DAILY NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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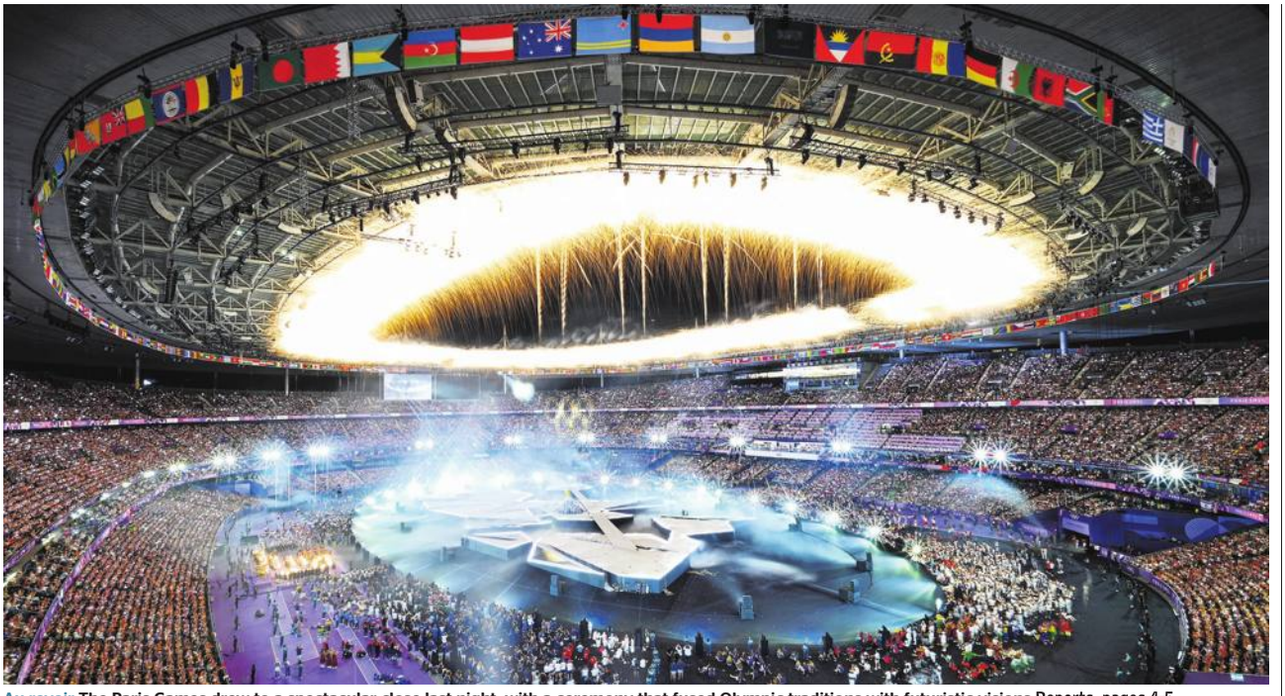
INSIDE TIMES2



Au revoir The Paris Games drew to a spectacular close last night, with a ceremony that fused Olympic traditions with futuristic visions Reports, pages 4-5

Knockdown prices for green belt to build on

Councils will have compulsory purchase powers as Labour rewrites planning rules

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Councils are to be given the power to compulsorily and cheaply buy up green belt land under plans by ministers to fulfil their pledge to build 1.5 million new homes by 2030.

In a bid to prevent landowners from cashing in on sites that would previously have been ineligible for development, the government is preparing to cap the amount of profit that they can make from the sale of their land.

Those that refuse to sell in parts of the country where there is the greatest housing need could find their land bought off them at a "benchmark" value that would be lower than the market value of similar sites outside of the green belt.

The move comes as experts warned that in order to achieve its housing target Labour would have to build not just on the so-called "grey belt" land around London but also on greenfield sites that have not previously been developed.

Campaign groups are likely to fiercely oppose the plans, but planning experts said it was the only way that some councils would be able to meet their new housing targets. England's protected green belt covers more than 6,300 square miles, roughly 13 per cent of the country's land area.

Green belts were implemented to prevent towns and cities from spreading into each other, but already include some developments. Labour says it includes significant grey belt, or "low quality", land that has little utility.

Ministers are currently consulting on plans to re-write the rules of the National Planning Policy Framework that would force councils to identify enough land in local plans to meet their future housing needs. The government has also said that when green belt land is built on, 50 per cent of the new homes should be affordable and have access to essential infrastructure.

But there are concerns that in areas of high property prices — particularly around London and the South East — landowners could cash in on sites.

In an attempt to address this, ministers are consulting on plans to set a low "benchmark" value for the land, that could cap the amount landowners could receive. If they fail to agree to the

Continued on page 2

X faces axe from tech's anti-terror coalition

Mark Sellman
Technology Correspondent

Elon Musk has thrown the tech industry's main anti-terror organisation into turmoil amid claims that X is now the top platform for hosting Hamas videos.

The Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) is a coalition that seeks to remove terrorism content from tech platforms. Members include Google, X, Meta and Microsoft.

Twitter — X's former name — was a founding member and the company is on the board. However, since Musk took over X and reduced content moderation, its continued membership has caused unrest. The billionaire has let banned extremists back on to X and sacked much of the moderation team. This was part of the strategy to turn X into a "free speech" platform that has seen him clash with Sir Keir Starmer over Britain's reponse to recent rioting.

That continued this weekend with

Elon Musk has lifted bans on extremists since buying the social network

Musk tweeting criticism of the prosecution of those inciting violence on social media. X is now the easiest platform on which to find Hamas videos, according to the Community Security Trust (CST), a charity combats extremism and antisemitism. Members of GIFCT believe that X's continued membership and place on the board undermines the organisation's credibility.

Its independent advisory committee, which the Home Office sits on, said in its last annual report that it had "become increasingly concerned by significant reductions in online trust and safety capabilities for certain platforms and a perceived decrease in the priority of the issue, impacting companies' ability to moderate extremist content online". GIFCT sources said this statement was meant to refer to Twitter/X.

Leading anti-terrorism figures are

Continued on page 2

IN THE NEWS

University challenge
Universities are offering potential students the chance to win free accommodation if they sign up to clearing before A-level results are released on Thursday. Page 6

Museum broke law
The British Museum broke laws governing the protection of ancient artefacts when 2,000 items went missing from its collection, an internal review has found. Page 7

Nazi inspired rioters
A neo-Nazi in Finland shared instructions on how to commit arson and waste police resources during the far-right riots across England last week. Page 13

Harris criticises Israel
Kamala Harris has criticised the Israeli attack on a school in Gaza that led to 93 deaths. "Yet again far too many civilians have been killed," the US vice-president said. Page 25

17,000 shops 'at risk'
The outmoded business rates system could put more than 17,000 shops at risk, the boss of Sainsbury's has said as he called for the government to overhaul the tax. Page 29

Van Dijk left waiting
Virgil van Dijk says he has yet to be offered a contract extension at Liverpool, as the head coach Arne Slot's first match ended with a 4-1 victory over Sevilla. Page 56

Today's highlights

7.05am **Sergei Markov**, ex-adviser to President Putin
8.45am **Sir Steve Redgrave**
11am **Anthony Loyd, Catherine Philp** and **Manveen Rana** on their war-zone experiences
2.50pm **Tim Higgins**, author of Power Play: Tesla, Elon Musk and the Bet of the Century
3.35pm **Mina Smallman**, right, whose daughters Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman were murdered, on taking on the Met

TIMES RADIO
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TODAY'S EDITION

NEWS

CASE CONCERNS
How safe are Lucy Letby's murder convictions?
PAGES 14-15

REGISTER

OBITUARY
Susan Wojcicki, YouTube chief and Google pioneer
PAGE 41

TIMES2

GOOD SPORTS
Farewell Olympics, hello to games played by the posh
PAGE 7

COMMENT

'Under Musk, X has eviscerated its Twitter-era safeguards and promotes incendiary content'

EDWARD LUCAS, PAGE 20

CARTOON 21 | WORLD 24 | SPORT 45
LETTERS 22 | BUSINESS 29 | CROSSWORD 56
LEADING ARTICLES 23 | REGISTER 41 | TV & RADIO TIMES2

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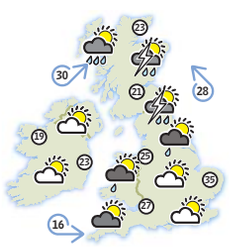

Thunderstorms in Scotland and northern England. Sunny spells elsewhere. **Full forecast, page 44**

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HMRC admits it will never recover £19bn of unpaid tax

Max Kendix

People are unlikely to pay back more than £19 billion they owe the Treasury in taxes, HM Revenue & Customs has admitted, as the number of taxpayers cut off after waiting more than an hour on the phone rose sevenfold.

HMRC is owed £43 billion in unpaid taxes, about three times more than pre-pandemic levels. But the build-up of older debts caused the proportion which HMRC estimates will not be paid back to rise to 45 per cent last year, compared with 32 per cent the previous year.

In its annual report, the department said the "prevailing economic conditions" with a "significant impact on businesses and individuals" made collecting the same level of taxes more difficult.

Separate figures from the report show that every customer service target set by the previous government was missed. Almost 56,000 customers were held on the line for 70 minutes by HMRC in the past year, at which point the call cuts off, up from just 6,900 the previous year. The average phone waiting time hit 23 minutes 14 seconds, up 42 per cent compared with last year.

Sarah Olney, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokeswoman, who analysed the figures, said that they reflected "years of Conservative Party economic vandalism" and called on the Labour government "to properly invest in the organisation" to "break this cycle of decline".

HMRC also admitted losing billions of pounds of taxpayer money to error and fraud in tax schemes to encourage research and development in business during the pandemic. About £4.1 billion has been wasted on the schemes since 2020, including £1.2 billion on the one reserved for smaller businesses.

In 2022 a Times investigation showed companies using the tax breaks for "innovations", including a pub adding vegan and gluten-free options to its menus, a launderette that offered to reduce temperatures on its washing machines, and a business that recouped money for staff performance reviews. Tax advisers said that HMRC "almost never checks" claims under the scheme and alleged that they represent "free money" for companies. An HMRC source said the rates were "clearly unacceptable" and that "the public rightly expect us to take action".

The department revised its estimate for the level of fraud in the scheme from 5.5 per cent to 24.4 per cent last year, and again to 25.8 per cent this year. Gareth Davies, the independent auditor of government departments, said it means the scheme is "among the highest reported across all government spending programmes, including those administered in response to Covid-19."

HMRC said: "To help fund public services it is vital that everyone pays their taxes on time, and we do everything we can to help those who engage with us to get out of debt. With research and development claims, public money is at stake ... which is why we have increased compliance activity."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Green belt building plan

price, ministers say they are considering how local authorities and Homes England could "take a proactive role in the assembly of the land supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers".

It adds that in such cases, the use of compulsory purchase powers could also include the "use of directions to secure 'no hope (of development) value' compensation where appropriate and justified in the public interest".

Government sources said this would allow land to be bought, giving "fair" compensation to the owner rather than inflated prices linked to the prospect of planning permission in the future.

They added that local authorities next to each other would be encouraged to plan future developments together that would "limit unnecessary green belt release", by allowing them to aggregate their housing needs rather than meet individual targets alone.

Although ministers have said that they expect councils and developers to prioritise brownfield developments and grey belt land in the green belt, planning experts believe the definitions are vague. This, they say, would allow greenfield sites to be developed.

Matthew Spry, a senior director at the planning consultancy Lichfields, said many local authorities would struggle with targets without building on greenfield land in the green belt.

"When you look at how many houses are being built in council areas around London, and then look at how much the government wants to increase this by, then you quickly see that you're not going to be able to do this without very significant new development in the green belt, and quickly," he said.

In a sign of what could become a battle between landowners, developers and the government, one industry source said that setting the price of green belt land below the market value of land outside it could backfire. "If they are capping the money ... many landowners will sit on their hands and refuse to sell in the hope that the policy changes," they said.

Lizzie Bundred Woodward, a planning policy manager at the countryside charity CPRE, said she was concerned that some landowners of green belt sites could degrade sites to make them eligible for development, and that the organisation was worried that insufficient consideration had been given to how ambitions for affordable homes in the grey belt would be achieved.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government said: "We will preserve the green belt and take a brownfield-first approach ... so sites which people are desperate to see used will be developed first. We will use lower-quality grey-belt land ... and introduce 'golden rules' to ensure that development benefits both communities and nature."

Ministers are right to seek growth through housebuilding, leading article, page 23

Bigger payouts when water firms foul up

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Customers who have their water cut off or whose properties are flooded by overflowing sewers will be entitled to higher levels of compensation, under plans to improve performance.

Payments will also be triggered for people who are issued with "boil water" notices, or when companies fail to conduct meter readings or installations as promised.

For households sent an incorrect notice of planned supply interruption, compensation will rise from £20 to £50. Reimbursement for internal flooding from sewers will increase from a maximum of £1,000 to £2,000. Low pressure could lead to up to £250 off an average water bill of £440 a year.

Compensation for disruption has not changed for almost 25 years.

The proposals will be subject to an eight-week consultation and Steve Reed, the environment secretary, said the government would "turn the tide on the destruction of our waterways".

The Consumer Council for Water said that increasing compensation would incentivise water companies to get things right.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Musk on collision course

also calling for Twitter/X to leave the board and even the whole organisation.

Neil Basu, the former head of UK counterterrorism at the Metropolitan Police, said: "X needs to be removed from the board of GIFCT until they control terror content on their platform. This would also send a message that the time has come for them to face the fact that they are now publishers, not platforms, and should be treated as such and held to account for what they push. Freedom of speech is not freedom to do harm and they are in danger of turning humankind's greatest invention into its worst."

Damian Collins, the Tory former technology minister, said arguments about "keeping X within the tent" of GIFCT missed the point. "While there is always an argument saying it is better to have them in the tent and part of the conversation, what people like Musk will say is: 'How can we be in favour of terror content on the web when we sit on these boards. We're part of the industry initiative to stop it'. And they're not ... they should be kicked off."

However, forcing X out would be difficult as it is a founder member, and the organisation may have to alter its constitution. GIFCT sources said that X was also failing to make its full financial contributions to the body.

GIFCT's 30 or so members have a shared database of current terror content that they collectively identify and automatically remove. It appears, though, that X is not contributing to the database or removing its terror content.

Within a few minutes researchers found propaganda videos from Hamas, Hezbollah, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, all proscribed organisations, on X. Also available were edited versions of the 2019 Christchurch shootings, in which 51 people were killed at a mosque and Islamic centre.

Musk is now on a collision course with Ofcom. Under the Online Safety Act, X must identify and remove illegal content, such as terrorism-related material, or face a fine of 10 per cent of its global income, a potential block in the UK and prosecution of its senior executives.

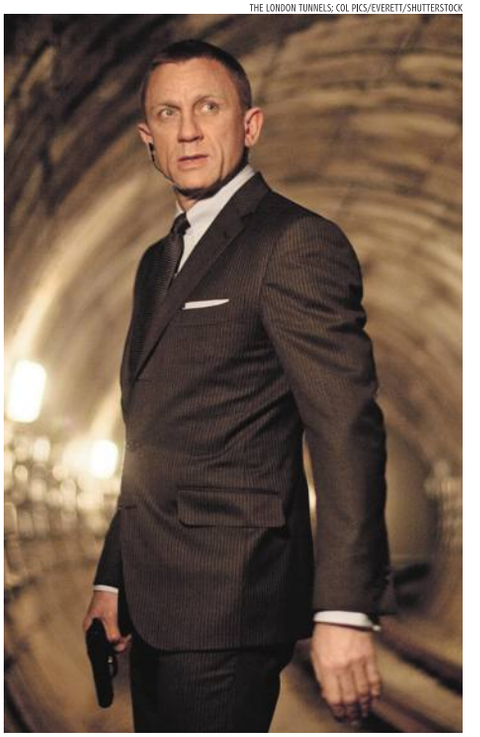
Sir Tom Winsor, the former chief inspector of constabulary, said the act needed greater powers to make tech companies criminally liable for content they carry. He told Times Radio: "Social media companies hide behind this notion that they are merely facilitators of what can be extraordinarily harmful messages rather than publishers."

An X representative said: "X remains fully committed to GIFCT's mission and our continued membership."

Finnish Neo-Nazi gave arson advice to rioters, page 13

Join the queue to see the home of Q

Tunnels that inspired Bond author will open to the public with the UK's deepest licensed bar, writes **Kate Mansey**



THE LONDON TUNNELS; COL PICS/EVERETT/SHUTTERSTOCK

A labyrinth built to protect Londoners during the Blitz and later used as a hub for British espionage has become known as the James Bond spy tunnels.

About 40m below the capital, Ian Fleming, author of the James Bond novels, worked as part of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), Churchill's spy organisation. The tunnels are thought to have provided Fleming with the inspiration for the lair of Q-branch in his novels.

After the war the subterranean network was expanded to become a secret telephone exchange running a Cold War "hotline" between the Kremlin and the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

The tunnels, to the east of Covent Garden, are now one step closer to becoming a tourist attraction after Camden council moved to grant planning permission, subject to an agreement for the developers to offset any impact on the area.

The move paves the way for what developers have described as "a unique and exceptional underground cultural hotspot".

The site beneath High Holborn — officially known as the Kingsway Exchange Tunnels — will feature an underground bar, the deepest licensed bar in the UK, and exhibition spaces that "may be used for medium-term exhibitions on associated themes such as James Bond".

The development is part of a £150 million plan by The London Tunnels company to transform the mile-long underground passageway into "a spectacular underground tourist attraction" for three million visitors a year.

The tunnels will offer "a cultural, multisensory, digital experience" and give people a chance to learn "the inside story of London's place in world history", with interactive displays about the city during the Second World War.

Free visits will be offered to London schools. Developers behind the project estimate that the development will bring additional spending of up to £80 million to the area.

Camden council's planning committee has recommended that permission be granted to give the scheme the go-ahead. It comes after a move to approve the scheme in the neighbouring City of London authority, where the tunnels start.

Throughout its 80-year history the tunnel network has been used for a variety of purposes. Designed and constructed between 1940 and 1942, the network was used during the Second World War to shelter 8,000 people from the Luftwaffe's bombs in the Blitz.

It was taken over by the SOE in the final stages of the war against the Nazis. Formed by Churchill, the SOE was designed to carry out sabotage and armed resistance in Nazi-occupied Europe.

After the war the General Post Office, which was responsible for the telephone network, used the tunnels.

In 1956 they came to house the London terminal for TAT-1, the first transatlantic telephone cable between Oban in Argyll and Bute, and Clarenville in Newfoundland. The government sold the tunnels to British Telecom (BT) in 1981 and the space was used for storage and servicing closed-circuit television. A tea bar, games room and a canteen were installed for the workers, as well as a licensed bar.

BT announced in 2008 that it was putting the tunnels up for sale and although a price was not made public it was estimated that the sale could attract offers of about £5 million. Elaine Hewitt, the group property director for BT, said at the time: "We are looking for a purchaser with the imagination and stature to return the tunnels to productive use."

The London Tunnels, which was established as an operational company in 2021, intends to do just that.

Angus Murray, an Australian banker turned entrepreneur, is chief executive of The London Tunnels plc. He said that approval by Camden council would bring the company "one step closer to realising our plans to develop this historically important tourist attraction at the heart of London".

The company is listed with the Euronext Amsterdam exchange, after plans to float it on the London Stock Exchange were dropped.

Brokers for the company had priced The London Tunnels at more than £100 million, with a further £25 million when letters of intent from investors were taken into consideration.

Over the next year the company is expected to continue its architectural designs and cost planning with an "aspiration" for the tourist attraction to open in 2027.

The spy who loved fiction based on facts

Ian Fleming once said: "Everything I write has a precedent in truth." Elements of his life can be seen in his books that sold 40 million copies before his death (Kate Mansey writes).

James Bond is thought to have been named after the ornithologist who wrote *Birds of the West Indies*. His character, however, and his adventures were most likely inspired in part by Fleming's older brother, Peter, who was drafted in as a secret agent at the start of the Second World War.

Fleming also drew on his own experiences, having enlisted in the Naval Intelligence Division in 1939 and serving as right-hand man to Admiral John Henry Godfrey, who became one of the inspirations for M.

During the war, Fleming worked on Operation Goldeneye amid fears of an invasion of Gibraltar. He named a villa in Jamaica Goldeneye, had a boat called Octopussy and a lover called Blanche, the guano tanker in *Dr No*. After his death, the 17th Bond film was *GoldenEye*.

Developers plan to create a "cultural" experience at the old British Telecom tunnels, below. As 007, Daniel Craig was kept well-equipped by Q

From Grand National to grandmasters? Horses think strategically

Will Humphries

They can run, jump and — as Olympics viewers know — dance. But horses are even smarter than previously thought, having shown the capacity to plan ahead during games of strategy.

Researchers found that when denied treats for not following the rules of a complex reward-based game, horses were able to adjust quickly to get more rewards.

Scientists said this shows the animals have the ability to think and plan ahead, something previously considered beyond their capacity.

Knowing how horses learn can help carers to train them more humanely and improve their welfare, the team from Nottingham Trent University said. Dr Carrie Ijichi, a senior lecturer in equine science, said: "Horses are not natural geniuses, they are thought of as mediocre, but this study shows they're not average and are, in fact, more cognitively advanced than we give them credit for."

For their study, researchers set 20 horses a task consisting of three stages. In the first, the animals had to touch a piece of card with their nose in order to get a treat.

Things became more complicated when a light was introduced and horses were allowed a snack only if they touched the card while the light was switched off.

The team found the horses kept blindly touching the card, regardless of whether the light was on or off, but were rewarded only for correct responses.

In the final stage, a penalty was put in place: touching the card when a "stop" light was on resulted in a ten-second time-out. Instead of indiscriminately touching the card, the team found the horses followed the rules by making a move only at the right time in order to get their treat.

The researchers said this suggested that rather than failing to grasp the rules of the game, the horses had understood it the whole time but had found a way to play in the second stage that did not require much attention.

Louise Evans, a PhD candidate at the university's school of animal, rural and environmental sciences, said: "We were expecting horses' performance to improve when we introduced the time-out, but were surprised by how immediate and significant the improvement was.

"Animals usually need several repetitions of a task to gradually acquire new knowledge, whereas our horses immediately improved when we introduced a cost for errors. This suggests that the horses knew all along what the rules of the game were."

The researchers said the findings, published in the journal Applied Animal Behaviour Science, suggests horses have the ability to form an internal model of the world around them to make decisions and predictions, a technique known as model-based learning.

It was previously thought that this was beyond them because they have an underdeveloped pre-frontal cortex, a part of the brain associated with strategic thinking.

Ijichi said the horses "must be using another area of the brain to achieve a similar result. This teaches us that we shouldn't make assumptions about animal intelligence or sentience based on whether they are 'built' just like us."

News Paris Olympics 2024

Viewers are taken on a voyage

Adam Sage, David Brown Paris

Parisian intellectualism met Hollywood glamour at the Olympics' closing ceremony last night in an attempt to span a gulf of cultural aspirations as wide as the Atlantic.

The French director who had also overseen the opening show carefully scripted his ending to the Games amid pledges to perpetuate the French political correctness that surprised much of the world two weeks ago.

Yet not everyone followed the script. After a lengthy and sometimes spectacular display involving a metaphorical figure dubbed the Golden Voyager on a "dystopian journey", Olympic athletes were asked to rush forward in a scene in which they were supposed to "take over the world".

They took the message literally, and took over the stage that was supposed to symbolise the world, while the French indie rock groups Air and Phoenix were to be performing.

Chaos ensued, with the organiser sending increasingly urgent pleas over the loud speaker system for the athletes to get down so the show could go on. They were told repeatedly: "Dear athletes, please leave the stage."

They eventually allowed the groups to perform a set that won scant approval, with many of the athletes quitting the stadium altogether.

Much of the closing ceremony was as cerebral as the opening one, although it incorporated the showbusiness flair of Los Angeles, which will host the Games in 2028. Organisers had promised a "quarter of an hour of Hollywood" amidst two hours of French art.

Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, passed the Olympic flag to Karen Bass, her Los Angeles counterpart, who passed it to Simone Biles, the gymnast who has been the star of the Games.

What followed was straight out of Hollywood as Tom Cruise, 62, leapt 45m (150ft) from the roof of the Stade de France in what was intended to be the most dramatic stunt since Queen Elizabeth appeared to parachute into the arena at the start of the London Games. Cruise took the flag off Biles before fleeing on a motorcycle. Images on the screen cut to a *Mission: Impossible* style film of him in Los Angeles.

The screen in the stadium showed the Hollywood logo with the Olympic rings woven into it before cutting to singers such as Billie Eilish performing.

The first part of the ceremony was more sedate, with President Macron present after a fortnight that has given him a respite from the political crisis engulfing the Élysée, with French public opinion perceiving the Games to be a national success.

The French president stepped forward after a rearranged version of *La Marseillaise*, the French national anthem, echoed around the stadium. Victor Le Masne, the musical director of the Games, said he wanted to make the song "less martial and more emotional" than the original composed in 1792 by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle.

His version, which began with flutes and ended in a score that could have come from *Star Wars*, failed to stir the crowd which did not sing with its usual French gusto.

The American singer H.E.R. later performed a rousingly patriotic version of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. The athletes paraded to more cheers, with Team GB entering the stadium in shirts designed by Ben Sherman. They came out to the tune of *Que Je T'Aime*, the hit song by Johnny Hallyday, the late rocker described as the French Elvis.

Perhaps unused to a country that drives on the right, Team GB initially went the wrong way before being hurriedly redirected.

Imane Khelif, the Algerian boxer at the centre of a controversy after allegedly previously failing a gender test, was shown on big screens kissing her gold medal while entering the stadium alongside thousands of other athletes.

The Games had opened under a deluge with a ceremony on the Seine. It ended with kinder weather, on a balmy night in north Paris.

The opening ceremony was described as an artistic translation of the capital city's liberalism. Last night's finale also included references designed to please the leftwingers. Thomas Jolly, the artistic director, described the closing ceremony as "a dystopian journey to the foundations of humanity" ushering in a "new era, with a more participatory, open and sustainable model that will be left as a legacy".

Zaho de Sagazan, a singer who has never made any secret of her leftwing leanings, began proceedings with a beautiful rendition of Édith Piaf's *Sous le ciel de Paris* at the Olympic cauldron.

Léon Marchand, the swimmer who became a French hero after winning four golds and a bronze, brought a rousing cheer from the 70,000 spectators in the stadium when he was shown by the

Tom Cruise brought Hollywood glamour to the finale by dropping in from the roof of the Stade de France, and then leaving by motorbike to take the Olympic flag to LA. The US singers H.E.R and Billie Eilish provided musical accompaniment as the ceremony came to a dramatic close

Team GB slips back to seventh in medals table on final day

David Brown, Adam Sage Paris
Kate Mansey Assistant Editor

Britain had its worst performance in the Olympic medal table for 20 years but will take solace in having ended with the third-highest number of podium finishes in Paris.

The 65 medals included 14 golds, leaving Team GB seventh in the ranking used by the International Olympic Committee. Hopes of leapfrogging France into fifth were dashed yesterday when two bronze medals were won in the five finals featuring our athletes.

Emma Finucane, 21, the Welsh cyclist, secured bronze in the individual sprint. Emily Campbell, 30, a weightlifter from Nottingham, won bronze in the women's +81kg category. Jack Carlin, 27, from Manchester, was involved in a high-speed crash in the dash to the finish line of the keirin. It was won by Harry Lavreysen of the Netherlands, which resulted in his country moving past Team GB into sixth place.

British cyclists finished fifth in the table, having been top for two decades. Rowing had the most success, with three golds among eight medals.

Britain broke into the top five of the Olympic medal table at Beijing in 2008 with a fourth place finish. Mark England, *chef de mission* for Team GB, said before the Paris Games: "I think the wheels are going to have to come off if we're not top five." Alex Yee, 26, the British triathlon gold medallist chosen to be a flag carrier at the closing ceremony, said Britain should be proud of its winners. "The beauty of sport and the Olympics is it is decided by such fine margins," he said.

The King congratulated British and Commonwealth athletes for their "many outstanding successes". In a joint message with the Queen, he added: "To those who missed out on the greatest prizes, you have most certainly not fallen short in the pride that you, too, have generated for your nations."

The Prince and Princess of Wales released a video at the end of the Games, praising the efforts of Team GB. In the video, filmed in Norfolk, where they live at Anmer Hall, he has a beard. "From all of us watching at home, congratulations to Team GB," the princess says. Her husband adds: "Well done on all you've achieved, you've been an inspiration to us all."

Over the course of the Paris cycle, UK Sport invested £315 million in government and National Lottery funds across 53 Olympic and Paralympic sports, with a further £70 million channelled directly to 1,100 athletes in the form of Athlete Performance Awards.

The medal table brought relief to President Macron, who demanded before the Games began that France finish in the top five. France spent about €300 million in the quest for medals.

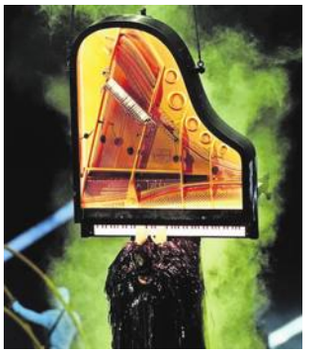
The Prince and Princess of Wales released a short video praising the performances of the Team GB athletes

The Games lifted spirits on both sides of the Channel, leading article, page 23
Reports and analysis, pages 51-56

as Paris hands over the baton

ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

Golden Voyager, right, a character inspired by the 1977 space probe and the Greek goddess Nike; the pianist Alain Roche plays as his instrument is hauled into the sky; the French swimming gold medallist Léon Marchand preserves the flames from the cauldron, and Team GB arrive in Hawaiian shirts



France signs off with a bang ... even if much of the oomph came from the next hosts

Television Carol Midgley

The Closing Ceremony
BBC1
★★★★☆

The Olympic opening ceremony was, let's face it, a bit of a washout, but for the closing ceremony Paris rolled out its *Top Gun*. Yes, we got Tom Cruise, abseiling from the roof of the Stade de France to shake the athletes' hands and take selfies with them.

OK, it might not have floated everyone's boat and it wasn't as spectacular as some of the stunts he has performed in his career. But it did at least inject some of the energy and vim that had been lacking on the rain-lashed Seine two weeks ago, and gave the audience an old-fashioned Hollywood spectacular.

Perhaps it was meant to echo the moment at the 2012 London Olympics when Queen Elizabeth appeared to parachute from a helicopter with James Bond. It was certainly a crowd pleaser as it showed Cruise leaving on a motorbike with the Olympic flag to the music of the Red Hot Chili Peppers then crossing the Atlantic and parachuting to LA where the 2028 Games will be held.

He hoisted the flag on the Hollywood sign, the six Olympic rings being incorporated into the famous letters.

We then got Billie Eilish, Dr Dre and Snoop Dogg. It *was* quite cool, to be fair and unfortunately upstaged in two minutes much of what we had seen in the previous two hours.

But the ceremony's artistic director, Thomas Jolly, showed his class and put on a clever ethereal light show, featuring a Golden Voyager with a face like a housefly and an awful lot of interpretative dance. More than some might wish for, actually.

The silhouettes from the first Olympic Games cast on to the crowd were beautiful. The French band Phoenix put on a decent music show with Air which, OK, wasn't quite Sir Paul McCartney but you can't have everything.

The closing ceremony immediately showed the wisdom of staging these things indoors and not stretched along 6km of a polluted river in the teeming rain. There was much more of an atmosphere, a party vibe even when we were just looking at athletes waving, taking videos on their phones and joining in a low-tech karaoke sing song.

You may have had to turn down the brightness on your TV screen thanks to Team GB's "busy" Hawaiian/surfer shirts. Good lord, talk about loud. I wouldn't thank you for a carpet in that design.

There were a couple of health and safety concerns. Two athletes, including Alex Yee, Team GB's men's triathlon gold medallist and mixed team relay triathlon bronze medallist, who had been one of the flag-bearers, tripped over a bit of cable as they entered the stadium at the beginning. Hobbling elite athletes on the final day would not have been a good look for France, but they seemed to escape unscathed.

Then there was a piano and pianist suspended vertically from the ceiling on wires that I thought might have snapped at any time. Happily they didn't seem to have been strung by the same person who did the cabling.

And can we forgive Thomas Bach, the International Olympic Committee's president, the most tortured pun of the Games when he said they had been "Seine-sational"? I think we can, even as we cringe.

Jolly's vision of a lunar landscape and the idea of Earth being rediscovered far into the future when it is simply an archaeological site was nicely conceived but was I the only one who thought it could have been shorter?

Dear lord, those closing speeches certainly could have been. I thought they'd never end.

But fair play to Paris. Their Games may have started with a whimper but they went out with a bang — even if much of the bang came courtesy of the next hosts, the US.

Olympic cauldron in a video. He extinguished the cauldron before carrying the flame through the gardens, symbolising the end of the Paris Games.

Ancient Greek culture was celebrated with a character called Golden Voyager, inspired by the 1977 space probe, encountering Nike, the goddess of victory who appears as the statue of the Victory of Samothrace displayed in the Louvre. It did not refer to Greek claims that the statue was illegally plundered and should be returned.

While highlighting the Games's environmental legacy, there was no reference to the delays to swimming events in the polluted Seine despite a £1.2 billion scheme to clean it up.

With Paris boasting that it has staged the most feminist Games in history, the ceremony featured a homage to the female marathon runners who took part in the final athletics event. Previous Olympics have ended with the men's marathon.

There was much talk of the ambitions of the Games, with organisers proclaiming them to be "perhaps humanity's greatest intangible work for peace". However, there has been no sign of the Olympic truce that Macron said he would work with the UN to bring about, either in Ukraine, the Middle East or anywhere else in the world.

After the high-brow French section, the partying began as the Olympic flame was passed to the mayor of Los Angeles.

The pop star Billie Eilish, rapper Snoop Dogg, and the rock band Red Hot Chili Peppers were among the acts representing American culture.

Australian PM leaps to dancer's defence

David Brown

The imitation of a kangaroo by a lecturer, which may have ended breakdancing's Olympic ambitions, has been defended by Australia's prime minister.

B-Girl Raygun failed to win a round in her three battles as the sport called breaking, a dance rooted in black American urban youth culture, made its first appearance at the Games.

Raygun's identity off the dance floor is Rachael Gunn, 36, who has a PhD and lectures in cultural studies at Macquarie University in Sydney.

Some of her routines during the heat stages on Friday appeared to be mimicking a kangaroo. At one stage she hopped and lay on her side and reached for her toes, flipped over and did it again. She later raised one leg and leant back with her arms bent toward her ears.

None of the nine judges gave her a point, and Rita Panahi, a host on Sky News Australia, said it was "so excruciatingly bad that people genuinely believe that it was some elaborate joke".

But Anthony Albanese, the prime minister, said: "Raygun had a crack. Good on her and a big shout out to her. That is in the Australian tradition of people having a go. She's had a go representing our country, and that's a good thing."

Gunn said after her routine: "All my moves are original. Creativity is really important to me. I go out there and I show my artistry. Sometimes it speaks to the judges, and sometimes it doesn't. I do my thing, and it represents art. That is what it is about."

Breaking was introduced in Paris to appeal to youngsters but has been dropped for Los Angeles in 2028.

Lithuania's silver medallist, Dominika Banevic, who is white, was criticised for wearing a durag, once worn by enslaved Africans to tie up their hair and which later became a symbol of black pride.

Glasgow tipped for slimmer 2026 Commonwealth Games

Matt Lawton Paris

Glasgow is in line to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games after the withdrawal last year of Victoria because of concerns about rising costs.

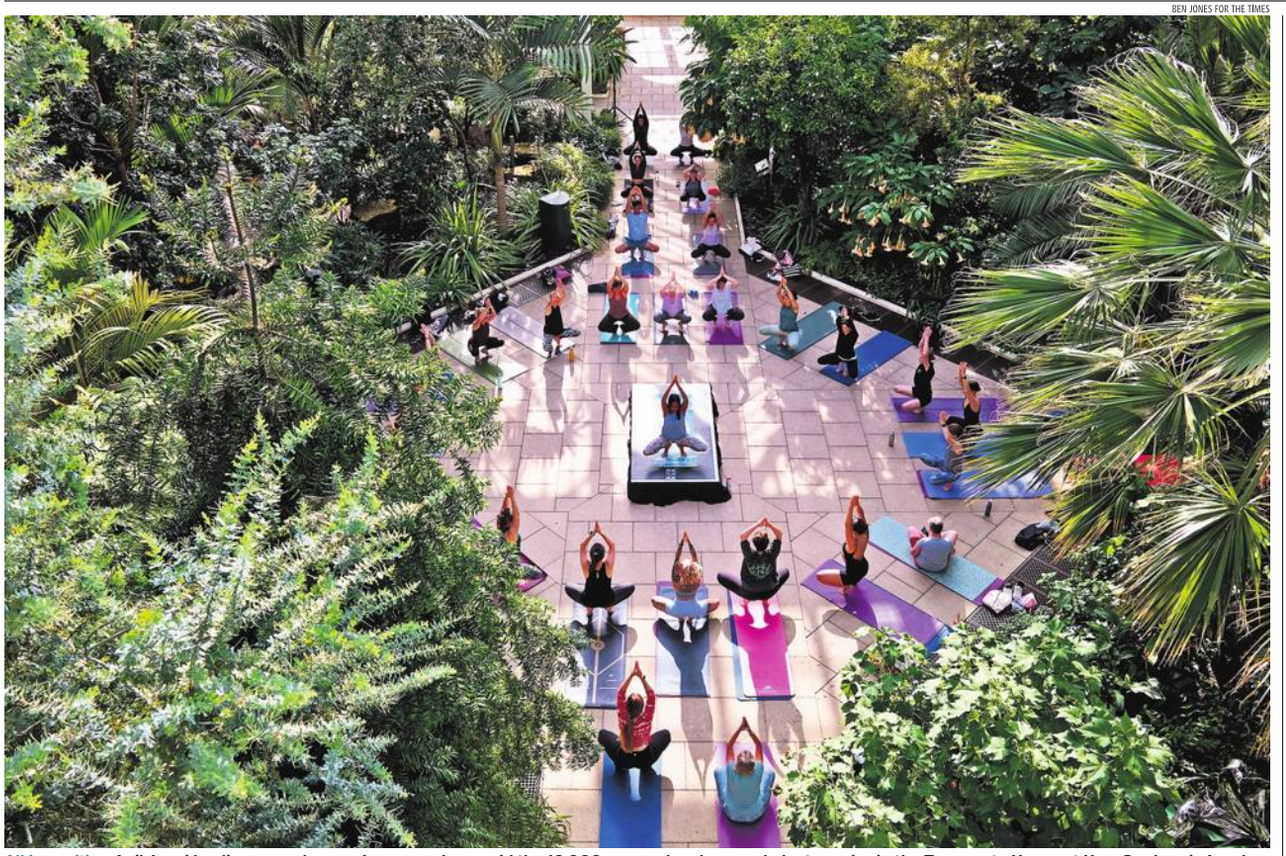
The Australian state had to pay the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) close to £200 million in compensation, which it still considered a bargain given fears that the total cost of hosting would be more than £3 billion.

Glasgow, which hosted the event in 2014 and has much of the infrastructure in place, is likely to be announced in the coming days. In April Team Scotland said that it was exploring a "cost-effective" way of hosting in 2026. At the time Ian Reid, chairman of Commonwealth Games Scotland, said: "We believe our concept provides the CGF with a viable, cost-effective and exciting solution which importantly won't involve significant sums of public funding. We look forward to discussing the concept further with the CGF, our member sports, athletes and wider partners."

The CGF has tried to help hosts by reducing the number of sports, with only ten expected in Glasgow over 11 days of competition.

News

BEN JONES FOR THE TIMES



All in position Anil Jangi leading an early morning yoga class amid the 10,000 rare and endangered plant species in the Temperate House at Kew Gardens in London

Free accommodation and prizes if students sign up before results day

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Universities are fighting to attract potential students with the chance to win a year's free accommodation and other prizes if they sign up for clearing packages before they learn their A-level results on Thursday.

They have been promised special open days, fast-track access to lecturers on results day, the opportunity to win prizes and guaranteed accommodation at a time of housing shortages in many university cities.

A drop in international students and other factors have already led selective institutions to offer more places in clearing than last year, leaving other universities scrambling to recruit.

About four in ten universities are forecast to run a budget deficit this year, with warnings that some could be forced to merge or significantly restructure, and about half are undertaking redundancy programmes.

Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, has told institutions not to expect a bailout but recently asked the Office for Students to focus on the financial sustainability of institutions rather than on freedom of speech.

At some institutions international student numbers have fallen by half on last year and there are fears those accepted will not turn up. A slightly smaller proportion of UK school-leavers applied to university this year than last year.

Clearing allows candidates to apply directly to universities if they did not go through Ucas, the admissions service, or to seek new opportunities if they miss their grades or do better than expected.

The University of Central Lancashire is offering "VIP clearing" before results, telling school-leavers: "You'll gain access to exclusive benefits, helpful content and a chance to win some amazing prizes."

They will get priority call-backs on results day, exclusive content to help to prepare for clearing, guaranteed accommodation in halls and access to a support package. Those who already have their grades could be made an offer "in minutes", the university's website pledges.

Worcester University urged teenagers to book campus tours before Thursday rather than waiting until they had their results. It said applicants could sign up for a free call from a lecturer, priority call-back on Thursday and priority access to accommodation.

Norwich University of the Arts promises personalised guidance with one-on-one support from its admissions team to find the "perfect course", campus tours, and advice on their application portfolio.

St Mary's University, Twickenham, tells candidates to sign up for "priority clearing" to ensure the institution gets in touch as they receive their results. It also promises access to "exclusive events and webinars" and says those signing up will be entered into a draw for the chance to win £250.

The University of Gloucestershire is offering free accommodation in halls of residence if students register to become a "Clearing VIP". Those signing up will also get results day text messages at 8am about courses in clearing and can request callbacks to skip the queue.

Dame Clare Marchant, the former head of Ucas who is now vice-chancellor of the university, said: "Those wanting to be students do have options this summer — many courses have places, such as competitive subjects like psychology and law.

"It's a more challenging time for universities. Cost of living has had a big impact for UK students, not necessarily tuition fees but whether the maintenance loan is going to cover it. Most students will get a part-time job alongside their studies.

"We launched the year's free accommodation offer on July 5 and had hundreds registering in the first week."

Tuition fees trebled to £9,000 in 2012 but have risen only once since, to £9,250 in 2017, meaning income from home students falls each year in real terms because of inflation.

No grade hikes for pupils in danger concrete schools

Offering a one-off dispensation to all pupils in exam years affected by the concrete crisis would not be fair to everybody receiving their results, said the head of England's exams regulator.

Sir Ian Bauckham, chief regulator of Ofqual, said it would be "difficult" to allow a special uplift to pupils' results in schools affected by reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac) but not make adjustments for factors like teacher shortages and "inadequate" facilities. The Ofqual chief added he would be "surprised" if Raac disruption affected overall exam results. His comments come as students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are due to receive A-level results on Thursday.

A headteachers' union has said it is "concerned" about the possible impact of the concrete crisis on exam performance after a number of schools were forced to offer remote learning when Raac was found in buildings days before the academic year was due to start. A report called for pupils at schools where teaching had been badly affected to have results raised by up to 10 per cent. Department for Education figures show 234 education settings in England have Raac in their buildings.

Bauckham said he was optimistic universities "will be as flexible as they're able to" when deciding whether to accept a pupil if Raac disruption was on their Ucas application form.

This year exam boards have offered extended coursework deadlines — up to 45 days — to schools and colleges who struggled to access specialist facilities for non-examination assessments due to Raac. The Joint Council for Qualifications said "special consideration" for a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their control, will not be granted to pupils who experienced Raac.

Pepe Di'Iasio, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: "Schools and colleges affected by Raac have worked extremely hard to support students whose studies have been disrupted by this issue, and they deserve an enormous amount of credit for all they have done."

Quintagram® No 2018

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Wine's bouquet (4)

_ _ _ _

2 Papal edict (4)

_ _ _ _

3 Expansion, enlargement (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

4 Dental process in infancy (8)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

5 Military action (10)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

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

Solutions see MindGames
Cryptic clues see MindGames

Get ready to swelter

Today could be the hottest of the year with temperatures reaching 35C, forecasters say. Warm air from Europe caused temperatures to climb yesterday but they are expected to return to average tomorrow. Likely thunderstorms have prompted the Met Office to issue yellow severe weather warnings for northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland today with up to 60mm of rain forecast in some areas. The previous highest temperature this year was 32C in London last month. **Full forecast, page 44**

Two die in Channel

A criminal investigation has begun in France after two migrants died when their overcrowded dinghy capsized as they tried to cross the Channel. French officials said the alert was raised in the early hours yesterday when the dinghy carrying 55 people got into trouble off the coast between Calais and Dunkirk. Several people were in the water, rescuers said. Two were pronounced dead and four were taken to hospital in a serious condition. They are expected to survive.

'Panic' over lost doctor

The wife of a retired doctor who has been missing in the French Pyrenees since Tuesday has told of the family's panic when he sent a last message saying "Help, I've fallen and cannot [m]ove". Anne Lyons, the wife of Tom Doherty, 67, from St Albans, Hertfordshire, said: "When I arrived in France, I hoped they had found him... but in the afternoon with the fog, we lost confidence, especially for a 67-year-old man spending a second night alone." Mountain rescue teams continue to search.

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British Museum broke law for protecting items

Max Kendix

The British Museum broke the law after thousands of ancient artefacts went missing from its collection, an internal review has found.

The museum confirmed in December that 2,000 items went missing and admitted that many may be "unrecoverable" after being defaced and "sold for scrap".

An internal audit found that it is not compliant with the law governing how national treasures should be kept.

Under the Public Records Act, museums and libraries are required to "meet basic standards of preservation, access and professional care" and be in "the care of suitably qualified staff". If organisations are found to fall foul of the act, the objects can be transferred elsewhere or handed over to the National Archives. A museum source said there was no suggestion of items being transferred in this case.

A sacked curator has denied stealing £100,000 of items from the museum

George Osborne, the former chancellor and chairman of trustees at the museum, and Nicholas Cullinan, the museum's director, wrote in its annual report that "a number of actions are currently being considered by management, who are continuing to work with the National Archives towards compliance".

The museum said it has embarked on documenting and digitising all eight million items in its collection over five years. It admitted that the alleged thefts "highlighted major weaknesses in the museum's control environment related to the security of collection objects and associated records and archival material".

The annual report also said that the rapid turnover of senior staff at the museum had likely impacted its "exposure to risk".

Around 1,500 items were feared to have been stolen last year, while 350 objects had "portions removed" such as "gold mounts for gems" and about 140 were damaged by tool marks.

More than 600 artefacts have since been returned to the museum, which, Osborne said, was "far more than many predicted we could recover".

Many of the returned items are thought to have been found with the help of the FBI, the US law enforcement agency.

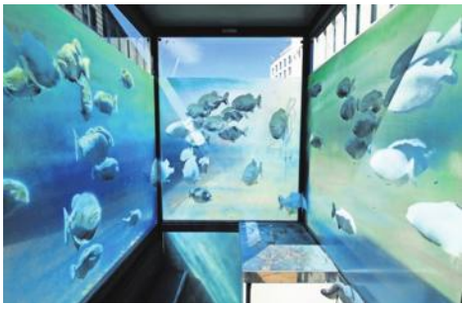
Peter Higgs, who was a senior curator at the museum before being sacked, is accused by the museum of using his position to steal an estimated £100,000 of unregistered items for at least a decade — mainly Roman and Greek gems and jewellery. Higgs denies the allegations, which have been made in a civil case, and nobody has been arrested or charged with any offence.

The museum received about £7.5 million in donations in the year, down from £25 million the previous year, but said that the "ongoing commitment of private supporters continued to be a great source of encouragement ... particularly following the challenges the museum faced this year after the announcement that objects were missing, damaged and stolen".

A spokesman for the museum said it "holds a historic archive of national significance, with a dedicated team overseeing its day to day management".

They added that the museum was "working closely" with the National Archives to reach full accreditation.

HENRY NICHOLLS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Art school For the seventh day running, a new Banksy appeared in the capital. In a departure from his series of animal stencils — one of which has been stolen, and another dismantled — the newest piece adorns a police box in the City of London

BBC 'let down' knifed student's mother

Charlotte Wace

The mother of a student killed in the Nottingham knife attack has described feeling "let down" by the BBC after learning that it plans to broadcast interviews with the killer's family without involving the relatives of his victims.

Emma Webber's son, Barnaby, 19, was stabbed to death by Valdo Calocane in June last year along with Grace O'Malley-Kumar, also 19 and Ian Coates, 65. Webber was said to have been told two weeks ago about the plan for a *Panorama* programme about the mental health decline of Calocane, who has paranoid schizophrenia. He was given an indefinite hospital order instead of a jail sentence. The BBC has also refused to let his victims' relatives see the programme before it is shown, The Sun reported.

Webber said: "All three families feel very disappointed. It's causing so much stress and trauma to people who are already shattered." Webber said when she complained, she was told by Panorama's editor it was in the public interest. She added: "I can't see how it's balanced without us being involved."

Calocane was initially charged with murder and attempted murder but the Crown Prosecution Service accepted his guilty plea to manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility, due to his mental illness.

In an interview with The Times in March, Webber described being given the news: "I heard the words manslaughter, diminished responsibility ...", she said. "All that was ringing in my ears was, 'He's getting away with it'."

Emma Webber and her son, Barnaby, 19, who died

On the first anniversary of the killings in June, the families of the victims reiterated their belief that Calocane should have been tried for murder.

The BBC said: "We have the deepest sympathy for the families, and the Panorama team has been extremely mindful of the sensitivities. They have been in contact with the bereaved families. The documentary has been produced in accordance with editorial guidelines."

The Nottingham Attacks: A Search for Answers is on BBC1 at 8pm tonight.

'Man with weapon' shot by police in Surrey village

Will Humphries, George Greenwood

A man in his twenties was shot by police in the early hours yesterday after reports of a man armed with a weapon in a village in Surrey.

Police were called at 12.36am to reports of an altercation between two people, including an armed man, in the street outside an address in Knaphill, on the outskirts of Woking.

Armed police attended Nursery Road in the village and a man in his twenties was shot by officers.

A weapon was recovered from the scene and the man was taken to hospital for medical treatment, where he remained in a critical but stable condition yesterday.

The two people involved in the altercation were known to each other and police said there was no anticipated risk to the wider public.

Surrey police said they had made a mandatory referral to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) over the shooting.

"We will not be able to comment further on the independent investigation into this incident," the force said.

"Nursery Road is partially closed, with limited foot and vehicle access to residents. Please avoid the area where possible for the time being.

"We are also appealing for anyone with any information that might assist with our enquiries to get in touch. If you saw or heard anything between 12.15am and 1.30am, or have CCTV, video doorbell, dash cam or helmet cam footage that might have captured all or part of this incident, please contact us."

Immigrants fill more jobs than Britons since Covid

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Nigerians and Indians have filled more new jobs in the past five years than British nationals, new government figures suggest.

The UK economy has created almost 1.5 million new roles since before the pandemic. Data from HM Revenue and Customs suggests most posts have been filled by workers from outside the European Union.

Since 2019 there has been an increase of 488,000 jobs being filled by Indian workers and 279,000 roles being taken by people from Nigeria. Over the same period UK citizens have taken up 257,000 new jobs.

Observers said the figures suggested that non-EU migrants had taken the place of European workers as a result of immigration reforms after Brexit.

The figures showed that people from the EU held 242,000 fewer positions over the period. The data exposes the challenges the government faces as it tries to reduce the UK's reliance on foreign labour while fulfilling its central mission of growing the economy.

Labour has said it intends to reduce net migration but has declined to set a target for cutting numbers.

Neil O'Brien, the Tory MP who uncovered the figures, said they showed how the new immigration rules and the post-study work visa restrictions had led to "a huge increase in non-EU migration". He added: "It is extraordinary that of the growth in jobs since the pandemic more individual jobs have been filled by people from Nigeria and India than ... by British workers."

The increases are largely the result of changes imposed by the last Conservative government in 2021. These lowered the general salary threshold for non-EU migrants from £30,000 to £25,600 while reducing the required skills level from a degree to A-level or equivalent and suspending the annual cap on certificates of sponsorship.

Ministers also relaxed migration rules to fill gaps in the economy after Covid such as care workers, with those coming to the UK allowed to bring dependants who were eligible to work.

The number of dependants arriving with foreign workers has almost tripled since 2019 to 155,343. This has been driven mostly by Indians, with 67,380 workers bringing 70,647 dependants in 2022.

Until the rules were changed this year the number of foreign students bringing dependants who were also able to work rose sharply.

Almost half a million foreign students brought 135,788 dependants in 2022. In the same year 59,053 Nigerian students brought 60,923 dependants.

The latest figures show the percentage of jobs held by non-EU nationals has increased from 7 per cent at the end of 2019 to more than 11 per cent at the end of last year. At the same time the percentage of jobs held by EU nationals fell from 8.6 per cent to 7.5 per cent.

The figures show that over the period the number of jobs held by Nigerian nationals has increased by 206 per cent, Indian nationals by 126 per cent and Bangladeshi nationals by 86 per cent.

Some of these jobs could be held by the same person because the figures fail to differentiate between part-time and full-time employment.

Ben Brindle, an economist at Oxford University's Migration Observatory think tank, said some evidence suggested non-EU migrants were doing jobs previously held by EU workers before Brexit and the pandemic.

"The figures show that the number of jobs being carried out by non-EU workers in the UK has increased significantly since the pandemic," he said. "At the same time when you look at sectors like hospitality and manufacturing, the data suggest there is some evidence that roles previously being carried out by EU workers are now being carried out by workers from outside the EU.

"It is likely that we now have non-EU nationals taking lower paid roles that were previously filled by EU nationals."

Brindle said that while student dependants could get visas before Brexit, the share of student visas going to dependants had increased as the mix of countries from which international students were coming had changed.

"Figures show that Indians and Nigerians have been the top nationalities receiving work visas since the post-Brexit system came into force," he said. "But this is likely to be the employment market taking advantage of the labour available.

"It is also important to recognise that these figures show jobs rather than identifying individuals in those jobs — so if one person has two part-time jobs they would show up twice."

O'Brien, who has written several articles highlighting the numerous problems with Britain's immigration system, also said average earnings for people from outside the EU had fallen sharply and were now below the average for UK nationals.

This should force ministers into a complete rethink of immigration policy, he said. "Given the costs for existing residents in terms of pressures on housing, infrastructure and public services, we should aim for immigration rules that select for high-earning migrants," he added. "But the new system seems to have taken things in the wrong direction. Immigration policy needs a total overhaul."

Sunak stuck with July 4 poll 'because he'd told King'

Rishi Sunak wanted to cancel his plans to call a general election in July but felt that he could not back out as he had already told the King, according to a new book (Kate Mansey writes).

Sunak also feared that two journalists who had learnt of the plan would say that he had "bottled it" if he was seen to have changed his mind.

Sunak had also told the police, who had begun to make security arrangements for the first days of the campaign.

Indecision over the timing of the election is said to feature in drafts of a book by Nadine Dorries, the former culture secretary, according to The Mail on Sunday.

Sunak had a "wobble" and considered changing the date but by that stage felt that he could not move the election to the autumn.

Some of Sunak's closest advisers were said to have been surprised by the timing of the election, which sparked tension and disagreement within the cabinet.

The King either cancelled or postponed engagements during the campaign, as is customary.

He was reported to have been irritated, however, that the emergency cabinet meeting to rubber stamp the July 4 election date clashed with a privy council meeting. It meant that Penny Mordaunt, lord president of the council, was the only member of the cabinet to attend the privy council meeting that afternoon.

There was controversy over the date of the election when it later emerged that some of Sunak's closest aides had placed bets on when it would take place.

Craig Williams, Sunak's parliamentary private secretary, was investigated about bets as did a police officer who was one of his protection specialists.

The anecdote about Sunak's "wobble" over the timing of the election is thought to be included in an early draft of Dorries's book *Downfall*, which charts the period from Sunak entering No 10 to his defeat at the polls.

AARON CHOWN/PA

The King is said to have been frustrated that Rishi Sunak's cabinet meeting to approve the date of the general election clashed with a meeting of the Privy Council

Minister in £2m house owned by aunt's ally

Oliver Wright

A Labour minister is living in a £2 million house owned by a close political ally of her aunt, the ousted Bangladeshi prime minister.

Tulip Siddiq, the economic secretary to the Treasury and City minister, moved out of a flat she owns in north London two years ago into a five-bedroom home a few miles away owned by the millionaire businessman Abdul Karim.

Karim has close links to Siddiq's aunt, Sheikh Hasina, who was prime minister of Bangladesh until she was forced out of office this month.

Last month it emerged that Siddiq was under investigation by parliament's standards watchdog after allegedly failing to declare income from letting out her former flat when she moved into Karim's property. Siddiq has apologised for the error, blaming it on an "administrative oversight" and said she would co-operate fully with the parliamentary commissioner on standards.

Tulip Siddiq with Abdul Karim, who has ties to the ousted Bangladeshi leader

Labour sources said that she had needed to move out of her flat because of security concerns and was paying rent on the new house at a rate "consistent with market levels".

They added that all relevant disclosures had been made to officials in the Treasury.

A Treasury spokesman said Siddiq had disclosed her property arrangements to the department and they were "being considered" as part of the "usual declaration of interest process".

Karim is an "executive member" of Hasina's Awami League political party. He is a close family friend of Siddiq and she and her mother, Rehana, attended the wedding of Karim's daughter at a ceremony in Langley Marish, Berkshire, in 2022.

Two years ago, it was reported that Rehana was living in a £1.4 million house in north London owned by the family of Salman F Rahman, one of Bangladesh's richest tycoons who became a minister in Hasina's government.

That property was owned through an offshore company registered in the Isle of Man, which was eventually traced back to Rahman's British-based son.

Rehana Siddiq also accompanied her sister on the military aircraft that took her from Bangladesh to India after the uprising against her leadership.

Reports suggest that Hasina is attempting to negotiate political asylum in the UK. Whitehall sources have confirmed that discussions had taken place but said that no decision had been made.

Briefing PM on security 'stymied by Sue Gray'

Oliver Wright

Sir Keir Starmer's chief of staff has been accused of restricting officials' access to the prime minister as tensions grow over her role in Downing Street.

Sue Gray, who was a senior civil servant before leaving to work for Starmer in opposition, is said to have insisted that officials working on national security talk to her before speaking to the prime minister.

It is also claimed that she has clashed with Simon Case, the cabinet secretary, by demanding that he deny a senior member of Starmer's staff access to a secure government computer system.

The claims, reported by The Mail on Sunday, appear to be part of a power struggle between Gray and Morgan McSweeney, who helped to mastermind Labour's election victory and is now head of political strategy at Downing Street. Sources claim that Gray suspects McSweeney of being behind briefings against her both in opposition and in government, and she is said to have used her knowledge of Whitehall to try to marginalise him.

She is known to have a strained relationship with Case after the two clashed during her investigation into the scandal over Downing Street parties during lockdown. When Gray resigned from the civil service to work for Starmer, Case backed attempts by Tory ministers to impose a long delay in her taking up her new job.

Sue Gray "thinks she runs the country", a Whitehall source said

A Whitehall source told the newspaper that Gray had denied access to officials who wanted to give the prime minister an intelligence briefing.

"It has got to the point where we have said that the PM needs to be given an intelligence briefing and Gray has said: 'Tell me'. But we need to know that it has reached him." They added: "Simon Case has had the same problem. The cabinet secretary should not have to go through her to get to the PM. She thinks she runs the country."

Another source claimed that Gray was involved in a stand-off with Case when she tried to prevent McSweeney from being given access to a secure government IT system. Case, the head of the civil service, is said to have told her: "I will only authorise that if the prime minister tells me himself."

One senior figure in Downing Street downplayed the claims, pointing out that Starmer holds weekly security council meetings as well as regular security briefings at which intelligence issues could be raised. "This is just noises off from people who don't know what they're talking about," they said.

The latest claims come after The Times reported that Gray had been accused of "subverting" cabinet ministers to try to secure a government bailout to rebuild a stadium in Belfast. She is said to have personally "dominated" talks over Casement Park, a dilapidated Gaelic games venue due to stage matches at Euro 2028, the football championship that will be co-hosted by the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Gray, who has ties to Northern Ireland, previously ran the province's finance ministry.

News

Don't pose as police on internet, council's Covid fraud unit told

George Greenwood
Investigations Reporter
James Hurley Enterprise Editor

The government's coronavirus fraud investigation unit was ordered by regulators to stop using police web domains and email addresses because it was not a law enforcement authority.

The National Intelligence Service (Natis), based at Thurrock council in Essex, was contracted by the Department for Business and Trade to pursue coronavirus fraud.

It issued staff with police-style uniforms and warrant cards and until recently had a website with a ".police" email domain.

In government press releases, Natis was described as making arrests and being involved in "raids" and "seizures". However, the service was staffed by council officials, and did not have investigation powers beyond those of trading standards staff.

The College of Policing, the professional policing body for England and Wales, which oversees police IT systems, contacted Thurrock council in May, after The Times approached it for comment about the use of a police website. The college said at the time that the police.uk domain had only been issued because it thought the request was from a genuine police organisation. It told Natis that "usage of the natis.police.uk domain name should cease as soon as practicably possible".

The domains were granted by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire police shared services unit. The forces said they were authorised following the required approval process", but declined to comment on what this process was.

Further disclosures under freedom of information laws show that Natis, with a headcount of 96 and a budget of £30 million in its first two years of operation, helped secure only six criminal prosecutions for abuse of coronavirus support programmes. Total recoveries from the period beginning in January 2020 were £17 million.

Labour is planning to appoint a Covid commissioner in an attempt to recover billions lost to fraud.

A government spokeswoman said that Natis's work had led to 81 arrests, and the recovery of significant sums. "More is expected through the significant number of ongoing investigations," she added.

Thurrock council said: "The role of Natis has always been, and continues to be, to investigate criminality targeting the public purse ... the council does not believe the public has been misled."

PAUL HEYES/ALAMY

Northern line The City of Wells, which originally took postwar passengers from London to Kent, now works on the East Lancashire Railway, which runs from Heywood to Rawtenstall and takes in villages such as Summerseat, on the river Irwell

Radiographers check if men are pregnant

Charlotte Wace

Radiographers in NHS hospitals have been advised to check if men are pregnant before conducting scans as part of inclusivity guidance.

Patients are said to have been left embarrassed by the suggestion that their sex was not obvious, with reports that men had walked out of appointments.

The advice is in a document developed by the Society of Radiographers called "inclusive pregnancy status guidelines for ionising radiation". Radiation from certain scans can be harmful to unborn babies.

The document draws on an incident involving a transgender male patient who had a CT scan without checks and was found to have been pregnant.

Radiographers told The Telegraph that forms designed to be inclusive had confused patients and posed a risk to their safety.

One said a man requiring an urgent cancer check "was so annoyed by the questions on the form, he ... left the department and didn't have a scan".

Women were said to have been left in tears by questions about their fertility, including having to explain why they could not be pregnant.

It is thought that many hospitals in England were using variations of the form. A source told The Times that this was not NHS England guidance.

Fiona McAnena, the director of campaigns at Sex Matters, said the questions were "a waste of valuable time".

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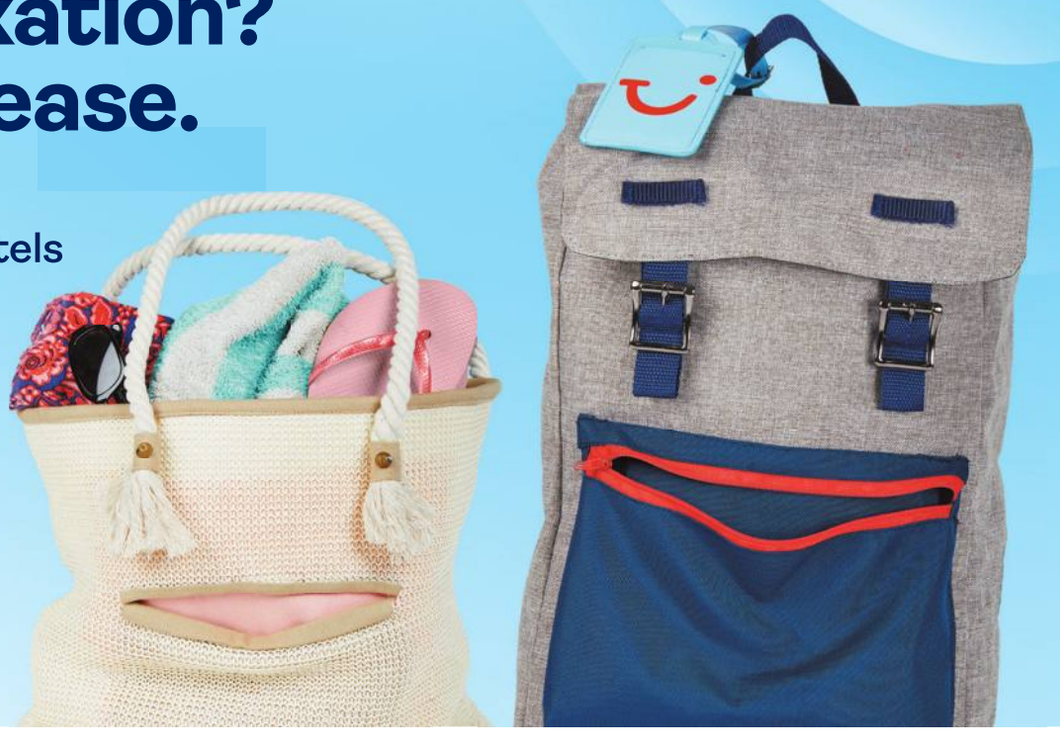

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Bosses block village plan to send cleaner on holiday

A street cleaner who is so valued by his local community that it raised £2,800 for him to go on holiday has been told by his employer that he cannot accept the gift (Mark Sellman writes).

Paul Spiers, 63, has been cleaning the streets of Beckenham, southeast London, since 2017 and last week he mentioned to Lisa Knight, the manager of an estate agent, that it was his birthday and he was saving for a holiday to Portugal.

Knight, who has struck up a friendship with Spiers through their shared love of Elvis Presley, started a fundraising campaign to pay for the trip.

"As an integral part of our Beckenham village, Paul is adored by all," she wrote on the fundraising page. Even she was surprised at the outpouring of generosity.

"It took off beyond what I ever thought it would," said Knight of the collection, which stands at £2,810.

However Veolia, the waste management company that employs Spiers, says he cannot have it.

"As part of Veolia's contract with Bromley council, we have strict protocols which exclude the acceptance by staff of any monies or other incentives outside of their agreed regular pay structure for work they undertake.

"This policy exists to ensure fairness and transparency in our public service contract," the company told Knight.

Members of the Beckenham Appreciation Facebook group were outraged by Veolia's stance. One resident wrote: "Gift it to him, you purchase it and add his name. The world has bloody gone mad!!!"

Another said: "Why should a powerful company be able to take such a thing away from an individual on a low wage? Disgusting ... keep fighting."

One suggested: "Put the holiday as a prize in a raffle, but only have one ticket."

The cleaner has taken the situation well. Knight said: "All he wants is to not get in trouble at work. He said he wouldn't even enjoy the holiday, if it wasn't totally approved."

Veolia was approached for comment.

Paul Spiers and Lisa Knight bonded over Elvis and she stepped in to help pay for a trip to Portugal

Vets warn of painful fate for hairless 'bullycats'

George Greenwood

An animal charity has said that a fashion for hairless cats is leaving many with crippling pain in their short lives.

The Naturewatch Foundation has told people not to buy so-called bullycats, a sphynx-like hairless breed with short, bow legs and wrinkly skin.

The charity said the cat's popularity has increased after social media trends on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. However, experts have said the exaggerated shape of the breed is likely to leave them in serious pain.

Dr Dan O'Neill, associate professor of companion animal epidemiology at the Royal Veterinary College, said bullycats were likely to live for 6.7 years, compared with an average of 11.7 years for all cats. "Deliberately selecting for disease mutations, such as hairlessness that leads to sunburn; dwarfism that leads to mobility issues and joint pain; and folded skin that leads to lifetimes of skin infections means that the lives of many bullycats will permanently be blighted by suffering," he said.

According to Naturewatch, the trend for bullycats appears to have originated in the US, but the charity, which campaigns to end the illegal trade in pets, said it is concerned to see that they are now being bred in the UK. A spokeswoman for the charity said, "It's shocking to see that these poor cats are starting to emerge in the UK. We've seen increasingly extreme breeding practices in the dog world in recent years, and it appears unscrupulous people are now turning their attention to exploiting cats in the same way, all in the pursuit of greed and social media likes. It's an animal welfare disaster and this kind of breeding is just cruel," the spokeswoman said.

The lack of hair condemns the cats to sunburn, and the wrinkled skin is prone to painful infections

"If you're thinking about getting a cat, don't buy into these harmful designer fads, as you'll pay a high price in vet fees and you'll have to endure the pain of seeing your beloved pet suffering from lifelong health issues."

"There are lots of wonderful cats out there who need a home, so please go to a reputable rescue instead and choose a cat or kitten with a natural body shape."

The charity has called people to boycott social media accounts that promote the trend, and to report inhumane pet selling to their local council's licensing department.

It may seem pretty unfair, but ugly people's lives are shorter

Tom Whipple Science Editor

Age, they say, comes before beauty but it turns out that age also comes because of beauty.

People who are less attractive die sooner, a study has found — and the effect is significant. The least attractive men live on average nearly a year less than their better-looking peers, while for women the difference is nearly two years.

The scientists behind the findings said that, most likely, we are seeing the accrued effects of spending a life as part of a group that endures often unrecognised discrimination: the ugly.

"If you're not attractive, it's a disadvantage in almost every activity you undertake," Daniel Hamermesh, from the University of Texas at Austin, said. Research has shown that less attractive people earn less, are promoted less, are treated more harshly by juries, and are more likely to lose elections. "Promotion, wages, dating — they come off worse in every activity," Hamermesh said. And now, they come off worse in death too. According to the study, women judged to be in the bottom sixth for attractiveness lived nearly one year, 11 months less. For men, the figure was nearly 11 months.

The research was possible thanks to a quirk of a long-running study. The Wisconsin Longitudinal Study has been following more than 8,000 adults since their high-school graduation in 1957 — about half of whom have died. Alongside a lifetime of health data, researchers also collected yearbook photos.

Almost 70 years on, as the subjects come to the end of their lives, those images remain. What is more, they have been ranked. To look for connections between attractiveness and health, researchers asked people to separately rate all the photographs. For the latest study, published in Social Science & Medicine, Hamermesh looked to see when the subjects died.

He said: "The only area in which I've seen research showing that being unattractive is an advantage was a very nice study where it showed that for younger criminals who engage in violent crime it pays to be bad-looking.

"If you're being mugged by somebody who's good looking, you laugh at them and say, 'What the hell are you doing? This is not for you.' Whereas a guy who's not good looking is going to scare the heck out of you."

There is another possible explanation for the findings, which is that unattractive faces are a signal that people are already less healthy. This fits with theories in evolutionary psychology which argue that, for instance, symmetrical faces indicate people who are better able to fight disease.

However, Hamermesh said obvious social effects were the more likely explanation — for instance the fact that ugly people earn less and people who earn less live shorter lives.

If, indeed, it is caused by societal prejudice it is also, however, good news in a way — because it means that it could change. "Over time, if people didn't pay as much attention to looks in daily life, I'm quite sure that 100 years from now we wouldn't see these differences in longevity," Hamermesh said.

"Asking people to change their attitudes is a tough call, but that's what it would take. This isn't just about employers, or about customers, it's about all of us and our attitudes. The enemy, the creator of differences in outcomes in so many areas for bad-looking people, is us."

Steer clear of drivers with bumper stickers — they could be psychopaths

Tom Whipple

Does your T-shirt inform people you have "never kissed a Tory"? Or perhaps your bumper sticker tells remainers, "You lost, get over it"?

Well, then you are letting people know about two things: your politics, and, quite possibly, your tendency to psychopathy.

A study in the US found that people who engage in "ideological poking" — displaying political symbols designed to mock their opponents — score more highly for psychopathic traits.

Matejas Mackin, from the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, conducted the study because, as he perused the bumper stickers of post-Trump America, it felt like something had changed.

"When I was a little younger, I would typically see campaigns with signs that would say something like 'Hope' or 'Vote Obama' or "Vote McCain'. Then from 2016 onwards, you start to see more and more people expressing their beliefs by insulting the other side. I was interested in understanding this phenomenon. Why do people do it?"

His study, published in the Journal of Research in Personality, sought to investigate this. It involved almost 500 US residents, all of whom completed a questionnaire assessing their tendency towards "dark personality traits".

The questionnaire asked people to rate how much they agreed with certain statements, looking at narcissism ("I tend to want others to admire me"), Machiavellianism ("I tend to manipulate others to get my way"), and psychopathy ("I tend to be unconcerned with the morality of my actions").

For the second part, Mackin presented people with a range of political slogans and bumper stickers, tailored to whether they were Democrat or Republican. He asked them how willing they would be to display them. Mackin found that there was no link between Machiavellianism and narcissism and ideological poking, but there was with psychopathy. It was not a huge effect, and it certainly did not mean that people who did it were clinically psychopathic, but the link was clear.

He said that this might explain some of the toxicity we have seen, on both sides of the Atlantic, in the past decade. "It does seem to be the case that the contemporary polarised political climate might give individuals with slightly darker dispositions more of a channel to speak," he said.

PETER TARRY FOR THE TIMES

A cut above Drivers taking part in the British Lawn Mower Racing Association's 12-hour event in Petersfield, Hampshire, reached speeds approaching 50mph

Hundreds of Britons try to avoid war in Lebanon

Oliver Marsden Beirut

Lebanon's political isolation and economic collapse have left hundreds of Britons trying to flee before an expected intensification of the conflict with Israel.

The Foreign Office has advised British citizens to leave as southern villages in Lebanon are regularly bombarded by Israeli jets and artillery. The Israelis are responding to rocket attacks by Hezbollah after Fouad Shukr, a leader of the Iran-backed militant group, was killed in a missile strike on southern Beirut.

Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas leader, was also assassinated in Tehran and Iran has threatened revenge.

British citizens in Lebanon say it is proving difficult to follow Foreign Office advice, and some say they face bureaucratic obstacles. The closure of the border with Syria for most westerners and the lack of ferry services means the airport is the only route in or out.

Others, mostly Britons married to Lebanese, say their money was lost or frozen when the country's banking system collapsed in 2019 and they cannot afford to return to the UK.

Angela Melki, 71, from Cambridge, said she lost her money in the financial collapse "and now we can get only $400 a month, we can't afford to leave". More than 50 years ago she married Toufic, now 79, to run a computer and station-

Angela Melki and her husband, Toufic, lost $1.7 million in the banking collapse

ery company in London before retiring to Lebanon.

Their savings of $2.7 million were vastly reduced when the banks collapsed. The government, perpetually divided between pro- and anti-Hezbollah factions, defaulted on an international loan then failed to act during a run on the banks.

Deposits were frozen, in effect making them inaccessible, limiting withdrawals to a few hundred dollars a month. "The collapse left us with less than a million," Melki said. "Over $1.7 million disappeared and the rest has been spent. In desperation we told the bank they could keep half of what is left just so we could get the other half out and leave. They said no."

Much to Melki's surprise, her bank told her the UK "was expensive and she wouldn't get far on $400 a month".

The couple plan to wait out any Israeli attacks in the basement of their home in Monteverde, overlooking Beirut. The house has been on the market for years but potential buyers are few and far between.

In the meantime every day the air above Beirut is torn by sonic booms as Israeli jets send a warning to Hezbollah.

Meelie, 34, a British national who is part of an initiative to provide sanitary support to women and who asked for her surname not to be used, said she was torn because media reports were terrifying but life on the ground was "OK".

She added: "Knowing the women I collaborate with are stuck here and can't leave, I want to stay and support them. I have chosen to be here. If I leave, I'm giving in to the power of my passport and it feels immoral."

She said she had just seen her mother off at the airport. "She was in tears," she added. "At dinner last night my mother vocalised her thought that this might be the last supper. We both just laughed."

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Disorder shows loss of respect for police, says Cooper as she boosts patrols

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Riots across the country have shown that Britain has lost respect for the police, the home secretary has said.

Yvette Cooper believes that a soft approach to justice had led too many people to "feel as though crime has no consequences".

She has pledged to restore the public's faith in the law and said that further police patrols would be in place this week.

"I am not prepared to tolerate the brazen abuse and contempt which a minority have felt able to show towards our men and women in uniform," she wrote in The Telegraph. "As well as punishing those responsible for the last fortnight's violent disorder, we must take action to restore respect for the police.

"From anti-social behaviour through to serious violence, too often people feel crime has no consequences. That has to change."

Her warning came after ministers pledged to push ahead with plans to jail or fine rioters and protesters who try to hide their identity by wearing balaclavas or other face coverings.

Government sources said Labour would adopt plans, previously backed by the Conservative government, that would give police the power to ban face coverings at protests for up to 24 hours if they believe the protest could involve criminal activity.

Those that flouted the rules could be jailed or face fines of £1,000. Ministers are also likely to ban people carrying flares or fireworks at demonstrations. Writing in The Sun, Dame Diana Johnson, the policing minister, said such items were unnecessary for protesting peacefully. "Do not tell me individuals who come armed with flares, fireworks and petrol bombs to a location advertised online with fire emojis are just there to protest," she wrote.

"Do not tell me someone is in a crowd for peaceful reasons wearing a balaclava to avoid being identified."

The measures are likely to be similar to those in the Conservatives' criminal justice bill that did not make it on to the statute book before the general election. Sources said work would be undertaken with the College of Policing to ensure that innocent people are not affected. This would include those in religious dress or with health problems.

In another change, children will be taught to spot extremist content and fake news online. Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, said she was launching a review of the curriculum to embed critical thinking across multiple subjects and arm pupils against "putrid conspiracy theories". Children might analyse newspaper articles in English lessons in a way that would help to weed out fabricated clickbait from true reporting. In computer lessons they could be taught to spot fake news sites; maths lessons could include analysis of statistics.

Phillipson told The Telegraph: "It's more important than ever that we give young people the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge what they see."

Misinformation spread online that the suspect in the stabbing of three young girls in Southport on July 29 was a Muslim asylum seeker in part caused days of rioting.

Neo-Nazi in Finland gave arson advice to UK rioters

Emma Yeomans

A Finnish neo-Nazi shared instructions to commit arson and urged people to file false reports in order to waste police resources during the riots last week.

The man in his early twenties, whom The Times is not naming, can be revealed as an instigator of the far-right action last week. He helped run a group chat on the app Telegram, where tens of thousands of people shared ideas for riot locations and hateful content about immigrants and Jewish people.

Social media sites have come under increased scrutiny since the stabbings in Southport. Misinformation about the suspect spread quickly, as well as locations for possible protests and incitement to riot.

The neo-Nazi, who is understood to live in southern Finland, began posting extreme right-wing content online when a teenager. According to police records unearthed by YLE, the Finnish public broadcaster, he was previously investigated by Finnish police for making an illegal threat. He became an administrator for the Southport Wake Up group on Telegram, which became connected to the riots.

At the time it was removed from Telegram the group had more than 13,000 users. The Finnish administrator posted racial slurs and pledged "international support" for the riots. He wrote: "I'm currently working hard on my war machine helping you guys."

Under a username inspired by the Nazi party, he boasted about removing suspected Jewish members from the group, shared content glorifying Hitler and distributed a manual on how to commit arson. The document was distributed at a similar time as a list of immigration solicitors' offices, prompting fears they might become victims of arson attacks.

The document was originally produced by National Socialism/White Power Crew, which Red Flare, a group of anti-fascist researchers, said was a Russian-Ukrainian neo-Nazi group. The Finnish man posted it with the caption: "Something fun for you to read."

He also directed his followers on a separate channel to file false police reports during proposed riots last Wednesday, in an attempt to tie up police resources. He shared a link to True Vision, a website owned by the National Police Chiefs' Council, where individuals can report hate crimes, which are then forwarded to the local police force. Before the expected far-right protests on Wednesday night he shared the link and added: "You know what to do."

Posts from far-right accounts around the world encouraged the filing of false police reports to British forces last week. In April leaders of far-right and white nationalist groups in Britain and the US directed followers to file false reports en masse to Police Scotland after hate-crime reporting laws were brought in in Scotland.

The National Police Chiefs' Council did not reply to a request for comment on the number of reports it received.

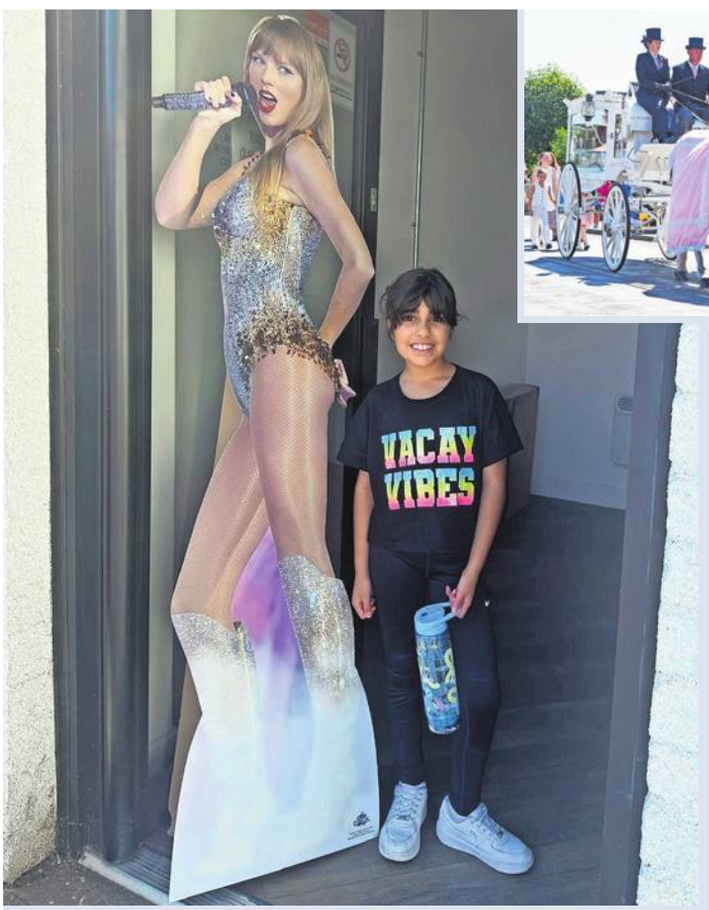
The Finnish man's history on multiple platforms suggests that he holds neo-Nazi views, including Islamophobia, antisemitism, homophobia and extreme anti-immigrant sentiment. On his Telegram accounts he shared videos mocking the Holocaust and used antisemitic slurs. He also took part in a support group for an Austrian neo-Nazi who was jailed for ten years for broadcasting and glorifying Nazi ideology.

