

90p



2024 NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

MONDAY 19 AUGUST 2024 Number 4,287

OPINION

I'm saying 'I don't' to the hen do

Lucy Mangan

P22



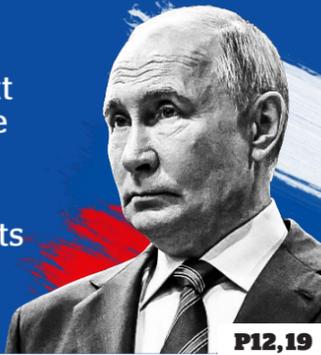
RUSSIA

'Putin's successor could be worse'

Veteran dissident released in prisoner swap on what the next regime could look like

+ Ian Birrell

The Kursk offensive shreds Putin's attempts to portray himself as Peter the Great



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SPORT

Champions City kick off where they left off

Chelsea's Maresca shown true enormity of his task



P54

PEOPLE

I'm back living with mum and dad - and proud of it



P35

Thousands of children and teens spiked by vapes or drinks in three years

- » Almost 3,000 children and teenagers are believed to have been spiked with dangerous drugs in the last three years, according to an **i** investigation
- » FoI data obtained from police forces also reveal that incidents of vape spiking among young people are set to reach record levels this year
- » Concerns over vapes being given to children who are unaware the pens are laced with spice, the dangerous synthetic narcotic known as a 'zombie drug'
- » Headteachers tell **i** of children being rushed to hospital after using spiked vapes, with one saying they experienced cardiac episodes and dissociation

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INDIA

'Men are conditioned to think they are superior'

Female doctors speak out over 'dangerous' working conditions following trainee's murder

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HOUSING

Thousands of cheaper rental homes to disappear from market as crisis hits

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CULTURE

Why classical music has a bullying problem

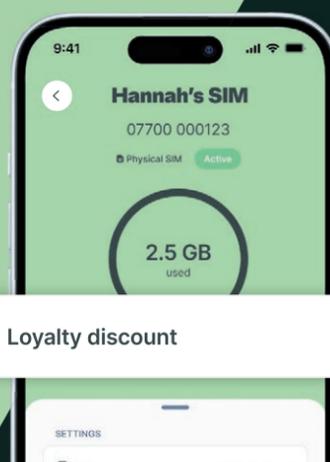


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MONDAY

19

AUGUST

Quote of the day



Conscience is the inner voice that warns us somebody may be looking
H L MENCKEN



Birthdays

Billy J Kramer, singer, 81; Jennie Bond, journalist, 74; Ian Gillan, singer, 79; Jim Carter (below), actor, 76; Baroness Scotland, diplomat, 69; Bill Clinton, former US President, 78



Anniversaries

Tuesday 19 August 1975
Campaigners calling for the release from prison of the wrongfully convicted armed robber George Davis vandalise the pitch at Headingley cricket ground in Leeds.

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The News Matrix

The day at a glance



Why is Coca-Cola celebrating a victory after the Olympics?
See p.25

SCOTLAND

Child dies following illness at play centre

A child has died after becoming unwell at a trampoline centre. Emergency services were called to Flip Out in Rutherglen, South Lanarkshire, just before 11am yesterday. The child was taken by ambulance to the Royal Hospital for Children in Glasgow where they were pronounced dead.

RETAIL

Ted Baker off high street by tomorrow

Fashion brand Ted Baker is expected to close its remaining 31 stores in Britain by tomorrow. No Ordinary Designer Label, which ran the stores, went into administration in March this year, and 15 shops were closed in April with the loss of 245 jobs. There are currently 513 employees across the brand's stores and head office.



The List

How to survive festivals: top tips

Music festivals have become a summer staple and those who attend regularly have come up with numerous hacks to help survive the camping conditions. According to research from styling brand VO5, the top piece of advice is to pack plenty of toilet roll. The top tips are:

- 1 Take a pack of toilet roll
- 2 Bring clothes for all weathers
- 3 Take an empty carrier bag for dirty washing
- 4 Stock up on lots of snacks
- 5 Take packets of tissues
- 6 Bring a camping chair
- 7 Invest in a portable charger
- 8 Use chewing gum/mints to freshen up breath
- 9 Pack dry shampoo
- 10 Take twice as much underwear as you think you might need



Newspapers support recycling. The average recycled content of UK newspapers in 2019 was 63.2 per cent

CONSERVATIVES

We deserved to lose, Rees-Mogg admits

Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg has admitted the Conservatives "deserved" to lose the last election. Appearing at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as part of *The Political Party with Matt Forde*, the former cabinet minister said: "We governed badly, we hadn't done what we told people we would do. I can't pretend we didn't deserve it."



KUWAIT

Fuel disruption hits power supplies

Oil-rich Kuwait yesterday brought in power blackouts in residential neighbourhoods, knocking out air conditioning, despite high summer temperatures. The state-run Kuna news agency blamed "a fuel supply disruption", which shut down desalination plants and some power stations. The forecast high for Kuwait yesterday was 43°C.

NORTHERN IRELAND

WWII bomb causes large evacuation

More than 400 homes have been evacuated due to an operation to clear what is suspected to be a Second World War-era bomb from a residential area in Co Down. The device was discovered in the Rivenwood area of Newtownards on Friday. The operation to clear the historical munition could take more than five days. North Down and Ards PSNI District Commander Superintendent Johnstone McDowell said: "In excess of 400 homes have been affected. This is a significant number of properties, and we thank residents for their patience and understanding."

CRIME

Southend is not no-go zone, insist police

Essex Police say they "categorically reject" the idea that any part of Southend is a "no-go zone", amid criticism of crime levels in the seaside town. A group of teenagers was charged earlier this month after youths, some brandishing machetes, fought on the resort town's seafront on the evening of 30 July.

MUSIC

'West End Girls' is Pet Shop Boys best song

BBC Radio 2 listeners have crowned "West End Girls" from 1986 as their favourite Pet Shop Boys song. Members Neil Tennant (left) and Chris Lowe said they were "very pleased and not totally surprised" with the listeners' choice. A poll invited fans to vote for up to five of the band's tracks from their catalogue.

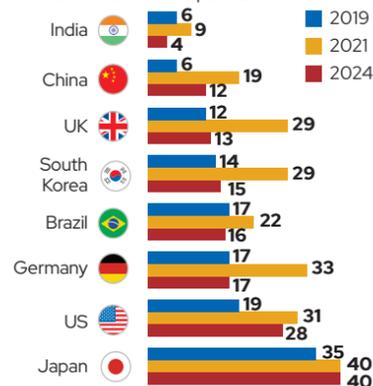
RUSSIA

7.0 earthquake occurs near major naval base

An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.0 struck in the Pacific off the far eastern coast of Russia near a major naval base yesterday, but there were no reports of damage or injuries. The quake prompted a tsunami warning that was later lifted. It occurred 18 miles below the surface east of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, the US Geological Survey said.

Staying grounded

Travel frequency is returning to pre-pandemic levels, judging by the percentage who didn't travel in the past 12 months



SOCIETY

Anti-racist musicians plan series of gigs

Rock Against Racism (RAR) successor Love Music Hate Racism (LMHR) is to host a series of gigs in towns and cities hit by far-right riots. LMHR is planning a London gig featuring singer Paloma Faith before arranging a series of concerts across the country. The group was launched in the early 2000s to protest against the rise of the British National Party (BNP). The organisation said that since it reformed it has been "inundated" with requests to host a gig. A 1978 RAR concert in London saw the likes of The Clash and Steel Pulse come together to protest against racist attacks and the National Front's rise.

The Page 3 Profile

IWAN RHEON, MISSED CHANCE TO ACT WITH LEGEND

Never act alongside your heroes...

When Iwan Rheon found out legend of stage and screen Sir Anthony Hopkins had agreed to star in a series about the ancient Roman Empire, he snapped at the chance to act alongside his hero. But it was only once Rheon, best known for *Game of Thrones*, started reading the script for *Those About to Die* that he realised he and his fellow Welshman did not share any scenes together. "Probably the only character in the whole show that my character doesn't have a scene with, which is devastating," Rheon, 39, told BBC Radio Wales.

Please, Sir.

Rheon was so disappointed not to be able to work with double Oscar-winner Hopkins, 86, that he asked the director if there was a scene in which they could appear together. "I obviously went through my initial period of mourning, and then when I got there, I asked Roland [Emmerich] if I could have a scene, and he said, 'No.'" "I was kind of joking, but I also wasn't," Rheon said. He was, however, allowed to visit the set and meet Hopkins.

Emperor Hopkins?

The *Game of Thrones* actor said Hopkins was perfect in the role of Emperor Vespasian while he appeared as Tenax, a bookmaker from Rome's underworld. "I never imagined anyone else doing it. Just to have him in the show is amazing," he said. *Those About to Die* chronicles the Roman Empire in 79AD with the Colosseum still under construction. The population is in desperate need of food, so to keep them from rioting, the empire stages chariot races.

Christian Oliver



IRELAND

Alcohol consumption falls by one third

The use of alcohol in Ireland is down by almost one-third in 20 years. Average alcohol consumption continues to fall based on population figures and the country's revenue alcohol clearance data. Beer accounts for 42.9 per cent of the alcohol market, according to a report authored by economist and academic Anthony Foley.

MUSIC

Carner woos home crowd on 'best day'

Loyle Carner hailed his headline performance at All Points East event as "one of the best days" of his life. The London-born rapper, 29, entertained the 35,000-strong audience with hits from across his back catalogue during the gig held in his local area at Victoria Park in east London on Saturday.

TELEVISION

'Corrie' has dilemma over Gail's departure

Helen Worth's final scenes as Gail Platt on *Coronation Street* have been thrown into uncertainty after Sean Wilson – who played her ex-husband Martin – announced his departure from the soap. ITV said the actor had left the show for "personal reasons". Wilson was set to reappear in October as part of the last scenes for Worth.

PEOPLE

Hilton 'heartbroken' after fire in her trailer

Paris Hilton said she is "heartbroken" after a trailer fire on the set of her "Bad Bitch Academy" music video. In a post on her Instagram page, the US socialite can be seen returning to the trailer and "assessing the damages". Hilton told followers she had lost clothing, technology, and shoes in the "disgusting" fire.

Letter from the Scotland Correspondent

Adam Forrest

i@news.co.uk

**Pension tick-box exercise could do some good**

Rachel Reeves is desperate to find ways to save public money. Yet there is one area in which the Government is, in theory, keen to splash more cash.

Pension credit is a benefit used to boost the incomes of Britain's poorest older people. The vital top-up makes sure the worst-off pensioners reach a basic level of £218 a week if they are single, or £322 a week if they are a couple.

But it is still relatively unknown and under-claimed, with more than 800,000 eligible households missing out, despite a series of Government publicity campaigns. Consumer champion Martin Lewis describes the figure as a "tragedy".

Policy experts have told *i* that there is one simple way to make a massive difference in uptake: add a box for pensioners to tick on other benefit forms.

The Department for Work and Pensions could make sure a box ticked on housing benefit and council tax support forms "automatically" puts people of pension age forward for pension credit.

The Chancellor's decision to scrap universal winter fuel payments means charities are trying to encourage more pensioners to come forward and claim pension credit for the first time.

But making sure the right people get money they're rightly entitled to is the responsibility of Government – not charity.

If ministers are serious about making sure the very poorest older people can get help, then they should look at simple, streamlined access to pension credit. It's one tick-box exercise that would actually do some good.

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MONARCHY

King 'to remove' security from Andrew

By Jessica Coates

The King is to axe the Duke of York's security team, according to reports.

Andrew's security has been privately funded by Charles after he lost publicly-funded protection in 2022 but members have been told they will not be needed from November, says *The Sun on Sunday*.

A Palace insider told the paper: "Everyone's speculating this means

the duke will have to leave the Royal Lodge because what other reason could there be to take his security away?"

Sources added: "It isn't a secret that the King wants him out."

The Sun said both Charles and Andrew are at the Balmoral in Scotland this weekend. Pressure on Andrew continues to mount



after the unsealing of hundreds of pages of court documents connected to the Jeffrey Epstein scandal.

Earlier this year, it was reported Andrew refused an offer to move out of Royal Lodge mansion into nearby Frogmore Cottage. The duke was said to have signed a 75-year lease on the Lodge in 2003.

HERITAGE

Somerset House partially reopens after fire in roof

By Pol Allingham, Rosie Shead and Danielle Desouza

Part of the Somerset House complex is remaining open to the public, despite the fire which damaged the roof of the arts venue on Saturday.

An investigation is taking place into the fire with the venue on the south side of The Strand in central London closed "until further notice".

The Courtauld Gallery, home to priceless artworks including Vincent van Gogh's 1889 self-portrait showing him with a bandaged ear and paintings by Claude Monet and Paul Cézanne, was not directly affected by the blaze and opened to the public yesterday.

A statement from Somerset House said "the safety and well-being of artists, visitors and staff is paramount" and the venue would remain closed while the London Fire Brigade carries out its investigation.

An event entitled Daytimers x RepresentAsian, described as "a day dedicated to South Asian creativity", was cancelled yesterday.

London Battle, a celebration of breakdancing, was called off on Saturday.

London Fire Brigade said 125 firefighters and 20 engines helped to tackle the blaze. There were no reported injuries.

Somerset House Trust's director Jonathan Reekie said the fire broke out in the west wing of the building, mainly comprising offices and "back-of-house" facilities, and there were "no artworks in that area".

He said it was "too early to comment on the building's condition" and thanked emergency services for their work tackling the flames.

The arts minister Sir Chris Bryant said the Government was liaising with the venue to "understand the impact and damage" caused by the fire.

He added: "I am sorry to hear about the fire at Somerset House – this historic building is home to some of London's great galleries and creative spaces."

i Queen Elizabeth I is among the former stately home's previous residents, having **lived there from the age of 20** before she became queen in 1558.



Somerset House seen from Waterloo Bridge on Saturday JAMES RYBACKII/AFP

SOCIETY

Asylum seekers' ordeal revealed

By Molly Blackall

GLOBAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

Four in 10 asylum seekers living at a former RAF base in Essex have suicidal thoughts and three quarters are in "severe psychological distress", according to medical evidence from doctors supporting them.

Medicins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Doctors of the World, two humanitarian medical organisations working in crisis zones globally, warned that the scale of the mental health crisis at RAF Wethersfield was "staggering" and called for it

to be closed. They said "prison-like conditions" were "exacerbating the psychological distress of people held there, rendering the site unsafe and wholly unsuitable to accommodate people."

It comes after **i** revealed the Home Office has spent more than £350,000 on legal fees in a court case brought by four asylum seekers who alleged their treatment had breached their human rights.

A Home Office spokesperson said: "The welfare of those in our care is of paramount importance. Welfare officers are on site round the clock."

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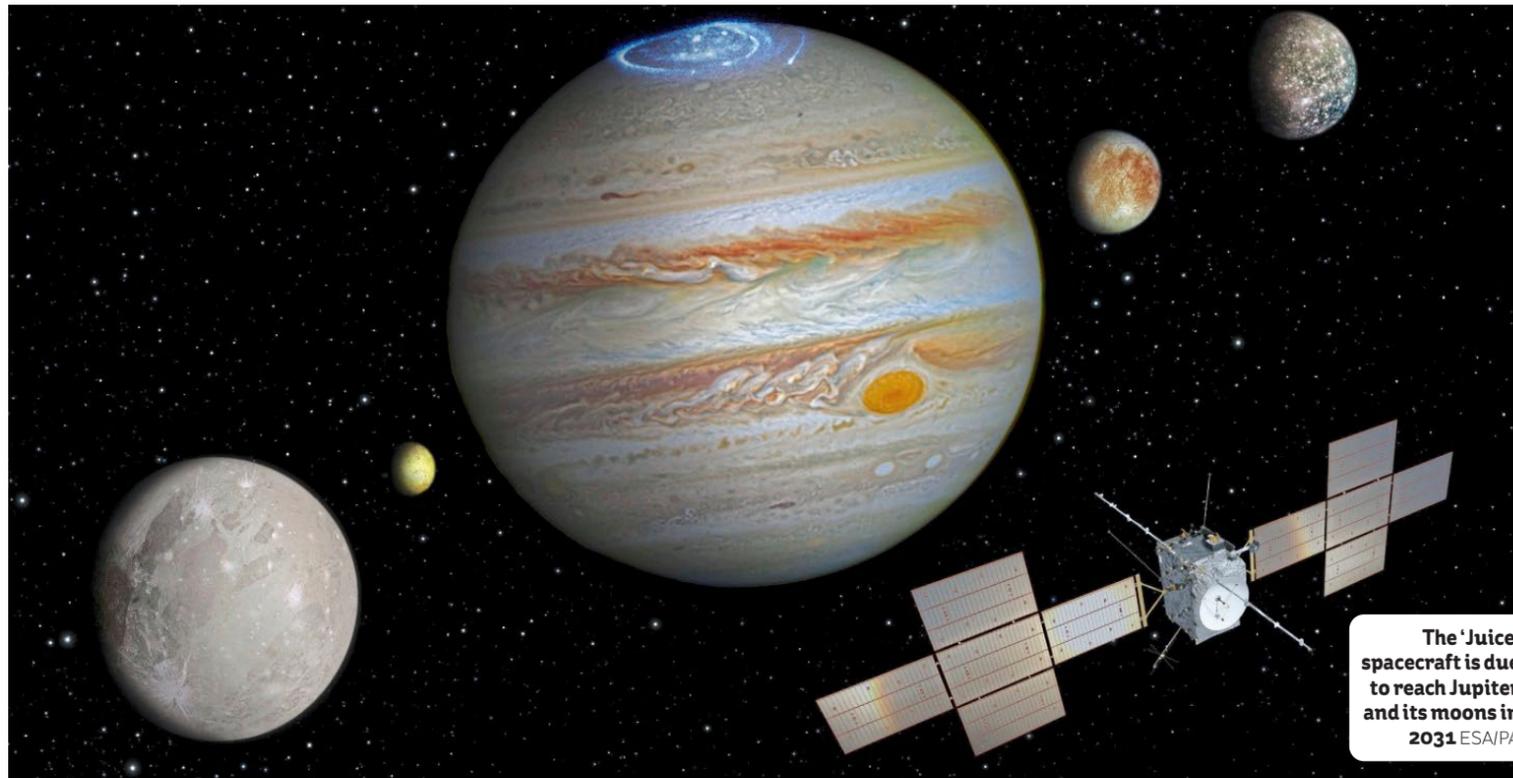
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SPACE



'Juice' has mission of utmost gravity, flying by Earth on 4bn-mile journey

By Nina Massey

The European Space Agency's (ESA) *Juice* craft will pass close to Earth tonight, taking part in a "world first" fly-by.

Flight controllers will guide the *Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (Juice)*, which has UK instruments on board, past the Moon and then Earth.

The risky manoeuvre will take *Juice* on a shortcut to Jupiter via Venus, using the Moon's gravity, and then Earth's, as a brake – slowing it down before future fly-pasts sling-shot it onwards.

The craft was launched in April last year to begin a 4.1 billion-mile journey which will take more than eight years to complete.

On board are 10 scientific instruments which will investigate whether the gas giant's three moons – Callisto, Europa and Ganymede – can support life in their oceans.

Tonight from about 11.57pm, into

the early hours of Tuesday, the ESA says a double world first will take place: the lunar-Earth fly-by and the double gravity assist manoeuvre.

The move will change *Juice*'s speed and direction to alter its course through space – and the slightest mistake could take the spacecraft off course and mean the end of the mission.

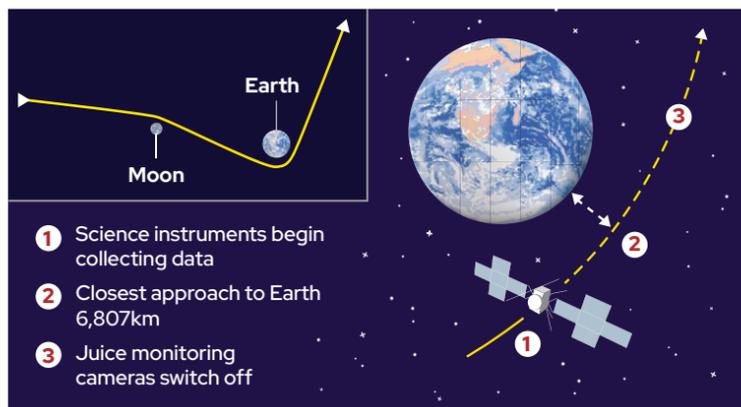
But Dr Caroline Harper, head of space science at the UK Space Agency, said of the manoeuvre: "It will be worth it. This saves a huge amount of fuel, which means that when *Juice* arrives at its destination, it can do a lot more science."

She added: "The UK Space Agency has invested £9m in the science instruments on board, so we will be watching closely and wishing *Juice* all the best for the next leg of its journey to Jupiter."

Earth will bend *Juice*'s trajectory through space, redirecting it on course for a fly-by of Venus in August

Over the moon

The Moon and Earth's gravity will bend the craft's path through space



SOURCE: European Space Agency via PA

next year. That encounter will speed *Juice* up – as will two further fly-bys of Earth in September 2026 and January 2029.

The moves are needed because Jupiter – which *Juice* is due to reach in 2031 – is an average of 500 million miles from Earth.

TRAVEL

Bank Holiday roads set to break records

By Neil Lancefield

Drivers are being warned to expect the busiest August bank holiday weekend roads since at least 2015.

The RAC estimated that 19.2 million leisure trips by car will be made between Friday and Monday.

The figure, based on a survey of 2,128 UK adults, is the highest since the motoring services company began recording data for the summer bank holiday in 2015.

Saturday is expected to be the busiest day on the roads, with 3.7 million leisure journeys planned.

Transport analysis company Inrix warned that the worst times for congestion are likely to be between 10am and 6pm on Friday and between 10am and 1pm on Saturday.

Delays are expected on roads serving coastal resorts and on routes for the Leeds and Reading music festivals.

Roads in Kent will also be busy as people head to Europe via the ports.

WEATHER

Aftermath of Ernesto on way

By Rosie Sheard

The "remnants" of Hurricane Ernesto are set to batter parts of the UK this week, bringing heavy rain and wind gusts of up to 60mph, the Met Office has warned.

Ernesto ripped through the North Atlantic last week, with maximum winds of 85mph.

Rain is expected in the UK from today, with Ernesto – now weakened to a tropical storm – set to hit on Wednesday. Its downpours and strong winds will mainly affect Scotland.

Forecasters have issued three yellow weather warnings for rain in Scotland for the early part of this week.

Forecast, page 46

INFRASTRUCTURE

Almost 30,000 sewers collapse in six years

Exclusive
By Kyriakos Petrakos

Almost 30,000 sewer collapses have occurred across England and Wales in the last six years, i can reveal.

United Utilities had 7,538 sewer collapses in that time – more than a quarter of the 29,926 collapses reported by 17 water companies across England and Wales, data released by the water regulator Ofwat on 8 August show.

Almost 4,300 sewer collapses were reported by wastewater

companies in 2022-23, with United Utilities recording 1,116 collapses. This was followed by Severn Trent (664) and Yorkshire Water (575).

While the number of sewer collapses dropped from 5,499 in 2017-18 to 5,273 in 2018-19, a record number of collapses was reported in 2019-20, totalling 5,558.

The figure has since decreased, with 4,297 collapses reported in 2022-23 – the lowest on record.

A "sewer collapse" is defined by Ofwat as a "structural failure"

that has "not been identified by the company" which affects services to customers or the environment.

Water UK, the industry trade association, said that the "number of sewer collapses is falling with a clear and improving trend year on year".

"Water companies have proposed investing a record £105bn to ensure the security of our water supply in the future, upgrade our sewer infrastructure and end sewage entering our rivers and seas."

ENVIRONMENT

Swimmers told to stay out of sea

By Kyriakos Petrakos

People have been advised to avoid entering the sea at Exmouth in Devon after a pipe burst at a nearby pumping station.

The Environment Agency has issued an alert and the local council is also advising people not to swim in the area (inset).

The problem was reported on Wednesday. On Saturday, South West Water said it was "working around the clock" to fix the Maer Road pumping

station, adding in a post on X: "We are very sorry this has happened and understand that this will cause concern for customers and visitors."

South West Water said it used "tankers to transfer flows to the treatment works to reduce the risk of a spill" but was unable to keep up with the level of flow "and there have been spills" at the pumping station.

"We will be installing an overland pipe as a temporary solution until a permanent fix can be carried out," it said.



EMPLOYMENT

Labour's pay deals risk flood of demands, admit union sources

By Richard Vaughan
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Sir Keir Starmer risks sparking a spiral of demands for public sector pay rises in the wake of offering inflation-busting salary increases to junior doctors in England and train drivers, union sources have said.

The Prime Minister was dealt a blow last week after his Government offered the train drivers' union Aslef a 15 per cent pay deal, only for the union to announce a fresh strike on the East Coast Mainline.

The decision to offer a "no strings attached" settlement, which will raise the average salary for a train driver by about £9,000 over the next three years, has sparked concerns that it will lead to other public sector leaders demanding similar increases for their workers.

One union source admitted that ministers' decision to give in to the pay demands could prompt more calls for higher pay each time there is a set of negotiations.

"There is a danger of that – that's happened in Scotland with the



LNER drivers will strike despite being offered a 15 per cent pay deal

teachers," the insider told *i*. "With any employer, not just the Government, you've always got that issue around what signal does it send. But it's been easier for them as this mess is not of their creation – they are tidying up someone else's mess."

The source added that accepting demands towards the start of its time in power gives the Government more room to manoeuvre later.

"There's always a risk, particularly for a Labour government, that they are going to open the cheque book," they said. "But I think that's part of the calculation – do that now, it makes it easier to be tough later."

The decision to offer larger pay deals in an effort to end disputes in the NHS and rail sectors has given other unions encouragement that the Government's approach will apply in other public sectors.

A different union source said: "The hope is they continue to offer decent pay deals to workers. You don't always get what you want, but hopefully that's a declaration of intent that people are going to be paid properly from here and they will listen when unions ask for further improvements in the workplace."

The Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, has already signalled her intention to deliver above-inflation pay rises to about six million public sector workers, at a cost of £9bn to £10bn.

But the Conservatives have claimed that should the Government agree to other union demands on top of the pay rises to teachers and NHS workers, the overall bill could rise by 40 per cent to about £13.9bn.

Another rail union, the RMT, has demanded a similar deal to Aslef's. The Royal College of Nursing has suggested that it wants the same 22 per cent pay offer put forward to end the junior doctors' dispute.

The GPs' union is calling for an increase in funding for primary care of 10.7 per cent, which is largely expected to go on salaries.

On Friday, Aslef said its members would strike on the East Coast Main Line for 22 days – from the end of August until 10 November – in a separate dispute about "bullying" by management, and what the union describes as LNER's persistent breaking of agreements.

i Last week, Cabinet Office minister Nick Thomas-Symonds insisted it was "unfair" to suggest that other unions would come forward with higher pay demands.

He stated that he works about 24 hours a month on Cameo, charging \$90 (£70) per video.

Following Donald Trump's assassination attempt, Reform UK donor Christopher Harborne funded Mr Farage's £32,836 visit to the US. The funds covered flights and accommodation for him and a staff member.

Reform MP Lee Anderson declared that he earns £100,000 a year for his role as a presenter and contributor on GB News.

Five MPs, including Sir Keir Starmer, were gifted tickets to see Taylor Swift at Wembley earlier this year, worth a total of £8,700.

Opinion, page 21

SURVEY

Britain 'moving in wrong direction'

By Claudia Savage

More than half of people have said that Britain is "moving in the wrong direction".

The poll of 1,148 adults by Ipsos, conducted between August 9 and 12, showed a post-election drop in the perception of the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, his deputy Angela Rayner and Chancellor Rachel Reeves.

Twenty-two per cent thought things were heading in the right direction, 52 per cent the wrong direction and 19 per cent neither.

Sir Keir was the most popular politician, with 38 per cent having a favourable opinion and 38 per cent unfavourable.

This is despite a drop in his net rating to zero from a rating of +7 immediately after the election, but compares favourably to the -10 for Rishi Sunak polled in his second month as PM.

Some 33 per cent were favourable towards Ms Rayner and 36 per cent unfavourable. There was a slight rise in those with unfavourable opinions of the Chancellor.

POLITICS

Farage denies GB News job pays him £98,000 a month

By Kyriakos Petrakos

Clacton MP Nigel Farage has earned more than £1m a year for his work outside of Parliament, according to the latest Register of Members' Financial Interests.

It states that most of the Reform UK leader's earnings come from his presenter role at GB News, which pays him £97,928.40 a month – far exceeding his basic annual salary as an MP of £91,346.

In a post on X, Mr Farage denied that he brought home such a total through presenting, writing: "To be clear... the GB News sum paid to me and declared includes VAT, and was for several months of work. It was paid to my company, which has significant expenses."

The MP meanwhile revealed in the register – published on Friday – that he has been paid £16,597 for recording personalised video messages through the Cameo.com website.



SOCIETY

Lack of support for children who leave care 'costly'

By Christian Oliver

A lack of support for families whose children are forced to go back into care after a failed return home is costing the taxpayer more than £300m a year, research shared exclusively with *i* has revealed.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) found £316m a year from the public purse was spent on sending children back into care when a reunion with their family fails – five times more than it would cost to provide families with the necessary support to keep the children at home.

The NSPCC has said it would cost the Government £67m a year – almost £250m a year less – if it instead diverted funding to give families in

England sufficient ongoing support when a child is ready to return home.

The latest research – by the University of Sussex, commissioned by the NSPCC – proves the cost-effectiveness of appropriate support, the charity said, and would result in vastly more successful reunions and fewer children stuck in the care system.

£316m
Annual amount spent on returning children to care after a failed family reunion, according to the NSPCC

It costs about £105,804 for each child who returns to care compared to an average of £7,857 per child when they are given the necessary support.

The cost varies depending on the children's circumstances, the charity noted, but even when a family is deemed to have high needs requiring at least two years of assistance, it only costs about £15,757.

This falls to £1,644 when a family



Jet-setter

A pedestrian cools off inside a water-spray art installation in Dover over the warm weekend.

LEON NEAL/GETTY

FAMILIES

Parents set to miss out on preferred childcare

By Claudia Savage

The Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson, has warned parents in England that they may not be able to get their first choice of funded childcare space by as late as September of next year.

In its manifesto, Labour said that it would open an additional 3,000 nurseries through “upgrading space” in primary schools, to deliver the extension of Government-funded hours families are entitled to.

The Government has said it will use disused classrooms to provide childcare, but questions have been raised about how they would be staffed.

The overall number of childcare providers registered with Ofsted, England’s regulator, dropped by 1,400 between March 2023 and March this year to 61,800 – a fall of 2 per cent, according to the latest statistics.

The data also suggested that the number of childminders registered with Ofsted decreased

by 1,340 over the same period to 26,500 – down 5 per cent.

Ms Phillipson said: “It is no secret that childcare in England has often been expensive and hard to find.

“My promise to parents is that I will do everything I possibly can to bridge these gaps as we reform the childcare system, so that all families – wherever they live – have equal access to brilliant early education. But I must be honest with parents in some areas that they might not get their first choice of childcare place in September 2025.”

In March 2023, then chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced eligible families of children as young as nine months in England would be able to claim 30 hours of funded childcare a week by September 2025.

Working parents of two-year-olds in England have been able to access 15 hours of funded childcare since April as part of childcare expansion.

has a low level of need and is supported for six months.

Eavan McKay, senior policy officer at the NSPCC, said: “The Government must prioritise investment in reunification support as a priority to keep more families together safely, tackle the unsustainable amount of children entering the care system and help alleviate the spiralling cost of children’s social care.”

She added: “All children deserve to live with a loving and stable family that cares about them.”

Alice Woudhuysen, of Action for Children, highlighted that returning home is “the most common way for children to leave care in England”.

“Investment in high-quality reunification support makes sense for councils, as well as for children and their families,” she said.

The NSPCC also urged the Department for Education to improve its data collection on re-entry into care so they can better identify when reunifications have failed and provide improved bespoke support.

The Department for Education said: “We have launched the Families First for Children Pathfinder and Family Networks Pilot, which is backed by £45m and is testing a whole-system reform to children’s social care to help families to overcome challenges, stay together and thrive – and keep children safe.”

POLICY

Simple tweak could ‘transform’ pension credit

By Adam Forrest

The United Kingdom’s poorest pensioners should be given “automatic” access to pension credit, an expert has recommended.

About £2.1bn worth of the vital benefit goes unclaimed each year by over 800,000 eligible households, and former pensions minister Sir Steve Webb said one simple change on official forms could make “a massive difference” to take-up rates.

Sir Steve wants the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to work with councils to create a new box – to be ticked on local authority support forms for people on low incomes – that would automatically put pensioners forward for a pension credit claim.

The ex-Liberal Democrat minister, Sir Steve, now a partner at financial services firm LCP, suggested that the forms for housing benefit and council tax support could be used to trigger a pension credit claim with the DWP.

“If you did that you would have a massive impact on pension credit take-up. It would be utterly transformative.”

He said trying to claim pension credit, housing benefit or council tax reduction all require the same details. “It’s the same information – income, spouses’ income and savings.”

He added: “If the DWP got councils to put a tick-box on housing benefit and council tax support forms, a box that said, ‘I would like to be assessed for pension credit as well,’ then there’s no need to make them jump through hoops again.

“It should be automatic and sys-



Sir Steve Webb said the DWP could make the application automatic

tematic. It’s the DWP’s job to change the system.”

Pension credit tops up pensioners’s incomes to £218.15 per week for single people and £332.95 per week for couples.

Charities are urging more people to check if they are eligible after Chancellor Rachel Reeves decided to scrap universal winter fuel payments worth up to £300 a year.

The new approach means only those receiving pension credit and other means-tested benefits will still get their winter fuel payment.

Meanwhile, the social policy analytics company Policy in Practice has called on the DWP to encourage local authorities to make better use of data to reach out to pensioners who are potentially eligible for pension credit.

The DWP said: “We will work with local authorities to bring together the administration of pension credit and housing benefit as soon as operationally possible.”

EDUCATION

Study finds free schools a costly social experiment

By Pol Allingham

England’s free schools have been branded “a costly experiment” after a study found social segregation increased in areas where primary free schools had opened.

Researchers at University College London (UCL) found the introduction of free primaries reduced student numbers in neighbouring schools, which could lead to cuts in their staff and curriculum.

Free schools in England are government-funded but not run by the local authority, do not have to follow the national curriculum and cannot select pupils based on their academic ability.

Introduced in 2010, UCL researchers said they were “intended to be high-quality alternatives, offering parents better choice and increas-

ing attainment by boosting competition between local schools, driving up performance”.

However, their analysis found primary free schools led to “modest increases” in segregation for pupils speaking English as an additional language, black, Asian and ethnic minority students, and also white British students.

The researchers said that children in areas with primary free schools were increasingly divided by ethnicity as pupils were less likely to meet peers from different backgrounds at school.

Niamh Sweeney, deputy general secretary of the National Education Union, said: “The free school programme rests on the corrosive idea that increasing competition by opening a new school is the way to drive school improvement across an area.”

HEALTH

Make sunscreen VAT-free and avoid 17,000 cancer cases, say Lib Dems

By Paul Gallagher

VAT on high-factor sun cream should be cut to tackle skin cancer, the Liberal Democrats are urging the Government.

The party says making high-factor protective sunscreens exempt from VAT would make them more affordable and increase their use.

They also want a broader care package to cut cancer treatment times, including recruiting more cancer nurses.

Many patients are waiting longer than the 62-day standard to start treatment, according to data from 49 NHS hospital trusts.

One patient at Norwich and Norfolk NHS Trust was left waiting 345 days following an urgent referral for treatment.

Cancer Research UK predicts there will be a record 20,800 cases diagnosed this year – up from a yearly average of 19,300 between 2020 and 2022.

It estimates that almost 90 per cent, or about 17,000 of cases of melanoma skin cancer, could be prevented by staying safe in the sun and avoiding sunbeds.

Lib Dem deputy leader and health spokesperson Daisy Cooper said the state of cancer services in the UK “is shocking and tragic”.

“We are seeing people up and down the country left waiting far too long for the care they need,” she said.

“This recent hot weather should serve as a stark reminder that skin cancer services are in desperate need of support and the staggering increase in referrals shows we must do more to prevent people from getting skin cancer in the first place.”

“That means making it affordable for people to protect themselves from skin cancer by cutting VAT on high-factor protective sunscreen and securing a public commitment from major retailers that they will pass on the benefit to consumers.”

The Lib Dems are urging the Government to introduce a guarantee that 100 per cent of patients will be able to start cancer treatment within 62 days of an urgent referral. The



Skaters and runners enjoy the heat in Battersea Park yesterday; sun cream can be difficult to afford JUSTIN TALLIS/AFP

party is also calling on ministers to recruit more cancer nurses so that every patient has a dedicated specialist supporting them throughout their treatment.

The Department of Health and Social Care said: “As part of our mission to get the NHS back on its feet, we will improve cancer survival rates by hitting all NHS cancer waiting time and early diagnosis targets within five years.”

“High-factor sunscreen is on the NHS prescription list for certain conditions and is already provided VAT-free when dispensed by a pharmacist to these patients.”

i A survey for Melanoma Focus found that 50 per cent of people think **sun cream is too expensive**, with one in 10 saying they do not use it due to the cost.

SOCIETY

Unplanned pregnancies may rise due to pharmacy cuts

By Alannah Francis

Unplanned pregnancies in England could increase as women struggle to access emergency contraception because of pharmacy closures and cutbacks, health experts have warned.

Dame Lesley Regan, trustee of the charity Wellbeing of Women and Women’s Health Ambassador for England, said a drop in the number of pharmacies providing such services would have a “massive impact” on women’s health and maternity.

The National Pharmacy Association said by October the number of pharmacies in England

could fall below 10,000 for the first time in 20 years.

Dame Lesley said: “One of the reasons why contraception has become so difficult to access is women have not been able to get to GPs.”

Dr Janet Barter, president of the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, said women have been reporting it is increasingly challenging to get hold of emergency contraception, with some saying they have visited pharmacies which are not providing the service.

A Department of Health spokesperson said: “We are monitoring closures closely.”

NHS

Most people unaware of physician associates

By Storm Newton

More than half of people in the UK have never heard of – or know nothing about – physician associates (PAs), a poll has found.

However, people expressed a small preference for the idea of NHS funding being used to recruit and train these staff if it means shorter waiting times for appointments, according to the poll conducted by Ipsos for the Press Association news agency.

Leading GPs said it is important people have more information on PAs, and stressed that it should be made clear to patients being treated by them that they are not doctors.

The British Medical Association also warned that “efforts to cut waiting lists must not come at the cost of patient safety”.

The poll, of 1,127 people over the age of 16, found 57 per cent had either never heard of PAs or had heard of the role but knew nothing about it.

Medical associate professions roles, which includes PAs and anaesthesia associates (AAs), were introduced to the NHS workforce in the early 2000s to bolster access to care for patients.

However, they have been under scrutiny following high-profile mistakes, including the death of 30-year-old Emily Chesterton (*inset*), who was misdiagnosed by a PA twice before dying of a blood clot in 2022.

The NHS’s long-term workforce plans set out an ambition to establish a workforce of 10,000 PAs by 2036-37 and, from December this year, both PAs and AAs will be regulated by the General Medical Council.

An NHS spokesperson said: “The NHS has always been clear about the role physician associates play in supporting clinical teams to provide high-quality care for patients. They are not replacements for doctors, but support with specific tasks they are trained to do, under supervision.”



EDUCATION

Underfunded universities could close or cut courses

By Connie Dimsdale

Universities will have to cut subjects and increase lecture sizes and will be unable to renovate buildings as they face budget shortfalls, higher education experts have warned.

Forty per cent of universities are projected to run budget deficits this year as a third make redundancies.

Jonathan Simons, a former Downing Street education official and now head of education at Public First, said many students starting this

year could notice a “steady decline” in opportunities and some courses could close.

And Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute think-tank, said there have been other periods in British history when universities have been “progressively underfunded” – so we know what happens.

“Assuming they don’t go bust,

what happens is they cram the lecture halls full of students so the staff-student ratio gets worse and it takes longer for your essays to get marked, and maybe fewer essays are set.”

Mr Hillman added that “buildings progressively deteriorate” meaning students study in “tattier” environments and universities are unlikely to hit net zero targets.

The Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson (*inset*), has acknowledged the challenge facing the sector but said raising tuition fees would be “unpalatable”. But civil servants are understood to have options for Ms Phillipson to consider, including increasing fees.



SCHOOLS

Expert proposes GCSEs shake-up

By Eleanor Busby

The Government should rethink “demoralising” and “soul-destroying” compulsory GCSE resits for pupils who do not achieve a standard pass in English or maths, an expert has suggested.

Professor Alan Smithers, director of the Centre for Education and Employment Research at the University of Buckingham, said the policy should be replaced with an alternative to help those fail-

ing the GCSEs “to achieve fluency in handling words and numbers”.

Pupils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland get results for GCSEs, and many vocational and technical qualifications, on Thursday.

He also said GCSEs “should not bear exactly the same name” in England, Wales and Northern Ireland as they have “grown so far apart” in the devolved nations.



Stefano Hatfield, page 22

COVER STORY

3,000 children and teens spiked by 'zombie' drugs in vapes and drinks

Exclusive In the past three years, misuse of the 'spice' narcotic has led to youth cardiac episodes. By **Sanya Burgess**

Almost 3,000 children and teenagers are believed to have been spiked in the last three years, according to an investigation by **i**, which reveals that incidents are set to reach record levels.

