aspects of AI, as well as the legal components, including due diligence and ethics.

Patrikios says many companies have started extending the remit of existing roles such as chief privacy officers to cover AI governance.

“ Many teams still work in silos. IT often doesn't work hand in glove with the person involved with AI governance

There are parallels in history when it comes to dealing with governance gaps. Whether it's the advent of the internet, cloud computing or the collection of personal data, eventually the law and regulation catch up with tech advances.

However, in each of these cases, standards and guidelines were not determined by big tech or governments alone. They emerged as the result of collaboration between public and private sector actors. Patrikios argues that filling the AI governance gap will require a similar collaborative effort.

Thankfully, guidelines on responsible AI are not being handed down from big tech companies alone. There are many industry forums weighing in on the issue and regulators around the world are starting to devise formal frameworks.

"What we must be doing is upskilling and using the power of the network when it comes to filling the AI governance gap. We need to be talking to our peers and our partners about this issue. It's essential to know what market practice looks like," concludes Patrikios. ●

How generative AI can attract the next generation of lawyers

The legal industry faces a hiring crisis but generative AI can offer innovative solutions. Law firms must embrace technology to save time, attract talent and avoid being left behind

Law firms are often seen as archaic organisations that can be reluctant to embrace new ways of working, expecting junior employees to put in long hours and perform repetitive tasks.

This perception has made it harder to recruit new talent, with firms continuously raising salaries for newly qualified lawyers to attract the best graduates. "Tech-savvy talent seeking more flexible work have also historically been put off a career in law," says Karen Waldron, director of product development at LexisNexis UK.

Yet that perception is starting to change. With the advent of generative AI tools, today's generation of lawyers have more ways to enjoy a legal career without following the traditional partner track.

"Firms that embrace technology and innovation now offer dynamic roles in automation, project management and AI solution development, as well as the practice of law," says Waldron. "By leveraging generative AI legal platforms, innovative firms can reposition themselves as attractive employers."

Law firms are increasingly more willing to encourage the use of AI tools. According to a LexisNexis study, the number of legal professionals using generative AI more than doubled between July 2023 and January 2024, jumping from 11% to 26%.

Enthusiasm is driven by the fact that AI allows lawyers to shift their focus to strategic, high-value work, boosting their productivity while improving the client experience.

"This also enables organic growth through improved reputation and means that lawyers can have the space to attract and serve more clients," Waldron says.

In this new world, lawyers have more time for professional development activities, such as gaining deeper expertise in specific practice areas or honing sharper tech skills by working with AI.

AI is likely to change the landscape for junior associates and trainee lawyers, Waldron says. "Generative AI can enhance the training and progression



of younger lawyers by helping them learn and get up to speed faster, especially when it comes to legal research and drafting documents," she says.

AI also has the potential to provide wider benefits such as personalised learning experiences and support for career development and AI-powered knowledge management systems.

While the uptake of AI may change a lawyer's scope of work, it is highly unlikely to replace lawyers entirely. The legal profession relies on human skills that cannot be replicated by machines.

"Young lawyers must continue to prioritise developing and building their critical thinking, emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills. This will ensure the next generation of lawyers have well-rounded competencies including technical capabilities and fundamental legal and ethical principles," Waldron says.

Generative AI can also help to improve work-life balance by streamlining time-consuming tasks. Not only can that help free up mental capacity, it enables better time management.

However, firms must be cautious when adopting generative AI tools and ensure lawyers understand the potential challenges this technology could create.

"Successful implementation requires planning, training and ethical considerations regarding risks like bias and hallucination, so it is important that services take steps to reduce these risks," says Waldron. "Taking a balanced approach to leveraging human expertise and generative AI legal platforms will provide the best outcomes for a great work-life balance and professional excellence."

LexisNexis is supporting law firms through this process with its new generative AI tool Lexis+ AI, which combines its exclusive, leading legal content with its proprietary search technology to create a fast, accurate, generative AI legal platform.