The case will pose fresh questions about the level of influence far-right extremists, in the UK and abroad, have had over the recent disorder, and the role of social media. Telegram in particular has been criticised for its failure to moderate extreme and hate-driven accounts. Adam Hadley, the founder and executive director of Tech Against Terrorism, said: "For too long Telegram has been a go-to platform for extremists. It's time for a change.

"We call on the platform to apply consistent, proactive content moderation against all forms of violent extremism and terrorism."

Rioters long for a Britain that never existed, Trevor Phillips, page 19
Time to target the online accomplices, Edward Lucas, page 20

ANDY KELVIN/PA



Hundreds at funeral of Southport stab victim

Hundreds of mourners gathered yesterday for the funeral of one of the three girls stabbed to death in Southport (Constance Kampfner writes). The parents of Alice da Silva Aguiar, nine, said she was their "dream child".

Alice was killed at a Taylor Swift-themed dance class on July 29. Bebe King, six, and Elsie Dot Stancombe, seven, also died in the attack.

Alice's parents, Sergio and Alexandra, from Portugal, were joined by family and friends at St Patrick's Catholic Church in the Merseyside town for the service. A cremation was held at a separate location.

The parents said she was a "good girl, with strong values ... an environmentalist in the making".

The family released a photograph of Alice waiting to get into the summer holiday class. Wearing leggings and a T-shirt, she is pictured next to a cardboard cut-out of Swift shortly before the attack.

About 300 people lined the streets of Southport as the funeral cortege passed. Police officers and members of the fire and ambulance services paid their respects.

The family of Alice da Silva Aguiar released a photo of her before the dance class. Mourners lined the streets of Southport as her funeral cortege, above, passed

Tommy Robinson faces scrutiny from MI5

Oliver Wright

The security services will be looking "very carefully" at who has funded the far-right leader Tommy Robinson, a former MI6 officer has said, after fears were raised that Russia had stoked the riots in the UK.

Christopher Steele, a former head of the Russia desk, said organisations such as MI5 would be looking into the background of people seen to encourage rioting to check whether they had links to the Putin regime. He said: "I think the security service will be looking very carefully at the instigators, including people like Tommy Robinson, even conceivably Nigel Farage. They'll be looking at things like their travel movements, who they've been in touch with, monetary transfers, a pattern of behaviour which can lead to some conclusions about the degree to which Russia has been interfering."

Steele, a counterintelligence specialist who worked for MI6 between 1987 and 2009, said it was "clear" there had been some Russian involvement, including false claims on social media. He said: "When you look at the original disinformation surrounding the Southport killings, that does seem to have come from a Russian-linked website."

The Sunday Times has reported that Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, and his associates created a web of secretive companies that have made profits of more than £1.6 million without paying tax before filing for insolvency. Robinson's spokesperson has complained about a "...false narrative perpetuated by mainstream media and politicians..." and referred to "inaccuracies" in reporting.

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said far-right groups' use of Christian imagery was an "outrage". Writing in The Guardian, he said: "Let me say clearly now to other faiths ... we denounce people misusing such imagery as fundamentally anti-Christian."

How safe are the Lucy Letby

Doubts linger over the evidence a year on from nurse's first guilty verdicts, **Tom Ball** and **Tom Whipple** report

Shortly after dawn on July 3, 2018, officers of the Cheshire constabulary arrived at Lucy Letby's door, arrested her on suspicion of multiple murders and led her away in handcuffs to a police car waiting in the street.

Almost exactly six years later, a retrial last month found her guilty of the attempted murder of a newborn girl. Having already been found guilty of killing seven babies and trying to kill six others, Letby was given her 15th conviction — numbers that confer on her the status of modern Britain's most prolific child killer.

Proving its case in court, the prosecution relied on expert medical witnesses who gave their opinions on contemporaneous clinical notes, witness testimonies and test results. Their assessments were buttressed by accounts from dozens of doctors and nurses who had worked with Letby at the Countess of Chester Hospital.

Her original trial, which ended last August, had been among the longest murder trials in English legal history. The police investigation that preceded it, known as Operation Hummingbird, scrutinised more than half a million medical documents and spoke to more than 2,000 people.

And yet, despite Letby being found guilty at two trials, and her attempts to appeal against her convictions being rejected twice by judges over the past few months, doubts over her guilt have lingered.

No sooner had she been sentenced to life behind bars than a campaign to set her free was spawned. What began on online discussion forums has grown to the extent that during her application to appeal a group of people waving placards proclaiming her innocence encamped themselves outside the Royal Courts of Justice.

Peter Skelton KC, who is representing some of the families of Letby's victims at the upcoming public inquiry, has described this campaign as the work of "conspiracists" and said it is "grossly offensive and distressing" to those whose babies were harmed.

The mother of a baby whom Letby was convicted of trying to kill asked: "What more was it going to take for people to realise that she's not innocent?" The mother, who cannot be named for legal reasons, told The Times: "You don't want to see her face, you don't want to hear her name, you don't want to hear people shouting that she's innocent. She's not innocent, she was found guilty in a court of law."

It is not only conspiracy theorists, though, who have raised questions about the case against the former nurse. Because of the active legal proceedings during and before the retrial, commentary around it was tightly restricted (though a lengthy investigation by The New Yorker magazine was published in that time). In the weeks since the retrial ended, however, a number of experts in fields ranging from neonatology to statistics have spoken of their concern about the safety of the convictions, citing an absence of direct forensic evidence and the way in which evidence was presented to the court.

One scientist, whose paper was used by the prosecution in the original trial, has even suggested that his work was misinterpreted in court.

Times reporters have spoken to several of these experts, and although only one was willing to go so far as to say he believed Letby to be innocent, many voiced disquiet about what they said were "uncertainties" in the prosecution's evidence.

Times reporters also spoke to the expert witnesses whose analysis of thousands of pages of medical documents formed the basis of the prosecution's case. Only they — as well as the expert witness for the defence — have had access to these documents, a point they stressed in rebuttal to some of the claims made by other experts who were not in court to hear all the evidence.

Here, we lay out some of the key areas raised as points of concern.

Insulin testing

Letby was convicted of killing and harming babies using two main methods: injecting air into their bloodstreams and poisoning them with insulin. Although the case for the former relied largely on a combination of indirect and circumstantial evidence, the prosecution had empirical scientific evidence for the latter in the form of test results showing that two babies had suffered from sudden unexplained drops in their blood sugar, a condition known as hypoglycaemia. Letby was found guilty of attempting to murder these two babies by injecting synthetic insulin into their feed bags. Both babies survived.

The test results were the closest thing prosecutors had to a smoking gun, and were a keystone for their case as a whole. Their argument ran that if the jury could agree that Letby had deliberately poisoned two babies, they could also reasonably conclude that she had harmed others using different methods, even if the evidence for those were less concrete. In the event, the insulin cases were the first on which the jury reached a verdict.

In court Dr Anna Milan, a biochemist at the Royal Liverpool Hospital, where the tests were carried out, said the results had shown that insulin had been given to the patients rather than being produced by the pancreas. The accuracy of these tests was corroborated by Dr Gwen Wark, director of the RSCH Peptide Hormone Laboratory in Guildford, a specialist centre for insulin testing. The results were then interpreted for the court in evidence given by Professor Peter Hindmarsh, a paediatric endocrinologist. Both declined to comment to The Times.

The two babies were found to have had very high levels of insulin in their blood, but only a negligible amount of C-peptide, which is produced with insulin in the body. It therefore follows that if there is no C-peptide present, the insulin has not been produced naturally. However, although the test — known as an immunoassay — is a useful guide for diagnosing hypoglycaemia, it does not test for the presence of insulin itself. As the Royal Liverpool recommends on its own website, if external insulin administration is suspected, a separate, analytical method is recommended. This did not happen in the Letby case, however, because both babies recovered soon afterwards.

This point was reiterated by Professor Alan Wayne Jones, an expert in forensic chemistry, who raised similar concerns over the case of Colin Norris, a nurse who was convicted in 2008 of murdering four elderly patients in Leeds using insulin. Norris remains in prison, but in 2021 a review by the Criminal Cases Review Commission referred his case back to the Court of Appeal.

"Positive immunoassay results are not sufficient as binding toxicological evidence of foul play in a criminal prosecution for murder," Jones said.

This point was not challenged in court by Letby's defence, who accepted that there had been a poisoner at work on the ward.

Sarrita Adams, a biotech consultant who has started a campaign critiquing the scientific evidence used in the trial, has argued that medical experts should not be used by courts to advise on cases involving forensic science.

The Royal Liverpool said its position had been laid out in court by Milan's evidence.

Air embolism

The other principal method with which Letby was convicted of harming seven babies was the injection of air into the bloodstream, causing what is known as an air embolism. In these cases babies exhibited an unusual skin discolouration shortly after they collapsed, which doctors on the unit said they had never seen before.

Dr Dewi Evans, the lead expert witness called by the prosecution, drew on these descriptions in concluding that the babies had suffered from air embolisms. His opinion was supported by Dr Sandie Bohin, the second expert medical witness, who was also given access to medical documents.

Evans, a paediatric consultant with more than 30 years experience as an expert witness, cited a paper written in 1989 by Dr Shoo Lee, a Canadian neonatologist, which detailed 53 cases in newborn babies, some of whom had also shown signs of skin discoloration. Lee, who recently retired, was not called to give evidence by either the prosecution or defence, though he did appear at Letby's appeal hearing in April. Rather than confirming Evans's and Bohin's diagnosis, he told the Court of Appeal that none of the descriptions of the babies' skin discolorations given by witnesses matched the sort that he had recorded. He said that the only sign visible on a baby's skin from which one could draw a conclusion of an air embolism was bright pink blood vessels over blue skin.

Dr Dewi Evans was the lead expert witness called by the prosecution

In response to Lee's testimony, Evans told The Times he did not believe that the descriptions of the babies' skin given in court during the trial contradicted those given in Lee's paper. Referring to the case of Baby A, whom Letby was found guilty of killing with an injection of air, Evans cited the evidence of two senior doctors, Ravi Jayaram and David Harkness, both of whom described skin that was "very pale and blue but [with] unusual pink patches that appeared mainly on his torso which seemed to appear and disappear and flit around".

"I don't know if this information was disclosed ... at the appeal court hearing [but] I would find it very difficult to distinguish what Harkness and Jayaram described from the description attributed to Dr Lee," he said.

Dr Michael Hall, who was a medical expert witness for the defence, said that in his view the charge of air embolism had not been proved beyond all reasonable doubt. He said that another research paper had described a quite different discoloration, in which the baby's skin had gone blue and stayed blue for some hours. He also said Lee's paper was not a suitable yardstick by which to judge air embolism in the Countess of Chester babies as the research had looked at a different scenario, in which oxygen had been delivered by force through ventilation.

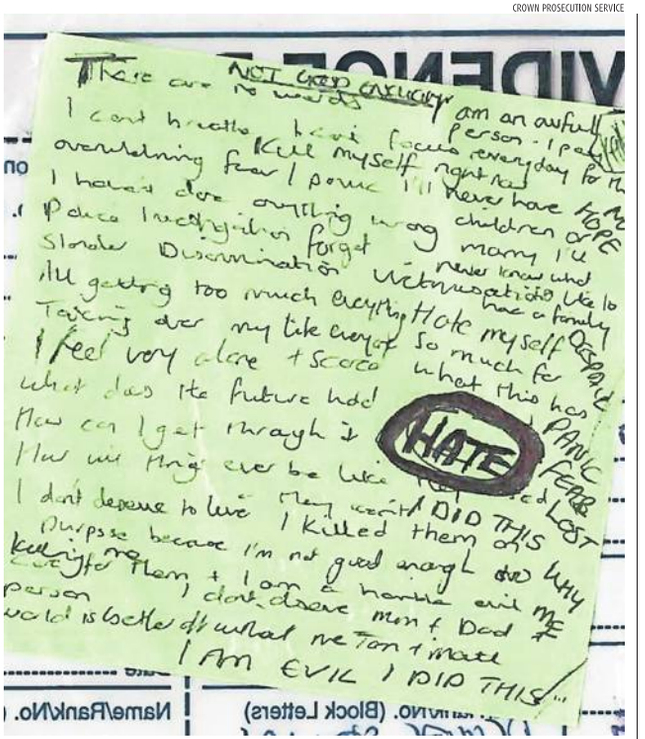
Other experts also expressed their surprise that skin discoloration had been used as the basis for diagnosis of air embolism, given that discoloration can have many causes. Two neonatologists said they thought that a more plausible explanation was the use of vasoactive drugs, such as adrenaline, given to a collapsing baby during attempts at resuscitation.

Evans said that something had to have caused the babies to collapse so suddenly in the first place, adding that for the most part these were babies who, though premature, were said to have been in stable conditions. The fact that they did not respond to the resuscitation efforts was also unusual, he said. He reiterated the judgment delivered by the Court of Appeal judges in rejection of Letby's application that skin discoloration was only one factor and alone did not determine that the babies had been injected with air.

Evans said that he had consulted 18 papers besides Lee's, including one published in 2001 looking at air embolism in newborns. It, too, described "blue-black [skin] with

convictions for baby murders?

CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE



The arrest of Lucy Letby and a note in which she wrote: "I am evil, I did this." Her defence said four consultants conspired to blame her for the rise in deaths on the unit. Right: Lucia de Berk, a Dutch neonatal nurse, was found guilty of murder then exonerated when it was shown she had been convicted on the basis of a statistical fallacy

blotchy redness". The radiologist who examined X-rays of the babies also agreed with the diagnosis of air embolism after finding large amounts of gas in the great vessels that could not be explained by other conditions such as sepsis or trauma.

Dr Andreas Marnerides, an expert in neonatal pathology who was asked by Cheshire police to review the case in 2017, also thought it likely that a number of babies died as a result of air being injected into their bloodstreams. He said he found "globules" in the lungs and brain tissue that were most likely to have been air. "I cannot be 100 per cent sure, but most likely this air went there while this baby was still alive," he said.

Statistics

At the start of the trial, the jury were shown a chart listing 25 suspicious deaths and collapses between June 2015 and June 2016 on one axis, and the names of the 38 nurses who had worked on the unit on the other. Every other nurse had a handful of crosses showing that they were on duty during incidents, but Letby had an unbroken row of crosses beside her name, putting her at the scene for every death and collapse.

However, the table did not include six other deaths during that period, for which Letby was not charged. If it had, the results would have appeared more mixed and the evidence against Letby less damning.

Professor Peter Green is a statistician at Bristol University. He was part of a group that wrote a report published by the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) about the use of statistics in cases of suspected medical misconduct. Released shortly before the Letby trial, it was titled *Healthcare serial killer or coincidence?*

Speaking in a personal capacity, he said it was clear that the standards the group recommended had not been applied in court. "It's easy to over-interpret this kind of data," he said. "People are very good at seeing patterns." Although the statistical evidence was only one part of the trial, he said, his worry was how it might have influenced the interpretation of medical evidence.

"The principal problem is the failure to account for other explanations," he said. "There's also a sense that by summarising it in such a succinct way you are capturing the whole story, and that's very, very compelling. People like simple explanations. And of course, people also like to blame human culprits, not problems with systems."

Letby's case bears some likenesses to that of Lucia de Berk, a Dutch neonatal nurse who was convicted of seven murders and three attempted murders in 2003 and 2004.

De Berk was exonerated in 2010 after it was shown that she had been convicted on the basis of a statistical fallacy that it was simply too improbable that an innocent person could have been present at every single one of those deaths.

Among those who petitioned for the case to be looked at again was Richard Gill, emeritus professor of statistics at Leiden University. Gill, another of the authors of the RSS report, was censured by Cheshire police for blogging about a potential miscarriage of justice throughout the Letby trial. "I think there's less than a one in a hundred thousand chance she's guilty," he said.

The counter-argument is that the shift chart in Letby's trial was only one plank among several supporting the case against her, and served initially only to identify her as a person of interest. Statistics were, by contrast, the bedrock of De Berk's conviction. The only other substantial piece of evidence put forward by prosecutors were diary entries in which she wrote of an unnamed "strange compulsion".

The chart in Letby's case is also more compelling than it appears at first sight. It shows not only that she was present, but also how collapses that had at first happened during the night began — after Letby was put on day shifts — to happen during the day.

The claim that the police may have cherry-picked incidents at which Letby was present, and prosecuted her for those while ignoring the rest, is also undermined by the fact that the table was drawn up by after Evans had been asked by them to identify any suspicious events in 2017. He said that he was not aware then that Letby was a suspect.

Suboptimal care

Letby's defence in court was that she was the victim of a "conspiracy" by four consultants who were trying to blame her for the rise in babies' deaths on the unit to cover for their own failings, as well as systemic ones.

After Letby was removed from the neonatal unit in the summer of 2016, under a cloud of suspicion, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health was brought in to investigate. It found that consultants were not as available as they should have been and that the number of nurses was often lower than recommended.

One nurse who worked on the unit at the same time as Letby made the point, however, that although consultants were rarely seen on the unit, nursing shortages were by no means unique to the Countess.

"Though the unit at Chester fell short of [recommended nursing] levels, especially at busy times, the same could be said of most NNUs [neonatal units]," the nurse, who asked not to be named, said.

In the same month that Letby was removed, the trust downgraded the neonatal unit, meaning it was allowed to deal only with less premature babies who did not require intensive care. Staffing shortages became less frequent and babies stopped dying.

Ben Myers KC, said that seven babies she was accused of harming had received "suboptimal care" on the unit. Some, he said, should have been taken to a more specialist hospital and others should have received medications hours before they did.

The only witness the defence called to attest to this — and indeed the only witness called by the defence throughout the whole trial — was Lorenzo Mansutti, the hospital's plumber, who said that on one occasion he had seen raw sewage coming from a hand basin in one of the unit's nurseries.

Myers called into question the testimonies given by witnesses, including Evans, whose evidence he applied to have excluded on the ground that Evans had "touted" his services to Cheshire police. In Letby's appeal, the defence reiterated its concerns that Evans did not have the relevant expertise to give evidence. The Court of Appeal judges ruled, however, that "he certainly had sufficient knowledge to render his opinion of value".

Before the retrial this year, Myers also challenged the evidence to be given by Jayaram after it was reported that the paediatrician was working on a TV drama about Letby with Jed Mercurio, the *Line of Duty* creator, which he said could incentivise him to "portray himself in a particular way in a story that is being developed'.

Letby's team did not call any scientific, medical or statistical experts — not even Hall, the specialist who had been instructed to write a report for the defence based on the same medical notes seen by Evans and Bohin.

Hall believes that the prosecution did not prove Letby's guilt beyond all reasonable doubt. However, the defence did not call him to give testimony so his opinion was never heard by the jury — he said that he did not know why.

The Times understands that friends of Letby were unhappy with the quality of her defence team and spoke to her about hiring different representation before the appeal application this year.

Myers's chambers declined to respond on his behalf.

'Context is everything'

Uncertainties were an acknowledged part of the case against Letby. During the original trial, the judge told the jury that it was not necessary for the prosecution to prove the precise manner in which she had acted, only that she had acted with murderous intent.

In doing so, the prosecution did not rely solely on medical and statistical evidence. It presented circumstantial evidence, such as the Letby's handwritten notes saying "I am evil, I did this"; her "trophies" in the form of confidential documents pertaining to some of her victims; Facebook searches for the parents of her victims, sometimes months after their deaths; the fact that a number of the babies suffered sudden catastrophic collapses only a very short time after their designated nurse had left the room; and that siblings had suffered harm at or about the same time.

As Nick Johnson KC, for the prosecution, told the court: "In this extraordinary case, context is everything." In other words, there was no one piece of evidence that proved Letby to be a killer beyond all reasonable doubt. Rather, guilt was evinced by a combination of interlocking, co-dependent facts.

There may be more criminal prosecutions. Operation Hummingbird is still active and is investigating the full four years of Letby's career as a nurse. Evans suspects that there are 25 other suspicious incidents linked to her, including one more insulin poisoning.

There is also the public inquiry, due to begin in September, which will look at the culture of the NHS and the conduct of its staff.

Letby has always denied ever having harmed a baby in her care. After being given her 15th whole life order at the retrial sentencing hearing in Manchester, she turned to the court before being taken down to the cells and cried, "I'm innocent".

Questions will probably long persist around Letby, the apparently motiveless killer who had nothing to gain and everything to lose. But for the mother of one of the children Letby was convicted of trying to kill, there is no doubt.

"I think unless you've sat in court and you've listened to every piece of evidence, you've seen her on the stand, you've seen her take the stand — you can't make that judgment unless you've lived it."

News

Britain's video games empire in peril as its disgruntled actors strike back

Equity is leading calls for better pay and more protections (including intimacy co-ordinators), **Alex Farber** reports

David Menkin, who provides the voice of Luke Skywalker in Lego Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga, is among those demanding change in an industry that now attracts big-name stars including Keanu Reeves, who appears in Cyberpunk 2077. In the US, video game actors have been on strike since last month

When an experienced video game actor turned up to record her voice part for a big-budget game, she had little idea of what was in store.

"They said I had to record a full eight-minute sex scene in real-time in front of six or seven sniggering guys," she said. "One tried to leave to give me some privacy but was told that he didn't have to."

The experience, which happened several years ago, was "awful", she said, adding: "I was put on the spot and didn't want to make a fuss but it really rattled me. It was embarrassing and I felt violated. Imagine somebody standing there watching you perform such an intimate act."

Britain's video game industry is huge. It has doubled in the past decade to be worth almost £8 billion, well ahead of the music industry's £6.7 billion.

The growth of the sector has attracted Hollywood A-listers including Kit Harington, Keanu Reeves and Kristen Bell to appear in games, either as virtual versions of themselves or voicing characters. Less well-known actors have carved out successful careers as specialists.

Now, however, there is growing unrest about how they are treated. In the US, video game actors have been on strike since last month, threatening to delay big-budget games. In the UK, Equity — the union that represents video game actors as well as those in film, TV and the rest of the entertainment industry — is calling for an overhaul of how they are treated.

As well as setting minimum pay rates for the first time, Equity wants members to be provided with a full summary of the storyline and scripts before recording, with any explicit scenes clearly flagged. They also want video game developers to follow Hollywood and TV by introducing intimacy co-ordinators for sex scenes and the opportunity for actors to request a closed set.

Other issues highlighted include the overuse of non-disclosure agreements, harmful vocal stress caused by scenes that involve extended screaming and safety during performance capture amid fears that not all games developers are properly insured.

David Menkin, an experienced performer who has appeared in games including *Final Fantasy XVI* and as Luke Skywalker in *Lego Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga*, said that pay had not risen in line with expectations. "Most of my colleagues are earning less per hour than they would have in the mid-Nineties. But, more critically, the industry has set no specific guidelines for our work," Menkin said.

"Our contracts give us no protections against the use of AI, voice actors are haemorrhaging their voices due to the demand for high-intensity screaming, motion-capture performers have been asked to perform dangerous stunts without proper safety equipment or a stunt co-ordinator on set, and colleagues have been expected to perform explicit sex scenes without clear safeguarding."

Shannon Sailing, Equity's industrial official for audio and video games, said that the strength of feeling to improve the situation was "palpable".

"Our members are no longer going to sit back and accept low rates of pay, unsafe working environments and poor terms and conditions," she said.

The union is understood to be in early conversations with games and Ukie, the interactive entertainment trade body, which represents developers and publishers, about adopting recommendations that it has drawn up. They have been published alongside the union's first recommended pay rates including a minimum £300 per hour for voiceover and £650 per day for motion capture after rates were said to have been stuck for more than 20 years. The union is also worried about the use of artificial intelligence by games developers as the issue threatens to paralyse the games industry in the US.

Major developers including Activision, Warner Bros and Walt Disney face strike action from actors who fear that their voices and likenesses can be reproduced without fair compensation. The actors are bargaining via the US union Sag-Aftra, which brought Hollywood film and TV production to a standstill over similar issues last year.

A spokesman for the video game producers said that the terms it had offered performers were "among the strongest" in the entertainment industry. "We are disappointed the union has chosen to walk away when we are so close to a deal, and we remain prepared to resume negotiations," they added.

A spokesman for Ukie added that video games made a vital cultural, social and economic contribution to the UK. "We recognise the important contribution of performers and voice actors in making games," they added. "We continue to work with stakeholders to promote and uphold best employment practices in our sector, to ensure the UK is the best place to make, play and sell video games."

'Digital will' services let loved ones access social media accounts

Mark Sellman
Technology Correspondent

You may have made a will and given powers of attorney, but if you have not arranged a digital legacy there is a gaping hole in your estate planning, experts say.

With more of our life being led online, there are growing calls for people to create digital and social media wills. Access to online accounts is controlled by tech companies and their terms, so after a death loved ones can be forced to battle for access if no provision has been made to hand them on.

"If you don't make plans for your digital life, your loved ones might experience what's known as secondary loss. So you may feel you've lost that person and now you're also losing something else, another part of them. So when it comes to making plans, it's important you think about these things," James Norris, founder of the Digital Legacy Association, said.

Norris set up the association to help people to deal with the issue, which gained publicity during a three-year legal fight between a property adviser, Rachel Thompson, and Apple.

Thompson wanted access to the photos and videos on the iCloud account of her husband, Martin, who had died, but because he did not leave a will, Apple demanded a court order. It took her three years to get the judgment.

Apple users can now enter one or more legacy contacts on their iCloud accounts, who can access the data — photos, messages, notes files and apps — after you have gone. Facebook also provides this feature, although Instagram, which is part of the Meta parent company, does not. Google's "inactive account manager" allows you to share your data with trusted contacts, but does not enable access to the account. Microsoft requires a court order to access the account after death if you do not know the details.

This patchwork of policies places even more importance on getting your online affairs in order.

The personal finance expert Martin Lewis said on his podcast: "It can be quite difficult for loved ones to gain access to your social media accounts if you die, if you have not specified what you want to happen to them and who should have access to them. So a couple of quick tips. Make a digital directory. Sit down. Think of all your important social media assets, where they are, so that at least somebody knows.

"It could be accessing your phone or your laptop, and certainly social media and certainly cloud storage accounts. I'd always make sure you back these up as you're doing them as well, if you're not doing it via a will and you just want to at least have some basic record of your preferences."

Norris has created a website called MyWishes.co.uk that enables the easy creation of a digital or social media will. Experts also recommend appointing a tech-savvy "digital executor", who can take charge of closing, accessing or "memorialising" your accounts — where they are preserved online.

Password managers like 1Password, where all your login details are sorted in the cloud in encrypted form, are good cybersecurity practice and can be very useful for executors if they have access. But accessing someone else's account is often a breach of terms and conditions. If all this is a little administrative, there is a way to lean more into the legacy side of things: creating an AI avatar of yourself that can interact with your family and friends after death. Several companies have started offering this service: HereAfter AI, StoryFile and DeepBrain AI.

But a digital legacy can even carry on through an online game. Norris's university housemate Ben suffered adult sudden death syndrome. However, he created a fantasy football league that his friends still use. Norris said: "It's a way for us to continue bonds with Ben and to talk about him during the season.

"It keeps us as the friendship group connected in the non-morbid, contextually relevant way, to the person he was."

Creator defends her sex education show for children

David Sanderson Arts Correspondent

The creator of a publicly funded sex education show aimed at children as young as five has admitted including naked adults was "too much too soon".

Josie Dale-Jones said that Arts Council England (ACE), which initially provided £63,000, had "panicked" after a public outcry and had withdrawn the money — only to reinstate the entire grant later.

The Family Sex Show by Dale-Jones's company ThisEgg was due to be performed at a series of regional theatres in 2022 until an online petition, which she claims was started by a group in Spain with links to the "extreme Christian right in the US and eastern Europe", led venues to cancel performances.

She said that venues involved in the tour of her show, which included Theatre Royal Bath, received bomb threats, she was repeatedly called a "paedophile" and her parents' home address was targeted.

In a new show at Edinburgh's Fringe Festival exploring the furore, *A Little Inquest Into What We Are All Doing Here*, Dale-Jones said that ACE and theatres "panicked" despite having been "told explicitly" what was going to be in the production, which "aimed to reimagine how we think and talk to young people about relationships and sex".

She said numerous untrue claims were made about the show, which was only at the rehearsal stage, including that there was "masturbation, genitals on show, simulating of sex acts, naked children". It was true, however, that "some of the adults were topless, breasts were visible" and that there "was a workshop after the show where children could go and make genitals out of playdough".

She admitted making "mistakes", including the show's title, which made some suggest "it was about incest". Of the "nakedness", she said: "I don't think it is inherently inappropriate but I do think it was too much too soon."

The controversy over the public funding of the show led to debates in parliament about the teaching of sex education in an age when pornography is easily accessible and there are increasing concerns about young people's understanding of consent.

Dale-Jones said she had been trying to "influence" children but not "indoctrinate", adding that the show was aimed at encouraging children to "talk openly with adults they trust about sex, sexuality, boundaries, consent .... it could make children safer as they explore things at their own pace".

Dale-Jones claimed that when the controversy erupted, her ACE "relationship manager" was "prevented from talking to me". Requests made under freedom of information laws showed a series of "heavily redacted" exchanges between ACE officers, politicians and officials from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

"They did not cancel and remove funding from my show," she said in the Edinburgh show. "They cancelled and withdrew funding from the idea of my show, because at that point nobody had seen it."

ACE confirmed this weekend that after an investigation it had "terminated the grant" for *The Family Sex Show* because of concerns about the "potential impact" of the performance on "children and vulnerable adults in the audience".

It said the grant was paid in full once it had been proven it would only be used to honour contracts to freelance workers and denied political pressure had played a part in its decision-making.

A spokeswoman said: "Arts Council England supports fantastic, high-quality, cultural work that appeals to the wide range of different tastes and interests of people across the country. As a distributor of public funds, we never compromise on the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We require the organisations and artists we support to have appropriate measures in place, and this is part of the terms of their grant agreements."

A Nightmare on Elm Street has had its 18 rating slashed

The kids don't know it yet, but something is coming to get them. The notorious "slasher" film *A Nightmare On Elm Street* is officially child-friendly viewing after having its rating dropped from 18 to 15.

The 1984 horror movie — about suburban teenagers whose dreams are being infiltrated by the razor-gloved killer Freddy Krueger — is among several classics to have their age limit cut after the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) deemed them to be tamer by modern standards than when originally released.

The Hitcher, a 1986 film about a murderous hitchhiker, is another to have its rating reduced to 15.

The BBFC reclassifies films when distributors present them for re-release on the big screen or on DVD and Blu-ray. It said that although *Elm Street*, starring Robert Englund, features "bloody moments", these remain "relatively discreet". It added that *The Hitcher*, with Rutger Hauer, had moments of "sadism and violent acts" but that these are not "sustained or prolonged".

Freddy Krueger was deemed suitable for 15 year olds

Reacting to the classifications, Lord Fellowes of West Stafford, the creator of *Downton Abbey*, told The Mail on Sunday: "I should have thought that showing *A Nightmare On Elm Street* to a 15-year-old constituted child abuse ... these people should get out more."

A BBFC spokesman said: "These guidelines evolve over time, informed by large scale research (recently involving 12,000 people) to ensure they continue to reflect the expectations of audiences."

PAUL QUEZADA-NEIMAN/ALAMY

Field trip The Tulleys Sunflower Festival in West Sussex invites guests to pose at "Insta-worthy spots scattered throughout"

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News

Female mountaineer looked down on male rivals (and porters)

Jack Malvern

The story of mountaineering is one of intrepid men as they competed to conquer ever greater peaks before Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay took the ultimate prize of scaling Everest in 1953.

So established is the idea of alpinism as a male pursuit that a historian was astonished to discover that the summit record for the world's most formidable mountain range was seized by a woman for a year.

Fanny Bullock Workman, an American socialite with links to British suffragettes and one of the first women admitted to the Royal Geographical Society, looked down on her male rivals in the Himalayas in 1906 and 1907 after reaching a peak of 6,930m.

It was higher than any other undisputed summit reached by man except for the Swiss climber Matthias Zurbriggen's ascent of Aconagua in the Andes 1897, when he was just 32m higher.

Workman, who was 47 at the time of her feat, clambered to the top of Pinnacle Peak in the Nun Kun massif of the western Himalayas.

Her summit record, which is distinct from altitude claims by climbers who had to turn back before reaching a summit, stood from July 28, 1906 until June 12, 1907, when the English doctor Tom Longstaff climbed 7,120m to the summit of Trisul.

Daniel Light, who has charted men's and women's altitude records for his forthcoming book *The White Ladder*, said that Workman's feat had been overlooked because of "sheer confusion around who did exactly what and when".

Fanny Bullock Workman in 1922, left, and an illustration from her 1900 book, In the Ice World of the Himalaya

Climbers' measures of their altitudes were not always accurate and some claimed that the peaks they had stood upon were higher than they were.

"I think there was also a snobbery on the part of the British in relation to the Workmans, they being American, and to Fanny especially, she being a woman," Light said.

Workman usually climbed with her husband William Hunter Workman, "who was willing to let her lead and he would quietly follow". For all her energy and determination, Workman is not an ideal feminist icon. Her memoirs and unpublished journals show how she mistreated their porters, forcing them higher than other mountaineers would have done so she and her husband could have their comforts.

During one expedition when grain shortages meant that porters were on the brink of starvation, she complained that the meals on the mountainside "would not have tempted an epicure".

"Chops were singed and blackened by the smoky flame... and the custard pudding was of swimming consistency, because it refused to bake over the miserable nomad-fireplace."

On another expedition, halfway up a peak near Skoro La in what is now Pakistan, Hunter responded to porters' refusal to continue by pelting them with stones.

She wrote of her contempt for Himalayan shepherds, whom she saw as "the personification of primitive and unintelligent man scarcely higher in his habits than the animals under his care".

After one seven-and-a-half hour climb, when the Workmans benefited from snow shoes and left the carrying to their porters, she wrote: "The last loiterers arrived throwing themselves down in various attitudes of distress, some nursing their feet, others holding their heads."

At 4am the next day, when the exhausted porters refused to get up, the Workmans collapsed their tent. "The tent-pins were pulled up, and as the coolies crawled out from under the prostrate canvas, they were commanded to put on their boots and get ready to march."

The porters climbed for another five hours before giving in to exhaustion. Workman, obliged to descend, wrote in her journal: "Bawling and unendurable, and only a few really ill."

Light discovered, while looking through the Workman archive at the National Library of Scotland, that the couple had a similar contempt for their European guides — something they omitted from their published work. "They seemed to fall out with just about everyone they climbed with. You work out that the Workmans were the problem," he said.

Fanny described Matthias Zurbriggen, who acted as her guide on early Himalayan expeditions, as "an ass in most respects".

Light said that Workman, who died in 1925, might have received more credit if she had made more friends.

"She didn't help herself with her abrasive manner, but, bottom line, the heights she reached were extraordinary and, in the case of both Koser Gunge and Pinnacle Peak, not in dispute."

The White Ladder: Triumph and Tragedy at the Dawn of Mountaineering will be published by Oneworld on September 5.

Slugs are not our friend, Titchmarsh tells gardeners

Kate Mansey

Not content with waging war on the slugs destroying his garden, Alan Titchmarsh appears to have taken aim at "unrealistic" gardeners keen to champion the rights of the slimy creatures.

Titchmarsh, 75, encourages people to "lob them into a spot where the thrushes and hedgehogs enjoy them". But the Royal Horticultural Society says slugs and snails are no longer classed as "pests" and could even be "considered a gardener's friend" because they eat decaying material, fertilise soil and help a garden's ecosystem.

Titchmarsh, who is a vice-president of the RHS, does not agree. He writes in Gardeners' World magazine: "There are times when folk who love to grow plants and beautify the landscape are made to feel like cold-hearted brutes who care little for the planet.

"If you're a gardener who likes a striped lawn, slug-free hostas and vegetables in neat rows, don't feel guilty. Pick off the snails and slugs and lob them into a spot where thrushes and hedgehogs enjoy them. It is unrealistic to expect us to welcome every pest and disease into our gardens because it has a right to exist. Maybe it does — but not in my patch. All my slugs and snails are re-homed into the hedgerow next door. That way we can all be happy."

Titchmarsh previously revealed that his loathing is shared by the King. "The King, I see quite regularly," Titchmarsh told an audience at the Chalke Valley History Festival. "We moan about slugs together because he has a great hosta collection."

To deter slugs, Titchmarsh recommended planting flowers which are "naturally slug-proof", such as lavender, hydrangeas, foxgloves, fuchsias and nasturtiums.

Dr Andrew Salisbury, head of plant health at RHS Garden Wisley, said that this year's mild, wet spring followed by a cool start to the summer created ideal conditions for slugs.

Craving the physical is natural in a digital world
Libby Purves
Page 21

Comment

Rioters long for a Britain that never existed

Finding a way to contain the rage of ignorant racists will prove a challenge for our political system in the years ahead

Trevor Phillips

@TREVORPTWEETS

Stop giving the thickos and sickos so much credit. They belong in the margins of our national life, not the mainstream. Many who took to the streets in recent days could barely spell immigration, much less stop it. The country they say they want back never existed except in the fever dreams of fantasists who regret they missed the opportunity to kill Germans in "the War". It's hardly surprising that such illiterates don't know that victory belonged not to these islands alone but to a multiracial, multicultural empire.

Their adoption of the chant "there ain't no black in the Union Jack" is proof positive that the cheerleaders who provide their slogans aren't even accomplished racists. The phrase was coined in the mid-1980s by the black academic Paul Gilroy as a protest against minority exclusion. There is some irony in Tommy Robinson's raggle taggle band of brothers unthinkingly mouthing the slogans of black Marxist revolutionaries.

Don't get me wrong. I take street fighting seriously. As a student activist I helped to organise the 1974 Red Lion Square anti-fascist demonstration at which the University of Warwick student Kevin Gately died. I started my career in journalism reporting on the riots of the early 1980s — Bristol, Southall, Toxteth, Brixton. At Broadwater Farm in 1985, PC Keith Blakelock, for a while the beat copper in my north London street, was murdered. Days later, David Hodge, a brilliant photojournalist I had become close to as a student and who took my children's first baby pictures, was killed reporting on a riot in Brixton.

Though there are lessons to be learnt from recent events, no one should try to build a state-of-the-nation portrait from the scraps we know about the ghastly murders of three children and the bluster of a few hundred lubricated thugs.

To start with, we know nothing of the motivation of the alleged killer. Even if there were a statistical connection between migration and crime, it is surely too early to tell whether this outrage is proof of that toxic link.

The idea that the riots pose an immediate threat to democracy is overblown. Nevertheless, we need to think hard about how we deal with the ugly rage of this

> Rwanda is a ready-made solution to our overcrowded prisons

unpleasant section of British society in the long term.

Talk of muzzling the internet is pure political distraction. In 2005, a rumour spread that a young African-Caribbean woman had been raped by a gang of Pakistani men in a shop in the Lozells area of Birmingham. The claim was made only twice, on local pirate radio stations, but it triggered days of street fighting between black and Asian groups. A council worker on his way home was stabbed and killed. Journalists were attacked, a police officer was shot. Yet no evidence of the rape was discovered, no premises identified, no victim named. The underlying resentments needed neither Elon Musk nor Twitter/X to spark the fire.

So what should we do about the fact that half-a-dozen British cities have found their centres disrupted by a mix of football hooligans, bored teens, inebriates and professional agitators, prompting several ministerial Cobra meetings and the mobilisation of thousands of police officers?

Sir Keir Starmer isn't wrong to pull on his prosecutorial robes and solemnly announce that he intends to throw the book at the hooligans and agitators. But his actions are classic Starmerism: identify a massive elephant in the room and tentatively introduce a mouse in the hope the pachyderm will run for its life. No doubt a few of the sadder drunks will weep in the dock and cry for their mums. But most will not. We need something tougher.

There is, of course, a problem: our jails are full. And Labour has always been queasy about the claim that prison works. Luckily we have a ready-made solution, one into which we've sunk hundreds of millions and which should be supported by government and opposition.

It is called Rwanda. Last year, the Conservatives put legislation in the works designed to make it easier to send prisoners abroad, and the government in Kigali has built facilities for the incarceration of asylum seekers. That country is well-endowed with expertise in ethnic conflict; almost a million died in the three-month war between Hutus and Tutsi in 1994. There will be thousands of veterans behind bars willing to share a few tricks with EDL members who still harbour an appetite for violence.

So much for the street fighters. What about those who would never dream of fronting up to a cop but

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES GLOSSOP

The idea that last week's riots pose a threat to our democracy is overblown

secretly think, "Maybe they've got a point?" Martin Luther King, three weeks before he was assassinated in 1968, said: "A riot is the language of the unheard." He made no qualification as to the race of the rioters. Dr King's point was less about demonstrators than that politics itself was at fault. In his speech "The Other America" he argued that most of America's leaders had been deaf to many of America's people.

Today I hear the lament "there's no one I can vote for" all too often. In the general election the combined vote for Labour and Conservatives sunk below 60 per cent. The vote for "anybody but you two" was larger than the vote for either Starmer or Sunak, a rare achievement. It's not that the country lacks the appetite for politics, it is more that our system is failing to respond to social changes quickly enough. In Britain, the barriers to entry for new political forces are too high.

I am no advocate for Nigel Farage. I recently put it to the Reform leader that his enabling of the EDL's politics is in some ways worse than the conduct of the out-and-out racists. I hope he is rethinking his dismissive response. In Dante's *Inferno* he would, I imagine, belong in the

> In democracies, even the divisive have the right to be represented

eighth circle of Hell, among the panderers ("exploiting the passions of others to serve their own interests") or sowers of discord ("ready to rip society apart to serve their sectional egotism"). But that's for St Peter to decide.

Nevertheless, it can't be right that it takes fewer than 30,000 votes to put a man with a red rosette in Westminster while Farage's followers needed to assemble the better part of a million voters for each of their five MPs. Inevitably, there are those already agitating for Reform to be suppressed. In today's democracies, even those destined to be eternally whipped by demons have the right to be represented. Failure to acknowledge their voice offers only one certain outcome: that they will bring more people to their dismal, divisive, destructive cause.

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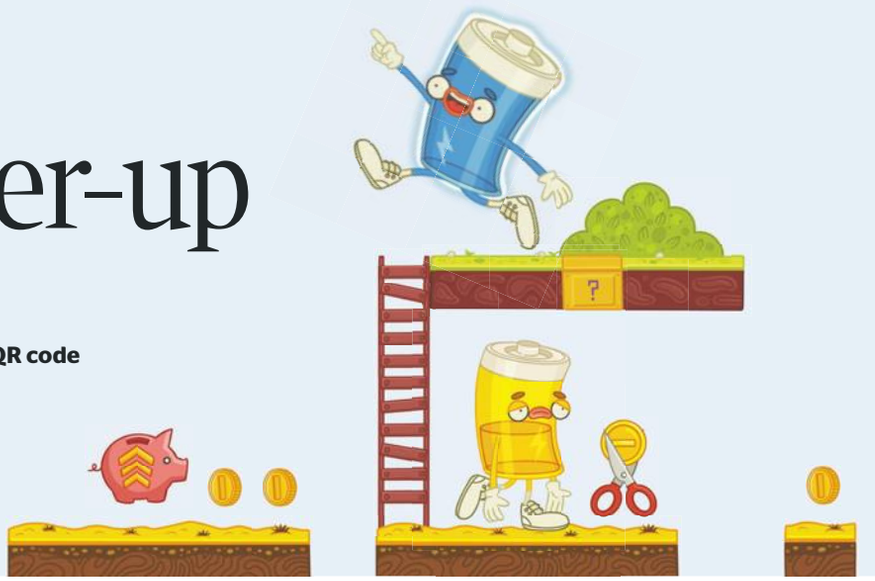


Comment

Time to target tech giants fuelling disorder

We have to punish rioters but the social networks that lit the spark must obey our laws too

Edward Lucas

@EDWARDLUCAS

As the smoke from this month's rioting dies away, the question of who lit the spark becomes even more pressing. One culprit is a social media account on Twitter/X called Europe Invasion. It pumps out racist videos and pictures to 400,000 followers. It was the first to spread the lie that the perpetrator of the Southport stabbings was a "Muslim immigrant" — in a post viewed four million times.

The consequences of what Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, calls "putrid" content were appalling. Yet the outlet faces no serious penalty. A jubilant post crows at reaching more than 700 million views in the past three months.

We are busy jailing thugs and nitwits who believed these and other lies from anonymous news providers. But we have no idea who is behind them. Europe Invasion, like Channel 3 Now — a supposed American website that promoted the lie that the Southport attacker was an asylum seeker — has no street address or any named staff members. (I contacted both outfits: no reply.)

This reflects a deep problem: the abuse of online anonymity. Though a boon for some (such as dissidents in dictatorships), in democracies it is a curse. Bogus websites, email addresses and social media accounts enable cybercrime and the spread of hoaxes, rumours and scare stories. Spreading disinformation from anonymous sources is a well-honed Russian technique, for example in the hacking and leaking of private emails in the 2016 US election. Given the epidemic of Kremlin-led mayhem across Europe, we should be on high alert. An information operation is under way to inflame moods, corrode trust and provoke disorder. This is not mere mischief. It is a national security threat.

As I pointed out in evidence to parliament in 2018, in the real world we take it for granted that we can

> We instinctively treat what we see and read on our screens as real

prove who we are and can check whom we are dealing with. Online, we mostly lack this protection. We have no easy way of checking the authenticity of the websites we visit, the messages we receive or the advertisements we read. We instinctively treat what we see on our screen as real, without realising that someone — be they crooks or spooks — is targeting us.

We can try countering this by policing content. We do this already when it comes to terrorism, child-abuse images and suicide-promotion sites, which we try to confine to online netherworlds. But difficulties abound: of overreach, of definition, and of tracking down people who are determined to be faceless. A better route is to sideline the anonymous outlets by giving more weight to those rooted in the real world. If you register a website, email or social media account, you should have the chance to show that you exist in real life, with credentials such as a government-issued ID or business registration, a street address and a credit rating.

This need not involve handing over all that private information to the tech companies: if you want to drink in a bar, you show your ID at the door but the bar does not photocopy it. This, in tech jargon, is called a "zero-knowledge proof". You can check a credit rating without knowing details of someone's finances. One simple test is the nine-digit Duns number, issued free by Dun & Bradstreet, a business data firm. Lack of that is a bright red flag.

Websites and social media accounts that can display these real-world credentials face consequences if they make mistakes. That means they deserve more trust than those that do not. The new Online Safety Act has a welcome provision to enable users to verify their real-world existence and filter out posts from those who won't.

Some internet users will be savvy enough to assess realness themselves. But others will need help. This will mean rethinking the algorithms that largely determine what lands on our screens. Search engines like Google and social media platforms such as Twitter/X and Facebook should tweak their systems to stop promoting links to websites that fail simple realness tests. If you do click on such sites, you should first get a warning. (Google already does this for websites that may infect your computer with viruses.)

This approach won't harm free speech or privacy; you choose to be real to reap the benefits. But it will require more knowledge. Impersonation-proof emails, for example, are an important step towards internet hygiene. But making that happen involves setting up tools such as DKIM, SPF and DMARC, which use digital signatures and other checks to prove an email's authenticity. That can be daunting. A sample instruction from Gmail: "Go to your domain's DNS management page. Add a TXT record with the following value: 'v=spf1 include:_spf.google.com ~all'." It should be easier.

The underlying problem is the tech companies' business model. X, run by the self-professed "free speech absolutist" Elon Musk, has eviscerated its Twitter-era safeguards and actively promotes incendiary content. Its "blue tick" system, once a badge of realness, is now available for cash (Europe Invasion has one). Facebook, to its credit, has cracked down on bogus accounts but it does little or nothing to stop its users posting bogus information, indeed it encourages it. More clicks mean bigger profits, and sensationalist content is more enticing than boring old facts.

But in the end, the tech giants operate under our laws. We can fine them, ban them or even nationalise them. We have shown the real-world rioters that we are serious. Time to do the same to their online accomplices.

Clive Davis Notebook

The weather is fine and it's a boater's life for me

I fell in love with boating again this summer. It's eight years since I moved on to a narrowboat, moored on the Thames near Windsor. Most of the time it has been great fun, waking up to one of the most serene views anyone could hope for. But last winter was a trial. I've experienced flooding before, but this year it seemed to go on and on.

When the water was up to my waist, I couldn't climb on and off the boat without a step-ladder. If my cat needed to mooch around outside, I had to don waders and give him a lift. Inside the cabin, everything began to feel faintly mouldy. And because the river was out of bounds for months on end due to the fast current, I couldn't empty the waste tank at the marina. After days of wondering when the loo would overflow, I decided to decamp to my partner's flat in central London which is, I have to say, a more convenient base when you're reviewing four or five plays and shows a week.

Recently, though, I had to voyage upstream to a dry dock on the Kennet & Avon Canal to have the hull recoated, a job I'd been putting off for years. It was only eight days there and back but, as I hardly ever have time to go exploring, I treated it as a holiday. My other half and a couple of friends came along to help. Time moves at such a different pace on the water: floating through an endless green tunnel of trees and shrubs, eight days felt like a month. We may have been a short drive from Reading but with the canal to ourselves most of the time (the eastern end seems to attract a lot less traffic) we could convince ourselves we were drifting along in a scene from *Deliverance*, sans hillbillies.

Even getting stuck in an ancient, malfunctioning lock late one evening couldn't sour the mood. By the time I got back to base, I could start to think of myself as a boater again.

Disco infernal

What's the one thing that irks me about river life? There's a trend for people to drift by in gin palaces with *Now That's What I Call Music, Volume 635* turned up to maximum volume. I'm not sure why, but things seem to be worse since lockdown. A couple of weeks ago a mobile disco was pumping away from a mooring 100 yards away. When I went to ask them to turn it down, I expected a face-off with surly teenagers. In fact, it was a couple in their early sixties bobbing around in a dinghy in the middle of the river while the music poured from their cruiser. So much for the older generation.

Star-gazing

By the time you read this the Olympics will be over and, like many, I'll be suffering withdrawal symptoms. I'm so glad we bought tickets for the athletics. It was only a morning of qualifying sessions and I'd assumed we'd need binoculars to see anything but it turned out we were close enough to hear the pole vault coaches as they leant over the barrier to give advice. That night, we wandered to the Tuileries to look at the cauldron balloon. It was impressive enough on television but close up it had the aura of an alien spaceship. The crowd was hushed and respectful. It was as though we'd become a neolithic tribe gazing at a messenger from the gods.

Real insights into Gaza

I'm tempted to post a trigger warning at this point: I'm about to discuss the Israel-Palestine conflict. Am I alone in being frustrated with TV coverage of Gaza going round in blood-soaked circles without producing much in the way of insight? I ask that regardless of which side you favour. That's why I'm so glad I've discovered the podcast *Call Me Back*, which has told me more about the way Israeli society functions than 1,000 news bulletins. And, from the Arab side, there's *Unapologetic: The Third Narrative*, hosted by two Palestinian-Israeli peace activists. We're constantly reminded that the internet is a sewer (yes, I'm looking at you, Elon Musk) but it's good to be reminded that it still has its sane corners.

@CLIVEDAVIS

THUNDERER

Prizes can solve our big challenges

Martin Rees and Tris Dyson

For millennia, sailors calculated their latitude by the sun and stars; longitude was guesswork. Between 1550 and 1650, one in five ships were lost between Portugal and India. By the 1700s, the longitude issue was one of the biggest economic challenges facing Britain.

A prize worth millions in today's money was offered to anyone who solved the problem. A self-taught Yorkshire clockmaker, John Harrison, won with his revolutionary "chronometer" that kept time at sea. This made it possible to calculate longitude, saving lives, ships and securing Britain's economic success.

We revived the Longitude Prize 300 years later to tackle the greatest challenges we face today. In June, after a ten-year competition, we awarded £8 million to a test to cut diagnosis of bacterial infections from three days to 45 minutes and slow the spread of superbugs that kill almost two million a year. In October, the Longitude Prize on Dementia will name five finalists developing AI tools to help people remain independent after a diagnosis.

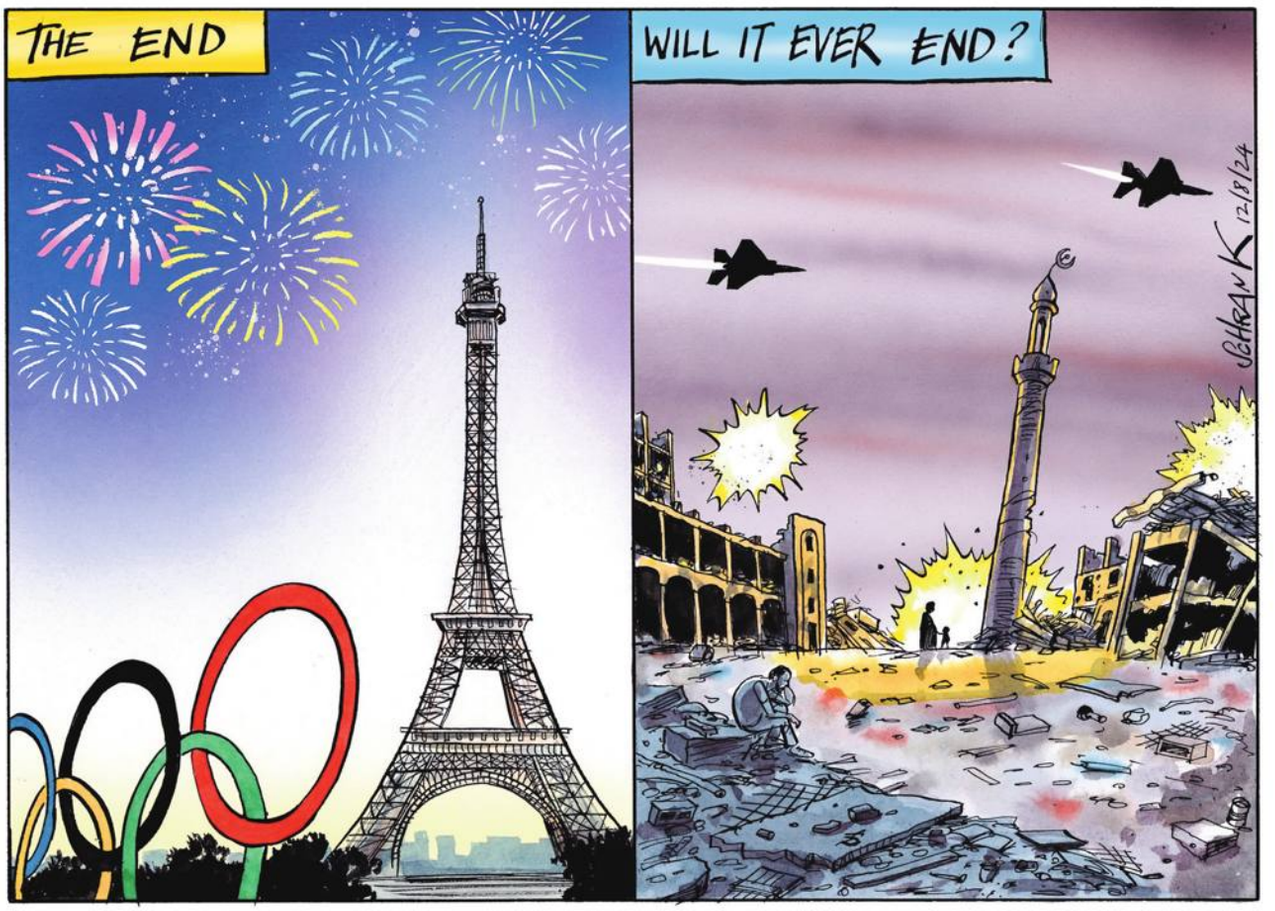
Traditional prizes, like the Nobels, recognise discoveries that have already happened. Challenge prizes, like the Longitude prizes, incentivise innovators to solve a problem where solutions do not exist. They attract the brightest minds and support them with seed funding and mentoring to develop multiple approaches to a problem. Since they only pay out when a solution is proven to work, they are an excellent way to fund unknown and untested innovators who often get overlooked.

This "crowding in" of talent tends to generate greater investment into a problem area than the prize itself. The teams competing in the $10 million Ansari X Prize collectively invested $100 million in pursuit of the award. While one team won (becoming Virgin Galactic), the legacy two decades later is that the US is the global leader in private space flight.

Prizes can incentivise the breakthroughs we need the most. AI can transform how we discover new medicines for diseases like MND where treatments are limited. To construct solar farms in space and transmit energy to Earth, we will need close-proximity drones to assemble them. A third of us live with chronic pain: new technologies could predict and mitigate flare-ups as an alternative to medication.

When tough decisions are being made about how government funds innovation, it should look to the US and Canada where departments use prizes to great effect. If we want lasting solutions to the challenges we face, we need the right incentives to attract the most creative problem solvers.

Lord Rees is astronomer royal and chair of the Longitude Committee; Tris Dyson is managing director of Challenge Works



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Craving the physical is natural in a digital world

Adoration of saintly relics seems medieval to many but some objects have a magical power to connect us to the past

Libby Purves

@LIB_THINKS

Hundreds gathered last week to revere a sliver of human flesh from around the heart of the late Carlo Acutis. The teenager is canonised as the first saint of the millennium, credited with two miracles, and crowds came to the National Catholic Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham to pray beside the reliquary. Monsignor Anthony Figueiredo, from Assisi, observed that since England is "one of the most secularised nations on earth" he hoped that this would help us to return to Jesus.

At first the whole business provoked a shudder, even from us long-drifted cradle-Catholics with an affection for the Church's best, who had loved the gentle wisdom of the Pope days earlier telling us to read novels in "moments of weariness, anger, disappointment or failure, when prayer itself does not help". With due respect for the devout at Walsingham, it is easy to cringe at the Vatican's clinging to an archaic holy-bones weirdness that enshrines fragments of dead people praised not only for their virtue but for supposedly interceding in heaven.

Why, we groan, has Catholicism not outgrown this? It's embarrassing: it takes us back to the 12th century when Hugh, the Bishop of Lincoln, (later a saint himself), bit off splinters from an arm bone ascribed to St Mary Magdalene.

Or, more recently, to General Franco in the 1930s, who kept the severed hand of St Teresa of Avila on his bedside table.

Indeed my own mother had a tiny fragment of "the true Cross": since Empress Helena in the 4th century, millions have claimed that dignity. Helena's son, the emperor Constantine I, made a bit for his horse out of a nail that was reputed to have come from the Crucifixion.

> As we saw last week, chancers have always exploited the ignorant

Even half a century ago the educated nuns in my convent school were already apologetically raising their eyebrows at this medievalism, muttering only that one must respect the honest prayers of those who gather around reliquaries or process in Bruges to celebrate the "holy blood" thought to liquefy every Friday. It felt like sweet old history, even in that time of carbon paper and Gestetner printers.

So 50 years on to have the kindly and lovable Carlo declared as Patron of the Internet suggests either extreme tenacity or, dare I say it, a bit of a backslide. Scepticism feels bracing, a modern version of the clean-up Cromwellism that in the 1530s confiscated a "boxe of bees" reputed to have stung Eve for taking the apple. There have always been chancers exploiting the ignorant: we should know that pretty well after the past week.

As the 20th century moved to its end, I made a radio programme about all this. It was enlightening to learn that the late Graham Leonard, the Bishop of London, had a fragment of St Philip Neri's knee bone in his pocket (he later became a Catholic).

There was brief amusement in being sternly told by a senior Methodist that they deplored this Papist nonsense and then being able to ask why, in that case, was there a pair of John Wesley's shoes on display? Yet, in that moment, I looked at the worn 18th-century footwear and thought of the miles that good man walked across our country, defying the establishment, singing, defending women's preaching and the abolition of slavery. My heart softened: that old leather meant something. Relics do too. My wincing scepticism was finally shaken by Archbishop Derek Worlock who, with the Anglican bishop David Sheppard, worked in partnership for Liverpool's poorest in the 1980s. A profoundly practical philanthropist, Worlock nonetheless spoke of contemplating a physical scrap in a reliquary and finding inspiration for his own struggles simply because: "In that body, a good man lived and worked and prayed."

> Ordinary people want a tangible link, to share atoms with greatness

It is easy to shudder at the global tour being made of the fragment of Carlo Acutis's heart (and indeed the display of his body, in jeans and trainers). But maybe our age of 3D printing and virtual reality feeds a revived hunger for solidity. Objects can speak deeply to the universal consolation of feeling part of long humanity, accepting our smallness, finding protection in knowing how gallantly others won or lost. Lockets of a beloved's hair are more than souvenirs. I happily keep two roof tiles from a childhood house and my dad's wooden bottle opener on the kitchen dresser. But it goes beyond the personal. The royal crown, the mace without which parliament is powerless, the Stone of Scone and Magna Carta are part of national identity. Signed letters, however banal, fetch immense prices: an unimportant scrawl by Clement Attlee is on eBay right now for £300. A suit worn by Margaret Thatcher raised £25,000, Diana Spencer's quite dull car £650,000, a box of Stephen Sondheim's pencils (which he hadn't even opened) £5,000. We occasionally visit a house where Tony Hancock's hat rests under a glass dome, and I once laid my hand respectfully on Samuel Johnson's desk, a Blarney-Stone superstition hoping for his robust eloquence.

See? There is no sense in any of this, yet it's not only speculators who buy relics but ordinary people wanting a tangible link, some vague sharing of atoms with greatness. And what is more intimate than a physical body? Who are any of us to shudder at devout reverence?

As for the values of the digital age, only 38 years passed between Steve Wozniak cobbling up a prototype Apple computer in Steve Jobs's garage and the thing fetching $905,000 at Bonhams. Maybe the cult of relics is not dying but accelerating. Some loyalist, somewhere, may be hoarding Boris Johnson's old running shorts; after all, Harold Wilson's pipe sold in 2019, though admittedly only for £50.

Letters to the Editor

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Action on ME

Sir, The coroner's conclusions from the inquest last week on the tragic death from ME of Maeve Boothby O'Neill (news, Aug 10), have shone a light on the desperation and neglect of so many with this awful disease.

I agree with Sean O'Neill's four key areas where urgent improvements are needed: education, specialist care, research and women' health. But there is a fifth area that could make a difference and, most importantly, turn these initiatives into reality.

I took over Forward-ME as chair from its founder, the Countess of Mar, with the primary goal of uniting the three main charities, Action for ME, ME Association and ME Research UK. While each is well meaning, individually they are not sufficiently effective with a pitifully low combined income of less than £5 million. Sadly, I was unable to persuade them to merge and become a fighting force so, frustrated, I stepped down.

Thanks to the O'Neill family and their brave daughter, awareness is heightened. Now is the time to build on this and work together so words can, finally, become actions.

Andrew B Morris
London NW3

Culinary diplomacy

Sir, Ben Macintyre provides a mouth-watering account of French culinary diplomacy (comment, Aug 10).

We in Britain supposedly never quite match the French in the kitchen. Yet consider the banquet at the Brighton Pavilion in 1817 hosted by the Prince Regent for his Russian guests to celebrate the end of the Napoleonic wars. The 40 entrées included tarts of thrushes, terrines of lark, custard rissoles, the head of a sturgeon in champagne, Luxembourg ducklings, sole in aspic, boar, pheasant and quail. For dessert there was a model of the Royal Pavilion fashioned in pastry and marzipan. Formidable, n'est pas?

Robin Laurance
Oxford

Corrections and clarifications

● An obituary of Frederick Crews contained errors (Aug 7). Sigmund Freud altered his theories in 1897, not 1987; and Crews alleged that Freud accepted only American clients after the First World War, not the Second World War.

● The photograph in our Birthdays Tomorrow column on Saturday (Aug 10) showed not Joe Jackson the musician as we said, but the father of Michael Jackson. We apologise for the mistake.

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Time for the Olympic Games to reach higher

Sir, A competitor in the decathlon or heptathlon (sport, Aug 10) participates respectively in ten or seven quite separate events, with the goal to win just one Olympic medal, while swimmers, track cyclists, as well as competitors in some other sports including equestrian, diving, shooting and gymnastics events can win two or more medals in their one sport. They do so by competing in very similar variations of the same sport, or in identical events as part of a team and as an individual.

Is it time for Olympic organiers to restrict the number of events within a single sport for which an individual can be entered? Even if the number of events in a sport is to remain the same, this restriction would increase the opportunities in these sports for other competitors to represent their country at least once every four years.

David Campbell
Chieveley, Berks

Sir, Having been bombarded for the past two weeks with an amazing number of "sports", is it perhaps time for the Olympics to revert to its core values? Do we really need breakdancing and trampoline?

Maybe all the artistic events that require judging, such as rhythmic gymnastics, synchronised swimming and freestyle BMX, deserve their own jamboree. Golf, tennis and football already have higher profile events and don't need the Olympics. Hopefully Los Angeles 2028 will get back to the original values — endurance, effort, athleticism and just taking part, rather than something that appeals to TV advertising revenue.

Andrew Kenyon
Wimborne, Dorset

Sir, The controversy surrounding two boxers competing at the Paris Olympics is well documented. Questions concerning the gender of Lin Yu-ting and Imane Khelif (sport, Aug 10) are rife, but I'm puzzled that no comment has been made about the concept of boxing itself, where the object of the exercise is to punch your opponent into submission, causing as much damage as possible, ideally to knock your opponent out. With all the safeguarding measures being introduced into contact sports such as rugby and football, it seems odd that boxing, with its inevitable risks to health, long term and short term, appears to continue unaffected.

Judy Winter
Cleeve Prior, Worcs

Sir, I have immensely enjoyed the Olympics. All the sports have been enthralling but my special love is the athletics where, unfortunately, the superb performances from Team GB were spoilt by the incessant chatter of the BBC pundit panel. All the field events were basically ignored as the BBC made us sit listening to Gabby Logan, Denise Lewis, Jessica Ennis-Hill, Paula Ratcliffe and Michael Johnson overanalyse and repeat themselves.

Anthony Latter
London NW3

Sir, It might not be a sport if you can smoke while doing it (letters, Aug 9-10), but it is the Olympic Games, not the Olympic Sports.

Alan W Thomas
Llwyngwril, Gwynedd

Sentencing rioters

Sir, The prime minister is to be congratulated on his two-pronged attack on the rioters — a combination of robust policing and rapid and firm justice (News, Aug 10). He has followed his own policies of 2011 but also earlier policies used in Glasgow. In the 1920s and 1930s there was extensive gang warfare in Glasgow characterised by razor slashings — giving the notorious "Glasgow smile". In 1931 Percy Sillitoe, later Sir Percy, was appointed chief constable after a successful career in Sheffield where he took on the gangs. His policy was to recruit large, strong men from the Highlands to form a force of 1,500.

With robust policing the level of violence was markedly reduced and eventually disappeared with the onset of the Second World War. After the war the razor-slashing epidemic recommenced. On this occasion Lord Carmont was sent from Edinburgh in 1952 to preside over the bench in Glasgow. In his first week there he handed out several ten-year prison sentences to gang members and the police reported that the following weekend they did not have a single slashing.

Robert Smith
Berwick-upon-Tweed

Sir, Our prisons are at capacity and sadly recent events have increased the demand for places. Perhaps the government could partially alleviate the pressure by sending convicted rioters to the facilities it has paid for in Rwanda. This would deliver some value for the £700 million of taxpayers' money spent on the project and allow convicts the educational benefits of experiencing life in a safe, riot-free country.

Charles Anderson
Chittlehampton, Devon

Funding research

Sir, It was great to hear our new science secretary declare Britain is "open for business" in technology and innovation and that "the war on universities has ended" (news, Aug 7).

UK science will be encouraged by his ambition and he is right to emphasise the power of private investment in creating game-changing new technologies. However, we must not forget the whole science ecosystem, which plays a vital role in producing technological breakthroughs — particularly the sometimes neglected early-stage "discovery" research. This kind of research, led by scientists in universities, is by its nature deeply uncertain. It requires many years of work, patient investment and scientific skill before a small number of initiatives emerge as the next Chat GPT, quantum computer or fusion energy breakthrough.

Businesses often will not back such uncertain research without support, and this is where public funding and public facilities must play their part. UK physics departments are world leading, producing cutting-edge research that could see the next global leap forward. But they must have higher levels of long-term, flexible R&D funding if we are to achieve this potential.

Tom Grinyer
Chief executive, Institute of Physics

Treasury urinal

Sir, Perhaps Rachel Reeves should do as the Quilters' Guild did in 1999 when confronted with urinals at the Indoor Cricket School at Lord's where we held an exhibition ("Covering up chancellor's private urinal would cost Reeves £8,000", News, August 10). We disguised the urinals by decorating them with fresh flowers, to much amusement for the ladies using the gents' facilities.

Joy Sheppard
Prestbury, Cheshire

MORE COMFORT ON THE TUBE

FROM THE TIMES AUGUST 12, 1924

A new type of car is shortly to be introduced on the District Railway, embodying a number of improvements intended both to increase the comfort of passengers and to facilitate freedom of movement.

The new car is roomier than those at present in use and has more seats, and in particular more cross seats. It is possible to seat as many as 24 passengers in this way. Some space has been saved by a rearrangement of the double doors. In the existing cars there are three pairs of such doors. In the new cars there will be only two pairs, but they will be of somewhat greater width, so as to allow of the passage of a fuller volume of people.

The seating has been so planned in relation to these doors as to give the largest fairway, so to speak, where the pressure is likely to be greatest. The doors have a new kind of safety catch and an indicator showing whether they are locked or unlocked. The glass screens with which the existing cars are fitted have been done away with, and by a clerestory feature in the structure of the roof, better arrangements are made for ventilation.

There is also better lighting. The number of lamps is increased from 25 to 30, and they are more evenly distributed and arranged to produce a subdued instead of a glaring effect. It is hoped that passengers will find they have improved conditions for reading.

The "straphanger" has not been forgotten. He will no longer swing to and fro by a flexible leather loop which tightens uncomfortably about the hand in proportion to the strain put upon it. In its place he will find a suspended handle made of aluminium, with no tendency to retaliation however tightly he grips it. The metal is not bare, but is coated with a black composition, which is pleasant to the touch. This can be washed, so it also has a hygienic advantage over the greasy strap.

The seats in the new cars are more comfortable than those in the old cars. They are upholstered in moquette, and buffalo hide arm-rests are fitted to them.

Fifty cars of the new type are being constructed by the Gloucester Carriage and Wagon Company, and they will be brought into use weekly as they are delivered.

THETIMES.COM/ARCHIVE

Local journalism

Sir, Owen Meredith (Thunderer, Aug 9) is correct in stressing the importance of local journalism in fighting disinformation. "Trained journalists," he writes, "are on the ground witnessing first hand the deeply disturbing events."

The truth is that trained journalists are thin on the ground with the decline of print and its replacement in the regions by online outlets. The newsroom of the paper where I worked has a large screen displaying the stories online and the number of hits they are achieving. The aim of the "journalists" is to produce stories that move up the popularity table and a story about the opening of a new bar is likely to move higher than one on a planning committee meeting.

Readers are getting what they like to read rather than what a thinking journalist feels they need to know, so local politicians and authorities go about their business without being held to account by local media. This is the threat to local democracy.

Dick Godfrey
Newcastle upon Tyne

School testing

Sir, Michael Gove writes that "continuous assessment takes away the incentive to fix learning into long-term memory via revision" (Saturday Review, Aug 10) When I taught in the German state system all testing was by monthly class tests. They were continuous assessment checks on what had just been taught, but crucially what had just been taught built on what had been taught before. Learning and testing were in step and cumulative — revising for one class test automatically meant revising all the work from earlier class tests.

By getting children used to regular testing, this system removes the biggest unfairness of one-off exams, which Gove does not mention: one-off exams often favour those with the strongest nerves and the best exam technique, not necessarily the brightest kids.

Michael Dean
Colchester, Essex

The personal touch

Sir, Like Janice Turner (comment, Aug 8) I once met an idol. In 2008 I attended Sotheby's for the preview of an auction dedicated to Damien Hirst artworks. Upon arrival I noticed Hirst deep in conversation with a group of the Sotheby's bosses. I went to reception and purchased an auction catalogue before saying to Hirst: "I've just spent £60 on this catalogue could you please quickly sign it for me?"

To my surprise he sat on the floor in the gallery for five to ten minutes sketching sharks, butterflies and skulls throughout my catalogue while the Sotheby's management looked on in silence waiting for his attention. I still have the catalogue and it always reminds me of Hirst's kind nature.

Ben Band
Whittlesey, Cambs

Emotional ties

Sir, Having struggled through many sweltering days of teaching in formal attire (letters, Aug 8 & 10) during a recent heatwave, male members of staff were informed in our morning briefing that they need no longer wear ties. "My God," came a disgruntled voice from behind the headmistress. "The dam has burst."

Gilly Mayes
Connah's Quay, Flintshire

Daily Universal Register

International: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) releases quarterly GDP per capita and economic wellbeing report.

Nature notes

Field madder is a low-growing, modest plant of field margins and waste ground, with small pale pink or lilac flowers, each with four tiny petals. It is described as a trailing plant but on level ground it forms mats that spread out from a central point. Its cousin, common madder, grows to 1.5m and is also known as dyer's madder; its roots are red and produce a scarlet dye called rose madder or Turkey red. Once widely cultivated, it fell out of use after red dye was synthesised in the 19th century. Wild madder is a tough and shiny evergreen climber, with tiny hooks on its stems and leaves. It does particularly well in coastal areas. MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today

Mark Knopfler, *pictured*, singer-songwriter, Dire Straits, *Walk of Life* (1985), 75; **Casey Affleck**, actor, *Manchester by the Sea* (2016), 49; **Michael Brunson**, broadcaster, political editor, ITN (1986-2000), 84; **Cara Delevingne**, model and actress, *Carnival Row* (2019-23), 32; **Arthur Edwards**, royal photographer for The Sun (since 1977), 84; **Tobias Ellwood**, Conservative MP for Bournemouth East (2005-May 2024), chairman, Commons defence select committee (2020-23), defence people and veterans minister (2017-19), 58; **Sir Bradley Fried**, financier, chairman, Preqin, Goldman Sachs International and Goldman Sachs International Bank (2023-Mar 2024), 59; **Chris Green**, Conservative MP for Bolton West (2015-May 2024), parliamentary private secretary to the Department for Education (2019-20), 51; **George Hamilton**, actor, *The Godfather: Part III* (1990), 85; **François Hollande**, president of France (2012-17), 70; **Sam J Jones**, actor, *Flash Gordon* (1980), 70; **Prof Sir David King**, founder and chairman (2019-23), Centre for Climate Repair, University of Cambridge, UK special representative on climate change (2013-17), UK government's chief scientific adviser (2000-07), 85; **David Lee**, jazz pianist and composer, arranger for stars including Norman Wisdom and Judy Garland, 98; **Anthony Mangnall**, Conservative MP for Totnes (2019-May 2024), 35; **Sir Robin Nicholson**, metallurgist, chief scientific adviser, Cabinet Office (1981-85), 90; **Amanda Redman**, actress, *New Tricks* (2003-13), 67; **Pete Sampras**, tennis player, seven-time Wimbledon men's singles champion, 53; **Joe Schmidt**, rugby union coach, head coach of Ireland (2013-19), 59; **George Soros**, founder (1973), Soros Fund Management, 94; **Tanita Tikaram**, singer-songwriter, *Twist in My Sobriety* (1988), 55; **Sir Graham Wylie**, co-founder of Sage software group and founder of Technology Services Group, 65.

On this day

In 2000 the Russian submarine Kursk sank in the Barents Sea, leading to the deaths of the 118 crew. Moscow declined rescue offers from the UK and Norway for five days; 23 sailors had survived on-board explosions.

The last word

"*The essential thing is not to have won but to have fought well.*" Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the International Olympic Committee (1908)

Reality Check

Ministers are right to seek growth through housebuilding. Yet an uncompromising stance on net zero may act as a brake on their economic ambition

The government says growth is its central mission for Britain. Sir Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves, the chancellor, know that they cannot simply tax and spend their way to better public services. The money has to come from somewhere. Ministers are now taking their first welcome steps towards planning reforms to advance that growth agenda. Yet they have difficult choices ahead on how to balance their economic strategy with their environmental commitments. Sooner or later they will need to confront some trade-offs between the two.

The Times reports today that the government is working on plans to give councils new powers to buy green-belt land. If landowners refuse to sell in areas of the country where there is greatest need, they could find their land bought at a "benchmark" price that is lower than the market value of similar sites off the green belt. Ministers hope that these new powers will help them to fulfil their pledge to build 1.5 million new homes across the country in five years.

There is no doubt that gaps in housing supply are holding back Britain's productivity. Workers find it hard to move, because they cannot find an affordable home where they can find a job offer. Even if they do, rents and mortgage payments are exorbitant, diverting their cash away from productive consumption. Too often, development is gummed up with legal wrangling and local objections. Genuine environmental or aesthetic concerns deserve to be taken seriously but this government, less dependent on rural voters than its predecessor, is well positioned to rebuff confected objections that disguise mere hostility to newcomers.

Yet Labour ministers are also vociferous proponents of a speedy transition to "net zero" greenhouse gas emissions. Housebuilding is far from an easy win as far as that target is concerned, not least because green-belt land tends to be poorly connected to transport infrastructure. Residents of these areas are, therefore, less likely to live within walking distance of the nearest train station than city dwellers, and are particularly dependent on car transport. It will not have escaped ministers' notice that cars are significant emitters. In 2022, transport accounted for 28 per cent of the UK's net greenhouse gas emissions.

That is only one example of a trade-off that will become increasingly pressing for this government, whose second "mission" in government is "accelerating to net zero", even promising a zero-carbon electricity system by 2030. The truth is that this country is increasingly isolated in its insistence that these environmental targets can be achieved without economic pain. In New Zealand, a new centre-right government has reversed a number of environmental policies to stimulate its economy. The United States, for all its climate advocacy, is a major oil producer that has forged ahead with fracking during the Biden presidency. Last year even Emmanuel Macron and Alexander De Croo, the French and Belgian leaders, called for a pause on new European green initiatives amid concerns of a consumer backlash to the costs of the transition.

In Britain too there is a need for more cool-headed, pragmatic assessment of how the government's plans for growth fit in with its accelerated net zero timetable. The committee on climate change has estimated that the cost of reaching net zero by 2050 is about £1.4 trillion. There will be economic benefits too but much later: official projections show most of the investment in the 2020s and 2030s, with savings arriving in the 2040s. There is no one to pay for all this except consumers, taxpayers and businesses. Labour's ambition of "green prosperity" is laudable: but uttering those words in the same breath cannot erase the tension between them.

Scrummage in Catalonia

The exiled Catalan leader's appearance has spelt turmoil for the Spanish premier

The fiery speech of the exiled Catalan leader at a rally in Barcelona last week and his subsequent disappearance, despite a police manhunt, has landed the most effective political blow possible on Pedro Sánchez, the Spanish prime minister: it has made him a public laughing stock. How was it possible that Carles Puigdemont, a former separatist president of the Catalan government who staged an illegal independence referendum in 2017 and fled to Belgium with an arrest warrant on his head, was able to return unexpectedly, openly address thousands of supporters and then vanish?

The answers are simple: his supporters smuggled him back into the country, protected him on stage, and then bundled him into a getaway car parked nearby in a bay for the disabled. The escape was arranged by two friendly policemen, and within 24 hours the Catalan Scarlet Pimpernel was back in Waterloo, his exiled Brussels home. So much for the political authority of Mr Sánchez, who had been savouring his triumph in getting his own Socialist party leader elected in Catalonia — the first time in 20 years that the province has had a leader who did not favour independence.

Not only does Mr Sánchez now have questions to answer over police incompetence; he has to explain to the right-wing Junts party in Catalonia how he can continue to function in government with its support. He returned to power after an indecisive election in July 2023, in which the opposition Conservatives won more seats but were unable to form a stable coalition. After months of negotiations, Mr Sánchez won the seven crucial votes of the Catalan separatists, to the fury of his political rivals and many Spaniards outraged by the demands for independence.

His manoeuvring in getting an anti-independence leader elected in Catalonia regional elections in May will delight local business, eager to lure back big companies that pulled out of the province after the independence referendum. But it angered Mr Puigdemont's supporters, who hoped they would be allowed to join the regional government. Instead the Socialists, lacking enough votes, made a deal with the rival left-wing Catalonian party. Junts is already upset that the amnesty promised to those who staged the referendum does not also extend to Mr Puigdemont himself. He is still wanted for the misuse of funds.

The question now is whether Mr Sánchez can continue in government. Without Junts's support, he cannot pass any laws. His standing has already been shaken by a row over his wife's meeting with a businessman subsequently awarded government contracts. Despite denials, it now emerges that Mr Sánchez was present at two of those meetings. In April he staged a melodramatic five-day withdrawal from work, suggesting he might resign over what he saw as unfair attacks on his wife. In a much-mocked anticlimax he then carried on, but refused to testify at the criminal investigation.

The opposition Popular Party is piling on the pressure. Its leader, Alberto Feijóo, called the failure to detain Mr Puigdemont an "unbearable humiliation". It is calling for fresh elections, clearly hoping that, even without the support of the far-right Vox party, it can win a majority and claim what it saw as its right to government in 2023. Another election could be just as indecisive. Instability is hurting investment in Spain. The political future looks rocky.

Fait Accompli

The Olympic Games have lifted spirits on both sides of the English Channel

At the start of the Olympics, there was a certain gloom in the Parisian air. France was emerging from a bitterly divisive election that had left the country in political gridlock. The public were apathetic at best about the Games. The opening ceremony was, in truth, a damp squib, amid the downpour of 15 days' worth of rain in one evening.

How they turned it around. French morale got a much-needed boost from a strong performance in the medal table and, as athletes from around the world have tested the limits of human endeavour yet further, a new *esprit de corps* has taken hold in France and beyond. A creditable performance from Team GB has, no doubt, helped buoy spirits on this side of the Channel too.