Often vapes are laced with spice – the synthetic narcotic known as a “zombie” drug because it can leave users temporarily paralysed.

Freedom of Information request responses from 31 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales show that the number of recorded vape spiking incidents last year had quadrupled since 2022 and is set to hit record levels.

Headteachers have told **i** of children being rushed to hospital after inhaling spiked vapes. One told of pupils experiencing “cardiac episodes” as well as “dissociation, paranoia, [and] a kind of psychosis”.

Separate research this year showed that almost a fifth of the confiscated vapes contained illegal drugs, with 93 per cent of those containing spice.

Professor Chris Pudney of the University of Bath, who carried out the research, warned that children could unknowingly risk overdosing on the drug.

“That’s why we’re seeing these really harmful outcomes of children collapsing and children ending up in intensive care,” he said.

“Spiking” is when a substance is put into a person’s body through a drink or injection without their consent. Vape spiking is when an e-cigarette contains unexpected intoxicants, when a person accepts



a vape unaware that it has other substances in it, or when someone’s vape is tampered with.

The investigation found that despite the rise in vape spiking among under-18s, the number is small compared with those who have unknowingly ingested drugs through tampered drinks.

The most common method of spiking of teenagers and children recorded in police data was drink spiking (62 per cent). This was followed by needle (17 per cent), other/unknown (16 per cent) and vape/cigarette spiking (3 per cent).

i’s analysis showed that vape spiking is on the rise. The rates recorded in the first five months of 2024 had almost reached the levels of 2023 as a whole, and are rising.

More than a third of incidents between 2021 and 2023 were from spiked drinks, where police figures were broken down by year and

method of attack. Campaigner Colin Mackie, whose 18-year-old son died after someone put large quantities of the Class A drug ecstasy into his soft drink, said: “I was really shocked when I saw the findings. I didn’t realise it was quite as bad as that... It’s getting really frightening.”

Other alarming data included incidents in which a teenage girl was given drug-laced sweets before she was raped; a 13-year-old girl attending a party “where [she] became unconscious and is believed to have been spiked”; and where a child collapsed after being given a spiked vape.

Spiking is a notoriously under-reported crime, with many victims

At least 568 children aged 16 are thought to have been spiked, with 116 of those aged 13 or younger

feeling embarrassed or that they are to blame. Official numbers are thought to be significantly lower than the reality.

The data show 3,115 young victims aged 18 and under were recorded as being spiked between 2019 and 2024.

At least 568 children aged 16 or under are thought to have been spiked, with 116 of those aged 13 or below.

Children are much more likely to be spiked after they start secondary school, and further still once they enter sixth form or go to college.

Most victims were female, although some campaigners believe the rate among boys may be higher as they could be less likely to come forward to report.

i approached police forces seeking the data after warnings that the numbers of children being spiked using a vape were increasing.

Pupils taken to hospital

Instead of the end-of-break bell, pupils at St Ambrose Barlow RC High School in Manchester heard shouts ringing out across the playground.

Two Year Nine boys had been sneaking a drag on a vape before they had to head back to class – only to suddenly collapse on the ground.

It was immediately clear to teachers that this was not a case of children mucking around. Shock was written on the faces of nearby pupils.

Swift action saw paramedics on the scene in minutes to treat the two unwell 14-year-old boys before they were taken to hospital last autumn.

The teenagers believed they were using ordinary vapes – but a drug had been inserted into the liquid.

The spiking resulted in what headteacher Ben Davis described to **i** as a “cardiac episode” for these two pupils. “The children described really odd symptoms: cartoon hands, being dissociated, paranoia, a kind of psychosis,” he added.

The Metropolitan Police, the largest police force, is among those that did not respond to **i**’s request.

This means – in addition to under-reporting from victims – **i**’s data set is missing some police records.

Assistant Chief Constable Samantha Millar, the National Police Chiefs’ Council’s violence against women and girls strategic programme director, said: “I would encourage anyone who is a victim of spiking to report it to the police. You will be listened to, and you will be taken seriously.”

Labour vowed in the King’s Speech to make spiking a stand-alone offence, although no details have yet emerged.

A spokesperson for the Home Secretary said: “Spiking is an appalling crime that has a lasting impact on victims and seriously undermines public safety, particularly for women.”

INQUEST

Woman dies after eating laundry pods

By **Christian Oliver**

A coroner has issued a warning after a 93-year-old woman with dementia died after eating laundry capsules that looked like sweets.

Elizabeth van der Drift died by a combination of aspiration pneumonia, after ingesting the toxic laundry tablets, and dementia on 19 March this year, the coroner ruled.

After a carer told the inquest that the laundry capsule packaging “bore more than a passing resemblance to a bag of sweets”, assistant coroner Ian Potter, in north London, warned

regulations were paying “insufficient regard” to risks posed to the cognitively impaired.

A prevention of future deaths report said that while it is known some products pose risks to children “there appears to be less acknowledgement of the risks posed to those living with dementia”.

The report has been issued by the Office for Product Safety and Standards, the Health Secretary, and the UK Cleaning Product Indus-

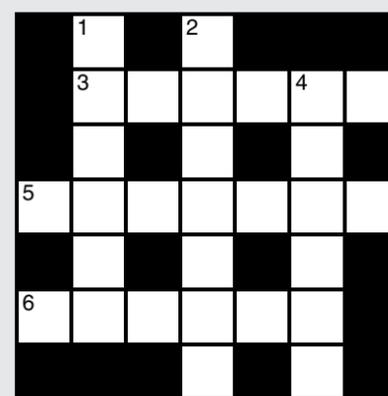
try Association, warning of the dangers bright packaging may cause to vulnerable people. Ms van der Drift (inset) lived with dementia for “a number of years”, Mr Potter said.



He said she would often “go in search in something to eat” and on 13 or 14 March “gained access to laundry detergent tablets [or] pods that were brightly coloured”.

After she “bit into one of them” Ms Van der Drift complained of stomach pain. She died in hospital days later.

The Five-Clue Cryptic Crossword No 4287



Across

3 Plant book found in weather balloons (6)

5/6 Teased nonstop about classic sitcom (7,3)

Down

1 Bleach at the time that the article is installed (6)

2 Plan Post Office put in writing (7)

4 One certain to be plentiful (6)

Solution, page 47

EQUALITY

Hatred against women and girls to be treated as extremism

By Claudia Savage

The Home Office minister Jess Phillips has said misogyny will be treated like “any other extremist ideology”, as the Government pledges to fill in “gaps” in countering radicalisation.

As part of its strategy for tackling violence against women and girls, Labour previously announced plans to create a perpetrator programme to target the 1,000 most dangerous abusers and sex offenders.

Under the proposed plans, the police would be required to “relentlessly pursue” perpetrators who posed a risk to women, using counter-terror-style data analysis and tactics to get repeat serious offenders off the streets, with the aim of increasing women’s safety.

On concerns that treating misogyny as extremism could criminalise free speech, Ms Phillips (*inset*) told LBC: “You just use the exact same test you would with far-right extremism and Islamism, wouldn’t you.

“People can hold views about women all they like, but it’s not OK any more to ignore the massive growing threat caused by online hatred towards women [or] for us to ignore it because we’re worried

about the line, rather than making sure the line is in the right place as we would do with any other extremist ideology.”

On Saturday, the Home Office announced a crackdown on people “pushing harmful and hateful beliefs” to “kick-start” a new approach to fighting extremism. The strategy will look at the rise of both Islamist and far-right extremism in the UK, as well as wider ideological trends, including extreme misogyny.

The MP for Birmingham Yardley said the new plans were about “looking at exactly what those definitions are” and filling in “gaps”.

The Government’s approach would require police forces to use data and intelligence on named suspects of rape, stalking and domestic abuse to devise a matrix of people who posed the most threat in their area – identifying, monitoring and targeting the most prolific perpetrators of violence against women and girls to prevent reoffending.

Once identified, Labour had said perpetrators should be targeted using the tactics and tools normally reserved for counter-terror and organised crime such as covert and surveillance operations.

A Labour Party spokesperson said: “Keir Starmer set out a historic mission to halve violence against women and girls in a decade. That requires a complete transformation in how every government department and agency approaches these devastating crimes.”



i Forces will be asked to systematically rank high-risk suspects according to the frequency, date and severity of the allegations against them.

POLICING

Fall in child strip searches

By Aine Fox

The number of child strip searches by police forces across England and Wales appears to be falling but safeguarding failures remain a problem, according to a report from the Children’s Commissioner.

There were 3,368 strip searches of children carried out by 44 police forces – including British Transport Police – between January 2018 and June 2023, according to data provided by forces to the commissioner.

Dame Rachel de Souza’s latest report shows the number of strip searches – those exposing intimate parts – under stop and search of children in England and Wales in 2022 was 42 per cent lower than in 2020. There was a “sharp reduction” in the proportion of all searches in London.

PRISONS

Riots may trigger emergency plan

By Sam Hall

The Government could trigger an emergency plan to avoid prison overcrowding as rioters are sentenced, according to the Prison Officers’ Association.

It followed reports in The Observer that the Government could be about to trigger Operation Early Dawn.

The long-standing contingency measure, which was last triggered by the Conservative government in May, allows defendants to be held in police cells until prison beds become available, but could mean their court dates are delayed or adjourned at short notice.

The Ministry of Justice has been approached for comment.



SOCIETY

‘People are angry at the world – and the asylum hotel became a target’

Riots are not what Rotherham is, **Steve Robson** is told

Ten days after it was ransacked by racist rioters, the Holiday Inn Express hotel in Wath upon Dearne, South Yorkshire, is a forlorn sight.

No less than 20 broken windows are boarded over. Piles of broken glass fill up a skip outside the front entrance, which remains cordoned off by police tape.

A few staff are around, but they appear nervous and keen to stay away from the steady stream of journalists who have come to examine the wreckage.

Shoppers visiting the Aldi opposite stare, and many feel the need to talk about the shocking events that unfolded on 4 August.

According to now-deleted Facebook posts, obtained by **i**,

the idea of an anti-immigrant demonstration was first shared by Connor McAllister, a 34-year-old plasterer who lives a few streets away from the hotel.

Calling for a “peaceful protest” starting at midday, Mr McAllister wrote: “Right people it’s time to wake up, take a stand make our area safe for our women and children.

“As most of you will already know, there’s hundreds of migrants been housed in the holiday inn [sic] on Manvers Way in Wath.

“As long as they are there it’s a potential risk to our community. Look what happened in Southport. That could be your child. We need them out.”

After five days of civil unrest sparked by the stabbings in Southport which left three children

dead, Mr McAllister’s words proved powerful. A similar protest organised by far-right figures at the same hotel in 2023 only mustered about 50 people, who were far outnumbered by police and counter-protesters.

This time, at least 500 demonstrators turned up – and the atmosphere was febrile from the start, eyewitnesses said.

“The counter-protesters were escorted out by police quite quickly at about 12pm,” one resident said. “I had to go and fetch my daughter from her job at the retail park and come back through it.

“I was disgusted and scared for the people that were in the hotel.”

Aldi started clearing its shelves of alcohol – not that it mattered much, as many of the protesters arrived



Puncturing knife culture

People gather in Southwark Park for the BikeStormz community ride against knife crime through central London on Saturday. Founded in 2014, the annual mass cycle ride promotes the message 'Bikes up, knives down'.

MAJA SMIEJKOWSKA/REUTERS

CRIME

Amnesty for 'zombie' knives ahead of full ban next month

By Rhiannon James

People in possession of zombie-style knives and machetes are being urged to hand them in to police ahead of an outright ban.

The Government said there will be no repercussions for those surrendering the knives, while the policing minister Dame Diana Johnson urged the public to "do the right thing".

From 24 September, zombie-style knives and machetes will be added to a prohibited list of dangerous items – which also includes butterfly knives, samurai swords and push daggers.

The Government stopped short of announcing a ban on ninja swords in the King's speech, but Dame Diana said it intends to make these illegal in future, as part of its plan to halve knife crime within the next 10 years.

Dame Diana said: "Too many people have access to weapons that can lead to devastating, life-changing consequences.

"There is no legitimate need for a weapon of this kind to be in our homes or on our streets. That is why we will continue to make sure the tightest restrictions are in place to limit the availability of these lethal

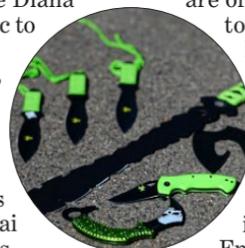
weapons. Implementing a ban on zombie-style knives is just the first step in our ambitious, dedicated plan to halve knife crime within a decade, and will closely be followed by making ninja swords illegal.

"It is absolutely crucial that members of the public come forward and safely hand in these weapons. We are offering people the chance to do the right thing – to help make our streets safer, prevent further loss of life and save so many futures."

The scheme will run for four weeks from 26 August to 23 September in police stations across England and Wales.

Knife owners are being told to contact their designated police station first to get advice on how to package up any weapons and bring them into the station.

They can also anonymously dispose of weapons using surrender bins, by contacting police, the council or an anti-knife crime charity.



i The Government said anyone found with a zombie-style knife or a machete following the ban will face **time behind bars**.

SOCIETY

Fundraiser for jailed rioter nets nearly £3,500

By Sam Hall

A fundraiser for a man jailed for throwing objects at police near a hotel housing asylum seekers has attracted criticism.

Dominic Capaldi, 34, was jailed on Wednesday for 34 months after admitting violent disorder in Bristol on 3 August.

The construction worker was seen throwing objects at police who were trying to prevent protesters gaining entry to the Mercure Hotel, which is used to house asylum seekers.

The fundraiser, set up after Capaldi's guilty plea, is called: "Help Doms family after an unlawful prison sentence."

Among those to have already donated is the divisive influencer Tristan Tate, who is the brother of Andrew Tate, who posted on social media platform X after pledging £2,500.

But comments in response to the post include: "Are you really this stupid? As he pleaded guilty, what's 'unlawful' about his well-earned sentence?"

Another read: "Sending money because a man was attacking police officers, you guys are hitting new lows by the day."

Yesterday morning, the fundraiser had reached £3,470 – exceeding its £1,000 target.

Crowdfunder has been approached for comment.

already carrying crates of beer. By 2pm, masked rioters had started smashing windows and hurling objects at police officers.

The former leader of the English Defence League, Tommy Robinson (real name Stephen Christopher Yaxley-Lennon), tweeted footage of the chaos on his X account.

He wrote: "This is what happens when British peoples concerns [sic] are ignored."

Although South Yorkshire Police had been aware of the protest and sent officers in riot gear to the scene, bosses had been anticipating the most likely location for disorder would be Sheffield city centre and found themselves stretched.

As the situation deteriorated, rioters forced their way into the hotel through broken windows and began roaming the corridors looking for asylum seekers to attack.

Fortunately, none of the 200 people staying in the hotel were seriously injured before police managed to flush out the attackers.

But then, in what South Yorkshire Police described as a "sickening" moment, rioters set one of the hotel's large wheelie bins alight and began trying to push it into the building. Once again, their attempts were unsuccessful.

At least one person has since been arrested on suspicion of arson with intent to endanger life.

The disorder continued long

into the night, with residents describing clashes with police until 4am. More than 60 police officers, dogs and horses were injured, including at least one who was knocked unconscious.

South Yorkshire's Mayor, Oliver Coppard, said seasoned officers were shocked at the level of violence they had been subjected to. He was in no doubt that rioters were intending to physically harm asylum seekers.

Mr Coppard, writing on iNews.co.uk, said he was "devastated" by the events but "that violence does not represent the place I know".

"The South Yorkshire I know and love is defined by a sense of community, of connection to one another," he wrote.

"That commitment to community

is the legacy of our industrial past. The coal mines and steel mills that were once central to both our economy and our identity were built on the idea that we all rely on each other."

Mr McAllister has not responded to i's requests for comment. But in the aftermath of the violence he apologised via another post on his Facebook page.

"It was always our intention to keep it peaceful and for the first hour it was," he wrote.

Mr McAllister then went on to claim the protest "escalated out of control" because asylum seekers watching from the hotel windows made threats and indecently exposed themselves, though he did not provide any evidence of this.

The broader truth is that

numerous factors, both local and national, recent and long-standing, led up to the hotel riot.

Like many parts of Yorkshire, Wath, near Rotherham, is still struggling with the realities of being a former mining town.

A 2019 report produced by researchers at Sheffield Hallam University illustrated a clear pattern among the former coalfields of England, Scotland and Wales.

In recent decades, population growth in these areas has less been half the average for Britain's regional cities, the number of people claiming disability benefit is higher, and far fewer jobs have been created. These are fertile conditions for discontent.

"People have these thoughts that immigration is people from other countries getting more than them, because there's been a level of deprivation here," one father walking his dog near the hotel said.

"It's capitalising on what deprivation is. I've lived here all my life, 54 years, I saw the miner's strike in 1984, there's been significant deprivation in this area because the main industry, the pits, has been taken away.

"It's steadily been getting on, in the last 20 or 30 years, it's taken that long. But there's still deprivation and they're [the far right] exploiting it.

"My father was a miner, right up until the last pit closed in 2012. I



Local residents have described being 'disgusted' by the attack on a Holiday Inn – which was housing asylum seekers – in Rotherham this month. REUTERS

don't think the new generation want to be a 'former mining town'. I've got kids – they are proud, this was a significant industry. But we're not a former mining town: we're growing, we're changing.

"It does tarnish that view that people have of northern towns, there we're intolerant, that we have racist views – we don't."

South Yorkshire Police has promised to bring those involved to justice and dozens of people have already appeared in court.

Sir Keir Starmer's Government hopes this kind of fast-tracked

i "I don't think the new generation want to be a 'former mining town'. We're growing and changing

justice will help to stamp out disorder in the short term. But the wounds left by rioting in places like Wath will take much longer, and a lot more work, to heal.

"People are angry at the world... and this just became a target," one mother pushing her children in a pram outside the hotel said.

"I've never seen them [the asylum seekers] doing anything wrong. I've never felt unsafe. It's never bothered me.

"It's awful... I hope they get somewhere nice to live now. They're innocent people aren't they... just born in a different country."

RUSSIA

Putin successor could be worse, says freed Orlov

Dissident swapped this month feels safe in West but still fears for his homeland. By **Rob Hastings**

Vladimir Putin's opponents hope that Ukraine's Kursk offensive will undermine his authority and eventually lead to a coup. But one of Russia's bravest dissidents has a warning: his successor could be even worse.

Oleg Orlov was among the 16 people released from Russian jails this month in the most historic prisoner exchange with the US since the Cold War, alongside the American reporter Evan Gershkovich and the activist Vladimir Kara-Murza.

Orlov was serving a sentence of 2.5 years for denouncing Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Speaking to **i** from Berlin, where he is recovering from his time in captivity, he describes the "cruel" conditions he endured – of 12 people sharing primitive cells with only 10 beds.

Nobody wants to see the downfall of Putin's "fascist" regime more than 71-year-old Orlov, who is chairman of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning human rights organisation Memorial. He suffered years of intimidation before his jail time and has mourned murdered colleagues.

He has been following news of the Kursk incursion. With Ukraine's forces apparently controlling 1,000 sq km of Russian territory and still advancing, Orlov thinks this "small crack" in Russia's defences – and its pride – has the potential to widen.

If it isn't stopped, this could "lead to problems for Putin's regime".

It is "quite possible" that an army commander might try to oust the President if the Kursk situation worsens, he believes. But any military leader bold enough to do this may be yet more extreme in their methods and aims.

Orlov reckons that last year's aborted revolt by the brutal Wagner mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhiny, who was exiled and later died in a mysterious plane crash, indicates the sheer level of ruthlessness that a presidential rival might possess.

In an interview through an interpreter, he says Putin remains very conscious of potential threats from hardline nationalists angry about military failings in Ukraine.

"That is why this regime harshly suppresses any opposition from even more reactionary forces,



Oleg Orlov with his wife, Tatiana Kasatkina, who has stayed in Russia

from those who in Russia are called 'Z patriots,' says Orlov. "They're imprisoned or removed from the army if they make any critical statements."

Intelligence experts have been cautioning for some time about who might try to overthrow Putin. In 2022, the former MI6 director Sir Alex Younger said that he was "in danger of being outflanked" by the "arguably fascist right wing".

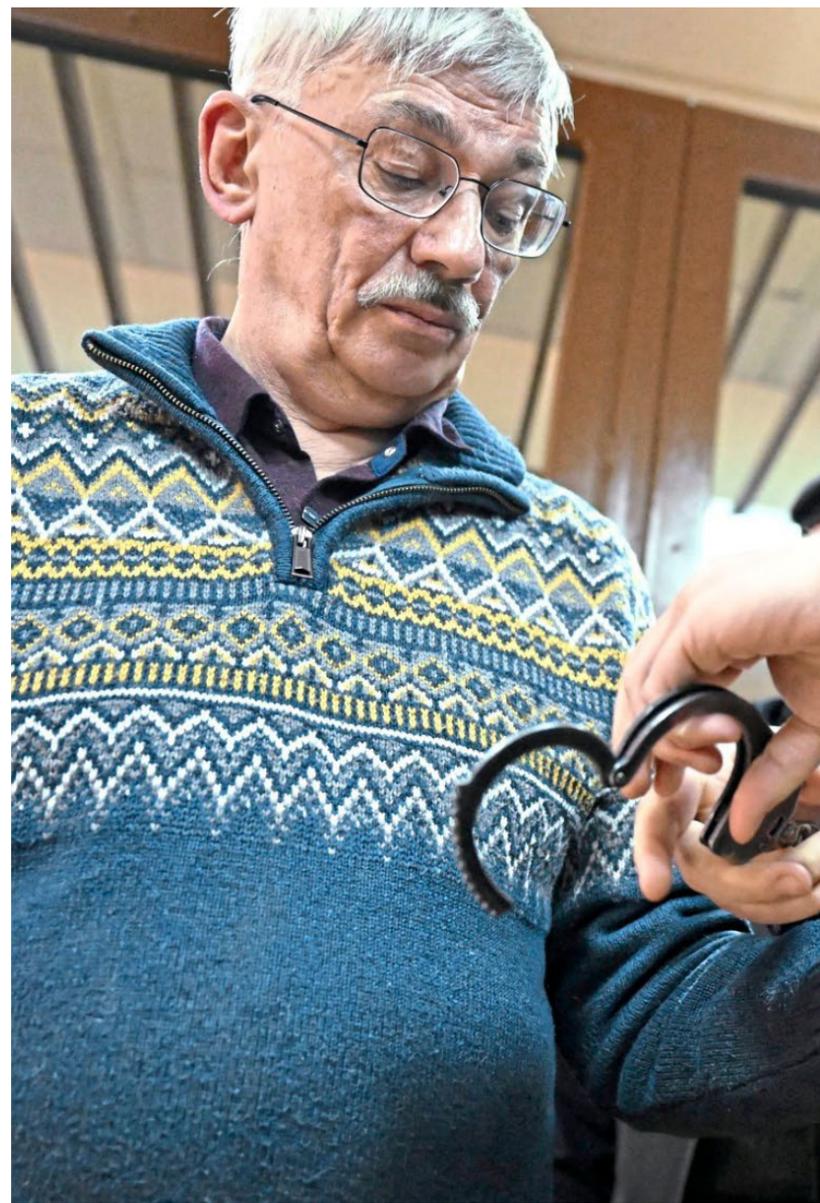
The chances of any replacement coming from Russia's far right can only have increased following the death of Alexei Navalny in February.

Navalny was seen as the only opposition leader with enough popular support to mount a realistic bid for the presidency. But he died in a penal colony while negotiations were apparently under way to include him in a prisoner exchange.

His allies allege that he must have been killed on Putin's orders, although the Kremlin has strongly denied this.

"This was a beautiful person. He could have become a unifying figure against Putin and that's why he was murdered," Orlov claims. "I was devastated. Huge masses of people were really shocked."

The mild-mannered Orlov seems an unlikely enemy for Putin. A plant biologist in his 70s with glasses and grey hair, he often attended his trial in patterned jumpers. Yet during much of Putin's presidency, this quietly defiant man has felt at



risk over his activism: "For many years, I've been aware that people in uniforms could come for me at any moment – and if they wanted to, they could kill me at any time."

Orlov was jailed in February. He knew for some time this was likely to happen but still remained in Russia, feeling it was an important display of his principles.

He didn't have any inkling he was going to be released until suddenly being presented with a pardon on the morning of 1 August.

Within hours, he was on a bus to the airport. Only now, in Germany, "I feel safe for the first time" in a long while, he says.

But mixed with this relief is a longing for his homeland. He is yet to be reunited with his wife, Tatiana Kasatkina, who remains in Russia and phones him midway through our conversation.

He feels "discomfort" at being released after only a few months. Hundreds of other people labelled in the West as political prisoners have been locked up for much longer. He alleges that some of them

This regime harshly suppresses opposition from even more reactionary forces – called 'Z patriots'

MILITARY

Ukraine destroys second Kursk bridge to hinder Kremlin forces

By Sara Keenan

Ukrainian forces have destroyed a second bridge in Kursk as the incursion in Russia continues.

Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleshchuk published a video showing what he termed a "precise" air strike on the bridge in the village of Zvanooe in the Kursk Oblast.

"Minus one more bridge! The aviation of the air force continues to deprive the enemy of its logistical capabilities with accurate air strikes,

which significantly affects the course of hostilities," Mr Oleshchuk wrote.

On Friday it was announced Ukraine had destroyed a strategically important bridge near the town of Glushkovo which had been used by the Kremlin to resupply troops.

The Russian Telegram channel Military Observer posted: "If (when) the enemy manages to destroy all good crossings, it will cut off the entire group of the Russian Armed Forces defending in the Glushkovo district."

Meanwhile, Russia's defence ministry claimed that its air defence units destroyed two Ukraine-launched drones over Proletarsk in the Rostov region overnight. Although destroyed, debris from the drones sparked a fire at an oil depot.

"Firefighting units were called in to put out the fire," Governor Vasily Golubev said on Telegram, a messaging app. Dark smoke was seen rising from what appeared to be the depot.

Kyiv has claimed to have taken



A picture circulated yesterday shows smoke rising from a bridge in Kursk

control of 82 settlements over an area of 444 sq miles in the region since 6 August.

In retaliation, a third major mis-

sile strike was carried out on Kyiv yesterday, although most of the projectiles were shot down on approach, Ukrainian officials said.



Plant biologist Oleg Orlov, jailed in February, is in now Berlin ALEXANDER NEMENOVIA/AF

have been tortured into giving false confessions by interrogators who “frequently use electric shocks”.

Given Russia’s record of poisoning dissidents abroad – such as Alexander Litvinenko in London and Sergei Skripal in Salisbury – Orlov knows that even now, “nobody can guarantee 100 per cent safety for me”.

In a warning to the prisoners who were exchanged in August, Putin’s ally Dmitry Medvedev wrote online: “Let them not forget about the perishability of their existence in this world. Let them burn in hell!”

Orlov is not complacent about the world outside Russia. He

is “worried” about what might happen if Donald Trump is elected as US president again – given that he praised Putin’s invasion as “genius” and “savvy” and is reportedly considering cutting off US military aid to Ukraine unless it enters peace talks.

“Trump is dangerous,” he says. “He’s an extreme populist who constantly promises simple solutions to extremely complex things. His words about a resolution on Ukraine contain no serious, realistic plan. It’s empty talk.”

He is also concerned about right-wing populists in Europe, such as Reform UK leader Nigel Farage,

who has said Putin was “provoked” into invading Ukraine.

“These extremely conservative circles in many European countries to some extent share Putin’s world view,” says Orlov. “This state of political redivision of the world is against all the progress that humanity achieved over the last decades. In my opinion, it is not practical either.”

Farage has defended his views by pointing to similar comments made by Boris Johnson in 2016, when the future prime minister said that the EU “caused real trouble” in Ukraine, which was first partially invaded by Russia in 2014.

“I have never sought to justify Putin’s invasion,” Farage wrote in June. He accepted that the “entirely wrong” Russian invasion was “immoral, outrageous and indefensible”, but added: “If you poke the Russian bear with a stick, don’t be surprised if he responds.”

For now, Putin’s government remains strong thanks to his ruthless oppression of critics like Orlov, who admits that there’s no sign of an “imminent collapse”.

The Russian territory that Ukrainian forces claim they control so far is a tiny fraction of the land Putin still holds over the border.

The Kursk offensive has also been contentious among Russian opposition figures, who do not want to celebrate compatriots being killed, injured or displaced.

But Orlov says that many dissidents believe this Ukrainian advance “is a route to the liberation of Russia, that the Ukrainian army are the allies of those fighting for Russia’s freedom”.

Although he does not feel “any pleasure or joy” in the fighting, he is “not prepared to condemn Ukraine” for its Kursk operation, as long as its soldiers “comply with humanitarian laws”.

Overall, it’s absolutely vital for Ukraine to win the war, he says: “Putin’s victory would strengthen his regime for many years, and then post-Putin we would still have a fascist regime.”

“Whether Ukraine’s victory would lead to the destruction of Putin’s regime, that is a possibility although it’s not 100 per cent. But it’s very important for the aggressor not to win.”

After chatting for an hour, Orlov has to go. Back in Russia, his wife is awaiting his call.

NORTH KOREA

Pyongyang hits out at incursion

By Jack Kim

North Korea has condemned Ukraine’s incursion into Russia as an unforgivable act of terror backed by Washington and the broader West, state media said yesterday.

Ukraine’s drive into Russia is pushing the situation to the brink of a third world war, the KCNA news agency said.

North Korea has dramatically upgraded its ties with Russia in the past year. At two recent summits, their leaders pledged closer co-operation in all areas. REUTERS

UKRAINE

Kursk offensive restores faith in Zelensky

But his citizens worry attack will herald wave of retaliations. By **Olga Tokariuk**

Surrounded by secrecy, Ukraine’s incursion into Kursk caught Russia, the West and many Ukrainians by surprise.

“I’m very pleased no one knew anything about the operation,” says Oksana Kovalenko, a journalist from Kyiv. She recalled a previous counter-offensive that was much publicised but “ended badly”, when the Ukrainians proved unable to penetrate multi-layered defence lines that Russia had prepared in the south of the country.

Now, Ukraine’s leadership has learnt it is better to act fast and without much publicity. President Volodymyr Zelensky only confirmed the presence of his country’s troops in Kursk nearly a week after the operation began. Ukrainian soldiers were reportedly told about the assault just before it happened.

While the final outcome remains unclear, the Kursk operation has already changed perceptions of the war. With its bold and asymmetrical move, Ukraine has put discussions about a stalemate and possible negotiations on hold.

Many Ukrainians see the raid as a turning point. It demonstrates their country’s agency, undermining Russia’s portrayal of the conflict as a proxy war with the West.

Ukrainians told **i** it restored their belief that Ukraine could win, as well as their trust in Ukraine’s political and military leadership – which has been undermined by a lack of recent battlefield successes and Zelensky’s sacking of popular army commander Valery Zaluzhny.

“I believe in our defenders and I believe in the [Ukrainian] leadership, no matter what they say,” says Iryna Zaporozhets, whose husband serves in the armed forces. “It’s the third year of full-scale war and we are holding on. We hold on desperately and with dignity. We hold on thanks to such moves that maybe not everyone can understand.”

In Kursk, Ukraine has brought the war home for Russians and exposed the weaknesses of Moscow’s army. Some Ukrainians hope the incursion will make Russians question the cost of war – and Vladimir Putin’s legitimacy.

“When I saw people in Kursk region appealing to Putin, saying, ‘Help, we supported the war and here no one is helping us’, I thought that karma exists,” Kovalenko says.

Some Ukrainians hope the incursion will make Russians question the cost of war



Volodymyr Zelensky’s incursion has boosted morale within Ukraine

“I really want them to understand that these are the consequences of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and of their support.”

While Ukrainians welcomed the Kursk offensive, many were anxious about what could happen next.

Referring to the capture of Russian prisoners of war, Natalia Gromova – an ethnology professor from Kyiv, whose husband is in the army – says: “On the one hand, it’s good the exchange fund has been replenished and there is a chance that the defenders of Mariupol will return home.” But she is also worried about possible Russian retaliation.

Olena Sazonova – originally from a village in Ukraine’s Chernihiv region which has been destroyed by Russian artillery – says she was positive initially, but is now anxious about the safety of the Ukrainian soldiers conducting the Kursk raid.

“The only question in my head is, what is the price of this operation?” she says.

One source in Kyiv’s armed forces says that despite how it has been portrayed by some media, the Kursk incursion has not been an easy one.

“The Russians were waiting for us – the regular army, border guards, Akhmat group [forces loyal to Ramzan Kadyrov, ruler of Chechnya], special forces. To get there, our soldiers had to do thorough demining and overcome strong enemy defences. Our guys are making tremendous efforts: they are wounded, killed; there are ambushes, head-on battles.”

This toll is what Ukrainians would like people in the West to notice.

Olga Tokariuk is a Ukrainian journalist and an Academy Fellow on the Russia and Eurasia Programme at Chatham House

BELARUS

‘Thousands’ of Ukrainian troops amassed at border

By Lucy Papachristou

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said yesterday that Ukraine had stationed more than 120,000 troops at the border and that Minsk had deployed almost a third of its armed forces along the line between the two countries.

“Seeing their aggressive policy, we have introduced there and placed in certain points – in case of war, they would be defence – our military along the entire border,” the Belta state news agency cited Mr Lukashenko

as saying in an interview with Russian state television.

Andriy Demchenko, a spokesperson for Ukraine’s border service, told Ukrainian media outlet *Ukrainska Pravda* yesterday that the situation on the border with Belarus remained unchanged.

“As we can see, Lukashenko’s rhetoric does not change either,” Mr Demchenko said. “We are not seeing any increase in the number of equipment or personnel of Belarusian units near our border.” REUTERS

UNITED STATES

Careful Harris will use convention to enforce poll gains over Trump

Democrats have enjoyed a miraculous turnaround but intense scrutiny lies ahead, writes **Andrew Buncombe**

Kamala Harris – riding high on a wave of enthusiasm and excitement from Democrats – is hoping to use the party's convention which starts today in Chicago to put herself in an unassailable position in the battle against Donald Trump.

Less than a month after Joe Biden stepped aside under mounting pressure, the Vice President has pulled level with Trump in national polls, leads him in five of six of the battleground states, and is tied in Georgia, according to the respected *Cook Political Report*.

So far, experts say, Harris and running mate Tim Walz (*inset*) have not put a foot wrong. But they have largely avoided much of the intense scrutiny that comes during a convention when candidates' policies and personalities go under the spotlight.

"They have avoided any serious missteps," Prof Todd Belt, a political scientist at George Washington University, told *i*. "To date, Harris has been light on policy specifics. That's certainly one reason why she hasn't done any press conferences yet." On Friday, Harris set out economic plans including lowering

the cost of food, reducing taxes, and addressing medical costs, which are often beyond the reach of ordinary Americans. She said she and Mr Biden had done much to restore the "foundations" of economic progress following the Covid pandemic.

With the economy the number one priority for many voters, Harris will seek to distance herself from some of the Biden administration's perceived failures, while embracing successes, such as lowering unemployment and an overall growing economy.

To date, she has only appeared with Biden at one campaign event since she replaced him at the top of the ticket, and the President will speak only this evening, before returning to Washington DC.

While the 81-year-old will likely receive a hero's reception, as someone who put his country ahead of personal ambition, reports say he remains bitter about the way he was treated. His anger is not directed at Harris, who he endorsed as his

To date Harris has been light on policy specifics. That's one reason she hasn't done any press conferences

successor, but rather at Barack Obama for having failed to speak to him, and in particular the so-called "Speaker Emerita", Nancy Pelosi, whose publicly expressed doubt – "It's up to the president to decide if he is going to run" – was seen as the fatal blow.

Obama is due to speak tomorrow night, while former president Bill Clinton will speak on Wednesday, as will Walz. Hillary Clinton, who lost to Trump in 2016, will also address the convention.

While Harris is vulnerable on issues such as the economy and immigration, Trump and running mate JD Vance have not seized on the opportunity to question her record. Instead, Trump has resorted to the race-baiting language he once used to attack Obama, and questioned whether Harris is Black.

Trump this week termed her economic plan "communism", but also accused her of stealing proposals – such as an end to taxation on tips – from him.

Harris, whose is of mixed race and whose mother is Indian and father Jamaican, has chosen not to engage with Trump's racist attacks.

Rather she has suggested Trump – who is 20 years older than her – and his views, are from a different era from which most Americans would rather move on.



People pose in front of a mural of Kamala Harris outside the United Centre in Chicago in the build-up to the Democratic Convention *AFP*

US ELECTION

Democrats want to crown a politician of first rank

Anne McElvoy



Kamala Harris's travel plans to the Chicago Convention began when her role was simply to whip up support for a faltering veteran president. On 21 July, that dating status with the US electorate changed when Biden decided to quit the Democratic Party candidacy.

This week it is Harris who will undergo a coronation at the convention. It is a history-making event, with heightened security in the wake of the near-fatal attack on Donald Trump last month.

Harris will be the first woman of black and South Asian descent to lead a party ticket – and the first

candidate to do so after a sitting president quit the White House race since Lyndon Johnson decided not to seek a second term in 1968. Hubert Humphrey, hastily inserted on the Democratic ticket, lost to Richard Nixon in that race.

Long shadows of past failure are something the Harris camp has sought to expel since she became the presumptive nominee. Her campaign, exuding buoyancy and high-energy optimism, is focusing on the potential gains of the switch.

She has restarted the spluttering Democratic campaign while polls in swing states are giving her the edge on many issues. As her folksy Veep bidder Tim Walz will say, she will "bring back the joy" and with it the hopes of many black, Hispanic and younger voters underwhelmed by the staid Biden campaign.

A reality check might add that joy is relative – Harris's style is still a



Kamala Harris and second gentleman Doug Emhoff board a flight yesterday ahead of the Democratic Convention

tad forced: stern and a bit shouty on the podium, rather than beguiling, and she's mocked by her enemies for her sudden gusts of laughter, which can be startling.

Her strength is as a legal prosecutor and taking adversaries to task. But she has rattled the Trump camp and the Trump-Vance

campaign is struggling to find attack lines. Harris meanwhile is going straight-arrow for Trump as a convicted felon, dangerous to stability and unfit for office.

But she needs a clearer theory of her own case and to flesh out a CV which will strike many voters as legalistic and leaning heavily on liberal social causes.

Her political career in California was launched as district attorney in San Francisco and as attorney general in California, the state where she attracted Republican support for crackdowns on gangs and organised criminals operating across the southern border.

Loath to be the "Border Tsar" responsible for a wavering approach to illegal immigration, she was accused of dodging responsibility for a poorly regulated influx of asylum seekers from Mexico and beyond.

It's an Achilles heel. She also needs to boost her appeal on the economy and is trailing a clutch of vaguely populist pledges, including an end to "price gouging" – spikes in supermarket food costs.

Pledges on housebuilding, healthcare costs and mortgage relief mark the transition the Harris camp wants to "reintroduce" a more rounded vice-president – not just an attorney general from California and member of the coastal elites but a candidate with the potential to run the country as a power broker in her own right.

Harris needs to establish herself not only as the prosecutor of Trump's record, but also as a politician of the first rank. Chicago is a coronation: but also an audition she can't afford to fail.

Anne McElvoy hosts the *Power Play* podcasts for Politico



CAMPAIGNS

Demonstrators to descend on Chicago convention

By Sophia Tareen

Thousands of activists are expected to converge on Chicago this week for the Democratic National Convention, hoping to call attention to abortion rights, economic injustice and the war in Gaza.

While Vice President Kamala Harris has energised crowds of supporters as she prepares to accept the Democratic nomination, activists maintain their mission remains the same.

Organisers say they are predicting bigger crowds and more robust demonstrations in Chicago, a city with deep social activism roots.

Demonstrations are expected every day of the convention to highlight various agendas, beginning on the convention's eve with an abortion rights march along the city's iconic Michigan Avenue.



Activists want to get their message across of an 'international issue'

Linda Loew, co-founder of Chicago for Abortion Rights (CFAR), said even though Democrats have pushed to safeguard US reproductive rights, the issue is international.

CFAR will march in solidarity with people everywhere who struggle for the right to control what happens to their bodies, she said. AP

ELECTIONS

Harris lead over Trump in polls widens

By Victoria Crow

Vice President Kamala Harris is leading her Republican rival for the presidency, Donald Trump, in the latest opinion polls, although the race remains tight with Trump more trusted by voters on the economy and immigration.

A *Washington Post*/ABC/Ipsos poll published yesterday found that Harris and her running mate, Governor Tim Walz, led Trump and his vice presidential pick, JD Vance, by 50 per cent to 45 per cent among all adults.

Among likely voters, Harris has a six-point lead over Trump, 51 per cent to 45 per cent.

Another *New York Times* poll published on Saturday found Harris leading Trump among voters in key swing states.

GAZA

Israeli strikes kill quintuplets as US envoy attempts ceasefire talks

By Wafaa Shurafa and Samy Magdy
IN DEIR AL-BALAH

Israeli strikes across Gaza killed 28 people yesterday, including young quintuplets, local health officials said, as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken headed to the region to try to seal a ceasefire deal after months of negotiations.

The US and fellow mediators Egypt and Qatar said they were closing in on a deal after two days of talks in Doha, with American and Israeli officials expressing cautious optimism, although Hamas has signalled resistance to what it called 'new demands'.