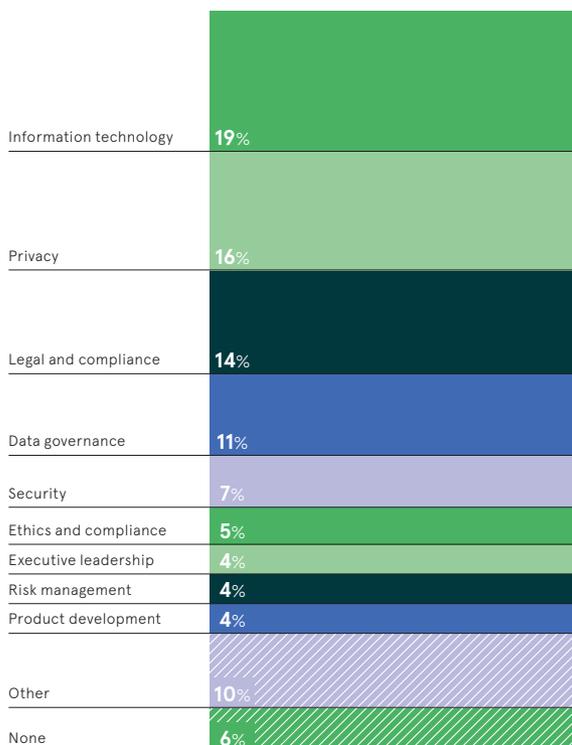
Lexis+ AI gives lawyers access to conversational search, intelligent drafting, case summarisation and rapid document analysis. This helps firms address issues such as information overload, repetitive tasks and lengthy legal research by summarising and synthesising large volumes of information.

"Lexis+ AI establishes trust in generative AI by having its outputs grounded in one of the world's largest leading legal content repositories. We reduce the risk of hallucinations by validating citations to the underlying legal authority and linking directly to the relevant content," Waldron adds.

Generative AI grounded on leading legal content has arrived. Embracing this kind of technology frees up valuable time for high-impact legal work while improving overall productivity. Law firms must realise how generative AI can not only change the current demands of the legal profession but play a key role in attracting and retaining the next generation of lawyers.

WHO'S IN CHARGE OF AI GOVERNANCE?

Business functions tasked with primary AI governance responsibilities worldwide



International Association of Privacy Professionals, EY, 2023

“ Embracing generative AI frees up valuable time for high-impact legal work

For more information please visit lexisnexis.co.uk



INTERVIEW

‘We take it for granted that humans will make the decisions’

José Esteves, dean of the Porto Business School, explains why business leaders must adapt their decision-making to generative AI – or risk being replaced by it

Oliver Balch

When José Esteves talks AI, C-suite leaders sit up and listen. As head of the Porto Business School, he already has their ear. But it’s his past as a professional hacker that really commands their attention.

For the first 15 years of his career, Esteves drew on his insider knowledge of the internet’s dark side to help governments and businesses to address their cyber-related vulnerabilities – and, occasionally, advise on how they could steal a march on their competitors.

Fast forward 15 years and he’s still a sought-after voice in leadership circles. But now executives ask less about cybersecurity basics and more about how to adapt to an increasingly AI-dominated world.

Esteves doesn’t downplay the immense changes coming down the track. Nor does he hold back on the unpreparedness of most business leaders, particularly when it comes to decision-making.

“Everyone is talking about automation, but no one is really analysing the impact of AI on decision-making,” he argues. “We take it for granted that human

beings will be the ones making decisions in organisations, but actually it’s not so true.”

It’s not that business leaders will be stripped of their decision-making roles as organisations come to depend more and more on generative AI (GenAI), he says. The real risk is ignoring the influence that AI exerts – and will increasingly exert – on the decision-making process.

Consider all the data-mining, number-crunching and scenario-planning that leads to ‘option A’ or ‘option B’ arriving before the board. AI’s contribution here is no bad thing, Esteves says. While business leaders like to boast of ‘going with their gut’, what is interpreted as bold or instinctive decision-making is often merely a suboptimal response to imperfect information, Esteves maintains.

“Few organisations can provide sufficient levels of analytical information to top leaders, so ‘gut instinct’ was created as a way of surviving. AI can help to create scenarios, assist with planning and enable better foresight,” he states.

In a similarly positive vein, AI can give leaders the kind of unbiased, straight-talking advice that colleagues and consultants are often unwilling to provide. As Esteves points out, AI has no fear of missing out on that must-have promotion or losing a critical contract: it just says “what you need to know” as a leader, not “what you want to hear”.