Admittedly, Britain's athletes did not manage as many gold medals as in Tokyo (or Rio, London or Beijing), and there is a mild pang of disappointment in descending to seventh on the medal table, which is ordered by golds, on the final day of the Games. Yet it is no small achievement for a country of Great Britain's size to win 65 medals overall. Keely Hodgkinson's triumph in the 800m, the women cyclists' sprint to a world-record victory in the velodrome and a stellar haul for Team GB's divers and rowers were particular highlights. Andy Murray may not have won a medal, but his long adieu — saving seemingly endless match points before he and partner Dan Evans were finally bested by the Americans in a quarter-final match — was also a typically captivating end to his professional career.

It is all a far cry from the miserable display at Atlanta in 1996, from which Team GB returned with a solitary gold. The radical improvement since then is thanks to substantial National Lottery funding. Those backers, along with the athletes and the Parisian hosts, are due a sincere *merci beaucoup*, and *félicitations*.

World

Nato's Baltic weak spot faces choice to take up arms

The demilitarised Aland Islands may be a gap in Europe's shield against Russia, **George Grylls** writes from Mariehamn

The MP for the Aland Islands, a Swedish-speaking archipelago in the Baltic Sea, makes a better case than most when, overlooking a harbour of sailing boats, he claims to represent the most beautiful constituency in the world.

"You can finish work and ten minutes later you're down here at the docks, taking out a small boat to have a picnic on an empty island," Mats Lofstrom said, describing the bliss of the Scandinavian summer.

Nearly 7,000 islands compose this autonomous region of Finland. Most are uninhabited skerries, small outcrops of red granite visited only by seals and birds. The islanders' unhurried existence has been complicated, however, by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Since 1856 the islands have been demilitarised, a status that exempts residents from national service and prevents Finland maintaining a garrison on one of the most strategic parts of its coastline.

The islands, which control access to the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia, represent a peculiar vulnerability in the Baltic, which has otherwise been nicknamed the "Nato lake" after Finland and Sweden's accession to the defensive alliance last year.

"Finland is the lock in the defence of northern Europe and the islands are the back door to Finland's defences," said Pekka Toveri, a Finnish MEP for the governing National Coalition Party and a former major general in the Finnish Defence Forces. "The demilitarised status only benefits Russia. Why would we do anything that benefits Russia in the current day and time?"

Finland maintained conscription after the end of the Cold War and has the largest wartime army in Europe, promising a prickly reception for any Russian soldier that decides to march on Helsinki from St Petersburg, something the Red Army learnt to its cost during the Winter War of 1939-40.

But military figures have pointed out that despite the impressive fortifications along its 830-mile land border, Finland imports 95 per cent of its goods by sea and is almost totally reliant on the straits surrounding the islands to remain connected to the world.

The capital of the Aland Islands, Mariehamn, a town of red clapboard houses, is named after a 19th-century tsarina. In the islands' parliament, a painting reminds visitors that the archipelago was ravaged by Peter the Great during a succession of wars fought with Sweden that ultimately resulted in Russian annexation in 1809. "Drunk and scary," Jorgen Pettersson, Speaker of the parliament, said of the pillaging figures. "The Russians wanted to conquer everything. Aland was literally a battlefield at the time."

The archipelago's neutral and demilitarised status was first agreed in a treaty signed after the Crimean War, when an Anglo-French expeditionary force scuppered Russian attempts to build a huge fortress on the Aland Islands, resulting in the award of the first Victoria Cross to Charles Davis Lucas, a sailor who threw a live shell overboard.

Subsequently reaffirmed by the League of Nations in 1921 and then by a Finnish-Soviet treaty marking the end of the Winter War, Russia still maintains a consulate in Mariehamn to monitor the islands' neutrality.

Yuri Jalava and Ilja Iljin, from Finland's coastal guard, patrol the calm waters

The consulate sits on a square recently renamed Ukrainiaplatsen where islanders gather at 5pm every day to demonstrate against the war. According to popular myth the Russian consul, a reclusive presence in the community, watches the protests on CCTV. "If the war in Ukraine goes wrong, maybe Russia will go further," said Harriet Tuominen, 79, carrying a sunflower placard. "You can't trust them."

Yet despite the hostility to Russia and support for Finland's membership of Nato, most of the 30,000 islands' population remains committed to neutrality and demilitarisation, polling suggests. "We are safer with the demilitarisation. Attacking Aland would be like attacking a hospital," says Mosse Wallen, 73, the organiser of the anti-war protests.

On the Finnish-speaking mainland, public opinion appears to differ: 60 per cent support remilitarisation there, according to a poll in 2022. Those in favour compare the situation to Gotland, a strategic island that Sweden decided to remilitarise after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, deploying air defences and re-establishing a mechanised battalion armed with CV90 armoured vehicles and Leopard 2 tanks.

For now, it is the Finnish coastal guard and not the navy that is responsible for patrolling the brackish waters around Aland. On deck a barbecue has been set up for the summer and the coastguards spend their days checking boat licences and controlling harbour speeds when not watching the archipelago's wildlife. "It's quite calm, as you can see," Ilja Iljin, 42, deputy commander of the West Finland district, said pointing out a sea eagle.

The overt threat from Russia appears limited. But the Finnish coastal guard is more concerned by the threat of hybrid war. Out at sea a shadow fleet of ageing Russian tankers is exporting oil through the Baltic, threatening the pristine waters with potential spills.

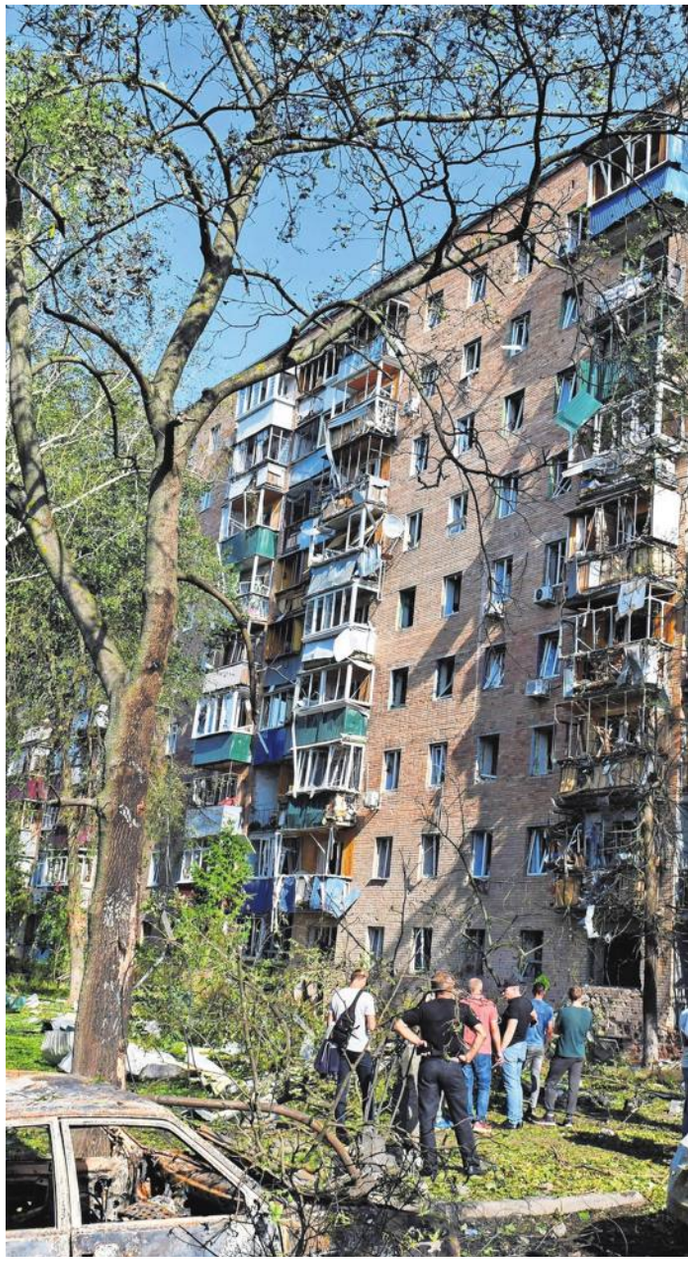
After recent attacks on the Nordstream and Baltic connector pipelines, the submarine cables that supply Finland with electricity and internet via Aland also appear vulnerable. Within the archipelago, the shallow waters are only 15m in depth in places. "You basically need civilian scuba kit to reach them," Yuri Jalava, 53, the border guard's deputy station chief, said.

But Finland, which overturned almost 80 years of non-alignment by joining Nato, does not appear in a rush to remilitarise the islands. Last year the foreign ministry commissioned a report that made no recommendation for any change. "It is obviously not just a Finnish question because the neutrality and demilitarisation are enshrined in international treaties and international laws," said Elina Valtonen, 42, the foreign minister, who chose the islands for her summer holiday.

"Sure there are vulnerabilities. But the Finnish Defence Forces have been taking those into account for decades. Now those are being taken into account in the defence planning of Nato. I don't foresee any change to the status. If there were a change, it would need to obviously be agreed with our friends and partners as well."

The same treaties that require demilitarisation also oblige Finland to defend the islands should they come under attack and while the Finnish Defence Forces cannot train on the archipelago, military experts note the frequent wargaming in coastal areas that bear a remarkable resemblance to the islands.

A Russian attack on the Aland Islands would be unlikely to end well, according to Jyri Lavikainen, a research fellow at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. "We'd be happy to help them commit suicide," he said.



Father and son die in Kyiv

Ukraine

Tom Ball Kyiv

A man and his four-year-old son were killed in a missile strike on Kyiv in what officials fear might only be the beginning of Russian retaliation to Ukraine's assault on its territory.

The bodies of the boy and his father, 35, were found under rubble after fragments of an intercepted missile fell on a residential area, according to Ukraine's emergency service.

President Zelensky said that Russia probably used a North Korean missile. It was one of six launched by Russia on Saturday night, with four aimed at Kyiv and two at Poltava, a city 200 miles east.

The attack came five days after Ukraine launched a co-ordinated surprise attack on the Russian region of Kursk. Since then Ukraine has advanced as far as 20 miles inside the border and seized towns and villages. After days of silence, Zelensky acknowledged the offensive at the weekend, saying that Kyiv was "pushing the war into the aggressor's territory".

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, a Ukrainian defence source said that officials were bracing themselves for an aggressive response from Russia in the form of attempted strikes at targets in the capital, including the parliament and other government buildings.

"Russia will feel the need to issue a very tough response, something huge, to show to the world that it is omnipotent and that something like Kursk will not go unpunished," the source said. "And it won't just be four missiles. It might be hundreds, using complex weaponry, cruise missiles, ballistic missiles and Shahed [kamikaze drones]. And that could be a big problem for our air defences, but I believe that we will be able to stop them."

After a meeting of the national

Rumblings in Pompeii over 'party for Madonna'
Page 27

How German board games conquered the world
Page 28

AP

In the Russian region of Kursk, residents fled after Ukrainian shells hit a block of flats and its troops raised their flag over state buildings. In Novogrodivka, in the Donbas region of Ukraine, Vitaly, a miner, his wife Yulia, and their children Alona and Oleg prepared to flee in fear of reprisals by Moscow. The Kremlin says that it has foiled attempts by Ukrainian tanks to get deep into its territory

Harris leads criticism of Israel after Gaza school strike kills 93

United States

Edmund Bower Beirut
Alistair Dawber New York

Kamala Harris has criticised Israel's attack on a school in Gaza, in which 93 people were killed.

The US vice-president said that "yet again far too many civilians have been killed", in the attack.

Three Israeli missiles hit a school that was sheltering displaced Palestinians, according to Gaza's civil defence authority, which is controlled by Hamas. At least 11 children and six women were among the dead, it said.

The Israel Defence Forces said that the airstrike had targeted a Hamas command post in the school in Gaza City and that 19 members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad had been killed.

"Israel has a right to go after the terrorists who are Hamas," Harris, the Democratic Party's presidential nominee, said. "But they also have, I believe, an important responsibility to avoid civilian casualties."

David Lammy, the UK foreign secretary, said he was appalled by the Israeli strike on the school, and called on both sides to "stop endangering civilians".

France "firmly condemned the strikes", and Jordan and Turkey accused the Israeli government of trying to thwart mediation efforts aimed at ending the war and freeing hostages taken captive by Hamas during the October 7 terrorist attacks on Israel that killed 1,200 people.

Qatar, an intermediary in ceasefire talks between Hamas and the Israeli government, called for an "urgent international investigation".

A German government spokesman said that Olaf Scholz, the chancellor, had told Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, that it was time to finalise an agreement on the release of hostages and a ceasefire.

The White House has backed Israel in its war in Gaza. There has been frustration in Washington however, over the high civilian death toll among Palestinians and what the US sees as Israel's lack of urgency at getting humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Harris is also concerned about the war derailing her chances in November's election. Michigan, a key battleground state that could be vital to her chances, has a lot of Muslim voters, and a big Palestinian diaspora. Washington is also growing increasingly concerned about the lack of progress in securing a deal to free the hostages.

After a meeting with Netanyahu last month Harris said that Israel had had enough time to secure the hostages' release. "There has been hopeful movement in the talks to secure an agreement on this [hostage] deal," she said. "And as I just told prime minister Netanyahu, it is time to get this deal done.

"To everyone who has been calling for a ceasefire and to everyone who yearns for peace, I see and I hear you. Let's get the deal done so we can get a ceasefire to end the war. Let's bring the hostages home and let's provide much-needed relief to the Palestinian people."

The Israeli government was reported to have been angered by the tone of the vice-president's comments.

On Friday the State Department said that the US would release $3.5 billion in military aid to Israel. Washington has also been working on a plan to defend Israel in the event of a new attack by Iran. Tehran has promised a reprisal for the assassination in Tehran last month of Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas leader. Israel, following its usual approach, has refused to comment on whether it was responsible for Haniyeh's death.

On Saturday Israel expanded evacuation orders for Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis. A spokesman for UNRWA, the UN organisation responsible for displaced Palestinians, said 75,000 people have been forced to flee the city. Yesterday video appeared on social media showing people walking to central Gaza.

attack as Ukraine braces for retaliation

security council on Friday, Zelensky signed off plans to strengthen the air defences, the source added.

Yesterday Russia's defence ministry said that its forces had "foiled attempts by enemy mobile groups with armoured vehicles to break through deep into Russian territory". But it also reported that its soldiers were engaged in fighting near the villages of Tolpino and Obshchy Kolodez about 20 miles from the border.

The Ukrainian invasion force has captured a number of settlements in the Kursk region, as well as in the neighbouring region of Belgorod, according to videos published by several brigades showing soldiers removing the Russian flag from administrative buildings and hoisting their own in its place.

Valery Gerasimov, head of the Russian army, has been criticised by influential military bloggers in Russia for having failed to counter with the incursion. President Putin has ordered a "counterterrorism operation" in Kursk that will come under the leadership of Alexander Bortnikov, head of the FSB.

The scale of the Ukrainian incursion appears to be far greater than initially thought. Russia's ministry of defence said on Wednesday that it believed about 1,000 Ukrainian soldiers had crossed the border, with two dozen armoured vehicles.

However, analysts believe that elements of at least four brigades are taking part in the assault, which would number several thousand troops.

Last week The Times saw a big military presence in villages across the border from where the attack was taking place, with convoys of tanks and armoured vehicles, as well as helicopters, heading for Russia.

The objectives remain unclear, but after months of Russian gains along the front lines of Donbas, the move appears designed to relieve pressure on Ukraine's beleaguered brigades by diverting Moscow's forces away from the east. Another element was to shift the narrative, the defence source said, to "persuade our people, as well as Europeans and Americans, that the Ukrainian army still has quite a large capacity for destroying Russians.

"After one year when we were defending, now we have changed the mood. And psychology is an extremely important part of the war."

Trump campaign: We were hacked by Iranian group

Alistair Dawber

Donald Trump's presidential campaign said it had been targeted by Iranian hackers after an American news group anonymously received high-level documents purportedly from inside the Republican candidate's operation.

The claim followed a statement on Friday by Microsoft, which said in June that hackers linked to Tehran had attempted to seize the account of a "high-ranking official" involved in the US presidential election. The hackers had taken over an account belonging to a former political adviser and used it to target the official, the report said. Microsoft declined to name the officials in question after the report was published.

"These documents were obtained illegally from foreign sources hostile to the US," Steven Cheung, a Trump campaign spokesman, said. On Saturday Trump said Microsoft told him that Iran had hacked one of his websites: "Iran and others will stop at nothing, our government is weak, but won't be for long," he said.

Politico said it had received an offer from an anonymous source last month, who claimed to have had access to Trump campaign documents, including details of JD Vance's "potential vulnerabilities" as a vice-presidential candidate.

Iran denied any involvement, but relations between Tehran and Washington were poor during Trump's presidency. Trump withdrew from a multinational nuclear agreement, and the US directed the assassination in January 2020 of Qasem Soleimani, a senior officer in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard.

AMINATOU DIALLO

The vision of Akon City, left, was inspired by the film version of Wakanda but there is little to show for it

Music star's 'Wakanda' vision fails to take shape

It takes some effort to look at a field in Senegal where livestock graze and imagine skyscrapers in a futuristic city that runs on cryptocurrency (Aminatou Diallo and Jane Flanagan write).

Four years after Akon, the singer, laid the foundation stone of a $6 billion development, the site is still populated by cows and goats.

Senegal's government fears that the scheme, inspired by the Marvel film *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, is looking more like a white elephant. The performer, 51, who has sold more than 35 million albums, has been given an ultimatum to get on with the work or lose the land granted to him.

The first phase, which included homes, a hospital, a school, a police station and a solar power plant, was to be completed last year.

The city was to be ready by the end of the decade. But work has barely started on the 136-acre site, which includes Mbodiene village, 60 miles south of Dakar, the capital city.

The proposal included soaring skyscrapers, film studios and a university, underpinned by the Akoin cryptocurrency.

So far a youth centre, a basketball court and an information centre have been handed over.

World Bank data suggest four in ten of Senegal's 16 million people live below the poverty line.

Félix Sene, 27, is tempted to leave rather than stay in Mbodiene.

"This Akon City project had given us hope for better days," he said. "Now we have to figure out what to do with our lives."

Akon, who was born in St Louis, Missouri, but grew up in Senegal, rose to prominence in 2004 with *Locked Up*.

He turned his attention to Africa, where Macky Sall, the former president of Senegal, and President Museveni of Uganda allocated him land before he struck legal difficulties. Sapco-Senegal, the state-owned tourism body, has told Akon to get moving.

But André Sarr, 51, a former hotel worker, was hopeful. "He has only built one house that is yet to be finished," he said. "But it's a start. He will get there."

China's marriage troubles cost diamond miners dear

Lesotho

Jane Flanagan Cape Town
Richard Spencer China Correspondent
Huang Lisha Beijing

There is no obvious connection between 1970s Chinese politics and the life of a present-day diamond miner high in the hills of Lesotho.

Yet in a globalised world, decisions made in Beijing can have ramifications thousands of miles away in southern Africa. Sales of diamonds are falling worldwide and miners are losing their jobs as a consequence of China's one-child policy, introduced 45 years ago.

For years, the growing wealth of the Chinese middle class and its emulation of western fashions, like wearing diamond engagement rings, drove a boom in sales. The value of imports of polished diamonds into China rose from $31 million in 2002 to a peak of almost $3 billion in 2018.

But during the past 15 years, the number of young adults — and therefore the number of marriages — in China has peaked, and started to collapse precipitously. The number of diamonds they need has fallen with them.

"They are telling us how big markets like China have less demand," said Makhakhe, a miner at the giant Letseng Mine, the world's highest at 3,100 metres, nestled in Lesotho's Maluti Mountains.

The mine is on a streak for unearthing huge diamonds. Nine gemstones weighing more than 100 carats have been unearthed since the start of the year, almost twice the number from all of 2023. But celebrations are muted.

The mine's owners, Gem Diamonds, have seen the effect of a declining market — its shares are down 33 per cent in a year. That has a more direct effect on the people at the hard end of the global supply chain.

"My colleagues have experienced the decline when they lost their jobs," Makhakhe, who asked for just one name to be used, said.

China's economic growth and the size of its population have tended to be treated as separate issues, albeit each involves staggering numbers.

Yet the massive rise in its population, from 540 million when the Communist Party took power in 1949 to 1.4 billion today, has helped to propel its economic growth. In particular, the baby boom of the 1960s provided a ready labour force at the same time that economic liberalisation attracted factory investment in the 1980s.

The one-child policy introduced in 1979, as well as the more general international trend towards smaller families, has put that into reverse.

The number of marriages in the country peaked at 13.5 million in 2013. Since then, it has been declining fast, sinking below 7 million in 2022 and this year it is expected to return to 1980 levels. With almost half of Chinese marriages — 47 per cent at the last count — involving diamonds in some shape or form, that fall has big consequences.

The worldwide diamond mining industry had already been severely affected by the development of lab-grown gems. But China's diamond market is the second largest, so its outsize demographic changes also have an equivalent effect on the market.

"When China is booming it fuels the market, when China is not buying it fuels the crash," Avi Krawitz, an independent diamond market analyst said. Prices on the global market have gone down by a third since an all-time high in 2022. There have been other factors. Diamond prices fell during the coronavirus pandemic, but swiftly recovered on the assumption that the long-term upward trend would continue.

In China, however, demand did not recover. The absence of a stimulus programme — compared with generous furlough-type schemes in the US, UK and Europe — and a downturn in economic confidence has seen the Chinese middle classes tighten their belts.

When China's young men do get married, they have returned to the traditional "safe haven" of gold as a way to show their economic reliability, Krawitz said. "In India and China gold is seen as a way of saving money," he said. By contrast with diamond jewellers, gold companies had a good year last year.

Lin Xiaoxi, 27, a white collar worker in the prosperous east coast city of Suzhou who recently got engaged, said that her fiancé had suggested they buy gold jewellery to mark their wedding rather than a diamond ring.

In 2018 China imported polished diamonds worth almost $3 billion

"The wedding date is approaching, and his work has been unstable these past few months," she said. He had a large mortgage on his home, despite a 50 per cent deposit provided by his family, and was sometimes struggling to keep up with payments.

"We don't have much money at the moment, and his family is also feeling the financial strain from the wedding expenses, so he doesn't want to ask them for more money," she said. "I personally don't think a diamond ring is that necessary."

China is insisting that its economic troubles are temporary — and its GDP is growing by about 5 per cent a year.

Nevertheless, its downwards demographic spiral is unlikely to reverse. Its fertility rate has fallen from an average of six children per woman in the late 1960s to western levels of about 1.7, below "replacement rate".

Chinese brides are also pragmatic. Pipi Zhang, 25, a civil servant from central China, said her fiancé was surprised when he asked her to choose a diamond ring she liked and she refused.

"I said we should skip the ring and just get gold," she said. He thought this was odd and so she compromised, agreeing to a lab-grown diamond costing a few hundred pounds "to satisfy the ceremony" but putting the rest of the budget into gold. "Natural diamonds only hold their value if they are over one carat, and we can't afford that," she said. "I'm just being smart."

Marcos anger as Beijing targets planes

Philippines

Richard Spencer

Chinese planes dropped flares in front of Philippine air force planes as the countries continued to trade angry barbs over competing claims for sovereignty in the South China Sea.

The Philippine military said on Saturday that one of its turboprop aircraft was on a routine patrol over the Scarborough Shoal at the time.

The shoal is an atoll 125 miles off the Philippines but China claims sovereignty over nearly all the South China Sea, in which it is situated. The People's Liberation Army said that the Philippine aircraft had disrupted "routine training" by its navy.

The incident happened despite a supposed "de-escalation pact" negotiated last month. Each side has accused the other of breaching the deal, at least in spirit. "The actions of [China's] aircraft were unjustified, illegal and reckless, especially as [our] aircraft was undertaking a routine maritime security operation in Philippine sovereign airspace," a statement by President Marcos said. "We have hardly started to calm the waters and it is already worrying that there could be instability in our airspace."

The South China Sea is a militarily vital part of the Pacific in which China is effectively hemmed in by American allies such as the Philippines and Taiwan. It wants unimpeded control so that its submarine fleet, based in Hainan, can reach the deeper waters of the western Pacific, particularly in the event of a conflict over Taiwan.

Previously there have been clashes at sea between coastguard vessels as Chinese ships try to prevent access to the area for Philippine trawlers.

Ellie warning app to protect villagers from being trampled to death

India

Penelope MacRae Delhi

The northeastern state of Assam, home to one of India's biggest elephant populations, has launched a mobile app "early warning system" to prevent people being killed in stampedes.

The "Haati App" or "Elephant App" was developed by the conservation group Aaranyak. It is designed to give villagers and farmers a vital heads-up when wild elephants are nearby.

"This will let them know about the presence of elephants in the proximity of human settlements, so as to help villagers avoid them," said Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, a spokesman for Aaranyak, a name derived from the Sanskrit *Aranya*, which means forest or wilderness.

The state authorities in Assam use radiowave-emitting collars, camera traps and direct sightings to keep track of elephants.

There has been a sharp rise in human and elephant deaths in the state and across India in the past few decades because of shrinking habitats and human encroachment on natural elephant corridors.

The situation is serious in Assam, where the density of elephants is greater than in most other parts of India. Many of these human-elephant confrontations arise at harvest time when the animals raid crops at night.

The beginnings of the conflict in the northeast can be traced back to British colonial days, when vast areas of forest were cut down to make way for tea plantations, historians say. The speed at which the forests have disappeared in Assam has been "tremendous, leaving far fewer places for wide-ranging creatures like elephants to roam", the wildlife charity WWF says.

More than 65 per cent of the elephant habitat north of Assam's huge Brahmaputra River has been lost to agriculture and settlements in the past few decades, and the conflict between humans and elephants has been steadily increasing ever since, the WWF says.

The southern state of Karnataka has India's largest population of elephants, with 6,049, followed by Assam with 5,719 and Kerala with 3,054, government figures show.

Nationwide 2,829 people were killed by elephants between 2019 and this year, according to official figures. The number of deaths hit a five-year high last year, at 629. In Assam, 383 people have died from elephant attacks in the past five years. A total of 528 elephants died during the past five years from electrocution, train accidents, poaching or poisoning.

Assam's small, marginal farmers fear the damage that elephants deprived of shelter and food can cause to homes and crops. In the event that the app fails to prevent an elephant attack, it also includes a feature that helps victims or their families to apply for government compensation.

There are fewer than 50,000 Asian elephants left in the world. India accounts for nearly 30,000 wild and 3,600 captive Asian elephants.

Anger rumbles over 'Madonna Pompeii party'

Italy

James Imam Milan

For historians and archaeologists there are few more resonant locations than Pompeii, the Roman town smothered in volcanic ash and pumice when Vesuvius erupted in 79AD.

But rumours that Madonna will throw a birthday dinner party among the site's ruins on Friday have generated strong reactions, and stoked debate about a trend of hiring out Italy's heritage for private events.

The Queen of Pop has reportedly hired the Large Theatre, the 2,200-year-old amphitheatre at Pompeii that now hosts drama and music performances, for her 66th birthday.

An American events company is believed to have booked the site for €30,000.

The Italian media reported that 500 guests are expected to attend the party, possibly including Katy Perry and Orlando Bloom, who are on a yacht off the Amalfi coast.

Madonna has previously thrown birthday parties in Noto in Sicily and Borgo Egnazia, the Puglia resort that hosted G7 leaders in June. Before the event, she is expected to make stops in Naples and Capri during a cruise aboard a private yacht, accompanied by her son Rocco, who was 24 yesterday.

La Repubblica quoted Carmine Lo Sapio, mayor of Pompei, saying he had been contacted about the event and: "We are ready to welcome the singer."

However, heritage experts have criticised the use of the famous site for such a purpose, at so low a price.

Michele Campisi, general secretary of the Italia Nostra heritage association, said: "Why does Madonna need to go to Pompeii? Is there not a more beautiful beach she could use?" He was also critical of the price. "€30,000 is absurd. "It's like giving Pompeii away."

Rosanna Carrieri, president of the Mi Riconosci, a cultural pressure group, said that the theatre had previously been hired for events such as fashion shows. But she warned against the use of heritage sites as a "scenic backdrop" for "exclusive" events.

Madonna is expected to arrive via the port of Marina di Stabia, near Castellammare, before being driven 15 minutes to Pompeii, where she will change into a dress designed for the occasion by Francesco Scognamiglio.

Madonna's Italian fan club has announced on Facebook that it is "preparing" for her arrival.

A police spokesman said that officers would oversee security outside the park, adding it was still unclear whether the site would be closed to visitors for the day.

Madonna has previously shown interest in historic sites, visiting the ancient city of Petra in Jordan in a trip arranged by Queen Rania in 2009. Guy Oseary, her agent, did not respond to a request for comment about the Pompeii party.

GETTY IMAGES

Hiring the theatre is thought to be costing Madonna €30,000; she will arrive in a new dress by Francesco Scognamiglio

However, Italians have been divided over whether their publicly owned heritage should be rented. The question previously made headlines when the Braidense library, part of Milan's Brera museum, was entrusted to the celebrity beautician Cristina Fogazzi for a private dinner in June for a reported €80,000.

About 40 miles south of Pompeii, the archaeological park of Paestum announced in May it would charge couples €7,000 to have their wedding photos taken at the towering Second Temple of Hera, described by DH Lawrence as "the best preserved of all Greek temples". The fee includes access to the archaeological park for three hours, during which time it remains closed to visitors.

Toni Ricciardi, an opposition MP, said that Paestum's fees were "a baffling anomaly", adding: "Culture as per the constitution must be accessible to all."

Campisi said that sites such as Pompeii, which attracted four million visitors last year, did not need the publicity of Madonna's party.

He added that Giorgia Meloni's government was aggressively cashing in on culture, and the culture ministry had published new guidelines in April indicating how heritage sites should calculate the rent on the basis of a site's size and the importance of its monuments.

"We are changing the sense of common good, of shared heritage," Campisi said. Carrieri said the trend began to emerge a decade ago when the government granted the country's most prestigious museums and archaeological sites greater decisional autonomy.

"The idea one has of heritage is increasingly of something at the disposal of a select few," she said.

Neighbouring mayors fall out over entry charge for the walk of love

James Imam

The course of true love never did run smooth, and just two weeks after reopening what is known as Italy's most romantic walk, mayors from neighbouring regions are arguing about the price of admission.

The Via dell'Amore on the Cinque Terre coast of Liguria has reopened to much fanfare after a €23 million renovation and with a new ticketing system to limit numbers.

First opened in 1931, the 900m path was closed 12 years ago after a landslide injured four Australian tourists. However, a new surcharge for accessing the pass connecting the villages of Riomaggiore and Manarola, has also led to complaints that some locals have been unfairly priced out.

New guidelines posted online last week say that as well as booking slots for €10 visitors who wish to enjoy access to all footpaths in the area must buy a Cinque Terre card, for another €7.50.

Residents of Cinque Terre, a string of villages overlooking the sea, can use the path free, but those from La Spezia, the provincial capital, must pay. On Saturday its mayor, Pierluigi Peracchini, said that the town would appeal against the decision in the courts.

"Riomaggiore wants to charge €10 for the people of La Spezia as well, after all the money allocated by the region of Liguria and the government," he wrote on social media. "We had a nasty surprise seeing that the path is free of charge to the people of La Spezia only after 5pm."

The regional government in Liguria paid €12 million for the renovation, and Rome provided €11.4 million.

Charging fees for the path has caused trouble before. When Riomaggiore opened a 160m stretch a year ago, charging visitors €5 for admission, an alliance of tourist associations campaigned against the decision, calling for "an open-air museum with no admission fee".

Fabrizia Pecunia, Riomaggiore's mayor, has said that the charge is necessary to help preserve the identities of villages that have 4,000 residents between them and draw three million tourists a year.

An area pass costs €7.50 and it is €10 more to book a slot on Via dell'Amore

Under the new rules, no more than 400 visitors can use the path every hour before 5pm, and they will do so under the watchful eye of guides.

On Friday, the day of the new path's opening to tourists, bemused visitors reportedly expressed disbelief at having to pay two fees for entry, La Repubblica said. "It is beautiful but it costs too much," said a visitor from Rome, who compared the path unfavourably to other routes between Cinque Terre's villages. "We preferred the path from Monterosso to Vernazza."

World

Gaza vandals attack Anne Frank statue

Netherlands

Bruno Waterfield

Smart video cameras and security lights will protect the Anne Frank statue in Amsterdam from graffiti after it was defaced on the 80th anniversary of her arrest.

The monument is on the Merwedeplein, a square where the Jewish Frank family lived before they went into hiding under German occupation in 1942. Since the outbreak of the conflict in Gaza the statue has been attacked repeatedly by pro-Palestinian protesters.

On August 4, 80 years after Anne and her family were arrested and taken to the concentration camp where she died, "free Gaza" was written on the pedestal and red paint daubed on the statue's hands.

Gert-Jan Jimmink, who owns the bookshop where Anne's father, Otto, bought her the diary that became one of the most important accounts of Nazi occupation, told Het Parool that the statue had been made to look as though "she had blood on her hands".

DAN PELED/GETTY IMAGES

Bucking the trend Clayton Braden competing in the bronco event during the Mount Isa Mines Rodeo in Queensland, Australia, the biggest in the southern hemisphere

Experience the many wonders of Costa Rica, a country renowned for having proportionately more protected land than any other, making it ripe for wildlife tourism. The star attraction is the marvellous, often bizarre, animals that live here: from catatonic sloths and screaming howler monkeys to screeching toucans and nesting green turtles. Throw in visits to both the Caribbean and Pacific coastlines, plus the expert guidance of our highly rated tour leaders, and it's easy to see why this adventure is among our most popular.

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*Prices are exclusive of flights and correct at time of going to press. ^Prices listed are based on two sharing a twin/double room. Single supplement available at £775pp, rooms are available to share on a requestbasis. Additional dates may be available, please call for details. Offer subject to availability and prices may fluctuate. This offer is not combinable with any other offers, including Loyalty Discounts Operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Exodus Travels, ABTA Y0751, ATOL 25825, a company wholly independent of News UK. Quote TIMES100 to be eligible for a £100pp saving, included in the cost above.

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Counter attack: global rise of the German board game

From our correspondent

OLIVER MOODY
BERLIN

My job in *Weimar: The Fight for Democracy* sounds simple: keep the communists down, the Nazis out and the slightly less demented radical right in check until 1933. This will, we have been warned, take six hours.

By 3am, however, my friends and I have only just reached 1921. We have already made an unspeakable Horlicks of the post-Versailles settlement: Stuttgart is in flames, Lenin's stooges are running riot across Munich, Essen and Cologne, and the first swastika armbands are starting to show up in the Reichstag.

The board game turns out to be so prohibitively complicated that we call it a night before we have even concluded the Treaty of Rapallo.

Although it costs €124, weighs as much as a toddler and comes with a rulebook only marginally shorter and less dense than Immanuel Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals*, the game has been sold out for six months and will not return to the market until next month.

It is part of an extraordinary cultural phenomenon. These days Germany is a cardboard superpower. By some estimates the Germans buy more games and puzzles per capita than any other nation: about 50 million a year in a population of 83 million. Sales are higher than ever despite the supposed diminution of attention spans in the era of digital media.

The country has also come to dictate board gaming tastes worldwide. The German-style game, which typically involves a delicate balance between tactics and strategy, a themed setting, several paths to victory and stabilising mechanics that can bring an early leader crashing down, is a significant export brand.

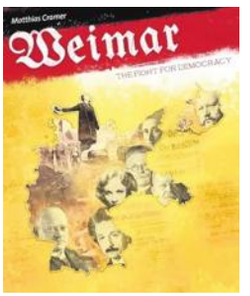
The national industry award, Game of the Year is the most prestigious in the world and can make the difference between shifting a few thousand and selling half a million.

It is all quite a recent development. Germany does have established gaming traditions such as the *Kriegsspiel* (wargame), a military simulation developed by the Prussian general staff 200 years ago to address the failures of the Napoleonic wars.

Man, Don't Get Worked Up, a variant of Ludo or Pachisi found in more than three quarters of homes, dates from the dawn of the First World War.

Yet things only really got going in the 1970s. "Back then games were seen as something for children, not grown-ups, who were supposed to be getting on with something sensible instead," said Thorsten Gimmler, a former electrical engineer now in charge of the game design department at Ravensburger, one of the biggest companies in the sector.

The first thing that changed their image was the arrival of 3M's "bookshelf" game boxes from the US, ranging from classics such as *Go* and backgammon to more complex games where players could run for the White House or vie for supremacy on the stock markets. Then, in 1979, a group of critics founded Game of the Year in Nuremberg, insisting that board games were an art form.



Weimar: the Fight for Democracy replays life in 1920s Germany

Designers began to develop a distinctive style, heavy on resource accumulation, world building and strategic depth, by some accounts because British and American games such as *Risk* or *Monopoly* were felt to be too one-dimensional.

The pivotal moment was 1995, when a Viking-obsessed dental technician called Klaus Teuber released *Settlers of Catan*. The game, in which players compete to build colonies on an island whose layout varies, was not only ubiquitous across Germany but also a formative influence on many Silicon Valley executives, including Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs and Peter Thiel.

Since Catan there have been plenty of successful German games that are superficially much simpler, such as *Azul*, in which players place ornamental tiles on a board. But the typical model has now become so entrenched that some of the best examples come from other countries, such as *7 Wonders* from France or *Terraforming Mars* from Sweden.

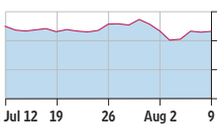
As elsewhere, the German market experienced a boom during the pandemic and now grows by 5 to 10 per cent a year, despite competition from video games and social media.

Industry figures say this is largely because the two worlds complement each other. Many board gamers are also video gamers. Popular board games often get digital adaptations while *Dorfromantik*, last year's Game of the Year, began as a computer game. Many video gamers like the social element of playing around a table, said Anna Satrapa of Kosmos, which publishes Catan. "You come together, you see each other and speak in person. Above all you don't have a screen in front of your face."

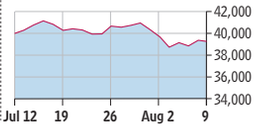
Business

WORLD MARKETS (Friday's close. Change on the week)

FTSE 100
8,168.10 (-6.61)

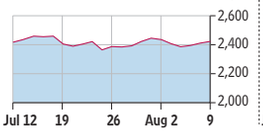


Dow Jones
39,497.54 (-239.72)

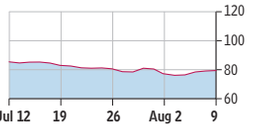


COMMODITIES

Gold
$2,430.08 (-6.77)

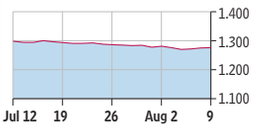


Brent crude (6pm)
$79.68 (+2.46)

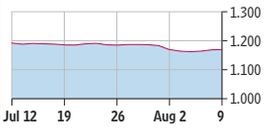


CURRENCIES

£/$
$1.2763 (-0.0040)



£/€
€1.1684 (-0.0043)



Tesla has BMW on its tail in the race for British electric car sales

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

Tesla, the undisputed king of Britain's electric car market, is within weeks of losing its crown to BMW.

Latest industry figures show that, after seven months of the year, sales of electric BMWs in Britain have risen to more than 22,000, firmly in the rear-view mirror of Tesla, the all-electric marque whose sales in the country this year have declined to 25,500.

Demand for BMW's electric cars in the year date has already almost superseded the number it sold in the whole of 2023 and the marque's new battery electric car registrations in Britain are up by about 70 per cent year-on-year.

All of which is in marked contrast with the situation at Tesla. Already in 2024, on a worldwide basis it has suffered its first two consecutive quarters of decline, with its sales down by nearly 5 per cent in the three months to the end of June. Its pace of decline in the UK is greater still: in the year to date, Tesla sales are down by 13 per cent, after a fall of more than 9 per cent to 49,500 in 2023, from a record high of 54,600 in 2022. Meanwhile, Britain's electric market, despite having slowed, is growing by more than 10 per cent a year.

The Tesla Model Y, the carmaker's lowest-priced vehicle, was Britain's third-bestselling car in 2022 across the whole market, including petrol cars. Last year the Model Y was still among the leaders, but had fallen to No 5. Thus far in 2024 it is not even in the top ten.

BMW's race to get electric cars into the hands of British drivers has been led by sales of its BMW i4, a zero-emission executive car regarded as the German carmaker's "Tesla-killer", directly competing with the American company. Battery electric vehicles account for more than 27 per cent of all BMW sales in Britain so far this year.

"BMW was an electric car pioneer with the launch of the BMW i3 11 years ago and has been developing the technology ever since," a spokesman for the company said. "We now have a full electric vehicle model in every sector of the market and this, combined with the strength of the BMW brand, is proving to be appealing to buyers."

As much as 85 per cent of electric car sales in Britain go to corporate fleets or are bought by employees via tax-efficient schemes. That has played to BMW's strength as a leading player in the company executive car market.

Market commentators suggest that

Continued on page 30

Business levy 'puts 17,000 shops at risk'

Sainsbury's and union chiefs call for reform

Jack Barnett
Economics Correspondent

More than 17,000 shops are at risk of closure over the next decade unless the Labour government overhauls the business rates regime, the boss of Sainsbury's and the general secretary of the biggest retail union have warned.

Writing in The Times, Simon Roberts, chief executive of Sainsbury's, and Paddy Lillis, the general secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, say that tens of thousands of retail jobs could disappear because of a sharp rise in business rates bills.

"The No 1 barrier to growth in our industry is the outmoded business rates system," they say, adding that "successive governments have promised reform but have only ever tinkered around the edges. The result? Shops closing, jobs lost, economic growth stunted."

Research shared with The Times carried out by Development Economics has claimed that a 20 per cent reduction in headline business rates would save retailers £1 billion in the first year and would safeguard or create more than 17,000 jobs. Although Development Economics says that a headline rate cut of such a magnitude would initially reduce tax revenues for the Treasury, its research has found that, after ten years, the corresponding increase in economic activity would generate net positive returns of £70 million per year for the government.

Without action from the government on the rates regime, 17,300 stores could close by 2033-34 in a worst-case scenario, amounting to, on average, 15 failures per town in England, Development Economics has found. About 42,000 jobs could be lost.

Roberts and Lillis say: "A government that revitalises growth, boosts jobs and secures long-term funding for public services will be able to look back on its achievements with pride. Reforming business rates won't be a silver bullet to achieving all of this, but it would be a very good place to start."

Business rates are a tax charged on commercial properties, such as shops and offices. The bill a company has to pay is based on a multiplier applied to the rateable value of their property. This multiplier rate was frozen between 2020-21 and 2023-24 at 51.2p for most businesses, but now it has risen to 54.6p.

According to the Office for Budget Responsibility, the government is set to collect £32.1 billion in business rates revenues this year, rising to £37.4 billion in 2028-29. Roberts and Lillis say that retailers have contributed about a fifth of these tax revenues, despite making up 5 per cent of the economy.

In its general election manifesto, the Labour Party promised to overhaul the business rates system to create a more level playing field between digital and bricks-and-mortar retailers.

The Treasury said: "As committed to in the manifesto, we pledged to replace business rates with a fairer system. This new system will level the playing field between the high street and online giants, better incentivise investment, tackle empty properties and support entrepreneurship."

Thriving high streets breathe life into our communities, page 32

DISNEY/PIXAR

Variations on a theme Walt Disney has unveiled plans to almost double spending over the next decade at its cruise and theme parks wing to $60 billion, with investment in four ships and new Avatar, Avengers and Monsters Inc attractions

Harris overturns gap with Trump

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

More Americans trust Kamala Harris, the Democratic presidential nominee, with managing the economy than they do Donald Trump, a new poll suggests.

In a survey of 1,001 voters polled for the Financial Times and the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, 42 per cent said they trusted Harris with economic management, compared with 41 per cent for the former president. It is the first time that the Democrats have polled better than the Republicans on the economy in more than a year.

Last month President Biden, the incumbent who announced he would not be seeking re-election, polled seven percentage points lower than Trump. The appointment of Harris, 59, as the Democratic candidate has shaken up polling in the past three weeks, with surveys showing a narrowing in the popularity gap with Trump. The Democrats under Biden, 81, had struggled to generate a positive campaigning message on the economy, after inflation hit a 30-year high in the autumn of 2022 at 9.1 per cent. Consumer prices inflation has fallen back to 3 per cent, but voters had consistently favoured Trump, 78, over the Democrats on managing the economy amid concerns about the cost of living.

The US economy has been one of the best performers in the world over the past year, stimulated by government and consumer spending. The Biden administration has boasted a record 15.7 million new jobs created since late 2020. Markets endured a sharp sell-off last week amid fears of a US recession driven by poor jobs numbers.

The next US president will face a series of big policy decisions, including whether to extend the 2016 Trump-era tax cuts that are due to expire next year. Trump has said he would continue the tax-cutting regime and would impose a 10 per cent tariff on all imports to the United States and a 60 per cent tariff on Chinese goods.

More American voters trust Trump on relations with China, at 43 per cent, compared with 39 per cent for Harris.

Simon French, page 33

Need to know

1 People are unlikely to pay back more than £19 billion they owe the Treasury in taxes, HM Revenue & Customs has said, as the number of taxpayers cut off after waiting over an hour on the phone rose sevenfold. Page 2

2 More than 17,000 shops are at risk of closure over the next decade unless the government overhauls the business rates regime, Simon Roberts, the chief executive of Sainsbury's, and Paddy Lillis, the general secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, have warned. Pages 29, 32

3 More Americans trust Kamala Harris, the Democratic presidential nominee, with managing the economy than they do Donald Trump, a new poll suggests. Page 29, Simon French, page 33

4 Tesla, the king of Britain's electric car market, is within weeks of losing its crown to BMW. Latest industry figures show that after seven months of the year, sales of electric BMWs in Britain have risen to more than 22,000. Tesla's UK sales this year have declined to 25,500. Page 29

5 The Unite union has sounded the alarm over hundreds of possible job losses from Carlsberg's bid to acquire Britvic for £3.3 billion.

6 Lord Rose of Monewden, the chairman of Asda, has said he is "embarrassed" by the supermarket's declining market share and has called on its owner Mohsin Issa to step back from running the retail chain.

7 The taxpayer is expected to lose most of its investment in a start-up backed by Jorginho, the Arsenal footballer, which collapsed after it failed to repay a pandemic loan. Gather International owned Gather, an app that provides access to funds from asset managers including BlackRock. Page 32

8 Inflation is poised to rise, weeks after the Bank of England cut interest rates for the first time in more than four years, figures this week are expected to show. City analysts think the rate of prices growth rose to 2.3 per cent in July, having held steady at 2 per cent in the previous two months. Page 33

9 This year, of the more than two million people who tried to get a ticket to the Glastonbury music festival, only 200,000 succeeded. With 6.5 million people attending music festivals in the UK every year, the organisers of alternatives to Glastonbury believe they can capitalise on the demand as festival season gets into full swing. Page 35

10 Since the 1970s, employers have been given a grace period to hire new recruits without the risk of facing unfair dismissal claims if it doesn't work out. The grace period since 2012 has been after two years; but never from day one. The reform is the main change in the government's employment law reforms, which it has said will be presented to parliament by mid-October. Times Enterprise Network, pages 36-37

All eyes are on what Warren

After the stock market sell-off last week, the veteran investor is under close scrutiny, reports **Ben Martin**

Warren Buffett famously once said: "Rule No 1, never lose money; rule No 2, never forget rule No 1." In the sell-off that gripped global stock markets a week ago, avoiding losses was exactly what investors were trying to do.

Equities from Japan to Britain to the United States tumbled as fears about the health of the American economy, worries about the lofty valuation of technology stocks and the unwinding of a popular trading strategy involving the yen drove a rout in share prices.

Indeed, Buffett himself may have played an inadvertent role in the turmoil. On the Saturday before the rout, second-quarter results from Berkshire Hathaway, the business run by the billionaire investor, showed that it had been a big net seller of equities in the three months to the end of June, mainly by almost halving its stake in Apple, and had boosted its cash pile to record levels.

In an already febrile atmosphere pervading stock markets, which had suffered falls in the previous session, these revelations about Berkshire's portfolio stoked speculation that Buffett was positioning the business for an economic downturn and a slump in technology stocks. Given the 93-year-old's status as one of the world's most renowned stockpickers, one whose investments are followed particularly closely, this is thought to have contributed to wider market nervousness and to have exacerbated the sell-off at the beginning of last week, one in which Apple suffered a one-day share price fall of 4.8 per cent.

All this has drawn attention to the influential position that Buffett holds in the investment world. More specifically, it has prompted an analysis of Buffett's portfolio and his past bets in an attempt to divine his views on the directions of the US economy and the stock market.

"It certainly looks like he is positioning Berkshire to have a reduced risk profile and to be in a cash position to take advantage of any opportunities," Bill Stone, the chief investment officer of Glenview Trust, a Berkshire shareholder, said.

Buffett has built his reputation and his fortune on Berkshire. A beleaguered textile manufacturer when he took control of the Omaha-based business in 1965, he has built it into a sprawling conglomerate through a string of deals. Its wholly owned subsidiaries now include significant operations in insurance, as well as businesses spanning everything from Fruit of the Loom, the clothing group, to the BNSF railroad. Along the way, Buffett has generated stunning returns for shareholders. Berkshire's shares were worth $18 when he took over the business; today, its class A stock is valued at $647,523.

The performance of Berkshire's portfolio of listed equity holdings has further cemented Buffett's status as a stock market superstar, earning him the sobriquet "the Sage of Omaha" because of his canny market bets. No wonder recent changes to this portfolio have drawn scrutiny.

The latest quarterly figures from Berkshire showed it had sold a net $75.5 billion of shares in the three months to the end of June, helping to push its cash position, including equivalents, to a record high of almost $277 billion. Its Apple stake, which Berkshire started building in 2016, was cut to a holding worth $84.2 billion, down from $135.4 billion three months earlier and $174.3 billion at the end of December. Separately, recent US filings showed that Buffett's group had pared back its investment in Bank of America, Berkshire's second largest stock market holding, to just over 12 per cent.

Paul Lountzis, of Lountzis Asset Management, another Berkshire shareholder, said Buffett's decision to reduce the Apple stake had been "a great move. Apple is a great company, but the valuation is ahead of itself." Apple shares reached a record high in mid-July to almost $235 apiece, valuing the maker of iPhones, iPads and Mac-

Britvic deal 'risks hundreds of jobs'

Helen Cahill

The Unite union has sounded the alarm over hundreds of possible job losses from Carlsberg's bid to acquire Britvic for £3.3 billion.

The union has demanded urgent talks with the Danish brewer to address concerns about its plan to cut about 1 per cent of jobs in the combined group if shareholders approve the merger.

Carlsberg has offered £13.15 per share for the London-listed Britvic as it seeks to increase its sales of non-alcoholic drinks. Britvic is the biggest maker of branded still soft drinks in Britain and Carlsberg is seeking ways to serve a younger, more moderate generation by growing its "Beyond Beer" products.

Britvic's board has recommended that its shareholders accept the deal in a vote planned for August 27, but Unite has pushed back against plans to cut jobs throughout the group's combined workforce of 34,500. The union has written to Britvic to express concerns about most of the possible 345 job losses falling in the UK. Carlsberg has pledged to "accelerate commercial and supply chain investments" at Britvic to help the company to grow.

Unite also said that "it is vital that the voice of workers is heard" during a review of the combined entity after the deal is completed.

Carlsberg has promised to hand cash bonuses worth 175 per cent of annual base salaries to between 130 and 180 senior executives. Unite has said that these retention bonuses should be granted to all staff. The union added: "We note that, according to Carlsberg, soft drinks are highly synergistic with beer throughout the value chain. It is vital that we see detailed proposals relating to investment, details that so far are lacking, including in relation to bottling agreements, as the documents disclosed are highly redacted."

Carlsberg has said in its acquisition documents that any job cuts "will be subject to comprehensive planning and appropriate engagement with stakeholders", including employees and their representative bodies.

The documents state: "It is anticipated that efforts will be made to mitigate headcount reductions made as a result of redundancies, via natural attrition, the elimination of vacant roles and alternative job opportunities."

Britvic and Carlsberg declined to comment.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

BMW catching up with Tesla

the reversal of Tesla's initial stellar performance in the British electric car market has been driven by greater competition and a price war as legacy carmakers get their acts together and as more disruptor brands come into showrooms, headed by BYD, of China.

Dealers say privately that demand for Teslas is under pressure. Potential buyers are said to have been put off the Model Y by talk that they are not acquiring US West Coast cool but instead are buying Chinese, as the vehicle is built in Shanghai. There is talk, too, that Teslas have lost their lustre as they are used more frequently as taxis. Then there is the "Elon factor", the suggestion that some consumers may be showing antipathy toward Elon Musk, the outspoken Tesla chief.

A spokesman for Tesla refused to comment.

Buffett will do next

"Price is what you pay, value is what you get."

"The best chance to deploy capital is when things are going down."

"It's far better to buy a wonderful company at a fair price, than a fair company at a wonderful price."

"Risk comes from not knowing what you are doing."

"Be fearful when others are greedy. Be greedy when others are fearful"

books at about $3.6 trillion. Selling Apple shares helped to increase the size of Berkshire's mammoth cash reserves, which include $234.6 billion of short-maturity treasury bills, a holding that surpasses even that of the US Federal Reserve, the American central bank. Treasuries, which are US government debt, typically are used by investors as a risk-free place to park their cash and at Berkshire's annual meeting in May Buffett described them as "the safest investment there is".

He has drawn attention for his big cash holdings in the past, notably in the run-up to the 2007-09 financial crisis. Berkshire had amassed about $43 billion in cash by early 2005 and had a similar amount at the start of 2008. In 2003, Buffett also warned that derivatives were "financial weapons of mass destruction". This proved prescient, with derivatives tied to mortgages being a significant cause of the meltdown that began in 2007.

When markets went into a tailspin as the global financial crisis unfolded, Buffett seized on the turmoil to make canny investments in troubled listed companies, including a $5 billion bet on Goldman Sachs and putting $3 billion into Dow Chemical, both in 2008 and both resulting in handsome returns.

Bryant VanCronkhite, a fund manager at Allspring Global Investments, who holds Berkshire stock, said: "Buffett and Berkshire Hathaway have a reputation for selling when other investors are greedy and buying at the bottom of cycles when other investors are fearful."

One catalyst for the recent market sell-off was disappointing labour market data in the United States, which showed that American employers had added only 117,000 jobs last month, significantly short of the 175,000 that had been forecast by economists. This raised fears that the US economy is heading for a sharp slowdown and that the Fed had erred on July 31 when it opted to hold interest rates at a 23-year high. That decision means the US central bank has diverged from the Bank of England, the European Central Bank and the Bank of Canada, all of which have started to cut borrowing costs.

Investors are now betting that the Fed's next move will be to lower rates, which will hit the returns that holders of treasuries, including Buffett, earn from the debt.

"I don't believe Buffett is positioning for a hard landing *per se*, but rather is trimming stocks that have materially outperformed," VanCronkhite said, "to position to rotate capital at more attractive valuations in the future. That may or may not come as a result of a recession."

Berkshire did not return a request for comment on its investment strategy and Buffett's silence since the release of its quarterly figures has left investors scouring his comments at the company's most recent annual meeting for clues on the rationale for his positioning. He said at the gathering in May that Berkshire would "love to spend" its cash but would not unless it could find "something that has very little risk and can make us a lot of money".

The veteran investor, who previously has called searching for big deals "elephant hunting", added: "I don't mind at all building the cash position. When I look at the alternatives, what's available in equity markets and the composition of what's going on in the world, we find it quite attractive."

Nevertheless, he has always been a proponent of owning shares in the long run. In his latest annual letter to Berkshire shareholders, released in February, he wrote: "I can't remember a period since March 11, 1942, the date of my first stock purchase, that I have not had a majority of my net worth in equities, US-based equities."

Asda owner 'needs to take a step back'

Mehreen Khan

Lord Rose of Monewden, the chairman of Asda, has said he is "embarrassed" by the supermarket's declining market share and has called on its owner Mohsin Issa to step back from running the retail chain.

Britain's third largest supermarket reported a decline in quarterly revenues last week of 2.2 per cent and a 5.3 per cent drop in like-for-like sales. Figures from Kantar, an industry body, show that Asda's market share has shrunk from 13.6 per cent to 12.7 per cent, losing ground to rivals including Tesco, Sainsbury's and Morrisons.

"I am going to be perfectly honest with you. I've been in this industry for a long time and I am slightly embarrassed. I won't deny that," Rose told The Telegraph. "I don't like being second, third or fourth. And if you look honestly now at the comparative numbers of Kantar or whatever index, we are not performing as well as should be. I don't like that."

Mohsin Issa owns 22.5 per cent of the retail chain

Asda is 67.5 per cent-owned by TDR Capital, a private equity firm, with Mohsin Issa, 53, holding 22.5 per cent. This year Zuber Issa, 52, Mohsin's brother, sold his 22.5 per cent stake to TDR to focus on his other businesses.

Rose, 75, the former chairman of Marks & Spencer, said that Mohsin Issa should step away from the daily running of Asda as the supermarket aims to revive its performance. "I wouldn't encourage him to [intervene in operations], and I am the chairman," he said.

"We always said Mohsin was a particular horse for a particular course. He is a disrupter, an entrepreneur, he is an agitator. We've added a significant number of stores and we've changed a lot, but it now needs a different animal. In the nicest possible way, Mohsin's work is largely complete."

Last week Michael Gleeson, the chief financial officer at Asda, set out plans to invest in improving Asda's store estate, adding more staff hours to ensure that shelves were replenished more quickly and to build customer loyalty.

The week ahead

Retail sales in Britain are expected to have rebounded in July, boosted by the England men's football team reaching the final of the European football championships. Figures published by the Office for National Statistics on Friday are forecast to show that sales increased by 0.9 per cent in July, up from June's steep 1.2 per cent decline.

Spending on food, drink and recreation are likely to have risen as fans gathered to support Gareth Southgate's team. However, the likely boost would still leave retail sales below their pre-pandemic level.

Analysts at Investec said: "We expect that there was some sort of recovery in July, although do not predict that June's losses were fully reversed. There are supportive factors such as England's success at the Euros."

Inflation has fallen sharply from a four-decade high of 11.1 per cent to 2 per cent, which, alongside rapid wage growth, has improved household finances. Experts think that this dynamic will continue for the rest of the year, creating conditions for further retail sales growth. The Bank of England also elected to cut interest rates this month by a quarter-point to 5 per cent, providing further relief for families.

England football fans are said to have delivered a win for retailers

TOMORROW

The City will be hoping for no more nasty surprises from Dowlais, the motor industry engineering group, when it reports half-year results. It has had a torrid time since it was spun out of Melrose Industries, the aerospace company, in April amid the stalling global automotive market, leading its shares to halve in value since the float. The last time the market heard from the FTSE 250 company in May, when it reported lower quarterly revenues of £1.7 billion, it said annual sales were now expected to be "slightly below" the previous year's £5.5 billion.

Interims Dowlais, Flutter Entertainment, Genuit, Just Group
Economy ONS UK monthly employment figures

WEDNESDAY

Until the recent market sell-off, Balfour Beatty shares had been at a 16-year peak, their highest since just before the market collapse in 2008 as the financial crisis went into full swing.

Ten years ago and before the arrival of Leo Quinn as chief executive, Balfour Beatty was in such a state that it was almost taken over by Carillion.

Britain's leading listed construction company is expected to report steady growth in interim results towards full-year increases of a marginally higher £9.6 billion turnover, with pre-tax profits rising by a forecast 3 per cent to £270 million. More closely watched will be the order book that in the last report stood at £16.5 billion. With net cash balances of £750 million at that time, it is in a continuing £100 million buy-back of shares to help to underpin its share price, which is 17 per cent higher than it was last year.

Interims Atalaya Mining, Aviva, Balfour Beatty, Kenmare Resources, Secure Trust Bank, Tui
Economy ONS monthly inflation figures

THURSDAY

Car insurance premiums may be starting to drop a little, but they are still a fifth higher than they were a year ago, according to figures from the Association of British Insurers. Shareholders in Admiral Group will be watching to see how it has fared in the six months to the end of June as price competition has started to bite a little more. Labour pledged in its election manifesto to tackle "the soaring cost of car insurance", but it has yet to explain how. In March Admiral reported a 23 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £442.8 million for 2023.

The Cardiff-based Admiral is Wales' biggest listed company and one of the largest motor insurers in Britain, valued at £8.1 billion. It employs more than 10,000 people, sells household and pet insurance and operates in the United States, France, Italy and Spain. It has 9.2 million policyholders worldwide.

In April, when Rank Group issued its third-quarter numbers, the gambling operator reported that all four of its divisions were in growth measured by net gaming revenue. Grosvenor Casinos was up 8 per cent, Mecca up 10 per cent, Enracha, its Spanish bingo group, was up 9 per cent and digital up 7 per cent. Its full-year results are expected to repeat the feat, with Grosvenor up 8.4 per cent, Enracha up 6.5 per cent and digital up 6.5 per cent. Mecca is being tipped to join them.

David Brohan, of Goodbody, said 2024 had been a positive year for Rank and he expected an operating profit of £44.7 million. He estimates the net benefit of the land-based reforms at £20 million to £25 million, assuming that the new government presses ahead.

Finals Rank Group
Interims Admiral, Empiric Student Property, OSB Group

FRIDAY

No big company announcements are scheduled
Economy ONS monthly retail sales figures

Business

Investment app sinks after failing to pay loan

James Hurley

The taxpayer is expected to lose the majority of its investment in a start-up backed by Jorginho, the Arsenal footballer, which collapsed after it failed to repay a pandemic loan.

The company behind Gather, an app that provides access to funds from asset managers including BlackRock, entered administration after it misunderstood the government's approach to the Future Fund scheme, according to insolvency filings.

Directors of Gather International, the owner of the app, thought their £3.2 million loan from the emergency programme, half of which came from taxpayers, would convert into equity at the end of its term, the company's administrator said. Future Fund debt converts to equity in the event that fresh qualifying finance is raised. If not, the Future Fund has the option to ask for the loan to be repaid with a 100 per cent "redemption premium" when the loan matures, effectively doubling the debt.

Chris Andersen, the administrator, said the "company did not appreciate the Future Fund had adopted [a] hardline policy" of seeking repayment of the loan at the end of its three-year term rather than allowing a conversion to equity, putting the company in a "very difficult financial position". He said that the "significance" of correspondence from the Future Fund confirming that it was seeking repayment "appears to have escaped the directors".

Gather was placed into administration at the end of May by its directors after a winding up petition was issued by the Future Fund in April.

The company was founded in 2019 by Giovanni Bonaccorso, an Italian entrepreneur, and was launched to the public last year, with £5.2 million invested in the app's development and marketing. It is aimed at young, everyday investors and its design is influenced by the accessibility of music and video streaming services. Investments can start at as little as £30 and customers can follow others users' investment choices.

Jorginho, 32, the Arsenal and Italy midfielder, owns nearly 5 per cent of the business, according to filings. He said last year that he wanted to set an example to young footballers who did not think about the future when they start making money.

Gather had been seeking an agreement with the government over an extension of the loan in order to rescue the company as a going concern. It is understood that this has been rejected.

A spokeswoman for the government's British Business Bank, which runs the Future Fund, said that loan extensions were subject to conditions, including "timeliness of extension requests, satisfactory and transparent responses to due diligence checks and confirmation from directors that the company would be able to pay its debts as they fall due following the extension. We do not comment on individual cases."

Andersen, of AABRS, an insolvency firm, wrote that in the event that the bank rejected an extension, the company's assets were likely to be marketed for sale.

The administrator warned that unsecured creditors of Gather, including the Future Fund, could be repaid as little as 3.44p in the pound.

The Future Fund was a pandemic programme that was supposed to support innovative companies by providing them with government loans match-funded by the private sector. The British Business Bank said last week that it was "cautiously optimistic that the portfolio will return a positive return to the taxpayer".

Andersen, AABRS and Gather did not respond to invitations to comment.

Jorginho wanted to set an example to young footballers

Rhubarb adds The Brewery to its menu

London's biggest breweries were once among the most recognisable landmarks in the capital (Dominic Walsh writes). Barclay, Perkins & Co's Anchor Brewery in Southwark became a tourist attraction, producing more than 300,000 barrels a year. Samuel Whitbread's steam-powered brewery in Chiswell Street, Islington, was a wonder of the age.

Today, these powerhouses of the 18th and 19th centuries have long since closed or have undergone a change of use, with the Whitbread facility being converted into one of the City of London's best-known conference and banqueting venues. Beer has not been brewed on the site since 1976. Now The Brewery is set for a new phase in its 274-year history after the sale of the venue to Rhubarb Hospitality Collection.

The deal, to be announced today, expands Rhubarb's footprint in Britain and lifts its workforce to more than 2,500.

Rhubarb runs bars and restaurants in several London venues, including Sky Garden, 22 Bishopsgate and the Royal Albert Hall, and operates restaurants and event spaces in New York and Berlin.

Rhubarb is backed by Oak View Group, an American property investor, which acquired it in 2023. It is a specialist in running live experiences and premium hospitality services and it recently opened Co-op Live in Manchester, where its opening was plagued by numerous issues.

The grade II listed Brewery, which hosts more than 500 events annually, is managed by James Varah, 43, its chief executive, and he will work with his counterpart at Rhubarb, Pieter-Bas Jacobse, 55, to develop a portfolio of premium venues in London.

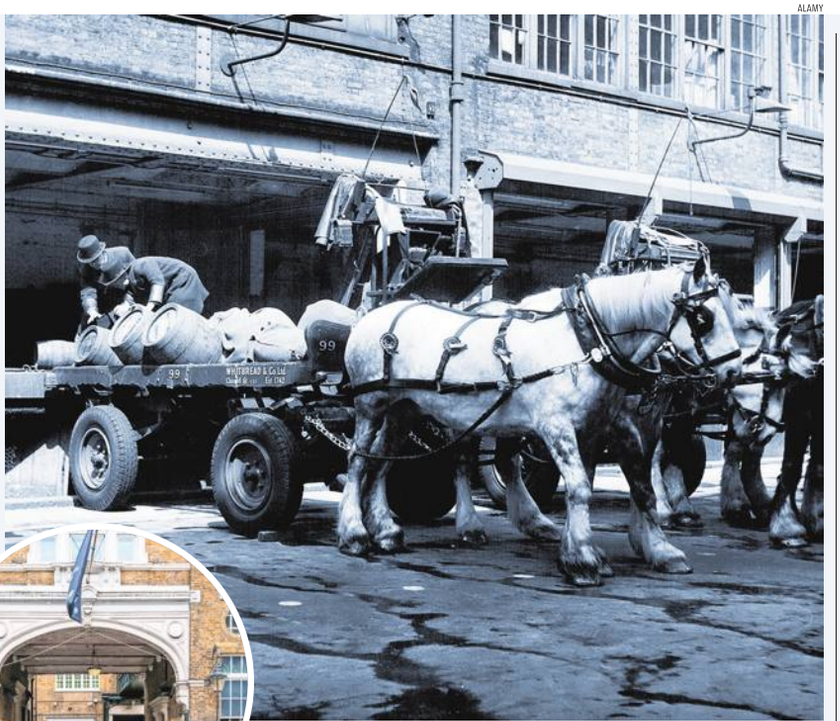
Whitbread continued to operate the London venue as a conference and banqueting centre until 2005, when it was put up for sale for an estimated £45 million to £50 million. At that point, it still housed the old Whitbread offices.

It was sold to EC&O Group, the owner of Earls Court and Olympia at that time, and the undeveloped office space in Chiswell Street was split off separately.

The hotel portion of the project was developed and opened in 2011 under the Montcalm hotel brand, owned by Precis Advisory.

At present, the two parts of The Brewery site in Chiswell Street are owned and run separately from each other.

ALAMY



The Brewery was once the world's largest producer of beer, with a history that goes back to horse-drawn drays

Floor Room joins sister going bust

Jack Barnett

A sister company of Carpetright has followed the same path into administration, throwing nearly 200 staff out of work with immediate effect.

The Floor Room, a carpet and flooring supplier that mainly operated smaller shops within department stores, except for one standalone shop in London, has fallen into administration, with PwC, the accountancy firm, overseeing proceedings.

The company was heavily dependent on Carpetright for support services and its trading. Carpetright's collapse into administration in July had made it "impossible for the business to continue trading", Adam Seres, of PwC, said.

Nestware Holdings, which owned both Carpetright and The Floor Room, had said that the latter would "continue to trade and serve customers via concessions at John Lewis and we will be working hard to secure job opportunities across these businesses to support Carpetright staff wherever we can".

PwC said that it would retain a handful of staff at The Floor Room's head office for a short time while it wound down operations, but that the remaining 196 had been made redundant immediately. Its London store will close straight away.

The consultancy added: "Outstanding orders are unable to be fulfilled and it is recommended that affected customers contact their payment card provider about the possibility of obtaining a refund."

Thriving high streets help breathe life into all our communities

Comment

Simon Roberts and Paddy Lillis

Employing more than three million people, retail is the lifeblood of our communities. As retail business and union leaders, we don't always agree on everything, but on this we do: the No 1 barrier to growth in our industry is the outmoded business rates system.

Retail has been transformed over the past ten years, with online sales tripling to 27 per cent of total retail sales last year. But the business rates system is unchanged, reflecting an era when virtually all shopping was done in stores. This is why since 2018 more than 6,000 stores have closed. Two thirds of closed stores cite business rates as a key factor in shutting up shop.

We represent 148,000 Sainsbury's colleagues and 360,000 Usdaw members and wanted to understand how much the system holds back growth in our sector. So Development Economics carried out a survey into what might happen if the system doesn't change and the potential benefits if it did.

Their findings should concern us all. If our new government doesn't make fundamental changes to the rates system, more than 17,000 more shop fronts will close by 2033. On average, that's 15 more closures in every town in England alone.

With more shops closing and jobs lost, the reduction in Treasury revenue could hit £5.43 billion by 2033-34 — that's nearly 80,000 new teachers or investment into hospitals and councils.

The challenge is that retail businesses account for 20 per cent of business rates revenue, despite making up only 5 per cent of the economy. Successive governments have promised reform but have only ever tinkered around the edges. The result? Shops closing, jobs lost, economic growth stunted. That's why we welcomed the government's manifesto commitment to level the playing field between the high street and online giants. After its victory, this government has a big chance to deliver on this promise and unlock the growth potential of retail.

Our industry is united on the need for reform. A headline cut to retail business rates of 20 per cent — and the growth this would unlock — could safeguard and create more than 17,000 jobs and deliver an extra £70 million per annum to the Treasury after ten years. It could also boost GVA (gross value added) — the value of the goods and services produced, minus the value of the intermediate inputs that were used to produce those goods and services — by £400 million per year.

The government already has a full in-tray and we will do all we can to ensure it succeeds. Of course we all recognise the fiscal pressures, but a government that revitalises growth, boosts jobs and secures long-term funding for public services will be able to look back on its achievements with pride. Reforming business rates won't be a silver bullet to achieving this, but it would be a very good place to start.

Simon Roberts is the chief executive of J Sainsbury. Paddy Lillis is the general secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

Simon French

Investors fear that the US economy is at a turning point, but is that true?

Inflation is set to rise again after rate cut

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

Fears over the health of America's economy have rattled financial markets. Last Monday global stock indices suffered their biggest one-day fall in almost two years. Trading floors buzzed with speculation about an emergency interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve. By the end of the week a semblance of calm had been restored, but confidence remains superficial. Data published in the next few weeks will be pored over for signs of fracturing in the world's largest economy.

What triggered the meltdown in sentiment has been debated extensively. Slowing jobs growth in the United States was the most probable trigger, with figures suggesting that only 117,000 jobs had been added during July. However, the role of Japan in raising its interest rates above zero for the first time in 14 years is also relevant. Cheap money pouring out of Japan in search of returns has been a constant backdrop for many investors' lives; if that is poised to change, then a range of assets, inflated by what has become known as the Yen carry trade, will need to be repriced lower.

Concerns of a more market-orientated nature are also relevant. A large proportion of the recent returns for investors has come from a small number of enormous American technology stocks seen as likely long-term beneficiaries from a boom in artificial intelligence investment. The sustainable returns for these companies, and the use cases they offer, remain an open question. Investors will face cycles of exuberance, hubris and doubt. Not necessarily in that order.

There is also my favoured, if flippant, answer when investors ask why markets have fallen. There were more sellers than buyers. Slightly less flippant is the fact that these big-volatility events (the Nikkei 225 index in Japan recorded its biggest one-day decline in 37 years on Monday, followed by its largest rebound on Tuesday) should be expected with greater frequency amid greater passive investment and algorithmically traded liquidity.

But what is the case that the US economy is at a turning point? With the US stock market accounting for

JAKE MAY/FLINT JOURNAL/AP

Slowing jobs growth in America helped to trigger the stock market sell-off

60 per cent of all stock market value around the world, and therefore of a large portion almost all pensions, the answer will have a significant impact on the finances of readers of The Times.

The US jobs data for July wasn't solely at risk of misinterpretation from the impact of Hurricane Beryl, but also from problems with sampling the American workforce. Payroll data suggests the US has added a healthy 2.5 million jobs over the past year. The household survey that purports to measure the same thing suggests jobs growth of only 57,000. Doubt over what is going on in the labour market has parallels with Britain.

I would suggest that it is unwise to draw big conclusions on relatively small changes in these numbers, yet that was precisely what markets did. The release of the latest US labour market data breached a closely watched indicator known as the Sahm Rule, named after Claudia Sahm, the former Fed economist. This rule, triggered when unemployment rises by 0.5 per cent from its 12-month low, purports to predict a US recession. It did this successfully in 1990, 2001 and 2008.

The problem is that we have been here before with such "rules". In July 2022 the US yield curve, the gap in interest rates between short and long-dated US debt, turned negative. This "inverted yield curve" is perhaps the most celebrated of market rules. It triggered a wide range of forecasters to predict an American recession in 2023; in fact, the economy accelerated and defied the doom-mongers. Such rules are great until they're not.

Despite this, we had the big Wall Street investment banks chasing headlines by raising their likelihood of recession predictions, Goldman Sachs to 25 per cent, JP Morgan to 35 per cent. Forget the fact that such statistical quantification is intellectually flawed, this helped to reinforce the nervous narrative.

At times like this, it is valuable to look at a broader range of indicators. In 2022, when the yield curve inverted, the Fed was selling bonds worth trillions of dollars back to private investors. This was, and remains, distortionary. Today, as the Sahm Rule has been triggered, the role of deficit spending from the Biden administration and the return of real income growth need to provide added context. There can be little doubt that the US jobs market is closer to maxing out than at any time since the pandemic. However, with the participation of American workers still rebounding, contrary to most expectations, the amount of spare capacity left is an open question for Fed policymakers considering their first interest rate cut next month.

That rate-cutting cycle looks most relevant to me. With existing home sales down by 40 per cent from their peak and total bank lending flat since late 2022, it is a reacceleration of the US credit cycle that is a key unknown. The animal spirits required to add to $17.7 trillion of household debt will be a big determinant. Part of this will hinge on how Jerome Powell, the Fed's boss, navigates the run-in to any interest rate cut.

In an election year in which consumer confidence and perceptions of the economy are split down partisan lines, how Kamala Harris and Donald Trump conduct their presidential election campaigns also will play a role. For Harris, this is straightforward. The vice-president's campaign will amplify an economic record of the past four years that, even after stripping out the pandemic, produced a higher rate of economic growth and jobs creation than the first Trump administration. For Trump, the calculation is harder. Trashing the Biden record could be a pyrrhic victory if it pushes the US economy into a recession on his watch.

Overall, I think the US economy is in better shape than recent headlines suggest. The bigger issue is whether US debt markets and equity markets are too big to fail without global collateral damage. It is that sheer scale that frays investors' nerves as much as the volatile data.

Simon French is managing director, chief economist and head of research at Panmure Liberum

Inflation is poised to rise again, weeks after the Bank of England cut interest rates for the first time in more than four years, figures due to be published this week are expected to show.

City analysts think that the rate of prices growth rose to 2.3 per cent in July, having held steady at 2 per cent in the previous two months, in line with the central bank's target.

The latest numbers will provide evidence of how the economy has fared in the first month under a Labour government. The Office for National Statistics also will provide updates on the pace of economic growth, the state of the labour market and retail sales.

Gross domestic product is projected to have increased by 0.2 per cent over the month to June, taking the quarterly growth rate to 0.7 per cent, unchanged from the previous three months, which was the steepest rise in the G7 group of wealthy nations.

BDO, the consultancy, said that its output index had accelerated at the quickest pace in two years in July, propelled by the manufacturing sector and the summer tourism season.

Sir Keir Starmer has pledged to raise economic growth to 2.5 per cent over the long term and to make Britain the fastest-growing economy in the G7. However, analysts have cast doubt on the chances of achieving that aim without a significant rise in investment.

"Supporting the economy in June was likely the boost to hospitality from the start of the European football championships, which Barclays reported to have resulted in greater expenditure in pubs," analysts at Investec said.

Services inflation, which stood at 5.7 per cent in June, has been closely watched by the Bank. At its ratesetting committee's meeting this month, when the base rate was lowered by a quarter-point to 5 per cent, it said that it was now placing greater emphasis on general trends in the economy rather than on a single indicator.

Fresh estimates released on Wednesday are expected to show that inflation in the United States stood at 3 per cent on an annual basis in July, rising from 2.9 per cent in the previous month.

After the weak jobs figures and last week's global stock market turmoil, investors priced in an aggressive round of policy loosening by the US Federal Reserve, with some predicting an emergency interest rate cut before the Fed's next meeting on September 18.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES Bestsellers List

Getting into the festival spirit? It's not as much fun as it sounds

MATT CROSSICK/EMPICS/ALAMY

Dua Lipa was high on the bill at Glastonbury. Smaller festivals, such as Wilderness, in Oxfordshire, offer a route to market for small firms

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

This year more than two million people tried to get a ticket to the Glastonbury music festival. About 200,000 were successful. Such friction between supply and demand means that disappointment is inevitable for most.

The supply of Glastonbury tickets is "inelastic", or, in normal terms, it does not increase quickly in response to a jump in demand. Tickets are scarce, meaning that its organisers can charge £360, including a booking fee, for the privilege of standing in a field in Somerset and paying an arm and a leg for an artisanal vegan burger hewn from cardboard. It is the most expensive music festival ticket in Britain. In 2000, a ticket cost £87.

Yet the British festival market is saturated and alternatives to Worthy Farm abound. The organisers of these alternatives are confident that they can capitalise on this excess demand as festival season gets into full swing. According to the latest available figures, about 6.5 million people attend music festivals in the UK every year.

Fiona Stewart, the managing director and owner of Green Man, an independent music festival with a capacity of about 25,000 that takes place this weekend in Powys, said: "Demand is high. This year's festival sold out in two hours last September."

The supply and demand imbalances that purvey the market for Glastonbury tickets exist elsewhere. According to Stewart, "42,000 people waited in the ticket queue. No artist was announced, so it was on brand trust alone. This happened in 2022 and 2023 as well."

Like most sectors of the economy, festival organisers have had to grapple with rising costs, driven primarily by higher wage, energy and insurance bills. Smaller festivals with less capacity to absorb greater expenditure pressures have been forced to close. Pandemic lockdowns caused havoc across the music industry, with small independent venues, festivals and up-and-coming artists bearing the brunt.

According to Simon Taffe, co-founder of End of the Road, a festival in Dorset with a capacity of 15,000, said that costs had increased by up to 60 per cent since the pandemic. Organisers have increased ticket prices in response.

Tom Kiehl, chief executive of UK Music, the representative body for the industry, said: "While festivals such as Glastonbury have been incredibly successful, it's been a mixed picture, with about 50 festivals that have been postponed, cancelled or shut down completely in 2024."

Nozstock, in Herefordshire, said that this year's edition would be its last after more than 20 years. Buckinghamshire's Towersey Festival succumbed to the same fate after more than 60 years, as have Beacon Festival and Shindig.

Festival closures risk curtailing the vibrancy of local economies. Events held in one area often yield a substantial benefit for output. For example, the Bank of France said last week that the Olympic Games would temporarily accelerate Parisian and national GDP. London continues to receive economic benefits from hosting the Games in 2012.

Such sporting or cultural events provide a route to market for independent food, drink, clothing and beauty suppliers. For lesser-known musicians, festivals can provide crucial exposure to larger crowds than typically they would draw at smaller venues. Brexit has made touring Europe much harder, magnifying the importance of performing on the domestic festival circuit. Jim King, chief executive of European festivals at AEG Presents, which organises All Points East, a string of day festivals in Victoria Park in east London, said that its events delivered "over £45 million in economic expenditure benefit to the local economy each year, of which £5.7 million benefits Tower Hamlets council directly and growing year-on-year".

All Points East also organises free events in Victoria Park for local residents when the festival is not on during the middle of the week, including film screenings and exercise classes.

In recent years, the number of day festivals, often organised in cities, has grown sharply, possibly reflecting consumers' desire to see their favourite bands but without the weekend camping. In a highly competitive market, there is a risk that day festivals lure music lovers away from the traditional festival weekend, raising the chances of further closures.

However, Taffe cast doubt on this. "There might be a slight generational shift in younger people going to more one-day events and not so much a camping festival," he said, "but who wants to be kicked out of a city park at 10.30pm?"

FTSE 100 bosses' pay hits record £4.2m

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

The average pay for FTSE 100 bosses rose to a record of £4.2 million last year. According to an analysis of corporate pay deals by the High Pay Centre, Britain's top bosses enjoyed an average bump from £4.1 million to £4.2 million in 2023, the highest on record. It makes a FTSE 100 chief executive's earnings 120 times the wage of the average British worker.

The increase was driven by a small group of listed companies awarding especially lucrative pay deals, with eight businesses giving out packages in excess of £10 million last year, compared with only four in 2022.

Pay awards for female chief executives of FTSE 100 firms was significantly lower, averaging £2.69 million, compared with £4.19 million for male bosses. Only six companies had female bosses for the whole financial year spanning 2022-23, the High Pay Centre found.

The best-paid FTSE 100 executive was Sir Pascal Soriot, 65, the boss of AstraZeneca, who earned £16.85 million last year, followed by Erik Engstrom, 61, the chief executive of Relx, the analytics provider, whose pay packet was worth £13.64 million. Rolls-Royce, BAE Systems, GSK, HSBC, Pearson and Diageo also awarded eight-figure deals to their bosses.

Sir Pascal Soriot of AstraZeneca is the highest-paid boss

"Higher executive pay has been a key demand of business lobbyists," Luke Hildyard, director of the High Pay Centre, said. "These figures indicate this campaign has had some success, with shareholders at the biggest UK companies becoming more willing to wave through bigger payouts." The High Pay Centre has pushed for governments to introduce limits on excessive corporate pay, which it says hinders businesses from awarding higher wages to workers. It has called for more pay transparency beyond the top executive levels and for two elected workers' representatives to hold seats on remuneration committees.

