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# THE



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# Who's on the Rizz List of 2023



What gave me the ick this year Carol Midgley

# Pupils changing gender due to peer pressure, schools warned

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Children in primary school should be banned from changing pronouns and teachers should question whether transgender pupils have been swayed by peers or social media, according to new government guidance.

Kemi Badenoch, minister for women and equalities, said the long-awaited guidelines she co-wrote were necessary because activists had hijacked trans-

gender issues by misinterpreting the law. Social transitioning to the opposite gender will be "extremely rare" in schools, the government said as it published the guidance, which had been delayed by months.

It received a mixed reaction, with some accusing the government of

licensing transphobia. Liz Truss, the former prime minister, said, however, that the guidance did not go far enough and new laws should be introduced. She announced a private member's bill to bring in legislation and protect the guidance from "exploitation by activists".

The guidance published by the Department for Education is subject to a 12-week consultation. It says parents

should be involved in their children's decisions to transition and that single-sex spaces must be protected for the safeguarding of pupils. It covers subjects including sports, changing rooms, uniforms and whether children should be allowed to transition without their parents' knowledge

parents' knowledge. Schools and colleges are told in the guidance that they do not have to, and should not, accept all requests for social transitioning, which can involve pupils changing their names, pronouns and uniform. It also asks schools to consider whether peers or social media are likely to have had an effect on the child asking to transition.

The guidance was drawn up by Badenoch with Gillian Keegan, the Continued on page 2

# Elderly 'will bear brunt of strikes at Christmas'

## Age UK raises fears as A&E unit shuts amid walkout

Eleanor Hayward Health Correspondent Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Hospitals will find it "extremely difficult" to keep elderly patients safe over Christmas as doctors begin the biggest strike in their history today, charities and NHS leaders warned.

As an A&E unit said it would close because of the scale of disruption, hospital bosses pleaded with junior doctors to provide last-minute exemptions for "life and limb" care. Emergency treatment will hang in

Emergency treatment will hang in the balance as members of the British Medical Association walk out for three days from 7am today, and again for six days from January 3 to 9

days from January 3 to 9.

Cheltenham General Hospital became the first to announce it would have to close for the duration of the strikes, which are taking place at the busiest time of year.

NHS Gloucestershire said the decision "had not been taken lightly" but was necessary to ensure safe staffing levels. Patients in the area will instead be told to go to the A&E at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, nearly ten miles and a 20-minute drive away.

Rishi Sunak sought to paint junior doctors as unreasonable outliers as he put pressure on them to return to negotiations.

"We have now reached a resolution with every other part of the public sector and every other part of the NHS," the prime minister told the Commons liaison committee. "The only remaining people who have not settled are the junior doctors. The question more is for the junior doctors as to why they are refusing to accept something that everyone else has now accepted."

A coalition of charities and NHS leaders, led by Age UK, have written a public letter in an unprecedented intervention, warning that the strike over the festive period poses a big threat to patients. They said the prolonged action into next month, combined with winter pressures, mean "it will be extremely difficult to ensure safe and effective care during this period for all patients that need it".

The letter, seen by The Times, reflects mounting fears about the care for elderly patients, many of whom are in "ongoing pain" after having multiple operations cancelled during previous strikes. It warns that thousands of older patients may end up "stranded in hospital" even if they are medically fit, because doctors will not be around to send them home.

"The timing, duration and fact that — as yet — no national [exemptions] have been agreed is cause for alarm," it says. "As a minimum, we are calling on all parties to take a step back and agree national [exemptions] in our most vital life and limb' services so they can continue to operate in full over the period."

The letter warns that vulnerable

Continued on page 2



Show stopper The England Women goalkeeper Mary Earps was crowned as BBC Sports Personality of the Year last night after a strong World Cup. Pages 3 and 50

# Back home for the holidays? Plenty of staff already are

Ben Clatworthy
Transport Correspondent
Andrew Ellson

'Twas the week before Christmas and across the country offices were emptying, stations had lost their hubbub and rush-hour traffic had fallen eerily quiet.

Britons are easing themselves into the Christmas holidays earlier than ever by taking advantage of hybrid employment arrangements and hunkering down at home — or escaping for a little secret shopping during the working day.

home — or escaping for a little secret shopping during the working day. Figures show the number of commuter journeys is down this week compared with three weeks ago. Rushhour congestion in London was 21 per cent lower yesterday than on the last Tuesday in November, according to the traffic analysts TomTom.

traffic analysts TomTom.

The drop in traffic is even greater in Manchester, where there has been a 44 per cent fall in congestion during the morning rush. In Edinburgh, where schools have not broken up, there has been a 21 per cent decrease in traffic.

Andy Marchant, of TomTom, said: "What we are seeing is ... a lull before the big Christmas getaway with people using this week to work from home." Office occupancy was beginning to fall last week compared with the same week in November, according to data provided by Remit Consulting. Across Britain, 53 per cent of desk spaces were occupied last week compared with 58 per cent in the middle of last month. The figures are expected to fall sharply again this week.

Network Rail said the morning peak for commuters at London's biggest railway stations on Monday was down 12 per cent on last week, equating to more than 100,000 fewer journeys. Christmas cheer for retailers, page 6





#### TODAY'S EDITION

#### Volcano erupts in Iceland

A volcano in Iceland has erupted after weeks of seismic activity, opening a two-mile crack in the earth and belching out enough lava to fill an Olympic swimming pool every 30 seconds. Some of the magma jets have been up to 300ft high. Pages 4-5

### British Museum in £50m BP deal

The British Museum has lost its deputy chairwoman, Muriel Gray, and fears it is at higher risk of attack by environmental activists after strengthening its relationship with the fossil fuel industry by striking a £50 million sponsorship deal with BP. Page 7

## Snowdonia crew facing burnout

Britain's busiest mountain rescue team, which assists those in need in the Welsh mountains around Snowdonia, has said its volunteers are at risk of burnout after more than 300 call-outs this year. In 2008 they responded to about 100. Page 13

Raducanu turns

Emma Raducanu, the

21-year-old tennis star,

is working with her

former coach Nick

from surgery. He worked at the High Performance Centre

where she trained in

in Bromley, Kent,

Cavaday as she prepares to return

to old coach

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

#### Ukraine seeks 500,000 troops

Ukraine's generals are seeking up to half a million soldiers to fight Russia's army, President Zelensky said. Under Ukrainian law, only males aged 27 to 60 can be mobilised, but vounger men are able to volunteer. Conscripts aged 18 to 20 cannot be sent into battle. Page 26

COMMENT 21

THUNDERER 22

#### Interest rates to remain raised

The Bank of England's deputy governor for financial stability, Sarah Breeden, has said that interest rates will have to remain raised for longer because the risk of inflation staying stubbornly high was greater than the chance of a fall. Page 31

> LEADING ARTICLES 25 REGISTER 43

SPORT 48 CROSSWORD 58 TV & RADIO TIMES2

her early teens. Page 58

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## THE WEATHER



A breezy day and mainly dry in the southeast; scattered showers in the northwest. Full forecast, page 47

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# Splash Out to Help Out: Sunak considered debit card giveaway

Rishi Sunak considered giving everyone in Britain a pre-paid debit card to boost the economy with a summer spending spree in 2020, documents released by the Covid inquiry show.

Evidence published yesterday also revealed that Boris Johnson was accused by Sir Gavin Williamson, his education secretary, of making a "panic decision" to shut schools in January

Helen Whately, the social care minister, has revealed her own warnings at the start of the pandemic that discharging patients into care homes risked spreading the virus, while Penny Mordaunt asked why Johnson's WhatsApp

messages had vanished.

Last week Sunak defended his Eat
Out to Help Out scheme as economically essential as he denied it fuelled a second wave of Covid. But Dan York-Smith, the director-general of tax policy at the Treasury, told the inquiry that "there was no specific risk assessment" of how the scheme might affect the spread of coronavirus. He also revealed that before launching the scheme Sunak considered an alter-

native plan to send tens of millions of debit cards loaded with taxpayers' money through the post. Sunak dropped the idea after officials pointed out "significant risks associated with tens of millions of cards being distributed through the post as part of a highly publicised scheme", York-Smith said.

In his witness statement, Williamson said he considered resigning over Johnson's "wholly unnecessary" decision to close schools a day after reopening them at the start of the third lockdown. He also complained that he was not given the chance to make the case to the cabinet before a U-turn that "did not sufficiently take children's interests or wellbeing into account", calling it "a panic decision, made without having children's interests front and centre"

Whately used her witness statements to argue that discharge policies showed that the NHS was prioritised over social care. She pointed to an email written by her office in March 2020 about draft discharge guidance saying she was "concerned that a patient will take Covid into a care home". She said that "the testing I wanted to see was initially not included ... because of the shortage of tests", adding that "there were times when I felt social care providers were there to do what the NHS needed, rather than being recognised for their primary role caring for their own residents'

Whately also said that the isolation caused by restrictions on care home visiting "often weighs on my mind" and that the need to ensure social contact was drowned out by "much louder" complaints about infection.

Mordaunt, the paymaster-general during the pandemic, said she was mystified that WhatsApp messages to and from Boris Johnson went missing from her phone. Dan Rosenfield, Johnson's chief of staff, ignored 14 requests for a meeting about the messages, Mor-daunt claimed in her witness state-ment, adding that the Cabinet Office wanted to charge her personally £1,000 a day to examine her phone.

No 10's security team suggested that "because of a security breach the PM may have deleted all his messages", Mordaunt said, but added that this was speculation". In January the National Cyber Security Centre wrote to Mordaunt to confirm that "no official advice had been given to the prime minister to delete his messages".

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Elderly people at risk

patients are those "paying the highest price" for the disruption and delays caused by the past nine months of junior doctors' strikes. Junior doctors have walked out for 25 days since March in their quest for a 35 per cent pay rise. NHS industrial action has led to the cancellation of 1.2 million operations and appointments this year, costing the health service £1.4 billion.

The letter says the strikes are "clearly unsustainable for staff, NHS leaders and patients" and that it is "imperative that both government and the BMA bring an end to their dispute".

It has been sent to Victoria Atkins, the health secretary, and Professor Phil Banfield, the BMA council chairman, and was signed by the NHS Confederation and, as well as Age UK, the Patients Association, Healthwatch England and National Voices. Caroline Abrahams, charity director

at Age UK, said the strikes over Christmas and new year pose a "much greater potential threat" to the elderly than previous walkouts. "We fear this planned industrial action will not only adversely affect older people stuck on waiting lists or due a clinic appointment, but also those in hospital and others who might need to be admitted over the holiday period," she said. "With the best will in the world, it is hard to guarantee patient safety and wellbeing if you are operating a hospital with a skeleton clinical staff.

Age UK said it had been inundated with calls from older people who have had appointments and operations post-poned. Abrahams said: "These postponements have had real consequences for them by slowing down the diagnosis of serious illnesses, as well as delaying surgery to deal with cataracts and degraded hip and knee joints that seriously interfere with daily life."

This is the first time doctors have gone on strike over the Christmas holiday period. It means there will be four weekdays of a fully functioning health service in the next three weeks, which is also a huge blow to efforts to cut waiting lists of 7.7 million.

Matthew Taylor, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, said: "Any strike is highly disruptive but worse still there is no agreement on national [exemptions] ... Without this agreement for doctors to provide urgent and criti-cal 'life and limb' cover, the risk to patient safety, and strain on other staff, is further heightened."

Responding to the Age UK letter, Banfield said: "We appreciate so many organisations raising the same concerns as doctors have over delays to patient treatment ... During all strike action by junior doctors, 'life and limb' care has been preserved and indeed enhanced in many places by being provided by the most senior doctors in the consultants and specialists.

# Cancer tests will be posted to all over-54s

Kat Lay Health Editor

Hundreds of thousands more people will be invited to check themselves for bowel cancer at home in an attempt to save thousands of lives

Over-54s in England will be sent a testing kit in the post every two years. The plan to lower the age at which people begin screening from the present 56 will mean 830,000 extra adults are eligible, the NHS said.

The test checks for blood in the stool. Lynn Dunne, chief executive of the charity Bowel Research UK, said it was simple and took minutes. "This expansion will undoubtedly save lives," she said, adding: "No other cancer is so reliant on early diagnosis to prevent emergency surgery.

gency surgery."
Steve Russell, national director for vaccinations and screening at NHS England, said: "Lives are saved when cancers are caught early." The NHS plans to offer testing to everyone aged

Deborah James, the cancer podcaster who died aged 40 last year, had campaigned for the screening age to be cut.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Transgender guidance

education secretary. It was promised a year ago and was supposed to be published before the summer holidays. Schools say they have been left in limbo for years on transgender matters. The guidance is non-statutory, but many schools are likely to follow the recom-

mendations as it gives them protection. Keegan said: "This guidance puts the best interests of all children first, removing any confusion about the protections that must be in place for biological sex and single-sex spaces, and making clear that safety and safeguarding for all children must always be

schools' primary concern."

Badenoch said: "This guidance is intended to give teachers and school leaders greater confidence when dealing with an issue that has been hijacked by activists misrepresenting the law."

The guidance says biological sex is fundamentally important when it comes to protecting safety and ensuring fairness in sports. This will almost always mean separate sports for boys girls, particularly in secondary school. If social transitioning is agreed, children, teachers or staff need not adopt preferred pronouns and there must be no sanction, verbal or otherwise, but bullying will not be tolerated.

Single-sex schools can refuse to admit pupils of the opposite sex, regardless of whether they are questioning their gender, but cannot turn away a pupil of the same biological sex who has adopted the opposite gender. The guidance says a child questioning their gender should be held to the same uniform standard as other children of their biological sex but schools can be flexible apart from with swimwear.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of Paul Willtellian, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "It would appear this guidance leaves a lot of questions unanswered, meaning school leaders will continue to be placed in an incredibly difficult position.

Stonewall, a charity that has advised many organisations on transgender matters, said of the guidance: "Not only is it legally unworkable and contrary to existing equality law and the government's own guidance on safeguarding

— it is actively dangerous."
What the advice means, pages 8-9 The guidance is right to insist parents are involved, leading article, page 25

# Prodigy, 8, crowned chess queen

Bodhana Sivanandan is destined for greatness after record-breaking game with grandmaster, reports Katie Gibbons

A British schoolgirl has made chess history and won the admiration of players worldwide by beating a master more than 30 years her senior at an international competition.

Eight-year-old Bodhana Sivanandan, from Harrow in northwest London, was crowned best woman player at the European rapid and blitz championship in Zagreb, Croatia, after winning 8.5/13 and coming 73rd in a round of 555 players.

Dominic Lawson, president of the English Chess Federation, said the performance at the speed chess event was "completely remarkable but not that surprising, because she is a phenomenon".

Bodhana does puzzles in chess magazines to help hone her skills.

In Zagreb she delivered an impressive 5/11 result with a 2056 performance in the rapid round, but her performance in the 13-round blitz is being hailed by fellow players as phenomenal.

Among the 555 players there were 48 grandmasters and 50 international masters. Bodhana beat her first international master, the England women's coach Lorin D'Costa, 39, in the penultimate round.

She then drew with the two-time Romanian champion grand master Vladislav Nevednichy, 54, in the final round, and in doing so became the youngest player to avoid defeat against a grandmaster in a competitive game.

"It's an extraordinary result for an eight-year-old and something we've certainly never seen in this country," Lawson said.

"She has a remarkably mature playing style, it's strategic and patient. She has what you might describe as long game." Bodhana,

started playing chess at the age of five



Bodhana Sivanandan drew with grandmaster Vladislav Nevednichy, below. Right, with Rishi Sunak and Shreyas Royal

during the coronavirus pan-demic, has spoken of her ambition to become a grandmaster and Eng-

land's youngest Olympic gold medallist, and eventually to win world title. This summer she

was invited to 10 Downing Street and played chess with Rishi Sunak, before the gov-ernment announced it was to invest £1 million in the game to increase the number of English grandmasters. In an interview with

## Champion children

Judit Polgar Aged seven, Polgar beat a master while playing blindfolded. Now 47, the Hungarian is one of the strongest female players of all time. She became a grandmaster aged 15 years and four months, beating Bobby Fischer's record.

**Bobby Fischer** Beat Boris Spassky of Russia to become world champion in 1972. In 1956, when he was 13,

Fischer had become the youngest player to win the United States Junior Championship. The next year he won the first of eight United States Championships, the youngest to do so. He died in 2008.

Rameshhahu Praggnanandhaa In February last year, aged 16, he became the youngest player to defeat the world champion at the time,

Magnus Carlsen. Praggnanandhaa, from India became an international master when he was ten, the youngest at the time to do so.

Tanitoluwa "Tani" Adewumi In 2021, aged ten, he became one of the youngest national masters in the history of US chess. Tani had fled Boko Haram in Nigeria and was granted asylum in America last year.

an Indian broadcaster, Bodhana said she started playing chess when she rescued a board that was going to be donated to charity.
"I got fascinated with the pieces and

I started taking them. I kept asking questions so my dad then taught me [how to play] using YouTube," she

Bodhana's spectacular performance has prompted comparisons with Judit Polgar, who as a nine-year-old Hunga-rian prodigy wowed audiences at the 1986 New York Open with 7.5/8. Bodhana became England's first

youth champion in 25 when she won the triple with titles in classical, rapid and blitz competitions

Following her latest win, many current and former champions and



chess experts seemed awestruck by Bodhana's performance. Irina Bulma-ga, 30, the Romanian international master and woman grandmaster who was also at the competition, said it was an "unbelievable result" by an eight-year-old girl. She added: "Winning the first prize among women ahead of me and a bunch of other experienced players! What a phenomenon she is!"

Lawrence Trent, the chess commentator and international master, wrote on Twitter/X: "Bodhana Sivanandan is one of the greatest talents I've witnessed in recent memory. The maturity of her play, her sublime touch, it's truly breathtaking. I have no doubt she will be England's greatest player and most likely one of the greatest the game has

On December 28 Bodhana will compete at the International Chess Congress in Hastings, East Sussex, along-side Shreyas Royal, another British child prodigy who is now 14. Bodhana is currently the world's third-highest rated player born in 2015 in classical chess. She is an ambassador for Chess-Kid, a site where children can learn to play the game.

# Lioness keeper Earps named Sports Personality of the Year

#### George Sandeman

Mary Earps, the England goalkeeper, has won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year after a public vote, beating Stuart Broad, the England cricketer, and the multi-event athlete Katarina Johnson-Thompson.

Earps, 30, had been favourite to win following her performances for the Lionesses, including their run to the World Cup final in the summer. She is the second successive Lioness to win the award after her team-mate Beth Mead took the 2022 award. Earps is also the third woman in a row to win.

She saved a penalty from Jenni Hermoso during the World Cup final in Sydney but England lost 1-0, failing to build on their Euros win last year. In September Earps was voted England women's player of the year and last season she helped her club, Manchester United, finish second in the Women's

Super League.
During the World Cup she spoke out about the hurt she felt when Nike decided not to sell replicas of her England jersey. When the company relented they sold out in five minutes.

"I'm very honoured and humbled For me this is the ultimate all-round sporting accolade," Earps said after winning the prize. "It's not been the easiest journey and I definitely wouldn't be here today without a number of incredible people so finally I just want to say thank you to them ... The last two years have been absolutely unbelievable."

Earps was the bookmakers' choice to win, ahead of Broad, Johnson-Thompson, the jockey Frankie Dettori, the wheelchair tennis player Alfie Hewett and the golfer Rory McIlroy.

Sir Kenny Dalglish, the former Liverpool and Scotland forward, received



reached the World Cup final

the lifetime achievement award at last night's ceremony in Salford. Dalglish, won nine league titles and three European Cups as a player and manager at Liverpool. "[This] is truly an honour," he said. "I have always believed in the importance of team success, and I wouldn't be where I am today without all of the players I've played with, the people I've worked for, and the supporters that stood

by me. Broad, 37, who came second in the main category, announced his retirement from cricket during the fifth Ashes Test this summer. He bowed out in spectacular fashion by hitting a six off his final ball and taking the final wicket in a match that tied the series. "When you make

that decision to move on from the game, you wonder what your last ball will be," Broad said afterwards. "So for it to be a wicket to win an Ashes Test match is pretty cool.

Johnson-Thompson, 30, who came third, claimed the world heptathlon title for the second time this summer. Her win in Budapest marked a triumphant comeback following a calf injury that wrecked her hopes of Olympic glory in 2021. Dettori, 53, claimed several big wins

in his farewell year as a jockey on the British horse racing circuit, including the 2000 Guineas and the Oaks. Hewett, 26, won seven wheelchair tennis singles tournaments in 2023. He also secured the doubles titles at the Australian and French Opens, plus Wimbledon with Gordon Reid. McIlroy, 34, was a key part of Europe's Ryder Cup-winning team.
Erling Haaland, the Norwegian

Manchester City striker, was named world sport star of the year and his club won team of the year. The former javelin world champion Fatima Whitbread was honoured with the Helen Rollason award, for outstanding achievement in the face of adversity

Hero made keepers cool, page 50

# News Iceland eruption





Residents in Grindavik watched the sky turn orange as the eruption began north of the town. The glow was seen from Keflavik, above, and the coastquard had an aerial view of the fissure, left. By daylight the eruption's closeness to Grindavik





# Volcano spews magma jets 300ft

#### Oliver Moody, Ben Clatworthy George Sandeman

A volcano in Iceland has erupted after weeks of intense seismic activity, wrenching open a two-mile crack in the Earth and belching out enough lava to fill an Olympic pool every 30 seconds

fill an Olympic pool every 30 seconds. The country's meteorological office said the eruption on Monday night began in the southwest of the island at Hagafell, on the Reykjanes Peninsula.

The scale and strength of the volcanic outflow were greater than scientists had expected. Overnight the fierce light from the volcano was easily visible from Reykjavik, the capital, 25 miles to the northeast.

Amid weeks of warnings about a build-up of seismic activity around Hagafell, the authorities had evacuated 3,800 people from Grindavik, a fishing town near by. On Sunday night more than 230 tremors were recorded near the town.

By yesterday the rate of lava flow had subsided as the long fissure began to consolidate into craters, but forecasters suggested that the eruption might continue at a lower level for ten days.

The University of Iceland's volcanology and natural hazards research unit said some of the magma jets had been up to 100m (330ft) high and the eruption had ejected between 100 and 200sq m of lava every second at its peak. That meant the lava was advancing at Ikm per hour. The volcano also released a plume of noxious sulphur dioxide gas about ten times larger than Iceland's other recent eruptions.

By last night the damage was still limited. The bulk of the lava had erupted some way from Grindavik and the police chief said no one was in danger.

However, experts said it was possible

that the impromptu anti-lava dams around the Svartsengi geothermal power plant, about two miles north of Crindayik could yet be tested

Grindavik, could yet be tested.
Keflavik airport, less than ten miles to the northwest, remained open as the wind carried the volcano's emissions to the east instead, where they may lead to some acid rain over the coming days. Some flights in and out were heavily delayed and a drone ban was in place.

The Foreign Office updated its travel advice, stating: "All roads to Grindavik are closed and you should stay away from the area. Keflavik International Airport is operating as normal, but you are divised to check for latest updates."

are advised to check for latest updates. "The capital city Reykjavik, and the rest of Iceland, has not been impacted. You should monitor local media for updates and follow the authorities' advice on travel to the area."

Jake Turner, a British developer,

posted a picture on Twitter/X in the early hours of yesterday showing the glow from the eruption on the horizon. He wrote: "I'm in Iceland now, the hotel called each room and said keep the windows closed because the volcano's erupted. A 757 from LHR just landed so I'm hoping my flight will be good."

Trackers showed that his 8am flight to Manchester from Keflavik departed only 13 minutes late. A flight to Manchester scheduled for 7.55pm on Monday was not able to take off until almost 1.30am yesterday, and a 7am flight to Athens was delayed until after midday yesterday, but almost all other flights were able to leave close to their scheduled departure time.

Inbound flights from the US and Canada that were due to land overnight were subject to long delays, some by more than six hours. Airline bosses had been planning for weeks for the erup-

tion although the risk of widespread disruption, like that in April 2010, was considered extremely minimal.

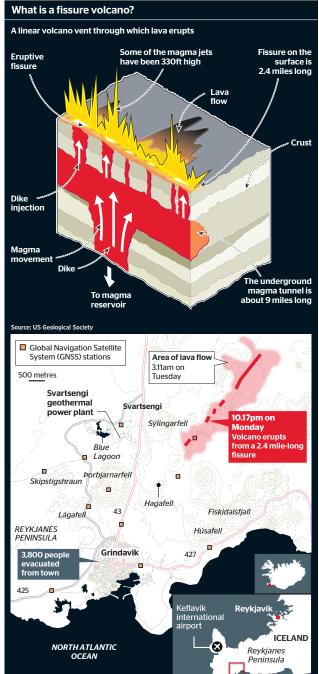
Einar Sveinbjornsson, a metereologist, told the *Morgunvakt* television news programme that the wind was expected to change direction and some pollution might reach Reykjavik.

"There's no question that people will notice it," he said. "Tomorrow [Wednesday] it will rain. Then the sulphur dioxide will react to form sulphuric acid. Maybe that's what people should worry about tomorrow."

The Blue Lagoon geothermal spa, a popular tourist destination a few miles north of Grindavik, was also closed. The spa had only just reopened after being shut for more than a month since November 9, when it was affected by more than 1,000 earthquakes in 24 hours. Local reports said some tourists fled the resort in taxis. The residents of











# into the air after weeks of waiting



#### Was there any warning of an eruption?

The volcanoes on the Reykjanes peninsula had been dormant for about 800 years but an eruption in 2021 saw them spring back to life. After three relatively safe eruptions since then, a fourth had been expected. The region has been experiencing an increase in earthquakes since October, prompting the evacuation of 4,000 people last month.

Residents had hoped to return home for Christmas but after a "swarm" of more than 1,000 tremors in a short time on Monday the eruption began.

# How did the eruption

A fissure opened up, running for about 2.4 miles. Magma emerged from 800 metres below the ground and spewed lava in giant fountains onto the surface at a rate of up to 200 cubic metres of melted rock a second, though the flow had fallen to a quarter of its initial rate by yesterday afternoon and the lava

fountains had fallen to less than 30m in height. No casualties were reported.

#### Why is Iceland so volcanically active?

Iceland lies on the boundary between the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates known as the mid-Atlantic ridge, which mostly lies on the ocean floor. The two continents are moving apart at about 2.5cm per year, causing earthquakes and eruptions. Iceland sits above a hotspot in the earth's mantle called the Iceland plume, which makes if one of the most

volcanically active places on earth, with 33 active volcano systems.

#### Will it affect flights or holidays?

Unlike the eruption of the Eviafiallajokull volcano in 2010, which grounded flights across Europe, this eruption is not expected to produce a large ash cloud. A small number of flights were affected with one to Manchester delayed by five hours but Icelandair said it was not expecting disruption. The country remains safe to visit, though people must stay away from the eruption site itself.

Grindavik were evacuated in the following days and have since only been allowed to return during daylight hours. They are not allowed to stay overnight or walk around the town. Before the eruption they had hoped the rules would be lifted in time for Christmas, according to The Guardian.

Solny Palsdottir, who lives in Grindavik, said she did not expect to return permanently to her home on a 50cm slant as a result of the earthquakes—for at least three months. She added: "Life in Iceland, it's a lot of questions. The hardest part is not knowing.

Iceland is home to 33 active volcano systems, the highest number in Europe The Reykjanes Peninsula had not experienced an eruption for eight centuries until 2021. Since then, three eruptions have struck - all in remote, uninhabited areas - and volcanologists say this could be the start of a new era of activity in the region.

David Rothery, professor of planet-ary geosciences at the Open University, said: "This is what has been anticipated for several weeks near Grindavik, thanks to the use of multiple monitoring techniques. It appears to be a classic fissure eruption. The seat of eruption will probably localise to a single vent within a few hours or days.

Robin Andrews, a volcanologist, told The Times that the gas pollution would be "mild to moderately unpleasant" for affected areas, but said it would not be "really severe issue"

He said that sulphur dioxide was a colourless but pungent gas that is kind of acrid [in your] nose and throat", adding: "It can cause some mild respiratory discomfort, but only in very high concentrations and if you have a preexisting condition like severe asthma."



# WFH transforms festive buying habits

Ben Clatworthy
Transport Correspondent
Andrew Ellson

Working from home has changed travel and shopping patterns, with employees using the week before Christmas to buy and wrap presents, and even do their big shop in work time.

After office parties and nights out with friends last week, the number of commuters has fallen sharply. The lull before Christmas will end on Friday when 3.2 million people jump in their cars and millions more board trains and aeroplanes for the Christmas getaway.

Retail figures suggest that the nation





Rail passenger numbers into London fell 12 per cent and Regent Street was quiet as working from home transformed people's habits in the run-up to Christmas

Wine & fizz for a poppin 1/3 off **EX2** 釵 **EKS** £18:50 **BKE** £28 £4.66 £8.50 £7.99 £11.99 £11.99 £18.50 ķ CHAMPAGNE hâteauneuf-du-Pape CHABLIS CHAMPAGNE *That's* more like it ASDA com If you want to buy alcohol you will need to prove your age. Challenge 25. No I.D. No sale. You pecial Louis Bernard Vintage Champagne 75cl awarded Vintage Champagne of Best Supermarket Champagne by Sood House Keeping Institute Taste Approved 2023. Delivery, collection and minimum basket charges may apply. Delivery/collection slots subject to availability. May exclude Asda Express stores and small stores – see ASDA.com/smallstores **25**  seems to be taking advantage of flexible working arrangements to do some last-minute Christmas shopping.

minute Christmas shopping.
Shops have been filling up, according to footfall figures published by MRI Software, a market research firm, with economists forecasting that £1.13 billion would be spent on presents yesterday.
MRI said the increase in high-street

MRI said the increase in high-street footfall had probably been influenced by the many festive markets and events taking place nationwide.

Jenni Matthews, the marketing and insights director at MRI, said: "Footfall across all retail destinations rose by 8.6 per cent on Monday from the previous week, signalling a strong start to the final trading week before Christmas Day."

Christmas Day.
"This suggests a promising week for the retail sector as we close out the golden quarter."

golden quarter."
Network Rail said there had been a
12 per cent fall in the number of
commuters travelling into London.
Traffic analysts at TomTom said that
rush-hour congestion fell by up to
21 per cent in London and Edinburgh.
The lull is to be followed by a surge in

The lull is to be followed by a surge in travel at the weekend. Rail operators say Saturday and Sunday will be the busiest days before Christmas, with another peak on Friday evening. Passengers are urged to reserve seats for peak services. After Christmas, December 27, 30 and January 2 were the most popular days for people heading home after visiting relatives.

after visiting relatives.

At airports, Friday is expected to be the busiest day. Gatwick said Geneva was the most popular short-haul destination with Dubai the favourite for long-haul.

Getaway traffic will rise from 2.2 million trips tomorrow to 3.2 million on Friday, the RAC said. Some 13.5 million leisure journeys by car are expected from Friday to Christmas Eve, up 20 per cent on the equivalent period last year.

cent on the equivalent period last year. This weekend, between 12pm and 2pm, is expected to be the busiest time on the roads. Drivers are advised to set out before Ilam or after 6pm to avoid jams. National Highways said it had removed more than 1,000 miles of roadworks on England's motorways and major A roads.

# 

#### Studio theme park plan

Universal Studios, which has theme parks in the US and the Far East, has revealed plans for its next attraction — in Bedford. It has acquired 480 acres of land that used to house a brickworks in the town, which is 50 miles north of London. If the plans proceed, Universal Studios Bedford would be larger than the 415 acres occupied by Universal Studios Hollywood.



# Scots earning £75,000 to pay more in income tax

#### Kieran Andrews, Greig Cameron

Hundreds of thousands of workers in Scotland will pay more income tax to prop up public services as Humza Yousaf, Scotland's first minister, was warned his "chaotic" budget would leave businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

In tax-raising measures described as a triple blow for middle and higher earners, Shona Robison, the deputy first minister, targeted those with the "broadest shoulders" as part of moves to plug a £1.5 billion hole in finances.

However, her actions were criticised by business leaders, who said that SNP ministers were increasingly singling out the country's top talent for tax rises.

Liz Cameron, chief executive of Scottish Chambers of Commerce, raised concerns about the budget "deterring potential talent from thinking about living and working in Scotland"

living and working in Scotland".

She said: "The introduction of a new tax band for higher-earning employees is a blow to Scotland's attractiveness and places the personal tax system at a further competitive disadvantage compared to the rest of the UK. At a time when industry is dealing with a tightening labour market supply and skills shortages, further tax divergence

will impact our ability to attract and retain the talent that business needs."

Robison introduced a new tax band, Scotland's sixth compared with three in England, affecting 114,000 workers earning between £75,000 and £125,000. The 40,000 Scots who earn more than that will pay an extra penny per pound beyond £125,140, at a rate of 48p. Robison froze the 42 per cent rate at £43,662.

She said that Holyrood's block grant funding, derived from UK government spending decisions, had fallen by 1.2 per cent in real terms since 2022-23. "Devolution has brought many benefits, but it has also exposed quite how beholden we are to the decisions of Westminster," she told MSPs. "We are fighting Westminster austerity with one hand tied behind our back."

Alister Jack, the Scottish secretary, said the budget would deter business investment. "The Scottish government has a record block grant yet wastes hundreds of millions of pounds," he said.

"It needs to take responsibility for its spending choices and the resultant self-inflicted budget black hole, rather than blaming the UK government and penalising Scottish taxpayers."

# British Museum seals £50m BP deal

Deputy chairwoman resigns amid fears that sponsorship will make site a target for activists, **David Sanderson** writes

The British Museum has lost its deputy chairwoman and fears it is at higher risk of attack after doubling down on its relationship with the fossil fuel industry by striking a £50 million sponsorship deal with BP.

The museum's board has surprised the country's cultural community by signing a ten-year deal with BP, which has in recent years been shunned by almost all of Britain's artistic organisations.

artistic organisations.

It has emerged that trustees took the decision in June last year at a meeting in which they agreed to "operate as a united board" despite personal disagreements. George Osborne, the chairman, withdrew after declaring a conflict of interest.

The minutes of the meeting record that "it was unanimously agreed that accepting the sponsorship was on balance in the best interests of the museum and the protection, display and use of its collection".

Muriel Gray resigned her post at the meeting in November immediately before the trustees discussed how to make public the BP deal.

Gray, who had been a trustee for

Gray, who had been a trustee for seven years, did not respond to requests for comment. The minutes record her as saying she made a personal decision to submit her resignation to the government.

A fellow trustee, Dame Mary Beard, said last night that she was against the sponsorship. She wrote by email: "I only have this to say. I accepted as a board member the view of the majority of the trustees (who I know looked long and hard at this). But it was not my view and speaking personally this would not have been my decision."

Trustees were warned about the increased risk of damage to the museum's collection of priceless objects from protesters angered by the sponsorship deal. There were also concerns about the "personal safety of staff and trustees".

BP and other oil and gas companies have been increasingly shunned by Britain's cultural sector in recent years despite a decline in state funding. The National Portrait

Gallery, Royal Shakespeare Company and Tate are among those that have been cutting ties.

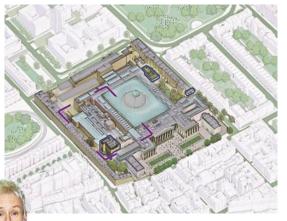
Chris Garrard, codirector of the pressure group Culture Unstained, said that it was an "astonishingly out of touch and completely indefensible

He said: "It comes just days after delegates at Cop28 agreed that the world must transition away from fossil fuels. We believe this decision is illegitimate and in breach of the museum's own climate commitments and sectorwide codes and will be seeking legal advice in order to mount a formal challenge to it."

The British Museum's master plan, which is expected to cost more than £l billion, involves significant refurbishment, a new energy



Green activists protested but the museum says the deal will fund restoration plans, below. Muriel Gray, below left, quit as deputy chairwoman before the news broke





centre and archaeological research unit, as well as a revamp of many of its galleries.

The museum said that the "urgent need of renovation" of the grade I listed building made it necessary for trustees to seek "funding on this scale". Sir Charlie Mayfield, a

Sir Charlie Mayfield, a trustee and chairman of the museum's master plan committee, said they were grateful to BP. He added that next year the museum would "begin the process of completely overhauling our outdated energy infrastructure and replacing it with state of the art facilities that will dramatically reduce our carbon footprint".

BP added: "As a business that

BP added: "As a business that has made Britain its home for over a century, we are proud to be a long-term partner to this important British institution and play our part in its future transformation — while helping to ensure that this iconic cultural venue remains freely accessible to all."

Museum deserves applause, leading article, page 25

# Accepting oil money was a risk worth taking

## Richard Morrison Comment

f you are a security guard who likes to keep busy, I suggest you head straight to the British Museum.
After this shock news, the galleries and gates of that Bloomsbury institution will surely need a lot more protecting, at least for the

next ten years.
That's the length of the £50 million sponsorship deal announced between the museum and BP. The oil giant used to be the biggest corporate sponsor of several top British arts organisations, including the Royal Shakespeare Company and Royal Opera House. One by one

they all dropped BP as pressure from anti-oil

campaigners mounted.
Indeed, the campaign to force the arts world to cut links with the fossil-fuel industry has reached such a peak that even getting sponsorship from finance houses with minor investments in oil companies is seen in some quarters as reprehensible.

This was evident last summer when Greta Thunberg and 100 authors threatened a boycott of the Edinburgh Book Festival if it continued accepting money from the finance company Baillie Gifford, which had 2 per cent of its investments in oil-related industries.

So the decision by George Osborne, the museum's chairman, to accept £50 million from BP — the No 1 target on the Just Stop Oil hitlist will be inflammatory. In the past, anti-oil activists have infiltrated London's top museums and galleries to stage stunts. Their reaction to a deal of this size is super to be appry

size is sure to be angry.
So why has the museum done it? The grand plan to revitalise its venerable galleries and decaying infrastructure, mooted a decade ago, has not yet left the drawing board.
The cost is likely to top £1 billion and the government won't foot the bill, so BP made an offer the museum couldn't refuse. This £50 million will cover only a fraction of the cost, but the deal is psychologically important. It sends a message to other corporate sponsors that, however sniffy people get about the British Museum accepting "tainted" money, it is open for business. That approach deserves more support

than one suspects it will get. The spectacle of actors and authors jetting between festivals then demanding that arts organisations divest themselves of fossil-fuel company sponsors is as hypocritical as it is impractical. Their protests won't change whether the world reaches its targets on carbon emissions. But it will bankrupt the arts and museum worlds, which are perilously short of funds and struggling to recapture their audiences after the pandemic.

after the pandemic.
That said, I don't envy
the task awaiting the (yet
to be appointed) new
director of the British
Museum. As if dealing
with the Elgin Marbles
controversy and the
fallout from the mass theft
of 2,000 objects were not
enough, the likelihood of
weekly protests could
require the imposition of
security measures more
appropriate to a military
base than a museum.

# What trans advice means for

Schools finally have official guidelines on how to handle pupils' gender identity, writes **Steven Swinford** 

After months of delay and infighting, the government has finally published its guidance for schools on how to deal with children who wish to change their gender identity.

gender identity.

The 19-page document will be the subject of intense debate in coming months as the government consults on the proposals.

## **Informing parents**

Schools should not "proactively initiate" social transitioning — the process under which children change pronouns, name and uniform — and should only take action if it is "explicitly requested" by the child. If children are not asking to change gender, teachers do not have to inform parents automatically. If the child asks to change their gender identity, parents should be informed, with exceptions for the "very rare situation" involving safeguarding issues. Parents' views should carry "great weight" and their consent will be required in the vast majority of cases.

# Social media pressure and 'watchful waiting'

Schools have been told to consider the "seriousness and context" of requests by children, specifically whether the child has been "influenced by peers or social media". Teachers should also consider whether children feel pressured to change their gender identity because they "simply do not align with stereotypes associated with their sex".



The advice highlights laws saying single-sex spaces must be protected

Other factors that must be taken into account include whether the child's sexual orientation is an issue, amid suggestions that young lesbians have felt pressured into identifying as males. The guidance recommends a period of "watchful waiting" to ensure that any request to change gender identity is "sustained and properly thought through". It says this will help to avoid "unnecessary action".

## Names and pronouns

Schools are cautioned against allowing children to change their pronouns and should only do so if "the benefit to the individual child outweighs the impact on the school community".

The guidance says there will be "very few" occasions where children are allowed to change their pronouns, and even then is explicit that teachers can continue to collectively refer to children as boys and girls. Teachers and other pupils should not be

compelled to use preferred pronouns other than in exceptional cases where there are safeguarding issues. They should only do so once all other options have been exhausted, such as using a child's name instead of their preferred pronoun. Children will be able to informally change their name in consultation with schools and parents, but schools will be expected to register their legal name and sex on the admissions register.

# Lavatories and changing rooms

The guidance highlights existing legislation stating that schools must always protect single-sex spaces. Pupils who are changing their gender identity should be barred from using facilities that are designated to the opposite sex. In the event they experience "distress" when they use facilities, "alternative arrangements" should be found, such as allowing children to use lavatories that can only be used by one child at a time and can be locked from the inside. Boarding schools should ensure that no child is required to share a room with a child of the opposite sex.

#### Uniform

Children who want to change their gender identity should in general wear the same uniform as other children of their biological sex at school, the guidance states. It highlights the fact that many schools now have a unisex uniform which could provide an alternative. Schools should not be expected to "develop new uniform policies" to accommodate children who wish to wear the uniform of the opposite sex.

#### PE and sport

Schools must not allow biological boys to compete against biological girls if it poses a threat to their safety, and vice versa. "There can be no exception to this," the guidance states. "Boys constitute more of a risk to girls because they are generally stronger, larger and heavier than girls." In sports where safety is not an issue, schools and colleges must ensure that competitive sports are fair

## Single-sex schools

The guidance is clear that under the Equality Act single-sex schools can refuse to admit pupils on the basis of their biological sex, even if they are questioning their gender identity. However, it says the legislation also states that schools are entitled to admit children of the opposite sex if the decision is exceptional. It says that if the admissions are "comparatively small and limited" schools can retain their single-sex status.

## **Primary schools**

Ministers had wanted to ban primary school children from changing their gender outright, but were unable to do so because of the constraints of the law. Instead the guidance says that requests from younger children in primary schools should be "treated with greater caution". It says that they are more vulnerable because "they are less able to articulate their feelings and will have a less mature understanding of complicated issues". It states that primary school children "should not have different pronouns".

Transgender guidance for schools is welcome, leading article, page 25



# This humane guidance is calm and pragmatic

## Janice Turner Comment

his document is no culture wars battle cry. Stonewall will scream transphobia, Tory headbangers will say it hasn't gone far enough. But what underpins this 19-page guidance is caution, pragmatism and calm moderation.

It begins with a categoric statement of first principles: that biological sex exists materially and legally, and schools have statutory obligations to recognise it. Anyone doubting that this was needed should look up "trans toolkits", widely disseminated over the past decade by groups such as Gendered Intelligence. These state that any male child who feels "more comfortable" in female changing rooms must be accommodated, while any girl who objects must undress elsewhere alone.

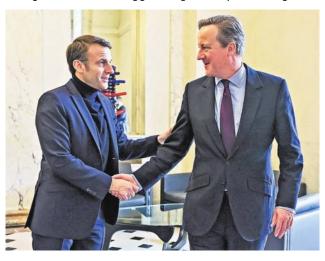
Such advice, in breach of the 2010 Equality Act, is now blown away. Instead the government clarifies that biological sex is fundamental to "safety and safeguarding for all children" in terms of lavatories and changing facilities but also specifically for girls being granted safe and fair sports.

specifically for girls being granted safe and fair sports.

It is uncompromising too in rejecting highly disputed terms: instead of "trans child" it speaks of "gender questioning" children. Yet the advice on how to deal with such vulnerable pupils is humane. The underlying principle is that parents must be told if their child socially transitions since this is "not a neutral act" but a pathway to medical interventions. A teacher can still have any number of general conversations about gender or sexuality in confidence. A child who is allowed to socially transition should be treated sensitively: allowed to use a gender-neutral cubicle, if they prefer, and adapt school codes. They should always be



Kemi Badenoch, the minister for women and equalities, helped to write the 19-page guidance on gender identity for schools. Michael Gove outlined plans to speed up housebuilding, while Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton met President Macron in Paris, below. One pundit suggested that Macron's grip made their meeting look more like a wedding guest being collared by the hired magician



called by a new preferred name (as is the case for any child), even if not their preferred pronouns.
The objective is to slow the

crystallisation of a "trans identity" and the rush to a gender clinic. The guidance talks of "watchful waiting", acknowledging that children may come under peer or social media pressure to transition or be driven by stereotypes about how girls and boys should act or dress. The document also urges caution about parents who insist a primary age child is trans.

It acknowledges that in keeping outcomes open, 80 per cent of gender dysphoric children come to terms with their sexed bodies after puberty. A ban on social transition, as backed by the Tory MP Miriam Cates, would simply cause alienated teenagers to dig in their heels.

Teachers asked for this guidance

and although many already operated along similar lines, it will be useful for those who have felt bullied into adopting extreme policies by a trans activist parent or staff member.

Crucially, no teacher can be sued or sacked for "misgendering" and schools will not be able to rip out single-sex lavatories for gender neutral facilities without consulting parents.

This is a significant push-back against institutional capture of education, yet I'd bet most teachers will be surprised by its moderate terms. Activists will throw around hyperbolic claims that it's worse than Section 28 but Labour will quietly keep it in place.

In spelling out the unfairness and safeguarding risks that underpin gender ideology, its impact will reach far beyond the school gates

# every child Labour vows to demolish Tories' planning reforms

Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Labour has warned local councils that it will unpick Michael Gove's planning reforms on "day one" of a future govern-ment, claiming that they undermine efforts to tackle Britain's housing crisis.

The housing secretary insisted yesterday that his planning reforms would increase the supply of new homes and pledged to name councils that failed to hit their building targets. Councils that try to "game the system" by delaying or rejecting legitimate applications could lose their powers over planning altogether, he said.

Critics said the reforms amounted to a dilution of existing rules and would let councils set new targets well below their projected housing need.

Last night Labour said that it would start reversing the changes to the national planning framework immediately after any election victory. The party warned local authorities that it would not let them use Gove's reforms to reduce their housebuilding targets.

We will ensure that we have a system in place that meets the country's housing needs in full," a Labour source said. "Fewer houses means people who want and need homes will miss out and economic growth will suffer."

Gove said in a speech to the Royal Institute of British Architects that he would give new powers to local authorities to reject development if it would significantly alter the character of an area or impinge upon existing greenbelt land. He denied giving in to Tory backbenchers who want to appease local opponents of housebuilding.

"There are perfectly reasonable reasons to resist development if it dramatically changes the character of an area ... [or] harms the environment," Gove said. "It's only right that local people can have the chance through the planning system to safeguard the environment and protect the character of the places in which they live."

He said all local councils should come forward with realistic housing plans within three months then deliver upon them. Those that failed to do so could have plans imposed upon them or be stripped of powers.

Gove also announced a review of socalled green tape that can hold up applications and push up costs. At present councils must consult organisations including the Environment Agency and Natural England before approving big developments.

Gove said the changes would allow

What are the main changes proposed by the government and what effect are they likely to have?

## Local plans for local

Councils will have three months to adopt a local plan identifying land that can be developed to meet the future housing needs of their area. If they fail to do so then housebuilders can apply to develop any land within a council's boundaries and there will be a presumption in favour of allowing the development to go ahead

But there are other changes to government policy which critics say would allow councils dramatically to reduce the number of homes they have to build.

The first is that councils would no longer have to follow a standard process to assess their local housing needs and determine how many homes they need to build. Instead they will be able argue that the unique characteristics of their area mean that they are unable to build all the homes necessary to meet future demand.

So, for example, a suburban council could

decide that it would not allow blocks of flats to be built because they would be "wholly out of character with the area"

Another change is that although councils will need to have local plans in place to cover a five-year supply of land for building, they will not have to keep these plans continually

#### . undated Nimby rating: 3/5 The fear is that local councils will be able to

put forward local plans that in no way meet their future housing needs by arguing that their unique circumstances make this impossible. Much will depend on the extent of the powers that ministers give the planning inspectorate to scrutinise or reject local plans that are not ambitious enough. This guidance has yet to be published.

The new planning framework makes it explicit that local councils are not required to review or alter their greenbelt boundaries in order to build enough homes to meet their future housing needs, Local authorities would still have the ability to review and alter those boundaries, but would have to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances existed.

Nimby rating: 4/5

Critics point out that despite not all the green belt being green, the planning system has made it prohibitively difficult to build homes in areas where demand is the greatest around Britain's big cities. The latest changes make developing homes on the green belt even

## New sanctions for local

authorities Councils will have to make a decision on developments within a 12-week timeframe and will no longer be able to simply put controversial applications on ice. They will also be expected to approve all applications that meet the requirements set out in their local plan. Failure to do so could result in their planning powers being taken away from them and handed to the planning inspectorate.

Nimby rating: 1/5 Gove believes one of the main impediments to building are the delays and uncertainties in the planning process, which pushes up costs for developers and ultimately home buyers. This is designed to remove these problems. However much will depend on whether the government chooses to exercise its new powers and how long it takes them to do so.

the government to hit its target of building 300,000 new homes a year when interest rates returned to more typical levels.

However, Kate Henderson, chief executive of the National Housing Federation, said: "These changes, which effectively relax local housing targets, will result in fewer homes, and measures to get councils building and approving applications, whilst positive, won't be enough to offset this risk,"

Darren Rodwell of the Local Gov-

ernment Association said: "We are pleased government has confirmed that housing targets will become an advisory starting point which will take into account local circumstances. Gove's policy has good points but puts party first, leading article, page 25

# Gove hopes Mone will face charges

#### Tom Witherow

Michael Gove said he hoped to see a criminal case brought against Baroness Mone over her role in winning more than £200 million of PPE contracts.

The former chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, whose department oversaw pandemic procurement, is co-operating with a National Crime Agency (NCA) investigation into deals struck by PPE Medpro, the company set up by Mone's husband, Doug Barrowman, to supply masks in 2020.

Mone, 52, and Barrowman, 58, are being investigated by the NCA over allegations of conspiracy to defraud, fraud by false representation, and bribery, which they deny. They are also defending a civil action by the Department of Health to claw back £134 million for gowns that were never used.

The lingerie tycoon has faced a political backlash after admitting that she lied when she repeatedly denied benefiting from £60 million in profits placed into trusts by Barrowman but she claimed that "they all knew" about her involvement with PPE Medpro.

Asked about her claims yesterday, Gove said: "There is a National Crime Agency inquiry going on. I've co-operated because I want to ensure that it that because I want to ensure that it reaches its conclusion quickly, [and] that justice can be served." He added: "I hope that inquiry results in a case being

The senior Tory, who is now level-ling-up and housing secretary, was dragged into the row when Mone claimed that Gove responded to her of-fer to sell PPE to the government by saying "oh my goodness, this is amazing". Mone said that ministers and officials knew about her "involvement from the very beginning", but she has not yet confirmed publicly that she declared that Barrowman was the man behind PPE Medpro, or that she stood to benefit financially.

However, she told the BBC on Sunday: "I don't honestly see there's a case to answer. I can't see what we've done wrong," adding that lying to newspapers was "not a crime". Criminal investigators are expected

to consider what information was provided to government officials.

Mone has been on leave from the House of Lords since last December. She faces an investigation by the Lords commissioners for standards into alleged breaches of the code of conduct, which has paused pending an NCA decision, expected next year

Mone scandal and PPE, letters, page 24

# Rwanda will set limit for migrants

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

The flow of migrants deported to Rwanda will be limited by the country's accommodation capacity, the home secretary said, as Rishi Sunak admitted that there was no deadline for meeting his pledge to "stop the boats".

James Cleverly insisted that there was no "inherent upper limit" to the number of asylum seekers who would be sent to the African country. However, he told the House of Lords international agreements committee that the "initial tranche" would be determined by what was "manageable to the Rwandans'

Sunak had earlier refused to tell MPs when he hoped to stop migrants crossing the Channel in small boats, one of five priorities he set out at the start of the year. "We have made progress and that is that the numbers this year are down by a third," the prime minister told the Commons liaison committee.

'There isn't a firm date on this because I've always been clear from the beginning, we will keep going until we do [stop the boats]. This isn't one of these things when there's a precise date estimate on it. This is something where before I took this job they had only ever gone up; now they're down by a third.

Sunak refused to guarantee that the Home Office would meet his goal of clearing a "legacy" backlog of 92,000 asylum claims by the end of this year, saying only that the government "remains on track to do it". The backlog accounts for claims

made before June 28 last year and had been cut by the end of last month from 92,000 to 18,366.

The prime minister did not set a date for when the overall asylum backlog of 109,442 applications would be cleared.

He also dodged questions on wheth-er the Home Office had found an airline willing to operate the Rwanda de-portation scheme. The Sunday Times reported that airlines had refused to sign contracts for reputational reasons. Cleverly pointed out that the Rwan-

da scheme would not stop the boats overnight and said it was part of a "multi-strand" approach. He said the scheme was uncapped but accepted that the number of people sent to Rwanda would be determined by its capacity to house them.

The Rwandan government has said it has contracts with hotels. Migrants would be offered permanent homes once their claims had been processed, Rwanda said, claiming to have unlimited capacity over the five-year deal.

Cleverly, asked about the Rwandan capacity, told peers: "We will make sure that the initial tranche is a figure which is manageable to the Rwandans, but there is no upper limit." Tetchy Rishi has a new persona: the arrogant nerd

**Tom Peck** Political Sketch



he liaison committee is what counts for pre Christmas fun in the Palace of Westminster. There is no mulled wine. No one gets to bring in board games from home. Instead, as is always now the way, the prime minister faces an hour and a half of questions from all of the chairmen and women of the various backbench select committees.

One year, maybe, they might be forced to wear Santa hats or Christmas jumpers, which would help rein in the self-regarding Jeremy Paxman impressions. If, for example, you want to glower at the prime minister of the United Kingdom and directly blame him for what's going on in Gaza, then it would be a marked improvement if you had to do it while rocking a pair of light-up antlers, which they definitely still would.

Sunak, for his part, has been increasingly tetchy in recent months (though he prefers the word passionate) and he now appears to have realised that his regular public bouts of tetchiness are not doing him any favours

From the moment he swept in at 1pm, it was clear to see that he's been working on a new character. Tetchy Rishi is dead. Long live arrogant nerd Rishi. He doesn't get annoyed with you anymore, he just smiles and looks down at you instead, like



the first teenage boy at Dungeons and Dragons club to get an actual girlfriend. He doesn't get tetchy when, for example, Labour's Diana Johnson wants to know on what date, exactly, he's going to "stop the boats". He just tells her "crossings are down, actually" and if you can't understand that then don't expect me to help you.

How, she wondered, can he know that the Rwanda policy will work as a deterrent, when there's no evidence it ever possibly can? "Actually, there is evidence that deterrents work," he told her, eyebrows raised, grin fixed. "We have a returns agreement with Albania,

and that has meant fewer people arriving. That is a deterrent working.'

He looked his interlocutor straight in the eye, cocked a half-smile and gently closed his ring binder. Game, set and match. But then a flash of panic seemed to appear behind his eyeballs. It appeared to be saying:
"Why have I just closed my
folder entirely for dramatic
effect, when there is still an
hour of this to go?" Without looking down or even breaking eye contact, and with all the skill of a misdirecting magician, he gently opened it again.

He's a mysterious man to watch, Sunak. Within the next year, it seems

overwhelmingly likely that the voters are going to knock him spark out. Yet in the meantime, MPs are finding it increasingly hard to lay a glove on him. He knows the details, he understands things and, like a late-term Tony Blair, he can't really be bothered to dance the political dance.

When the foreign affairs committee chairwoman, Alicia Kearns, wanted to know why, for example, he hadn't managed to persuade Israel to act with "more restraint", he simply replied: "I am not the one making operational decisions on the ground."

Labour's Liam Byrne wanted to know why wealth inequality had got so much

worse. Sunak had the numbers to say that actually it had got much better. Why weren't rich people paying more tax on their capital gains? Well, Rishi told him, the rules on that stuff were put in place 15 years ago, when someone called Liam Byrne was working in the Treasury "You've changed your mind have you?" he said, laughing. "It wasn't morally wrong then, but it is now?" Byrne looked crestfallen, despite fundamentally being in the right, which is not easy to achieve.

With every passing day, Sunak is growing into his job but the trouble is, there iust aren't that many passing days left.

# PM faces by-election after Bone ousted

Aubrey Allegretti

Chief Political Correspondent

Rishi Sunak is facing another potentially painful by-election after voters in Peter Bone's constituency of Welling-borough voted by recall petition for him to lose his seat.

The process was triggered when Bone, an independent MP who lost the Conservative whip this year, was suspended from the Commons.

He was found by parliament's independent expert panel in October to have bullied and indecently exposed himself to a staff member in his twen-

ties. He denies any wrongdoing. Bone was suspended for six weeks, far above the ten-day threshold that automatically triggers a recall petition. He

has since returned to parliament, and was present for the crunch vote on Sunak's Rwanda legislation.