Esteves describes this aspect of AI as almost an ‘executive coach’ – it’s there 24/7 to offer candid and unvarnished insights based on real-time developments. “It’s absolutely indifferent to managing the politics within the organisation,” he says.

If that sounds like tough love, think again. AI’s status as a machine

“
The return on investment cannot be seen in the short term; it’s in the knowledge you gain, the culture and the way of working





How businesses are raising the bar with AI avatars

Simple yet powerful AI avatars will enable businesses to cut through in an intensely competitive market

provides businesses with a unique way to cut through and meet consumer needs in areas such as customer service, education, healthcare and entertainment – among many others.

Eliminating technical and financial barriers

Yet despite the benefits, concerns about privacy, cost and complexity around AI risk undermining this progress.

“Globally, CEOs say AI is their number one priority, but they also say it’s their biggest concern,” says James Martin, founder and chief executive of Dante AI, a market leader in the world of AI chatbot and AI avatar development.

“For this reason, many firms hold back and miss out on the advantages. So, it is vital to eliminate the technical and financial barriers that companies face with AI, while providing truly secure platforms that leverage the full benefits of the technology.”

Dante AI helps clients launch advanced AI chatbots and AI avatars within minutes, via its easy-to-use self-service platform. Dante AI’s “no-code” approach means users require no previous coding experience – they can simply type their instructions into the system to achieve the desired results using natural language processing (NLP).

The company’s AI chatbots and AI avatars go beyond merely handling repetitive tasks, promising to revolutionise digital interactions – providing faster, more accurate responses that help to form a more human-like bond with users.

They are also highly customisable, offer advanced insights on AI chat performance in real-time, and integrate easily with existing IT systems, connecting with over 6,000 applications and Dante AI’s direct integrations into widely used platforms such as MS Teams, Slack and WhatsApp.

Dante AI’s white-label approach also means its tools blend seamlessly with a company’s existing brand assets – cutting development timelines from

months to minutes. This ease of adoption ensures that even smaller businesses can leverage cutting-edge AI technology to enhance their operations and customer engagement.

Strikingly authentic

“Our AI assistants are intelligent, responsive and astonishingly human-like,” says Martin. “They can comprehend and respond to users instantly – exhibiting nuanced behaviours, expressions, and empathy that make interactions strikingly authentic.”

The firm already has more than 100,000 users globally, from B2C consumers to major blue chip companies, and its user base is growing fast. Martin believes embracing AI chatbots and AI avatars is a long-term strategic move toward a more immersive and engaging form of customer interaction.

Yet, while the data collected through AI solutions can provide companies with real-time end-user data, security is critical and sits at the heart of Dante AI’s business philosophy. The company offers robust data encryption that meets the highest international data protection standards and only works with trusted corporate partners such as Amazon Web Services and ChatGPT creator OpenAI, amongst others.

“In a world rushing towards ultra-complicated solutions, Dante AI champions simplicity while ensuring the highest levels of security,” he concludes. “Our tools are so intuitive a child could master them, yet so powerful the biggest enterprises can rely on them. It means no matter your background, you can leverage the benefits of this transformative AI technology within minutes.”

For more information please visit <https://go.dante-ai.com/>



“Few organisations can provide sufficient information. ‘Gut instinct’ was created as a way of surviving

Learning to be comfortable with experimentation is key. It’s an insight drawn from his hacking days. In the face of a new system, Esteves says hackers always start with an exploratory phase, looking for weak spots and testing possible avenues for attack.

“By experimenting, you’re going to start perceiving the potential impact of AI. The return on investment is not in sales and cannot be seen in the short term: it’s in the knowledge you gain, the culture and the way of working,” he argues.

Courage is a related aspect of the hacker mindset. Many leaders are really managers rather than true leaders, says Esteves, hence the importance placed on adapting to the slowly changing status quo rather than uprooting it altogether. In an AI age, in contrast, leaders must be brave enough to follow where their curiosity leads them and “do things in totally new ways”.

Another key step revolves around radical collaboration. This is the only viable route to competitive advantage, Esteves reasons. His logic is simple: most companies lack the resources required to develop sophisticated AI solutions themselves, relying instead on a very similar core set of AI technologies, which reduces their distinctive edge. Only by collaborating with others can they hope to break out and contextualise AI tools to their market realities.