The Labour government has made no pledges to cap or restrict boardroom pay deals and has ruled out "wealth" taxes. Rachel Reeves, the chancellor, said last month that she would award an average 5.5 per cent pay increase to public sector workers over the next year to put an end to industrial action.

Hildyard said: "The huge pay gap between executives and the wider UK workforce is a result of factors like the decline of trade union membership, low levels of worker participation in business decision-making and a business culture that puts the interests of investors before workers, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders."

Employers expect smaller wage rises in the pipeline

Mehreen Khan

Employers in Britain are expecting to hand out the smallest pay rises in two years in a sign that inflation pressures are easing.

A survey of 2,000 employers by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development found that private sector pay deals would fall from 4 per cent to 3 per cent over the next year, the lowest level since the summer of 2022. In the public sector, pay deals are expected to fall from 3 per cent to 2.5 per cent.

Falling pay expectations will be welcome news for ratesetters at the Bank of England, who have been dealing with high wages growth and a tight labour market. Pay intentions reported by the institute are within the 3 per cent range that is consistent with maintaining inflation at the Bank's 2 per cent target.

Pay throughout the economy, excluding bonuses, rose by 5.7 per cent in the three months to May, with new figures released this week expected to show a dip to about 5.2 per cent in June.

The pace of pay growth has stayed high as inflation has fallen to the Bank's 2 per cent target in the past two months, driven mostly by falling energy and goods prices. Figures released this week are expected to show a rise in consumer prices inflation to 2.3 per cent in July.

A decline in inflation coupled with robust pay growth has helped to boost real earnings over the past year, supporting consumer spending.

James Cockett, senior labour market economist at the CIPD, said the drop in pay intentions had been expected after a fall in inflation. "However, many workers will still feel worse off than a couple of years ago, so other benefits, like providing flexible working ... are in employers' interests," he said.

Are new rules on dismissal being unfair to companies?

THE TIMES ENTERPRISE NETWORK REGULATION

Employers and experts are pondering Labour's reforms to employment conditions, reports **Richard Tyler**

Dominic Ponniah, the co-founder and chief executive of Cleanology, a commercial cleaning company, calls it "unworkable". Ben Willmott, head of public policy at the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, prefers the description "uncharted territory". They are describing the government's plan to make unfair dismissal a right from the first day in a job. Both of them may be right.

What is certain is that the government is preparing to change the balance of power between employers and employees in a way that has not been done before in modern Britain. Since the 1970s, employers have been given a grace period to hire new recruits without the risk of facing unfair dismissal claims if the person doesn't work out. The grace period variously has been six months of service, one year and, since 2012, after two years. But never from day one.

The reform is the most significant change within the government's New Deal package of employment law reforms, first promised in 2021 and which it has said will be presented to parliament by mid-October. Employers and their advisers are particularly concerned about the impact of the right to claim unfair dismissal from the first day in a job.

Cleanology employs 1,300 people and voluntarily has paid its cleaners the London-weighted "real living wage" since 2022, at present £13.15 an hour. Ponniah, who turns 45 this month, says the new right bumps up against the reality of employing people. Some don't do what they say and employers need to act quickly where a new hire doesn't work out, without getting tied up with multiple formal performance reviews, common after two years of service but not for those still working their probation. If that consultative process is not followed to the letter, the employer loses any related employment tribunal.

"For employers like us, it's a bit of a kick in the teeth. We are trying to do the right thing. What are we supposed to do [when faced by new hires who repeatedly don't turn up for work]? Do we wait a week and then have a disciplinary hearing that they might not turn up to, while paying someone else to do the work?"

Lisa Kay, the founder of Sole Bliss, a footwear brand, is also mulling over the changes. Her business is expanding rapidly and hopes to double its 18-strong team in the next year. A two-year risk-free period has allowed Sole Bliss to give people time to show they share the company's values and work ethic and to fit in with the rest of the team. "In the past we have given people a chance where we were not 100 per cent."

When day one unfair dismissal rights come in, Kay, 60, expects Sole Bliss to "take longer at interviews", exploring unexplained gaps in CVs and double-checking references. She says it may also extend workers' probation periods from three to six months. "You can never tell about the capability of someone or their conduct from day one."

Ponniah already operates a six-month probation period, although most staff clear the hurdle after a third performance review at 12 weeks because they are good at their jobs. Nevertheless, he will need to make changes. "It will definitely make a difference to the way we recruit. Where we are not sure about someone, we might have said, 'Let's give them a go.' Now if we have any doubts we will not. We have to be more cautious."

Labour's reforms,

Labour's reforms include scrapping zero-hours contracts, increasing pay reporting at large companies, toughening existing duties to prevent sexual harassment at work and introducing day one rights to statutory sick pay and to maternity and paternity pay.

On its plans for day one unfair dismissal rights, it promises to find a way to accommodate probationary periods that have "fair and transparent rules and processes" so that employers can "assess new hires". "The changes will help to ensure that newly hired workers are not fired without reason or cause and will help drive up standards in workplaces," it has said.

Taken together, the reforms are significant. "This is absolutely the biggest change in UK employment law since the Labour government signed up to the social chapter in the late 1990s," in the view of Tom Bray, an employment law partner at Eversheds Sutherland, the legal firm.

This month the TUC published

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JUSTIN TALLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

being led by Angela Rayner, will make Lisa Kay, left, founder of Sole Bliss, much more careful about the people she hires

research commissioned from the University of Cambridge that highlighted how British employment laws remain "significantly weaker" than those in other big economies such as France, Germany, Italy and Spain, although they are stronger than those in the United States.

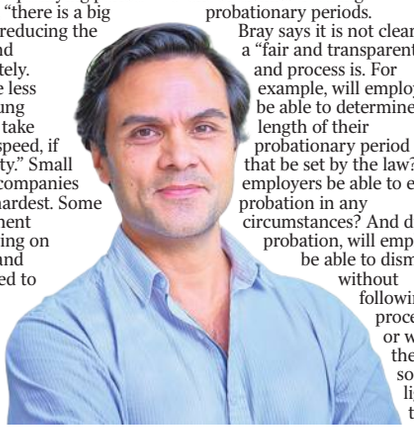
Robert McKellar, legal services director at Peninsula, an HR and employment law specialist, offers a counter-argument: "Employees aren't exactly short on rights as it stands. There are 88 different employment rights across 80 pieces of employment law that employees benefit from including, from day one, rights in matters such as equalities and the national living wage."

Willmott says that while the CIPD supports a cut in the qualifying period for unfair dismissal, "there is a big difference between reducing the qualifying period and removing it completely. Employers might be less likely to take on young workers who might take longer to get up to speed, if there is less flexibility." Small and medium-sized companies are likely to be hit hardest. Some do not use employment contracts at all, relying on verbal agreements and leaving them exposed to claims.

"HR and people management is the Achilles' heel for most smaller companies. That really needs to be understood by policy makers. The removal of that two-year qualifying period will be a significant disruption."

To bring in day one unfair dismissal rights, the rules around probation periods are likely to change. If the right is disapplied during probation periods, there is a risk that some employers may extend them to two years. To counter that, the government could cap probation periods, for the first time.

Large employers have spent the summer trying to find out if they will need to revise their employment contracts, lawyers say. Contracts determine rights to notice in the event of dismissal during probationary periods.



Dominic Ponniah fears the plans don't fit reality

Bray says it is not clear what a "fair and transparent rule and process is. For example, will employers be able to determine the length of their probationary period or will that be set by the law? Will employers be able to extend probation in any circumstances? And during probation, will employers be able to dismiss without following any procedure, or will there be some light-touch procedure?" Compensation awards by tribunals for those in work for only a short time also need to be clarified. At present, the compensation is capped at one year's salary or £115,000, whichever is lower.

Another factor is that the employment tribunal system will face more claims. It is already struggling. "The system is significantly backlogged. We are still seeing cases being brought in 2024 being listed for 2026 for hearings," says McKellar. "It means that both the employer and the employee have an incredibly stressful situation hanging over them." To move on more quickly, many employers settle even vexatious cases. McKellar says it happens in 75 per cent of the cases that Peninsula sees.

What happens next? The government has promised to consult and canvass views. "It is crucial we get the balance right," the Department for Business and Trade said, "which is why employers will still be able to use probation periods to assess new staff and we will consult fully with business before new laws come into effect."

Willmott wants ministers to play the long game. "It is important that there is a period of reflection to understand what would be the best approach that would prompt employers to improve their employment practices and not have negative unintended consequences that could adversely affect businesses and workers."

Now, as a pregnant person, I have a prickle of dread

Amy Williams

"How's it all going, you know, 'down below'?" A question I truly never thought I'd be asked at an industry networking event. The flustered male in front of me gestures towards the swell of my newly visible baby bump as he waits for me to recover from the shock of the question.

The honest answer is that "down below" is going about as well as any terrifying and accelerating identity crisis could be expected to go. But I say, "Oh, just great thanks, my husband and I are very excited", as I pat my stomach like a hungry baker.

My body has been coming up a lot lately. What I put in it seems to be a hot topic. So far three men have taken it upon themselves to check that my drinks are non-alcoholic. Four people have touched my body unprompted and I find myself in regular conversation about the various ways my body may "need time" or "bounce back".

I've grown accustomed to the prickle of dread that oozes down my spine when I walk into a business meeting and feel eyes start scanning downwards. Knowing that in this room of strangers, my body is disclosing something deeply personal, with zero relevance to today's agenda. Explaining to my all-male board that, in New York State, if my baby ends up coming through my vagina, I will be entitled to fewer weeks of disability leave than if she arrives via c-section, was a particular highlight.

> "The easiest and most wonderful part of this experience has been other women

Being pregnant just is a very corporeal and very biologically female experience. That's obvious, but it has taken me by surprise all the same. As a woman who has proudly fought for my "same and equal" position in the workplace, I am now, in a very visceral way, no longer the same *or* equal to my biologically male colleagues.

For all my talk of building an inclusive and supportive workplace at my company, Good-Loop, it turns out that I wasn't even bringing my whole self to work. And I didn't realise I was doing it until my womb and womanhood pushed themselves, uninvited, into my 9 to 5.

I am working hard to integrate these new, or lost, parts of myself into my professional identity. For a start, I'm wearing more dresses in the workplace (in part out of necessity). But there are some things even the cutest ankle-length gingham one-piece can't solve.

As chief executive, I must be decisive and confident. It is my job to make the tough decisions that are best for the business and that best protect my staff, stakeholders and shareholders. But as an expectant mother, I must advocate for myself and my rights, making decisions that are best for my future family.

As a founder I must follow my gut, knowing that no decision is perfect but trusting in my ability to pursue the instincts that have got me this far. But as a pregnant person, I must wade through a soup of unfamiliar hormones that make me second-guess every emotion. I find myself agonising over which reactions are justified and which are "artificially" amplified, gaslighting my own feelings.

The running joke is that this baby will be my "second born". From the other founders I know, it seems we have a predisposition to care a little too much about our companies, all tied up with slightly too much of ourselves. For eight years, my identity has been one thing above all else: Good-Loop's founder.

How am I expected to simply now also become someone's mother? To have something that matters just as much, or probably more? This is the hardest question I'm yet to answer.

The easiest and most wonderful part of this experience has been other women. The two female members of my team who left a little Danish pastry on my desk the day I announced my news. My female colleague who, at a conference in France, spent every morning helping me to wrestle my bump into some sort of prenatal jock strap. My female client who posted a bottomless babygrow to our office, advising me that the high volume of nappy changes in the early days make this a must-have item. My female mentor who, having founded and exited a company while raising children, pointed out the opportunity that lies ahead: I have the power to make Good-Loop an incredible workplace for other mothers like me. The many, many women who have sent out little, almost imperceptible messages of "I see you".

Being a pregnant woman feels a bit like being a VW campervan owner, powering down the A5. You take up too much of the lane and your speed is embarrassingly limited. But there is nothing more emboldening than the solemn nod of acknowledgement from another VW campervan owner driving in the other direction.

Checking the alcohol content of someone's drink, or buying them a Danish — how big an impact such small gestures can have in moments of vulnerability. So, as someone who has the privilege of rarely feeling that different or scrutinised in the workplace, I have a new-found resolution to never again wait until I'm the one in need of "the nod".

Amy Williams is the founder and chief executive of Good-Loop, a B-Corp registered technology platform that encourages people to engage with online advertisements by paying for their time through charity donations

Business Equity prices

Automobiles & parts

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
1,147.09	Aston Martin Lag	139	-6¾		-3.7

Banking & finance

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
2,659.34	Abrdn	149⅛	-14½	9.8	...
4.43	Acuity RM♦	2⅞	-⅛		-2.1
7,928.91	**Admiral**	2675	-22	2.7	24.1
10.18	ADVFN♦	22	+½		-5.5
1,748.27	AJ Bell	424	-16	2.6	21.5
56,021.14	Aon Corpn	25787⅜	-86⅛	...	25.4
154.22	Arbuthnot Bkg♦	945	-32½	4.9	4.2
2.34	Argo Group♦	6	...		-0.2
1,091.60	Ashmore	164½	-¾	10.3	11.3
43,275.21	Aus New Z	1442⅛	-66	...	12.3
12,814.53	**Aviva**	482½	+4⅝	6.9	12.9
53,447.40	Banco Santander	345	+4½	4.4	6.0
1,790.84	Bank of Georgia	3995	-155	5.8	2.8
32,098.07	**Barclays**	218¼	+9⅛	3.7	8.4
1.17	Blue Star Capital♦	...	...		-0.2
204.93	BP Marsh&Ptnrs♦	555	+5	1.9	4.8
3.03	Braveheart Inv♦	4¾	-½		-0.4
1,564.20	Brewin Dolphin	515	+1	...	28.1
2,176.19	Bridgepoint	274½	-8⅜	3.2	30.5
16.44	Cenkos Secs♦	29	+2	...	5.9
390.22	Chesnara	258½	+3	9.4	21.0
11.94	City of Lon Gp♦	10	-14	...	-0.6
180.64	City Lon Inv Gp	371	+3	9.1	12.8
711.51	Close Bros	472¾	-13⅜	9.5	5.0
888.41	CMC Markets‡	317½	+11	2.6	85.8
12,476.33	Commerzbk	1053⅛	-112	...	6.8
22,692.20	Deutsche Bk	1137½	+10	...	4.6
2,260.59	Direct Line Ins	174⅛	-4⅛	2.3	11.1
491.78	EFG-Hermes Hldg	67⅜	...		7.7
49.00	EPE Special Opps♦	164	-5		...
453.81	FBD‡	1117½	+17	...	6.7
9.46	Fiske♦	80	+5	0.3	16.0
59.60	Frenkel Topping♦	48½	+½	2.1	37.3
413.73	Georgia Capital	1000	+8		2.3
451.54	Gresham House♦	1100	+5	...	30.5
170.01	H&T Group♦	392	+1	4.1	8.0
63.55	Hansard Global	46½	-1½	9.4	9.7
5,222.11	**Hargreaves Lansdown**	1102	+2	3.9	19.6
124.85	Helios Under♦	175	-6	3.4	8.3
118,545.24	**HSBC**	642½	+6⅛	7.6	7.0
3,379.25	IG Group	916½	+1	4.9	12.4
460.67	Impax♦	360	-28½	7.7	11.6
5,786.48	**Intermed Capital**	1991	+11	4.0	12.4
347.66	IPF	153½	+½	6.7	7.6
2,410.07	International Public P'ship	127	-¾		86.9
3,719.36	Investec	576½	-5½	5.7	8.4
16.89	Investment Co	354	-1		43.9
373.21	IP Group	36¾	-2⅞	1.4	-2.2
22.59	Jarvis Securities♦	50½	-10½	10.7	5.6
391.88	Jupiter Fund Mgmt‡	76⅛	-6½	8.7	...
1,192.43	Just Group	114¾	-⅛	1.8	10.2
1,497.89	Lancashire Holdings	624	+9	2.7	6.0
13,188.89	**Legal & Gen**	224⅜	+4⅜	9.2	30.8
1,438.66	Liberty Group	502⅝	-50034⅜	...	16.2
394.31	Liontrust‡	617	-21	11.8	7.7
63.66	Livermore Invs♦	38½	...		6.1
35,298.59	**Lloyds Banking Group**‡	56⅞	+1½	5.0	8.1
14.17	LMS Capital	17½	...		-3.8
52,213.72	**Lond Stk Ex Gp**	9828	+88	1.1	71.1
4,801.25	**M&G**	201⅝	+⅝	9.8	16.2
2,467.40	Man‡	213⅜	-17½	6.0	14.0
20.61	Manx Fin♦	17¼	-¾	2.6	4.9
1.59	Marechale Cap♦	1½	...		-3.6
412.66	Mattioli Woods♦	793	...	3.4	41.3
15.35	Metal Tiger♦	9	+1	...	-2.0
398.93	Metro Bank	59¼	+3½		4.4
56,731.36	Nat Aust Bk	1837¾	-124¾	...	16.1
27,727.59	**NatWest**‡	333	+7⅜	5.3	7.1
377.31	Numis♦	343	+1	...	...
1,857.42	Onesavings Bank	481⅜	-8½	6.6	7.4
508.66	PayPoint	702	+30	2.7	16.4
3.17	PCF Group♦	⅞	+¼	...	-0.4
5,363.41	**Phoenix**	535½	+6½	9.8	...
17,289.28	**Prudential**	632¾	-12½	2.6	13.0
8.72	Quantum Blockchain♦	⅝	...		-2.0
1,950.57	Quilter	140½	+9½	3.7	45.3
0.28	Randall & Quilter♦#	...	-1¾	...	...
2,001.44	Rathbone Grp	1848	-36	3.1	36.3
1.71	RiverFort Global Opps♦#	⅛	...	1.6	-0.3
85.32	Rockwood Strategic‡	265	-8½		25.0
229.04	S & U	1885	+10	6.3	9.0
2.69	Sancus Lending Grp♦	⅜	...		-0.1
229.39	Schroder REIT‡	46⅞	-1⅜		78.1
5,442.45	**Schroders**	337½	-7⅜	6.3	13.9
3,807.98	St James Place	699½	+11½	3.4	...
17,993.69	**Stand Chart**‡	715⅜	+26⅜	3.3	8.0
6.82	Starvest♦	11⅝	-¼	...	-1.9
30.33	STM Group♦	52½	...	1.1	75.0
21,721.96	Sun Life Can	3755⅜	-45⅝	4.7	12.1
15.97	Tavistock Inv♦	2¾	...	2.4	...
1,540.53	TBC Bank Group	2800	-5	7.4	4.4
8.22	Tern♦	1⅞	...		-0.5
75.22	Thames Ventures VCT	42⅛	...		-5.4
43.94	Time Finance♦	47½	-4½		11.2
137.99	Vanquis	53¾	-1⅛	11.3	...
31.62	Volvere♦	1425	-25		17.6
7.67	WH Ireland♦	3¼	...		-0.4
8.52	Walker Crips Grp	20	+1	2.5	15.8
139,778.75	Wells Fargo	4106½	-66½	...	10.8
50,049.65	Westpac	1446¾	-85½	...	15.6
9.89	Worsley Investors Ltd	29¼	-¼		...
61,100.98	Zurich Fincl	41748¼	-498¼	...	17.9

Investment companies

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Forecast Yld%	Forecast P/E
29,308.06	**3I Group**	3011	+182	2.8	40.6
3,126.77	3i Infrastructure	339	+12	3.3	-7.9
1,333.25	Aberforth Smlr	1584	+218	3.2	-12.8
3,379.18	Alliance	1190	-34	1.9	-3.4
635.78	Asia Dragon Tr	399	+42	1.5	-16.1
3.99	Athelney Trust	185	+2	5.0	-6.5
1,027.74	AVI Global Trust	229	-1	1.4	-10.2
114.58	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	186½	-6½	0.8	-10.8
327.48	BaillieGifford Eu Gr	92	-4⅞	2.3	-14.6
616.19	Baillie Gifford JpnTr	690	-42	1.1	-12.7
326.95	Baillie Gifford SN	108	-9	...	-16.3
254.36	Baillie Gifford UK Gr	173	+10	1.9	-15.1
603.33	Bal Comm Prop	86	+7	4.6	-27.7
1,317.70	Bankers Inv Trst	111	-1	2.0	-10.8
1,385.79	BH Macro	385	+49	...	-13.5
332.19	Biotech Growth	992	+1	...	-5.2
142.19	BlckRck Com Inc	113	-7	3.4	-10.8
277.36	BlckRck Fro Inv	146½	-8½	3.8	-8.1
583.18	BlckRck Grt Euro	582	-43	1.0	-5.6
39.91	BlckRck Inc & Gwth	198	+16	3.5	-12.2
709.32	BlckRck Smlr	1506	+148	2.7	-11.7
152.84	BlckRck Sustain Amer	197	-4	3.5	-10.1
583.81	BlckRck Throgmorton	631	+46	2.2	-10.3
1,003.71	BlckRck Wld Min	525	-43	5.9	-6.3
158.95	Brown Adv US sm	1340	+25	...	-11.9
574.22	Brunner	1345	+45	1.6	-4.9
1,940.84	Caledonia Inv	3560	+130	1.2	-35.4
2,143.42	City of Lon IT	429½	+22½	4.9	-2.2
77.32	Crystal Amber Fd♦	101	+24	22.6	-31.2
334.37	CT Priv Eq Ord	466	+23	3.9	-35.8
3.58	CT Property	73½	+73½	4.1	-14.5
339.53	CT UK Cap&Inc	333	+13	3.6	-3.5
27.02	CT UK HIT B	88	+4	...	-8.7
76.87	CT UK HIT	92¼	+8¼	5.9	-4.9
28.35	Dunedin Entp	515	+25	5.7	-22.3
1,136.73	Edinburgh IT	752	+51	3.6	-9.5
584.06	Edin Wwide	152⅜	+7⅜	...	-11.7
88.25	EP Global Opp	302	+18	1.3	-21.6
307.50	European Assets	85⅜	+⅜	5.6	-11.7
570.62	European Opp Trust	866	+2	0.3	-10.6
5,162.88	**F&C Invest Tr**	1026	+34	1.3	-10.8
352.63	Fidlty Asian Val	495	-21	2.6	-9.6
991.55	Fidelity China Sp	189⅛	-16¾	2.7	-10.9
531.08	FdltyEmrgMkt	693½	+17½	2.0	-11.9
1,594.05	Fidelity European Trust	390	+3	2.0	-4.9
193.96	Fidlty Jap Tru	159	-19	...	-10.5
1,035.50	Fidlty Spec Val	319½	+30½	2.8	-9.5
1,531.55	Fins Gwth & Inc	827	...	2.0	-7.4
702.06	GCP Infrastructure	80⅞	+8⅞	6.3	-35.8
28.00	Gldn Prosp Prc Mtl	32¾	-3¼	...	-18.7
3,326.85	Greencoat UK Wind	145	+6	6.3	-16.9
86.40	Hansa Investment	216	+4	0.8	-43.2
165.60	Hansa Inv Co 'A'	207	+8	0.8	-45.9
1,893.45	Hbrvest Glbl Pt Eq	2460	+170	...	-42.8
2.91	Hend Euro Foc	1235	+1055	2.1	-11.7
282.31	Hend High Inc	164	+7	6.0	-8.2
669.55	Hend Smlr	897	+117	2.9	-14.4
1,151.25	Herald	2110	+10	...	-12.4
2,329.84	HgCapital Trust	509	+22	1.3	-4.6
2,551.55	HICL Infra	125½	-⅜	5.2	-22.6
...	Highbridge Tactical	...	...	...	61.1
859.72	ICG Ent Tr	1290	+44	1.6	-38.7
1,033.21	Impax Env Mkts	386½	-11½	1.0	-11.0
208.95	Invesco Asia Tr	316	+5	4.2	-12.3
329.37	Invesco Bond Inc	170½	-2½	6.9	2.1
0.08	IPST Bal#	140½	-2½	2.5	-9.4
179.06	IPST Gbl Eq	287	+19	2.3	-9.8
0.03	IPST Managed#	103	-3	0.9	-6.6
0.57	IPST UK Eq#	164½	+½	3.7	-13.3
1,782.82	JPM American	975	-3	0.7	1.7
303.31	JPM Asia Gro & Inc	358	+4	3.9	-9.3
165.57	JPM China	199	-16	5.2	-10.6
406.29	JPM Claverhs	710	+16	4.8	-4.7
3.42	JPMorgan Emerg E & ME & Africa	648	+520	1.0	158.6
1,217.62	JPM Em Mkts	108½	+4½	1.4	-11.7
664.21	JPM Euro disc	452½	-9½	2.0	-10.4
386.59	JPM GEMI	132	-1	3.5	-11.2
2,612.77	JPM GG&I	556	-2	3.2	1.3
730.52	JPM Indian	1028	+102	...	-19.4
169.85	JPM Jap Sml Co	313	+3	3.8	-12.8
759.03	JPM Japan	520	-12	1.1	-8.7
3.24	JPM Mid Cap#	1220	+1220	2.9	-14.6
0.90	JPM Multi-asset G&I#	101¾	+101¾	5.7	...
507.78	JPM Smllr Co	369	+70	3.3	-13.4
130.82	Keystone Positive Change Inv plc	217	-10	0.1	-11.5
1,160.18	Law Debenture	885	+68	3.9	-1.0
345.84	Lowland	128	+9	3.5	-12.5
122.96	Majedie	232	-16	2.6	-9.0
246.24	M Currie Port	356	-23	1.0	-1.7
51.47	Marwyn Val In	92¾	+2¾	4.9	-52.2
1,889.82	Mercantile IT	243½	+20½	3.0	-12.1
864.73	Merchants	583	+36	5.3	-0.2
406.78	Mid Wynd	778	+6	1.2	-1.6
2,447.39	Monks Inv Tst	1138	-2	0.2	-11.1
270.88	Montanaro Eur Sml	143	+4	0.6	-13.9
919.63	Murray Income Trust	868	+25	4.3	-9.7
1,539.09	Murray Int	250½	+4½	4.1	-10.8
4.08	Nb Global Floating	88	-3⅛	5.4	-9.6
459.64	Pacific Assets	380	+16	0.5	-12.6
1,435.36	Pantheon Int	306	-21	...	-32.6
822.26	PatriaPrivEq	542	-2½	...	...
6,554.16	**Pershing Sq**	3562	+30	0.5	-26.7
1,673.22	Personal Assets	487½	+2½	1.5	-0.7
3,575.48	Polar Cap Tech	2960	-45	...	-9.8
19.33	Prem Glb & Inf	106	+13	6.7	-14.9
2,505.03	Renewables Inf	100¾	+2¾	5.7	-24.0
2,717.36	RIT Cap Ptnr	1856	+74	...	-28.0
214.74	Riverstone	791	-129	...	-26.9
430.87	Schroder TotRt	449	+4	2.3	-7.8
788.65	Schrd Asia Pac	523	+20	2.1	-12.3
202.03	Schrod Inc Gwth	291	+19	4.5	-10.9
287.84	Schrod Jap Gwth	243	-17	1.8	-9.9
219.24	Schrod UKMid	634	+72	3.1	-14.8
95.79	Schroder UK PP Tr	11⅜	-1½	...	-47.6
902.28	Scot American	506	+20	2.6	-0.6
11,385.78	**Scot Mtge**	826	-35	0.4	-9.1
304.20	Secs Tst Scot	220	+6	3.0	-0.4
1,279.70	Sequoia Eco	79⅛	-2¾	7.4	-13.5
763.57	Temple Bar	266½	+18½	3.6	-6.3
1,791.79	Tplton Emg Mkt	161⅜	+7⅜	2.7	-15.2
811.62	The Glbl Smaller	163	+4	1.3	-9.8
0.76	Tiger Royal and Inv♦	⅛	+⅛	...	122.2
1,066.30	TR Property	336	+22	4.4	-6.1
2.59	Troy Inc&Gth#	79¾	+79¾	3.7	-0.3
87.62	Utilico Ord	104½	-3½	3.2	-42.5
424.65	Utilico Emerging Mkt	223	...	3.1	-18.5
1,112.91	Vietnam Ent Inv	562	-39	...	-16.9
1,616.54	Witan	265	+13	2.2	-8.4
1,954.92	Ww Health	360	+26	0.8	-9.5

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Construction & property

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
88.53	Alumasc♦	245	+21	4.3	11.1
10.65	Aseana Props	6⅝	...		-1.9
1,230.46	Assura	41⅛	-1⅛	8.1	...
5.37	Aukett Swanke♦	1½	...		...
2,089.58	Balfour Beatty	407⅛	+2½	2.8	11.7
5,104.91	**Barratt Devs**	523¾	+⅛	5.4	23.2
3,260.64	Bellway	2748	-22	4.1	15.2
5,306.59	**Berkeley**	5020	-10	1.3	11.9
2,359.38	Big Yellow Group	1208	-8	3.8	9.5
60.12	Billington Hldgs♦	487	+7	4.1	6.1
291.30	Boot (Henry)	218	-3	3.3	11.3
1,369.18	BREEDON	398½	-12	3.4	12.8
3,679.97	Br Land	396½	-9⅛	5.8	...
15.91	Caledonian Tst♦	135	...		...
153.04	Cap & Regnl	65¾	-2	8.5	34.6
23.87	Cardiff Prop	2300	...	0.9	20.2
10.44	Carecapital♦#	1⅞	...	...	-0.2
88.39	Clarke T	159	-¼	...	11.5
1,148.53	Countryside Partner	229¾	+11	...	16.7
0.76	Craven House♦	19½	-7¾		-0.1
2,627.61	Derwent London	2340	+42	3.4	-5.5
44.33	Dolphin Capital♦#	4⅞	+⅜		-5.1
20.51	First Prop♦	18½	...		...
4.87	Fletcher King♦	47½	...	1.5	21.7
197.28	Foxtons Group‡	65	+1	1.4	38.2
304.09	Galliford Try	303	-2	3.8	21.9
1,171.10	Genuit Group	470	-18½	2.6	30.5
344.45	Gleeson (MJ)	590	+16	2.2	20.2
2,014.48	Grafton	1006¾	-10⅛	3.3	11.6
1,778.86	Grainger	241	-2	2.9	...
1,398.29	Great Portland	345	+1	3.4	-3.4
1,350.09	Hammerson	27	-1⅜	5.5	...
537.79	Harworth Gp	166	-2	0.8	14.4
10.39	Heath (Samuel)♦	410	+120	3.2	12.2
282.25	Helical PLC	230	+4½	2.1	-1.4
30.59	Highcroft Invs	587½	-42½	...	-2.5
707.43	Ibstock	180	+1½	3.8	33.9
800.73	James Halstead♦	185	-4	4.4	17.2
1,141.82	Keller	1580	+166	2.8	13.1
11,306.01	Kingspan Group	6214⅛	-162⅛	0.3	20.5
4,618.34	**Land Sec**	620	-16	6.4	...
121.80	Life Science Reit	34¾	+¾		-5.6
8.96	Lon & Assoc	10½	...		-2.3
4,050.68	**Londonmetric Property**	198½	-5½	5.1	18.7
21.27	Macau Prop Op	34⅜	-1⅛		-1.7
859.75	Marshalls	340	+2½	2.4	46.5
90.87	Michelmersh♦	97	-½	4.8	9.6
3.94	Mindflair PLC♦	1	...		-0.7
1,365.05	Morgan Sindall	2920	+130	3.8	11.6
359.68	Mountview‡	9225	-400	5.6	13.5
254.50	NewRiver REIT‡	82	+⅜	8.4	82.0
62.97	Palace Capital‡	218	-14	6.8	-9.2
52.33	Panther Securities♦	300	-15	4.0	11.8
5,044.23	**Persimmon**	1577	+20½	3.7	19.8
2.74	Plaza Cent	40	...		-1.1
1,250.15	Primary Health Properties‡	93½	...	7.3	46.8
60.16	Real Estate Invs♦	34½	+½	6.6	-6.3
2,464.24	Redrow	745	+11½	3.4	11.6
1,791.59	Safestore	820	-3	3.7	6.8
1,614.35	Savills	1192	-70	1.7	41.3
5.17	Secure Property♦	4	...		...
12,079.35	**Segro**‡	893⅛	-32⅛	3.1	...
278.97	SIG	24⅛	+⅝		-6.3
746.95	SigmaRoc♦	67	-2½		35.2
1,446.64	Sirius Real Estate	96⅛	+⅝	5.5	13.0
50.25	Smart (J)	127½	...	2.5	...
33.95	Steppe Cement♦	15½	+1		9.4
5,562.98	**Taylor Wimpey**	157⅛	+2½	6.2	15.8
67.30	Town Centre	139	-6	3.5	5.4
1,868.05	Travis Perkins	886	-7	2.0	49.7
4,013.74	Tritax Big Box Reit	161¾	-4⅜		43.4
544.59	Tritax Eurobox	67½	...		...
775.93	Tyman	398	-5½	3.4	20.4
4,613.67	**Unite**	944½	-20	3.8	38.3
4,337.81	**Vistry Group**	1293	-20		20.3
365.81	Warehouse REIT	86	-⅛		10.6
1,169.30	Workspace Grp	609	-4	4.6	-6.0
18.61	Wynnstay Props♦	690	+20	3.8	13.7

Consumer goods

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
0.65	Agriterra♦	⅞	...		-0.2
10.03	Airea♦	26	-3	2.1	13.0
248.78	Anglo-Eastern	630	+24	3.8	6.2
166.03	Animalcare♦	275	-1	1.8	...
18,179.53	**AB Foods**	2457	-7	2.2	15.8
842.17	Bakkavor Group	146½	-5	4.9	15.9
686.97	Barr (AG)	619	-15	2.4	18.0
2.93	Bidstack Group♦#	⅛	...	...	-0.3
8.24	Brand Architekts♦	29½	...		-1.4
61,943.66	**Brit Amer Tob**	2801	+13	8.3	-4.3
3,121.22	Britvic	1265	-3	2.5	24.8
2,455.58	**Burberry**	684¾	-45⅜	8.7	9.2
581.02	C&C Grp‡	151⅛	-7	3.2	-6.0
5.69	Capital Metals♦	1⅝	...		-9.5
122.76	Carr's Grp	130	-9	4.9	...
53.17	Character Grp♦	285	-8	6.9	10.1
126.48	Churchill China♦	1150	-40	3.1	16.3
9,765.65	**Coca Cola HBC**	2684	-150	2.9	17.9
53.84	Colefax♦	865	-5	0.6	10.0
2,469.30	Cranswick‡	4600	-35	1.9	21.9
562.20	Devro	329	+½	...	17.8
53,872.33	**Diageo**	2426½	+46½	3.3	16.5
3.85	Distil♦	⅜	...		-2.6
449.76	Evans (M.P.)♦	850	...	5.2	11.1
143.42	Finsbury Food♦	110	+½	...	13.1
3,305.08	Games Workshop‡	10030	+40	3.7	23.6
3,964.17	Glanbia	1525⅛	...	1.9	15.1
788.91	Greencore	173¾	+¾		16.5
117.95	Headlam	146	-5	6.9	15.2
824.34	Hilton Food	920	+12	3.4	22.8
40.76	Hornby♦	24	...		-4.6
18,090.40	**Imperial Brands**	2126	-16	6.9	9.2
2.62	J Lewis Hford♦	1¼	+⅛	...	7.9
12,565.25	Kerry Gp	7343¼	+556¼	1.3	20.6
214.31	McBride	123½	-5		12.2
67.59	Mulberry Group♦	112½	+7½	0.8	36.4
420.10	Nichols♦‡	1150	+5	2.5	22.8
204.01	Norcros	228	-1	4.5	7.6
282.71	Origin Ents♦	265¼	...	5.4	8.3
0.77	Pittards♦#	5⅜	-1	...	2.5
29.24	Portmeirion♦	212½	+2½	2.5	-3.4
11.84	Provexis♦	½	...		...
432.13	PZ Cussons	103⅛	+2⅛	5.1	...
35.83	REA	81¾	+1½		-3.1
1.44	Real Gd Fd♦#	1⅜	...	...	-0.1
9.03	Tandem♦	165	...		-7.3
273.25	Treatt‡	450	+9½	1.8	24.3
1.19	Ukrproduct Gp♦	3	...		3.0
137,893.32	Unilever (NV)	5530	-154	3.0	24.9
117,834.51	**Unilever**‡	4730	-116	3.0	21.3
198.18	Victoria♦	174⅜	+7⅛		-1.8

Engineering

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
0.31	Ass Br Eng#	15	...		-6.2
376.76	Avon Rubber‡	1256	+6	1.4	...
2,621.52	Babcock	518½	+7	0.3	82.3
38,680.41	**BAE**	1277½	-4½	2.3	21.1
15.84	Braime A N/V♦	1100	+100	1.3	6.9
28.08	Braime Group♦	1950	...	0.7	12.3
12.54	Caffyns‡	460	...	2.1	9.7
10.27	Cap XX Ld♦	¼	...		-0.6
152.10	Castings‡	350	...	5.2	9.1
2.06	Chamberlin♦#	1⅛	...	...	5.0
28.08	Checkit♦	26	...		-6.1
335.10	Cohort♦	832	...	1.6	25.5
112.50	Crestchic Plc♦	399	...	...	...
88.95	Dewhurst♦‡	1150	+25	1.3	18.1
73.05	Dialight	182½	+6		...
1,764.34	Electrolux 'B'	641¾	-22⅜	...	-3.9
8.20	Feedback♦	61½	-2½		-2.3
121.20	Gooch Hsego♦	484	+7	2.7	94.9
566.22	Goodwin	7540	-160	1.5	36.1
9,527.77	**Halma**‡	2526	-1	0.8	40.2
1,638.56	Hill & Smith	2040	-140	2.0	24.0
2.13	Holders Tech♦	50½	...	...	-3.9
2.53	Image Scan♦	1¾	...		...
4,501.16	**IMI**‡	1736	-19	1.6	19.0
0.74	Inspirit Energy♦	...	...		-1.8
670.77	Judges Scientific♦	10100	+300	0.9	70.3
8.85	LPA♦	65½	...	1.5	...
6,346.88	**Melrose**‡	485¾	+3⅛	1.1	...
889.26	Morgan Advanced	312½	-6	3.8	19.1
91.62	Mpac♦	447½	-12½		34.1
168.23	MS Intl♦‡	1045	-40	1.9	25.0
1,330.64	Oxford Inst‡	2295	-50	0.9	26.5
21,157.48	Philips El nv	2250⅞	+17	...	...
0.49	PipeHawk♦	1¼	...		-0.3
12.57	Pressure Tech♦	32½	...		...
2,541.55	Renishaw	3495	+50	2.2	26.1
113.78	Renold♦‡	54⅜	-¾	0.9	7.4
41,248.75	**Rolls-Royce**	485	+21		16.9
1.63	Ross Gp#	⅝	...		-1.6
2,775.23	Rotork	326	-10½	2.2	24.7
67.96	SDI Group♦	65	+4¾		41.9
669.33	Senior	162⅞	+4½	1.4	22.1
248.36	Severfield	81½	+1⅜	4.3	15.9
3.39	Six Hundred♦#	2⅝	...	...	15.5
5,924.71	SKF B	1390½	-28¼	...	13.7
3.15	Slingsby (HC)♦	300	-10		13.5
5,952.78	**Smiths**	1734	+23	2.4	26.0
159.17	Solid State♦	1400	-5	1.4	21.2
177.38	Somero Enter♦	322½	-17½	7.7	8.2
2,890.35	Spectris	2874	-8	2.7	20.6
5,640.53	**Spirax-Sarco**	7660	-860	2.0	30.7
20.83	Surface Trsfms♦	1½	-⅛		-0.2
5.72	Tanfield♦	3½	...		...
410.85	Thorpe FW♦	350	+8	1.8	18.5
17.14	TP Group♦	2⅛	...	...	-3.3
20.93	Transense Tech♦	137½	-10		12.9
2,513.35	Ultra Electrncs	3500	+8	...	37.4
1,037.74	Vesuvius‡	395½	-26½	5.9	9.0
632.00	Volex♦‡	350	+11½	1.2	20.6
4,904.07	**Weir**	1889	-20	2.0	21.4
330.60	XP Power	1396	+102		...
5.89	Zytronic♦	58	...		-4.5

Health

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
2,810.87	Abcam♦	1226	-41	...	...
500.80	AdvancedMedical♦	233½	+½	1.0	32.2
233.56	Allergy Therap♦	4⅞	...		-0.8
45.15	Angle♦	14	-¼		-1.8
49.05	Anpario♦	290	-12½	3.6	21.5
196,884.05	**AstraZeneca**‡	12700	+90	1.8	39.6
4,746.26	**Convatec**	232	...	2.1	46.9
17.79	Creighton‡	26	-2	1.7	16.5
4,403.60	Dechra Pharma	3866	+4	...	57.7
2.75	Deltex Medical♦	⅛	...		-1.3
52.59	e-Therapeutics♦	9	-¾	...	-5.0
68.08	Eco Animal Hlth♦	100½	-6		...
126.14	EKF Diagnostics♦	27¾	+1⅛	4.5	53.4
101.28	Futura Medical♦	33½	-1⅜		...
1,152.95	Genus	1746	+10	1.8	34.5
63,855.87	**GSK**	1565½	+3	3.7	14.3
0.81	Gunsynd♦	⅛	...		-0.3
34,377.59	**Haleon**	377	+9⅛	1.6	32.2
4,522.02	**Hikma Pharms**	2038	+151	2.8	30.5
2,663.69	Hutchmed China♦	312	+30		33.1
6.93	ImmuPharma♦	1⅝	...		-2.0
1,311.16	Indivior	982½	-64½		...
22.86	Inspiration Health♦	25½	-1½	2.4	...

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
3.45	IXICO♦	7⅛	+ ⅛		-1.8
3,693.59	Mediclinic	501	+ 1	...	31.3
2.37	N4 Pharma♦	½	...		-1.1
268.84	NIOX Group♦	63⅜	- ½	1.5	30.0
CHF 195.554bn	Novartis	CHF 96.59	- 0.02	...	25.1
5.23	Omega Diags♦	2⅛	...		-1.6
0.69	Ovoca Bio♦	¾	...		-0.1
369.68	Oxford Biomedica	351	- 2½		-2.1
1.57	Physiomics♦	¾	...		-1.9
10.04	Proteome Scies♦	3⅜	+ ⅛		-4.1
29,148.15	**Reckitt Benckiser**‡	4180	+ 30	4.6	18.3
6.98	RUA Life Sciences♦	11¼	+ ½		-1.3
32.38	Sareum Hldgs♦	30	...		-4.8
10,166.97	**Smith & Neph**	1166	- 20½	2.5	49.3
1,003.50	Spire Hcare	248½	- 5	0.8	37.6
7.15	Synairgen♦	3½	- ⅜		-0.8
44.88	Tissue Regenix♦	63	...		...
19.65	Totally♦	10	- ¼	1.2	...
223.51	Tristel♦	470	- 12½	2.8	37.5
3.11	ValiRx♦	2¼	- ⅜		-1.1

Industrials

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
123.25	Accsys Tech♦	51½	- 3½		-7.5
31,601.88	BASF	3540⅝	- 34⅛	...	...
21,832.11	Bayer DM50	2222¼	- 118⅞	...	-8.2
0.81	Biome Tech♦	21½	- 2½		-0.5
0.45	Byotrol♦	...	...	...	-0.2
4.98	Camb Gbl Timber♦	6¾	...	...	-9.0
1,581.47	Coats Grp	99¼	+ 1⅞	2.3	24.6
5,349.43	**Croda**	3831	- 141	2.8	31.3
23.89	Cropper (James)♦	250	- 10	2.8	7.3
875.44	Elementis	148½	- 5⅜	1.1	40.3
5.10	Hardide♦	6½	- ¾		-2.6
2,843.24	Johnson Math	1576	- 16	4.8	27.0
6,299.72	**Mondi**	1429	- 27	4.3	14.4
18.26	Robinson♦	109	- 1	5.0	...
6,055.99	**DS Smith**	438¾	- 5	4.0	15.7
5,770.30	Swire Pacific	697¼	+ 24½	...	3.4
5.06	Symph Environ♦	2¼	...		-1.9
391.74	Synthomer	239½	- 6		-2.0
34,602.16	Takeda Pharm	2174⅞	- 60⅜	...	34.7
4.51	Velocys♦	¼	...	...	-0.2
905.16	Victrex	1040	- 12	5.7	29.7
77.61	Wynnstay Group♦	337½	- 22½	5.0	13.3
239.12	Zotefoams	492	- 8	1.4	26.5

Leisure

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
278.52	Accesso Tech♦	686	- 4		46.8
44.85	Best of the Best♦	530	...	...	5.9
13,355.51	Carnival	1054	- 6½		41.6
182.45	Celtic♦	192½	+ 15		25.9
1,169.06	Domino's Pizza	294⅜	- 22	3.7	10.5
3,568.55	**Entain**	558⅛	+ 18½	3.2	-3.9
234.00	Evoke	52	- 2⅛		-4.1
26,434.94	Flutter Ent	14875	+ 360		...
120.88	Gaming Realms♦	41	+ ½		20.9
14.12	Heavitree♦	290	+ 25	1.9	10.5
9.01	Heavitree A♦	185	+ 25	3.2	6.7
0.93	Hermes Pacific♦	40	- 12½		...
11,658.19	**InterContinental Hotels**	7272	- 94	1.7	21.0
5.07	Minoan Gp♦	½	...		-8.5
1,799.99	Mitch & Butlers	303	+ 1		40.9
230.11	On The Beach	137¾	- 4½	0.6	14.6
305.42	Rank Grp	65⅛	- 3⅜		-3.1
499.23	Restaurant Gp	64¾	...	...	...
19.54	Rotala♦	63	...	...	...
8.40	Sportech♦	84	+ 16	...	...
1,305.54	SSP	163½	- 1¼	2.2	...
2.77	Tasty♦	1⅜	...		-0.2
5.76	Tintra♦#	32½	- 12½	...	-1.7
2,859.37	Tui	563½	- 10	...	3.1
3.74	Webis Holdings♦	⅞	...		-4.8
924.69	Wetherspoon JD	748	+ 17		23.1
5,096.97	**Whitbread**	2855	+ 48	3.4	17.8
611.31	Young & Co - A♦	990	- 20	2.2	52.4
432.24	Young & Co - N/V♦	700	- 10	3.1	37.0

Media

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
5.63	Aeorema Comms♦	59	+ 1	5.0	20.5
25.73	Altitude Group♦	35½	- 3		49.3
13.04	Arcontech Grp♦	97½	...	3.5	11.3
1,145.65	Ascential	568	- 2½		...
7,075.09	**Auto Trader**	791⅜	- ⅛	1.1	28.1
552.15	Bloomsbury Pub‡	678	- 30	2.1	17.3
0.79	Bonhill Group♦	⅝	+ ⅛	...	-1.5
17.88	Catalyst Media♦	85	...	31.7	5.8
0.31	Catenae♦	½	...		-1.2
2.54	DCD Media♦#	100	- 50	...	5.0
51.27	Ebiquity♦	37½	- ½		...
1,178.30	Future	1040	- 9	0.3	13.6
1,769.15	GlobalData♦	222½	+ 8½	2.1	58.5
351.72	Hyve Group	120½	...	...	...
197.54	IG Design Grp♦	201	- 18		-8.9
10,615.10	**Informa**‡	799½	- 34⅛	2.3	26.7
3,063.13	ITV	78	...	6.3	15.0
1.87	Jaywing♦	2	+ ⅛		-0.1
0.78	Live Company Gp♦#	¼	- ⅛		...
729.93	ME Group	193¾	+ 5⅜	3.9	14.5
1.31	Mediazest♦	...	...		-2.5
17.73	Merit Grp♦	74	...		-6.3
0.14	Mirada♦	1½	- 1⅜	...	...
22.26	Mission Group♦	24½	- 1½	6.9	-1.9
1,156.49	Moneysupermarket‡	215⅛	- 2⅛	5.6	15.9
8,209.60	News Corp A	2164⅞	+ 104⅛	...	73.9
4,273.13	News Corp B	2240⅞	+ 114⅜	...	76.5
834.82	Next 15 Group♦‡	828	- 5	1.8	32.2
6,927.78	**Pearson**‡	1042	- 7½	2.2	19.7
4.26	Primorus Inv♦	3	- ¼		-1.8
57.24	Quarto	140	+ 10	...	5.3
327.58	Reach	103	- 3⅛	7.2	15.1
16.16	REACT Grp♦	75	+ 1		76.5
65,348.87	**Relx**‡	3511	- 56	1.7	37.3
4,250.70	**Rightmove**	537	- 21½	1.7	21.7
1.90	SpaceandPeople♦	100	+ 5		14.0
122.53	STV Group	269	- 5	4.2	28.6
93.26	System1 Group♦	735	- 10		75.0
7,110.68	21st Cent Fox Inc A	3076⅛	+ 152¾	...	12.2
6,770.74	21st Cent Fox Inc B	2874	+ 141	...	11.4
1.71	Vela Tech♦	...	...		4.5
356.87	Wilmington	400	+ 10	2.6	19.6
7,321.23	**WPP**	678¾	- 36⅛	5.7	67.2
15.82	Zinc Media♦	69½	- 3		-7.6

Natural resources

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
2.67	ADM Energy♦#	⅜	...		-0.7
2.67	Advance Energy♦#	⅛	...		-0.1
119.39	AFC Energy♦	14	- ⅜		-5.9
115.34	Afentra PLC♦	51	...		...
3.70	Alba Mineral Res♦	...	...		...
9.39	Alien Metals♦	⅛	...		2.4
2,156.27	Alumina	74¼	- 9⅞	...	...
66.45	Aminex	1½	...		...
1.25	Amur Mins Corp♦#	...	- 14¼		...
7,005.25	Anglo Amer Plat	2640½	- 161½	...	12.4
26,986.52	**Anglo American**	2226	- 17½	3.4	...
103.27	Anglo Asian Mng♦	90⅜	+ 14⅜	3.5	-5.4
18,203.84	**Antofagasta**	1846½	- 41½	1.5	27.7
25.31	Arc Minerals♦	1¾	...		54.6
41.27	Ariana Res♦	2¼	...		...
1.41	Arkle Resources♦	¼	...		-4.1
1.98	Armadale Cap♦	¼	...		-0.3
20.75	Asiamet Rsrcs♦	¾	...		-4.4
485.62	Atalaya Mine‡	345	- 12	2.0	19.7
20.92	Baron Oil♦	...	...		-9.1
9.32	Beowulf Mining♦	24	- 2½		-2.2
3.00	Bezant Res♦	...	...		1.3
106,350.00	BHP Group	2097	- 6	5.7	18.3
18.05	Border & Sthn Pet♦	2⅜	...		...
95.16	Bougainville	23⅝	- 2	...	...
4.24	BowLeven♦	⅛	...		-0.4
71,384.00	**BP**‡	433¾	- 11	5.4	6.4
5.97	Cadence Min♦	2⅝	...		-1.5
5.13	Cadogan Petrol	2	...		5.3
160.32	Caledonia Mining♦	835	- 55	5.3	62.4
96.96	Caspian Sunrise♦	4¼	- ⅛		...
1,392.51	Centamin	120	- 2¾	2.6	19.5
325.33	Cent Asia Metals♦	187	- 2⅛	9.6	12.1
1.67	Chaarat Gold♦	⅛	...		-0.1
74.20	Chariot Oil & Gas♦	6⅞	+ ¼		-4.3
4.97	China Nonferr Gold♦#	1¼	...	...	...
5.75	Clontarf Energy♦	...	...		-4.0
46.51	Condor Gld♦	22¾	...		...
2.58	Corcel♦	...	...		-0.7
621.69	DRD Gold	71⅞	- 6	...	8.4
4.83	ECR Minerals♦	¼	...		13.0
4.49	Empyrean Energy♦	¼	...		0.9
3,755.14	**Endeavour**	1538	- 136	4.1	...
250.64	EnQuest	13⅛	+ ¼		-1.1
66.03	Eurasia Mining♦#	2¼	...		-4.5
9.83	Europa Oil&Gas♦	1	...		...
290.99	Ferrexpo	48⅝	- 2⅝		-4.3
3,942.38	**Fresnillo**‡	535	- 38	1.5	21.5
43.86	G3 Exploration#	28	...		-2.6
9.47	Galantas Gold♦	8¼	- ¼		-1.7
9.95	GCM Resources♦	3½	...		-6.0
18.37	Gem Diamonds	13⅛	...		...
1.62	Getech♦	2⅜	+ ⅛		-0.3
49,248.54	**Glencore**	405	...	5.6	15.1
1.26	Global Petrol♦	...	...		-0.8
11,141.15	Gold Fields	1244¾	- 94⅝	...	20.0
10.74	Goldplat♦	6⅜	...		4.8
10.34	Goldstone Res♦	1½	...		-4.0
362.43	Greatld Gld♦	7	...		...
214.48	Griffin Mining♦	117	- 12		18.6
268.21	Gulf Keystone	123⅝	- 1⅞	4.2	...
14.49	Harland & Wolff Gp♦#	8⅜	- ⅞		-0.1
858.12	Hochschild	166¾	- 6½		...
0.88	Horizonte Minrls♦#	¼	...	...	-0.1
655.56	Hunting PLC	414	- 21	1.9	7.5
1.42	Independ Res♦	...	...		...
13.91	Indus Gas♦	7½	+ ⅜		0.5
1.89	Ironveld♦	...	...		-4.8
319.49	ITM Power♦	51¾	- 1¼		-5.0
182.14	Jubilee Metals♦	6	...		12.6
2.06	Karel Diamd Res♦	1½	...		-6.8
35.45	KEFI Gold and Copper♦	½	...		-3.3
293.56	Kenmare Res	329	+ 5	13.7	3.0
37.60	Lamprell#	8⅞	...	...	-0.7
11.42	Landore Res♦	3⅝	...		-3.6
1.23	Lansdowne O&G♦#	...	...		...
1.78	Leeds Group♦	6½	...		-1.9
13.96	Lexington Gold♦	3½	...		...
31.57	MC Mining♦	7⅝	+ ⅛	...	-4.0
96.37	Metals Explorn♦	4½	...		1.0
0.36	Nostra Terra♦	...	...		-0.7
8.02	Nostrum O&G	4¾	- ½		...
4,549.45	Oil Search	218⅞	+ 5⅜	...	60.3
13.60	Oilex♦#	⅛	...		0.1
10.32	Oriole Resources♦	¼	...		-3.7
3.54	Ormonde Mining♦#	¾	...	...	-3.4
5.65	Orosur Mining♦	2¾	- ½		-5.1
537.58	Pan African Res♦	28	- 1¼	2.7	9.1
174.31	Pantheon Res♦	18⅛	+ 1⅝		...
12.29	Parkmead Grp♦	11¼	- 1¼		-0.4
2.91	Pathfinder Mins♦#	¼	...		-3.4
56.51	Petra Diamonds	29	- 1⅝		-0.7
1.65	Petrel Resources♦	⅞	...		-3.7
41.55	Petro Matad♦	2¾	...		-7.1
75.44	Petrofac	14¼	+ ⅜		-0.1
0.91	Petroneft Res♦#	...	...	...	-0.2
181.13	Phoenix Global♦	6½	- ½	...	-1.6
14.49	Plexus Holdings♦	13¾	+ ⅛		55.0
1,018.30	Polymetal Intl#	215	...	...	2.4
290.35	Porvair‡	632	- 14	0.9	18.8
20.79	Prospex Energy♦	6¼	- ¼		...
27.42	Proton Motor Power S♦	1⅝	...		-1.8
34.84	Providence Res♦	3¼	- ⅛	...	29.0
33.09	Quadrise♦	1⅞	...		-9.9
8.71	Rambler Met&Min♦#	5⅜	...	...	0.1
6.63	Reabold Resources♦	...	...		-0.8
2.54	Red Rock Res♦	...	...		-0.4
22,301.43	Rio Tinto Ltd	6007⅝	- 166½	...	12.4
79,806.54	**Rio Tinto**	4914½	- 35	6.9	10.1
74.24	San Leon Energy♦#	16½	+ 4	...	6.1
2.25	Scirocco Energy♦	¼	...	...	-1.3
50.36	Serabi Gold♦	66½	- 4½		7.2
498.22	Serica Energy♦	127½	+ 4⅛	18.1	4.7
155.20	Shanta Gold♦	14¾	...	...	14.6
173,405.34	**Shell**	2776	- 1	3.8	12.8
4.59	Shuka Minerals♦	7⅝	...		-1.8
17.88	Sound Energy♦	⅞	...		-2.3
10.28	Star Energy♦	7⅞	...		-2.2
2.55	Sunrise Resources♦	...	...		-6.6
2.70	Tertiary Minerals♦	...	...		-5.2
3.22	Thor Mining♦	¾	- ⅛		-0.7
120,837.08	Total Eng SE	5255	+ 25⅝	4.9	7.4
2.68	Tower Resources♦	...	...		-1.8
393.96	Tullow Oil	27	- 2⅛		-4.5
4.59	UK Oil & Gas♦	...	...		-0.3
0.82	URU Metals♦	50	...		-1.0
1.90	Vast Res♦	...	...		...
9.99	Victoria Oil&Gas♦#	3¾	- ⅛	...	-1.8
3.89	W Resources♦#	2⅝	...	...	-0.3
2.02	Westmount Engy♦	1⅜	...		-0.3
903.36	Wood Grp (J)	131⅜	- 65½		-8.6
14.99	Woodbois♦	⅜	...		1.4
6.85	Xtract Resources♦	¾	...		-5.4
69.15	Zephyr Energy♦	3⅞	- ¼		...

Professional & support services

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
1,546.04	4imprint Grp	5490	- 220	3.0	24.5
229.18	Andrews Sykes♦	547½	+ 2½	4.7	12.9
22,577.00	**Ashtead**‡	5174	+ 12	1.6	17.8
1.26	Asimilar Group♦	1	- ¼	...	...
54.14	AssetCo♦	38	...		-5.5
76.72	Avisen♦	69	- 1		69.0
158.19	Begbies Traynor♦	100	- 3½	3.9	...
174.54	Blancco Tech♦	225	+ 3	...	80.6
10,707.32	**Bunzl**	3186	+ 20	2.1	20.4
308.21	Capita	18⅛	+ 1½		-1.7
3.89	CEPS♦	18½	- 1½		6.9
27.19	Christie Group♦	102½	...	0.9	-6.9
39,653.24	**Compass**	2333	- 28	1.8	29.8
13.36	CPPGroup♦	151	- 6		-1.5
9.27	Croma Security♦	67½	- 3	3.2	3.0
5,092.13	**DCC**	5150	- 5	3.7	15.6
178.39	De La Rue	91	- 2¾		-4.1
5,527.17	**Diploma**	4124	+ 50	1.4	47.7
593.88	Discoverie	619	- 10	1.9	39.1
13.75	Driver Group♦	26	+ ½	5.7	65.0
459.36	Essentra	159½	- 1	2.2	79.8
31,821.18	**Experian**	3483	- 9	1.3	33.7
31,204.88	Ferguson	15500	- 380	1.6	21.2
31.93	FIH Group♦	255	+ 47	2.6	15.9
202.09	Hargeaves Serv♦	616	+ 40	3.9	16.1
389.32	Impellam Grp♦	875	+ 32½	...	25.0
18.90	Ince G♦#	5⅛	...	...	2.9
7,495.05	**Intertek**	4652	- 232	2.4	25.3
1,703.21	IWG	168¼	+ 3⅞	0.5	-7.8
649.11	Johnson Srvce♦	156½	- ¾	1.8	24.4
44.56	Journeo♦	270½	+ 5½		15.0
650.33	Kier Gp	149⅜	- 5¾	1.1	16.6
280.22	Latham (J)♦‡	1390	- 50	2.4	9.5
363.59	Lok'n Store♦	1105	- 5	1.2	88.1
478.14	Lon Security♦	3900	...	3.1	20.5
364.59	LSL Prop Services	351	+ 6	3.2	45.0
195.51	Macfarlane	122½	- 2	2.9	13.1
34.47	Maintel Hldgs♦	240	...		-6.4
4.52	Malvern Intl♦	18½	- 1		...
334.94	Mears Group	348½	- 3	3.6	10.9
1,488.10	Mitie Gp	118½	- ⅛	3.4	13.0
2.87	MobilityOne♦#	2⅝	- 1⅜		-9.1
8.20	Newmark Sec♦	87½	- 5		...
4.85	Norm Broadbent♦	7¼	...		18.5
8.32	Northern Bear♦	60½	...	6.6	6.5
84.05	NWF Grp♦	170	+ 2½	4.5	6.4
1,254.94	PageGroup	400	- 10¾	4.0	16.4
47.43	PCI-PAL♦	65½	- ½		...
4.55	Petards♦	7½	+ ¼		-4.0
2.52	PHSC♦	24½	- 2	7.2	11.1
52.46	PowerHouse Egy♦	1¼	...		...
125.80	Record	65⅜	+ 2⅛	7.2	13.6
845.20	Renew Hldgs♦	1068	+ 18	1.7	17.3
516.54	Renewi	646	- 11	0.7	14.2
11,661.08	**Rentokil**‡	464¼	+ 3	1.9	30.8
355.35	Restore♦	260	+ 2	2.0	...
311.08	Ricardo	500	- 16	2.4	...
249.63	Robert Walters	345	- 27	6.7	18.1
7.85	Roebuck Food Grp♦	15¾	+ ⅛		-2.7
613.30	RPS Group	221	...	...	...
3,585.84	RS Group	757	+ 14	2.9	19.5
14.99	RTC Group♦	102½	- 10	5.3	8.0
652.58	RWS Hldgs♦	177	- 5½	6.8	...
201.31	Science Group♦	443	+ 6	1.8	36.9
1,773.90	Serco	168½	- 4⅞	2.0	9.4
136.09	Smiths News	57⅜	- 1½	7.7	6.1
15,870.53	Smurfit Westrock Plc	3056	- 352	4.2	12.1
70.21	Software Circle plc♦	18	- ½		-8.6
53.13	Staffline Gp♦	37½	- 1¼		-7.0
509.27	SThree	384½	- 3½	4.3	9.2
32.03	Synectics♦‡	180	+ 5	2.8	14.0
25.60	Thruvision Group♦	16	...		...
119.43	Tribal♦	56	- 3½		23.3
37.36	Vianet♦	127	- ½	0.5	47.2
8.76	Westminster♦	2⅝	- ¼		-5.5
901.10	ZIGUP plc	399	- 9½	6.2	6.9

Real estate

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
2,841.20	Shaftesbury Cap	145⅝	- 2	2.1	3.2

Retailing

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
649.06	AO World	112	- 2⅛		27.0
4,559.69	**B&M European**	454⅝	+ ¼	3.2	12.4
121.35	Brown (N)♦	26	+ 3		...
416.23	Card Factory	120	- ⅜	3.8	8.3
762.71	CVS Group♦	1064	+ 18	0.6	21.4
285.66	DFS Furn	122	+ 3¾	3.4	16.0
2,381.94	Dunelm	1178	- 25	3.6	15.9
3,791.66	**Frasers Group**	842	- 25½		7.4
3,168.21	Greggs	3122	+ 44	2.0	22.4
308.25	Halfords‡	140¾	- 3⅛	5.7	9.5
4,849.45	**Howden Joinery**	882½	- 3	2.4	19.0
3,280.17	Inchcape‡	797½	- 35½	4.5	12.3
2.55	IQ-AI	1⅛	...		-3.3
6,502.24	**JD Sports**	125⅜	+ 1⅝	0.7	12.0
4,953.97	**Kingfisher**	270⅞	+ 2⅛	4.6	15.0
6,434.14	**Marks & Spencer**	318¾	+ 1⅝	0.9	15.3
22.61	Mothercare♦	4	...		22.0
38.08	Naked Wines♦	51⅜	- 2⅛		-1.3
11,403.91	**Next**	9520	+ 44	2.1	14.5
3,069.44	Ocado	374	- 19⅝		-9.7
619.39	Pendragon	35½	...		0.5
1,330.73	Pets at Home	290⅜	+ 1⅜	4.4	17.7
143.13	Saga	100⅜	- 3		-1.2
6,235.19	**Sainsbury's**	267¾	- 6	4.8	46.9
1,568.33	WH Smith	1198	- 50	2.6	24.6
21.72	Sosandar♦	8¾	+ ½		79.5
100.06	Studio Retail#	115	- 6		2.4
22,550.36	**Tesco**	330½	+ 3¾	3.6	13.4
86.34	Topps Tiles	43⅞	+ ½	8.6	...

Technology

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
3.89	Aferian plc♦	3½	- ¼		...
546.17	Alfa Financial	185	- 1⅛	0.7	23.4
32.89	Allied Minds	13¾	+ 4¼	...	-1.2
203.58	Aptitude Software‡	358	- 4	1.5	50.4
92.17	Bango♦	120	- 4		...
91.60	BATM Adv Coms	21	...		...
75.79	Berkeley Res	17	...		...
21.29	Blackbird♦	5½	- 1		-8.0
109.44	Celebrus Tech PLC♦‡	277½	...	1.1	30.2
1.24	CloudCoCo Group♦	⅛	...		-0.5
2,929.74	Computacenter	2580	- 24	2.7	14.9
99.77	Concurrent Tech♦	116½	+ 3½	0.8	24.0
97.95	Corero♦	19¼	...		...
819.40	Craneware♦	2320	- 30	1.2	...
9.86	Crimson Tide♦	150	- 5		...
24.23	CyanConn Hldgs♦	8	...		...
1.77	Dillistone Group♦	9	...		...
3.50	EQTEC♦	1¼	+ ⅛		-1.7
456.64	FDM Group	418½	- 1½	8.7	11.2
148.58	Filtronic♦	68	+ 2½		...
411.44	First Derivts♦	1458	- 16		...
841.50	GB Group♦	333¾	- 8	1.2	...
136.57	GreshamTech	162½	+ ½	...	45.7
42.66	Ilika♦	25½	- 1		-7.0
16.54	Ingenta♦	114	- 3	3.6	7.3
88.93	Intercede♦	151½	+ 6		56.1
135.97	Iomart♦	121	- 3	4.2	20.8
270.65	IQE♦	28	- ¾		-8.5
30.18	K3 Business Tch♦	67½	- 15½		...
4,797.08	LG Electronics‡	1332	...	2.0	11.4
0.01	Location Sciences♦	⅛	- 134⅛		...
31.28	MTI Wireless♦	36	- 2½	6.6	9.8
27.21	Nanoco Gp	14½	- ⅝		3.2
153.36	Netcall♦	93	- 3	0.8	29.5
9.87	Northamber♦	36	- ½	1.6	...
2.22	Online Blockchain♦#	15½	+ 2	...	-2.0
116.32	Oxford Metrics♦	88½	- 2	3.0	22.9
0.85	Parity♦#	¾	...	...	-0.2
10.34	Pennant Intl♦	24	...		-9.4
1,587.45	Playtech	521	- 19		17.8
95.77	Pulsar Group♦	75	- 1		...
2,667.96	QinetiQ‡	468⅜	+ 5⅛	1.7	19.6
69.31	RM	83¼	- 1½		-1.4
9,942.86	**Sage**	995⅛	- 50¼	1.9	38.5
202.19	Seeing Machines♦	4¾	+ ¼		-8.1
10.84	Shearwater Grp♦	45½	- 1		-1.4
26.05	Smartspace S'ware♦	90	...	...	-9.4
3,109.28	Softcat	1561	+ 8	1.6	27.8
1,006.45	Spirent Comms	176	+ 4	1.2	52.6
66.79	SRT Marine♦	30	- ½		-8.3
16,181.85	Tele. Ericsson	524¼	- 8	...	-9.2
8.12	Touchstar♦	99	...	2.5	13.0
178.92	Tracsis♦	590	- 35	0.3	38.6
3.50	Trakm8♦	7	- ½		3.1
45.01	Triad Grp‡	270	- 10	2.2	...
72.97	Wandisco♦	63½	- 3¾		-1.9
67.85	Water Intel♦	390	- 25		20.1
98.14	Xaar	124	- 9		...
16.45	Yourgene♦	½	...	...	-0.3
55.80	Zoo Digital♦	57	- 4		...

Telecoms

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
50.21	AdEPT Technology♦‡	200½	+ 1½	...	...
4,113.88	**Airtel Africa**	110⅝	- ¾	4.3	...
12,765.21	**BT Group**‡	130½	- 7⅝	6.1	15.1
873.92	Currys plc	77	- ½		3.6
1,456.06	Gamma Comms♦	1518	+ 28	1.1	28.9
1,257.16	Helios Towers	119½	- 2⅛		...
2,228.43	Just Eat T'away	1082	+ 143		-1.4
3.28	Mobile Streams♦	...	...		-0.6
7.31	Mobile Tornado♦	1¾	...		-7.2
1,390.60	Telecom Plus‡	1760	- 52	4.7	45.1
19,615.13	**Vodafone**	73¾	+ 1½	10.3	19.4

Transport

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
91.22	Braemar Ship‡	298½	- 3½	4.3	23.3
3,288.77	**EasyJet**	436⅝	+ 7⅝	1.0	8.8
0.71	Esken Limited#	...	...		...
964.08	FirstGroup‡	160⅜	- 5¾	3.4	...
169.30	Fisher (James)	336	...		-3.3
8,159.21	**International Airlines**	166½	- ⅞		3.7
3,229.21	IDS	337⅜	- 7⅛		60.2
753.55	Irish Cont Uts	458	+ 8	2.7	14.8
2,874.62	Jet2♦	1339	- 35	0.9	7.3
327.00	Mobico Group	53¼	- 1¾	3.2	-1.7
447.34	Ocean Wilson	1265	- 10	5.3	8.5
13.64	Sutton Harbour♦	10½	...		-5.7
744.08	Wincanton	605	+ 4	...	28.8
1,423.29	Wizz Air	1377	- 71		5.4

Utilities

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
6,438.01	**Centrica**	123¼	- 4	3.2	1.7
1,658.27	ContourGlobal	251	+ ½	...	28.3
2,479.03	Drax Group	640½	- 1½	3.5	4.5
136.96	Jersey Electricity	447	- 5	4.4	12.1
47,822.51	**National Grid**	978¾	- 18⅛	5.8	17.8
38.07	OPG Power♦	9½	- ¼		3.5
1,694.79	Pennon‡	592½	- 38	7.4	...
2.39	Rurelec♦#	⅜	...	...	42.5
7,593.16	**Severn Trent**	2530	- 123	4.6	49.7
20,232.07	**SSE**‡	1862	- 46	3.2	11.9
6,750.70	**United Utilities**	990	- 69	5.1	53.2

♦AIM company; # Price at suspension; † Ex dividend; ‡ 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 Dis or Prm supplied by Morningstar.

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Sun 8	**San Sebastián, Spain**
Mon 9	**Gijón, Spain**
Tue 10	**La Coruña, Spain**
Wed 11	**Bilbao, Spain**
Thu 12	**La Rochelle, France**
Fri 13	**Brest, France** (depart pm)
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Sun 15	**Arrive in Southampton**

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Penthouse Suite	PH3<	~~£7,659~~	£6,199
Penthouse Suite	PH1	~~£8,059~~	£6,679

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Mon 21	**Embark the elegant 5★ *Vista* and depart Southampton**
Wed 23	**Copenhagen, Denmark** (arrive early pm – depart late night)
Thu 24 - Fri 25	**Berlin (from Warnemünde), Germany** (overnight) ★Recommended Excursion×: The Berlin Experience
Sun 27	**Tallinn, Estonia**
Mon 28 - Tue 29	**Stockholm, Sweden** (overnight) ★Recommended Excursion×: The best of Stockholm
Thu 31	**Oslo, Norway** (arrive midday - overnight)

AUGUST 2025

Fri 1	**Oslo, Norway**
Sun 3	**Bruges (from Zeebrugge), Belgium**
Mon 4	**Arrive in Southampton**

Dates not mentioned will be spent relaxing at sea

BOOK TODAY TO SECURE THESE EXCLUSIVE FARES

STATEROOM/SUITE	GRADE	BROCHURE FARE (PP)	SALE FARE (PP)
Veranda	B4<	~~£6,129~~	£4,599
Concierge Veranda	A4<	~~£6,609~~	£5,069
Penthouse Suite	PH3<	~~£8,579~~	£6,719
Vista Suite	VS	~~£14,529~~	£12,059

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AUGUST 2025

Mon 4	**Embark the elegant 5★ *Vista* and depart Southampton**
Wed 6	**Edinburgh (from Newhaven), Scotland**
Thu 7	**Invergordon, Scotland**
Fri 8	**Lerwick, Shetland Islands, Scotland**
Sat 9	**Stornoway, Hebrides, Scotland**
Sun 10	**Glasgow (from Greenock), Scotland** (arrive late am) ★Recommended Excursion×: Panoramic Scottish Lochs
Mon 11	**Dublin (from Dún Laoghaire), Ireland**
Tue 12	**Belfast, Northern Ireland**
Wed 13	**Waterford, Ireland**
Thu 14	**Fowey, Cornwall, England**
Fri 15	**Arrive in Southampton**

Date not mentioned will be spent relaxing at sea

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STATEROOM/SUITE	GRADE	BROCHURE FARE (PP)	SALE FARE (PP)
French Veranda	B5	– SOLD OUT –	
Veranda	B4<	~~£6,079~~	£4,719
Concierge Veranda	A4<	~~£6,469~~	£5,129
Concierge Veranda	A1	~~£6,709~~	£5,399

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Benjamin Luxon
Britten's first-choice baritone
Page 42

Register

Obituaries

Susan Wojcicki

Chief executive of YouTube who helped grow Google from her garage and was celebrated for being 'normal' in an eccentric industry

Seeking extra income to help pay her bills, a Silicon Valley marketing employee agreed to rent out her garage to two students at the nearby Stanford University. The pair, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, had an idea for a search engine that could trawl a novelty called the World Wide Web and needed office space. "I was worried about covering the mortgage, so I was willing to rent my garage to any student," said Susan Wojcicki, who worked for the chip manufacturer Intel.

Found through a mutual friend, the tenants were the obscure founders of a scrappy start-up they would call Google. Wojcicki charged $1,700 a month and the fledgling enterprise expanded to six people and took over three bedrooms. Page and Brin moved into a proper office the following year, in 1999, but Wojcicki would prove far more than a temporary landlady.

"I wasn't particularly interested in what they were doing as long as they remembered to take out the recycling and pay the rent," she told the Female Founders Fund. "But, over time, I got to know them more and began using their search engine, Google. My 'eureka moment' came one day when I was at work. I went to search for something on Google but the site was down. I realised in that moment that I had become completely reliant on Google search for getting my work done, and that it was so much better than any other search engine out there."

Though about five months pregnant, she quit her job at Intel and became the sixteenth Google employee, managing marketing and helping to oversee initiatives including the Google Doodle homepage logo designs. In 2006 she took charge of advertising, the following year masterminding the $3.1 billion purchase of DoubleClick, an advertising technology business. The move was fundamental to Google's subsequent growth.

In 2010 she was named a senior vice-president of Google, becoming its highest-ranked female employee. "She is as core to the history of Google as anyone," the company's chief executive, Sundar Pichai, said. In 2023, Google's advertising revenue reached almost $238 billion, by far its largest source of income. By some estimates she was responsible for generating 97 per cent of the revenues.

YouTube was founded in 2005 by three former PayPal employees as a way for users to upload their own videos, promoted with the slogan "Broadcast Yourself". Wojcicki oversaw Google's equivalent but it was less popular and she persuaded her bosses to acquire its rival in 2006. At the time the purchase price of $1.65 billion was viewed as outlandish, while the dotcom entrepreneur Mark Cuban declared that only a "moron" would buy the platform because of potential copyright lawsuits.

It proved a bargain. YouTube became the world's pre-eminent video-sharing platform, with more than two and a half billion monthly users and advertising revenue of $8 billion in the first quarter of 2024. According to one estimate, 14 billion videos have been uploaded to the site, and 500 hours of footage are added every minute.

STEPHEN LOVEKIN/FILMMAGIK FOR YOUTUBE

Susan Wojcicki, below with her husband Dennis Troper, pushed Google to buy YouTube at a price many saw as outlandish

Wojcicki was dubbed the most powerful woman in advertising when named chief executive of YouTube in 2014, given the reach, influence and income of the company at a time when traditional media business models were being upended by the streaming revolution. As YouTube's popularity grew and traditional studios and broadcasters struggled to decide whether it was a threat or an asset, Wojcicki also assumed the status of a media mogul.

Viewership soared during her tenure with the help of algorithms that recommend videos to users. She navigated the complexities of copyright laws — when asked her biggest fear, she is said to have replied "regulation" — and boosted revenue by conjuring new ways to monetise the site. In 2024 YouTube said that it had doled out over $70 billion to creators, artists and media companies in the past three years. However, she was increasingly forced to focus on content moderation and the limits of free speech as misinformation and extreme content proliferated among the clips of kittens and wannabes dreaming of going viral.

A scandal in 2017, known as "Elsagate" after the Disney character from *Frozen*, involved images of children's characters manipulated to act in family-unfriendly ways and led to accusations that YouTube was placing its thirst for clicks and advertising dollars ahead of child safety. In 2019 American regulators fined Google and YouTube $170 million to settle allegations that YouTube illegally collected personal information from children without parental consent.

In recent years, faced with legal and reputational risks as conspiracy theories infected western politics, YouTube enhanced its enforcement, though its efforts have not gone far enough for some critics. Wojcicki insisted that inappropriate videos represented a tiny fraction of the site's vast repertoire and that protecting children was the top priority.

Tensions over content and monetisation policies ignited a violent incident at YouTube's headquarters in 2018. A YouTube user who promoted herself as "the first Persian female vegan bodybuilder", and who wrote "My Revenue For 300,000 Views Is $0.10?????" on her website, shot and wounded three people then killed herself. Wojcicki and other employees had to hide during the shooting.

Challenged by the rise of the Chinese-owned TikTok, Wojcicki sought to diversify YouTube's offerings, adding its own short video feature and selling subscriptions to music and advertisement-free content. The platform also streams television channels, targeting living-room screens as well as computer and mobile devices.

Susan Diane Wojcicki was born in Santa Clara, California, in 1968, to Esther (née Hochman), an American educator, journalist and author of the parenting guide *How to Raise Successful People*, and Stanley Wojcicki, a Warsaw-born experimental particle physicist and wartime refugee who was chair of the physics department at Stanford University. The surname is pronounced "Woe-jiski".

> **'I've been left out and had ideas ignored until they were rephrased by men'**

Wojcicki grew up on the Stanford campus and started her first business, selling homemade "spice ropes" door to door, aged 11. She studied history and literature at Harvard University, before a graduate degree in economics from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and an MBA from the University of California, Los Angeles. More drawn to academia and the creative arts than the technology industry, she did not begin using a computer until she was at university but a summer internship at a digital start-up piqued her interest and she took a computer science class.

Despite the pre-eminence of her online platform, and in stark contrast to its eyeball-grabbing techniques, Wojcicki maintained a far lower profile than other tech titans and she showed little personal interest in the celebrity and influencer culture that propelled her company. She decorated her office with family photographs rather than images of encounters with the rich and famous.

In Silicon Valley, rationality and temperance were her superpowers. "In an industry that celebrates eccentricity, Ms Wojcicki presents as exceedingly normal, bordering on boring," one interviewer noted in 2019. Her own YouTube favourites included yoga, cookery and science videos. Wojcicki is survived by her husband, Dennis Troper, who works for Google. A son, Marco, a student at the University of California, Berkeley, died in February aged 19 of an accidental drug overdose. The couple had four other children, and she is also survived by her mother and two sisters: Janet, a professor of paediatrics; and Anne, co-founder and CEO of the consumer genetics company 23andMe, who was married to Brin.

Last year Wojcicki announced that she was stepping down from her role at YouTube. It was later revealed that she had had lung cancer diagnosed. With a personal fortune estimated by Forbes at $800 million, after leaving YouTube she acted as an adviser to Google's parent company, Alphabet, focused on philanthropy and last month joined the board of a satellite imaging firm.

In 2017 she wrote an essay addressing discrimination in the industry: "I've had my abilities and commitment to my job questioned. I've been left out of key industry events and social gatherings. I've had meetings with external leaders where they primarily addressed the more junior male colleagues. I've had my comments frequently interrupted and my ideas ignored until they were rephrased by men."

Conscious of the paucity of women in the industry and believing that a work-all-hours culture was corrosive to family life and office productivity, she aimed to be home for dinner with her family almost every evening and advocated for improved parental leave policies. She was the first Google employee to take maternity leave. "When we increased paid maternity leave to 18 from 12 weeks in 2007, the rate at which new moms left Google fell by 50 per cent," she said.

She also saw motherhood as an asset that helped with tracking trends. "I try to watch my kids' behaviour, and I try to get insights from that, and understand how are they thinking about media, what are they watching," she told CNN in 2016. "Then I try to marry that with quantitative data that we have in the office."

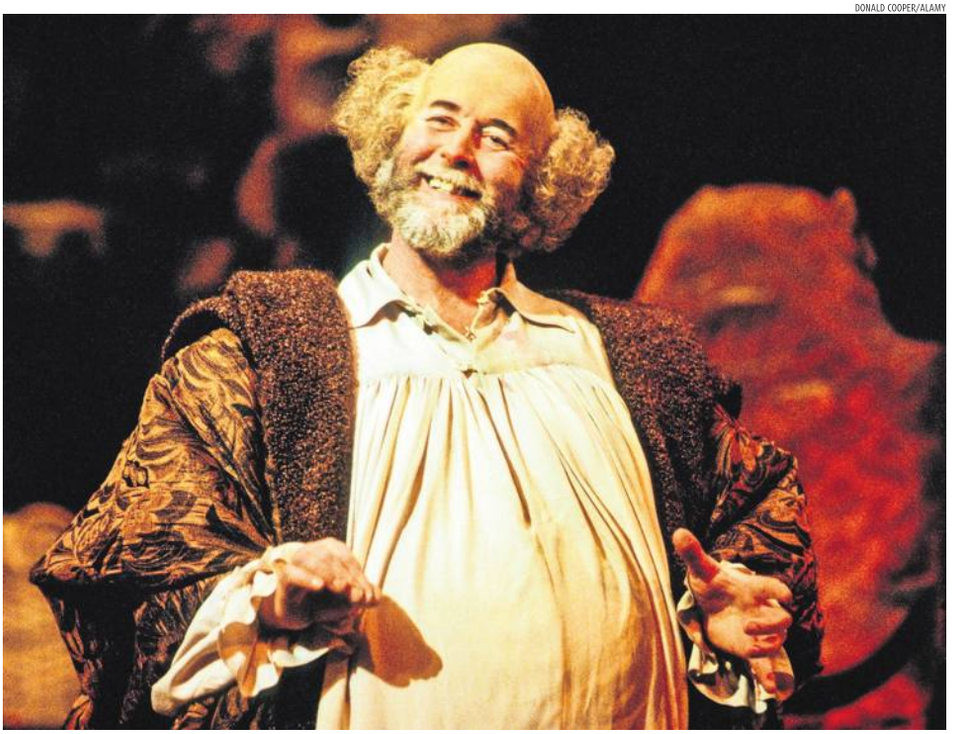
Susan Wojcicki, Google and YouTube executive, was born on July 5, 1968. She died of lung cancer on August 9, 2024, aged 56

Register

Benjamin Luxon

Energetic opera singer and Britten's first-choice baritone who sang Rule Britannia! at the Proms after the Falklands conflict

DONALD COOPER/ALAMY



Luxon in 1989 in the title role of Verdi's comedy Falstaff at English National Opera, with which he had a long association

From Edward Elgar to Benjamin Britten via Victorian music hall and belting out *Rule Britannia!* at the Last Night of the Proms, Benjamin Luxon excelled in the rich repertoire of English song — yet he insisted that he wasn't really English at all.