As more than 10 per cent of the constituency's voters signed the petition -7,904 people, or 13.2 per cent — a



Peter Bone was found to have bullied and exposed himself to a staff member

by-election is now triggered. Bone, a former deputy leader of the Commons, will formally lose his role as an MP but is free to stand in the by-election, for which the government is vet to set a date. Bone is a veteran figure in Westminster, having been MP for the Northamptonshire seat since 2005. He was a prominent campaigner for Brexit during the EU referendum and won Wellingborough in 2019 with a majority of 19,000.

However, Labour and the Liberal Democrats have overturned bigger majorities in by-elections over the past year, meaning that what should be a safe Tory seat will be fought keenly.

Bone, 71, said after the result of the recall petition was announced that it "came about as a result of an inquiry into alleged bullying and misconduct toan ex-employee which was alleged to have occurred more than ten years ago. These allegations are totally untrue and without foundation".

# I'm lucky to be alive, says MP after sepsis operation

Geraldine Scott Senior Political Correspondent

A Conservative MP has revealed that he had "extreme" surgery and considers himself lucky to be alive after contracting sepsis.

Craig Mackinlay was placed in an induced coma in September after organ failures.

In a message to his constituents in South Thanet yesterday he said he was on the "road to recovery", which had included "some extreme surgery". He added: "Treatment by the NHS has been exemplary and I'm extremely lucky to be alive. I can't thank my doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals enough.

Mackinlay, 57, first spoke about his ordeal on Twitter/X in October, a month after being taken to hospital.

Rishi Sunak and opposition MPs were among those to send good wishes.

Sepsis is life-threatening and occurs when the immune system overreacts to infection and damages the body

Craig Mackinlay, 57, was placed in an induced coma

# British businessman, 78, 'kidnapped' in Ecuador

Stephen Gibbs

Latin America Correspondent

A British businessman was apparently abducted from his home on Saturday by several armed gunmen who stormed the rural estate to the north

of the city of Guayaquil.
Colin Armstrong was
driven away in his own
BMW, which was later found abandoned.

Ecuadorean media reported that a Colombian woman, believed to be Arm-strong's partner and named locally as Kath-erine Paola Santos, was also kidnapped. There are unconfirmed reports she has since been released. Her social media accounts have been closed in recent days.

One report said that a group of up to 15 assailants, wearing police uniforms gained entry by overpowering security guards at the perimeter of Armstrong's known property, Rancho Rodeo le. Ecuadorean Rodeo Grande. police said they are con-

tinuing to investigate.

A video published
on social media, apparently from Armstrong's home, showed signs of forced entry, along with traces of blood and ransacked rooms.

Armstrong founded Agripac,

an agricultural and industrial supplies business in Ecuador that last year celebrated its 50th anniversary. His daughter, who is based in California, has appealed for information on his disap-

rance. Diana Armstrong-Bruns told the Daily Mail: pearance. 'This is a critical time, we've been told not to say anything to anyone. We just want my father back."

Armstrong is also the owner of the Tupgill Park Estate, in North Yorkshire, which was his childhood home. The 78-year-old was appointed OBE and CMG in 2011. He was honorary consul in Guayaquil for several

A spokesman for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said: "We are in contact with the authorities following the disappearance of a British man and are supporting his family."

years and retired in 2016.

Guayaquil, second largest city, is at the-centre of a surge in violence in the country over the past three years. About a third of violent deaths this year were in the city. A battle between cartels for control of drug exports from Guayaquil port is believed to be one reason why crime has spiralled. Kidnapping for ransom has become commonplace.

Ministry of the Interior reported that 11 criminal gangs are operating in 21 of the country's 24 provinces. The gangs fund themselves through extortion, kidnap-

ping and theft.

Ecuador's crime rate came to global attention this year during a presidential campaign in which eight politicians were killed, including candidate for the presidency, Fernando Villavicencio.



# Colin Armstrong's partner, Katherine Paola Santos, was reportedly taken too

This year the Ecuadorean Dead tricky puzzle book tops the festive sales chart

David Sanderson Arts Correspondent

A book of murder mystery puzzles, described as a cross between Cluedo and Wordle, has knocked Richard Osman from the top of the Christmas bestsellers' chart.

Murdle, a puzzle book "for armchair detectives everywhere" is top of the last book chart to be published before Christmas. The book of logic puzzles created by GT Karber, an American "whodunnit enthusiast", has sold more than 200,000 copies in Britain since it was published in Ĵune. Over a quarter of them were bought in the week ending December 16.

The book has 100 murder mystery puzzles that ask readers to use codes and maps to complete a grid to work out who the killers are, as well as how and why they did it.

MURDLE

G.T. KARBER

The sales spurt took it to the top of Nielsen BookScan's chart, above the annual bestseller, Guinness World Records and even Osman's latest novel, The Last Devil To Die, which was published in September.

The fourth bestselling book was the fifth volume in Alice Oseman's Heartstopper series, followed by the cookbook Pinch of Nom: Express, the Private Eve Annual and Rory

Stewart's Politics on the Edge. The dominance of the popular market by a hand-ful of writers and titles is illustrated by the previous winners of the Christmas bestseller title which include Guinness's record book last year, another Pinch of Nom book in 2021 and, in 2020,

Osman's The Thursday Murder Club.
David Walliams won in 2016, 2017
and 2019 with Michelle Obama's
Becoming triumphing in 2018.

Philip Stone, an analyst at Nielsen said: "Murdle has been a consistent top ten bestseller since it was published this

"However, its sales have really ramped up in recent weeks. It sold 5,300 copies in the week ending November 4 but sold almost ten times that figure in the UK last week.

Stone said crime and puzzles were

obvious routes to success. Crime pays in the UK book market. £125 million has been spent on crime novels in the UK in 2023, and another £5 million has been spent on true crime non-fiction books," Stone said.

"Brits also love a good puzzle book and, helped by the success of Murdle, sales of puzzle books in the UK this year are the highest since 2005, when Sudoku books were all the rage.



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THIS IS NOT JUST FOOD -



# Seal spared from death on the rocks

ith only its head above the sand, the seal pup could easily have been mistaken for a rock or some flotsam (Will Humphries writes). But thanks to an observant photographer the small animal, which was buried up to its neck

in the sand between sea defence boulders, was saved.

Three people worked to rescue the grey seal pup wedged among rocks at Waxham, on the northeast Norfolk coast, at high tide. When the tide went out the pup was trapped. It could have drowned at the next high tide. It was



The grey seal pup was found buried up to its neck in sand between the sea defence boulders along the Norfolk coast. It could have drowned at the next high tide

spotted by a photographer walking along the seafront on Friday afternoon, who contacted the Friends of Horsey Seals charity. Sally Butler, part of

the rescue team, said: "It was quite shocking. Fortunately I have a little spade on my truck so we managed to dig it out a little bit and then managed to pull it out of the sand." She said it was lucky that the alarm had been raised in daylight and was thankful that the team freed the pup before the tide came in.

Butler said the sea defences did a "really good job" at protecting the cliffs but said that 13 pups had to be rescued from them last year.

"When you get high tides and big concrete sea defences, these pups have nowhere to go," she said. The Environment Agency said it worked with ecological advisers when designing assets such as sea defences. "We are regularly reviewing how to reduce flood risk to communities while still protecting wildlife," it added.

The rescued pup is no longer dependent on his mother as he is a good size, Butler said, but he must remain on land for a few weeks until he moults his pup fur and gets a waterproof coat.

gets a waterproof coat. So far this year about 3,400 seal pups have been born in the fivemile stretch between Waxham and Winterton, the group said.

As a result of high tides and strong winds last month, the group has found pups "washed up and down the coast" during the pupping season.

Butler said it was vitally important that members of the public did not try to rescue seals or put them back into the sea but that they should instead contact the charity.

# Busy mountain rescuers fear burnout

Will Humphries Countryside Correspondent

Britain's busiest mountain rescue team has said that its volunteers are at risk of "burnout" after responding to a record number of emergency call-outs.

Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team, which assists those in need in the Welsh mountains around Snowdonia, also known as Eryri, said that callouts soared to more than 300 in 2023. In 2008 they responded to about 100.

Many are for incidents on Snowdon, or Yr Wyddfa, which has more than half a million visitors each year. Since the beginning of February the team of 56 volunteers has had a rescue every weekend except one. On 25 weekends

they were called out on both the Saturday and Sunday. They attended their 300th call on December 2, when they rescued a hill walker on Snowdon.

The charity, which like other UK mountain rescue teams is made up entirely of unpaid volunteers, said: "An increase in the number of attendances is now placing huge pressure on the volunteers ... Team members are increasingly being asked to attend several incidents a day, leading to fatigue and the risk of volunteer burnout."

Richard Griffiths, the team chairman, said: "We are hugely lucky that our volunteers are willing to go out at any time of day to rescue [those] whose day has gone wrong. Our average member attends around 40 call-outs



Volunteers faced a record number of incidents on Snowdonia's mountains

per year. The impact on them and their families cannot be understated ... There is a real risk that the service becomes overloaded and we are not able to respond to those in need quickly."

Griffiths said that 56 operational team members had done more than 8,000 hours of rescue work so far this year. "As a group of volunteers we are nearing the limit of what we can do to support those in need in the mountains. In the coming years we will be looking to continue our work with other stakeholders to reduce the number of mountain incidents on Yr Wyddfa and to build our capacity to respond to this increasing demand.

"In the meantime, we continue to encourage walkers and climbers to prepare adequately ... by following the key messages from Adventure Smart UK [a campaign aiming to reduce the number of avoidable incidents]."

The rising number of call-outs also increases the frequency of traumatic, complex and dangerous incidents attended by team members, which impacts on the wellbeing of the team's volunteers, who said balancing this commitment with their personal lives is increasingly difficult.

"Yr Wyddfa stands as the United

"Yr Wyddfa stands as the United Kingdom's and possibly the world's busiest mountain, with more than 500,000 visitors a year," they said. "This has led to Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team's distinction as the most active mountain rescue team in the country."

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**QUOTE TIMES** 

# Historians' outcry over plan to kill off paper wills archive

Jack Blackburn History Correspondent

Charles Dickens, Princess Diana and others have been causing the Ministry of Justice a storage headache. Theirs are some of the millions of wills that have been taking up archive space at a cost of £4.5 million a year — and now bureaucrats want to free it up.

However, their plan to digitise wills and destroy almost all of the originals has historians up in arms. "Insane" and "sheer vandalism" are some of the criticisms levelled at the scheme, which was announced last week.

The government has reassured people that wills of "notable individuals" or which have "significant historical interest" will be preserved, but this has not been enough to placate critics.

Sir Richard Evans, a historian specialising in Germany and the Third Reich, has described the move as "typical arrogance of bureaucracy" and "just sheer vandalism in the name of bureaucratic efficiency".

The concerns are not just about history but the future, as the plan that is under consultation is to retain paper wills for a mere 25 years. This means that physical documents from people whose significance is only realised at a later stage would be lost.

Evans cited the example of Mary Seacole, the Crimean War nurse who hailed from Jamaica. "Fifty years ago, who would have thought that Mary Seacole was important or her will worth preserving?" he told The Guardian. "People who are now thought of as obscure will become famous in the future because what we consider important changes over time."

Digitisation will, of course, have benefits. It will allow genealogists and family historians easier access to these materials, many of which date back to the 19th century.

the 19th century.

However, it also comes with risks.
While digitisation is supposed to preserve the documents in theory, there

are concerns about it in practice. Digital archives decay and there is also the risk of pages being missed in the scanning process.

Digital archives can also be hacked, such as in the case of the British Library cyberattack that occurred in October and has crippled the library's digital operation ever since (a phased return of the service is due to begin next month). "My real anxiety is that if everything

"My real anxiety is that if everything is digitised, somebody pulls the plug," said the historian Tom Holland, a board member for the British Library. Holland called the proposals "obviously insane".

Mike Freer, the justice minister, said: "Historic wills can provide us with a unique window into the past and we want to make it as easy for amateur and professional historians alike to access these documents."

He added: "Digitalisation allows us to move with the times and save the tax-payer valuable money, while preserving paper copies of noteworthy wills which hold historical importance."

The High Court is required to preserve wills when they are submitted for scrutiny and has done so since 1858.

The archive runs to some 110 million documents and digitisation of new wills only began in 2021. It has not been extended to any document submitted before then. Applications can be made to digitise specific wills, a process that takes weeks.

Natalie Pithers, of the Society of Genealogists, said: "We are advocates of digitisation but not at the cost of destroying originals. In any digitisation projects, mistakes get made. We don't know what further information could be gained in the future from the original documents. There could be somebody in there who did something extraordinary."

The consultation on the 25-year plan will end on February 23 next year and the proposal would require legislation before it could be enacted.



Sidelining the sleigh Mel Glass, a cycling instructor and volunteer with the asylum seekers' charity Garas, brings some festive cheer to Lower Slaughter in the Cotswolds on his penny-farthing. He helps match refugees with donated bicycles



# Coronation crowned BBC's most-watched show of year

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

The BBC's coverage of the coronation drew the biggest audience of the year as drama suffered a slump in viewers after an outstanding 2022, corporation figures show.

The ceremony at Westminster Abbey in May was the highest-rated programme of the year, with 12.8 million viewers tuning in to BBCl to watch. A total of about 18 million were estimated to have watched the coverage across the II channels that aired the ceremony.

BBCl's coronation coverage drew almost one million more viewers than the third and final series of *Happy Valley*.

The crime drama, which starred Sarah Lancashire as sergeant Catherine Cawood, attracted an average of II.9 million viewers across six episodes.

It was the only scripted show with more than nine million viewers this year, after six series broke the barrier last year. In 2022, the BBC! thrillers The Tourist and The Responder, Death in Paradise and SAS Rogue Heroes all drew more than nine million viewers. ITVI'S Trigger Point and The Thief, His Wife

and The Canoe, the tale of the disappearance of John Darwin, averaged more than ten million.

In October, Ofcom said the number of shows achieving "mass audiences" of more than six million slumped to 213 leat year form 1.72 in 2014.

last year, from 1,172 in 2014.

Happy Valley's performance was followed by BBCI's coverage of the Eurovision Song Contest from Liverpool, which drew 10.7 million viewers.

Channel 4's *The Great British Bake*Off was the most-watched non-BBC
show, with an average of 9.7 million.

ITVI's I'm A Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!, which this year featured Nigel Farage, scored nine million, narrowly beating Sir David Attenborough's Planet Earth III and Strictly Come Dancing.

No streaming shows appeared in the top ten most-watched list. Netflix data shows that over the first six months of the year its 239 million subscribers watched an average of about 15 hours of programming each week. Its most popular programme globally was the FBI thriller The Night Agent followed by the comedy-drama Ginny & Georgia and the Korean drama The Glorv.

# Alex 'spoke of going home to surprise grandmother'

Katie Gatens, Tom Ball

Alex Batty wanted to "surprise" his grandmother by returning to Britain after going missing for six years, according to the family that he lived with in France.

Frederic Hambye and Ingrid Beauve, owners of a gîte in the Aude region near Toulouse, gave Alex accommodation at their guesthouse in exchange for chores after he arrived in the late autumn of 2021, accompanied by his mother and grandfather.

Hambye, 53, and Beauve, 49, said that Alex would talk about returning to Britain, saying that it was a "positive

memory" for him. "He said that his mum was a lawyer and that they had a lot of money and they had a BMW and she decided one day to be spiritual and everything changed," Beauve said.

Alex is alleged to have been abducted aged 11 by his mother, Melanie, and grandfather, David, in October 2017 while on holiday in Spain. In the early hours of last Thursday, Alex, now 17, was picked up by a delivery driver near Toulouse after walking across the Pyrenees for four days and four nights.

Since returning to Britain on Saturday, Alex has been living at the home of Susan Caruana, 68, his grandmother and legal guardian, in Oldham, Greater



Alex Batty, 17, returned to Britain on Saturday

Manchester. Hambye and Beauve said that while he was living with them, Alex was not in any formal education as the local schools would not enrol him without ID certification. Beauve said that she offered to take him to the British consulate to obtain the necessary papers but he refused.

While living at the gîte, Alex went by

the name of "Zach", his mother by

"Rose" and his grandfather by "Peter".

"He said 'no, I have to wait until I'm 18
to go to the consulate;" she said. "But he also told me that his mother was not very happy about him going to school. "And then he told me 'OK, then I

have another idea. I'm going to go back to England and I will get my papers there'. He said he had a grandma and she would probably welcome him. I asked him if he had contacted his grandma and he said, 'No, I will surprise her." The couple said that Melanie was often away looking for a "spiritual community" in which to live, and sometimes Alex would leave to join her for

weeks at a time. This was not the life that Alex wanted for himself, Hamaye said. "That's why I think it's very courageous what he did."

Beauve described the Batty family as people with "good values" and that Alex was "polite and authentic". She said: "He had a lot of respect for his grandfa-ther, but it was a distant relationship, there was no hugging. We thought it was just because they were British."

Alex told the authorities that his

grandfather had died about six months ago and his mother had decided to move to Finland. However, French police said yesterday that the grandfa-ther may be alive.





New voices The women who shaped Shakespeare's life will be the focus of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's programming in Stratford-upon-Avon next year

# Sergeant jailed after holding knife to subordinate's neck

Mario Ledwith

An army sergeant has been jailed after holding an 8in "jungle" knife to the neck of a junior colleague in retaliation for having been called a "mong'

Sergeant Matthew Crews, 36, a rocket system specialist, chased and threatened the lower-ranked soldier while heavily intoxicated after being infuriated by the slur during what a court was told was "harsh banter"

Crews, of 26 Royal Artillery Regiment, said he felt compelled to threaten Gunner Oliver Palmer to prove that he was still the "top dog"

The incident took place on July 28 last year during a posting to Estonia as part of an operation called "Iron Surge".

Captain Hugh-Guy Lorriman told Bulford military court in Wiltshire that he had been socialising in Tapa, northern Estonia, before returning to army accommodation, and that Palmer insulted Crews in a corridor. The sergeant then chased Palmer with the knife and held the blade to his neck during a scuffle that followed.

Crews admitted threatening with an



Matthew Crews was drunk when he chased a soldier who insulted him

offensive weapon in a public place. Sentencing him to a year's military detention and dismissal from the army, General Alan Large, the UK's highest military judge, said: "We have no doubt that when you are on the field you are a good soldier but that night, you weren't.

"Sergeants cannot go around threatening their subordinates with knives.



# Bar served tequila with drain cleaner

#### Laurence Sleator

The owners of a West End nightclub have been fined £120,000 after a barman accidentally served caustic soda with tequila shots instead of salt.

The four women who ingested the substance were hospitalised after the incident, suffering burning and bleed-

ing in their mouths as well as vomiting. Westminster magistrates court heard the women had visited the Tiger Tiger nightclub in Haymarket on December 7, 2021. They had ordered four shots of tequila but when the barman was lining up the drinks he realised they had run out of salt in the bar area.

Representatives for Westminster city council, who brought a health and safety prosecution against the bar, said the barman then made a mix-up in an unlit storage area behind the bar.

Using a disposable plastic cup, he reached inside a large white container of what he believed to be salt. He then handed it out to the four women who poured the white powder on their hands, licked it and drank the shot. Due to the strong alcohol content of the spirit, tequila drinkers will often drink it with salt and a citrus fruit — licking the salt, then consuming the shot before biting on the fruit to disguise the taste.

The court heard the barman knew something was wrong when the women immediately fell ill. He then tried a small amount of the substance himself which provoked a burning sensation in

his mouth. After the incident, the women were taken to hospital and police were called, with the nightclub closed as police conducted interviews. Caustic soda, or sodium hydroxide, is

a very strong alkali often used as a drain cleaner. It can cause severe burns if it gets on the skin and inhaling it can lead

to permanent lung damage.
Tiger Tiger owners A3D2 Ltd pleaded guilty to four health and safety breaches by "failing to ensure (customers) were not exposed to the risk of chemical substances" and were ordered to pay £120,000. Aicha Less,

Aicha Less, Westminster city council's deputy leader, said: "The shocking details of this case show a lack of attention and proper process for handling toxic cleaning chemicals ...we hope the significant fine awarded in court acts [as] a warning."
A3D2's law firm Fieldfisher said in a statement: "A3D2 has always strived to

ensure that the customers in their venues are protected from harm and has implemented a number of public safety campaigns within their venues. However, on this occasion, A3D2 admit there were shortcomings and have fully co-operated in the resultant investi-gation as a responsible operator.

"They take their health and safety responsibilities extremely seriously and have worked with a number of partners in implementing improvements to their health and safety operations following the incident."



Patti Hansen, his Rolling Stones bandmate Ronnie Wood, 76, and Wood's family

# We've never had it so bad, says Which?

Andrew Ellson Consumer Affairs Correspondent

Energy suppliers, telecoms companies and banks are failing in every area of customer service as "standards plumb

customer service as "standards plumb new depths", research suggests. Which?, the consumer group, has found that millions of people are rou-tinely being ignored or left on hold by businesses and when they do get through, their problems are compounded by uncaring or poorly trained staff or ineffective chatbots.

Some large companies were offering "shockingly poor" service, Which? said. It highlighted one case where it took British Gas five months to resolve sending an incorrect bill for £8,000.

Which? surveyed nearly 3,500 members of the public about their most recent customer service experience in the energy, financial services, retail and telecoms industries. An average of 20 per cent of people were unhappy with their most recent customer service experience but this climbed to 22 per cent for the telecoms sector and 25 per cent for the energy industry.

The most common complaint was

how long it took to get through and

have their query answered.
British Gas said: "This year we have handled 22 million contacts from our customers, including an increase in calls from those needing more help and advice, and we've invested £25 million in our customer services operations.



# **TMS**

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# Mitterrand in the gravy boat

As a mere 20-year-old, Michel Roux Jr saw panic in the Élysée Palace. He was working there as a chef when, after years of right-wing decadence, François Mitterrand was elected. Staff feared a socialist would pose a threat to that most important thing of all: the Élysée's menu.

"They thought the socialists would have sandwiches, beer and poulet frites," says Roux. Heureusement, the socialists were not for such privations and felt that the ship of state should be a gravy boat. "They hadn't been in for fourteen years and had a lot of catching up to do," Roux tells Table Talk. "It was state banquet after state banquet." Extraordinary that a 20-year-old would be there but, naturally for the French, cooking for the president counts as national service.

#### THIRST FOR POWER

Keir Starmer has been working on his jokes. Lord Mandelson tells *How* to *Win an Election* on Times Radio that at a drinks do for lobby hacks last week, Starmer noted that he has been making progress with the



right-wing press. "In 2017 the Daily Mail said I was 'weak and floundering," he said. "Now I'm pleased to report that they're just describing me as 'floundering." Perhaps you had to be there, but hacks were less concerned with reporting Starmer's jokes than by the fact that the drinks ran out due to over-attendance. Starmer is apparently so keen to break with the years of Jeremy Corbyn that he buys booze for the few, not the many.

While filming Celebrity Antiques Road Trip, the former home secretary David Blunkett discovered that blindness was no bar to finding quality knick-knacks, but it did see him miss out on some of the fun. He was completely oblivious when their shoot was disturbed by a nude bike ride going past. "This is one of those occasions when not being able to see is either a massive plus, or a great

disadvantage, depending on your point of view," he tells the Yorkshire Post. "I think, on the whole, the former."

#### BLUE PERIOD

The clans of the arty cannot quite lay claim to political balance, but the right has an unexpected champion in the form of the crossdressing artist Sir Grayson Perry. "I describe myself as a Tory voter trapped in a Labour voter's body," he writes in The Spectator. "I quite often find myself in the company of museum directors. I like to tease them by asking, "When is your next Tory exhibition?" Perry has a plan to show appreciation for the right's role in the arts: "I offer to correct this imbalance by installing a large Tracey Emin-style neon sign on the front of the museum saying, "Who the hell do you think pays for all this?""

Some in the arts have more modest hopes. The comedian Simon Evans tells The Critic: "My only ambition has ever been that when I am 73 and am mown down at dawn by a bright red sports car on my way home from an all-night party, the local paper would refer to me as 'the comedian Simon Evans', and not 'Simon Evans, who worked as a comedian."

JACK BLACKBURN

# Rantzen's daughter: I'd stop Dignitas jet

#### Seren Hughes

Esther Rantzen's daughter has said she would want to ground the plane if her mother were to fly to Switzerland for an assisted death, after the broadcaster revealed that she had joined Dignitas. Rebecca Wilcox said it was a "joy and

Rebecca Wilcox said it was a "joy and delight" to have her mother for Christmas this year after fearing she would not make it.

Rantzen, 83, has said she is undergoing a "miracle" treatment for stage four lung cancer, which was diagnosed in January. But should this fail to work, she said she "might buzz off to Zurich", where assisted dying is legal.

Wilcox, 43, told *Good Morning Brit*ain on ITV: "I personally would want to ground her plane if she was going to fly to Zurich but I know it's her decision. I just don't ever want her

to go."
She added: "It's really hard to talk about because I don't want her to die but I want her to have the choice, and what she says about UK law is that we're constantly making these rulings on the worst-case

Esther Rantzen and protective daughter

scenario." Wilcox said there were people who "would take advantage of relatives for a will" but there were also many "who want the choice to have a dignified, painless death that is actually a positive experience".

A positive experience.

Rantzen, who founded the charity
Childline in 1986, said part of her decision to join Dignitas was to avoid
having her family's last memories be
"painful" from watching a "bad death".
She admitted that if she did decide to

She admitted that if she did decide to have an assisted death it would put her family in a "difficult position" as they would want to go with her but could face prosecution for doing so. Asked if she would go to Switzerland with her mother, Wilcox said: "Legally I can't say that because I'd get in trouble, but I hear Switzerland is very nice."

Rantzen has called for a free vote in parliament on assisted dying. Assisted suicide is banned in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with a maximum sentence of

14 years.
The Health and Social Care Committee is due to publish its report into assisted dying and assisted suicide in England and Wales.

Assisted dying, letters, page 24





**Everyday Amazing.** 



# **Loyalty at heart of** Elizabeth's garden

memorial to in the heart of Regent's include a wildlife refuge and lookout tower. according to plans unveiled yesterday (Kieran Gair writes)

Early sketches of the two-acre garden, published by the Royal Parks charity, also show a pergola, pond, flower garden and a nursery which will feature some of the late Queen's favoured species.

The tribute to Britain's

longest-reigning monarch, who died in September last year aged 96 after 70 years on the throne, will be opened in 2026 to coincide with what would have been her 100th birthday. "The garden will

transform a disused plant nursery into a beautiful, tranquil two-acre garden, with significant benefits to nature," the Royal Parks said. A straight path running through the garden will represent Elizabeth's "unwavering loyalty and service" with each



space for quiet reflection, the charity said. At the southern main entrance, visitors will be greeted by a large pond with seating and a pergola. The central

promenade will be bisected by a path that leads the of landscapes. An existing water tower could be turned into a viewing platform and wildlife refuge.

Andrew Scattergood, chief executive of the Royal Parks, said: "This garden is a unique opportunity to transform grey to green and return two acres of beautiful green space to reflective garden, the antithesis to the hustle and bustle of the city, and we hope that people will come and spend some quiet time there, enjoying the natural landscape and the wonderful year-round colour that the garden

will provide. Demolition of the due to take place in the spring, with construction expected to begin in late 2024.

The garden will be in the heart of Regent's Park, tucked behind the Espresso Bar on the Broad Walk, and metres from The Avenue Gardens. It will be accessible by four new

# Westminster memorial for first black Briton to vote

Jack Blackburn History Correspondent

He was born on a slave ship in the middle of the Atlantic and died as a gentle-man of Westminster. Now, almost 250 years on, the name of Charles Ignatius Sancho, the first black Briton to have the vote, is up on the wall of parliament's parish church.

A memorial to Sancho was unveiled last night at St Margaret's, Westminster. The memorial notes Sancho's own marriage there to Anne Osborne and it



Charles Ignatius Sancho went from slavery to gentry

was unveiled just two days after their 266th wedding anniversary. Paterson Joseph, the actor who starred in the sitcom *Peep Show* and who had championed Sancho's story for 25 years, said that it "felt like a family member had been honoured".

Sancho was born on a ship that was bound for South America but he was brought back across the Atlantic while still a child. He was owned as a "pet" by three sisters in Greenwich but his intelligence caught the eye of the Duke of

Montagu, who took Sancho in as a butler and showed him how to educate himself. He became a successful shopkeeper, a writer and a composer. Sancho also became a noted figure in society: he was painted by Thomas Gainsborough and exchanged letters with Laurence Sterne, the Tristram Shandy author. He also became part of

the growing abolitionist movement. Before the unveiling, Joseph spoke of the importance of telling stories such as Sancho's to people of all backgrounds to give a truer sense of our past. "It is about us as a nation," he said. "It is a story about how Britain was 240-odd years ago, and that is what I am driven by."

The memorial, made by the artist Marcia Bennett-Male, lists him as Ignatius Sancho, dropping the Charles from his name. The surname Sancho had been given to him by the sisters in Greenwich, who were mockingly comparing him to the squire from Don Quixote. It appears that Sancho decided to adopt this as his preferred name after his correspondence with Sterne.

"He insisted that people call him Sancho," Joseph said. "It's a name which was foisted upon him but at some point he said, 'I'm going to use it as a tool to make me better known'

Caribbean needs our cash to defeat legacy of slavery, Thunderer, page 22 Britain's defence, letters, page 24

# Dion loses use of muscles with stiff person disorder

Joshua Thurston

Céline Dion has lost control of her muscles as a result of a rare neurological disorder called stiff person syndrome (SPS), her sister has revealed.

In an interview with the Canadian TV network 7 Jours, Claudette Dion said: "She doesn't have control over her muscles. What pains me is that she has always been disciplined. She always worked hard."

worked hard."

It has been a year since Dion, 55, cancelled tour dates and publicly shared her diagnosis. The rare and incurable neurological disorder affects the nervous system, specifically the brain and spinal cord.

"It's certain that, in our dreams and in hers, the idea is to return to the stage. In which state? I do not know. The vocal cords are muscles, and the heart is also a muscle," Claudette Dion said.

a muscle, "Claudette Dion said."
In May, the singer cancelled the remaining dates of her world tour, Courage. She said she was "working really hard" to build her strength back.

"I'm so sorry to disappoint all of you once again. It's not fair to you to keep postponing the shows, and even though it breaks my heart, it's best that we cancel everything now until I'm really



Céline Dion has cancelled world tour shows because of a medical condition

ready to be back on stage again," Dion said

First described in 1956, stiff person syndrome is very rare, occurring in about one in a million people and most commonly during middle age.

"There are some who have lost hope because that [SPS] is a disease that is not known," Claudette Dion said. "Since it's one case in millions, scientists didn't do that much research because it didn't affect that many people.

Patients with SPS often have rigid muscles and painful spasms, which can be triggered by loud noises or a even a

sudden touch. The cause is not known but scientists believe it may be the result of an autoimmune response where the body attacks nerve cells in the central nervous system that control muscle movement. Those with the condition can often be too disabled to move. There is no evidence-based treatment for the condition because its rarity complicates efforts to conduct large controlled trials.

Dion first spoke of her symptoms in October 2021, when she postponed the resumption of her Las Vegas residency due to "severe and persistent" muscle spasms.

Her sister said that people "tell us they love her and pray for her. She receives so many messages, gifts, blessed crucifixes".

Since her diagnosis, Dion has starred in the film *Love Again*, for which she

also recorded five new songs.

It has been a difficult decade for the star, who announced in 2014 that she was putting her career on hold "indefi-nitely" to care for her husband, René Angélil, after his second cancer diagnosis. She stepped away from her music career again when both Angélil and her brother Daniel Dion died in January 2016.

News

APPEAL

# Street Child helped after I was trafficked

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES
CHRISTMAS



Richard Assheton Benin, Nigeria

Grace Ebele was happy. She was married to a local Nigerian man, with two young children. Ebele dreamt of opening a beauty salon in her home town of Benin City in southern Nigeria.

Then she noticed her best friend was pregnant and Ebele soon discovered the father was her own husband. The friend moved in and Ebele moved out.

Jobless and a single mother, Ebele went to her parents. They blamed her. A cousin said she knew a "boga", or people smuggler. To Ebele it seemed like salvation.

"Charles" said his wife had a salon in Italy where Ebele could work. She just had to reimburse him the money he would pay to get her there.

Several months later, Ebele sat on a UN repatriation flight from Libya having been shot at, almost drowned and beaten by smugglers during four months in a desert prison during which she excreted blood and ate only bread while watching dozens of women die as "skeletons". Nigeria is



Street Child helps Nigerian people grow their own businesses. Grace Ebele, left, is a trafficking survivor

trafficking hotspot.
Countless women
end up as sex slaves.
In 2021, the last year
for which there is
data, Nigeria's antitrafficking agency
Naptip rescued 1,470
women. At least half the
cases involved sexual abuse.

Almost 300 of the women or girls were taken as prostitutes.

Ebele's parents found £500 to free her. When she got home, the Londonbased charity Street Child found her, and "trained me", she said. Through the charity Girls' Power Initiative, Street Child taught her to make hair weaves, fake eyelashes, sew wigs and do pedicures. She spoke to a pastor who helped her set up in a room tacked on to a shop. She also sells Coca-Cola and dresses.

But two days before we visited, a lorry snagged itself on electricity wires and burst into flames. The fire destroyed much of Ebele's shopfront.

Local men came, seemingly to help, but looted the shop. Ebele said she had lost about £300. She must start again. Street Child said it would inform the

UN. But without more funding, Street Child's work in Benin City is paused. Ebele is a pseudonym to protect her identity.

Street Child is one of three charities supported by The Times and The Sunday Times in the Christmas appeal this year. Every eligible pound donated to Street Child between December 15 and January 31 by readers will be matched by the UK government up to £500,000. The first £225,000 donated will also be matched by From Babies with Love, the gift brand that donates 100 per cent of its profits to vulnerable children, Boodles, the luxury jeweller, and an anonymous donor, multiplying the impact of your generosity.

# **To donate**Call 0151 284 2336, go to thetimes.co.uk/christmasappeal or use the QR code below



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The council's right, I've bin a very naughty boy Matthew Parris

Mattnew Pari Page 22



# Comment

# Israel's critics must do more than just carp

A two-state solution will not work with Hamas around, so how do Arab states propose to contribute to future peace?

Daniel Finkelstein



@DANNYTHEFINK

eople reciprocate gestures.
That's why, if I say "good morning", you say it back.
And among the gestures we reciprocate is the making of concessions. I back off a bit, so do you. It's one of the core principles of social psychology.

So let me tell you what happened when I wrote an article about the Middle East, making concessions to the Palestinian position. Nothing. That's what happened. Actually probably worse than nothing.

Three weeks ago in this space I wrote about the need for each side to listen to the other, and accepted that if this was going to happen, I — as a supporter of Israel's existence and safety — would have to show I was willing to listen myself. So I acknowledged the legitimacy of some core arguments made by those who support what they call a "free Palestine"

I affirmed, among other things, the history and legitimacy of Palestinian nationalism; I expressed understanding (accompanied by deep regret) even of armed resistance to the initial creation of the state of Israel; I agreed that the creation of Israeli settlements on land occupied during the repeated wars launched against Israel was a strategic and moral error; and I accepted that there was now a strong strand of Israeli opinion that rejected a two-state solution and would have to be defeated politically if there was to be peace.

I had hoped, as the academic

literature and my personal tendency towards naivety led me to expect, that this article would prompt matching concessions by those campaigning for Palestinian rights. I have been disappointed.

I have received four types of reply: some gratifying support from those who already agree with me; some minor quibbles from other Jews questioning certain factual points; a healthy number of Palestinian rights supporters congratulating me on seeing the validity of some of their points; and even more who were pleased with my article but felt there were a number of ways in which I could have gone further.

Many of the last two kinds were

Many of the last two kinds were accompanied by lengthy reiteration of Palestinian talking points or much shorter calls for a ceasefire and an end to (what they erroneously and offensively call) genocide. Absent entirely was any acknowledgment of why Israel or its supporters might

# Israel cannot live next door to a state that is run by Hamas

hold the position they do.

It is as if the Jews had taken it into their heads one morning to start bombing Gaza, just to see how many people they could hit.

How can supporters of Palestinian rights fail to see that this stance, this complete failure to see Israel's case, simply won't do? Is no one willing to show the courage to acknowledge that there are two sides to this story?

First, in all those rallies about freeing Palestine from the river to the sea, is there no one willing to say — explicitly, clearly — that between the river and the sea there must be an Israel safe and secure within

agreed borders? Half the Jews in the world live in Israel and there is nowhere for them to go. It is not enough vaguely to say that no one plans to drive them out. Israel was formed because Jews as a people spent centuries being oppressed by the countries they lived in as an ethnic minority. Many fled there from other parts of the Middle East.

So the existence of a state of Israel, one where Jews can protect themselves, needs to be accepted if there is to be peace, whatever the arguments about the past and how Israel was created. Simply repeating arguments about old grievances will get us nowhere.

And there needs to be a degree of realism about what security for Israel involves. When I was a student, supporters of Arab rights were constantly going on about Israel giving the Golan Heights back to Assad's Syria. Everyone seems to have gone quiet about that one.

This leads to a second point. If there is to be a two-state solution then the Palestinian state has to be willing to live with its neighbours and has to be a reasonably stable and reliable partner.

So supporters of Palestinian rights need to show they are realistic about the nature of Palestinian leadership and many of the states that surround Israel. In the rhetoric about "free Palestine" there seems to be no acknowledgment, not even a hint, that the leadership of the Palestinians has little commitment to freedom at all.

Without significant change, a Palestinian state would be free only of Jews. In any other sense it would not be free. It would be corrupt, violent, unstable and oppressive. This is so glaringly obvious that failure to address it means we aren't having a proper exchange at all.



Protesters fail to notice that Palestinian leaders show little interest in freedom

Having two states is one thing, but to have a two-state "solution" requires both Palestinian reform and external partners — surely this is a job for Israel's neighbours and the Arab states — helping to provide a security guarantee.

And it would require — of course it would — the defeat of Hamas. The task of defeating Hamas has been handed entirely to Israel, with everyone else criticising how it is going about it. Not one person writing to me about my column did any more than say they abhorred what Hamas did on October 7 (and not everyone even bothered with that). They failed even to mention that Hamas still holds hostages. This is completely inadequate.

There cannot be peace in the Middle East while Hamas remains in a position to disrupt the peace. Israel

cannot live next door to a state run by Hamas. And more broadly, the creation of a state dominated by Hamas is a danger to every country in the world, not just to the Jews. If Hamas fought Israel and even

If Hamas fought Israel and even world Jewry until the last of us was dead, which would certainly be their desired outcome, they would not then stop. For they oppose every liberal and democratic instinct and will lend their support to every violent opponent of it. While Hamas is safe, no one else is safe.

So saying, as I fear is true, that too many Gazans are dying as a result of Israel's response, and that disease may soon kill many more, and that we need to try all we can to end this — saying that is not enough. Israel needs to be told not just what it should not do, but what it should do.

And by this I don't mean just telling it to stop settler violence and start working towards two states. I mean advising what Israel should do militarily to defeat Hamas. And suggesting what neighbouring states can do as contributors rather than just critics.

Without accepting these points the need for Israel to exist, to be safe, to live near a stable neighbour, to destroy Hamas — then any call for a "free Palestine" is either a call to kill Jews or a bogus position.

For without security for Israel there will never be freedom for Palestine. And vice versa. The two are inextricably linked.

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# Wagner makes a killing from Africa's gold

The mercenaries' Russian revolt failed but their grip on bullion still makes them key players





@ROGERBOYES

hen Yevgeny Prigozhin's jet smashed headfirst into a Russian field in August it was assumed to be the end of the ruthless Wagner mercenary group under his command Earlier in the summer the garrulous ex-con had encouraged the Wagnerians to march mutinously on the Kremlin and demand better conditions for their fight against Ukraine. They stopped and gave up 200 kilometres short of Moscow but Vladimir Putin never forgave Prigozhin for his public display of disloyalty.
But the Wagner network, unlike its

founder, is still alive, playing a role in the pantomime of Putin-era politics. Its influence in Africa has been evident for years — in the Central African Republic (CAR), Sudan, Mali, Libya among others — and the armed assistance of these Russian irregulars is regarded as indispensable by leaders clinging to power.

Since August 2020 seven African leaders have been toppled by their own military elites, an epidemic that stretches from Guinea in the west to Sudan in the east. Even where there have been staged elections, such as in the CAR, leaders rule as de facto authoritarians, fixing elections and bending constitutions

to allow them to rule for life.

The Wagnerians developed exportable talents in all relevant domains: the manipulation of social media, the formation of close bodyguard units around nervous tyrants, advice on interrogation techniques, the training of local special forces. But, above all, the protection and management of mines producing rare minerals, diamonds and — of critical significance for the Putin regime as it tries to sidestep tightening western sanctions — gold.

It is gold that has kept at least some old Wagner hands in business. So much so that they have taken to calling themselves the Afrika Korps, a tribute of sorts to Erwin Rommel's

# Russia's shift to a war economy boosts the need for illicit gold

desert troops. The new-look Korps has different functions: to provide security and increase productivity around Africa's gold mines, to gain a stake in the continent's gold, to make itself indispensable to shaky regimes that share profits with the group and to send gold to Russia. The Blood Gold Report, a research unit based in Washington, calculates that the Kremlin has earned \$2.5 billion from trade in African gold since Putin launched his full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February last year.

In Sudan, which is in the midst of a spiralling civil war, Wagner front companies have built a gold processing plant. This was the result of a friendly relationship with the socalled Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Within days of Russia invading Ukraine the RSF leader Mohamed Dagalo, known as Hemedti, flew to Moscow to give his backing to the establishment of a Russian navy base on the Red Sea in return for military hardware. The same plane carried gold bullion; the Wagner network brokered that deal. In due course Russian planes were shuttling from a Libvan airport controlled by the insurgent general Khalifa Haftar another ally of the Wagnerians full of missiles for the RSF.

Ultimately, behind the geopolitical game-playing, there was always gold. Back in 2021 a Sudanese whistleblower discovered that 32.7 tonnes of gold from the vaults of the central bank were unaccounted for. Western intelligence believes that at least part of that loot went to Russia, flown in 16 flights to the Russian airbase in Syria. That was Wagner: the gold-smuggling business remains one of its talents, even in its

The CAR and Mali are part of the gold nexus. Both countries were reassured by foreign minister Sergey Lavrov after Prigozhin's death that Russia would continue to look out for them. The withdrawal of French troops from the two states left an opening for the Wagnerians and it has never really closed. The CAR signed a number of security agreements with Moscow in 2017 military support in return for access to diamonds, uranium and gold.

By December of that year the Russian foreign ministry had lobbied for an exemption to the UN arms embargo on the CAR and in a flash

170 "instructors" and crate loads of weapons were on their way. Later, Wagner re-election experts arrived. For the CAR regime, Moscow was a reliable partner. Net effect: satellite pictures show a massive expansion of production in the Ndassima gold mine since the Russian attack on Ukraine.

Gold has become critical to the Russian economy. Moscow has amassed 150,000 gold bars since the first Russian assault on Crimea in 2014 but as western sanctions have piled up there are not many ways of turning the hoard into cash. Russia is largely cut out of dollar and euro trading and while it can trade with non-sanctioned friendlies, it will struggle more and more. Oil and gas exports drove the wheels of the economy; that is no longer a solid bet. The shift to a war economy, acute labour shortages (likely to be intensified after a broader mobilisation in April), an overdependence on the de-dollarised trading relationship with China: all this boosts the need for illicit gold, melted down to disguise its origin, flown around the world in military planes, and gathered in by the Wagnerian soldiers of fortune.

The group was kept in the shadows for years but Putin's demand for fresh meat on the front propelled Prigozhin into public prominence, recruiting convicts in prison yards and chewing out the defence ministry. After its bungled mutiny, Wagner lost its brand as a pack of loyal rottweilers. Not in Africa though; there, Prigozhin veterans are seen as having not only useful, professional muscle but also the touch of Midas.



# Caribbean needs our cash to defeat legacy of slavery

## **Denis O'Brien**

here is an innate sense of decency among people in the UK, and this has been demonstrated in everyday life over centuries. Now there is an opportunity for the nation to admit to its role in perpetrating 300 years of chattel slavery which came to an end in 1838. During this period more than 12 million enslaved people were brought mainly from west Africa to the Caribbean and were sold into the most brutal living conditions known to mankind.

Many of my friends in the UK tell me this is all ancient history — but it's not, because the government borrowed 40 per cent of its GDP in the 1830s to compensate owners of the enslaved for loss of property and earnings. This debt was only paid off in 2015 and is the equivalent of £17 billion today.

When the Caribbean countries obtained independence in the 1960s and 1970s, their new governments were left with an exchequer akin to a bare cupboard. They have struggled to create economies that can withstand economic recession and climate change. Yet the families who owned the enslaved invested their profits in the Industrial Revolution, which made the UK one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

Every part of the establishment benefited from the profits of slavery, including the royal family, Church of England London Stock Exchange Lloyd's and the major universities. But it is not just the responsibility of the UK to make amends — France, Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands were all active participants in enslavement in the Caribbean.

Today nearly all the Caribbean countries that experienced chattel slavery are struggling with issues such as life expectancy, infant mortality and low levels of engagement in higher education, which are stunting economic growth. Having invested in 23 territories in the Caribbean over two decades, I have seen firsthand how investment can change a country dramatically. For this reason I set up the Repair Campaign 18 months ago to create socioeconomic reparatory justice plans for each country.

We are advocating that the UK and the EU jointly fund plans that are specific to each of the Caricom member states affected by enslavement over a 25-year period. These funds would be supplementary to the main government budget and would cover areas such as early childhood education, a dramatic increase in higher education enrolment, converting to renewable energy, infrastructure projects, water treatment solutions and the proper development of health systems.

Unfortunately, the wrong people were compensated. This is the time in history to do the right thing.

Denis O'Brien is founder of the Repair Campaign

# **Matthew Parris Notebook**

# The council's right, I've bin a very naughty boy

he postman calls. No, not a Christmas card. I'm on the council's naughty step. The letter from the waste and recycling manager at the Derbyshire Dales district council is stern. "We ask you to refrain from putting dead animals in the food caddy bin with immediate effect.

Readers, a word of explanation. A local pheasant shoot crosses our fields. Taking potshots at our feathered friends wouldn't be my idea of fun but we've no objection. Every year they kindly leave a bottle of whisky or a bird. Plucking is too laborious but Julian cuts the breast out and makes excellent curries. This year he left the remains in a heap, which I put in the food-waste caddy. It was the feathers that did it: the (efficient) waste collection team must have noticed them and blew the whistle.

My first response was a barrage of quibbling whataboutery. What about the remains of the Christmas turkey/

fish skeletons/dead mice? Etc, etc. But the more you think, the clearer it becomes that the council is right; it has to draw the line somewhere. Consider the wedge whose thin end is (say) a departed goldfish. Or budgie. Then what about a couple of deceased hamsters? Or a late lamented guinea pig? Or an exchihuahua? And soon we've reached a fallen spaniel or a dead swan.

"Thank you in advance for your co-operation," my wrist slap ends. You shall have it, officer. I am well rebuked.

## Great grace

ve been glad to serve as honorary president of the Cambridge in Derbyshire Society but it's time to hand over to a successor, so our pleasant annual lunch brought with it no official duties but a nonreligious grace that impressed me. A full complement had turned up: a bit elderly but none of us gaga, and the stimulating company you'd expect of some distinguished engineers, science graduates, people who've made things work This (I translate from the Latin) was Churchill College's grace: "We give thanks for the meal which

we are about to receive/

and hope that being, by it, healthfully nourished/ we may be enabled to show our bounden duty/and may know the causes of things".

"And may know the causes of things." I love that. Hard to imagine those Oxford types, hugging their teddy bears, gurgling port and chanting madrigals, celebrating in this way the human impulse to understand.

## Go nuts about pine

edgebury Pinetum in Kent. I vent last week, invited to see for myself that the critically endangered Australian Wollemi pine is not doomed (as I'd suggested on this page) to fall victim to English frost. And, boy, they're right. Their oldest specimen must be 20 feet high,

ramrod-straight and thriving. It's one of hundreds of conifer species there: many rare, all different and some spectacularly so, every shape and size and colour, collected from all over the planet to be cultivated, studied and (often enough) saved Before visiting this vast

park a coniferous forest was to me, just that. Fairly homogeneous I thought, monotonous, almost sterile. Now I realise I wasn't seeing the trees for the wood. But at Bedgebury you bring in your focus. You meet trees as individuals. They're all labelled and there's an indexed inventory, so if you want to see a Japanese red cedar or a tiger-tail spruce or smell the candyfloss-scented leaves of a katsura, the map will take you there. Do visit. I'm so glad I did.

## Top of the novelty pops

edgebury's senior curator and I discovered a shared love not just Of trees but of madcap novelty hits from the record charts over the years. I proposed Toast (Streetband 1978) about, well, toast. Dan Luscombe suggested Convoy (CW McCall, 1975) about truckers, CB radio and the police. I could propose Teddy Bear (Red Sovine, 1976, about a little crippled boy). Or how about Sparky's Magic Piano (1947); a whole range of whistling songs; The Laughing Policeman (Charles Penrose, 1926) and of course Je t'aime (Serge Gainsbourg and Jane Birkin, 1969). Then there's Don't Sell Daddy Anymore Whiskey (Molly O'Day, 1950), with crying baby noises, which the troops kept requesting to my mother's dismay as a disc jockey for the Forces Broadcasting Service in Cyprus. Wouldn't novelty hits make a rather good hour on BBC Radio 2? And would Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polkadot Bikini (Bryan Hyland, 1960) qualify?



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# Ludicrous bills are price of blind faith in IT

Sir Grayson Perry's plight at the hands of EDF shows the urgent need for firms to question their wayward computers





@MCCARTNEY\_JENNY

ven in these financially volatile times, the celebrated ceramicist Grayson Perry surely got quite a jolt on learning that his monthly electricity bill had jumped from £300 to £39,000. As wags on social media remarked, he must have "left the kiln on". Either that, or his energy company EDF had made a gross accounting error.

While investigating the latter possibility, Perry spent three hours "trying to get some sense" out of the EDF call centre, which nonetheless seemed helpless to stop the company from attempting to seize the cash from his account by direct debit.

In the end he resorted to Twitter/ X, as demoralised people so often do, where he attracted the sympathy of the broadcaster Jon Sopel, who had also been surprised when his monthly bill leapt from £152 to £19,274.

A slew of others then shared their own grim experiences, with talk of eye-watering demands, glitches in smart meters, errors in algorithms, distressed elderly relatives, and months spent in wrangling and confusion. Meanwhile an online squad of EDF customer services representatives urged those unhappy to get in touch. The company reassured customers: "We have robust interventions in place to ensure that any large increases in customers' direct debits are verified by a human check. In almost all such cases, system errors are rectified and prevented without customers being impacted."

Nationwide, however, that "almost

Nationwide, however, that "almost all" leaves room for significant error. The "robust interventions" appeared not to be working last year, when EDF customer Richard Baron, from Deal in Kent, was told his family of four owed a monthly bill of £80,000. Mr Baron thought the demand so

# Restitution shouldn't depend on one's clout on social media

crazy as to be almost amusing, and informed them of the mistake: it was, apparently, just a rectifiable "problem with the system".

Baron's good humour was severely tested, however, when the company then extracted the money from his account, leaving him £76,000 overdrawn. The money was refunded by his bank's fraud scheme, only for him to notice that EDF was

proposing another £80,000 cash grab on Christmas Day. He cancelled his direct debit, losing his previously favourable tariff which was only reinstated with apologies after his case hit the headlines. This is an unusual example, certainly, but lesser errors are happening regularly, and in other energy companies too.

Something has gone badly awry, and it is more deep-seated than just EDF and its ludicrous demands. A curious form of doublethink now operates in many companies regarding their computer systems. At one level, the "system" is apparently regarded by its employees as virtually infallible. Its operations carry weight: it dispatches letters and emails, couched in official language, and follows them up with brusquer demands and threats of court action. These communications not only reach the better-off but also people near the end of their tether: the unwell, elderly, bereaved or simply those who are struggling financially and for whom an unexpected bill sparks genuine panic.

To correct an error, the customer must often do exhausting battle with obstructive layers of the very system that spawned it, before finally being permitted to talk to a human being. Yet should the company admit fault, the second part of the doublethink kicks in: the matter becomes suddenly weightless, a mere "system

error", a "glitch" which can be waved away with a perfunctory correction or, in extremely embarrassing cases, a "goodwill payment".

a "goodwill payment".

By virtue of being able to blame the system rather than any individual, mistakes with damaging consequences mysteriously become no one's fault. If an acquaintance accosted you in the pub, wrongly insisted you owed him money and—when you politely disagreed—snatched the cash from your coat, it

# A curious form of doublethink operates in many companies

would be a matter for the police. Yet the electronic equivalent is practised by large energy companies every day.

These are admittedly complex operations, but that is no excuse for frequent failure. Such companies could, and should, strengthen the team whose job it is to deal swiftly and personally with customers reporting errors, and set up another one whose specific task is to constantly question the computer system. But that would involve spending money rather than accruing it.

If Orwell accurately predicted the surveillance society, and Huxley prophesied mankind's infinite capacity for brain-numbing

distraction, then it was Kafka who most keenly understood the disorienting effect of bureaucratic systems. A company's first instinct is often to defend its own interests, while hinting customers are guilty of some nameless error. Some years ago, when I was the victim of bank fraud, a bank official at first tried to tell me the criminals were probably able to set up an online account in my name thanks to "malware" on my computer which allowed them to steal my passcodes. At the time I used only telephone banking and had never written a passcode down: even malware, I pointed out, had not yet developed the ability to read minds.

The most heartbreaking and extreme example of the "trust the system" phenomenon is the Post Office scandal, in which the company culpably ignored longstanding evidence of bugs in its Horizon software. Instead it chose to prosecute and convict hundreds of innocent sub-postmasters for accounting shortfalls, resulting in unimaginable pain to those individuals and their families. But a faulty "system" is not some separate entity which operates in a realm devoid of blame. And, as Grayson Perry was correct to point out to EDF, restitution really shouldn't depend on one's clout on

Alice Thomson is away

Letters to the Editor should be sent to letters@thetimes.co.uk or by post to 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF



# Stresses of obesity

Sir, I agree that the food industry is feeding an addiction to ultraprocessed food, contributing to obesity, and that this needs to be urgently addressed (report, leading article, Dec 18). However, research is uncovering a much greater influence. Obesity is a symptom of a stressed society. The craving for this highly palatable food in adults and children who suffer from chronic stress is driven by the brain via high levels of insulin and stress hormones. Like all animals, humans prioritise calories when under stress, resulting in greater calorie intake, fat storage and reduced desire to exercise. Obesity will continue to be a scourge until we address the main causes of chronic stress, such as social isolation. marginalised communities and stressful environments. Professor William Bird

# City gridlock

Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

Sir, As a long-time Cambridge resident I don't mind Michael Gove's proposed expansion of the city ("New homes to be forced through", Dec 19). There have been housing developments galore in the past decade. What I do mind, though, is the lack of joined-up planning for infrastructure and the accompanying budget cuts. Cambridge city centre is tiny and public transport poor. If 150,000 new homes means another 300,000 cars at rush hour, then no one will be able to move anywhere. Colin Sherwood Cambridge

# Two-year queue

Sir, Mike Heenan (letters, Dec 18 & 19) says "not everything is broken", citing the renewal of his passport in four days. However, I have been told by the solicitor handling the lease extension for my UK flat that "due to workload issues" the Land Registry is taking 24 months to complete such applications. Clearly some things are more broken than others.

Robert Willock Palm Jumeirah, Dubai

Letters to The Times must be exclusive and may be edited. Please include a full address and daytime telephone number.

## **Corrections and** clarifications

The name of Sir Tim Brighouse's first wife was Mary Demer, not Mary Demmers as we wrongly said (obituaries, Dec 19).



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# Avoidable failures on Mone scandal and PPE

Sir, I was fascinated to read such a delightfully retro veneration of the wisdom of business leaders ("Business will be a mystery to Labour's new MPs", Dec 18). James Kirkup seems concerned that few new Labour MPs will have experience of working in the private sector and may lack an 'instinctive understanding" of how profit-seeking businesses work. I am sure I was not the only reader to rejoice at this prospect. I am very much hoping the next government will substitute intellectual rigour and due diligence for the "instincts" that have had such dire consequences

I refer, of course, to the instincts that led to PPE Medpro securing more than £200 million in fasttracked government contracts during the pandemic for equipment that ministers believe was inadequate (report, Dec 18; letters, Dec 19). The same instincts led to the government ignoring the advice of public health experts, including its own chief medical officer, on the perils of vaping among children because it fell for the

agenda of the vaping industry. Perhaps the lack of Labour MPs with direct business experience will lead to some much-needed humility. the ability to listen to expert advice and the critical thinking that has been sadly lacking in the present government

Hannah Williams

Sir, During the pandemic I worked in public relations for a big car manufacturer. Covid halted our production lines and cost us a huge amount of money. Yet we deployed engineers to work on developing ventilators for Covid sufferers in hospital, donated large amounts of PPE and leased vehicles to deliver groceries to those who needed them. This was not done for reasons of positive PR. Most of these gestures were carried out under the radar and took place because we thought they were the right thing to do.