The evolving proposal calls for a three-phase process in which Hamas would release all hostages abducted during its 7 October attack. In exchange, Israel would withdraw its forces from Gaza and release Palestinian prisoners.

The war has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, displaced the majority of the territory's 2.3m residents, and led experts to warn of famine and disease outbreaks.

"It is as if we live a primitive life," said Sanaa Akela, a displaced Palestinian now in Deir al-Balah.

The latest Israeli bombardment included a strike on a home in Deir al-Balah that killed a woman and her six children, according to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, including 10-year-old quintuplets.

Mohammed Awad Khatab, the children's grandfather, said his



Children wounded in an Israeli strike are taken to a Gaza hospital yesterday

daughter was a teacher, and the youngest child was 18 months. "The six children have become body parts. They were placed in a single bag," he said. "What did they do? Did they kill any of the Jews? ... Will this provide security to Israel?"

Another strike east of Deir al-Balah killed at least four people, according to an AP journalist at the hospital. A strike in Jabaliya killed two men, a woman and her daughter, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Another two strikes in central Gaza killed nine people, according to Al-Awda Hospital. Late Saturday, a strike near Khan Younis killed four people from the same family, according to Nasser Hospital.

An American official said on Friday that mediators were preparing the latest ceasefire proposal, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office expressed "cautious optimism" that a deal could be reached. Mr Blinken will meet with Mr Netanyahu today. AP

POLICY

Foreign Office official quits over arms sales to Israel

By Richard Vaughan

A Foreign Office official, who worked in counterterrorism, has quit his role in protest over the continued sale of arms from the UK to Israel, it has emerged.

Mark Smith, who was based at the British Embassy in Dublin (*inset*), wrote to colleagues on Friday last week, warning the UK Government "may be complicit in war crimes" over its continuing export of arms to Israel for use in Gaza.

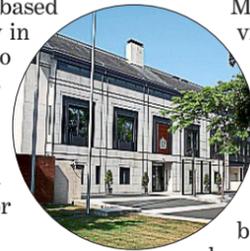
In a resignation email, seen by the BBC which first reported the news, Mr Smith said he had raised concerns "at every level" in the Foreign Office, including as an official whistle-blower.

It comes after *i* reported in April

that civil servants in the Department for Business and Trade overseeing the export of arms to Israel were threatening legal action against the Government amid concerns they may be found to be in breach of international law over the war in Gaza.

Mr Smith said he had previously worked assessing arms export licensing to the Middle East, adding that "each day" colleagues were witnessing "clear and unquestionable examples" of war crimes and breaches of international humanitarian law by Israel in Gaza. He added there was "no justification for the UK's continued arms sales to Israel".

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "This government is committed to upholding international law."



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EXCLUSIVE

Crisis deepens as thousands of cheap rentals are withdrawn

Housing associations moving to home ownership models. By **Keith Cooper**

Thousands fewer cheaper homes could soon be available for rent due to the affordable housing “scandal” revealed by **i** that has left brand new properties sitting empty and unused.

Experts predict knock-on effects from the unfolding crisis, caused by housing associations being unable to afford the homes, will hit families already suffering the surging prices of an overheated rental market.

i has identified examples of developers and councils switching affordable rental properties towards home ownership models because they can't find associations to act as landlords. Experts say this trend will continue unless urgent government action is taken. And they predict it will mean a halving of the annual supply of new “social rent” homes – the cheapest category of affordable housing most accessible to homeless families.

There are fears a reduction in rental homes caused by the crisis will trap even more homeless families in often substandard temporary accommodation. A record-breaking 117,450 homeless households are stuck in these stop-gaps, including more than 151,000 children, according to the latest figures, released last week.



Polly Neate (*inset*), chief executive of homelessness charity Shelter, said: “New builds that have been designated as social rent must stay that way and not be converted to home-ownership products.”

“Every day we see the terrible toll of not having enough genuinely affordable social homes: from record levels of homelessness to millions being trapped in expensive and substandard private rentals.”

At the centre of the new national crisis is housing associations' increasing inability and reluctance to buy and run the Section 106 affordable homes that developers have been legally obliged to build by planning agreements as part of bigger private estates.

i revealed this month that the new homes have been left empty and unused for as long as three years, as developers complain that the associations – which do not legally have to buy them – have “shut up shop”.

The associations – facing funding cuts and “huge bills” for their existing homes to fix unsafe cladding and rid them of their damp and mould – say they can no longer afford the new homes.

Councils and developers have begun to react to these problems by switching the use of Section 106 affordable homes away from the rental market. In some cases this



involves a category of affordable homes known as “affordable rent”. These rentals have rates set between the cheapest “social rent” levels and up to 80 per cent of rates charged on the private rental market. More than 11,600 such affordable rental homes were built through Section 106 agreements in 2022-23.

In Shoeburyness, Essex, a planning deal between Taylor Wimpey and Southend-on-Sea Council has been amended this month to shift what would have been “affordable rent” homes – available to families on benefits

“Every day we see the terrible toll of not having enough genuinely affordable social homes

(see panel) to ones which are only available to people intending to buy, who can pass an affordability check.

The developer told the council the change was needed because it couldn't find a housing association to take on the Section 106 homes. A similar case in rural Hampshire, near Basingstoke (see panel), has also seen homes switched away from the affordable rent model because of a lack of housing association interest.

But it is the supply of “social rent” homes – the cheapest category of affordable homes and therefore most important in tackling homelessness – that experts say is most at risk from the crisis.

This is because they can only be owned and managed by “registered providers”. The overwhelming majority of these are housing associations.

Latest figures show that 3,440 social rent homes were built in England through such planning deals in 2022-23. Emily Williams, research director at estate agency Savills, said the crisis could lead to that supply being halved.

“We know that roughly half of the largest housing associations are cutting their requirement or not intending to buy Section 106,” she said. “That would suggest a 50 per cent drop-off in the number of social rented units. It could be

a drop-off of 1,700 units a year.” Ms Williams said the cuts to supply would also extend to other categories of affordable homes.

“If this is a problem over the next five to six years we would expect that thousands of homes that could have been built as affordable rented stock will end up as other forms of affordable housing such as discounted market sale,” she said.

Annie Gingell, an associate director of Tetlow King Planning, a consultancy which advises some of the country's biggest housebuilders, warned that the number of social rented and other kinds of affordable rental homes could fall significantly if housing associations remained “financially constrained”.

“Increased government funding for housing associations is urgently needed to get these sites moving again,” she said.

The National Housing Federation, which represents housing associations, said it was “seriously concerned about the risk of losing new social rented homes”.

“Our members are working with relevant stakeholders to find solutions to the current challenges around Section 106 delivery,” said director of policy and research Alistair Smyth.

A Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government spokesperson said: “We are aware of these concerns and the wider shortage in affordable housing. We are already taking steps to turn the tide by giving councils flexibility to use their Right to Buy receipts to build and buy more social homes.”

From affordable homes to rent to buy Homeless lose out

Council papers seen by **i** show that Southend-on-Sea Council in Essex amended its planning deal with the house builder Taylor Wimpey on a site in Shoeburyness this month, converting 21 affordable homes to a “rent-to-buy” model.

Sixteen of these 21 homes would have been offered at an “affordable rent” level and accessible to homeless households on its waiting list, as a clause in the previous Section 106 agreement would have ensured rent levels were “capped” at “local housing allowance levels” and affordable to households on benefits.

But the rent-to-buy model, operated by private firm Rentplus, is only open to potential homeowners who pass an “affordability check”.

Taylor Wimpey's land manager Rob Piggott told Southend Council in a letter last December that “all

avenues to deliver the affordable housing on site as intended through the application and Section 106 have been exhausted”.

“With the exception of Rentplus, there has been no interest from the RP [registered providers] market or indeed from Southend-on-Sea City Council in purchasing the 21 affordable homes,” his letter adds.

The developer had been turned down by seven RPs, including Sanctuary, Clarion Housing Group, and Moat. Taylor Wimpey declined to comment.

Anne Jones, deputy leader of Southend-on-Sea City Council, said: “The council must take a pragmatic approach when it is reported that there is a lack of interest from the registered providers.”

In February Basingstoke and Deane Council's development and

control committee recommended that a planning deal for a rural development in Tadley and Pamber with the Guernsey-based developer Rysaffe Nominees be amended to convert five affordable rent homes to the Rentplus model.

“There were no registered providers interested in acquiring the affordable housing,” council papers recommending the change stated.

Legal documents for the change are being finalised and the housing scheme's “very rural location... would have been unlikely to be suitable for homeless families”, a Basingstoke and Deane council spokesperson said.

Rentplus said the model was suitable for people at risk of homelessness and could free occupied social rented homes to help others in greater need.

Keith Cooper

The Opinion Matrix

COMMENT FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Opinion

LABOUR'S PAY DEALS



Is Starmer caving in to unions?

The Mail on Sunday

Sir Keir Starmer's Labour Party has remained unchanged in its treatment of trade unions and their pay demands. There is hardly a militant union which has not received a large bag of taxpayers' gold in the past few weeks. (Editorial)

Daily Star Sunday

Good news from Labour for Aslef train staff, who have secured a rise. Not such good news, though, for nearly 10 million pensioners who have seen their winter fuel allowance cut by the party. Maybe old folk should form a union to make Keir Starmer care about their needs. (John Ward)

MANAGING UK ECONOMY



Fiscal conservatism falls short

The Observer

Fiscal conservatism proved a good electoral strategy for Labour, but it falls badly short as a governing philosophy. There are things the Government must do immediately, as a moral imperative, such as improving financial support to children living in poverty. (Editorial)

Sunday Telegraph

Look at what has happened in the past three months. Our economy has handsomely outperformed comparable European states. We are the fastest-growing country in the G7 this year. Inflation has dropped. (Daniel Hannan)

RACE FOR WHITE HOUSE



Harris needs to set out her policies

Washington Post

Inflation is a real political issue for Kamala Harris. One way to handle it might be to level with voters, telling them that inflation spiked in 2021 mainly because the pandemic snarled supply chains, and that the Federal Reserve's policies are working to slow it. The Vice President instead opted for a less forthright route: blaming big business. (Editorial)

The Independent

It's time for Team Harris to start talking seriously about policy. Say it quietly, but there has been far more policy detail from Donald Trump than her. (Jon Sopel)

UKRAINE IN KURSK



Moscow has been caught off guard

The Spectator

The reaction of the Russian authorities has been chaotic. They were definitely caught by surprise and had no coherent defensive measures in place. Most interestingly, hints of political trouble are circulating. (Norman Davies)

Sunday Express

I travelled to Ukraine on just my second day as Defence Secretary. We should be proud of Britain's support for Ukraine's struggle. We should be proud that British-donated equipment, in the hands of brave Ukrainians on the frontline, is helping them to defend their country. (John Healey)

MATTHEW PERRY



Doctors pander to celebrities

The New York Times

It's no surprise to encounter the callousness, the greed of dealers who know with expert precision how to prey on addicts. But in Matthew Perry's case, we've seen a murkier area – a messy middle ground where people apparently start out thinking they're helping but end up enabling and eventually hurting. (Patti Davis)

The Sunday Times

Some Hollywood doctors are so dazzled by fame that they give their celebrity patients whatever drugs they want, a problem so common it even has a name: VIP syndrome. (Hadley Freeman)

SCHOOL RESULTS



Emphasis shouldn't be on A-levels

Sunday People

It was great to see exam success celebrations but frustrating the media again focused on A-levels and unis rather than T-levels, BTECs and apprenticeships. In Germany, academic and technical education are seen as equals. The UK won't rise to its skills challenges until this snobbery ends. (Andy Burnham)

The Sun on Sunday

The Tory-built apprenticeship system is not fit for purpose. The Government must overhaul the system so young Brits get trained in the essential building trades we so need. (Editorial)

Quote of the day



Torn ligaments, four screws in my shoulder, a messed-up rotator cuff and a hip replacement

Wayne Sleep
The ballet star on the physical price of a top dance career

Life In Brief

ISSA HAYATOU FORMER INTERIM FIFA PRESIDENT

Issa Hayatou, the long-time leader of African football who was made interim president of Fifa during its corruption crisis in 2015, has died. He was 77.

Fifa president Gianni Infantino said in an Instagram post: "A passionate sports fan, he dedicated his life to sports administration. On behalf of Fifa, condolences go to his family, friends, former colleagues and all who knew him."

Hayatou also was a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for 15 years up to 2016, and remained an honorary member.

He was elected to lead the Confederation of African Football (CAF) in 1988 and within four years was a vice president of Fifa.

In 2002, during a period of deep financial and political turmoil, Hayatou challenged then-president Sepp Blatter in an election.

However, he lost heavily despite support in Europe. The 139-56 result showed Hayatou had lost votes from his African colleagues.

Blatter still led Fifa in 2015 when federal investigations in the United States and Switzerland of alleged corruption in international soccer swept a generation of leaders from North and South America out of office, and, eventually, Blatter himself.

Hayatou took over from his one-time rival as an interim president for four months, to steer Fifa toward anti-corruption reforms and an election that put Infantino in office.

"I knew that there were things going wrong," Hayatou told *The Times* at the height of the scandal. "But the scope of the revelations that have been made is extremely troubling."

Issa Hayatou was born in Garoua, then part of French Cameroon, in

1946. His father was a local sultan in Garoua, and the young Hayatou became a strong middle-distance runner – he set national record times in the 400 metres and 800 metres – as well as making the Cameroonian national basketball squad.

In 2017, Hayatou's 29-year reign as the head of CAF was ended in an election he lost to Ahmad Ahmad of Madagascar, who had been supported by Infantino.

Hayatou then faced an investigation by Fifa's ethics committee, and in 2021 was banned from soccer for one year for alleged breach of "duty of loyalty" in a commercial rights deal at CAF.

In a separate case, he was reprimanded by the IOC ethics commission in 2011 for having taken a cash payment from a Swiss marketing agency, ISL, in 1995 when it sold World Cup broadcasting rights for Fifa. He



was also accused of taking a \$1.5m bribe to vote for the 2022 World Cup to be awarded to Qatar; he refuted this and no charges were brought against him.

Hayatou was a key figure in making sure Africa's national football bodies were represented. "President Hayatou was always able, through his leadership, interpersonal skills, and sense of pragmatism, to defend the voice of Africa," Cameroon FA head Samuel Eto'o said. "We owe him a lot." PA

Born 9 August 1946
Died 8 August 2024

My View

Ian Birrell



Imitating Peter is Putin's greatest folly

Obsessed despot can never match achievements of his idol

In September 2021, as Russian military forces built up on Ukraine's border before their full-scale invasion, Vladimir Putin spoke to students in Vladivostok to mark the start of the school year.

After a weak joke, he began talking about his hero Peter the Great, asking why the giant tsar started the Seven Years War against Sweden that led to the battle of Poltava in 1709. But one fearless pupil intervened to point out that this decisive battle – marking the start of their nation's imperial expansion – really took place during the Great Northern War, which lasted 21 years. “We lost four times and on the fifth we won. That's it,” he said. “Yes, of course, thank you for the correction,” responded the clearly-annoyed dictator.

The irony of Putin being given such a lesson while lecturing school kids on the importance of history in understanding the present was not lost on critics.

He is famously obsessed with the subject, even publishing his own rambling essay a few months earlier that denied Ukraine's right to exist based on his distorted view of the past and his paranoia of the present (the latter seemed to grow worse as he hid during the pandemic).

Now Putin is being given another lesson on Peter the Great – although this time it is being delivered by that nation he sought to eliminate, and revolves around his efforts to place himself on the same pedestal as his giant predecessor.

Putin loves to project himself as the modern-day successor to the iron-willed character who created his home city, a man of towering height and intellect who created St Petersburg on the bones of thousands of slaves who died building the Baltic port on marshes taken from Sweden.

He has a huge bronze bust over his presidential desk to underline the parallels. And he has compared his efforts to crush Ukraine with Peter's expansionist wars three centuries earlier, saying the tsar did not seize anything from the Swedes but simply returned land to Russia. “It seems it has fallen to us, too, to reclaim and strengthen,” he said.

But look at the shattered reality of Putin's humiliating misadventures. Instead of showing Russia's strength as a great imperial power, his failure to seize Ukraine and install a puppet regime only exposed weakness.

The Kremlin, after uniting



Despite his posturing, the Russian leader has exposed his country's weakness with its failure to overwhelm Ukraine

its Western foes, kowtows to China and begs for weapons from impoverished North Korea.

In place of the planned three-day blitzkrieg and victory parades in Kyiv, its stumbling forces have suffered half a million casualties and after 30 grim months, are still slugging it out to make small gains of devastated terrain and little strategic significance in the Donbas region.

Now Russia is enduring the embarrassment of its first invasion by enemy forces since the Second World War. Regardless of how Ukraine's daring Kursk incursion ends, it is a hammer blow for the Kremlin, the most serious of several setbacks since the launch

of this stupid war. Putin looked feeble and unsettled in response, his carefully constructed pose as the modern-day tsar protecting his people and reasserting national greatness ruined by the sight of all

Putin let his enemies grab a chunk of the country. Tanks have crossed the border again

those citizens displaced by Kyiv's surprise attack.

Meanwhile, Moscow's bumbling response has exposed again the failings of their top-down command system led by a brutal dictator.

Instead of “reclaiming” land to rebuild the collapsed Soviet empire and flexing Russia's military muscle to revive imperial ambitions, Putin let his enemies grab a chunk of their country.

German tanks have crossed their border again. Airfields are being attacked, bridges blown up and conscripts captured, despite the Kremlin's pledge they would not join the conflict.

Criticism has appeared in the patsy media and from infuriated

military bloggers, confirming Kyiv's advances even as the inept defence ministry pushed propaganda of a supposed fightback that turned out to be faked by using footage filmed earlier this year in Ukraine.

Only a fool would predict the conclusion of this incursion, let alone of the war itself. Yet the Ukrainians deserve admiration for again demonstrating their skills on the battlefield when equipped with sufficient modern arms to defend their nation. This, in turn, makes it all the more shameful how the West, pathetically intimidated by Putin's sabre-rattling, still restricts the supply of weapons and their use on Russian targets.

Note also how Kyiv defeated Russia's Black Sea naval fleet through smart use of drones and missiles to sink or damage one third of the ships. This forced the rest to retreat from Crimea, reducing their ability to bomb Ukrainian cities from warships.

Peter the Great, who founded Russia's modern navy after visiting England to study shipbuilding, would not have been impressed by this dismal ruler who has done so much to diminish their nation while claiming to have inherited his mantle. The tsar was also a ruthless despot. His victory in Poltava over Sweden and its Cossack allies paved the way for the assimilation of Ukraine under Russia's cruel rule.

Yet he was also an admirer of European culture and ideas, an energetic moderniser who hired foreign scientists to help drag his country forward and famously saw St Petersburg as his “window on the West”.

Putin has slammed shut that window to protect his evil regime after Ukraine sought democracy and freedom. The cost is paid in the blood of his people and prosperity of his nation as it cuts itself off from the rest of the continent that his supposed icon was so desperate to emulate by dragging Russia kicking and screaming into the modern age.

Peter earned that sobriquet of greatness through reform at home as well as those battles abroad. Now his Kremlin successor seeks reflected glory from this colossus of his country's past.

Yet as the arrival of Ukrainian troops in Kursk shows, we witness a diminutive president with a record of reactionary failure who shrinks further day by day in comparison with his proclaimed hero.

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Your View

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Pay deal, but more strikes

Isn't it depressing that despite us enduring rail strikes, after a generous pay offer elsewhere the Aslef union decides to embark on a new wave of strikes within LNER. Mick Whelan seems to be a union leader in the Arthur Scargill mould. **STEVE MOIR BRIGG**, LINCOLNSHIRE

Where's the money from?

I'm no economist but could Rachel Reeves please explain – with such a large black hole in the economy – where all the money is coming from (other than stopping pensioners' winter fuel payment) to fund all the pay settlements that have so far been agreed? Surely this will only

make the shortfall even larger?
HENRY CASSON
TARLETON,
LANCASHIRE

Haters keep on hating

How sad to read about the hate mail received by Australian breakdancing Olympian Rachael Gunn (Sport, 16 August). Yet again, social media plumbs the

depths of malice. Let's hope vilification never becomes an Olympic event, because there will be an awful lot of people going for gold.
NICK TAPPENDEN
ROCHESTER, KENT

Payne has chutzpah

I read Sebastian Payne's My View (Opinion, 16 August) with incredulity. To assert that Boris Johnson was too lethargic and "many on the right were too shy about bending the state to work for them" had me spitting feathers.

Was he completely unaware of what Johnson and his right-hand man Dominic Cummings did when the Tories were in power?

To then bring up Dido Harding as an example of good governance, with regard to Test and Trace made me think that he had lost his reasoning capabilities.

I salute, however, his chutzpah in trying to rewrite recent history.
ANDY FERDINAND
WORTHING,
WEST SUSSEX

Honours must be limited

After the high number of honours awarded during the Tory administration we must hope Labour will not follow suit.

One reform would surely be to limit the number of living holders of various grades of honours as with the Companion of Honour – restricted to 65 members.

This would have the effect of only awarding honours to those who



Coo! Contented pigeons in Exeter challenge the view that birds have been putting a sock in it CHRISTINE ROSE

truly deserve them – not party hacks and donors.
RODNEY JONES
TIMPERLEY, GREATER
MANCHESTER

No trigger warnings here

Re the recent debate on trigger warnings: at the theatre I enjoy the array of emotions that are felt when the unexpected is presented to the audience.

If people are offended then that's life, I'm afraid.
SIAN LYALL
CARDIFF

I'll stay in croc-free Moray

Gillian Orr seems to think you can live longer by moving to Australia ('I know why Aussies live longer – and it's not the sun', Opinion, 16 August).

Give me Scotland any day. When I go swimming in the beautiful Moray

Firth I don't run the risk of being chomped by a great white shark or saltwater crocodile. I'm also unlikely to die in my home from the bite of a funnel-web spider, or a taipan snake.
CHRIS INCE
LOSSIEMOUTH,
MORAYSHIRE

Wood pigeons making noise

Andy Clews (**i**, 15 August) tells us that "Birds are taking some quiet time" – hence the absence of birdsong at this time of year.

This observation does not seem to apply to my and my neighbours' gardens. Wood pigeons coo contentedly whilst sitting on their nests both at dawn and dusk.

One wonders whether these birds breed all year round now?
PHILIP BARTON
EXETER



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TELEVISION
More than just flimsy fashion
'Emily in Paris' is a comfort watch for broken millennial workaholics

Farage's fascinating finances show that he is bored

POLITICS

**Eliot
Wilson**



The Commons register of members' financial interests, can reveal fascinating and telling details. The latest has excited scrutiny of the arrangements of the MP for Clacton, Reform leader Nigel Farage.

The basic salary is £91,346, plus expenses and allowances for the cost of fulfilling duties. The purpose of the register is to capture any additional remuneration or benefit "which someone else might reasonably consider to influence what they say or do as an MP".

Some members' entries are considerably shorter than others – including some simple nil returns – but Farage's runs to two-and-a-half pages of payments, fees, donations and travel costs.

The figure that most grabs the attention is his payment as a presenter on GB News.

For 32 hours in July, Farage was paid £97,928.40, which pro rata would be an annual income of over £1,175,000 and falls firmly into the category of "nice work if you can get it". In fact, the money was paid not to Farage directly, but to his company, the predictably named Thorn in the Side Ltd.

He claims it is a gross sum, including VAT; that it includes services such as media consultancy; and that it in fact applies to the period since 1 April. The Reform UK leader explains he is not paid a fixed monthly fee by GB News, but ad hoc remuneration as a contractor.

Farage also declared £16,597.22 for an estimated 24 hours' work on Cameo, a website through which the public can commission personalised video messages from celebrities. Farage is a fairly affordable \$90 (£69.55), slightly less than attention junkie and former Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow.

One striking element of Cameo's appeal is that many customers commission videos from people they dislike, sometimes arranging for them to read out ludicrous messages

or make statements with which they could not possibly agree. Farage, whose career has been built on the persona of a cheery pub drinker, is happy to oblige.

His performances are curious to watch. Farage delivers the requested messages in his characteristic intonation, but his manner bears no relation to the content, as if he is reading phonetically words which are otherwise alien to him.

Perhaps they are: mischievous customers are fond of asking him to make references to "Big Chungus" (an internet meme of a fat Bugs Bunny) and "sus imposter" (a term from online game *Among Us*). One can laugh at him being duped, but he collects the money all the same.

None of this is against the rules of the House of Commons. Nevertheless, his own estimate reveals a total of 72 hours' work outside of Parliament a month, the equivalent of nine full working days.

Transparency is important. The electors of Clacton can reflect on Farage's allocation of his time and cast their votes accordingly at the next poll.

In some ways, though, Farage's substantial income and time commitment outside Parliament



For 32 hours in July, Nigel Farage earned almost £98,000 from his presenting role on GB News

Less special, less noticeable than he was as a gadfly outside Parliament

represents a deeper truth, which is that membership of the House of Commons, at the eighth time of asking, has not delivered what he might have hoped for.

As one MP of 650, the leader of the joint sixth-largest party in the Commons, he is perversely less special, less noticeable than he was as a gadfly outside Parliament, where he had no commitments, no expectations and few restrictions.

He has spoken only twice in the Chamber, voted in two divisions, submitted no written questions and signed no early day motions.

It is significant that when the Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, made a statement to MPs on 30 July on the stabbings in Southport, Farage left it to Lee Anderson to represent Reform. The leader posted a piece to camera on social media instead.

Farage is bored. He has the air of a child who has wished for so long for something and finally, when his wish is granted, finds it is much less satisfying than he thought.

His lucrative bustle of activity suggests that he might already have concluded that the hard yards of parliamentary scrutiny were not what he was looking for.

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P&O CRUISES

Save me from hen-do hell, I'm too old to go clubbing

SOCIETY
Lucy Mangan



You think you're safe. You think the one thing that age and decrepitude brings is a certain amount of protection from particular horrors. And then, bang! Someone hits you with an invitation to a hen do.

A hen do! At my age! A hen do, in fact, at any age past... well, 33, I would suggest. 35 as an absolute maximum cut-off point. After that –

stop! The one I have been invited to is the full three-day event.

A long drive (or expensive train journey), a hotel, a big celebratory meal one night, spa treatments the next day. Then a long drive) back, knackered, hung over and ballasted with resentment of the time wasted.

There is some excuse for this kind of nonsense in your twenties (you're too young to get married in



The full three-day horror should be off-limits when you hit mid-thirties

beatific state at the same time, and this friend is lagging behind.

She still cares, God bless her. About doing the right thing, about doing the expected thing, and the tripartite hen do is what she is going to have if it kills her, and us too, which it probably will.

I have started hearing rumours that she wants us to go clubbing on the last night.

The rest of the hen gang are horrified by the entire prospect too. So I think it is now incumbent upon us to seize control of the event.

We'll convene at the hotel, sure. But then we will stage an intervention, not a party.

We will, like a gang of perimenopausal Marines, break her down over the three days and rebuild her in our image.

Her fiancé, when he sees her yomping down the aisle in tinted moisturiser, flat shoes and a John Lewis ANYDAY jumpsuit she can get years of use out of after this, may take more persuading, but that's his problem.

The important point is that the hen do will do what a hen do is supposed to do – show the bride-to-be that whatever married life holds, they'll always have her back.

And even more importantly, it will mean that I do not have to pay for a massage, drink more than the two glasses of wine I am capable of or go clubbing. Time and money just about well spent.

your twenties, but that's a discussion for another time) and your early thirties. Peer pressure is a powerful thing and the wedding-industrial complex has harnessed it with an efficiency that would have given the Manhattan Project pause.

I was dead set against a large wedding and ended up walking down the aisle of a proper church, in a proper frock, towards a proper vicar 'n' vows witnessed by a hundred guests – with, honestly, no idea how it had happened.

A series of seemingly tiny, innocuous decisions are stealthily transmuted by forces unknown until there you are, holding a bouquet, turning your zombie head from side to side to smile at people you can't recognise without your glasses.

But now? Now, in our forties and fifties we should be able to say "no" to this and all other kinds of crap. And, by and large, we can and we do.

The problem with the hen do is that we don't all arrive at such a

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EDUCATION

Stefano Hatfield



When will we learn on exam stress?

It is arguably the most stressful week of the year. Last Thursday, it was A-level results in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Scotland's Highers were a week earlier). This Thursday, it is GCSE results day. Many 16-year-olds will be suffering sleepless nights. There is surely a better way.

As a teacher of GCSE and A-level pupils, a sixth-form tutor and a parent of two daughters who have been through all this stressful madness, I have a unique perspective of the reality behind school league tables.

My conclusion is that we are all complicit in fostering a pernicious system that forces so much stress upon minds not fully developed enough to cope with it. Parents, teachers, schools, Ofsted and the Government all claim they want the best for children, but we all conspire in the perpetuation of warped

priorities. It can be summed up in the doublespeak of a single phrase: "we don't teach to the test".

Of course schools teach to the test. Why? Because that's how the Government and parents judge them. Schools are ranked by league table performance, not by how holistic or nurturing they are, nor how happy and well-rounded pupils are when they leave.

And then there's our obsession with Stem (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects. So many pupils struggle with subjects that they think they ought to do, or which their parents have forced them to – particularly at A-level – rather than subjects they are good at or love.

"But, Johnny needs chemistry in order to be a doctor (like us)" is the parental thought process that ignores Johnny's hatred of chemistry, his disdain for a career in medicine and absolute determination not to follow in his parents' footsteps.

Instead, let's adopt an American or European approach to studying a wider range of subjects for longer – like the school baccalaureate or liberal arts degree route. And, let's recalibrate. Instead of Stem for all, why not prepare pupils for Heal-focused careers – ones based in health, education, administration and literacy?

In the meantime, we need to abandon the notion that our children are failures if they get a D in physics. Until, then, good luck to all who need it this Thursday.



Mark Simmons with the U&Dave Joke of the Fringe 2024 award
ROBERT PERRY/PINPEP

EDINBURGH

Heard the one about a boat in a bottle? It's a corker..

By Sarah Ward

Comedian Mark Simmons is "really chuffed" after one of his jokes was named the funniest at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival – after a decade of appearing at the event.

Television channel U&Dave announced the winner of its 15th Funniest Joke of the Fringe award, for which 15 jokes were shortlisted.

Simmons won with: "I was going to sail around the globe in the world's smallest ship, but I bottled it."

Leading comedy critics and comedians in the UK were on the judging panel for the award, which celebrates "the art of joke writing" and making people laugh.

Panellists attended hundreds of shows during the Fringe, listening out for gags that made them laugh, then submitted their 10 favourites in an anonymous shortlist to prevent any bias towards household names.

A public vote involving 2,000 people was then held, with Simmons voted the winner.

The joke, taken from his show at the city's Liquid Room Annexe, won 40 per cent of the vote.

It came a decade after Simmons first performed at the Fringe as a solo act, when his friend convinced him to do an open mic night.

Since then, his gags have placed ninth, sixth, and second in the joke award – and this year he had a

second witticism on the shortlist as well as the winning one.

Simmons said: "I'm really chuffed to win U&Dave's Funniest Joke of the Fringe. I needed some good news as I was just fired from my job marking exam papers. Can't understand it – I always gave 110 per cent."

He is debuting his show *More Jokes at Liquid Rooms Annexe* until 24 August, and he is currently on a 200-date tour. Previous winners of the award include Lorna Rose Treen, Masai Graham, Ken Cheng, Olaf Falafel and Tim Vine.

Cherie Hall, U&Dave channel director, said: "This year's list features a hilarious blend of jokes that are sure to keep us laughing."

Contenders Other quips

I've been taking salsa lessons for months, but I just don't feel like I'm progressing. It's just one step forward... two steps back - Alec Snook

Ate horse at a restaurant once – wasn't great. Starter was all right but the mane was dreadful - Alex Kitson

I sailed through my driving test. That's why I failed it - Arthur Smith

I love the Olympics. My friend and I invented a new type of relay baton: well, he came up with the idea, I ran with it - Mark Simmons

My dad used to say to me "Pints, gallons, litres", which, I think, speaks volumes - Olaf Falafel

I wanted to know which came first the chicken or the egg so I bought a chicken and then I bought an egg and I think I've cracked it - Masai Graham

BROADCASTING

Wright to be remembered with day of tribute shows

By Casey Cooper-Fiske

A series of BBC Radio 2 tribute shows to the late broadcaster Steve Wright will celebrate him as a "master of his craft".

On what would have been the DJ's 70th birthday, Vernon Kay, Liza Tarbuck and Paul Gambaccini will each host a programme dedicated to Wright on 26 August.

Wright (*inset*) died in February, aged 69, from a ruptured ulcer in his stomach caused by acute peritonitis.

Tributes will begin with Kay's *Steve Wright Remembered* from 2pm until 4pm, in which famous faces, including former prime minister David Cameron and singers Billy Ocean and Barry Gibb, will share their memories of the former Radio 2 afternoon show presenter.

Kay said: "Steve Wright was the don of UK radio, the master of his craft and an absolute perfectionist, researching each guest meticulously to ensure he had the right question at the right time."

From 4pm until 6pm, Tarbuck will host *What Steve Meant To Me: A Listeners' Special*, where audience members will share their memories.

Between 6pm and 8pm, Gambaccini will present *Steve Wright In His Own Words*, which will include BBC archive clips, with excerpts from Wright's episode of the *Radio Radio* series which aired in 1986, plus a 2010 interview for the Radio 2 series *Music In The Air: A History Of Music Radio*.



Another View

Kat Storr



So this is what all the fuss is about

I've just walked out of a bubble of love with 92,000 other people. Taylor Swift at Wembley Stadium – which was hands down the best and most emotional live show I've ever been to.

I don't need to go into what an

amazingly talented, honest and authentic performer she is because it's all been said before.

But the way she brings together women of all ages and backgrounds really is a spectacle to witness in real life. Groups of girls around me did not sit down for four hours and knew every single lyric to the 40 or so songs Swift performed. They danced, held hands and filmed every moment.

When she sang a surprise *capella* version of "End Game" the girl next to me burst into tears. When Ed Sheeran came on to join her for "Everything Has Changed" and "Thinking Out Loud" the stadium went absolutely wild.

I think it was the happiest, most friendly and warm place I've ever been. A fun and kind place that women and girls need right now.

With violence against women something we're constantly confronted with, and fearful of,

being in a place where everyone can be themselves felt important and much-needed.

I went with one of my best friends and her eight-year-old daughter whose mind was repeatedly blown as the concert went on. But one emotion that crept up on me as we walked out of Wembley was one of jealousy. I don't have a daughter I can share this kind of bonding experience with.

We were surrounded by mothers and daughters of all ages. Holding hands, laughing and taking selfies. We spoke to some who'd spent days making their friendship bracelets and outfits together.

It was so heartwarming to see – and I know my mum and I would

have done that when I was younger. But I'm not sure what I can imagine doing with my three boys.

It feels like a special mother-daughter moment. I love being a mum of boys more than anything else in the world and they're great fun and we have an unbreakable bond.

At the moment they're still too young for concerts or to be fanatical about anything much but we have many special occasions and events ahead of us and I can't wait.

But there's something about Taylor Swift isn't there? She's an incredible role model for young

The community spirit at Taylor Swift's concert was truly magical GETTY



It was the happiest, most friendly and warm place

girls and encourages them to be proud of themselves and to **** the patriarchy!

Of course these are characteristics I'd also like my sons to grow up with and to appreciate in girls and women they're friends with. But last night I just felt a bit sad that I didn't have a daughter to share it with – and never will.

I know I'm lucky to have gone at all and I won't take that for granted. I'll be telling my boys all about what a fun night we had.

And I know that my friends with daughters will all let me join them for special Girl Power moments in the future.

FILM

'He made the world dream': Delon, star of 60s French cinema, dies at 88

By Sara Keenan

Alain Delon, the French actor best known for his roles in *Purple Noon* and *The Leopard*, has died at the age of 88, his family has announced.

Earlier this year, his son Anthony said Delon had been diagnosed with B-cell lymphoma. He had made his last public appearance in May 2019 when he was awarded a Palme d'or at Cannes.

"Alain-Fabien, Anouchka, Anthony, as well as [his dog] Loubo are deeply saddened to announce the passing of their father," a family statement said.

"He passed away peacefully in his home in Douchy, surrounded by his three children and his family."

The President of France, Emmanuel Macron, paid tribute to Delon, calling him "a monument" of France.

"Alain Delon has played legendary roles and made the world dream," he wrote on X. "He lent us his unforgettable face to shake up our lives.

"Melancholic, popular, secretive, he was more than a star: he was a French monument."

The Brigitte Bardot Foundation, dedicated to animal protection, paid tribute to "an exceptional man, an unforgettable artist and a great friend of animals".

During the French cinema resurgence in the 1960s, Delon played roles including cops and hitmen and was sometimes referred to as the "French Frank Sinatra".

The actor also starred in classics such as Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Samourai* where he played a melancholic, solitary silent killer.

Delon was born in 1935 in Sceaux,



Alain Delon in a French air force jet in 1988: President Emmanuel Macron wrote that 'he was a French monument' AFP

a Paris suburb. After being expelled from school he went to work at a butcher's at the age of 14 before a stint in the navy. He was dishonourably discharged in 1956.

Delon made his cinema debut in the 1957 thriller *Send a Woman When the Devil Fails*. He also made several

Italian movies, working most notably with Luchino Visconti in the 1961 film *Rocco and his Brothers*.

Delon had a son, Anthony, in 1964, with his then-wife Nathalie Canovas.

He had two more children, Anouchka and Alain-Fabien, with Rosalie van Breemen.

i With almost 100 features to his name, Delon received several awards including the French César and an honorary Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival.

News in brief

ART

Zoo's Banksy gorilla mural is removed

A Banksy artwork at London Zoo has been removed for "safekeeping" and to allow the popular attraction to use its full entrance during its "busy summer period".

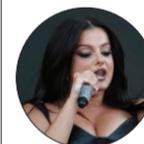
The piece, which shows a gorilla lifting up a shutter and allowing birds and a seal to escape, has been replaced with a replica.

A nearby sign reads: "Banksy woz ere", and offers an apology to any disappointed fans of the street artist.

The painting on the entrance to the zoo was the ninth and final work in a series of images of animals created across the capital.

PEOPLE

Singer claims airline staff 'abused' her



Lufthansa has contacted singer Bebe Rexha (inset) after she claimed she was "mentally abused" by a

member of staff for being Albanian.

In a series of Instagram posts, the 34-year-old alleged she was "threatened" when speaking to a member of staff at Munich airport, who she thought was from Albania, in Albanian.

She also claimed the male member of staff was trying to ban her from the flight. It is not known whether Rexha was allowed to fly.

In one post she said: "I believe this to be a hate crime because I am Albanian."

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

No 4223 BY NITSY

ACROSS

- 1 Each head's scratched fiercely (4)
- 3 Stretch bra out of shape? Nothing is revealed when it's pressed (5,3)
- 10 Be unbalanced as cow almost leaves horse rattled (4,1,5,5)
- 11 Passage for those who are boring? (9)
- 12 Conclusions from *The Guardian* panned Boris's aims (4)
- 13 Poor hen shifting - one's likely to lay an egg (2-5)
- 15 Particular dock? (6)
- 17 Sons go before church sermon (6)
- 19 Shannon maybe embracing one by a holiday destination (7)
- 20 Spots Mickelson finally securing hole-in-one? On the contrary (4)
- 21 Weak with emotional strain? Not the first aspect (9)

- 24 Abandoned soul in political vision (7,8)
- 25 Bond's wound is on head (8)
- 26 Gets old, wise person to move south (4)

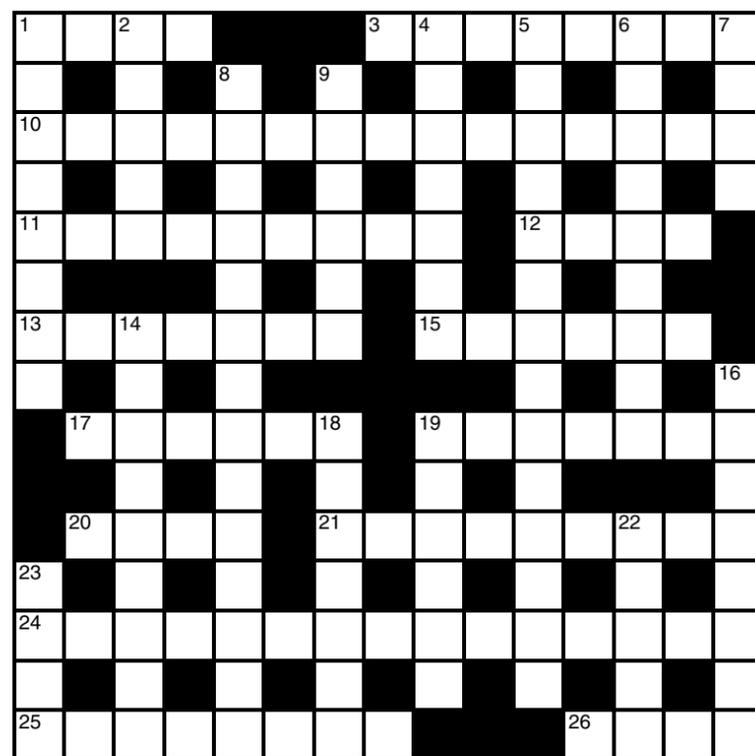
DOWN

- 1 Strong old soldier captures macho blokes (8)
- 2 Yellow topped black (5)
- 4 Folded page and left to dine with editor (7)
- 5 Gang perhaps developing cult with no violence (10,4)
- 6 Attack American woman on team (9)
- 7 Regretted being offensive on the radio (4)
- 8 Deception involving secret plan with fees (5,9)
- 9 Den is after peach, oddly leaving cake (6)

- 14 Game husband having drink after work (9)
- 16 Wants no yen for pay (8)
- 18 Gentleman concealed a large repair (7)
- 19 Discover the truth about low noise (6)
- 22 It might be used to cover cake in picnic in garden (5)
- 23 Very plump bottom goes on this? (4)

Solution to Saturday's Cryptic

SNIPER CROW RAIL
 W N X A N C R A
 INSIPID ROLLBAR
 F T R D E A I K
 TRADE DISCOUNT
 L S E O S E L
 RELISH ORATORIO
 O I G D R O
 ORTHODOX SOLEMN
 K O N V P P R
 PRIZE FIGHTING
 S S S R G O T O
 HEARTEN EMBARGO
 A I S O O I E S
 GULL WREN CRANE



Stuck on the cryptic crossword? For today's solutions, call 0905 789 3580. Calls cost 80p per minute plus your network access charge. If you are having trouble accessing this number, please call our helpdesk on 0333 202 3390.