“The question many executives ask me is, ‘If everyone is going to use OpenAI, how can I use AI to compete with other companies?’. I see a great potential in select banks or marketing agencies, say, creating industry-specific AI solutions for their domain.”

Leaders shouldn’t fear AI, Esteves insists. Yes, their roles will change, but for the better: they will spend less time managing the day-to-day and more exploring the exciting ‘what ifs’ of tomorrow.

Could AI become the chief executive? Is that too far-fetched? Not necessarily, says Esteves. “It could, yes, especially if humans don’t change the way they lead.” ●

doesn’t prevent it from learning human-like traits such as empathy. Indeed, Esteves argues that the discourse of early generation systems like ChatGPT is in fact very positive and friendly. AI machines also have infinite time to listen, something busy humans all too often lack.

“It’s not talked about much, but many leaders feel lonely, especially in times of crisis, because they cannot share what’s worrying them or because they are not willing to trust in anyone. With GenAI, people know they are talking to a machine, but they trust it all the same,” he says.

When it comes to people management, however, AI’s impact on leadership has a more unsettling edge. Leaders need to get used to the idea of managing a workforce composed of two types of workers: humans and machines.

Clearly, there’s an organisational challenge around redeployment: who does what job where? But a shift in mindset is also required, Esteves argues. Leaders can no longer assume that humans are the smartest or even the most creative resource available to them.

Don’t expect all employees to be comfortable working alongside machines, he warns, especially if the latter are perceived as bringing greater value. Esteves suggests managers and employees ‘co-create’ a culture where people see AI as a partner rather than a competitor.

“If you put a machine in competition with a human, that person won’t be happy about it. But if a human employee feels that the machine is helping them to improve their overall performance and experience, then it’s good,” he says.

So how should leaders best prepare? It’s tempting to defer any substantive action, Esteves admits. For all the talk about AI’s disruptive impact, the dramatic changes to leadership that he envisions are still a few years away, he says.

For Esteves, however, leaders can’t start prepping soon enough. “Typically, companies wait for the technology to mature, but that’s a mistake. We know from experience that the best companies give their employees time to experiment and understand it.”

The key word here is ‘experiment’. Most advice that crosses business leaders’ desks relates to procedural matters: establish an AI policy, set up an AI ethics committee, appoint a chief AI officer, develop an AI strategy and a data strategy to go with it, and so on.

These are all on Esteves’ to-do list. However, he says leaders must focus on shifting their mindsets for an AI age, something that will take time.

How the UK is poised to become an AI and data platform leader

A unique combination of data infrastructure and a commitment to AI as an investment sector puts the UK in prime position to dominate digital transformation

A I and data are two of the main cornerstones of technology in business – with the former often helping unlock insights hidden within the latter. And UK businesses are uniquely situated to take advantage of the promise of both, thanks to the position the country holds in the world.

There are more data centres in the UK than any other country in the world, except the US and Germany. The country punches above its weight in its data might, ranking seventh when graded by GDP.

At the same time, the UK is leading Europe in AI-created jobs and companies. There are currently 360,000 AI related jobs in the UK, contributing \$2.2bn in annual GDP. By 2030, AI will boost the UK economy by 10%, according to PwC.

"AI can unlock GDP growth at a rate that's unprecedented in recent years," says Kevin Dallas, CEO of EDB, a leading Postgres data and AI company. "The forecast would suggest a 1.5 percentage point annual growth rate – just from AI. Compare that to the first quarter overall GDP growth rate this year, which was annualised at just 0.7%."

Harnessing the power of AI

The numbers speak for themselves. But AI and data will change so much for businesses beyond the typical ROI metrics. In an EDB survey of C-suite executives, respondents said that AI could help bring return on investment by unlocking agility and competitive advantages. In addition, respondents also felt AI could open up the capacity for innovation – which would in turn create better margins.

"The question is how, not if, your organisation can transform to be a data and AI platform-based infrastructure," says Dallas. AI is becoming a focal discussion point in the enterprises EDB surveyed, with 59% of businesses in the United States, 63% in the UK and 66% in Germany saying it's a vital topic when considering future technology strategy.