It is important not to lose sight of the fact that many businesses, large and small, made a concerted effort to assist in what was a national emergency. That public spiritedness is something that others, presently experiencing a rough ride as far as their public image is concerned, should have displayed more of. Profiting to the tune of millions of

pounds when thousands of people were dying is not a very good look, is it?

Steve Wrelton Maidenhead

Sir, Apart from the questionable conduct of the noble lady, the government looks pretty stupid in this sad affair, Baroness Mone's company, PPE Medpro, was registered only shortly before it was awarded contracts worth £200 million and thus had no track record of performance, while the official NHS procurement channels ignored established suppliers. Colin Fuller

Cheltenham

Sir, The lack of financial probity and control during Covid was avoidable. When Boris Johnson announced that we should do "whatever it takes" to cope with the challenges, all controls were compromised. Under pressure, the situation offered a blank cheque to suppliers. This enabled the enrichment of a few opportunists who exploited the situation.

Jon Scourse

Ingham, Lincs

# **Border delays**

Sir, One might hope that predictions of delays in border checks on Eurostar and at Dover and other ports from October next year would lead to some creative thinking ("New fingerprint rules raise prospect of long delays", Dec 19). It is about ten months until the system changes. Would it not be sensible to set up places now where would-be travellers could register their biometric details before travelling? This might mitigate some of the worst delays for travellers and make them merely appalling rather than not worth the trouble at all. French tourism and our trade will surely suffer if something is not done and done urgently.

Richard Davey South Petherton, Somerset

# **Dentistry warning**

Sir, Dr Gerard Bulger is absolutely right when he says that the system of payment for GPs is responsible for exacerbating the crisis in NHS general practice (letter, Dec 18). This is borne out by the experience in dentistry, where the collapse of NHS

services was prompted by the introduction of a new dental contract in 2006. It ended the system of paying dentists directly for the amount of work they did and replaced it with an anomalous contract with punitive targets, coupled with a ceiling on the amount of work a dentist could do and be paid for. Successive leaders of the dental profession have failed to persuade the government to rethink this misguided policy. One can only hope that GPs' representatives are more successful. John Grossman

Northwood, Middx

Sir, NHS Trusts work hard to boost productivity (report, leading article, Dec 16; letters, Dec 18 & 19), including conducting more operations, discharging patients more quickly and using artificial intelligence for faster referrals. Improving public health, increasing public investment and reforming social care are also vital to help reduce pressure on the NHS. But it is hard for trusts feeling the pinch from tight budgets and asked to find unprecedented savings to improve productivity when there are more than 121,000 vacancies in the NHS in England alone, Employees are already overstretched in the face of

relentless demand and many more patients with complex conditions. Saffron Cordery Deputy chief executive NHS Providers

# Assisted dying

Sir, Esther Rantzen is the latest public figure to come out in favour of assisted dying (report, Dec 19). Educated and well-connected, such individuals have an experience of life that is very different from the patients I look after. In 15 years of working as a doctor in east London. I have been asked only once by a patient to end their life. Far more commonly, my attempts to institute humane and effective end-of-life care is hampered by fears that I might be trying to do exactly that. Our politicians are to be commended for rejecting the beguiling claim that assisted suicide offers an easy solution to the complex challenges of suffering and death. Instead they have preserved a law that protects those whose voices are easily marginalised, a law that enjoys widespread support among disadvantaged and minority groups. **Dr David Randall** London E14

for by the theatres, who are once more providing those glimpses into fairyland without which Christmas would not be complete, and there is

to be a circus at Olympia. While thousands of persons are flocking to London, thousands of others are leaving it to seek snow and sun on the Continent. A representative of one touring agency declared yesterday: "The bookings for Switzerland are very heavy, France and Egypt are going strong and, generally, there is much more movement than in previous vears" Another tourist company stated that bookings for holidays abroad were double those of last year. Holiday-makers were anxious to enjoy the winter sports in Switzerland, and there was also a great increase in the number of people bound for Algeria.

THETIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

# Fertility lottery

Sir, Whether it is due to choice, circumstance or the challenges in conceiving that Harriet Walker calls the "fertility lottery", not all women without children are mothers in waiting ("The way we parents talk, it's no wonder bringing up children isn't valued", Dec 18). Her comment about the challenges for parents versus non-parents of working over the Christmas period misses the mark. As someone who has not drawn the winning ticket in that particular lottery, I can confirm that societal privilege and preferential treatment is shown to parents across the whole year, not just at Christmas.

Nobody doubts that the logistical challenges of navigating childcare as a working parent are difficult, but if we give credence only to the wants and needs of a woman when she has fulfilled her role of "mother", we hold back all women and cause harm and distress to those of us who have not found a path to parenthood. Polly Warrack

London SE19

## Britain's defence

Sir, Denis O'Brien thinks that British taxpayers should make reparations to Caribbean countries for the actions of the British state more than 200 years ago (report, Dec 18; letters, Dec 19). Along with many Nato countries, Britain spends billions of pounds a year defending democracy, freedom and the western way of life — something that his own home country of Ireland does not. The UK also spends a considerable sum of money on global aid. Mr O'Brien would be well advised to look at his own country's meagre support for international security before he lectures us on our responsibilities. John Gorrod Southampton

Sir, We were colonised by the Romans and subjected to slavery. Can we claim reparations? Joan Freeland Bristol

# Vote system ailing

Sir, Whether or not the Commons decides to allow MPs to vote remotely (letter, Dec 19), the arcane procedure of "nodding through", by which the votes of those on the premises but not well enough to reach the lobbies are counted, needs to be replaced. I speak from experience, having once been driven in a private ambulance hired by the whips' office from Salisbury hospital to Westminster to vote. I was semi-conscious and had not the slightest idea of the issue being debated, let alone how to vote. Charles Goodson-Wickes (MP 1987-97), London SW1

# L of an accent

Sir, As someone born and bred in Bristol, I was interested to read your item about the rhotic "R" and the stolen "L" (report, Dec 18; letter, Dec 19). Some years ago a Bristol band leader announced a Latin "Americal" set by saying that the first dance would be a sambal, followed by a rumble and a tangle. John Cobbett Tenterden, Kent

Sir, My mother, a native Bristolian, employed a cleaning lady who referred to her daughter as "Eval". Elisabeth Parker-Jervis Cheltenham

**CHRISTMAS** VISITORS TO

FROM THE TIMES DECEMBER 20, 1923

LONDON

Much attention has been devoted to the facilities provided by the railway companies and tourist agencies for Londoners to spend Christmas out of town, but the fact that similar arrangements exist for bringing country visitors to London is apt to be overlooked. Railway companies have risen to the occasion, and very adequate facilities have been provided. Excursions and long-date bookings from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales are announced, and it is expected that there will be a "record" invasion during the coming week or two. The railway termini

already present scenes of animation. Thousands of visitors arrive daily and crowd the principal shopping centres.
The great stores are realms of

adventure to old and young alike. Those wonderful Christmas Parties for children have already begun at the principal hotels. Theatres are delving into the past and bringing out the old laughter-makers — Charley's Aunt and The Private Secretary have already arrived. The influx of visitors has made it impossible for the stores to close for three days. Shop assistants are thus deprived of a long week-end, which it is generally admitted (as set forth in the letters which have appeared in The Times) they deserve. Though strong representations have been made, there appears to be no hope of shop assistants receiving the hoped-for concession.

Hotels are vying with each other in providing lavish entertainment. There will be gala dinners, "surprises", and dancing. Children are being catered

# **Leading articles**

## **Daily Universal Register**

UK: Junior doctors who are members of the BMA strike for three days over pay. World: UN general assembly's International Human Solidarity Day.

#### Nature notes



The birch is a beautiful tree. In spring, its leaves are some of the first to show, and they glint like emeralds in the March sunlight.

Through summer heats, the birch's small leaves cast a dappled, ever-changing shade. In autumn, the canopy turns fox red, and forms a striking contrast with the white trunk and black branches. Slowly the fox red fades to yellow. But it's in winter, perhaps, that birch trees show at their most striking. Rimed with frost, the trees look like frozen fountains. Should a breeze blow through the drooping branches of a rimed birch, then the tiny icicles will ring softly like wind chimes. JONATHAN TULLOCH

#### Birthdays today



Dame Mitsuko Uchida, classical pianist and conductor, pictured, 75; Jenny Agutter, actress, The Railway Children (1970), 71; Maggie Alphonsi, rugby union player, Saracens WRFC

and England (2003-14), now pundit, 40; Roger Alton, editor, The Observer (1998-2007), The Independent (2008-10), executive editor, The Times (2010-15), 76; Ornella Barra, pharmacist, chief operating officer (international), Walgreens Boots Alliance, 70; Tim Bevan, film producer, *Elizabeth* (1999), *The Theory of Everything* (2015), cochairman of Working Title Films, 66; **Billy** Bragg, singer-songwriter, Workers Playtime (1988), 66; Keith Brown, MSP for Clackmannanshire & Dunblane, depute leader of the Scottish National Party, 62; Sir Malcolm Colquhoun of Luss, chief of Clan Colquhoun, 76; Joe Cornish, comedian and director, *The Adam and Joe Show* (1996-2001), and co-writer, Ant-Man (2015), 55; Debra Crew, chief executive, Diageo (alcoholic beverages), 53; Peter Criss, musician, Kiss, 78; Alain de Botton, philosopher and author, Essays in Love (1993), 54; Uri Geller, illusionist, 77; Jonah Hill, actor, The Wolf of Wall Street (2013), 40; Terry Johnson, dramatist and director, Not Only But Always (2004), 68; Lesley Judd, only but Ariway (2004), 06, Lesiey Judu, actress and presenter, *Blue Peter* (1972-79), 77; Sir Christopher Le Brun, president of the Royal Academy of Arts (2011-19), 72; Sir Andrew Mackenzie, chairman, Shell, UK Research and Innovation, chief executive of NUID (2012) of the article in the control of the BHP (2013-19, the world's largest mining company), 67; Kylian Mbappé, footballer, Paris Saint-Germain and France, matched Geoff Hurst (1966) by scoring a hat-trick in a World Cup final, 25; Alan Parsons, musician and producer, including the Beatles' Abbey Road (1969) and Pink Floyd's The Dark Side of the Moon (1973), 75; Todd Phillips, film-maker, the Hangover trilogy (2009-13), *Joker* (2019), 53; Lord (Philip) Remnant, chairman, Coutts & Co, senior adviser, Credit Suisse (2006-13), 69.

#### On this day

In 1995 Elizabeth II's request to Prince Charles and Princess Diana that they seek "an early divorce" was made public by Buckingham Palace, a month after the princess's *Panorama* interview.

## The last word

"When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul/ Then nightly sings the staring owl." William Shakespeare, Love's Labour's Lost, Act V,



# **Questioning Gender**

Guidance for schools on dealing with transgender pupils is welcome, not least in its insistence that parents must be involved

Transgenderism is a political hot potato. A misstep in any debate around gender identity has the potential to crash careers and ruin reputations. Many public figures who blunder into the topic soon wish they had not, while others find their own identities now forever bound up with whatever view they have expressed.

For an issue that affects so few adults — the 2021 census suggests half of 1 per cent, but even that is broadly disputed — its salience is staggering. Largely, this is the upshot of years of powerful campaigning by skilled and opportunistic lobbying groups that have worked hard to suggest that any wariness about switching gender should be regarded alongside homophobia and racism as an attitude now beyond the pale. Nowhere has this had a greater impact than in schools. Yesterday the government published new guidance as to how such pupils should be accommodated. It was about time.

Much as traditionalists may object, there will always be a small number of children whose sense of dysphoria is such that the only compassionate course of action is to allow them to live as another gender. For those in need of help, the correct approach from school authorities is vital. Without official guidelines, however, schools have been

forced to rely upon materials published by campaigning groups, whose stance, motives and rigour may be questionable. Teachers, fearful of being ostracised, bullied or sacked for perceived bigotry — quite apart from being fearful of actually causing harm — risked reinforcing and embedding behaviour that might otherwise have been regarded as trivial. They will also have struggled to judge when, or if, to involve parents. Under pressure from passionate activists, in the shape of parents or other staff, new norms were being established, and with little external oversight. The most important thing about the government's new guidance, then, is simply that it now exists. Recommendations are moderate. The advice is

Recommendations are moderate. The advice is that schools should "take a very cautious approach" when children wish to change names, pronouns or clothing. The guidance also states that "decisions should never be taken in haste or without the involvement of parents" save for "in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child." Altogether, it makes for a sensible balance between placing trust in schools and giving them the basis upon which to make their decisions. Critics of Kemi Badenoch, the cabinet minister with the equalities brief, are keen to paint

her as a swashbuckling participant in the culture wars. This sober document does not bear that out.

Gender is not the only area in which schools would benefit from guidance. Back in March of this year, the government promised a review into how sex education is taught in England. This followed a report by The Times which found many children were being taught using material that is wildly inappropriate. Structurally, the failures were similar. Sex education has been compulsory in schools since 2020, but the obligation arrived without clear instructions as to how it should be carried out. Schools were forced to turn to thirdparty providers, creating what some described as a "wild west" environment. This left them, and children, at the mercy of companies that suggested children as young as three could be transgender, or that there is a "galaxy" of genders, or that children should be encouraged to make genitalia out of Play-Doh. Nine months on, no guidance has materialized.

By contrast, parents, teachers and campaigners alike should be heartened by the new guidance on gender. Tackling the most emotive and thorniest of subjects, it shows that clear leadership can combine compassion with caution. The onus is now on schools to do the same.

# **Home Improvements**

# Despite good elements, Michael Gove's planning policy deserves a thumbs-down

Among the many divisions that beset the Tory party, one of the hardest to reconcile is that between the urge to protect homeowners and the drive to promote growth. Planning is the issue over which these two powerful instincts collide most obviously. With the publication of the updated National Planning Policy Framework yesterday, Michael Gove, secretary of state for housing, has tried to effect a reconciliation; but as the election approaches and the government gets increasingly desperate to shore up its votes, the job becomes ever more difficult.

Gove deserves credit for his insistence that local authorities need to publish plans allocating land for housing development, as required by law. Many councils simply don't bother. Basildon in Essex, for instance, has not adopted one since 1998. The government has done little to punish such offenders. In future, councils that fail to publish plans may be stripped of their planning powers.

In order to help to reconcile homeowners to new housing, Gove is giving new emphasis to the way developments look. He is right to recognise that nimbyism isn't born purely of selfishness: it's also the consequence of tasteless development. The government has set up the Office for Place, a new public body to disseminate good design, which will help councils to ensure that new developments attract more admiration than hostility.

Gove has also doubled down on his commitment to promoting growth in Cambridge. The city is a leading global centre of life sciences, expected to be one of the world's fastest-growing industries this century. Its development has been constrained by the absence of laboratory space and the astronomical cost of housing. A development corporation will be created to facilitate the building of 150,000 new homes in and around the city over the next two decades. By combining growth with a focus on place-making, Gove intends that Cambridge should persuade Britain, in his words, "to fall back in love with the future".

Despite this, his changes do not redress the shift that has taken place over the past couple of years. Two years ago, the Tories abandoned a promising reform of the planning system because they lost a by-election to a Lib Dem candidate who pandered to local nimbyism. Last year, Gove caved in to MPs who wanted national housing targets abandoned. Targets still exist, but they are advisory. The absence of mandatory targets takes the

The absence of mandatory targets takes the force out of the government's insistence that local authorities must adopt local plans. Without externally imposed numbers, councils are free to choose how many houses can be built in their area. Their plans will be subject to inspection, but the absence of a mandatory target means that they are unlikely to be held to account for failing to meet local needs.

At the same time, the new planning policy framework gives councils more grounds for turning down developments. Building on the green belt is already hard. In future, it will be well-nigh impossible. Councils will also be able to dismiss schemes that are on agricultural land, or deemed likely to change the character of an area — which pretty much any big development does.

The Tories reckon that placating the nimbys will work in their favour at the next election. Perhaps it will. But it's certainly not in Britain's interests; and this newspaper thinks poorly of governments that put party above country.

# **Beyond Petroleum**

# The British Museum should be applauded for taking BP's money

Apparently, nobody likes an oil company. With manmade climate change no longer in dispute, there are few easier villains than the firms which pull fossil fuel from the ground and encourage the rest of us to burn it. They are also, however, extremely rich.

This presents any institution which relies upon philanthropy with a dilemma. With oil companies, that dilemma is particularly acute. The Science Museum still receives money from Shell and Adani, but is frequently beleaguered by protests. The National Theatre, the National Gallery, the BFI and Tate galleries have all recently made a great

show of rejecting oil money. Both the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal Opera House have cut ties with BP, the latter after 33 years. The British Museum and its chair, George Osborne, should be applauded for bucking that trend.

The museum has secured a £50 million donation from BP that will help to fund a "masterplan", which it said would maintain its buildings and collections for centuries. Overall, it is expected to cost more than £1 billion, including a new Energy Centre and Archaeological Research Centre. The deal with Britain's biggest oil company is expected to last for ten years. Money needs to come from somewhere.

After the RSC walked away from BP, a scheme which provided young people with £5 theatre tickets was thrown into doubt. It was also BP that paid for the Royal Opera House's outdoor, "big screen" productions. These no longer happen.

Activism isn't cheap. The pressure on cultural institutions, already strained by cuts in their state funding over the past decade, will only intensify. Critics may cry "greenwashing". In fact, the idea of ostracising oil companies makes little sense while we all still use petrol. If BP's charm offensive means more funding for our museums, we all benefit. Just don't drive there.

# World

# We need 500,000 more soldiers, say Ukraine generals

#### Ukraine

## Marc Bennetts Kyiv

Ukraine's generals are seeking to mobilise up to half a million new soldiers to push back Russia's invading army, President Zelensky said yesterday as concerns grow over the future of western military aid to the country.

Most Ukrainian soldiers at the front are believed to be volunteers, many of whom have been fighting almost nonstop since the start of Russia's invasion last year. Under Ukrainian law only males aged 27 to 60 can be mobilised, although younger men can volunteer to fight. Conscripts aged 18 to 20 cannot be sent to the battlefield.

Speaking at his annual press conference in Kyiv, Zelensky said he had yet to make a final decision on the army's request to swell its ranks. "I said that I would need more arguments to support this move. Because first of all it's a question of people, second, it's a question of fairness, it's a question of defence capability and it's a question of finances."

Even before the war, Ukraine's popu-

Even before the war, Ukraine's population of about 43 million people was less than a third of Russia's, meaning that President Putin is able to try to grind down Kyiv's forces through sheer weight of numbers.

At the start of the invasion there were

long queues at military recruitment offices as people rushed to sign up to defend Ukraine. Today many of those volunteers have been killed or injured or are simply exhausted, and Ukraine is struggling to replace them. The government has mobilised people to fight but the exact number is a state secret.

"I'm on the edge of a breakdown," a 50-year-old Ukrainian soldier told The Times this week, speaking on condition of anonymity. "I don't know how much longer I can go on."

Zelensky suggested that a victory for Donald Trump at next year's presidential elections in the United States could lead to a domino effect of western countries cutting assistance to Ukraine. Trump, who is expected to easily secure the Republican Party nomination, is ahead of President Biden in some opinion polls. He has pledged to resolve the war in Ukraine in 24 hours by forcing Zelensky to "make a deal"; a comment widely seen as meaning he would pressure him to surrender territory to Putin.

Zelensky did not directly criticise Trump, but he said if he returned to the White House it was clear that he would have a different policy" towards Ukraine than the Biden administration.

Republicans in the US Congress are refusing to approve a further \$60 billion military aid package for Ukraine until the White House agrees to immigration reforms. There is also increasing scepticism within the Republican Party that Ukraine would be able to push back Russian forces even if it got the assistance it is seeking, after its eagerly awaited summer counter-offensive spluttered to a standstill.

A trip by Zelensky to Washington this month failed to break the deadlock in Congress, despite Biden warning that a failure to provide more weapons would be a "Christmas gift" for Putin.

Last week Hungary blocked a European Union financial aid deal for Ukraine, and fewer than half the one million artillery shells that the EU promised have been delivered. However, European leaders have promised that they will not abandon Kyiv.

A report by the Institute for the Study of War, a US-based think tank, warned that Russia could conquer all of Ukraine if the US and Europe stopped providing military assistance. "Such an outcome would bring a battered but triumphant Russian army right up to Nato's border from the Black Sea to the Arctic Ocean," it wrote.

Zelensky's comments on mobilisation came after a top Ukrainian general said that troops along the entire front line were facing ammunition shortages and had been forced to downsize some operations because of a decrease in foreign assistance. "The volumes we have are not sufficient," General Oleksandr Tarnavskyi said.

Although Russian casualties are estimated by western intelligence to be equivalent to 90 per cent of the 360,000-strong army that invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the Kremlin has managed to replenish its forces by recruiting prisoners and carrying out a nationwide mobilisation last year.

A year ago Zelensky was basking in the success of Ukrainian advances that routed the Russian army in the east, north and south. His star has fallen since then amid speculation of a rift with the head of his armed forces. Wagner makes a killing from Africa's gold, Roger Boyes, page 26





# Unloved Caravaggio seen in a glorious new light

t had long been considered one of Caravaggio's least popular works, but following its restoration his painting of David has been declared a "masterpiece" (Isambard Wilkinson writes).

Experts from the Prado Museum in Madrid have stripped away layers of dirt and oxidised varnish from David with the Head of Goliath that over time had obscured key elements of the Italian artist's chiaroscuro brilliance

brilliance.
The restoration
work uncovered a
section of radiant
light around David's
head as well as a
correction made by

Caravaggio, along with two big tears in the canvas. "This shows us a

"This shows us a new Caravaggio, giving us an image of the painting that was hitherto unknown, the authentic image of this masterpiece that after so much time in the shadows recovers the light with which it was conceived," said Almudena Sánchez, who was in charge of the restoration.

David García, the curator of the painting, which was unveiled in the museum yesterday, said: "We found a correction in the right foot of the figure of David where there was an intention to create a sandal that was then covered up." During

the cleaning process "we discovered a luminosity around David's head, almost treating him like a saint with a halo"

saint with a halo". The museum previously described the work, which dates to about 1600, as "one of the least popular paintings in the much-explored Caravaggio canon, [that] has enjoyed mixed critical fortune, and considerable doubt persists as to its provenance".

Compared with the many other treatments of the biblical episode, the scene depicted is unusual: it shows David securing Goliath's decapitated head by tying the hair, to display it as a trophy. "We hope



President Zelensky told the press he had yet to reach a decision on mobilisation

# Russia has the initiative, claims Putin

## Maxim Tucker

President Putin congratulated his military leaders yesterday, saying the war in Ukraine had shifted in Russia's favour after Kyiv's counteroffensive stalled. He said: "Our troops are holding the

He said: "Our troops are holding the initiative. We are effectively doing what ... we want."

The commander of Ukraine's ground forces, General Oleksandr Syrsky, said his troops were running low on ammunition against "superior weapons and numbers". He said Russian forces were attacking from Bakhmut towards the

bigger cities of Kramatorsk and Slovyansk in an attempt to take the entire Donbas region.

Putin met his top brass the day after the formal launch of his re-election campaign. The Russian president was belligerent as he looked forward to the prospect of the United States entering the new year without agreeing a military aid package for Kyiv, mocking the West's failure to help Ukraine break through in its summer operation. Putin said: "All attempts by the West to deliver us a military defeat, a strategic defeat, were shattered by the courage and for

titude of our soldiers." He said Ukraine had "wasted its reserves while trying to show at least some results of its so-called counteroffensive to its masters."

called counteroriensive to its masters.
Putin accused Nato of provoking the
war and insisted that Russia would continue to press its invasion. He said: "The
West isn't abandoning its strategy of
containment of Russia and its aggressive goals in Ukraine. Well, we also
aren't going to abandon the goals of the

special military operation."

Putin said the Kremlin was open to talks but made clear that control of Ukraine was still his central condition.

# Owl be seeing you: New

## **United States**

#### Will Pavia New York

One evening Robin Herbst-Paparne was on her sofa reading with her cat, Lucy Goose, snuggled on her lap, when there was a thump outside the window.

"You hear all sorts of sounds here on the Lower East Side," said Herbst-Paparne, a psychologist. "But my cat jumped up."

Outside, an enormous creature was on the air-conditioning unit, its backside pressed to the glass. "I just saw this big poof of feathers," she said. She couldn't know it then, but she was in the presence of greatness: it was Flaco, an owl that escaped from Central Park Zoo in February, survived, prospered, and became a New York celebrity with an international following

r ty with an international following. "I was staring straight into Flaco's rear end," she said.

rear end," she said.

Herbst-Paparne is one of a succession of New Yorkers to have looked out of their windows recently to be confronted by the city's most famous bird staring in at them, round-eyed.

Nan Knighton, a poet on the Upper West Side, spent several hours talking

## French eat meat laced with additives that are banned from pet food

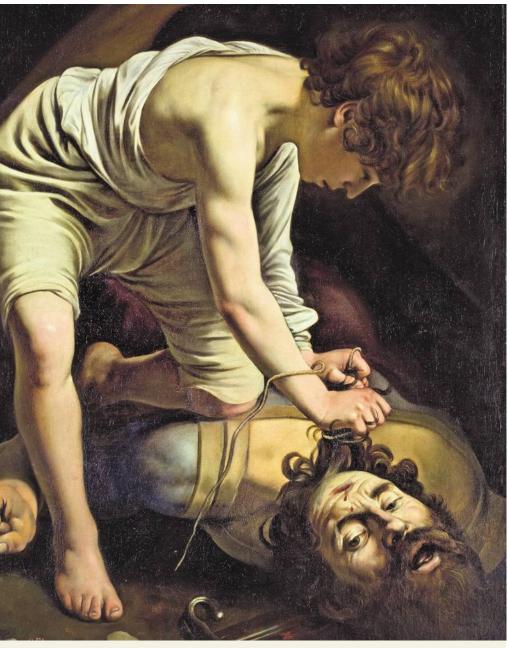
Page 29



Take a seat: Ikea sells off its flatpack antiques to classic furniture fans

Page 30





A radiographic study restoration process found corrections. top left, to the giant's face and hair

the restoration will rehabilitate the work's standing as it has a novel iconographic idea which breaks with

the traditional representation of David and Goliath," García said. A radiographic

study found "two

very serious areas of damage", Sánchez said. "Both were mended in very old affected the original paint." The work's provenance remains unknown.

The earliest reference to it in the museum is 1794.

# York's feathered fugitive on a flying visit

to the owl. "He was the most gorgeous thing I've ever seen," she told the WABC radio station.

Flaco, a Eurasian-eagle owl, a species usually found in mountainous forests in Europe and Asia, arrived in 2010 as a new attraction at Central Park Zoo. On February 3 this year, the zoo said that someone had cut a hole in his enclosure. The owl was loose.

Zoo officials tracked him through the park, trying to catch him using bait and recordings of eagle owl calls, but "the park is full of rats and he has been very successful at hunting", the zoo said.

Since then, Flaco's adventures have been chronicled in the social media posts of Manhattan Bird Alert. He was in Central Park until October 31, said David Barrett, who manages the service.

Then the owl went south. Barrett speculated that this was because he was seeking a mate and

Residents are becoming used to Flaco's adventures



"his hoots have gone unanswered". He returned last month, Barrett said, spending the days "resting in building courtyards outside the park" where he had been harassed by crows and blue jays trying to drive him away.
"I think he learnt that

these backyards in the city are excellent for him because they don't have birds, and they are protected from the wind'

# Widow of serial killer guilty over student murder

Adam Sage Paris

A three-decade battle for justice by the family of a British student who was raped and strangled in France ended yesterday when a serial killer's widow was convicted for her role in the

Monique Olivier, 75, was given a life sentence in connection with the deaths of Joanna Parrish, a 20-year-old Leeds University undergraduate whose body was found in a river in Burgundy in 1990, and two French victims: Marie-Angèle Domèce, 18, and Estelle Mouzin, 9.

The defendant was already serving life for her role in five other murders committed over the course of 16 years with Michel Fourniret, her late husband, who was known as the "Ogre of the Ardennes".

She is barred from applying for parole until she is at least 87.

After the verdict, Parrish's 80-yearold father, Roger, said: "There has never been any doubt in our minds that [Olivier] was equally responsible in the murder." Olivier had "actively partici-pated [in] and encouraged" all three

Patrick Proctor, 55, who was Parrish's boyfriend at the time of the murder, also denounced the 33-year wait to secure a conviction and described the French justice system as "disjointed and unprofessional".

With Olivier and Fourniret having escaped arrest for 16 years, during which they continued to commit murder and rape, Proctor said that the "lack of professionalism" by police and prosecutors "may have cost lives".

He went on to say that during the trial "we've had to listen to details so unbearable that they could destroy us"

Fourniret died in jail in 2021 after being convicted of eight murders. But Nanterre criminal court outside Paris was told that police believe he and Olivier committed 35 murders between their meeting in 1987 and 2003, when they were arrested after a victim escaped and alerted the Belgian police. The couple divorced in 2010 while in prison.

The court heard that Fourniret was obsessed with virgins and that Olivier helped to procure them for him in the knowledge that he would rape and murder them.

Before the jury retired, Olivier said: "I regret everything I did and I ask for forgiveness from the families of the victims, [although] I know that what I

did was unpardonable."
Parrish's father and Pauline Murrell, 75, her mother, were present during the three-week trial. Didier Safar, the presiding judge, paid tribute to them for spending decades fighting to discover the truth about their daughter's death, and said the trial might never have been held without their "tenacity"

Parrish had been spending a year in Auxerre in Burgundy as part of her modern languages degree when she fell victim to Fourniret and Olivier. **Behind the story** 

hen the battered body of Joanna Parrish was discovered in a river near Auxerre in 1990, police were flummoxed (Adam Sage writes).

They had no clues, no leads, no suspects. It never seems to have occurred to them to link the murder of the British student with the disappearance of Isabelle Laville, 17, a local girl on her way home from school in Auxerre in 1987, or with that of Marie-Angèle Domèce, 18, who vanished returning to her village near Auxerre in 1988.

If detectives had bothered to look, they might have realised that the inhabitants of Saint-Cyrles-Colons included Michel Fourniret, who had been released from prison in 1987 after serving a seven-year term for child rape.

He had moved to a house in the village with Monique Olivier, who had answered an advert he had placed in a Catholic newspaper asking for a correspondent to alleviate his solitude during his jail sentence. But it took more than a decade

for police and prosecutors to treat Fourniret and Olivier as suspects in Parrish's killing and over three decades to hold a court case.

The jury was told that Fourniet and Olivier had sealed a pact after their correspondence led to a meeting and then to marriage in the late 1980s. Fourniret would kill Olivier's first husband. In return, she would help him to find young girls, or "pretty little subjects" as he called them. He never carried out his part of the

Olivier said she was used as "bait" for the victims. Sometimes the couple brought along their son, Sélim, born in 1988, to add a veneer of respectability.
How many victims were there?

Police are unsure but suspect it may be 35 in all. The trial, sadly, failed to shed light on this question.

the court was told. Saying they wanted her to give English lessons to their son, the couple persuaded her to get into their van before Fourniret beat her unconscious, raped her, strangled her and threw her body into a river, the court was told.

Olivier said she had sat in the front of the vehicle while Parrish was assaulted and killed in the back.

She gave similar evidence in connection with the death of Domèce, who was also tricked into getting into a vehicle with her and Fourniret in Auxerre in 1988

# Victory for Hindus who want to turn mosque into a temple

India

#### Amrit Dhillon Delhi

Hindus who want to turn a mosque into a temple have achieved a significant victory, with a court throwing out Muslim demands to block the move.

Campaigners argue that the 17thcentury Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, was built on top of a Hindu temple and should be restored to its earlier status

The case is part of a concerted cam-

paign by right-wing Hindus affiliated with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to take control of mosques.

They assert that Islamic invaders and rulers destroyed Hindu temples over several centuries, and are compiling a

list of 3,000 mosques to target.

The claims are inflammatory in a country where Muslims already feel undermined. The majority of the 1.4 billion Indian population are Hindu, with

Muslims comprising about 200 million. The polarising conflict over mosques

dates back to 1992, when a Hindu mob destroyed the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, on the grounds that it had been built on the site of a destroyed Hindu temple.

After a prolonged legal case the site was handed over to Hindus by the Supreme Court in 2019 and work began to construct a new Ram temple on the site. On January 22 the Hindu government and its supporters will celebrate the inauguration of the temple.

Narendra Modi, the prime minister,

said during a visit to Varanasi, his constituency, that India had to "rebuild the symbols of its culture and faith" that had been destroyed by "tyrants". He held up the Ram temple at Ayodhya as an example of this revival.

The Allahabad high court that ruled on the latest case granted permission last week for a survey of the 17th-century Shahi Eidgah mosque in Mathura to see if it contains Hindu artefacts.

For many Muslims, the temple campaign is less about religious belief than

about robbing them of their dignity and showing them their "place" in a resurgent Hindu India. "We're heading into an election next year and this is a perfect time for them to make yet another issue over a mosque. We are heading towards a Hindu state," Taslim Ahmed Rehmani, head of the Muslim Political Council of India, said.

The Gyanvapi mosque court ruling is a setback but it does not end the matter as Muslims may appeal against the decision in the Supreme Court.



hite satin Whirling dervishes perform a prayer ritual in Konya. Turkey, to mark the 750th anniversary of the death of Meylana Jalaluddin Rumi, poet and father of Sufism, a form of Islamic mysticism

# **US** prepares to hit back at rebels attacking ships

George Grylls Political Correspondent Richard Spencer Tel Aviv

The US is drawing up plans to strike back at the Houthis in Yemen after the Iran-backed group attacked naval and commercial ships in the Red Sea.

Pentagon officials have outlined

options for a missile attack on Houthi positions after an increase in raids on shipping that has led western nations to

scramble warships to the area. The US has moved the Dwight D Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group into the Gulf of Aden, as part of an international maritime task force to support a potential counter-strike, an official told Politico. The US military has also provided options to commanders to bomb targets in Yemen, the official added.

A British destroyer, HMS Diamond, has arrived in the region to help to protect commercial shipping. It shot down a Houthi drone at the weekend.

The Biden administration is still hoping that diplomacy will bring an end to the Houthi threat to shipping before launching attacks, Bloomberg reported.

The Houthis meanwhile

said they would not back down in the face of the "Operation Prosperity Guardian" task force that also includes Canadian and Bahraini French,

The rebel Yemeni militia group has been launching missile and drone attacks on container ships and oil tankers that it says are linked to Israel. It has seized one ship, the Bahamas-

and is holding its 25 crew hostage.

Separately, a British minister revealed that Sir Tony Blair will hold talks with Binyamin Netanyahu over the war in Gaza, as support for the conflict wavers among Israel's allies.

The former prime minister, 70 has been touted as a potential intermediary in humanitarian talks and has the backing

of Netanyahu, according to Israeli media reports. A former envoy to the Middle East, Blair has known Netanyahu for more than 25 years.

Yesterday Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton held talks with President Macron in Paris, and Giorgia Meloni, Italy's

Sir Tony Blair is a former envoy to the Middle East prime mijnister, in Rome as part of a European effort to co-ordinate diplomatic pressure on Israel. The UK and Germany have called for a sustainable ceasefire, and France has called for an immediate and durable cessation of hostilities.

In a Commons debate about the humanitarian situation in Gaza where the death toll is approaching 20,000 since the October 7 attacks, according to the local Hamas-run health authorities — Andrew Mitchell, the minister for development and Africa, said UK concerns were being "well ventilated" by "senior British poli-ticians" in meetings with Netanyahu.

"I think Sir Tony Blair is seeing Prime Minister Netanyahu shortly too," he told MPs.

Blair has the blessing of the UK government in pursuing unofficial talks with Netanyahu. "He knows Netanyahu very well and is a force for good," a government source said.

A spokeswoman for Blair refused to comment on private meetings.

The militant group Islamic Jihad re-

leased a new video of two Israeli hostages held in Gaza last night. It came a few hours after President Herzog of Israel said his country was ready for a new temporary ceasefire and to exchange hostages for Palestinian prisoners.

Israel's critics must do more than just carp, Daniel Finkelstein, page 21

# Gaza hospital manager 'was working for Hamas'

Richard Spencer

Israel has sought to justify arresting scores of medical staff in Gaza, posting video that purports to show a hospital manager confessing to working for Hamas

Ahmed Kahlot, head of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza, was detained last week along with 70 other medical staff. It followed the arrest last month of Mohammed Abu Salmiya, director of al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza's

In the face of protests, the Israel security agency, Shin Bet, released a video of Kahlot's interrogation, in which he confesses to having been recruited and trained by Hamas in 2010. He says that 16 staff at the hospital were also from Hamas, and that Hamas officials had offices there.

The release of the video was con-demned by pro-Palestinian support groups, who said there was no justification for publishing interrogation evi-dence obtained under unclear conditions without the presence of a lawyer.

Claims and counter-claims between Israel and the Gazan health authorities — and the international agencies that work with them — have been a theme of the war, which began with the bombing of al-Ahli Arab Hospital. Doctors claimed 470 people died when it was struck by an Israeli airstrike. The Israeli Defence Forces said a misfiring Pales-tinian Islamic Jihad rocket had struck the car park, where displaced people were sheltering. Later the Israeli army

laid siege to al-Shifa Hospital, claiming it was used by Hamas and that its fighters had a "command centre" in

tunnels underneath it.

Last night the director of al-Ahli,
Fadel Naim, said it was "out of action" after being stormed on Monday by Israeli troops, who arrested doctors, other medical staff and patients: "We can't receive any patients or injured," he

The Israelis insist that Hamas uses hospitals as well as schools and other facilities as cover for their activity, knowing they cannot be attacked.

The video of Kahlot's interrogation

more likely, a recording summarising his "confessions" — goes into detail of his rank within Hamas, brigadier, and Hamas's use of an ambulance to transport a male Israeli hostage who was held at the hospital for a time.

"Hamas has offices inside the hospi-tals," he said. "There are places for senior officials, they also brought a kidnapped soldier there. There is a designated place for investigations, internal security, and special security. They all have private phone lines inside the hospital." He called the Hamas leadership "cowards" for operating from the safety of tunnels not available to civilians.

Ghassan Abu Sitta, a British-Palestinian surgeon who spent weeks earlier in the conflict working in both al-Shifa and al-Ahli hospitals, said the Israelis were taking these actions and planned "show trials" because their attempts to show al-Shifa had been used as a command centre had failed

# French eat meat with additives that are banned from pet food

France

#### David Chazan Paris

French MPs are calling for a ban on preservatives that continue to be used in processed meats such as ham and salami despite being not allowed in pet foods because they are considered to be carcinogenic.

Nitrites and nitrates are used as preservatives in many cold meats and cheeses, and give ham and bacon their pink hue.

The European Union has pledged to phase out the use of nitrites in pet foods by 2025 because of their proven links with cancer, heart disease and diabetes. In October the European Commission announced tighter limits for their use in all foodstuffs, but a number of French MPs have spoken out to demand a blanket ban.

Richard Ramos, an MP from the centrist MoDem party, which is allied with President Macron's Renaissance group, said the EU was resisting such a move because of lobbying by certain food manufacturers who were determined to keep using the additives in charcuterie.

"There hasn't been the same sort of lobbying for pet food, so that has allowed scientists and politicians to advance calmly in that area," he said. "Dogs and cats are protected, but not neonle."

people."
The anomaly has raised awareness of the risks, and many members of the public interviewed by the French media have expressed outrage.

Ramos has written to Macron urging him to intervene and has also sent him a bag of nitrite-free biscuits for his much-photographed dog. Nemo.

much-photographed dog, Nemo.
"I wouldn't want to poison the president's dog," he said. "But we must also think about the health of our fellow citizens, particularly the poorest, as the better-off increasingly buy food

without nitrites. Two levels of foodstuffs are being created, with a risk of cancer for the poor."

cancer for the poor."

Vets say the risk could be greater to animals since many are fed exclusively on industrially produced pet foods, most of which have, until now, contained nitrites.

Macron's government pledged to limit the use of the additives in all foodstuffs last year after French health officials warned of the significant risks.

Food manufacturers have long tried to minimise the health risks of nitrites and nitrates, despite a decision by the World Health Organisation in 2015 to classify processed meats as "carcinogenic to humans". The industry has played up the role of the additives in protecting against botulism, listeria and salmonella but critics say preservatives would not be needed if the shelf lives of processed meats were shortened.

About 90 per cent of bacon sold in the UK is believed to contain nitrites, which research has linked with the development of colon, bowel, breast and prostate cancer

and prostate cancer.
Last year scientists from Queen's University Belfast urged the British government to ban their use in food. The Food Standards Agency advises on its website, however, that "existing levels of nitrites and nitrates are sufficiently protective for consumers".

ciently protective for consumers". It says: "Processed meat, whether produced with the use of nitrites and nitrates or without, can form part of [a] varied and balanced diet when consumed within current NHS guidelines."

The NHS recommends limiting consumption to 70g or less per day.

The World Health Organisation says that consuming 50g of processed meat each day increases the risk of colorectal cancer by 18 per cent.

Nitrites are listed in food ingredients as E249 and E250. Nitrates are indicated by E251 and E252.



# Humble pie for social media star in cake row

ne of the world's most popular fashion influencers has apologised and promised to donate £1 million to a children's hospital after she was involved in a charity scam and criticised by Giorgia Meloni, Italy's prime minister (Tom Kington writes).

clean to her 29.6 million Instagram followers after she profited from a deal to sell Christmas pandoro cake for charity. "You can make mistakes, and when it happens you need to admit it, and if possible make amends and learn from it," Ferragni said in a video post as she fought back tears.

Italy's competition watchdog found that customers buying a pandoro promoted by Ferragni were led to believe that part of the price would be donated to the Regina Margherita, a paediatric hospital in Turin. But apart from £50,000 donated up front by the manufacturer, the

Chiara Ferragni, who has 29.6 million Instagram followers, returned her fee and donated £1 million to a hospital after she was shamed in a charity scam

hospital received nothing, while Ferragni, 36, was paid €1 million.

She was ordered to repay the €I million and has now promised to donate the same amount to the hospital.

Meloni referred to the incident in a speech on Sunday, saying: "The true examples to follow are not influencers who make a lot of money putting on clothes or even promoting very expensive cakes, making you think

it's for charity while it is actually just to pay their fee worth millions."

Ferragni was backed by her husband, the rapper Fedez, 34, who pointed out how ministers in Meloni's government have been investigated for breaking rules. He has taken on the Italian right in the past, accusing Meloni's coalition ally Matteo Salvini of ignoring eav rights.

ignoring gay rights.
With 67 per cent of
Facebook posts in Italy
about the pandoro row
critical of Ferragni,
Italians appeared to side
with Meloni. "Fake, so
fake," one person wrote
on Instagram about
Ferragni's tearful apology.

# Amsterdam picks new red-light district

#### Netherlands

#### **Bruno Waterfiel**

Amsterdam council has chosen a controversial site for a new "erotic centre" that will move prostitutes out of the red-light district.

As plans for the "mega brothel" were announced, demonstrators burnt giant E and C letters, representing erotisch centrum, in protest against a scheme that has polarised the liberal city. "The whole plan has to be burnt down," Marja Volkering, one of the protesters, said. "This idea is really one of those bureaucratic solutions: good for nothing."

ing."

Details of the project will be announced next week as the city tries to deter sex and drug tourists by closing 100 "window" brothels in the red-light district of De Wallen.

Groups of young men, often drunk or high after visiting Amsterdam's cannabis cafés, flock to see the legalised brothels with prostitutes in shop windows. Under the new guidance the

sex workers will be based in a modern "culture, education and erotica" hotel and event centre with 100 rooms, inspired by imagery from Baz Luhrmann's film Moulin Rouge!

"This location is the most promising and has the fewest disadvantages," Femke Halsema, the mayor, said in a letter to councillors. "The location is in a strong, socially resilient neighbour-hood compared with other locations in the city. It is outside the Al0 ring road. Amsterdam city centre must once again become a place where all Amsterdammers enjoy coming and where residents feel at home."

The new rooms, equipped with panic buttons, will be available to be rented by the hour by prostitutes who solicit clients online, Halsema said.

The venue would be an "interesting alternative" to the red-light district, she said. She also plans to encourage male and transsexual sex workers to operate from the complex, which she believes will be safer for them.

However, the site has already been

dubbed the "armpit" of the AIO and faces stiff opposition from EU officials working at the nearby European Medicines Agency, as well as hotels offering conference facilities.

The council fuelled more anger by admitting that the centre will be next to part of Amstelpark, a large, popular green space that has the Riekermolen, a historic windmill monument, at its centre.

"How is it possible that this beautiful park, which receives large groups of parents with children in the summer, has to be sacrificed for sex work and cheap tourism?" wrote Marieke Ruijter, a resident of the area, in a letter published by Amsterdam's Het Parool newspaper.

Another outraged resident, Henk Visser, wrote that he had lived in the "garden city" Buitenveldert district for almost 50 years.

"I will soon be living in a neighbourhood with a red-light district," he said. "I could never have imagined that. Thank you, Mrs Halsema."

# Italy's older generations outnumber children 5 to 1

### Italy

#### Tom Kington Rome

Children in Italy are outnumbered more than five to one by people aged over 65, the country's statistics agency has reported.

For every child aged six or under there are now 5.6 Italians aged over 65, compared with a ratio of one to one in 1971, Istat said. Its final census numbers for last year put the Italian population at just under 59 million, down from more than 60 million in 2014.

The fall is being driven by Italy's declining birthrate, one of Europe's lowest, measured at 1.22 children per woman, far below the rate of two needed for a stable population.

The collapse has been attributed to a struggling economy, which has led to 61.2 per cent of people living with their parents until they are 35.

"The drop in the population is being

limited thanks to the positive trend among the foreign population in Italy," Istat reported, noting that migrants now numbered 5.1 million, 8.7 per cent of the population.

The numbers are a challenge for Giorgia Meloni, the prime minister, who claims that migration is not the answer and is trying to find the funds to increase child support. Many working women say they cannot afford to have children because of the lack of nursery schools, and paltry benefit payments.

schools, and paltry benefit payments.

Meloni's disparaging attitude to migration was backed in Rome at the weekend by the billionaire Elon Musk as he addressed a convention held by Meloni's Prothers of Italy party.

Meloni's Brothers of Italy party.

"You can't depend on other countries for immigration," Musk, who has II children, said to applause. "We have to maintain [the] reasonable cultural identity of countries or they simply won't be those countries."

# Ikea sells off its flatpack antiques to furniture fans

Sweden

#### Kieran Gair

Furniture made by Ikea in the second half of the 20th century is fetching thousands of pounds at auction as collectors vie to secure rare items from the company's earliest days.

A selection of 122 second-hand furnishings from the 1950s onwards were sold at Auktionsverk auction house in Stockholm on Monday night, far exceeding expectations by fetching a total of £32,000. A red impala sofa by Gillis Lund-gren, the celebrated Ikea designer who died in 2016, was sold in

who died in 2016, was sold in stores for the equivalent

of £100 in 1972, but on Monday went for

Li Pamp, Auk-onsverk's chief tionsverk's executive, 'I've been in the auction industry for almost 30 years, and if somebody had

A red impala sofa by Ikea sold for £1,700

said when I started that one day you will host an Ikea auction in a very nice showroom, I would have said

'No, that's absolutely not possible.'"
She said Ikea had courted controversy, citing its history of following trends and criticism of it on environmental grounds. "But there are also some items that stand out," Pamp said. "Many very famous designers have been involved in Ikea at some point in their career. And for many, Ikea was the starting point of their

Many of the most sought-after at auction were ones that flopped at first because of production costs or poor

sales. Their prompt discontinuation meant that there are few examples around.

Pontus Silfver-stolpe, co-founder of the auction directory Barnebys, said: "The flat package fortune contin-ues to surprise the auction world, but we have more peaks ahead."



Supporting role The actor Kevin Bacon, right, was outshone by Brodie, a goldendoodle, as they watched the Los Angeles Lakers



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# Macron bows to the right over immigration laws

France

#### **David Chazan Paris**

President Macron has been forced into a humiliating compromise with right-wing parties, including Marine Le Pen's National Rally, to get his bill toughening immigration laws passed by parliament.

Le Pen claimed an "ideological victory" as she said her party would back a revised version of the bill thrashed out yesterday after days of egotiations. Parliament passed the bill comfortably thanks to the support of the conservative opposition party, The Republicans, although 37 of Macrons own MPs either abstained or voted against it.

Minutes before the late-night vote in the National Assembly, the lower house, after hours of debate, Macron tried to calm the left wing of his centrist party by indicating that he would not count the National Rally's votes He threatened to call a second vote if its support were decisive in passing the bill. However, it would have passed without the backing of Le Pen's party.

government initially

wanted to make it easier to grant residency rights to migrants working in industries that lacked labour, such as hospitality and construction, while also speeding up expulsion procedures for illegal immigrants. To gain right-wing support, the government agreed to introduce stricter conditions for residency permits and to delay migrants' eligibility for housing or child benefits by several years.

Since the governing party lost its parliamentary majority last year, Macron has been forced to opposition support or resort to an unpopular executive decree mechanism to push through controversial measures, such as his fiercely contested pension reforms.

Last week, parliament rejected an earlier version of the immigration bill as soon as it was tabled for debate. Left-wing parties also opposed its latest incarnation. Alexis Corbière, of the hard-left France Unbowed party, described it as "a triumph for Marine Le Pen", who is tipped to win the next presidential election in

Macron escaped the political crisis

that would have resulted from a failure to reach agreement on the bill. but MPs on the left of his centrist Renaissance party are deeply troubled by what some see as a de facto alliance with Le Pen over immigration, viewing it as a further sign of Macron's shift to the right.

The new legislation exposed divi-sions within Renaissance. Macron held crisis talks with Élisabeth Borne, the prime minister, and Gérald Darmanin, the interior minister, last night as six left-wing ministers held a separate meeting amid suggestions that some might resign.

Darmanin insisted that the government had not given way to Le

Pen on depriving immigrants of the right to claim housing and other benefits. "Foreigners who work can claim benefits," he said. "Those who do not work will not be helped.

The deal is likely to boost Le Pen's party as it gears up for European parliament elections in six months. Le Pen said the deal was "a small step" that did not go far enough, but she backed it because it was "in the national interest".

# Trump is banned from ballot by court

**United States** 

**David Charter** Washington

Colorado's supreme court has banned Donald Trump from appearing on the state's primary election ballot paper after ruling that he engaged in an insurrection by stoking the riot at the US Capitol on January

It makes Trump the first presidential candidate in US history to be deemed ineligible by a state to run for the White House, invoking the 14th Amendment of the Constitution that bars officials who have engaged in insurrection or rebellion from holding office. While the ruling applies to the primary vote in March, if it stands it would also apply to the presidential poll in November. The close decision, by a vote of four to three judges, applies only to Colorado, a safe Democratic state.

It is certain to be sent to the US Supreme Court by the Trump campaign which has been fighting similar moves in other including Arizona, Mi Michigan, Minnesota and New Hampshire. The Colorado ruling assesses the events of January 6 to be an insurrection and that Trump took part

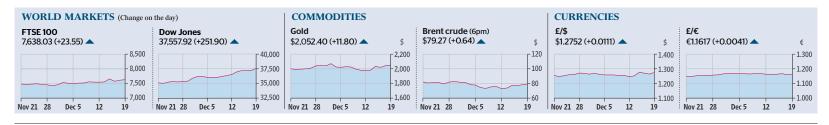
"We do not reach these conclu-

sions lightly," the majority opinion of the judges states. "We are mindful of the magnitude and weight of the questions now before us. We are likewise mindful of our solemn duty to apply the law, without fear or favour."

The court stayed its ruling until January 4 to give the US Supreme Court time to weigh in.

Colorado's presidential primary ballot must be set by January 5 because voting papers start being posted later that month before the primary on March 5.

Trump's campaign called the decision "flawed" and "undemocratic," and said there would be an appeal.



# MPs step up pressure on Dowden to intervene in UAE Telegraph bid

#### Helen Cahill

Pressure is mounting on the deputy prime minister to intervene on national security grounds in the Abu Dhabibacked bid for the Telegraph newspapers.

Conservative MPs have demanded Oliver Dowden use the National Security and Investment Act to investigate the United Arab Emirates' takeover.

However, it is understood that the Cabinet Office is not expected to issue a

call-in notice on the acquisition imminently, despite an American intervention in a UAE purchase of Fortress Investment Group, of the United States.

The Times has been told Dowden is "unforthcoming" on the demands issued by backbench MPs. However, it is understood he would not be able to indicate whether or not an investigation is imminent as he would be acting in a quasi-judicial role in such a process. Any decision to issue a call-in

notice would be based on evidence of a risk to national security and the government has not ruled out an intervention. The takeover of the newspaper is under investigation in a process being run by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The Cabinet Office has intervened in 17 transactions since the act came into force in January 2022. The government used it to order the Chineseowned Nexperia to unwind its acquisi-

tion of Newport Wafer Fab, one of Britain's biggest semiconductor factories.

ain's biggest semiconductor factories.

American national security officials started reviewing the Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund's \$3 billion bid to invest in Fortress in July. The intervention came amid concerns over the UAE's support for China.

Mutaz Ahmed, the Telegraph's associate comment editor, has become the latest senior columnist to attack the bid for the newspapers, saying it would be inappropriate for the UAE to own the titles because it "sows chaos around the world". He cited reports that the UAE was supporting Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo's militia in the Sudanese civil war and reports that Emirati diplomats had been expelled from the country.

A UAE official responded to the

A UAE official responded to the expulsion of its diplomats from Sudan by saying the country had "consistently called for de-escalation, a ceasefire and the initiation of diplomatic dialogue".

# Rates 'must stay higher for longer'

# Bank chief dashes hopes of cuts early next year

#### Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

Interest rates will have to stay higher for longer, a senior Bank of England official has warned, dashing expectations of monetary easing next year. Sarah Breeden, in her first speech as

Sarah Breeden, in her first speech as the Bank's deputy governor for financial stability, said the risks of inflation remaining stubbornly high were greater than the chances of a significant fall.

"The economy is moving in the right direction to return inflation to the 2 per cent target, but our job isn't done," Breeden said. "The question I am focused on is whether there is evidence of persistent inflationary pressure, which means we may need to tighten further. Regardless, monetary policy still needs to be restrictive for an extended period to keep pushing down on inflation and to return it sustainably to target."

Her comments come a week after the Bank's rate-setting monetary policy committee, which includes Breeden, kept the base interest rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent for a third consecutive meeting. The MPC warned there were still "upside risks to the outlook for wage growth", which could warrant another increase to the base rate if this were to translate into higher inflation.

Annual consumer prices inflation has fallen from a peak of 11.1 per cent in October last year to 4.6 per cent 12 months later. The November figures, released today, are expected to show another dip to a fresh two-year low of 4.3 per cent.

The committee will be monitoring the inflation data and subsequent figures on wage growth before taking its next policy decision in February. This week Ben Broadbent, another of the Bank's deputy governors, warned that he needed to see further evidence of a weakening labour market before declaring victory over inflation.

The committee's consistently hawkish messaging is in stark contrast to money market pricing, where traders are betting on at least four interest rate cuts from the Bank next year, taking the base rate closer to 4.25 per cent. The pound, which strengthens in value on the back of higher interest rate expectations, rose 0.8 per cent against the dollar yesterday to \$1.275, approaching its highest level since August.

Although inflation has fallen significantly in recent months, measures of wage growth are falling only gradually to about 7.3 per cent. Breeden said Britain was suffering from higher price and wage inflation than both the US and eurozone, but the Bank was not targeting any particular rate of earnings growth or unemployment to bring inflation back to its target, a level that it thinks will be reached in early 2025.

Breeden said a period of prolonged high inflation would have "damaging" consequences for the economy, households and businesses, delaying investment decisions and increasing the volatility of price changes

tility of price changes.
"High inflation can make people lose trust in institutions," Breeden said. "The central bank and other policy institutions need to establish and maintain trust in their commitment to economic stability. If inflation is high for too long, people can begin to lose that trust and that risks a self-fulfilling expectation that inflation will accelerate"



# Shot in the Arm over breakfast

asayoshi Son, the billionaire technology investor, and Rene Haas, the chief executive of Arm Holdings, were spotted leaving the Treasury early yesterday morning after a meeting with Jeremy Hunt, raising speculation that one of Britain's greatest technology success stories could be exploring a secondary listing in London.

SoftBank, Son's huge investment fund, floated the Cambridge-based semiconductor group on the Nasdaq exchange in New York in September. However, Haas left the door open to a dual-listing at the time, saying that Arm was "incredibly proud of our UK heritage".

No one involved in the meeting was prepared to comment.

# Energy firm faces inquiry on emissions

Emily Gosden Energy Editor

A London-listed American gas and oil producer is facing scrutiny from the US Congress over its environmental liabilities.