"I'm a Cornishman, a very different race," he told Roy Plomley when he was the castaway on *Desert Islands Discs*. He looked it, too, with his bushy fisherman's beard and to prove his fealty to the southwest peninsula and his Celtic roots, he chose as the first of his eight records the *Newquay Fishermen's Song*, performed by a full-throated Cornish male voice choir.

His choices soon moved on to the music of Britten, in whose operas he made his name as one of the finest singers of his generation. If Peter Pears was the composer's favourite tenor, Luxon was Britten's first-choice baritone and he wrote the title role of his opera *Owen Wingrave* specifically for him. The composer, who had been a conscientious objector during the Second World War, based the opera on a story by Henry James about a young man who rejects his family's military traditions and becomes a pacifist. The opera was premiered on BBC2 in 1971; Luxon reprised the role two years later when it received its first staged production at the Royal Opera House.

Britten had handed Luxon his operatic break seven years earlier when his English Opera Group was due to tour the Soviet Union and the company lost one of its leading baritones on the eve of departure. Luxon reckoned that as a young and unknown singer he was the only baritone available at such notice but he got the gig and never looked back. On the tour Luxon sang in two Britten operas, *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Albert Herring*, and he remained with the group for the next seven years, touring Europe, North America and Australia in productions of English language operas mostly by Britten but also by other contemporary composers including William Walton and Malcolm Williamson, and older works such as Henry Purcell's *King Arthur* and John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*.

A long association followed with English National Opera and with the Royal Opera House, as Luxon expanded his repertoire to include Mozart and Rossini, Wagner and Verdi.

He made a spectacular debut at the New York Metropolitan Opera in 1980 in the title role in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and six years later made his La Scala debut. He was also a favourite at Glyndebourne, with his marvellously engaging Papageno in the David Hockney-designed production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

He sang under the baton of many of the most celebrated conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Georg Solti and Leonard Bernstein, and made more than 100 recordings, among which his personal favourite was Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Scottish National Chorus and Orchestra under Sir Alexander Gibson. He sang *Rule Britannia!* at the Last Night of the Proms twice, including in 1982 just a few weeks after the Falklands conflict ended, when his performance was met with a particularly enthusiastic display of patriotic fervour by promenaders.

Luxon refused to be restricted to the classical repertoire. He made his TV debut in the 1960s singing sea shanties on Westward TV, recorded folk songs with the American folk singer Bill Crofut, sang a little jazz, appeared on the music hall show *The Good Old Days* and staged evenings of Victorian parlour and songs with his friend, the tenor Robert Tear. "If I'd been born 500 years ago, I would have been a minstrel," he said.

A large and energetic man, every so often he felt the need to escape from the concert stage and "just get out and work physically. I don't really care what it is, so long as it's good physical hard work." On one occasion after some elm trees had been felled on his Hertfordshire farm, he spent ten days from dawn until dusk chopping them up into logs purely for the satisfaction he derived from the sweat on his brow.

He is survived by his second wife, Susan Crofut, the widow of his folk singing partner Bill, who died in 1999.

On their marriage in 2002 he took American citizenship and settled in Sandisfield, Massachusetts. He is further survived by three children from his first marriage to the Israeli soprano Sheila Amit, whom he met when they toured the Soviet Union together in 1964 with Britten's opera group.

Benjamin Matthew Luxon was born in 1937 in Redruth, Cornwall, and grew up in nearby Camborne, the son of Lucille (née Grigg) and Ernest Luxon. It was, he said, "a completely unsophisticated background" but his father was an amateur singer with a fine bass voice and his son was soon singing as a boy soprano at the local Methodist chapel and in his school choir. By the age of nine he was performing in concerts almost every week, but, he said, "everyone in Cornwall sang in those days so I wasn't unusual".

He continued singing as a scholarship boy at Truro School but had no thoughts of becoming a professional singer and, after doing his two years of National Service, he enrolled at a teacher training college. It was there that he "got the bug for singing properly" and with the encouragement of the soprano Marion Studholme he enrolled at the Guildhall School of Music, funding his studies by working part-time as a PE teacher in the East End.

In his final year he won the Guildhall gold medal and began his professional career giving recitals of German lieder. For all his later association with the English repertoire he called Schubert his "musical god".

His singing came to an unfortunate end in 1990 when in the middle of a Schubert recital in London he found he couldn't pitch his voice to the piano. "I tried to get through but I couldn't," he recalled. "The music would start, and I had no idea where to sing. It was so distorted." Within two days he had gone so deaf that he "couldn't hear the difference between men and women's voices. They all sounded like weird robots."

It was eventually diagnosed as an auto-immune problem and with a cochlear implant he attempted to take to the stage again. "There was nothing wrong with my voice, but I couldn't really hear what was happening around me and I was far too damaged to carry on a major international career," he said.

He bore it with fortitude. "I never expected to sing at the places where I sang or do the things I did. It was all a bonus, really," he reasoned. "And once I stopped the profession, I began to look a little bit more at life and people."

Benjamin Luxon, opera singer, was born on March 24, 1937. He died of colon cancer on July 25, 2024, aged 87

Dennis Trevelyan

Civil service commissioner who butted heads with Thatcher in his efforts to keep unqualified political appointees from Whitehall

For five years from 1978 Dennis Trevelyan's job was to keep people in, tens of thousands of them to be precise — residents of HM Prisons in England and Wales. For the next six years, as first civil service commissioner, he was responsible for keeping people out, ensuring that unqualified political appointees did not reach the upper echelons of Whitehall.

A distant ancestor, Sir Charles Trevelyan, had produced with Sir Stafford Northcote the Northcote-Trevelyan report of 1853 recommending that admission to the civil service be solely on merit and examination, securing only civil servants who were qualified rather than members of aristocratic or influential families. Trevelyan's job was to ensure that Whitehall remained true to that ideal. Although only a deputy secretary in the management and personnel office, he could technically go over the heads of the cabinet secretary and even the prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, to the Queen if he feared that patronage of the 19th-century variety was once more rearing its corrupt head.

Trevelyan tried to broaden recruitment

The nearest he came to doing so was in 1984 when Michael Heseltine, then defence secretary, appointed Peter Levene, chairman of the defence contractor United Scientific Holdings, to be chief of defence procurement without seeking approval from Trevelyan's commission. The situation was eventually resolved when Levene (now Lord Levene of Portsoken) was retrospectively approved by the commission.

His approach did not sit well with Thatcher, who wanted more political appointees in the higher echelons of the civil service, and his family recalled him clashing with the prime minister. Yet he stood firm, insisting that the civil service would not be politicised on his watch. "The chaps I recruit are the same sort of people [as previously]," he told The Guardian, referring to the days of non-political appointments.

Trevelyan had less success with his mission to broaden the civil service's recruitment. It was an uphill battle and he remained frustrated by how few applications came from northern and Scottish universities, women and scientists.

While calling for more risk-takers, innovators and doers, he also faced heavily entrenched views of the civil service. Asked during a recruitment event in Leeds in 1983 about Sir Humphrey Appleby, the fictional civil servant of *Yes Minister*, he replied in frustration: "We are not at all like that. There are all sorts of jobs available and pay is good — but few people seem interested."

Dennis John Trevelyan was born in north London in 1929, the only child of John Trevelyan, also a civil servant, and his wife, Eliza (née Morris), who was from an Ashkenazi Jewish background though her son was a lifelong atheist.

Settling for a 2:1 in history at Oxford meant forgoing his postgraduate studies at All Souls College, though with hindsight he regarded that as an opportunity. Meanwhile, he was rejected for National Service, the legacy of childhood mastoiditis that had left him with impaired hearing.

Trevelyan joined the Home Office in 1950 and worked his way upwards through most government departments apart from the Foreign Office. While holidaying in Majorca he met Carol Coombes, a teacher of profoundly deaf children, and they married in 1959. She died in 2015 and he is survived by their children, Joanna and Jonathan.

By 1978 Trevelyan was running the Home Office broadcasting department. He was "plucked overnight" to become director-general of prisons; belying his gentle exterior he described the conditions in Britain's overcrowded jails as "an affront to a civilised society".

On retiring in 1989 he was appointed principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, tasked with raising the funds for it to become a self-governing college, which it achieved in 1995. He and Carol settled in Begbroke, north of Oxford. He was interested in criminology, sailed a dinghy into his seventies and played the piano. Tall, athletic and barrel-chested with wavy white hair and a cheeringly cultivated manner, the one deviation from his otherwise urbane nature was an insistence on pouring brown sauce on almost everything he ate.

Dennis Trevelyan CB, civil servant and principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, 1989-96, was born on July 21, 1929. He died on July 19, 2024, aged 94

Email: obituaries@thetimes.co.uk

Law Report

The recoverable damages for malicious falsehood when no financial loss suffered

Supreme Court
Published August 12, 2024
George v Cannell and another
Before Lord Hodge, Lord Hamblen, Lord Leggatt, Lord Burrows and Lord Richards
[2024] UKSC 19
Judgment June 12, 2024

In an action for malicious falsehood section 3(1) of the Defamation Act 1952, where it applied, created a presumption of law that the publication of the words complained of had caused financial loss. The presumption was irrebuttable as far as liability was concerned. Where the malicious falsehood had not in fact caused any financial loss a claimant would not be entitled to damages for financial loss or damages for injury to feelings, other than nominal damages.

The Supreme Court so held (Lord Hamblen and Lord Burrows partly dissenting) in allowing in part the appeal of the defendants, Linda Cannell and LCA Jobs Ltd, from the decision of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Underhill, Lord Justice Warby and Lord Justice Snowden) (***The Times*** November 10, 2022; [2023] QB 117) which allowed the appeal of the claimant, Fiona George, from the dismissal by Mr Justice Saini ([2021] 4 WLR 145) of her claim for malicious falsehood.

Section 3(1) of the Defamation Act 1952 provides: "In an action for ... malicious falsehood, it shall not be necessary to allege or prove special damage — (a) if the words upon which the action is founded are calculated to cause pecuniary damage to the plaintiff and are published in writing or other permanent form; or (b) if the said words are calculated to cause pecuniary damage to the plaintiff in respect of any office, profession, calling, trade or business held or carried on by him at the time of the publication."

David Price KC and **Jonathan Price** for the defendants; **William Bennett KC** and **Godwin Busuttil** for the claimant. Media Defence intervened by way of written submissions only.

LORD LEGGATT, with whom Lord Hodge and Lord Richards agreed, said that the claimant was employed by the second defendant, an agency owned and operated by the first defendant, as a recruitment consultant. She resigned and took a new job with another recruitment agency. Her contract of employment with the second defendant did not prohibit her from soliciting business from their clients after her employment ended, although she gave the first defendant verbal assurances that she would not do so.

The claimant started her new job and began actively targeting the second defendant's clients. The first defendant called one of the claimant's clients and emailed her new employer alleging that the claimant had been acting in breach of restrictive covenants in her contract with the second defendant by approaching its clients and soliciting business from them.

The claimant sued the defendants for malicious falsehood, claiming damages for injury to her feelings caused by the publications complained of.

The judge found that the statements made by the first defendant were false and were made maliciously, as the first defendant did not honestly believe that they were true, but dismissed the claim on the ground that the statements complained of had not caused any financial loss and therefore the claimant had not proved special damage as required by the common law nor had she shown that her case fell within the exception to that requirement as contained in section 3(1) of the 1952 Act.

The Court of Appeal decided that the claim did fall within section 3(1) with the consequence that the claimant was entitled to a judgment for damages to be assessed. They also decided that, even though the publications complained of caused the claimant no financial loss, she was not limited on that account to an award of purely nominal damages but was entitled to recover compensation for injury to her feelings. The Court of Appeal ordered that the case be remitted to the High Court to assess those damages.

In the present appeal the defendants disputed each step of the Court of Appeal's reasoning. First they argued that, on the facts found by the judge, and in particular his finding that the two publications caused no financial loss to the claimant, the claim had to fail altogether. Alternatively, they argued that, if the claimant was entitled to a judgment in her favour, it could only be for nominal damages and not for damages for injured feelings.

The first of those arguments turned on the proper interpretation of section 3(1) of the 1952 Act. The clear underlying purpose of section 3(1) was to make it easier for claimants to recover damages in actions for malicious falsehood, by dispensing with the requirement under common law to allege and prove loss with certainty and precision.

The effect of section 3(1), where it applied, was to create a presumption of law that the publication of the words complained of had caused financial loss. That presumption was irrebuttable as far as liability was concerned but did not necessarily lead to an award of substantial damages.

In determining whether the words complained of "are calculated to cause pecuniary damage" to the claimant, the appropriate test was to ask whether, on the facts known or which should reasonably have been known to the defendant at the time of publication, it was objectively likely that the words published would cause financial loss. Applying that test in the present case, the first defendant's false statements were calculated to cause financial loss to the claimant and the publications fell within section 3(1).

In principle if a tort had been committed, the claimant should be entitled to compensation for all pecuniary and non-pecuniary loss caused by the tort, subject to normal rules concerning remoteness etcetera.

As to damages for injury to the claimant's feelings — also known as damages for "mental distress" — the defendants had not sought to argue that damages for injured feelings could never be awarded in an action for malicious falsehood. Their contention was that such damages were only available where significant financial loss had been caused and the distress related to the infliction of such loss. That was in principle the correct approach.

In respect of the common law tort of malicious falsehood the interests protected were purely economic interests and pecuniary damage/financial loss was an essential element of the cause of action. Although section 3(1) created a presumption of law that the publication complained of had caused financial loss, if the court concluded that no financial loss had actually been caused the claimant would only be entitled to nominal damages.

The statutory modification of the tort by section 3(1) had not transformed the tort from an economic one into a psychological one. The tort as modified was still not designed to afford protection against non-pecuniary harm and in cases where section 3(1) applied it remained necessary, if an award of damages for injury to feelings was to be justified, to show that financial damage had been suffered which had caused such injury to feelings.

It had been found as a fact in the instant case that no financial loss was actually caused by the publications and although section 3(1) applied the presumption that the words published caused financial damage to the claimant was purely notional and attracted only token damages.

There was no financial loss that could have given rise to injury to feelings for which compensation might be awarded. The claimant's emotional distress was not a matter for which the defendants could be held responsible because it was not suffered as a consequence, foreseeable or otherwise, of the tort of malicious falsehood.

There was nothing in the circumstances of the present case which could reasonably be said to justify an award of aggravated damages.

The Court of Appeal's order for an assessment of damages for injury to feelings would be set aside and judgment entered for the claimant for nominal damages in a sum of £5.

Lord Hamblen and Lord Burrows delivered a judgment dissenting as to whether damages for mental distress could be awarded for the tort of malicious falsehood to a claimant who was relying on section 3(1) even though the claimant had suffered no pecuniary loss.

Brabners LLP, Liverpool; **Thomson Heath & Associates.**

THE TIMES

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Court Circular

Buckingham Palace
9th August, 2024
The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP (Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury) had an audience of The King via telephone this evening.

His Majesty afterwards held a Meeting via telephone with Chief Constable Gavin Stephens (Chairman of National Police Chiefs' Council and Chief Constable of Surrey Police) and Chief Constable Ben-Julian Harrington (UK Gold Commander and Chief Constable of Essex Police).

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

SO THEN you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God. Ephesians 2.19-22 (NRSV)

Births

MEADOWS on 3rd August 2024 to Katie (née Liddell) and Lloyd, a son, Rupert Mark, brother to Hector and Toby.

Forthcoming Marriages

MR M. W. HOWARD-VYSE AND MISS E. Z. ALESSANDRONI
The engagement is announced between Marcus, elder son of Mr & Mrs Charles Howard-Vyse of Oxborough, Norfolk, and Lily, daughter of Signore Leonardo Alessandroni of Urbania, Italy, and Ms Ann Flynn of Rome, Italy.

Deaths

LEVERTON Captain Leslie Spry. MC and Bar. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. Died 12th August 1924 in Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia, aged 30. Soyez Sage et Simple.

PHILLIPS Annemarie (née Heymann) on 25th July 2024, aged 95, widow of Donald Phillips and mother to Tanya, Simon and Adam, died peacefully. A private funeral has taken place. May her memory be a blessing.

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

Legal Notices

Notice of Intended Distribution to Creditors
TRUSTEDOCTOR LTD
(In Members' Voluntary Liquidation) ("the Company")
(Company Number 10228675)
Registered office: Bridgewater Place, Water Lane, Leeds, LS11 5QR
Principal trading address: City Launch Lab 4th Floor, Franklin Building, 124 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DP
As Joint Liquidators of the Company, we hereby give notice that we intend to make a final distribution to its creditors. The last date for proving is 27 September 2024 and creditors of the Company should by that date send their full names and addresses and particulars of their debts or claims to me Trevor Oates of Ernst & Young LLP, 1 Bridgewater Place, Water Lane, Leeds, LS11 5QR. In accordance with Rule 14.38(1)(c) of the Insolvency (England and Wales) Rules 2016, we may thereafter make the proposed distribution without regard to the claim of any person in respect of a debt not yet proved.
Joint Liquidators: Trevor Oates (IP number 26290) of Ernst & Young LLP, 1 Bridgewater Place, Water Lane, Leeds, LS11 5QR and Derek Neil Hyslop (IP number 9970) of Ernst & Young LLP, Atria One, 144 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EX. Date of Appointment: 02 August 2024. For further details contact Mark Chapman on +44 113 298 2602.
Dated 8 August 2024
Trevor Oates, *Joint Liquidator*

Weather

Today Thunderstorms in Scotland and northern England. Sunny spells elsewhere. Max 35C (95F), min 6C (43F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder
☆=previous day ☆☆=data not available

	Temp C midday yesterday		Rain mm 24 hrs to 5pm yesterday	Sun hr☆
Aberdeen	18	S	0.0	6.4
Aberporth	22	C	0.0	5.0
Anglesey	☆☆	☆☆	0.0	8.2
Aviemore	17	PC	0.0	5.6
Barnstaple	22	C	0.0	☆☆
Bedford	24	C	0.0	☆☆
Belfast	19	S	0.0	9.3
Birmingham	23	PC	0.0	☆☆
Bournemouth	25	PC	0.0	2.9
Bridlington	20	S	0.0	☆☆
Bristol	23	C	0.0	4.9
Camborne	19	C	0.6	0.0
Cardiff	22	C	0.0	3.9
Edinburgh	19	S	0.0	7.3
Eskdalemuir	17	PC	0.0	12.6
Glasgow	19	PC	0.0	5.1
Hereford	23	M	0.0	☆☆
Herstmonceux	26	S	0.0	7.6
Ipswich	24	R	0.0	2.8
Isle of Man	19	S	0.0	11.4
Isle of Wight	24	S	0.0	☆☆
Jersey	27	S	0.0	13.7
Keswick	20	S	0.0	☆☆
Kinloss	18	C	0.0	3.8
Leeds	21	S	0.0	☆☆
Lerwick	14	C	0.0	0.7
Leuchars	19	S	0.0	8.1
Lincoln	22	S	0.0	2.9
Liverpool	22	S	0.0	☆☆
London	26	S	0.0	4.0
Lyneham	24	C	0.0	3.2
Manchester	23	S	0.0	4.4
Margate	23	S	0.0	8.5
Milford Haven	19	C	0.0	☆☆
Newcastle	21	PC	0.0	☆☆
Nottingham	23	S	0.0	3.3
Orkney	15	D	1.4	5.4
Oxford	24	PC	0.0	☆☆
Plymouth	21	B	0.0	☆☆
Portland	18	R	0.2	☆☆
Scilly, St Mary's	18	R	0.4	☆☆
Shoreham	25	PC	0.0	4.9
Shrewsbury	22	C	0.0	3.1
Snowdonia	21	PC	0.0	☆☆
Southend	23	S	0.0	5.5
South Uist	15	C	0.2	☆☆
Stornoway	15	C	0.8	3.4
Tiree	15	C	0.6	3.5
Whitehaven	19	M	0.0	4.0
Wick	16	C	0.6	☆☆
Yeovilton	23	C	0.8	0.1

The world

All readings local midday yesterday

Alicante	33	S	Madeira	25	B
Amsterdam	26	PC	Madrid	35	S
Athens	32	PC	Malaga	30	S
Auckland	15	S	Mallorca	33	S
Bahrain	36	S	Malta	34	PC
Bangkok	34	PC	Melbourne	17	PC
Barbados	31	SH	Mexico City	21	C
Barcelona	28	PC	Miami	33	B
Beijing	32	S	Milan	33	PC
Beirut	30	PC	Mombasa	26	B
Belgrade	33	S	Montreal	24	PC
Berlin	24	PC	Moscow	21	PC
Bermuda	31	SH	Mumbai	29	☆☆
Bordeaux	36	S	Munich	29	S
Brussels	26	S	Nairobi	20	C
Bucharest	31	S	Naples	35	S
Budapest	32	S	New Orleans	33	S
Buenos Aires	14	S	New York	30	PC
Cairo	34	S	Nice	32	PC
Calcutta	30	☆☆	Nicosia	33	PC
Canberra	15	S	Oslo	20	S
Cape Town	16	B	Paris	29	S
Chicago	23	B	Perth	20	B
Copenhagen	20	PC	Prague	26	S
Corfu	35	PC	Reykjavik	13	SH
Delhi	26	R	Riga	20	PC
Dubai	42	S	Rio de Janeiro	17	R
Dublin	20	PC	Riyadh	43	S
Faro	27	PC	Rome	35	S
Florence	38	S	San Francisco	16	PC
Frankfurt	29	S	Santiago	17	S
Geneva	30	S	São Paulo	11	C
Gibraltar	28	PC	Seoul	33	PC
Helsinki	17	T	Seychelles	28	PC
Hong Kong	34	PC	Singapore	30	B
Honolulu	32	PC	St Petersburg	18	PC
Istanbul	32	PC	Stockholm	20	S
Jerusalem	32	PC	Sydney	17	PC
Johannesburg	24	S	Tel Aviv	32	PC
Kuala Lumpur	24	T	Tenerife	28	S
Kyiv	☆☆	☆☆	Tokyo	34	PC
Lanzarote	28	PC	Vancouver	24	PC
Las Palmas	26	PC	Venice	31	S
Lima	15	C	Vienna	32	S
Lisbon	30	S	Warsaw	24	B
Los Angeles	24	PC	Washington	31	B
Luxor	42	S	Zurich	29	S

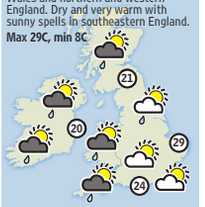
Five days ahead

It will turn fresh and more unsettled with showers or longer spells of rain at times

Tomorrow

Outbreaks of rain will spread eastwards across Ireland, Scotland, Wales and northern and western England. Dry and very warm with sunny spells in southeastern England.

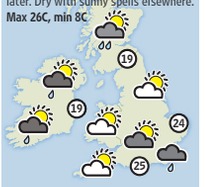
Max 29C, min 8C



Wednesday

Partly cloudy with the chance of some patchy rain in southeast England. Mostly cloudy in western Scotland and Ireland with spells of rain spreading in later. Dry with sunny spells elsewhere.

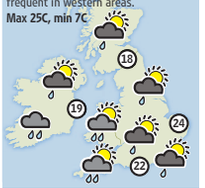
Max 26C, min 8C



Thursday

Spells of rain will spread southeastwards across Ireland, England and Wales. Sunny periods and scattered showers in Scotland, most frequent in western areas.

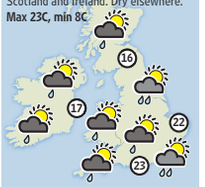
Max 25C, min 7C



Friday

Outbreaks of rain will clear southern and eastern England through the morning, leaving a dry rest of the day with sunny spells. Showers in western Scotland and Ireland. Dry elsewhere.

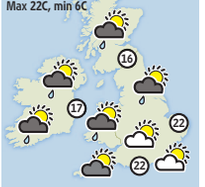
Max 23C, min 8C



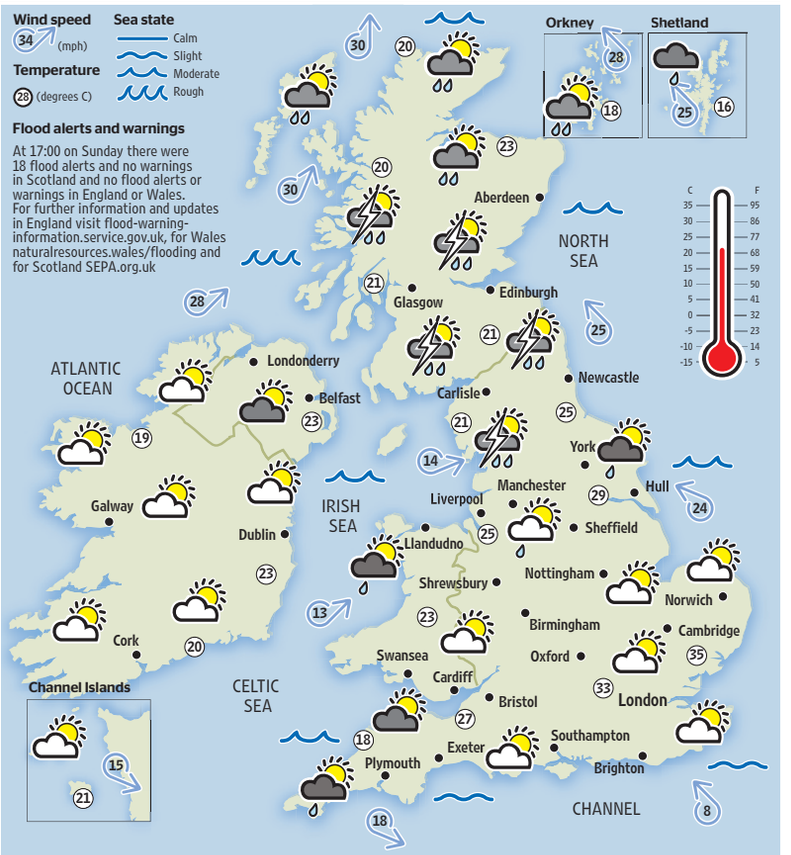
Saturday

Sunny periods and scattered heavy showers in Scotland, Wales, Ireland and northwest England. Dry with spells of sunshine elsewhere.

Max 22C, min 6C



The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest

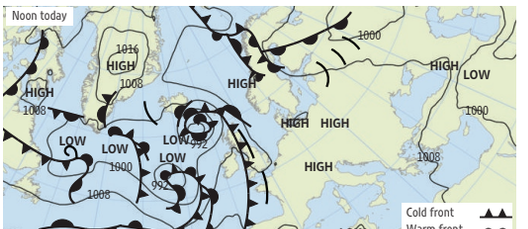


General situation: Showery rain and thunderstorms in Scotland and northern England. Largely dry elsewhere with sunny spells.
N Ireland, Republic of Ireland: Any showery rain or thunderstorms will quickly clear first thing, leaving a dry rest of the day with sunny spells. Gentle to moderate west or southwesterly winds. Maximum 22C (72F), minimum 12C (54F).
Wales, SW Eng, Channel Is: A partly cloudy morning with the risk of a shower or isolated thunderstorm, turning dry with lengthy sunny spells in the afternoon. Gentle to moderate south or southwesterly winds. Maximum 28C (82F), minimum 9C (48F).
NW Eng, Lake District, IoM, NE Eng: Sunny periods with the chance of a thunderstorm in the morning. A dry afternoon with sunny intervals. Maximum 28C (82F), minimum 9C (48F).
Scotland: Showers and thunderstorms will spread eastwards across Scotland through the morning and early afternoon. It will then turn drier with sunny spells developing after. Fresh to near gale force winds in the Northern and Western Isles, gentle to moderate winds elsewhere. Maximum 23C (73F), minimum 6C (43F).
London, Cen S Eng, E Anglia, Mids, E Eng, Cen N Eng: A largely dry and hot day with spells of sunshine. Gentle southerly winds. Maximum 35C (95F), minimum 11C (52F).

Tides

Tidal predictions. Heights in metres

Today		Ht		Ht
Aberdeen	06:47	3.6	19:28	3.4
Avonmouth	--:--	--	12:23	10.7
Belfast	04:35	3.2	17:14	2.9
Cardiff	--:--	--	12:05	9.9
Devonport	11:04	4.5	23:11	4.5
Dover	04:00	5.7	16:24	5.7
Dublin	05:00	3.5	17:31	3.3
Falmouth	10:31	4.3	22:48	4.3
Greenock	05:37	3.2	18:24	2.9
Harwich	05:11	3.5	17:25	3.5
Holyhead	03:31	4.7	16:04	4.5
Hull	11:34	6.4	--:--	--
Leith	08:09	4.6	20:41	4.5
Liverpool	04:10	7.8	16:41	7.5
London Bridge	07:04	6.0	19:20	6.0
Lowestoft	02:58	2.1	15:06	2.3
Milford Haven	11:33	5.5	23:53	5.5
Morecambe	04:22	7.8	16:54	7.4
Newhaven	04:10	5.5	16:33	5.5
Newquay	10:28	5.6	22:49	5.5
Oban	11:01	3.1	23:04	3.1
Penzance	10:00	4.5	22:17	4.4
Portsmouth	04:45	4.0	17:15	4.1
Shoreham	04:10	5.2	16:34	5.2
Southampton	03:48	3.9	16:13	4.0
Swansea	11:35	7.6	23:52	7.5
Tees	09:12	4.7	21:50	4.5
Weymouth	11:43	1.5	23:56	1.5



Synoptic situation

A trough and cold front associated with an area of low pressure situated to the northwest of the British Isles will spread eastwards across Northern Ireland, northern England and Scotland bringing showery rain, some of which will be thundery in Scotland and northern England. Dry and hot in southern England under a ridge of high pressure.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday

Warmest: Northolt, Greater London, 29.2C
Coldest: Cairngorm, 3.7C
Wettest: Achnagart, Inverness-shire, 3.8mm
Sunniest: Jersey, 13.7hrs☆

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 05.41
Sun sets: 20.27
Moon rises: 14.34
Moon sets: 22.49
Full Moon: August 19

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	21:26-05:02
Belfast	21:31-05:27
Birmingham	21:08-05:18
Cardiff	21:10-05:26
Exeter	21:09-05:29
Glasgow	21:29-05:16
Liverpool	21:16-05:19
London	20:58-05:13
Manchester	21:13-05:16
Newcastle	21:15-05:08
Norwich	20:56-05:04
Penzance	21:16-05:39
Sheffield	21:09-05:13

Weather Eye

Paul Simons

It may be worth going outside tonight and watching out for lights streaking across the sky, but only so long as the weather co-operates and clouds don't blot out the view.

These illuminations are the Perseid meteor shower, when cosmic dust crashes into the Earth's atmosphere, streaking across the sky with trails of faint light. The Perseids are the best meteor display of the year, producing some of the brightest and most active shooting stars and tonight they reach their peak of around 60 to 100 meteors per hour. Better still, there will be little interference from moonlight as only a quarter moon is visible, and in any case the moon will set just before midnight. The best place to see the meteors is in pitch black darkness, well away from any artificial lights. Give your eyes 15 minutes to adjust to the darkness, and don't look at mobile phones.

Despite their heavenly display, meteors are small, often no bigger than a grain of sand. The Perseids can also feature larger, pea-sized meteors that can burn up into impressive fireballs as they explode in the upper atmosphere. And even if clouds block out the view tonight, the meteors will carry on for some time yet and the moon will set early enough to give a good view up to Thursday night.

The Perseids are spawned from the Swift-Tuttle comet as it sheds streams of fine debris on its way through the solar system. When the Earth passes through that trail, the meteors shoot through the atmosphere at around 135,000 miles per hour. The air in front of a meteor becomes squashed and with the intense friction heats up to thousands of degrees celsius, and so the meteors burn up like fireworks leaving tails of light in their wake.

Meteors don't just come in showers — they constantly crash into the Earth's atmosphere. It has been estimated that about 48.5 tonnes of meteoritic material fall on Earth each day but they usually don't come in concentrated showers so they are much more difficult to spot.

Speak directly to one of our forecasters on 09065 777675

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Sport

The Springboks and Kolbe's total rugby flying into future – look out

Stuart Barnes

There was a time when Cheslin Kolbe was rated one of the best wings in the world. In the 2019 World Cup final he turned England and Owen Farrell inside out to guarantee the Springboks glory in Japan. Last year he was the man who charged down a French conversion that might just have been the difference between winning and losing that epic quarter-final. That was then…

In the now of this South Africa team, whose head coach has already talked about the requisite evolution needed in their attempt to win a third consecutive World Cup in 2027, Kolbe is — paradoxically — starting to look less like one of the best wings on the planet. The fireworks against Australia in Saturday's 33-7 rout in Brisbane were predominantly provided on the left wing. Kurt-Lee Arendse was all speed with a soft-shoe shuffle to leave Wallabies trailing in his devastating two-try wake.

There's no doubting his status among the world's best left wings. But Kolbe? He didn't score a try, didn't threaten the tryline, but his was arguably the most fascinating performance of all. In Brisbane we witnessed the 30-year-old beginning to become a complete player.

In fact he was least effective when standing on the right wing to stretch the Australian defence. South Africa couldn't put their dazzler away. Instead he surged off his wing to commence a move that ended with Arendse scorching over in the left corner for South Africa's fifth try in an ominously controlled display.

That run was the sum of his role in the five tries, yet do not be fooled by the lack of personal pyrotechnics — Kolbe is evolving into so much more than a wing.

South Africa fielded a 6-2 forwards/back bench split in Brisbane. With Kolbe on the field they could easily revert to the 7-1 balance they had in the World Cup final because he is fast emerging as the jack-of-all-positions — and a threat from every single one.

Here's what he did in the opening quarter of the match. The first scrum was awarded to the Springboks in an offensive position near the left touchline. The right wing sauntered over to perform the duties of scrum half. Cobus Reinach, the regular No 9, is a low-slung threat himself but Kolbe, with that footwork, is another dimension of danger. The scrum sent Australia into retreat, Kolbe picked up and darted at the defence around the fringes. It was an "almost" moment but the seed of insecurity was sown in Australian heads. They were to play as though they didn't know what danger was emanating from where in a first half in which Kolbe popped up everywhere.

At the first lineout, which was on the left touchline, Kolbe strolled into the fly half position. "First receiver," said the commentator as Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu, the No 10, moved further into the midfield, giving the Wallabies dual headaches. Does Kolbe commit the defence, does the fly half put sufficient width on the ball to outflank a defence with one eye on the No 14 standing at No 10?

In the 11th minute Kolbe distributes from the base of the ruck. He could definitely slot into any side at scrum half. In the same move he next emerges in the midfield. One minute later he is stepping and slipping a splendid offload to Pieter-Steph du Toit, like a world-class centre. When the attack breaks down and the home side put up a speculative kick beneath the South African posts, he is there at full back to call the mark and clear his lines with a solid touch-finder.

Five minutes later the power-packed Springbok hits a ruck hard enough to prevent a possible turnover. Next he is involved three times in a multi-phase attack, every one of his interventions coming far from the right flank. Twice he passes and another time he carries with intent. It is no surprise that the midfield defence parts soon after, Australia's system stretched by the buzzing variety of the opposing backs, Kolbe in particular.

In the second half, with the world champions dropping down a gear, he crops up again as a scrum half at a breakdown, this time producing a Faf de Klerk-style box-kick. With the game ticking towards its denouement he slips deep into the pocket and attempts a drop-goal to try to get the scoreboard moving. He missed but here was an example of a wing operating as a decision-making fly half. He even threw a ball into the lineout and, yes, the Springboks won possession.

There was a distant time when wings always threw into lineouts. The cameo (with both hookers off the field for varying reasons) was a journey to the past. As for the rest of his game, it was a warning to the rest of the world. South Africa with Tony Brown, once an All Black No 10 and an excellent addition to their camp as backs coach, are leading the way into the future.

At the 2023 World Cup, England's Henry Arundell stood on the wing in the play-off against Argentina and watched the game unfold as though he was sitting in the stands. South Africa and Kolbe are steaming into the future. Saturday was merely a hint of what is to come.

APE/DARREN ENGLAND

Kolbe is nominally a wing but provided a threat from several positions during the Springboks' rout of Australia in Brisbane

Three plays, four yards on debut, Rees-Zammit has it all to do

American football
Elgan Alderman

Louis Rees-Zammit played four positions, made four yards from three plays and even kicked the ball during his Kansas City Chiefs debut.

The Welshman, 23, who quit rugby union in January to try to make it in the NFL, wore the No 9 jersey for his team's first pre-season match. He was involved as a running back, kick returner and kicker in the 26-13 defeat by Jacksonville Jaguars at EverBank Stadium in Florida. Watching on were his mum, Maxine, and dad, Joseph, whose experience playing in Cardiff in the 1980s informed Rees-Zammit's love of NFL.

Rees-Zammit was the first Kansas City player to touch the ball, catching the opening kick-off, initially running forward before deciding to take a knee in the end zone and guarantee field position. Kick return and special teams is expected to be his best chance of making it in the league, which has a new kick-off rule that requires the defensive line to stand on the 40-yard line until the ball is caught or lands.

Rees-Zammit was involved in offensive plays in the third and fourth quarters, making two rushes for a yard and catching once for a three-yard gain. As part of special teams, he made one tackle during a return and took a kick-off himself, which travelled 56 yards.

"It was a great first experience," he told the *Irish NFL Show*. "I loved getting the snaps I did, on special teams. I've got to look back on this, review it and see how I can get better.

"I got a little kick-off, that was great; being able to play special teams is amazing. To be able to exploit different skills. I'm happy. I'll see how I can get better and take it on to the next game."

That Rees-Zammit has played in a pre-season game is some achievement, albeit highlighting how difficult it will be for him to play in the NFL itself. There are few opportunities to impress on the field, and Rees-Zammit did look a bit stiff on his first rush. Five years ago Christian Wade scored a 65-yard touchdown on debut for Buffalo Bills but still did not feature in the regular season. Wade returned to rugby with Racing 92 and has just joined Gloucester, filling Rees-Zammit's space on the wing.

Rees-Zammit admitted he has a lot to learn but loved his debut

A Chiefs depth chart online listed Rees-Zammit as fifth-choice running back and third-choice kick returner behind Nikko Remigio and Mecole Hardman. Their performances on Saturday showed that even those with experience can struggle pre-season. Remigio had the ball stolen by Christian Braswell for a touchdown, only to be saved by his knee just touching the ground before the rip, and Hardman conceded a two-point safety when he dithered over a Jacksonville kick-off and carried the ball into the end zone.

Rees-Zammit quit rugby, on the day Wales's Six Nations squad was announced, to join the International Player Pathway (IPP). After a training camp in Florida, he recorded a 40-yard dash time of 4.43sec on the Pro Day in March, a decent time but higher than he had hoped for, before signing a three-year, $2.8 million (£2.2 million) deal with Kansas City. The Chiefs have won the past two Super Bowls, and have Patrick Mahomes as quarterback and Taylor Swift as their most famous fan.

Even if Rees-Zammit does not make it on to the playing roster this season, he could continue learning on the practice squad. He said before his debut that the biggest challenge has been mental and he spent two hours after evening meetings to learn the playbook. "The blows you take here are pretty big," he said. "It's a completely different sport — I've never had to pass-protect before. It's illegal in rugby. I have to try to pick it up as quickly as possible."

Sport

Results and scoreboards

Football

FA Community Shield

Man City (0) **1** **Man Utd** (0) **1**
Silva 89 — Garnacho 82
78,146
Man City won 7-6 on pens
(at Wembley Stadium)

Sky Bet Championship

Cardiff (0) **0** **Sunderland** (1) **2**
21,401 — O'Nien 18, Clarke 89

Hull (0) **1** **Bristol City** (0) **1**
Estupiñán 90+1 (pen) — Mayulu 84
21,011

Leeds (1) **3** **Portsmouth** (2) **3**
Struijk 10 (pen), Gnonto 46, Aaronson 90+5 — Sorensen 23, Lang 41, 90+2 (pen)
36,432

Middlesbrough (1) **1** **Swansea** (0) **0**
Latte Lath 25 (pen)
26,610

Millwall (0) **2** **Watford** (1) **3**
Watmore 74, 88 — Kayembe 22, Chakvetadze 55, Rajovic 90
16,456

Oxford Utd (1) **2** **Norwich** (0) **0**
Harris 28, Brannagan 58
11,333

QPR (1) **1** **West Brom** (1) **3**
Andersen 16 — Maja 26, 51, 65

Sheffield Wed (1) **4** **Plymouth** (0) **0**
Lowe 35, Galloway 52 (og), Windass 82, Smith 90+6
29,535

Stoke (0) **1** **Coventry** (0) **0**
Baker 78
25,037

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Sheffield Wed	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3
Blackburn	1	1	0	0	4	2	2	3
West Bromwich	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
Sunderland	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Oxford Utd	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Watford	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
Middlesbrough	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Stoke	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
***Sheffield Utd**	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	1
Portsmouth	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
Leeds	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
Bristol City	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Hull	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Burnley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Luton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Millwall	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
Coventry	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Swansea	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Derby	1	0	0	1	2	4	-2	0
QPR	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
Cardiff	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Norwich	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Preston	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Plymouth	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0

*deducted 2pts for breach of league rules

Today Luton v Burnley (8.0)

League One

Birmingham (0) **1** **Reading** (1) **1**
May 87 (pen) — Ehibhatiomhan 42
27,985

Bristol Rovers (0) **1** **Northampton** (0) **0**
Bilongo 90+2
8,529

Burton Albion (2) **2** **Lincoln City** (2) **3**
Godwin-Malife 5, Bodin 41 — O'Connor 9, 86, Darikwa 22

Crawley (2) **2** **Blackpool** (0) **1**
Hepburn-Murphy 16, Quitirna 33 — Fletcher 74
2,718

Exeter (0) **1** **Rotherham** (0) **0**
Watts 71

Leyton Orient (1) **1** **Bolton** (1) **2**
Kelman 38 — Charles 8, Adeboyejo 75
7,835

Peterborough (0) **0** **Huddersfield** (2) **2**
Evans 36, Wiles 45+1

Stevenage (0) **1** **Shrewsbury** (0) **0**
List 58
3,357

Stockport (1) **2** **Cambridge U** (0) **0**
Barry 5, Wootton 76
9,457

Wigan (0) **0** **Charlton** (0) **1**
9,564 — Jones 81

Wrexham (2) **3** **Wycombe** (0) **2**
Cleworth 9, Marriott 29, Fletcher 83 — Kone 58, Vokes 89
13,214

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Huddersfield	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Stockport	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Lincoln City	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
Wrexham	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
Bolton	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Mansfield	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Crawley	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Charlton	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Bristol Roers	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Exeter	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Stevenage	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Reading	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Birmingham	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Wycombe	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
Burton	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
Blackpool	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Barnsley	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Leyton Orient	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Northampton	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Rotherham	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Shrewsbury	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Wigan	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Cambridge Utd	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Peterboroough	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

League Two

AFC Wimbledon (3) **4** **Colchester** (2) **2**
Ball 13, Reeves 30, Stevens 38 (pen), Chaaban 54 — Goodliffe 1, 9
7,924

Barrow (1) **1** **Crewe** (0) **0**
Vassell 22
3,585

Cheltenham (2) **3** **Newport Co** (2) **2**
Colwill 22, 90+6, Dulson 27 — Baker-Richardson 31 (pen), Greaves 43
4,613

Doncaster (1) **4** **Accrington** (0) **1**
Molyneux 43, 62, Gibson 68, Sharp 87 — Walton 47
6,423

Fleetwood (1) **1** **Grimsby** (0) **0**
Helm 18
3,525

Gillingham (1) **4** **Carlisle** (0) **1**
Dieng 2, Wakeling 48, Nolan 77, Williams 87 — Mellish 65
7,037

Harrogate (0) **0** **Bromley** (0) **2**
2,236 — Cheek 62, Grant 71

MK Dons (1) **1** **Bradford City** (2) **2**
Gilbey 20 — Pattison 3, Sherring 5 (og)
7,561

Salford (0) **0** **Port Vale** (1) **2**
3,318 — Garrity 45+3, 69

Tranmere (0) **0** **Notts County** (0) **0**
8,198

Walsall (1) **1** **Morecambe** (0) **0**
Allen 20
5,226

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Doncaster	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	3
Gillingham	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	3
AFC Wimbledon	1	1	0	0	4	2	2	3
Bromley	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Port Vale	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Cheltenham	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
Bradford City	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Barrow	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Fleetwood	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Walsall	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Swindon	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Chesterfield	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Notts County	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tranmere	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Newport County	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
MK Dons	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Crewe	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Grimsby	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Morecambe	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Colchester	1	0	0	1	2	4	-2	0
Harrogate	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Salford	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Accrington	1	0	0	1	1	4	-3	0
Carlisle	1	0	0	1	1	4	-3	0

Vanarama National League AFC Fylde 3 Solihull Moors 2; Aldershot 3 Forest Green 3; Altrincham 1 Woking 0; Boston 0 Rochdale 3; Dagenham & Redbridge 2 Wealdstone 1; Halifax 2 Barnet 1; Gateshead 5 Ebbsfleet 1; Maidenhead 0 Eastleigh 2; Oldham 3 Braintree 0; Southend 1 York 1; Tamworth 1 Sutton Utd 1; Yeovil 0 Hartlepool 1. **North** Brackley 0 Scunthorpe 3; Buxton 2 Leamington 1; Curzon Ashton 3 Needham Market 0; Darlington 1 Kidderminster 2; Hereford 3 South Shields 0; Kings Lynn 3 Warrington 1; Marine 1 Oxford City 1; Peterborough Sports 0 Chorley 1; Radcliffe 3 Scarborough 3; Rushall 2 Farsley 3; Southport 3 Alfreton 1; Spennymoor 3 Chester 0. **South** Boreham Wood 1 Bath 0; Chippenham 1 Farnborough 2; Eastbourne 1 Chesham 1; Hampton & Richmond 1 Hornchurch 3; Hemel Hempstead 2 Salisbury 2; Slough 2 Chelmsford 1; St Albans 0 Maidstone 1; Tonbridge 3 Weymouth 2; Torquay 2 Enfield 1; Truro 1 Dorking 2; Welling 1 Aveley 0; Weston-super-Mare 3 Worthing 4.

William Hill Scottish Premiership

Aberdeen (1) **3** **St Mirren** (1) **1**
Guèye 39, McGrath 54, Besuijen 81 — Olusanya 45+3
17,057

Dundee (3) **3** **Hearts** (0) **1**
Tiffoney 23, Taylor 45+2 (og), McCowan 45+5 (pen) — Kent 61
7,266

Hibernian (0) **0** **Celtic** (2) **2**
17,918 — Kuhn 3, McGregor 19

Kilmarnock (0) **0** **St Johnstone** (2) **3**
4,843 — Sidibeh 3, 33, Kimpioka 81 (pen)
Sent off: J Wright (Kilmarnock) 16

Rangers (2) **2** **Motherwell** (1) **1**
Dessers 13, Cerny 24 — Pröpper 17 (og)
48,529

Ross County (0) **1** **Dundee Utd** (0) **1**
Hale 90+5 — Babunski 48
4,169

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Celtic	2	2	0	0	6	0	6	6
Aberdeen	2	2	0	0	5	2	3	6
Dundee	2	1	1	0	5	3	2	4
Rangers	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
St Johnstone	2	1	0	1	4	2	2	3
St Mirren	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	3
Dundee Utd	2	0	2	0	3	3	0	2
Ross County	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	2
Motherwell	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	1
Hearts	2	0	1	1	1	3	-2	1
Hibernian	2	0	0	2	0	5	-5	0
Kilmarnock	2	0	0	2	0	7	-7	0

William Hill Championship Dunfermline Athletic 0 Falkirk 2; Greenock Morton 0 Hamilton Academical 0; Raith Rovers 1 Partick Thistle 0. **League One** Annan 1 Inverness CT 0; Arbroath 0 Montrose 0; Dumbarton 3 Alloa 3; Kelty 2 Stenhousemuir 0; Queen of the South 2 Cove 1. **League Two** Clyde 1 Stranraer 0; East Fife 2 Edinburgh City 0; Peterhead 2 Forfar 1; Stirling Albion 0 Elgin 1; The Spartans 2 Bonnyrigg 0.

Cricket

Metro Bank Cup: Group A

Kent v Durham

Canterbury (Durham won toss): Durham (2pts) beat Kent by seven runs

Durham (balls)
M A Jones b Swanepoel 12 (15)
B S McKinney c Stobo b O'Riordan 115 (116)
*A Z Lees lbw b Stobo 35 (46)
C N Ackermann c Leaning b Parkinson 7 (12)
S G Borthwick lbw b O'Riordan 35 (39)
B F W de Leede c Evison b Stewart 47 (36)
N Wagner c Evison b O'Riordan 1 (2)
†H S Mustard lbw b Denly 35 (24)
J J Bushnell c Swanepoel b Denly 4 (4)
G S Drissell b Denly 6 (4)
B D Glover not out 3 (2)
Extras (lb 3, w 4) 7
Total (50 overs) 307
Fall of wickets 1-14, 2-101, 3-125, 4-207, 5-214, 6-216, 7-291, 8-297, 9-304.
Bowling Stewart 6.5-0-34-1; Swanepoel 6-1-28-1; Stobo 7-0-55-1; Garrett 2-0-20-0; Leaning 7-0-33-0; Parkinson 10-0-64-1; Gilchrist 2-0-19-0; O'Riordan 7.1-0-36-3; Denly 2-0-15-3.

Kent (balls)
M K O'Riordan c Mustard b Wagner 11 (12)
J D M Evison c Mustard b De Leede 28 (30)
*J A Leaning b Drissell 81 (96)
†H Z Finch c Ackermann b Wagner 104 (91)
J K Denly lbw b Drissell 17 (31)
G Stewart lbw b Drissell 3 (6)
B Swanepoel lbw b Ackermann 1 (5)
M W Parkinson c Jones b Drissell 6 (9)
C H Stobo run out 19 (13)
N N Gilchrist not out 4 (5)
G A Garrett not out 6 (3)
Extras (lb 6, w 12, nb 2) 20
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) 300
Fall of wickets 1-20, 2-40, 3-223, 4-256, 5-260, 6-263, 7-265, 8-278, 9-294.
Bowling Wagner 10-1-66-2; De Leede 9-0-46-1; Glover 6-0-42-0; Bushnell 5-0-36-0; Drissell 10-0-38-4; Borthwick 3-0-29-0; Ackermann 7-0-37-1.

Middlesex v Somerset

Lord's (Somerset won toss): Somerset (2pts) beat Middlesex by eight wickets

Middlesex (balls)
J B Cracknell run out 1 (7)
N Fernandes lbw b Meredith 1 (7)
S D Robson b Davey 4 (15)
*M D Stoneman b Meredith 23 (19)
†J L B Davies c Rew b Green 9 (20)
M K Andersson lbw b Meredith 34 (49)
L B K Hollman not out 38 (71)
J M De Caires c Rew b Leach 1 (6)
T S Roland-Jones lbw b Meredith 0 (5)
H J H Brookes c Dickson b Vaughan 9 (22)
E R Bamber b Leach 10 (16)
Extras (w 5) 5
Total (39.3 overs) 135
Fall of wickets 1-2, 2-2, 3-29, 4-36, 5-48, 6-94, 7-97, 8-98, 9-119.
Bowling Davey 7-1-20-1; Meredith 8-1-27-4; Aldridge 7-0-28-0; Green 4-2-13-1; Leach 8.3-2-27-2; Thomas 3-0-13-0; Vaughan 2-0-7-1.

Somerset (balls)
G W Thomas st Davies b Bamber 11 (21)
A R I Umeed st Davies b Hollman 22 (37)
L P Goldsworthy not out 41 (61)
†J E K Rew not out 53 (43)
Extras (b 4, w 7) 11
Total (2 wkts, 27 overs) 138
*S R Dickson, A M Vaughan, B G F Green, K L Aldridge, J H Davey, M J Leach and R P Meredith did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-24, 2-57.
Bowling Bamber 5-1-20-1; Roland-Jones 5-0-24-0; Brookes 4-1-16-0; Hollman 8-0-37-1; De Caires 3-0-11-0; Fernandes 2-0-26-0.

Northamptonshire v Lancashire

Northampton (Lancashire won toss): Lancashire (2pts) beat Northamptonshire by four runs

Lancashire (balls)
†G J Bell c Bartlett b Zaib 35 (49)
D K Fonseka b Sanderson 0 (6)
*J J Bohannon b Sanderson 0 (4)
R Flintoff lbw b Zaib 23 (50)
V R Iyer c McManus b Zaib 15 (17)
C J Green c Sales b Miller 33 (43)
G P Balderson c McManus b Weatherall 53 (67)
H Singh c McManus b Broad 8 (14)
J A Boyden not out 44 (35)
C M Barnard c McManus b Heldreich 0 (3)
J P Morley not out 10 (13)
Extras (b 1, lb 8, w 8, nb 2) 19
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) 240
Fall of wickets 1-12, 2-23, 3-55, 4-85, 5-98, 6-130, 7-152, 8-217, 9-218.
Bowling Sanderson 9-1-28-2; Broad 7-0-38-1; Zaib 10-0-44-3; Weatherall 8-0-49-1; Miller 6-1-19-1; Heldreich 8-0-38-1; Sales 2-0-15-0.

Northamptonshire (balls)
P P Shaw c sub b Barnard 23 (31)
J J G Sales b Boyden 0 (3)
G A Bartlett st Bell b Morley 35 (51)
J Broad lbw b Morley 63 (98)
S A Zaib st Bell b Green 4 (8)
*†L D McManus c Balderson b Boyden 45 (38)
A H Miller run out 27 (37)
R S Vasconcelos c Green b Iyer 19 (29)
B W Sanderson not out 2 (3)
R A Weatherall not out 1 (2)
Extras (b 4, lb 5, w 8) 17
Total (8 wkts, 50 overs) 236
F J Heldreich did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-1, 2-47, 3-82, 4-89, 5-166, 6-183, 7-228, 8-235.
Bowling Balderson 5-2-23-0; Boyden 8-0-49-2; Barnard 10-1-24-1; Iyer 8-0-40-1; Morley 10-2-44-2; Green 9-0-47-1.

Worcestershire v Hampshire

Worcester (Hampshire won toss): Worcestershire (2pts) beat Hampshire by eight wickets

Hampshire (balls)
F S Middleton c Singh b Khan 23 (29)
J J Weatherley c Roderick b Sturgess 10 (12)
*N R T Gubbins c Roderick b Home 14 (18)
T J Prest c Khan b Brookes 4 (12)
†B C Brown c Roderick b Home 0 (2)
T E Albert lbw b Singh 26 (30)
F S Organ c Jones b Singh 9 (35)
D C Kelly c Roderick b Brookes 45 (95)
K J Abbott st Roderick b Hinley 7 (21)
B T J Wheal b Home 13 (29)
M Abbas not out 0 (3)
Extras (b 1, lb 2, w 10) 13
Total (47.4 overs) 164
Fall of wickets 1-11, 2-47, 3-49, 4-49, 5-64, 6-90, 7-97, 8-113, 9-149.
Bowling Sturgess 5-0-23-1; Khan 6-0-31-1; Home 9-0-33-3; Brookes 7.4-1-15-2; Singh 10-0-27-2; Hinley 10-1-32-1.

Worcestershire (balls)
†G H Roderick c Albert b Gubbins 47 (94)
E J Pollock c Abbas b Prest 67 (60)
R P Jones not out 25 (37)
*J D Libby not out 20 (27)
Extras (lb 4, w 2) 6
Total (2 wkts, 36.2 overs) 165
E A Brookes, R M Edavalath, F Singh, T I Hinley, T G Sturgess, J Home and H M Khan did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-104, 2-121.
Bowling Abbott 8-3-27-0; Abbas 4-0-23-0; Kelly 2-0-10-0; Wheal 4-0-24-0; Organ 7.2-0-33-0; Prest 7-0-29-1; Gubbins 4-1-15-1.

	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	RR
Somerset (Q)	8	6	2	0	0	**12**	1.22
Worcestershire	7	5	2	0	0	**10**	0.66
Durham	7	4	2	0	1	**9**	-0.03
Hampshire	7	4	3	0	0	**8**	0.17
Derbyshire	7	4	3	0	0	**8**	0.03
Middlesex	7	3	3	0	1	**7**	-0.83
Kent	7	3	4	0	0	**6**	-0.16
Northamptonshire	7	1	6	0	0	**2**	-0.30
Lancashire	7	1	6	0	0	**2**	-0.98

Group B: Leicestershire v Glamorgan

Leicester (Glamorgan won toss): Leicestershire (2pts) beat Glamorgan by nine runs

Leicestershire (balls)
I G Holland lbw b van der Gugten 1 (2)
S G Budinger c Ingram b Van der Gugten 28 (23)
*L J Hill run out 6 (10)
A M Rahane lbw b Van der Gugten 9 (15)
P S P Handscomb c Northeast b Gorvin 103 (94)
L Kimber b Van der Gugten 0 (4)
†O B Cox c Tribe b Douthwaite 34 (37)
L Trevaskis b Van der Gugten 47 (87)
T A R Scriven not out 25 (22)
R I Walker not out 10 (8)
Extras (lb 1, w 3, nb 4) 8
Total (8 wkts, 50 overs) 271
C J C Wright did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-2, 2-32, 3-44, 4-45, 5-59, 6-105, 7-208, 8-255.
Bowling Van der Gugten 10-2-49-5; McIlroy 10-0-66-0; Douthwaite 10-0-65-1; Gorvin 10-0-47-1; Carlson 6-0-23-0; Bevan 4-0-20-0.

Glamorgan (balls)
†W T Smale c sub b Holland 7 (18)
T R Bevan c Wright b Holland 20 (25)
*K S Carlson c Kimber b Scriven 31 (43)
S A Northeast c and b Trevaskis 31 (48)
C A Ingram lbw b Trevaskis 68 (68)
W T Root c Budinger b Trevaskis 7 (11)
A M Tribe c sub b Trevaskis 12 (15)
D A Douthwaite c Budinger b Walker 61 (40)
T van der Gugten b Walker 19 (21)
A W Gorvin c Scriven b Walker 0 (3)
J P McIlroy not out 0 (0)
Extras (w 6) 6
Total (48.4 overs) 262
Fall of wickets 1-28, 2-35, 3-83, 4-108, 5-146, 6-166, 7-197, 8-241, 9-241.
Bowling Holland 9-1-39-2; Wright 9-0-57-0; Scriven 10-0-58-1; Walker 8.4-0-40-3; Trevaskis 10-0-54-4; Kimber 2-0-14-0.

Nottinghamshire v Essex

Trent Bridge (Essex won toss): Essex (2pts) beat Nottinghamshire by seven wickets

Nottinghamshire (balls)
B T Slater c Khushi b Richards 47 (56)
J A Haynes c Fernandes b Porter 17 (31)
F W McCann c Fernandes b Richards 33 (42)
*H Hameed b Richards 0 (2)
M Montgomery c Allison b Richards 52 (72)
†T J Moores c Thain b Westley 33 (28)
L W James run out 3 (6)
L Patterson-White b Snater 12 (15)
C G Harrison c Khushi b Richards 1 (11)
R Lord lbw b Allison 8 (13)
L J Fletcher not out 3 (10)
Extras (w 5, nb 4) 9
Total (47.2 overs) 218
Fall of wickets 1-40, 2-96, 3-96, 4-123, 5-163, 6-168, 7-187, 8-193, 9-209.
Bowling Porter 10-0-39-1; Snater 9-1-37-1; Allison 10-0-43-1; Westley 6-0-47-1; Khushi 2-0-15-0; Richards 8.2-1-31-5; Thain 2-0-6-0.

Essex (balls)
L M Benkenstein c Haynes b Lord 4 (11)
R J Das not out 100 (119)
*T Westley b Lord 14 (9)
N R M Thain lbw b Harrison 83 (123)
N L J Browne not out 0 (1)
Extras (b 4, lb 4, w 6, nb 4) 18
Total (3 wkts, 43.3 overs) 219
B M J Allison, F I N Khushi, †S M L Fernandes, S Snater, J A Richards and J A Porter did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-15, 2-29, 3-214.
Bowling Fletcher 5-0-32-0; Lord 8-1-42-2; Patterson-White 10-0-43-0; James 4-0-19-0; Harrison 9-0-33-1; McCann 7-1-37-0; Slater 0.3-0-5-0.

Sussex v Surrey

Hove (Surrey won toss): Sussex (2pts) beat Surrey by six wickets

Surrey (balls)
*D P Sibley c Simpson b Robinson 8 (11)
R S Patel c Haines b Lenham 26 (37)
B B A Geddes b Haines 81 (92)
C T Steel c Simpson b Lenham 1 (7)
†J W Blake lbw b Carson 53 (69)
O F M Sykes b Lion-Cachet 20 (27)
A R G Thomas b Carson 1 (6)
C McKerr c Robinson b Crocombe 10 (11)
N A Barnwell not out 9 (17)
Y Majid b Robinson 2 (10)
S H Stuart-Reckling b Robinson 0 (2)
Extras (b 2, lb 3, w 20, nb 6) 31
Total (47.4 overs) 242
Fall of wickets 1-15, 2-71, 3-88, 4-185, 5-191, 6-197, 7-223, 8-230, 9-242.
Bowling Crocombe 8-0-50-1; Robinson 7.4-1-40-3; Lenham 10-0-35-2; Ibrahim 6-0-31-0; Carson 10-1-49-2; Haines 4-0-22-1; Lion-Cachet 2-0-10-1.

Sussex (balls)
T G R Clark b Stuart-Reckling 24 (27)
T J Haines b Majid 79 (95)
T P Alsop not out 108 (130)
Z B Lion-Cachet b Steel 8 (14)
O J Carter c Patel b McKerr 6 (12)
*†J A Simpson not out 10 (7)
Extras (lb 5, w 3) 8
Total (4 wkts, 47.3 overs) 243
J J Carson, A D Lenham, D K Ibrahim, O E Robinson and H T Crocombe did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-36, 2-189, 3-206, 4-222.
Bowling Stuart-Reckling 8-0-53-1; McKerr 7-0-38-1; Geddes 4-0-20-0; Barnwell 8.3-0-49-0; Steel 10-1-44-1; Majid 10-1-34-1.

Warwickshire v Yorkshire

Rugby (Yorkshire won toss): Yorkshire (2pts) beat Warwickshire by six wickets

Warwickshire (balls)
R M Yates c Bess b Revis 72 (107)
*E G Barnard b Hill 12 (24)
W M H Rhodes c Bean b Hill 15 (23)
H Shaikh lbw b Hill 11 (17)
M G K Burgess c Vagadia b Bess 10 (14)
†C G Benjamin b Hill 38 (38)
K Smith b Hill 33 (26)
J B Lintott b Hill 14 (14)
M G Booth b Revis 13 (18)
T C Ali not out 16 (13)
O J Hannon-Dalby not out 1 (6)
Extras (lb 5, w 2) 7
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) 242
Fall of wickets 1-35, 2-53, 3-73, 4-96, 5-152, 6-183, 7-203, 8-212, 9-232.
Bowling Coad 10-2-38-0; Cliff 6-0-37-0; Hill 10-1-28-6; Bess 10-0-46-1; Revis 7-0-40-2; Moriarty 7-0-48-0.

Yorkshire (balls)
†H G Duke c Benjamin b Lintott 60 (51)
Y Vagadia c Rhodes b Hannon-Dalby 1 (8)
W A Luxton not out 105 (121)
F J Bean c Lintott b Ali 5 (7)
*J A Tattersall c Rhodes b Lintott 9 (15)
M L Revis not out 51 (65)
Extras (lb 4, w 11) 15
Total (4 wkts, 44.3 overs) 246
D M Bess, G C H Hill, B O Coad, B M Cliff and D T Moriarty did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-25, 2-79, 3-96, 4-117.
Bowling Barnard 2.3-0-22-0; Hannon-Dalby 9-0-37-1; Booth 6-0-26-0; Rhodes 3-0-23-0; Lintott 10-0-44-2; Ali 8-0-50-1; Yates 6-0-40-0.

	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	RR
Glamorgan (Q)	7	5	1	0	1	**11**	0.99
Warwickshire (Q)	7	5	1	0	1	**11**	0.74
Leicestershire	7	5	2	0	0	**10**	-0.54
Gloucestershire	7	4	3	0	0	**8**	0.32
Yorkshire	7	4	3	0	0	**8**	-0.06
Nottinghamshire	7	3	4	0	0	**6**	0.45
Essex	7	2	5	0	0	**4**	-0.19
Surrey	8	2	6	0	0	**4**	-0.76
Sussex	7	1	6	0	0	**2**	-0.72

The Hundred

Oval Invincibles v London Spirit

Kia Oval (Oval Invincibles won toss): Oval Invincibles (2pts) beat London Spirit by nine wickets

London Spirit (balls)
†M S Pepper b Zampa 27 (18)
K K Jennings c Ferreira b S M Curran 1 (2)
O J D Pope c T K Curran b Jacks 9 (13)
S O Hetmyer c Lammonby b Zampa 6 (8)
*D W Lawrence c and b Zampa 12 (14)
A D Russell c Ferreira b Zampa 1 (6)
M J J Critchley c Jacks b S M Curran 6 (11)
L A Dawson c Ferreira b T K Curran 14 (7)
O P Stone c Billings b T K Curran 7 (6)
N T Ellis c Ferreira b S M Curran 7 (7)
D J Worrall not out 0 (0)
Extras (lb 1, w 5) 6
Total (92 balls) 96
Fall of wickets 1-11, 2-40, 3-48, 4-48, 5-52, 6-64, 7-81, 8-87, 9-96.
Bowling Johnson 5-4-60; T K Curran 17-7-21-2; S M Curran 15-7-10-3; Sowter 20-5-29-0; Zampa 20-11-17-4; Jacks 15-4-12-1.

Oval Invincibles (balls)
W G Jacks c Russell b Stone 2 (6)
D J Malan not out 29 (27)
J M Cox not out 61 (30)
Extras (lb 3, w 5) 8
Total (1 wkt, 63 balls) 100
*†S W Billings, S M Curran, D Ferreira, T K Curran, T A Lammonby, N A Sowter, A Zampa and S H Johnson did not bat.
Fall of wicket 1-15.
Bowling Worrall 10-5-8-0; Stone 15-10-16-1; Ellis 10-3-22-0; Dawson 10-3-11-0; Critchley 10-1-17-0; Lawrence 8-2-23-0.

Women

Kia Ova (Oval Invincibles won toss): Oval Invincibles (2pts) beat London Spirit by eight wickets

London Spirit (balls)
M M Lanning lbw b Kapp 0 (3)
†G P Redmayne c Wellington b Slater 4 (9)
C L Griffith run out 17 (14)
*H C Knight c and b Wellington 8 (11)
D R Gibson lbw b MacDonald-Gay 0 (2)
D B Sharma not out 46 (30)
A J Freeborn st Winfield-Hill b Villiers 2 (3)
C E Dean c Wellington b Smale 2 (5)
E Gray b Smale 28 (22)
S Glenn not out 2 (3)
Extras (b 1, lb 2, w 4, nb 4) 11
Total (8 wkts, 100 balls) 120
T G Norris did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-2, 2-10, 3-31, 4-33, 5-37, 6-41, 7-47, 8-103.
Bowling Kapp 15-8-11-1; Slater 15-7-16-1; MacDonald-Gay 20-9-21-1; Wellington 20-3-24-1; Villiers 15-7-20-1; Smale 15-5-25-2.

Oval Invincibles (balls)
*†L Winfield-Hill not out 61 (40)
A M C J K Athapaththu lbw b Glenn 11 (19)
A R Capsey b Gibson 13 (14)
M Kapp not out 30 (18)
Extras (lb 4, w 2) 6
Total (2 wkts, 91 balls) 121
P J Scholfield, M K Villiers, A J Wellington, J L Gardner, R L MacDonald-Gay, S A E Smale and R E Slater did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-29, 2-70.
Bowling Norris 10-4-17-0; Gibson 16-7-19-1; Gray 15-7-17-0; Dean 15-7-21-0; Glenn 20-8-26-1; Sharma 15-3-17-0.

Manchester Originals v Northern Superchargers

Old Trafford (Northern Superchargers won toss): Northern Superchargers (2pts) beat Manchester Originals by seven wickets

Manchester Originals (balls)
*†P D Salt c Santner b Rashid 61 (28)
M F Hurst c Lawes b Brown 17 (8)
M D E Holden c Brook b Santner 13 (11)
W L Madsen lbw b Potts 4 (5)
P I Walter run out 4 (9)
S R Butt c Pooran b Santner 0 (1)
J Overton not out 21 (21)
U Mir st Pooran b Santner 1 (8)
T H Aspinwall not out 18 (12)
Extras (b 1, w 6, nb 6) 13
Total (7 wkts, 100 balls) 152
S W Currie and F Farooqi did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-45, 2-86, 3-95, 4-99, 5-99, 6-111, 7-114.
Bowling Lawes 5-1-22-0; Stokes 15-6-29-0; Brown 15-6-28-1; Santner 20-11-24-3; Rashid 20-10-19-1; Potts 20-8-26-1; Short 5-3-3-0.

Northern Superchargers (balls)
M W Short c Walter b Farooqi 1 (4)
B A Stokes retired hurt 2 (4)
O G Robinson c Overton b Currie 12 (16)
*H C Brook c Overton b Mir 43 (26)
†N Pooran not out 66 (33)
A J Hose not out 27 (14)
Extras (lb 3, w 2) 5
Total (3 wkts, 97 balls) 156
M J Santner, M J Potts, T E Lawes, A U Rashid and P R Brown did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-2, 2-29, 3-85.
Bowling Farooqi 20-10-37-1; Aspinwall 15-7-17-0; Mir 20-7-14-1; Walter 15-2-31-0; Currie 17-926-1; Raza 10-2-28-0.

Women

Old Trafford (Manchester Originals won toss): Manchester Originals (2pts) beat Northern Superchargers by 17 runs

Manchester Originals (balls)
†B L Mooney not out 99 (54)
L Wolvaardt st Heath b Smith 26 (21)
K E Bryce retired 13 (21)
*S Ecclestone run out 6 (5)
Extras (lb 2, w 3, nb 2) 7
Total (3 wkts, 100 balls) 151
E L Lamb, F M K Morris, E Jones, K J Garth, D L Gregory, A Z Monaghan and L L Filer did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-60, 2-127, 3-151.
Bowling Cross 20-7-33-0; Higham 10-4-16-0; Ballinger 10-5-12-0; Smith 20-6-32-1; Sutherland 20-8-25-0; Wareham 20-5-31-0.

Northern Superchargers (balls)
D S T Perrin c Bryce b Garth 7 (9)
*H J Armitage c Wolvaardt b Bryce 9 (14)
P E S Litchfield b Garth 45 (29)
A J Sutherland c Jones b Bryce 26 (21)
G L Wareham c Morris b Bryce 25 (18)
†B A M Heath c Gregory b Ecclestone 8 (5)
A N Davidson-Richards c Mooney b Bryce 5 (3)
K L Cross st Mooney b Bryce 0 (1)
L F Higham not out 1 (1)
L C N Smith not out 1 (1)
Extras (lb 1, w 2, nb 4) 7
Total (8 wkts, 100 balls) 134
G Ballinger did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-13, 2-45, 3-86, 4-102, 5-124, 6-132, 7-132, 8-133.
Bowling Garth 20-12-17-2; Filer 15-3-26-0; Morris 5-2-14-0; Monaghan 10-1-14-0; Ecclestone 20-8-32-1; Bryce 20-10-13-5; Gregory 10-2-17-0.

Men	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	NRR
Oval Invincibles	7	6	1	0	0	**12**	1.072
Southern Brave	7	5	2	0	0	**10**	0.595
N Superchargers	7	4	2	0	1	**9**	-0.684
B'ham Phoenix	6	4	2	0	0	**8**	0.283
Trent Rockets	6	3	4	0	0	**6**	0.480
Welsh Fire	7	2	4	0	1	**5**	-0.215
M'ster Originals	7	1	6	0	0	**2**	-0.823
London Spirit	7	1	6	0	0	**2**	-0.884

Women	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	NRR
Welsh Fire	7	4	2	0	1	**9**	0.086
Oval Invincibles	7	4	2	1	0	**9**	-0.016
N Superchargers	7	3	2	1	1	**8**	1.267
London Spirit	7	3	3	1	0	**7**	-0.088
Trent Rockets	6	3	3	0	0	**6**	0.562
M'ster Originals	7	3	4	0	0	**6**	-0.398
B'ham Phoenix	6	3	3	0	0	**6**	-0.817
Southern Brave	7	1	5	1	0	**3**	-0.493

Today: Edgbaston Birmingham Phoenix v Trent Rockets (women 3.0, men 6.30).

First Test match

Port of Spain: Final day of five (at Tea): South Africa 357 (T Bavuma, 86, T de Zorzi 78; J Warrican 4 for 69) and 173-3 dec (T Stubbs 68); West Indies 233 (K Maharaj 4 for 76) and 121-3 (A Athanaze 52 not out).

Golf

US PGA Tour Wyndham Championship

Greensboro, North Carolina: Leaders after three rounds (United States unless stated): **195** M Greyserman 69, 60, 66. **197** L Clanton 68, 67, 62. **198** R Hisatsune (Japan) 67, 67, 64; A Rai (Eng) 65, 65, 68; D Thompson 66, 66, 66; C Young 67, 62, 69; B Griffin 65, 70, 63; M Kuchar 64, 64, 70. **199** C Bezuidenhout (SA) 70, 66, 63; J Bridgeman 68, 64, 67; A Svensson (Can) 68, 65, 66.

Motorcycling

World Superbike Championship

Portimão, Portugal: Leading positions: Superpole race 1, T Razgatlioglu (Tur, BMW) 16min 46.626sec; 2, D Petrucci (It, Ducati) at 2.980sec behind; 3, A Lowes (GB, Kawasaki) 3.251. **Race 2** 1, Razgatlioglu 33:49.138; 2, N Bulega (It, Ducati) at 0.035; 3, Lowes 6.299. **Championship** 1, Razgatlioglu 365pts; 2, Bulega 273; 3, A Bautista (Sp, Ducati) 223; 4, Lowes 213.

Rugby league

Betfred Super League Leeds 30 Wigan 4; Leigh 42 Hull 12; London Broncos 22 Warrington 36.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hull KR	21	16	0	5	539	264	**32**
Wigan	21	16	0	5	529	296	**32**
Warrington	21	15	0	6	540	289	**30**
St Helens	21	13	0	8	518	278	**26**
Catalans D	21	13	0	8	398	308	**26**
Salford	21	13	0	8	393	399	**26**
Leeds	21	11	0	10	401	368	**22**
Leigh	21	10	1	10	440	326	**21**
Huddersfield	21	7	0	14	372	478	**14**
Castleford	21	6	1	14	342	559	**13**
Hull	21	3	0	18	286	654	**6**
L Broncos	21	2	0	19	232	771	**4**

Betfred Championship Batley Batley 26 Swinton 6; Bradford 58 Whitehaven 0; Doncaster 20 Toulouse 18; Halifax 38 Barrow 12; Widnes 0 Featherstone 8; York 54 Dewsbury 12. **League One** Cornwall 26 Hunslet 33; Midlands Hurricanes 34 Workington 22; North Wales Crusaders 16 Keighley 24; Oldham 84 Newcastle 0.

Betfred Women's Super League Barrow 32 Warrington 14; St Helens 56 Featherstone 6; York 48 Huddersfield 10.

Rugby union

The Rugby Championship Australia 7 South Africa 33; New Zealand 30 Argentina 38.

Tennis

ATP National Bank Open

Montreal: Third round A Zverev (Ger) bt H Rune (Den) 6-3, 7-6 (7-5); H Hurkacz (Pol) bt A Rinderknech (Fr) 4-6, 6-3, 6-4. **Quarter-finals** A Rublev (Russ) bt J Sinner (It) 6-3, 1-6, 6-2; M Arnaldi (It) bt K Nishikori (Japan) 6-4, 7-5.

WTA National Bank Open

Toronto: Quarter-finals E Navarro (US) bt T Townsend (US) 6-3, 7-6 (7-5); A Anismova (US) bt A Sabalenka (Bel) 6-4, 6-2; J Pegula (US) bt P Stearns (US) 6-4, 7-5; D Shnaider (Russ) bt L Samsonova (Russ) 4-6, 6-1, 6-4. **Semi-final** Anisimova bt Navarro 6-3, 2-6, 6-2.

Rooney blames players after own goal sums up shambolic defeat

Sheffield Wed *J Lowe 35, Galloway (og) 52, Windass 82, Smith 90+6*	4
Plymouth	0

Sky Bet Championship
Ian Whittell

It took only seconds of the new season for the familiar chants of "Rooney" to come from the visiting supporters in the Leppings Lane End and just a few minutes more for the size of the task facing Plymouth Argyle's new head coach to become all too apparent.

For a man who as a player always found that every aspect of football came to him effortlessly, management has been a very different beast for Wayne Rooney at Derby County and Birmingham City, as a win record that barely tops 25 per cent testifies.

It is little wonder that Rooney admits he has a point to prove in his latest, slightly unexpected, appointment and, also, given Plymouth's struggles last season, when they only avoided relegation on the final day, it was little wonder that Argyle toiled so badly under the bright Sheffield sunshine. It led Rooney to turn on his players after only one game, saying their basic skills were a world away from where they should be.

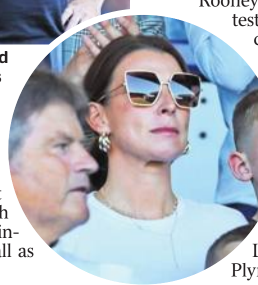
"I'm disappointed, angry, from everything that I had seen this pre-season," Rooney said. "We didn't do the basics right. We had a game plan and didn't execute it well at all. I was really surprised by the performance today and it's a wake-up call for all of us.

"Today's performance can't happen again, the players know that.

"You have to make sure you're running, tackling. That wasn't there today and the players know they have to be at it every game."

By the time the unmarked Wednesday debutant Jamal Lowe forced in Svante Ingelsson's 35th-minute cross from five yards, after the latest in a long line of impressive passes from the ageless Barry Bannan, Argyle could have been well out of contention.

Rooney's task would have been weighty enough without having to also contend with the public relations legacy of his disastrous 83-day reign at



Rooney cut an irritated figure on the sidelines as his wife Coleen, inset, watched on

Birmingham last season that ended in January and brought him his first five-month hiatus since he broke into professional football as a teenager.

At least his time at Plymouth has allowed him to already achieve one managerial first: signing players. This was something he was unable to do at Derby, because of imposed financial restrictions, and Birmingham, due to the brevity of his stay. With four debutants starting at Hillsborough, it is ludicrously premature to draw conclusions about Plymouth's prospects.

Still, the ease with which his players were pulled out of position by the home side's energetic passing game and the lack of threat up front suggested that Rooney's coaching skills will be tested to the full in the coming weeks.

As Rooney looked increasingly displeased on the touchline, the second Wednesday goal early in the second half summed up a miserable debut for the new manager. Anthony Musaba had enough space to pick out Lowe on the edge of the Plymouth six-yard area and his header struck the defender Brendan Galloway, who knew nothing of his contribution to a comical own goal.

Musaba's pull-back allowed Josh Windass to score a third on 82 minutes before the substitute Michael Smith forced in a fourth, from Liam Palmer's cross, six minutes into stoppage time.

Before the hour was out, Rooney had made a triple substitution, although his changes made no difference whatsoever. He faced inevitable taunts of "You're getting sacked in the morning" from Wednesday fans. It is the sort of trolling that the Championship's most high-profile manager can expect all season long. Whatever managerial talents he possesses will be badly needed.

Sheffield Wednesday (4-2-3-1): J Beadle — Y Valery (P Valentín 83min), D Iorfa, D Bernard, M Lowe (M Johnson 75) — S Ingelsson (L Palmer 87), B Bannan — D Gassama (O Kobacki 75), J Windass (M Smith 83), A Musaba — J Lowe. **Booked** Lowe.
Plymouth Argyle (4-2-3-1): C Hazard — V Pálsson, L Gibson, B Galloway, N Ogbeta (B Mumba 57) — A Forshaw, D Gyabi — M Whittaker, M Bundu (C Wright 57), I Cissoko (F Issaka 67) — M Tijani (R Hardie 57). **Booked** Cissoko.
Referee L Smith. **Attendance** 29,525.