Full terms and conditions can be found on page 29

INDIA

No toilets or rest - female doctors strike over fear for their safety

'Dangerous' work settings lack changing rooms for staff. By **Gurvinder Singh**

Female medical workers in India are forced to change in doctors' offices and feel "too traumatised" to work following the rape and killing of a doctor that has shocked the nation and caused widespread protests.

Earlier this month, the body of a postgraduate student doctor was found in a seminar room at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata after she had reportedly gone there to rest during her shift.

A volunteer worker at the hospital has been arrested in connection with the case, being treated as rape and murder, while investigations continue.

The Indian Medical Association described the incident as a "crime of barbaric scale due to the lack of safe spaces for women".

Thousands have taken part in marches, vigils and strikes, highlighting violence perpetrated against women in India and demanding justice, a full investigation and safer working conditions.

At a protest at the site of the incident in Kolkata, junior doctor Susmita Chakraborty told **i**: "The horrific incident has shocked us beyond limits as it is impossible to think about any such crime happening inside the hospital."

"We have odd working hours that stretch for 24 hours and even beyond. We never felt unsafe in a hospital till this gruesome murder happened."

"We work tirelessly in hospitals,

especially the government-run [ones], with bare minimum facilities to save human lives, but this is what we get in return."

Fatima Alam, 21, a nursing student at the RG Kar facility, said: "We have no separate toilets, changing rooms [nor] rest rooms."

"We have to often change our clothes in doctors' rooms and even in makeshift rooms with malfunctioning locks. The situation is such that one has to stand outside the gate and other girls change their clothes inside."

"We work in terrible conditions for a profession which is considered noble, but what about our safety?"

Conditions are so bad that some female doctors said they are contemplating quitting.

Dr Anasuya Goswami, 31, a doctor and former student of RG Kar, said: "We were never scared to work in the hospital, even during night hours, but this incident has changed everything. I am too traumatised to work. I am losing faith in this profession and regretting that I could have opted for something else."

Kaavya Sreedhar, 27, a doctor in an obstetrics and gynaecology department in Delhi, told **i**: "The problem is that the government doesn't listen unless a strong message is conveyed through strong

We work tirelessly with bare minimum facilities to save human lives, but this is what we get in return



Medical professionals strike in protest against the rape and killing of a student doctor from Kolkata; Dr Anasuya Goswami (below) says she had never felt scared at work until the incident; nursing student Fatima Alam (bottom) says she and other female medics often have to change in doctors' rooms, or in ones with faulty locks (DREES MOHAMMED/AFP)

measures. The situation is already bad in government hospitals that are facing huge patient influx coupled with infrastructure woes.

"The situation is almost the same in all the government hospitals in the country where security measures are inadequate for us."

"Even drunkards visit the hospitals and we are vulnerable to any assaults."

"We are not demanding anything special, but we want just basic rights, like well-lit corridors, separate washrooms and guards outside our rooms so that we are safe from any assault by the mischievous elements or even by angry patients' relatives in case the treatment goes wrong."

"The junior doctors are becoming completely demoralised and considering [a] switch to other professions."



Shwetasri Mohanta, 29, a doctor who works in a sports medicine department for athletes at Safdarjung Hospital, a government-run facility in Delhi, said that she opted to work with athletes as she wanted to be less exposed to violence through her job.

"I joined sports medicine because I loved sports and also wanted to have less exposure to patients because the violence to doctors is nothing new and we have been facing such issues for a long time. "Such incidents cause too much trauma and badly affect the mental health of the doctors."

"The government should act immediately and formulate ways to protect us," she added. "We live in a society where the men are conditioned to think that they are superior to us and such incidents happen."

RECYCLING

Coca-Cola tests 'closed loop' plan

By **Josie Clarke**

Coca-Cola said its trial of a "closed loop" recycling scheme at the Paris Olympics has been a "valuable" test ahead of a long-awaited deposit return scheme (DRS) launching in the UK in 2027.

The drinks company trialled a system of collecting bottles during the Games and recycling them to be re-used during the Paralympic Games. The usual cycle was cut from four months to less than four weeks.

It said the scale and complexity of the Olympic and Paralympic Games provided a unique opportunity to test solutions to packaging waste.

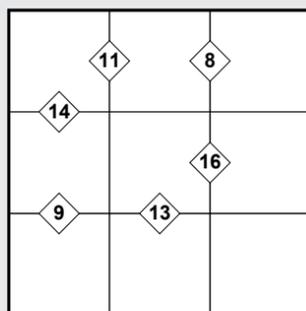


Coca-Cola is considering what it learnt from Paris alongside other closed-loop models, such as Ireland's DRS, where deposits are returned when customers return empty containers.

Labour plans to introduce a DRS before October 2027.

One-minute Wjuko

How to play Place 1 - 9 once in the grid, obeying the sums between pairs of squares



Solution: page 47
More puzzles: pages 27-30

TURKEY

Warning of further wildfires issued

By **Huseyin Hayatsever**

Firefighters in Turkey have brought two large forest fires under control that had been burning for three days, with several other wildfires across the country expected to be put out soon, the Forestry Minister said yesterday.

The blazes in Turkey's western coastal province of Izmir and northern province of Bolu started late on Thursday and firefighters have been working to contain them since then.

Speaking in Izmir's Karsiyaka district, Forestry Minister Ibrahim Yumakli said cooling efforts were under way to fully extinguish the fires. A

small fire that started in Izmir's Urla district on Saturday was also under control, he said.

More forest fires in Izmir's Menderes district and in the western provinces of Aydin, Manisa and Usak, as well as the northern province of Karabuk, were still burning. Planes, helicopters and other vehicles had been brought in to douse the flames and all were "close to being contained".

Turkish authorities warned of a high risk of further wildfires in northern and western Turkey for the next couple of days due to high temperatures, low humidity, and strong winds. REUTERS

Television Monday 19 August

CRITIC'S CHOICE

GERARD GILBERT



PICK OF THE DAY

The Kingdom: The World's Most Powerful Prince

9pm, BBC Two
From fringe royal to the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia, this fascinating two-part documentary looks at the rise of Mohammed bin Salman (left). MBS, as he is known, went from being just one of hundreds of junior Saudi princes to becoming heir to the throne and prime minister. Hearing from friends, advisers, spies, diplomats and exiles, this first instalment explores the tension between his desire to reform one of the world's most conservative countries (including granting greater freedoms to women) and his seemingly ruthless approach to opposition. It's even rumoured that he plotted to poison the king.

Only Connect

8pm, BBC Two
Anyone ever get the answers to these lateral-thinking questions? Anyway, this week, beer fans the Hopsters (including a keen Lego builder with a fear of butterflies and a woman who had a childhood crush on Virgil from *Thunderbirds*) take on vegetable enthusiasts the Sprouters. Except the Sprouters don't grow veg themselves, but apparently watch online growing competitions. So can you link cat: 200-300, mouse: 10-15, horse: 15-20k, and human: 2-2.5k?

Yorkshire by the Sea

8pm, Channel 4
Follow fisherman Darren as he heads into the North Sea from the

charming traditional fishing village of Staithes in search of lobster and crab. Shellfish are now a mainstay of the catch on the Yorkshire coast, with conservationists ensuring that the lobster population remains buoyant by breeding and releasing them from a purpose-built hatchery in nearby Whitby.

Long Lost Family

9pm, ITV1
Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell present two more stories, beginning with 66-year-old Charlotte's search for the baby she gave up as a teenager – a quest given greater urgency by her recent cancer diagnosis. Meanwhile, Jenna was donor-conceived and is desperate to see if she has any siblings out there.

Merseyside Detectives: The Murders of Ashley and Olivia

9pm, Channel 4
A new series follows the case of two people who lived within two miles of each other in Liverpool, and who were each shot in their own homes within two days of each other. While the pressure built on police to find the gunmen who murdered Ashley Dale, 28, and nine-year-old Olivia Pratt-Korbel, potential informants involved with feuding organised crime groups were forced to decide whether or not to talk to the police.

Forensics: Murder Scene

9pm, Channel 5
And yet more true crime, this time in West Yorkshire. The police call in

	ONE	TWO	itv1	4	5	FOUR	FILM	itv2	
Daytime	6.00 Breakfast (S) 9.30 Animal Park (S) 10.15 Countryfile (R) (S) 11.00 Homes Under The Hammer (R) (S) 12.00 Bargain Hunt (R) (S) 1.00 BBC News At One; Weather (S) 1.35 BBC Regional News; Weather (S) 1.45 BBC News At One; Weather (S) 2.00 Money For Nothing (R) (S) 3.00 Escape To The Country (S) 3.45 Antiques Road Trip (S) 4.30 The Answer Run (S) 5.15 Pointless (S)	6.45 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites (R) (S) 8.15 Sign Zone: Bridge Of Lies (R) (S) 9.00 BBC News 1.00 Head Hunters (R) (S) 1.45 Bridge Of Lies (R) (S) 2.30 All That Glitters: Britain's Next Jewellery Star (R) (S) 3.30 Hairy Bikers' Best Of British (R) (S) 4.15 Cornwall: This Fishing Life (R) (S) 5.15 Flog It! (R) (S)	6.00 Good Morning Britain (S) 9.00 Lorraine (S) 10.00 This Morning (S) 12.30 Loose Women (S) 1.30 ITV News; Weather (S) 1.55 ITV Regional News; Weather (S) 2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal (R) (S) 3.00 Tenable (R) (S) 3.59 ITV Regional Weather (S) 4.00 Tipping Point (R) (S) 5.00 The Chase (R) (S)	6.15 Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet The Athletes (R) (S) 6.20 Cheers (R) (S) 6.45 Cheers (R) (S) 7.10 Everybody Loves Raymond (R) (S) 8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond (R) (S) 9.00 Frasier (R) (S) 10.00 Frasier (R) (S) 11.00 The Simpsons (R) (S) 12.00 Channel 4 News Summary (S) 12.05 Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet The Athletes (R) (S) 12.10 A New Life In The Sun (R) (S) 1.10 Car S.O.S (R) (S) 2.10 Countdown (S) 3.00 A Place In The Sun (R) (S) 4.00 The Great House Giveaway (R) (S) 5.00 A New Life In The Sun: Where Are They Now? (S)	6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine (S) 11.30 Storm Huntley (S) 12.45 Friends (R) (S) 1.10 Friends (R) (S) 1.40 5 News At Lunchtime (S) 1.45 Home And Away (R) (S) 2.15 FILM: Mystery 101: Words Can Kill (Andy Mikita 2019) Thriller, starring Jill Wagner (S) 4.00 The Cruise: Fun-Loving Brits At Sea (R) (S) 5.00 5 News At 5 (S)	6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine (S) 11.30 Storm Huntley (S) 12.45 Friends (R) (S) 1.10 Friends (R) (S) 1.40 5 News At Lunchtime (S) 1.45 Home And Away (R) (S) 2.15 FILM: Mystery 101: Words Can Kill (Andy Mikita 2019) Thriller, starring Jill Wagner (S) 4.00 The Cruise: Fun-Loving Brits At Sea (R) (S) 5.00 5 News At 5 (S)	 Davina McCall helps Charlotte, 66, find the baby she gave up in 'Long Lost Family' 9pm, ITV1	 Kyla Harris writes and stars in a new comedy 10pm, BBC Two	6.00 CITV 9.00 World's Funniest Videos (S) 9.30 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records (S) 10.00 Love Bites (S) 11.00 Love Bites (S) 12.00 Dress To Impress (S) 1.00 In For A Penny (S) 1.30 In For A Penny (S) 2.00 Supermarket Sweep (S) 3.00 Charmed (S) 4.00 Dawson's Creek (S) 5.00 Dress To Impress (S)
6pm	6.00 BBC News At Six; Weather (S) 6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather (S)	6.00 Richard Osman's House Of Games (R) (S) 6.30 Great British Railway Journeys (R) (S)	6.00 ITV Regional News; Weather (S) 6.30 ITV News; Weather (S)	6.00 Come Dine With Me (R) (S) 6.30 The Simpsons Bart falls for the wrong girl (R) (S)	6.00 Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly (R) (S) 6.55 5 News Update (S)	 Charlotte, 66, find the baby she gave up in 'Long Lost Family' 9pm, ITV1	 Investigating the murder of Ashley Dale 9pm, Channel 4	6.00 Celebrity Catchphrase With Mo Gilligan, Naga Munchetty and Joanna Page (S)	
7pm	7.00 The One Show (S) 7.30 EastEnders Reiss is nervous as he faces the deadline to pay Phil (S)	7.00 Iolo's Valleys (R) (S) 7.30 Mastermind Specialist subjects include Tom Lehrer (S)	7.30 Emmerdale Laurel suggests buying Ja's shares in the Hide (S)	7.00 Channel 4 News (S)	7.00 Traffic Cops A car thief rams officers off the road at high-speed (R) (S) 7.55 5 News Update (S)	7.00 Fred Dibnah's Age Of Steam (S) 7.30 Gareth Edwards' Great Welsh Adventure (S)	6.45 FILM: Cowboys & Aliens (Jon Favreau 2011) Sci-fi Western, with Daniel Craig (S)	7.00 Ant & Dec's Limitless Win (S)	
8pm	8.00 The Riots that Shocked the Country: Panorama (S) 8.30 Scam Interceptors (R) (S)	8.00 Only Connect The Hopsters take on the Sprouters (S) 8.30 University Challenge (S)	8.00 Coronation Street Toyah discovers Nick has blabbed to David (S)	8.00 Yorkshire By The Sea Darren heads into the North Sea in search of lobster and crab (S)	8.00 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders (S)	8.00 The Impressionists - Painting And Revolution (S)		8.00 Bob's Burgers (S) 8.30 Bob's Burgers (S)	
9pm	9.00 Death In Paradise The owner of a hair salon is killed in puzzling circumstances (R) (S)	9.00 The Kingdom: The World's Most Powerful Prince (S)	9.00 Long Lost Family A 66-year-old woman looks for the baby she gave up as a teenager (S)	9.00 Merseyside Detectives: The Murders Of Ashley And Olivia New series (S)	9.00 Forensics: Murder Scene A man is shot and killed in a newsagents (S)	9.00 Call My Bluff Featuring Patrick Campbell (R) (S) 9.30 Going For A Song (S)	9.00 FILM: Men In Black: International (F Gary Gray 2019) Fantasy sequel, starring Chris Hemsworth (S)	9.00 Family Guy Peter prepares for a fight with Liam Neeson (S) 9.30 Family Guy Lois books a couple's vacation (S)	
10pm	10.00 BBC News At Ten (S) 10.30 BBC Regional News; Weather (S) 10.40 Have I Got News For You (R) (S)	10.00 We Might Regret This New series. Comedy drama, starring Kyla Harris (S) 10.30 Newsnight (S)	10.00 ITV News (S) 10.30 ITV Regional News (S) 10.45 FILM: Olympus Has Fallen (Antoine Fuqua 2013) (S)	10.00 Murder Case: The Digital Detectives (R) (S)	10.30 999: Police Hour Of Duty (R) (S)	10.00 Mary Beard's Shock Of The Nude The classicist examines the nude in western art (S)		10.00 Family Guy Meg convinces Brian to take her SATs for her (S) 10.30 Family Guy (S)	
11pm	11.10 Who Do You Think You Are? Line of Duty star Vicky McClure researches her ancestry (R) (S)	11.05 Slavery At Sea An investigation into allegations of modern slavery aboard UK fishing vessels (S)		11.05 Night Coppers Sergeants Sam and Ed are called to a gas leak at a petrol station (R) (S)	11.30 999: Critical Condition A man with a torn aorta, needs urgent medical attention (R) (S)	11.00 Sex And Sensibility: The Allure Of Art Nouveau The movement's influence in Britain (S)	11.15 FILM: XXx: The Next Level (Lee Tamahori 2005) Action sequel, starring Ice Cube (S)	11.00 Family Guy Peter discovers his first name is actually Justin (S) 11.30 American Dad! (S)	
Late	12.10 The Repair Shop (R) (S) 1.15 BBC News (S)	12.05 FILM: The Levelling (Hope Dickson Leach 2016) Drama, starring Ellie Kendrick (S) 1.25 Sign Zone: Countryfile (R) (S) 2.20 Sign Zone: Celebrity MasterChef (R) (S) 3.20 This Is BBC Two (S)	12.40 Shop On TV 3.00 Family Fortunes (R) (S) 3.50 Unwind With ITV (S) 5.05 Jimmy's Taste Of Florida (R) (S)	12.05 The Flight Attendant Murders (S) 3.45 Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet The Athletes (R) (S) 3.50 Grand Designs (R) (S) 4.45 Frasier (R) (S) 5.10 Frasier (R) (S) 5.35 Countdown (R) (S)	12.30 Traffic Cops (R) (S) 1.20 PlayOJO Live Casino Show (S) 3.20 Suspects (R) (S) 4.05 The Dambusters (R) (S) 4.50 House Busters (R) (S) 5.15 House Doctor (R) (S) 5.40 Entertainment News On 5 (S)	12.00 Romancing The Stone: The Golden Ages Of British Sculpture (S) 1.00 Fred Dibnah's Age Of Steam (S) 1.30 Gareth Edwards' Great Welsh Adventure (S)	1.20 FILM: Assassination Nation (Sam Levinson 2018) Comedy thriller, starring Odessa Young (S) 3.35 Close	12.00 American Dad! (S) 12.30 Bob's Burgers (S) 1.00 Bob's Burgers (S) 1.30 Deal Or No Deal (S) 2.30 Unwind With ITV (S) 3.00 Teleshopping	

Dominoes

How to play All of the 28 domino pieces from 0-0 through to 6-6 have been placed once into the grid. Can you work out where each of them is placed?

4	1	1	6	4	0	5	4
2	5	0	3	6	1	6	6
3	5	2	6	2	1	3	6
2	2	1	1	5	3	1	0
2	2	0	2	4	6	3	4
0	4	5	3	1	5	0	0
0	5	5	3	4	4	6	3

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						
0						

Journey Finder

How to play Move between the numbers in order 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4 and so on, starting with the grey 1 and ending with the grey 4. On each step you may move one square in any direction (including diagonally). You must form a continuous path that visits every square exactly once.

1	4	3	4	2	3
1	2	3	1	3	4
1	2	4	2	1	2
4	2	3	3	1	4
3	3	2	4	4	3
2	1	4	1	1	2

Train Tracks

How to play Numbers around the outside indicate how many squares in each row and column the track passes through between A and B. The track either passes straight through a square or turns at right angles in it.

5	4	5	4	4	4	4	6	
								2
								8
								5
								2
								8
								2
								3
								6
								B
A								

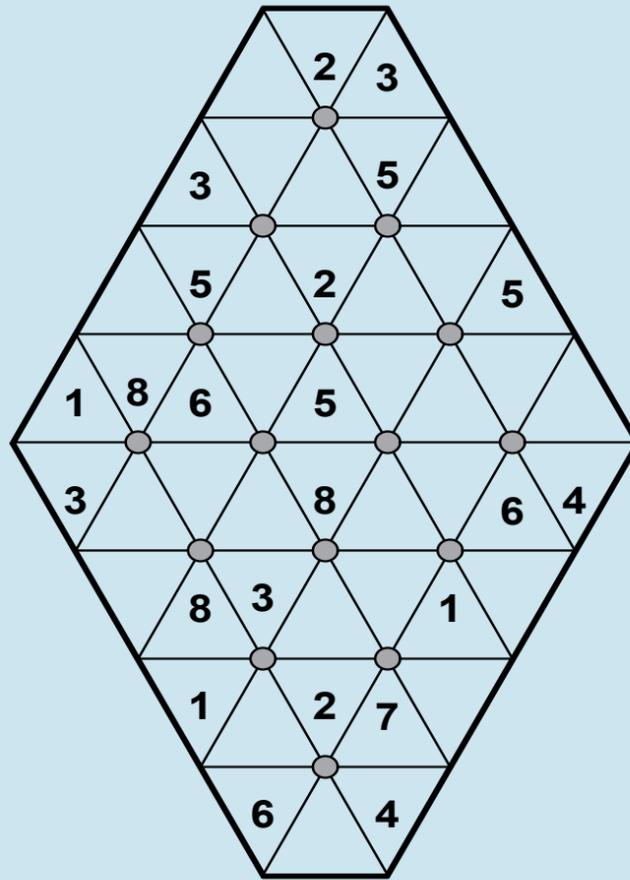
Binary

How to play Complete the grid so that each row and column contains five 0s and five 1s. The same number cannot appear in more than two consecutive squares in any row or column. In the finished puzzle, each row must have a different sequence of 0s and 1s to any other row, and likewise for each column.

	1		0	0				
			0				0	
1	1				1			
1	1	1	0					0
			0	0				0
1	1	0						
1							1	
	0			1				
		1						

Number Hexagon

How to play Each hexagon is divided into six triangles. The sum of these six triangles is always 25. Place a number from 1-9 in each empty triangle to complete the puzzle; you cannot repeat a number within a hexagon.



Pathfinder

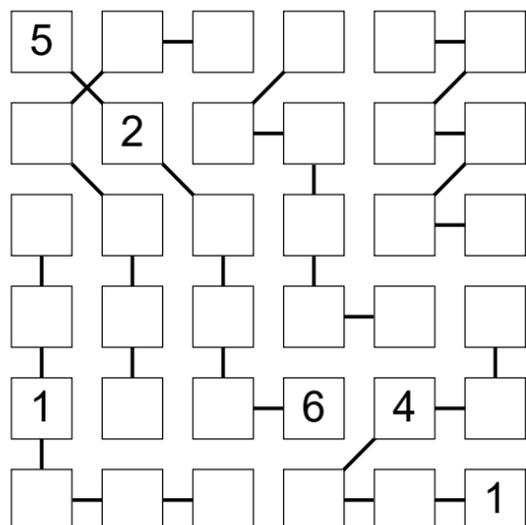
How to play Moving from letter to adjacent letter, can you create a continuous path that visits every square once and spells out all the words listed to the right of the grid? Start on the shaded square.

C	A	L	T	P	V	A	S	I	V
I	M	H	S	E	R	N	A	S	E
L	E	E	I	E	H	T	L	L	F
O	P	E	B	R	S	U	O	O	L
T	S	R	B	V	U	N	R	U	T
E	I	R	O	I	O	D	E	M	S
L	E	S	R	O	H	A	L	A	G
S	N	U	I	L	T	U	Z	U	N
L	S	P	O	E	D	H	Z	M	S
R	U	H	S	L	E	E	A	R	F

- Anther
- Author
- Berries
- Flouts
- Frazzled
- Heels
- Heist
- Hurls
- Lets
- Magnums
- Obvious
- Pervasive
- Polemical
- Unrolls
- Unspoiled

Chain Link

How to play Place the numbers 1-6 in each row, column and along each series of squares linked by the chain.



Battleships

How to play Locate the position of each of the ships listed below in the grid. Numbers around the edge tell you the number of ship segments in each row and column of the puzzle. Ships are surrounded on all sides by water, including diagonally.

									3
									2
									4
									1
									2
									1
									1
									4
									0
									2
1	8	0	3	2	0	2	1	3	0

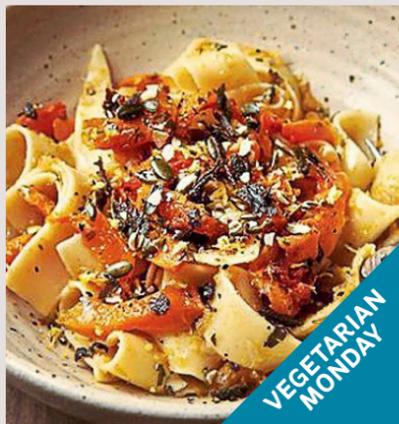


Daily Quiz

- What tongue-twisting sentence, said to be a test for sobriety, mentions a Scottish constabulary?
- Madame de Pompadour was the mistress of which French monarch?
- A "lost" 12-string acoustic guitar belonging to which of the Beatles was sold for £2.3m in New York in May?
- Which north African dish is named after the earthenware pot in which it is cooked?

Answers, page 47

Smoked garlic, squash and crispy sage pasta



VEGETARIAN MONDAY

SERVES 4

- 1 large white onion (finely chopped)
- 2tsp smoked garlic paste
- Olive oil
- Handful of fresh sage
- 1 butternut squash (diced)
- 100-200ml stock
- 350ml pasta (pappardelle or tagliatelle)
- Half a lemon (zest and juice reserved)
- Handful of pumpkin seeds (lightly toasted)
- Salt and pepper

Pre-heat the oven to gas mark 4/180°C/160°C fan. Remove the skin and seeds from the squash. Halve, chopping one half into 1cm cubes, and the other half into quarters and then 1cm slices.

Toss the slices in oil and place in a baking tray. Tear a few leaves of the sage and sprinkle over, then season well and place in the oven for 30 to 40 minutes.

While the squash is roasting, add a generous glug of oil to a heavy pan and turn the heat to medium-high. Drop in the remaining sage leaves for approximately 30 seconds, until crispy but still green. Remove from the pan, reserving the flavoured oil.

Add the onion to the sage oil and cook gently for 10 minutes. Once translucent, add the smoked garlic and cook for a couple of minutes, then add the cubed squash. Turn the heat up to fry the squash for a minute, mixing well, before pouring in the stock. Cook on a high heat for 15 to 20 minutes, until all the liquid has been absorbed.

While the squash is cooking, boil a pan of salted water and add pasta. Cook until al dente then drain, reserving a cup of the pasta water. Toast the seeds.

Once the squash has cooked into the stock, add the pasta to the pan. Pour in a little of the reserved pasta water and bring to a simmer.

Mix gently, using the pasta water to loosen the squash sauce and create a gloss. Squeeze and sprinkle over the lemon juice and zest and season well.

Recipe from bart.co.uk

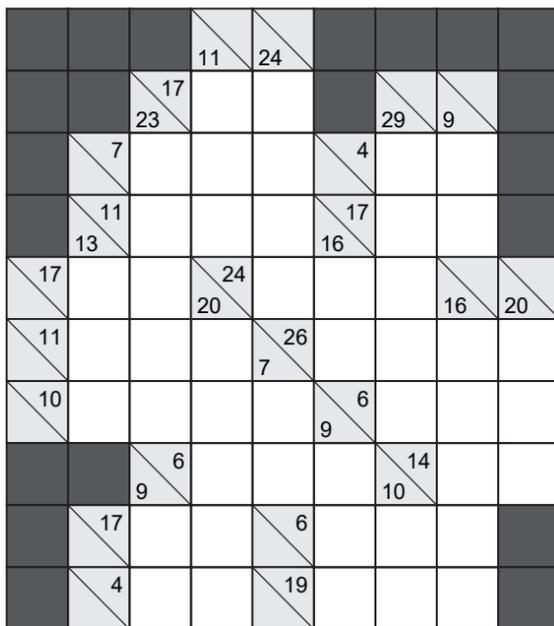
Tomorrow
Prawn saganaki



Games & Puzzles

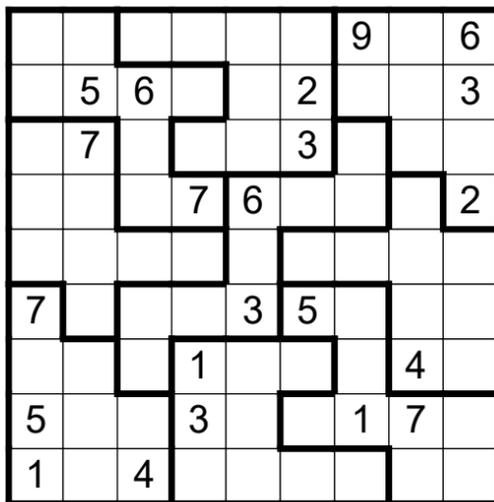
Kakuro

How to play Fill the white squares so that the total in each across or down run of cells matches the total at the start of that run. You must use the numbers from 1-9 only and cannot repeat a number in a run.



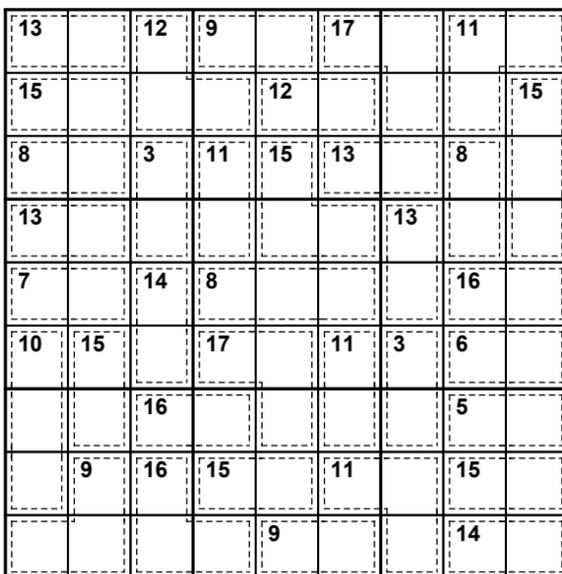
Jigsawdoku

How to play Place the numbers 1-9 once in each row, column and bold-lined jigsaw region.



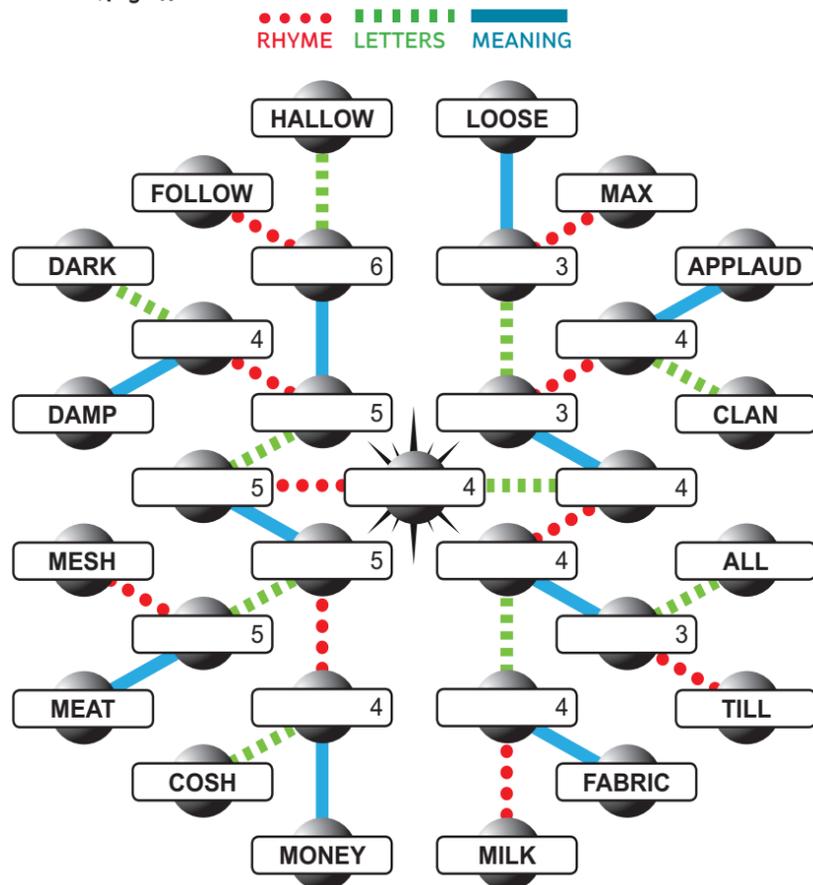
Killer Sudoku

How to play Each row, column and 3 by 3 box must contain each number (1 to 9) only once. The sum of all numbers contained in a dotted area must match the number printed in its top-left corner. No number can appear more than once in a dotted area.



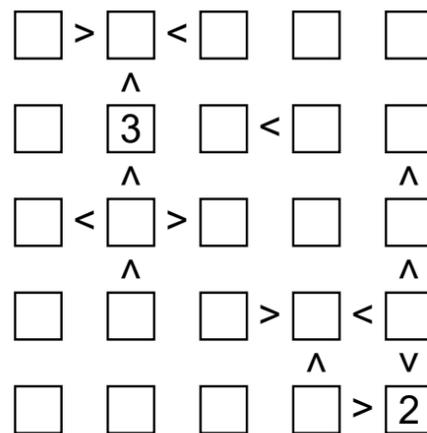
Zygolex® In i every day

Find the missing words by following the RHYME, LETTERS and MEANING links – eg, a word that rhymes with 'cheek', has one letter different from 'pear' and has the same meaning as mountain, would be 'peak'. Full rules at zygolex.com. **Solution, page 47**



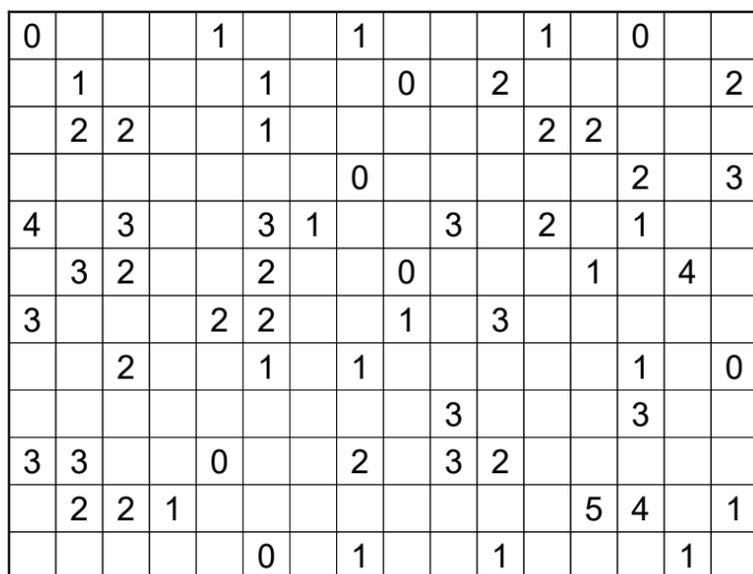
Futoshiki

How to play Place the numbers from 1-5 exactly once in each row and column. The greater than and less than signs (> and <) indicate where one cell is greater/less than the adjacent cell indicated.



Minesweeper

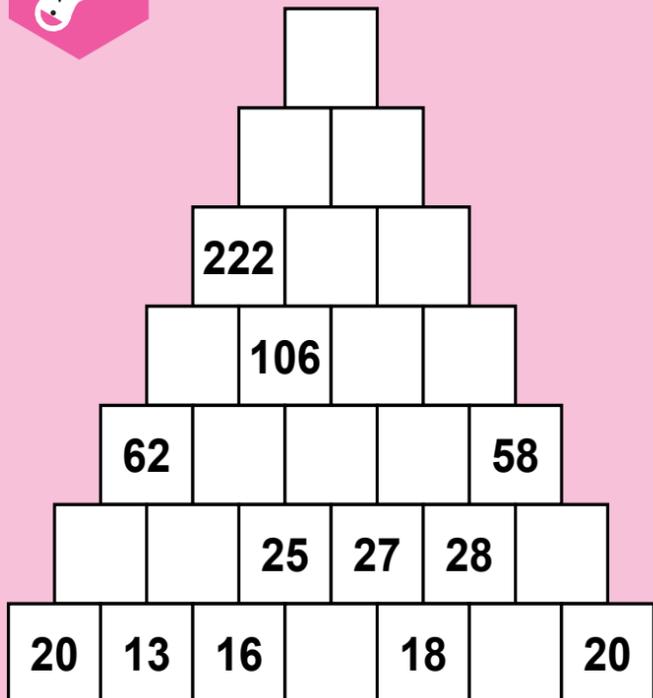
How to play Find all the mines in the grid. Numbers in certain squares indicate how many mines there are in the neighbouring squares, including diagonally touching squares. Mines cannot be placed in squares with numbers.



Children's Corner Number Tower



How to play The value of each square in the number pyramid is the sum of the two squares directly under it.



Knight's Tour

How to play A chess knight visits each square of the grid exactly once, starting at 1 and ending at 100 (these squares are shaded). Deduce the whole path of the knight - some of which is already given - and thus complete the grid. The knight moves either two squares horizontally followed by one square vertically, or two squares vertically followed by one square horizontally.

			51	18	35		39	16	
	52	81	34	47	94				40
32			91			46			
	76		78		90		44		22
			73	96		88	23		
				61				1	
30	85				87	60	11	70	
55	8				98				
				66		4		12	
7	56	63				67	26		100

Rectangles

How to play Divide the grid into a series of rectangles or squares, such that every cell in the grid is in exactly one region. Numbers indicate the size of each region: for instance a "7" in a cell means that cell is part of a region that contains seven cells in total. There is only one number in each region.

	3			6					
	4	12						2	3
		3							
							2		2
		6	20						
							5		2
6									
								7	3
	12				2				

Word Fit

How to play Can you fit all the words into the grid to complete the puzzle? Some words may initially fit in more than one place, but there is only one way to fit all the words together to complete the grid.

	<p>4 letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Dewy □ Pans <p>5 letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Bated □ Boxed □ Local □ Paved □ Shirt □ Taste □ Teeth <p>6 letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Cravat □ Cycled □ Enough □ Fished □ Hither □ Pestle □ Purvey □ Spaced <p>7 letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Starchy □ Whimper <p>8 letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Massaged □ Tactless
--	---

Bridges

How to play Connect every island (represented by circles) into a single interconnected group. To do this draw bridges between islands. The number in each circle states how many bridges must be connected to that island. Bridges cannot cross each other, can only be drawn horizontally or vertically, and there can be a maximum of two bridges between any pair of islands.

Word Search

How to play The classic word-search puzzle: find all the words in the grid. Words may be hidden horizontally, vertically or diagonally and in either a forwards or backwards direction.

Q	Z	V	W	R	N	Z	Y	O	B	E	G	A	P	H
V	T	M	D	B	U	Z	Z	C	U	T	M	G	P	S
A	N	N	D	M	B	O	U	F	F	A	N	T	K	T
K	C	T	U	C	R	E	D	N	U	Z	W	Y	Z	F
B	T	U	C	R	A	S	E	A	C	U	Z	D	Z	V
O	F	C	K	O	Q	J	Y	A	P	U	F	F	V	M
B	N	W	T	P	L	R	Y	I	T	M	T	U	T	O
C	O	E	A	B	J	R	B	L	O	W	O	U	T	H
U	R	R	I	L	N	B	M	B	Q	T	N	P	P	A
T	U	C	L	W	O	B	I	U	I	H	S	T	W	W
L	F	Z	P	K	N	X	X	F	L	A	U	E	I	K
R	S	B	E	Y	G	E	L	O	C	L	R	J	B	X
O	B	E	R	H	I	O	R	F	A	W	E	N	M	Q
T	J	D	M	H	H	U	V	F	L	A	T	T	O	P
N	P	J	Q	E	C	Z	S	M	W	A	J	D	V	A

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFRO BLOWOUT BOB CUT BOUFFANT BOWL CUT BUN BUZZ CUT CAESAR CUT CHIGNON CREW CUT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CROP DUCKTAIL FLATTOP MOHAWK MULLET PAGEBOY PERM POMPADOUR TONSURE UNDERCUT |
|--|--|

Solutions: page 47

Word Square

How to play Simply answer the clues alongside the grid, writing the answers in the respective rows. The solution must read the same horizontally in each row as it does vertically in each column.

□	□	□	□	Impel
□	□	□	□	Roll of photographic film
□	□	□	□	Coheres
□	□	□	□	Otherwise

CalcuDoku

How to play Place the numbers 1-6 once in each row and column, obeying sums in bold-lined regions. The number in each region indicates the total for the region, and the symbol shows which type of operation should be applied to the numbers: addition, subtraction, division or multiplication. Numbers may repeat within bold-lined regions. With subtraction always take the lower numbers away from the highest number in a region, and with division divide the highest number by the lower numbers.

1-		2-	10+		5+
6+	6÷		4-	10+	
			12+		
15x			6÷		12+
6+			6+		
24x				2-	

Hexalex

How to play Place each of the letters below once into the empty hexagons, crossing them off as you do so. Enter the letters in such a way that it is possible to find all the words listed alongside the grid by moving from hexagon to adjacent hexagon to spell out each word.