Diversified Energy may be "vastly underestimating well clean-up costs" four members of the House of Representatives have alleged in a letter to Rusty Hutson Jr, its chief executive, seeking further information from the FTSE 250 group.

FTSE 250 group.

News of the letter sent shares in Diversified down by almost 15 per cent, or 188½p, to £11.22. The letter from Democrat members of the House energy and commerce committee was sent on Monday, coinciding with Diversified's shares beginning trading

under a secondary listing in New York. Diversified was founded by Hutson, 54, in 2001 and was listed in London in 2017, moving to the main market in 2020. It buys mature gas and oilwells that have been drilled by other firms and focuses on extending their life. It operates about 70,000 wells in the US.

Its environmental record and liabilities came under scrutiny in 2021 when an investigation by Bloomberg found methane leaks at many of its sites, raised concerns about rusty facilities and questioned whether Diversified would have enough cash to cover the costs of decommissioning the wells. The Democrats' letter echoes many of the same concerns, saying that if Diversified were unable to cover its liabilities, it "could create thousands of orphaned, methane-leaking wells".

Diversified noted that the letter had been written by four members of the minority party of a 52-member committee but said that it intended to "engage in a positive and open manner". It said: "Full modelling and accounting for the company's asset retirement obligations are audited by independent, global accounting firms and reserve engineers and transparently disclosed." Diversified added that it had reduced its operational emissions by more than a guarter since 2020.

# Need to know

Rishi Sunak considered giving everyone in Britain a pre-paid debit card to boost the economy with a summer spending spree in 2020, documents released by the Covid inquiry show. Page 2

Retail figures suggest the nation is taking advantage of flexible working arrangements to do last-minute Christmas shopping. Shops have been filling up with customers, according to figures published by MRI Software, with economists saying that £1.13 billion would have been spent on presents yesterday. Page 6

Energy suppliers, telecoms Energy suppliers, telecomes companies and banks are failing in every area of customer service as "standards plumb new depths", according to Which?. The consumer group has found that millions of people are being ignored or left on hold by businesses and that when they do get through, their problems are compounded by uncaring or poorly trained staff or ineffective chatbots. Page 16

Interest rates will have to stay higher for longer, a senior Bank of England official has warned, dashing expectations of monetary easing next year. Sarah Breeden, in her first speech as the deputy governor for financial stability, said the risks of inflation remaining stubbornly high were greater than the chances of a significant fall. Page 31

Pressure is mounting on the deputy prime minister to intervene on national security grounds in the Abu Dhabi-backed bid for the Telegraph newspapers. Conservative MPs have demanded Pressure is mounting on the that Oliver Dowden use the National Security and Investment Act to investigate the United Arab Emirates' takeover, Page 31

A London-listed American gas and oil producer is facing scrutiny from the US Congress over its environmental liabilities. Diversified Energy may be "vastly underestimating well clean-up costs", four members of the House of Representatives have alleged in a letter to its chief executive. Page 31

The financial results of Hipgnosis Songs Fund have been delayed amid a dispute over the valuation of the troubled music rights investment company's catalogues.

Bosses at Asda have told MPs that there are "no gaps" in its finances and that Britain's third biggest supermarkets group is on a sound footing, despite the growing cost of financing its £4.2 billion debt.

Difficulties faced by British companies in dealing with post-Brexit trading arrangements have "not eased" and fresh challenges are approaching as UK and EU rules diverge, the British Chambers of Commerce has warned, Page 34

The City minister has insisted the government is not "complacent" over the competitive threats facing Britain's capital markets as the Financial Conduct Authority pushes ahead with plans for reforms to the listings regime in London. Page 34

# Hipgnosis forced to delay results after catalogue of valuation errors

The financial results of Hipgnosis Songs Fund have been delayed amid a dispute over the valuation of the troubled music rights investment company's catalogues.

It represents yet another setback for the company, which is in the midst of a strategic review after it suffered a shareholder revolt over its governance in October.

Hipgnosis said that a valuation of its assets by Citrin Cooperman, its independent valuer, was "materially higher" than that implied by recent deals in the sector. These included Hipgnosis's thwarted \$417.5 million discounted sale of 29 catalogues, including works by Nelly, Shakira, Chrissie Hynde and Jay-Z, to a Blackstone fund managed by Merck Mercuriadis, who is also the founder of Hipgnosis, and this month's \$23.1 million sale of about 20,000 songs by Hipgnosis.

Given the discrepancy in valuation, the Hipgnosis board sought advice from Hipgnosis Song Management, its investment adviser, which is majorityowned by funds managed by Blackstone and is run by Mercuriadis, 60, on their opinion on the valuation.

"Hipgnosis Song Management Limited eventually provided an opinion, which was heavily caveated, such that the board has concerns as to the valuation of the company's assets in its

results for the six months to the end of September and has triggered yet more

uncertainty over the company's future. Hipgnosis, which had been due to issue the results yesterday, said it now expected to publish them by the end of the month.

Analysts at Jefferies said the delay was "a setback for shareholders in at-

tempting to resolve the fund's myriad of ation and NAV [net asset valuation] importantly reflecting recent transactional activity — is needed to help clear the decks for the portfolio's eventual

Shot Tower Capital as a lead adviser to conduct due diligence on its assets as broker. Singer was already an existing broker, alongside JP Morgan Cazenove external auditor.

Robert Naylor, former chairman of Round Hill Music, a private equity fund that in September agreed a \$469 mil-lion takeover by Alchemy Copyrights.

Jefferies said "the reconstituted board appears to have done the right thing here in rejecting a valuation that the wider market would have considered unrealistic".

Citrin Cooperman was approached for comment.

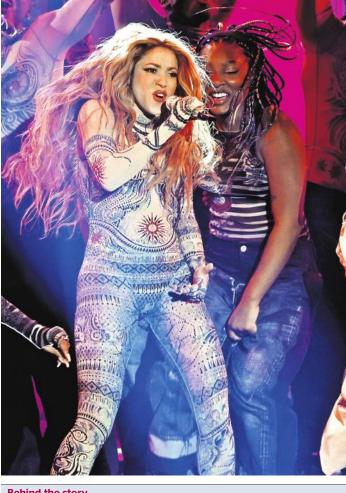
In a statement, Hipgnosis Song Management said that it had "fulfilled its duties to the company with respect to both the independent valuation and preparation of the interim results in a timely and efficient manner". It said it would "continue to work in a constructive manner to support the interests of the company and its shareholders".

Shares in Hipgnosis rose by ½p, or 0.6 per cent, to 69½p.

issues, as a more realistic portfolio valu-This month Hipgnosis appointed

part of its company review. Singer Capital Markets became its sole corporate and RBC Capital Markets, which are no longer involved. Last month Hipgnosis said PwC was standing down as its

The changes came after a tumultuous shareholder meeting in October, at which investors rejected the sale of the 29 catalogues and voted against the "continuation" of the fund. That gave the board six months to find a new strategy. Three directors were also removed, including Andrew Sutch, the chairman. He has been replaced by



### Behind the story

he Christmas period should be a happy time for Hipgnosis Songs Fund, the owner of the rights to a series of popular festive tunes, but it has been far from that. Instead, the embattled music investment company has criticism ringing

In delaying its half-

year results, the latest in a series of downbeat updates this year, Hipgnosis's new board revealed a rift with its investment manager and reinforced concerns about the credibility of the valuation of the

company's portfolio. The eleventh-hour postponement also has put the position of Blackstone back

under the spotlight after a deal to buy 29 catalogues by a fund run by the American investment group was rejected by Hipgnosis shareholders in October. Hipgnosis has now

said that it will publish interim results by the end of the month because its board believes that the valuation of its

# Asda owners shrug off fears over debt

## James Hurley

Bosses at Asda have told MPs that there are "no gaps" in the company's finances and that Britain's third biggest supermarkets group is on a sound footing, despite the growing cost of financing its £4.2 billion debt.

Mohsin Issa, 52, and his brother Zuber Issa, 51, backed by TDR Capital, the private equity firm, bought Asda from Walmart in a £6.8 billion debtfuelled deal in 2020. In May, the brothers agreed to sell the UK and Ireland operations of EG Group, their petrol station business, to Asda in a £2.3 billion tie-up.

The Commons business and trade select committee is examining the use of private equity in retail. Higher interest rates have left businesses backed by such firms with more expensive debts.

Liam Byrne, chairman of the committee, said he was worried about the very large but unclear amount of debt that he claimed Asda was facing.

Michael Gleeson, 54, Asda's chief

financial officer, told MPs that the group had £4.2 billion of debt, £500 million of which would become due in February at a higher interest rate, adding

"at least" £30 million to financing costs. Mohsin Issa said that despite higher borrowing costs, the grocer, which employs 151,000 people in the UK, was in a stable financial position. "We can give you the confidence that it is run properly," he told the committee.

When asked if he had any worries about Asda's debt, Issa said: "No, I don't. The debt leverage at the start of the year was at 4.2 times; that has gone down to 3.8 times and that trajectory is to go down even further by the end of

"At the same time, we are investing in colleague pay, customer pricing and loyalty. The business is highly cashgenerative."

The scrutiny comes days after reports that Morrisons, the rival retailer bought last year by Clayton, Dubilier & Rice, the American private equity firm, had told staff that it needed an overhaul

as it sought to improve its finances in

the light of its growing debt burden.

MPs said they were also concerned about the "opacity and sustainability of private equity structures".

Issa dismissed suggestions there was

money unaccounted for in Asda's financial reports: "I can assure you there is no gap in the accounts signed off by our auditors

He insisted that the 16 different entities between the ultimate owner and Asda's operating company was "not unusual for a large corporation like Asda". Many of the companies are registered offshore, but Issa said that "all of these companies are tax-registered and pay tax in the UK".

Gleeson defended the use of holding companies based in Jersey, saying that they could "facilitate corporate restruc-turings more quickly than can happen in England and Wales". He said that Asda would share accounts for the offshore entities with MPs, even though the Jersey-based companies did not need to publish annual accounts.

# MailOnline to erect paywall for exclusives

## Helen Cahill

The Daily Mail will start charging for its journalism online as it joins rival newspaper brands with the launch of a

The group's website MailOnline will start publishing up to 15 stories a day that will only be accessible to subscribers as it declares that its journalism

"costs money to produce".

The Mail said it would start charging for some of its most important content such as investigations, royal and celebrity exclusives, and opinion pieces by its leading columnists. The website is also set to start charging for health, money and travel advice. The newspaper has not disclosed the monthly fee to access the stories under the Mail+ brand.

Ted Verity, editor of Mail News-





The music company, which owns songs by artists including Shakira, left, Nelly, above and Chrissie Hvnde. said an independent valuation of its assets was "materially higher" than that implied by recent deals in the sector



catalogues by Citrin Cooperman, its independent valuer, is materially higher than recent deals in the sector. It added that advice from Hipgnosis Song Management Limited, its investment adviser, which is majorityowned by Blackstone, had failed to reassure the directors.
Analysts at Stifel,

the broker, said it had been "obvious" that the Inet asset valuel was incorrect. "In some ways, the delay in publishing the results on concerns over valuations seems about two years too late" it said.

likely that



Hipgnosis Song Management, run by Merck Mercuriadis, Hipgnosis's founder, left, was "trying to ensure that they protect their 'call' option to purchase the portfolio. Admitting to errors that opens the door to terminating the investment advisory contract

'for cause' likely lapses this option."

JP Morgan said it

was "surprised that another party had not been hired to provide

a valuation".
With the holiday season approaching, Hipgnosis, the board and its advisers have little time left to fulfil their pledge to publish the delayed results by the end of the year.

papers, said: "Everyone knows the best high-quality journalism of the kind the Mail is famous for costs money to produce and this will allow us to give our readers even more of it, alongside hundreds of great articles that will remain available to read for free."

Lord Rothermere, owner of Daily Mail and General Trust, told The Times this year that the group could build a premium subscription service. He said: "I would like to build a subscription part of the business. It would be different. I think we can carry on being mostly advertising, but we can also build a premium subscription product as well.'

DMGT's revenues increased by 2 per cent to £997 million for the year to September 30 as the group's events business continued to recover from the pandemic. However, revenue in its consumer media division fell by 5 per cent to £625 million and the unit swung to a statutory operating loss of £40 million.

The company said: "Advertising prices were adversely affected by circulation volumes, which continued to decline as expected, as well as by a challenging advertising market, due to pressure on UK consumers' real disposable income?

# The heat is on at Superdry as retailer issues profit warning

Lottie Hayton

An "abnormally mild autumn" that hit sales has forced Superdry to issue a profit warning, prompting concerns among analysts about the wider retail market this Christmas.

In an unscheduled trading update,

the fashion chain said its sales in the six months to October 28 had fallen by 13 per cent year-on-year, largely because warm weather meant that customers had been slow to buy its autumn and winter ranges. Wholesale sales in the first half of its financial year plunged by 41 per cent, partly because Superdry had quit its operation in the United States.

Shares in Superdry closed down 7½p, or 17.5 per cent, at 34½p.
"Despite progress on strategic priorities and the programme to recapitalise the balance sheet, the external environment has proven challenging and trading performance. challenging and trading performance

has been significantly below management expectations," Superdry said. "Profits for the year are therefore expected to reflect this weaker trading

seen to date."

Clive Black, an analyst at Shore
Capital, said: "The Superdry warning adds a little tension into the air ahead of the forthcoming new year trading updates from clothing players.

Despite chillier weather in the six weeks from October 28 to December 10, sales at Superdry remained down

7 per cent on a like-for-like basis.
Julian Dunkerton, the company's chief executive, said: "While we have seen modest signs of improvement through the recent spell of colder weather, current trading has remained challenging." The Cheltenham-based company has struggled since the return of Dunkerton, 58, its founder, as chief executive in 2019. The company fell to a £150 million loss for the year to the end of April.

Duff note sounds at discordant fund

**BUSINESS COMMENTARY** Alistair Osborne

ll I want for Christmas is ... the flipping financial results. Is that too much to ask? The shareholders in Hipgnosis Songs Fund have been putting up with one hell of a racket lately. But even they didn't expect a twist on Mariah Carey's yuletide ditty: a tune halfowned by the discordant group.

Bad luck. Instead of feelgood festive warbling, look what they've now been treated to: an 11th-hour delay to the numbers they are most keen to hear: the half-year figures. The reason? What looks a bit of a concocted row, starring a new board: the chairman Rob Naylor; the investment manager Merck Mercuriadis, whose business is majority-owned by Blackstone; and the "independent valuer" Citrin Cooperman. It's a bust-up, too, that again showcases the conflicts at the heart of the London-listed fund.

The board, joined just last week by the activist investor Christopher Mills, has postponed the results after finding that Citrin's portfolio valuation was "materially higher" than "implied by proposed and recent transactions". It cited two. The first was its goofed-up, conflict-ridden attempt to sell 29 catalogues to a Blackstone fund also managed by Mercuriadis for a net \$418 million — a deal voted down by 84 per cent of investors, who also turfed out half of the six directors, including former chairman Andrew Sutch. And second was its \$23.1 million disposal of some non-core songs.

The abortive sale, the board said, was at a 24.3 per cent discount to March's net asset value per share of 15lp, while the other one came in at 14.2 per cent less than September's as-yet undisclosed valuation. No question September's NAV will be lower than March's. But the clear suggestion? That despite real world deals, Citrin has still produced a heroic valuation - and one several octaves above the share price, up

0.6 per cent yesterday to 69½p. The board says it asked the firm Mercuriadis runs whether it thought Citrin's valuation was "fair and reasonable". But he refused to say, only relenting with a view so "heavily caveated" that it has concerns over the "valuation" of the "assets in the interim results".

Isn't all this weird? Naylor had Citrin's valuation on the day he became chairman: November 7. But, according to Mercuriadis's camp, the board didn't ask him until a month later to give his opinion on whether "true and fair value" question repeated in another guise on December 14. Yet it's the board that appoints a valuer and that, as Sutch noted last year, is "ultimately and solely responsible" for the "valuation" of Hipgnosis's catalogues. Rightly, Mercuriadis has no role in that. So, whatever his flaws, it's not his job to say whether Citrin's valuation is true and fair.

Mercuriadis would say it was only last Friday that the board lowered the bar and asked him merely if he thought the valuation "fair and reasonable", with his view relayed back on Saturday and caveated with boilerplate stuff — not least that a portfolio's valuation can be different to the price for selling part of it at a

given time. To this, the board said it would publish its correspondence if Mercuriadis and Blackstone didn't insist it was confidential.

So, a nice row. One interpretation for it? That Blackstone may yet bid for Hipgnosis, so didn't want to reveal its hand on valuation. It shows two other things, too: the breakdown in relations between the board and Mercuriadis; and that no one believes Citrin, which is incentivised to keep valuations high.

Still, you can see why JP Morgan Cazenove analysts said the episode was "an early blow to the credibility of the new board". To avoid a share suspension, it must publish the results by the year's end. So it will simply have to make a statement saying it disagrees with Citrin. Why delay the figures for that?

# Money talks

noof that shareholder activism works. When investors ganged up in April to force out chairman Kevin Loosemore, De La Rue had just delivered its fourth profit warning in 16 months. The big worry? That without a change at the top, the banknote printer would loosemore money. In came Clive Whiley. The share price since then? Up from 40½p to 77p, even allowing for a 5 per cent dip on the half-year

results (report, page 34).
Yes, the business, in which activist investor Crystal Amber holds a 17per cent stake, still lost £16.8 million pretax. Yet there are clear signs of progress. Net debt of £82 million is better than the £100 million guidance, boosted by an operating cash inflow of £15.4 million versus last time's £2.8 million outflow. The currency order book has doubled since September to £220 million. And the pension deficit's actuarial valuation is down to £78 million.

Whiley found a group "struggling to balance conflicting stakeholder objectives", with £3 million of adviser fees "suffocating" recovery. He says he provided "air cover", allowing the other Clive — chief executive Clive Vacher — to focus on operations. Whiley also hints at better to come, with the results a springboard to optimise the underlying intrinsic value of the business", even if De La Rue denied that was code for luring a bid. Whatever, it has no longer got such as big a licence to lose money.

# Ting of fire

e's been Tingo'd. Who?
"Dozy" Mmobuosi, a bidder
for Sheffield United FC — at
least until Hindenburg put the boot
into his Tingo outfit in June. Via its report Fake farmers, phones and financials: the Nigerian empire that isn't, the short-seller removed half of the Nasdaq-listed group's value. US regulators have now charged Dozy and his companies with "massive fraud". One example? His claim that Tingo Mobile's Nigerian bank account held \$461.7 million cash. The real figure? "Less than \$50." Quite a spectacular own goal.

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# Exporters fear new trade rules in Europe

#### James Hurley

Difficulties faced by British companies in dealing with post-Brexit trading arrangements have "not eased" and further problems are looming, an employers' group has warned. Three in five companies felt that

Three in five companies felt that trading with the European Union was more difficult now than it had been a year ago, the British Chambers of Commerce said, and fresh challenges were approaching as UK and EU rules diverged, "creating further headaches for traders on both sides of the Channel".

The EU-UK Trade and Co-operation

The EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement, which began in December 2020, sets out preferential arrangements between the two markets in areas including trade in goods and services, digital trade, intellectual property, public procurement, aviation and road transport. It was intended to

allow tariff-free trade with the EU once

Brexit took effect.

However, in a report the business lobby group has identified problems that the agreement is causing. These include the fact that goods can no longer be imported from the rest of the world and then exported tariff-free to the EU without sufficient processing.

Similarly, goods cannot be imported from the EU and then distributed tarifferee from the UK back into the bloc without the appropriate processing. Some companies have had to set up distribution networks on the Continent to deal with such issues.

Problems with "rules of origin" have led to a reduced choice of components, ingredients and parts for British manufacturers, while companies have complained about the inconsistent application of customs rules by EU member states. For example, the requirement

#### 'Hard landing' warning for Britain

The British economy risks a "hard landing" next year, an executive at one of world's biggest bond fund managers has warned (James Hurley writes).

Daniel Ivascyn, chief investment officer of Pimco, said his belief that the UK would face greater economic

for vets to sign export health certificates for certain agricultural goods

were said to have caused "significant

hardship for agri-food exporters in 2021 and 2022", particularly smaller

businesses. Other issues were said to

problems than those felt by the United States had led him to place bets that were larger than usual on UK government bonds compared with those from America.

"In the case of the UK

— a smaller, open
economy, with a
consumer that's feeling

the brunt of central bank policy far more than their US counterparts — you just have a higher probability of more significant economic deterioration," Ivascyn told the Financial Times. "We do think there's potentially more hard landing risks."

include labour mobility, VAT compliance, markings on industrial and electrical goods, rules on chemicals and data flows between the FIL and Britain

ta flows between the EU and Britain. In a survey by the BCC of 733 businesses, mostly small and mediumsized, two fifths of exporters said they were facing difficulties adapting to the Brexit deal's rules on buying and selling goods. A lack of recognition for professional qualifications was cited as an issue by more than one in four respondents. The group said awareness of forthcoming changes, including new checks on food imports and new VAT laws was "darmingly low."

checks on tood imports and new VAI laws, was "alarmingly low".

Shevaun Haviland, the BCC's director-general, said: "EU businesses have been largely able to carry on importing goods into the UK as they did before Brexit, but that will change next year and could lead to significant new disruption. Both the UK and EU will be making significant changes in the next few years that could have big repercussions. We need to take a smart but flexible approach to how we handle these alterations to keep their impact to a minimum".

# De La Rue strikes a note of optimism

recovery in demand for banknotes from the world's central banks has given a boost to turnaround efforts at De La Rue (Alex Ralph writes).

However, the business said "significant operational uncertainties still remain" as it reported mixed results for the six months to the end of September.

Months to the end of September.

Clive Vacher, who has been leading a stuttering revival of the 210-year-old banknote printer over the past four years, said its performance had been "robust" and, after an 18-month downturn in the market, De La Rue had more than doubled its currency order book to almost £220 million. "We are exhibiting a high win rate, with more



Sarah John, the Bank of England's chief cashier, checks new £20 notes produced by De La Rue for the reign of King Charles

opportunities in the pipeline," he said.

Group revenue fell by
1.7 per cent to
£161.5 million in the first
half and its adjusted
operating profit fell to
£7.9 million, from
£9.3 million a year
earlier. Losses before tax
rose to £16.8 million
from £15.9 million.

Revenue in the authentication business, which helps to protect products from illicit trade, rose by 5.7 per cent to £48.1 million, while revenue in currency fell by 2.6 per cent to £113.4 million.

Vacher, 53, said with higher inflation and banks placing new orders, in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, business had picked up.

business had picked up. De La Rue reiterated its full-year forecast of adjusted group operating profit "in the low £20 million" range.

The shares closed down by 4p, or 4.8 per cent, at 77p.

# City regulator to revamp listing regime

## Ben Martin Banking Editor

The City minister has insisted that the government is not "complacent" over the competitive threats facing Britain's capital markets as the Financial Conduct Authority pushes ahead with plans for sweeping reforms to the listings regime in London.

Today the regulator is to unveil proposals to completely rewrite the listings rulebook and to do away with the premium and standard listing segments, which would be replaced by a single category for commercial companies.

The aim of the changes, which put a greater onus on investors to do their own due diligence, is to simplify the regime to make the London market more appealing to international businesses looking to sell shares. The most significant stock market revamp in decades comes after concerns in Westminster

and the Square Mile that London is losing business to rival centres overseas.

Bim Afolami, the City minister, said: "The UK is Europe's leading hub for investment, but it's a competitive world and we are by no means complacent. We are strengthening the UK as a listing destination, taking forward reforms to make it quicker to list, improve disclosure and make our capital markets more efficient and open."

Arm Holdings, the Cambridge-based microchip designer, dealt a big blow to London this year when its owners chose to list the business in New York in a \$54.5 billion flotation. The decision was seen as illustrating London's weak appeal to innovative, high-growth businesses seeking to go public.

A number of companies quoted in London are looking elsewhere. They include Flutter Entertainment, the gambling group, which is pursuing a

secondary listing in New York and may move its main listing across the Atlantic. Tui, the tour operator quoted in London and Frankfurt, has said it is considering dropping its UK listing, while in September CRH, the building materials group, switched its primary listing from London to New York.

This has dented the London market's reputation. A survey of more than 260 global chief executives by Teneo, an advisory firm, found that 81 per cent of those based in Britain believed that the value of a London listing had fallen in the past 12 months and 32 per cent had considered listing elsewhere.

Under existing rules, companies can choose either a premium listing that has rigorous governance standards or a less strict, standard quote. The FCA raised the idea of scrapping this structure last year, but will now consult on its new, more detailed plan.

# Workers' wages rise at the fastest pace in 30 years

## Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

Wages have risen at their fastest sustained pace in three decades over the past year, helping to offset the cost of living crisis but posing dilemmas for the Bank of England.

In the three months to November, and for the eighth time in 2023, the median pay settlement reached 6 per cent, according to a new survey by XpertHR. It means that average pay growth dipped below 6 per cent in only three rolling quarters in 2023, the strongest such performance in 30 years.

Businesses have granted workers' demands for higher pay in response to the rising cost of living, while companies also compete to retain staff.

Sheila Attwood, of XpertHR, said:

"Over 2023 as a whole, pay awards stood at a median of 6 per cent. The jump from 4 per cent the previous year was a reflection of the high inflation levels in the UK and a commitment from employers to help their employees with this as much as possible. Inflation is now falling and we expect the level of pay awards to follow suit."

the level of pay awards to follow suit."

XpertHR's figures, which are monitored closely by the Bank, underscore analysis that nominal pay growth in 2023 diverged sharply from its stagnant trend since the 2008 financial crisis. According to economists, so-called real wages have yet to recover to the same level they were before 2008. Officials at the Bank fear that wage growth could keep inflation above its 2 per cent target.

# **David Smith**

# Can a resilient consumer keep the economy from recession?



crazy to talk of

recession risks or a

flatlining economy when so many people are spending so much money. Shops are full, car parks are a nightmare to get into and restaurants and pubs are bursting with festive parties and bleary-eyed office workers who have written off the afternoon and, possibly, the next day. And, yes, this is a tradition that has survived the working-from-home revolution.

These things are all real, but we tend not to seasonally adjust our impressions, for example by balancing hectic December with tumbleweed January. If December was typical, we would have a permanent consumer boom. This is not to say that impressions tell us nothing. The late Sir Alan Budd, the former government chief economic adviser, used to tell me that he kept an eye on the strength of consumer spending by counting the plastic bags people were carrying. Concerns about the environment and the introduction of bag charges have put a bit of a kybosh on that informal economic indicator, although I still see people loaded down with them, particularly if they bear the name of a prestige store

Incidentally, the plastic bag charge seems to me to be an example of giving retailers an inch and them taking a mile. The 5p charge for single-use plastic bags operated successfully in Wales for years and made a significant difference. Now you can be asked to pay many times that, even for a paper bag. And don't get me started on bags for life.

Anyway, as we look at prospects for 2024, one of the big questions for the economy is how much of an appetite for spending people will carry into the new year. They will need to do so. Consumer spending accounts for about 60 per cent of gross domestic product. Without consumer spending growth, it

is hard to have much economic growth. Normally you can rely on Shopping bags could be used

to monitor economic activity

it. Indeed, a frequent criticism of Britain's economic performance over the years is that it has been too reliant on consumer spending funded by debt. Yet debt is lower now than it used to be, relative to income, and, like other parts of the economy, consumers appear to have lost their

While the economy overall is a bit bigger than it was before the pandemic, consumer spending adjusted for inflation is 1.5 per cent lower than it was at the end of 2019. Official statisticians reported the other day that consumer-facing services, which include retail, hospitality, leisure, entertainment and garage services, are still 5 per cent down on their pre-pandemic levels We await new figures for retail sales at the end of this week, but the latest figures show that volumes in October were 2.7 per cent down on a year earlier and an astonishing 11.5 per cent lower than they were in April 2021, the end of the third Covid lockdown. Retailers lit the blue touchpaper and were met with the dampest of damp squibs. As you might expect, sales in value terms are up, which means that most of people's hard-won money has gone on higher prices.

Will we now see a reversal of what, for consumer businesses, are very depressing trends? One source of hope is that (without wanting to jinx it in the face of new trade disruptions and higher January bills) inflation

has come down, restoring real wage growth. In the latest three months, pay adjusted for inflation was 1.3 per cent higher than a year earlier. That is not much, though, and, astonishingly, real

wages are lower than they were 15 years ago, before the financial crisis ushered in a long period of pay stagnation. It does not feel yet as if we have seen enough for people to be ready to celebrate the end of the cost of living crisis or the long squeeze on earnings. Pay awards will be lower next year than this and are expected to follow inflation down. The Bank of England hopes so, anyway.

The Sunday Times david.smith@sunday-times.co.uk It is true that consumer confidence

resilience.



has perked up. The latest reading from GfK, which has been monitoring consumer confidence since the 1970s. was an index reading of -22. That sounds gloomy, but the index is often negative and this was the highest reading since January last year and was 27 points better than its Trussrelated record low 15 months ago.

There was one bright spot, in particular, in the latest survey, which is that people are no longer as gloomy about their own financial prospects for the next 12 months, with only a marginal negative reading. The story here is that a year ago households were scared stiff of rising energy prices and higher interest rates but have gradually become less worried.

That speaks to the main challenge standing in the way of a significant revival of consumer spending in 2024, which is the delayed effect of all the interest rate rises we saw until the Bank called a halt, or at least a pause, in September. You will know that, as far as households are concerned, these delayed effects, with perhaps half the overall impact yet to come, will come through in three main ways. Households that re-fix their mortgages will face significantly higher monthly payments, diverting spending from elsewhere. Those in private rented accommodation will face rent rises, as their landlords respond to their own increased borrowing costs. And companies squeezed by higher rates will be more reluctant to hire and spend. These effects will outweigh the impact of increased savings income that households will get from higher rates. How will these two forces — real

wage growth versus higher borrowing costs — play out? Sadly for consumer businesses, it looks like a dull 0-0 draw. The Bank, never very cheerful, expects zero growth in consumer spending in 2024, after 0.5 per cent this year. The Office for Budget Responsibility is only slightly more upbeat, merely expecting next year to match this year's weak performance. Many will be hoping that both organisations are underestimating the great British consumer's

David Smith is Economics Editor of

## **Katie Prescott**

# Game developers have it all to play for in the new year after a difficult 2023

mong the more optimistic items on my children's Christmas wish lists this year are a real lion, a real monkey and a real hippopotamus. Realistically, Father Christmas is unlikely to fit any of these down the chimney, but the Roblox vouchers might make it. Like so many, the kids were converted to the game, and gaming, during Covid.

However, after the jump in spending on gaming during the pandemic, the market has flattened, costs are going up and the economy looks shaky. And, partly as a result of this lull, something quite dramatic has happened this year to the five gaming businesses listed on the London Stock Exchange: the shares prices of all them have dived and all have issued profit warnings.



Some of this is simply about the profile of the games they're making. There was a slew of delayed top titles this year, such as the latest versions of Call of Duty, Hogwarts and Spiderman, which stole audience from smaller games.

Frontier Development's share price is down almost 90 per cent since the start of this year. Its Warhammer: Age of Sigmar

Realms of Ruin game has not done as well as expected, with a similar story around sales of its FI Manager games. The Cambridge based business is now suggesting that its revenue for the full year will be £20 million less than expected.

Similarly, Team17's share price is down 60 per cent this year. It warned a few weeks ago that more revenue was coming from lower-margin third-party titles rather than its own intellectual property. The Wakefield-based business also said it had overspent on projects.
Then there is Devolver Digital, of

Texas, down 69 per cent since January. It reported delays to new

releases, poor game performance and a lack of subscription deals

Another impact on the industry at large has come from the Hollywood actors' and writers' strike. This hit Keywords Studios, the Irish games service provider that works on hit titles such as Fortnite. Its share price has dropped by 45 per cent and it, too, is predicting that revenue will be slightly less than expected. Nonetheless, this week it announced the acquisition of Multiplayer Group, a game development studio, for £76.5 million, a bullish response to how it could be affected by the surge of artificial intelligence.

Finally, the share price of tinyBuild has slumped by almost 100 per cent, with speculation that its founder could take it private. What does this say about the year

ahead for the industry? These stock market falls certainly make these UK-listed games businesses attractive takeover targets, just as Sumo was, acquired by Tencent for

\$1.25 billion last year.

Analysts at Jefferies put out a strikingly bearish note on the sector as a whole this week, saying: "We are turning incrementally negative on the video game industry as we see declines in both PC, console and in mobile in 2024. Consumer behaviour changes mixed with fewer AAA+ titles are the driving factors In mobile, continued pressure from privacy, a mix shift in genres and fewer title launches will keep this segment from returning to growth."

Number-crunchers at Newzoo are more positive, expecting the global games market to generate \$184 billion this year, a rise of 0.6 per cent from last year, and to hit \$206 billion in 2026.

Alasdair Young, who follows gaming companies for Panmure Gordon, the investment bank, said: I think UK-listed companies are likely to be able to pick up a bigger share of the wallet than in 2023, but there are obviously a lot of question marks as to what the size of that

wallet is going to be." Success in 2024 will depend greatly on how much people are willing to spend and how generous Father Christmas is feeling at the end of this year.

Katie Prescott is Technology Business Editor of The Times

# A week is a long time in politics. Here are 52.

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T GIFTS



# Bidding war adds to Kin + Carta's appeal

## Jessica Newman Market report

he prospect of a bidding war for Kin + Carta sent shares in the technology services specialist sharply higher after a second suitor came forward with an offer to buy it.

Investors piled into the company after it said it was recommending a 130p-a-share cash offer from Valtech, which is controlled indirectly by

funds advised by BC Partners, the private equity group.

Valtech's swoop comes weeks after Apax Partners, another private equity player, increased its all-cash bid to 120p a share, which the board of Kin + Carta said at the time was "fair and reasonable". The company, which advises clients including Google and Microsoft on efficiency savings, said it had now withdrawn its recommendation of the revised offer. Kin + Carta's shares leapt by 17p, or 14.8 per cent, to close at a near-ten-

month high of 132p. Investors found plenty to be cheerful about on the wider market. Despite a stronger pound, the FTSE 100 rose 23.55 points, or 0.3 per cent, to 7,638.03, while the more UK-focused FTSE 250 added 95.43 points, or 0.5 per cent, to 19,315.98.

Higher metals prices gave a push to miners such as **Fresnillo**, which improved 21¾p, or 3.9 per cent, to 576¾p — as well as to **Anglo** 



Rate cut hopes drove indices higher. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 251.90 points, or 0.7 per cent, at 37,557.92, a record for a fifth day. The S&P 500 rose 27.81 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 4,768.37, in touch of its record high in 2022 of 4,796.56.

American and Antofagasta, which gained, respectively, 70%p, or 3.9 per cent, to £18.91%, and 47p, or 2.9 per cent, to £16.85.

Investors took a punt on London's bookmakers, including Flutter Entertainment, which rose 475p, or 3.5 per cent, to £139.20 after Peel Hunt upgraded the stock to a "buy" amid hopes that its secondary listing in the US would drive up demand for the shares by giving American investors "exposure to a fast-growing local market leader". Excitement over the shake-up in Entain's boardroom meant the Ladbrokes operator secured its fifth consecutive day of gains as its shares picked up another 34%p. or 3.6 per cent. to £10.12

34¾p, or 3.6 per cent, to £10.12. **Wizz Air** flew towards the top of the FTSE 250 risers' board, finishing 126½p, or 6.4 per cent, higher at £21.07, after s UBS instructed its clients to buy the airline's shares. Its reasoning is that traffic growth should continue at Wizz, given its cost base and focus on central and eastern European and Middle East markets.

Burberry capped gains on the Footsie, falling 31p, or 2.1 per cent, to £14.83½ after Jefferies aired concerns over whether the attractiveness of the luxury group's new products would be enough to offset a weak trading backdron.

backdrop.
Elsewhere, shares in **DP Eurasia**, which runs the Domino's Pizza brand in Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia, jumped 7½p, or 8.6 per cent, to 95p after it rejected an improved takeover offer from Jubilant Foodworks, its biggest shareholder. DP Eurasia's shareholders were offered 95p a share, up from a previous offer of 85p, but the board believes the new offer still "significantly undervalues" the company and that Jubilant has sought to "exploit" being a good commercial partner by seeking to delist the company without offering fair value, to the detriment of minority shareholders.



# Priority booking for The Royal Ballet's Swan Lake

Classical ballet's most powerful tale of love, treachery and forgiveness returns to the Royal Opera House stage. Book your tickets now for this beautiful ballet.

# Chrysler tower on the block

Bids are being invited for the Chrysler Building in New York as administrators for its co-owner try to raise cash to pay back creditors (Tom Howard writes).

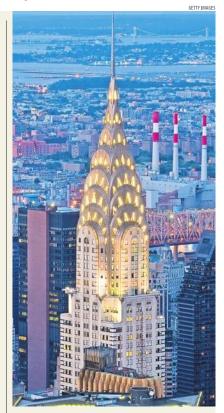
Signa Holdings, the

Signa Holdings, the property empire built by René Benko, filed for insolvency last month, with debts of about \$5.5 billion.

The administrator gathered creditors in Vienna yesterday and said that "a liquidation plan has been initiated". As well as Signa's 50 per cent stake in the Chrysler Building, administrators are in talks to sell the company jet.

company jet.
In 2019 Signa
worked in partnership
with RFR Holding,
the New York-based
developer, to buy the
Chrysler tower, which
was the world's tallest
building when it was
completed in 1930.

Signa has been the most high-profile casualty of the downturn in the commercial property market. Rising



interest rates have increased the cost of debt while valuations have fallen. Signa was built by Benko, 46, who, over the past decade, earned himself a reputation as one of Europe's most prominent property tycoons. The Austrian's star has fallen, though, with Forbes removing him from its list of billionaires.

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T&Cs apply. Swan Lake, The Royal Ballet ©2022 ROH. Photograph by Tristram Kenton

### The day's biggest movers

Company	Change
Wizz Air Holdings UBS repeats "buy" rating	6.4%
Anglo American Metals prices strengthen	3.9%
Entain Extends gains for fifth consecutive session	3.6%
Flutter Entertainment Peel Hunt tips "buy"	3.5%
Severn Trent Bond yields fall	1.6%
Imperial Brands Dollar-earners weighed down by strong pound	-0.8%
Currys Profit-taking	-1.6%
Burberry Concerns over weak demand	-2.1%
LondonMetric Extends losses	-4.0%
Diversified Energy Congressional intervention unsettles investors	14.4%

## **Business**

## **Emma Powell Tempus**

Buy, sell or hold: today's best share tips



## These fine margins are still in fashion

## ASSOCIATED BRITISH FOOD

Annual revenue £19.8bn Market cap £17.9bn

his time last year, cost inflation was the main nemesis of Associated British Foods, but getting a handle on higher prices has put the owner of Primark on course to finish the year as one of the best performers in the FTSE 100. Yet its value credentials remain intact

A recovery in margins could fuel the shares next year. At Primark, which accounts for almost half of group profits, the adjusted operating margin is set to rise to 10 per cent this year, better than the 8.2 per cent recorded last year and closer to a prepandemic margin of 11.7 per cent

The burdens of higher costs for raw materials, labour and freight hit profitability last year. However, absolute cost pressures are easing, along with the volatility in where they might end up. The group took a hit on margins last year to manage cost inflation, rather than lifting prices enough to compensate.

Any improvement over and above the 10 per cent margin guidance depends on how consumer spending fares. If the economy performs better than expected, there could be a repeat of the upgrades announced for last year. Analysts expect an adjusted operating profit of £1.81 billion, up from £1.51 billion last year.

Cost inflation has been the biggest challenge to Associated British Foods

## **Sweet spot**





across its businesses. It was also the main source of reticence among investors towards the group Confidence is growing that the worst is behind it, but the shares remain cheap. A forward price-earnings ratio of just under 13 is markedly below a ten-year average of almost 20.

The balance sheet is solid. Net debt stood at £2.27 billion at the end of September, equating to a leverage multiple of just under one, which

## Revenue Adjusted operating profit £15.8bn £1.42bn £13.9bn £1.02bn £13.9bn £1.01bn £17bn £1.44bn 2023 £19.8bn £1.51bn

triggered another £500 million share buyback, plus a 12.7p special dividend. Free cashflow should be set for a

significant increase this year. Working through inventories built up at Primark during the supply chain turmoil of the past financial year should mean that working capital unwinds. HSBC expects an inflow of about £200 million. The British defined-benefit pension scheme is now in surplus, which should free up £70 million in cash that was being directed towards contributions into the scheme.

That is in addition to higher expected profits. Analysts have recast a rise in free cashflow to double last year's figure. That raises the possibility of further special returns for the new financial year. Shore Capital has forecast a decline in net debt to £1.7 billion, against adjusted earnings before interest, taxes and other deductions of £2.58 billion, or a leverage multiple of 0.65. ABF considers leverage consistently below one as an indication that it has surplus capital.

Like-for-like sales growth is expected to be "modest", but supplemented by about a million sq ft in new selling space. Indeed, the international expansion of Primark remains the greatest potential catalyst of all. The plan is to open Primark shops in America, Italy, Iberia and France, increasing the total estate to 530 by 2026. New shops contributed 6 per cent to the 15 per cent sales growth from Primark in the past financial year. They typically take less than a year

to become profitable.

The food businesses also look to be on a better footing. The grocery business is expected to stabilise as inflation recedes and spending on marketing its international brands steps up. The ingredients division, where sales boomed last year, will ease, but sales and profitability for the sugar business are expected to be well ahead, after a poor British crop caused the group to look to third parties for alternative sources of

supplies, increasing costs.

If ABF can keep its margins on track, it could be better appreciated by the market.

an appreciation of the Mexican peso and higher energy costs as subsidies expire, the investment bank thinks.

Guidance for capital expenditure has been set at \$505 million by 2025, a decline from this year, with heavy investment on opening its Juanicipio mine already spent. The question is whether more spending is needed. Morgan Stanley thinks so if Fresnillo is to extend the lives of its mines, which average six years.





£1.02 billion this year, more than

## **NEWS IN BRIEF**

## Google to pay \$700m

Google is set to pay \$700 million and to enable greater competition in its Play app store as part of an antitrust settlement with American states and consumers. The company, part of Alphabet, was accused of overcharging customers, with unlawful restrictions on the distribution of apps on Android devices and unnecessary fees for in-app transactions. Google has not admitted wrongdoing, but will pay \$630 million into a fund for consumers and \$70 million into a fund for states, under a deal that still requires a judge's approval.

## FTX in liquidation deal

The bankrupt crypto exchange FTX Trading has announced a settlement with liquidators for FTX's Bahamas unit, resolving a dispute over whether its American bankruptcy proceedings should take precedence over the Bahamian liquidation. FTX and FTX Digital Markets have agreed to pool their assets and to harmonise their approach to valuing customers' claims to ensure equal treatment for customers in either country's insolvency process.

## Tingo fraud charges

The businessman who made a bid to buy Sheffield United FC this year has been charged by the US Securities and Exchange Commission with inflating the financial performance of his companies to defraud investors. The regulator said Dozy Mmobuosi and his three companies Tingo Group, Agri-Fintech Holdings and Tingo International Holdings had violated anti-fraud provisions under federal laws, as well as Nasdaq reporting controls.

## Fraud victim payouts

Banks and other payment firms must reimburse defrauded customers up to a maximum of £415,000 from next October, the Payment Systems Regulator said. The move aims to bolster consumer protection against authorised push-payment fraud — where people are tricked into sending money from their account to a fraudster posing as a genuine payee, UK Finance has said such fraud totalled £239.3 million in the first half of 2023, with £152.8 million returned to victims.

79 57-79 55

Volume: 1936791

## FRESNILLO Market cap Dividend vield £4.1bn

here are few clear catalysts for Fresnillo any time soon and that suspicion is reflected in a torrid performance for the shares since the start of this year. More than a third of the Mexican precious metals miner's market value has been wiped out, extending a lengthy

record of poor performance. Not even a rally in silver and gold prices could prompt investors to look past production hiccups and stubborn cost inflation. In the first six months higher prices pushed

revenue 6 per cent higher, but that was more than twice outstripped by the magnitude of cost increases.

Fresnillo has recent form in missing production expectations. Weaker volumes in the third quarter have not helped confidence in the world's largest silver producer. In the quarter, output missed expectations, with silver production declining. The Fresnillo and Saucito mines were the biggest drag, hit by a lack of equipment availability and lower

Things are not expected to improve in the final quarter. The outlook for this year has been set at between 57 million and 64 million ounces for silver and 590 thousand

11146.43 (-9.37)

to 640 thousand ounces of gold. At the midpoint, that implies an annual rise in the latter but a fall of about 3 per cent in its silver output. Production out to 2025 is expected to be lacklustre and the forecast is for a decline in both gold and silver

output against this year's levels.

Cost inflation and the revaluation of the Mexican peso against the dollar, in which a chunk of the miner's expenses are denominated. will be challenges next year. However, the consensus forecast is for a 5 per cent decline in costs in 2024. Analysts at Morgan Stanley think that is too optimistic, expecting a rise of almost 3 per cent. It will be driven primarily by wage inflation,

**ADVICE** Avoid WHY Few near-term catalysts for the shares

## **PRICES**

## **Major indices**

New York	
Dow Jones	37557.92 (+251.90)
Nasdaq Composite	15003.22 (+98.03)
S&P 500	4768.37 (+27.81)
Tokyo	
Nikkei 225	33219.39 (+460.41)
Hong Kong	
Hang Seng	16505.00 (-124.23)
Amsterdam	
AEX Index	792.48 (+3.33)
Sydney	
AO	7715.90 (+66.30)
Frankfurt	
DAX	16744.41 (+93.86)
Singapore	
Straits	3116.62 (+3.39)
Brussels	
BEL20	3742.59 (+22.44)
Paris	
CAC-40	7574.67 (+5.81)

FT	SE 100	7638.03 (+23.55)
.41) FT	SE 250	19315.98 (+95.43)
FT	SE 350	4216.54 (+14.12)
.23) FT	SE Eurotop 100	3731.88 (+11.73)
FT FT	SE All-Shares	4175.13 (+14.11)
	SE Non Financials	5060.51 (+19.90)
.33) te	chMARK 100	6499.70 (+78.33)
Ba	ırgains	n/a
0) US	\$	1.2734 (+0.0083)
Eu	iro	1.1605 (+0.0025)
(i) :SI	DR	0.98 (+0.00)
	change Index	81.64 (-0.28)
Ba	ink of England offic	cial close (4pm)
CP CP	1	132.00 Oct (2015 = 100)
RF	N .	377.80 Oct (Jan 1987 = 100)
) RF	NΙΧ	374.20 Oct (Jan 1987 = 100)
Me	orningstar Long Co	mmodity 677.16 (+5.72)
81) Mo	orningstar Long/Sho	rt Commod 4703.45 (+27.75)

DJ Euro Stoxx 50 Londor

## **London Financial Futures**

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gi <b>l</b> t	Dec 23	99.730	99.800	99.660	101.92	61	1
	MAR 24	101.71	102.05	101.38	101.95	189845	488052
3-Mth Sterling	Dec 23						
-	Mar 24						
	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						
	Dec 24						
3-Mth Euribor	Mar 24	96.290	96.300	96.275	96.295	141554	790861
	Jun 24	96.820	96.845	96.815	96.830	115359	625005
	Sep 24	97.245	97.285	97.240	97.275	95710	484801
	Dec 24	97.560	97.605	97.550	97.600	83832	429949
	Mar 25	97.765	97.820	97.765	97.815	70869	402221
3-Mth Euroswiss	Dec 23						
	Mar 24						
	Jun 24						
	Sep 24						
FTSE100	Mar 24	7643.0	7675.0	7630.5	7670.0	66503	500964
	Jun 24	7635.0	7635.0	7635.0	7663.0	1	950
FTSEurofirst 80	Mar 24				6202.0		
	Jun 24				6162.0		

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ICIS pricing (Lone	don 7,30pm)		
Crude Oils (\$/bai	rel FOB)		
Brent Physical BFOE(Feb)		79.93 79.29	+
BFOE(Mar)		79.47	+
WTI(Feb) WTI(Mar)		73.44 73.94	+
	one (prompt d	lalivary)	
Products (\$/MT) Spot CIF NW Eur Premium Unid Gasoil EEC	792.00 805.00	795.00 806.00	+1
Spot CIF NW Eur Premium Unld Gasoil EEC 3.5 Fuel Oil	792.00 805.00 424.00	795.00	+1
Spot CIF NW Eur Premium Unld Gasoil EEC	792.00 805.00	795.00 806.00 425.00	+1

79.40-79.38 May 79.51-79.50 Jun

79.64-79.60 79.59-79.57

Brent (9,00pm)

LIFFE			
Cocoa			
Mar	3554-3552	May	2930-2850
May	3424-3420	Jul	2800-2850
Jul	3286-3281	Sep	2760 BID
Sep	3176-3172		
Dec	3048-3044		
Mar	2978-2960		Volume: 70686
Robusta			
Jan	2969-2965	Sep	2705-2590
Mar	2936-2932	Nov	2653-2550
May	2863-2858		
Jul	2798-2738		Volume: 32140
White S	ugar (FOB)		
Reuters		0ct	583.30-581.20
		Dec	576.60-572.40
Mar	615.50-614.50	Mar	570.90-569.00
May	600.00-598.20	May	559.70-545.00
Aug	590.80-588.60		Volume: 69300
	Grain Futures		
	. , .		