However, simply having AI within your business is not a guarantor of success. The ability to operate and work at very high speeds with AI and data is seen as a near-universal prerequisite for success among respondents, with at least four in five C-suite representatives across the US (84%), the UK (81%) and Germany (81%) agreeing with its importance.

Rewriting your business plan

Harnessing AI at speed means new thinking about effective, AI-literate

infrastructure has to take place. "Organisations need to develop, consume and operationalise their AI and data for their own platforms, wherever, however and whenever they want," says Dallas. "It's this idea of your organisation becoming a data and AI platform that is going to drive success."

IDC estimates that 90% of all data collected by enterprises is unstructured and therefore its real value has yet to be discovered. Adding structure to that data is the promise AI can bring to businesses. To achieve the most from the technology, businesses need to follow three key steps.

First key for success: You need a sovereign AI and data platform

Much of the value of a business's future data will come from the idea of being able to access it anytime, anywhere – while staying compliant. AI should only be restricted by your industry standards and regional governments. This means data will be on your premises, in your private clouds and maybe public clouds.

Second key for success: Observability is critical across your data estate for AI success

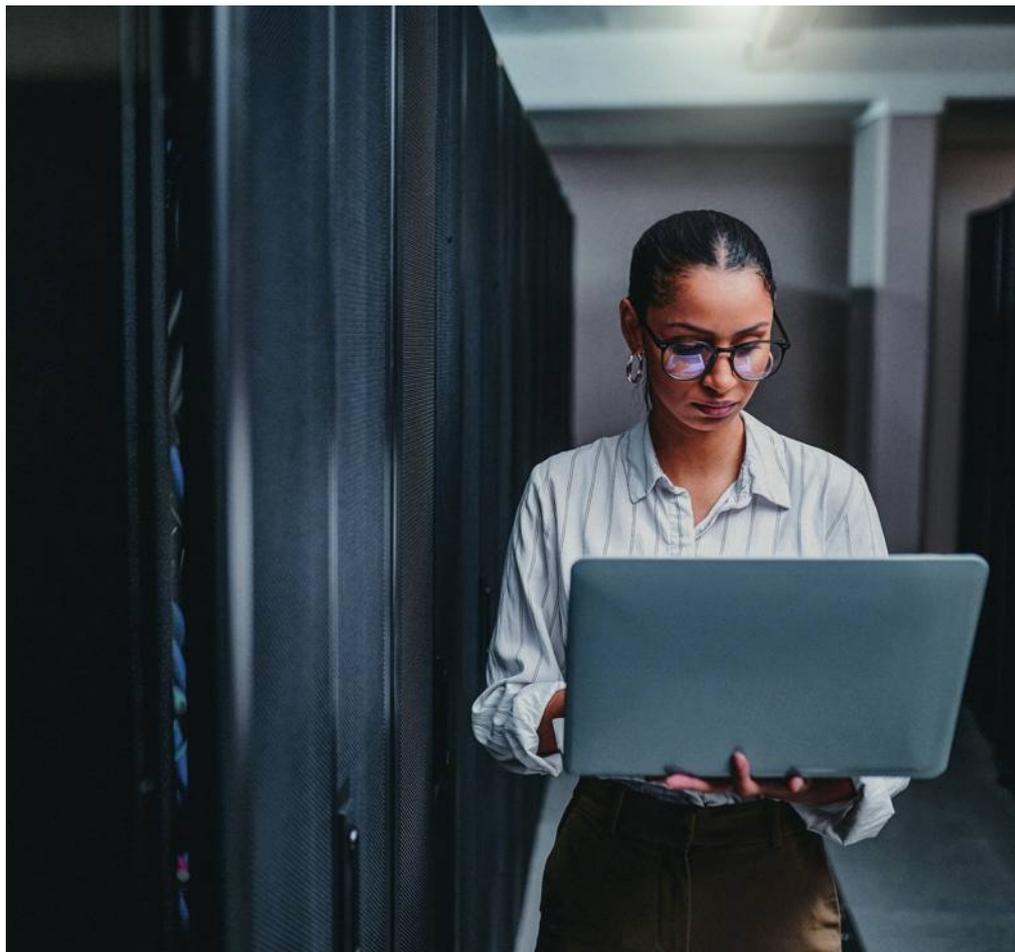
Organisations infusing AI into their mission-critical workloads also need to ensure there is observability across these data estates and workflows. "Observability is crucial: AI has an insatiable appetite for data from a plethora of sources, and businesses need visibility into this process across their various data estates," says Dallas.