- AMP
- ERG
- FLAP
- GAZED
- JOT
- PALM
- SHIVER
- SHY
- SNIDE
- TUCK
- VEX
- WIN

A C D E F G H I J M P R S T W Y

forensic teams to investigate when a man is shot and killed in a newsagents – the savage attack with a close-range shotgun blast sending tremors through the community.

=== We Might Regret This 10pm, BBC Two

"You were disabled way before it was cool," says Jo (Elena Saurel) to best friend Freya (Kyla Harris), a thirty-something tetraplegic artist in London – setting the tone for Harris's promising comedy-drama. Jo may be chaotic, but she knows how to use a catheter when Freya needs a pee – the only problem being that Jo is at loggerheads with Freya's new boyfriend. In the opening episode, Freya is interviewed by an agency to be a "diversity model".

FILM CHOICE

LAURENCE PHELAN



FILM OF THE DAY

Paper Moon

4.05pm, Sky Cinema Greats
(Peter Bogdanovich, 1973)

A charming, lyrical comic picaresque, with Ryan and Tatum O'Neal (both left) as a con artist and a wily little girl who may or may not be his daughter, swindling their way across Depression-era Kansas. In fact, the girl is so wily and smart that it's less like a father-daughter bonding movie and more of an odd-couple buddy comedy. Hardly any films manage to feature kids this cute without getting sentimental; even fewer are so heartwarming and yet still ring true. It helps that Bogdanovich, an underappreciated film-maker of the "New Hollywood" of the 1970s, is so well served by his cinematographer, László Kovács.

=== Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 8pm, Sky Cinema Greats

(Ang Lee, 2000)
A sumptuous Qing-dynasty costume drama, a tender, achingly restrained love story and a spectacular and balletic action film all in one, this Oscar-winning hit is the martial arts movie it's OK to like.

=== Machete

9pm, Great! Action

(Ethan Maniquis, Robert Rodriguez, 2010)
Setting out to do for Mexicans what blaxploitation did for African Americans and kung fu flicks for the Chinese, this exploitation throwback stars Danny Trejo as a one-man army battling Texan right-wingers.

ON DEMAND

Spent BBC iPlayer

A semi-autobiographical comedy from former model Michelle de Swarte.

Mr Bigstuff Now

Danny Dyer and Ryan Sampson play long-lost siblings in this jaunty caper.

OceanXplorers Disney+

On board the research vessel exploring 80 per cent of Earth's uncharted oceans.

itv3

ITV

More
ITV

sky max

sky atlantic

6.00 Classic Emmerdale (S) 6.30 Classic Emmerdale (S) 7.00 Classic Coronation Street (S) 7.35 Classic Coronation Street (S) 8.05 Wild At Heart (S) 9.10 Wild At Heart (S) 10.25 The Royal (S) 11.25 Heartbeat (S) 12.35 Heartbeat (S) 1.40 Classic Emmerdale (S) 2.40 Classic Coronation Street (S) 3.15 Classic Coronation Street (S) 3.50 A Touch Of Frost (S)

6.00 Hollyoaks (S) 7.00 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (S) 9.00 The Goldbergs (S) 9.30 The Goldbergs (S) 10.00 Young Sheldon (S) 10.30 Young Sheldon (S) 11.00 Modern Family (S) 11.30 Modern Family (S) 12.00 The Big Bang Theory (S) 12.30 The Big Bang Theory (S) 1.00 The Big Bang Theory (S) 1.30 The Big Bang Theory (S) 2.00 The Goldbergs (S) 2.30 The Goldbergs (S) 3.00 Modern Family (S) 3.30 Modern Family (S) 4.00 Young Sheldon (S) 4.30 Young Sheldon (S) 5.00 The Big Bang Theory (S) 5.30 The Big Bang Theory (S)

8.55 Food Unwrapped (S) 9.30 A Place In The Sun (S) 10.25 A New Life In The Sun (S) 11.25 Find It, Fix It, Flog It (S) 12.30 Come Dine With Me (S) 1.00 Come Dine With Me (S) 1.30 Come Dine With Me (S) 2.05 Come Dine With Me (S) 2.35 Come Dine With Me (S) 3.10 Four In A Bed (S) 3.40 Four In A Bed (S) 4.15 Four In A Bed (S) 4.50 Four In A Bed (S) 5.20 Four In A Bed (S) 5.50 Chateau DIY (S)

6.00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow (R) (S) 7.00 SEAL Team (R) (S) 8.00 Supergirl (R) (S) 9.00 Stargate SG-1 (R) (S) 10.00 Stargate SG-1 (R) (S) 11.00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow (R) (S) 12.00 Supergirl (R) (S) 1.00 Magnum P.I. (R) (S) 2.00 Magnum P.I. (R) (S) 3.00 Hawaii Five-0 (R) (S) 4.00 S.W.A.T. (R) (S) 5.00 SEAL Team (R) (S)

6.00 The Guest Wing (R) (S) 6.55 The Guest Wing (R) (S) 7.55 Perry Mason (R) (S) 9.05 Perry Mason (R) (S) 10.15 Westworld (R) (S) 11.20 Westworld (R) (S) 12.25 Game Of Thrones (R) (S) 1.25 The Sopranos (R) (S) 2.30 The Sopranos (R) (S) 3.35 Perry Mason (R) (S) 4.40 Perry Mason (R) (S) 5.45 Westworld (R) (S)

6.00 Heartbeat A latter-day Robin Hood baffles the police. Drama, starring Derek Fowlds (S).

6.00 The Big Bang Theory (S) 6.30 The Big Bang Theory (S)

6.55 Car S.O.S Tim and Fuzz restore the 1987 MG Metro 6R4 rally car (S).

6.00 Stargate SG-1 A teenage boy claims to be Colonel O'Neill (R) (S).

6.50 Westworld Elsie discovers evidence that could point to sabotage (R) (S).

7.00 Heartbeat An insurance salesman is murdered (S).

7.00 Hollyoaks (S) 7.30 Second-Hand Showdown With Vicky Pattison (S)

7.55 Grand Designs A shed-like home and workspace built using industrial-style materials (S).

7.00 Stargate SG-1 A rescue mission gets under way (R) (S).

7.55 Game Of Thrones Jon and the Night's Watch face their biggest challenge (R) (S).

8.00 Vera The detective investigates the murder of a homeless young man (S).

8.00 Below Deck Adventure (S)

8.00 Freddie Fries Again Andrew Flintoff and Rob Penn head to the south-west of England (R) (S).

8.00 Mr Bigstuff Last in series (R) (S). 9.30 The Walking Dead (R) (S).

10.00 Cracker Part two of two. Grady and Nash hide in an abandoned factory (S).

10.05 Gogglebox Reviews of Married at First Sight Australia and Only Connect (S).

10.00 Flights From Hell: Caught On Camera (S).

10.30 Warrior An assassination attempt is made during a Chinatown parade (R) (S).

10.05 The Last Of Us Joel and Ellie descend deeper into dangerous territory (R) (S).

11.05 Cracker Part one of two. Fitz receives a love letter (S).

11.15 First Dates A part-time singer enjoys an evening with a professional magician (S).

11.05 24 Hours In A&E A driver is rushed in after flipping his car on its roof (S).

11.30 The Force: Manchester Documentary following the work of Greater Manchester Police (R) (S).

11.20 Succession The Roy family come together to attend a wedding in Italy (R) (S).

12.00 Wild At Heart (S) 12.45 Wild At Heart (S) 1.35 Upstairs, Downstairs (S) 2.30 Teleshopping

12.15 The Big Bang Theory (S) 12.45 The Big Bang Theory (S) 1.15 Brooklyn Nine-Nine (S) 2.10 Celebs Go Dating (S) 3.10 Below Deck Adventure (S) 4.00 Modern Family (S) 4.50 Brooklyn Nine-Nine (S)

12.05 Paris 2024 Paralympics: Meet The Athletes (S) 12.15 Emergency Helicopter Medics (S) 1.20 999: On The Front Line (S) 2.20 24 Hours In A&E (S) 3.25 Food Unwrapped (S)

12.30 Brit Cops: Frontline Crime UK (R) (S) 1.30 Road Wars (R) (S) 2.30 Road Wars (R) (S) 3.00 Hawaii Five-0 (R) (S) 4.00 S.W.A.T. (R) (S) 5.00 Highway Patrol (R) (S) 5.30 Highway Patrol (R) (S)

12.35 Euphoria (R) (S) 1.40 Game Of Thrones (R) (S) 2.50 The Nevers (R) (S) 4.00 The Guest Wing (R) (S) 5.00 The Guest Wing (R) (S)

Radio

BBC Radio 1

6.57am Newsbeat 7.00 Radio 1 Breakfast With Greg James 2.00 The Archers 2.15 Ed Reardon's Week 2.45 Jessie Kesson Short Stories 3.00 Great Lives 3.30 Extreme 4.00 Ukraine: On The Frontline 4.30 Alexei Sayle's Strangers On A Train 5.00 PM 5.57 Weather 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 The Unbelievable Truth 7.00 The Archers. Will is forced to improvise, and Jim makes a suggestion. 7.15 Front Row. Arts programme. 8.00 The Briefing Room. China's desire for "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan. 8.30 BBC Inside Science 9.00 History's Secret Heroes. The African-American doctor who led the blood bank effort during the Second World War. 9.30 To Catch A Scorpion. The dramatic hunt for a people smuggler on the run from the law. 10.00 The World Tonight 10.45 Book At Bedtime: The Go-Between 11.00 Harland 11.30 The Rise And Rise Of The Microchip 12midn't News And Weather 12.30 Book Of The Week: Exam Nation 12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As BBC World Service 5.20 Shipping Forecast 5.30 News Briefing 5.43 Prayer For The Day 5.45 Farming Today

BBC Radio 1Xtra

6.33am 1Xtra Playlists 7.00 1Xtra Breakfast With Fee Mak 10.00 DJ Day Day 12.45pm Newsbeat @ 12.45 1.00 Kaylee Golding 4.00 Remi Burgz 5.45 Newsbeat @ 17.45 6.00 Remi Burgz 7.00 DJ Target 9.00 Sian Anderson 11.00 Snoochie Shy 1am 1Xtra's Carnival Collection: Soca Sixty-Sounds Of The Caribbean 2.00 1Xtra's Carnival Collection: Soca Sixty-Sounds Of The Caribbean 3.00 1Xtra Salutes 4.00 Battle Of The Mixes 4.30 1Xtra's R&B Chill Mix 5.30 1Xtra's Throwback Party

BBC Radio 2

6.30am The Scott Mills Breakfast Show 9.30 Vernon Kay 12noon Tina Daheley 2.00 DJ Spooky 4.00 Sara Cox 6.30 Sara Cox's Half Wower 7.00 Edith Bowman's Shiny Happy Playlist 7.30 Edith Bowman 9.00 The Blues Show With Moby 10.00 Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation 12midn't Phil Williams 2.30 One Hit Wonders With OJ Borg 3.00 Tom Daley's Motivational Mix - Row 4.00 Owain Wyn Evans

BBC Radio 3

6.30am Breakfast 9.30 Essential Classics 1pm Classical Live. Recordings from this year's Edinburgh International Festival. 4.00 Composer Of The Week: Tailleferre. Kate Molleson examines the life and career of Germaine Tailleferre. 5.00 In Tune. Music and arts news. 7.00 Classical Mixtape. With pieces by Dvorak, Vivaldi, Bach and Tchaikovsky. 7.30 BBC Proms 2024. A live performance of Bach's St John Passion. 10.15 Night Tracks 11.30 Round Midnight 12.30am Through The Night

BBC Radio 4

6am Today 9.00 The Artificial Human 9.30 Natalie Haynes Stands Up For The Classics 10.00 Woman's Hour 11.00 Michael Sheen Gets Into Character 11.30 One To One 11.45 Book Of The Week: Exam Nation 12noon News 12.04

You And Yours 12.57 Weather 1.00 The World At One 1.45 Grenfell: Building A Disaster 2.00 The Archers 2.15 Ed Reardon's Week 2.45 Jessie Kesson Short Stories 3.00 Great Lives 3.30 Extreme 4.00 Ukraine: On The Frontline 4.30 Alexei Sayle's Strangers On A Train 5.00 PM 5.57 Weather 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 The Unbelievable Truth 7.00 The Archers. Will is forced to improvise, and Jim makes a suggestion. 7.15 Front Row. Arts programme. 8.00 The Briefing Room. China's desire for "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan. 8.30 BBC Inside Science 9.00 History's Secret Heroes. The African-American doctor who led the blood bank effort during the Second World War. 9.30 To Catch A Scorpion. The dramatic hunt for a people smuggler on the run from the law. 10.00 The World Tonight 10.45 Book At Bedtime: The Go-Between 11.00 Harland 11.30 The Rise And Rise Of The Microchip 12midn't News And Weather 12.30 Book Of The Week: Exam Nation 12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As BBC World Service 5.20 Shipping Forecast 5.30 News Briefing 5.43 Prayer For The Day 5.45 Farming Today

BBC Radio 4 Extra

6am Dixon Of Dock Green 6.30 Raffles 7.00 Anything Legal 7.30 Stop Messing About! 8.00 North By Northamptonshire 8.30 On Her Majesty's Secret Service 8.45 Subterranean Homesick Blues 9.00 The Unbelievable Truth 9.30 Door Stepping 9.45 Daily Service 10.00 Frankly Speaking 10.30 When Hollywood Met Halifax 11.00 Dixon Of Dock Green 11.30 Raffles 12noon Anything Legal 12.30 Stop Messing About! 1.00 North By Northamptonshire 1.30 On Her Majesty's Secret Service 1.45 Subterranean Homesick Blues 2.00 Just A Minute 2.30 Street And Lane 3.00 Safe As Houses 4.00 Frankly Speaking 4.30 When Hollywood Met Halifax

BBC Radio 5 Live

6am 5 Live Breakfast 9.00 Nicky Campbell 11.00 Naga Munchetty 1pm Steffan Powell 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 1am Dotun Adebayo 5.00 Wake Up To Money

BBC Radio 6 Music

7.30am Lauren Laverne 10.30 Tom Ravenscroft 1pm Craig Charles 4.00 Steve Lamacq's Teatime Session 7.00 New Music Fix Daily 9.00 Riley & Coe 11.00 The First Time With Bernard Butler 12midn't Fontaines DC At The BBC 1.00 Fontaines DC. Live 2.00 Fontaines DC In Residence 4.00 The Fontaines DC Playlist 5.00 Chris Hawkins

Classic FM

6.30am Classic FM Breakfast With Dan Walker 9.00 The Classic FM Hall Of Fame Hour With Dan Walker 10.00 John Brunning 1pm Anne-Marie Minhall 4.00 Margherita Taylor 7.00 Relaxing Evenings 10.00 Calm Classics 1am Bill Overton 4.00 Early Breakfast

Absolute Radio

6am Dave Berry 10.00 Leona Graham 1pm Ben Burrell 4.00 Bush And Richie 7.00 Claire Sturges 10.00 Jay Lawrence 1am Dan Noble

Heart

6.30am Heart Breakfast With Jamie Theakston And Amanda Holden 10.00 Pandora Christie 1pm Matt Wilkinson 4.00 JK And Kelly Brook 7.00 Heart's Feel Good Weekend With Dev Griffin 10.00 Fia Tarrant 1am Heart's Feel Good Weekend With Jonny Meah 4.00 Early Breakfast With Lindsey Russell

TalkSPORT

6am Breakfast With Jeff Stelling 10.00 Jim White And Simon Jordan 1pm Hawksbee And Jacobs 4.00 Drive With Andy Goldstein And Darren Bent 7.00 Monday GameNight 10.00 The Sports Bar 1am Extra Time With Paul Ross 5.00 Early Sports Breakfast

Pick of the day



Vernon Kay

9.30am, BBC Radio 2

One of the most decorated athletes in British sporting history, Paralympian Sarah Storey (above), shares her favourite songs on "Tracks of my Years".

“My joints feel great thanks to Prime Cream!”

Collagen is essential for good joint health!

Collagen is your body's most abundant natural protein, making up around 33% of your body mass. It's in your bones, joints, muscles and other types of connective tissue.

As we age, the body's collagen production slows down or even stops. In fact, there is a school of thought which suggests that if you're over 30, your body can no longer make its own collagen. We need collagen for healthy joints, physical resilience and the ability to recover from injuries. The body loses 1.5 per cent every year, so by the age of 40, we have lost over 30 per cent!

JOINT HEALTH SOLUTION

Now, Collagen Prime Cream offers a new solution. With its unique combination of 16 all-natural ingredients – including 3 different types of Collagen, Glucosamine, Aloe vera and vitamins A, D and E – you'll soon discover why Collagen Prime Cream is better than any other product available today.

Jan Hall, 62, was worried she would no longer be able to enjoy quality time with

her grandchildren and her beautiful Wiltshire garden would go untended.

“I try to be as active as possible, but it's just harder as you get older. I haven't really got a choice either – especially as I help take my grandchildren to school occasionally, and try and spend as much time with them as possible. They definitely keep me young in spirit, but it just seemed that my body couldn't keep up! I'm also very proud of our garden, however a lot of kneeling and pruning seems to have taken its toll on my joints – especially my hips, knees and hands. I was taking the typical traditional vitamins and ointments to try and help, but I didn't feel as if they really worked at all either as pain relief, or in the long term to improve my mobility.

“Then one Sunday afternoon, I was out at the café at my local garden centre with my daughter and her friend. It was quite embarrassing really – my hands and wrists were so uncomfortable, I couldn't even pour the tea!

REMARKABLE DIFFERENCE

My daughter's friend obviously noticed, and said her mum suffered with a similar problem, but she had started using a product called Collagen Prime Cream and had seen a remarkable difference. I'd heard of Collagen, but thought it was just for wrinkles! ‘I could use some of that’, I said, ‘but what about my joints?’ She laughed, and explained that although Collagen is great for skin and used in lots of cosmetic products, its also essentially the glue that holds us all together – joints, skin, muscles, everything! Her mum has found it great to target elbows and knees for joint health – and she even said it's been great for her skin as well!

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Jan Hall, 62, was worried she would no longer be able to enjoy quality time with her grandchildren, and her beautiful Wiltshire garden would go untended. Now thanks to Collagen Prime, she couldn't be happier.

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that you get with other creams. I looked at the label and couldn't believe how many ingredients were in there! It was packed full of vitamins, Glucosamine, Co-enzyme Q10 and even 3 different types of collagen!

WHAT A RELIEF

Well when I used it, I was amazed. I honestly couldn't believe it. Such a soothing sensation – what a relief! “Just some massaged into my hands, wrists, elbows and knees, and it works wonders. Kneeling down now to get some weeds out of the flowerbeds has been a breeze – and even to play in the garden with the kids isn't a problem – apart from when they won't let me stop and have a cup of tea! Which by the way, I can pour no problem now!”

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Panorama

Around the world in 10 stories



AUSTRIA

Heavy rains disrupt travel

Heavy rains lashed Alpine regions of Austria and left parts of Vienna under water at the weekend, causing severe damage and disrupting road and rail transport.

Torrents of water swept cars through the ski resort of St Anton in western Austria.

Meanwhile record rainfall hit parts of Vienna. A woman was dragged under a bus by the flooding in the Doebling area in the north of the city on Saturday.

"Heavy storms have done great damage," the Chancellor Karl Nehammer said. REUTERS

CYPRUS

Man overboard survives ordeal

A sailor is thanking his lucky stars after being pulled unharmed from the east Mediterranean early yesterday – nearly five hours after falling off a ship.

The unnamed 24-year-old Lebanese man needed no medical attention despite falling 18 metres from the Panamanian-flagged *Nivin*.

A helicopter was dispatched to 115 miles south-east of Cyprus after sunset when the ship sent a distress call that one of its crew had fallen overboard. The ship found him after being directed to his possible location and his fellow crew members heard his screams. AP

YEMEN

Alert over rise in critical cases of malnutrition

By Mohammed Ghoari
IN ADEN

Acute malnutrition is rapidly increasing in areas of Yemen controlled by the government, with the most critical cases along areas of the Red Sea coast, UN food security experts said in a report issued yesterday.

The war between the Saudi-backed government and Iran-aligned Houthi militia, stalemated for years, has caused the economic collapse of the already widely impoverished Arabian Peninsula country and one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

In a report, the UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Technical Group in Yemen said malnutrition had worsened due to several factors. REUTERS

Postcard From... The Everglades

It's after midnight when the windshield fogs up on Thomas Aycock's F-250 pickup truck. He flashes a low smile as he manoeuvres through the sawgrass, down dirt roads deep in the Florida Everglades.

His windshield just confirmed it: When the dew point drops in the dead of the night, it's prime time for pythons.

"I catch more pythons when that happens," he explained. Mr Aycock (*inset*), a contractor with the Florida



Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, has hunted Burmese pythons in the Everglades for 11 years.

He always participates in the Florida Python Challenge, hosted by the wildlife commission to incentivise people to track down invasive Burmese pythons that thrive in Florida's preserved wetlands and have had a devastating impact.

This year's 10-day challenge ended yesterday. More than 600 hunters participated, hoping to top last year's total of 209 pythons killed.

The grand prize winner, who humanely kills the most, receives \$10,000 (£7,725). AP

Stephany Matat

GERMANY

Festival-goers injured after Ferris wheel catches fire

By Conrad Smith

At least 23 people were injured and police are investigating after two gondolas of a Ferris wheel caught fire at a music festival near Leipzig in eastern Germany, news agency dpa reported yesterday.

The fire started in one gondola and then spread to a second one on Saturday night, police said.

Four people suffered burn injuries and one suffered injuries from a fall. Others, including first responders and at least four police officers, were taken to hospital for possible smoke inhalation, dpa reported.

The accident took place at the



The Ferris wheel caught fire at the Highfield Festival in Grossspoesna

Highfield Festival at Lake Störmthal, Grossspoesna. Police are still investigating what caused the fire.

Yesterday, police were still unable

to provide any information about the condition of those injured. The exact number of casualties had also not been determined, dpa reported.

The operator of the Ferris wheel told dpa that no passengers were sitting in the gondola in which the fire started.

Footage of the incident was shared online, with German rapper Ski Aggu saying in a video that he was told to continue performing during the blaze.

"I was just told through my earpiece that I should not end the show under any circumstances," he said, adding that this was done to avoid "mass panic". AP



You've got to be car-azy!

Competitors take part in Red Bull Flugtag in Gdynia, Poland, yesterday. Participants use self-made vehicles to jump from the ramp to the water. The length of the jump is rated, as well as creativity and "show". JAKUB PORZYCKI/ANADOLU

THAILAND

Daughter of ex-PM becomes new leader

By Jintamas Saksornchai
IN BANGKOK

Paetongtarn Shinawatra, daughter of the divisive former leader Thaksin Shinawatra, became Thailand's prime minister after receiving a royal letter of endorsement yesterday, two days after she was chosen by parliament following a court order that removed her predecessor.

Ms Paetongtarn (*inset*) is the leader of the Pheu Thai Party in a coalition that includes military parties associated with the coup that deposed the party's last government.

She is the third Shinawatra to hold the job after her billionaire father and her aunt, Yingluck Shinawatra, both of whom were removed from

office and forced into exile in coups before Mr Thaksin returned to Thailand last year as Pheu Thai formed a government.

The father and daughter both wore white civil servants' uniforms as they held hands at yesterday's ceremony at the party's Bangkok headquarters, which are used for state ceremonies. AP



SOUTH KOREA

Summit's regional pledge renewed

The leaders of South Korea, Japan and the United States issued a joint statement yesterday marking the anniversary of last year's summit at Camp David and reaffirmed a pledge to jointly tackle regional challenges, South Korea's presidential office said.

The principles on trilateral co-operation continue to serve as a roadmap, the statement issued by South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol's office said. REUTERS

ISRAEL

Crocodile attack injures keeper

A crocodile attacked a zookeeper in Jerusalem yesterday, leaving him hospitalised with severe injuries on his upper body, officials said.

Israeli police said a security guard probably saved the man's life by firing stun bullets at the crocodile. It was not clear if the animal was injured.

The Ein Kerem hospital said the 45-year-old was taken into surgery.

The zoo opened in 1939 as a petting zoo in the city centre and moved to southern Jerusalem in 1992.

VIETNAM

Mission to keep peace with China

New President To Lam has arrived in China on a three-day mission to smooth relations with Vietnam's giant neighbour and build deeper trade partnerships.

He will meet President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang to discuss the disputed Spratly and Paracel Islands which sit hundreds of miles from both countries. China has hailed the meetings as "a good start" to building a "shared future". AP

SOCIETY

Crumbs... café chains have killed off my local bakery

Bakery behemoth Gail's feels artisanal: that's why true artisans are having to shut up shop, writes **Clare Finney**

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The dust has finally settled on our local independent bakery. The dust not just of furniture, books and baking equipment now removed, but of the bread that Raluca Micu, ex-owner of October 26 Bread and Books, had painstakingly baked every week for 10 years. Her shop was a community staple in our quiet corner of west London: her sourdough, pastries, and the warmth with which regulars and strangers alike would be engaged in light conversation.

Then along came Gail's and, in less than two years, Micu was forced to shut her shop down – or risk going bankrupt. The arrival of the bakery chain was definitely not the only reason October 26 closed. Old electrics, rising rates and exhaustion informed Micu's decision-making. But, she says, the private equity-backed coffee shop company played a key role.

"Within three months we had seen a decrease in our sales by 20 per cent month on month – and it stayed that way," she says. "I tried opposing the opening by contacting the council and explaining the street already had three independent bakeries/coffee shops, but nothing was done."

Elsewhere in London, a friend has highlighted the plight of her local coffee shop, Chealson's. It has been family-run in Woolwich since 2017, but is now struggling to survive thanks to "newer, bigger kids on the block," reads their plaintive Instagram post.

I messaged them privately, lamenting that Starbucks and Costa continued to hold such sway. "Actually, [they] didn't cause too much harm. It was Gail's that massacred us," replied Sian, Chealson's co-founder.

"Since Gail's opened on our doorstep our sales have plummeted," she said, "but passers-by still see it as young and trendy without realising it is a rapidly expanding super-chain."

Chealson's cannot open for the same hours as Gail's, or serve its huge range of foods, without employing more people. And as a young, family-run independent, they don't have the financial resources to do so.

For me, this was the icing on the cake. No more could I pretend these light, warm, artisanal-seeming bakeries were a benign force on London's food scene. Before, I'd enjoyed the odd Gail's – its almond croissants are consistently good, its coffee the best of the high street chains – but I could no longer condone its rapacious expansion.

"Small businesses can't compete with a private equity-backed chain bakery and the manpower to have the shop open seven days a week from 7am to 7pm," explains Micu. And that is what Gail's has become, since being bought by McWin Capital Partners in 2021.

Where once it was Pret that seemed to proliferate in front of one's very eyes, now it is Gail's that pops up on every street corner – or at least everywhere that you find the suited and booted.

Now residents are starting to push back. Walthamstow Village, well-heeled and tree-lined, seemed a natural fit for the bakery chain,



which has become the unofficial hallmark of upper crust parts of London. But the north-east London neighbourhood, it transpires, doesn't want it.

The community has come out in force over the prospect of Gail's "overshadowing our much-loved local stores due to their massive scale and advertising reach", wrote resident James Harvey on his petition against the proposed shop (600 signatures and rising).

"This could lead to decreased visibility and pedestrian traffic towards independently run businesses, threatening their very existence and dismantling the character and diversity crucial to Walthamstow's charm."

In a financially perilous climate, "those with deeper pockets are naturally better placed to survive," explains Stefan Chomka, editor-in-chief of industry magazine *Restaurant Online*.

Referring to Gail's Danish-originated rival, he adds: "Gail's and Ole & Steen are still seen as premium and popular brands (and rightly so) which means smaller independents will still struggle to compete in the more premium, high footfall city centre locations."

Gail's doesn't set out to extinguish smaller competitors, but that seems the natural consequence

But this is not a simple case of David vs Goliath, independent vs chain, because the success of Gail's feels more insidious – or more considered, depending on your perspective. The good people of Walthamstow, like those of Woolwich and my pocket of west London, know to avoid Starbucks, Subway and the like if they want to keep their high streets diverse. But Gail's doesn't feel, look or taste like a baking behemoth.

"The mainstream bakery sector has been underserved compared to other eating out categories over the past decade, and this has enabled brands such as Gail's and Ole & Steen to steal a march by offering something a bit more premium to the coffee shop giants of Pret and Nero," Chomka says.

Despite operating more than 100 UK stores from their central bakery just outside London, their "indie" spirit feels unchanged since founders Ran Avidan and Tom Molnar opened the first Gail's shop in 2005, on Hampstead High Street.

Their supporters – and the company itself, of course – point out that expansion enables Gail's to grow and support their suppliers, like Shipton Mill, Quicke's Dairy and Cacklebean's – all of which I know to boast ethical and environmental credentials.

A few years ago, Gail's became the first UK bakery to make a sourdough loaf from surplus bread.



Gail's Bakery is the latest chain to be called out for pushing out independent bakeries and coffee shops GETTY

Its milk comes from pasture-fed cows in Lancaster. The result, as Chomka says, is a premium and justifiably loved bakery brand.

And I cannot fault Gail's for taking a good thing and building it up – I'm wary of our kneejerk cultural aversion to scale in the hospitality industry. Clearly it doesn't set out to extinguish smaller competitors, but that seems the natural consequence.

So what can be done? Diversify and offer products that the larger players are unable to.

"The bakery sector is one of the most dynamic of all of hospitality with lots of independent bakeries and small groups having a huge effect in terms of creativity," says Chomka. "Brands such as Toad Bakery, Pophams, Bunhead, The Dusty Knuckle, Buns from Home, Bread Ahead have all impressed with their quality but also their

artisan nature, interesting ingredients and combinations, and diversity.

"And bakery is one of the most viral types of food videos of TikTok, as evidenced in everything from Bread Ahead's crême brûlée doughnut scorched with a hot iron, to Arome Bakery's honey butter toast, Dolce Vyta by Matteo Manzotti's stuffed maritzzi buns, La Maritxu's burnt Basque cheesecake, Fallow's signature croissant rolls, and Philippe Conticini's large croissant.

"Bakeries that can capture the imagination by offering something new, or with a twist, or just by showing the true skill required to make high-quality products, should survive and thrive."

But to argue that smaller, independent businesses like Chealson's or October 26 need to adapt and work harder to survive is to overlook the fact that hospitality has never been such an un-level playing field; and that a bakery that seems independent, but is anything but, is hard to compete with.

My hope is not that Gail's fails, but that it listens before launching another store. Thanks to Walthamstow Village, perhaps landlords and consumers will know better, so that a coffee and croissant from Gail's is one option in a range of palatable possibilities, rather than the best of a bad bunch on a homogenised high street.



Chealson's Coffee co-owners Cai and Sian have felt 'massacred' by Gail's

PEOPLE

There's no shame in moving back in with mum and dad

Priced out of London thanks to a sharp rise in rents, **Beth McColl** has traded the Big Smoke for rural Wales

I'd planned not to mention my move out of London on social media. My closest friends would know, of course, plus a few of my editors, but there would be no official announcement on my Instagram story, no grid post with a long caption about emotional rollercoasters and fresh starts. I was leaving the city after nearly a decade and that was nobody's business but mine.

As my moving date approached, however, and the boxes began to fill up around me, I found myself not only posting that I was leaving, but also sharing with anyone who would listen precisely where I was going.

Because I wasn't off to discover a new city, hadn't accepted a great job offer elsewhere or followed my fortune to someplace new and exciting, I was leaving London and, at the ripe age of 31, moving to Wales to live with my mum and dad. My embarrassment and shame about this may have been great, but my desire to seek out and talk to other people in the same boat turned out to be greater.

Since starting to share this part of my life online around a month ago, responses from both friends and strangers have poured in, ranging from genuine envy and compassion to poorly disguised judgement and pity.

It's a great chance to save money, many people have reminded me. It's time with your family that you'll be incredibly thankful for later on, several others have said. Your poor parents, a few commenters on my TikTok have noted.

How long for? is by far the most common question I've been asked and I wish I could answer it. But truthfully I don't have the faintest clue. As a freelance writer working in an economic and media climate as changeable and often hostile as this, it seems impossible to predict even a couple of months into the future.

I've now been living at home for a week and have received dozens of sympathetic messages from people around my age or older who are already doing the same, are in the process of moving back or are seriously considering this as their next step. Ours is not an unusual predicament, I'm learning.

Data from the Office for National Statistics show that yearly private rental prices increased by 6.1 per cent in England in the year leading up to January 2024 and that, within England, the highest annual percentage change in private rents was in London, at 6.9 per cent.

Everyone I know is getting squeezed in some way or another by this economic crisis, many of them thinking of leaving London for somewhere more affordable and less miserable for private renters.

Though I once believed the opposite, I know now that London is



Beth McColl fears she will be left to lag further and further behind her friends

not the centre of the Universe, and that there are many other wonderful places across the UK to call home.

Still, I was wracked with shame when I realised that I'd been priced out of a place I'd thought I'd happily live in for ever. Just as many of my friends were looking to buy in London or were celebrating their second or third decade living here, I was on Facebook Marketplace trying to sell my once-treasured furniture for a fiver here and a tenner there. They were thinking of adding extensions to accommodate unborn children while I was feeling like an adult infant myself.

As well as worrying I'll be left to lag further and further behind my friends, I've also felt scared I'll lose something of myself by moving home, that I'll regress into a teenage state of mind and do damage to the lovely bond I have with my folks.

I also worry that my drive to work will be dampened, that without having to pay the equivalent of a second-hand Ford Focus each month in rent, I may not work as hard or be as quick to think of new ways to make money.

I worry that this stop-gap move will become something more permanent, which is not what either my parents or I want.

But even as I bemoan these feelings of stagnation and the isolation of having to move home and "start again" in my early thirties, I do recognise how much privilege is at play.

I just want a place that doesn't wipe out my bank account each and every month without fail

Not only am I lucky enough to have a good relationship with my parents, it's also a stroke of great fortune that they have enough room at their house for me to live here without getting underfoot.

Of all the places to land, rural South Wales must be among the most peaceful and beautiful. As I've said several times, I'm so grateful that I can, I'm just angry and frustrated that I've had to.

The main question I ask myself is whether I might have somehow been able to avoid this. Technically, I suppose I could have made it work in the city a little while longer.

There'll always be some too-small room for rent out in Zone 5 or an overpriced sublet available while the room's real occupant goes to South America for three months.

Perhaps if I had been willing to totally sacrifice going out for drinks with friends or attending birthday dinners or ever buying anything that wasn't strictly necessary, I could have stayed at least until the next rent hike.

But that isn't the dream I have for my life, and at 31 years of age I'm tired of my hard work only translating into basic survival. Nothing I want is particularly decadent – I'm not saving for a huge wedding or a holiday home or for an army of children.

I just want a home that is mine, a place that doesn't wipe out my bank account each and every month without fail. I want some modest savings, to be free to plant things in a small garden and to not flinch in fear every time I get an email from a letting agent. If living at home for a year or even longer is how I get that, then I will do it gladly.

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- Day 4 **Brønnøysund – Svolvær, Norway ★Cross the Arctic Circle★**
Cross the Arctic Circle and mark the moment with a traditional ceremony. This afternoon, the ship enters the Lofoten archipelago. The 1,000 metre-high Lofoten Wall is a stunning sight that seems to stretch for miles on the horizon
- Day 5 **Stokmarknes – Skjervøy, Norway**
Sail into Tromsø, Gateway to the Arctic. Along the waterfront you'll find Polaria, a centre exhibiting environmental research in the Arctic with a small aquarium. Across the fjord, see the iconic Arctic Cathedral
- Day 6 **Øksfjord – Berlevåg, Norway**
- Day 7 **Båtsfjord – Berlevåg, Norway**
- Day 8 **Mehamn – Tromsø, Norway**
- Day 9 **Tromsø – Stamsund, Norway**
Sailing along Raftsund, the Captain may choose to take the ship into tiny Trollfjord if the weather allows. The mountain walls will look so close you'll think you can reach out and brush them! To exit the fjord, the ship will rotate 180 degrees on the spot. Remember to look out for sea eagles here
- Day 10 **Bodø – Rørvik, Norway**
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A breath of fresh air

Orne, in southernmost Normandy, is known as the Cotswolds of France. **Emma Gibbs** pays the peaceful region a visit

The 15th-century Manoir de Courboyer; inset, the hilltop town of Bellême

“It feels like magic here,” says Christine Barnel. We are sitting in her garden in the twilight, the gold of the fields beyond lit by the last of the sun’s rays. The breeze ripples through the leaves of the heavily loaded apple trees on the other side of the mill pond and an orchestra of grasshoppers is in full swing.

This is the Orne, the southernmost department of Normandy. When people talk of going to the region, it’s usually to the beaches and battlefields. But this southern swathe is somewhere you might whizz through en route to the south-west, little more than a blur of green at the side of the autoroute. Perfect, then, as a quiet corner of France that’s in easy, flight-free reach of home.

I’m travelling with my family – it took us 90 minutes to arrive at Christine’s gîte, just south of the town of Mortagne-au-Perche, from the ferry port at Caen.

Turning off the motorway, we passed fields of sunflowers and corn. Deep green copses broke

up the gentle undulations of farmland and honey-coloured houses, shuttered against the heat of the day, ushered us through strung-out hamlets.

We are spending a few days in the Perche, in the far south of the Orne – an area popular with Parisians for a weekend break. Only a couple of hours from the city, its appeal is similar to the Cotswolds’, with a combination of pretty villages, antique shops and abundant countryside.

Yet it is little discovered among British tourists. Christine has been running her gîte and B&B from her home – Le Moulin de Radray, an old mill and farmhouse – since early last year, but we are only her third set of visitors from the UK. This is borne out through our travels in the area: in our first two days we only

This magical little corner of France feels like ours to enjoy alone

hear one other British accent and everyone we meet talks to us in French, even after we’ve revealed our rather rudimentary grasp of the language.

On our first night, we drive three miles south-west to the Wednesday market at Une Ferme du Perche, where a farm stall groans with produce: huge tomatoes, almost fluorescent carrots and black peppers that we cut into back home and find to be green inside. The atmosphere is convivial – picnic benches and hay bales have been set up next to a large pond and a guitarist is tuning up.

Also on sale is cider, beer, bread, pork, cheese and russet-orange apple juice – all of which are locally made.

On our first visit to Mortagne-au-Perche in the south-east of Orne, we find it quiet. Further south, a town like this – with its sunny squares, narrow alleys and buildings with painted shutters –

would be chock-full of tourists. Here, everyone seems to be local.

It is a similar story in the hilltop town of Bellême, 11 miles south. Spotting a sign for horse-drawn carriage rides, we brace for tourist central, but only pass a few small groups of map-wielding (French) visitors as we explore the shops looking on to the 17th-century church of St Saviour.



Some specialise in antiques, while others a mix of home-wares and brocante (vintage items).

At lunchtime, the restaurant terraces are busy with a mix of couples and families, and we squeeze on to the last available table outside a corner café.

The kids brave speaking a little French and are met with beaming smiles from our waitress. Afterwards, we drive seven miles north-east along narrow country lanes to the Maison du Parc, headquarters of the Perche Regional Natural Park, where five miles of paths meander through the grounds of the turreted 15th-century Manoir de Courboyer.

On our way back to the gîte, two things stop us in our tracks. The first is the large statue of Babar the Elephant outside Le Chineur du Perche, another antique shop in Rémalard-en-Perche. Inside, the shelves are arranged by colour.

My husband and I point out toys of our childhood to the kids, who respond with reassuring things like, “wow, that’s so old”.

The second is even more surprising: the basilica of Notre-Dame de Montligeon. Spotted in the distance from the main road,

Travel essentials

Getting there

Brittany Ferries

The Portsmouth to Caen route is £148 one-way for a car and a family of four. To maximise your time, book overnight crossings. From Caen, it is a 90-minute drive to Mortagne-au-Perche. brittany-ferries.co.uk

Staying there

Le Moulin de Radray has accommodation in a self-contained gîte, which sleeps seven from €700 (£598) a week. The B&B sleeps four, from €120 a night. gites-de-france-orne.com

More information

orne-normandy-travel.co.uk

the imposing, double-spired neo-gothic building seems improbable against the tree-clad hills. Inside, we marvel at the cool, marble-clad interior before the children, worried by the muttered dirges, pull us back outside.

When we return to Mortagne for its Saturday morning market, we find our initial impression dispelled: stalls crowd its squares and streets and we hear a few English-speaking voices. We stock up on goat’s cheese and cider, and then retreat to a crêperie for lunch.

An hour later, when we emerge blinking in the bright sun, the market has packed up and its crowds dispersed. Mortagne, and this magical little corner of France, feel like ours to enjoy alone once again.



Crowds converge for market day in Mortagne-au-Perche

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Arts



Podcast
Rising Phoenix



The excitement of the Olympics isn't over yet: next week, the Paris 2024 Paralympics will kick off, giving us two more weeks of athleticism to enjoy.

Here to tell the stories of Paralympic athletes - who are sometimes overlooked in favour of their Olympic colleagues - is *Rising Phoenix: What Does It Take?*, a podcast made off the back of the 2020 documentary about the history of the Paralympics.

Hosted by US Paralympian Matt Stutzman (who also made the film) and track and field veteran Michael Johnson, the podcast tells you all you need to know about the athletes to watch and will help you understand the inconceivably difficult process behind becoming a Paralympic champion.