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with Rosanna Lockwood

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## The Times unit trust information service

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ALLIANZ GLOBA	L INVEST	ORS		
Inv Serv: 020 706	5 1400 He	Ipline: 08	300 317 5	73
Gilt Yield A #@	206.01		+0.27	1.05
Strategic Bond Fund #	@ 140.10		-0.56	3.70
UK Corp Bond C +@	104.79		-0.78	3.87
UK Eqty C #@	6317.26		-14.91	3.28
UK Eqty Inc A #@	311,05		+0.08	5,44
UK Gwth A 3@	7820,36		+6,39	
UK Index A Inc †@	1423,81		-5.83	
UK Mid Cap A #@	4654.61		11.35	

ARTEMIS FUND MGRS LTD

rtadionibed invital			
Capital R Acc #@	2185.83	 +0.90	3.38
Euro Opps R Acc #@	91,26	 -0.48	1,29
Euro Opps R Inc #@	85,36	 -0.46	1,30
European Growth R Acc	‡@431 <b>.</b> 75	 -0.51	
Global Energy R Acc #@	39,04	 -0.07	
Global Growth R Acc #6	345.14	 -0.33	2,35
Global Income R Acc #@	168.02	 -0.75	3,36
Global Income R Inc #@	103.31	 -0.46	3,40
Global Select R Acc #@		 +0.09	0.22
High Income R Inc 10	63.29	 -0.05	6.41
Income R Acc #@	533.10	 +0.06	3.97
Income R Inc #@	224.40	 +0.03	4.10
Monthly Dist R Inc :@		 -0.28	4.92
Strategic Assets R Acc	\$ 89.45	 +0.06	
Strategic Bond R M Acc		 -0.18	3.93
Strategic Bond R M Inc		 -0.09	4.03
Strategic Bond R Q Acc	*@100.38	 -0.19	3.98
Strategic Bond R Q Inc	‡@ 50 <b>.</b> 95	 -0.09	4,05
UK Growth R Acc #@	763,11	 +1.66	
UK Smaller Cos R Acc %		 +14.12	1,49
UK Special Sits R Acc #	@ 730,77	 +1.74	

AXA FRAMLINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD Dling: 0845 602 1952 Priv Clients: 0845 777 5511

Equity Inc #@	572.40		-2.70	4.43
Gilt Acc @	201.30	211.80	+0.10	1.08
Gilt Inc @	74.35	78.24	-0.39	1.09
Health Acc #@	2982.00		-8.00	
Jap Smlr Co Ac @	62.56	66.09	-0.19	0.30
Managed Inc #@	138.30			
Monthly Inc Inc #@	205,70		-0.40	6,25
UK Growth Inc #@	210,00		+1,10	1,01
UK Select Opps Inc #@	1812,00		+4.00	
UK Sml Cos Inc #@	259.90		+2,10	0,20

AXA FUND MANAGERS LTD Admin & Eng 0117 989 0808

AAA IIUSUS			
Gen Acc #@	2101.00	 +6.00	
Gen Inc #@	1079.00	 -2.00	

UK/Global Investment Companies

Euro Acc A 3@	234.70	 	1.18
Extra Inc Inc B #@	86.74	 +0.24	
Global Gwth Acc R #@	288.10	 +4.10	0.52
Japan Acc A #@	162.30	 +2,20	1.51
Pac Gwth Acc A #@	479.80	 -17.60	2.30

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD 08457 46 46 46

European Gwth ‡@	218,20	 0.20	
Sus Leaders #@	798.50	 +1.90	
UK Growth ‡@	636.40	 +0.60	
UK Income ‡@	206,20	 -0.30	4.9

Dealing: 020 7426 6232

Winchester 3

0870 606 6402			
Beacon Inv #	84.88	 +0.35	

COLUMBIA THREADNEEDLE INVESTMENTS Engs: 0870 601 6183 Dealing: 0870 601 6083 Share Class 1 - Retail

3759.45

+70.41 1.11

Corporate Bd #@	49.99		-0.31	
Emerging Mkts :@	116,50		-0.50	
Euro Gwth & Inc 1 :@	1318.00		-4.00	
Extra Inc Bond #@	45.21		-0.02	1.82
FTSE All-Shr Track #@	422.40		-0.20	
Global Gwth SC1 #@	321.10		-0.10	
High Inc Trst @	11.37	11.97	+0.02	
Max Inc Bond #@	44.54	***	-0.02	4.18
Multi Man Caut :@	70.41	***		3.18
Multi Man Distr #@	60.44			3.37
North Amer #@	946.40	***	+0.90	
Pacific Gwth #@	477.40	***		0.04
Strategic Bd #@	201,10		-0,20	0,88
UK Equity #@	3446,00		+2,00	1,27
UK Gwth & Inc Acc 1 *@	658,50			
UK Gwth & Inc Dist #@	234,70			
UK Smaller Cos †@	999.40		+6.40	1,68

EDENTREE INV MGMT LTD

0800 358 3010		
Resp & Sust Sterling Bond \$87.11	 0.11	4.38
Resp & Sust Eurp Eq # 343.10	 	
Resp & Sust Glbl Eq # 346.00	 -0.70	0.70
Resp & Sust Mgd Income #122.60	 -0.10	
Resp & Sust UK Eq 219.40	 +1.20	1.62
Resp & Sust UK Equity Opps #283,70	 +1.70	1.29

FIDELITY INTERNATIONAL

Private Cints 080	0 414191 RLO	ker Digs	0800 41	4181
Amer Spec Sits #@	2432.00		-1.00	
American ‡@	5803.00		+19.00	
Euro Opps #@	603.60		+1.20	
European 3@	3635.00		-5.00	
Extra Income #@	22.67		-0.01	6.34
Glob Spec Sits #@	5865.00		-2.00	
Global Focus #@	2989.00		-4,00	
International #@	149.50	***	+0.20	0.08
Japan ‡@	594.50		-1.00	0.73

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Moneybldr Glob	327.60	327.60	-0.10	0.21
Moneybldr Gwth #@	76.12		-0.95	
Moneybldr Inc @	29.48		-0.05	
Moneybldr UK Ind 10	132.31		-0.01	
Special Sits ‡@	4600.00		+5,00	2.60
Wealthbuilder	69.75	72.18	+0.53	0.44

HALIFAX INVESTMENT FUND MGRS LTD

Corporate Bond #@	34.11		-0.03	
Ethical †@	119.40		-0.10	0.20
European #@	119.40	***	-0.30	1.91
Far Eastern #	113.50		-0.70	3.36
Fund of Inv Tst #@	141,20		-0,10	0,60
Intl Gwth #	137,80		-0.10	1,37
Japanese #	74.40		-0,67	1,39
North Amer :	168,30		+0.40	0,35
Smaller Cos #@	105.00		+0,60	1.64
Special Sits #@	48.62		+0.02	
UK Equity Inc #@	93.79		-0.13	4.01
UK FTSE 100 IT :@	71.87		-0.08	
UK FTSE All-S IT 1@	80.99		-0.04	
UK Growth 10	85.42		-0.11	

HSBC GLOBAL ASSET MGMT (UK) LTD Enq: 0845 745 6123 Dlg: 0845 745 6126 Mon-Fri 8-6 MSRC Indox Tracker Investment Funds (OEIC)

HSBC Index Tracker Investment Funds (OEIC)				
Amer Ind Acc #@	1041.49		+1.83	1.22
Amer Ind Inc @	825.46		+1.45	2.41
Euro Ind Acc #@	1271.33		-1.96	
Euro Ind Inc #@	792.11	***	-1.22	
FTSE 100 Ind Acc #@	284.50	***	-0.21	
FTSE 100 Ind Inc #@	125.07		-0.10	
FTSE 250 Ind Acc #@	296.38		+1.44	3.6
FTSE 250 Ind Inc #@	176.70		+0.86	3.0
FTSE All-S Acc #@	724.74	***	+0.59	
FTSE All-S Inc 3@	354,22		+0,29	
Jap Ind Acc *@	150,23		-1.32	1,8
Jap Ind Inc #@	114,84		-1.01	1,8
Pac Ind Acc #@	511.90		-1.42	3,4
Pac Ind Inc %@	310,89		-0.86	3.5
Pac Ind Inc #@	310,89		-0.86	_ :

HSBC Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Share Class

Palguced Acc +(a	255.09	***	-0.29	1-10
Balanced Inc #@	151,95		-0.14	
Corp Bd Acc #@	283,01		-0.20	
Corp Bd Inc #@	106,68		-0.08	
Gilt & Fd Int Acc 10	497.78		+1.62	
Gilt & Fd Int Inc #@	74.17		+0.24	
Income Acc ‡@	730.08		-0.41	4.19
Income Inc ‡@	292.65		-0.17	4.33
Monthly Inc Acc 3@	313.41		+0.77	3.21
Monthly Inc Inc 4@	128,54		-0.10	
UK Grth & Inc Ret B Ac	c :@148.17		+0.07	
UK Grth & Inc Ret B In	rc ‡@63.97		+0.03	
UK Gth & Inc Acc #@	148.17		+0.07	
UK 6th & Inc Inc #@	63.97		+0.03	

HSBC Specialist Investment Funds (OEIC)

American Index Retail Ac		***	+1.83	1.22
American Index Retail I	nc ‡@825.46		+1.45	2.41
Asian Gth Acc :@	147.77	***	-0.07	
Asian Gth Inc #@	130.99	***	-0.06	
Chinese Eq Acc #@	513.81	***	+0.27	0.40
Chinese Eq Inc #@	434.76	***	+0.22	0.34
Euro Gth Acc #@	973.97	***	+4,05	
Euro Gth Inc #@	817.05		+3.39	

IGNIS ASSET MGMT DIg: 0141 222 8282

American 6th Inc @	322.55	340.42	-3.34	
Balanced Growth @	262.17	276.69	-0.93	
Balanced Growth Acc @	393.13	414.92	-1.40	
Corporate Bond #@	99.69		-0.89	4.77
European Growth @	403.88	426.26	-3.57	
European Growth Acc @	475.71	502.07	-4.21	
Glob Gwth @	331.53	349.90	-3.09	0.12
Higher Yield @	83.98	88.64	-0.29	4.43
Higher Yield Acc @	275,04	290,28	-0.92	4,32
Japan @	49.06	51.78	-0.03	
Managed @	130,89	138,15	-0.06	
Managed Trust @	71.96	76.96	+0.17	
Mngd Pfolio Inc @	95,54	100,84	-0.11	0.58
Pacific Grth @	498,71	526.34	-2.81	1.34
Smaller Comp @	756,24	798.14	+1.64	0.15
Smaller Cos @	628,94	663,79	+1.36	0.21

INSIGHT INVESTMENT FDS MANAGEMENT LTD

Insight Investment		nager F	unds	
Well Bldr Bal Acc 3@	96.05		-0.32	
Well Ridr Gwth Arr 3/8	93 79		-0.36	

INVESCO FUND MGRS LTD Dling: 0800 085 8571 Inv Serv: 0800 085 8677 Brkr Serv: 0800 028 2121 INVESCO Funds

323,57 UK Str Inc N/TrI :@

INVESCO PERPETUAL Funds						
Childrens Acc 4@	487.86		+0.66	2.29		
Corp Bond Acc †@	212,27		-0.25	1,57		
High Income Inc †@	318,02		+0,08			
Income & Grth Inc #@	431,12		+1,24	3,27		
Income Inc †@	1250.95		+1.91			
Money Acc #@	95.81		+0.01	3.40		
Monthly Inc Plus Inc 3@	94.40		-0.07			
UK Aggressive Inc ‡@	154.28		-0.24	3.15		
UK Growth Acc 3@	909.10		-0.15			
UK Sml Cos Eqty Acc #@	1300.38		+12.42	1.53		
UK Sml Cos Gwth 3@	82.54		+0.04			

INVESTEC FUND MGRS Broker Support and Dealing: 020 7597 1900

OEIC Series i,ii,iii, & iv			
American A Acc #@ 769		+0.67	
Asia ex Japan A Acc 3@ 673		-5.35	
Capital Accumulator A Acc #@23		-3.81	
Cautious Managed A Acc #@383		+0.36	
Cautious Managed A Inc #@236		+0.23	
Diversified Growth A Acc #@12		-0.24	
Diversified Growth A Inc #@133		-0.26	
Diversified Income A Acc #@330	0.40	+0.08	3.01
Diversified Income A Inc #@67		+0.02	4.44
Emerging Mkts Blended Debt A Acc (@1)	19,05	+0,02	4,76

			Yld
Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Emerging Mikts Ellended Debt A Acc Gross 1/9125,02		+0.20	4.21
Emerging miss bremen beni A Anc triss (#12252) Emerging Mikts Blended Debt A Inc (#864,66		+0.01	6.54
Emerging Mkts Equity A Acc #@147.95		-0.28	1.37
Emro Mkts Local Curr Debt A Acc + Ø190,79		+0.08	5.14
Emro Mikts Local Curr Debt A Inc (070.17	***	+0.03	7.01
Emry Mikts Local Curr Debt Gross   Acc :/9220.49		-0.05	
Enhanced Natural Resources A Acc :40134,24		1.25	
Global Bond A Acc 40 139.30		+4.03	0.82
Global Bond A Inc (@ 109.33	***	+3.00	0.82
Global Bond I Gross Inc :@1167.00		+29.78	1.25
Global Dynamic A Acc 30 193.61		+1.95	0.47
Global Energy A Acc :@ 170.97		1.14	0.47
Global Equity A Acc *@ 242.92		-0.67	0.13
Global Franchise A Acc #@330.40		-0.42	
Global Free Enterprise A Acc : @1307.67		+1.05	0,36
Global Gold A Acc :@ 190.44		-0.16	0.88
Global Special Situations A Acc 1/8364.65		+0.76	
Global Special Situations A Inc #@281.50		+0.58	0,20
Managed Growth A Acc #@270,42		-1.45	020
Monthly High Income A Acc 1(8243.45		+0.43	3,54
Monthly High Income A Inc :@63.17	***	+0.01	5.01
Multi-Asset Protector A Acc (@169.36		+0.05	0.91
Strategic Bond A Acc		-0.05	
Stratogic Road A Inc	***		
Target Return A Acc : @ 102.03	***	+0.44	0,82
Target Return A Inc 10 87.63		+0.01	0.87
UK Alpha A Acc 10 2764.97		+3.54	
UK Blue Chip A Acc ÷(a 770.11		+3.15	
UK Smaller Companies A Acc † (84416.91		+20,55	0,60
UK Smaller Companies A Inc : @3938.18		+18.33	0,60
UK Special Situations A Acc #81570.56		-0.38	1.47
UK Special Situations A Inc +0554.39		-0.13	1.50

For ISIS Asset Mgmt see F&C Fd Mgmt Ltd (OEICS) JANUS HENDERSON INVESTORS

Investors Serv: 0800 832 832 Ding: 0845 946 4646

All Stks Credit A Inc #@ 116.70	 -0.10	
Asian Div Inc U Trst Inc #@74.99	 -0.22	5.60
Cautious Man Fd A Acc #@294.20	 -0.10	
Cautious Man Fd A Inc 3@140.90	 	
China Opp Fund A Acc #@ 966.30	 -5.90	

				TIU
	Sell	Buy	+/-	%
Income Trust #@	501.97		-0.94	4.56
Merlin Bal (Acc) 3@	238.76		-2.04	3,60
Merlin Gwth (Acc) ‡@	568.43		-1.11	0.05
Merlin Inc (Acc) 0	350.65		-0.60	3,29
Merlin Wwide (Inc) 3@	405.13		-1.15	
UK Growth ‡@	262.61		+0.47	0.88
UK Special Sits (Inc) #@	209.79		-0.02	2.52

LEGAL & GENERAL (UT MGRS) LTD

Enquiries: 0870 05	0 0955 D	ealing: 08	70 050 0	1956
Equity Acc @	2616.00	2639.00	-8.00	
Equity Dist @	893.80	902,00	-2.70	
Euro Ind Acc #@	560.70		-1.00	
Euro Ind Inc 3@	358.80		-0.70	
Fixed Int Acc #@	137.90		-0.20	
Fixed Int Dist #@	62.75		-0.10	
Glob Gwth Acc @	243.90	243.90	-1.30	
Glob Health Acc :@	107.80		+0.70	0.86
Glob Tech Acc 1@	117.90		+0.40	
Gwth Tst Acc @	106.00	106.50	-1.00	
High Inc Acc #@	131.00			5.85
Japan Ind Acc #@	72.95		-0.74	1.60
Pacific Ind Acc #@	204.30		-0.80	2.78
UK 100 Ind Acc @	180.90	180.90	+0.90	3.19
UK Active Opps Acc @	249,90	252,90	-0.10	
UK Index Acc ‡@	354,40		-0.10	
UK Index Dist #@	165,20			
US Ind Acc #@	916.20		+7.50	0.84
Worldwide Acc 30	351,50		+0.30	

M & G SECURITIES Enq: 0800 390 390 Dealing Line: 0800 328 3196

Authorised Inv	Funds	
Charifund Inc #	1412.67	 -6.18

Sterling Class A I	nvestment	Funds 1		
Euro Smlr Cos Acc ‡	525.29		-3.39	

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 2

Extra Income Inc #	662,25		-2.96	5,87
Gilt & Fxd Int Inc #	75.23		-0.27	
GI Hi Yd Bd Inc ‡	39.90	***	+0.01	6.04
Index Linked Bd Inc 3	115.28	***	+0.15	
Index Trckr Inc ‡	75.04		-0.02	



TO A YEAR OF FUN

Own a share in a racehorse

Ep



☆ Trustpliot ★★★★★

Emg Mkts Opps Fd A Acc #@189,00		-1.90	0.75
Erpn Grth Fund A Acc #@ 310.10		-0.10	
Erpn Sel Opps Fd A Acc :@2501.00		-4.00	
Fix Int Mnthly Inc Fd Acc #@29.54		-0.06	4.36
Global Equity Fund Acc #@4478.00		+2.00	
Global Equity Income A Inc :@65.57		-0.17	3,42
Global Tech A Acc #@ 3626.00		+20.00	
InstI UK Idx Opps A Acc #@117.37		+0.01	
M-Asset Abs Ret A Acc #@167.80			1.33
M-Man Active Fd A Acc #@265.00		-0.40	
M-Man Inc Grth A Inc #@ 146.60			
M-Man Inc Grth Fd A Acc #@193.90		-0.10	
Sterling Bond U Trst Acc :@213.10	***	-0.20	
Sterling Bond U Trst Inc #@57.00		-0.06	
Strategic Bond A Inc +@ 101.80		-0.30	3,31
UK Abs Ret Fd A Acc :@ 176.00		+0.20	0,64
UK Alpha Fund A Acc @ 143.60		+1.20	1,66
UK Irsh Sm Co Fd A Acc : @742.50		-1.70	
UK Property A Acc @ 264.95	278.15	+0.01	2,63
UK Property A Inc @ 105.80	111.07		2,68
US Growth Fund A Acc #@2016.00		+4.00	

JP MORGAN ASSET MGMT

UK Equity Core E Net Acc :@454.00

JUPITER UT MGRS LTD 020 7581 3020

Absolute Return ধ	31.60	 	0.11
Distribution and Grow	th ‡@99.60	 -0.06	2,63
Emg Euro Opps #@	145.34	 -31.23	
Euro Special Sits ‡@	473.33	 +0.36	
European #@	3122.72	 +1.57	
inancial Opps 🕸	743,97	 +1,66	1,43

Short Dated Corp Bd	Inc # 25.03	 	4.03
UK Select A Inc #	2724.23	 +13.25	

Sterling Class A Investment Funds 3

terling Class A Investment F	unds 4		
isode Allocation A Inc ‡@142 <u>.</u> 02		+0.04	3,7

MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD

0808 005 5555				
High Income	88.12	88.12	+0.05	4.98
High Income Acc	256.70	256.70	+0.10	4.82
UK 100 Comp Acc @	467.00	467.00	+2.30	
UK 100 Cos @	224.40	224.40	+1.10	
UK Select Pflo @	335.00	335.00	-0.10	
UK Selection Port Acc @	715.40	715.40	-0.50	
Worldwide Mgd Acc @	983.20	983.20	+2.50	1.52
Wwide Mad (∂	569,20	569,20	+1.40	0.55

MORGAN STANLEY INVESTMENT MGMT LTD Enquires: 0800 0961 962 The Morgan Stanley Funds (UK) Class A Shares

Equity			
Dev Opp Fund F Acc #@	766.64	 -8.03	
Dev Opp Fund   Acc #@	761.45	 -7.98	
Glob Bal Inc F F Acc #@	967.57	 -0.25	3.19
Glob Bal Inc F F Inc #@	876.26	 -0.22	3.26
Glob Bal Inc F I Acc #@	965.52	 -0.27	3.16
Glob Bal Inc F I Inc #@	874.56	 -0.25	3,23
Glob Bal Sust F F Acc #@	966.82	 -0.51	1.82
Glob Ral Sust F F Inc 3:0	935.23	-0.49	1.84

3100 D01 303CF F IIIC (@ 724.71	***	-0.70	1.70
Glob Br Eq Inc Fund F Inc ‡@1318.74		-0.76	3.95
llob Br Eq Inc Fund I Acc :@1875.26		-1.10	3.93
Glob Br Eq Inc Fund I Inc #@1407.33		-0.82	4.03
llob Br Fund I Acc (PH) #@14428.32		+14.86	0.76
lob Br Fund I Acc (PH) #@1693.29		+6.85	0.75
Glob Br Fund I Inc (PH) :@3933.58 Glob Br Fund I Inc (PH) :@1609.94		+4.06	0.77
lob Br Fund I Inc (PH) :@1609.94		+6.52	0.75
Glob Ins Fund F Acc ÷@ 645.62		+0.65	
Slob Ins Fund F Inc *@ 645.62		+0.65	
alob Ins Fund I Acc ३@ 641.39		+0.64	
lob Ins Fund I Inc ‡@ 641.39		+0.65	
Hob Sust Fund F Acc (PH) #@1288.01		+3.91	0.51
Glob Sust Fund F Inc #@ 1350,27		-0.22	0.53
Glob Sust Fund   Acc #@ 1372.28		-0.23	0.39
Glob Sust Fund   Acc (PH) \$@1284.28		+3.90	0.38
Hob Sustain Fund F Acc ‡@1381.27		-0.23	0.53
Stg Corp Bond F F Acc :@127.89		-0.18	
Stg Corp Bond F F Inc ‡@ 97.60		-0.14	
Stg Corp Bond F I Acc :@2716.27		-3.88	
Stg Corp Bond F I Inc 1@1390.77		-1.99	
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F F Acc : @971.38		+0.15	3.56
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F F Inc ‡@905.10		+0.15	3.66
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F I Acc ±@965.54		+0.14	3.37
Sust Fixed Inc Opps F I Inc #@904.62		+0.13	3.45
JS Adv F F Acc 3@ 1742,24		+0,10	
JS Adv F F Acc (PH) 3@ 1004.21		+3,65	
JS Adv F   Acc †@ 1849.04		+0.10	
JS Adv F   Acc (PH) †@ 1048.33		+3,80	
SANTANDER UNIT TST MGRS	5		
08457 413002			

-0.51 1.76

Glob Bal Sust F I Acc #@ 965.02

08457 413002				
Bal Pfolio Inc #@	110.50		+0.40	2.4
Bal Port Gwth Acc #@	240.40		+0.90	2.0
Equity Inc Inc #@	205.70		+1.80	5.1
N&P UK Gwth Inc #@	182.80		+0.10	
Stkmkt 100 Tkr @	268,70	268,70	+0.50	
UK Growth Acc *@	491.90		+0.80	_
UK Growth Inc #@	254.30		+0.50	

SCOTTISH MUTUAL INV MNGRS LTD 0141 248 6100

European Inc	1777.00	1873.48	+4.40	
Far Eastern Inc	584.69	617.09	-0.73	1.4
Intl Growth Inc	380.56	400.59	+0.02	0.7
Japanese Inc	41.85	41.85	+0.43	0.5
Mutual European	2762,93	2908,99	-21.63	
Mutual Far Eastern	865,86	913,84	4.43	1,0
Mutual North Am	1983.00	2092,88	+6.23	0,2
Mutual UK Eq	1419,40	1428,80	-10.35	
Nth American Inc	1227.65	1295,67	-7.28	
UK Equity Inc	562.23	593,38	+1.31	

SCOTTISH WIDOWS UNIT TRUST MGRS 0845 300 2244 Authorised Inv Funds (OEICs)

OEIC A Class							
Managed Investment Funds							
Bal Port A Acc #@	237.60		+0.80	0.01			
Caut Port A Acc #@	207.10		+0.30				
Caut Port A Inc #@	152.00		+0.30				
Opps Port A Acc #@	280.20		+1.30				
Drog Dort A Acc 90	266.60		±1.10				

Overseas Growth Investment Funds Eur Sel Gth A Acc ‡@ 3484.00

Tracker and Spec	ialist Invest	ment F	unds
UK Trkr A Acc ‡@	397.80		+4.20
UK Trkr A Inc #@	193.70		+2.00

UK and Income Investment Funds

Corp Bond A Acc ‡@	297.60	 +0.50	
Corp Bond A Inc #@	107.50	 +0.10	
Envir Invtr A Acc #@	371.20	 +0.30	1.9
Hi Inc Bond A Ac 3@	248.70	 	5.7
Hi Inc Bond A Inc #	70.17	 	5.8
Hi Res A Acc ‡@	394.90	 +1.50	3.8
Hi Res A Inc ‡@	118.20	 +0.40	3.9
Safety Plus A Acc ‡@	40.49	 	
Strat Inc A Acc #@	199.50	 +0.30	3.9
Strat Inc A Inc #@	84.70	 +0.13	4.1
UK Gwth A Acc #@	204.00	 +1.00	
TIK Sol Gwth A Acc 30	2266.00	+2.00	1.

OEIC B Class Tracker and Specialist Investment Funds 439.60 192.60

UK and Income Investment Funds 370.70 Corp Bond B Acc #@ Corp Bond B Inc #@

OEIC C Class UK and Income Investment Funds +0.70 UK Gth C Inc ‡@ 131.90 UK Sel Gwth C Acc ‡@ 2598.00

STANDARD LIFE INVESTMENTS 0845 279 3003 Investment Funds (OEIC) - Retail Shares

AAA Inc CAT Acc ‡@ AAA Inc CAT Inc ‡@ Higher Inc Acc ‡@ Higher Inc Inc ‡@ -0.50 1.58 \*1.70 ... \*1.00 ... \*0.20 4.64 \*0.06 4.81 \*0.90 2.31

SVS BROWN SHIPLEY FUNDS Enquiries:0141 222 1151 Balanced A Acc ‡@ Balanced A Inc ‡@

Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
114.73		-0.11	1.99
97.06		-0.09	2.03
349.61		+0.08	
312.41		+0.07	
357.63		-0.01	1.15
256.39		-0.16	
242.37		-0.28	3,52
97.00		-0.11	3.61
	114.73 97.06 349.61 312.41 357.63 256.39 242.37	114.73 97.06 349.61 312.41 357.63 256.39 242.37	114.730.11 97.060.09 349.61 +0.08 312.41 +0.07 357.630.01 256.390.16 242.370.28

THREADNEEDLE INVESTMENTS Client Serv: 0800 0683000 Intermediary Serv: 0800 0684000 Institutional Shares (Class 2) (500000 GBP)

Threadneedle UK Eq Opps Ins Inc 1@132.56

 +0.01	4.56
 +0.08	3.71
 -0.06	
 -0.05	
 -0.13	
 -0.04	4.07
 +0.25	
 +0.88	
 +0.27	
 -0.01	4.41
 -0.09	
 +1.85	0.36
	+0.08 0.06 0.05 0.13 0.04 +0.25 +0.88 +0.27 0.01 0.09

For Resolution see Ignis
TU FUND MANAGERS LIMITED

<sup>↑</sup> Yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return);

† Ex dividend; <sup>↑</sup> Middle price; . . . No significant data. <sup>‡</sup>

Periodic charge deducted from capital; <sup>②</sup> Exit charge

Output

Description:

Periodic charge deducted from capital; <sup>③</sup> Exit charge

Periodic charge deducted from capital; <sup>③</sup> Exit charge

Periodic charge deducted from capital; <sup>③</sup> Exit charge

Periodic charge deducted from capital; <sup>3</sup>

Per

## **British funds**

12 ma	onth		Price	Int Yld Grs rd
High	Low	Stock	(£) +/-	% yld
Inde	x-linl	кed		
381,59	371,44	Tr IL 25% 24 °	381.3904	
102,39	97,72	Tr IL 03/3 24	99.17 - 03	L 3.42
101,68	95,63	Tr IL 01/3% 26	99.22 + 15	0.47
108,34	99,63	Tr IL 11/3 27	104.96 + .28	3 1.30 -0.01
103,36	94,64	Tr IL 01/3% 28	100,65 + 33	L0.01
103,31	94,22	Tr IL 01/3/29	100.26 + 34	
351.56	327.00	Tr IL 41/3/ 30 °	349,32 +1.29	
105.18	94.31	Tr IL 01/3/31	100.99 + .44	
116.30	102.81	Tr IL 11/3/3 32	110,11 + 51	l 1.14 0.11
111.16	96,67	Tr IL 05/3 34	104.71 + 56	0.28
257.29	232.58	Tr IL 2% 35 *	252.38 +1.3	
103,24	86,94	Tr IL 01/1/1 36	96.25 + 66	0.42
117.26	97.89	Tr IL 11/1/1 37	108.29 + 7	l 1.09 0.51
101.10	82.06	Tr IL 05/3/39	92.60 + .60	
109.29	87.85	Tr IL 05/3 40	99.41 + 60	
100,37	78,66	Tr IL 05/3 41	90.55 + 68	
110.02	84.97	Tr IL 05/8 42	97.96 + .77	7 0.64 0.74
99.08	73,97	Tr IL 05/5 44	86.91 + .70	) 0.83
98.30	71.18	Tr IL 01/3/4 46	84.85 + 73	L 0.88
113,06	81.61	Tr IL 05/5 47	97.09 + 79	
98.06	68.36	Tr IL 01/3% 48	83.15 + .75	0.89
107.99	74,48	Tr IL 055% 50	90.76 + 83	3 0.90
102.53	67.57	Tr IL 01/3 52	84.13 + 84	
135,55	89,61	Tr JL 11/3 55	110.49 +1.00	
99.85	61.33	Tr IL 01/3 56	79.15 + 89	
99,71	60,17	Tr JL 03/3 58	78.08 + .80	
110.39	65.01	Tr IL 03/3 62	84.76 + 93	
103,12	56,59	Tr JL 05/5 65	76.80 + .97	
104.00	55.84	Tr IL 01/3% 68	76.92 +1.03	
111 55	57.30	Tr II 01/3/73	82 20 +1 2	0.5

Longs (Over 15 years)

98,08	65,49 Tr 0 55 51	81.37 + 81		0,9
59,47	43.31 Tr 11/2% 51	53.22 + 36		4.0
103.90	79,70 Tr 31/4 52	93.82 + .57		4.1
62,65	45.42 Tr 15% 53	55.68 + 43		4.1
64.41	46.56 Tr 15% 54	93.82 + 57 55.68 + 43 57.17 + 43		4.1 4.1 4.0
114,36	87.03 Tr 41% 55	10250 + 61	4.15	41
66.09	47.33 Tr 1½% 57 83.11 Tr 4% 60	58 41 + 50 99 23 + 74 33 95 + 40		4.0 4.0 3.8
111.84	83.11 Tr 4% 60	99.23 + 74		4.0
39.23	25.35 Tr 05% 61	33.95 + 40		3.8
80.17	57,02 Tr 25% 65	70.17 + 60		3,9
102.50	74.17 Tr 31/5/68	70.17 + 60 90.20 + 73		3.9 3.9 3.6 4.1 3.9 4.0 4.0
60.02	40.77 Tr 15% 71	52.03 + .52		3,8
48.07	31.56 Tr 1 % 73 79.19 Tr 3 % 53	41.68 + 49		3.6
103,74	79.19 Tr 3½% 53	93.37 + 56		4.1
115.69 71.18	97.75 Tr 43/5 38	108.74 + .62	4.37	3.9
71.18	58.95 Tr 15% 39	67.53 + .40		4,0
109.27	91.74 Tr 41/5 39	102.62 + 50	4.14	4.0
109.36	90.94 Tr 452% 40	102.33 + .45		4,0
68.93	55.47 Tr 11/2% 41	64.59 + .36		4.0
95.09	76.53 Tr 35/8 44	102.33 + 45 64.59 + 36 87.93 + 38		4.1
113,53	92.93 Tr 45% 42	105.23 + .52	4.28	4.1
98.63	78.97 Tr 35% 45	90.91 + .40		4.1
110.34	88.06 Tr 41// 46	101.51 + .47	4.19	4.1
58,02	44.13 Tr 0%% 46	53.33 + 32		4.1
66.37	50.63 Tr 15% 47	60.65 + .36		4.0 4.0 4.1 4.1 4.1 4.1 4.1
69,68	52,73 Tr 155 49	63.22 + 38		4.1
111.44	87.41 Tr 41/5/ 49	101.73 + .52	4.18	4.1
40.40		44.00 + 22		

Mediums (5-15 years)

105,82		11 4 55 Z/	100,85 + 20		- 52
93.30	86.03	Tr 132% 27	92.03 + 22		3.
106.12	96.63	Tr 41/5 27	102.24 + 27	4,16	3.
87.24	80,26	Tr 015% 28	86.89 + 25		3.
106.12 87.24 93.52	84.91	Tr 15% 28	91.62 + 30		3.
91.05	85.12	Tr 05% 26	90.87 + 19		3.
95.52	89.51	Tr 15% 26	94.39 + 19		3.
116.13		Tr 6% 28	110.89 + 33	5.41	3.
86.40	78,59	Tr 05% 29	85.81 + 32		3.
87.71	79,16	Tr 0%% 29	86.29 + 35		3.
82.38 112.70	73.68	Tr 03/5/ 30	81.08 + 33		3.
112,70		Tr 45/5 30	107.47 + 38	4.42	3.
79.47	70.82	Tr 01/5/8 31	78.13 + 36		3.
83,95	74,53	Tr 1% 32	81.96 + 41		3.
110.14	97.27	Tr 41/6 32	104.96 + 42	4.05	3.
101.14		Tr 4 1/1/27	97.00 + 39		3,
79.92 112.81	69.76	Tr 0%% 33	77.55 + 40		3.
112.81		Tr 45% 34	106.69 + 49	4,22	3.
73.00		Tr 05/6 35	70.46 + 47		3.
109,78		Tr 452% 36	104.27 + 59	4.08	32
80.85	68.31	Tr 13/6 37	77.17 + .50		3.
103,24	87,49	Tr 31/1/6 38	97.74 + 56		3.

2.21

+6.30 0.72

Short	ts (under 5 y	/ears)		
97.82	92.80 Tr 2% 25	96.43 + .09		4,18
100.88	95.02 Tr 31% 25	98.67 + 08		4,26
92,38 94,97	87,71 Tr 01/1/1/26	92.37 + 12		3.92 4.33
94.97	91.28 Tr 05% 25	94.80 + 05		4,33
104.16	99,24 Tr 5% 25	100.59 + .04	4,97	4.49
95.35	92.14 Tr 01/2% 25	95.35 + .04		4.57
99,37	96,82 Tr 23/% 24	98.48 + 02		4.90 5.16
99.42	96 10 Tr 03% 24	99.42 + 01		5.16

99.42 96.10 Tr 01% 24 99.42 + .01 98.60 96.56 Tr 1% 24 98.60 + .01 .... \* maturities having an eight-month indexation lag.

This is a paid for information service. For further details on a particular fund, readers should contact their fund manager



12 month High Low Company

325 147 Dialight

1334% 691% Electrolux 'B'

182½ 71 Feedback◆

147% - 4 ...

846 + 18½ ... .

72½ + ½ ... -3.3

## **Business Equity prices**

**Dividend yields** Please note that the information in the dividend yields column has been suspended due to technical problems at Morningstar, the provider. 12-month high and low High/low prices for UK equities are based on closing prices. Investment trust high and low prices are based on intra-day figures.

12 mc High		Company	Price (p)	+/- YI	d%	P/E
Au	to	mobiles	s & p	ar	ts	
395%	1493	Aston Martin Lag	211% +	1%		3,5

D-	1	· 0 1	90	_		_
ва	nk	ing & f	Ima	11	ıce	
236%	150%	Abrdn	1821/2	-	11/4	 3.9
9%	41/8	Acuity RM◆	51/4			 -0.6
2801	18811/2	Admira	2680	٠	10	 22.2
381/2	11½	ADVFN◆	111/2			 2.0
372%	249	AJ Bell	314%		21/2	 29.4
270521/4	22401%	Aon Corpn	24573%	-	78%	 22.7
1075	835	Arbuthnot Bkg◆	10021/2	-	21/2	 22.1
121/2	51/2	Argo Group◆	51/2			 2.5
286%	1661/4	Ashmore	214%		21/2	 17.6
1360%	11781/3	Aus New Z	1360%	+	51/4	 10.9
462%	3691/3	Aviva	4271/8	-	2	 
3411/2	232	Banco Santander	3321/2	٠	101/2	 6.3
3730	2395	Bank of Georgia	3680	+	75	 3.5
189%	1291/3	Barclays	147%	٠	11/8	 4.3
1/4		Blue Star Capital♦				 1.9
451	297	BP Marsh&Ptnrs◆	451	+	4	 12.4
151/4	6%	Braveheart Inv	81/4			0.2
			072			
		Brewin Dolphin	515	+	1	 28.1
 279½		Brewin Dolphin Bridgepoint	7.6	+		
	166%		515		1	 28,1
2791/2	166% 24½	Bridgepoint	515 279½		1 1%	 28.1 17.4
279½ 52½	166% 24½	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆	515 279½ 29		1 1% 	 28.1 17.4 5.9
279½ 52½ 305	166% 24½ 250 9	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆ Chesnara	515 279½ 29 260	-	1 1% 	 28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6
279½ 52½ 305 52¾	166% 24½ 250 9 301 734	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆ Chesnara City of Lon Gp◆ City Lon Inv Gp Close Bros	515 279½ 29 260 10	-	1 1%  1	 28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6 -0.6
279½ 52½ 305 52¾ 470	166% 24½ 250 9 301 734	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs Chesnara City of Lon Gp City Lon Inv Gp	515 279½ 29 260 10 307		1 1%  1 5	 28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6 -0.6 10.3
279½ 52½ 305 52¾ 470 1124	166% 24½ 250 9 301 734 89%	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆ Chesnara City of Lon Gp◆ City Lon Inv Gp Close Bros	515 279½ 29 260 10 307 784½ 99 909%		1 1%  1 5 3	 28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6 -0.6 10.3 14.4
279% 52% 305 52% 470 1124 251	166% 24½ 250 9 301 734 89% 663%	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆ Chesnara City of Lon Gp◆ City Lon Inv Gp Close Bros CMC Markets‡	515 279½ 29 260 10 307 784½ 99		1 1%  1 5 3 3%	 28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6 -0.6 10.3 14.4 3.0
279½ 52½ 305 52¾ 470 1124 251 1029¼ 1063¼ 235¼	166% 24½ 250 9 301 734 89½ 663% 735%	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆ Chesnara City of Lon Gp◆ City Lon Inv Gp Close Bros CMC Markets* Commerzbk Deutsche Bk Direct Line Ins	515 279½ 29 260 10 307 784½ 99 909¾ 1038½ 185¾		1 1% 1 5 3 3% 6 4% 3	 28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6 -0.6 10.3 14.4 3.0 46.6
279½ 52½ 305 52¾ 470 1124 251 1029¼ 1063¼	166% 24½ 250 9 301 734 89½ 663% 735%	Bridgepoint Cenkos Secs◆ Chesnara City of Lon Gp◆ City Lon Inv Gp Close Bros CMC Markets‡ Commerzbk Deutsche Bk Direct Line Ins	515 279½ 29 260 10 307 784½ 99 909¾ 1038½ 185¾		1 1% 1 5 3 3% 6 4%	28.1 17.4 5.9 -7.6 -0.6 10.3 14.4 3.0 46.6 5.3

12 mg		C	Pric		+/-	Yld%	P/F
High	Low	Company	(p)		+/-	YIO%	P/E
195	145	EPE Special Opps◆	162				4.3
12211/4	943%	FBD	952%				4.2
671/2	52	Fiske◆	52				9.
75	521/2	Frenkel Topping+	531/2				28.
1050	718	Georgia Capital	1000	-	2		1.
102%	670	Gresham House◆	1100	-	20		30.
493	394	H&T Group◆	411	+	1		13.
551/2	381/2	Hansard Global	401/2	+	3	í	93
9491/2	690%	Hargreaves Lansdow	n 720½	+	13	4	123
175	115	Helios Under◆	1531/2				29.
659	492%	HSBC:	613	+	1	4	6.
8221/2	611	IG Group	7441/2	+	6		8,
883	3681/2	Impax◆	538	٠	1		17.
1694%	1104	Intermed Capital	116941/2	+	2		9.
131	64%	IPF	1211/2	+	15	<u> </u>	6.
158%	115%	International Public P's	hip135%		13	í	25.
546%	406	Investec‡	516	_	53	4	12.
340	266	Investment Co	298				10.
67	431/2	IP Group	56%	+	11	í	2.
195	461/2	Jarvis Securities◆	61	_	3	í	4.
151	73%	Jupiter Fund Mgmt	881/8	+	13	í	3.
951/4	681/6	Just Group	85%	+	1	í	54.
689	5241/2	Lancashire Holdings	6061/2	_	31	<u> </u>	
265%	205%	Legal & Gen	245%	+	3	í	7.
		Liberty Group	502%	-	23	í	
L290	5231/2	Liontrust®	5991/2	+	22		7.
481/3	31	Livermore Invs◆‡	321/8	-	1		
53%	39%	L <b>l</b> oyds Banking Gr	oup46%	-	1	í	4.
301/2	19%	LMS Capital	241/2	+	3	4	10.
322	7104	Lond Stk Ex Gp	9246	-	28		76.
219%	177%	M&G	219%	+	1	4	

12 m High		Company	Pric (p)		+/· Ylı	1% P/E
286%	202	Man	231			92
29	15%	Manx Fin♦	16	-	1/4	53
21/8	1	Marechale Cap◆	1½			3.3
655	490	Mattioli Woods♦	630			42.2
17%	71/2	Metal Tiger◆	9	+	3/4	8.0
153%	351/2	Metro Bank	351/2	-	%	50.2
1683¼	1321	Nat Aust Bk	1611¼	+	81/2	13.
309%	176%	NatWest	219	-	1/2	4.5
343	185	Numis♦	343			
5681/2	280%	Onesavings Bank	4501/2	+	71/2	5.9
576	377½	PayPoint:	497	+	16	10.0
75	%	PCF Group◆	%	+	1/4	0.
647	441½	Phoenix	523%	+	21/2	6.
1371½	8291/2	Prudentia	8631/2	-	3/1	8.
3	1/4	Quantum Blockchain	11/2			43
103%	71%	Quilter	101%			39.
87	9%	Randall & Quilter♦	11			0.
2220	1458	Rathbone Grp	1718	-	20	23
3/4	3/8	RiverFort Global Opp	s <b>♦</b> ¾			3.
205	1621/2	Rockwood Strategic	2001/2	+	31/2	61
2570	2040	S & U	2100	+	10	7.
1½	1/6	Sancus Lending Grpe	%			0.
50	391/2	Schroder REIT#	451/8	-	1/4	43
506%	361%	Schroders	435	-	%	2J
1304½	610%	St James Place	673%	-	7	123
790%	591%	Stand Chart	658	+	121/2	12.4
12	4½	Starvest◆	11%	+	1/4	19
60	24½	STM Group◆	55			56.
41181/3	3536	Sun Life Can	4038		151/4	10.3
9	4	Tavistock Inv◆	4	+	1/4	3.7

12 mo		Company	Pric (p)		/- Ylc	1%	P/E	12 m		Company	Prico (p)		/- Ylo	d% P/	/E
286%	202	Man	231				9.2	167%	120	Caledonian Tst◆	130			2	5.9
29	15%	Manx Fin◆	16	_	14		5.3	61%	52	Cap & Regnl	59	_	1%		
21/4	1	Marechale Cap◆	1½				-3.3	2450	2300	Cardiff Prop	2300			2	5.0
655	490	Mattioli Woods♦	630				42.2	15	1%	Carecapital ◆#	1%			4	0.2
17%	7½	Metal Tiger◆	9	+	34		-8.0	155	117	Clarke T	1271/4	+	1½	'	9.1
153%	351/	Metro Bank	351/2	-	%		50.7			Countryside Partner	229%	+	14	1	6.7
1683¼	1321	Nat Aust Bk	1611¼	+	81/2		13.1	27%	6%	Craven House	11%			4	0.2
309%	176%	NatWest	219	-	1/2		4.5	5326	31711/3	CRH+	5326	+	70	1	7.5
343	185	Numis◆	343					2726	1779	Derwent London	2318	-	10	1)	0.3
5681/2	280%	Onesavings Bank	450½	+	71/2		5.9	47/3	3%	Dolphin Capital♦	$4\frac{3}{14}$				5.0
576	3771/	PayPoint‡	497	+	16		10.0	28	15%	First Prop◆	181/2			1	8.0
%	56	PCF Group◆	%	+	1/4		-0.4	431/2	33	Fletcher King♦	33			1	5.7
647	441%	Phoenix	523%	+	21/2		-6.3	451/3	29	Foxtons Group	441/8	+	1/4		
13711/2	8291/2	Prudentia	8631/2	-	3/8		8.7	245	153%	Galliford Try	2251/2	-	6	2	7.8
3	3/	Quantum Blockchain	• 1½				-4.8	391	256	Genuit Group	391	+	$5\frac{1}{2}$	2	8.1
103%	71%	Quilter	101%				39.1	475	335	Gleeson (MJ)	475	+	16		7.4
87	93/	Randall & Quilter♦	11				-0.1	988%	751	Grafton	938	+	31/2	1)	0.8
2220	1458	Rathbone Grp	1718	-	20		23.6	271%	217%	Grainger	267			1	6.5
¥	3/8	RiverFort Global Opp	s♦ ¾				-3.1	6031/2	372	Great Portland	4081/2	-	3%	!	5.1
205	1621/2	Rockwood Strategic	2001/2	+	31/2		6.0	301/2	20%	Hammerson	281/8	+	1/4	=	3.0
2570	2040	S & U	2100	+	10	***	7.7	127½	95%	Harworth Gp	1231/2	+	3	4	8.2
1½	3/4	Sancus Lending Grp•	%			***	-0.2	450	325	Heath (Samuel)♦	325			1	6.7
50	391/	Schroder REIT#	451/2	-	1/4	***	4.8	389	187%	Helical PLC	219	+	2	!	5.2
506%	361%	Schroders	435	-	%	***	2.0	950	750	Highcroft Invs	880			=	3.8
1304½	610%	St James Place	673%	-	7		12.8	178	120%	Ibstock	146%			1	9.0
790%	591%	Stand Chart	658	+	121/2		12.4	225	176	James Halstead♦	206	+	2	2	1.9
12	419	Starvest◆	11%	+	1/4	***	-1.9	856	635	Keller	834	+	20	'	9.6
60		STM Group◆	55				56.7			Kingspan Group	62141/1			2	1.8
41181/3	3536	Sun Life Can	4038	٠	151/4		10.3	7431/3	559%	Land Sec	7081/8	٠	2		
9	4	Tavistock Inv◆	4	+	1/4	***	-3.7	77		Life Science Reit	61%		%		7.3
2995	2150	TBC Bank Group	2830	+	30	***	8.2	201/2	81/2	Lon & Assoc	131/2	-	1	=	3.8

High	Low	Company	(p)		+/- YIc	1% P/E
491/2	215	Steppe Cement	221/2	-	1/2	7.
144	991	Taylor Wimpey	144	+	%	9.
165	110	Town Centre:	125	-	1/2	4.
1082½	715%	Travis Perkins	838%	+	8%	12.
168¾	123);	Tritax Big Box Reit	1651/2			3.
71%	44	Tritax Eurobox‡	61%	+	1	
318	225	Tyman	3011/2	+	2 %	11.
1053	847	Unite	1032	-	3	12.
946	604	Vistry Group	868	+	18	12.
111%	695	Warehouse REIT	88			2.
604	4213	Workspace Grp	567%	+	2	
730	6221	Wynnstay Props♦	700			5.
Co	ns	umer g	000	k	S	
4%	1	Agriterra◆	11/4			0.
391/2	231	Airea♦	231/2			&
880	652	Anglo-Eastern	668	_	12	7.

172½ - 1½ ... 95.8

2379 + 20 ... 24.9

82 - 1 ... 39.0

508 + 2 ... 16.8

¼ ... ... -0.4

26½ ... ... -1.1

862 + 5½ ... 19.5

14831/2 - 31 ... 12.7

143½ - 1½ ... -8.5

93% - 1% ... 11.5

289 ... 5.1

720 + 5 ... 8.0

3812 - 24 ... 20.1

329 ... ... 17.8

2838½ - 9 ... 17.2

738 + 14 ... 11.4

110 + ½ ... 13.1

9985 + 30 ... 27.5

1303% + 18% ... 16.9

96% - % ... 19.3

202 - 2 ... 8.4

747 + 17 ... 60.7

64681/4 + 771/2 ... 17.9

88½ - 1½ ... ... 165 + 15 ... 6.8

182 - 2 ... 5.7 2931/4 ... ...

5% + 1 ...

300 ... 8.8 1/2 ...

154% + 1% ... 17.8

70 + ½ ... -8.4

1% ... ... -0.1 135 + 10

446½ + 26½ ... 17.9

3 ... 25.0

4370 + 6 ... 22.4

3762½ - 2 ... 13.4 327 + 14½ ... -4.1

1155 + 65 ...

... -4.5

9.2

% ...

... 17.4

... -9.0

3% ... ...

230 147½ Animalcare◆

2455 1543 AB Foods

121 82 Bakkayor Group

3⅓ ⅓ Bidstack Group◆

39 24% Brand Architekts◆

3353½ 2279½ Brit Amer Tob 2321½ - 2½ ... 6.0

2565 1910 **Coca Cola HBC** 2284 + 11 ... 18.2

2105 1580 Imperial Brands 1805 - 14½ ... 10.2

1½ 1 J Lewis Hford♦ 1¼ + ¼ ... 7.9

561 451½ Barr (AG)

936 758 Britvic

183¼ 123½ C&C Grp

5½ 1 Capital Metals◆

149% 93% Carr's Grp

432½ 252 Character Grp◆

2906 Cranswick:

329 304½ Devro

3777 2740 Diageo

110

% % Distil◆

900 670 Evans (M.P.)♦

11700 7300 Games Workshop

1378% 946% Glanbia

101% 61% Greencore

348 176 Headlam

29 14½ Hornby◆

8529% 6177% Kerry Gp

88½ 19 McBride

1155 882 Nichols 223 135½ Norcros#

374% 271% Origin Ents♦

512½ 234 Portmeirion•

½ ½ Provexis◆

221 125% PZ Cussons 491/2 REA

% Real Gd Fd◆#

411 Treatt

1¼ Ukrproduct Gp◆

4314 Unilever (NV)

3753% Unilever

1335 710 Dewhurst♦

11%

260 160 Mulberry Group◆

1640 1085 Churchill China◆ 1300

2641 1450 Rurherry:

## 664 437 Gooch Hsego◆ 600 + 8 ... ... 5900 3100 Goodwin 5900 + 160 ... 28.5 2498 1810% Halma 2292 + 42 ... 33.1 1900 1170 Hill & Smith2 1870 + 8 ... 44.0 84% 38% Holders Tech+ 11/4 + 1/4 ... 7.9 1680 1288 IMI 1652 + 23 ... 22,5 ... Inspirit Energy 10200 7400 Judges Scientific♦ 9500 - 40 ... 72.5 101½ 73 LPA♦ 80½ ... ... ... 798% + 1/3 ... ... ... Meggitt 568% 260% Melrose 558% + 3% ... .. 323½ 218½ Morgan Advanced 278 + ½ ... 13.5 250 - 10 ... ... 325 187½ Mpac♦ 930 446 MS Intl♦ 865 - 25 ... 2855 1712 Oxford Inst: 2300 - 5 ... 31.4 1846% + 67% ... ... 1846% 1068% Phillips El nv 15 7½ PipeHawk◆ 71/4 ... ... 15.4 45 31½ ... -2.8 3660 + 56 ... 22.9 4232 2950 Renishaw 35% 20% Renold◆ 34% - 1 ... 12.4 304% 87% Rolls-Royce 295 + 2½ ... 14.9 1¼ % Ross Gp# 342½ 281 Rotork 313% - 2% ... 34.0 200 79 SDI Group◆ 81 ... 21,7 177 + ½ ... 30.8 181% 121% Senior 75 57% Severfield 62½ + ½ ... 11.1 2% ... ... 15.5 1659% 1210% SKF B 1596% + 8½ ... 14.4 250 ... 4.1 300 190 Slingsby (HC)♦ 1797% 1526 Smiths 1732½ + 7 ... 27.5 1415 1025 Solid State◆ 1380 + 40 ... 33.2 315 + 8 ... 8.7 450 257 Somero Enter◆ 3750 + 45 ... 12,3 3841 2935 Spectris 12350 8058 Spirax-Sarco 10340 + 230 ... 32.5 39½ 10¼ Surface Trsfms♦ 11½ - ½ ... -3.4 4¼ 2% Tanfield♦ 3½ ... 448 329 Thorpe FW◆ 372 + 11 21/4 ... -3.3 2½ 2½ TP Group◆ 115% 79 Transense Tech♦ 104% ... ... 11.8 ... Ultra Electrocs 3500 + 6 ... 37.4 468% - 1% ... 12.5 350 + 3 ... 9.8 1167 272% Videndum 335 202 Volex◆‡ 329 + 1½ ... 17.9 2021 16444 Weir 2680 776 XP Power 1272 + 22 ... 6.7

Inv	/es	tment c	on	ij	par	ies
12 mo		Company	Pric (p)		+/- 9	
2439	1271	3I Group	2384	+	6	27.1
3421/		3i Infrastructure	320	+	1/2	8.1
1428	1126	Aberforth Smlr	1346	+	8	10.6
94%		abrdnDivInc&Grwth	821/6	_	1/8	26.2
1100	911	Alliance	1094	٠	2	6.2
457	327	Asia Dragon Tr	344	٠	2	16.2
215	160	Athelney Trust	185			13.6
2151/2	179%	AVI Global Trust	213	-	1	10.6
330	193	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	1981/2	-	11/2	9.3
1021/2		BaillieGifford Eu Gr	91%			14.4
811		Baillie Gifford JpnTr	685	+	4	10.0
163%		Baillie Gifford SN	1241/2			12.6
180%		Baillie Gifford UK Gr	162	+	34	14.1
931/2	60	Bal Comm Prop	71½	-	1/8	36.8
107		Bankers Inv Trst	100½			12.2
467	334	BH Macro	3651/2			10.2
979%	715	Biotech Growth	853	-	3	7.1
149½ 148		BlckRck Com Inc BlckRck Fro Inv	113 142	*	1% 1	11.6
566		BlckRck Grt Euro	557	-	1	
202	170	BlckRck Inc & Gwth	183%	Ť	1	5.9
449		BlckRck Latin Am	429	ı	7	15.2
1450	1146	BlckRck Smlr	1358	ï	8	9.7
213%		BlckRck Sustain Ame				7.9
670	503	BlckRck Throamortor			3	5.3
774	522	BlckRck Wld Min	577		10	4.9
1321%	1065	Brown Adv US sm	1257%	_	121/2	12.2
11921/2	964	Brunner	1180			9.3
3720	3110	Caledonia Inv	3530	_	20	31.1
432	3711/2	City of Lon IT	404	_	1	1.0
99	60	Crystal Amber Fd◆	711/2	+	1	29.8
534	406	CT Priv Eq Ord	4641/2	-	141/2	31.0
96	72	CT Property	731/2	-	1%	14.5
317		CT UK Cap&Inc	303	+	3	3.4
93	75	CT UK HIT B	851/2			4.8
89	71	CT UK HIT	86	-	1	3.1
356	292	CT UK HIT UNIT	334	+	2	7.6
590		Dunedin Entp	512½	-	5	17.9
690	611	Edinburgh IT	673			7.9
190%		Edin Wwide	149	٠	13/8	15.1
336		EP Global Opp	299	-	1	16.9
97¾ 871	73 706	European Assets	87 870	*	¾ 7	9.8
992		European Opp Trust		*		8.2
536		F&C Invest Tr Fid ty Asian Va	952 502	_	2	6.2
299%	196	Fidelity China Sp	2061/2	_		6.3
649%	568	FdltyEmrgMkt	6061/2	+	5/8	12.1
362		Fidelity European Tru		Ĺ	1	7.4
187	151	Fidlty Jap Tru	176	_	¥.	9.5
2931/2	252	Fidlty Spec Val	2731/2	_	1%	7.8
923	788%	Fins Gwth & Inc	852	+	4	6.8
102%		GCP Infrastructure	69%	_	1%	35.4
39	221/2	Gldn Prosp Prc Mtl	26%	-	1	19.9
167	130	Greencoat UK Wind	147		1	11.8
210	161	Hansa Investment	2011/2	٠	1/2	39.5
197	160	Hansa Inv Co 'A'	1851/2	-	8	42.8
2430	1900	Hbrvest Glbl Pt Eq	2305	٠	15	43.2
174		Hend Euro Foc	172	*	1	12.0
181	136	Hend High Inc	1531/2	+	1	8.9
907	626	Hend Smlr	802	+	4	9.7
1958	1590	Herald	1894	+	4	13.3
429 170%	317	HgCapital Trust HICL Infra	429 134%		10	15.1

170% 111 HICL Infra

1260 974 ICG Ent Tr

Highbridge Tactical

774 ICG Ent Tr 1222 - 10 331½ Impax Env Mkts 38912 -

134% +

	27.1	374	286	Invesco Asia Tr	307	+	7	12.2
ź	8.1	173	154½	Invesco Bond Inc	170%	+	2	0.6
	10.6	137	112	IPST Bal	1291/2	+	3	15.5
í	26.2	268	220	IPST Gbl Eq	260			13.1
	6.2	106	88	IPST Managed	103			7.6
	16.2	177	1441/2	IPST UK Eq	1721/2	٠	1/2	10.0
	13.6	478	378	IP UKSmallerCos	4221/2	٠	11/2	
	10.6	852	667	JPM American	850			1.6
ź	9.3	4021/4	324	JPM Asia Gro & Inc	332	-	1	9.6
	14.4	419	2141/2	JPM China	216			10.3
	10.0	722	622%	JPM Claverhs	670	+	4	6.0
	12.6	804	514	JPMorgan Emerg E & ME & Af	rica648	-	1%	
4	14.1	120%	96	JPM Em Mkts	105	+	34	
É	36.8	449	352%	JPM Euro disc	4111/2	-	1	11.1
	12.2	1421/2	116	JPM GEMI	125			11.8
	10.2	501		JPM GG&I	497	-	2	1.3
	7.1	9201/4		JPM Indian	916			17.7
í	11.6	339		JPM Jap Sml Co	306	-	1	11.1
	8.7	521	435	JPM Japan	477	-	1	8.6
	5.9	974%	762	JPM Mid Cap	924			12.9
	13.7	98		JPM Multi-asset G&I	98			2.1
	15.2	303		JPM Smllr Co	281	-	3	10.6
	9.7	2281/2		Keystone Positive Change Inv		-	2	13.8
	7.9	871		Law Debenture	795	-	3	0.3
	5.3	135		Lowland	122	+	1	9.7
	4.9	231	179	Majedie	2241/2	-	11/2	
2	12.2	358	290	M Currie Port	343	+	2	2.4
	9.3	100	76	Marwyn Val In	791/2		1	53.0
	31.1	2221/2		Mercantile IT	218	+	21/2	
	1.0	606		Merchants	549			0.9
	29.8	750	656	Mid Wynd	742	+	2	2.2
ź	31.0	1058	880		1058	+	20	11.5
4	14.5	151%	106	Montanaro Eur Sml	135	+	1%	12.7
	3.4	886		Murray Income Trust		-	1	7.5
	4.8	275%		Murray Int	253	+	2	7.1
	3.1	80%	65	Nb Global Floating	67	+	1	13.0
	7.6	384	338	Pacific Assets	380	+	9	4.9
	17.9	306		Pantheon Int	304	-	1/2	
	7.9	3462	2670		3434	٠	52	32.9
8	15.1	487½	457	Personal Assets	470	-	1½	
	16.9	2565			2545	-	5	113
É	9.8	162	89	Prem Glb & Inf	117	+	4	18.0
	8.2	133%	1696	Renewables Inf	109½ 1786	+	3/8 8	16.8
	6.2	2218	510			+	5	25.2
	6.3	826 457	382	Riverstone	799 430		1	37.7
,	9.2 12.1	549%	38Z 459	Schroder TotRt Schrd Asia Pac	489	_	1	5.0
έ	7.4	324	247	Schrod Inc Gwth	277	+	 2 2 2	7.1
	9.5	246		Schrod Jap Gwth	225	Ĭ	2	95
ž Ž	7.8	626	482	Schrod UKMid	566	+	2	11.3
ě	6.8	15%		Schroder UK PP Tr	14%			36.4
	35.4	543	450	Scot American	525	+	3	0.5
	19.9	800%		Scot Mtge	791%		61/2	
	11.8	2291/4	205	Secs Tst Scot	220		2	1.5
ź	39.5	89	71	Seguoia Eco	84		%	
ć	42.8	2491/3		Temple Bar	2351/2		1/2	5.6
	43.2	166		Tplton Emg Mkt	1481/		1/8	13.8
	12.0	162%		The Glb  Smaller	148	į	78 3/8	
	8.9	102,4		Tiger Royal and Inv	1/8			94.4
	9.7	3421/2		TR Property	330	+	2	8.4
	13.3	74		Troy Inc&Gth	68	_	1/2	
	15.1	168	112	Utilico Ord	1191/2		1	33 6
4	15.8	234		Utilico Emerging Mkt				14.3
	61.1	660		Vietnam Ent Inv	538	_	10	16.4
	35.1	237	209	Witan	233	+	1/2	
	9.0	3331/2	286	Ww Health	3031/2		1	10.7

12 month High Low Company

TIMESRADIO
INTELLIGENT RADIO FROM THE TIMES
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DAB RADIO   ONLINE   SMART SPEAKER   APP
9½ 3½ Tern+

91/2	31/2	lern♦	41/4			 -1.4
541/2	48	Thames Ventures V	CT 48			 6.4
381/2	19	Time Finance◆	341/2	-	2	 9.5
243%	103	Vanquis	1211/4	+	2%	 2.2
1275	965	Volvere◆	1255			 16.4
25	$3\frac{1}{2}$	WH Ireland◆	31/2			 -1.0
291/2	211/2	Walker Crips Grp	23	+	1/2	 23.4
3899%	2839%	Wells Fargo	3899%	+	1½	 12.5
1260%	1051%	Westpac	12021/2	+	9	 12.7
31	241/8	Worsley Investors L	td 26%			 83.7
41434%	361951/3	Zurich Find	40484%			 16.0

## **Construction &** property

1831/2	135	Alumasc◆	179	+	51/2	 7.7
10%	6%	Aseana Props	6%			 -1.6
58	39%	Assura†	461/2	٠	%	 9.3
21/4	3/4	Aukett Swanke◆	3/4			 -1.2
393%	2951/8	Balfour Beatty	3251/2	-	1/4	 7.8
5561/3	3921/4	Barratt Devs	5561/8	+	41/2	 10.5
2532	1861	Bellway#	2532	+	26	 7.6
4940	3738	Berkeley	4777	+	72	 12,4
1290	910	Big Yellow Group	1205	+	2	 7.9
455	275	Bi <b>ll</b> ington H <b>l</b> dgs♦	455	+	8	 8.1
253	170	Boot (Henry)	203	-	2	 13.9
471%	29130	Rr Landii	40514	_	275	-3.6

3661/2	198	Marsha  s	2711/2	+	1/2	 31.5
100	75	Michelmersh◆‡	89	+	2	 9.3
3	7/8	Mindflair PLC◆	1	-	1/4	 -0.9
2145	1482	Morgan Sindall	2145	+	10	 15.6
12500	9500	Mountview	10500	+	800	 13.0
941/2	74	NewRiver REIT:	811/2	-	1%	 2.8
260	199	Palace Capital:	224	-	4	 10.7
335	255	Panther Securities	295			 3.6
1531	960%	Persimmon	1359½	+	10	 5.5
45	30	Plaza Cent	30			 -0.8
117	851/2	Primary Health Proper	ties102	+	1/2	 10.4
31	27½	Real Estate Invs◆	29			 23.4
597	427%	Redrow	597	+	7½	 6.5
1074	653	Safestore	856	+	9	 4.8
1055	7631/2	Savills	965	+	231/2	 9.6
6	4	Secure Property◆	4			 
920%	6791/8	Segro	879%	+	8%	 2.6
44%	27	SIG	33	-	1/2	 
63	45	SigmaRoc◆	51%	+	1%	 9.3
91%	69%	Sirius Real Estate	881/2	-	1/2	 6.9
173%	122%	Smart (J)	127%			 3.4

3/ /4	3.6	125
1/4 74	26	18
1/2	31.5	302}
	9.3	724
1/4	0.9	33
	15.6	5051
	13.0	4443);
	2.8	722
	10.7	Er
		EI
	3.6	
	5.5	
	0.8	1129
1/2	10.4	4253
	23.4	1117)
1/2	6.5	2150
	6.5	2150 1900

En	giı	neering	g		
		Ass Br Eng₽	15		3.5
1129	593	Avon Rubber	830 -	4	
425%	269	Babcock#	396% +	2%	2.4
117½	825	BAE	1065 -	31/2	19.4
2150	1200	Braime A N/V♦	1450		6.6
1900	1650	Braime Group♦	1900		8.7
580	470	Caffyns‡	550		7.9
41/2	3/	Cap XX Ld♦	3/4		1.3
419	326	Castings#	365 -	7	17.6
41/8	23	Chamberlin <b>◆</b>	2%		0.2
34	17%	Checkit♦	25 +	2	2.6
560	428	Cohort <b>◆</b>	560 +	8	20.1
400	396	Crestchic Plc◆	399		

725

... 8.3

150	"	Zyttolik*	00			 20.0
He	alt	h				
		Abcam♦	1226		123	
2741/2	1771/8	AdvancedMedical •	215	+	41/2	 24.0
51/4	3/8	Allergy Therap♦	21/3			 -0.4
521/2	9%	Angle♦	10%	-	1/4	 -1.2
510	178½	Anpario◆	255			 22.4
12294	9900	AstraZeneca	10346	-	10	 33.3
2481/2	1961/8	Convatec	2421/2	+	1%	 56.6
43	21	Creighton	22			 4.2
3844	2544	Dechra Pharma	3844	-	2	 57.4
11/2	1/8	Deltex Medical♦	1/8			 -1.1
23	83%	e-Therapeutics♦	8%			 -4.8
130	89	Eco Animal Hlth◆	109½			 13.2
51	24%	EKF Diagnostics◆	28	+	7/3	 
65	27	Futura Medical♦	271/4	-	1/3	 
3196	1909	Genus	2118	+	70	 41.9
1535%	1316	GSK:	1432%	-	9¾	 9.6
3/8	1/8	Gunsynd♦	1/8			 1.7
3531/2	3081/2	Haleon	3201/4	+	%	 

2205 1503½ **Hikma Pharms** 1765 + 13½ ... 13.2 335 173½ Hutchmed China◆ 282 - 7½ ... ...