Simply adding AI into your company's mission-critical workloads is not enough: you need to be able to see how it is helping your firm and adapt to its findings. Success will be driven by observing data when, where and how you need to.

Third key for success: In an uncertain future, open source is vital

At this stage of the AI revolution, it is impossible to predict the full direction of data and AI platforms, so choice is essential. Secure, compliant and enterprise grade AI and data in an increasingly open-source world is part of this future. Four in 10 leaders in the US, UK and Germany reported that data platforms such as Postgres will be considered for their next major AI project.

"Companies need solutions that are flexible enough to run both in the cloud or on-premises depending on



“Companies need solutions that are flexible enough to run both in the cloud or on-premises depending on their specific needs and workloads

their specific needs and workloads," says Dallas. "AI is still a new frontier, so companies should opt for technologies like Postgres, which have an extensible underlying data model that also provides ongoing support as they navigate building these novel intelligent applications."

Unlocking opportunities

EDB is the leading contributor to the fast-growing open-source database, Postgres. The company works with businesses to help them unlock AI and data opportunities.

AI, data and Postgres are already being combined to make a dramatic

difference to our planet, in ways far beyond initial expectations of technology. The Wildlife Conservation Society uses this technology to track the real-time health of coral reefs that drive the livelihood of over 500 million people.

"Making data accessible to all users, across different environments and applications, is crucial in the era of AI, especially when it comes to protecting our world's oceans," says Dallas. "With more than 35 years of continuous development, Postgres stands as the most adaptable and versatile database, relied upon by millions of nonprofits, government bodies and businesses. What we are witnessing now is that Postgres can significantly contribute to the future of our planet."

This is just one example of how AI, data and Postgres can make an impact. To welcome digital transformation into their own organisations, leaders will need to redraw their business plans. Companies will need access to their data and AI platform when, where and how they need it, without disturbing the mission-critical operations that are running a business day in, day out.

"There will be new ecosystems that will need to wrap around your business

as an AI and data platform, because open source done right will deliver value far greater than the sum of all the parts," says Dallas.

Firms will need to infuse their AI models into their business, where, when and how they want. As a result, leaders will need to be constantly vigilant to ensure that data is secure and compliant as it is moving and working across their whole data estate.

This all requires a level of observability across data estates that is currently not common practice. "It's a hard task," says Dallas. "But enterprise-grade Postgres delivers each of these key components of success for your AI and data platform future." IT leaders driving digital transformation must harness the potential of data and AI, with those in the UK uniquely positioned to lead the charge.

For more information please visit enterprisedb.com



RISK

Are firms ready for the cost of AI failures?

AI systems offer strong advantages, but organisations must prepare for the consequences if the technology goes wrong

Daniel Thomas

When McDonald's was forced to remove an AI-powered ordering system from its US drive-through restaurants in June 2024, the debacle served as an example of what can happen when the new technology goes wrong.

The problem started when the fast food giant's voice-activated tech began to misinterpret customer orders to comic effect, registering requests for bacon-topped ice cream and hundreds of dollars' worth of unwanted chicken nuggets. Naturally, videos of these gaffes went viral and sparked a torrent of mockery, forcing the chain to shelve its partnership with IBM, which supplied the ordering system.

As AI proliferates, such system failures are becoming increasingly common, with organisations including Microsoft, Air Canada, Tesla and Amazon all experiencing their own embarrassing incidents.

The costs can be significant in terms of business continuity, brand damage, regulatory action and even legal claims.

But that hasn't dampened enthusiasm for AI's potential. Again, look at McDonald's: despite the blunder, the company maintains the technology is still "part of its restaurants' future", highlighting the obvious efficiencies that AI solutions can produce.

So how can firms minimise the risks while maximising the benefits?

AI failures can be grouped into three categories. The most common misstep is when an automated system produces an output that is incorrect, biased or even discriminatory. Often the consequence of a system being fed with bad data, this type of failure has led to lawsuits and enforcement actions.