Windsor

Thunderer

5.40 Piranha Rama
6.10 Blewburton
6.40 Staincliff
7.10 Palmar Bay
7.40 Bramble Jelly
8.10 Oh So Audacious

Going: good to firm
Draw: 5f-6f, low best — Sky Sports Racing

5.40 Nursery (2-Y-O: £4,711: 6f) (12 runners)

1	(4)	000 **DYNAMITE DIVA** 14 B Millman 9-11	L Edmunds
2	(8)	660 **MIAMI MEMORIES** 14 R Beckett 9-11	H Crouch
3	(9)	06214 **PIRANHA RAMA** 9 (BF,D) P Evans 9-10	R Kingscote
4	(10)	000 **FUNALLTHEWAY** 26 (H,P) J S Moore 9-9	L Keniry
5	(3)	0040 **BLUESY MOON** 33 M Attwater 9-8	C Fallon
6	(7)	405 **KALEIDOSCOPE EYES** 17 (H) M Attwater 9-7	R Havlin
7	(6)	605 **RUBY RASCAL** 33 J Parr 9-5	C Shepherd
8	(5)	00630 **LIFT LADY** 13 (BF) K P De Foy 9-4	B Sayette
9	(1)	000 **BENTLEY AIR** 37 R Hannon 9-3	D Probert
10	(2)	000 **CASSANDRAALEXANDRA** 11 J Horton 9-0	S Osborne
11	(11)	600 **PURE LIBERTY** 13 S C Williams 9-0	S M Levey
12	(12)	000 **PUGLIA** 21 E De Giles 8-13	P Cosgrave

3-1 Piranha Rama, 5-1 Miami Memories, Lift Lady, 7-1 Bentley Air, 8-1 Pure Liberty, 10-1 Dynamite Diva, 12-1 Cassandraalexandra, Ruby Rascal.

Thunderer's choice: Piranha Rama has the most solid credentials in what looks a weak race **Danger:** Dynamite Diva

6.10 Novice Stakes (2-Y-O: £3,672: 6f) (15)

1	(5)	13 **BLEWBURTON** 62 E J-Houghton 9-8	C Bishop
2	(8)	6213 **GLITTERATI** 10 (BF,D) A Watson 9-8	L Morris
3	(11)	**CURZON** M Meade 9-4	S M Levey
4	(14)	06 **D DAY HARLEY R** 11 K P De Foy 9-4	B Sayette
5	(1)	**GLENTANAR** A King 9-4	C Fallon
6	(15)	6 **HUSCAL** 13 C Hills 9-4	S Osborne
7	(13)	**JERSEY MAVERICK** C Fellowes 9-4	K Shoemark
8	(2)	3524 **TWILIGHT BALLET** 26 (BF) A Balding 9-4	D Probert
9	(4)	5 **WATCHMAKER** 24 M Bell 9-4	H Crouch
10	(12)	00 **INFANTRY OFFICER** 19 M Bell 9-2	P Cosgrave
11	(6)	**RAAVI** I Mohammed 9-2	P Bradley
12	(7)	44 **SILCA BAY** 17 E J-Houghton 9-2	G Downing
13	(10)	0 **TOP BILLER** 6 J Osborne 9-2	W Carver (3)
14	(3)	03 **HEAVEN KNOWS** 21 R Guest 8-13	C Shepherd
15	(9)	0 **ROC D'AZUR** 48 J Portman 8-13	R Hornby

3-1 Huscal, 9-2 Blewburton, Glitterati, 11-2 Twilight Ballet, 12-1 Silca Bay, Jersey Maverick, Heaven Knows, 14-1 Curzon, Watchmaker.

Thunderer's choice: Blewburton ran well under a penalty at Salisbury last time and is entitled to progress **Danger:** Huscal

6.40 Novice Stakes (£4,320: 5f) (7)

1	(5)	21- **STAINCLIFF** 284 J Channon 3-9-7	C Bishop
2	(3)	4 **ALL WAYS GLAMOROUS** 16 C Mason 3-9-5	Gina Mangan (3)
3	(2)	5- **DAWN SUCCESS** 240 G Boughey 3-9-5	P Cosgrave
4	(1)	26 **STATE OF MADNESS** 19 D Shaw 3-9-5	R Da Silva
5	(6)	43 **GLOWCHESTER** 7 Craig Lidster 3-9-0	L Edmunds
6	(4)	06 **MY AWELE** 20 C Allen 3-9-0	D Keenan
7	(7)	35 **TILL IT SHINES** 95 J S Moore 3-9-0	L Keniry

8-11 Staincliff, 6-1 State Of Madness, 8-1 Till It Shines, 10-1 Dawn Success, My Awele, Glowchester, 25-1 All Ways Glamorous.

Thunderer's choice: Staincliff has been absent more than nine months but has a good opportunity **Danger:** Dawn Success

7.10 Handicap (£38,655: 6f) (16)

1	(16)	61101 **GET IT** 9 (CD) G Baker 6-9-12	P Cosgrave
2	(10)	04301 **THUNDER MOOR** 18 (B,T) G Boughey 4-9-7	F Daly (7)
3	(4)	20254 **ARAMIS GREY** 13 (CD) R Guest 7-9-5	C Shepherd
4	(8)	21123 **HAYMAKER** 30 (CD) H Morrison 5-9-0	R Hornby
5	(13)	01312 **AMAZONIAN DREAM** 14 (CD) B Millman 5-8-13	L Edmunds
6	(11)	-1506 **UNDER THE TWILIGHT** 42 (CD) M Blake 6-8-13	D Probert
7	(7)	51340 **NAVELLO** 13 (T,C,D) G Boughey 5-8-13	N Callan
8	(15)	52200 **MANY A STAR** 11 (T,D) J Osborne 7-8-12	S Osborne
9	(3)	52300 **RHYTHM N HOOVES** 9 (B,D) A Watson 4-8-12	L Morris
10	(14)	14005 **BALDOMERO** 14 (V,D) M Appleby 6-8-12	J Watson
11	(2)	24110 **TREFOR** 16 (BF,CD) C Hills 3-8-11	R Havlin
12	(6)	1-633 **ELMONJED** 14 (B,BF,D) W Haggas 3-8-10	J Crowley
13	(5)	3-061 **PALMAR BAY** 14 (CD) R Beckett 3-8-8	E Greatrex
14	(1)	-5150 **EQUITY LAW** 18 (V,D) A Balding 3-8-6	H Turner
15	(12)	00044 **INDIAN CREAK** 40 (CD) J Channon 7-8-4	Rose Dawes (5)
16	(9)	00501 **EXPERT AGENT** 28 (CD) S C Williams 4-8-4	J Doughty (5)

5-1 Get It, 6-1 Thunder Moor, 13-2 Palmar Bay, Haymaker, 7-1 Amazonian Dream, Elmonjed, 10-1 Expert Agent, 14-1 Aramis Grey, Trefor.

Thunderer's choice: Palmar Bay had Amazonian Dream and Elmonjed behind when winning last time **Danger:** Elmonjed

Blinkered first time: Ayr 3.35 Odette's Beau. 5.15 Atomise. **Kempton Park** 2.10 Matharu. 2.10 Keep Singing. 2.10 Aleishka. 5.35 Bittalemon. **Windsor** 7.10 Elmonjed. 7.40 I Dare You.

7.40 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,768: 1m 3f) (6)

1	(2)	06006 **ALBERT LASKER** 76 (W,H,T) A Haynes 9-11	C Howarth (3)
2	(5)	06402 **MAKE A SCENE** 16 J Portman 9-8	J Mitchell
3	(6)	-0005 **RAMAAH** 19 (V) I Mohammed 9-7	P Bradley
4	(3)	-0565 **I DARE YOU** 6 (B) W Muir & C Grassick 9-7	L Edmunds
5	(1)	44342 **KINETIC** 4 (BF) James Owen 9-3	C Shepherd
6	(4)	02643 **BRAMBLE JELLY** 16 D F Davis 8-12	Gina Mangan (3)

9-4 Make A Scene, 5-2 Kinetic, 3-1 Bramble Jelly, 8-1 I Dare You, Ramaah, 16-1 Albert Lasker.

Thunderer's choice: Bramble Jelly ran a personal best when upped in trip last time and should go well **Danger:** Kinetic

8.10 Handicap (£3,768: 1m) (10)

1	(2)	22634 **RAVENGLASS** 46 (H,BF,D) A Wintle 5-9-11	Gina Mangan (3)
2	(1)	40060 **H KEY LAILS** 16 (V,D) M Attwater 4-9-10	R Havlin
3	(5)	34132 **OH SO AUDACIOUS** 13 (BF,CD) H Eustace 5-9-9	Kaiya Fraser (5)
4	(9)	40542 **BONAVENTURE** 9 (T) S C Williams 3-9-9	S M Levey
5	(7)	03316 **LOOSE TONGUE** 53 (H,BF,D) P Evans 3-9-8	D Probert
6	(6)	10003 **FLYING PANTHER** 13 (H,P,T,D) J Owen 4-9-7	S D Bowen (3)
7	(4)	400-0 **GOODWOOD VISION** 17 A Dunn 4-9-6	K Shoemark
8	(8)	23660 **STOPNSEARCH** 40 (C,D) B Johnson 7-9-2	C Shepherd
9	(10)	3-544 **MILVUS** 31 D Coakley 4-9-1	G Bass (3)
10	(3)	0-06 **HOMME DE FER** 21 A Carroll 3-8-9	L Morris

9-4 Oh So Audacious, 3-1 Bonaventure, 9-2 Flying Panther, 7-1 Loose Tongue, 8-1 Ravenglass, 16-1 Milvus, Homme De Fer, 20-1 Stopnsearch.

Thunderer's choice: Oh So Audacious is holding her form well and can get back to winning ways **Danger:** Flying Panther

Ayr

Thunderer

2.25 Shining Pearl
3.00 Wallaroo
3.35 Aspire To Glory
4.10 Braes Of Doune
4.40 Pol Roger (nap)
5.15 Atomise
5.45 Ramon Di Lora
6.15 Dingwall (nb)

Going: good-good to soft in places
Draw: no advantage — Racing TV

2.25 Novice Stakes (2-Y-O: £4,320: 7f) (5)

1	(2)	4 **DUTY FIRST** 30 A Watson 9-2	H Doyle
2	(1)	52 **SHINING PEARL** 24 K R Burke 9-2	C Lee
3	(5)	**SILENT AFFAIR** J Butler 9-2	C Beasley
4	(4)	4 **SOUTH ROAD** 50 L Russell 9-2	Oisin Orr
5	(3)	34 **WHO WANTS ME** 32 I Jardine 9-2	A Mullen

10-11 Shining Pearl, 100-30 Duty First, 6-1 Who Wants Me, 7-1 South Road, 10-1 Silent Affair.

3.00 Classified Stakes (Div I: £3,664: 1m) (9)

1	(6)	4000- **BELIEVE ME NOW** 334 (T) I Jardine 4-9-9	A Mullen
2	(4)	36463 **CHINESE SPIRIT** 7 (CD) Miss L Perratt 10-9-9	T Jakes (5)
3	(1)	05635 **DESERT DREAM** 14 (D) S Spencer 10-9-9	D Swift
4	(8)	/0-03 **OUR NOBLE LORD** 2 L Russell 5-9-9	C Lee
5	(2)	50506 **REBECCA'S GIRL** 6 (V,BF) G Rutherford 4-9-9	Oisin Orr
6	(3)	02666 **WALLAROO** 16 I Furtado 6-9-9	Elle-May Croot (7)
7	(5)	65630 **LIKLEMAN** 38 S G West 3-9-2	J Hart
8	(7)	55526 **MILLBUIE** 2 (P) Ewan Whillans 3-9-2	P J McDonald
9	(9)	00301 **ROCK AND ROYAL** 13 (H,D) D Cunha 3-9-2	B Loughnane

5-2 Rock And Royal, 9-2 Wallaroo, 11-2 Likleman, 6-1 Millbuie, 13-2 Rebecca's Girl, 12-1 Believe Me Now, Chinese Spirit, Desert Dream, 16-1 Our Noble Lord.

3.35 Classified Stakes (Div II: £3,664: 1m) (9)

1	(5)	00/0- **DARK ECLIPSE** 355 (P) F Watson 8-9-9	C Hardie
2	(2)	23000 **DARKER** 21 (P) R Carr 5-9-9	JP Sullivan
3	(4)	05000 **KEEP ME STABLE** 16 Miss L Perratt 4-9-9	T Jakes (5)
4	(1)	00604 **LOOM LARGE** 12 (P,T) I Jardine 5-9-9	M Tabti (5)
5	(8)	06600 **RETIREMENT BECKONS** 7 (CD) Miss L Perratt 9-9-9	P Mulrennan
6	(7)	42035 **ASPIRE TO GLORY** 13 (H,T) Alice Haynes 3-9-2	H Doyle
7	(3)	026-0 **CHRIS'S MATE** 7 (H) Mr W G Harrison 3-9-2	Paula Muir (3)
8	(6)	5-000 **ODETTE'S BEAU** 21 (B) M Dods 3-9-2	C Beasley
9	(9)	0-404 **SHOWMETHEWAYHOME** 10 E Whillans 3-9-2	R Scott

3-1 Aspire To Glory, 4-1 Keep Me Stable, 9-2 Retirement Beckons, 8-1 Showmethewayhome, Darker, Loom Large, Chris's Mate, 16-1 others.

4.10 Handicap (£3,664: 7f) (14)

1	(7)	64402 **NOVAK** 10 (CD) I Jardine 5-10-2	M Tabti (5)
2	(8)	13505 **MONHAMMER** 14 (CD) Miss L Perratt 6-10-1	B Loughnane
3	(3)	06056 **TRAIS FLUORS** 9 (D) Miss L Perratt 10-10-0	P J McDonald
4	(6)	10005 **JKR COBBLER** 7 (CD) I Jardine 5-9-13	A Mullen
5	(1)	06000 **AHAMOMENT** 20 (CD) D & N Barron 5-9-13	C Lee
6	(5)	34060 **BLACK FRIDAY** 28 (CD) R M Smith 9-9-12	Joanna Mason
7	(12)	50040 **COLOUR CODE** 2 (H) Miss L Perratt 3-9-10	T Jakes (5)
8	(14)	32205 **DARBUCKS** 40 (D) C Kellett 5-9-10	C Beasley
9	(2)	-0000 **AGNES GREY** 49 (P) J & S Quinn 4-9-10	JP Sullivan
10	(4)	-4122 **SIR GARFIELD** 2 (B,BF,D) J & S Quinn 3-9-9	J Hart
11	(11)	10-40 **BANNER ROAD** 30 (C) L Russell 5-9-9	Oisin Orr
12	(9)	02606 **ANGEL OF THE BAY** 22 (P) D & N Barron 3-9-4	S James
13	(10)	23423 **BRAES OF DOUNE** 2 (P,C) J Goldie 6-9-3	P Mulrennan
14	(13)	0-001 **LUMENBOURG** 9 (V,D) J Camacho 3-9-0	Doubtful

9-4 Sir Garfield, 7-2 Novak, 9-2 Monhammer, 11-2 Braes Of Doune, 10-1 Darbucks, 20-1 Banner Road, Agnes Grey, Jkr Cobbler, Ahamoment.

4.40 Handicap (£4,711: 1m 2f) (10)

1	(4)	45362 **FAYLAQ** 9 (BF) J Goldie 8-10-2	P Mulrennan
2	(3)	11222 **POL ROGER** 14 (P,CD) M Dods 4-10-2	C Beasley
3	(2)	100-0 **CAVALLO PAZZO** 23 D Bourke 5-10-2	J Hart
4	(10)	0406- **YORKSHIRE LADY** J191 (CD) M & D Easterby 6-10-2	Joanna Mason
5	(6)	332/ **STAND STRONG** 667 (BF) Ewan Whillans 4-10-1	R Scott
6	(1)	03000 **TOSHIZOU** 31 (P) R Fell & S Murray 6-9-12	B Loughnane
7	(5)	02251 **AVIEMORE** 28 (CD) C Johnston 3-9-10	F Norton
8	(9)	04-00 **JOHN CHARD VC** 47 R Fell & S Murray 4-9-9	H Doyle
9	(7)	45006 **BASHFUL** 67 (P,T,CD) I Jardine 6-9-7	A Mullen
10	(8)	00505 **STRAYA** 9 K Scott 3-9-2	S James

5-2 Pol Roger, 100-30 Aviemore, 9-2 Faylaq, 7-1 Yorkshire Lady, 8-1 Toshizou, 12-1 Bashful, 16-1 Stand Strong, Straya.

5.15 Handicap (Div I: £3,664: 6f) (9)

1	(9)	66241 **PEMBROKESHIRE** 21 (H,C,D) I Jardine 4-9-13	A Mullen
2	(2)	32334 **ATOMISE** 7 (B,D) M Dods 5-9-9	C Beasley
3	(8)	02005 **MAJESTIC NEWLAW** 32 (P) I Jardine 4-9-7	M Tabti (5)
4	(3)	13600 **WARMINSTER** 14 (CD) K Scott 4-9-6	S James
5	(5)	10400 **IGNAC LAMAR** 40 (W,D) J Goldie 4-9-5	R Sexton
6	(6)	04120 **SOUND OF IONA** 2 (CD) J Goldie 8-9-4	Amie Waugh (5)
7	(4)	00560 **SIXCOR** 2 (V,C) Miss L Perratt 6-9-0	B Loughnane
8	(1)	0600/ **GLEAMING ARCH** 1145 F Watson 10-8-12	C Hardie
9	(7)	04644 **EARN YOUR STRIPES** 14 (P,CD) R M Smith 6-8-12	A Breslin (3)

2-1 Pembrokeshire, 5-2 Sound Of Iona, 11-2 Atomise, 10-1 Earn Your Stripes, Sixcor, 12-1 Majestic Newlaw, 14-1 Warminster, 20-1 Gleaming Arch, 25-1 Ignac Lamar.

5.45 Handicap (Div II: £3,664: 6f) (9)

1	(6)	03226 **RAMON DI LORIA** 14 (BF,D) E Whillans 6-9-12	P J McDonald
2	(9)	40541 **THE GAY BLADE** 25 (D) I Jardine 5-9-8	A Mullen
3	(8)	-0000 **IVA BATT** 2 (T,D) R K Watson (Ire) 6-9-7	Paula Muir (3)
4	(1)	41550 **PIPER'S FORT** 2 (D) K Scott 3-9-5	S James
5	(4)	23605 **INANNA** 30 J Goldie 4-9-5	P Mulrennan
6	(3)	04623 **CROCODILE POWER** 12 S Spencer 6-9-4	D Swift
7	(5)	60020 **SEE MY BABY JIVE** 2 (CD) D Whillans 8-9-0	J Hart
8	(2)	00040 **ONTHEBUNNY** 2 (E) Miss L Perratt 4-8-12	JP Sullivan
9	(7)	05-46 **SHATIN VENTURE** 2 Miss L Perratt 3-8-8	A Breslin (3)

2-1 The Gay Blade, 5-1 Crocodile Power, 13-2 Ramon Di Loria, 8-1 See My Baby Jive, Inanna, 10-1 Piper's Fort, Shatin Venture, Iva Batt, 14-1 Onthebunny.

6.15 Handicap (£3,664: 1m 2f) (14)

1	(8)	00024 **BEARAWAY** 38 (D) S Spencer 6-10-1	D Swift
2	(14)	00063 **AYR POET** 7 (CD) J Goldie 9-10-0	P Mulrennan
3	(5)	22331 **WE STILL BELIEVE** 35 (CD) D Bourke 6-10-0	J Hart
4	(6)	13535 **LEDGER** 25 (B) L Russell 4-9-12	Oisin Orr
5	(12)	65654 **GLASSES UP** 3 (P,CD) R M Smith 9-9-10	Joanna Mason
6	(2)	46464 **JAMINOZ** 30 (B,T,C) L Russell 5-9-10	A Young (5)
7	(3)	204-6 **CATRAKE FORCE** 206 G Tuer 4-9-10	S James
8	(13)	-1025 **GOLDEN VALOUR** 14 (P,C) R M Smith 8-9-8	A Breslin (3)
9	(11)	0553 **MEADE GOLD** 19 D & N Barron 3-9-6	C Lee
10	(10)	5-051 **DINGWALL** 36 (H,CD) I Jardine 3-9-6	A Mullen
11	(7)	10-06 **RECORWOMAN** 24 (T,D) I Furtado 5-9-4	Elle-May Croot (7)
12	(1)	05251 **CARVALHAL** 9 (V) M Dods 3-9-4	C Beasley
13	(9)	6-04 **MIX DE GRIS** 25 L Russell 3-9-0	Doubtful
14	(4)	00134 **GREGORINA** 21 (V,D) A McGuinness (Ire) 3-8-10	A Caffrey (3)

7-2 Carvalhal, 6-1 We Still Believe, Dingwall, 7-1 Gregorina, 8-1 Jaminoz, Ayr Poet, 10-1 Glasses Up, 12-1 Ledger, Golden Valour.

Course specialists

Ayr: Trainers A Watson, 14 winners from 37 runners, 37.8%; A Haynes, 5 from 15, 33.3%; J Camacho, 6 from 24, 25%. **Jockeys** Hollie Doyle, 12 winners from 41 rides, 29.3%; M Tabti, 3 from 11, 27.3%; P Mulrennan, 62 from 406, 15.3%.

Kempton Park: Trainers S & E Crisford, 33 from 151, 21.9%; W Haggas, 40 from 201, 19.9%; K P De Foy, 34 from 184, 18.5%. **Jockeys** O Murphy, 91 from 463, 19.7%; S De Sousa, 25 from 147, 17%; F Marsh, 16 from 104, 15.4%.

Windsor: Trainers W Haggas, 27 from 106, 25.5%; R Beckett, 28 from 129, 21.7%; C Hills, 17 from 86, 19.8%. **Jockeys** S D Bowen, 3 from 10, 30%; J Crowley, 5 from 17, 29.4%; E Greatrex, 4 from 16, 25%.

Kempton Park

Thunderer

2.10 Aleishka
2.45 Mbpape
3.20 Quick To Decide
3.55 Shrimp Shady
4.30 Carbine Harvester
5.00 Far Lane
5.35 At A Pinch

Going: standard to slow
Draw: 7f, low best — Racing TV

2.10 Nursery (2-Y-O: £3,140: 1m) (14)

1	(10)	66644 **BEAUHAATHER** 19 (P,T) Miss A Murphy 9-9	F Larson (3)
2	(12)	650 **HOLBROOK** 26 Ollie Sangster 9-7	N Currie
3	(13)	0000 **LAZIEELUNCH** 19 (B) S Woods 9-6	D Muscutt
4	(11)	000 **EYE PUZZLE** 30 Darryll Holland 9-5	R Dawson
5	(4)	065 **MATHARU** 16 (B) R Hughes 9-4	F Marsh
6	(8)	000 **PERFECT RUBY** 24 R Hannon 9-3	J Leavy (5)
7	(1)	5600 **SUN PETAL** 17 (H) C Johnston 8-13	J Fanning
8	(7)	500 **BOWNDER** 80 J Portman 8-12	David Egan
9	(6)	50056 **BRIGHT ERA** 13 (P) J S Moore 8-12	S Mohd (7)
10	(14)	0603 **ALEISHKA** 27 (B) E Dunlop 8-9	S De Sousa
11	(9)	000 **KEEP SINGING** 51 (B) J S Moore 8-9	W Cox
12	(2)	600 **MY CANDY GIRL** 27 K Jewell 8-9	G Rooke
13	(3)	6000 **GOOD CALL** 19 J S Moore 8-9	Georgia Dobie
14	(5)	000 **INNOCENT SETTLER** 76 (P,T) Alice Haynes 8-9	K O'Neill

2-1 Aleishka, 7-2 Beauhaather, 7-1 Holbrook, 12-1 Lazieelunch, Bright Era, Matharu, 14-1 Eye Puzzle, 16-1 Sun Petal, Perfect Ruby.

2.45 Handicap (3-Y-O: £4,187: 1m) (13)

1	(2)	14141 **MBAPPE** 13 (C,D) M Loughnane 9-11	R Dawson
2	(12)	3-255 **MILLITERRIES** 25 (BF) J Fanshawe 9-11	R Coakley
3	(9)	0-004 **ONTHEMONEYHONEY** 32 C Cox 9-10	Rossa Ryan
4	(6)	335 **FIOR DI BOSCO** 23 W Haggas 9-10	T Marquand
5	(13)	13661 **NEW KINGS ROAD** 9 (D) R Hannon 9-10	J Leavy (5)
6	(7)	04562 **DAYMER BAY** 14 E J-Houghton 9-8	Georgia Dobie
7	(3)	650- **MAITH AN FARHH** 289 J Ferguson 9-8	D Muscutt
8	(4)	50163 **TRIBAL CHIEF** 39 (T,BF,D) D Menuisier 9-6	H Davies
9	(10)	24-05 **TACTICAL CONTROL** J59 (T) B Brookhouse 9-6	J Gilligan
10	(5)	50262 **NEVER MIND ME** 12 (V) A Balding 9-4	O Murphy
11	(1)	53012 **MORE THAN A FEELIN** 14 (H) Alice Haynes 9-2	K O'Neill
12	(11)	064 **SORONTAR** 129 (T) H Main 9-1	K Stott
13	(8)	-6060 **GOLDEN ARC** 21 A Perrett 8-11	D Egan

9-2 Mbappe, 5-1 New Kings Road, 6-1 Tribal Chief, Fior Di Bosco, 10-1 Milliterries, More Than A Feelin, Never Mind Me, Daymer Bay.

3.20 Fillies' Stakes (2-Y-O: £5,346: 7f) (14)

1	(7)	**ADDENDA** M Botti 9-2	M Ghiani
2	(5)	**DARN HOT MYSTERY** H Candy 9-2	N Currie
3	(3)	**FELINA** D Menuisier 9-2	S De Sousa
4	(2)	**NEOMA** C Johnston 9-2	J Fanning
5	(10)	**QUICK TO DECIDE** J Ferguson 9-2	D Muscutt
6	(9)	**TABBY** D P Quinn 9-2	T Marquand
7	(6)	**TEMPTED** Ollie Sangster 9-2	K Stott
8	(11)	**TERRAMINDAR** P & O Cole 9-2	F Marsh
9	(13)	**ESTIMAID** K Jewell 9-0	G Rooke
10	(8)	**EVANKA** P Chapple-Hyam 9-0	R Dawson
11	(4)	**LADY MANZOR** A Perrett 9-0	D Egan
12	(1)	**LIKELY PERSPECTIVE** R Hughes 9-0	O Murphy
13	(12)	**VIA LUNA** Harry Charlton 9-0	T Whelan
14	(14)	**WHERE'S THE PICNIC** E Smyth-Osbourne 9-0	Georgia Dobie

7-2 Likely Perspective, 4-1 Quick To Decide, 6-1 Darn Hot Mystery, 8-1 Neoma, 10-1 Addenda, Felina, 12-1 Via Luna, Tempted.

3.55 Maiden Stakes (Div I: 2-Y-O: £5,346: 7f) (9)

1	(6)	**BEAR ISLAND** D Menuisier 9-7	H Davies
2	(2)	**BRIZE NORTON** R Beckett 9-7	Rossa Ryan
3	(7)	**HAMDANI CRUISER** James Horton 9-7	A Farragher
4	(8)	**KAYTWO** Miss A Murphy 9-7	S De Sousa
5	(4)	**PORTNOY** G Scott 9-7	D Egan
6	(1)	**SHRIMP SHADY** A Balding 9-7	O Murphy
7	(3)	**HARRYELLA** J Fanshawe 9-5	D Muscutt
8	(9)	**MAKES ME WONDER** D M Simcock 9-5	Georgia Dobie
9	(5)	**OBSIDIAN DREAM** J S Moore 9-5	S W Kelly

5-2 Brize Norton, 3-1 Shrimp Shady, 6-1 Portnoy, 7-1 Kaytwo, 10-1 Harryella, 12-1 Bear Island, Hamdani Cruiser, Makes Me Wonder, 14-1 Obsidian Dream.

4.30 Maiden Stakes (Div II: 2-Y-O: £5,346: 7f) (9)

1	(7)	**CAPTAIN BRETT** D M Simcock 9-7	Georgia Dobie
2	(5)	**CARBINE HARVESTER** W Haggas 9-7	T Marquand
3	(9)	**NOTIMEFORCHITCHAT** R Hughes 9-7	G Rooke
4	(4)	**PICKERING CASTLE** (H) D M Simcock 9-7	J Haynes
5	(1)	**ZOU'S YOUR DADDY** S Pearce 9-7	R Dawson
6	(2)	**AMILOC** R Beckett 9-5	Rossa Ryan
7	(3)	**BRUCE BANNER** G Brown 9-5	N Currie
8	(6)	**KING KERNOW** J S Moore 9-5	S W Kelly
9	(8)	**UPPERCASE** Harry Eustace 9-5	G Wood

9-4 Carbine Harvester, 4-1 Amiloc, 11-2 Notimeforchitchat, 6-1 Uppercase, Captain Brett, 10-1 Pickering Castle, 16-1 others.

5.00 Handicap (3-Y-O: £4,187: 1m 4f) (8)

1	(7)	0-310 **CHERRY BURTON** 93 (D) S Woods 9-9	D Muscutt
2	(4)	1-055 **PRINCE RASAM** 42 M Bell 9-9	K Stott
3	(6)	-5264 **PURE OF HEART** 23 (P,T) Ollie Sangster 9-9	O Murphy
4	(2)	05-12 **CAPRELO** 84 (C) H Morrison 9-9	D Egan
5	(8)	505 **ENVIRONMENT AMIGO** 14 (T) J Fanshawe 9-8	S De Sousa
6	(3)	540 **FAR LANE** 25 W Haggas 9-6	T Marquand
7	(1)	04350 **ALPEN POWER** 18 C Johnston 9-5	J Fanning
8	(5)	-6055 **SURREY FORCE** 37 K P De Foy 8-7	H Davies

5-2 Caprelo, 4-1 Pure Of Heart, 13-2 Environment Amigo, Far Lane, 7-1 Prince Rasam, Cherry Burton, 8-1 Alpen Power, 16-1 Surrey Force.

5.35 Handicap (£4,187: 1m 3f) (12)

1	(8)	10/0- **AT A PINCH** J67 (H,P,CD) T Lawes 6-10-4	J Peate (3)
2	(9)	31140 **PINK LILY** 28 R Hannon 4-10-2	A Voikhansky (3)
3	(3)	33225 **GOLD AURA** 46 (H) Jack Jones 4-10-1	Rossa Ryan
4	(12)	06362 **MEASURED MOMENTS** 25 J Butler 5-9-11	D Egan
5	(10)	34361 **MARITIME LADY** 19 (P) James Owen 3-9-8	S De Sousa
6	(11)	1-440 **ALACRITY** 38 (BF) A Balding 3-9-7	O Murphy
7	(5)	36253 **CARPATHIAN** 25 J Ferguson 3-9-7	D Muscutt
8	(4)	5000 **CAKEWALK** 21 (BF) S & E Crisford 3-9-6	H Davies
9	(6)	01 **UMBRIA** 43 E Walker 3-9-5	C Hutchinson (3)
10	(2)	6533 **BITTALEMON** 14 (B) W Haggas 3-9-4	T Marquand
11	(1)	-5020 **TAMBOURINE DREAM** 14 (H) J Fanshawe 3-9-3	R Coakley
12	(7)	000 **AUTUMN'S BREEZE** 27 G & J Moore 3-9-1	F Marsh

4-1 Maritime Lady, 6-1 Gold Aura, 13-2 Umbria, Measured Moments, 8-1 Pink Lily, 10-1 Carpathian, Bittalemon, Alacrity.

Yesterday's racing results

Leicester

Going: good to firm (good in places)

2.00 (7f) 1, **Corriamo** (T E Whelan, 2-1 fav); 2, Liberty Bird (12-1); 3, Law Degree (4-1). 9 ran. 1l, nk. M P Tregoning.

2.30 (7f) 1, **Matauri Bay** (Hector Crouch, 2-1 fav); 2, Shah (8-1); 3, Nightwalker (11-4). 6 ran. 1½l, 1¼l. R M Beckett.

3.00 (6f) 1, **Lihou** (David Probert, 11-2); 2, Silent Flame (9-2); 3, Ultramarine (28-1). 11 ran. Hd, nk. P D Evans.

3.30 (1m 3f 179yd) 1, **Papagei** (Daniel Muscutt, 4-1 Co fav); 2, Dubawi Time (4-1 Co fav); 3, Bobacious (4-1 Co fav). 12 ran. 4¾l, 6½l. J Ferguson.

4.00 (7f) 1, **Dion Baker** (Darragh Keenan, 7-1); 2, Ajrad (5-1); 3, Autumn Angel (25-1). 10 ran. NR: Asmund. 1½l, 1l. M Wigham.

4.30 (1m 2f) 1, **Bay Dream Believer** (P J McDonald, 6-1); 2, First Encounter (5-1); 3, Cerulean Summer (9-1). 8 ran. NR: Rose Light. ns, ½l. M Walford.

Placepot: £264.90.

Quadpot: £78.60.

Ripon

Going: good (good to firm in places)

2.10 (1m) 1, **Bowood** (Elle-May Croot, 7-2 jt-fav); 2, Style Of Life (8-1); 3, Little Ted (9-1). 12 ran. 3¾l, ½l. I Furtado.

2.40 (6f) 1, **Mearall** (O J Orr, 11-8 fav); 2, We Dare To Dream (13-8); 3, Focus On Zaam (250-1). 7 ran. 2¼l, 4¼l. R A Fahey.

3.10 (6f) 1, **Lesley's Boy** (O J Orr, 13-8); 2, Easy Peeler (6-4 fav); 3, Dark Thunderstorm (9-1). 6 ran. NR: Art Design. ½l, 2½l. R A Fahey.

3.40 (1m 4f 10yd) 1, **Oosterpark** (Callum Rodriguez, 11-1); 2, Monsieur Melee (5-2); 3, St Pancras (7-2). 5 ran. NR: Huxley. 2¼l, 2¼l. E Bethell.

4.10 (5f) 1, **Dunnington Lad** (Ethan Jones, 4-1); 2, Protest Rally (9-2); 3, Latin Five (13-2). 9 ran. Nk, 1¼l. P Winks.

4.40 (1m) 1, **Degale** (Callum Rodriguez, 13-8); 2, Bursinel (4-5 fav); 3, Nogradi (33-1). 6 ran. 1¼l, ½l. T D Barron.

5.10 (1m 1f 170yd) 1, **Evelyn's Phoenix** (D Allan, 7-2); 2, Jez Bomb (5-2 jt-fav); 3, Star Delta (25-1). 7 ran. 1½l, 5½l. T D Easterby.

Placepot: £36.60.

Quadpot: £7.80.

Why data didn't capture the pure genius of Modric

In the latest extract from his new book, Liverpool's former head of research **Ian Graham** explains how he met Michael Edwards, won over Jürgen Klopp, and unearthed hidden gem Roberto Firmino

Ian Graham was working for Decision Technology providing data analysis for Tottenham Hotspur when he met Michael Edwards in 2009. The pair went on to achieve great success at Liverpool but it is safe to say they did not initially see eye to eye…

Harry Redknapp was keen to bring his old Portsmouth video analyst to Spurs. Michael Edwards had worked for Portsmouth since 2003 and became Spurs' head of video analysis in November 2009.

He would also become responsible for the club's relationship with Decision Technology. I was not thrilled at this prospect. Bizarrely, Spurs' board had decided that Harry did not need to know about data analysis and Decision Technology, and I assumed that Michael was a Redknapp loyalist. Our first meeting confirmed my worst fears.

Space was at a premium at Spurs Lodge. My first meeting with Michael, on a cold, grey November day, was in the draughty education room used by the Academy. "Pleased to meet you, Michael," I said. He replied: "My friends call me Eddy." Eddy was wearing the usual video analyst's uniform of Spurs training kit. He was quite short and skinny, and wearing a pair of glasses even thicker than mine. The strange look was topped off with a spiky haircut. Eddy would later tell me that when Sunderland's manager Mick McCarthy spotted him at Fratton Park, he exclaimed: "F*** me, it's Jedward."

We waited for some Academy players to file out before sitting down to talk. As I was opening my laptop, Eddy made his opening move: "All this data analysis in football is bullshit, isn't it?" I soon found out that this behaviour is quite typical. Eddy is aggressive and combative and takes a special delight in confronting and calling out nonsense wherever he sees it. He had been a youth footballer in Peterborough's Academy but was released, having been deemed too small to succeed in the professional game. After gaining a degree in informatics and trying out teaching IT (a role to which he was definitely not suited) he had been offered a job by a friend who was working for Prozone, football's first real data company.

Prozone had installed video cameras in football stadiums, and recorded each game on VHS. After every game, the tapes were driven to the company's Leeds office, where they were painstakingly transcribed into the first version of "Tracking Data", where all of the players' positions on the pitch are captured. At Portsmouth, Eddy's job was to present a statistical report for each game to the coaching team. The problem was that he thought the statistics were garbage. And at the time he was right.

First, the coaches didn't care about statistics, and second the statistics didn't represent what he believed to be important about the game. I had come to the same conclusion while developing my Possession Value model. Pass completion percentages were meaningless — it is easy to complete 100 per cent of passes if they are all back towards the goalkeeper. The passes that make a difference by breaking the defensive line are risky by definition and players making those passes have much lower completion rates.

The main use of Prozone was physical data — how much distance the player had covered, how many sprints he had made and so on. This had some use for planning training sessions, but the physical data did not have much correlation with team success. Instead, it was used as a motivational tool — a way for the manager to criticise players for being lazy if their total distance was low. Players immediately began to game the system. When the ball was out of play, one Portsmouth player started sprinting to the touchline to take a throw-in.

Given his experiences with data, it was no wonder Eddy was sceptical. I began to explain the Possession Value model to him. Move from defensive to controlled possession, get a reward. Move the ball up the pitch, get a reward. The rewards get higher the closer to the opposition goal you go. Lose possession, receive a penalty.

I thought I was getting somewhere, but "it's bollocks though, isn't it? You can't tell how much pressure a player's under. The backwards pass might be his best option." The only way to get someone to trust a mathematical model is to explain it honestly, including its shortcomings as well as its strengths, so I admitted that we could not directly see in the data how much pressure a player was under. The data was certainly an incomplete view of the game and it did not capture some of the things that Eddy knew were important. But it did consistently, if imperfectly, record every action of every player in every game.

Afterwards, somewhat rattled, I sat in the Spurs Lodge car park trying to collect my thoughts. I remember calling my boss Henry and saying: "I don't think we'll be working with Spurs for much longer. Their new video analyst doesn't believe in data." Thankfully, I was wrong.

In Eddy, we had an advocate who believed in and understood our models, and also understood their strengths and weaknesses. His youth football career gave him strong opinions on what was captured well by our analysis and what wasn't. One player who caused a difference of opinion was Luka Modric. According to our system he was a perfectly good young attacking midfielder, which was out of step with Eddy's opinion that he was by far the best player in the squad. When ever-greater offers for Modric's services came in from Europe, our opinion was Spurs should certainly consider selling if there was a reasonable replacement available. Eddy did not agree with that advice. Looking back, and knowing now what was missing from those early models, Eddy was right and we were wrong.

Modric's dribbling and passing looked good, but not world-class. Eddy could see, watching every game in detail on video, that Modric passed, received and dribbled in very tight spaces, and often relieved pressure for his team. These were aspects that were difficult to glean from the data: at that time they were not directly collected. This experience with Modric became our template for understanding players. Data analysis defined the starting point for our evaluation of a player, and Eddy's judgment would refine that starting point. For the most part, there was good agreement between the model and Eddy's view but in special cases, like Modric, Eddy would consider a player to be better or worse than the model suggested.

HOW DATA HIGHLIGHTED FIRMINO'S TRUE VALUE

Graham and Edwards moved to Liverpool, where a transfer committee of analysts and the manager Brendan Rodgers was formed to determine which players to sign. While the 2014-15 season was far from successful for the club, the committee did unearth some gems, including Roberto Firmino, who would go on to become a key player in their Premier League and Champions League triumphs

Modric has won six Champions Leagues with Real to date; inset: Klopp consoles

The other big signing of summer 2015 was Roberto Firmino, who, along with James Milner, would become the first unqualified success among the signings made by the transfer committee since [Philippe] Coutinho and [Daniel] Sturridge back in January 2013. Our data analysis was a driving force behind signing Firmino, but he did not immediately stand out as a high-value signing. We needed to dig deeper into the data in order to really understand his value, and may not have done so if Eddy had not been insistent that he was undervalued.

In addition to performance analysis, we performed financial analysis for the club, and an important part of this was understanding transfer fees and salaries: what the market overpaid for and what the market underpaid for. After all, the definition of "Moneyball" is not to improve performance but to maximise improvement in performance per pound spend. After all, nearly anyone, with notable exceptions such as the Glazer family at Manchester United, can improve performance with large enough expenditure.

Firmino was a player whose demographics led us to estimate his expected transfer fee at £19 million. He had played for four seasons at a mid-table Bundesliga club, Hoffenheim, and had only two years left on his contract. These factors indicated a modest transfer fee. The fact he played in Germany meant he was not liable to the "Premier League experience" surcharge. The fact he was a young forward and Brazilian increased the expected fee, but the fact he had not played youth football or competitively for Brazil deflated it

DAVID ALIAGA/NURPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES

star striker Aubameyang at Dortmund

again. All else being equal, of course we'd prefer a player with Premier League experience and 20 caps for Brazil, but all else is not equal, and those players command a high premium.

Borussia Dortmund were also interested in signing Firmino and had already offered €25 million. We would have to pay more to secure his services. Eddy was adamant that Firmino was drastically undervalued by the market and persuaded our owners to part with £29 million to sign him. There were important points in Firmino's favour that suggested he was undervalued: he was rarely injured, and had played nearly every game for Hoffenheim over the past four years. He was excellent in the air and was excellent at creating chances for others, despite his modest goal return (he'd scored ten or more goals in only one of his four Bundesliga seasons). He could also play in three positions.

The fact that Firmino played three positions should have been seen as a strength, but I think it was seen as a weakness — other teams didn't know what to make of him. Was he a centre forward, an attacking midfielder or a winger? Even our own coaching staff were unsure what to do with him; the consensus was that he was a good player but they didn't quite know where to fit him in. From my point of view a multifunctional player is a huge asset: if Firmino can play in three positions, then less squad depth is needed in those positions because he can fill in there. Another unqualified success of the 2015 transfer window — free transfer James Milner — had exactly the same strength.

Even our data analysis had been tripped up by Firmino's flexibility. He'd ended up in the striker category, but didn't add enough through shooting to look very impressive as a striker. Eddy insisted that he'd played many games as a "10" so we took another look at him.

Our player classification tool allowed us to decide what role each player played in each game. We could use Firmino's games as a striker to compare him to other strikers, and his games as a No10 to compare him to other No10s. The result of this process was that, as a No10, he looked like one of the best young players in Europe. Most of the young players who rated better than him — Alexis Sánchez, James Rodríguez, Isco, Oscar, [Paul] Pogba, [Aaron] Ramsey — were playing for huge Champions League teams and completely unrealistic signings for Liverpool's position in the pecking order in 2015.

Eddy credits data analysis for influencing the signing of Firmino, but we would not have spent the time we did on analysing him if Eddy had not insisted: his new process of analysing 20-30 games on video had also suggested that Firmino, while inconsistent, might just be a special talent.

HOW KLOPP WAS WON OVER BY DATA – BY REVISITING HIS WORST SEASON

Rodgers was sacked in October 2015 and Graham was asked to brief his successor, Jürgen Klopp, on how Liverpool had been using data to inform decision-making

A strange coincidence meant that I'd analysed Dortmund's terrible 2014-15 season long before Jürgen arrived at Liverpool. Rewind to March 2015. I'd been invited to Frankfurt to give a presentation at the Deutsche Fussball Liga (DFL)'s annual analysts' meeting by an old acquaintance, Holger Ruhl.

I showed them some Bundesliga analysis. According to our team strength ratings Dortmund were still clearly the second-best team in Germany. At the halfway stage, Dortmund had been 17th out of 18 teams in the league table. The press smelled blood and the German tabloid Bild published a photo of Jürgen comforting star forward Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, who was in tears after yet another loss. The caption was "Echter Schrot", which roughly translates as "Absolute Garbage". It was widely accepted that Dortmund were a spent force, and here was some data guy saying they were the still second-best team in the country?

I went on to say that we predicted them to finish seventh in 2014-15, generating about two points per game on average from their final eight games. This prediction was met with some disbelief. Dortmund had been on the receiving end of some results that were very different to their underlying performance, as measured by expected goals. Dortmund's expected goal difference after 26 games of "Echter Schrot" was the third-best in the Bundesliga. They were creating and allowing a similar quantity and quality of chances as they had in previous seasons. The main difference was that their shots were not crossing the goalline while the opposition's shots were.

In late October 2015, Eddy [Michael Edwards] told me: "You need to set up a meeting with Jürgen to explain what your department does."

Jürgen had been announced as Liverpool manager three weeks previously. Eddy, soon to be announced as Liverpool's first sporting director, thought Jürgen needed to understand how the club was using data to help its decision-making. I knew that Jürgen had had little prior exposure to statistical analysis in football. It was important to me that I made a good impression.

I'd worked all week on an introductory presentation. First, a one-pager on expected goals for someone who hadn't seen expected goals before: from a given location on the pitch, kicked shots end up in the net more often than headers. Well of course, that's obvious. If you shoot from closer range, or where the goalkeeper isn't, the shot is more likely to become a goal. So far, so good.

Hoping to pique Jürgen's interest, the next part of the presentation was on Dortmund 2014-15 and how his success story there unravelled. I revisited the eight worst games of the season. I hoped it would not be too traumatic an experience for him.

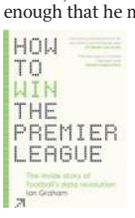
September 20, 2014: Dortmund lose 2-0 away to Mainz. It was clear this game was tinged with bad luck for Dortmund without resorting to any sophisticated analysis. Dortmund's expensive new signing Ciro Immobile won a penalty when Dortmund were only one goal down, but it was saved by Loris Karius, of all people — he would join Liverpool in 2016. And the second goal was an own goal. According to expected goals, the "fair score" in the game should have been 1.8-1.7 in Dortmund's favour. A Dortmund win was the likeliest result. Jürgen agreed with the analysis. "We should have won that game! You saw it?" No, I hadn't seen it. I had just analysed the data.

October 25, 2014: Dortmund lose 1-0 at home to Hanover, their fourth consecutive Bundesliga defeat. By expected goals, Dortmund's chances were expected to be rewarded with 1.2 goals, compared to 0.5 for Hanover. "You saw that game? We f***ing destroyed them!" No, I hadn't seen the game, but I had analysed the data.

November 30, 2014: Dortmund lose 2-0 away to Frankfurt and fall to last place in the league table. But they have six shots on target to Frankfurt's three, 17 total shots to Frankfurt's 10, and 35 box entries to Frankfurt's 25. Expected goals estimated 2.2 Dortmund goals to Frankfurt's 1.1 and a 67 per cent chance of victory. The game was a case study on the contribution of luck to football results.

December 17, 2014: Dortmund draw 2-2 at home to Wolfsburg but… Jürgen had got the point by now. In each case, Dortmund's results did not match their underlying performances, they'd just received a very large dose of bad luck. Crucially, Jürgen's intuition was in tune with what the analysis was saying.

The rest of the presentation went well. If Jürgen wasn't an overnight convert, the meeting had gone well enough that he might become the convert I was hoping for.



How to Win the Premier League **by Ian Graham is published by Century, Penguin Random House. £22 from August 15**

Pope on standby to take captaincy reins

CONTINUED FROM BACK

England team-mate, said: "It doesn't look great unfortunately. He'll have a scan tomorrow and we'll see how he is."

Most of the England Test squad are playing in the Hundred before convening in Manchester on August 19 in preparation for the first of three Tests against Sri Lanka, starting on August 21 at Old Trafford. The three matches are being played back-to-back, meaning there is little time for Stokes, 33, to recover before the series, even if the injury is not too serious. The Test side then have three weeks off while the white-ball team take on Australia before travelling to Pakistan in early October for three Tests, followed by three more in New Zealand.

Should Stokes be ruled out, Ollie Pope would take over the captaincy. It would be a serious blow to be without Stokes, not only because of his leadership and captaincy but also because he balances the side, having returned to bowling this summer.

He has not missed any matches since taking over as captain in 2022, even though he was unable to bowl for most of last year or during the winter tour to India because of the issue with his left knee.

England have already suffered two injury blows since the West Indies series. Zak Crawley was ruled out after fracturing a finger on the final day of the third Test, while the uncapped fast bowler Dillon Pennington — who was in the squad for the West Indies Tests — sustained a hamstring injury playing for London Spirit in the Hundred. Dan Lawrence has been confirmed as England's new opening batsman in place of Crawley against Sri Lanka, with fast bowler Olly Stone also recalled for the first time in two years.

Jordan Cox, of Essex, had already been called up as the spare batsman and could come into the middle order to bat at No6 in place of Stokes, which would leave England with three seamers and Shoaib Bashir as a specialist spinner. There are five seam bowlers in the squad — Mark Wood, Gus Atkinson, Chris Woakes, Matthew Potts and Stone — but if they bring in another, Essex's Sam Cook may be in contention. Surrey's Sam Curran is an option if England try to replace Stokes with a genuine all-rounder. Curran, 26, has not played Test cricket since 2021 but has impressed for Oval Invincibles in the Hundred.

Stokes is on crutches after injuring his left leg again

We need some signings as it's a long season, says Van Dijk

CONTINUED FROM BACK

which was secured courtesy of a stunning Diogo Jota volley, Luis Díaz's brace and an excellent finish from highly rated 17-year-old Trey Nyoni.

Afterwards, the Liverpool captain was asked whether there had been any progress over his contract and he said: "There are no changes at the moment."

Van Dijk turned 33 last month and Liverpool have been reluctant to hand players that age new deals that are longer than 12 months.

Yet the centre half was a consistent performer for the majority of last term and will be able to negotiate with European clubs from January about a free transfer move next summer.

Salah, 32, and Alexander-Arnold, 25, are in similar positions. How often Alexander-Arnold is used in the engine room remains to be seen, with Liverpool hoping that the Real Sociedad midfielder Martín Zubimendi will confirm he is willing to move to Anfield.

Liverpool were led to believe the Spain player was prepared to make the switch to Anfield, although the 25-year-old is mulling over whether to actually break ties with his boyhood club. A £51 million release clause would then have to be triggered or a compromise reached over the fee.

Slot has yet to make a signing, but Van Dijk said that he trusted the club to make the necessary improvements.

"I am positive. I am confident," he said. "Obviously, I think we should make some signings based on how long the season will go but I think they are working behind the scenes and I am fully convinced, and trust the club, that they will do the right thing for us and get the best possible squad in order to compete in every competition."

Injury doubt over Grealish

Paul Hirst

Jack Grealish is a doubt for Manchester City's opening Premier League fixture of the season away to Chelsea on Sunday after suffering a hamstring injury in training.

After the disappointment of being left out of the England squad for Euro 2024, Grealish bounced back with some impressive pre-season displays for City, but the 28-year-old missed the Community Shield win over Manchester United on Saturday.

It was rotten luck for the former Aston Villa captain, who suffered a leg injury in August last year that derailed his campaign. "It's a blow because he played all pre-season, had the rhythm, was aggressive," Pep Guardiola, the City manager, said of Grealish.

"During the season, discomforts and injuries happen. We didn't want to take a risk [in the Community Shield] and maybe against Chelsea he will be ready or [if not, I'm] pretty sure against Ipswich Town [City's second league game] he will be ready."

Guardiola said that Grealish would risk "three weeks or a month out" if he exacerbated the problem by playing while not fully fit.

In Grealish's absence, Jérémy Doku started on the left wing at Wembley. Oscar Bobb, the 21-year-old Norwegian, continued his excellent pre-season form on the right while new signing Savinho also impressed.

‘He loved us and he had loved life before his illness took over’

Graham Thorpe’s family tell **Mike Atherton** about former England star’s struggle with anxiety and depression

HANDOUT; REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Graham with fellow Chelsea fans Emma, left, and Kitty, who said her dad was a “complete character”. Below left, with Amanda at a dinner in 2022, when the illness had abated, and at Buckingham Palace in 2007, inset, when the former England great collected his MBE

On Saturday afternoon, before the match between Farnham Cricket Club and Chipstead Cricket Club, a small, understated ceremony was held pitch-side to remember Farnham’s most famous cricketing son, Graham Thorpe. It was to Farnham that Thorpe moved from Wrecclesham Cricket Club, which is where he started out as a young boy. We all start out somewhere.

Amanda Thorpe, Graham’s wife, was present, along with her two girls, Kitty, 22, and Emma, 19. Graham Thorpe’s father, Geoff, and his brothers, Ian and Alan, were there along with wider family and friends as well as Graham’s dog, Bertie, who, Amanda says, finding it hard to suppress a smile, behaved himself for once.

Amanda, Kitty and Emma have been trying hard to smile these past few days. They have been blown away by the fondness of the reflections from former team-mates and friends and the wider cricketing community and have been determined to remember the good times they shared — and there were many — before mental illness took over two years ago and took away the man they knew and loved.

The minute’s silence at Farnham, the club to which the Thorpe family have been connected for decades, was the final commemoration of a week in which cricket supporters have paid tribute with respectful silences at Cardiff, the Oval, Thorpe’s home ground, and Lord’s. Around the country, players and former team-mates have offered their respects and the family have been thankful for that.

The family contacted me on Friday through Alec Stewart and Graham’s closest friend, Jeff Banks, both rocks of support, because they wanted to express their gratitude to the many well-wishers and because they wanted to find a way, however hard that may be, of sharing some more information after a two-year silence. They want to heighten the awareness of the illness that took him, but also want to emphasise that his life should not be defined by that. There was far, far more to him than that.

“For the past couple of years, Graham had been suffering from major depression and anxiety,” Amanda says. “This led him to make a serious attempt on his life in May 2022, which resulted in a prolonged stay in an intensive care unit.

“Despite glimpses of hope and of the old Graham, he continued to suffer from depression and anxiety, which at times got very severe. We supported him as a family and he tried many, many treatments but unfortunately none of them really seemed to work.

“Graham was renowned as someone who was very mentally strong on the field and he was in good physical health. But mental illness is a real disease and can affect anyone. Despite having a wife and two daughters whom he loved and who loved him, he did not get better.

“He was so unwell in recent times and he really did believe that we would be better off without him and we are devastated that he acted on that and took his own life,” she says.

In this dark period, there were moments of light. Amanda shows me a radiant photograph of them both from a dinner at the Oval to mark Richard Thompson’s departure as chairman of Surrey in November 2022. John Major was the guest of honour and made certain, in his speech, to mark Thorpe’s presence, and the reaction in the room was suitably overwhelming.

> “He would get up and dance anywhere to anything. He wasn’t the best dancer, but he never cared about that

But the illness returned. “We are not ashamed of talking about it,” Kitty says, with remarkable composure and bravery. “There is nothing to hide and it is not a stigma. We were trying to help him get better before and trying to protect him, which is why we said nothing. This is the time now to share the news, however horrible it is. We’ve wanted to be able to talk and share and we’d now like to raise awareness, too.” There is talk of starting a foundation in his name.

“He had loved life and he loved us but he just couldn’t see a way out. It was heartbreaking to see how withdrawn he had become. He was not the same person. It was strange to see this person trapped in the body of Dad. That’s why we’ve been so happy that the many reflections have been about his life before this illness took over. I’m glad that’s how everyone does remember him, rightly so, as the complete character he was.”

Kitty adds: “When I first got to university, a friend asked me what my dad did and I said he used to play cricket, and she said, ‘OMG so does mine!’ When she went home and mentioned this to her dad, the penny dropped. We still laugh about it now! He never talked about his achievements.”

Kitty remembers, above all, the dancing. “He would get up and dance anywhere to anything. He wasn’t the best dancer, but he never cared about that.” They have been lifted in recent days by the fondness with which he has been remembered. “He was so humble,” Emma recalls. “I didn’t really realise how good he was, until reading all the tributes in the past few days. He hardly ever talked about his success or his playing days. If someone asked him what he did, he’d say he knocked a ball about a bit.” Emma remembers the hours they spent playing table football together. “He taught me all his tricks, until I could finally beat him.”

Amanda remembers that anti-authoritarian streak fondly. “That’s the Graham I know and remember and loved. Graham was a free spirit, he had his own mind and his own way of going about things. He loved a loud shirt. My favourite memory of him is in Barbados, which he loved, enjoying a rum punch and listening to his favourite reggae after a swim. He was handsome, so handsome. He was funny and he made us all laugh so much.”

How lifeguard from Wigan is secret weapon of track stars

Charlie Hobson proved the ideal training partner for the British pair, says **Matt Lawton**

Keely Hodgkinson

Georgia Bell

It was the early hours of Sunday and in one corner of a bar just a few strides from the Moulin Rouge a young lifeguard from Manchester was being bought a beer. To date, the height of Charlie Hobson's own athletics career has been some schoolboy track and cross-country titles in Greater Manchester. It is why he needs to work at the local swimming baths in Wigan.

But the tall, unassuming 21-year-old, below, more than deserved his pint because he had spent three weeks in Paris as training partner to Keely Hodgkinson and Georgia Bell. "The girls have paid for him to take the time off work and be here," Trevor Painter, the coach to both Olympic medallists as well as one quarter of the British men's 4x400m relay team that also claimed a bronze on Saturday night, says. "He's done a great job."

Hobson's best for 800m is 1min 52.97sec: more than a second quicker than Hodgkinson on paper and therefore making him a perfect partner for the more demanding Painter sessions. He was out there on the track, for instance, for the "split 800" session that indicated to both Hodgkinson and Painter that she was in the shape to secure that Olympic gold medal.

"Charlie led out the first 400m [they stop after crossing the line, walk back to the start and immediately go again] but Keely killed him in the second," Painter says. "We knew then that she was ready."

What a week it has been for Painter and his wife, Jenny Meadows, who run the M11 track club in Manchester and were able to enjoy a well-earned drink of their own at a post-event party for Bell.

They always hoped Hodgkinson would build on her three silver medals in the previous three global 800m finals but Bell and Lewis Davey's feats were a touch more unexpected, even if Painter was quietly confident that the immensely gifted Bell was in contention for a place on the 1,500m podium.

So thrilled were they for Bell that they followed her into the media interview area and ended up watching the relay on television. Davey had been given about half an hour's notice that he was running because of an injury, during the warm-up, to Sam Reardon. "I can't breathe," Meadows said as Davey took off on the third leg. There was no need to panic, with Davey clocking a 44.9sec split and keeping the British quartet in a medal position.

Bell's performance was more special, of course: it capped the story of a middle-distance athlete who took time off work to be here in the city of her birth and returned to the sport only two years ago after she suffered a series of stress fractures during a spell when she said she overtrained while a student at the University of California. It left her so disillusioned by 2017 that she quit racing on the track altogether.

As she said on Saturday night, she was far from an amateur "couch to 5k" runner who had somehow risen to the ranks of Olympic medallist. At 14 she was an English Schools champion with a best of 2:08 for 800m, a phenomenal time.

But it was not until lockdown that she made a tentative return to running and it was only after finishing second, behind a man, at a Parkrun in Bushy Park, southwest London, in March 2022 that she decided it was maybe time to have another crack at being an elite runner. Within a few months she had clocked 4:16 for 1,500m, at a low-key race in nearby Tooting, and in November that year she texted Painter to see if he would consider coaching her again.

"I actually found it earlier and took a screenshot and sent it to him," Bell says. "It was a message out of the blue, like, 'Oh, congratulations on your daughter, would you be free for a chat?' I think he was happy because he always knew that I had the potential."

Within months she had lowered her best for the metric mile to 4:06. Another year on and she first dipped under four minutes, then improved to 3:56 and followed a European silver medal with Olympic bronze, not only beating Laura Muir but breaking the Scot's British record in the process with a time of 3:52.61.

"I was gutted when she went to America," Painter says. "You could just see something special.

"The first time she came to us, I thought she was a society girl: like Tamara Beckwith, very glamorous. But then I saw her run and I thought, 'Oh, all right.' "

Meadows and Painter are now recalling what happened next together. "Georgia tells a story of her last race [before taking a break from the sport]," Meadows says. "It was 4:37 and she was on the start line thinking she would never run again."

"Too much volume, injuries, she fell out of love with it," Painter says.

"It broke her," Meadows adds. "It was November 2022 when she phoned Trevor. She'd been doing a few sessions and run 4:16. We were like, 'That's pretty good.' "

Painter recalls how Bell's boyfriend at the time, now her fiancé, had suggested going for a run during the Covid pandemic. "She said, 'You don't want to run with me.' He was like, 'What do you mean?' They went for the run and she destroyed him."

Bell suggests she now has a decision to make about whether she returns to her job in cybersecurity, and Painter agrees.

"The weekend of the London Diamond League was when we had that cyber hit," he said. "She was furious because she said she was losing so much commission [by] not being at work. But it's a conversation she needs to have with her boss."

Bell is now 30 but Painter thinks the time she has been away from the sport means she has a few more miles in her yet. "Kelly Holmes was 34 when she did the double gold in Athens," he says. "Georgia is very lightly raced. Her body is not hanging on like some people at that age."

With this athlete, Meadows thinks anything is possible. They have their sights on the women's 800m record for Hodgkinson and she thinks Faith Kipyegon's mark of 3:49.04 should not necessarily be considered out of reach. "She's run 3:52.6," Meadows says. "I know 3:49.0 is a little bit in front of that, but never say never for anything."

"And she's tough," Painter says. "We did say that the medals can be won in the last two metres so don't give up; keep driving all the way through. She did that."

In part, thanks to a lifeguard from Wigan.

How the British got on at the Olympics on the final weekend

Artistic swimming

Leading final positions: Duet: Free routine 1, China 566.4783pts; 2, Great Britain (K Shortman and I Thorpe) 558.5367; 3, Netherlands 558.3963.

Athletics

Men: Leading final positions: 800m 1, E Wanyonyi (Ken) 1min 41.19sec; 2, M Arop (Can) 1:41.20; 3, D Sedjati (Alg) 1:41.50; 8, M Burgin (GB) 1:43.84. **5,000m** 1, J Ingebrigtsen (Nor) 13:13.66; 2, R Kwemoi (Ken) 13:15.04; 3, G Fisher (US) 13:15.13; 21, G Mills (GB) 13:32.32. **4x400m relay** 1, United States 2:54.43; 2, Botswana 2:54.53; 3, Great Britain (A Haydock-Wilson, M Hudson-Smith, L Davey and C Dobson) 2:55.83. **Marathon** 1, T Tola (Eth) 2hr 6min 26sec; 2, B Abdi (Bel) 2:06:47; 3, B Kipruto (Ken) 2:07:00; 4, E Cairess (GB) 2:07:29; 46 P Sesemann (GB) 2:13:08.

Women: Leading final positions: 1,500m 1, F Kipyegon (Ken) 3:51.29; 2, J Hull (Aus) 3:52.56; 3, G Bell (GB) 3:52.61; 5, L Muir (GB) 3:53.37. **4x400m relay** 1, United States 3:15.27; 2, Netherlands 3:19.50; 3, Great Britain (V Oburuogu, L Nielsen, N Yeargin and A Anning) 3:19.72. **Marathon** 1, S Hassan (Neth) 2:22:55; 2, T Assefa (Eth) 2:22:58; 3, H Obiri (Ken) 2:23:10; 78, R Harvey (GB) 2:51:03.

Cycling — track

Men: Leading final positions: Keirin: Quarter-finals: Heat 1 1, J Carlin (GB); 2 M Glaetzer (Aus) at 0.006sec behind. **Heat 2** 1, H Lavreysen (Neth) 2, H Turnbull (GB) at 0.089. **Semi-final 1** 1, J Carlin (GB); 2 M Glaetzer (Aus) at 0.345. **Semi-final 2** 1, M Richardson (Aus) 2, Lavreysen at 0.234; Turnbull dnf. **Final** 1, Lavreysen; 2, Richardson at 0.056; 3, Glaetzer 0.881; Carlin dnf. **Madison: Final** 1, Portugal 55pts; 2, Italy 47; 3, Denmark 41; 10 Great Britain (O Wood and M Stewart) -9.

Women: Leading final positions: Sprint: Semi-final 2 E Andrews (NZ) bt E Finucane (GB) 2-0. **Places 5-8** 5, S Capewell (GB); 2, E Hinze (Ger) at 0.064; 7, M Bayona Pineda (Col) 0.092; 8, K MitcheLL (Can) 0.493. **Bronze medal race** Finucane bt H van de Wouw (Neth) 2-0. **Omnium: Scratch race** 1, J Valente (US); 2, M Coles-Lyster (Can); 3, G Baker (Aus); 22, N Evans (GB). **Tempo race** 1, L Gillespie (Ire); 2, J Valente (US); 3, D Pikulik (Pol); 18, Evans. **Elimination race** 1, Valente; 2, Baker; 3, Coles-Lyster; 17, Evans. **Points race** 1, Valente; 2, Pikulik; 3, A Wollaston (NZ); 15, Evans. **Overall** 1, Valente 144pts; 2, Pikulik 131; 3, A Wollaston (NZ) 125; 15, Evans 52.

Diving

Leading positions: Men: 10m platform: Semi-final 1, Cao Yuan (China) 504.00pts; 2, Yang Hao (China) 490.55; 3, R Tamai (Japan) 477.00; 6, K Kothari (GB) 443.55.12, N Williams (GB) 400.90. **Final** 1, Cao 547.50; 2, Tamai 507.65; 3, Williams 497.35; 11, Kothari 401.55.

Golf

Women: Leading final scores: 279 L Ko (NZ) 72, 67, 68, 71. **280** E Henseleit (Ger) 72, 73, 69, 66. **281** Lin Xiyu (China) 71, 70, 71, 69. **282** B Pagdanganan (Phi) 72, 69, 73, 68; A Yang (S Kor) 72, 71, 70, 69; H Green (Aus) 77, 70, 66, 69; M Yamashita (Japan) 71, 70, 68, 73. **British: 289** C Hull 81, 71, 69, 68. **293** G Hall 74, 74, 71, 74.

Modern pentathlon

Men: Leading final positions: Riding: Show jumping 1, G Malan (It) (0) 300; 2, T Sato (Japan) (0) 300; 3, J-B Mourcia (Fr) (0) 300; 7, J Choong (GB) (0) 293. **Fencing: Bonus round** 1, E Hernandez (Mex) (6-1) 12; 2, Jun Woongtae (S Kor) (3-0) 6; 3, Choong (2-1) 4. **Swimming: Freestyle: 200m: Heat 1** 1, Choong; 2, C Bohm (Hun); 3, Hernandez. **Laser run** 1, Hernandez (shooting: 41.46sec, running: 8min 59.34sec, laser: 9:40.80) 720pts; 2, Mourcia (46.11, 9:02.44, 9:44.87) 716; 4, Choong (41.13, 9:06.96, 9:48.09) 712. **Overall** 1, A Elgendy (Egy) 1,555pts (world record); 2, Sato 1,542; 3, Malan 1,536; 9, Choong 1,519.

Women: Leading final positions: Riding: Show jumping 1, M Gulyas (Hun) (0) 300pts; 2, Seong Seungmin (S Kor) (0) 300; 3, Zhang Mingyu (China) (0) 300; 15, K Bryson (GB) (0) 286. **Fencing: Bonus round** 1, E Micheli (It) (6-1) 12; 2, A Sotero (It) (3-1) 6; 3, L Hlavackova (Cz) (2-1) 4; 10, Bryson (0-1) 0. **Swimming: Freestyle: 200m: Heat 3** 1, Seong; 2, E Clouvel (Fr); 3, Gulyas; 6, Bryson. **Laser run** 1, Guzi (41.58; 10:03.90; 10:45.48) 655; 2, L Heredia (Sp) (42.58; 10:08.15; 10:50.73) 650; 3, I Ozyuksel (Tur) (44.38; 10:13.82; 10:58.20) 642; 10, Bryson (54.70; 10:24.42; 11:19.12) 621. **Overall** 1, Gulyas 1,461; 2, Clouvel 1,452; 3, Seong 1,441; 9, Bryson 1,404.

Sport climbing

Leading final positions: Women: Boulder 1, J Garnbret (Slove) 84.4pts; 2, B Raboutou (US) 84.0; 3, O Mackenzie (Aus) 59.7; 5, E McNeice (GB) 59.5. **Lead** 1, A Mori (Japan) 96.1; 2, J Pilz (Austria) 88.1; 3, Garnbret 84.1; 6, McNeice 68.1. **Overall** 1, Garnbret 168.5; 2, Raboutou 156.0; 3, Pilz 147.4; 5, McNeice 127.6.

Taekwondo

Leading positions: Men: +80 kg: Round of 16 C Cunningham (GB) bt A Issoufou (Niger) 2-0. **Quarter-final** Cunningham bt R Alba (Cub) 2-1. **Semi-final** Cunningham bt C Sallah Cisse (Ivo) 2-1. **Gold medal** contest A Salimi (Iran) bt Cunningham 2-1.

Women: +67kg: Round of 16 R McGowan (GB) bt V Traill (Fij) 2-0. **Quarter-final** S Osipova (Uzb) bt McGowan 2-0.

Weightlifting

Leading final positions: Women: +81kg 1, Li Wenwen (China) 309kg (681 pds); 2, Park Hyejeong (S Kor) 299 (659); 3, E Campbell (GB) 288 (635).

Best Games ever? Paris and London share the honours

Owen Slot

Chief Sports Writer, Paris

It's Sunday lunchtime and I have chosen to make the last event I attend at these Games the men's water polo final. I don't know if you've seen the water polo but "physical" is an understatement. It is like rugby with flick knives, track cycling with chainsaws: you have your finger and toenails checked pre-match so they cannot be used as weapons. And this final is between Serbia and Croatia. The Croatian journalist sitting next to me puts this in perspective: "Not a friendly match, but not quite the war."

Meanwhile I am trying to follow the progress of Emily Campbell, Britain's heavyweight superstar in the weightlifting, while also watching Anna Meares crying in an end-of-term Aussie press conference.

This is a typical Olympic experience. In a festival of extreme human performance, where there is an overload of elite endeavour, you generally don't know where to look so you are trying to look everywhere.

Anyway, let me tell you about Meares, who is one of my favourite Olympic people. You may remember her from a decade-plus ago. She was a track cyclist and, being the No 1 rival to Britain's great hope Victoria Pendleton, we in the British media turned her into some kind of London 2012 villain, a role that she managed to laugh off with impressive grace.

She is now the chef de mission of the Australia Olympic team in Paris, still impressive but now statesman-like too, and, even though she can't help but get emotional in delivering them, the words she finds are the right ones. She is talking specifically about the Aussie athletes, but when she says she is "proud for them, proud of them, proud to be here with them", she could be speaking for pretty much any team here.

She could certainly be talking for the France team. I was lucky enough to witness the electricity injected when Antoine Dupont came on to turn the men's rugby sevens final France's way on day one. I thought that would be as loud as the Games could get, but then I was at the pool four days later, that crazy night when Léon Marchand won two golds inside two hours. And then it became clear that the French crowd were up for absolutely anything, especially when it arrived in French colours. The worst divers off the 10m platform were French but they could have belly-flopped and still been cheered like gold-medal winners.

At the end of every Olympics there is a kind of assessment process: how were the Games? The first and simple answer here is that they worked. They didn't fulfil French fears: the security worked, no one went on strike and the rioters and protesters, it seemed, had gone on holiday.

The greater answer to "How were the Games?" came from the broader home team. Not just the Duponts and the Marchands but the infrastructure, the volunteers, the public, Parisians, the city that was so cynical about the event that was coming to disrupt their lives.

For 17 days the stereotype of the indifferent, grumpy Frenchman went missing. By the end it was not uncommon to hear the French media claiming that Paris 2024 had been better than London 2012. "The most spectacular Games of all time," France Info radio claimed, an assessment apparently based on the opinion of foreign media.

Conclusions here are invidious and everyone will have their own opinions, but if there was a gold medal for best Games, maybe London and Paris would be atop the podium together. In many ways they felt so similar: a cynical public suddenly wowed by the experience and then a rare, tangible sense of feelgood.

For two weeks in 2012 it suddenly became OK for Londoners to feel proud, buoyant, uplifted. I remember the same in Sydney 24 years ago. It was: look at us, world, we're not some unrefined Antipodean backwater after all, we can really do stuff. The same here in Paris for a fortnight plus: look at us.

And then it's those conversations

Dupont, a flag-bearer in the closing ceremony, electrified the Games early

that you never quite believe you're having. In London we were introduced to the Brownlee brothers and became instant experts on the tactics in the keirin. Here, likewise, France has become obsessed with the ping-pong brothers, Alexis and Félix Lebrun, who look as if they've just stepped out of a chemistry lesson but won bronze together and now have Le Monde speculating on the new national table tennis obsession. "The question," the newspaper reported, "isn't whether there will be a surge of new players, but rather how large it will be."

At some point, no doubt, Paris will further follow the London narrative. It's probably a few months before people start questioning the vast expense again and asking "Where's the legacy?" And then a few more before the dope cheats are exposed and we wonder what actually was the purpose of it all.

Right now, though, the spell has truly been cast. That's partly because Paris has done this thing really well. Without doubt, they have made the Olympic Games look more beautiful than ever before. You wonder if that — the pure aesthetics of it — can ever be topped.

Yet the reason that towers above all is the 10,000-plus athletes who have bewitched crowds with their enduring brilliance. It's a love thing, isn't it? Or the most amazing holiday romance with the slightest chance that you may bump into your holiday fling again in four years' time.

When asked what it meant to be in the basketball gold-medal match, Gabby Williams, the France star, said that it was "a love letter to our fans" and that "the atmosphere has made us want to cry every single game".

That's how it feels here in the water polo: an arena that feels like the Colosseum, volume on full, Serbia building up a strong lead in the first quarter and who's that starting to dominate? Dusan Mandic, a player I'm told is the best in the world, a player who once played on having fractured a cheekbone in the middle of a game.

Most of us won't see him for another four years. We won't see many of these extraordinary human beings. That is the deal with the Olympics, the rarity value that makes the occasion so special. Personally I find that somewhat disturbing — for the health of what we might call "minor" sports and for the income and endurance of those who play them. Very quickly we in the media will go back to telling the stories with which you are more accustomed — the Premier League season starts on Friday — and those amazing synchro girls or the kid who climbed the wall or Campbell, who's just won bronze, will recede from sight to be dug up by the BBC for one night at Christmas before spending another 3½ years preparing to wow us at Los Angeles 2028.

We know they'll do it. We know that because Paris has reminded us that they always do.

Here at the water polo, the time runs down and the buzzer goes to indicate that Mandic and his fellow Serbs are champions. No injuries, cheekbones all intact, just huge, strapping men reduced to tears. The support staff then all jump into the pool, fully clothed, and celebrate by trying to dunk each other under water. Someone hangs the Serbian flag over the goal.

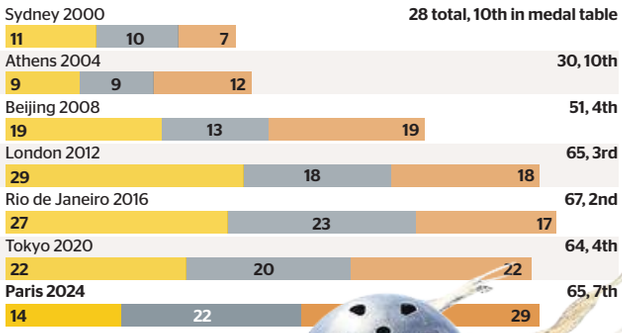
This is the third Olympics in succession in which Serbia have won the gold, but the moment looks as precious as it has to every other Olympic champion who has stood atop a podium and failed to hold back the tears as their national anthem has played.

Were these Olympics a success? Of course they were, because once you've lit the flame, you just stand back and watch as the amazing things happen. Every day at every venue. Even a Parisian can see that.

The last words, then, will to go Meares in that send-off address, because she so clearly gets it. Again, her words were for her Aussie team, but they apply universally: "I said to our teams as they were welcomed here: the pages of the chapter that is Paris 2024 were blank, they were there for them to make their mark, both from a personal perspective and a performance perspective. These pages are almost complete. Congratulations. Job well done. *Bonne journée, au revoir. Merci beaucoup.*"

TEAM GB'S MEDAL HAUL

GB medals since 2000



Breakdown by gender

Youngest medal winner
16
Sky Brown
Skateboarding, women's park

MEDALS BY DAY

Day 1: 2
Yasmin Harper, Scarlett Jensen Mew *(Bronze, 3m synchro springboard)* **Anna Henderson** *(Silver, Cycling, time-trial*

Day 2: 2
Kimberley Woods *(Bronze, Canoeing, K1)* **Adam Peaty** *(Silver, Swimming, 100m Breaststroke)*

Day 3: 6
Laura Collett *(Bronze, Equestrianism, Eventing)* **Adam Burgess** *(Silver, Canoeing, C1)* **Matt Richards** *(Silver, Swimming, 200m freestyle)* **Tom Daley, Noah Williams** *(Silver, Diving, 10m synchro platform)* **Tom Pidcock** *(Gold, Cycling, Men's cross-country)* **Ros Canter, Laura Collett, Tom McEwen** *(Gold,Equestrianism, Team Eventing)*

Day 4: 2
Nathan Hales *(Gold, Trap shooting)*, **James Guy, Jack McMillan, Kieran Bird, Tom Dean, Matthew Richards, Duncan Scott** *(Gold, Swimming, 4x200m freestyle relay)*

Day 5: 5
Beth Potter *(Bronze, Triathlon, Women's triathlon)* **Andrea Spendolini-Sireix, Lois Toulson** *(Bronze, Diving, Women's 10m synchro platform)* **Kieran Reilly** *(Silver, Cycling, Men's BMX Freestyle)* **Alex Yee** *(Gold, Triathlon, Men's triathlon)* **Lauren Henry, Hannah Scott, Lola Anderson, Georgie Brayshaw** *(Gold, Rowing, Women's quadruple sculls)*

Day 6: 3
Mathilda Hodgkins Byrne, Rebecca Wilde *(Bronze, Rowing, Women's double sculls)* **Matt Aldridge, David Ambler, Freddie Davidson, Oliver Wilkes** *(Bronze, Rowing, Men's four)* **Esme Booth, Helen Glover, Sam Redgrave, Rebecca Shorten** *(Silver, Rowing, Women's four)*

Day 7: 7
Anthony Harding, Jack Laugher *(Bronze, Diving, Men's synchronised 3m springboard)* **Oliver Wynne-Griffith, Tom George** *(Silver, Rowing, Men's pair)* **Ben Proud** *(Silver, Swimming, Men's 50m freestyle)* **Duncan Scott** *(Silver, Swimming, Men's 200m individual medley)* **Bryony Page** *(Gold, Gymnastics, Women's trampoline* **Ben Maher, Harry Charles, Scott Brash** *(Gold, Equestrianism, Team show jumping)* **Emily Craig, Imogen Grant** *(Gold, Rowing, Women's double sculls)*

Day 8: 6
Heidi Long, Rowan McKellar, Holly Dunford, Emily Ford, Lauren Irwin, Eve

Team a success despite fewer golds, says BOA

Matt Lawton

Chief Sports Correspondent, Paris

British Olympic bosses have insisted that this was a successful Olympic Games despite the nation dropping to seventh in the medals table with 14 golds and finishing behind the Netherlands as well as France, the hosts.

Team GB were third in London in 2012, second in Rio four years later and fourth in Tokyo in 2021, amassing 27 golds from a total haul of 67 in 2016.

Mark England, the team's long-serving chef de mission, suggested last October that "the wheels would have to come off not to be in the top five," given the investment in British Olympic sport. Between the Olympics and the Paralympics, the national federations have received a total of £385 million in government and lottery funding since Tokyo.

Andy Anson, the chief executive of the British Olympic Association (BOA), and Dame Katherine Grainger, the chairwoman of UK Sport and an Olympic rowing champion, nevertheless maintained there was plenty of cause for celebration, citing the fact that the total of 65 medals — one more than Tokyo — amounted to Team GB's second-best return at an overseas Games. Of course, it would have been equal to Tokyo, which included 22 golds, had CJ Ujah's positive drug test not cost the sprinters a relay silver medal in 2021.

Some sports certainly did well: athletics, rowing and canoeing among them. Track cycling only secured one gold but, as Anson pointed out, the absence of Katie Archibald with injury was a huge blow that probably cost the team two golds. For sailing, boxing and taekwondo, there will be much disappointment.

"I genuinely think it's been a sensational Games in many ways," Anson said at a closing media conference at Team GB house. "And I do think the Olympics are back in full swing.

"I think after Tokyo and no fans and quiet venues, this has been remarkable. Certainly in terms of being a global entertainment event.

"For us, we passed 1,000 medals in the Olympics during this Games, which was a big moment, and 65 medals is our second-best tally on foreign soil. So that's something incredible to celebrate.

"Further to that, 131 out of 327 athletes will come home with medals, which is 40 per cent of the team, and [we have] more medals than we had in Tokyo. And [in] one more sport — we've had 18 sports represented on the medal table, which is brilliant."

Anson conceded it was "frustrating to be seventh", joking that the BOA was now "adopting the American way of counting medals".

"But I think it has been an unbelievably competitive Olympic Games," he said. "We've seen that across many, many sports."

Grainger said there would, of course, be a performance review aimed at identifying where there is room for improvement before Los Angeles in 2028.

"We've got to celebrate first, because there have been some incredible performances," she said. "But then, I think, UK Sport [and] the national governing bodies themselves need to sit back and identify if there were any issues. Was there something more systematic? Let's look across the whole scene, but in a controlled way."

As Anson explained, there were some near-misses. "Adam Peaty had Covid," he said. "You can't do anything about that. Kate French had to pull out of the modern pentathlon [yesterday] morning with a gastric issue. Katie Archibald tripping in the garden and breaking three bones in her ankle — she is probably the best in the world at women's endurance track cycling."

Grainger stressed the need to view the medals table in the context of all the medals — not simply the golds.

"The medal table will be the medal table, will be the medal table," she said. "And people will do it in different ways. Many Americans do overall numbers. You can spin it any way you want.