Emily Bootle

The heated arguments over John Eliot Gardiner's departure from the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra (MCO) show no sign of simmering down. Last year, the octogenarian conductor - who performed at King Charles III's coronation - punched a singer in an altercation following a concert in southern France. He apologised, recused himself from performances, and sought therapy.

Now, a year on, he and the organisation - which he founded - have definitively parted company. Some of his musicians, however, are distraught and are arguing passionately for his return.

In this summer of violence and thuggery, it's discombobulating to see some fine, intelligent artists appear to insist that a punch is somehow forgivable if the perpetrator is a genius.

Classical music is unusually prone to "great man syndrome," excusing almost any interpersonal transgression to maintain world-class work. Any artistic endeavour, or any profession that depends on a seemingly mystical level of understanding, could go the same way (Caravaggio, anyone?).

But in classical music, the issue has rarely disappeared - from when Jean-Baptiste Lully, Louis XIV's favourite musician, led his ensemble with such intensity that he accidentally stabbed his own foot, to more recent times when a conductor (Gardiner again, about 10 years ago) could allegedly lash out physically at an orchestral brass player and still be rebooked (an allegation made in *Private Eye* and reportedly apologised for in private by Gardiner).

I could give you innumerable examples of musical bullies. I remember watching the late Kurt Masur verbally unnerve a fine soprano soloist in rehearsal for the *St Matthew Passion*, so much that in the concert she had a memory lapse in "Aus Liebe". Another time, a young female musician told me of a conductor who flashed at a section of the orchestra and went unsanctioned for it.

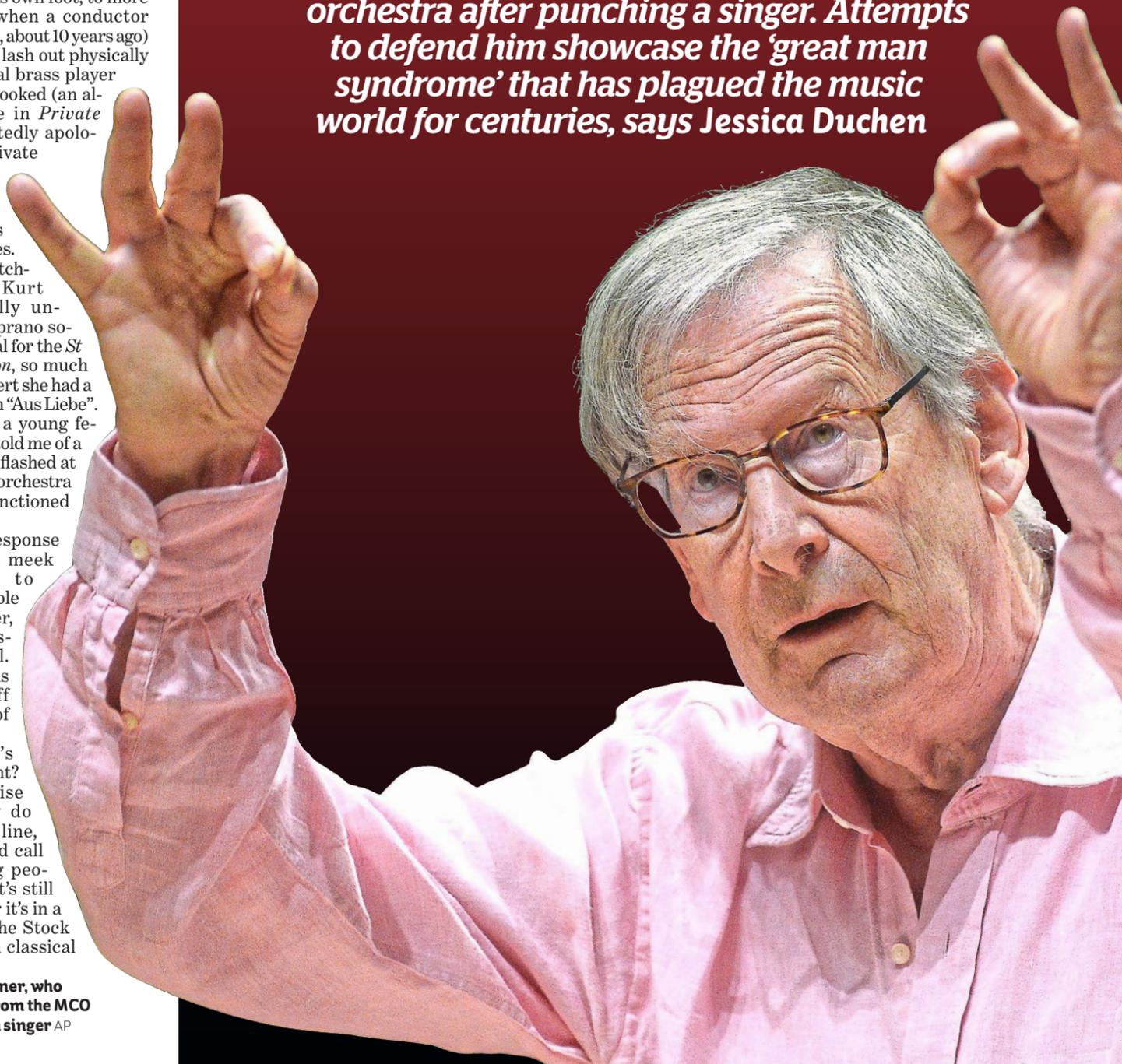
The usual response to bullies is a meek rolling-over to please the people with the power, whether artistic or financial. Some musicians shrug it all off as the nature of the profession.

So, where's the tipping point? If you normalise bullying, how do you draw the line, turn round and call it out? Hitting people is wrong. It's still wrong whether it's in a street brawl, the Stock Exchange, or a classical

John Eliot Gardiner, who stepped down from the MCO after punching a singer AP

Why classical music has a bullying problem

Conductor John Eliot Gardiner has left his orchestra after punching a singer. Attempts to defend him showcase the 'great man syndrome' that has plagued the music world for centuries, says Jessica Duchén





concert. Logically, if you excuse physical violence because someone is good at his job, then you have to excuse it in someone else who is equally good at theirs. I don't know, maybe head librarians sometimes punch their employees, but it's thought OK if they've created a beautiful catalogue? Maybe a brilliant scientist might take a swing at a lab technician, and if they'd won a prize, perhaps a blind eye might be turned?

Just kidding – I very much doubt that anybody violent to their co-workers in such places wouldn't be sacked. But personnel management is not exactly the music sector's strong point. Some organisations have next to none.

As for the excuse of "genius" – it's no more valid in music than it is in science or politics. Not that Gardiner is necessarily a genius. He is certainly creative, entrepreneurial, wealthy, charismatic and talented. I've heard some beautiful performances of his – especially the early Romantics, like Schumann and Berlioz – with mainstream modern symphony orchestras.

But I've found many other conductors far more inspiring. I wouldn't choose Gardiner if I could instead listen to Vladimir Jurowski, Kirill Petrenko or John Wilson – different repertoire, admittedly, but these are musicians

I'd gladly hear conduct the Yellow Pages, and Gardiner's not one of them. I've met only two musicians whom I would willingly call geniuses – one of them was Pierre Boulez.

Allowing for the fact that people are complex, that nobody is perfect, and that Gardiner has arguably created jobs for hundreds of musicians at a high level in the early music field, you can see why some remain loyal and wish to forgive and forget.

There's also the small matter that his name sells tickets. Lots of them. The MCO is his own creation, half a century old: can it survive without him? Are some players fearing for their future employment?

Dozens of accounts have circulated about what really happened that night: some say it was desperately hot and Gardiner didn't feel well; his management said there had been a change in his medication. Those close to Gardiner love him and revere his musicianship, but it is claimed by some that he has a volatile personality and I've heard from people who dread having to encounter him again.

Having addressed his problem, why should he not be allowed a chance of redemption? It wouldn't be illegal to reinstate him. Whether it's the right thing to do is another matter. Clearly the MCO thinks it is not. Platitudes come to mind about leopards, spots, new tricks and other quadrupeds. Change is not impossible, but there's a point beyond which hoping for it could be considered a risk too far.

In the bigger picture of early music, the "big beasts" that have powered this fast-moving field for half a century are reaching the final curtain. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Christopher Hogwood and Frans Brüggen are dead. Roger Norrington, maybe the most compelling, is 90.

Gardiner himself is 81. He shares his age, though nothing else, with US President Joe Biden (who has never punched anyone as far as we know), and it's not unreasonable to think that like Biden, Gardiner could be encouraged to head home-

Artists appear to insist a punch is somehow forgivable delivered by a genius



Top: the late German conductor Kurt Masur in 1991; above, Louis XIV's composer Jean-Baptiste Lully

ward – in his case, to his Dorset organic farm to tend the rare-breed cattle. There are plenty of Kamala Harrises waiting in the wings. A new generation of conductors is taking early music to fresh heights.

Where the elder "maestri" were pioneers – researching, experimenting, learning on the job, sometimes triumphing and sometimes failing in their quest for so-called "authenticity" (which was then proven to be an unrealisable concept) – conductors like Laurence Cummings, Rinaldo Alessandrini and Maxim Emelyanychev have been able to slot into the sound-world and infuse it with the deeper values of love, understanding, and warmth of personality that some of the 1980s zealots could occasionally miss.

The MCO's performances with Dinis Sousa since Gardiner's refusal have been highly successful. Cummings conducting Handel's *Giulio Cesare* at Glyndebourne this summer was utterly sublime.

Early music will not die without its old guard. It will evolve, and it may even improve. And if one ensemble fades, a dynamic new figure might start another. Of all musical fields, early music probably has the greatest number of passionate, motivated, well-informed, mission-driven musicians who believe in what they're doing and function perfectly well together without being bullied into submission – let alone accepting the potential for physical violence.

Perhaps it is simply time to pass the baton.

Last night's television

RACHAEL SIGEE



Travelogue celebrates a friendship enriched by pair's differences

» **Dame Judi and Jay: The Odd Couple** Channel 4, 9pm ★★★★★

It has become fashionable to dunk on the celebrity travelogue in recent times – and often with good reason. For every *Rob and Rylan's Grand Tour* (good), there is an *Alison & Larry: Billerica to Barry* (awful). Invariably they come across as indulgent jollies that reveal little about either the celebs or the places they visit.

But *Dame Judi and Jay: The Odd Couple* proved a shining beacon of just how successful it can be if you get the right two people talking to each other at the right time and in the right place. Dame Judi Dench and Jay Blades met three years ago when the acting legend appeared on his BBC programme *The Repair Shop*. They became, Dench says, "the very best of friends" despite their differences.

She was born in 1934 in York into a theatre-loving family, moved to London to study drama and rose to become one of the greatest actors the country has ever seen. In 1970, the same year she received her OBE, Blades was born in east London, a child of the Windrush generation who spent time in a homeless refuge with his single mum, and whose work as a furniture restorer unexpectedly led him to the world of TV.

The Odd Couple followed the pair visiting the places that were most important to them in an effort to understand one another better. While Blades took Dench (or, as he calls her, "The Dame") to Ridley

Their fondness for one another meant they were willing to be vulnerable

Road Market and his old youth centre in Hackney, she took him to her former home in Stratford-upon-Avon and the Old Vic theatre where her career began.

The gentle no-frills premise allowed for one lovely moment after the next: Dench mistaking chillies for broad beans before buying everything she could get her hands on at the market (two string vests for a fiver is not to be sniffed at). Meanwhile, Blades reunited with the youth worker and friend whom he credits with keeping him out of trouble as a teenager.

In Stratford-upon-Avon, they visited the grave of Dench's beloved husband, Michael, before attending a pub quiz organised by her daughter, Finty, in which we learnt that the actress once saved



Dame Judi Dench and Jay Blades shared an emotional journey

a goldfish by giving it mouth to mouth. Later they met Blades's friend DJ Ron and Dench learnt how to scratch a record.

Both were frequently choked up at revisiting places that mean so much to them, often after many decades, with Dench more than once quietly declaring: "Oh, this is a strange feeling." But their evident fondness for one another meant they were willing to be vulnerable, clutching each other's hands when words got the better of them.

The most touching segment arrived on stage at the Old Vic, where Dench delivered a mesmerising sonnet performance solely for Blades in the front row. In response, Jay – who is dyslexic and only learnt to read and write aged 51 – stood and read some *Hamlet* back to her as she mouthed along the words, offering tender prompts and encouragement.

The final section – a boat ride along the Thames past the MI6 headquarters, in homage to Dench's role as M in the Bond films – was a little trite compared with what came before. Though it's hard to complain about a clip involving the national treasure requesting to drive the boat herself and delightedly exclaiming: "I'm drunk with power!"

As a celebration of friendship and connection, *The Odd Couple* was a quiet yet sorely needed call for empathy and humanity towards those who are different from you. They may only have physically travelled the length of the M40 but emotionally, Dench and Blades covered miles more than the rest of TV's celeb jet-setters put together.

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Arts review

ROCK

Frank Carter and Sex Pistols

BUSH HALL, LONDON

★★★★★

A penny for John Lydon's thoughts. Actually, we can imagine exactly what the uncharacteristically quiet figure once known as Johnny Rotten thinks of the remaining original members of the Sex Pistols – Glen Matlock, Steve Jones and Paul Cook – re-forming without him. The animosity that spilled over across almost 50 years has become a permanent rupture over Lydon's objection to the use of the band's music in Danny Boyle's 2022 Disney biopic *Pistol*. Speaking only through lawyers, the Pistols as we knew them are over.

This wasn't the first ride of the reunion merry-go-round. The first came in 1996, with the tongue-in-cheek *Filthy Lucre* tour; the 2002 and 2007 get-togethers were more of a cash grab. But

the motivation here was more altruistic: the three-night run aimed to raise money for the 400-capacity Bush Hall in west London, threatened with closure amid nightlife's post-pandemic struggles. This was the old stomping ground: drummer Cook still lives here and Matlock's amp features the flag of local football club Queens Park Rangers.

Not that there was much sense of the greater good among the crowd, baking in the sweltering hall. Channelling Lydon was left to former Gallows and current Rattlesnakes frontman Frank Carter – a 40-year-old committed punk veteran, born seven years after the Pistols' only album *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols* changed music history: punk's definitive statement.

Lydon's snarls of disdain and general air of menace were the nihilistic combustion point that terrified a nation and pushed a subculture into the mainstream. Carter, ripped and heavily tattooed, gave a full-throttle, full-throated, tub-thumping interpretation. He cleverly walked the tightrope between



Frank Carter channels Johnny Rotten alongside Glen Matlock, Paul Cook and Steve Jones JEMMA DODD

reverence and ownership: "I'd like to introduce you to the greatest punk band who ever lived," he said three songs in. Later he called Jones "the boss".

But he brought his own type of manic, wide-eyed energy. He manned the barriers and stage-dived. At one point he got into the crowd and ordered everyone to form a circle and mosh around him, causing some chaos.

During "Submission" he even asked people to partner up ("I bet you never got to slow dance to Sex Pistols before, so here's your chance"), which would have

been unthinkable in 1977. People duly obliged.

Behind him the band were loud, tough and often thrilling; putting aside the arguments of how punk at its purest should be beyond nostalgia, it was undeniably exciting to hear "Holidays in the Sun" open the show – a shot of pure adrenaline.

Jones's guitar was precise and fierce. "Bodies" was ferocious; "God Save the Queen", with its lyric change to reflect the new monarch, was a whirlwind.

That the three non-album tracks – including their cover of

"No Fun", a pale imitation of The Stooges – were punk-by-numbers made it all the more remarkable to think just how the Pistols made such a slim output go so far. But the 12 *Never Mind...* songs were received like treasures.

They finished with "Anarchy in the UK", which, given recent events, was fitting and showed the enduring power of these songs. "I'm having the time of my life," Carter said.

Rather than having no future, as "God Save the Queen" famously railed, this reunion may have legs. SHAUN CURRAN



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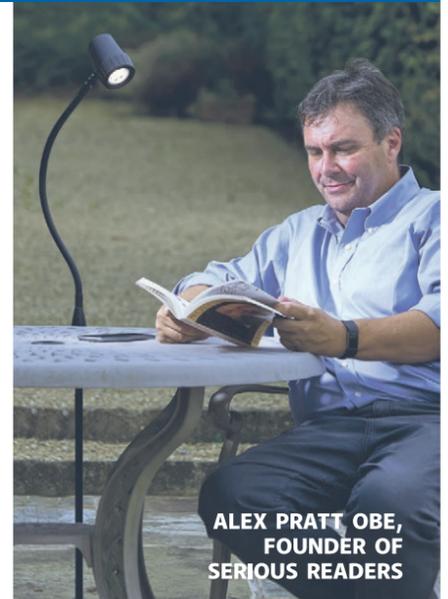
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PROPERTY

'Buyer buzz' could reverse usual summer slowdown

By Emily Braeger

UK house prices have fallen by nearly £6,000 this month in what has been coined August's traditional summer slowdown.

New sellers listed their homes for £367,785 on average, down by £5,708 (1.5 per cent), according to Rightmove's House Price Index.

It marks the 18th consecutive August in which new seller asking prices have fallen. The size of this month's drop is in line with the long-term average, the property website said.

The distractions of the school summer holidays tend to bring a dip in prices, as some buyers put their home-moving plans on hold to enjoy a break or time with family.

This also means that new sellers who do come to market at this quieter time of year may have a pressing

need to sell, meaning they are likely to price more competitively.

But Rightmove said that summer sellers this year may find that there is a degree of "buyer buzz" that was missing in the peak-mortgage-rate market at this time last year.

Elsewhere, the first Bank of England base rate cut for four years at the start of the month has helped to accelerate mortgage rate drops and has contributed significantly to improved buyer demand, the Housing Index showed.

Tim Bannister, Rightmove's direc-

tor of property science, said: "The first Bank Rate cut since 2020 has sparked a welcome late summer boost in buyer activity."

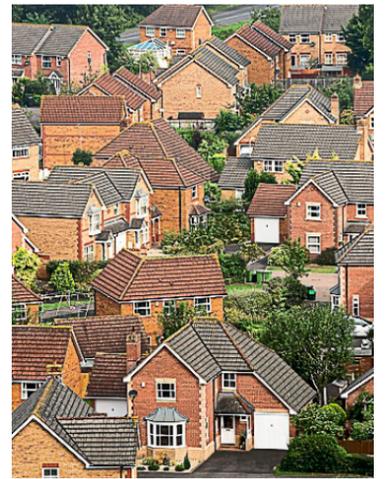
"While mortgage rates aren't yet substantially lower since the rate cut, the fact that the long-hoped-for first cut has finally arrived, and mortgage rates are heading downwards, is positive for home-mover sentiment."

He added: "As the summer holiday season comes to an end, the conditions are there for a more active autumn market."

In response to the Bank's rate cut, Rightmove raised its 2024 forecast from a 1 per cent drop over the whole of the year to a 1 per cent rise in new seller asking prices.

Mr Bannister said: "This is a relatively small revision from our original prediction of a 1 per cent fall in prices over the year, since we didn't initially

i The Bank of England cut rates from **5.25 per cent to 5 per cent** on 1 August, prompting a raft of new mortgage offers from the leading lenders.



The property market tends to slow in August as many people take a holiday

forecast anything more drastic than a slight drop in prices.

"Since the Bank cut rates on August 1, the number of potential buyers contacting estate agents to view homes for sale is 19 per cent higher than in the same period a year ago."

"This comparison is with a very subdued period in 2023, when the market was dealing with the fallout of unexpectedly high inflation figures."

EMPLOYMENT

Optimism boosts job salaries and vacancies

By Emily Braeger

UK job vacancies have risen for the first time this year – up 1.1 per cent to 862,043 in July, compared with June – bringing the first sign of an improvement in prospects to those seeking a new role.

Following positive growth figures and the election, business confidence rebounded last month. This translated to increased hiring, according to new data from the latest UK Job Market Report by employment search engine Adzuna.

Compared with July 2023, vacancies are still down by 17.69 per cent, which demonstrates that the market still has a long way to go to achieve a full recovery.

Meanwhile, average advertised salaries are higher compared with last year, up by 2.95 per cent to £38,863, whilst month-on-month average advertised salaries increased marginally, up by 0.08 per cent.

In a sign of further contractions in the job market, there are now 2.09 jobseekers per vacancy, the highest figure since May 2021 – during the pandemic. Jobs are filling at the fastest pace this year, with an average time to fill of 35.6 days in July, down from 36 days last month.

The sector with the shortest live job posting time is property, at 32 days. At the other end of the scale is travel, at 48.8 days on average.

James Neave, head of data science of Adzuna, said: "An increase of 1.1 per cent may seem small, but we're used to seeing job postings fall during the summer as companies put hiring plans on pause because of holidays."



The 30 Second Briefing

MUSK VS BRAZIL

Who's having an online spat?

Elon Musk has said his social media platform, X, will be closing its operations in Brazil "immediately" as a result of "censorship orders" from the Brazilian judge Alexandre de Moraes. X claims Mr Moraes secretly threatened a legal representative with arrest if the

company did not comply with orders to take down some content.

Let me log on to rant about this...

Good news: if you're in Brazil, this is still possible. While operations are shutting down, the site remains available to users there.

Any musings from Musk?

The platform's billionaire owner tweeted on Saturday: "Due to demands by 'Justice' @Alexandre in Brazil that would require us to break (in secret) Brazilian, Argentinian, American and international law, X has no choice but to close out local operations in Brazil. He is an utter disgrace to justice."

For Mr Moraes's part, Brazil's

supreme court, where the judge has a seat, told Reuters it would not comment on the matter.

Case history

Mr Moraes opened an inquiry into Mr Musk earlier this year after he said he would reactivate accounts on X that the judge had ordered to be blocked.

Mr Musk has called Mr Moraes's decisions "unconstitutional". But X representatives reversed course and told the supreme court that it would comply with the legal rulings.

In April, lawyers representing X in Brazil had told the court that "operational faults" allowed users who were ordered blocked to stay active on the social media platform.

HOW I MANAGE MY MONEY

‘My narrowboat lets me save on housing – and earn on YouTube’

In our How I Manage My Money series, we aim to find out how people in the UK or overseas are spending, saving, and investing money to meet their costs and achieve their goals.

This week we speak to **JAMES POSNER, 46**, a content creator who lives in Hertfordshire and has five children aged between five and 16. After getting divorced, James snapped up a narrowboat called *Sloe Patrol* to live in. James has no savings and pays £1,300 in child support each month. He says a decent retirement plan is the least of his concerns. Here he speaks to Jane Denton.

I grew up in Northwood, north-west London, and went to a boarding school in nearby Berkhamsted from quite a young age. My family life was good. We had a few holidays a year and I always enjoyed Christmas. I had everything I wanted and thought life was easy.

I got through school without working too hard and somehow managed to go to university in Bristol, even though I had no clue what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. After a brief stint studying geography, I switched and did development and policy, spending a few years partying in Clifton Village with the other posh kids and barely seeing a lecture hall.

After leaving university with a far lower qualification than was expected of me, I ended up working in commercial real estate, like my father. He was very successful in the 1980s and 1990s as an office agent in Mayfair and made it all look easy and not much hard work.

I did many jobs in the commercial real estate sector spanning a 25-year period. My most recent job, from which I was made redundant in March 2022, paid me between £60,000 to £80,000 a year.

A turning point in my life came in 2020 as my wife and I divorced. As well as dealing with the trauma of this, my financial situation looked set to rapidly deteriorate. I was earning up to £80,000, but was only just about able to keep everything going. There was nothing left at the end of the month.

The idea of having to pay for a second home and keep on top of all the bills kept me awake at night. I moved out of the family home and stayed with a friend until I figured out my next move and how on earth I would cope financially.

After staying at my friend's for a few months, I decided to buy and live in a narrowboat in October 2020. I still had no money but could get a small bank loan for £16,000 and buy a project boat, although it wasn't sold to me as such. The seller's

I save on rent and am not paying council tax – plus there are massive energy bills for landlubbers



James Posner, a content creator, is looking to raffle off 'Sloe Patrol' as he is moving on to a larger narrowboat

Money facts The ins and outs

Monthly income

My income fluctuates, but is on average £3,000 per month. The majority comes from YouTube, who pay me for adverts on my channel.

The rest comprises company sponsorships and financial donations from supporters. Some months, being a content creator, my earnings are much lower than what I need, so I

sometimes take on extra building or making work.

Monthly outgoings

Boat licence, £90; boat insurance, £30; gas, £20; coal in winter, £20; diesel, £20; child support, £1,300; debt repayments, £500; food and other essentials, £600; petrol for car, £200; car tax, £30; car insurance, £50.

exact words were “you can sail away tomorrow!” I bought it for £12,000 and had a monthly repayment of £300, which I could just afford.

Over the next year I worked day and night fixing up the narrowboat to make it a comfortable, warm and secure home for me and the kids. Buying a project boat, even with a survey like I did, will probably cost you more than just buying a better boat. But I couldn't afford to do so upfront, and nor can many others.

Living on the narrowboat is cheap, though some have higher running costs and heating and fuel costs can vary. I save on renting a property suitable for my kids to be in, which in my area would cost about £1,500 a month. I'm not paying council tax, which again around here can be £200 a month, plus there are massive energy bills for landlubbers.

Even a small flat could have a monthly utilities bill of £300, and that's all year round. On a boat, I only light my fire in the winter months, so I save about £2,000 a month by living on *Sloe Patrol*.

The community of boaters is also

like none other and no matter where you moor, you'll find a friend.

I started my YouTube channel by mistake. I began recording parts of my narrowboat journey for a friend with whom I was originally planning to buy the boat. Sadly, he was diagnosed with cancer and couldn't get stuck in as he'd hoped. The files I sent were often too big for email so I uploaded videos to YouTube to ensure he could view them. To my amazement, a day later I had 1,000 subscribers from all over the world. It all took off from there.

I am now a full-time content creator and the bulk of my monthly income comes from YouTube. At one point, some of my subscribers donated £12,000 so I could get a new baseplate for the boat.

My YouTube channel, “The Narrowboat That James Built”, has grown to the extent that I'm now raffling off *Sloe Patrol*. I've been given a narrowboat by a subscriber

on my channel who couldn't live on it any more and knew I needed a bit more space as my kids grow.

I want to pass that bit of luck I had on to someone else who could really do with a place to live or something to sell. The new boat I'll be living in needs a lot of work doing to it and I've made a start on this.

Would I buy a bog-standard house again? If I had to. If I was of an age where boat life was too much for me, then yes, I would. It'd need to have a good view, though...

While I'm making decent money, I have zero savings – but this doesn't scare me. I'm used to having no money regardless of previous higher earnings. I have a few pensions which I'll probably cash early, pay the tax on and blow on a holiday.

My attitude towards saving and investing is so wrong, but I've had a few ended relationships in my life and that changes your view on big things like retirement planning. I've essentially wasted hundreds and hundreds of thousands of pounds in my life, so retirement plans are the least of my concerns.

I imagine I will stop working when my audience decides I'm not worth watching any more. I don't want to stop doing what I love, though.

Money is only important to me because I am a father and need to ensure my children have certain opportunities open to them.

Want to take part in How I Manage My Money? Email money@inews.co.uk

News in brief

LOGISTICS

Ambulances visit Amazon sites

More than 1,400 ambulances were called to Amazon warehouses in the past five years, according to figures uncovered by *The Observer*.

The findings, described as “shocking” by the GMB union, raise questions about safety at the firm's UK workplaces.

Centres in Dunfermline in Scotland and Bristol in the South West had the most callouts, with 161 and 125 respectively. A third of callouts in Dunfermline related to chest pains.

Amazon strongly denied that it is a dangerous place to work.

MANUFACTURING

Bad roads cause logistics headache

Over half of Britain's manufacturers say national road infrastructure has deteriorated in the last decade, resulting in increased logistics costs and difficulty around labour mobility and access to skills, research has revealed.

Roads in the north of England were in a more critical state than anywhere else in the UK, according to Make UK.

Manufacturers in the North West were the most pessimistic about roads, with 68 per cent saying they have deteriorated over the past 10 years.

TECHNOLOGY



Bumble shares fall as users dump app

Shares in the dating app Bumble crashed 30 per cent this month after a bad earnings report.

Match Group – the Dallas-based owner of Tinder, Match.com, OkCupid, Hinge and others – has reported a decline in its total number of paying users for seven consecutive quarters.

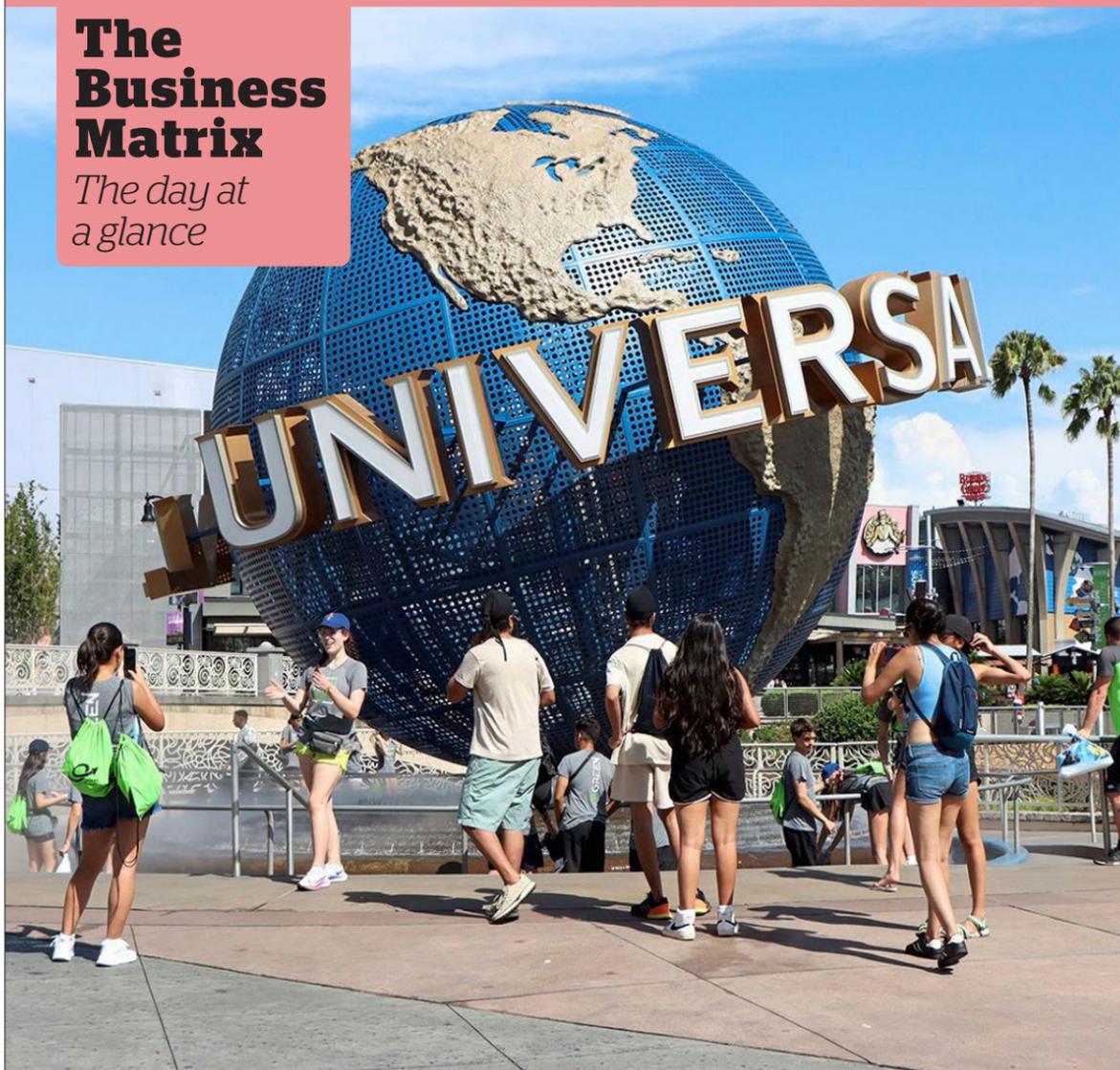
According to Pew research, nearly half of all online daters, and more than half of female daters, say their experiences have been negative. The same study found that 52 per cent of online daters said they had come across someone they thought was trying to scam them.

£2,000

James Posner's estimated monthly savings from living on his canal boat rather than in a rented flat

The Business Matrix

The day at a glance



LEISURE

Talks go on over Universal resort

Comcast is in talks with UK officials about tax and other incentives to secure a multibillion-pound Universal Studios resort for Bedford. Sources said the decision would depend on talks with officials regarding economic incentives to "de-risk" the 500-acre project, which would rival the 541-acre Universal Orlando park (left) in Florida.

TELECOMS

Canterbury fails on fast broadband

For the second straight year, Canterbury has won the wooden spoon for the UK's slowest city for broadband in a ranking by Broadband Genie. The Kentish city clocked in with broadband speeds of 22MB, which is the bare minimum offered by the most basic superfast packages. Lichfield in Staffordshire won with a weighted speed of 359MB.

WHAT THE SUNDAY PAPERS SAID

Government data 'should be shared'

Ministers could find ways to boost the economy and improve public services by combining data from separate government departments, according to the head of the UK's statistics watchdog. Sir Robert Chote said government data was "siloed" because departments were worried people may uncover weaknesses.

The Observer

Chinese investors snap up UK flats

Luxury apartments in Manchester, part-financed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), are being sold off to Chinese landlords despite Labour's pledge to crack down on foreign property speculators. Analysis of Companies House filings suggests that flats have been sold to Chinese investors.

The Sunday Telegraph

Delivery chaos at White Company

Customers of the White Company have been left furious after experiencing delivery delays and order cancellations. It comes after a chaotic move to a new third-party distribution centre earlier this year. Standard delivery service, once three to five days, has since slipped to seven to 10 days.

The Sunday Times

'£40m payday' for Rolls-Royce boss

Rolls-Royce chief executive Tufan Erginbilgic could be set for as much as £40m come payday after just over a year and a half in the role. The FTSE 100 executive's £13m remuneration package in 2023 already made him the third highest paid FTSE 100 CEO, according to a report.

The Sunday Express

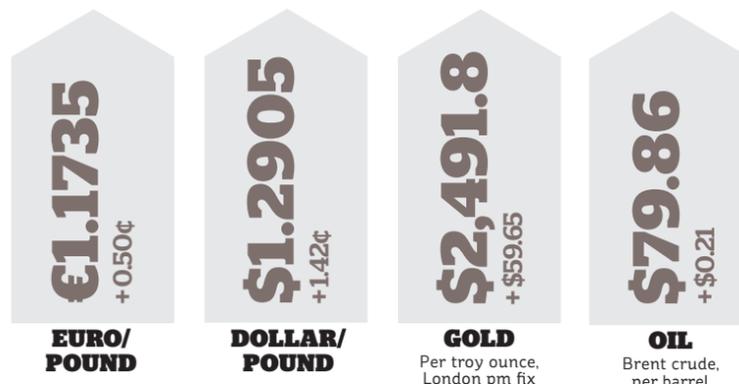
FTSE 100 up* 1.75% at 8,311.41

* last week's changes

Company	Price	Wk +/-%	Yield	P/E	Company	Price	Wk +/-%	Yield	P/E	Company	Price	Wk +/-%	Yield	P/E
3i Group	3132.0	+4.02%	1.9	7.9	Glencore	403.9	-0.31%	2.5	15.3	Rightmove	532.0	-0.93%	1.8	21.7
Admiral	2960.0	+10.65%	3.6	26.6	GSK	1591.0	+1.63%	3.8	13.1	Rio Tinto	4742.0	-3.51%	7.1	9.9
Airtel Africa	111.3	+0.54%	4.1	-32.6	Haleon	370.2	-1.80%	1.7	32.5	Rolls-Royce	501.0	+3.30%		17.4
Anglo Amer	2185.5	-1.82%	2.9		Halma	2551.0	+0.99%	0.8	41.1	Sage	1015.5	+2.04%	1.9	48.9
Antofagasta	1876.0	+1.60%	1.5	28.6	Hargreaves Lans	1099.5	-0.23%	3.9	17.8	Sainsbury(J)	280.6	+4.78%	4.7	47.6
AB Foods	2468.0	+0.45%	2.2	18.4	Hikma Pharma	2070.0	+1.57%	3.0	31.0	Schroders	346.6	+2.67%	6.2	14.1
Ashted Group	5210.0	+0.70%	1.6	18.4	Howden Joinery	907.5	+2.83%	2.3	19.5	Scot Mort Inv Tst	855.4	+3.56%	0.5	
AstraZeneca	13046.0	+2.72%	1.8	43.8	HSBC Hldgs	656.6	+2.19%	7.2	7.4	Segro	887.4	-0.65%	3.2	-42.9
Auto Trader Group	825.8	+4.35%	1.2	29.3	IAG	170.7	+2.49%	1.5	3.7	Severn Trent	2550.0	+0.79%	4.6	50.0
Aviva	500.4	+3.71%	6.8	13.3	IMI	1780.0	+2.53%	1.6	19.5	Shell	2790.0	+0.50%	3.8	12.5
BAE Systems	1350.0	+5.68%	2.3	22.0	Imperial Brands	2162.0	+1.69%	6.9	8.6	Smith&Neph	1168.5	+0.21%	2.5	49.9
Barclays	228.3	+4.60%	3.6	8.2	Informa	821.6	+2.75%	2.3	27.3	Smith (DS)	463.8	+5.70%	3.9	16.6
Barratt Dev	535.8	+2.29%	5.2	10.1	IntCont HtIs	7466.0	+2.67%	1.6	21.7	Smiths Gp	1778.0	+2.54%	2.4	27.1
BAT	2774.0	-0.96%	8.5	-4.3	Intermediate Cap	2118.0	+6.38%	3.7	12.8	Spirax Group	7570.0	-1.17%	2.1	30.3
Beazley	748.5	+3.53%	1.9	6.0	Intertek	4740.0	+1.89%	2.7	25.7	SSE	1888.0	+1.40%	3.2	12.0
Berkeley Grp Hldgs	5175.0	+3.09%	2.4	13.8	JD Sports Fashion	126.8	+1.12%	0.7	12.4	Stan Chart	762.4	+6.57%	3.1	9.1
B&M EurValRtl	448.1	-1.45%	7.7	12.2	Kingfisher	278.6	+2.84%	4.5	15.3	Taylor Wimpey	161.6	+2.80%	5.9	16.3
BP	441.2	+1.73%	5.2	6.5	Land Secs	629.5	+1.53%	6.3	-14.6	Tesco	341.2	+3.24%	3.5	20.4
BT	145.4	+11.42%	5.5	16.7	Legal & Gen	229.2	+2.14%	9.0	31.2	Unilever	4728.0	-0.04%	3.1	21.5
Bunzl	3228.0	+1.32%	2.1	20.5	Lloyds Bk Gp	58.9	+3.41%	4.9	7.8	Unite Group	946.5	+0.21%	3.8	38.3
Burberry	686.6	+0.26%		9.3	LondonMetric Prop	204.0	+2.72%	5.0	19.2	United Utilities	997.8	+0.79%	5.0	53.6
Centrica	127.7	+3.57%	3.3	1.8	Lon Stock Ex	9970.0	+1.44%	1.2	71.8	Vodafone	74.7	+1.25%	10.2	20.8
Coca-Cola HBC	2736.0	+1.94%	2.9	18.5	M&G	210.4	+4.31%	9.4	-3.2	Vistry	1344.0	+3.94%	2.4	20.8
Compass	2377.0	+1.89%	1.9	31.5	M&S	329.1	+3.23%	0.9	15.0	Weir Group	1920.0	+1.64%	2.0	21.8
Convatec	237.6	+2.41%	2.1	47.9	Melrose Ind	504.4	+3.83%	1.1	-6.7	Whitbread	2808.0	-1.65%	3.5	17.4
Croda Intl	3895.0	+1.67%	2.8	31.8	Mondi	1464.5	+2.48%	4.1	15.9	WPP	708.8	+4.42%	5.6	11.4
Darktrace	590.2	-0.91%		84.5	National Grid	982.8	+0.41%	6.0	17.2					
DCC	5275.0	+2.43%	3.7	16.0	NatWest Group	348.7	+4.71%	5.0	7.3					
Diageo	2483.5	+2.35%	3.2	15.1	Next	9808.0	+3.03%	2.1	17.1					
Diploma	4286.0	+3.93%	1.3	47.2	Pearson	1044.5	+0.24%	2.2	19.7					
easyJet	436.2	-0.11%	1.0	10.1	Pershing Square	3654.0	+2.58%	1.2	3.6					
Endeavour Mining	1590.0	+3.38%	4.0	-89.1	Persimmon	1655.0	+4.95%	3.6	20.7					
Entain	638.2	+14.33%	2.9	-4.2	Phoenix	553.5	+3.36%	9.5	-40.1					
Experian	3588.0	+3.01%	1.3	35.2	Prudential	657.4	+3.89%	2.5	13.6					
F&C Inv Trust	1040.0	+1.36%	1.4	65.7	Reckitt Ben	4272.0	+2.20%	4.6	18.6					
Frasers Group	848.5	+0.77%		9.8	RELX	3532.0	+0.60%	1.7	37.5					
Fresnillo	532.0	-0.56%	1.6	21.6	Rentokil Initial	486.5	+4.78%	1.9	32.1					

Markets

FTSE 100	8311.4	+1.75%
FTSE 250	21048.9	+2.05%
FTSE All Share	4545.0	+1.79%
FTSE Eurofirst300	2028.5	+2.46%
Dow Jones*	40700.3	+3.05%
S&P 500*	5560.6	+4.05%
Nasdaq*	17668.8	+5.51%
DAX	18322.4	+3.38%
CAC 40	7449.7	+2.48%
Hang Seng	17430.2	+1.99%
Nikkei	38062.7	+8.67%



THE WEEK AHEAD

Key report due on public finances

The Office for National Statistics will reveal how the relationship between UK public sector monthly income and expenditure leads to changes in deficit and debt, when it shares its Public Sector Finances report on Wednesday at 7am. The publication will include data on net debt in the UK.