Then there are blunders in data protection. These errors relate to how algorithms are trained and have spawned a spate of recent copyright cases against AI providers such as Microsoft and OpenAI.

The third category of failure is cyber attacks, either against AI systems or facilitated by them, which are becoming more common and more dangerous.

According to Luisa Resmerita, a senior director in the technology segment at FTI Consulting: "The challenge for businesses is balancing the costs of lost opportunities on the one hand and the costs of getting it wrong on the other."

Many of the implementation problems may stem from the fact that generative AI is a new technology and is being adopted very quickly. According to the Federation of Small Businesses, 20% of UK small and medium-sized enterprises say they now use some form of AI, but 46% admit they lack the knowledge and/or skills to use it successfully.

A robust AI strategy is key to staying safe. Firms should carry out risk assessments to evaluate the chances and potential consequences of AI system failures. They should also have backups to ensure business



“The first step to mitigating risks is to take a transparent and traceable approach to model-building

continuity; a proper data strategy so that systems are powered with the right information; reliable monitoring processes; and proper human oversight of AI decisions.

Executives increasingly require the advice of external partners to ensure their AI strategies are founded on a realistic appraisal of potential risks, according to Stina Connor, an associate director at risk management consultancy Control Risks.

Security teams, on the other hand, often want more tactical support, she explains. Such support could help them understand the trajectory of cyber threats, for example, or to design appropriate policies, guidelines and internal training on the acceptable use of AI within organisations.

Crucially, security and risk mitigation should move in tandem with commercially driven decisions surrounding AI implementation, including partnerships and strategies, Connor says.

Some firms may need to hire dedicated AI and data professionals to oversee AI development and ensure

models are ethical, accurate and secure. It is critical that these experts work closely with management, legal and compliance teams so the right AI culture is instilled across the organisation.

Amir Jirbandey, head of growth and marketing at AI-powered video dubbing startup Papercup, points out that more and more large organisations are establishing dedicated AI committees.

"Groups such as these enable holistic evaluations of the risks and benefits of the technology for businesses and their people," he says.

With coherent regulation in short supply, one of the challenges businesses face is a lack of guidance on AI best practices. This will soon change with the introduction of legislation such as the EU's AI Act. However, this will in turn see a considerable growth in the compliance burden for internal teams.

Evolving regulations require varying levels of compliance around maintaining detailed documentation and logs of AI systems, notes Mirit Eldor, managing director of life sciences solutions at Elsevier, an information analytics company.

She believes the first step to mitigating risks, including regulatory risk, is to take a transparent and traceable approach to model-building. "This means ensuring AI models are backed by robust data governance, providing visibility into exactly how and what data is being used," she says.

Given the risks, some firms may choose to avoid AI altogether. That would be a mistake, says Michal

Szymczak, head of AI strategy at software consultancy Zartis.

It's best to jump in and experiment. Companies learn through trial and error and are likely to gain a competitive advantage as an early adopter, he says. "No one has the recipe right now, so every company will have to find its own way."

But it isn't enough to deploy an AI tool and hope for the best, Szymczak stresses. Firms need a strategy with clear processes for monitoring, notifying and eliminating problems – automatically, if possible.

"A good principle to keep in mind is 'innovate, monitor and control,'" he says.

While companies must prepare for possible systems failures, a one-size-fits-all solution is unlikely to work. Some may focus on enhancing corporate governance by injecting AI risk controls into their processes; others will take a more targeted, product-centric approach.

Resmerita thinks AI risk is uniquely multifaceted and therefore must be addressed holistically. "Ultimately, an organisation's approach to governing AI risk must be proportionate to their AI investment strategies and risk tolerance," she adds.

Like Jirbandey, she believes executive buy-in is key to building an effective AI strategy that properly accounts for risk. Companies should also define clear roles, responsibilities and protocols for AI governance.

"While defining policy standards is an important first step in the journey, standards are only valuable if they are effectively implemented," Resmerita concludes. ●

99%

of chief risk officers worldwide believe the development and deployment of AI technologies is outpacing the management of ethical and societal risks

43%

believe the deployment of AI technologies should slow or pause until risks are better understood

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