60½ 29½ Inspiration Health◆‡ 39½ ... ... ...

1% ... ... -1.7

1147 + 12 ... ...

13½ + ¾ ... 4.3

501 + ½ ... 31.3

½ - ½ ... -2.1

64 - 1 ... 34.9

3½ 1½ ImmuPharma◆

1998 1147 Indivior

28¼ 13¼ IXICO◆

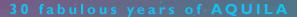
501 493½ Mediclinic

2% % N4 Pharma◆

72¾ 34¾ NIOX Group◆

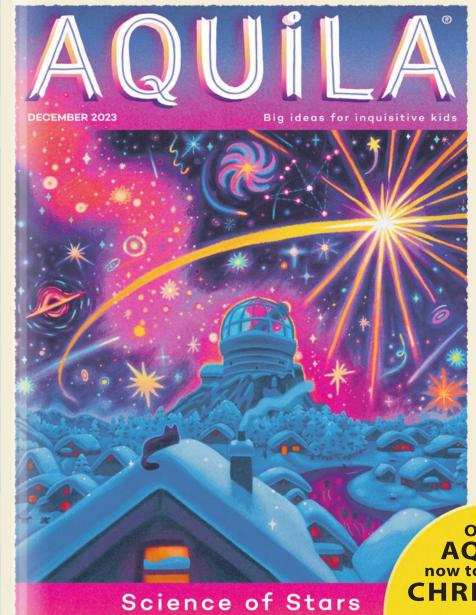
## S

				Equity	prices Business
12 month Price High Low Company (p) +/- Yld% P/E	12 month Price High Low Company (p) +/- Yid% P/E	12 month Price High Low Company (p) +/- Yld% P/E	12 month Price High Low Company (p) +/- Yld% P/E	12 month Price High Low Company (p) +/- Yld% P/E	12 month
90.16 69.89 Novartis CHF84.62 - 0.64 25.18	172½ 100 Catalyst Media♦ 102½	10513% 64% DRD Gold 64% + % 7.6	15 4½ Shuka Minerals♦ 10½ - ½1.5	560 353 Robert Walters 464 + 17 10.6	189½ 112 lomart♦ 158 + ½ 17.3
3% 2 Omega Diags♦ 2½1.5  14 % Ovoca Bio♦ %0.3	¼ Catenae◆0.3 DCD Media◆∜ 100 - 30 5.0	% % ECR Minerals ◆ ¼1.7	2 ½ Sound Energy◆ ¾1.0  23½ 7½ Star Energy◆ 8½ + ½0.3	20 11 Roebuck Food Grp♦ 148.1 222 220 RPS Group 221 - 1	59% 13% IQE◆ 22% + %2.1 129 105 K3 Business Tch◆ 112½ - ½
562 166½ Oxford Biomedica 201½ + 6½3_1	58½ 32 Ebiquity• 32 + ½	1½ ½ Empyrean Energy♦ ½0.3  2184 1498 Endeavour 1817 + 34	% Sunrise Resources ◆7.2	1035 660% <b>RS Group</b> 827 + 10% 13.7	1645% 1253% LG Electronics 1334% - 62% 21.4
5	1749 594 Future 700 + 8½ 12.0	23½ 12½ EnQuest 13½ + ¾1.1	⅓ Tertiary Minerals	61½ 16 RTC Group♦ 60	⅓ ⅓ Location Sciences ♦ ⅓6.3
8½ 3½ Proteome Scies◆ 4¾ - ½ 22.9 6570 5328 <b>Reckitt Benckiser</b> 5432 + 12 17.5	196 132 GlobalData♦ 152½ * 1 7.5	4½ 1½ Eurasia Mining♦ 2½ + ½4.3	3½ 1½ Thor Mining◆ 1½	408½ 196 RWS Hldgs♦ 246½ + 5½ 22.6 431 377 Science Group♦ 393 18.1	55½ 31 MTI Wireless◆ 34½ + ½ 10.0 55½ 15½ Nanoco Gp 17½ - ¼
63½ 10¼ RUA Life Sciences # 10¼ - ½0.9	120¼ 68¼ Hyve Group 120½ 196 107½ IG Design Grp◆ 145 - ½6.2	1¼ % Europa Oil&Gas♦ 1	5593½ 4368¾ Total Eng SE 5359% - 150 8.3 ⅓ Tower Resources •0.9	163% 136% Serco 159 + ½ 6.5	116½ 71½ Netcall♦ 89 + 5½
142½ 57½ Sareum Hldgs♦ 57½ * 2½	196 107½ IG Design Grp◆ 145 - ½6.2  789½ 603½ Informa 770½ + 3½	175 70% Ferrexpo 78½ + 1¾ 0.6	39 22½ Tullow Oil 35½4.4	57½ 40% Smiths News 53½ - 1 5.2	46 35 Northamber◆‡ 44
1314½ 896½ Smith & Neph 1048½ + 2 23.7 250 203 Spire Hoare 222½ - 2½ 42.7	90 59½ ITV 63½ + ¼ 6.8	968 509% Fresnillo 576% + 21% 24.6	UK Oil & Gas+0,7	3596 2554 Smurfit Kappa 3172 + 20 14.4  14 5% Software Circle plc 13%	25% 9% Online Blockchain◆# 15% + 2½8.1 119 78 Oxford Metrics◆# 104% + 4 45.4
250 203 Spire Hcare 222½ - 2½ 42.7 16¼ 6½ Synairgen◆ 7¼ 1.4	8¼ 3¼ Jaywing♦ 3½0.2	G3 Exploration# 282.6  34½ 11½ Galantas Gold• 141.3	222 75 URU Metals♦ 751.5	14 5½ Software Circle plc◆ 13½ 40½ 22½ Staffline Gp◆ 23½ 33.5	
70 49 Tissue Regenix♦ 54 - 1	3½ 1½ Live Company Gp◆# 20.4  171 111 ME Group 128½ + 1½ 22.3	5¼ % GCM Resources◆ 1¼ - ¼1.4	¾ Vast Res◆0.2 Victoria Oil&Gas◆# 3¾1.8	484½ 332 SThree 418 - 2 13.5	41½ 25½ Pennant Intl♦ 31
36 4½ Totally♦ 5½ + ¾ 8.7 465 295 Tristol●≐ 455 + 7½ 93.8	Mediazest •42	33 $10\%$ Gem Diamonds $12\%$ - $\%$ 4.1	W Resources # 2½ 0.3	145 97½ Synectics 145	634½ 370 Playtech 441½ + 8½ 379½ 292½ QinetiQ 307½ + 1½ 24.0
465 295 Tristel•	68½ 26½ Merit Grp◆ 65½ - ½4.4	16% 5 Getech♦ 50.7	2% $1%$ Westmount Engy+ $1%$ 0.3	31 18½ Thruvision Group◆ 18½ 71½ 35 Tribal♦ 54 + 2 41.5	92 47 RM 61 + 33.8
-	32½ 1½ Mirada◆ 1½ - 1¾	578 411% <b>Glencore</b> 467% + 5% 7.8	226 125½ Wood Grp (J) 163½ + 2½1.8	87 63½ Vianet♦ 80	1194½ 732½ Sage 1172 - 2 44.9
<b>Industrials</b>	58 10½ Mission Group◆ 18¾ - ¾  283¼ 185½ Moneysupermarket 268 + 3¾ 27.3	% Global Petrol♦0.7  138210% 1287% Gold Fields 1287% + 13% 22.4	1½ ⅓ Woodbois♦ ٪ 3.3 2⅓ ⅓ Xtract Resources♦ ٪ 6.6	720 485 Vp‡ 630 + 2½ 15.5	7% 4% Seeing Machines ◆ 5 106½ 35 Shearwater Grp ◆ 461.3
107 60¾ Accsys Tech♦ 60¾ - ½2.0	1852% 1222½ News Corp A 1852% + 20 90.6	11 5% Goldplat 6% 4.7	7½ 2½ Zephyr Energy♦ 2¾ + ½	2½ 1 Westminster◆ 1½ 7.2	75 33½ Smartspace S'ware♦ 707.3
4656 3496¼ BASF 4188½ + 25½	1940 1235 News Corp B 1940 + 20¾ 94.8	4% 2½ Goldstone Res◆# 2½9.9		Real estate	1534 1071 Softcat 1340 + 13 26.2 283½ 90 Spirent Comms 117 + 1 10.9
5384½ 2632½ Bayer DM50 2776½ + 7½ 22.0 175 73 Biome Tech 1103.7	1106 554 Next 15 Group◆ 806 + 8 31.3	11½ 5% Greatid Gld♦ 9¼ - ¼	Professional &	134½ 100½ Shaftesbury Cap 134½ + 1½ 39.5	68 36½ SRT Marine◆ 41½ - 2
1/5 /3 Biome lech♦ 1103./ 2½ ½ Byotrol♦ ½	976½ 754 <b>Pearson</b> 948½ + 8 45.3 4½ 2½ Primorus Inv <b>•</b> 2½2.9	98¼ 72½ Griffin Mining♦ 84 20.3	support services	194% 100% Shartesoniy Cop 194% 1 1% 35.7	515% 375% Tele Ericsson 476% + 3% 18.0
Camb Gbl Timber♦ 6¾9.0	198 107½ Quarto 130 4.9	215 84¼ Gulf Keystone 118½ + 3¼ 3.3  22¼ 9½ Harland & Wolff Gp◆ 11½0.2		Retailing	112½ 80 Touchstar◆ 90 11.4 1000 695 Tracsis◆ 926 + 11
80% 63% Coats Grp 76% - ½ 33.3 7218 4076 <b>Croda</b> 5042 • 42 21.9	110½ 66 Reach 72½ + 2 80.1	22½ 9½ Harland & Wolff Gp◆ 11½0.2  111½ 61 Hochschild 101½ + 2½	5350 4200 4imprint Grp 4605 + 70 77.7  742½ 465 Andrews Sykes◆ 595 + 5 13.8	100½ 52 A0 World 97¼ + 2¼	19½ 12¼ Trakm8♦ 15½
7218 4076 <b>Croda</b> 5042 * 42 21.9 930 575 Cropper (James)◆\$ 640 + 10	1% 1 REACT Grp♦ 1% 20.7	172 7% Horizonte MinrIs◆ 7% - ¾3.0	5874 4444 Ashtead 5428 + 40 18.4	612½ 407 <b>B&amp;M European</b> 561½ + 2½ 16.1	165 81 Triad Grp 135 + 8 14.8
129 97% Elementis 124 * 1½	3169 2284 Relx 3070 + 10 33.6 615% 462% Rightmove 565 + 8% 31.9	351½ 197½ Hunting PLC 276 + 7½ 38.1	4 % Asimilar Group◆ 1	42% 16½ Brown (N)♦ 17 - 1L3	1380 49 Wandisco◆ 63½ + ½1.1 680 312 Water Intel◆ 412½ - 5 23.7
15½ 10¼ Hardide◆ 10¼ - ¼2.9	100 60 SpaceandPeople♦ 600.6	⅓ Independ Res♦0.1	78½ 36 AssetCo♦ 48½ + ½ 0.3	113½ 77 Card Factory 105¾ + 2¾ 7.0  2192 1390 CVS Group◆ 1654 + 8 28.2	208 101 Xaar 107 - 1
2373 1446½ Johnson Math* 1682 * 34½ 21.2  1601 1180 <b>Mondi</b> 1528½ * 22½ 11.6	315 176½ STV Group 198 + 2½ 7.8	264 83¼ Indus Gas♦ 87½ + 1 6.3	55 45½ Avisen◆ 47½ 148 105½ Begbies Traynor◆ 114 - ½ 60.0	165 99½ DFS Furn\$ 128¾ + 1¾ 13.2	1½ ½ Yourgene♦ ½0.3
110 80 Robinson♦ 92½	310 122½ System1 Group	% ⅓ Ironveld	226 154½ Blancco Tech	1275 945½ Dunelm 1108 - 5 14.7	207½ 33¾ Zoo Digital♦ 56½ 8.4
368½ 263½ <b>DS Smith</b> ៖ 311 + 4½ 17.6	2908% 2280% 21st Cent Fox Inc A 2337% + 9% 13.9 2692% 2124% 21st Cent Fox Inc B 2171% + 2% 12.9	13 4% Jubilee Metals◆ 6¼ - ½ 13.4	3225 2687 <b>Bunzi</b> : 3161 + 24 21.7	929 672 <b>Frasers Group</b> 929 + 2½ 9.2 2904 2282 Greggs 2526 + 56 22.1	Telecoms
724¾ 491¾ Swire Pacific 630½ + 10 13 3¾ Symph Environ◆ 3¾2.8	Vela Tech•	5% 1% Karel Diamd Res◆ 2%9.3	42½ 15½ Capita 21½ + ½	234 165½ Halfords‡ 193 6.4	2007 300 AFPE Today Londo 2007
1199½ 171½ Synthomer 183½ - ¾ 3.8	356 257 Wilmington 320 14.3	1 ½ KEFI Gold and Copper◆ ¾4.1	41 28 CEPS♦ 28 - 3 9.1 160 92½ Christie Group♦ 92½ 62.5	$817\frac{1}{18}$ 560\frac{1}{18} <b>Howden Joinery</b> $817\frac{1}{18}$ + $2\frac{1}{18}$ 15.4	200½ 100 AdEPT Technology◆\$ 200½ 133‰ 103‰ Airtel Africa 127½ + 2½ 18.7
2688 2155½ Takeda Pharm 2155½ + 10½ 32.3	1051½ 681½ WPP 749½ + 6½ 15.3 112½ 77½ Zinc Media◆ 87½9.3	493 382 Kenmare Res 382 4.4	2235 1856 <b>Compass</b> 2084 - 3 28.8	941 633 Inchcape 702 + 11½ 23.7 5½ 1½ IQ-AI 5 + 1½	160% 110% BT Group 123% - 1 6.5
4% ½ Velocys◆ ½0.1  1913 1326 Victrex 1504 - 4 17.9	112½ 77½ Zinc Media◆ 87½ 93	Lamprell# 8½0.7  18½ 3 Landore Res◆ 31.4	252 106½ CPPGroup♦ 153 - 42.7	5% 1% IQ-AI 5 + 1%  186% 113% JD Sports* 172% + 1 45.0	81½ 43½ Currys plc 49½ - ½ 2.3
610 338 Wynnstay Group	Natural resources	½ Lansdowne 0&G•	69½ 43 Croma Security♦ 61 + 1 8.7	291½ 201½ <b>Kingfisher</b> 241½ + 2½ 13.8	1210 994 Gamma Comms◆ 1106 + 16 21.0 120 59 Helios Towers 81 + 6¼
410 276 Zotefoams 349 - 11 20.9		14 9½ Leeds Group◆ 11½ + 24.1	5690 4030 <b>DCC</b> 5690 + 16 18.8 81% 30 De La Rue 77 - 3%2.7	129¼ 75¼ Lookers 129¼ + ¼ 7.9	2215½ 914 Just Eat T'away 1252 + 32.7
Leisure	¾ ¼ ADM Energy♦ ¼0.5	8¼ 3½ Lexington Gold◆ 3¼	3552 2584 <b>Diploma</b> 3552 + 30 63.5	265 118¾ Marks & Spencer ₹264½ + 2¾ 10½ 3¾ Mothercare ♦ 6	1% Mobile Streams ◆0.9 21% 1% Mobile Tornado ◆ 1%3.0
	Advance Energy◆# ¼0.1 29½ 11¼ AFC Energy◆ 19½ - 2½	21½ 6½ MC Mining◆ 7 + ½1.4	938 593 Discoverie: 761 + 6 62.3	138½ 28½ Naked Wines♦ 53½ + 2½2.2	2280 1448 Telecom Plus 1544 + 28 39.5
130 51½ 888 Hldgs 88½ + ½2.3 846 523 Accesso Tech♦ 573 - 2 43.7	34 20½ Afentra PLC	3 1½ Metals Explorm ◆ 2½ 1.5 ¼ ½ Nostra Terra ◆ ½6.6	33 22½ Driver Group◆ 28 13.3 241½ 143½ Essentra 161¾ - 1½	8142 5508 Next* 8106 + 16 14.1 976½ 343½ Ocado 766½ + 38½	102¼ 65¼ Vodafone\$ 66¼ - ¼ 1.7
680 370 Best of the Best 530 5.9	⅓ Alba Mineral Res♦ 16.3	26½ ½ Nostrum 0&G 9%	3203 2390 Experian 3203 + 1 41.0	976% 343% <b>Ocado</b> 766% + 38% 35% 14% Pendragon 32 10.2	Transport
1356 $\frac{1}{2}$ 566 $\frac{1}{8}$ Carnival 1321 $\frac{1}{2}$ + 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	½ ½ Alien Metals ♦ ¼6.7	Oil Search 218% - 5% 60.3	14890 9930 Ferguson? 14890 + 45 21.0	$397\frac{1}{2}$ $268\frac{1}{8}$ Pets at Home $308\frac{1}{24}$ + $\frac{1}{24}$ $12.6$	
132½ 111½ Celtic♦ 120 11.8 5½ ½ Cineworld♥ ¾	89¼ 36¼ Alumina 48 - ¾ 1¼ ¾ Aminex ¾	0ilex•# ½5.3	274 205 FIH Group◆\$ 225 + 15 9.0  485 383 Hargeaves Serv◆ 444 + 4 5.2	188½ 105¾ Saga 130½ - 1½2.8 298½ 217½ Sainsbury's 294½ + ½ 24.7	321 224 Braemar Ship 270 - 12 8.9 528 324½ EasyJet 502½ + 3½3.1
424½ 259% Domino's Pizza 387% - 1½ 19.7	1¼ % Aminex ¾	% Oriole Resources◆	485 383 Hargeaves Serv◆ 444 + 4 5.2 890 595 Impellam Grp◆‡ 862½ - 17½ 24.6	1714 1160 WH Smith 1346 + 13	6% 1 Esken Limited 1 - ¼
1587½ 794¾ <b>Entain</b> 1012 + 34¾	653432½ 3940½ Anglo Amer Plat 3940½ + 208¾ 2.8	9½ 2 Orosur Mining	6¼ 4% Ince G◆# 5½ 2.9	27¼ 11¼ Sosandar◆ 14¼ - ¾ 19.2	178% 97% FirstGroup: 168% + 1½ 40.1
16725 11290 Flutter Ent 13920 + 475 38 24½ Gaming Realms◆ 34½ - ½ 21.8	3672½ 1670¼ Anglo American 1891½ + 70½ 14.0	20⅓ 12 Pan African Res• 16¾ + ⅓ 6.6	4528 3755 <b>Intertek</b> 4099 + 31 23.0	Studio Retail# 115 - 2½ 2.4 290½ 222½ <b>Tesco</b> 286 + 2½ 14.5	425 260 Fisher (James) 299 + 6½ 71.1 173½ 123¾ International Airlines158½ + 1½3.5
290 275 Heavitree♦ 275 16.5	121 42 Anglo Asian Mng♦ 59 + 1 86.2 1805 1293 Antofagasta 1685 + 47 17.4	88 10½ Pantheon Res◆ 23½ + ¾	197% 127% IWG 173½ + 4½ 140% 90% Johnson Srvce◆ 140½ + 1½ 18.2	56% 45 Topps Tiles 50% + ½ 9.1	279½ 196½ IDS 279½3.0
150 65 Heavitree A• 150 9.0	4½ 2½ Arc Minerals ◆ 3	59 12½ Parkmead Grp◆ 15½1.1	274 118½ Journeo♦ 269 16.1	Tashnalagy	439¼ 346¼ Irish Cont Uts 390 + 13 13.8 1381½ 942 Jet2♦ 1294 + 246.9
145 70 Hermes Pacific   70 7096 4725 InterContinental Hotels 70% + 24 66.4	3½ 1½ Ariana Res♦ 2½ 14.3	% % Pathfinder Mins◆# ¼3.4  102 43½ Petra Diamonds 50 - ¾1.1	115 $58\frac{5}{8}$ Kier Gp $106\frac{5}{21}$ + $1\frac{5}{21}$ 11.4	Technology	1381½ 942 Jet2◆ 1294 + 246.9 143¾ 56½ Mobico Group 74¾ + 1½1.5
1½ % Minoan Gp♦ %4.4	% ¼ Arkle Resources◆ %5.0	2½ ½ Petrel Resources♦ 2½ + ¾	1360 955 Latham (J)♦ 1150 6.3 990 628 Loli'n Store♦∜ 814 + 2 24.6	81½ 54½ Access Intell♦ 54½	1150 820 Ocean Wilson 1105 + 10 5.6
248% 132% Mitch & Butlers 248% + %	1% ½ Armadale Cap◆ 1 26.2 1% ¾ Asiamet Rsrcs◆ ¾3.3	7 2½ Petro Matad♦ 3¾ + ½	3100 2350 Lon Security 3050 17.1	101 9½ Aferian pic◆ 10¼ 0.4 196½ 126 Alfa Financial 143½ + 2 16.5	Stagecoach 104% 25.3  23 14½ Sutton Harbour 14½8.4
189½ 82¾ On The Beach 177 + 1¾ 9.3 1310 1005 PPHE Hotels 1150 - 15 13.5	1% ¾ Asiamet Rsrcs◆ ¾3.3  380 286 Atalaya Mine◆ 349 + 7 4.4	89½ 17 Petrofac 22½ + 1½0.2	304 216 LSL Prop Services 236 + 63.6	Allied Minds 13% + 3%1.2	344½ 192¾ Wincanton 314 + 4½ 8.5
104½ 62½ Rank Grp 77 - 3½3.7	¼ Baron Oil♦7.4	1 Petroneft Res•#0.2 Petropaylovsk# 1½ - ½ 1.6	119 99 Macfarlane 113 11.1	392 230 Aptitude Software 280 - 5 31.4	3158 1546½ Wizz Air 2107 + 126½4.7
68 26% Restaurant Gp 64% 61½ 33½ Rotala♦ 61½	4¼ 1¼ Beowulf Mining◆ 1½5.2	Petropavlovsk# 1½ - ½ 1.6  Phoenix Global • 6½ + ¼1.6	194 90 Maintel Hldgs♦ 167½ + 53.5 27 12 Malvern Intl♦ 24½	265 160 Bango◆ 195  33 19½ BATM Adv Coms 21½ + ½	Utilities
61½ 33½ Rotala◆ 61½ 175 Sportech◆ 84 + 9	Bezant Res• 1.1  2855 2182½ BHP Group 2642 + 31 13.1	28½ 1½ Plexus Holdings♦ 20½ + 15.0	300½ 195 Mears Group 300½ - 1 26.1	38 15½ Berkeley Res 19 8.1	
281½ 179½ SSP 234½ + 3½	3% 1% Border & Sthn Pet	350 150 Polymetal Intil 215 + 50 5.8	106¾ 72¼ Mitte Gp‡ 100 + ½ 50.0	15¼ 5¾ Blackbird◆ 6¼7.8	172½ 89½ <b>Centrica</b> 141¼ - % 14.2 251 250½ ContourGlobal 251 + ½ 28.3
3% 1 Tasty♦ 1%0.1 260 32% Tintra♦# 32% - 51.7	24% 14% Bougainville 19%	698 524 Porvair 618 - 12 23,7	10½ 4 MobilityOne♦ 8 69 33 Newmark Sec♦ 69 + ½ 18,7	242 155 Celebrus Tech PLC◆\$ 195 + 10 23.1  1% % CloudCoCo Group◆ %1.7	708½ 401½ Drax Group 473½ - 5¼ 35.0
260 32½ Tintra◆# 32½ - 51.7  704¾ 369¾ Tui 610½ + 3 6.4	3 ½ BowLeven◆ ½0.7	19¼ 5 Prospex Energy ◆ 5 + ¼ 15.3 13¾ 4½ Proton Motor Power S ◆ 5¼4.7	7½ 3½ Norm Broadbent	2776 1880 Computacenter 2776 + 74 16.4	535 415 Jersey Electricity 420 7.9
2% 1 Webis Holdings• 1	567½ 449% BP\$ 463% - 1½ 4.0	Providence Res ◆ 3½ 29.0	62½ 37 Northern Bear♦ 60 + 2 6.1	81 55½ Concurrent Tech♦ 75½ + 4 35.2	1162 932 National Grid‡ 1054½ + 6 14.2 13½ 5½ 0PG Power◆ 12½ 7.0
801½ 414¼ Wetherspoon JD 801½ + 10 17.2 3678 2570 Whithread 3601 + 66	16% 4% Cadence Min◆ 4% - ½3.5  2½ 1% Cadogan Petrol 1½	3 % Quadrise♦ 2¾ + ¾	275 187½ NWF Grp◆ 207½ 6.8	10¼ 5½ Corero♦ 8¼ 1950 1080 Craneware♦ 1830 - 10 89.1	971 551 Pennon 742 + 12
3678 2570 Whitbread 3601 + 66 1240 976 Young & Co - A♦ 1105 + 30	1350 775 Caledonia Mining ◆ 952½	5% 2 Rambler Met&Min◆# 5% 0.1	489½ 365 PageGroup 487 - 5½ 15.4 60½ 39½ PCI-PAL♦ 60 + 2	325 135 Crimson Tide◆ 142½	% % Rurelec+# %0.7
892 615 Young & Co - N/V◆ 778 - 12	833 137½ Capricorn Energy 149½ + 4½1.3	¼ Reabold Resources •	11½ 3½ Petards◆ 4 - ½ 19.0	24 8½ CyanConn Hldgs♦ 9½ - ¼	2975 2265 Severn Trent* 2641 + 41 1900 1508 SSE 1840½ - 7 7.1
Media	8½ 2½ Caspian Sunrise♦ 2½ 77.9	¼ Red Rock Res♦0.4  7127½ 5442½ Rio Tinto Ltd 7127½ + 52 17.1	24½ 12½ PHSC♦ 24½ - ½ 44.5	21 12½ Dillistone Group◆ 12½	1125 900% United Utilities 1092 + 14
IVICUIA	125½ 78½ Centamin 100½ + 1 15.5  292½ 157½ Cent Asia Metals ◆ 181 + 2½	7127½ 5442½ Rio Tinto Ltd 7127½ + 52 17.1 6377 4559 <b>Rio Tinto</b> 5786 + 21 13.9	1½ ½ PowerHouse Egy♦ ¾0.3	% EQTEC♥ 444 870 383 FDM Group 448 + 23 15.5	◆AIM company; # Price at suspension;
107½ 68 Aeorema Comms♦ 107½ + 5 29.7	292½ 157½ Cent Asia Metals ◆ 181 + 2½  12½ 3½ Chaarat Gold ◆ 5½1.6	38 12½ San Leon Energy◆# 16½ + 1½ 6.1	98 65 Record* 73¾ - ¼ 20.2 437½ 311½ Redde Northgate* 360 + 1 9.0	21 10½ Fi[tronic◆ 21 + 1½	† Ex dividend; ‡ Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue;  ▼ Ex all; § Ex capital distribution; * figures
52 31½ Altitude Group◆ 32½ 58.9 102½ 63½ Arcontech Grp◆ 95 12.9	18¼ 10¼ Chariot Oil & Gas◆ 10¼ - ¾6.5	½ ½ Scirocco Energy♦ ¼1.5	845 659 Renew Hldgs♦ 845 + 8 20.8	2165 812 First Derivts ◆ 1070 + 10  376 208½ GB Group ◆ 267 + 2½ 20.3	or report awaited; No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the
102½ 63½ Arcontech Grp◆ 95 12.9 290 188¼ Ascential 290 + 1½	3½ ⅓ China Nonferr Gold•# 1¼	39 21½ Serabi Gold♦ 35 - ½ 17.5	734 450 Renewi 649 + 12 13.7	376 208% GB Group◆ 267 + 2% 20.3 180% 116% GreshamTech 116%	FTSE 100 Index. Investment Cos sector Nav Dis or Prm supplied by Morningstar.
745% 515½ <b>Auto Trader</b> 710% + 9% 35.0	% Clontarf Energy♦ 0.8	290 198½ Serica Energy♦ 218 + 2¾ 3.0 13½ 9 Shanta Gold♦ 12½ 12.5	655% 406% <b>Rentokil</b> 436 + 7% 30.9	68½ 24¼ Ilika◆ 42 - ½ 9.1	N Data as shown is
474½ 381 Bloomsbury Pub 474½ + 5½ 18.3 8 ⅓ Bonhill Group♦ ⅓ - ⅓1.5	34½ 14 Condor Gld◆ 25½ + 3½ ½ ½ Corcel◆ ¾0.4	2772½ 2200½ <b>Shell</b>	353 125 Restore♦ 210 610 424 Ricardo 490	153½ 92 Ingenta♦ 124½ + 1 7.7 97 41½ Intercede♦ 88½ - 1 40.2	purposes only. No offer is made by
. 18 18 m Mar	I	I I			Morningstar or this publication



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Shakespearean actor and star of Brooklyn Nine-Nine Andre Braugher Page 44

**Obituaries** 

## Register

## Dr Adrian Chester

Cardiac expert who survived a pioneering heart operation as a child and spent decades working with the surgeon who saved him

Adrian Chester was given little hope of living much beyond childhood because of an "inoperable" heart condition. Doctors told his parents: "There is nothing we can do for him. All you can do is pray that medical science advances fast enough for him to be helped."

As Chester described his condition years later: "I had three quarters of a heart."

He had been born with a single left ventricle, which meant that the tricuspid and mitral valves opened into one chamber instead of two. He also had pulmonary stenosis and pulmonary hypertension, causing high pressure in his lungs.

On many occasions, his mother Angela watched as her baby son turned grey, stopped feeding and struggled to breathe. As a nurse and a mother of two other children, she knew that he needed help.

After consulting specialists after his birth in 1965, she took him to Harefield Hospital in west London, where a cardiologist told her that she might find help in the form of a "remarkable new surgeon" who would soon be working in the cardiac unit

surgeon who would be in the cardiac unit.

She met Magdi Yacoub, an Egyptian heart specialist with a growing reputation, in 1969. He was unable to correct the defect but told Angela that there would come a time when he probably could. Five years later, when Adrian was pine Yacoub operated.

was nine, Yacoub operated.
Recalling events many years later,
Chester said: "He did an operation he
had never done before. Essentially he
turned my right atrium into a ventricle,
which then pumped blood into my
lungs." Details of Chester's operation,
involving a modified Fontan procedure, were published in medical journals and the British press.

He would live longer than almost anyone else who had undergone the operation and pursue a career that would help to advance medical science. Indeed, his treatment marked the start of a remarkable relationship between doctor and patient.

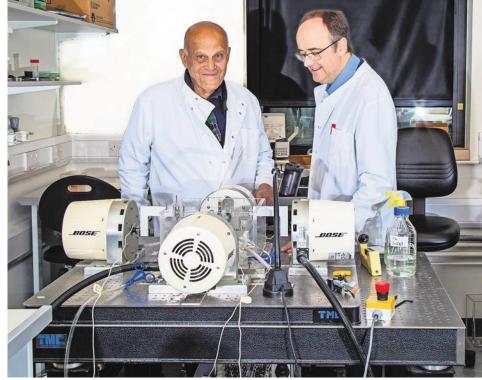
While Chester was unable to do as much physical activity as he would have liked as a boy, his parents encouraged him to "get on with life". He worked hard at school and studied pharmacology at the University of Portsmouth.

He started work at Glaxo, the pharmaceutical company, and took a call one evening from Yacoub, who wanted to see him for a series of health checks at Harefield.

"Professor Yacoub was looking at my X-ray when he asked me what I was do-ing," Chester recalled. "He said, 'That's fantastic. You'll have to come here and work for me'. I told him that I wanted to do a PhD and he said I could do it at Harefield."

At first he hesitated. "I wondered whether he meant it," said Chester, who was not endowed with great self-confidence at the time. He finally accepted the job offer in 1987, after accompanying Yacoub to a research seminar in Sweden and racing back to Britain with him, the last leg in a police car because of an emergency at Harefield.

Although Chester's initial role was unclear, he would spend the rest of his



Yacoub, left, invited Chester to work with him at Harefield Hospital in London after hearing that he wanted to complete a PhD

career at the hospital's Heart Science Centre, working on the development of

He set up a temporary laboratory in a theatre manager's office while new laboratories were built at Harefield, which was becoming one of the biggest and most successful heart transplant centres in the world.

tres in the world.
"The whole thing was exciting,"
Chestersaid. "The science was exciting.
The people I met were exciting. It
wasn't like going to work at all."

Chester eventually became deputy director of the Harefield Heart Science

## The whole thing was exciting, it wasn't like going to work at all'

Centre and an authority on heart

He had been awarded his PhD from the University of London after writing a thesis entitled "Receptor Pharmacology of the Human Coronary Artery" under Yacoub's supervision.

He later established a laboratory dedicated to the study of vascular mechanisms in human blood vessels, particularly those used in coronary artery bypass surgery.

The team at Harefield is studying the molecular mechanisms that regulate the cellular components of heart valves and how these cells influence the valves' function. Their goal is to create a "living heart valve" through bio-engineering. Chester was also involved in writing more than 150 medical and

scientific papers and contributed to several books. He was appointed senior lecturer at the National Heart and Lung Institute in 2002 and became an honorary senior research fellow at Imperial College London.

While Harefield was often in the limelight because of pioneering research and surgery, the hospital also found itself in the headlines because of its relationship with Diana,

of its relationship with Diana, Princess of Wales, who supported Yacoub's work with children, his charity Chain of Hope, and had an affair with his senior registrar, Hasnat Khan.

In a memoir written shortly before his death, Chester recalled that staff at the hospital often remarked excitedly about meeting her.

His wife, Ruth, a cardiac physiotherapist at Harefield, had met Diana in the changing rooms after an operation. On other occasions, the princess, wearing a wig, would join staff at a local pub.

"I had become fascinated

"I had become fascinated with what it was like to meet someone so famous, as I couldn't really understand how she could be any different to anyone else you might meet in the street," Chester wrote.

"One day, one of my PhD students casually mentioned that she had just let Diana into the building. The princess had gone upstairs to wait for Profes-

sor Yacoub. I suddenly saw my big chance. I bundled a load of papers into my arms — as I had done many times before — knocked on the door and went into his office. The first person I saw was the professor's daughter Lisa, whom I knew well.

She stood and said: 'Have you met Diana?' There, just behind the door, sitting in the corner, was perhaps the most beautiful woman I had ever seen, dressed immaculately in an electric blue dress.

"She shook hands gently, and we shared a joke about the enormous mess created by all the papers in Professor Yacoub's office.

"I then gave Lisa a message for her father and simply left. It was a magical moment." Adrian Harold

Adrian Harold Chester was born in 1965, the son of James Chester, an accountant, and his wife Angela.

He was the third of their four children and had two brothers, Peter and John, and a sister, Claire.

After his operation, Chester returned to the family home in Richmond, southwest London and went back to school. He was educated at St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School in Mortlake and Gunnersbury Boys'

School in Brentford. Home was a happy place. He talked about his experiences with his mother and father and mucked in with his siblings.

in with his siblings.

"I was aware that I had a heart condition and it limited me a bit," he said in an interview in 2021. "I never took part in sports but I wasn't wrapped in cotton wool and protected."

He became fascinated by the heart and listened rapt whenever Yacoub appeared on television. He aspired to be a doctor but realised he would not get the grades needed for medical school. After a careers evening, he decided to study pharmacology. He met his future wife, Ruth Harris,

He met his future wife, Ruth Harris, in one of the cardiac theatres at Hare-field Hospital. Both were wearing masks but their eyes met. They were married two years later. The couple had two children, Dominic, who is a pharmacist, and Gabrielle, a software engineer. All survive him.

As a boy, Chester enjoyed cricket and was appointed scorer for a local team. In adulthood he was a keen supporter of Watford Football Club and held a season ticket for more than 25 years. He occasionally wrote match reports for the Watford Observer.

He enjoyed good health for many years but his fortunes changed. For several years Chester suffered occasional then more frequent arrhythmias — when the normal rhythms of the heart are disrupted — as well as a failing liver. It was eventually realised that he needed a double transplant.

In autumn 2014 he was admitted to the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle, one of the main transplant centres in Britain, where the surgical teams had experience of treating patients with conditions similar to Chester's.

He spent six months there waiting for the hospital to find donors for both organs. He continued to pursue medical research from his hospital bed and joined team meetings at Harefield on his laptop. Separated from his family and

Separated from his family and friends, he watched other transplant patients come and go and, at times, became dismayed by his own wait for a donor. He was reluctant to "celebrate" his 50th birthday in 2015, but hospital staff marked the occasion, lifting his spirits enormously.

A month later, donors were found

A month later, donors were found and the transplant went ahead. Once again Chester recovered and returned to work. At Harefield, he helped to find answers to the development of bio-engineered heart valves that recruit stem cells and are capable of growing within the patient, increasing both longevity and quality of life.

The onset of the coronavirus pandemic presented new threats and particular problems. Late in the day, Chester contracted the virus and spent much of the last year of his life in hospital.

His contribution to cardiac treatment was, however, undeniable. According to Yacoub: "Adrian was a heart patient who went on to pay back science and humanity in an unprecedented way."

Dr Adrian Chester, pharmacologist and bio-engineer, was born on March 12, 1965. He died of bronchopneumonia on November 17, 2023, aged 58

## Lord Walker of Gestingthorpe

Reserved but intellectually rigorous justice of the Supreme Court who ruled in a controversial case about conjoined twins

If the Chancery Bar is regarded by those outside it as highly intellectual but dry as dust, Lord Walker of Gestingthorpe was the epitome of a Chancery practitioner.

The former Supreme Court justice stood out even within those high-flown ranks as a rigorous and analytical lawyer and judge, acknowledged as the doyen of tax and trusts specialists who rose with almost record rapidity to the High Court and beyond, serving as a law lord and Supreme Court justice for

Though he was kind and humane, his demeanour in court was nonetheless reserved, almost taciturn; while out of court he seemed shy, even aloof. "He could be curt or friendly and talkative — you never knew what you were going to get," a colleague said. In court he might say nothing throughout the hearing until it was 1pm or 4pm, when he would say: "Is this a convenient moment [to rise]?"

He could also become highly irritated. "In one case, I could see the steam rising but he would struggle to contain himself — a bit like a pressure cooker, the colleague recalled. "By the time he exploded, the barrister had sat down and it was his opponent who took the full force.

But beneath his somewhat austere countenance, Walker held strong views and feelings. If he occasionally failed to contain his annoyance in court, he equally did so in judgments: in a Supreme Court decision in 2011 (McDonald v Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea), he - unusually among the normally restrained members of the highest court — broke ranks to criticise his fellow justice, Baroness Hale of Richmond, saying her comments had been "regrettable" and deplorable.

It was not the first such falling out, and some speculate that one reason Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury was appointed president of the court in 2012 was because he was seen as a peacemaker. One justice noted: "Walker often disagreed with Hale but he did also admire her — and on one occasion her draft arguments persuaded him and others." This occasion was Stack v Dowden, in which the law lords agreed with the Court of Appeal in awarding an unmarried couple shares in a property that reflected their financial contributions towards it.

Walker's rise was swift: he was appointed a High Court judge in 1994 and three years later was promoted to the Court of Appeal on the recommendation of the lord chancellor Lord Irvine of Lairg. Lairg had been strongly impressed when, as counsel, he appeared before Walker in a case — and then took soundings from a leading silk who endorsed Irvine's view. Walker was promoted over ten more senior judges

Robert Walker was born in 1938, the son of Ronald, a conveyancing lawyer, and Mary, Brought up a Roman Catholic, he went to Downside School in Somerset then read classics and law at Trinity College, Cambridge, graduating with a first-class degree.

He was a middle-distance runner at school and university, where he was an athletics blue, and ran several mara-



Walker rose rapidly and ran marathons

thons later in life, including in less than three hours aged 48. He was called to the Bar (Lincoln's Inn) in 1960 where he became a tenant at 17 Old Buildings, taking silk in 1982.

It was one of his regrets that he spent only three years in the High Court, running his own court, before being promoted to the Court of Appeal in 1997. In 2002, he was made a lord of appeal in ordinary, sitting in the highest court and then moving across with colleagues to form the new Supreme Court in 2009.

Walker developed a reputation for construing or analysing so as to obtain the morally right result. He always had a good grasp of the papers and was often more abreast of the detail than counsel. Commonly, he might say to a floundering barrister looking for a reference: "I think you'll find it in bundle G

In 2001 he sat with Lord Justices Ward and Brooke in the final appeal of the controversial ruling on the conjoined twins "Jodie and Mary", ruling that they should be separated in order to preserve the life of Jodie, whilst potentially sacrificing the weaker twin, Mary. Dismissing the appeal, Walker said that all the judges had been "deeply troubled" by the case and by the "awful paradox" that Mary "is alive as a distinct personality, but is not viable as a separate human being [dependent as she was on Jodie's oxygenated blood supply for her survival]".

The parents' feelings and religious beliefs were entitled to "great respect", he said, "[but] the court cannot escape the responsibility of deciding the matter to the best of its judgment as to the twins' best interests

He was not averse to disagreeing with colleagues. In 2004, he was the only dissenter among nine law lords in their landmark ruling that detaining foreign terrorists without trial breached human rights laws, arguing that the anti-terrorism legislation contained important safeguards against oppression.

In 2007 Walker stood out against Lords Hoffmann, Nicholls, Brown and Lady Hale to oppose the judgment that the magazine Hello! was liable for breach of confidence to the rival magazine OK! in publishing unauthorised photographs of Catherine Zeta-Jones's wedding to Michael Douglas. Among his final appeal cases was Pitt v Holt (2013): his widely praised judgment restricted the scope of a previous ruling that had allowed the court to set aside decisions made by trustees if the decisions had unintended consequences Walker's judgment ensured this would be possible only where the trustees had committed a breach of fiduciary duty.

He retired from the Supreme Court in 2013 and sat until 2021 as a crossbencher in the House of Lords, chairing its committee on the HS2 bill in 2016

among other things.
Walker married Suzanne Leggi in 1962 with whom he had three daughters and a son, all of whom survive him. In his youth he was a keen sportsman, enjoying running, riding and crosscountry skiing, and completing the 1986 London Marathon in a personal best time of 2 hours and 57 minutes; only 47 minutes slower than that year's winner, Toshihiko Seko.

Despite his achievements, Walker remained modest and unassuming. When he retired from the Supreme Court, he spoke of his gratitude and "some surprise" at having reached the top of the judicial ladder, adding that except for a small number of judicial superstars "there is a huge amount of fortune or luck ... in who gets promotion and who does not".

Lord Walker of Gestingthorpe, Supreme Court justice, was born on March 17, 1938. He died on November 16, 2023, aged 85

## Andre Braugher

## Shakespearean actor who gradually embraced situation comedy as the deadpan police captain in Brooklyn Nine-Nine

When Andre Braugher was asked to play Captain Raymond Holt in Brook lyn Nine-Nine he admitted to being "pretty freaked out".

That the New York police officer was gay, unlike Braugher, was never the issue. His only insistence was that Holt's sexual orientation had to be merely a matter of fact and not a source of amusement. "As long as there's no pink hot pants and singing YMCA then everything's OK," he said.

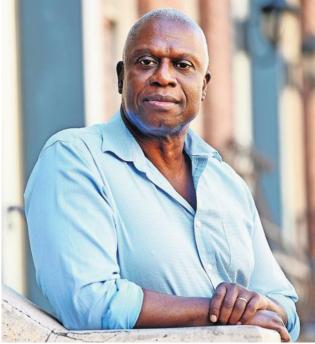
He even corrected one of his teenage sons who asked him if it was true that he was going to be playing a gay police captain. "No, I'm playing a police captain who's gay," he replied, before sitting the boy down to explain the distinction.

Instead his concern was that Brooklyn Nine-Nine was not a standard television police procedural but a sitcom. A Stanford University graduate who trained in drama at the Juilliard School, Braugher had played detectives before — notably in the gritty, long-running NBC drama *Homicide: Life on the Street* — and was a celebrated Shakespearean whose roles included Henry V and Claudius in Hamlet.

However, he had seldom performed in comedies and the prospect of playing for laughs scared him. "It was all new to me. I'd not done it before and I kept looking at it and saying to myself, 'Is this any good?'" he recalled.

Perhaps it helped that the joke that ran throughout the series was that his stoical precinct captain was so stern that he had to strain to smile even when delivering a devastating punchline. It enabled Braugher to bring a gravitas to his portrayal, and his deadpan comic timing proved popular with viewers. He played the part for eight series starting

"He would have you believe he had no comedic skills before the show



Braugher said he had always been frustrated by the lack of roles for black actors

started, but we all know that's not true," said Andy Samberg, whose goofball detective character Jake Peralta often exasperated Braugher's erudite cap-

His portrayal earned him four Emmy nominations and two Critics' Choice awards, yet he continued to insist he was merely "a voveur at the funny person's table". Drama and comedy, he discovered, were "not opposites, just different tools to get at the same human truths"

The show was on air when the murder of George Floyd at the hands of a white police officer began a nationwide conversation about racism and police brutality. Braugher

said that the Black Lives Matter movement prompted him to look at the role of television police dramas through a new lens.

"The myth that the outcomes of the criminal justice system are not dependent upon your race has to be confronted," he said. "Brooklyn Nine-Nine has to commit itself, as a comedy, to telling the story of how these things happen. Can anyone in America maintain any kind of innocence about what police departments are capable of?

He is survived by his wife of more than 30 years, the actress Ami Brabson, who was cast as his on-screen wife in Homicide: Life on the Street, and by their sons, Michael, Isaiah and John Wesley.

His work was all in Los Angeles but he kept his home in New Jersey, clocking up vast air miles by flying home every weekend to see his children, whom he wanted to grow up in what he called "a true context" rather than in Hollywood.

Andre Keith Braugher was born in Chicago in 1962, the son of Sally, a postal worker, and Floyd Braugher, a heavy equipment operator. "We lived in a ghetto ... I wound up not getting in trouble," he told The New York Times. "I don't consider myself to be especially wise, but it's pretty clear that some people want to get out and some people don't. I wanted out.'

His route out came via St Ignatius College, a Jesuit high school in Chicago, and a scholarship to Stanford, where he majored in mathematics before switching to theatre studies.

His father, who wanted him to be an engineer, was furious. "In his eyes he was watching me throw away a perfectly good career to experiment with the " Braugher said.

"How many successful black actors can you name?" his father demanded.

He admitted that he ran out of names before he ran out of fingers and the lack of parts for African-American actors remained a concern, even after he had

"I've always been frustrated with the roles that are available," he noted. "I've been very fortunate but it's not as though I had a lot of auditions and there's been a platter laid out for me to feast at.

After graduating from Juilliard, Braugher landed his first film role in 1989's Glory, playing a corporal in a black regiment in the American Civil War alongside Denzel Washington and Morgan Freeman.

His first police role came as a sidekick in a revival of *Kojak*. It led to his casting in 1993 in *Homicide: Life on the Street* as the tough and unyielding detective Frank Pembleton, a role that earned him an Emmy for outstanding lead actor in a drama series and a place in People magazine's list of the 50 most beautiful people in the world.

Braugher later switched sides and won another Emmy as the head of a criminal gang in the 2006 miniseries Thief. His most recent appearance came in the 2022 film She Said, in which he played Dean Baquet, the New York Times editor who oversaw the journalistic investigation that exposed the crimes of Harvey Weinstein.

He admitted that he would have liked to have done more with his career, including directing and producing.
"But it would have been at the expense of my own life," he said.

Andre Braugher, actor, was born on July 1, 1962. He died of lung cancer on December 11, 2023, aged 61

Email: obituaries@thetimes.co.uk

**Law Report** 

## Limits to VAT exemption for transactions concerning payments, transfers and debts

Supreme Court December 20, 2023

Target Group Ltd v Revenue and Customs Commissioners

Before Lord Reed, Lord Lloyd-Jones, Lord Sales, Lord Hamblen and Lady Rose [2023] UKSC 35 Judgment October 11, 2023

Judgment October 11, 2023

Where a bank outsourced the servicing of its loan accounts to a company, which gave instructions for payments from the customer to the bank, and recorded all transactions on the customer's loan account, those actions by the company did not qualify as "transactions ... concerning payments, transfers [or] debts" for the purpose of article 135(1)(d) of Council Directive 2006/112/EC (the Principal VAT Directive) so as to be exempt from VAT

The Supreme Court so held in dismissing an appeal by Target Group Ltd against the order of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Underhill, Lord Justice Henderson and Lady Justice Simler) ([2021] STC 1662) affirming a decision to that effect by the Upper Tribunal (Mr Justice Zacaroli and Upper Tribunal Judge Greg Sinfield) ([2020] STC 1).

Target Group Ltd (Target) had appealed to the First-tier Tribunal against the refusal of the Revenue and Customs Commissioners (HMRC) to grant it a non-statutory clearance concerning the VAT liability of its services to Shawbrook Bank Ltd (Shawbrook). The First-tier Tribunal (First-tier Tribunal Judge Sarah Falk) ([2018] UKFTT 226 (TC)) dismissed the appeal, albeit on a different ground than that relied on by the Upper Tribunal and Court of Appeal.

bunal and Court of Appeal.

Roderick Cordara KC for
Target. Hui Ling McCarthy
KC and Michael Ripley for
HMRC.

LORD HAMBLEN, with whom the other members of the court agreed, said that Shawbrook was a provider of mortgages and loans. Target administered loans made by Shawbrook, including by operating individual loan accounts and instigating

and processing payments due from borrowers.

The article 135(1)(d) exemption applied to "transactions ... concerning ... payments, transfers, debts ... but excluding debt collection". Target contended that the services it provided fell within that provision and so were exempt from VAT.

In particular, it relied on the fact that it procured payments from borrowers' bank accounts to Shawbrook's bank accounts by giving instructions for payment which were then automatically and inevitably carried out through the Bankers' Automated Clearing System (Bacs).

HMRC contended that the exemption did not apply because the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union made it clear that the exemption only applied to the exemption only applied to the exemption of an order for transfer or payment — and giving instructions for payment was a prior step to execution rather than part of the process of execution. The interpretation of the Principal VAT Directive was a matter of EU law, as retained pursuant to sections 2,5(2) and 6 of European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018

al) Act 2018.

His Lordship said that the terms used in the Principal VAT Directive to specify exemptions had to be interpreted strictly because they constituted exceptions to the general rule that VAT was to be levied on all services supplied for consideration by a taxable person.

The first case to consider the scope of what was now the article 135(1)(d) exemption had been Sparekassernes Datacenter (SDC) v Skatteministeriet (Case C-2/95) ([1997] STC 932). It held that a transaction concerning a transfer meant the execution of an order for the transfer of a sum of money from one bank account to another.

The execution of such an order required a "change in the legal and financial situation" of the relevant parties (paragraph 55). That meant a change in the

legal and financial situation as between the payer and the payee and/or the payer and its bank or the payee and its bank and/or between the banks involved in the transfer.

What remained arguably unclear was whether the services had to, in themselves, have that effect and make that change—the narrow interpretation—or whether it was sufficient for them to have that causal effect

— the wider interpretation. The Court of Justice case law now made it absolutely clear that the narrow interpretation was the correct one. That meant that the services had to, in themselves, have the effect of transferring funds and changing the legal and financial situation. It was not enough to give instructions to do so thereby triggering a transfer or navment.

transfer or payment.

Nor was it enough to perform a service which was essential to carrying out the transfer or payment, or which automatically and inevitably led to transfer or payment. Rather, it was necessary to be involved in carrying out or executing the transfer or payment — its "materialisation." That required functional participation and performance. Causation was insufficient, however inevitable the consequences.

Although Shawbrook was a bank, Target did not carry out banking payment services on its behalf. Its role related to Shawbrook's mortgage and loan business — that was, Shawbrook acting as a supplier of credit rather than as a supplier of payment and transfer services.

As the Court of Appeal stated in the instant case, at paragraph 86, the Target services in issue merely transmitted information or instructions and did not themselves perform any of the functions of transmitting funds to constitute a transfer.

It followed that the giving of instructions by Target, although automatically and inevitably resulting in payment from the borrowers' bank accounts to Shawbrook's bank accounts via

Bacs, was insufficient to fall within the exemption.

Target had also relied on its inputting of entries into the borrowers' loan accounts with Shawbrook. In relation to that issue Target had placed greater emphasis on "transactions concerning debts"

issue farget has practed greater emphasis on "transactions"... concerning ... debts". Target's role included the authorised debiting and crediting of the borrower loan accounts with Shawbrook and that, it was claimed, involved making changes to the legal and financial situation of the parties and so fell within the article 135(1)(d) exemption.

However, as the First-tier Tribunal found, at paragraph 42, the loan accounts were 'effectively ledgers which evidence the level of indebtedness, capture repayments and record other financial information including fees and interest charged".

It also held, at paragraph 50, that because of the way payment processes operated, "expected" payments were initially "assumed to be made" by applying credits to the relevant loan accounts. Where it transpired that payment was not made, those entries were reversed.

On any view, entries made of "expected" payments which were "assumed" to be made could not effect a payment or transfer or result in a change in the legal position of the parties. Further, consistently with the assumptions inherent in applying credits made by reference to "expected" payments, those entries were reversible.

Hence, as the Court of Appeal stated, at paragraph 102, the debits and credits to loan accounts made by Target did not effect any payment or transfer and did not result in a change in the legal and financial position of the parties, but simply recorded the consequence of transfers effected by others.

Solicitors: Legal Services, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP; HMRC Solicitor's Office, Stratford

## **Court Circular**



## **Buckingham Palace**

19th December, 2023 The King held an Investiture at Windsor Castle this morning.

Major Grant Baker was received by The King this afternoon upon relinquishing his appointment as a Gentleman Usher to His Majesty. Mrs Hannah Howard was

Mrs Hannah Howard was received by The King upon relinquishing her appointment as Communications Secretary when His Majesty invested her with the Insignia of a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

## St James's Palace

19th December, 2023 The Duchess of Edinburgh, Patron, this morning visited the Lighthouse, 8-10 High Street, Woking, Surrey.

## LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

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Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 11.30am three days prior to insertion

## Births, Marriages and Deaths

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THE LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.
Psalm 145.17-18 (ESV)

Bible verses are provided by the

## Births

**HEITZMAN** on 6th November 2023 to Martina Klimentova and Chris Heitzman, a son, Edward William Christopher.

## Deaths

HEADLEY Gillian (Gill) passed away on 11th December 2023, aged 85. Wife of David, mother of Caroline and Jackie, grandmother to Abigail. She will be greatly missed.

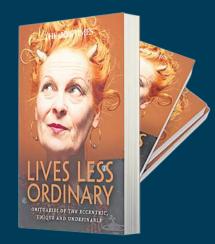
HERBERT Hilary (née Pugh) of Abergavenny, died on 13th December 2023. Private funeral, at her request. Inquiries to Ted Williams & Son, Abergavenny, 01873 853942.

ROEBUCK Roy Delville MA LIM on 17th December 2023, aged 94. RAF Gangodawila (NS), journalist, member of parliament, barrister. Widower and father. No service at his request.

SHIPTON (ay died peacefully on 12th December 20,23, aged 86. Devoted wife to the late John (JK), loving mother of Bill, Ed, Matt and Plum and much-loved Granny to Sophie, Phoebe, George, Arthur, Henry, Sam, Josie and Jack. A thanksgiving service will be held at 12,30pm on 11th January 20,24 at St Clement's, Sandwich. No flowers please. If planning to attend please email khs\_service@blinternet.com

SUFFIELD-JONES Veronica (née Stafford) on 12th December, aged 82, after a short illness. Adored wife, mother, grandmother and mother-in-law. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Service of thanksgiving at 2.30pm on 13th January at 51 James the Less, Pangbourne. Donations in her memory to Sue Ryder, Duches of Kent Hospice. Reading, RG30 2DX, would be appreciated.

## A collection of Times obituaries



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## The perfect gift for new parents

'He'll be shouting for Ireland in the rugby but England in the cricket'

CILLIAN FRANCIS DUNKLEY WAS BORN ON DECEMBER 19, 2022, AT PETERBOROUGH CITY HOSPITAL IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE TO KATE WALSH AND JAMIE DUNKLEY

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## **Today** A breezy day and mainly dry in the southeast, scattered showers in the northwest. Max 12C (54F), min 3C (37F)

Calm

✓ Moderate

Slight

**SCOC** Rough

At 17:00 on Tuesday there were six flood warnings and 79 flood alerts in England and three flood alerts and no flood warnings in Wales. There were no flood alerts or warnings in Scotland.
For further information and updates in England visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk

(32)

ATLANTIC

**OCEAN** 

Channel Islands

(11)

(mph)

Temperature

(degrees C)

## **Around Britain**

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder \*=previous day \*\*=data not available

	Temp C		Rain mm	Sun hr
			24 hrs to 5pm	
Aberdeen	7	S	0.0	1.1
Aberporth	8	D	23.2	0.0
Anglesey	9	PC	1.4	0.0
Aviemore	5	S	1.4	0.1
Barnstaple	10	R	19.8	22
Bedford	10	C	12.4	22
Belfast	7	C	2.0	0.0
Birmingham	8	R	9,6	22
Bournemouth	11	C	9,2	0.0
Bridlington	8	PC	0.8	22
Bristol	9	C	22.6	0.0
Camborne	10	R	9.4	0.0
Cardiff	10	R	17.6	0.0
Edinburgh	7	PC	0.0	0.1
Eskdalemuir	5	R	1.0	0.0
Glasgow	7	C	2.4	0.0
Hereford	9	R	11.8	22
Herstmonceux	12	R	13.4	0.0
Ipswich	9	R	18.4	0.0
Isle of Man	9	PC	0.0	0.0
Isle of Wight	12	R	12.2	22
Jersey	12	C	1.6	0.0
Keswick	8	C	2.6	22
Kinloss	7	PC	0.4	0.5
Leeds	5	S	2.8	22
Lerwick	5	R	7.8	0.0
Leuchars	7	S	0.0	0.8
Lincoln	8	R	5.0	0.0
Liverpool	22	22	3.6	22
London	10	R	14.6	0.0
Lyneham	9	C	14.8	0.0
Manchester	7	PC	5.4	0.0
Margate	12	R	12.2	0.4
Milford Haven	8	R	20.0	22
Newcastle	6	S	0.2	22
Nottingham	7	D	5.0	0.0
Orkney	6	S	7.8	0.2
Oxford	10	R	12.8	22
Plymouth	10	C	10.6	22
Portland	11	C	7.6	22
Scilly, St Mary's		D	6.4	22
Shoreham	10	R	12.6	0.0
Shrewsbury	8	D	10.2	0.0
Snowdonia	7	C	6.4	22
Southend	9	R	14.0	0.5
South Uist	9	В	2.6	22
Stornoway	7	R	4.8	0.3
Tiree	9	PC	2.0	22
Whitehaven	7	PC	0.2	0.0
Wick	5	S	2.0	22
Yeovilton	11	R	6.8	0.0

## The world

All readings local midday yesterday						
Alicante	15	S	Madeira	20	PC	
Amsterdam	10	R	Madrid	9	S	
Athens	16	S	Malaga	16	S	
Auckland	19	В	Mallorca	15	S	
Bahrain	24	PC	Malta	16	PC	
Bangkok	33	PC	Melbourne	15	SH	
Barbados	26	SH	Mexico City	20	S	
Barcelona	16	S	Miami	22	В	
Beijing	-7	S	Milan	13	S	
Beirut	19	S	Mombasa	32	PC	
Belgrade	10	S	Montreal	8	R	
Berlin	6	В	Moscow	1	D	
Bermuda	22	C	Mumbai	30	22	
Bordeaux	7	DU	Munich	7	S	
Brussels	8	R	Nairobi	24	В	
Bucharest	8	S	Naples	15	S	
Budapest	-1	FG	New Orleans	16	S	
Buenos Aires	15	R	New York	11	R	
Cairo	22	PC	Nice	16	S	
Calcutta	22	**	Nicosia	20	PC	
Canberra	32	S	Oslo	2 7	S	
Cape Town	24	S	Paris		В	
Chicago	-1	В	Perth	29	S	
Copenhagen	8	R	Prague	8	S	
Corfu	17	S	Reykjavik	-1	SN	
Delhi	19	**	Riga	8	В	
Dubai	26	S		30	PC	
Dublin	7	PC	Riyadh	21	S	
Faro	16	S	Rome	15	S	
Florence	9	S	San Francisco	14	M	
Frankfurt	3	В	Santiago	27	S	
Geneva	1	FG	São Paulo	31	PC	
Gibraltar	16	PC	Seoul	-1	В	
Helsinki	4	PC	Seychelles	30	В	
Hong Kong	14	PC	Singapore	30	В	
Honolulu	23		St Petersburg	4	SH	
Istanbul	12	S	Stockholm	3	S	
Jerusalem	22	S	Sydney	29	**	
Johannesburg		PC	Tel Aviv	22	S	
Kuala Lumpur	32	SH	Tenerife	21	PC	
Kyiv	宗宗	**	Tokyo	9	В	
Lanzarote	20	PC	Vancouver	7	В	
Las Palmas	21	PC	Venice	10	S	

## Five days ahead

through Christmas Day with rain most frequent in the north and west

Tomorrow
A windy day with showers or longer
spells of rain, most frequent in the
north and west and wintry over higher ground. Drier with sunny intervals in
the south and east.
Max 14C, min -2C
Wax 14C, IIIII -2C
12
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(12)





## **Christmas Eve**





The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest
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General situation: Rather cloudy and breezy with showery rain in northern and western areas. Drier and brighter in the south and east. London, SE Eng. E Anglia, Midands, @ <del>(</del>

Tides

Today Aberdeer

Cardiff

Falmouth

Holyhead

Norecambe

Newhaven

Newquay

Penzance

Portsmouth Shoreham Southampton

04:40 5.6 04:01 4.1

Leith

Avonmouth Belfast

London, SE Eng, E Anglia, Mudiands, Cen S Eng: A mainly dry day with sunny spells although cloudier later with the small chance of an isolated shower. Moderate to fresh westerly winds. Maximum 11C (52F), minimum 7C (45F). SW Eng, S Wales, Channel Is: A few bright intervals, but rather cloudy

26

23:42

16:16

6.4

much of the time with scattered showers. Fresh to strong west to northwesterly winds. Maximum 12C (54F), minimum 7C (45F). E Eng, NE Eng, Borders, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Dundee, Cen Highland, Moray Firth: Some dry, bright spells, but thicker cloud may bring outbreaks of showery rain, especially around midday. Fresh westerly winds, strong over higher ground. Maximum 11C (52F), minimum 5C (41F). 11C (52F), minimum 5C (41F). N Wales, NW Eng, Cen N Eng, IoM,

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17

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NORTH

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Birmingham

11 London

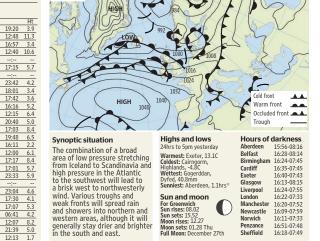
CHANNEL

Southampton

00

29

Lake District, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, NW Scotland, NE Scotland, N Isles: Cloudy and breezy with showers or longer spells of rain. Fresh to strong west to northwesterly winds. Maximum 12C (54F), minimum 3C (37F). Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Rather cloudy with showers or spells of rain. Drier with brighter spells in the south. Fresh to strong west to northwesterly winds. Maximum 12C (54F), minimum 9C (48F).



## **Weather Eye** Paul Simons



edgerows and woodlands had bumper crops of hawthorn berries (haws) this autumn, meaning a feast for birds over autumn and winter so far. The Nature's Calendar team at the Woodland Trust reported the crop was the biggest since their records began 20 years ago, a welcome boost for wildlife as the haws are eaten by many birds as well as small mammals. They put the exceptional crop down to a mild spring with temperatures hovering above average. Warm dry weather in May was ideal for insects to pollinate the hawthorn blossom.

But folklore also warns of a cold winter and snows (snaws) when the hawthorns have plenty of berries: 'When the hawthorn has too many haws/ We shall still have many snaws." It may be wise not to rely on this prediction, but are there any other signs of what the rest of this winter could bring?

One big influence on the winter weather in Britain and northwest Europe is likely to be a strong El Niño driving a warm wedge through the tropical Pacific seas around the equator. True to form, this bout of El Niño brought a largely wet, windy and mild late autumn and early winter, but a typical one also brings a drastic change to drier and colder conditions in the latter half of winter and early spring.

Another player in the winter outlook is the stratosphere. During this season, fierce winds race around the Arctic in a vortex that keeps intensely cold air bottled up over the pole. But these stratospheric winds have been steadily weakening over recent weeks and if they grow too weak they may go into reverse, leading to a total breakdown of the polar vortex. Should that happen, cold polar air in the stratosphere can burst out southwards and penetrate into our weather. That is far from certain, but in the worst case it could bring back the dreaded Beast from the East, the Siberian winds that froze the country in the infamous hard December of 2010 and spells of cold in early 2011.

## Speak directly to one of our forecasters on 09065 777675

8am to 5pm daily (calls are charged at £1.55 plus network extras)





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## Sport

## The scrum cap that could save rugby

Tim Stimpson knows former players on 'suicide watch' after putting bodies on the line, but new technology could be game changer, writes Owen Slot

t the end of a year when rugby has been struggling more than ever, here is a story that might give you faith. It may come to nothing, but when there is a grave concern that rugby is facing an existential threat, here are two men

devoted to keeping it alive.

It is a story about headguards — or, in old It is a story about neadguards — or, in old terminology, the scrum cap — and it asks the question: can technology help save the game?

The story has three starting points. You could say it starts on December 7, 1996, when a young

Tim Stimpson, playing for the Barbarians, felt the full force of David Campese's knee to his head. That was his first big concussion.

You could say it starts on December 22 five years later, Harlequins v Leicester Tigers, when Dan Luger managed to evade the tackles of both Stimpson and Freddie Tuilagi, meaning that Stimpson's face took the full force of Tuilagi's elbow. As Stimpson recalls it: "I could hear Niagara Falls in my head, there was clearly a lot of blood." Waking up on Boxing Day morning, he stared into a mirror to find that his right eye had sunk down into his skull.

Or you could say that the story starts in 2004 when George Fox, a young textiles engineer, was living in a student-type accommodation block in Lyon. One of his friends didn't come home because when he was flipped off his bike by a car and landed on his head, his helmet wasn't good enough to protect him.

Years later, when Fox was approached by a start-up wanting to make a bike helmet. "It became an absolute focus," he says. "A real case of: I flipping need to do this." He devoted four years — much of it in his shed — to inventing and re-inventing different foam materials before he was finally happy that if anyone else was in a similar bike accident, they would have a considerably better chance of survival.

Stimpson's driver was those concussions and where they were taking him. Those plus the love of his sport, and the fact that his two boys were getting good at it too and that his wife, like touchline parents on rugby pitches around the world, was asking him whether this was really a good thing for them to be doing. He wanted to

give her a proper answer.

Stimpson retired in 2006 with 19 England caps and one for the Lions. Eight years later, he started hypoxic training — with reduced oxygen, as if preparing for altitude because he was concerned about the long

TCellie

because ne was concerned about the long-term effects of his career.

"I am shitting myself that, like so many of my mates, I have an acquired brain injury," he says. "Do I forget things? Am I bad with names? Yes, yes.

"I have a few mates who

were playing with me who, as far as I am concerned, are on suicide watch. They have been isolated from society, they are seen as a problem, they can't see their kids or wives any more. They've turned to alcohol and drugs. One guy I know about ... he's living in his car. He's told me he has less than five years to live.

"When I was playing, you earned the respect of the forwards by sacrificing your body. You'd never want to get labelled as soft by the forward pack. You'd play on with



Stimpson, below, is concerned that he may have acquired a brain injury during his playing days and hopes the Hedkayse scrum cap will make the sport safe

obvious impairment of your vision and your faculties. I even kicked goals with no idea what was going on in the middle of my sight, I just

kicked on technique.
"Now I know I have mood swings. My wife would tell you she's frustrated with my lack of memory. It's embarrassing when you forget people's names. I don't know whether it's anything to do with whether I've got an acquired brain injury, or whether I'm under a lot of stress. I don't know."

These storylines merged exactly a year ago. At the business centre where Fox works, the tenants are encouraged to make presentations about their work and it just so happened that Stimpson was in the room when Fox was presenting. Stimpson was on a low; he had been to Doddie Weir's funeral, he had just been spending time with another former team-mate who was suffering terribly with what he believed were the effects of accumulated head knocks.

After the presentation, he was straight up to Fox, who recalls Stimpson telling him: "One of the first things was: 'How soon can you

make a sample because I want to put it on my boy right now? I just want to look after my kid.'

## CRICKET EQUIPMENT REVOLUTION

By then, Fox had a long history in making protective sportswear. In 2011, he was having a pint

with Neil Carter, the South African playing for Warwickshire. Carter showed him his thigh pad, made by a top cricket brand.
"I just remember looking at this

lump of foam, going, 'Is that it? That's rubbish.'" So he bet him another pint that he could do better.

Within two hours of Carter going into training with it, Fox got a call from Edgbaston: "You need to come

"I thought, oh no, what have I done?" But when Fox arrived, he found Carter's team-mates whacking him on the leg with their bats and laughing.

Immediately, Fox started receiving orders from those team-mates. Players at Hampshire, Yorkshire and other counties followed. Then the West Indies who were about to tour

Players started to post videos of themselves being hit with bats or mallets. It was when two businessmen came across these posts that they contacted Fox. That was when their company, Hedkayse, was formed.
The pace of this story then slows

considerably with Fox now in his shed, trying to solve a problem. Helmets were traditionally encased with polystyrene, but it can crack and lose its protection after one impact.

So he wanted durability. The solution, he became convinced, lay in polyurethane foams but the problem here was that their but the problem here was that their performance was temperature dependent. Too hot and they would soften; too cold and they would become brittle. "So," he says, "I thought: if I can create some sort of secret sauce that I mix into it that gives it properties that allow it to maintain its stability, whether it's cold, whether it's hot, then we might have a winner.

Four years and more than 6,000 tests later, he was finally satisfied with the fruit of his labours. This is the textile that they now call "Enkayse". It has worked for cycling. The question, now, is whether it will work for rugby.

## A GAME CHANGER OR JUST MORE HEADGEAR WITHOUT BENEFITS?

The historical limitations of scrum caps are no secret. They have protected heads from surface damage: cuts, head wounds, cauliflowering ears, but they haven't protected the brain. "We started doing impact testing, and we were going, "This is rubbish. What is this?" Fox says.

A unit of force is measured in Gs — or gravities — where Ig is the force of gravity. Fighter pilots experience sustained forces of up to 9g, though this is different to one sudden blow which produces a far greater instant force When World Rugby does testing, the standard impact measurement is 530g. Testing by Dr William Proud, director of shock physics at Imperial College, shows that a regular scrum cap reduces 530g to 439.9g.

We need to understand the numbers here. A 530g impact is colossal. An F1 collision at full

speed hardly gets close.

One of the problems in this field of science is that we still don't know the exact relationship

between a single blow and the long-term damage caused. We know that different skulls can sustain different impacts. Importantly, there is a growing agreement that it isn't single big blows that are the problem, so much as the number of head knocks: the cumulative dose.

In its recent statement on tackle-height changes, the Rugby Football League's Brain Health and Clinical Advisory Group focused on the accumulation of "head accelerations" of 20g or more as its concern.

When Dr Proud tested the Hedkayse headguard at body temperature, it reduced a 530g impact to 85g. Hedkayse's own testing shows that for lower impacts, the same percentage of reduction applies. Are these the kind of numbers that could save rugby? Hedkayse went to Dr Marshall Garrett for an

opinion. Garrett is honorary clinical senior lecturer at the University of Glasgow and an expert on traumatic brain injury who has written on brain injuries in rugby. Garrett was sufficiently impressed to permit Hedkayse to quote him (unpaid) in its

literature. He describes Hedkayse as "a game changer" and "a huge step forward in mitigation of risk".

Hedkayse also went to Return2Play, a company that consults on head injuries, mainly to schools; last year they had more than 10,000 appointments, 59 per cent of them from rugby. Dr Sam Barke, their head of sports medicine, is "very excited about the potential of what Hedkayse may be

able to offer".

However, he added that there is a difference between lab data and on-field data, and that further testing was required. Like others, he said that no one should mistake Hedkayse for rugby's silver bullet.

Lower tackles, better tackling technique, a reduction in playing time and minutes spent on bone-on-bone defence in training, better education and recognition of concussion — these all remain crucial.

Hedkayse has its sceptics too, like Dr Willie Stewart, consultant neuropathologist at the University of Glasgow and one of the leading experts on sport and brain injury, who wrote recently: "Study after study shows no benefit of headgear."

This is a debate now in the hands of World

Rugby. It has already given "trial" status to another headguard, NPro, which reduces that 530g force at body temperature to 190.4g. So on the basis that Hedkayse takes it down to 85g, it

is expected to be given the green light soon.

Max Lahiff, the Bristol Bears prop, already
wears it in training. The moment World Rugby endorses its trial status, he will be wearing it in the Gallagher Premiership and in Europe.

If any of this sounds like a long product endorsement for a get-rich-quick scheme by Stimpson, he is pretty clear on the motivations behind it. "I don't own any equity in the business," he says. "I am only being paid for my time as an ambassador, but if I help the business become successful, I'll be rewarded with some minority shares.

Right from the start, he said to the founders: if this is successful, we give 20 per cent to rugby charities. He is also concerned that the cost of the headguard shouldn't be prohibitive. It will be £120 for an adult, £100 for a child. The idea is that for every headguard sold, one will be given away free.

Stimpson feels that he didn't completely fulfil his gifts as a player, but he sees this — his ability, his dream, his hope to help rugby — potentially greater calling. It might never happen, but now rugby needs that help, and here are some people who are seriously trying.

## Newbury Rob Wright

12.15 Torneo 2.35 Gidleigh Park 12.50 Home Free 3.10 Etalon 3.45 Chattamento 2.00 Galia Des Liteaux	(nb

Going: soft, good to soft in places on chase course Racing TV

## 12.15 Juvenile Hurdle

	(3-Y-O: £5,446: 2m) (7 runners)	
H Reed	450 BISCOFF JOE 52 (T) Syd Hosie 11-0	
B J Powe	6 ROYAL DEESIDE 43 (BF) A King 11-0	!
C Quinn (3)	3 THROUGH THE AGES 45 G L Moore 11-0	;
G Sheehan	2 TORNEO 26 J Snowden 11-0	ļ
D Noonan	05 ALL BLUES 41 T R Gretton 10-7	i
le Ryder (10)	GUSTY 6 Brown 10-7 Isabell	,
l De Boinvi <b>ll</b> e	THERAPIST F88 N Henderson 10-7 N	•
The Ages 22.1	6 Thoranict 7 2 Torano E 1 Doual Doneido 6 1 Through T	_

Gusty 50-1 All Rhos 66-1 Riscoff In

**Rob Wright's choice: Torneo**, fair on the Flat in France, showed promise over jumps at Catterick **Danger:** Therapist

## 12.50 Maiden Hurdle (£5,446: 2m) (20)

1	AKTHUKIAN FABLE 1894 K Bandey 6-11-4	H Bannister
2	U3-4 DAVID'S WELL 41 C Gordon 4-11-4	R Dingle
3	15 DENBURN 27 A King 4-11-4	T Cannon
4	DIPLOMATIC ASH 6 L Moore 4-11-4	D Noonan
5	4/ DONALD LLEWELLYN F42 G L Moore 6-11-	4 C Quinn (3)
6	1-U FORTUNATE MAN 8 (T) Jonjo O'Neill 4-11-	4 J O'Neill Jr
7	05-6 HARRY GULLIVER 217 A Hales 5-11-4	B Carver
8	33-06 HIGHWAY ONE O FIVE 23 C Gordon 4-11-4	Bryony Frost
9	23- HOME FREE 298 D Skelton 5-11-4	H Skelton
10	44 MELTON MOSSY 37 L Horsfall 4-11-4	M G Nolan
11	52 PYROTECHNIC 29 G L Moore 4-11-4	N F Houlihan (3)
12	5450- RIVERS CORNER 265 Syd Hosie 5-11-4	H Reed
13	SALVATORE F523 Harry Derham 4-11-4	P O'Brien
14	014-0 SAMAZUL 30 (D) B Pauling 5-11-4	K Woods
15	SAPPERDEAN F32 (H) L Dace 4-11-4	Mr A Weaver (7)
16	436-5 SHILLANAVOGY 8 W Greatrex 5-11-4	J J Burke
17	5-5 STAR OF AFFINITY 37 Joe Tizzard 4-11-4	B J Powell
18	0-4 STRUTTER 41 (H) N Henderson 4-11-4	N De Boinville
19	1-60 WILLSBURG 26 (D) 0 Signy 4-11-4	G Sheehan
20	2-44 CHARMIAN'S PLACE 37 (BF) N King 5-10-:	11 J Quinlan
4-1	Strutter, 9-2 Home Free, 6-1 Arthurian Fable, 7-1 Sal	vatore, 8-1 David's
We	II, 10-1 Pyrotechnic, Denburn, Fortunate Man.	
Wı	right choice: Home Free showed a useful l	evel of form on

Dangers: Strutter, Denburn both starts in bumpers

## 1.25 Handicap Chase (£10,034: 2m 7f) (5)

1	121-2 THEATRE MAN 41 R Bandey 7-11-10	H Banniste
2	131/1 BRAVE KINGDOM 30 (T) P Nicholls 7-11-9	H Cobdei
3	4140- HECTOR JAVILEX 279 (T) C Longsdon 6-11-9	Lily Pinchi
4	413-2 AMRONS SAGE 24 N Henderson 6-11-0	N De Boinville
5	312/5 PULLING STUMPS 30 P Hobbs & J White 6-10	I-8 M G Nolai
	1 Brave Kingdom, 11-4 Amrons Sage, 3-1 Theatre Man, 9- -1 Pulling Stumps.	2 Hector Javile

Wright choice: Hector Javilex developed into a fair stayer over hurdles; he looks a chasing type Danger: Amrons Sage

## 2.00 Mares' Chase (£18.509: 2m 7f) (6)

1	154-1 GALIA DES LITEAUX 34 D Skelton 7-11-4	H Skelton
2	311-4 PINK LEGEND 11 V Williams 9-11-4	C Deutsch
3	33-60 LILITH 5 (B,T,C) A Honeyball 8-11-0	J J Burke
4	13-10 ROSE OF ARCADIA 31 (T) Joe Tizzard 8-11-0	B J Powel
5	/1P6- SWINCOMBE FLEAT 328 C Gordon 7-11-0	R Dingle
6	344-U TWEED SKIRT 34 (T) N Henderson 6-11-0	N De Boinville
8-	11 Galia Des Liteaux, 10-3 Pink Legend, 9-2 Tweed Skir	rt, 12-1 Rose Of
A٢	cadia, 33-1 Swincombe Fleat, Lilith.	
۱۸	tright chaica Calia Doc Liteaux eacily wen	in this arada

**Wright choice: Galia Des Liteaux** easily won in this grade at Market Rasen; wi**ll** be hard to beat **Danger:** Tweed Skirt

## NH Novices' Hurdle 2 35 (£5,446: 2m 4f 118yd) (13)

1	1-1 EAST INDIA EXPRESS 37 (D) N Henderso	14-11-6
-		N De Boinville
2	1-1 GIDLEIGH PARK 30 H Fry 5-11-6	J J Burke
3	3-41 ITSEEMSLIKEIT 28 D Pipe 4-11-6	J Tudor
4	CATCH CATCHFIRE   Williams 4-11-0	T Cannon
5	024-P CHAMPETRE 52 (P) 0 Signy 5-11-0	C Deutsch
6	10-2 FIRE FLYER 31 P Nicholls 5-11-0	H Cobden
7	0 JOLYJUMP 23 G L Moore 4-11-0	N F Houlihan (3)
8	0- LAST IN LINE 260 G Deacon 6-11-0	J Davies
9	532- PIC ROC 254 B Pauling 5-11-0	K Woods
10	1/5- SONIFICATION 420 Harry Derham 5-11-0	P O'Brien
11	41/5 THEEODMICMICHTY 52 D Skolton 6 11 D	LI Skolton

10-2 FIRE FLYER 31 P Nicholis 5-11-0 N F Hot 0 JOLYJMP 25 G I More 4-11-0 N F Hot 0- LAST IN LINE 260 G Deacon 6-11-0 1/5- SOMIFICATION 420 Harry Derham 5-11-0 1/5- SOMIFICATION 420 Harry Derham 5-11-0 12/5 THEFORMISMIGHTY 52 D Stetton 6-11-0 22/6 THUNDER N LIGHTNIN 37 (f) Harry Derham 5-11-0 13 5-506 TOUCH OF THUNDER 18 C Poulton 5-11-0 2-1 East India Express, 11-4 Gidleigh Park, 4-1 Fire Flyer, 6-1 Itseemslikeit, 12-1 PicRoc, 14-1 Theformismighty, 20-1 Thunder N Lightnin, 25-1 Champetrner Wright Choice: Gidleigh Park acsily beat subsequent winner Range at Exeter Dangers: East India Express, Itseemslikeit

## Handicap Chase (£10,562: 2m) (9)

1	2-12P IN THE AIR 38 G L Moore 5-12-0	H Cobde		
2	40-11 MR GREY SKY 26 (D) K Bailey 9-11-13	C Gething		
3	2214- ETALON 284 (T) D Skelton 6-11-10	H Skelto		
4	12-51 GALLIC GEORDIE 21 (CD) S Drinkwater 10-11-	B B Bromley (5		
5	2012- WEWILLGOWITHPLANB 267 (BF) R Bandey	6-11-8		
		H Banniste		
6	P6-33 MARTATOR 30 (P) V Williams 6-11-7	C Deutso		
7	22/55 HECOULDBETHEONE 19 C Gordon 6-11-6	R Dingl		
8	P114- FISTON DE BECON 249 0 Murphy 8-11-2	L Stones (3		
9	-2P66 THE PLIMSOLL LINE 34 J Scott 7-10-10	L William		
5-2	Etalon, 3-1 Mr Grev Sky, 7-1 Wewillgowithplanb, 8-1 Marta	tor, Gallic Geordie		
In 1	The Air, 10-1 Fiston De Becon, 16-1 Hecouldbetheone, 20-1	The Plimsoll Line		
W	Wright choice: Etalon, a fair hurdler, can make a winning			

## NH Flat Race (3-Y-O: £3.812: 2m) (17)

3.43	INTI FIAL RACE (3-1-0: £3	,012: 2111) (17)
1	BRENDA Mrs L Mongan 11-0	N F Houlihan (3
2	BRIEFLY A Honeyball 11-0	R Dingle
3	BRIONYWELLS F O'Brien 11-0	L Harrison
4	CHATTAMENTO Georgina Nicholls 11-0	H Skelto
5	DANCE THE MOON A King 11-0	T Cannoi
6	4 FLIGHTTOTHESTARS 48 (W) L Horsfall 1	1-0 H Cobdei
7	HABIBI (H) N Twiston-Davies 11-0	F Lambert (5
8	0 KILBERRY 25 R Bandey 11-0	H Banniste
9	4 MARIA'S FLAME 41 (BF) F O'Brien 11-0	J Hogan (3
10	MASALA CHAI Jack Channon 11-0	M G Nola
11	NORTHERN SYMPHONIE Anthony Charlto	on 11-0 <b>B Harris (5</b>
12	ORDER OF PROGRESS T Lacey 11-0	S Sheppare
13	PARK PRINCESS A Honeyball 11-0	J J Burk
14	PEPITE DE SAPHIR Dr R Newland & J Inso	le 11-0 C Hammon
15	0 PRAIRIE QUEEN 48 Mrs S Gardner 11-0	L Gardne
16	SALLY MCLENNANE C Poulton 11-0	H Ree
17	SURREY NEMESIS A West 11-0 B	Ffrench-Davis (5
	e The Moon, 11-2 Maria's Flame, 7-1 Park Princ	
Brionywe	lls, 10-1 Briefly, Habibi, 12-1 Order Of Progre	SS.

Wright choice: Chattamento comes from a good jumping family Dangers: Dance The Moon, Maria's Flame

Ayr
Dob Wish

11.50 Leitrim Chief 12.25 Dance Thief 1.00 I Love My Baie 1 35 Midnight It Is	<b>2.10</b> Ba <b>ll</b> in Bay <b>2.45</b> Artic Row <b>3.20</b> Ayiko

Going: soft, heavy in places

## Racing TV

11.50 Novices' Hurdle (£4,084: 2m) (12)			
1	P	GOLDEN VALOUR 42 (V) R M Smith 7-11-2 V	W Shanahan (5)
2		JAMINOZ F69 (B) L Russell 4-11-2	S Mulqueer
3	0333/	LEITRIM CHIEF 648 (W,BF) J Ewart 7-11-2	D McMenamir
4	43-02	MARTY MCFLY 17 (T,BF) R M Smith 5-11-2	C Bewley
5	60	NAB WOOD 62 N Richards 6-11-2	S Quinlar
6	4	OZZY COSMO 234 (T) N Alexander 4-11-2	B Lynn (3)
7	53-5	PROFESSOR KLUMP 41 (T,BF) D McCain 4-1	1-2 B Hughes
8		ROYAL PROSPECT F43 (T) S Corbett 8-11-2	S Colthero
9		THUNDER GAP F321 (T) M Barnes 6-11-2	C Rabbitt (5)
10	54-P3	BLOW THE BUDGET 21 L Russell 5-10-9	D R Fox
11	35340	RORY'S STORY 27 (H) T Davidson 4-10-9	J Kingtor
12		SPIT SPOT F76 L Russell 4-10-9	P W Wadge (3)
5-2	Blow T	he Budget, 11-4 Leitrim Chief, 6-1 Spit Spot, Pro	fessor Klump, 7-1
Ma	rty Mcf	ly, 10-1 Ozzy Cosmo, 12-1 Nab Wood, 20-1 Jam	inoz.

12	2.25	Handicap Hurdle (£3,169	2m 2f) (8)
1	32-24	FLASH DU PISTOLET 25 W Coltherd 5-12-0	S Coltherd
2	-4352	DANCE THIEF 17 R M Smith 5-11-12	B Smith (10)
3	/303-	HIGH ROLLER 270 (W,T) N Alexander 6-11-5	B Lynn (3)
4	5346-	TOUCAN SAM 422 (T) A B Hamilton 5-11-5	C Rabbitt (5)
5	P25UF	SEA PRINCE 105 (P) L Kerr 6-10-12	D R Fox
6	342-4	BEAT THE RETREAT 21 (T) N Alexander 4-10	-10
			D McMenamin
7	500	AM STILL HERE 26 N Richards 4-10-8	S Quinlan

O442 AMBUSH ANNIE 60 S Crawford (Ire) 6-10-4 Mr S Connor (7)
 F-2 Flash Du Pistolet, 7-2 Dance Thief, 6-1 Ambush Annie, 7-1 High Roller, 8-1
 Sea Prince, Beat The Retreat, Am Still Here, 14-1 Toucan Sam.

## 1.00 **Novices' Hurdle**

(£4.084: 2m 4f 100vd) (6)

1	-3123 I LOVE MY BAIE 25 (D) S Crawford (Ire) 5-11-9	D Jacob
2	/12-1 MAGIC WAVE 27 M Walford 7-11-9	J Hamilton
3	30-31 THE KALOOKI KID 20 (D) N Richards 5-11-9 D	McMenamin
4	24-20 KANDOR 32 L Russell 4-11-2	D R Fox
5	12-00 NOW IS THE HOUR 89 G Cromwell (Ire) 6-11-2	S W Flanagan
6	P1/5P SMART LADY 9 (T)   Duncan 7-10-9	C Bewley
7-4	4 Magic Wave, 2-1   Love My Baie, 5-2 The Kalooki Kid, 12	-1 Kandor, 14-1
No	w Is The Hour, 100-1 Smart Lady.	

## 1.35 Handicap Chase

	(£7,033. 2111 110 yu) (3)	
1	1503P THE FLIER BEGLEY 11 S Crawford (Ire) 8-1	2-0
		Mr S Connor (7)
2	251U/ SALAMANCA BAY 621 L Russell 7-11-11	D R Fox
3	1122/ SOFT RISK 628 N Richards 7-11-8	S Quinlan
4	315-P JACKPOT DE CHOISEL 93 (T) J McConnell (	(Ire) 4-11-6
		B Harvey (3)
-	201//3 MIDNIGHT IT IS 13 (D) 6 (romwoll (Iro) 7-1	10-13

S W Flanagan
2-1 Midnight It Is, 3-1 The Flier Begley, 7-2 Jackpot De Choisel, 9-2 Soft Risk,
7-1 Salamana Par

_					
2.1	0	Handicap Hurdle (£5,624: 2r	n 5f) (7)		
		HERE COMES MCCOY 28 (T) 0 Murphy 8-12-0	S Bowen		
2	22/4-	MOUNT MELLERAY 416 (P) Mrs A C Hamilton 8-1	2-0 J Hamilton		
3	110-0	CORAL BLUE 27 (T,C,D) D Bourke 8-11-5	B Hughes		
4	01-15	NOWINITTOWINIT 20 (T) S Crawford (Ire) 7-11-4			

		Mr S Connor (7)
5	643-1 BALLIN BAY 21 Miss P Robson 5-10-12	C Nichol
6	23-42 ENEMY AT THE GATE 21 (BF) D Whillans	7-10-11 S Quinlan
7	/60-3 CREAM OF THE WEST 28 N Alexander 7-10	-10 D McMenamin
11-	-4 Ballin Bay, 7-2 Enemy At The Gate, 4-1 Here Come	s McCoy, 6-1 Cream
Of	The West, 7-1 Mount Melleray, 8-1 Nowinittowinit,	12-1 Coral Blue

## **Handicap Chase**

	(£3,097: 2111 41 110yu) (0)			
1	25-12 BUSTY BOY 21 D Bourke 6-12-0	B Hughes		
2	00-3P ARTIC ROW 42 (T) N Alexander 6-11-0	S Quinlan		
3	3PP05 ARDERA CROSS 9 (P,CD) W Young Jnr 12-10-12	D R Fox		
4	/F6-6 GUN MERCHANT 17 (P) Mrs A C Hamilton 10-10-8	J Hamilton		
5	52U66 FATHERS ADVICE 26 (P) R M Smith 6-10-3	C Bewley		
6	/0-FP ANY JOB WILL DO 67 Mrs J Stephen 7-10-2	B Lynn (3)		
4-6 Busty Boy, 5-1 Artic Row, Ardera Cross, 10-1 Fathers Advice, 12-1 Gun				
Me	erchant 50-1 Any Joh Will Do			

## NH Flat Race (£2,178: 2m) (7)

1	2 AYIKO 191 S Crawford (Ire) 4-11-2	D Jacob
2	3 CUSHENDUN 46   Duncan 4-11-2	B Hughes
3	2 JUNKER D'ALLIER 46 (BF) 0 Murphy 4-11-2	S Bowen
4	3 MALICASH 39 Ewan Whillans 4-11-2	C Nichol
5	POSH ET NOIR H Graham & G Rutherford 4-11-2	N Moscrop
6	YOUNG GETAWAY N Richards 4-11-2	S Quinlan
7	531-3 JOSIE ALICE 5 L Russell 5-10-9 Miss Roisi	in Leech (7)
9-4	Ayiko, 3-1 Junker D'allier, 5-1 Malicash, Young Getaway, 8-	1 Josie Alice,
Cu:	shendun, 25-1 Posh Et Noir.	

## **Kempton Park**

tob Wilgin	
30 Cool Legend	7.00 Urban Sprawl 7.30 Tiger Crusade 8.00 Beauen Arrows
30 Kalpana	8.30 Queens Award
Going: standard to slow	Racing T\
Draw: 5f-1m. low number	ers hest

4	.55	Handicap (£6,281: 1m 4f) (14	1)
ι	(1) 12120	GLENISTER 80 (D) T Lawes 4-10-0	B Wilk
2	(4) 32324	WAY OF LIFE 11 (D) J Portman 5-10-0	T Sau
3	(6) 12301	FORGE VALLEY LAD 246 (D) D M Simcock	6-9-12

			Koze Dawez
	(5) 55632	STATELY HOME 136 (C) S Lycett 6-9-12	T Jakes (5)
	(9) -2510	STONKING 44 (BF,D) H Main 4-9-12	W Pyle
,	(8) 45154	MILLER SPIRIT 58 (B,BF) G L Moore 3-9-10	
		Ani	na Gibson (5)
,	(12) 2/032	OCEAN HEIGHTS 1/L(T) D Ding 6-0-0	A Brookes

7 (13) 2/032 OCEAN HEIGHTS 14 (T) D Pipe 6-9-9	A Brookes
B (10) 0-12 SAX APPEAL 306 (BF) C Johnston 3-9-7	A Voikhansky
9 (14) 24263 TYPICAL WOMAN 25 (D) I Williams 4-9-6	A Pinna (7)
10 (3) 26224 LOVE YOUR WORK 61 (BF) Darryll Holland	7-9-5 L Catton
11 (7) 34043 ROMILDA 15 (T) W Haggas 3-9-4	J Enright (7)
12(12) 40251 NIARBYL BAY 32 (D) H Candy 4-9-4	Laura Coughlan
13(11) 24216 WATERLOO SUNSET 16 (CD) D Coakley 5	-9-3 A Jary (3)
14 (2) 31360 DEVIZES 14 (CD) P Phelan 7-9-1	Z Wheatley
5-1 Sax Appeal, 7-1 Forge Valley Lad, 8-1 Niarbyl Bay, 10-1 W	ay Of Life, Stately

## Maiden Stakes

1 (7)	ALRAZEEN G Kelleway 9-7	W Cox
2 (9)	6 CHAIN OF COMMAND 39 J & T Gosden 9-7 P	J McDonald
3 (10)	62 CLASSIC ENCOUNTER 74 (P) C Appleby 9-7	D Tudhope
4 (5)	53 COOL LEGEND 14 W Haggas 9-7	D Muscutt

A Voikhansky (5)	0 EASY DANCER 44 R Hannon 9-7	(1)	5
M Ghiani	ENCOMIARE M Botti 9-7	(2)	6
B Sayette	50 LANFRANCO 11 J & T Gosden 9-7	(12)	7
H Davies	0 NIGHT HORN 25 A Balding 9-7	(4)	8
R Havlin	PAPPANO J & T Gosden 9-7	(3)	9
C Shepherd	00 SARAJEVO BOY 15 (T) P Evans 9-7	(13)	10
J Mitchell	00 SYNCHRONIZE 72 (B) J & T Gosden 9-	(11)	11
C Hutchinson (3)	0 TURING 39 A Balding 9-7	(6)	12
A Jary (5)	60 USELESS EES 13 P Evans 9-7	(8)	13
Synchronize, Chain	sic Encounter, 3-1 Cool Legend, 5-1 Pappano, 14-	-8 Clas	13
	and Night Horn Encomiage 16-1 Lanfrance	Comm	Of

## Nursery (2-Y-O: £3,140: 1m) (14)

1 (3) 06431 MONTECRISTO GOLD 34 (B,D) Tom Clover	9-9 D Tudhope
2 (14) 20214 PALAZZO PERSICO 27 E Dunlop 9-9	J Mitchell
3 (8) 0561 MULCIBER 33 (P,T) M Botti 9-9	M Ghiani
4 (12) 56443 CHECKMEOUT 28 R Varian 9-9	R Da Silva
5 (11) 0606 MODERN VERSE 46 (P) D M Simcock 9-8 R	cose Dawes (5)
6 (7) 00000 UNION JACKIE 151 R Cook & J Bridger 9-7	H Davies
7 (1) 0000 TRUE BLUE GENT 28 (B,T) M Botti 9-7	P J McDonald
8 (13) 30302 COMPTON BAY 7 (P) E J-Houghton 9-6 Ger	orgia Dobie (3)
9 (9) 000 PUBLICITY 14 (P) J Butler 9-4	D Muscutt
10 (6) 64630 WESTON COURT 28 R Harris 9-3	J Enright (7)
11(10) 050 DIRE WOLF 65 (T) A West 9-1	R Havlin
12 (5) 0000 SUBALTERN 7 (P,T) Miss A Murphy 8-13	C Shepherd
13 (4) 00415 TRES CHIC 28 (D) J S Moore 8-10 A V	Voikhansky (5)
14 (2) 000 INAWE 11 (T) David Dennis 8-8	T Heard (3)
3-1 Mulciber, 9-2 Montecristo Gold, 5-1 Compton Bay, 6-1	Checkmeout, 7-1
Palazza Parrico, 14 1 Truo Pluo Gont, 16 1 Troc Chic Bublio	itu

## 6.30 Fillies' Stakes

	(2-Y-O: £3,672: 1m) (14)	
1 (13)	0 AMIWITHANI 14 J Osborne 9-2	C Shephero
2 (7)	BLESSED HONOUR ( Appleby 9-2	D Tudhope
3 (2)	CRIMSON CORONET C Fellowes 9-2	H Davies
4 (1)	EAVESTONE R Varian 9-2	R Da Silva
5 (6)	FAIRY GLEN S & E Crisford 9-2	H Burns (3)
6 (4)	2 FLYING FINN 7 A Keatley 9-2	P J McDonald
7 (8)	FRIENDLY SOUL J & T Gosden 9-2	R Havlir
8 (12)	IZIPIZI J & T Gosden 9-2	B Sayette
9 (3)	KALPANA A Balding 9-2	C Hutchinson (3)
10 (9)	LANNOSEA E Dunlop 9-2	D Muscuti
11 (5)	0 LAST EMPRESS 14 R Varian 9-2	K Strydom
12(11)	4 LIGHTNING TOUCH 54 R Varian 9-2	J Mitche
<b>13</b> (10)	30 PRIVATE GETAWAY 14 M Botti 9-2	M Ghian
14(14)	SAPPHIRE SIROCCO P Phelan 9-2	Georgia Dobie (3)
5-2 Bless	ed Honour, 4-1 Flying Finn, 5-1 Lightning Tou	rch, 7-1 Friendly Soul
8-1 Izipiz	i, 12-1 Fairy Glen, Eavestone, 16-1 Crimson C	oronet, Kalpana.

## Handicap (£7,731: 1m) (11)

2	(8)	3000/	PLANTADREAM 819 (CD) K Jewell 8-9-10	R Havlin
3	(3)	41021	TALIS EVOLVERE 15 (D) R Hannon 3-9-9	
_			A V	oikhansky (5)
4	(10)	-3040	LEGEND OF LEROS 46 (P) M Botti 3-9-8	M Ghiani
5	(2)	24322	URBAN SPRAWL 9 (P,BF) C Johnston 3-9-8	D Muscutt
6	(7)	06100	MARSHAL DAN 11 H Main 8-9-8	J Mitchell
7	(4)	05410	EVOCATIVE SPARK 81 (BF) Darryll Holland	14-9-7
				B Sayette
8	(1)	20200	TOP SECRET 102 (H,CD) W Muir & C Grassie	k 6-9-7
_				L Edmunds
9	(6)	00000	ESCOBAR 11 (T,D) D O'Meara 9-9-6	D Tudhope
10	(11)	3-140	CHANTICO 242 A Keatley 4-9-4	P J McDonald
11	(5)	15204	CROWNTHORPE 12 (P,D) A Brown 8-9-0	T Jakes (7)
7-4	1 Tal	is Evol	vere, 5-2 Urban Sprawl, 10-1 Escobar, 12-1 Evoc	ative Spark, Top
Se	cret,	14-10	rownthorpe, Chantico, 16-1 Marshal Dan, Good	Too.
-				

## 7.30 Handicap (£12,885; 6f) (6)

1		COACHELLO 4 (D) G Elliott (Ire) 5-10-0(5ex)	S Ewing
2	(3) 14000	SUMMERGHAND 32 (V,D) D O'Meara 9-9-7	D Tudhope
3	(4) 40534	CHIPSTEAD 28 (P,D) R Teal 5-9-2	J Mitchell
4	(1) 50120	TIGER CRUSADE 75 (CD) D M Simcock 6-9-1	C Shepherd
5	(6) 00001	PROBE 29 (H,D) J Candlish 5-9-0	L Edmunds
6	(5) 03223	BALDOMERO 25 (V,BF,C) M Appleby 5-8-9	H Davies
9~	4 Coachello,	3-1 Probe, 7-2 Baldomero, 7-1 Summerghand, 8	-1 Chipstead,
Tig	ger Crusade		

## Handicap (Div I: £3,140: 7f) (11)

	(2) 00001 GLODAL WAKINING 10 (D) 1 DUILEI 7-3-15(46)	N/
		HBurns (3)
2	(7) 0-135 RABINAL 14 S Dow 4-9-11	J Mitchell
3	(9) 21000 BOOM BOOM POW 10 (H,CD) M Usher 3-9-10	W Cox
4	(4) 60000 UNITED FORCE 13 (P,D) C Hobson 3-9-8	H Davies
5	(11) 33243 GOT NO DOLLARS 9 (P.T.(D) S C Williams 5-9	1-8
	L	Catton (5)
6	(10) 03044 SPARKLING SPIRIT 33 (B) A Keatley 3-9-7 P.	J McDonald

(10	03044	SPARKL	ING SPII	RIT 33 (B	) A Keatley	3-9-7 F	J McDonald
' (3	30536	BEAUEN	I ARROV	VS 160 N	Attwater -	4-9-7	C Shepherd
(2	20000	SUPERL	UMINAL	47 (B) J	Berry 3-9-7	7	B Wilkie (5)
(1	05000	AFTERL	IFE 13 (H	,D) P McI	ntee 3-9-7	Josep	phine Gordon
.0 (8	0-400	MARCH	ETTI 84 (	W) J Fox	6-8-11	Geor	gia Dobie (3)
1 (6	0-044	SAFE PA	ASSAGE	34 L Dace	5-8-11		M Ghiani
-5 6	obal W	arning, 9-	2 Got No	Dollars,	8-1 Safe P	'assage,	10-1 Rabinal,
eaue	n Arroy	rs. Sparkli	na Spirit.	16-1 Boo	n Room Po	w. 20-1	Superluminal.

Handicap (Div II: £3,140: 7f) (10)

| 1 (9) 0-614 FREETODREAM 194 (0) A Perrett 3-9-11 | R Havlin | 2 (7) 00020 WAKE UP HARRY 32 (P,BF) Brian Toomey 5-9-10 | C Shepherd

3 (4) 10015 DIVINE MESSENGER 7 (H,V,C,D) Emma Owen 9-9-1 P J McD nald

- 4	(	1)	0630	QUEENS	AWARD	112 (BF)	Mrs 5 Gar	dner 3-9-	-8
								C Hute	chinson (3)
5	(1)	0) (	0033	VITALLIN	<b>IE</b> 5 (P,CI	) K Burke	5-9-8	Joseph	ine Gordon
6	(	2) (	0400	REPARTI	E 161 L	Carter 6-9-	-7		E Jones (7)
7	' (	6) (	0656	STRYDE	72 (W)	M Attwate	r 3-9-7		J Mitchell
8	(	8) (	2600	SEAS OF	ELZAAN	<b>/</b> 81 (H,D)	J Butler (	5-9-6	D Muscutt
9	(	3) (	00006	SEA THE	BUCKTH	IORN 13 (	H) M Ushe	r 3-8-13	L Edmunds
1	0 (	5) (	00003	KANGAR	<b>00</b> 13 (T	,V) P McEi	ntee 3-8-1	1 1	Γ Heard (3)
7	-2 V	Wak	e Up	Harry, 4-1	Freetodre	am, Vitall	line, 6-1 D	ivine Me	ssenger, 8-1
C	(uee	ns	Awarı	d, 10-1 Sea	The Buck	thorn, 14-	1 Stryder,	Kangaro	0.

## Lingfield Park

ROD Wright	
11.30 Dark Mystery 12.00 L'Eagle Aid 12.35 Clear Storm 1.10 Moonfire	1.45 Sixties Chic 2.20 Flying Panther 2.55 Raintown 3.30 Forever Proud
Going: standard	Sky Sports Racing

## Draw: 5f-1m, low numbers best 11.30 Handicap (£3.873-2m) (7)

	.50	Harrarcap (£3,073. 2111) (7)	
1	(4) 11650	WESTERN STARS 30 J Boyle 4-10-2	J Leav
2	(3) 40630	ALPINE STROLL 67 (D) Alexandra Dunn 5-9-13	Daniel Land
		IVIOIIY	Pres <b>l</b> an
3	(1) 4-054	DARK MYSTERY 179 (H,T) B Brookhouse 4-9-9	

		M Pinna (7)
4	(6) 21025 ANISOPTERA 184 (CD) B Johnson 6-9-8	0 Timms (5)
5	(2) 15060 SMITH 15 (V,CD) Mrs L Richards 7-9-7	Molly Gunn (3)
6	(7) 63222 ARTISAN DANCER 15 (BF,CD) C Johnsto	n 3-9-6 A Young
7	(5) 65/03 TAMARIS 7 (T) Joe Tizzard 6-8-12	J Bradnam (5)
6~	1 Artisan Dancer, 4-1 Anisoptera, Tamaris, 7-1 Dark Mys	tery, 10-1 Western
Sti	ars, 12-1 Alpine Stroll, 20-1 Smith.	

## 12.00 Novice Stakes

(Div I: 2-Y-O: £3,564: 1m) (10)

1 (10) P21 DASHING	DARCEY 15 (CD) R Varian 9-11	A Keeley (3
2 (6) 222 CHARACT	TER TESTING 30 Tom Clover 9-4	D Egai
3 (7) 50 MYNA 55	M Tregoning 9-4	D Costello
4 (1) 60 HARLING	TON 14 R J Smith 9-2	G Rook
5 (2) 3 L'EAGLE	AID 15 C Johnston 9-2	F Norto
6 (5) 00 SICILIAN	SOSIZZA 14 Joseph Parr 9-2	C Noble
7 (9) 0 SNOOKER	R MCCREW 15 J S Moore 9-2	L Kenir
8 (3) BELARMI	NDAR P & O Cole 8-11	H Turne
9 (8) 6 PRATIGY	A 49 H & R Charlton 8-11	H Croucl
10 (4) 04 SKY BLUE	E DREAMS 34 Alice Haynes 8-11	K O'Nei
	1 Character Testing, 6-1 L'Eagle Air	

12	2.35	Novice Stakes	
		(Div II: 2-Y-O: £3,564: 1m) (9	9)
1	(1)	0 FRAM CASTLE 30 Ollie Sangster 9-7	J F Egar
2	(2)	00 LENNON 29 G Boughey 9-7	Grace McEntee (3)
3	(8)	LIGHTNING BAY J Butler 9-7	G Wood
4	(9)	50 THE FERRET 158 R Hannon 9-7	L Keniry
5	(6)	NORTHFIELD LAKE R J Smith 9-5	G Rooke
6	(3)	WANNABEAWALLABY Dylan Cunha	9-5 T Fisher (3)
7	(7)	0 ROSY KISS 14 M Botti 9-2	J Gi <b>ll</b> igar
8	(4)	6 CLEAR STORM 42 W Haggas 9-0	A Farraghe
9	(5)	P MON ETOILE 55 C Johnston 9-0	F Nortor
		r Storm, 4-1 Rosy Kiss, 11-2 Lennon, 8	
W	annabea	wallaby, 12-1 Mon Etoile, Lightning Bay, 14	-1 others.

## 1.10 Novice Stakes (2-Y-O: £3,564: 7f) (8)

8 (8) ZANDITA C Johnston 9-2 F Norton 7-4 Moonfire, 3-1 Tiaraqueen, 5-1 Divine Presence, 6-1 Elderflower, 10-1 Midnight Drive, 14-1 Zandita, Ravensbourne, 66-1 Mucha Muchacha.

## Handicap (£3.873: 6f) (12)

		(13,073. 01) (12)	
1	(11) 36031	IMPEACH 34 (P,CD) M Attwater 5-9-9	P Bradley (3
2	? (7) 11110	BANKRUPT 8 (CD) C Banham 4-9-8	J Hayne
3	(5) 00544	LIBRA TIGER 25 (D) Mrs L Mongan 4-9-8	G Rook
2	(10) 03435	ITHRA 35 (B) A Watson 3-9-8	J Brya
5	(1) 25044	EM JAY KAY 8 (D) P McEntee 4-9-8 Grace	e McEntee (3
6	(8) 20022	HABOOBA 29 (P) T Kent 3-9-6	David Ega
7	(12) 50254	THISMYDREAM 110 (P) M Attwater 4-9-5	C Nob
8	(9) 43121	SIXTIES CHIC 15 (CD) Jack Channon 3-9-5	G Bass (3
		EL HOMBRE 25 (CD) M Loughnane 9-9-5	F Mars
1	LO (4) 22224	MUMAYAZ 15 (T,BF) A Carroll 4-9-4	W Carso
1	1 (3) 35000	ROMAN SPRING 14 (P) R Cook & J Bridger	3-9-4

12 (6) 52351 GLAMOROUS EXPRESS 45 (T,CD) A Carroll 4-9-3 9-2 Sixties Chic, 5-1 Mumayaz, 7-1 Impeach, Habooba, Glamorous Express, 8-1 Em Jay Kay, El Hombre, 12-1 Bankrupt.

## 2.20 Handicap (£3,140: 1m) (12)

1	(10) 42464	ROSCIOLI 32 (T,D) B Johnson 5-9-10	R Clutterbuck
2	(3) 44614	RECUERDAME 7 (CD) S Dow 7-9-9	C Howarth (3)
3	(2) 62106	FLYING PANTHER 63 (CD) Dr R Newlan	d & J Insole 3-9-8 Rossa Ryan
4	(1) 65536	H KEY LAILS 13 M Attwater 3-9-8	A Farragher
5	(4) 50250	WALEYFA 15 (H,CD) Alice Haynes 5-9-7	K O'Neill
6	(5) 00600	CEPHALUS 63 (D) G L Moore 4-9-6	T P Queally
7	(11) 00021	SO CHIC 25 (C) J Long 3-9-5	Gina Mangan (3)
8	(8) 30554	SPLIT ELEVENS 13 (B,C,D) J Butler 5-9-	5 D Hogan
9	(12) 44612	EDMUND IRONSIDE 7 (P,CD) M Attwat	er 3-9-5
			P Bradley (3)
1	(7) 36550	CAP D'ANTIBES 62 (T,CD) Marie Martin	6-9-2 H Turner
-	1 //\ 000000	LODD CLEMACHICACTLE (2 (DD) A MA	n

11 (6) 02250 LORD CLENAGHCASTLE 62 (P,D) A West 9-8-9 Molly Gunn (7)
12 (9) 65032 BLUE CURACAO 29 P Phelan 3-8-8
1-El Edmund Ironsido, 11-2 Recuerdame, 6-1 Split Elevens, So Chic, 7-1 H Key Lalls, 10-1 Waleyfa, Blue Curacao, Roscioli.