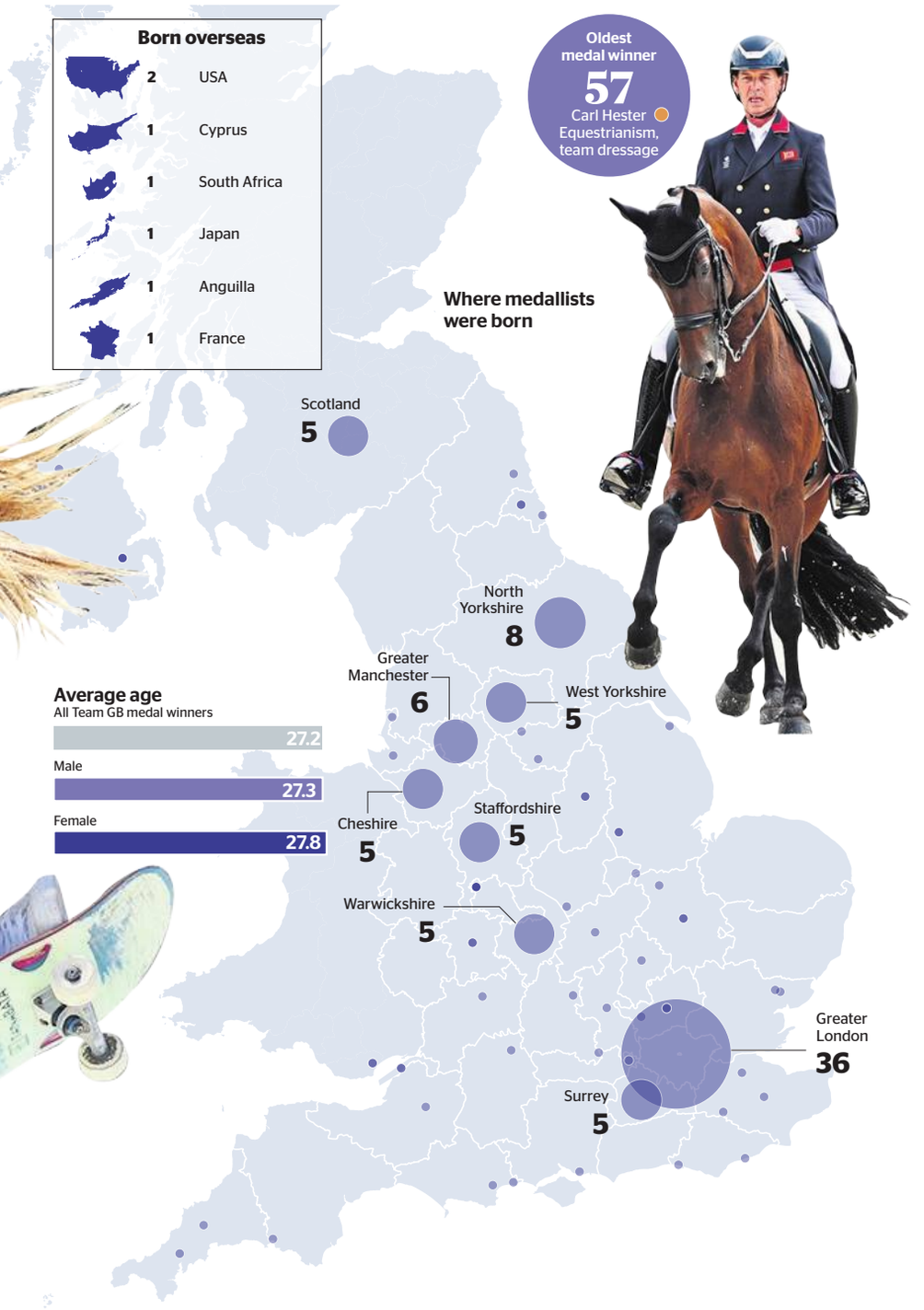
"The fact is third to eighth is incredibly congested. We know that as soon as the future hosts are announced [they benefit], while Japan are still benefiting from being a recent host. Brisbane has been announced. LA has been announced. We know that USA and Australia are very strong.

"What we normally see is around a 30 per cent conversion of the medals into gold, and we haven't seen that here. So what we will do is review what has worked really well, and what hasn't worked as well. Where did we miss some of the conversions?"

Alex Yee won gold with a sprint finish in the triathlon

Medals table

		G	S	B	Total
1	United States	40	44	42	126
2	China	40	27	24	91
3	Japan	20	12	13	45
4	Australia	18	19	16	53
5	France	16	26	22	64
6	Netherlands	15	7	12	34
7	Great Britain	14	22	29	65
8	South Korea	13	9	10	32
9	Italy	12	13	15	40
10	Germany	12	13	8	33
11	New Zealand	10	7	3	20
12	Canada	9	7	11	27
13	Uzbekistan	8	2	3	13
14	Hungary	6	7	6	19
15	Spain	5	4	9	18
16	Sweden	4	4	3	11
17	Kenya	4	2	5	11
18	Norway	4	1	3	8
19	Ireland	4	0	3	7
20	Brazil	3	7	10	20



Stewart, Harriet Taylor, Annie Campbell-Orde, Henry Fieldman *(Bronze, Rowing, Women's eight)* **Emma Wilson** *(Bronze, Sailing, Windsurfing)* **Becky Moody, Carl Hester, Charlotte Fry** *(Bronze, Equestrianism, Team dressage)* **Jake Jarman** *(Bronze, Gymnastics, Men's floor exercise)* **Sam Reardon, Laviai Nielsen, Alex Haydock-Wilson, Amber Anning, Nicole Yeargin** *(Bronze, Athletics, 4x400m relay mixed)* **Sholto Carnegie, Rory Gibbs, Morgan Bolding, Jacob Dawson, Charlie Elwes, Thomas Digby, James Rudkin, Tom Ford, Harry Brightmore** *(Gold, Rowing, Men's eight)*

Day 9: 4

Charlotte Fry *(Bronze, Equestrianism, Individual dressage)* **Harry Hepworth** *(Bronze, Gymnastics, Men's vault)* **Amber Rutter** *(Silver, Shooting, Women's skeet)* **Tommy Fleetwood** *(Silver, Golf, Men)*

Day 10: 5

Alex Yee, Georgia Taylor-Brown, Sam Dickinson, Beth Potter *(Bronze, Triathlon relay, Mixed)* **Kimberley Woods** *(Bronze, Kayak cross, Women)* **Joe Clarke** *(Silver, Kayak cross, Men)* **Katy Marchant, Sophie Capewell, Emma Finucane** *(Gold, Track cycling, Women's team sprint)* **Keely Hodgkinson** *(Gold, Athletics, Women's 800m)*

Day 11: 4

Sky Brown *(Bronze, Skateboarding, Women's park)* **Lewis Richardson** *(Bronze, Boxing, Men's welterweight)* **Jack Carlin, Ed Lowe, Hamish Turnbull** *(Silver, Track cycling, Men's team sprint)* **Josh Kerr** *(Silver, Athletics, 1,500m)*

Day 12: 3

Elinor Barker, Josie Knight, Anna Morris, Jess Roberts *(Bronze, Track cycling, Women's team pursuit)* **Ethan Hayter, Charlie Tanfield, Ethan Vernon, Daniel Bigham, Oliver Wood** *(Silver, Track cycling, Men's team pursuit)* **Matthew Hudson-Smith** *(Silver, Athletics, 400m)*

Day 13: 2

Emma Finucane *(Bronze, Track cycling, Women's keirin)* **Ellie Aldridge** *(Gold, Sailing, Women's kite)*

Day 14: 6

Jack Carlin *(Bronze, Track cycling, Men's sprint)* **Jeremiah Azu, Louie Hinchliffe, Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake, Zharnel Hughes, Richard Kilty** *(Bronze, Athletics, Men's 4x100 relay)* **Imani Lansiquot, Dina Asher-Smith, Daryll Neita, Amy Hunt, Desiree Henry, Bianca Williams** *(Silver, Athletics, Women's 4x100 relay)* **Katarina Johnson-Thompson** *(Silver, Athletics, Women's heptathlon)* **Toby Roberts** *(Gold, Sport climbing, Men's combined)* **Elinor Barker, Neah Evans** *(Silver, Track cycling, Women's madison)*

Day 15: 6

Noah Williams *(Bronze, Diving, Men's 10m platform)* **Georgia Bell** *(Bronze, Athletics, Women's 1,500m)* **Alex Haydock-Wilson, Matt Hudson-Smith, Lewis Davey, Toby Harries, Sam Reardon, Charlie Dobson** *(Bronze, Athletics, Men's 4x400m relay)* **Amber Anning, Victoria Ohuruogu, Laviai Nielsen, Nicole Yeargin, Yemi Mary John, Hannah Kelly, Jodie Williams** *(Bronze, Athletics, Women's 4x400m relay)*, **Kate Shortman, Izzy Thorpe** *(Silver, Artistic swimming)*, **Caden Cunningham** *(Silver, Taekwondo, Men's +80kg)*

Day 16: 2

Emma Finucane *(Bronze, Track cycling, Women's Sprint)* **Emily Campbell** *(Bronze, Weightlifting, Women's +81kg)*

New star of track Finucane

James Gheerbrant
Paris

Emma Finucane became the first British woman to win three medals at a single Olympics since 1964 but Great Britain were unable to add to their single gold in track cycling on the last day at the velodrome. Finucane won bronze in the individual sprint to add to her gold in the team sprint and bronze in the keirin on a day marred by some heavy crashes involving the British riders Jack Carlin and Hamish Turnbull.

Carlin was thrown from his bike and landed on the track with such force that the visor on his helmet flew off. He was immediately treated by two members of the British cycling team's medical staff and, after lying at the side of the track for several minutes, he was eventually able to get to his feet. Turnbull was unbalanced by swerving to avoid a fall ahead of him and slid all the way from the top of the track to the bottom, leaving his skin suit torn and visible scrapes and bruises on his back.

Finucane, the 21-year-old from Carmarthen, has emerged as the new star of British track cycling at these Games and her three-medal haul matches that of track and field athlete Mary Bignal-Rand in Tokyo 60 years ago. She was no match for the imperious Ellesse Andrews of New Zealand — the eventual champion, who also won the keirin — in the semi-final of the sprint, losing by two races to nil but came back strongly in the bronze-medal race, winning 2-0 against Hetty van der Wouw of the Netherlands.

"I know I had the expectation on me coming into these Games but honestly, a gold and two bronzes is more than I could have expected," Finucane said. "I wanted to be in the gold final, but I had nothing left to give. I am living my teenage dream and I love every second of it: this is my job and I wouldn't change it for the world. I want to keep doing what I do and keep making Britain proud."

There was a disappointing conclusion to the Games for Neah Evans, a silver medallist in the madison, when she finished 15th in the omnium, having also crashed in her first race. That left Great Britain with a total of eight medals — one gold, three silver and four bronze — from the velodrome.

Carlin, who had already been involved in plenty of incidents and accidents over the week, including controversially steering into Jeffrey Hoogland of the Netherlands, was looking to keep the keirin gold medal in British hands: Chris Hoy and Jason Kenny between them had won the event at the past four Olympics. And he looked in supreme form, winning his semi-final by clear daylight. Turnbull advanced to the second semi-final but was at the back of the field when the crash ended his hopes.

In the final, Harrie Lavreysen of the Netherlands, the dominant male sprinter in the velodrome and arguably the cycling star of the Games, powered into a lead he would not relinquish, with Matthew Richardson of Australia on his wheel as the riders entered the final bend. Carlin was locked in a battle for bronze with Muhammad Shah Firdaus Sahrom of Malaysia and Shinji Nakano of Japan, both slightly ahead of him, when they moved across his path and wiped out his front wheel. That allowed another Australian, Matthew Glaetzer, to take third place.

Afterwards, Carlin blamed himself for getting in a bad position. "I'm all right. I'm just a bit sore, but that is part and parcel of racing," he said.

"I mucked it up a little bit, I was on the back foot and then two riders collided in front of me and your day is done after that. I've done well [but] I was hoping for more today. This is the one I felt really confident [about] and I was doing really well I just got it wrong and I paid the consequence for that."

Lavreysen's gold was a significant one: it was the Netherlands' 15th of the Games and took them ahead of Great Britain, who were pushed down to seventh in the overall medal table.

Evans was on the back foot from the start in the omnium, the multi-race event twice won by Laura Kenny. A crash in the first race, the scratch race, meant she was awarded only one point for that event and found herself significantly behind the leaders. She added only six points in the tempo race and was then knocked out early in the elimination race. A brave effort in the points race, where she gained a lap and finished fifth overall, with 37 points, showed her abilities but it was too little, too late.

"It was not my day," Evans said. "I had an unfortunate start that put me in last place, which is hard to pick up from after that. I stuck to my strategy after but it is frustrating, because I might have had a top-five finish."

Evans spoke after the race about competing at next year's World Championships but, at 34, may not be around for the next Olympics. Finucane, on the other hand, is a central figure in a young core which also includes Turnbull, Sophie Capewell, Ethan Hayter and Josh Tarling, who finished fourth in the road time-trial. Asked about what she could achieve at the next Olympics, Finucane said: "The sky's the limit."

Diminishing returns

Team GB's track cycling team returned their worst gold-medal haul at an Olympic Games since Sydney 2000

	Total cycling medals			
Sydney 2000	4	1	1	2
Athens 2004	4	2	1	1
Beijing 2008	12	7	3	2
London 2012	9	7	1	1
Rio 2016	12	6	4	2
Tokyo 2020	7	3	3	1
Paris 2024	8	1	3	4

Tale of what ifs for Team GB as golds go begging

John Westerby
Paris

With every new Olympics since Great Britain began to dominate the velodrome in Beijing, there has come an expectation that a dip in performance was inevitable. In London, Rio and Tokyo, they managed to hold off the surges from other teams and stay out in front, finishing on top of cycling's medal table. But over the past week in the Paris velodrome, the British cyclists have slipped back into the pack. Their haul of 11 medals across the different cycling disciplines was still more than any other nation, but the golden shimmer that has accompanied Team GB cyclists home after the previous few Games has taken on more of a silver and bronze hue in Paris.

In the velodrome, Britain won seven golds in London, six in Rio and three in Tokyo. In Paris, there was just the one, in the women's team sprint, adding to the gold that Tom Pidcock claimed in the mountain bike cross-country. Yesterday's programme offered further opportunities, but the enduring image of the final day of competition was of British riders crashing and hitting the Siberian pine boards hard. Jack Carlin and Hamish Turnbull were both unseated in the keirin, as was Neah Evans in the omnium, while Emma Finucane won a bronze in the individual sprint that the British team had hoped, given her status as world champion, might have been the gold that would have lifted them level with France, Netherlands, Australia and USA, all of whom won three titles across disciplines in Paris.

Does this represent the end of an era for British cycling? "I wouldn't say an era has ended, because it could easily have been different," Stephen Park, the British Cycling performance director, said. "To win more medals than any other nation, we've had a fantastic Games despite a number of pieces of adversity. Because of the level of competition, some [medals] are just going to elude you."

There were, indeed, near misses, such as the puncture that scuppered Josh Tarling in the road time-trial, and Bethany Shriever looking a shoo-in for gold after winning every BMX race until the final.

In the velodrome there was a time, not too long ago, when silver and bronze medals would have been rapturously received. But the new riders have inherited a phenomenal level of expectation set by the likes of Jason and Laura Kenny, Chris Hoy and Victoria Pendleton.

They also benefit from £29.3 million of funding and, although the official medal target of ten was hit, there will be frustration that a couple more of those on the track were not turned into golds. "We won't ever know what could have been," Park said. "But if some of our line-ups had been a little different, had we not had one or two of those crashes, we could easily have won one or two more gold medals."

The single biggest factor that might have affected Britain's haul was a step

pulls off a ‘dream’ hat-trick in the velodrome

ERIK S. LESSER/EPA; TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER JACK HILL; ALEX WHITEHEAD/SWPIX.COM

Rising star Finucane won bronze in the women’s sprint yesterday, left, for her third medal in Paris as Team GB finished with a single gold in track cycling. It was a day marred by crashes involving Turnbull and Carlin, above, whose medal hopes were ended when he was thrown from his bike during the keirin final

in Katie Archibald’s garden, over which the double Olympic champion tripped only six weeks ago. She broke her ankle in three places, was immediately ruled out of the Games, and the planning for the women’s endurance squad was thrown into disarray. There was capable back-up but Archibald, 30, one of the finest riders of her generation, was expected to challenge for gold in three events.

It was also a case of what might have been in the men’s endurance events, in which Ethan Hayter was expected to star. Plans were disrupted when Dan Bigham, Hayter’s team pursuit colleague, crashed heavily in training and was a little below his best as a result. When the British team were chasing down Australia on the final lap of the team pursuit gold-medal race, Bigham’s lack of form led to Hayter being asked to do too much work: half a lap more on the front of the train than normal. Hayter, memorably, reached his physical limit and slipped from his saddle. He also injured his thigh in the process. The 25-year-old attempted to ride through the injury the next day in the omnium, an event in which he is a two-times world champion, but could only finish eighth. He then withdrew from the madison, in which Ollie Wood and Mark Stewart, after yet another crash, missed out on the medals.

Two medals, now for Strictly, says cartwheeling Campbell

Rick Broadbent
Paris

LARS BARON/GETTY IMAGES

Campbell took home a bronze medal in the +81kg super heavyweight category

“Faster, higher, stronger” is the Olympic motto, but it helps if you can mix athleticism with personality while sporting an elaborate hair-do and performing half-cocked cartwheels. Emily Campbell was the last act for the British medal collectors and she duly brought the house down.

Her bronze in the +81kg super heavyweight category made it 65 in all for Team GB and made her the first two-times British weightlifting medallist since Louis Martin 60 years ago. She was already the first female British weightlifting medallist after her silver in Tokyo. This, though, came with added value, given she recorded a personal best and had her family watching in the South Paris Arena.

“I don’t know if you heard them but they are nuts,” she said. “Wherever they are, whoever they’re bothering, they will be on a high for the rest of the day.”

A vibrant character, Campbell was quick to offer a come-and-get-me plea to *Strictly Come Dancing*. “If *Strictly* want me, I wouldn’t say no,” she said. Viewers would love her.

Campbell, 30, caused a surprise three years ago in Tokyo. Journalists had gone to the weightlifting primarily to cover the story of Laurel Hubbard, the first openly transgender athlete to compete at the Olympics. When the New Zealander failed to register a lift, attention quickly turned to the unheralded Briton defying expectations.

That silver was won with a lesser performance than she managed in Paris. “The field was tougher today and the level was so much higher than Tokyo. I knew I had to pull out the big guns today. I started weightlifting trying to get to Paris and Tokyo was a bonus,” she said, adding that she was glad that her silver medal had a “friend” now.

When she had finished competing and she knew she had a second medal, she blew kisses to the crowd and waved. Then she tried a cartwheel, which she said she had been promising her coach for months.

“Obviously, as you can see, it was the best cartwheel you’ve ever seen in your life,” she quipped. “I thought this is my opportunity: ‘You’ve got to do a really bad, sorry really good, cartwheel.’” These big lifters seem a fun bunch.

Nobody could stop the Chinese phenomenon, Li Wenwen, the defending champion who has been fighting her way back from injuries. She let out a few high-pitched war cries during competition and had put on her large glasses by the time she jumped on to the podium. Then she took them off and put on some comedy ones featuring the Olympic rings. “I haven’t had a good night’s sleep in over 300 days,” she said. She had let the clock run down for her last lift and then darted off stage and came back holding her diminutive coach aloft. “He’s like a father to me,” she explained. For lay watchers, the announcer confirmed that this did not count as an official lift.

Campbell, herself, had the Olympic rings woven into the back of her hair, which also featured two red, white and blue bunches of braids. This work of art had taken three hours on Saturday.

It has not all been fun and games, though. When Campbell won her Tokyo medal she used her 15 minutes of fame to criticise clothing manufacturers for their use of waif-like models and for ignoring the fact that the average woman is a size 16. She wanted to be a role model for the ordinary. Recently, she said a woman’s body is a journey and it is important to embrace every stage. This is important stuff.

Success followed with medals at World Championship level, but knee surgery last year could have wrecked her plans. She has now bounced back with her best tournament yet.

The competition is split into two sections: the snatch and the clean and jerk. After the snatch she had lifted 126kg with Li out in front with 136kg.

On to the second part and she opened with 162kg. That put her in a strong medal position, and when Lisseth Betzaida Ayoví Cabezas, an effervescent Ecuadorian, fell, that was that.

She had a failure at 169kg but still added extra weight to go for 174kg, as that would have hauled her into second position. She could not manage it and so Park Hye-jong, of South Korea, took the silver. Li’s combined score was 309kg with Park managing 299kg and Campbell 288kg.

Some things have changed since Tokyo. After blazing a trail for the sport in the UK, there is more support and there are more opportunities and she wants to help some of the others at her hometown base at the University of Nottingham. That raises hopes that she will not be the sole GB representative next time. “It would be lovely to have some friends,” she said.

She was the most fitting postscript to the Olympics for Team GB, with her patriotic braids and refusal to subscribe to stereotypes, whether they are about body shape or opinions of the Nottingham council estate she hails from. For circus Games that started immersed in scandal for Great Britain, Campbell provided the happy, inspiring and cartwheeling ending.

Coe: I’d be strong on gender as IOC chief

Matt Lawton
Chief Sports Correspondent, Paris

Lord Coe has given the strongest indication yet that he will stand for election for the presidency of the International Olympic Committee, outlining why he thinks he would be good at the job.

On Saturday Thomas Bach said he would step down next June, with an election set for March 2025. And Coe, a former middle-distance runner, took the opportunity at his closing press conference as World Athletics president in Paris to express his interest in succeeding the German.

“I have always made it clear that if the opportunity arose, I will give it serious thought,” Coe, who served as chairman of the London 2012 organising committee and the British Olympic Association, said. “I have been involved in the Olympic movement for the larger part of my life. I have been privileged to compete in two Olympic Games. I have chaired a national Olympic committee.

“These are experiences that, if you put them together, as well as other aspects of my life, would be beneficial to the role.”

At World Athletics he has displayed strong leadership, not least over difficult issues that concern the female category. The IOC under Bach, by contrast, has displayed an alarming lack of leadership during a Games blighted by the gender row in the women’s boxing competition. “What I will say is you have to have a clear policy,” Coe said. “You’re never going to satisfy everyone. But you have to be unambiguous about the importance of women’s sport.”

Sport

‘He loved us – and had loved life’

The family of Graham Thorpe open up about his anxiety and depression

Mike Atherton, Page 50

AGUSTIN MARCARIAN/REUTERS

History makers

- Finucane first British woman to win hat-trick of medals since 1964
- Campbell GB’s first two-times weightlifting medallist for 60 years

Matt Lawton
Chief Sports Correspondent, Paris

Emma Finucane and Emily Campbell won bronze medals on the final day of Olympic action as Team GB lifted their medal haul to 65, one more than their tally from Tokyo three years ago.

Finucane’s third-place finish in the sprint yesterday, allied to her gold in the team keirin and bronze in the individual, made her the first British woman since athlete Mary Rand at Tokyo 1964 to claim three medals at the same Games.

Weightlifter Campbell also took bronze in the +81kg category, but golds remained elusive on the final day. While Team GB’s overall haul is only two less than Rio 2016 and the equal of London 2012, the return of only 14 golds in Paris is their lowest since Athens 2004.

Indeed Team GB ended in seventh in the official medal table but Andy Anson, the British Olympic Association chief executive, said: “65 medals is our second best ever on foreign soil. So that’s something to celebrate.”

Olympics review in full, pages 51-55

Finucane won bronze in the women’s sprint to add to her gold medal in the team sprint and keirin bronze. Inset, Campbell took the bronze in the +81kg weightlifting

Stokes doubt for Sri Lanka

Elizabeth Ammon

Ben Stokes is a significant doubt for the upcoming Test series against Sri Lanka after sustaining what appeared to be a serious injury to his left hamstring while playing for Northern Superchargers in the Hundred last night.

England’s Test captain was batting against Manchester Originals at Old Trafford and, after running for a bye, was seen clutching the back of his left knee — the same knee on which he had surgery in November. Stokes had to be helped off the pitch by two members of the Superchargers support staff and seemed to be in considerable pain.

Stokes was seen on crutches and in a statement, the Superchargers said: “Ben Stokes is having his hamstring assessed. Further updates will be available from tomorrow.” Harry Brook, the Superchargers captain and Stokes’s

Continued on page 49

Van Dijk yet to be offered deal

Paul Joyce
Northern Football Correspondent

Virgil van Dijk has said that Liverpool are yet to table a formal offer of a contract extension despite him having entered the final year of his deal.

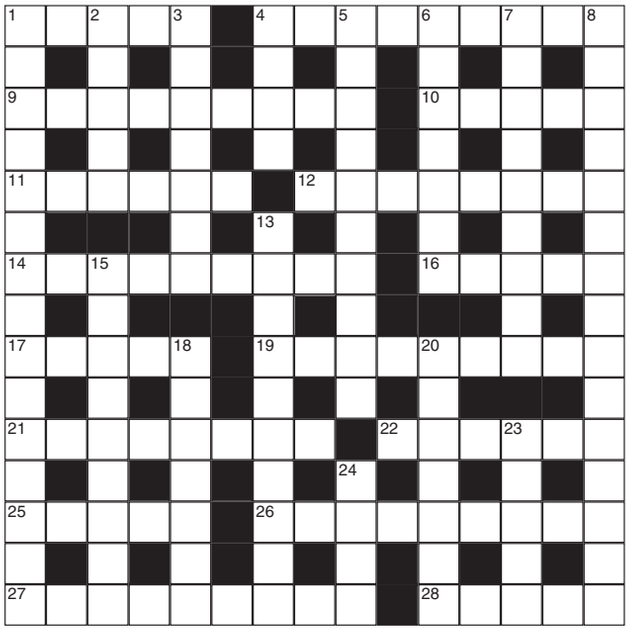
The defender revealed that there have been no significant developments over his future after the new head coach Arne Slot’s first match at Anfield ended with a resounding 4-1 friendly victory over Sevilla.

Liverpool have allowed Van Dijk, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Mohamed Salah to move into the final 12 months of their contracts and that will serve as a subplot to Slot’s first season at the helm after the departure of Jürgen Klopp.

Van Dijk played 74 minutes of the thumping win over the Spanish club,

Continued on page 49

Times Crossword 28,993



ACROSS

1 Chap’s tax-free savings account (5)
4 Presentation speech is holding record (9)
9 Closest human perhaps circling bull? (9)
10 Choral piece assembled around Biblical texts (5)
11 One of two I encountered in upper atmosphere (6)
12 Revolutionary is one cutting food plants (8)
14 Kuwait’s capital Arabs are changing old settlement (5,4)
16 Port’s initially like Erith but without river (5)
17 Decapitated poet’s killers (5)
19 Firm in Russian city concerning for Scotland (9)
21 Corresponding material in rubbish promos is rejected (8)
22 Get browned off about theatre that’s boring (6)
25 It turned dark, turning fearful (5)
26 Transported cup at Holi for aromatic oil (9)
27 Problem with sister getting in fake spirit (9)
28 Short TV feature about northern tip (5)

DOWN

1 Just like one mimicking, say, Renoir in cinema early on (15)
2 Nothing being in touch is concerning (5)
3 Crimea suffering being invaded by hard monster (7)
4 One’s leaving perfect bargain (4)
5 Possibly flat pastry mistake over putting fruit in (4-1-5)
6 Mike invested in fuel — that’s ridiculous (7)
7 One new exam in English of which colon is a part (9)
8 In spite of being without status (15)
13 Wrapping ground pepper with care (5,5)
15 Host’s mooring on island (9)
18 Rambling on downs and upland (7)
20 Broadcasts invitation to cheer flyer (7)
23 Body that’s downgraded parking on most of airport (5)
24 I am cut by the heartless couple (4)

Prize solution 28,986

M	A	R	Y	P	O	P	I	N	S		C	W	M	
A		U		R	O		N		U		A		Y	
N	U	M	B	E	R	T	E	N		P	I	N	K	S
		E		S		E		I		P		T		T
S	I	N	K	S		I	N		T	I	L	L	A	G	E
H			U		T			E		B		R		
O	N	T	A	P		A	D	V	E	R	S	I	T	Y
W		R			T		A			L		P		
E	L	A	L	A	M	E	I	N		S	W	E	L	L
R		I		I			D		C				A	
P	A	P	Y	R	U	S		A	N	A	R	C	H	Y
R		S		H		U		L		R		L		
O	P	I	N	E		S	T	I	L	L	L	I	F	E
O		N		A		A		S		E		M		W
F	A	G		D	I	N	N	E	R	T	A	B	L	E

Check today’s answers by ringing 0905 757 0141 by midnight. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company’s network access charge. SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390.

The winners of Prize Crossword No 26,986 are **K Fidler,** Nottingham; **P Davies,** London, N2; **R Jukes,** Wolverhampton, West Midlands; **J Woolfrey,** Worthing, West Sussex; **P Howell,** Cambridge

Newspapers support recycling
The recycled paper content of UK newspapers in 2023 was 45.5%

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TIMES 2

August 12 | **2024**

Fingers on buzzers — it's the quizmasters' quiz!

Clive Myrie, Victoria Coren Mitchell and Amol Rajan ask the questions

I'm a demon with the Marigolds. Am I a trad wife in waiting?

Kevin Maher

In the early family days, when the kids were young, I used to do regular "dads' night" drinks. We'd meet in the pub, half a dozen of us new and newish fathers, and over booze and crisps we'd thrash out the subjects of the day. Usually, just before closing, well sozzled, the difficult truths would finally emerge. And none was more difficult than the question that plagued us, keeping us awake at nights, like a painful splinter in the collective dad consciousness. And it was this: why are all our wives so rubbish at housework?

No, really. Because when we did housework we aced that shit. Kitchen? Spotless. Laundry? All folded, razor-sharp edges. Bathrooms? Blinding. Toilets? So clean you could cry. The wives, meanwhile? Well, between you, me and the dads, they were utterly shambolic. Of course, you couldn't say anything because of them being, you know, women. And you couldn't give them tips, although, honestly, a bit of extra elbow grease never hurt. One of the dads even contemplated, in a moment of sheer desperation, printing out and sellotaping to the vacuum cleaner the Laura Ingalls Wilder motto, "Every job is good if you do your best and work hard."

We heavily inebriated dads were clearly onto something: a report from the Journal of Happiness Studies has claimed that "life satisfaction" for men would be increased if they spent more time on "household responsibilities". And it's true. I've written two well-received novels and travelled the world with the great and the good of the movie business and yet few things can compete with the sense of accomplishment that comes from transforming a messy, pan-splattered kitchen into a spotless, Shaker-chic showroom. Similarly, when I'm in the bathroom at night and I spy splashes of dried toothpaste on the tap enamel I get an instant thrill of excitement from anticipating the cleaning job that I'm going to administer to the entire area the next day.

Ditto with reaching the bottom of the laundry baskets and returning all clothes, fluffy, fresh and folded, to their respective homes. And don't get me started on vacuuming. There is no sound more sensual to my ears, downright erotic even, than the sandy

rattle of dirt particles racing up the Hoover pipe as you transform another carpet, or bare stairs floorboards, into a grime-free paradise.

And all those drinking dads, back then, were with me on this. I used to wonder allowed, in fact, whisky in hand, if there'd not been a bizarre evolutionary short circuit in homo sapiens, and that we really should be living in fully matriarchal societies, like the bonobos of the Congo. And in these societies all men, wherever possible, would be fully subservient and the ones at home, taking on all the household responsibilities, all the time. And we would be, inevitably, satisfied all the time, cleaning forever and beaming with delight. In this fantasy I would be, gloriously, ecstatically, the so-called traditional wife. And I wondered, in essence, if I was really, underneath it all, a trad wife in waiting.

And then my real wife went away for a full week. Not a day. Not two days. A week. And I learnt very quickly that all housework was rubbish. I let the pans pile up. Didn't touch the laundry. Let the loos go full *Trainspotting*. It's almost as if there's a correlation between the amount of housework that's imposed upon you and the enthusiasm with which you embrace that work. The Journal of Happiness nerds understand this too. It's why they've noted that, on average, men spend just over 22 hours a week on domestic labour while the figure is as high as 40 hours for women. And so, by doing more around the house, more regularly, we men will be lightening her load, and making her happier. And, as we men know, making her happy is the fundamental, and unavoidable, key to all of life's satisfactions.

Depp's X-rated debut

It was Maggie Smith's Lady Violet, from *Downton Abbey*, who famously said, "Principles are like prayers; noble, of course, but awkward at a party."

The *Downton* creator Julian Fellowes is nonetheless sticking to his principles by railing against a recent decision to downgrade the classic Eighties horror flick *A Nightmare on Elm Street* from an 18 certificate to a 15. Fellowes, according to the Mail on Sunday, said that he thought showing the Freddy Krueger slasher flick to 15-year-olds "constituted child abuse".

Hmmm. Strong, but I'm not convinced. The gore in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* is expected, only briefly shocking and genre appropriate. It's fodder such as the John Wick movies that need interrogating, with their 15 certs and incessant, unalloyed celebration of stabbings, slicing and knife crime. Plus the real horror in *A Nightmare* on Elm Street is Johnny Depp's debut performance as Glen, the dimbo boyfriend who gets eaten by a double bed and murders lines such as, "I'm going to punch out your ugly lights, whoever you are!" As Lady Violet would say, quite!

I was a Groucho poseur too

Boo hoo. Some disgruntled punter has distributed a damning letter to members of the swanky Soho establishment the Groucho Club complaining about high pricing and bad vibes.

The club, which was founded in 1985 and is patronised by A-listers such as Bono, Harry Styles and Rachel Weisz, has been accused of a "creep to corporatism" and is apparently now "much less fun".

I used to frequent the Groucho Club in the Nineties (a friend was a member) and, alas, it was "much less fun" back then too. Just lots of awful rubber-necking poseurs throwing shapes and gawking at celebrities. On my last night there, in fact, John Hurt had arrived. And I rubber-necked with the best of them. And threw some pretty fine shapes too.

No, we single women are not desperate for a partner

Smug and married? You need to think again, says single academic Dr Bella DePaulo. We want your tax breaks not your pity, she tells Hilary Rose

If you cried in *Jerry Maguire*, when Tom Cruise told Renée Zellweger "you complete me", look away now. If you sympathised with Bridget Jones as a sad singleton and cheered when she met her Mr Right then Bella DePaulo has news for you: you're wrong. DePaulo is an academic whose life's work is changing the way we think about singleness, starting with the idea that it's sad. For the chronically lonesome, she argues, being single isn't just their relationship status, it's their identity. And while they might resent some of the perks that society bestows on couples, they very much don't want your pity.

"Single life is not a lesser life," DePaulo explains over Zoom from her home near Montecito, California. "For people who are single at heart, single life is their best, most meaningful, fulfilling and joyful life."

Dr Bella DePaulo

DePaulo is 70 and has been single her whole life. She has had a few brief relationships with men, when she was younger, but wishes she hadn't bothered. "It wasn't who I was," she says. For years she thought she was perhaps a bit slow to get the marriage bug because everyone else seemed "obsessed" with it. Then she realised it was never going to bite because she was, in her own phrase, single at heart. She isn't single because she's a loner or because she never met Mr Right. She isn't starved of love in her life, nor is she selfish or unwilling to compromise. She isn't bitter or scarred or unhappy; quite the opposite. She looks back on those early encounters with fondness: "I think I even kind of liked it." She just doesn't want to be part of a couple. Ever. And never has.

Whatever you do, don't question whether she *really* loves being a party of one. "When have you ever, ever, ever said the same thing to a married person who said they love being married?" she says, laughing. "No, I just knew at my core that I want to be the captain of my own ship."

She discovered that she wasn't the only one. Trained at Harvard and now an academic affiliate in the department of psychological and brain sciences at the University of California, Santa Barbara, DePaulo had long been struck by how differently she was treated professionally, and socially, from her married colleagues. At work, she was offered the evening teaching jobs, which were "too hard" for the married members of faculty. During the week, everyone had lunch together. At weekends, lunches were couples only.

At a party, she asked another single colleague if she had similar experiences. By the end of the night she had so many stories from single-at-heart people that she spent two hours writing up notes when she got home. She knew there was a book in it, not to mention a new area of specialism; she was a psychologist of lying but is now a full-time researcher into singleness with a book to boost her thesis, *Single at Heart*.

There are plenty of books about how to be happily single while you're looking for love, she says, but with the premise that being single is not really what anyone actively wants. She reckons, some people do want to be single as an active, positive way of life, not as the scarred result of a bad break-up. The details of the single-at-heart people she's interviewed may differ, but they all have three things in common: they're happier single than in a couple, they love their freedom and they love solitude. And they are no less likely to be happy than their married counterparts.

"Some people are better suited to being single. People take it as scientifically established fact that if you get married you'll be happier and healthier but, actually, there are now dozens of studies which find that married people end up being about as happy or unhappy as they were when they were single."

GETTY IMAGES

Diane Keaton, who said last year that she doesn't date

Jennifer Aniston

to single people? What would happen if single people were the ones that get the tax breaks and married people pay supplements for vacation packages or insurance. Take everything and flip it and see who would be doing better and whose kids would be doing better. There's a whole system of inequality." In the workplace; in housing, where rental agents prefer married couples; and most egregiously of all, in medicine. She cites a paper by Joan DelFattore titled *Death by stereotype? Cancer treatment in unmarried patients*, which found that oncologists were less likely to prescribe the most aggressive treatments for single patients, because they thought they didn't have the will to live. "This," DePaulo says, outraged, "is mindblowing."

For people such as DePaulo, there is always a conflict in a romantic relationship between your time belonging to you and your time belonging to your spouse. Single-at-heart people want their time to be entirely their own. They don't want to create a life with someone else. People get in touch with her to admit how much they love being single but worry that they're a freak. One woman asked her if she thought there was something wrong with her. "I'm not at all against valuing romantic coupling. What I object to is overvaluing it, and the undervaluing of all other important relationships in our lives, and the mythology that if you only find this one person and commit, all the pieces of your life will fall into place. Imagine if that were true! I'm trying to break through this mindset and let people know that the things we always thought were true aren't, necessarily. Or they're not true of everyone."

Which brings us back to Bridget Jones and Jerry Maguire, and the pervasive onscreen "obsession" with romance and weddings. She stopped watching *Grey's Anatomy* when a season finale featured three weddings. "Even sporting events have a kiss cam!" she wails. "Saaave meeee!" And finally it brings us to JD Vance and his attempt to disparage Kamala Harris by calling her a childless cat lady. It earned him a rebuke from Jennifer Aniston and a million memes pointing out that one of the biggest, richest, most popular stars in the world, Taylor Swift, is a childless cat lady who posed for the cover of Time magazine with one draped around her neck.

"Oh my gosh I LOVE that his remark triggered such a backlash," says DePaulo, who does not, for the record, have a cat. "It's emblematic of how things have evolved, where single people and people who don't have kids are less likely to let themselves be shamed. If someone comes after us now, we're not taking it. That's a wonderful thing."

***Single at Heart* by Dr Bella DePaulo (Profile £14.99). To order a copy go to timesbookshop.co.uk. Special discount available for Times+ members**

This matters, DePaulo believes, not just because society "fetishises" marriage and romance but because it diminishes, if not demonises, singleness: on screen, single women are sad or dangerous. Single men can be perceived as loners who sit in their parents' basement playing video games. Humans have evolved to be social animals but you can be a social animal, she points out, with your friends and relatives. Evolution isn't about wedding rings, she says, though she is not anti-marriage, far from it. Whatever floats your boat. What frustrates her is the unfairness and statutory discrimination faced by the single, or as she puts it: "Giving people special privileges and rewards and perks just because they're married."

In America, she says there are "hundreds" of federal laws benefiting married couples. In Britain being married can have positive implications on tax, savings, pensions and private healthcare, where spouses can sometimes share provision. You could argue that married couples get those breaks because they're deemed to be the bedrock of civil society, so worth encouraging. She disagrees.

"What would happen if we reversed everything and gave all those benefits

I asked an AI assistant to write my Wikipedia entry — it couldn't stop lying

By Steve Boggan

It's a cracking title for a book — *Gold Dust: Two Years in the Land of the Spotted Leopard*, a riveting account of a journalist's adventures with illegal goldminers in Ghana. And, apparently, I'm the author. Except that I'm not.

I did once go digging for gold, but it was for two months not two years. And it was in California, not Ghana. And there was absolutely nothing illegal about it. And my book was called *Gold Fever: One Man's Adventures on the Trail of the Modern Gold Rush*. Oh, and the nearest spotted leopard was about 8,000 miles away.

Welcome to the world of "hallucinating" artificial intelligence chatbots and assistants, where supposedly all-seeing, all-knowing "large language models" simply make stuff up for reasons not fully understood. Sometimes they don't just hallucinate — they totally trip off their faces. And at others they go completely batshit crazy.

All of them — from ChatGPT to Copilot and Gemini, and a growing stable of others — do it to some extent, but my rewritten existence has just been created by Claude 3 Opus, one of the most recent and genuinely highly regarded.

I came upon it while viewing a video on the website of the American tech magazine Wired in which an expert said his favourite AI assistant was Claude, a platform created by Anthropic, a respected US company set up in 2021 to promote the ethical use of AI. Several other people in the video said it was their favourite too, so I thought I'd give it a go by asking it to write something on a subject I know and love — me!

I signed up and, with absolutely no sense of shame whatsoever, asked Claude to "write a Wikipedia page about the British journalist Steve Boggan". As an expert in Steve Boggan, I figured I could quickly see just how good this baby was. Within two seconds, my life had been changed, literally.

I was, apparently, born in 1964 in Wiltshire (nope, 1962 in Liverpool). I had worked for the Financial Times (never set foot in the place). I had studied English and American literature at the University of Warwick (never been to Warwick or its university). And I had graduated in 1986, which was something of an achievement given that I had never been to university, choosing instead to become an apprentice reporter.

After graduating, I worked as a local reporter on several local newspapers in the south of England (actually, one in the north of England and one in the Midlands), before landing a staff job at the Guardian in 1989 (never been staff at the Guardian, though worked as a freelance writer in the mid-Noughties). Among my talents was writing about business affairs (a subject about which I know slightly less than nothing).

Claude then listed a whole host of journalism awards I had landed, so it wasn't all bad. Except that, while being shortlisted for some, I have won none.

> **It listed a host of awards I had landed, so it wasn't all bad. Except I have won none**

Perhaps the funniest fabrications were that I was "an avid outdoor enthusiast" (I am actually an avid *indoors* enthusiast, usually pubs) ... and that I had fathered two children. At this, my wife, Suzanne, with whom I have had no offspring, slapped the back of my head and said: "You've got a double life, haven't you?"

I asked Claude how it had come up with this fictional life, and its reply was contrite and almost childlike.

It replied: "I apologise for providing incorrect biographical details about Steve Boggan. You're absolutely right to point this out, and I appreciate you bringing it to my attention.

"To answer your question directly: I did not actually have accurate or verified information about Steve Boggan's biographical details. The information I provided, such as his birth year, place of birth, education, and career timeline, was generated based on patterns common to many journalists' biographies, but it was not based on factual data specific to Steve Boggan.

"This is a clear example of my tendency to hallucinate or generate plausible sounding but potentially inaccurate information when asked about topics or individuals for which I don't have reliable data. This is especially likely to occur with less prominent individuals or very specific biographical details."

Apart from the "less prominent individuals" bit, at which I naturally took umbrage, I was grateful for Claude's honesty. I asked Anthropic how Claude could get so much so wrong when correct details of my life and career were all over the place and, sportingly, a spokesman fessed up: "In an attempt to be a helpful assistant, Claude can occasionally produce responses that are incorrect or misleading. This is known as 'hallucinating' information, and it's a by-product of some of the current limitations of frontier generative AI models, like Claude.

"Users should not rely on Claude as a singular source of truth and should carefully scrutinise any high-stakes advice given by Claude."

So, while a fun exercise, my experience should be a salutary lesson to all users — and, perhaps, media organisations intent on replacing proper journalists with AI chatbots — that artifical intelligence isn't always the omnipotent panacea it's made out to be.

And that distance of 8,000 miles between me and the nearest spotted leopard? I got that from Copilot, so that might not be true. I wouldn't be surprised if one had been hiding in my tent the whole time.

Take the ultimate quizmasters'

As BBC2's triathlon of shows returns tonight, warm up with their fiendish questions. Plus John Maier on his University Challenge nightmare

"Quizzing Mondays" are back on BBC2, a fact you might have thought would be of interest only to undergraduates on the second leg of a two-day hangover and prisoners serving custodial sentences. But there is a dedicated nationwide television audience for the weekly 90-minute marathon that begins with *Mastermind* and *Only Connect* and concludes with *University Challenge*.

Sadly I can no longer watch *University Challenge* after making my traumatic appearance on the programme during the last series. There are still nights when, with the show's sprightly string-heavy theme tune ringing in my ear, I wake up with a start, screaming answers to questions no one has asked, bellowing out the names of obscure Micronesian states or Qing dynasty styles of porcelain.

Under my captaincy, the plucky underdogs of Balliol College, Oxford (representing some 700 students) went up against the monolithic force of Imperial College, London (representing unknown tens of thousands). The psychological pressure ahead of battle was immense.

As we were frequently and unhelpfully reminded, Balliol had won the entire competition in 2017: an event memorialised in a large photograph of four startled young students being presented with a trophy by Professor Stephen Hawking that hung in the college's buttery.

But that was then. A generation of students had come and gone. Hawking was dead. And Imperial had acquired a reputation on the underground quizzing network for their ruthless style of preparation, their unsportsmanlike commitment to knowing things like facts and the cool relish they took in assassinating teams fielded by complacent Oxbridge rivals.

One of the trickiest parts of appearing on *UC* turned out to be managing the expectations of friends and relatives in the surprisingly long interlude between filming and broadcast. Many people simply refused to take me at my word when I told them the BBC possessed footage of me and three colleagues being remorselessly screwed and which, in an apparent breach of Ofcom regulations, they were planning to broadcast in a primetime slot on a Monday evening. Only when our valiant but decisive defeat became a matter of public record did they finally believe me.

Of course, the potential for humiliation is not exclusive to *University Challenge*. *Mastermind* may offer the security of a specialist subject round, but anyone who doubts the damage that can be sustained in the great wilderness of the general knowledge round should rewatch the frighteningly bad performance of the foreign secretary, David Lammy.

In the course of a few seconds, Lammy suggests that Marie Antoinette won the Nobel prize for the discovery of radium, confuses the Palace of Versailles with the Bastille prison, and most alarmingly of all, after a period of careful reflection, identifies Henry VII as the son and successor of Henry VIII.

In what one can only assume to be a well-advised strategy of damage limitation he then says "pass" several times — in fact, so many times that it was bad luck it didn't turn out to be the answer to a single question ("What p is the act of retaining possession of a ball by way of manoeuvring it between players on a pitch?")

As such performances make clear, the tactics involved in playing along at home can deviate quite dramatically from those you should employ when on the show itself. From one's armchair, the cost of an incorrect guess or Lammy-style uncontrolled mental association is negligible, and the small satisfactions of alighting on knowledge you didn't know you possessed are considerable.

On *University Challenge* the production team warned us that a notably bad or good performance, or even one in between the two, could invite waves of social media abuse. Abuse that, to my considerable disappointment, failed to materialise.

One lingering doubt I have with "quizzing" Mondays is that the sense of natural climax is mishandled — because, being the most abstract and unmanageable of the three, *Only Connect* should surely come last rather than second in the schedule.

Discovering *Only Connect* is like finding out that *University Challenge* has a more bookish and less well-socialised cousin. Where *UC*'s approach to knowledge is broad and panoptic, testing for all-round epistemic athleticism, *Only Connect* favours the esoteric and fiddly.

The correct way to watch *Only Connect* — the way I do, at least — is with a growing sense of despondency: it is the quiz-show equivalent of the landlord leaning over the bar and telling you you've had enough.

Compared with *UC*, *Mastermind* is again more discriminating. Rather than the all-you-can-eat style of questioning, there is a more straightforward test of its contestants' general knowledge: those facts that the average viewer should feel a twinge of shame in *not* knowing.

In other words, the stakes are high. Readers willing to risk humiliation for an opportunity to aim at glory should take the quizmasters' quiz now.

Mastermind

This quiz show, hosted by Clive Myrie, started on the BBC in 1972 and features contestants answering tough questions while seated in a black chair under the spotlight. Its creator, Bill Wright, took inspiration from being interrogated by the Gestapo during the Second World War.
BBC2, Monday, 7.30pm

1 What 2023 film directed by Greta Gerwig became the first directed solely by a woman to earn more than $1 billion at the global box office?

2 What's the four-letter name for the Hindu festival during which participants shower each other with brightly coloured water or powder?

3 Which American singer and musician, who died in 2016, was often referred to in the media by the nickname "His Royal Purpleness"?

4 The cold water ocean current, sometimes called the Peru Current, which flows north along the west coast of South America, is known by what other name after the Prussian naturalist who described it?

5 What name, from the Latin for "flank", is given to the lowest and longest part of the small intestine, between the jejunum and the caecum, where absorption of vitamin B12 takes place?

6 The town of Honiton in Devon was, from the early 17th century, a major producer of what delicate fabric?

7 Which Austrian painter's final portrait, *Lady with a Fan*, sold for £85.3 million in June 2023, 105 years after his death?

8 Mrs Boyle, Miss Casewell and Christopher Wren are all characters in what stage play by Agatha Christie?

9 A classic dry martini cocktail is made with vermouth and which spirit as its main ingredient?

Only Connect

Victoria Coren Mitchell hosts this show about finding connections between seemingly unrelated clues. It first aired in 2008 on BBC4 before moving to BBC2 in 2014. Its title is taken from a passage in EM Forster's novel *Howards End*.
BBC2, Monday, 8pm

1 What connects the following?
Clue 1 ***Succession* (series)**
Clue 2 ***Scum* (film)**
Clue 3 ***All by Myself* (single)**
Clue 4 **The Joker (comic)**

2 What would come fourth in this sequence?
Clue 1 **65536256**
Clue 2 **25616**
Clue 3 **164**
Clue 4 **?**

3 What connects the following?
Clue 1 **Po in *Kung Fu Panda***
Clue 2 **Hen-House Harry in *Chuckie Egg***
Clue 3 **Grotbags**
Clue 4 **Wile E Coyote**

COVER: BBC, BELOW: JEFF SPICER/BAFTA/GETTY IMAGES FOR BAFTA; DAVE BENETT/GETTY IMAGES; ITV/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Presenters Amol Rajan, Victoria Coren Mitchell and Clive Myrie

quiz. Ready?

University Challenge

Pitting students from across the country against each other, this show began in 1962 and ran until 1987 on ITV before being revived by the BBC in 1994. Amol Rajan hosts, having succeeded Jeremy Paxman last year. *BBC2, Monday, 8.30pm*

1 Gordon Comstock, a bookseller's assistant, is the protagonist of which 1936 novel by George Orwell? Its title includes the name of a house plant said to symbolise middle-class values.

2 Which Asian country's so-called new wave of cinema includes films whose English titles are *Dang Bireley's and the Young Gangsters*, *Tears of the Black Tiger* and *Tropical Malady*? The last was directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul.

3 In biology, what term is used to denote an organism or tissue that contains at least two different sets of DNA, often from the fusion of different zygotes? This term is also the name of a monster in Greek myth that was killed by Bellerophon.

4 A syllabary consisting of 86 symbols developed in 1821 by the Native American polymath Sequoyah was the first writing system of which language, originally native to Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas?

5 Which philosopher's works include *The Hedgehog and the Fox* and *Four Essays on Liberty*, published in 1953 and 1969 respectively?

6 Dating to 1986 and 2004 respectively, *A Fashionable Marriage*, which critiques William Hogarth's depictions of black people, and *Naming the Money*, which explores representations of black servitude, are major installations by which British artist, born in Zanzibar in 1954?

7 Give the four-letter name of the genus of large antelopes whose species include the Arabian, scimitar and east African.

8 In AD455, Rome was sacked by which Germanic tribe, led by Genseric?

Answers

Mastermind
1 Barbie **2** Holi **3** Prince
4 Humboldt Current **5** Ileum
6 Lace **7** Gustav Klimt
8 The Mousetrap **9** Gin

Only Connect
1 In each clue the bracketed word is a synonym of the first part of the clue — as well as being a description of what the first part of the clue is.
2 42. Each clue shows, without a gap, a number and then its square root. Each clue follows on from the previous one, so that the square root at the end of the clue becomes the square number at the start of the clue. (2 squared is 4 / 4 squared is 16 / 16 squared is 256 / 256 squared is 65536)
3 The enemy or rival of each of these is a bird. (Lord Shen, an evil peacock / A mother duck and hens / Emu / Road Runner)

University Challenge
1 *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*
2 Thailand **3** Chimera **4** Cherokee
5 Isaiah Berlin **6** Lubaina Himid
7 Oryx **8** Vandals

GETTY IMAGES

Bag charms: this summer's latest accessories are from the toybox

Keyrings, tiny purses, Disney softies ... you name it, the influencers will add it to their handbag. By Hannah Rogers

Recently I had a sudden urge to update my keyring situation — a random impulse I justified with the notion that the set to my new home deserved something pretty and shiny to swing off. A colourful bead vibe, perhaps, or something pearly to match my phone charm.

Now, after some deep self-reflection and significant time browsing £20 iterations (stringting.com), I realise I have just fallen victim to luxury fashion's latest obsession. Am I silly to want a silly-cessory?

You tell me. But take a look at your collection before you answer. Are you wearing a friendship bracelet or two; is your phone, like mine, decorated with some gingham ribbon or a charm?

Do you wear lurid-hued Crocs strewn with the pop-on stickers known as — oh, how I hate this word — Jibbitz; has your laptop got stickers on? If the answer to even one of those is yes, then you too are a silly-cessory billy. Or a silly-cessory goose. Take your pick.

Let me explain. We all know youth is always in fashion, but right now it's items aesthetically suited to a playroom toybox that are delighting even the most stylish grown-ups most. It is a trend that started last year, which between the release of *Barbie*, Taylor Swift's tour and the viral trend for picky-bit "girl dinners", became known as the Year of the Girl.

Bows were in fashion, as were mary-janes. I remain haunted by the number of marketing emails I received about Barbie pink. Still, the mood stuck — and now, if it's bright, plastic, girly and a bit silly, it's cool. As usual the trend can be found concentrated in its purest form on the front row.

There, the latest incarnation of the movement comes in the form of bag-scots: designer charms intended to be layered up messily on the zip and handle of your handbag. And when I say handbag, I mean It bag. Balenciaga's Le City tote is £2,050 and Le Charms which go with it — think keyrings, heart mirrors, cursive text, tiny purses — start at £275 apiece.

Janka Polliani. Top: bag charms at Copenhagen Fashion Week

I know. But there's more. Miu Miu, the Italian label which is owned by and is known as the little sister (how fitting) brand to Prada, launched its Beau bag last year on its spring 2024 catwalk. The £2,650 sleek rectangular leather top handle style looks elegant and ladylike — until you style it up with its corresponding attachments.

A £650 suede or silk "Duchesse" pouch; £480 tiny wallets on neon bungee cords; leather "tricks" — rough translation: "things"— and keyrings that cost as much as £410. My favourite might be the oversized woven leather scoobies. Perhaps you remember making your very own as a pre-teen with plastic lace. Core millennial memory unlocked!

Those who sit in the boardrooms at Balenciaga et all must be laughing. Small accessories have always been big money for luxury brands: they offer an entry point for aspiring customers who can't afford to size-up. Some brands have made these their signatures: think of Anya Hindmarch's clever leather stickers.

But it's not just designer charms influencers are using as bag-scots. Oh no. On TikTok you can find the Miu Miu Beau styled up with Pokémon softies, tiny teddy bears and Hello Kitty. At Copenhagen last week I saw Disney soft toys clinging to handbag handles — and not on the shoulders of anyone who was visiting Tivoli.

As for me, I'm getting a scoobie for my keys. But I'm going to make my own.

life

Ask Professor Tanya Byron

My mother has married a younger man and I am so jealous

Q I am so jealous of my mother that it is ruining my life. It is all I obsess about. A few years ago she met a younger man and now they are happily married and she has become the most spoilt woman I know.

She was always slim and attractive but now she dresses in the hippest clothes. Her husband is handsome, funny, really intelligent and adores her. And he makes more than enough to keep her in the style she is now used to.

She seems to have forgotten that her choices before they met were numerous and often disastrous for both of us. I thought she was finished with all the turmoil she put us through in life and would slowly grow older and mature.

To be honest, I've been in love with her husband from the moment we met. It's unrequited but he is thoughtful and considerate when we are together. My mother acts entitled, as if the life he has given her is something she ultimately deserved.

I think the best thing for me is to move far away from them. It would give me a chance to explore the world and find what I want to do in life. More importantly, I wouldn't have to face her or her husband any more. What do you think?
Annie

A I think you are being insightful and honest as you describe your jealousy and associated obsessional ruminations about your mother. While you don't directly state this, I suspect that the emotional and psychological struggles you are having come from a childhood, where your needs were not met. You describe that she has made "disastrous" choices and put you both through "turmoil".

The jealousy isn't just related to the fact that your mother seems to have her life sorted and is very comfortable but also because of the reason for this — her husband. Your resentment is because her needs are now being met after a childhood where she didn't meet your needs, and also because you desire the person fulfilling her needs; I can understand why you think moving away is the only sensible solution for you. I cannot advise on this directly but I am very clear that moving won't resolve how you feel.

Jealousy has powerful effects on mental health, leading to anxiety and depression. The feelings associated with it are complex and painful: insecurity, resentment, helplessness — all damaging to self-esteem.

Chaotic childhood experiences can lead to fears of abandonment, underpinning jealousy and contaminating and confusing later-life relationships. Therefore not only are you struggling with your negative feelings towards your mother and her lack of adequate nurture, but you are also confusing adult feelings associated with unavailable romantic love.

Given that your mother made bad choices that created turmoil in your childhood, you may be left with feelings of inadequacy. Children will blame themselves for dysfunction, believing they are the problem — sometimes that is what they are told or made to feel.

From what you describe, your mother displays traits of narcissism, rendering her unable to nurture consistently and a personal/parenting style that seems to be more one of taking than giving. Narcissistic mothers will never be able adequately to meet the needs of their child because they are too focused on themselves.

I can understand that it is especially galling that she is now having all her needs met and seems "entitled" and "spoilt", believing that this is what she "ultimately deserved".

If you would like Professor Tanya Byron's help, email proftanyabyron@thetimes.co.uk

While I accept that your stepfather is a good man and, being "thoughtful and considerate", a man that you are attracted to, I also wonder whether there is some unconscious desire to take from your mother what gives her so much joy as a consequence of her taking joy from you as a child.

For you, however, the problem, as brilliantly stated by Nelson Mandela as he was released from Robben Island prison, is that "resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies".

Like a poison, the feelings you carry are corrosive. There is no doubt that you struggle with the legacy of having a narcissistic mother. Yet the reality is a) she won't change and b) she's unlikely ever to take responsibility for her inadequate mothering. Wherever you move in the world, you take these toxic and life-limiting feelings with you, so the question is, how can you free yourself from them?

To start, it would help to accept your mother for who she is. There might be a process of grieving associated with this as it is a huge loss accepting that she is not the mother you've wanted or needed.

Next would be to forgive her. While you might have balked at the term acceptance, the idea of forgiveness may challenge you more. Acceptance does not mean that her behaviour then or now is acceptable, more that she is who she is, and accepting that is a more peaceful state than resenting that.

Forgiveness does not mean that the pain she caused you suddenly doesn't matter any more; instead, it enables you eventually to let go of hate and resentment for your own sake.

I am concerned that, without being able to get to this state, you will continue to suffer the consequences of having a narcissist for a mother. Research indicates that the psychological legacy of unresolved childhood pain can lead to chronic stress, anxiety, depression and unhealthy coping mechanisms, including eating disorders and substance misuse.

The obsessive ruminations you describe indicate continuing stress that you suffer even though you are no longer living in the situation that caused the stress, ie your childhood.

I advise some therapeutic support to process the pain of childhood and the psychological consequences you are struggling with. Cognitive behavioural therapy can provide strategies and techniques to manage the negative and upsetting thoughts, and their resultant feelings and behaviour.

However, I think you would also benefit from a psychodynamic therapeutic approach that enables a deeper dive into your history with your mother and associated feelings. These therapies come together in cognitive analytic therapy, a talking therapy available on the NHS that mainly focuses on relationship patterns that have come from early-life experiences. It identifies unhelpful patterns in thinking, feeling and behaving, and enables new emotional regulation skills to be developed while processing long-held and unresolved emotional pain and trauma (see: engage.acat.org.uk).

Your mother won't change. Your mother's marriage won't change. Changing location might help by putting distance between you and what triggers your continuing pain, but that will only work for you if you find a way to change yourself.

If you explore the world, make sure you do it without the burden of your mother's behaviour weighing you down. You deserve space and understanding to process the turmoil of your childhood. Focus on yourself and find peace with who you are and how you live your life, independent of who your mother is and how she is living hers. I wish you well.

Discover this month's selection of free books

This August, you can read *Quint* by Robert Lautner and the hottest debut of the summer, *I Hope This Finds You Well* by Natalie Sue. This month's audiobook is The Sunday Times bestselling *Hitler, Stalin, Mum and Dad* by Daniel Finkelstein.

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Stiffy tossing? Loafer throwing? Welcome to the Posh Olympics

Forget athletics. Toffs partake in different sporting events. Sophia Money-Coutts on the games they play

GETTY IMAGES

The Olympics have reminded me of the Monty Python skit *Upper Class Twit of the Year*. Have you seen it? Stop what you're doing and watch it immediately if you haven't, or even if you have. It's on YouTube. I've watched it roughly a million times and I still howl at the characters (Eric Idle as Vivian Smith-Smythe-Smith, who "has an O-level in chemo-hygiene" and "can count up to 4!"). I honestly don't know how they all finished filming it without dying of laughter. And having rewatched the above, I started thinking about some of the other, *terrible* categories that the Posh Olympics could include ...

The chocolate game

Put a large bar of Dairy Milk in the middle of the dining room table and take it in turns to roll the dice. If anyone scores a six they must immediately leap up, put on a selection of fancy dress clothing, then attack the bar with a knife and fork. Usually quite tricky, this, as the outfit involves ski gloves — rest assured that cutting into a large bar of chocolate using a knife and fork while wearing ski gloves is comically difficult. Meanwhile, everyone keeps rolling the dice and the next person to get a six has to leap up, rip all the clobber off the previous person and start having a go at the chocolate themselves. It's usually a children's party game but I played this at a 40th birthday in the Lake District over the weekend where the outfit involved ski goggles, a baseball hat and a small pink tutu. It was extremely juvenile but we screamed with laughter. Medals for whoever rolls the most sixes.

Hunk or monk?

Very specific this, as it's a game played by those who went to Ampleforth, the Catholic boarding school in Yorkshire run by monks. Pretty uncomplicated rules: everyone around the table has to name a monk or a hunk, although if you name a "hunky monk" the order reverses. Medals for whoever names the most hunks or monks.

Downe it House

Similarly, everyone sitting around the table names someone they know who went to Downe House, the former school of the Princess of Wales, *below*, for a hot minute. If you can't think of one, you have to down your drink. (At this stage, I'd just like to point out that I haven't played several of these games. I'm merely pointing out that they exist. Don't blame me.)

Stiffy tossing

I don't think this is its official name but it was a game that certain posh students at Edinburgh used to play. Some of them had such grand student flats there that whenever they received a posh invitation to something they would stand at the back of the sitting room and throw it towards the other side of the room. If the invitation was stiff ("a stiffy"), and therefore heavy enough to reach the mantelpiece, it was allowed to go on there. Otherwise, if it was on thinner card — or even paper — and fluttered to the floor before reaching the other side of the room, it was deemed inferior and put elsewhere. Medals for whoever sends the stiffest invitations? (Again, I'd like to issue a disclaimer here, please. I was only *told* about this one.)

Loafer throwing

I'm not actually sure whether this is a real game, to be honest, but my friend Laura insists they play it on Parsons Green. Medals for whoever gets their loafers closest to the pub from the Fulham Road side.

The Chinamid

I think we'd put this one in the gymnastics category, and it was actually made up by my anonymous friend who wrote *The Chin Dictionary*, a satirical glossary for the English upper classes. "The Chinamid *n.*" begins the entry. "Forming a seven-person pyramid: three at the bottom, two in the middle, one at the top and one to put the picture on Instagram. Can happen after Stormzy's set at Glastonbury or after the Hat game in the drawing room." Medals for whichever teams hold the Chinamid the longest.

The Hat game

This leads us nicely into the Hat game. "Oh *do* let's play the Hat game!" a posh person says during Christmas or the summer holidays or a weekend away. Everyone is given five or six little pieces of paper on which they write someone's name — either a famous person (dead or alive) or someone all the competitors know. Those little pieces of paper are then folded and put into a hat (a riding hat or a top hat, whatever you have lying around). You divide into two teams and play three rounds — the first involves pulling out one of the pieces of paper and describing that person, the second involves describing them with just one word and the final round is just charades, no words at all. Everyone takes it in turns to pull a name out and has one minute for their team members to guess who they are talking about. There was a period a few years ago when certain posh people thought it was funny to put Jimmy Savile into the hat every time, which meant several Jimmy Saviles came out of the hat on several bits of paper. Thankfully, I think we're now past this. Gold for the winning team.

Freda

A game usually played after dinner in castles or big houses that have games rooms or snooker tables. (Snooker tables are slightly larger than pool tables, I've just learnt from Google, which makes sense. I've never heard anyone who owns a castle refer to it as their "pool table".) Anyway, someone plugs all the snooker table pockets with loo rolls so the balls can't sink into them and everyone runs around the table taking it in turns to try to keep the red ball moving by hitting it with the white ball. No cues, you roll the ball by hand. If you miss the ball you're out. Medals for the last three left standing. Supposedly named after Edward VIII's mistress, Freda Dudley Ward. The racier version is "strip Freda", which involves taking off an item of clothing every time you miss the red ball. I'm not sure the International Olympic Committee would like this version but, to be fair, they do allow very small pants for the diving.

The After Eight game

Competitors, usually around a dining room table, often in black tie, are each handed an After Eight chocolate. You take the chocolate from its wrapper, tip your head back and place it on your forehead. The aim is to manoeuvre the chocolate from there into your mouth using an extremely silly combination of facial expressions. No hands allowed. Often leaves players with a fetching brown skid mark trailing down their face. Jolly amusing and all that. Medals and a celebratory glass of port for the fastest three competitors.

first night

edinburgh comedy

Nina Conti

Pleasance Courtyard

★★★★☆

"I am naturally quite shy," says Nina Conti at the start of an hour in which she will befriend, mock and corral into ludicrous situations a series of audience volunteers. Well, I say she: often it's her right-hand man, her ventriloquist's doll Monkey, who cuts through the guff and mocks ventriloquism or Conti herself. "Oh just do a Ted talk and call it a day," he moans when she gets earnest for a moment. "Zero in on her lips," he says to the cameraperson making sure every gesture of woman and beast is beamed onto the huge screen.

Conti has been so good for so long that we are in danger of taking her for granted. And if there was a point at which she was trying too hard to experiment, in the past few years she has found a formula she can both sustain and find new fun with every night. She banters with Monkey and, as ever, does a sensational job of looking like a smilingly passive passenger in their partnership.

More than half of the show, though, sidelines Monkey and turns people into her puppets. Conti has a rack of masks upstage. She finds volunteers, sticks masks on them and has conversations with them. She operates their jaws with a hand-held pump on a wire, voicing them, caricaturing them. They play along. And something magical happens, almost every time: something spontaneous, liberty-taking, abrasive yet inclusive.

Yes, as with a magician's act, finding volunteers and getting them on and off stage brings an element of admin. And show-offs can derail things, as happened on my night in the sequence in which Monkey offers psychotherapy to all comers from behind a screen.

And yet, also on my night, Conti somehow went from hearing about a long-distance relationship from one volunteer to bringing five of her friends up on stage. Everyone played along, while getting — pleasurably — bested by their hostess. And by the time they were all forming a human aeroplane, flying to Australia, it was nothing less than a gag-heavy theatrical happening. All held together by an outwardly demure, secretly daring comedian whose mind contains multitudes.

Dominic Maxwell

To Aug 25, pleasance.co.uk; touring Jan 16 to Mar 6, ninaontour.com

FOTEINI CHRISTOFILOPOULOU

The ever-versatile Jane Horrocks plays Meg as a stereotypically batty landlady in Richard Jones's staging

What's it all about?

Jane Horrocks may get the laughs but, says Clive Davis, Harold Pinter's play is still impenetrable

theatre

The Birthday Party

Ustinov, Theatre Royal, Bath (130min)

★★★☆☆

In terms of visuals, at least, Richard Jones's production is hard to fault. All those shades of brown weave a studiously downbeat portrait of Fifties Britain: even the tea cosy seems depressed. The modest dimensions of the Ustinov, one of my favourite venues, add an extra layer of claustrophobia to a notoriously impenetrable sliver of early Harold Pinter which unfurls in the living room of a house in a seaside town.

The designer, Ultz, adds a window-like scrim that rises at the start of a drama that critics have spent 60-odd years peering into in the hope of extracting some sort of meaning. Most of the early reviews were hostile; later generations of critics had fun mocking those who failed to see the light the first time round. William Goldman was one of the few sceptics: Pinter, he wrote in *The Season*, his classic Broadway chronicle, "is cresting for one, and only one, reason: he is appropriately obscure; he allows intellectuals to theorize". True, true.

Jones adds cartoonish vigour to the celebrated pauses and non-sequiturs. The voices come at you in squalls. Benjamin Grant's sound design adds disorientating volleys of radio static.

Sam Swainsbury's mysterious lodger, Stanley, has all the boyish energy of a John Cusack character rattling around in a Coen brothers film. Meanwhile, the ever-versatile Jane Horrocks plays Meg as the stereotypically batty landlady. It's a far cry from the suave art expert she gave us months ago at the Young Vic in that unsettling German satire *Nachtland*. Her Meg, a pallid vision in dowdy dress and cardigan, gets plenty of laughs early on, but the character seems more two-dimensional than ever.

As the two mysterious strangers who arrive at the house and subject the hapless Stanley to a nonsensical interrogation ("What about the Albigensenist heresy? Who watered the wicket in Melbourne?"), John Marquez and Caolan Byrne make a quietly sinister double act. Carla Harrison-Hodge is suitably brittle as Lulu, the victim of an assault as the lights dim and inhibitions are shed in the unbearably grim party. (Here, rather than being spreadeagled on the table, she is shown cradled in Stanley's arms.)

In the end, the mood is as mechanical as the Wurlitzer organ that tootles away at the start. In a household full of gargoyles, Nicolas Tennant provides a hint of human warmth as Meg's other half, Petey.

To Aug 31, theatreroyal.org.uk

edinburgh opera

Così fan tutte

Usher Hall

★★★★★

Very unusually for them, almost all of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's work in the Edinburgh International Festival this year is in the world of opera. They served as the theatre orchestra for the Opéra Comique's *Carmen*, and were unleashed from the pit to take centre stage for the Usher Hall's concert staging of *Così fan tutte*.

Based on their work over the past seven days, the SCO would give any full-time opera company a run for their money, so vibrantly expressive has their playing been. This *Così* zinged right from the whipcrack overture, with lithe strings, chuckling winds and period brass and timpani that gave the score real bite. But every effect was used to serve Mozart's drama, and in that the orchestra had a not-so-secret weapon in their principal conductor, Maxim Emelyanychev.

He was the dynamo that energised this whole, sparkling performance, not only shaping the ensembles with dramatic flair but crafting the recitatives from the fortepiano in a way that made them sound as if they had only just been written. Endless peppery twists from the continuo brought insights and psychological depth. Who would have thought, for example, that a simple bass drone under the men's protestations of love in the opening scene could make them sound so preposterous?

The team of soloists, all singing from memory, were brilliant both individually and as a team. The easy opulence of Golda Schultz's creamy soprano made Fiordiligi sound simultaneously aristocratic and deeply human. Angela Brower's Dorabella was more spicy and worldly, while Hera Hyesang Park had a slightly frosty edge to her voice that set Despina apart from her mistresses. Josh Lovell brought a lovely, soft tenor tone to Ferrando, while Huw Montague Rendall sang Guglielmo with warmth but also a touch of grit. Christopher Maltman was young for Don Alfonso, but that meant he could bring a mischievous energy to the part.

There was no credited director, but the entrances, exits and gestures meant that this was a proper piece of theatre, often very funny. Who needs a set when the drama explodes out of the score with such vigour?

Simon Thompson

proms

BBC SO/Oramo; NYO/Bloch; Songs of Wars I Have Seen

Royal Albert Hall

★★★★☆

A short but striking work by the hugely respected Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho, who died last year, opened the BBC Symphony Orchestra's Friday Prom, fittingly led by three other Finns: conductor Sakari Oramo, soprano Silja Aalto and cellist Anssi Karttunen. Written in 2007, *Mirage* is a real statement of intent by an emerging composer.

Up in the stratosphere the soprano hurls out self-affirming words by the Mexican trance poet Maria Sabina, with the cello amplifying her line and the orchestra providing a cloudy backdrop of spectral sounds enhanced by electronics. It's the composer saying: "This is my music, take it or leave it."

Oddly, Strauss's *Alpine Symphony*, played magnificently in the same concert with 16 offstage brass fanfaring in the gallery, isn't so dissimilar in its autobiographical confidence, though a universe apart musically.

Saturday's National Youth Orchestra Prom, ebulliently conducted by Alexandre Bloch and Tess Jackson, also contained a monster romantic symphony and music by contemporary women. Mahler's First was thrilling: not immaculate but overwhelming in sonority and dramatically paced. Towards the first movement's end the whole orchestra cheered: an apt addition to this joyous performance.

Missy Mazzoli's *Orpheus Undone* was full of big effects, mostly set against a ticking wood-block, but made little sense to me. In any case it was immediately upstaged by the premiere of Dani Howard's *Three, Four, AND ...* — a melodious cinematic swirl for about 200 players, with dozens of members of the training scheme NYO Inspire enhancing the main orchestra from galleries and aisles.

Women were also to the fore, literally and philosophically, in Heiner Goebbels's music-theatre piece, *Songs of Wars I Have Seen*. At this late-night Prom precisely conducted by Chloe Rooke it was revived by the bands (London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) that gave its 2007 premiere.

The text, from Gertrude Stein's quirky wartime memoir, is spoken by women in the orchestra, who sit closest to the conductor. Meanwhile the male instrumentalists, playing more strident music, are ranged at the back. The symbolism — men at war; women getting on with domestic life — is clearly sexist, but in this context it works.

Because Stein alludes to Shakespeare, Goebbels incorporates hauntingly wistful snippets from Matthew Locke's 1667 score for *The Tempest*, played on the OAE's period instruments. I must admit I find Locke's music far more moving than Goebbels's, though the latter's ending — a slithery, disembodied trumpet solo over the humming of prayer bowls — is inspired.

Richard Morrison

Available on BBC Sounds. bbc.co.uk/sounds

‘I escaped the sect and my kids cut me off’

GETTY IMAGES (POSED BY MODEL)

Maria Compton left the Plymouth Brethren and an abusive marriage to start again. By Katie Glass

The thing that shocks people most about Maria Compton’s time in a sect, in which she was never allowed to cut her hair, most technology was banned and she lived in fear of something called the Rapture, is that this is not some hidden cult from a remote part of America but a group operating openly in Britain today.

In her new book, *Out of Faith*, Compton reveals her unbelievable, and at times abhorrent, experiences in the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, and how she endured a violent marriage for more than two decades and bore numerous children before she escaped.

She is at pains to stress that she does not speak for others in the Brethren, a sect that started as a religious movement in 1829 and has an estimated 46,000 members worldwide, about 16,000 of whom are in Britain. When we speak it is under strict agreement to keep her identity secret. Maria Compton is not her real name and I have been asked not to describe how she looks or her accent. I can only tell you she sounds hesitant, but resolute. Leaving came at a heavy price.

> “I carry this deep sadness with me but I can’t put a price on freedom

Compton is now estranged from her children. “I’ll never see them or any of my grandchildren or my parents or siblings again,” she says. “I do carry this deep sadness with me but I can’t put a price on freedom.”

What worries her about being identified are the repercussions for her family, who remain in the sect. “They have already suffered a lot. I just don’t want them to suffer any more.”

Now middle-aged, Compton was born into the Brethren as a fourth-generation follower. Her great-great-grandparents joined when it was “a very simple type of evangelical sect”. As successive leaders came in with ever more complicated rules for how Brethren must live, the strict, psychological control was tightened.

She was not permitted to watch television, to listen to prerecorded music, use computers or mobiles, go to the cinema or have a dog. Children couldn’t watch organised sports or go swimming, so she never learnt. She couldn’t attend university or work outside Brethren companies. She couldn’t fraternise with people outside the Brethren, while within it close friendships were discouraged, even among parents and children. Compton had to ask a local leader permission for everything: to see her parents, to marry, even to travel.

Women in particular had rules governing how they looked. No make-up, trousers or revealing clothing. They wore headscarves and “no jewellery apart from a wedding ring”. For each rule “there was usually some sort of vague biblical reference”.

“We never questioned it. If that’s what the man of God said, God had told him that and we believed that was true,” Compton explains. At the centre of these rules was the belief that there should be a “separation from worldly people” based on the Scripture. “The Brethren believe there is evil in the world and therefore you must separate from everybody.” All actions were in service to the Rapture, a moment when, according to doctrine, Jesus would take deserving Brethren with him to Heaven while worldly people were left behind to face the horrors of the Tribulation.

Even as a four-year-old, Compton remembered her “terror” of the Rapture and fear of breaking the rules; a transgression could even be talking to someone outside the sect. “Fear ran through my whole life,” she says. Years after she left, she “had this fear that if I crossed the road, a lorry might run me over”.

Having attended a mainstream school, Compton was also frustrated growing up at “not being able to do so many things that my school peers could. I hated the separation: of having to go outside during assembly, having to sit out of religious education, not being allowed to go on school trips or watch television programmes — even educational ones — going home for lunch so we didn’t eat with ‘worldly people’. You were just looked on as a weirdo.”

“[At home] for my mum’s generation, and most of my married life, life for a woman was making babies, cooking, cleaning, entertaining,” she says. “On top of that, no matter what sort of decision your husband made, you had to obey it.”

Some of the most horrifying parts of Compton’s story are how she endured more than two decades of marriage to a man she describes as a violent, rageful sex addict who subjected her to “aggressive, bruising, loveless sex”. On more than one occasion she claims he raped her and once tried to smother her. She claims she was trapped by her obligation to submit to him and the rule that Brethren didn’t divorce. “I don’t think I ever knew what love was,” she says. Although, she is also empathetic. “I know he was extreme and what he did was wrong but he didn’t have any role model. I think maybe some of it came out of frustration; all the time trying to be this person that he thought he was meant to be. He’s also a victim.”

> “Life for a woman was making babies, cooking, cleaning

I suggest her story has echoes of *The Handmaid’s Tale* and she agrees. “There were things where the principles felt so similar. It felt like it was all about silencing women. You just didn’t have a voice”. There may be certain values in Brethren life that, like the trad wife trend on Instagram and TikTok, appeal to some women. “There is security about some bits of it and maybe a satisfaction in some bits of it,” she considers. “But if that’s all life is, it’s not for me.

“I believe everybody should have freedom to live how they want,” she says. “I don’t know whether those women have that but, for me, women should have a voice.”

Every time she considered leaving the Brethren she was petrified. As a child, Maria had felt horror opening a family photo album to find all the pictures of her aunt, who had been “cut off”, had been removed. “And yet we never questioned that,” she says. “I do feel shame sometimes when I look back at how I would have crossed the road when somebody who had been ‘cut off’ was on the pavement.”

One of the hardest aspects has been her estrangement from her children, who chose to cut themselves off from her when she left the sect. “Looking back, I do question myself. Should I have done more to get them to leave?” she says. “But at that point in time I was doing the best I could. I had to do this.” Now she hopes she can show her children “by example” and “be that beacon of light”. She adds: “My hope is that we’ll be reunited. Giving up on that hope will be giving up on them.”

After years of abuse, her life had become intolerable. The rapes by her husband and the misery and the mental breakdowns “pushed me further and further down into this dark hole”. At one point she became unable to speak. Eventually, standing on a pier, she considered suicide. “That was when I finally felt I had to do something different,” she said. “I suppose in that moment I really knew what my losses would be. When death stares you in the face you know whatever is thrown at you, you have to keep going.”

Since leaving the Brethren, Compton has flourished. She finds joy in playing with her appearance, wearing jewellery and trousers, dying her hair different colours ... “those little things that people take for granted”. She runs a business with her fiancé, whom she soon plans to marry. “I didn’t think that I would get married again but my partner is different. For us equality is a massive thing.”

She says her story is “not about exposing the Plymouth Brethren” but about “giving others strength to find the freedom” to get out “of whatever you’re in that you don’t want to be in”.

***Out of Faith* by Maria Compton (Bonnier £20). To order a copy go to timesbookshop.co.uk or call 020 3176 2935. Free UK standard P&P on online orders over £25. Special discount available for Times+ members**

Your weekday brain boost

More puzzles Pages 14-16

Every day, Monday to Thursday, a page of extra puzzles to give your brain an extended workout

Samurai easy

Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

1		2		6	7			
5		4	7			6		
							9	
	8		1			7		
	6			3	5			
4		5	2	7	6	8	1	
3				9				
	4		7		3			

		3	1		7			4
	6			4	9	3		7
2							8	
			7			4		
6		2	4				3	
1	7	4	3	9				5
			9					8
				6				
4		2				6	1	

			9	4		8		
			2	3		7		
			3	2				
			4	1				

	4	8	9			2	7	
		3			7			
6				7				
3			7	1	2	9	5	
	9			6	1		7	
	7		2			1		
	2				6			
7		2	3			4		
1	5	6		9	8			

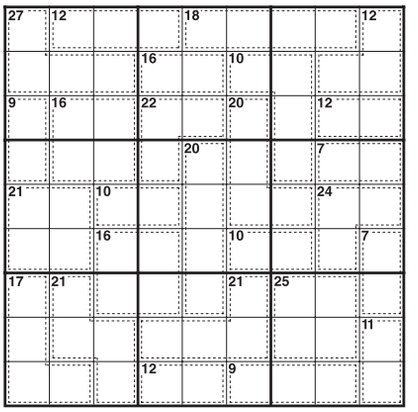
						9		6
						5		
						4		9
3	4	2	7	8	9			1
6		5	2		2		3	
					1		7	
9								
	3			5	8			6
	6		1		4			7

Sudoku super fiendish

	6				2			
		8				1		
				9	5	7	8	
	5				8		7	2
	4						5	
2	9			3			1	
	8	3		5	6			
		2				8		
				2			3	

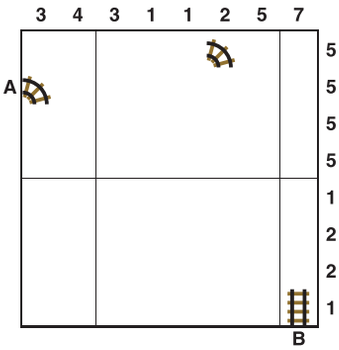
Killer deadly

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.