Consumers' mood to be tested

A snapshot of how UK consumers feel on the crucial economic topics today, and their outlook for the next 12 months, will be revealed on Friday when GfK's Consumer Confidence Barometer results are released. Each month it tracks consumers' views of their finances and the economy.

Bailey to speak at US gathering

Andrew Bailey, the Governor of the Bank of England, is set to give a speech at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's annual Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium in Wyoming on Friday. The appearance comes after the Bank cut rates for the first time in four years, from 5.25 per cent to 5 per cent.

Three-year gilt auction to be held

The Treasury will hold a three-year gilt auction on Thursday. Such auctions are the main way the Debt Management Office issues gilts - UK Government bonds that fund public spending. Buying them at one of these auctions is cheaper than trading for one, partly because there is no commission charged.

ENERGY

Predicted price cap could raise bills by £150, says charity

By Emily Braeger

Households face having to endure another winter with less support and higher prices in terms of energy, a charity has warned.

Based on previous predictions by Cornwall Insight, Ofgem's price cap will rise to £1,723 a year on 1 October. This would be a 10 per cent increase from the cap that took effect on 1 July, of £1,568 a year.

The energy consultancy is set to announce its official predictions today ahead of Ofgem's price cap announcement on Friday.

Campaigners with National Energy Action have said that if it is confirmed that the cap will rise, average yearly energy bills will increase by approximately £150 per year.

{i} The cap is based on a household using **11,500 kWh of gas and 2,700 kWh of electricity** a year, on a single contract for gas and electricity.

Adam Scorer, the charity's chief executive, said: "If these alarming estimates are confirmed by Ofgem on Friday, energy bills and debt will stretch household finances beyond breaking point.

"Households will go into winter with less support and higher prices. This can still be avoided if the Government and Ofgem act urgently to reduce customer debt levels and energy prices for those most in need."

Hundreds of thousands of pensioners will miss out on the winter fuel payment as changes by the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, mean only those on means-tested benefits can claim. Energy debt is at a record high, as customers owe over £3bn.

A source told **i** that Cornwall Insight's predictions today will probably be similar to its June update. That forecast showed that the electricity cap will shoot up to £896.97, and gas to £826.09.

The cap limits what suppliers can charge domestic consumers per kilowatt hour of energy used, as well as the standing charge.



Wave hello to hybrids

A new battery-powered riverboat has been launched by Thames Clipper.

Mars Clipper completes a three-vessel fleet of hybrid passenger ferries from Uber Boat, which runs services between Putney in the west and Barking in the east.

The boats emit 90 per cent less CO₂ than diesel-only models.

DAVID PARRY/PA

TELECOMS

Restructuring uncovers start-up's £15m black hole

By Emily Braeger

Restructuring experts are scrambling to recover cash from a failed Essex telecoms start-up after a £15m black hole was uncovered in its accounts.

Internet Mobile Communications, known as Bank of Telecom,

collapsed into administration two months ago.

In a report to creditors, advisers at Interpath, who are trying to rescue it, said they were told the company held more than \$19m (£15m) in its bank account. But the business accounts were almost empty.

Interpath's Jonathan Thielmann

and David Standish said: "The balance at the date of our appointment was \$1,500 and the account balance was never greater than \$4,000."

Bank of Telecom, which claimed to allow the trading of SMS and voice traffic between mobile companies, owes about £36m to investment firm Investec.

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- ✓ Weekly newsletter



Today's Weather

Mostly dry in England and Wales, though it will become cloudier. Rain in Northern Ireland, Scotland and northern England, sometimes heavy.

Today's high

24°

Today's low

9°

Moon Phase



Sunrise

05:53

Sunset

20:14

Around Britain

City	Temp (Midday yesterday)	Rain (mm)	Sun (hrs)
Aberdeen	17	F	0.0
Aberporth	16	F	0.0
Aberystwyth	17	C	0.0
Aviemore	14	DR	0.3
Belfast	16	F	0.0
Birmingham	19	F	0.0
Bournemouth	21	F	0.0
Bridlington	19	F	0.0
Bristol	19	S	0.1
Cardiff	18	F	0.4
Cromer	21	F	0.0
Durham	18	F	0.0
Eastbourne	21	F	0.0
Edinburgh	17	C	0.2
Eskdalemuir	14	C	0.4
Glasgow	16	C	1.6
Holyhead	17	F	0.0
Hove	21	F	0.0
Hull	20	C	0.0
Huntingdon	21	F	0.0
Ipswich	20	C	0.0
Isle of Man	17	C	0.0
Isle of Wight	19	F	0.0
Kinlochewe	14	SH	3.2
Kirkwall	15	F	0.9
Leeds	18	F	0.0
Lerwick	13	F	1.1
Leuchars	18	F	0.0
Lincoln	20	F	0.0
Liverpool	17	F	0.0
London	22	F	0.0
Manchester	17	C	0.0
Margate	21	F	0.0
Milford Haven	18	C	0.0
Morecambe	17	F	0.0
Newcastle	18	F	0.0
Norwich	21	C	0.0
Nottingham	19	C	0.0
Okehampton	19	F	0.0
Oxford	21	F	0.0
Plymouth	20	F	0.0
Portland	19	S	0.0
Portsmouth	21	F	0.0
Prestwick	16	F	0.0
Rhyl	17	C	0.0
Sheffield	18	F	0.0
Shrewsbury	18	C	0.0
Skegness	21	F	0.0
Southend	22	F	0.0
Stoke	17	C	0.0
Stornoway	14	C	2.5
Swansea	18	F	0.1
Tiree	15	C	0.5

Global

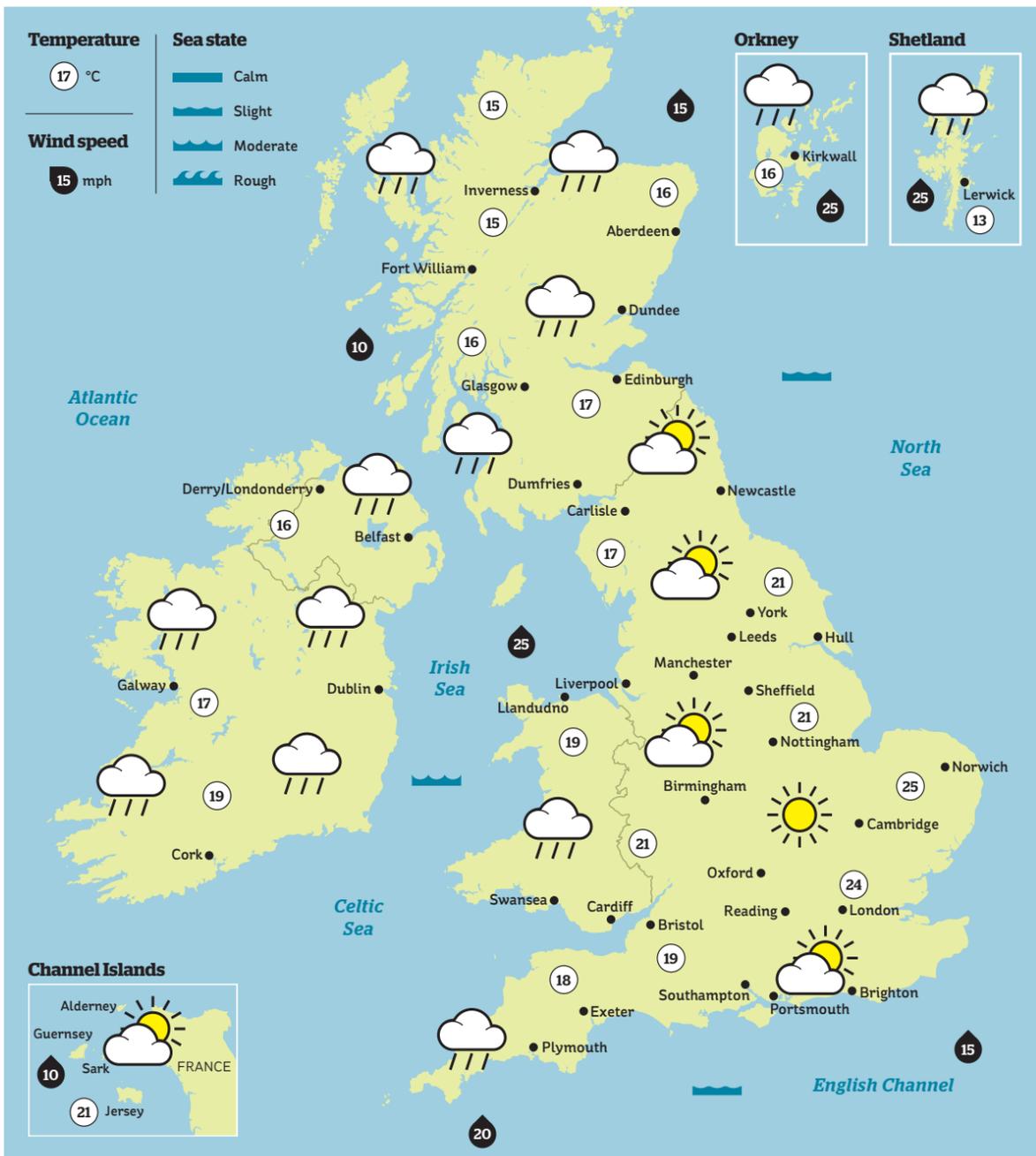
City	Temp (in °C)	Cond	City	Temp (in °C)	Cond
Abu Dhabi	40	S	Miami	31	F
Abuja	27	TH	Milan	26	TH
Alicante	30	S	Moscow	23	F
Amsterdam	22	F	Mumbai	32	F
Athens	34	S	Munich	21	R
Bangkok	33	F	New York	27	F
Barcelona	28	TH	Nice	28	S
Beijing	27	TH	Palma	29	F
Berlin	22	F	Paris	21	F
Brussels	22	F	Prague	26	TH
Budapest	29	S	Reykjavik	9	F
Chicago	26	SH	Rio	29	S
Delhi	34	SH	Rome	30	SH
Dubai	38	S	Stockholm	20	F
Dublin	18	C	Strasbourg	19	TH
Frankfurt	22	TH	Sydney	16	SH
Geneva	18	SH	Tenerife	29	S
Helsinki	20	F	Tokyo	30	F
Hong Kong	28	TH	Toronto	19	TH
Istanbul	29	S	Vancouver	22	S
Johannesburg	23	S	Vienna	26	S
Lisbon	28	S	Warsaw	30	SH
Los Angeles	24	S	Washington	27	C
Madrid	32	S	Wellington	14	SH

Key: C=Cloudy, DR=Drizzle, F=Fair, FG=Fog, H=Hail, M=Mist, R=Rain, S=Sunny, SH=Showers, SL=Sleet, SN=Snow, SS=Sandstorm, TH=Thunderstorm

Air Pollution Index

Air pollution levels Low (1) Very high (10) uk-air.defra.gov.uk

Region	Today	Tomorrow
Highlands	2	2
North East Scotland	2	2
Central Scotland	2	2
Scottish Borders	2	2
Northern Ireland	2	2
North West & Mersey	2	2
North East	2	3
Yorkshire & Humber	2	3
North Wales	2	2
West Midlands	3	3
East Midlands	3	3
South Wales	3	3
South West	3	3
South East	3	3
Eastern	3	3
Greater London	3	3



GENERAL SITUATION An area of low pressure, located to the west of Ireland initially will push eastwards towards the UK today and an associated weather front will bring cloudy skies and outbreaks of rain. Rain will be most frequent and locally heavy across Scotland and Northern Ireland before pushing into northern and western Britain and Wales later in the day. Mainly dry but cloudy further south and east as high pressure remains close by.

Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Unsettled today with rain spreading from the west during the morning which will become widespread by midday. A cloudy and wet afternoon

too with rain continuing and this may be locally heavy and persistent. Rain will clear to reveal sunny spells during the evening. Moderate southerly winds. Max temp: 20°C. Tonight, chance of showers. Min temp: 10°C.

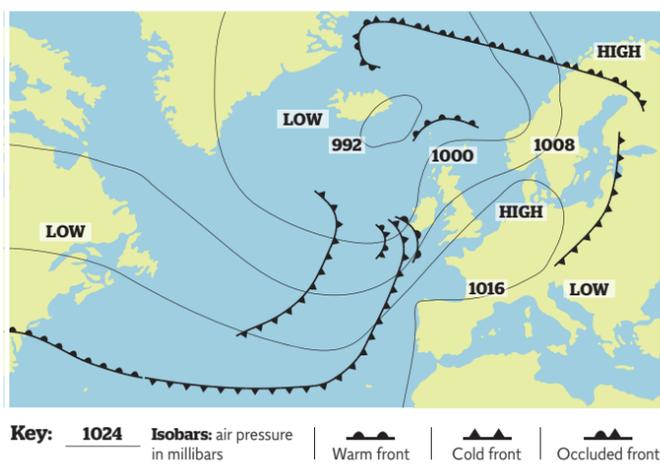
W Isles, N Isles, NW Scotland, IoM: A cloudy start with outbreaks of rain spreading in from the north-west. It will continue to be unsettled for the rest of the day with overcast skies and rain which will be often heavy. There will be gentle southerly winds but breezy across the far north west where winds will be brisk. Max temp: 17°C. Tonight, heavy rain. Min temp: 11°C.

NE Scotland, SE Scotland, SW Scotland: A generally dry but cloudy start to the day, however outbreaks of rain will spread in from the west during the morning. Unsettled and overcast during the afternoon with cloudy skies and outbreaks of rain which will continue into the evening and may be heavy. There will be moderate southerly winds. Max temp: 17°C. Tonight, heavy rain for some. Min temp: 10°C.

N Wales, S Wales, SW England, NE England, NW England: Mainly dry but overcast during the morning with a chance of a few showers developing by midday. Overcast during the afternoon and turning increasingly

unsettled as rain spreads in from the west which will be locally heavy by the evening. There will be gentle to moderate southerly winds. Max temp: 20°C. Tonight, chance of showers. Min temp: 9°C.

Midlands, E England, Cen S England, SE England, E Anglia, London, Channel Is: A few bright spells initially, but in general it will be mainly overcast and grey during the morning with cloudy skies. A lot of dry weather during the afternoon too, but a few showers may develop and also some periods of sunshine could break through. There will be gentle to moderate southerly winds. Max temp: 24°C. Tonight, chance of showers. Min temp: 9°C.



SYNOPTIC PRESSURE A region of high pressure to the south of the UK will begin to move north-east, though a low moving east towards the UK will displace this high pressure and push it further towards continental Europe, away from the UK. The aforementioned low will fill as it makes its way across the UK. A high will build in Europe.

HIGHS AND LOWS (Yesterday, up to 2pm)

Warmest: Heathrow Airport, Greater London, 22C

Colest: Santon Downham, Suffolk, 8C

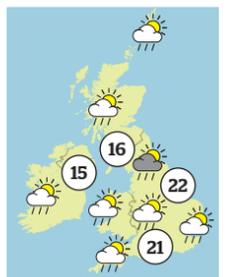
Wettest: Achnagart, Ross and Cromarty, 72mm

Sunniest: Shoeburyness, Essex, 10.1hrs

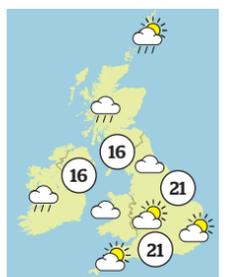
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Aberdeen	20.39-05.46
Birmingham	20.23-05.59
Bristol	20.23-06.04
Cardiff	20.25-06.06
Glasgow	20.42-05.58
Hull	20.20-05.49
Inverness	20.48-05.51
Liverpool	20.30-06.00
London	20.14-05.54
Manchester	20.27-05.57
Stornoway	21.00-05.59
Swansea	20.29-06.09
York	20.24-05.51

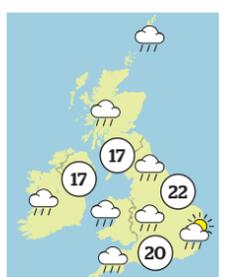
Five-day outlook



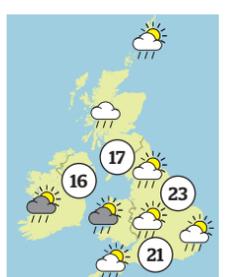
TUESDAY A bright day with long spells of sunshine, but it will also be breezy and a scattering of showers will develop. Some may be heavy.



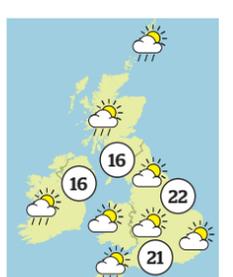
WEDNESDAY Early bright spells but clouds will soon thicken and heavy rain will spread across Northern Ireland and Scotland later in the day.



THURSDAY Mainly cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Turning drier and brighter in the north later with sunny spells and a chance of showers.



FRIDAY Cloudy and wet in the morning but drier and brighter in the afternoon with sunny spells and a chance of some showers in the west.



SATURDAY Dry and bright for many with long sunny spells but showers will develop and these will be most frequent across northern Britain.

RACING

Whistlejacket bounces back in style at Deauville

By Jon Freeman
RACING EDITOR

Whistlejacket is a son of American sire No Nay Never, a top-class sprinter before he became a big hit at stud, so it wasn't hard to predict that he would be blessed with blistering speed.

But he showed how robust he is, too, at Deauville yesterday when toughing it out to beat Rashabar in the Prix Morny, just eight days after his defeat in another Group One at the Curragh.

Aidan O'Brien knows when patience is required, but in Whistlejacket's case he didn't take any persuading to let him get off the canvas for a race No Nay Never won in 2013.

"It's hard to do both, but the Curragh race didn't set up perfectly for him and he's so fast and precocious we thought he could do the two," explained the trainer.

A 200th worldwide Group/

Grade One victory for Ryan Moore, Whistlejacket was soon belting along against the stands rail, putting it up to a field that included two Royal Ascot winners, Rashabar and Shareholder.

Shareholder actually beat Whistlejacket into fourth place in the Norfolk Stakes, but it was Brian Meehan's Rashabar, shock 80-1 winner of the Coventry Stakes, who emerged as the biggest threat to the Ballydoyle favourite and he deserves great credit for running him to less than a length from his wide position.

Whistlejacket has now run six times in his first campaign, but O'Brien isn't thinking about taking his foot off the pedal. Quite the contrary.

"He's very quick over five and six furlongs, so I'd say it's the Middle Park at Newmarket next (he's now 5-2 favourite) and then go on from there with the Breeders' Cup (in California) as an aim as well."

1 top tips

BEST BET
Back In Black (5.40, Yarmouth)
Ready to get off mark. Holds Group Two entries, so well-regarded

NEXT BEST
Glory Fighter (4.15, Catterick)
Veteran has won off higher marks than this.

ONE TO WATCH
Ramazan
Ran top race in defeat at Ripon.

CATTERICK GOOD TO FIRM

- 4.15** CONSTANT SECURITY SERVICES HANDICAP (CLASS 5) £8,650 added 5f
- 782051 GLORY FIGHTER (CD) P Midgley 8 9 13 P Mulrennan 5
 - 0525-8 SHOW ME SHOW ME (D) R Fahey 7 9 12 Oisin Orr C 3
 - 106-0 JAMIE BOND (CD) B Smart 4 9 11 A Breslin (3) 2
 - 531210 BIRKENHEAD (CD) P Midgley 7 9 9 D Nolan C 1
 - 572421 MACANUDO (D) I Williams 3 9 9 R Kavanagh (7) B 6
 - 345947 LA BOO (BF) M & D Easterby 3 9 3 Joanna Mason 4
- BETTING: 9-4 Macanudo, 11-4 Glory Fighter, 3-1 Birkenhead, 13-2 La Boo, 8-1 Show Me Show Me, 16-1 Jamie Bond.

WINDSOR GOOD TO FIRM

- 5.25** THAMES ALFA ROMEO SLOUGH APPRENTICE HANDICAP (CLASS 4) £10,800 added 1m 2f
- 23215 BLUEFLAGFLYINGHIGH (D) M Bell 4 10 4 J Bradnam (7) C 1
 - 563108 MORCAR (CD) R Hannon 4 9 11 J Leavy (3) B 5
 - 716931 PARTY ISLAND (D) D Coakley 7 9 8 G Bass 4
 - 291-25 ROYAL BLAZE M Tregoning 3 9 5 Gina Mangan V 3
 - 141211 NILOUFAR (D) Harry Charlton 3 9 4 Millie Wannacott (3) H 2
- BETTING: 6-4 Niloufar, 7-2 Party Island, Blueflagflyinghigh, 4-1 Royal Blaze, 14-1 Morcar.

- 5.55** GET RACEDAY READY NURSERY (CLASS 6) 2YO £9,000 added 6f
- 962141 PIRANHA RAMA (CD) P Evans 9 12 (6x) R Kingscote 2
 - 4774 BAILEYS HONEYMOON Miss A Murphy 9 T Marquand C,T 4
 - 0086 CASSANDRAALEXANDRA James Horton 8 10 S Osborne 3
 - 0082 PUGLIA E De Giles 8 9 H Doyle C 1
- BETTING: 5-6 Piranha Rama, 5-2 Puglia, 6-1 Cassandraalexandra, 8-1 Baileys Honeymoon.

- 6.55** GET THE INSIDE TRACK WITH RACEDAY-READY.COM HANDICAP (CLASS 4) £10,800 added 6f
- 12505 BISHOP'S CROWN (CD) E J-Houghton 4 10 2 C Bishop 5
 - 0-2097 LUCKY MAN (D) R Spencer 5 10 0 O Murphy B 12
 - 044439 DANGER ALERT (D) G Baker 4 9 13 P Cosgrave V 10
 - 31157 MISS BODACIOUS (D) K R Burke 3 9 12 C Lee 8
 - 21310 HOVER ON THE WIND (D) C Dwyer 4 9 11 M Ghiani 4
 - 734443 THE COFFEE POD (D) R Hannon 3 9 10 H Doyle C 3
 - 21-344 KODIAC THRILLER C Hills 3 9 9 S Osborne 1
 - 757275 TREMBLANT Miss A Murphy 4 9 6 T Marquand H,C,T 9
 - 57-548 LETMELIVEMYLIFE P Attwater 6 9 6 Ethan Jones (5) 7
 - 49503 AS IF BY CHANCE (CD) N Tinker 6 9 5 F McManoman C 11
 - 471590 ANGEL'S CALL Mrs N Evans 3 9 1 J Bryan 2
 - 870583 ULTRAMARINE (D) P Evans 5 9 0 R Kingscote 6
- BETTING: 9-2 Miss Bodacious, 7-1 Kodiac Thriller, The Coffee Pod, 15-2 Lucky Man, As If By Chance, 8-1 others.

7.55 TIPS FOR EVERY RACE AT RACEDAY-READY.COM HANDICAP (CLASS 6) £9,000 added 6f

- 486857 KENSINGTON AGENT (D) A Carroll 5 9 9 L Morris 8
 - 07845 TWITCH (D) Craig Benton 7 9 8 Georgia Dobie B 11
 - 087553 GREAT TIME P Evans 4 9 8 R Kingscote 4
 - 753522 FORESEEABLE FUTURE (CD) R Carr 9 9 7 H Davies V 1
 - 353254 Q TWENTY BOY (D) M Usher 9 9 6 Alicia Perkins (7) 6
 - 243552 DIAMOND COTTAGE (D) M Saunders 7 9 6 Gina Mangan (3) H 5
 - 0-4961 FIRENZE ROSA (CD) R Cook & J Bridger 9 9 5 H Doyle C 12
 - 0-4439 FALMOUTH BOY A Carroll 3 9 3 C Lee 10
 - 908-05 BEDFORD HOUSE A Carroll 5 9 2 R Dawson 2
 - 433232 ESSME R Cook & J Bridger 6 9 1 W Carson C,T 3
 - 664908 CARRY ON AITCH (C) R Ingram 4 9 0 Josephine Gordon V 9
 - 567458 LITTLE WHITE DOVE M Usher 3 8 11 T Heard 7
- BETTING: 9-2 Q Twenty Boy, 5-1 Firenze Rosa, Foreseeable Future, Greatest Time, 6-1 Essme, Kensington Agent, 8-1 others.

WORCESTER GOOD

- 4.30** VICKERS.BET FOR BEST PRICES GUARANTEED HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS 3) £10,700 added 2m 4f
- 36-512 GALATA BRIDGE (D)(BF) Dr R Newland & J Insole 7 12 0 C Hammond 7
 - 11-133 PADDY DE POLE (D) P Nicholls 6 11 9 F Gingell (3) C
 - PP6-50 LUNAR POWER D McCain 6 11 9 William Mags (5) C
 - 15F-24 BUTLER'S BRIEF (C) A Ralph 9 11 8 N Schofield C
 - 173-24 SONGO R G Hawker 8 11 6 J Best
 - 4516-1 THE HEIGHT OF FAME K Burke 7 11 3 G Sheehan C,T
 - 3P4-39 MINELLA DOUBLE (D) B Summers 6 10 12 P Armson (3) C,T
- BETTING: 13-8 The Height Of Fame, 9-4 Galata Bridge, 3-1 Paddy De Pole, 14-1 Butler's Brief, 16-1 Songo, 20-1 Lunar Power, 33-1 Minella Double.

YARMOUTH GOOD TO FIRM

- 5.40** BRITISH STALLION STUDS EBF MAIDEN STAKES (GBB RACE) (CLASS 4) 2YO £9,950 added 7f
- 22 BACK IN BLACK J Fanshawe 9 7 D Muscott 2
 - BLUE TRAIN W Knight 9 7 N Callan 9
 - CALEDONIAN D M Simcock 9 7 J P Spencer 8
 - CHARMING FELLOW P Chapple-Hyam 9 7 C Hutchinson (3) 7
 - DIFFUS CASTLE P McBride 9 7 A Farragher 5
 - IFFRAAJ POWER G Boughey 9 7 Billy Loughane 4
 - NOBLE GUEST G Margaron 9 7 T P Quayly 3
 - WE'RE DONE S C Williams 9 7 H Crouch 6
 - 42 WILTSHIRE LAD Sir M Stoute 9 7 R Clutterbuck 1
 - YANKEE DUDE W Greatrex 9 7 E Greatrex 10
- BETTING: 5-4 Back In Black, 2-1 Wiltshire Lad, 7-1 Caledonian, 12-1 Blue Train, 16-1 Yankee Dude, Iffraaj Power, 20-1 We're Done, 33-1 others.

Puzzle solutions

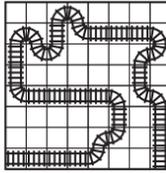
Dominoes

4	1	1	6	4	0	5	4
3	5	0	3	6	1	6	6
3	5	2	6	2	1	3	6
2	2	1	1	5	3	1	0
2	2	0	2	4	6	3	4
0	4	5	3	1	5	0	0
0	5	5	3	4	4	6	3

Journey Finder

1	4	3	4	2	3
1	2	3	1	3	4
1	2	4	2	1	2
4	2	3	3	1	4
3	3	2	4	4	3
2	1	4	1	1	2

Train Tracks



Number Square

3	-	6	-	8	-11
-	-	-	-	-	-
2	-	5	+	1	-3
+	-	+	-	+	-
9	+	4	+	7	20
10	5	14			

idoku

9	7	5	1	4	3	6	8	2
3	6	2	9	7	8	1	5	4
8	1	4	2	5	6	7	9	3
2	5	7	8	6	9	4	3	1
6	9	3	4	1	2	5	7	8
4	8	1	7	3	5	2	6	9
1	2	8	6	9	7	3	4	5
7	3	9	5	2	4	8	1	6
5	4	6	3	8	1	9	2	7

Kakuro

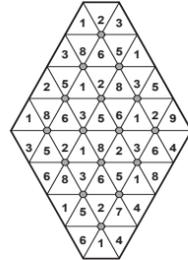
Wijuko

6	5	5	3
8	9	7	
1	4	2	

Binary

0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1

Number Hexagon



Zygolex

LEFT TO RIGHT:
hollow; lax; dank;
clap; blank; lap; blink;
link; lick; flash; sick;
flesh; ill; cash; silk

Daily Quiz

- The Leith police dismisses us
- Louis XV
- John Lennon
- Tagine

Word Ladder

BILL	CORN
SILL	CORK
SILK	CONK
SINK	MONK
SING	MINK
SANG	MILK

Word Wheel

NINE-LETTER WORD interdict
OTHER WORDS cider, cinder, cite, cited, credit, cried, dice, die, diet, din, dine, diner, dint, dire, direct, dirt, edict, edit, ice, iced, icier, incite, incited, indirect, inert, inter, ire, nice, nicer, nit, nitric, nitride, nitrite, rein, rice, rid, ride, rind, rite, tic, tide, tidier, tie, tied, tier, tin, tinder, tinier, tint, tinted, tire, tired, tit, titre, trice, trident, tried, trite

Saturday's Codeword 3964

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
G	K	J	A	X	S	T	U	N	Q	V	H	M
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
D	F	W	O	B	Z	L	E	Y	I	C	R	P

Killer Sudoku

8	5	4	2	7	1	9	6	3
9	6	3	5	8	4	7	2	1
7	1	2	3	6	9	4	5	8
4	9	1	8	2	7	5	3	6
5	2	6	1	4	3	8	7	9
3	7	8	9	5	6	1	4	2
6	8	9	7	3	5	2	1	4
1	4	5	6	9	2	3	8	7
2	3	7	4	1	8	6	9	5

Minesweeper

0	1	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	2
4	3	3	3	0	3	2	1	2	3
3	2	2	2	0	3	1	4	2	3
3	3	2	2	1	3	3	3	3	3
3	3	0	2	3	2	3	2	3	3
2	2	1	1	1	3	2	3	2	3
2	2	1	0	1	3	2	3	2	3
2	2	1	0	1	3	2	3	2	3
2	2	1	0	1	3	2	3	2	3

Number Tower

868
435 433
222 213 220
116 106 107 113
62 54 52 55 58
33 29 25 27 28 30
20 13 16 9 18 10 20

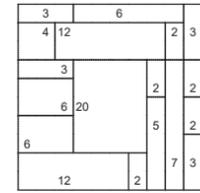
Calculatedoku

3	2	5	4	6	1
2	6	3	1	5	4
4	1	6	5	2	3
5	3	4	6	1	2
1	5	2	3	4	6
6	4	1	2	3	5

Word Square

U	R	G	E
R	E	E	L
G	E	L	S
E	L	S	E

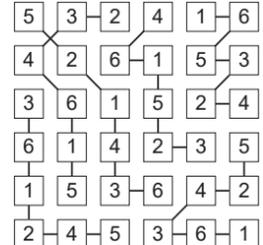
Rectangles



Pathfinder

C	A	L	T	P	V	A	S	I	V
I	M	H	S	E	R	N	A	S	E
L	E	E	I	E	H	T	L	L	F
O	P	E	B	R	S	U	O	U	L
T	S	R	B	V	U	N	R	U	T
E	I	R	O	D	E	M	S		
L	E	S	R	O	H	A	L	A	G
S	N	U	L	L	T	U	Z	U	N
L	S	P	O	E	H	Z	M	S	
R	U	H	S	L	E	E	A	R	F

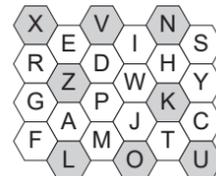
Chain Link



Futoshiki

3	>	2	<	4	1	5	
5	>	3	<	2	<	4	1
2	<	4	>	1	5	3	
1	5	3	>	2	<	4	
4	1	5	3	>	2		

Hexalex



Word Fit

M	A	S</
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Sport in brief

CRICKET



Spirit win first Hundred trophy

London Spirit chased down 115 to beat Welsh Fire and claim the women's Hundred title in front of a record 22,008 fans at Lord's.

It was left to Deepti Sharma (above right, with captain Heather Knight) and Charlie Dean to get their team over the line, with Indian all-rounder Sharma finishing the

job with a six over long on with just two balls left. Sharma's strike hung in the air but there was enough power for the ball to fall beyond the clutches of Shabnim Ismail.

Oval Invincibles retained the men's trophy with a 17-run victory over Southern Brave, Saqib Mahmood taking three wickets.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Hull KR player in hand-biting claim

Hull KR scrum-half Mikey Lewis accused Catalans Dragons full-back Cesar Rouge of biting him during Rovers' convincing Magic Weekend win yesterday over the French side.

Lewis claimed Rouge bit his hand during the second half of an emphatic 36-4 triumph at Elland Road that lifted the title-chasing Robins back to the top of the table.

"My hand has ended up inside of his mouth and he's bitten down," Lewis told Sky Sports. The RFL will investigate but Catalans coach Steve McNamara was incredulous.

MOTOGP

Bagnaia clear at top after Austria victory



Francesco Bagnaia (left) won the Austrian Grand Prix yesterday to complete a weekend double and

move five points clear at the top of the world championship, taking the chequered flag ahead of his rival Jorge Martin with Bagnaia's teammate Enea Bastianini third.

"The pace was incredible. I think Jorge and I did something unbelievable in terms of speed and consistency," Bagnaia said.

"But I'm very happy."

Results Service

CRICKET

MEN'S HUNDRED

FINAL (Lord's): Oval Invincibles 147-9 (100 balls); A J Hosein 3-34; T S Mills 3-33; Southern Brave 130-7 (100 balls); S Mahmood 3-17. Oval Invincibles win by 17 runs.

WOMEN'S HUNDRED

FINAL (Lord's): Welsh Fire 115-8 (100 balls); J L Jonassen 5-4; London Spirit 118-6 (98 balls); S Ismail 3-24; London Spirit women win by 4 wickets.

ONE-DAY CUP SEMI-FINALS

Glamorgan v Warwickshire, Sophia Gardens: Glamorgan 247-9 (50 overs); D A Douthwaite 55no; E Barnard 4-34; Warwickshire 208 (46.1 overs); M G K Burgess 85; Glamorgan win by 39 runs.

Somerset v Leicestershire, Taunton: Somerset 334-4 (50 overs); L P Goldsworthy 115no; J E K Rew 71; A R I Urneed 57; Leicestershire 311-9 (50 overs); P S P Handscomb 111; Somerset win by 23 runs.

GOLF

D-D REAL CZECH MASTERS, PGA NATIONAL OAKS PRAGUE, Final rnd (GB & Irl unless stated, Par 72): 265 D Ravetto (Fr) 68 63 70 64; 269 J Svensson (Swe) 65 67 68 69; 270 R Ramsay 65 67 71 67; A Saddier (Fr) 66 69 67 68; F Lacroix (Fr) 68 70 67 65.

RUGBY LEAGUE

BETFREDS SUPER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hull KR	22	17	0	5	575	268	34
Wigan	22	17	0	5	549	296	34
Warrington	22	16	0	6	564	295	32
St Helens	22	13	0	9	518	298	26
Catalans Dragons	22	13	0	9	402	344	26
Salford	22	13	0	9	393	425	26
Leigh	22	11	1	10	466	326	23
Leeds	22	11	0	11	407	392	22
Huddersfield	22	8	0	14	392	490	16
Castleford	22	6	1	15	354	579	13
Hull	22	3	0	19	290	683	6
London Broncos	22	3	0	19	261	775	6
Hull (4)	4	4	0	0	0	0	29
Warrington (8)	24	24	0	0	0	0	6

Wigan (14)	20	St Helens (0)	0
Catalans Dragons (4)	4	Hull KR (12)	36
Huddersfield (12)	20	Castleford (0)	12
Leigh (12)	26	Salford (0)	0

RUGBY UNION

THE RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP

Australia (9)	12	South Africa (11)	30
New Zealand (35)	42	Argentina (3)	10

TENNIS

ATP & WTA CINCINNATI OPEN (Cincinnati, Ohio)
ATP WINSTON-SALEM OPEN (Winston-Salem, North Carolina)

WTA TENNIS IN THE LAND (Cleveland, Ohio)

WTA ABIERTO GNP SEGUROS (Monterrey, Mexico)

Sport on TV

Cycling: Vuelta a Espana

Eurosport 1, 1.30pm

Cricket: West Indies v S Africa

TNT Sports 1, 2.45pm

Tennis: Cincinnati Open

Sky Sports Main Event, 11pm

Football: Leicester v Tottenham

Sky Sports Main Event, 6.30pm

Baseball: Dodgers v Mariners

TNT Sports 2, 3am (Tuesday)

CRICKET

Controversial selection of Lawrence as opener divides opinion

Vaughan raises concerns about new England call up being moved up the order. By **Chris Stocks**

For Dan Lawrence there will be a feeling of comforting familiarity this week when he faces Sri Lanka in what will be his first Test match appearance in two-and-a-half years.

This is the same opposition the 27-year-old took on when he made his international debut at Galle during the Covid-era behind-closed-door series in January 2021.

Back then, Lawrence made a composed 73 in his first innings batting at No5 to help set up what would end up being a comfortable seven-wicket win.

The signs were positive for a young batter who had first played men's cricket at the age of nine, hit a century in the Chingford first team aged 15 and then his maiden hundred for Essex at 17.

Lawrence's star had risen fast, yet after 11 Test appearances in which he batted in every position for England from three to No 7, his career stalled just as the Bazball revolution kicked off in the summer of 2022.

In the series immediately before captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum joined forces, Lawrence had been one positive on an otherwise wretched tour of the West Indies. He had fallen nine runs short of a maiden century in Barbados having batted selflessly attempting to move the game on late on the first day.

It was an innings Stokes noted. But a hamstring injury knocked Lawrence out of contention early that summer and Ollie Pope and Harry Brook moved ahead of him in the pecking order.

Even so, he has been a constant of the Bazball regime as the spare batter since last year's tour of New Zealand. Now, thanks to

the finger injury sustained by Zak Crawley, he has a second chance for England having been handed the opportunity to open the batting.

Lawrence (right) has batted just six times at the top of the order, five times for Essex in 2015 and once for Surrey during a run chase against Somerset earlier this summer when he hit 53 from 34 balls.

Lawrence made the move to The Oval over the winter to enhance his England chances.

Not everyone, though, is convinced he is the right choice to open in the three-Test series against Sri Lanka that starts at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Former England captain Michael Vaughan is one prominent dissenting voice. "I do not think picking Lawrence to open is the right call,"

he said in his most recent *Sunday Telegraph* column.

"He is a really good middle-order batsman and has waited patiently for a spot to become available in the team. I just do not see him as a Test opening bat, and believe while the game changes all the time, that remains a specialist position, particularly in England, worthy of respect.

"There is no doubt Lawrence has the attacking game for the job. He will get on the front foot and try to put the bowlers under pressure. Get him on a flat one and he will play shots to parts of the ground where captains do not have fielders, but he will be vulnerable to the moving ball."

Sir Alastair Cook, Lawrence's former Essex team-mate and the most prolific opener in England's Test history, was more supportive

in *The Sunday Times*. "He's been 12th man so often he won't care that he usually bats in the middle order, he will just be desperate to play," he said. "Dan came through at Essex, so I've known him for a long time and he will back himself. It will be interesting to see how his technique holds up, although with Sri Lanka we're not talking about an Australia-style bowling line-up. He's opened in one-day cricket and will look to score. I think the sort of fields he will face – three slips and a gully – will open up gaps and give him a chance to attack."

Lawrence batted at No 3 for Surrey in their most recent County Championship match but has primarily been used at five or six this summer in red-ball cricket.

He also batted at three for England during his debut winter, handed the hospital pass of first drop for the first two Tests against India at Chennai. They were Lawrence's third and fourth Test appearances. No wonder it didn't go well.

Three years on, and against far weaker opposition, Lawrence will be better equipped





NEWCASTLE UNITED 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON

Schär red card pushes need for reinforcements

By Mark Douglas
AT ST JAMES' PARK

If this was not the manner of victory Eddie Howe craved, it was not a bad substitute for the "intensity-is-our-identity" imprint the Newcastle boss wants to return to this season.

Top of Howe's wishlist this season is control but the dream of dominating Southampton and laying down a marker for the rest of the top-four challengers came to an abrupt end when Fabian Schär (right) lost his head and clashed with Ben Brereton-Diaz.

After that it became a scrap for Newcastle – but one which will have given Howe a lot of satisfaction.

Repairing the defensive deficiencies which undermined them last time out is essential for Newcastle. In the 2022-3 season they conceded just 33 goals, the joint fewest in the league, which was the foundation for finishing fourth. In 2023-4 it was 62, more than Fulham, Everton and Crystal Palace, and enough for European qualification to evaporate.

Those are issues are why Newcastle are prepared to blow the summer budget on Marc Guéhi, even as Palace's asking price no longer seems to make much sense in a depressed transfer market.

But here was evidence of a platform to build on.

With a man advantage Saints pinned Newcastle in their own half for most of the second half – they had 77.8 per cent of possession – but Howe's side were resolute.