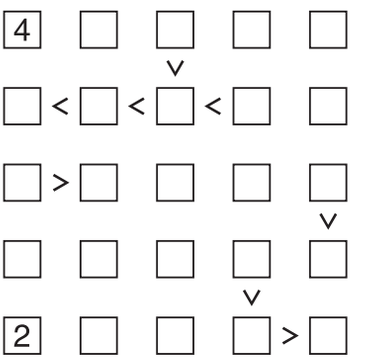
Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

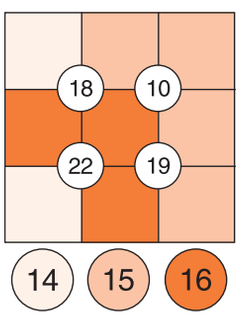


Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.



Suko

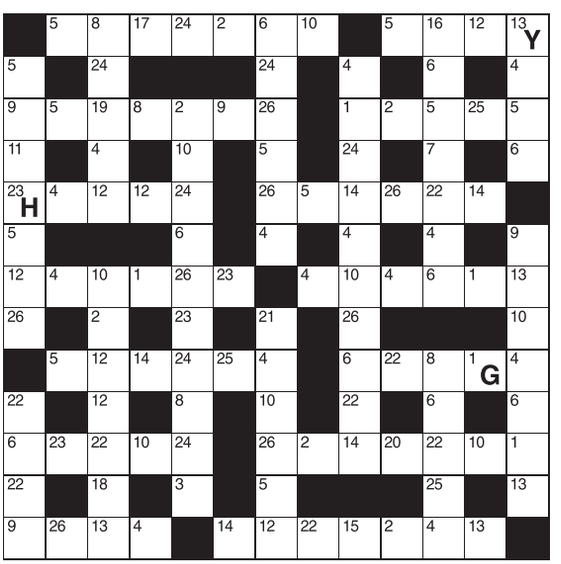


Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Solve Times puzzles interactively with same-day solutions at thetimes.com

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.



A B C D E F ~~G~~ ~~H~~ I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X ~~Y~~ Z

1 G	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Y
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23 H	24	25	26

Mini Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

6				3	4
		3		2	6
				4	1
4	3				
3	1		2		
5	2				3

Solutions in tomorrow's Times2

Thursday's solutions

SAMURAI

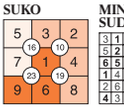
8	5	4	7	1	2	6	3	9
3	1	7	8	9	6	2	4	5
2	6	9	3	5	4	7	8	1
1	7	8	2	4	5	9	6	3
6	2	3	1	7	9	8	5	4
9	4	5	6	8	3	1	2	7
7	3	1	5	6	8	4	9	2
4	8	2	9	3	1	5	7	6
5	9	6	4	2	7	3	1	8

4	1	5	2	8	6	7	3	9
6	7	9	1	5	3	2	8	4
3	8	2	7	9	4	1	6	5
2	4	1	5	3	7	6	9	8
5	3	6	9	1	8	4	2	7
7	9	8	3	4	2	5	1	6
1	2	3	8	7	9	6	5	4
8	6	4	6	2	5	3	7	1
9	5	7	4	6	1	8	3	2

2	3	8	4	5	7	1	6	9
7	6	4	8	9	1	2	5	3
1	5	9	3	2	6	7	8	4
9	2	6	5	1	8	4	3	7
8	7	3	2	6	4	5	9	1
4	1	5	7	3	9	8	2	6
6	9	2	1	4	5	3	7	8
5	8	1	9	7	3	6	4	2
3	4	7	6	8	2	9	1	5

4	7	8	1	2	6	3	9	5
3	8	2	7	9	4	1	6	5
1	2	3	8	7	9	4	6	5
6	3	5	2	9	1	8	7	4
7	9	4	6	5	8	3	1	2
2	1	6	3	4	7	5	8	9
5	4	9	5	6	3	2	4	1
8	6	1	4	3	5	7	2	6
9	5	7	9	1	2	6	3	8

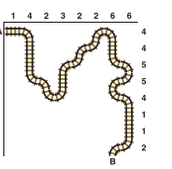
SUKO



MINI SUDOKU

3	1	6	5	4	2
5	2	4	6	3	1
6	5	2	4	1	3
1	4	3	2	5	6
2	6	1	3	5	4
4	3	5	1	2	6

TRAIN TRACKS



FUTOSHIKI

4	5 >	1 <	2	3
3	2	4	1	5
5	1	3 <	4	2
2	4	5	3	1
1	3	2	5 >	4

SUDOKU

1	5	3	7	4	9	2	6	8
9	7	4	8	2	6	3	5	1
6	8	2	1	3	5	4	9	7
4	1	8	3	9	2	6	7	5
7	2	6	5	1	8	9	3	4
3	9	5	4	6	7	1	8	2
8	4	9	2	5	3	7	1	6
2	6	7	9	8	1	5	4	3
5	3	1	6	7	4	8	2	9

KILLER

7	8	1	9	2	3	5	6	4
6	2	3	5	4	1	8	7	9
4	9	5	6	8	7	1	3	2
2	3	4	8	7	9	6	5	1
1	7	6	3	5	2	9	4	8
8	5	9	1	6	4	3	2	7
3	6	7	4	1	8	2	9	5
5	4	8	2	9	6	7	1	3
9	1	2	7	3	5	4	8	6

CODEWORD

J	A	W	B	O	N	E	■	O	G	R	E	■	■
C	B	■	■	U	■	Q	R	V	■	■	■	■	■
A	S	H	A	M	E	D	■	U	S	A	G	E	■
S	■	O	E	■	I	■	A	■	D	■	N	■	■
S	T	R	U	M	■	S	O	D	I	U	M	■	■
O	■	■	B	■	T	■	R	■	A	■	A	■	■
C	L	E	V	E	R	■	P	U	B	L	I	C	■
K	■	D	■	R	■	S	■	P	■	■	■	R	■
■	F	I	A	S	C	O	■	L	O	T	T	O	■
L	■	F	■	H	■	L	■	E	■	U	■	N	■
A	L	I	B	I	■	V	I	T	A	L	L	Y	■
V	■	C	■	P	■	E	■	■	■	L	■	M	■
A	P	E	X	■	C	R	A	Z	I	E	R	■	■

A bigamist liar and the women who took revenge

Carol Midgley TV review

The Other Mrs Jordan
ITV1
★★★★☆

The Body Next Door
Sky Documentaries
★★★★☆

Possibly like you, my recurring thought when watching **The Other Mrs Jordan** (ITV1) was — eh? How the hell could this unremarkable man manage to con and swindle so many people and have women falling at his feet?

William Allen Jordan wasn't someone you'd look twice at in the street, yet here were intelligent women handing him thousands of pounds and having his babies (he lied to some, saying he was infertile due to mumps). I am not victim-blaming. Quite the reverse. This case convinced me more than ever that no one is con-proof.

But as Mary Turner Thomson, whom Jordan married bigamously and had two children with, said: "He messed with the wrong woman when he messed with me." This was true because she was a powerhouse who helped to nail him with fabulous determination and also wrote a book about him. But not before he had relieved her of £198,000. I hope the book sales replaced a chunk of that.

The time frame jumped around, flitting between Scotland and America and the people he had scammed over two decades, fathering 14 children (odd for a man claiming to be firing blanks). It was a complex story to tell and had some victims restaging phone calls, which felt a bit unnecessary. But it is a jaw-dropping tale.

We all like to think we would see through a psychopathic fantasist who claimed to be a CIA agent, letting him go missing for months, but Jordan seemed to be a superb liar. The women who took part in the film told their stories well, clearly relishing their chance to take revenge, and good for them. One used herself as bait so the police could arrest him. Brave woman. How easy it is to be taken in by someone who shows all the signs of totally loving you.

But perhaps it was Mary's daughter, Eilidh, who has disowned her jailbird father, who put it best. To him, all the victims were simply characters he could control as he chose in his real-life *Sims* game, she said. This average-looking bloke is extremely dangerous and these women have done the world a favour by holding him to the light.

Mary Turner Thomson with William Allen Jordan

You may remember the tale behind **The Body Next Door** from the inquest headlines in 2016. But they didn't tell the whole story or show the vast human capacity for selfishness. A sleepy Welsh village had a killer in its midst, one who wrapped their male victim in 40 layers of plastic.

But the story gets stranger, sadder and darker than you could imagine. Episode two is equally excellent and infuriating when it interviews the "secret" children of the killer.

It started in Beddau, south Wales, and perhaps to lighten things, the director cast it almost as a stage play with the local interviewees described as the Pastor, the Neighbour, the Carer and the Pub Landlady. Episode one was called *Act One*. This is a technique becoming increasingly popular with documentary-makers, but it does risk undermining the seriousness of the subject matter.

No spoilers, but the opener to episode two, in which a woman says, "My mother was a nasty, horrible, heartless bitch", gives you some idea of what we're dealing with. Depressing, and fascinating.

Radio choice
Ben Dowell

New Storytellers
Radio 4, 11.45am

***New Storytellers* presents the work of new radio producers, and this series features the winners of the Charles Parker Prize 2024 for the best student radio feature. It's presented every year in memory of the pioneering radio producer Charles Parker, *above*, who produced the famous series of radio ballads with Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. Introduced by Charles' daughter, the radio producer Sara Parker, it opens with *Fight Fair*, which follows the female boxer Libby Liburd who helped to transform her life when she picked up a flyer at a boxing gym and took up the sport.**

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Times Radio
Digital, web, smart speaker, app
5.00am James Hanson with Early Breakfast **6.00** Aasmah Mir and Stig Abell with Times Radio Breakfast **10.00** Adam Boulton. Conversation **1.00pm** Ayesha Hazarika **2.00** Jane Garvey and Fi Glover. Live discussion on the day's news **4.00** Carole Walker with Times Radio Drive **7.00** Rosie Wright with the Evening Edition **10.00** Darryl Morris. Late night conversation **1.00am** The Story **1.30** The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2
FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show **9.30** Vernon Kay. Sananda Maitreya chooses his Tracks of My Years **12.00** Tina Daheley **2.00pm** Scott Mills **4.00** Sara Cox **6.30** Sara Cox's Half Wower **7.00** Jo Whiley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30** Jo Whiley **9.00** The Blues Show with Moby. Sitting in for Cerys Matthews with a selection of music from the blues scene, featuring tracks from John Lee Hooker, Sippie Wallace and Taj Mahal **10.00** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation **12.00** OJ Borg **2.30am** One Hit Wonders with OJ Borg **3.00** Tom Daley's Motivational Mix — Swim **4.00** Owain Wyn Evans

Radio 3
FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
Kate Molleson presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show. Including **7.00**, **8.00** News. **7.30**, **8.30** News headlines
9.30 Essential Classics
Ian Skelly presents a selection of music and features, including new discoveries, musical surprises and plenty of familiar favourites
1.00pm Classical Live
Elizabeth Alker introduces chamber music recorded for the programme at this year's Edinburgh International Festival, as well as from the BBC Proms. The pianist Alexandre Kantorow has been described as Liszt reincarnated and this summer he makes his Edinburgh International Festival debut. Plus, another chance to hear the Prom from last Thursday with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra performing in a programme that includes Sarah Gibson's *Warp & Weft*. From the Edinburgh International Festival — Brahms (Rhapsody in B minor, Op 79 No 1); Rachmaninov (Sonata No 1, Op 28); From the BBC Proms — Beethoven (Violin Concerto in D, Op 61); Sarah Gibson (*Warp & Weft*); and Brahms (Symphony No 4 in E minor, Op 98)
4.00 Composer of the Week: Chopin (1810-1849)
Early in 1837, Franz Liszt introduced Frédéric Chopin to a woman who would have a profound influence on his life. Her name was George Sand and Chopin's relationship with the novelist would go on to stretch for almost a decade and prove to be the longest romantic bond of the composer's life, and a defining creative relationship for both of them. Over the course of this week, Donald Macleod explores the intertwined lives of these two key figures in French romantic-era life. He begins by examining Liszt's role in Chopin's first meetings with Sand. Initially, Chopin was repulsed by the notorious cigar-smoking, trouser-wearing novelist, but the pair eventually formed a romantic relationship that would last for nine years. Donald also explores how the beginning of their relationship sparked an incident which almost led to the composer being killed. Chopin (Impromptu No 1 in A flat, Op 29; Piano Concerto No 2 in F minor, Op 21 — I. Moderato; Six Polish Songs — *Narzeczony — The Bridegroom*; Ballade No 1 in G minor, Op 23; *Seventeen Polish Songs*, Op 74: *No 5 — What She Likes*; *No 12 — My Darling*; and Etudes, Op 25, Nos 1-6) (r)
5.00 In Tune
With live music by folk violinist Eliza Carthy
7.00 Classical Mixtape
A selection of classical favourites mixed with jazz, folk and music from around the world
7.30 Live BBC Proms 2024
Sarah Walker presents a live concert from the Royal Albert Hall with Nil Venditti conducting the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in Grace Williams, Beethoven and Farrenc with the saxophonist Jess Gillam the soloist for Karl Jenkins' *Stravaganza*. With his Symphony No 7, Beethoven permanently realigned western music's fundamental relationship with rhythm, creating some of the most compelling music of his age. Venditti places this momentous symphonic dance alongside music by Louise Farrenc, a composer from the generation after Beethoven who picked up the master's baton and ran with it. Grace Williams (Concert Overture); Karl Jenkins (*Stravaganza*); Farrenc (Overture No 1, Op 23); and Beethoven (Symphony No 7 in A, Op 92)
10.15 Night Tracks
An adventurous, immersive soundtrack for late-night listening
11.30 'Round Midnight
Soweto Kinch presents the best in jazz with a particular focus on the British scene
12.30am Through the Night

Radio 4
FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz
5.30am News Briefing
5.43 Prayer for the Day
5.45 Farming Today
6.00 Today
With Justin Webb and Mishal Husain
9.00 Orwell vs Kafka
Ian Hislop and Helen Lewis consider how the writers will be seen in the future (6/6) (r)
9.30 Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics
Natalie discusses Tacitus, the great historian of imperial Rome (6/7)
10.00 Woman's Hour
Nuala McGovern presents the magazine offering a female perspective on the world
11.00 Michael Sheen Gets into Character
Michael Sheen explores the methods used by actors to get into character (1/3) (r)
11.30 One to One
Keith Brymer Jones talks to the artist Craig Mealing about crying (1/6) (r)
11.45 New Storytellers
The story of how a single mother and her son found strength, belonging and joy in the world of boxing. ***See Radio Choice*** (1/5)
12.04pm You and Yours
1.00 The World at One
1.45 Cafe Hope
Featuring stories of recovery from the bereaved town of Southport
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Ed Reardon's Week
Ed decides to run an online quiz (5/6) (r)
2.45 Jessie Kesson Short Stories
Country Dweller's Year, abridged and produced by Kirsteen Cameron (1/3) (r)
3.00 Great Lives
Zing Tsjeng picks painter Hilma af Klint, and is joined by Jennifer Higgie (2/9)
3.30 Extreme
Taking a look at the evolution of the use of steroids in sports (3/8)
4.00 Inside the Riots Paul Kenyon reports from riots in Liverpool where far-right activists attacked police (r)
4.30 Alexei Sayle's Strangers on a Train
The comedian talks to passengers on a train from Belfast to Londonderry (4/5) (r)
5.00 PM
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The Unbelievable Truth
With Angela Barnes, Glenn Moore, Shaparak Khorsandi and Neil Delamere (2/6)
7.00 The Archers
Justin enters a tricky negotiation
7.15 Front Row
8.00 The Briefing Room
The first of three programmes exploring global tensions (5/16) (r)
8.30 BBC Inside Science
Turning e-waste into jewellery and the genetics of a gold medal Olympian (r)
9.00 History's Secret Heroes
The story of Raymond Gurême, a young circus performer who dedicated himself to bringing the Nazis down (6/10) (r)
9.30 To Catch a Scorpion
Things take an unexpected turn when Scorpion's brother is located (5/8) (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Enlightenment
By Sarah Perry (6/10)
11.00 Harland
The mysterious stranger known as Hare Mask has reappeared (3/5) (r)
11.30 The Rise and Rise of the Microchip
The microchip's cold war past, corporate present and quantum future (1/3) (r)
12.00 News and Weather
12.30am New Storytellers (1/5) (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra
Digital only
8.00am North by Northamptonshire **8.30** On Her Majesty's Secret Service **8.45** Where Angels Fear to Tread **9.00** The Unbelievable Truth **9.30** Horse Story **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** Charles Parker Prize 2024 **11.00** Dixon of Dock Green **11.30** Towards Zero **12.00** Anything Legal **12.30pm** Stop Messing About! **1.00** North by Northamptonshire **1.30** On Her Majesty's Secret Service **1.45** Where Angels Fear to Tread **2.00** Just a Minute: Edinburgh Festival **2.30** Street and Lane **3.00** Here Be Dragons **4.00** Charles Parker Prize 2024 **5.00** Dixon of Dock Green **5.30** Towards Zero **6.00** Anything Legal **6.30** Stop Messing About! **7.00** North by Northamptonshire. By Katherine Jakeways **7.30** On Her Majesty's Secret Service. James Bond meets a tragic contessa **7.45** Where Angels Fear to Tread. By EM Forster **8.00** Just a Minute: Edinburgh Festival. With Paul Merton, Janey Godley, Richard Herring and Sue Perkins **8.30** Street and Lane. Comedy with Nick Lane and Fine Time Fontayne **9.00** Here Be Dragons. By Stewart Love **10.00** Comedy Club: The Unbelievable Truth. With Tony Hawks, Lucy Porter, Zoe Lyons and Justin Edwards **10.30** Goodness Gracious Me **11.00** Catherine Bohart: TL;DR **11.30** The Ape That Got Lucky

Radio 5 Live
MW: 693, 909
5.00am Wake Up to Money **6.00** 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.00** Naga Munchetty **1.00pm** Rima Ahmed **4.00** 5 Live Drive **7.00** 5 Live Sport: The Monday Night Club **9.00** 5 Live Sport: 5 Live Cricket **10.00** Gordon Smart **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT
MW: 1053, 1089 kHz
5.00am Early Sports Breakfast **6.00** talkSPORT Breakfast with Jeff Stelling **10.00** Jim White and Simon Jordan **1.00pm** Hawksbee and Jacobs **4.00** talkSPORT Drive with Andy Goldstein and Darren Bent **7.00** Kick Off **10.00** The Sports Bar **1.00am** Extra Time with Paul Ross

Talk
Digital only
6.30am Mike Graham **10.00** Julia Hartley Brewer **1.00pm** Ian Collins **4.00** Jeremy Kyle **7.00** Alex Phillips **10.00** Petrie Hosken **1.00am** Paul Ross

6 Music
Digital only
5.00am Nathan Shepherd **7.30** Lauren Laverne **10.30** Tom Ravenscroft **1.00pm** Chris Hawkins **4.00** Steve Lamacq's Teatime Session **7.00** New Music Fix Daily. Tom Ravenscroft presents **9.00** Riley & Coe **11.00** Song Exploder **12.00** The xx: In Their Own Words **1.00am** The xx — xx, Mercury Prize Winner 2010 **2.00** The xx Live. Highlights from 2012 **3.00** The First Time with the xx **4.00** The xx Playlist

Virgin Radio
Digital only
6.30am Angela Scanlon on The Chris Evans Breakfast Show with webuyanycar **10.00** Steve Denyer on 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** James Merritt

Classic FM
FM: 100-102 MHz
6.30am Classic FM Breakfast with Dan Walker **9.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour **10.00** Alexander Armstrong **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minhall **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

My Tiger Family
BBC2, 9pm

Top pick

When you first see a tiger in the wild you "lose yourself somewhere within yourself", says Valmik Thapar, a man who knows what he is talking about. When he was a young man and his marriage was failing he hopped aboard a train and headed for the jungles around the stunning Ranthambore Fort in northwest India. With the help of the park director, Fateh Singh Rathore, Thapar saw his first Ranthambore tiger and they have since been his life's passion. Fortunately he was also a film-maker so there is plenty of archive footage of these extraordinary creatures in the breathtaking setting, the golden Indian sun often dripping like honey into the lens. Thapar is a mesmerising presence too, his full beard and intense gaze having a hypnotic quality even if he probably needs to tone down his slightly overblown narration. He claims that in the 1970s "nobody really knew anything about wild tigers", a statement that is probably not strictly true. But his work has done much for these noble beasts, which were hunted to near extinction by the Maharajahs and the Europeans before a ban on hunting, and the country's laws were changed in the 1970s to protect Ranthambore as a pioneering tiger reserve. He sees tigers as part of his family and he offers fascinating insights into the matriarchal nature of the animals' hierarchy.

Iolo's Valleys
BBC2, 7pm

The nature presenter Iolo Williams is back exploring the wildlife of his beloved south Wales valleys. He heads up the Upper Clydach River to find a dipper's nest hidden beneath a rock overhang and comes across the rare marsh fritillary butterfly in an old colliery site near Ystradgynlais. Another surprise is a kingfisher that has built its nest by digging a tunnel into coal waste. In the Amman valley, an oak woodland that survived the coal industry, is full of nesting migrant birds from Africa while the Bronze Age ring cairn of Carn Llechart is surrounded by reed buntings, skylarks and meadow pipits. Lovely.

BBC1

Early

6.00am Breakfast **9.30** Animal Park. New series. A new species of predator is introduced to Longleat safari park (AD) **10.15** Countryfile Treasures. John Craven is at Wrest Park in Bedfordshire (r) **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. Properties in Kent, central London and the West Midlands are sold at auction (r) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. Eric Knowles presents from Newbury, Berkshire (r) (AD) **1.00pm** BBC News at One; Weather **1.35** BBC Regional News; Weather **1.45** BBC News at One; Weather **2.00** Money for Nothing. Sarah Moore rummages through the rubbish at Wallyford Recycling Centre in East Lothian (r) **3.00** Escape to the Country. Nicki Chapman has a selection of properties for a young couple, currently living in Manchester, who are hoping to move to the Cheshire countryside with their young daughter **3.45** The Repair Shop. Silversmith Brenton West repairs a boxing trophy (r) (AD) **4.30** The Finish Line. Quiz contest in which contestants race in moving podiums across the studio floor to try and win £5,000. Hosted by Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene (r) **5.15** Pointless. Quiz hosted by Alexander Armstrong and Stephen Mangan (r) **6.00** BBC News at Six; Weather **6.30** BBC Regional News; Weather

7PM

7.00 The One Show Alex Jones and Lauren Laverne present the usual mix of topical stories and showbiz chat

7.30 EastEnders Peter is jealous of Bobby's recent promotion. Meanwhile, Nish makes a desperate attempt to upset Suki and Eve (AD)

8PM

8.00 Panorama Current affairs report

8.30 Scam Interceptors A scam call centre is pretending to be a mobile provider to get control of UK phone accounts to steal customers' money (r)

9PM

9.00 Death in Paradise A desert island survival course goes wrong when the leader, a trained survival expert and ex-SAS soldier, is found dead. Having ventured off alone and with no other people on the island apart from the trip participants, suspicion soon falls upon them (6/8) (r) (AD)

10PM

10.00 BBC News at Ten

10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather

10.40 Have I Got News for You David Tennant hosts, with Richard Osman and Lucy Beaumont (2/10) (r)

11PM

11.10 Crazy Rich Asians (12, 2018) When New York University professor Rachel Chu heads to Singapore with her boyfriend, Nick Young, she's surprised to learn he is from an extremely wealthy family. The problem is they aren't so approving of her, so she attempts to win them over. Blockbusting comedy based on Kevin Kwan's novel starring Constance Wu, Henry Golding, Gemma Chan and Michelle Yeoh (AD)

Late

1.10am-6.00 BBC News

BBC2

Early

6.45am Saturday Kitchen: Matt's Dream Dishes (r) **8.15** Sign Zone: Bridge of Lies. Quiz show hosted by Ross Kemp (r) (SL) **9.00** BBC News **1.00pm** Head Hunters. Quiz show hosted by Rob Beckett (r) **1.45** Catchpoint. Tia Kofi, Vivienne from *Ru Paul's Drag Race UK* and Scott Mills compete for charity (r) **2.15** A Countryside Summer. Marcus Wareing shows how to cook apple tarte Tatin (r) (AD) **2.45** Spy in the Wild. Camouflaged spy cameras go "undercover" in the animal world, following a family of gorillas and witnessing a feeding frenzy in Brazil (r) (AD) **3.45** B&B by the Sea. *Gavin and Stacey* star Larry Lamb stays at the B&B (r) **4.15** Cornwall: This Fishing Life. Restrictions begin to ease in Newquay after the coronavirus lockdown, and the town's fishermen have lost time to catch up on (r) (AD) **5.15** Flog It! The experts search for items at Penrhyn Castle in north Wales, where David Harper looks at vintage Second World War posters and Claire Rawle is surprised by a valuable watch (r) **6.00** Robson Green's Weekend Escapes. The actor tries out landscape painting (r) (AD) **6.30** Robson Green's Weekend Escapes. Robson and Rosie Ramsey enjoy a bushcraft lesson in Northumberland (r) (AD)

7.00 Iolo's Valleys New series. Iolo Williams explores the valleys north of Swansea. *See Viewing Guide* (1/4)

7.30 Mastermind New series. Clive Myrie asks questions on Jane Austen, *Dad's Army*, Liverpool FC under Jurgen Klopp, and Shania Twain. *See Viewing Guide*

8.00 Only Connect New series. The AI Frescans take on the Midlanders in the opening heat. *See Viewing Guide*

8.30 University Challenge New series. Amol Rajan hosts the quiz as Queen's University Belfast take on Liverpool. *See Viewing Guide*

9.00 My Tiger Family Documentary telling the 50-year story of a wild tiger family in north-west India with the lives of the big cats documented by Valmik Thapar, who has dedicated his life to following them, witnessing some of the most remarkable tiger behaviour ever seen. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

10.00 Spent Jo's relationship is on the rocks, and when Mia arrives to pick up the pieces, their romantic tension comes to a head. Last in the series (AD)

10.30 Newsnight With Katie Razzall

11.05 The Sense of an Ending (15, 2017) A divorced and retired aging Londoner and vintage camera shop owner becomes haunted by his past and is presented with a mysterious legacy that causes him to re-think his current situation in life. Drama starring Jim Broadbent and Charlotte Rampling

12.50am Sign Zone: Countryfile Joe Crowley is on the lookout for some of the UK's most elusive animals at Thursley National Nature Reserve, in Surrey — one of the largest remaining areas of heathland (r) (SL) **1.45-2.30** Clean It, Fix It. The team are in Surrey to help a busy family whose kids and dogs have taken over (r) (SL)

ITV1

6.00am Good Morning Britain **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 chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather **12.30pm** Loose Women. Showbiz interviews and studio discussion from a female perspective **1.30** ITV News; Weather **1.55** Regional News; Weather **2.00** Dickinson's Real Deal. David Dickinson is joined by experts Henry Nicholls, Stewart Hofgartner, Tim Hogarth and Mark Stevens in Burton upon Trent to assess items brought in by members of the public (r) (AD) **3.00** Tenable. Five friends from Warwickshire University tackle a series of top 10 list questions for the chance to win £125,000 in the quiz show hosted by Warwick Davis (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 work as a team to take on one of the Chasers and secure a cash prize (r) **6.00** Regional News; Weather **6.30** ITV News; Weather

7.30 Emmerdale Tracy has an argument with Mandy, and Noah asks Amelia if he can still be part of Esther's life (AD)

8.00 Coronation Street Leanne keeps her distance as Toyah undergoes an operation, Kit moves into the Rovers, and Steve misleads Cassie with an invitation to an evening of culture. Meanwhile, Aadi cautions Amy against investing her inheritance from Deirdre in the Institute (AD)

9.00 Long Lost Family Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell present the stories of two women searching for siblings, including one who always had a feeling that she had a biological sister and has longed to meet her since being proved right. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

10.00 ITV News at Ten

10.30 Regional News

10.45 Mission: Impossible III (12, 2006) Former secret agent Ethan Hunt is called out of retirement when an ex-trainee is taken hostage by a ruthless arms dealer, but when the rescue operation goes wrong, the villain decides to target Hunt's fiancée. Action thriller sequel directed by JJ Abrams, starring Tom Cruise, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Michelle Monaghan, Ving Rhames and Simon Pegg (AD)

12.50am Shop on TV 3.00 Family Fortunes. Gino D'Acampo hosts as clans from Clacton-on-Sea and Scotland try to guess the most popular responses to surveys posed to 100 people for a chance to win a £30,000 jackpot prize (r) (SL) **3.50** Unwind with ITV **5.05-6.00** Jimmy's Taste of Florida. In central Florida (r) (AD, SL)

Channel 4

6.20am Cheers (r) **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) **9.00** Frasier (r) (AD) **11.00** The Simpsons (r) (AD) **12.00** Channel 4 News Summary **12.05pm** Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes. The swimmer Maisie Summers-Newton offers an intimate insight into her life (r) (AD) **12.10** A New Life in the Sun. In Spain, a couple renovate a rustic property into a resort with a golf theme (r) **1.10** Car SOS. Tim and Fuzz are taking on their 100th car and their first electric conversion (r) (AD) **2.10** Countdown. John Thomson is in Dictionary Corner **3.00** A Place in the Sun. Property expert Jean Johansson helps sisters find a holiday home along the coastline in southern Cyprus (r) **4.00** The Great House Giveaway. A delivery driver and a company owner team up to transform a dilapidated family home in Chalford Oaks, Middlesbrough (r) **5.00** A New Life in the Sun: Where Are They Now? Gîte owners, who have a passion for military history, take flight with a new idea, and a fitness instructor from Somerset sets sail on a new adventure **6.00** Come Dine with Me. This week's competition comes from in and around Chelmsford (r) **6.30** The Simpsons. Homer is promoted at the power plant (r) (AD)

7.00 Channel 4 News

8.00 Yorkshire By the Sea Whitby distillers create their latest tipple from foraged seaside ingredients, a sea-farmer checks out his seaweed harvest of sugar kelp in Scarborough, while in Filey, a military vehicle restorer preps his Second World War American Jeep for parade duty (2/4) (AD)

9.00 Emergency New series. A 38-year-old paratrooper arrives at the Royal London after a paragliding accident. He has lost sensation in his legs and needs specialist high-risk surgery to fix his compacted spine and pelvis if he is to have a chance of walking again. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

10.00 Murder Case: The Digital Detectives Series exploring ground-breaking digital techniques helping police to solve murders. Here, a 17-year-old is chased and stabbed, and the only evidence is his dying declaration, caught on body camera, that there were four assailants (1/3) (r) (AD)

11.05 Night Coppers On the beat with the police officers of Brighton after dark. Two officers are assigned to a football fan who has been knocked out in the street. Meanwhile, a man accused of assault bolts on foot and a solo officer is tasked with tracking down some youths in a fight (1/6) (r) (AD)

12.00 Murdered: The Baby on the Beach Triple bill looking at the Kerry Babies case (r) (AD, SL) **2.40am** Becoming Elizabeth (r) (AD, SL) **3.40** Grand Designs (r) (AD, SL) **4.35** Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free (r) **4.50** Frasier (r) (AD) **5.35** Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes (r) (AD, SL) **5.40-6.20** Countdown (r)

Channel 5

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. Ross's true feelings for Rachel are revealed (r) (AD) **1.10** Friends. Rachel struggles to deal with Ross's new relationship and turns to Paolo for comfort (r) (AD) **1.40** 5 News at Lunchtime **1.45** Home and Away. Mackenzie is not in a forgiving mood, Mali and Iluka are affronted by Elandra's betrayal and Rose is done with compromise (r) (AD) **2.15 FILM: Gone Girl — The Disappearance of Jennifer Dulos (12, TVM, 2020)** A wealthy Connecticut mother-of-five mysteriously vanishes in 2019, and the finger of suspicion points at her husband. Fact-based crime drama starring Annabeth Gish **4.00** The Cruise: Fun-Loving Brits at Sea. The first day of cruising around the Mediterranean for the three groups begins with a trip to the Greek capital Athens, including a visit to the ruins of Hadrian's Library (r) (AD) **5.00** 5 News at 5 **6.00** World's Most Scenic Railway Journeys. A trip through the Peak District at full steam, pulled by the Royal Scot, one of the finest locomotives ever built. Bill Nighy narrates (r) **6.55** 5 News Update

7.00 Traffic Cops A prolific car thief with a string of convictions under his belt crashes and rolls a stolen car at over 100mph, while in Harrogate the hunt for a cloned car and disqualified driver leads to a high-speed pursuit (r)

7.55 5 News Update

8.00 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders A sergeant pursues a car suspected of having cloned number plates, but the driver refuses to stop despite two flat tyres and decides to drive the wrong way down the A1, and a PC pulls over a woman who is suspected to be high on drugs (8/10)

9.00 Forensics: Murder Scene New series. Documentary telling the inside story of forensics teams working alongside West Yorkshire police, beginning with a woman who has been brutally stabbed in her home in Leeds. Over the course of the critical next few hours the teams and blood-analysis experts meticulously assess the scene to establish what might have happened and report back to the detectives investigating the case (1/6)

10.30 Police: Hour of Duty A woman arrives in custody after being arrested on suspicion of causing harm to her baby. A task force heads out to raid a factory believed to be used for the large-scale production of cannabis and suspected of being linked to a major organised crime group (5/8) (r)

11.25 Police 999: Clear & Present Danger Police search for a missing pensioner, and become involved in a car chase with criminals in possession of a gun (6/6) (r)

12.25am Traffic Cops In the Peak District, a middle-aged woman crashes her car into a farmer's wall (r) **1.20** PlayOJO Live Casino Show **3.20** The Science of Sleep: How to Sleep Better (r) **4.10** House Busters (r) (SL) **5.05** House Doctor (r) (SL) **5.30** Entertainment News on 5 **5.35** Fireman Sam (r) (SL) **5.45-6.00** Paw Patrol (r) (SL)

Inside Britain's far

Riots have engulfed Britain after the stabbing of three girls in Southport. The far-right are being blamed for inciting the violence and disorder, but how have they gained momentum and what do they stand for?

television & radio

Mastermind
BBC2, 7.30pm

Settle yourselves down for a marathon session of quizzing, beginning with Clive Myrie's return to quizmaster duties and four candidates taking to the black chair. Today's subjects include an actuary being quizzed on Dad's Army, a media consultant answering questions on the fortunes of Liverpool FC under Jürgen Klopp, a teacher answering questions on the life and works of Jane Austen and a bakery assistant on the singer-songwriter Shania Twain. After that it's *Only Connect* (BBC2, 8pm) and *University Challenge* (BBC2, 8.30pm) to further test your grey matter.

Long Lost Family
ITV1, 9pm

Prepare for more stories in the latest series from Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell as they help people trying to find missing family members, aided by a team of trained intermediaries, DNA experts and investigators. The first story finds Tracey Boyle, who had children of her own before she learnt she had a brother: after a stay in hospital following a breakdown, her mother finally confided in Tracey that her first-born son was prised from her hands at the age of 16 and placed for adoption. Will the team be able to track him down?

Emergency
Channel 4, 9pm

The series following the minute-by-minute decisions that trauma teams make to treat the most serious cases continues. In this second episode, Jeymi, a 33-year-old mother of three, is at St Mary's Hospital with a serious femur fracture and broken knee joint after her taxi crashed into a lamppost. The orthopaedic surgeon Rajarshi is carrying out emergency surgery to fix her leg and try to get Jeymi back to her family. Meanwhile the 15-year-old Louie is at St Mary's after having emergency surgery to repair a severed artery in his leg after he kicked a glass security door at school.

Film Roman Holiday
Film4, 2.30pm

This romcom colossus has been aped and emulated in everything from *Notting Hill* to *Trainwreck*. American reporter Joe Bradley (Gregory Peck) attempts to sweet-talk a scoop from Audrey Hepburn's undercover princess, Ann. (U, 1953)

Sky Max

6.00am DC's Legends of Tomorrow (r) (AD)
7.00 SEAL Team (r) (AD) **8.00** Supergirl (r)
9.00 Stargate SG-1 (r) **11.00** DC's Legends of Tomorrow (r) (AD) **12.00** Supergirl (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)
6.00 Stargate SG-1. Maybourne offers to reveal the location of an alien weapons stockpile (r)
7.00 Stargate SG-1. A Russian brings news that one of the Goa'uld is conducting experiments (r)
8.00 Freddie Fries Again. Heading to the south coast of England (3/6) (r) (AD)
9.00 Mr Bigstuff. Lee takes action when he realises his past has caught up with him (r) (AD)
9.30 The Walking Dead. Alexandria's protective walls have been breached (r)
10.30 Warrior. Ah Sahm and Young Jun transport precious cargo (r) (AD)
11.30 The Force: Manchester (r)
12.30am Brit Cops: Frontline Crime UK (r)
1.30 Road Wars (r) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T (r) (AD) **5.00** Highway Patrol (r) (AD)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Fish Town (r) **8.10** Riviera (r) (AD)
10.20 Britannia (r) (AD) **12.25pm** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **1.40** The Sopranos (r) **3.55** Riviera (r) (AD) **5.55** Britannia (r) (AD)
7.55 Game of Thrones. Jaime finally visits Tyrion in jail after some persuasion from Bronn, and also has a mission for Brienne. Daenerys tries to balance justice and mercy (r) (AD)
9.00 Mare of Easttown. A detective in a small Pennsylvania town investigates a local murder while trying to keep her life from falling apart. Crime drama with Kate Winslet (1/7) (r) (AD)
10.05 The Last of Us. While attempting to evade the rebels, Joel and Ellie cross paths with the most wanted man in Kansas City. Kathleen continues her hunt (5/9) (r) (AD)
11.20 Succession. At Kendall's lavish birthday bash, Shiv and Roman try to arrange a meeting with Lukas Matsson, a tech mogul who recently snubbed Logan (7/9) (r) (AD)
12.30am The Leftovers (r) (AD) **3.00** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **4.10** Fish Town (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Story of Late Night (r) **7.00** Discovering: Forest Whitaker (r) **8.00** The Directors (r) (AD) **8.55** The Civil War (r) **10.00** The Great Rhino Robbery (r) (AD) **11.00** Murder in Boston: Roots, Rampage and Reckoning (r) **12.00** Music Box (r) (AD) **2.00pm** MoviePass, MovieCrash (r) (AD) **3.50** My Icon: Moeen Ali (r) (AD) **4.00** The Directors (r) (AD) **5.00** Discovering: Forest Whitaker (r) **5.55** The Civil War. The origins of the American Civil War (r)
7.00 The Great Rhino Robbery (r) (AD)
8.00 Murder in Boston: Roots, Rampage and Reckoning. The 1989 murder of Carol Stuart (r)
9.00 Elizabeth Taylor: The Lost Tapes. A profile of the actress told through audio tapes (r)
11.00 FILM: Gascoigne (15, 2015) Documentary about Paul Gascoigne
12.50am FILM: Undefeated (12, 2011) Documentary following a high-school American football team **3.00** The Unbreakable Tatiana Suarez (r) **4.30** Premier League Legends (r) (AD) **5.00** Discovering: Forest Whitaker (r)

Sky Arts

6.00am Rachmaninov: Rhapsody/The Two Pigeons **8.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **9.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.00** Discovering: Kevin Bacon **12.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **2.00** Cleo Laine: The Unseen Home Movies (AD) **3.00** Sky Arts Book Club **4.00** Discovering: Octavia Spencer **5.00** Watercolour Challenge
6.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD)
7.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents. A man decides to steal money from his boss
7.30 Alfred Hitchcock Presents. A man tries to frame someone for a murder
8.00 André Rieu in Wonderland. A concert by the violinist at Efteling theme park in Holland
10.30 André Rieu: Romantic Paradise. A performance in Cortona, Tuscany
12.20am Peter Grimes. An ENO production
3.00 Classic Literature & Cinema (AD) **4.00** Cheltenham Literature Festival **5.00** The Art of Architecture: Great Museums of the World

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News **7.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **9.00** Good Morning Transfers **10.00** The Football Show **12.00** Transfer Talk **1.00pm** Lunchtime Live **2.00** Sports Desk **2.30** Live The Hundred: Birmingham Phoenix Women v Trent Rockets Women (Start-time **3.00**). Coverage of the match at Edgbaston **6.00** Live The Hundred: Birmingham Phoenix Men v Trent Rockets Men (Start-time **6.30**). Coverage of the match at Edgbaston **7.30** Live EFL: Luton Town v Burnley (Kick-off **8.00**). Coverage of the Championship match comes from Kenilworth Road **11.00** Live Tennis: The WTA National Bank Open presented by Rogers. Coverage of the final of the WTA 1000 event, a hard-court tournament at Sobeys Stadium in Toronto, Canada **1.00am** Live Tennis: The ATP National Bank Open presented by Rogers. Coverage of the final of the ATP 1000 event, a hard-court tournament at IGA Stadium in Montreal, Canada **2.30** Sky Sports News **3.00-6.00** Sky Sports News

T AUDIO

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BBC3

7.00pm Top Gear. A search for the world's best taxi. With guest Ron Howard
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8.40 The Catch Up. A round-up of the day's news
8.45 Press X to Continue. Open-world gaming
9.00 Stacey Dooley Sleeps Over. Stacey meets a Mormon family in Ashton-under-Lyne (5/6)
9.45 High: Confessions of an Ibiza Drug Mule. Michaella reveals how she got out of prison early and what it taught her. Last in the series
10.30 Drugs Map of Britain. Documentary taking a look at the rising trend of vaping
THC to get high in 16-24 year olds (2/4)
10.55 Drugs Map of Britain. Users and dealers share their stories of monkey dust (3/4)
11.20 Him & Her. Steve's ex-girlfriend enlists his help to search for her missing brother
11.50 Him & Her. Steve hides an engagement ring from Becky, who has a hangover
12.20am Eating with My Ex. Para-athlete Souleyman Bah faces his ex **12.50** High: Confessions of an Ibiza Drug Mule **1.35** Drugs Map of Britain **2.25** Lazy Susan **2.40** Him & Her (SL) **3.40-3.50** Mobility (SL)

BBC4

7.00pm Great British Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo explores the West Country (AD)
7.30 Gareth Edwards' Great Welsh Adventure. The former rugby player and his wife Maureen explore Wales, beginning in Machynlleth
8.00 The Impressionists — Painting and Revolution. The achievements of painters associated with the art movement (AD)
9.00 Call My Bluff. Game show hosted by Robert Robinson. From 1974
9.30 Going for a Song. With celebrity guests Jane Rossington and Tim Hollier. From 1971
10.00 The Sky at Night. The team talk to Dr Nicola Fox, Nasa's head of science
10.30 Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau. A history of the early 20th-century art and design movement (1/3) (AD)
11.30 Maggi Hambling: Making Love with the Paint. An interview with the painter (AD)
12.30am Romancing the Stone: The Golden Ages of British Sculpture. Exploring the medieval era **1.30** Great British Railway Journeys (AD) **2.00** Gareth Edwards' Great Welsh Adventure **2.30-3.30** The Impressionists — Painting and Revolution (AD, SL)

Talking Pictures

6.00am Stagecoach West (b/w) **7.00 FILM: Down Among the Z-Men (PG, 1952)** Comedy starring The Goons **8.20 FILM: The Night We Dropped a Clanger (U, 1959)** Second World War comedy starring Brian Rix (b/w) **10.05 FILM: Blind Spot (U, 1958)** Crime drama starring Robert MacKenzie (b/w) **11.35** The Outer Limits (b/w) **12.40pm FILM: The Gallant Hours (U, 1960)** Fact-based Second World War drama starring James Cagney (b/w) **3.00** The Saint (b/w) **4.05** Steering Clear **4.30 FILM: Five Days (PG, 1954)** Crime drama starring Dane Clark (b/w)
6.00 For the Love of Ada
6.30 Out of Town
7.00 The Footage Detectives
8.00 Enemy at the Door
9.05 FILM: Cash on Demand (PG, 1961) Crime thriller starring Peter Cushing (b/w)
10.45 FILM: Time Without Pity (PG, 1957) Mystery starring Michael Redgrave (b/w)
12.25am FILM: Kill Me Tomorrow (PG, 1957) Drama (b/w) **2.00** Maigret **3.50** Look at Life **4.00** Justice **5.00** The Lloyd Bridges Show (b/w) **5.30** Dangerous Assignment (b/w)

Film4

11.00am Tad the Lost Explorer and the Secret of King Midas (U, 2017) Animated adventure with the voice of Trevor White
12.40pm Little Monsters (12, 1989) Comedy starring Fred Savage (AD)
2.30 Roman Holiday (U, 1953) Romantic comedy starring Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck (b/w) (AD). *See Viewing Guide*
4.50 We Bought a Zoo (PG, 2011) Fact-based comedy drama starring Matt Damon (AD)
7.10 Made in Italy (15, 2020) A father and son sell a Tuscan villa left to them by their late wife and mother, respectively. Comedy drama starring Liam Neeson and Micheál Richardson
9.00 Copshop (15, 2021) On the run from an assassin, a wily con artist devises a scheme to hide out inside a small-town police station. Thriller with Gerard Butler and Frank Grillo (AD)
11.10 Nuns on the Run (15, 1990) Two small-time crooks trying to go straight pose as nuns to avoid capture by a crime kingpin. Comedy starring Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane
1.00am-3.15 Can You Ever Forgive Me? (15, 2018) Comedy starring Melissa McCarthy, Richard E Grant and Dolly Wells (AD)

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, Flog It **12.30pm** Come Dine with Me (AD) **3.10** Four in a Bed **5.50** Château DIY (AD) **6.55** Car SOS. A classic 1971 sports car (AD)
7.55 Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud follows a project near Newbury to construct a modern farmhouse that combines an open-plan party pad with functional spaces below (9/12) (AD)
9.00 Car SOS. Fuzz Townshend and Tim Shaw restore a year 2000 Ford Mondeo (AD)
10.00 Holidays from Hell: Caught on Camera. Cameras reveal what can go wrong when a dream holiday turns into a nightmare. Footage includes sunbed dashes and ski crashes to Brits behaving badly and locals behaving madly (AD)
11.05 24 Hours in A&E. A woman is rushed to St George's after collapsing from a brain aneurysm, and a 30-year-old has a suspected urinary tract infection (AD)
12.10am Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet the Athletes. With the sprinter Thomas Young (AD)
12.15 Emergency Helicopter Medics (AD) **1.20** 999: On the Front Line **2.20** 24 Hours in A&E (AD) **3.25-3.55** Food Unwrapped (AD)

ITV2

6.00am CITV **9.00** World's Funniest Videos **9.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **10.00** Love Bites (AD, SL) **12.00** Dress to Impress **1.00pm** In for a Penny (AD) **2.00** Supermarket Sweep **3.00** Charmed **4.00** Dawson's Creek **5.00** Dress to Impress **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase (AD)
7.00 Ant & Dec's Limitless Win. Two sisters return to take on the money ladder (AD)
8.00 Bob's Burgers. Teddy hopes that the return of a comet will help him decide his future
8.30 Bob's Burgers. Tina and Zeke go to watch when Jimmy Jr takes modern dance lessons
9.00 Family Guy. Brian and Peter go on a mission to find a new Thanksgiving turkey (AD)
9.30 Family Guy. Stewie and Brian use their time machine to help Chris (AD)
10.00 Family Guy (AD)
10.30 Family Guy (AD)
11.00 Family Guy (AD)
11.30 American Dad! (AD)
12.00 American Dad! (AD) **12.30am** Bob's Burgers **1.30** Deal or No Deal (SL) **2.35** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale (AD) **7.00** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **8.00** Agatha Christie's Poirot (AD) **10.00** Bless This House **10.30** The Royal (AD) **11.35** Heartbeat (AD) **1.40pm** Classic Emmerdale (AD) **2.40** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **3.50** A Touch of Frost (AD)
6.00 Heartbeat. A search for stolen antiques puts Mason and Wetherby in grave danger (AD)
7.00 Heartbeat. Carol is smitten with a handsome visitor, but the police suspect he could be involved in a spate of burglaries (AD)
8.00 Vera. When a dock worker plunges from a multi-storey car park, Vera investigates a work dispute over a young man's death and uncovers a life of secrets and lies (4/4) (AD)
10.00 Cracker. Part one of three. Fitz comes face to face with the dark underbelly of suburbia while investigating the disappearance of a teenage girl mixed up in a cult (4/9) (AD)
11.05 Cracker. Part two of three. Fitz's fears for Joanne prove justified (5/9) (AD)
12.05am Agatha Christie's Poirot. The last-ever episode of the drama (AD) **1.45** Bless This House **2.10** Unwind with ITV **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am Minder (AD, SL) **7.05** The Professionals (AD, SL) **8.10** Robin of Sherwood **9.15** The Champions **10.20** Kojak **11.25** BattleBots **12.30pm** Robin of Sherwood **1.35** The Champions **2.40** Kojak **3.50** Minder (AD) **4.55** The Professionals. Gordon Jackson stars (AD)
6.00 BattleBots. Four bots remain in the quest
7.00 The Chase Celebrity Special. Bradley Walsh presents as Chizzy Akudolu, Andrew Pierce, Sonja McLaughlan and Jack Carroll take part
8.00 King of the Roads. Action from the Race of Legends, the youngest Irish road racing event
9.00 King of the Roads. Highlights of the Armoy Road Races and the Race of Legends from Northern Ireland, as riders looked to etch their name into the history books as the latest winner
10.05 FILM: Rambo III (18, 1988) Vietnam veteran John Rambo heads for Afghanistan on a quest to rescue his old boss Colonel Trautman from prison. Action adventure sequel with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna (AD)
12.10am Motorsport UK **1.05** Auto Mundial **1.30** Motorsport Mundial **1.55** From Dusk Till Dawn **2.45** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

U&Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.10** London's Burning **8.00** Doctors **9.15** Classic Holby City **10.35** Classic Casualty **11.40** The Bill **12.40pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** London's Burning **3.00** Born and Bred **4.10** Howards' Way **5.25** Birds of a Feather. Sharon becomes broody
6.05 Desmond's. Part two of two. The police face a siege outside the shop
6.40 Are You Being Served? Miss Brahms becomes the store spokesperson
7.20 Last of the Summer Wine. News of an imminent death rocks the friends
8.00 The Brokenwood Mysteries. Lynley Foster's search for peace and quiet is dashed by her disagreeable neighbour, Wyatt (3/6) (AD)
10.00 New Tricks. A dying man asks the team to clear the name of his son, a talented golfer who committed suicide after being implicated in the murder of a 10-year-old boy (5/7) (AD)
11.20 Silent Witness. Nikki and the Lyell unit are called in to investigate an attack against a transgender man. Starring Emilia Fox
1.35am Footballers' Wives. Joan Collins guest stars **2.40** Classic Holby City **4.00** Teleshopping

U&Yesterday

6.10am Inside the Factory **8.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **10.00** World War Two from Above **11.00** Nazi Hunters **12.00** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (AD) **1.00pm** Antiques Roadshow **2.00** Bangers & Cash (AD) **4.00** WW2 — Frontlines (AD) **5.00** Nazi Hunters
6.00 Antiques Roadshow. Dover Castle stages an edition aired to mark 80 years since the start of the Second World War
7.00 Find It, Fix It, Flog It. Simon and Henry head to Wiltshire to an old WWII airfield (AD)
8.00 Abandoned Engineering. Exploring Haludovo Palace Hotel in Croatia (2/8) (AD)
9.00 A Very British Murder with Lucy Worsley. Examining Britain's enduring fascination with murder, beginning by exploring how stories of notorious killings entertained the public (AD)
10.00 Bangers & Cash. Paul hits the road to collect an old navy ambulance that served its time as a holiday camper (AD)
11.00 Abandoned Engineering (9/12) (AD)
12.00 Great American Railroad Journeys. Brooklyn to Montauk **1.00am** A Year on the Yorkshire Steam Railway **3.00** Teleshopping

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: 10.40pm True North: Darts City. Four darts players aim for a place in one of the biggest leagues in Europe **11.10** Have I Got News for You (r) **11.40** FILM: Crazy Rich Asians (2018) Comedy starring Constance Wu (AD) **1.35am-6.00** BBC News

BBC1 Scotland
As BBC1 except: 11.10pm Sportscene. Highlights of recent events **11.40** FILM: Crazy Rich Asians (2018) Comedy starring Constance Wu (AD) **1.40am-6.00** BBC News

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: 8.00pm Eisteddfod 2024 with Huw Stephens. Huw enjoys performances from Wales's top female talent (r) **8.30-9.00** One Man and His Island — Our Lives. The story of the warden of a remote island between England and Wales (r) **10.40-11.10** Panorama. In-depth current affairs report

BBC2 N Ireland
As BBC2 except: 10.00pm-10.30 Kayak ó Thuaidh. Two novice kayakers travel along the northern coast of Ireland (r)

STV
As ITV1 except: 10.30pm-10.45 STV News **12.50am** Shop on TV **3.00** Family Fortunes. A family from Clacton-on-Sea take on a group from Scotland (r) **3.50-6.00** Unwind with STV

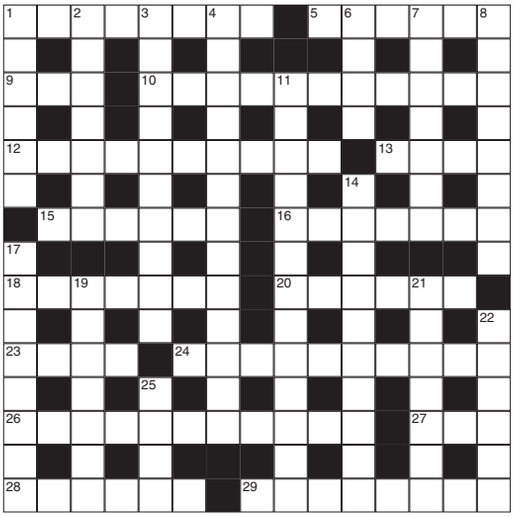
BBC Scotland
2.00pm Sign Zone: Beechgrove Garden (r) **2.30** Sign Zone: Scotland's Home of the Year (r) (AD) **3.00** Sign Zone: Pink Dreams (r) (AD) **3.30-4.00** Sign Zone: The Island That Saved My Life (r) (AD) **7.00** Sportscene: SWPL Highlights **7.30** Paramedics on Scene (r) (AD) **8.30** Life on the Bay (r) **9.00** The Nine **10.00** River City. Eddie seizes an opportunity for revenge (AD) **10.30** Alan Carr's Picture Slam (r) **11.15** Martin Compston's Norwegian Fling (r) (AD) **11.45-12.00** Rewind 2000s (r)

BBC Alba
6.00am Alba Today **5.00pm** Treubh an Tuathanais (Big Barn Farm) (r) **5.15** Na Clangairean **5.25** AH-AH/No-No (r) **5.35** Su Pic (Peek Zoo) (r) **5.45** Daolag-bhreac is Seillean (r) **5.50** Meaban is Moo (r) **5.55** Stòiridh (r) **6.00** Belle agus Sebastian **6.15** Bogaisean is Gumbalan/Bottersnikes and Gumbles (r) **6.25** An Sgoil (r) **6.40** Pròiseact Plòigh (r) **7.00** Eilean Mo Ghaoil (From Lewis with Love) (r) **7.30** SpeakGaelic (r) **8.00** An Là (News) **8.30** Fuine (Home Baking) (r) **9.00** Trusadh (Compelling Stories) (r) **9.55** Bannan (The Ties That Bind) (r) **10.30** Niteworks (r) **11.30** Seòid a' Chidsin — The Kitchen Coves (r) **12.00-6.00am** Alba Today

S4C
6.00am Cyw: Odo (r) **6.05** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **6.15** Guto Gwningen (r) **6.30** Tomos a'i Ffrindiau (r) **6.40** Cacamwnci (r) **6.55** Timpo (r) **7.05** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **7.15** Blero yn Mynd i Ocido (r) **7.30** Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r) **7.40** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **8.00** Olobobs (r) **8.05** Ysbyty Cyw Bach (r) **8.20** Patrol Pawennau (r) **8.35** Digbi Draig (r) **8.45** Ben Dant (r) **9.05** Blociau Lliw (r) **9.10** Shwshaswyn (r) **9.20** Twt (r) **9.30** Crawc a'i Ffrindiau (r) **9.45** Amser Maith Maith yn Ôl (r) **10.00** Odo (r) **10.05** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **10.15** Guto Gwningen (r) **10.30** Tomos a'i Ffrindiau (r) **10.40** Cacamwnci (r) **10.55** Timpo (r) **11.05** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **11.15** Blero yn Mynd i Ocido (r) **11.30** Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r) **11.40** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **12.00** News; Weather **12.05pm** Caru Siopa (r) (AD) **12.30** Heno Aur (r) **1.00** Ralïo+ (r) **1.30** Tanwen ac Ollie (r) (AD) **2.00** News; Weather **2.05** Prynhawn Da **3.00** News; Weather **3.05** Canu gyda Fy Arwr (r) **4.00** Awr Fawr: Blociau Lliw (r) **4.05** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **4.15** Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r) **4.25** Patrol Pawennau (r) **4.40** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **5.00** Stwnsh: Bwystfil (r) **5.10** Byd Rwtsh Dai Potsh (r) **5.25** Y Stadiwm **5.40** Cer I Greu (r) **6.00** Cegin Bryn (r) **6.30** Bywyd y Fet (r) **7.00** Heno **7.30** News; Weather **8.00** Trefi Gwyllt Iolo (r) **8.25** Garddio a Mwy **8.55** News; Weather **9.00** Cefn Gwlad (r) (AD) **10.00** Sgorio **10.30** Cyfres Triathlon Cymru. 2024 — Triathlon Caerdydd. Highlights of the third leg (r) **11.00-11.35** Y Sîn (r)

MindGames

General Knowledge Crossword No 246



Across

1 Sliced salad ingredient that is technically a fruit (8)
5 Citizen of Bratislava, eg (6)
9 Innovative British band led by Jeff Lynne (1,1,1)
10 Somerset town associated with Arthurian legend (11)
12 High-profile MP for Richmond and Northallerton (5,5)
13 South American cousin of the emu and ostrich (4)
15 Eugene ---, US playwright who penned *The Iceman Cometh* (6)
16 Former student of an academic institution (7)
18 Army rank between major and lieutenant (7)
20 Basil ---, architect behind Coventry Cathedral (6)
23 Fit of feverish shivering (4)
24 Julian, Dick, Anne, George and Timmy in tales by Enid Blyton (6,4)
26 US actor in *The Great Escape* and *The Magnificent Seven* (5,6)
27 Chain for a pocket watch (3)
28 Sci-fi travelling device resembling a police box (6)
29 Huge semi-aquatic snake of the River Amazon (8)

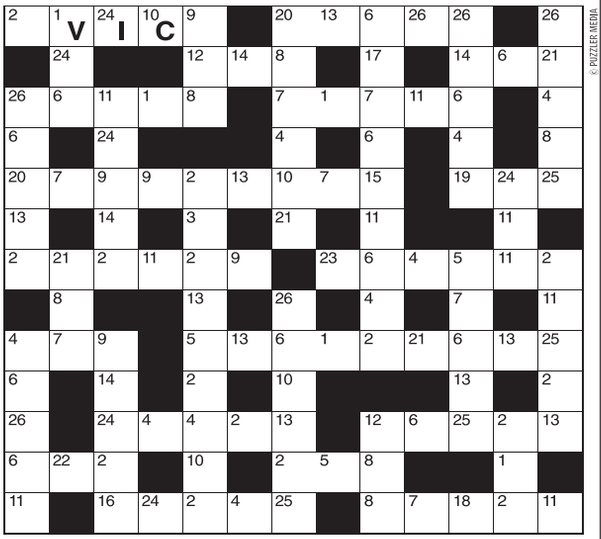
Down

1 Fruit used to make the liqueur maraschino (6)
2 Catherine ---, popular author whose novels were set in her native northeast England (7)
3 Canticle also known as the song or hymn of Mary (10)
4 Celebrated French fashion designer (1933-2019) (7,6)
6 Roman moon goddess (4)
7 Michael ---, cricketer who led England to their 2005 Ashes victory (7)
8 Classic British actress directed by her husband David Lean in *Oliver Twist* (1948) (3,5)
11 Colossal Roman pillar completed in AD113 (7,6)
14 Debut single of the Britpop band Oasis (10)
17 Powerful engine allowing propulsion to **14D** speeds (8)
19 Christopher ---, oldest nominee for an acting Oscar (7)
21 Fine semi-transparent fabric made from silk or nylon (7)
22 Home country of the tennis player Novak Djokovic (6)
25 --- spumante, Italian wine (4)

Last week's solution

P	I	T	T	■	I	C	I	N	G	S	U	G	A	R
A	■	A	■	H	■	I	■	C	■	O	■	U	■	■
L	I	G	H	T	N	I	N	G	■	E	A	R	P	S
I	■	U	■	T	■	E	■	P	■	B	■	H	■	■
M	A	S	T	I	F	F	■	R	A	T	T	A	N	■
P	■	■	■	L	■	T	■	■	■	I	■	C	■	A
S	A	C	H	A	B	A	R	O	N	C	O	H	E	N
E	■	I	■	■	■	I	■	L	■	■	■	E	■	D
S	I	G	O	U	R	N	E	Y	W	E	A	V	E	R
T	■	A	■	N	■	■	■	M	■	C	■	■	■	E
■	I	R	V	I	N	G	■	P	A	L	T	R	O	W
R	E	■	T	■	U	■	I	■	A	■	H	■	N	■
U	L	T	R	A	■	M	I	A	M	I	V	I	C	E
F	■	T	■	R	■	B	■	N	■	R	■	N	■	I
F	I	T	E	L	D	M	O	U	S	E	■	F	O	I	L

Codeword No 5291



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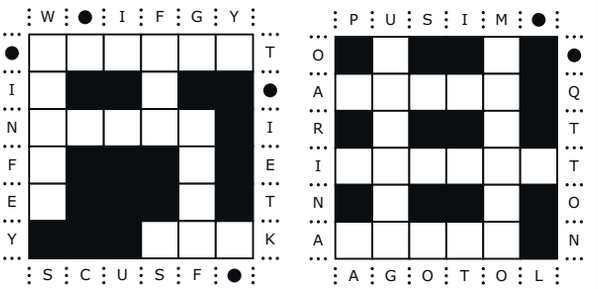
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1 V	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 C	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24 I	25	26

Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Saturday's solution, right*

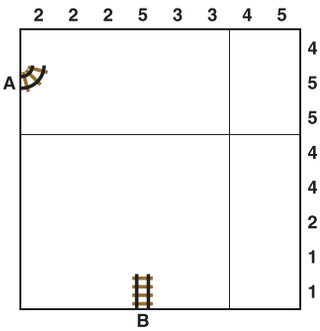
Cluelines **Stuck on Codeword?** To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

Lexica Easy No 7589 Hard No 7590



Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

Train Tracks No 2319



Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Quintagram®

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Periodical and newspaper for Christmas visitors (4)

2 Women's support for young dog (5)

3 Old lady with doctor, extremely idle chatterer (6)

4 Former husband has beers and sighs (7)

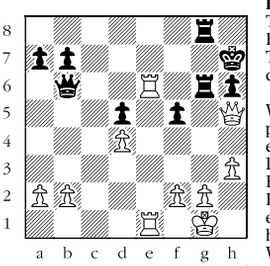
5 Knocking down farm animal having a rest (10)

A	A	A	B	D	E	E	E
E	G	G	G	H	H	I	I
I	L	L	L	L	M	M	N
O	P	P	S	U	W	X	Z

Challenge your mind with puzzle books from The Times

timesbookshop.co.uk

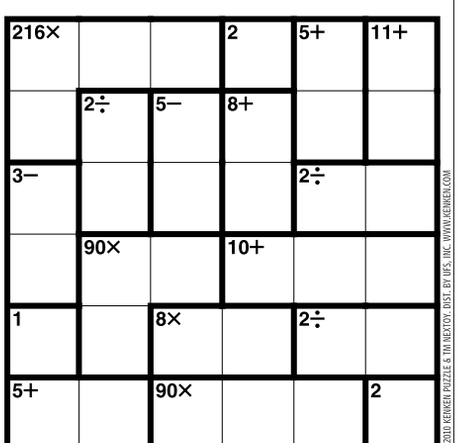
Winning Move



Black to play. This position is from Klukin-Askarov, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2024.

White has just powered through on e6. The plan is to meet 1 ... Rxe6 with 2 Qf7+ Rg7 3 Qxe6 Qxe6 4 Rxe6 with a winning endgame. However, he has missed something. What did Black play?

KenKen Easy No 6283



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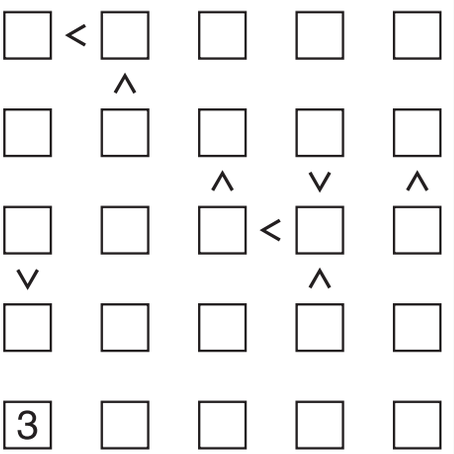
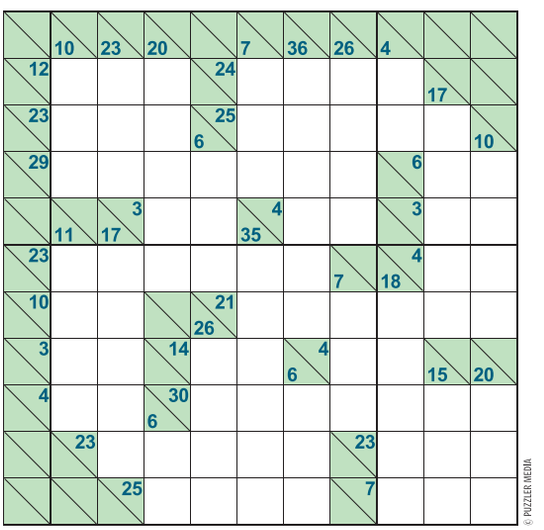
All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

Futoshiki No 4831



Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 3790



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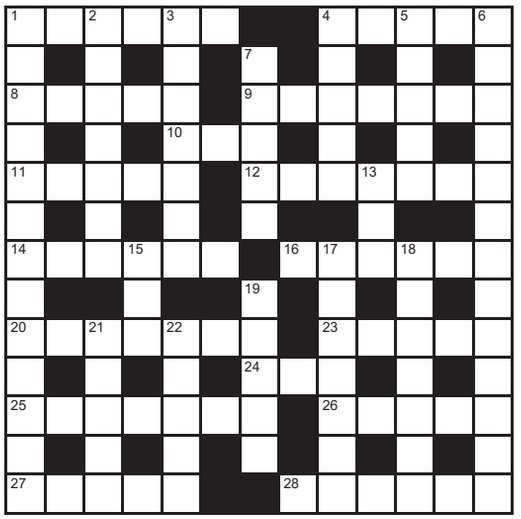
Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

MindGames

times2 Crossword No 9607



Across

1 Decline, deteriorate (6)
4 Messaging device (5)
8 Holiday trips; French city (5)
9 Foreboding, fateful (7)
10 Unused, just bought (3)
11 Many-headed monster (5)
12 Cut open (a specimen) (7)
14 Assistant (6)
16 Item of neckwear (6)
20 Take prisoner (7)
23 Increase with sudden force (5)
24 Sales agent (3)
25 Sumptuous, plush (7)
26 Indian vegetable side dish (5)
27 Massage (dough) (5)
28 Chick of a pen and cob (6)

Down

1 Wait impatiently (5,3,5)
2 Circular design feature (7)
3 Catch in a trap (7)
4 Matching sets of two (5)
5 Hand garment (5)
6 React to provocation (4,2,3,4)
7 Boisterous, disorderly (5)
13 Mineral spring (3)
15 Scoring shot in snooker (3)
17 Apply a fresh coat of paint to (a vehicle) (7)
18 Different or variant form (7)
19 Bed aboard a ship (5)
21 Feather (5)
22 Overturn (5)

Solution to Crossword 9606

E	A	S	T	E	R		E	R	M	I	N	E
X		A		R				A		G		A
C	O	L	O	G	N	E		P	I	L	O	T
E		T		O		X		I		O		I
S	K	I	M		H	A	N	D	D	O	W	N
S		R		C		M		I				G
			E	M	A	C	I	A	T	E	D	
A				R		N		Y		I		D
P	A	T	H	E	T	I	C		E	P	E	E
P		U		F		N		B		L		M
L	O	N	E	R		G	R	A	N	O	L	A
E		E		E				S		M		N
S	T	R	E	E	T		I	S	L	A	N	D

Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

As the last handful of the 29 matches in the 56th European Teams Championships began, Swizerland were almost guaranteed a medal (in the end, they won silver) while France needed some good wins to finish in the top eight (and a place in the world championships next year).

This board from Switzerland v France did the French no favours (although they did finish 8th). They bid to the inferior 5♣ but it took an alert defence by the Swiss East player, Bas Drijver, to defeat the contract.

West, Sjoert Brink, led a passive club. Declarer won dummy's jack and, at trick two, called for a spade. If East had played an autopilot low card, West would have won the king, unable to profitably attack either red suit. Declarer would have won his (say) passive second club and led a second spade to East's king. He could then rise with the ace on East's red-suit return and cross to dummy's third club to cash the two promoted spades, dropping his red-suit losers. Eleven tricks and game made.

However, East alertly rose with the king of spades at trick two (key play). He needed his partner to hold the ace, and realised the necessity of him winning the spade, so he could lead a red card through declarer's ace. He chose a heart — normal-looking given dummy's relative red-suit holdings — and declarer had to finesse. West won the king and had to come to the ace of spades — one down.

Predictably, the Swiss N-S bid to 3NT (as did 28 out of the 30 NSs).

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Both

Teams

	♠ QJ109 ♥ 843 ♦ Q75 ♣ J74	
♠ A64 ♥ KJ62 ♦ K832 ♣ 83	N W E S	♠ K752 ♥ 10975 ♦ J1096 ♣ 10
	♠ 83 ♥ AQ ♦ A4 ♣ AKQ9652	

Table One

S	W	N	E
2♣(1)	Pass	2♦(2)	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦(3)	Pass
3NT	Pass	5♣(4)	end

(1) Showing 23 or more points, or (as here) an upgrade for shape.
(2) The normal waiting response.
(3) Staymanic; a 3♥/♠ bid here would show a fifth card.
(4) Passing is surely tempting.

Contract: 5♣, Opening Lead: ♣3

Table Two

S	W	N	E
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3NT(1)	end		

(1) Best played as showing a solid minor in a (sub) minimum 2♣ opener. [Balanced hands with 25 or more points go via the 2♣-2♦-2♥ Kokish relay — but that's another story.]

Contract: 3NT, Opening Lead: ♥2

This contract was in no danger and declarer made two overtricks, winning West's heart lead with the queen and, at trick two, sneaking a diamond to the queen.

andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

Brain Trainer

EASY	9	SQUARE IT	+ 4	3/5 OF IT	+ 8	x 2	– 12	1/2 OF IT	+ 9	÷ 2
MEDIUM	94	+ 81	x 4	+ 56	+ 1/4 OF IT	+ 57	5/6 OF IT	+ 89	5/12 OF IT	– 97
HARDER	112	x 7	+ 334	+ 1/2 OF IT	x 3	– 469	+ 1/2 OF IT	+ 877	80% OF IT	75% OF IT

ANSWER

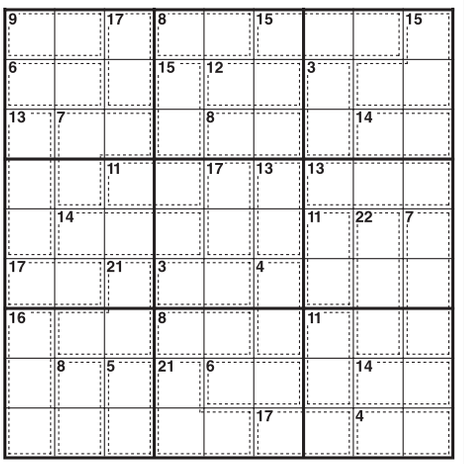
Polygon

From these letters, make words of **three** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives.
How you rate 10 words, average; 14 good; 17, very good; 20, excellent

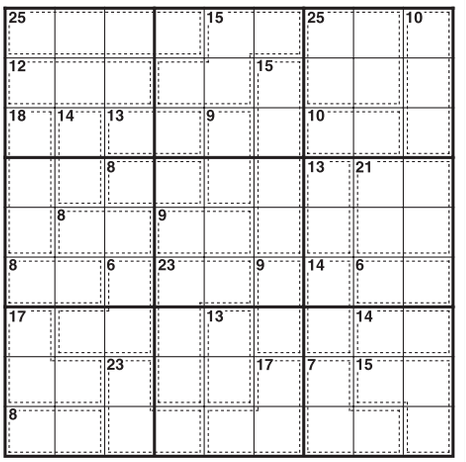
Saturday's answers

afar, afreet, after, **aftertaste**, fare, fart, fast, fate, fear, feart, feast, feaster, feat, fester, feta, fete, fetta, fetter, frae, frat, free, fret, raft, reef, safe, serf, strafe, trefa

Killer Gentle No 9620



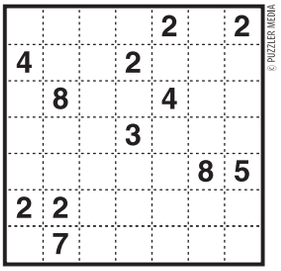
Killer Tricky No 9621



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 5174



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.

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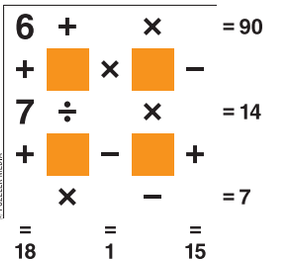
Set Square No 3793



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.

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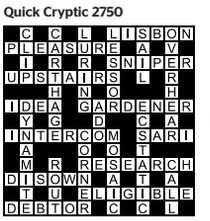
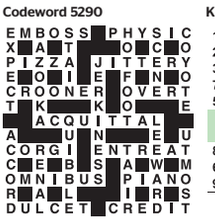
Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2750

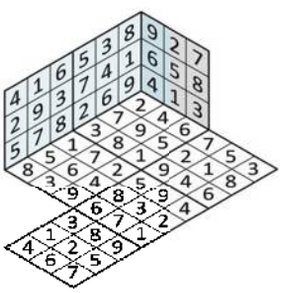


Codeword 5290

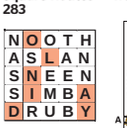


Kakuro 3788

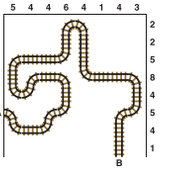
Tredoku 1850



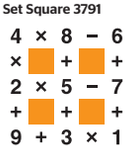
Square Routes 283



Train Tracks 2318

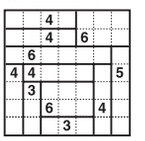


Set Square 3791

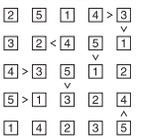


Lexica 7583

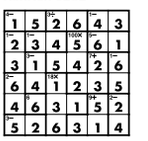
Cell Blocks 5173



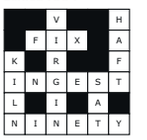
Futoshiki 4829



KenKen 6282



Lexica 7584



Sudoku 15,140

2	4	7	9	6	5	3	1	8
6	1	8	4	7	3	9	5	2
5	3	9	1	8	2	4	7	6
4	8	6	5	9	1	7	2	3
7	2	5	8	3	4	6	9	1
1	9	3	6	2	7	5	8	4
9	6	1	7	4	8	2	3	5
3	5	4	2	1	9	8	6	7
8	7	2	3	5	6	1	4	9

Killer 9619

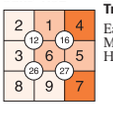
1	3	7	2	6	9	8	5	4
8	6	9	5	7	4	2	3	1
5	2	4	8	3	1	9	6	7
3	1	8	6	5	7	4	9	2
2	9	5	4	1	8	6	7	3
4	7	6	3	9	2	1	8	5
7	8	3	1	4	6	5	2	9
9	4	2	7	8	5	3	1	6
6	5	1	9	2	3	7	4	8

Today's solutions

Concise Quintagram
1 Nose
2 Bull
3 Growth
4 Teething
5 Engagement

Cryptic Quintagram
1 Magi
2 Whelp
3 Magpie
4 Exhales
5 Bulldozing

Suko 4192



Brain Trainer
Easy 31
Medium 288
Harder 4,632

Word watch

Cacoepy (c) A wrong pronunciation (*Chambers*)
Nock (c) A notch on an arrow for the bowstring (*Collins*)
Repetiteur (c) A person who rehearses opera singers (*Chambers*)

Chess — Winning Move

1 ... Rxg2+! 2 Khl (2 Kfl Qb5+ and 3 ... Rgl mate) and now 2 ... Qxe6! wins as 3 Rxe6 Rgl+ 4 Khl R8g2 is mate.

Quiz

1 Amy Winehouse **2** Orange **3** First World War **4** Dunkirk **5** South Africa **6** Dian Fossey **7** *Reversal of Fortune* **8** Vivienne Westwood **9** Ellen Ternan **10** *World in Action* **11** San Francisco **12** Dalarna **13** Eleanor Rathbone **14** Saint Lucia **15** Ian Fleming.

THE TIMES

12.08.24

MindGames

For extra puzzles
See page 10

Word watch
David Parfitt

Cacoepy
a A process in chocolate-making
b A nocturnal parrot
c A wrong pronunciation

Nock
a The dead of night
b An instinctive skill or talent
c A notch on an arrow for the bowstring

Repetiteur
a A copycat
b An artiste who fits into or through small spaces
c A person who rehearses opera singers

Answers on page 15

Sudoku

Easy No 15,141

		9	1				3	
1		6	2			8		
			3		5		4	6
3	9			5		7		
	6	2		7	1		5	
7	4			2		6		
			4		9		7	3
5		4	7			9		
		3	5				8	

Difficult No 15,142

			3			2		
1						4	6	
				4	5		3	7
	9	4		1	6	7		
	8				3	6		
		5						4
	7		5		2			
	5	6		8	7			
2							7	

Fiendish No 15,143

			8	9				
	2	4						
8	1	6				3		
4	9			1				6
					5			7
			3					
3						7	4	
2	4				8	9	1	
	5	9			7	2		

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

The Times Daily Quiz
Olav Bjortomt

1 Which late English singer is the subject of Daphne Barak's 2010 book *Saving Amy*?

2 Which colour in the visible light spectrum is between yellow and red?

3 Paul Nash's 1919 painting *The Menin Road* depicts a devastated battlefield from which war?

4 Winston Churchill said: "We shall fight on the beaches" after the 1940 evacuation from which French port?

5 Pinotage is which country's signature red wine grape variety?

6 The words "No one loved gorillas more" appear on the gravestone of which American primatologist (1932-85)?

TIMES NEWSPAPERS LTD

7 Jeremy Irons won an Oscar for playing Claus von Bülow in which 1990 film?

8 In 1993, Naomi Campbell fell on a Paris catwalk while wearing blue platforms by which British designer?

9 Simon Gray's 2007 play *Little Nell* is about which mistress of Charles Dickens?

10 In 1971, which ITV current affairs show challenged the Staffordshire village of Longnor to quit smoking?

11 The TV drama *Looking* was about gay men living in which Californian city?

12 A Dalecarlian horse is a painted wooden statue that comes from which Swedish province?

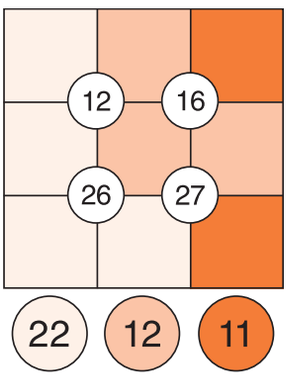
13 Which women's rights campaigner became an independent MP for the Combined English Universities in 1929?

14 The 100m sprinter Julien Alfred is which Caribbean country's first ever Olympic medallist?

15 Who is this British writer?

Answers on page 15

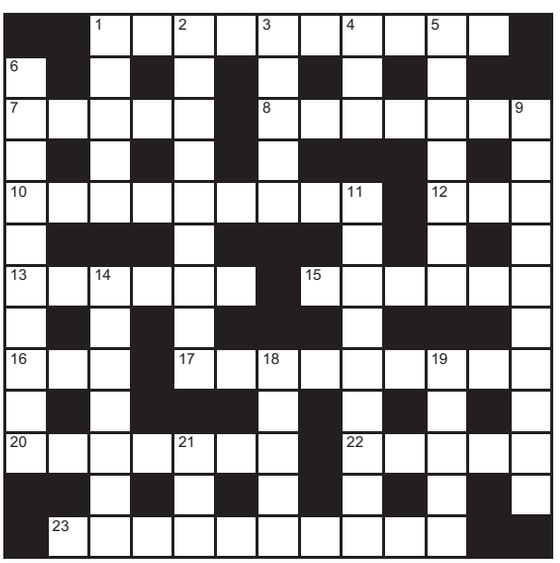
Suko
No 4192



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

For interactive puzzles visit thetimes.com

The Times Quick Cryptic
No 2752 by Jimmy



Across

1 Competitor withdrawing from race course after midday loses nothing (3-7)
7 Thieves — or where they might end up (5)
8 Following tabloid, see blemish on the face of a star (7)
10 Raunchier novel creating terrible storm (9)
12 I'm surprised Rothko gets regularly scratched (3)
13 Hurry in Athens, travelling around (6)
15 DJ cross during day before party (6)
16 Queen breaking a French vase (3)
17 Stretching son with schooling (9)
20 Add spice to starter of lamb, even in cooking (7)
22 Horrify a learner on TikTok or Instagram, say (5)
23 Material used when writing intro Yeats devised (10)

Down

1 Tastier sorbet, say, eaten by empty neighbour (5)
2 Malice admitted by gymnast in Essex (9)
3 Drunk turned up and caught a Puccini work (5)
4 Friend of Harry's working under Rex (3)
5 Old policeman with energy to become really angry (7)
6 Where roofers work for free (2,3,5)
9 Utterly hot, moving about (10)
11 Explain cryptic clue, I see (9)
14 Just one tango in vest (7)
18 Classical piece penned by composer on document (5)
19 Suggest merely going topless (5)
21 Tub or the box containing article, overturned (3)

Friday's solution on page 15

Solution: INSURANCE BR01827 01/2024

R U I
S C N
N A E

Helping solve your insurance puzzles?
It takes Aviva.
aviva.co.uk
AVIVA