No one ever doubted the character or determination of the likes of Dan Burn and Sean Longstaff but Newcastle benefited from greater defensive organisation and the ability to freshen things up as tired bodies faded. Their shift to a low block after Schär's red card was seamless and successful.

A word too for the return of Joelinton. He offers not just his presence but also the return of balance to midfield. And his goal was the sort of first-touch finish that he has been working on with his personal video analyst, who detailed the diligent work he puts in between matches to i in a fascinating interview over the summer.

Joelinton makes Bruno Guimarães better and who is to say they won't be Brazil's midfield pairing in the 2026 World Cup?

Newcastle will certainly need to improve but it hardly helped that Guimarães and Anthony Gordon were far from peak condition after returning late from their summer tournament exertions.



Joelinton has benefited from working with a video analyst

They also need more in the transfer market, be it Guéhi or someone else. Schär's red card – unless it is appealed – means he is missing for three games, making Newcastle's need for defensive reinforcements even more acute.

A personal feeling is that the Palace man's fee now feels over-inflated off the back of his performances in the Euros. His £65m price would be the joint highest paid for a player in a transfer market depressed by profitability and sustainability regulations concerns and likely end any pretensions of strengthening at right wing. Would the price have been anywhere near that if Harry Maguire had been fit and first choice in Germany?

Fellow England international Joe Gomez, out of favour at Liverpool, is an alternative given the Reds are open to a sale. That might leave some PSR headroom to do other deals.

quickly become a fan favourite, and this interview with Sky signalled his second smart move – with an assist, most likely, from Villa's press team – in protecting Jhon Duran from further interrogation.

The cameras were fixated with Duran at full-time. He had, after all, just scored the winner against the side he has been linked with over the summer, just three weeks after making an Irons gesture on Instagram live, and had thus celebrated in half-apology, half-declaration that he was here to stay and fight for Villa.

"I think Jhon will be crucial player for us," Onana added. "He is very talented. Big, fast and physical and he's definitely committed to his task here. We're delighted to have him."

Emery then reiterated his stance, adding: "We believe in him and his potential. We are open to working with him like he did today, helping the team, being available when we need him and today he was fantastic."

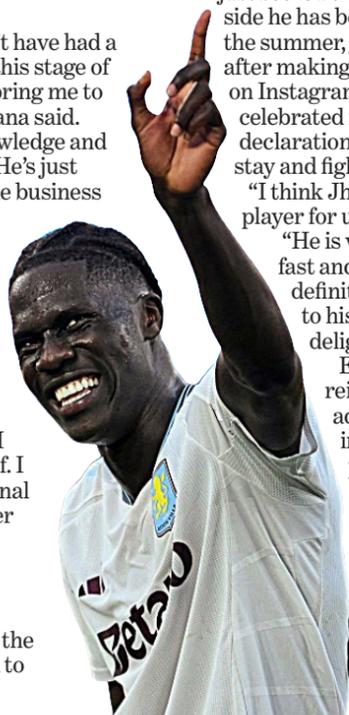
new club. "I couldn't have had a better manager at this stage of my career. He can bring me to the next stage," Onana said.

"His football knowledge and IQ is unbelievable. He's just one of the best in the business for me.

"Absolutely delighted to have scored. I couldn't have had it any better. The ball was a 12/10, I couldn't miss it.

"The fans have been unbelievable, I was enjoying myself. I like to be in traditional clubs, I have another one here with big history."

In the space of two hours, Onana (right) displayed all the hallmarks required to



WEST HAM UNITED 1-2 ASTON VILLA

Onana makes himself an instant favourite with Villa supporters

By Michael Hincks
AT THE LONDON STADIUM

Not only an orchestrator on the pitch, Amadou Onana had the Aston Villa fans on strings at full-time to cap off his man-of-the-match display with a simple act that spoke volumes.

It was some introduction for the £50m midfielder, who scored within four minutes of his Villa debut in the Premier League win at West Ham.

Onana was a standout performer throughout, and was not shy in coming forward after full-time, showcasing a confident personality that is evident in his play by running up to beckon a cheer from Villa's travelling support. He then did it again, and again, and again.

Onana proceeded to shake hands with the pitch-side Sky Sports team before walking down the tunnel, later returning to talk up his new head coach and the prestige of his

ARSENAL 2-0 WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS

Sublime Saka picks up where he left off for the Gunners

One month after Euro final, winger leaves bemused defenders in his wake. By Oliver Myles-Young

If Bukayo Saka is short of peak fitness after a gruelling summer he didn't show it in Arsenal's Premier League opener against Wolves.

Only 34 days have passed since England's painful 2-1 defeat to Spain in Berlin's Olympiastadion and Saka would have more reason than most for feeling jaded given he accumulated the sixth-highest number of minutes for the Three Lions in Germany. And yet he played as though he'd spent July with his feet up on a yacht in Mykonos rather than toiling in the latter stages of the Euros.

It's easy to forget how young Saka is given how consistent he has been over a prolonged period. His Wikipedia page says he is still only 22 (23 in September) and it's the sort of information that you assume must have been edited by a mischievous user with too much time on their hands. He's already played 267 matches for club and country.

Despite being staggeringly efficient – only four players have produced more Premier League goals and assists since the start of last season than he has – there remains a sense that Saka is somehow under-appreciated outside this patch of north London.

Perhaps it is because the beauty

of his game is rooted in simplicity rather than flashiness. Some wingers delight and frustrate in equal measure due to their erratic decision-making; Saka always takes the right option. He drives when there is space to go into and plays a one-two if it needs to be created.

Troublingly for defenders, he is developing an Arjen Robben-like knack for producing the same killer move over and over again and reaping the rewards. Saka is writing a similar signature.

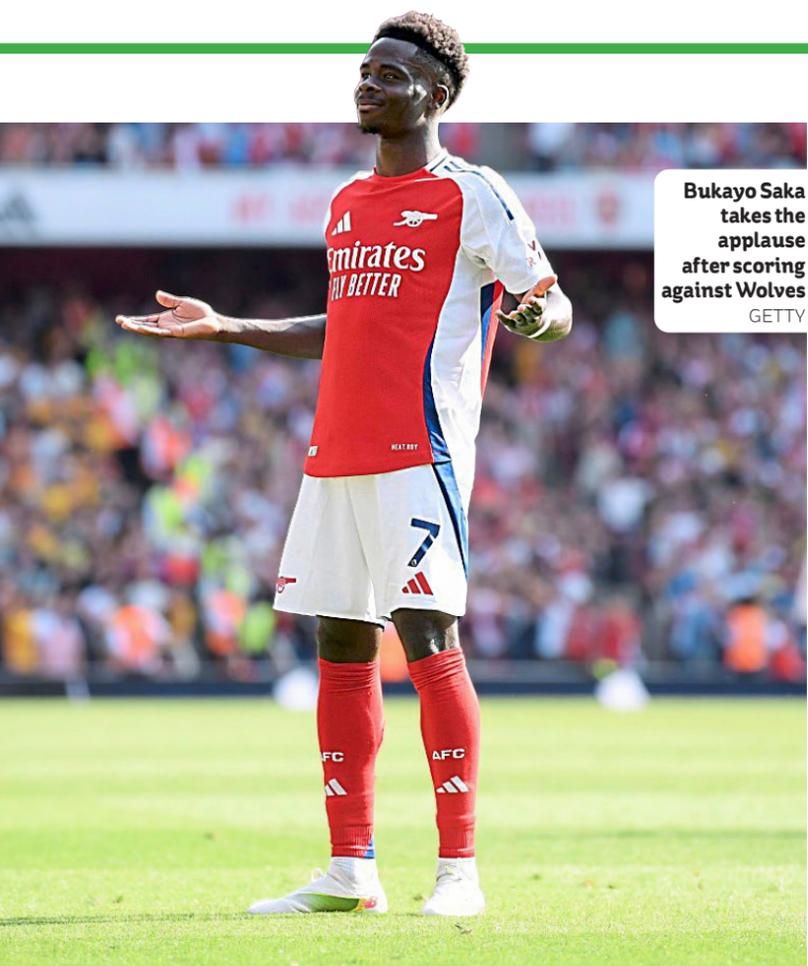
Both of Arsenal's goals came from Saka receiving the ball out on the right wing and shifting the ball to his left foot. Wolves' defenders knew exactly what he wanted to do but were powerless to stop him.

"With good players, it's like that," Mikel Arteta said after the game. "With Messi, I know he's going to come in and do that, but you can't stop him!"

The cross for Kai Havertz's header was perfectly pitched, a winning combination of pace and precision. Havertz darted across his marker and got to the ball before Jose Sa to glance a header into an unguarded net. It was a



Arsenal players congratulate Bukayo Saka (centre) after his goal (right) AP



Bukayo Saka takes the applause after scoring against Wolves
GETTY

IPSWICH 0-2 LIVERPOOL

McKenna won't curb his attacking instincts in bid to keep new boys up

Katherine Lucas

AT PORTMAN ROAD



Ramsey, Robson, Burley – McKenna? Onto the turnstiles Ipswich Town have emblazoned their own Mount Rushmore – the pantheon of greats who turned the club into a top-flight side, their eyes looking down on a cacophonous hive of fans who have been waiting 22 years for this moment.

They are rattling through the gates to see a game of Premier League football; for thousands of younger fans, this is a promised land they have only ever known as an inaccessible TV opera.

From the Sir Bobby Robson Stand hangs the rallying cry: “The future is now.” With Wes Burns racing forward and Omari Hutchinson wriggling through what was at first a woefully static Liverpool midfield, they made clear from the first kick that they are ready to seize the day – and have no intention of watering down the firebrand football that got them here in the first place.

It took an hour for Liverpool to put a pin in the magic swirling around Portman Road. By then, Ipswich were unlocked too easily by Trent Alexander-Arnold down the right, before Mo Salah teed up Diogo Jota so that the Portuguese could atone for a horror miss moments earlier.

Once the tap was turned on, Salah – who has never failed to score or assist on the opening weekend of the season – promptly made it two, with the ball ping-pong around the box and played into his path by an unfortunate Leif Davis. The alarm bells will have been ringing all around as Liverpool clicked into gear and – in the second half – put in exactly the kind of performance which hints at why they appointed Arne Slot.

Ipswich have a balance to strike between committing to the counter-press that has seen them thrive in League One and the Championship and lacking control.

Ten of the starting XI were making their Premier League debuts, though Davis largely neutralised Salah and Jota in the first half. Had he not been narrowly

caught offside, Ipswich might have had a penalty too for Virgil van Dijk bringing down Liam Delap. Diaz's own appeal shortly afterwards at the other end was more theatrical but had less merit.

In the long run, it may well have been for the best that the back four were eventually forced to dig in for large stretches, a reality check nipping in the bud any naivety about the challenge ahead of them.

This has to be a season of defying the doubters, of which there will be many. While Liverpool have not made a single senior addition under Slot, in McKenna's new deal

Ipswich arguably clinched the signing of the summer.

The prospect of losing him to Brighton & Hove Albion or Chelsea was very real but keeping him has given them a fighting chance.

Last season, all three newly promoted teams went straight back down.

That is why Ipswich will have supporters willing them on far beyond the thunderous 30,014 who squeezed into one of the Premier League's smallest grounds.

It is in everyone's interests that they can compete. They have not done a Sheffield United, selling their best players in the build-up and

resigning themselves to relegation.

All the indications are that the goals will come, helped by the arrival of Sammie Szmodics, an excellent bit of business at just £9m after a return of 27 goals from 44 games at Blackburn Rovers last season.

Ali Al-Hamadi has already made history and could have made even more when he forced Alisson into a one-handed save. Playing for AFC Wimbledon in January in League Two, he is now the first Iraqi to play in the Premier League.

The club have evidently been forking out elsewhere too, with swish media facilities adapted after promotion and so new in some quarters you can still smell the lick of paint. Even the bins outside have been adapted: “Ipswich – a Premier League town.”

Keeping it that way is a formidable task, though not an impossible one. McKenna (above) has already drawn comparisons with Eddie Howe, whose attacking credentials would not be numbed at Bournemouth – and for several seasons, it worked.

There is no let-up in the fixture list. Next come Manchester City at the Etihad on Saturday.

NOTTM F 1-1 B'MOUTH

Danilo vows to bounce back from ankle break

By Jonathan Veal

Nottingham Forest midfielder Danilo has vowed to be “back soon” after breaking his ankle just seven minutes into the new season.

The 23-year-old sustained the injury when he fell awkwardly after an early aerial challenge with Antoine Semenyo in Forest's draw.

He needed nine minutes of treatment, with club staff using blankets to shield him from the crowd, and was transferred straight to Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham.

Boss Nuno Espirito Santo said the injury was serious, but Danilo was back at home on Saturday night.

He posted on Instagram: “Hey guys, I'm stopping by to say that I'm fine, thank god, and I'm already home.”

Bournemouth boss Andoni Iraola expects new signing Evanilson to be a hit. “For sure he will be someone who will be very important,” he said.



striker's goal, the type of which Havertz will be delighted to score as he continues his evolution into a complete No 9, and one that owed plenty to the quality of the assist.

Saka's goal, set up by Havertz, was even better.

Rayan Aït-Nouri committed the cardinal sin of showing Saka the inside but he still had plenty to do with a sea of gold shirts obstructing his route to goal. Saka set himself to dive to the right, anticipating the curler into the far corner; Saka gave him the eyes and smashed it in at his near post instead. That variety of finishing makes him doubly dangerous.

Arsenal were by no means at their best. It is unlikely that they will produce as many disjointed periods of play throughout the season as they did from half-time until Saka's winner 16 minutes from the end. Wolves were the better side during that stretch but lacked the ruthlessness to make it count. Matheus Cunha fluffed a glorious chance to level, perhaps as bemused as the rest of us to receive the ball from William Saliba inside the Frenchman's own box.

The Gunners both dominated and had to dig in. They controlled the first half, aggressively pushing Wolves back and allowing them no room to breathe to the point that Havertz's goal was an inevitability. The collective worked like clockwork, each unit of the team clicking precisely as instructed.

But between Havertz's header and Saka's stunner, they relied upon individual moments to complete the mission. David Raya's stunning reaction save to deny Jorgen Strand Larsen a debut goal ensured Arsenal retained their lead going into half-time and Saka's goal succeeded in stifling Wolves'

hopes just when they had started to believe.

That in itself is a sign of a good team, one that wins comfortably when not completely at their

best. Saka was given a rare breather with 10 minutes

to go, a telltale sign that he is still building himself back up after the briefest of intermissions.

It was about then that Declan Rice collapsed to the turf clutching his calf in agony with cramp. They had put in a commendable shift with depleted reserves.

Arsenal will only improve as their stars get back up to speed. With Saka already soaring that is a warning to the rest of the league.

59
Arsenal goals for Bukayo Saka since he made his debut in November 2018



They have no intention of watering down the firebrand football that got them here in the first place

EVERTON 0-3 BRIGHTON

Tarkowski still upbeat after heavy Toffees' loss

By Carl Markham

Everton's stand-in captain James Tarkowski attempted to find the positives from a demoralising defeat at home to Brighton.

The centre-back, captain in the absence of Seamus Coleman, argued the scoreline did not reflect their first-half performance.

Ashley Young's 66th-minute sending-off with the score 2-0, courtesy of goals from Kaoru Mitoma and Danny Welbeck, was followed by Simon Adingra's late strike.

“I have just said to them [the squad], ‘Don't be too disheartened by it’,” said Tarkowski (right).

“You finish the game being really low because of the way it finished; you are 3-0 down, but up until the sending-off, I was really confident that we were going to pick up a result.

“Once you look at the game, as we will do, then you realise a lot of the good things we did. It didn't go our way but there are a lot of positives to take into next week.”



Mbeumo and Wissa make a strong case to fill Bees' Toney void

BRENTFORD
Mbeumo 29, Wissa 76

2

CRYSTAL PALACE
Pinnock 56

1

By Ian McCullough

AT GTECH COMMUNITY STADIUM

Bryan Mbeumo and Yoane Wissa showed once again there is life after Ivan Toney as the pair combined to help Brentford secure a first Premier League win over Palace.

Bees boss Thomas Frank made the shock decision to leave the England striker out of his squad with the 28-year-old set for a move to Saudi Arabia.

But Mbeumo and Wissa, who scored 21 goals between them last season – most when Toney (*right*) was serving an eight-month suspension – lifted their side to victory.

Toney's absence led to a subdued mood at kick-off following a difficult pre-season for the hosts, who have managed to sign only Fabio Carvalho after a move for Napoli midfielder Jens Cajuste collapse last week.

Palace were the better side for much of the game, with Eberechi Eze in outstanding form alongside Adam Wharton in the heart of the Palace midfield.

Eze looked to have given his side the lead with a long-range free-kick that caught out Mark Flekken, but rookie referee Sam Barratt blew his whistle before the ball hit the net for a push by Will Hughes on Nathan Collins.

That early whistle meant VAR

could not be consulted and Eze said after the game the referee admitted he made a mistake.

"It could have changed the game but we have to deal with it. It wasn't our only chance," he told the BBC.

"If we perform like that then we'll do well. It's a game, you're going to make mistakes as a referee, and unfortunately it happened to us today. You'd hope it'd even out throughout the season."

Brentford went ahead when Wissa and Mbeumo combined in the Bees' first meaningful attack, the Cameroon forward blasting in from the edge of the box.

The goal did lift the home side from their early slumber, Kevin Schade shooting just wide on the stroke of half-time while

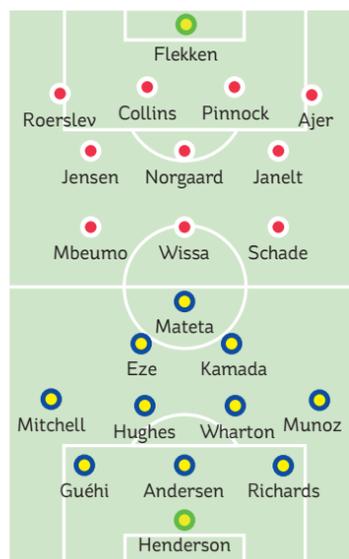
Palace were forced to withdraw Jean-Philippe Mateta at the break after he hurt himself colliding with Flekken.

Palace finally got the goal their efforts deserved when Ethan Pinnock prodded into his own net after Daniel Munoz outjumped Kristoffer Ajer to meet a Tyrick Mitchell cross and the south Londoners looked the more likely side to take the three points.

Eze continued to cause Brentford problems and his pass into the path of Odsonne Édouard set up the French forward to hammer the ball past Flekken, only to be denied by an offside flag.

But it was the hosts who claimed the victory 14 minutes from time when a high ball into the Palace area wasn't cleared properly. Wissa followed up a deflected shot from Collins that was tipped away by Dean Henderson, into the shins of the Congolese forward and over the line.

Brentford



Crystal Palace

Substitutions: Brentford Lewis-Potter (Schade, 74), Damsgaard (Janelt, 74), Onyeka (Jensen, 84), Carvalho (Wissa, 84), Mee (Mbeumo, 90).

Crystal Palace Edouard (Mateta, h-t), Ayew (Kamada, 70), Lerma (Wharton, 74), Doucouré (Hughes), Sarr (Richards, 84).

Player of the match

Bryan Mbeumo A handful all game before the moment of quality, cutting inside Marc Guéhi

Palace pushed hard for an equaliser, with Eze denied once again when his weaving run and shot was clawed away by Flekken and Édouard lifting the ball over the bar from close range.

Frank refused to say if Toney had played his last game for the club but revealed he made the decision on Thursday not to include a man who has scored 72 goals for the club since moving from Peterborough in 2020.

"It was a decision made by me and the club, we thought it was the best for all and Ivan was on board," he said.

"He is a top player, probably our best player over a long spell, but like any good player, one day they will leave the club and somebody needs to step up.

"Every time Ivan has not played, Wissa has stepped up and done well. Bryan started last season so well but got injured but is now back up to speed."

LEICESTER CITY v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR



Why Leicester are kicking off their season on the wrong foot

George Simms



For some Leicester fans, being charged £10 to watch a pre-season friendly against Shrewsbury Town was the final straw.

For others, it was the front-of-shirt sponsorship deal with a crypto-gambling company who can't legally operate in the UK and have, for some unknown reason, one of the most viewed tweets ever. A fair chunk were not best pleased at a demand to pay £25 for a printed season ticket.

This all followed an £880,000 fine from the UK's competition watchdog for cutting an illegal shirt sale deal with JD Sports, losing over £100m worth of playing talent for free and, of course, the years of steady managed and mismanaged decline leading to a very sudden

relegation. First as a drip and then in droves, Leicester fans lost their optimism, ambition and joy.

Now days from starting their ninth Premier League campaign in 10 years, a decade after the promotion which forged a path to nirvana, the squad is somewhere between incomplete and incoherent.

A sword dangles precariously from the King Power Stadium's roof marked "PSR points deduction" which could fall any time in the next six months. Ignoring it is impossible when it also restricts transfer activity and long-term planning.

There's also the small matter of losing the Championship-winning manager and reigning Player of the Year, a local lad and academy product, while still relying on the 37-year-old club legend for goals.

Even last season's promotion campaign, which flirted with its fair share of disaster, was only ever the realisation of base-level expectations. It's not difficult to understand how this heady cocktail of chaos and greed has ended in



Bryan Mbeumo scores Brentford's first goal past Crystal Palace goalkeeper Dean Henderson REUTERS



Clockwise from main picture: Ricardo Pereira in training; manager Steve Cooper; Harry Winks plays against his old club; academy product Luke Thomas GETTY



overwhelming apathy. A survey by *The Athletic* found 69 per cent of fans are pessimistic about the upcoming season.

The impending points deduction is the most severe concern. Despite Leicester being formally charged by the Premier League in March, the process has been dragged out by legal action suggesting that relegation exempted the club from top-flight regulation.

Unsurprisingly they lost and can now, in 2024-25, expect a six-to-12-point penalty potentially kicked down the road until after Manchester City's 115 charges have been heard.

There is also the threat of a second deduction this season, as Everton experienced in 2023-24. The EFL was monitoring Leicester's real-time losses last season and it has shared this information with the Premier League, which could lead to PSR punishments for both the 2020-2023 and 2021-2024 financial periods.

"All of us assumed we would have some clarity on what the points deduction is going to be by now," James Knight from website *The Fosse Way* tells *i*. "Everyone expects there is going to be one."

"That's definitely contributing to the whole feeling around the club at the moment. We're going into the season not really knowing what you need to do. We probably need four or five more wins than you would normally need to stay up. There's quite a lot of ambivalence about the new season."

A common trend of Leicester's summer is downgrading their

transfer targets, from first-choice to fourth or fifth, with players seemingly turned off by the uncertainty and looming deduction.

Juventus' Matias Soule and Arsenal's Reiss Nelson were among the primary options, yet the highest-profile deal so far has been signing Abdul Fatawu from Sporting Lisbon. Considering he spent last season at the King

Power, this is hardly a fresh addition. "The lack of transfer activity is absolutely down to the concern around PSR compliance," football finance expert Dr Rob Wilson tells *i*. "That is also why they let the manager go to Chelsea so easily, because of the compensation package that was agreed. That was money into the bank."

"They're looking for mitigation if they breach again this season - they can say they've not spent the money, they've got a degree of profitability, they've released players and not signed anyone fresh. They should get £120m for promotion this season."

There was much excitement when the club were linked to Wilfried Zaha, but are now much more likely to sign his 32-year-old former teammate Jordan Ayew. The Ghanaian has 21 goals in 174 Premier League matches for Crystal Palace, hardly the obvious answer to a goalscoring crisis.

Much of this is also caused by the club's difficulties selling players. Wesley Fofana, James Maddison and Harvey Barnes all left for decent fees, but Kelechi Iheanacho, Dennis Praet, Caglar

Soyuncu, Youri Tielemans, Ayoze Perez, Nampalys Mendy and Daniel Amartey all ran down their contracts.

Wages were extortionately high for a Championship side and remain precarious even for a lower-half Premier League team. This has contributed to five consecutive years of losses - including £92.5m in 2021-22 and around £90m in 2022-23. A sixth is inevitably coming. Don't bet against a seventh.

"We just have been so bad at selling players," Knight explains. "It's definitely much deeper than the relegation. Most people would blame Jon Rudkin, the director of football, for allowing it to get to this point, although it's not actually that clear who's ultimately responsible."

"But the way the Leicester football operation works is a bit confusing, everyone assumes he's the one making decisions, but it's not actually that clear who's ultimately responsible, whether it's him, the chairman - who doesn't seem to be involved day to day - or somebody else."

This reflects a wider fan frustration about a lack of transparency from club executives, not helped by a series of attempts to financially exploit supporters.

"They [club executives] just don't really answer any questions about the way the club is run or anything like that," Knight says. "If you wanted to change seats, you had to pay a charge for that as well. They've been treating fans more like customers."

"It's definitely felt like they've tried to gouge the fans a bit this summer. When you put it together, you start to question who's making the decisions and what the motivation is."

There has also been a great deal of scepticism about hiring Steve Cooper to replace Enzo Maresca. Not only has Cooper recently managed Midlands rivals Nottingham Forest, his Leicester side lost their final three pre-season games without scoring a goal.

The consensus around the club is that a 17th-place finish is the best Leicester can hope for with the impending deduction(s), despite having a strong, experienced starting XI when every player is available. There have been minor protests against the ownership and board in recent years which could develop and grow if fortunes on the pitch do not improve.

This is a story of a club let down by its hierarchy and executives. They have both become victims of the Premier League's punitive bureaucracy and yet done nothing to ease that situation with wildly optimistic legal action.

Burning the once-immeasurable goodwill of football's most heartwarming story within the space of a decade exposes unavoidable flaws in Leicester's management, but says as much about the impossibility of permanently disrupting the Premier League's established elite as anything else.

Perhaps their greatest source of hope now is what happened the last time they narrowly avoided Premier League relegation. Anyone know what Claudio Ranieri is up to?

Maddison's desire for England return will benefit Tottenham

By Jon West

Ange Postecoglou is confident James Maddison's desire to get back in the England squad will reap big benefits for Tottenham.

Spurs kick off their Premier League campaign tonight at Leicester, the club that sold Maddison to them for £40m last summer.

Playmaker Maddison, 27, made an instant impact in Postecoglou's first season as manager but was sidelined for almost three months in November by an ankle injury.

He struggled in a team that had also dipped in form on his return and was left out of the England squad for the European Championships at the end of the season.

"Even though it wasn't a significant injury in terms of time out, it still was significant in terms of it setting him back," Postecoglou said.

"When he came back we were also struggling which didn't help him terms of the player he is. The good thing is he's fit and he's allowed himself a good foundation to have another strong season."

"The disappointments of missing the Euros, that's just part of being a footballer. You take all the good stuff, but you have setbacks and it's how you react to those. I'm sure he'll want to go out there and get himself back into the international frame and back playing for England."

"That's up to him to find the right way to use that as a motivation. If you just deflect or at any point say, 'it had nothing to do with me' then you miss an opportunity to improve. I sense in Madders that he's really determined to have a good season



James Maddison missed out on an England place for the Euros

and hopefully that gets him back into the England frame. More importantly for us, hopefully it gets him back to the form we know he can have."

Dominic Solanke, the £65m signing from Bournemouth, is set to make an instant debut as the focal point in attack.

Postecoglou moved swiftly to add 19-year-old Burnley winger Wilson Odobert, a scorer for the Clarets at Luton last Monday, for an initial £25m and he should be on the bench.

Yves Bissouma has been suspended by the club for misuse of Class C drug nitrous oxide, which opens the door for summer signing Archie Gray to start in midfield. Gray, 18 cost £40m from Leeds.

Spurs missed out on Championship football last season but Postecoglou teams usually improve significantly in his second season. "I'd suggest it's not by accident," the Australian said.

I sense in Madders that he's really determined to have a good season and that gets him back in the England frame

Football in brief

ITALY

Nightmare start to season for Napoli



Napoli's Serie A season kicked off in disastrous fashion yesterday when they were overwhelmed 3-0 at Hellas Verona and lost star midfielder Khvicha Kvaratskhelia after he collided with an opposing player.

Antonio Conte (above), in his first league match in charge, was forced to take off Kvaratskhelia just before halftime when the Georgian looked uncomfortable following the collision.

Dailon Livramento slotted in a cross from close range before Daniel Mosquera doubled Verona's lead and then tapped to complete his brace.

FRANCE

Gomes feeling fine after clash of heads



Lille midfielder Angel Gomes says he's back home and "feeling good," a day after being knocked unconscious in a collision during a French league match.

Lille's game against Reims on Saturday was halted for more than 30 minutes with Gomes needing lengthy treatment before being carried off on a stretcher and taken to a hospital for further evaluation.

Yesterday, the London-born player reassured fans in a video on his social media account.

"I just want to let everyone know that I'm OK, I'm back home. I've been looked after and I'm feeling good," Gomes said.



Haaland's 'perfect goal' kick-starts title defence in style

By Clare Lovell

Erling Haaland scored his 91st goal in his 100th appearance for Manchester City yesterday as the champions kicked off their Premier League title defence with a lively 2-0 away win over Chelsea.

The big Norwegian, fed by Bernardo Silva, forced his way between Marc Cucurella and Wesley Fofana and finished neatly past Robert Sanchez in the 18th minute.

"Three points, a perfect start," Haaland told Sky Sports.

"I knew exactly what to do, I think it was a really good goal. I remember last year he made a really good save against me, it had been irritating me for a long time so, yeah, it was a perfect goal."

Former Chelsea midfielder Mateo Kovacic (right) made sure of victory for the visitors six minutes from time, racing through a disorganised Chelsea midfield and thumping the

ball into Sanchez's net. City, seeking a fifth title in a row, were more composed and comfortable on the ball than Chelsea and looked in control.

Sanchez was kept busy in the Chelsea goal, saving from Haaland and Jérémy Doku, while Rico Lewis proved a constant worry as he moved upfield.

"I didn't expect it," Pep Guardiola

told Sky. "We are a way from our best, so three points is the good news. The bad news is we have 65 games ahead of us.

"We have an advantage, it's our ninth season together so we know each other well."

Chelsea, in their first Premier League outing under new manager Enzo Maresca, fashioned some hopeful attacking moves, a timely



Sterling adds to chaos for Maresca as City make gulf in class tell

CHELSEA

0

MANCHESTER CITY
Haaland 18, Kovacic 84

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By Sam Cunningham
AT STAMFORD BRIDGE

Ah, the beautiful game is back, in all its marvellous, compelling, confusing and beastly glory.

The marquee fixture of the Premier League opening weekend was between a club that has no clue if the conclusion to a hearing into the 115 charges against them will result in expulsion from the league and a club that quite possibly has no clue.

Still, if it was a Big Game Sunday between two of the Big Six, where anything could happen, why did it have a feeling of inevitability? Manchester City winning, Erling Haaland scoring, the world continuing to spin on its axis.

If Enzo Maresca, the fourth new manager entering the third season since the Todd Boehly-Clearlake Capital takeover, had hoped match day would provide some reprieve from the madness of Chelsea football club, he was made acutely aware of the round-the-clock chaos at Stamford Bridge when he left Raheem Sterling out of the squad and, while the players were still warming up, a representative released a statement saying the player would seek clarity from the club on his future.

Maresca said it was merely a "technical decision", that it was his job to make difficult choices and that players might not like them. He had probably expected Sterling to raise any issues privately, in his office, rather than hurl toys out the pram in public, but that's Chelsea.

Moments before kick-off, Enzo Fernandes had the Chelsea captain's armband wrapped around his upper arm for the first time while he took the knee, in a gesture of anti-discrimination, a month after apologising for making racist and homophobic slurs.

Meanwhile, Savinho made his City debut after they somehow beat competition from leading clubs across Europe for the Brazilian winger from Troyes, which they own. Savinho, only 20, looked brilliant – skilful, direct, fast. An absolute bargain at the fair market value of £30.8m.

Beyond all of that was an entertaining, ironing-out-some-pre-season-creases match.

After only 18 minutes Bernardo Silva got a vital touch on the edge of

the penalty area to divert the ball to Erling Haaland who swatted Marc Cucurella away, like a nuisance mosquito, before clipping the ball exquisitely over Robert Sanchez.

Almost immediately a group of Chelsea fans chanted for Conor Gallagher, the academy graduate and standout player last season who was also left out of the squad while the owners try to offload him to generate more funds to buy more players.

At least there is a purity to Haaland, scoring his 91st goal in his 100th Manchester City game. A raw simplicity to it all, seemingly thinking of nothing else in this world but: there is football, and there is goal.

City took passing it out from the back to whole new levels when they passed it back and forth practically along Ederson's goal line.

Chelsea looked, despite the off-field turmoil, pretty good: organised, threatening City's goal a few times with meaningful if not clear-cut chance, not completely outclassed – not always the case last season.

Ruben Dias intervention denying Nicolas Jackson in the 14th minute.

Jackson also had the ball in the net before being ruled offside late in the first half.

But it was clear that Maresca has work to do with his plentiful squad after moving from Leicester City.

"The performance was there but we didn't take the chances," Maresca said. "Probably the big difference was inside the box. I'm quite happy in terms of performance."

Chelsea



Manchester City

Substitutions: Chelsea Neto (Nkunku, 58), Dewsbury-Hall (Lavia, 67), Guiu (Jackson, 67), Veiga (Cucurella, 80); Manchester City Foden (Savinho, h-t).

Player of the match

Mateo Kovacic Bossed the midfield and scored the clinching second goal

Erling Haaland is perfectly placed to open the scoring for Manchester City against Chelsea REUTERS

Romeo Lavia, injured for the majority of last season after a £58 transfer, was superb in defensive midfield for Chelsea, and still only 20.

Nicolas Jackson came closest to scoring for them with a clever close-range volley that Ederson did well to save, even if the effort was straight at him. That said, Sanchez was by far the busier goalkeeper.

Maresca handed debuts to Pedro Neto, Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall and Marc Guiu. He has a squad of 43 that needs to be cut in half to submit a squad of 25 in a couple of weeks' time when the window closes. The more he can get a feel for the better.

Mateo Kovacic made certain of the result with a late second – a nicely-taken shot from the edge of the area that Sanchez could only push off his near post on its way in.

Kovacic declined to celebrate against the club who sold him for £25m. A club which would be greatly improved with him in their team, if they could only make room for one more.

Handing Fernandez armband just one of the new boss's many questionable decisions

George Simms

AT STAMFORD BRIDGE



Maybe that was good. Maybe that was progress. Maybe that was the start of a beautiful friendship between Enzo Maresca and Chelsea. Maybe Manchester City are inevitable and Erling Haaland was always going to score. Maybe this is what £1.3bn is supposed to buy you.

Or maybe Mateo Kovacic (£30m, bought from Chelsea) pushing past Enzo Fernandez (£105m) like he was made of dandelion fluff en route to scoring represents some deeper problem.

Maybe Raheem Sterling, who scored in both Premier League matches against City under Mauricio Pochettino, might have been more use were he not engaged in a proxy slanging match with the club having not been selected.

Maybe Marc Cucurella should not have spent his summer reciting a kitschy chant about him leaving Erling Haaland "trembling" to anyone who would listen. Food for thought, and Cucurella will likely spend much of the next week thinking about Haaland running through him.

These 90 minutes sparked far more questions than answers. Perhaps the most pressing surrounded Fernandez's myriad roles at Chelsea.

Having spent much of the summer under investigation after broadcasting himself singing a racist and transphobic song to his 11.3m Instagram followers the 23-year-old was named captain.

Is this the gleaming standard Maresca hopes to set? That forgiveness is only ever an apology and a sizeable charitable donation away if you're worth more than £100m to the club? Chelsea's leadership void has been well publicised, but surely there was a candidate for the vice-captaincy who hasn't spent their summer posting Comic Sans statements?

None of which has any relevance to the other screamingly obvious issue with Fernandez – he is not as good as

Chelsea either believe him to be or are kidding themselves he is. Failing to stop Kovacic was just the most recognisable incident in a litany of misplaced raking passes and ricocheting touches, two of which he attempted to pass off as penalty-box fouls.

There's a fair argument he doesn't suit a role in Maresca's system just as much as Conor Gallagher, who presumably spent his afternoon watching from the TV while trying to learn Spanish on Duolingo. After Sterling's late arrival, he's now not even the most famous footballer on the isle of misfit toys.

Maresca is so wedded to his system he is willing to alienate the club's highest earner in Sterling, two Academy products in Trevoh Chalobah and Gallagher and a Champions League winner in Ben Chilwell.

His decision-making demonstrates both remarkable ruthlessness and either confidence or arrogance. Given confidence is entirely evidence-based and this was his first Premier League match,

Fernandez is not as good as Chelsea either believe him to be or are kidding themselves he is

you have to suspect a healthy helping of the latter.

Yet there were unmissable positives, not least Romeo Lavia. Having played just 37 minutes last season, he completed 38 of his 39 passes, made six ball recoveries and created a big chance.

Christopher Nkunku also offers the twin threat Cole Palmer desperately needed while attempting to drag Chelsea out of the mire last season. Even Cucurella, bar the minor inconvenience of being publicly humiliated, continued his remarkable renaissance.

But Chelsea's problem last season wasn't these Super Sunday affairs, but their inability to win the matches they were expected to win.

These were entrenched problems with motivation and arrogance and experience, with breaking down low blocks and protecting a high line. They now play six consecutive Premier League matches against teams which finished below them last season. This, far more than anything on show yesterday, will predict their future success.

Chelsea are trapped in a bizarre liminal space where only brilliant victory is ever truly justifiable given the financial and human sacrifice to get here, yet most supporters just want effort and tangible progress.

There was an emptiness to the hopeful pre-match noise and bluster which vanished with Haaland's goal and never really returned.

"I do think it's good times ahead", Sterling said 11 days ago, and on the evidence of this performance he may well be right. But he almost certainly won't be there to enjoy them.

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Romeo Lavia completed 38 out of 39 passes against Manchester City yesterday



NEWCASTLE UNITED



Bruno Guimaraes was made captain by manager Eddie Howe on Friday

Captaincy is a dream come true, says Bruno

» Continued from back page

the game and said he was in a lot of pain after playing all 90 minutes – Guimaraes was honest about how far he is behind his colleagues.

"I'm not at my best physical level. I came back after the guys after a tiring season for me, 64 games.

"I enjoyed my holidays a lot so I'm not at my best level but I tried to work very, very hard.

"We knew it would be a different game with 10 men but I think we gave everything to win the game.

"I was very, very tired but for me there's many, many ways to win and we won the hard way today."

For all that the close season began with speculation surrounding Guimaraes, his affection for Newcastle and the supporters is absolutely genuine. Being named captain – Howe informed him on Friday – is a career ambition ticked off.

"It's another dream come true to be captain of a club where I love to be. When the fans love me, it's always massive for me," he said.

"I played for them, I gave everything I had. There's pain everywhere to be honest. I'm not in my best level physically, I'm still building, but Saturday was for them.

"I think the fans made the difference for us. When the red card came, they start to play like another player for us.

"They deserved the win – once again they made the difference and we're very lucky to have our fans on our side."

What can Newcastle really hope to achieve this season? "I'm hopeful we can do something similar to two years ago – we are trying to do the same as we did when we got the Champions League," Guimaraes said.

"Every game matters, Saturday was massive. It's always unbelievable, we need to improve the away games because last season was not good enough.

"Next weekend we have a big chance to start well away from home [at Bournemouth]."



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Why Leicester are starting the season on the wrong foot



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Controversial Lawrence call divides fan opinions

FOOTBALL
Schär red card highlights need for new players at Newcastle

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Premier League

Tractor boys are believing

McKenna has Ipswich fans saying that the future is now



Unstoppable Saka

Forward prompts Arteta into Messi comparisons: 'I know he's going to do it, but you can't stop him!'



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Erling Haaland, Bernardo Silva and Kevin de Bruyne celebrate Manchester City's first goal
GETTY

City start fast

Champions waste no time in getting first win of the season

Chelsea 0-2 Man City, p54-55

Guimaraes rules out City move: I love it at Magpies

By Mark Douglas
NORTHERN FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

Bruno Guimaraes has dismissed lingering rumours linking him with a move to Manchester City, reaffirming his commitment to "the club I love" Newcastle United while also admitting he's a long way away from peak physical condition.

Having been promoted to

Newcastle's leadership group in the summer – a reflection both of his importance in the squad and a concerted attempt to "love bomb" a player courted by some of Europe's top clubs – Guimaraes captained 10-man Newcastle to a hard-fought opening day win over a spirited Southampton side.

It was, by his own admission, not a match in which he sparkled from

an attacking perspective, but his defensive work was hailed as "elite" by manager Eddie Howe and summed up why he is so critically important to Newcastle's ambitions this season.

After Fabian Schär was dismissed for a foolish skirmish with Ben Brereton-Diaz in the first half, Newcastle required all hands to overcome visitors promoted from

the Championship last season. Guimaraes's contribution typified the desire that delighted Howe.

Newcastle, who have aspirations of a top-four place, regard Guimaraes as simply unsellable and mid-week claims that he still harbours a desire to join champions City have now been flatly dismissed by the man himself – who confirmed he will remain at St James' Park beyond the 30 August transfer deadline.

"Yes, I'm very happy to be here," he told **i**.

"These things [rumours about his future], I cannot control, but I'm here, I'm very happy to be here, I love it and I hope to keep [being] here."

His future addressed, Guimaraes handled post-match media duties almost as adroitly as he did the midfield battle.

Clearly exhausted – he requested a chair to do radio interviews after

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