## Handican (£3.873-1m.2f) (12)

1	(12) 02034 AVON LIGHT 15 (T) W Muir & C Grassick 3-9-8	H Crou
2	(1) 11506 CIOTOG 36 M Loughnane 5-9-8	F Mars
3	(5) 3-506 ZODIAC STAR 76 (H) A King 3-9-8	L Keni
4	(9) 60/00 POUR ME A DRINK 16 (D) J & S Best 7-9-8	J Quir
5	(3) 44642 NINTH LIFE 75 (H) Dr R Newland & J Insole 3-9-	-7
		occa Du

-y-o 「P Queally 9 (10) 56005 SIR LAURENCE GRAFF 39 (D) C Banham 3-9-6 **J** Haynes 10 (6) 05604 RAINTOWN 14 (BF,CD) J S Moore 3-9-4 **T** Fisher (3) 11 (4) 55320 GOLDSMITH 10 (H,CD) Alice Haynes 4-9-4 **K** K O'Neill 12(11) 60550 UZINCSO 42 J Butler 7-9-4 **D** Egan 4-1 Raintown, 9-2 Ninth Life, 5-1 Red Treasure, 6-1 Goldsmith, 10-1 Ciotog, Avon Light, Princess Niyla, 12-1 Master Chartwell, Uzincso.

## Handicap (£3,140: 1m 2f) (12)

1 (11) 06421 STAR OF EPSOM 15 (CD) P Phelan 5-9-9	P Bradley (3)
2 (9) 40202 UTHER PENDRAGON 13 (P.CD) J S Moore	8-9-4
- 07	T Fisher (3)
3 (10) 66054 THE CONQUEROR 15 (P,D) J Boyle 5-9-3	H Crouch
4 (7) 50000 FOREVER PROUD 15 M Hoad 3-9-2	F Marsh
5 (4) 40550 STAR FOR A DAY 40 (T) S Hodgson 4-9-2	W Carver (3)
6 (6) 00620 RAINBOW SIGN 7 (T,C) M Pattinson 5-9-0	T Whelan
7 (5) 44244 SUNSET IN PARIS 40 (BF) J R Jenkins 5-9	-0 Rossa Ryan
8 (12) 44050 HANOVERIAN KING 118 (B) S Pearce 5-9-	0 A Farragher
9 (1) 0/040 WARRIOR SQUARE 13 T Kent 4-9-0	D Egan
10 (8) 03460 DILLYDINGDILLYDONG 67 R Hannon 5-9-	J Leavy (7)
11 (3) 06000 CEILIDH KING 29 (H,T) Jack Jones 3-8-12	D Hogan
12 (2) 06500 TIZ LIKELY 54 (P) J S Moore 3-8-12	R Clutterbuck
7-2 Star Of Epsom, 4-1 Uther Pendragon, 5-1 The Conquero	ır, 6-1 Sunset İn
Paris, 8-1 Warrior Square, 12-1 Star For A Day, 14-1 Ceilidh K	ing, 16-1 others.

## Course specialists

Ayr: Trainers M Walford, 7 winners from 25 runners, 28%; J McConnell, 3 from 13, 23.1%. Jockeys S Bowen, 13 winners from 52 rides, 25%; D Jacob, 10 from 43, 23.3%. Kempton Park: Trainers C Appleby, 64 from 195, 32.8%, R Varian, 73 from 304, 24%. Jockeys D Tudhope, 7 from 32, 21.9%; B De La Sayette, 17 from 92, 18.5%.

17 from 92, 18.5%. Lingfleld Park: Trainers C Appleby, 25 from 76, 32.9%; J Jones, 6 from 22, 27.3%. Jockeys J Bryan, 21 from 142, 14.8%; 6 Bass, 15 from 105, 14.3%. Ludiow. Trainers N Mulholland, 8 from 28, 28.6%; Miss V Williams, 19 from 80, 23.8%. Jockeys Miss G Andrews, 6 from 10, 60%, Miss L Turner, 5 from 15, 33.3%.

Newbury: Trainers H Derham, 3 from 11, 27.3%; Miss V Williams, 10 from 39, 25.6%. Jockeys C Deutsch, 10 from 35, 28.6%; N De Boinville, 33 from 137, 24.1%.

## Ludlow

**Rob Wright** 12.05 The Height Of Fame 2.25 Lilting Verse 12.40 Gaboriot 3.00 Cartonne 1.15 Dameofthecotswolds 3.35 Go To War 1.50 Dr T J Eckleburg

## Going: soft, good to soft in places Racing TV 12.05 Handicap Hurdle Female

Amateur Jockeys (£4,967:2m5f)(10)

1 4-340 WHATSUPWITHYOU 33 (P,1) B Pauling 9-12-0
Miss Megan Fox (7)
2 U5543 THE BOMBER LISTON 41 (P) N Henderson 7-11-11
Miss L Jones (7)

2 USS43 THE BUMBER LISTOR MISS L JUNE 1/2 (1)
3 33-2P MAMOON STAR 38 (T) F 0'Brien 5-11-9 Miss Fern 0'Brien (3)
Miss L June 1/2 (1)
Miss Fern 0'Brien (3) | MISS Part | Washington | Miss Part | Washington | Washi

4 211-4 THE TURTLE SAID 27 IN Mulholland 6-11-7MISS E Hampson
5 536-9 HABS DV9 86 (W) CLORGOSIO 6-11-6 MISS A DArdrews
6 -2451 THE HEIGHT OF FAME 62 (P;7,D) K Burks -6-11-4
7 60-96 HERMES BOY 26 (B;7) Mrs J Williams -6-11-4
8 0/33 THE FAMOUS FIVE 23 (BF) V Williams 5-11-10
8 0/33 THE FAMOUS FIVE 23 (BF) V Williams 5-11-10
10 6-940 SEHAYUT 73 L Morgan 10-10-2 Miss E Herbison (7)
110 4-740 SEHAYUT 75 L Morgan 10-10-2 Miss Elie Mayo (7)
11-4 The Famous Pro 7-7 The Helgol of Fame, 13-2 The Bomber Liston, 7-1
Kazontherazz, 8-1 Mamoon Star, 10-1 others.

## 12.40 Handicap Chase (£7.922; 3m) (8)

1	14P-P BOBHOPEORNOHOPE 42 (P,T,CD) K Bailey	8-12-0 D Bas
2	21-10 LATITUDE 32 (CD) M Rowley 7-11-13 S	Twiston-David
3	PP-20 MUSICAL SLAVE 33 (P,D) P Hobbs & J Whit	e 10-11-7
		S Houliha
4	-114P JET PLANE 12 (T,C) D Skelton 7-11-3	F Gilla
5	OP-U5 JIMMY THE DIGGER 28 H Daly 10-10-12	A Stevens (
6	41002 QUOI DE NEUF 26 (P,T) E Williams 9-10-12	A Wedg
7	3-211 GABORIOT 33 (P,D) O Greenall & J Guerriero	
		H Brook
8	P-4P4 TIDE TIMES 21 (CD)   Williams 9-10-2	C J Too
15-	8 Gaboriot, 3-1 Quoi De Neuf, 7-1 Jimmy The Digger,	B-1 Musical Slav

13-8 Gaboriot, 3-1 Quoi De Neur, 7-1 Jimmy The Digger, 8-1 Latitude, 10-1 Bobhopeornohope, Jet Plane, 25-1 Tide Times.

## 1.15 **NH Hurdle**

(3-V-O: £4.753: 2m) (7)

	01P VIRGINIA LODGE 11 (D) D Skelton 11-7	F Gillard
	ASK ME ANOTHER R L Llewellyn 11-0	T Wynne (3)
	53 BRAVEWHENINEEDTOBE 31 A Ralph 11-0	L Edwards
	3 CIRCLE OF HOPE 29 (P,BF) B Brookhouse 11-0	A Stevens (5)
	51 DAMEOFTHECOTSWOLDS 36 N Twiston-Day	
	ST	wiston-Davies
,	22 LOVE TREE 36 (BF) James Owen 11-0	J Bower
	0 RAISE YOUR GLASS 18 L Russell 11-0	A Doyle (5)
-4 C	ameofthecotswolds, 5-2 Love Tree, 9-2 Virginia Lod	je, 5-1 Cirde Ot
lope	, 14-1 Bravewhenineedtobe, 25-1 Raise Your Glass, As	k Me Another.

## **Handicap Chase**

(£14,160: 2m) (4)

(£14,160: 2m) (4,)

1 31443 SACRE COEUR 11 (H) D Skelton 7-12-0 T Durrell (5)

2 61014 FEEL THE PINCH 18 (T,BF,CD) R L Llewellyn 9-11-9 T Wynne (3)

3 111-4 GABRIEL 5 GETTON 1 STEWNSTON 2 1 WISSON 4 03131 DR T J ECKLEBURG 14 (CD) E Williams 5-10-12 A COUNTY 1 Fekloburg, 7-2 Feel The Pinch, 9-2 Gabriel's G

## 2.25 NH Novices' Hurdle

(£4,901: 2m 5f) (13)

1	12242 ALL THE GLORY 30 (P) Jonjo O'Neill 6-11-12	J Smith (7)
2	410-1 LILTING VERSE 41 (T,CD) F O'Brien 6-11-7	C Brace
3	0-00 ALL UNDER CONTROL 4 Sheila Lewis 4-11-0	H Kimber (3)
4	10-U2 BABY SAGE 34 (BF) A King 5-11-0	T Bellamy
5	1/6-2 BETWEEN WATERS 41 (BF) N Henderson 5-1	1-0 J Bowen
6	05-0 COTONEASTER 34 (W) Noel Williams 5-11-0	R T Dunne
7	4-240 EMMA HAMILTON 29 H Daly 5-11-0	A Stevens (5)
8	20 MARMALADE TIME 42 M Rowley 4-11-0	L Edwards
9	1-P MRS TABITHA 45 O Greenall & J Guerriero 4-1	1-0 H Brooke
10	0-00 PEPITE DE AMOUR 44 (H) P Webber 5-11-0	A Wedge
11	1/4- SMILING GETAWAY 325 (BF) N Twiston-Davi	
	ST	wiston-Davies
12	00- SPRING GALE 264 H Daly 6-11-0	R Patrick
13	414-3 STUTI 34 H Morrison 6-11-0	D Bass
3-1	Baby Sage, 4-1 Lilting Verse, 9-2 Between Waters, 5-1 /	III The Glory, 6-1
Stu	ti, 7-1 Smiling Getaway, 14-1 Marmalade Time, 20-1 Mr	s Tabitha.

## 3.00 Handicap Chase

	(£0,337: 2111 41) (13)	
1	23-P1 CARTONNE 33 (T,D) D McCain 6-12-0	T Gillard
2	3P235 INISHBIGGLE 41 (P,T) G Hanmer 8-12-0	K Brogar
3	124-6 JOBESGREEN LAD 33 (T,CD) T R George 8-11-12	J Bower
4	5530P AVIEWTOSEA 27 (P,T) D Killahena & G McPherso N	n 8-11-12 I <b>Slatter (5</b>
5	4-U45 AMERICAN GERRY 41 (T) H Morrison 7-11-12	D Bass
6	211-P MASTER MALCOLM 43 (B,T,D) Mrs E Bishop 6-1	1-12 J Bes
7	13/3- MISTER MARBLES 420 E Williams 7-11-10	A Wedge
8	3-144 PAWPAW 154 D J Jeffreys 6-11-9	M Kendricl
9	0033- MINELLA CHOICE 255 (T) I Williams 7-11-8	C J Todo
10	P4114 BEN BUIE 37 (V) M Keighley 9-11-6 S Twi:	ston-Davies
11	0P523 STRIKING OUT 34 Henry Oliver 9-10-12	Doubtfu
12	6/25- BARRAKHOV 427 (T) D Killahena & G McPherson	7-10-11

 
 13
 3-62P EST ILLIC 38 (P) S-J Davies 9-10-3
 Tabelamy

 14
 95152 MARTALMIX/JAC 14 (P.T) M Rowley 6-10-2
 Mr Dodd (7)

 15
 -P605 BEANNAIGH DO 21 Shella Lewis 6-10-2
 Shoullhan

 100-30 Cartome, 13-2 Mister Marbles, 15-2 Minella Tohice, Barrakhoy, 10-1
 100-80 Cartome, 13-2 Mister Marbles, 15-2 Minella Tohice, Barrakhoy, 10-1
 Martalmix'jac, Ben Buie, American Gerry, Inishbiggle, Pawpaw.

J Tidball (5)

## 3.35 **NH Novices' Hurdle**

1 20-0 CHEVINGTON 57 A Ralph 4-11-0

2	FO-5 DUC D	U RENE 28 (1) E Williams 5-11-0	A Wedge
3	0-332 <b>GENTI</b>	EMAN JACQUES 23 C Longsdon 4-1	11-0 J Bowen
4	10-U3 GO TO	WAR 20 (D) F O'Brien 5-11-0	P Brennan
5	P-36P JOHNS	S DREAM 4 Sheila Lewis 5-11-0	S Houlihan
6	334 <b>JOUR</b>	D'EVASION 25 (T) H Daly 4-11-0	5 Twiston-Davies
7	50-62 MYFA	NWY'S MAGIC 28 M Keighley 6-11-0	H Atkins (10)
8		NS LANE 21 A King 4-11-0	T Bellamy
9	5-6 SCRU	MPY 222 H Daly 5-11-0	R Patrick
10	6/UR-TOP O	F THE BAY 269 (H) O Greenall & J G	uerriero
	6-11-0		T Wynne (3)
11	OP DARQ	UESSE 6 C Dyson 5-10-7	R T Dunne
12	0 KATTE	GAT 29 D Skelton 4-10-7	T Durrell (5)
13	LINDY	REILLY (T) D Skelton 5-10-7	C J Todd
14	040-3 MY VI	RTUE 219 (H) M Rowley 5-10-7	L Edwards
15	00 SPECI.	AL DRAGON 18 (T) O Greenall & J G	uerriero 4-10-7

7-4 Go To War, 5-1 Gentleman Jacques, 7-1 Saxons Lane, Lind Myfanwy's Magic, Jour D'evasion, 16-1 Scrumpy, 20-1 Chevington.

Blinkered first time: Ayr 11.50 Jaminoz. Kempton Park 4 55 Miller Spirit 6.00 True Blue Gent. 8.00 Sparkling Spirit. Lingfield Park 1.45 Ithra. Ludlow 12.05 Hermes Boy.

## Earps wins the BBC's biggest prize but McIlroy snubs show

Matt Lawton

Chief Sports Correspondent

The bookmakers do not always get this one right but last night the overwhelming favourite did indeed emerge as the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year, with Mary Earps becoming the third woman in as many years to claim the prestigious award.

The event was not without its surprises, however. Rory McIlroy was among the six sports stars shortlisted but did not participate, failing to give a pre-recorded interview or turn up for the two-hour show. The BBC declined to offer an explanation as to why afterwards. Fortunately for the BBC, McIlroy's

absence appeared to have little impact. While those who questioned the make-up of the shortlist might argue that the England Women goalkeeper has received a prize for coming second, the voting public clearly took other factors into consideration.

Sure, Earps did finish up on the losing side in that World Cup final against Spain. But she returned from Sydney with the Golden Glove after conceding only four goals in seven matches and she also charmed us with her expletiveladen response to saving a penalty against the Spanish. Of course, there was also the storm that erupted when the Manchester United shot-stop-

Nike had refused to sell replicas of her England shirt. Earps became something of a cult hero, even if Nike did then turn a PR defeat into a commercial victory by putting the shirt into production and selling them by the lorry-load. The pre-show 1/10 favourite managed to keep it clean in Salford, celebrating that she had made "goalkeeping cool"

Earps, 30, spoke movingly of losing her England place after the 2019 World Cup. "All these happy memories of the game that I loved didn't make any sense any more," she said. "It felt like I had lost my purpose in life.

There was a time in my life when I thought I would never put on an England shirt again and suddenly I am representing my country at a World Cup.

"It has been an incredible couple of years and I just feel really, really grateful to have been given an opportunity to fulfil my wildest dreams."

For the 70th edition of this award to complete a hat-trick for women, after those victories for Emma Raducanu and Beth Mead, did feel signifi-

cant; a measure, perhaps, of the growing popularity of the women's game as well as a growing admiration for some wonderful female sports stars. Not since the mid-1960s have we seen such dominance, when Mary Rand followed Dorothy Hyman and Anita Lonsbrough in

Kerr, with his fiancée Larimar Rodriguez, arrives for the show

## Last night's roll of honour

Sports Personality of the Year Mary Earps Young Sports Personality of the Year Mia Brookes World Sports Star Erling Haaland Coach of the Year Pep Guardiola Team of the Year Manchester City Unsuna Hero Des Smith Helen Rollason Award Fatima Whitbread Lifetime Achievement Award Kenny Dalglish

winning this award after claiming long jump gold at the first Tokyo Olympics

The 12-person panel that selected the shortlist attracted criticism not only for the omission of Josh Kerr, the world 1,500m champion, but because actually winning something did not appear to be essential. Stuart Broad, for all the brilliance he displayed in the way he signed off from cricket in the Ashes, remained part of an England team unable to wrestle the urn from Australia. Even so,

he was runner-up to Earps.

These are challenging times for the BBC. A Question of Sport has bitten the dust, there are wider questions for BBC Sport over a diminishing rights package and questions, too, around Gary Lineker and his latest volley of social media posts in the direction of our politicians.

McIlrov's snub and the further absence of Frankie Dettori aside, a show having to fight harder than ever for its slice of the UK's television audience actually went relatively smoothly, even if it also ran slightly over time. Kerr did at least show.

There were plenty of other memorable triumphs and a victory for the BBC

will be that this clearly still matters to those who were honoured on stage. Katarina Johnson-Thompson, who finished third, was almost overwhelmed after watching a video reflecting on her second world heptathlon title, one that marked an extraordinary comeback given the injury problems she overcame. "I have seen rock bottom in many different forms," she said. "My mantra was, 'I am not going out like this.'"

It was lovely stuff, as was the film dedi-

cated to Alfie Hewett, the world's finest wheelchair tennis player, who was invited to look back on footage of his "sevenyear-old self" battling to come to terms with a disability he now says was the best thing that ever happened to him.

Predictably, Manchester City's Treble winners claimed some of the other awards. Erling Haaland was named World Sport Star for his 52 goals, while City were recognised as Team of the Year. Quite rightly Pep Guardiola was named Coach of the Year. The Young Sports Personality of the Year went to Mia Brookes, a 16-year-old from Cheshire who became the youngest world champion in snowboarding history.

Sir Kenny Dalglish won the Lifetime Achievement Award, while the former javelin world champion Fatima Whitbread was the recipient of the Helen Rollason Award for her charity work. Des Smith, a community worker who launched the Sheffield Caribbean Sports Club in 1986, was the winner of the Unsung Hero award.

The last word nevertheless went to Earps. "I feel a bit sick actually," she said, after Lineker jokingly praised her for not dropping what she described as "the ultimate all-round sporting accolade". She added: "Sport is such a fantastic thing in the way it brings the world



## Glitz-fest benefits from less polish, more personality

## John Westerby

Slick, shiny and scripted. Everything about the modern version of Sports Personality of the Year smacks of an excessive urge to produce a polished, pristine evening of glittering entertainment, an attempt to elevate this gathering of athletes beyond an end-of-season awards ceremony into sport's Oscars, with all the glitz that involves, the whole thing dressed up to the nines.

Thankfully, it was not quite so flawless last night. As Gabby Logan introduced an early montage of athletics, a dose of authenticity was soon brought to the event as her microphone failed and her words were completely

inaudible to the television audience. It felt like something of a relief, a vicar mispronouncing the groom's name at a wedding, prompting nervous laughter and puncturing the tension. Relax everyone, you can breathe out now - if that tight-fitting suit permits.

It might have been said at this juncture that everything was going a bit Pete Tong, except that Pete Tong had already done his bit, the veteran DJ presiding over a lavish musical overture to the evening. The modern SPOTY probably has as much in common with Saturday night primetime events such as Strictly Come Dancing and Britain's Got Talent as the homely programme previously known as Sports Review of the Year. None of which is to suggest that SPOTYis now better or worse, but it has so clearly morphed into a different programme for a different era.

In keeping with the requirements of primetime television, the films depicting each of the six contenders on the shortlist for the main award all sketched out the journeys each had embarked upon. The portraits of Katarina Johnson-Thompson and Alfie Hewett were particularly emotive.

six also traced the nominees' paths from their earliest days in sport, reminders that every stellar performer must start somewhere. The inspiration provided by greats to those at the grassroots is how the whole sporting cycle

keeps turning. Hence the recognition too, as the Unsung Hero award winner, of Des Smith, a cricket and football coach from Sheffield who arrived as part of the Windrush generation.

There are a lot of awards now, and both Fatima Whitbread and Sir Kenny Dalglish provided powerful moments in accepting their gongs. The need to shoehorn so much sport and showbiz skilfully into a two-hour slot means that this programme is never going to keep everybody happy, but it still represents a stirring annual gathering of the sport-ing village, all the more so once things start going wrong, the top buttons are loosened a little and the personality in *SPOTY* is allowed to shine through.

## **Every winner of SPOTY**

**1954** Christopher Chataway (Athletics) **1955** Gordon Pirie (Athletics)

1956 Jim Laker (Cricket) 1957 Dai Rees (Golf)

1958 Ian Black (Swimming)

**1959** John Surtees (Motorsport)

1960 David Broome (Equestrianism)

1961 Stirling Moss (Motorsport)

1962 Anita Lonsbrough (Swimming) 1963 Dorothy Hyman (Athletics)

1964 Mary Rand (Athletics)

1965 Tom Simpson (Cycling) 1966 Bobby Moore (Football)

1967 Henry Cooper (Boxing)

1968 David Hemery (Athletics)

1969 Ann Jones (Tennis)

1970 Henry Cooper (Boxing)

1971 Princess Anne (Equestrianism)

## Yesterday's racing results

## Catterick

Going: good to soft (good in places) (Miss Fern O'Brien, 6-1); 2, Balkotic (6-1); 3, Jessie Lightfoot (20-1). 5 ran. NR: Didtheyleaveuoutto. 5½1, 4¼1. F O'Brien.

1.00 (1m 7f 156yd hdle) 1, **Teorie** (P J Brennan, 4-6 fav); 2, Mandega (28-1); 3, Expert Lady (200-1). 9 ran. NR: Kabuki. 15I, 14I. F O'Brien. Wynne, 6-1); 2, Okavango Delta (40-1), 3, Empty Nest (5-1). 11 ran. NR: Key Factor, Saint Jaguen. Hd, sh hd. S Allwood.

Saint Jaguert. Hr, Sri Nd. S Allwood.

2.00 (2m 3f 66yd hdlel) 1, Rich Spirit (Ross Chapman, 5-2); 2, Mikimoto (9-2); 3, Hawkseye View (28-1). 12 ran. NR: Geordiel Night, Greyrobin Star, Lahardaun, Rowdy Romeo. 10l, ns. Mrs S J Smith.

**2.30** (2m 3f 66yd hdle) 1, **Mistral Nell** (P J Brennan, 11-2); 2, Crimson Ruby (14-1); 3, Misty Mani (18-1). 14 ran. NR: Line In The Sand. Hd, 12l. F O'Brien.

**3.00** (1m 7f 145yd ch) 1, **Fanfan Du Seuil** (James Bowen, 13-2); 2, Beat The Edge (9-2); 3, Budarri (25-1). 9 ran. NR: Rocco Storm. 6l, 2¾l. N Kent.

3.30 (Im 7f 156yd Flat) 1, Wilful (Jonjo O'Neill Jr.,9-1); 2, Largy Force (100-30); 3, Tigga Time (11-4 fav). 11 ran. NR: Do Ye Wanna, Ocean Of Stars. 3I, 2½I. Jonjo O'Neill.

Ouadpot: £116.60.

## Fakenham

## Going: soft

2.10 (2m 4f 1yd hdle) 1, West Warhorse (Alice Stevens, 5-1); 2, Ballyvaughan Bay (5-1); 3, Little Talks (80-1). 7 ran. 16i, 5i. B Brookhouse.

B Brookhouse.

12.40 (2m 5f 44yd ch) 1, Jacks Touch (D A Jacob, 7-2); 2, Lincoln Lyn (3-1 fav); 3, Our Nel (7-1). 7 ran. ½1, 3½1. Mrs 5 J Humphrey.

1.10 (2m 3yd hdle) 1, Lady Berlals (C J Todd, 9-2); 2, Lady Gwen (5-2); 3, Our Pink Lady

(9-1). 7 ran. NR: Fillyfudge, Riccirella. 8I, 3\%1. D Skelton.

1.40 (3m 5f 24yd ch) 1, Gold Clermont (S Bowen, 17-2); 2, Eceparti (4-1); 3, Bretney (12-1). 8 ran. 14l, 3l. A Irvine.

**2.10** (2m 3yd hdle) **1, For Pleasure** (S Bowen, 3-1); **2**, Go Fox (50-1); **3**, Seignor Gringo (16-1). 8 ran. 15l,  $7\frac{1}{2}$ l. O Murphy.

2.40 (2m 5f 44yd ch) 1, Georges Saint (Miss Lucy Turner, 5-2); 2, William Cody (16-5); 3, Yccs Portocervo (18-1). 7 ran. 12l, 12l. Miss V Williams.

3.10 (2m 7f 95yd hdle) 1, Edison Kent (Lily Pinchin, 8-1); 2, Copshill Lad (7-2 fav); 3, William Ewart (11-2). 7 ran. NR: The Wise Traveller. 231, 161. James Owen.

Placepot: £443.00. Quadpot: £48.30.

## Wincanton

Going: good to soft (soft in places) 12.20 (3m 1f 30yd ch) 1, Twenty Twenty (Caoilin Quinn, 20-1); 2, Ya Know Yaseff (5-1); 3, Head And Heart (9-2). 11 ran.  $3\frac{1}{4}$ l, nk. G L Moore.

12.50 (Im 7f 149yd ch) 1, Libberty Hunter (Adam Wedge, 5-2); 2, Filanderer (13-2); 3, Non Stop (7-4 fav). 5 ran. NR: Aggagio. 5I, 15I. Evan Williams.

L20 (2m 3f 179yd hdle) 1, Lord Of Thunder (Brendan Powell, 6-4 [t-fav); 2, Tarras Wood (6-4 [t-fav); 3, Kingoftheswingerz (50-1). 9 ran. NR: Outside Adesa, Tinklers Hill. 9½I, 15I. Joe Tizzard.

**1.50** (2m 4f 35yd ch) 1, **Arclight** (N de Boinville, 6-4 fav); 2, Marsh Wren (9-2) 3, Moviddy (10-3). 6 ran. 2l, 4l. N J Henderson 2.20 (1m 7f 50yd hdle) 1, Dartmoor Pirate (Ben Godfrey, 15-2); 2, Pentire Head (7-4 fav);

3, Storming Nelson (100-1). 18 ran. 11l, nk A J Honeyball. 2.50 (2m 4f 35yd ch) 1, Harjo (H Cobden 9-4); 2, Pilsdon Pen (7-4 fav); 3, Harlem Sou 5 ran. NR: Hall Lane. 5½I, 22I

**3.20** (1m 7f 50yd hdle) 1, Lowry's Bar (MGNolan,5-2); 2, Javert Allen (7-4 fav); 3, Out Of Focus (7-2). 5 ran. ¾1, 1¾1. P Hobbs & J White.

3.50 (2m 3f 179yd hdle) 1, I'm On My Way (H Cobden, 14-1); 2, Cast's Tasha (6-4 fav); 3, Ede'iffs Rock (4-1). 11 ran. Nk, 13/4l. N P Mulholland. Placepot: £58.50.

## Wolverhampton

Going: standard

Sono (Im If 104yd) 1, Queen Of Ipanema (Mr S Walker, 3-1); 2, Alazwar (2-1 fav); 3, Champagne City (150-1), 11 ran. ¾, 1. G Boughey. 5.30 (Im 142yd) 1, Arabian Tribe (D Tudhope, 8-11 fav); 2, Sunny Street (2-1); 3, Bur Dubai (4-1), 8 ran. NR: Ghostiore, Succeed. 11, 2¾.

6.00 (6f 20yd) 1, White Mist (George Wood, 12-1); 2, Sisters In The Sky (9-2); 3, Red Walls (11-1). 11 ran. ½I, 1¼I. Mrs I G-Leveque.

**6.30** (6f 20yd) 1, **Kitbag** (George Bass, 7-2); 2, Kangaroo (12-1); 3, Mc's Wag (9-1). 11 ran. 11, sh hd. Jack Channon.

1, 311. 34. deck diamon. 7.00 (5f 21yd) 1, Maharajas Express (Dylan Hogan, 7-2); 2, Let's Go Hugo (16-1); 3, Josies Kid (12-1), 8 ran. NR: Granny B, Just That Lord, Kitaab. ¾I, nk. Jack Jones.

7.30 (1m 142yd) 1, **Master Of Combat** (J Mitchell, 100-30); 2, He's A Gentleman (5-1); 3, Eagle Day (6-4 fav). 8 ran. Nk, nk. K Frost. 8.00 (Im 142yd)1, Crown Board (David Egan, 4-6 fav); 2, Mapogo (16-1); 3, Glimmer Of Light (9-1). 10 ran. NR: Luna Dipinta, Youm Jameel. 6½I, 2¾I. Jane Chapple-Hyam.

Rawlinson, 11-2): 2, The Caltonian (13-8 fav): 3, Dakota Power (100-30). 9 ran. NR: Al Baahy, Blackjack, Warminster. Sh hd,  $2\frac{1}{N}$ . P D Evans.

Jackpot: £10,141.80 - part won. Pool of £13,712.87 carried forward to Newbury



Earps, main, takes a selfie after being named the winner of the night's main prize; above, Tommy Fleetwood speaks to Lineker on behalf of the absent McIlroy, and, below, Dalglish, left. is presented with his award by Alan Hansen



## 1972 Mary Peters (Athletics) 1973 Jackie Stewart (Motorsport) 1974 Brendan Foster (Athletics) 1975 David Steele (Cricket) 1976 John Curry (Figure skating) 1977 Virginia Wade (Tennis) 1978 Steve Ovett (Athletics) 1979 Sebastian Coe (Athletics) 1980 Robin Cousins (Figure skating) 1981 Ian Botham (Cricket) 1982 Daley Thompson (Athletics) 1983 Steve Cram (Athletics) 1984 Torvill and Dean (Figure 1985 Barry McGuigan (Boxing) 1986 Nigel Mansell (Motorsport) 1987 Fatima Whitbread (Athletics) 1988 Steve Davis (Snooker)

1989 Nick Faldo (Golf)
1990 Paul Gascoigne (Football)
1991 Liz McColgan (Athletics)
1992 Nigel Mansell (Motorsport)
1993 Linford Christie (Athletics)
1994 Damon Hill (Motorsport)
1995 Jonathan Edwards (Athletics)

1995 Jonathan Edwards (Athletics) 1996 Damon Hill (Motorsport) 1997 Greg Rusedski (Tennis) 1998 Michael Owen (Football) 1999 Lennox Lewis (Boxing)

2000 Steve Redgrave (Rowing) 2001 David Beckham (Football) 2002 Paula Radcliffe, left (Athletics)

2003 Jonny Wilkinson (Rugby) 2004 Kelly Holmes (Athletics) 2005 Andrew Flintoff (Cricket) 2008 Chris Hoy (Cycling)
2009 Ryan Giggs (Football)
2010 AP McCoy (Racing)
2011 Mark Cavendish (Cycling)
2012 Bradley Wiggins (Cycling)
2013 Andy Murray (Tennis)
2014 Lewis Hamilton (Motorsport)
2015 Andy Murray (Tennis)
2016 Andy Murray (Tennis)
2016 Andy Murray (Tennis)
2017 Mo Farah (Athletics)
2018 Geraint Thomas (Cycling)
2019 Ben Stokes (Cricket)
2020 Lewis Hamilton (Motorsport)
2021 Emma Raducanu (Tennis)
2022 Beth Mead (Football)

2023 Mary Earps (Football)

2006 Zara Phillips (Equestrianism)

2007 Joe Calzaghe (Boxing)

## Sanderson backs Ford to lead England

## Rugby union Chris Jones

George Ford has been backed by Alex Sanderson to replace Owen Farrell as England captain because he is a "calming influence" and "exceptionally emotionally intelligent".

Sanderson, who is director of rugby at Ford's club side, Sale Sharks, was also a long-time coach of Farrell at Saracens. The 32-year-old has opted out of international duty for the foreseeable future to prioritise his and his family's mental wellbeing.

Steve Borthwick, the England head coach, has to find a new leader for the Six Nations. Ford, 30, and Farrell will go head to head on Friday night when the Gallagher Premiership leaders, Sale Sharks, face fourth-placed Saracens at the AJ Bell Stadium.

"George is ready for any leadership role and he could fill those boots in a different style to Faz," Sanderson said. "George is one of the best leaders I have had the privilege of working with and that includes Owen Farrell, Maro Itoje and Jamie George. He is exceptionally emotionally intelligent and can put his

messages across really efficiently, which is difficult.

"He is demanding about standards without being oppressive and autocratic. He is that kind of player who takes things on his shoulders."

takes things on his shoulders."

Other contenders to captain England at the Six Nations are George and Itoje, Farrell's Saracens team-mates. "They've both been a part of the leadership group at Saracens for a long time," Mark McCall, the Saracens director of rugby, said. "They're different in the way they go about things, but both would be very good England captains."

## Psychedelic drug revives Wilder's love for boxing

Deontay

Wilder v Joseph

**Tom Kershaw** on the heavyweight's unusual jungle retreat, wanting 50 kids, and prospect of facing Joshua in spring

efeat has left its fair share of boxers retired with tortured souls, but Deontay Wilder rediscovered contentment in a different kind of retreat. The former WBC champion almost bowed out of the sport after suffering his second dramatic loss against Tyson Fury in 2021, and has fought just one round in the past two years, but a visit to a luxury ayahuasca treatment centre in the Costa Rican jungle helped reaffirm the convictions that have carried him to Saudi Arabia for a bout against Joseph Parker this Saturday.

"I found happiness while doing

"I found happiness while doing ayahuasca. It's a beautiful thing," Wilder said; he stayed at Rythmia, where a seven-night visit starts at \$4,900 (about £3,800) and includes four ceremonies where guests drink the potent psychedelic brew on mattresses under the

guidance of a shaman. Production of the plant is prohibited in the UK, as it contains DMT, a Class A drug.

**Parker** "A lot of people are a little nervous of what Saturday, from 4pm they're going to see, but you'll leave with TV: TNT Sports Box Office everything you need," he added. "I could feel the energy of the moon smiling at me, but most of my experiences came from strangers. One woman saw me in their dream and said I was on a white horse carrying her in. Another said: 'I don't know you, but my mother told me I need to find the strongest man in the land, and it was you'. All the stuff those people said to me confirmed what I already knew: that I'm a true leader of men. I'm

looking to go back there every year."
Wilder, 38, is, needless to say, a colourful and often erratic character, leaping between topics including wanting 50 children — he has eight at present — the perils of modern-day technology, and Anthony Joshua's fallibility in one fell swoop at the Crown Plaza hotel in Riyadh. The Alabaman is in undeniably good spirits, though, and has always possessed a punch with devastating clarity, having stopped all 42 men he has faced aside from Fury, who Wilder still knocked down

four times during their trilogy.

Wilder returned from his hallucinogenic sabbatical last year when he knocked out Robert Helenius in under three minutes. The Finnish heavyweight fought Joshua

this year and

survived six

laborious rounds before succumbing to the same fate. After years of failed negotiations

After years of failed negotiations and recriminations, the pair are finally expected to face one another in Riyadh in the spring, provided they both emerge from their fights unscathed. Joshua faces Otto Wallin, a Swedish southpaw, in the main event on Saturday.

Wilder has repeatedly questioned the former WBA, WBO and IBF champion's heart, describing him as a manufactured champion that beat "mediocre" opponents. The pair reportedly stand to earn £50 million each for the proposed March bout, but Joshua has admitted he might yet pursue a shot at the IBF title instead.

"Sometimes you think it's the right price, but you don't know what's in their head," Wilder said. "I don't want Joshua to get in the ring just because the money is good. I want him to feel like he can beat me and not lay down the first time he gets hit."

Wilder cites the stalemates and slanging matches as part of the reason he "fell out of love with boxing" — he and Joshua were previously in negotiations for a bout in 2017 when the pair were undefeated world champions.

Another epiphany that restored his motivation didn't lie in the jungle, though — nor

the Jungle, though — hor the riches of the desert — but in Wilder's hometown of Tuscaloosa, where the

unveiling of a lifesize bronze statue emphasised the inspirational impact of his success in the local community.

"Because I came up with nothing, I appreciate everything," Wilder said. "You can be a trillionaire but still be miserable, and if you don't have happiness and peace in your life, then what's living worth? People said: 'Is he depressed? What's wrong?' But when I was away from boxing, people didn't see me because I was in a great place and enjoying my family.

"I was able to be more involved with my children's lives and see them grow and take them on camping trips and adventures. Being a father is one of the biggest responsibilities in the world. It's beautiful to have a loving heart and enjoy my children. I have eight now, but I want four more. Twelve is my ideal number, but I would love 50. I'd have to find the women to do that. Unfortunately, my wife is only one woman, so I might

have to become a Muslim."
The logic is hardly sound,
but then unhealthy
contradictions are inherent to
boxing's nature. Ayahuasca is
certainly among the more
unorthodox remedies, but a

Wilder's apparitions in the rainforest: Parker, Joshua, and a fortune fit to cover the impending

path has emerged from

Wilder faces Parker this

## Salt's record ton fires England to victory

## **West Indies** v England

Tarouba (West Indies won toss) England win by 75 runs

Elgan Alderman Trinidad

Phil Salt thinks the IPL auction is stupid. Probably. A maiden hundred in T20s, three days before the gavels had linseed oil applied, to fire England to victory in Grenada was not enough to earn him a trip to India. In the hours that followed his snub, he became the first man to score a second T20 hundred for England, this one off 48 balls, to power England to 267 for three, their record total in men's T20Is.

West Indies threw the bat at everything and were often ahead of the rate. They were either going to win with time to spare or be all out in a majestic heap. It turned out to be the latter.

Having equalled his team's format record of nine sixes in an innings in the previous match, Salt carded ten here. His hundred and Jos Buttler's fifty started the car, Will Jacks took over for a bit and Liam Livingstone careered it off a cliff and into the history books. Only Nepal, Afghanistan, the Czech Republic and Malaysia have scored more in men's T20Is, against Mongolia, Ireland, Turkey and Thailand,

West Indies outmuscled England at first but the touring side have replied with 18 and 19 sixes in two matches, their second and third-highest tallies for T20Is. And West Indies wanted to bowl first here in Trinidad.

If Jonny Bairstow returns to this team, it will surely not be at the top of the order. Five times Buttler and Salt have opened together for England, yielding 80, 77, 9, 115 and 117. Those runs have come at 10.03 an over, faster than any England opening duo other than Phil Mustard and Luke Wright (and

they were only a two-time thing).

Five players from this match had been purchased in the morning's IPL auction and Salt was not one of them. He went hard straight away, hitting a six and four off Matthew Forde's first over in T20Is. Buttler twice escaped via difficult fingertip catches, in Kyle Mayers's follow-through and from Royman Powell at extra cover. Otherwise he was at his serenely brutal best, sweeping

anything full, orthodox and reverse. They blasted 68 in the powerplay and accelerated from there. Salt, who has neither a central nor an IPL contract, was the first to a half-century, off 23 balls, Buttler needing 26. The England



Days after scoring his maiden T20 hundred. Salt secured another, racking up 119 runs from 57 balls and hitting ten sixes

captain had been at ease with world and willow until Jason Holder prevented boundaries in the tenth over and he mis-hit to Powell at long-on. Jacks smashed 24 off eight balls before he was

out leg-before, sweeping. England were on 119 at halfway and Salt wanted more. He showed Sherfane Rutherford what he thought of his Kolkata Knight Riders deal, hitting his first three balls for sixes towards the grassy banks on the leg side. Livingstone took Forde for sixes off the first three balls of the 18th over too, before Salt departed in the penultimate set for 119 off 57 balls.

Livingstone brought up his fifty, off 20 balls, at the death. He did not celebrate — he does not care for milestones — but this was only his second 50-plus score in T20Is; 84 runs had come off the last five overs and 148

England had 20 overs of deathbowling practice and were given a warning for exceeding the 60-second stop clock before the fifth over. Brandon King located his hip and swung from it immediately. He flung all his momentum at Moeen Ali's first ball of the reply and it plopped up to Reece Topley at short third man. Then boundaries, of course. Nicholas Pooran reverse-swept for two fours and blasted two sixes over deep mid-wicket. West Indies were 20 for one after one over. It was that kind of evening.

Salt had gone through his wicket-keeping drills at Queen's Park Oval on Monday and wore the gloves instead of Buttler, who fielded at mid-off as Topley shared the new ball, watching Mayers smack a six over his head. The next ball was skied high to Chris Woakes — along with Rehan Ahmed a replacement in the XI for Gus Atkinson

and Tymal Mills - to take the catch at mid-on after an initial juggle.

Harry Brook completed a brilliant

low, diving catch after running in from long-on, dismissing Pooran. Adil Rashid bowled Powell in his first over, which somehow went for only two runs off the bat, Curran, attempting a catch like Brook's, dropped Rutherford but the heavily attacked Ahmed darted a shorter ball through his reverse-pull. Holder slogged his first ball to deep mid-wicket. "Are you the Abu Dhabi T10 in disguise?" the crowd might have chanted at halfway, the score 129 for seven, though they didn't. Andre Russell has mayhem within him. Even

with a 24-ball fifty, they were well short. This is a venue for the T20 World Cup in June. England have battled from 2-0 down and the series decider is here tomorrow. What on earth will happen then?

Scoreboard			
ENGLAND	R	В	6/4
† <b>P D Salt</b> b Russell	119	57	10/7
*J C Buttler c Powell b Holder	55	29	3/6
W G Jacks Ibw b Hosein	24	9	2/2
L S Livingstone not out	54	21	4/4
H C Brook not out	6	4	0/0
Extras (w 9)	9		
TOTAL (3 wkts, 20 overs)	267		

M M Ali, S M Curran, C R Woakes, R Ahmed, R J W Topley and A U Rashid R Ahmed, R.J. vv. 1061-5, did not bat. Fall of wickets 1-117, 2-173, 3-246. Bowling Forde 3-0-54-0; Hosein 4-0-36-1; Mayers 1-0-7-0; Holder 4-0-55-1; Motie 4-0-55-0; Russell 3-0-37-1; Rutherford

WEST INDIES	R	В	6/4
<b>B A King</b> c Topley b Ali	0	1	0/0
K R Mayers c Woakes b Topley	12	5	1/1
† <b>N Pooran</b> c Brook b Curran	39	15	4/3
S D Hope c Salt b Woakes	16	8	1/2
S E Rutherford Ibw b Ahmed	36	15	2/5
*R Powell b Rashid	4	6	0/0
A D Russell c Brook b Topley	51	25	5/3
J O Holder c Jacks b Ahmed	0	1	0/0
A J Hosein c Ali b Curran	15	11	1/1
M W Forde c Buttler b Topley	3	5	0/0
G Motie not out	0	1	0/0
Extras (b 2, lb 6, w 8)	16		
TOTAL (15.3 overs)	192		

Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-32, 3-58, 4-78, 5-106, 6-120, 7-120, 8-160, 9-169.

Bowling Ali 1-0-20-1; Topley 3.3-0-37-3; Woakes 2-0-25-1; Curran 2-0-25-2; Ahmed 3-0-42-2; Rashid 4-0-35-1.

Umpires G Brathwaite and P Gustard. Five-match series level 2-2 Details: First T20 West Indies won by four wickets (Bridgetown). Second West Indies won by ten runs (St George's). Third England won by seven wickets (St George's). Fifth: Tomorrow (Tarouba).

## Raducanu turns to childhood coach as she prepares for comeback

## CONTINUED FROM BACK

basis While confirmation of Cavaday's involvement has not yet been offered by Raducanu's management, it would be unusual for another coach to suddenly step in at this late stage before the new season. Sources have suggested that Cavaday will be given a short trial before a final decision is taken on whether he travels with her to New Zealand and then on to Melbourne for the Australian Open.

Another potential addition to the team is Somdev Devvarman, a former player who reached a career-high world ranking of No 62 in 2011. The 38-year-old has also been sighted at the National Tennis Centre in recent days and would be a useful hitting partner.

Cavaday, whose best ranking was No1,022 in 2009 after he graduated from the American college circuit with a degree in psychology, is not a high-profile name, but he has much

experience across the board in mentoring players. He has worked on the tour, helping Slovenia's Aljaz Bedene reach the top 50 in singles and guiding the doubles pair of Dominic Inglot and Robert Lindstedt to the semi-finals of

the 2015 US Open.

More recently, Cavaday — the elder brother of the former top-200 player Naomi — was the head coach of the LTA's national academy in Loughbor-ough, where he worked with several of the country's most promising junior players. He left his role in March.
This is not the first time that

Raducanu has enlisted the help of a figure from her childhood. When she was without a coach before Wimbledon in 2022, she asked her former mentor Jane O'Donoghue to help during practice sessions at the All England Club.

Raducanu's previous coaching part-nership came to an end in May, around the same time as she was undergoing three separate minor operations on

## Raducanu's coaching carousel

Matches won Matches lost

Nigel Sears (Jun-Jul 2021)

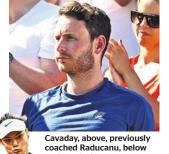
Andrew Richardson (Aug-Sept 2021)

Torben Beltz (Jan-Apr 2022)

Dmitry Tursunov (Aug-Oct 2022)

Sebastian Sachs (Dec '22-May '23)

both wrists and her left ankle. Renowned for instability in her support team, the de-parture of Sebastian Sachs was the fifth time that she had split with a coach in two years.



left, while in Bromley

"I ask my coaches a lot of questions," Raducanu told BBC Radio 4's Today programme in October. "I think on certain occasions they haven't been able to keep up with the

questions I've asked, so maybe that's why it ended. I'm not someone who you can just tell what to do and I'll do it. I need to understand why."

Despite being urged by the likes of Tim Henman to use her eight-month absence from the sport as an opportunity to put a proper team of trusted staff members in place, it has surprised many insiders within British tennis that Raducanu has left it so late.

During a recent trip of a few days to Hong Kong for a commercial appearance, she had to call upon the services of a local tennis coaching provider to

assist with her training sessions.
Ranked No 299 in the world, Raducanu will use a wild card in Auckland. Despite having an injury-protected ranking of No103, she is the sixth alternate for the Australian Open and will either need another wild card or a successful run through three matches in qualifying to reach the main draw at Melbourne Park

ootball is about money. No, really, it is. And not just in the way you may think. Football isn't about money simply because of wages, or transfer fees, or because a club that spends well often wins the league.

It's about money because that is the way the game has been twisted. It is about money because every rule and regulation is now geared towards earnings and profit and loss, and that governs what can rightfully be invested in the business and occupies the waking thought of every financial executive and owner. So of course the Champions League is getting bigger; of course the Club World Cup is expanding; of course your match is moved to suit television; of course every club is flying to several continents to sell its wares pre-season. Bernardo Silva may say the players are increasingly exhausted, Pep Guardiola may fear that the breaks between seasons are getting ever smaller, but Fifa is setting up a prize fund of about £2 billion for its new 32-club tournament and anyone who thinks Manchester United and Liverpool won't be resentful to not be part of that no longer understands the game. So, in time, it will get even bigger, no doubt.

In 2025, the revamped Club World Cup will take place in the United States, with a similar duration to the traditional World Cup and a limited number of entrants per country. Manchester City and Chelsea are already in as recent European champions, filling the English quota unless Arsenal win the 2023-24 Champions League. Al-Hilal, Urawa Red Diamonds, Al Ahly, Wydad Casablanca, Monterrey, León, Seattle Sounders, Palmeiras, Fluminense, Flamengo, Auckland City, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Paris Saint-Germain, Inter Milan, Porto and Benfica have also qualified. That's a sexy tournament, already. There is a lot of cynicism around the Club World Cup, but this version is more inclusive and exotic, and spaced out across four years it will grow and grow. Yet with 12 European slots from the start, the flaw is plain.

The current, stripped-down Club World Cup often ends repetitiously because in the past 18 editions, two thirds of the finals have been contested between European and South American opposition. Yet with 12 of 32 teams in the revamped version provided by Uefa, what is there to stop that problem becoming exacerbated? If the format follows the World Cup there will be eight groups of four and two qualifiers from each. If Fifa pushes the European teams together early on, so they knock each other out to afford room for the rest of the world, the group stages will just appear a poor relation of the Champions League. If they keep them apart – two European teams in four groups, one in the other four groups, one in the other four groups – there is a danger a significant number could progress. Worse-case scenario is a completely European tournament by the quarter-finals or semi-finals. Then, once again, it's Champions League B.

And, no, the World Cup

isn't Eurocentric like that. At a World Cup, Argentina get to keep Lionel Messi, and Brazil can play Vinícius Júnior, and Africa isn't just a talent farm, so balance remains. Fifa might hope that increased global participation eases the gap between the rest of the world and Europe. There are claims each participant could receive in the region of £50 million. Does that mean, though, that Palmeiras would have been able to keep Endrick, who will join Real Madrid in the summer? Not necessarily. If Palmeiras and Madrid got £50 million each, the La Liga team is still bigger and has more money to make that deal happen.



Silva, left, described football's schedule as "crazy" after news of the Club World Cup's expansion

## Martin Samuel Sorry Bernardo, the game now belongs to accountants

The voice of sport

The downside, however, is that £50 million to Auckland City in New Zealand's National League is potentially the end of that competition, just as another £50 million minimum for Bayern Munich covers any ground that may have been made up by rivals such as

made up by rivals such as
Bayer Leverkusen. At one stage
there was speculation that
Europa League winners could
earn a place and a share. That was
swiftly abandoned.

swiftly abandoned.
So, Fifa is about to tread the same path as Uefa with its Champions
League wealth distribution, rewarding a small number of already rich clubs at the expense of

rich clubs at the expense of domestic competition. But there will be no pushback, because football has decided that every calculation, particularly those that purport to be about financial fairness and sustainability, is

forever anchored to the bottom line. That's why nobody listens to the players or the managers any more. It's the accountants that

have taken over the asylum.

James is Euro risk

If Reece James is out for just three months w
his latest hamstring issues, he should be fit in

If Reece James is out for just three months with his latest hamstring issues, he should be fit in plenty of time for Euro 2024 providing he does not need an operation. Whether Gareth

Southgate wishes to take him is another matter. Tournaments are intense and James's body does not respond to intensity. His career is littered with injury absences, often for months on end, of which his third hamstring issue since April is merely the latest. Equally unfortunate for him is that right back is the one position where Southgate is blessed. He has Kyle Walker, the best defensive full back in the country, Kieran Trippier, a very capable understudy and probably the most accurate first-time crosser of a ball in the Premier League, and Trent Alexander-Arnold, ever more confident in the inverted role and creative in midfield.

inverted role and creative in midfield. It can be argued that James, at his best, has all of those qualities, but not if he can't stay fit. A run to the final necessitates seven games. The last time James was fit to start seven straight games for Chelsea in a single campaign was at the end of the 2021-22 season. It would be a terrible pity for him to miss two tournaments in a row, but with squad sizes back to normal, Southeate must consider more than kindness.

Ten Hag's enjoyed plenty of luck too

Loyalists will say Erik ten Hag has been very unlucky as the Manchester United manager. He has been dogged by injuries, is surrounded by executives who lacked the gumption to aggressively pursue Harry Kane and Declan Rice, and his time at Old Trafford has coincided with the Manchester City machine, the emergence of Newcastle United and a rejuvenated Arsenal. But looked at mother way he is the Nanaleonia.

rejuvenated Arsenal. But looked at another way, he is the Napoleonic definition of the lucky general.

Ten Hag has bumped into Scott McTominay, left, in the form of his life, despite wishing to selh him in the summer. In 54 league games across the previous two seasons, McTominay scored twice; he equalled that total in injury time against Brentford on October 7. At Anfield on Sunday, he was also a fine, level-headed captain, perfect for a resilient display against Liverpool. Yet were it not for a suspension triggered by a series of childish outbursts, Ten Hag's captain would have been the flaky Bruno Fernandes.

The most consistent defender at the club this

The most consistent defender at the club this season has been Harry Maguire who, again, Ten Hag did not want. Not far behind him is Jonny Evans, who returned to the club simply to train, having been released by Leicester City. Once more, fortune intervened, and a lack of injury cover turned a short-term pre-season contract into a one-year deal. Then, when Maguire was injured for the Liverpool game, Ten Hag had to turn to Raphaël Varane, who was man of the match. Yet earlier this month, Varane appeared to be behind not just Maguire and Evans, but also Victor Lindelof and Luke Shaw.

also Victor Lindelof and Luke Shaw.
Football can be like that. Jürgen Klopp is now expressing delight that Liverpool missed out on Moisés Caicedo and Roméo Lavia, who signed for Chelsea to little end. Manchester City were lucky that Alexis Sánchez, Fred and Maguire all chose United. But Ten Hag has had some good breaks, too. Napoleon would have loved him.

● The bid document for the Women's Super League is to be issued in January, and it is hoped broadcasters will pay a 150 per cent increase on their current £75 million deal. The target is £20 million a year, based on rising attendances and the success of England's

Yet the viewing figures for the early weeks of the competition show a drop of more than one quarter. Maybe television bosses will up their outlay for a show that is losing its audience, but that doesn't tend to be the way business works. In the real world, as discussed last week, the numbers matter.

## Saudis chase Vegas

I'll never forget my last trip to Saudi Arabia. I couldn't wait to tell everyone about it. "It's 50 degrees," I gushed, "so too hot to even sunbathe. Nobody's out in the streets during the day, not even the locals, who seem a little wary of an unseen tyrannical force. All the good restaurants are in hotels, so a lot of them are buffets or fabulously expensive, and alcohol's illegal so they're all dry. But at night, don't worry, everyone just mills around shopping centres, consuming luxury goods without purpose because that's where the air conditioning is. And the remainder of the restaurants, too. When shall we go?"

Maybe I missed something. Certainly, I missed what boxing promoter Bob Arum saw when he described Saudi as the new Las Vegas. "Vegas didn't have a single professional sports franchise," he recalled. "It became Vegas because the powers that be put up the money to get the big fights there. That's what is happening now in Riyadh. They're trying to accomplish a sports and entertainment capital of the world."

An invisible one, as Neom, the proposed city that will live by westernised laws, is 1,250 kilometres away from Riyadh, on the Red Sea. This is also where "The Line" will sit, a trillion-dollar megacity encased in giant mirrors. If this sounds a bit like *The Truman Show*, well, it is. It isn't Las Vegas. Incredibly, Vegas feels more real.

## Slick City lifted by own goal from man who missed son's birth to play

Henry Winter

Chief Football Writer, Jeddah

**Urawa Red Diamonds** 

**Manchester City** 

Just when the heat was on Manchester City, they made light of 28C temperatures to stride to within 90 minutes of being champions of the world here in Jeddah. Just when headlines turned tricky for the Treble winners, stuttering to one success in six in the Premier League, which Rodri said "left a very bad feeling in the changing room", they showed their quality here. "When you win 3-0 it looks easy, when we don't win it's because City are in crisis and are not playing good," Pep Guardiola said

His team showed why they got here, controlling the game from start to finish, especially after Bernardo Silva went right and Phil Foden central midway through the first half. Both were excellent. Foden's dribbling and even pushing forward as a false No 9 worked. Silva's passing from the flank turned Urawa Reds inside out. Tactical tweaks like this highlight Guardiola's acumen.

"I'm so very happy being here in this club, really happy, [to] have one more year," the City manager said. "Hopefully they don't sack me and I can stay here for the time with this club." His captain, Kyle Walker, delivered with word and deed, exhorta-

tion and one exquisite pass.

It needs swiftly noting that their opponents were hardly menacing or mobile. Even Jeddah's traffic occasionally moves both ways. The Japanese side's 200 travelling fans with their chants and drums had more energy and enterprise

than their players. Fluminense, the South American champions whom City now face in Friday's Club World Cup final, will be far more challenging, especially in attack, although their defence can be got at. "We know how Brazilian teams are, very passionate and full of quality," Rodri said.

City will be favourites. If they prevail, they will return to the domestic and Champions League fray refreshed. The heat has also been on City with the continued scrutiny over the 115 charges of financial breaches, which they deny. So this was important, Events on and



Main, Kovacic doubles the lead after an own goal by new father Hoibraten, inset, who saw his child's birth on FaceTime

off the field meant they had to win here and they duly did.

City took control with goals either side of half-time. The first was fortuitous, an own goal from Marius Hoibraten. The Norway defender had missed the birth of his first child to be here at

the tournament, but followed the event on FaceTime, before dashing home for 12 hours to

Club World

Cup final

Manchester City v

see his fiancée and their new son. At least it showed what this strange competition means to many. The frustration on Hoibra-ten's face as City celebrated highlighted that.

Fluminense, Friday, kick-off 6pm TV: TNT Sports 1 The City fans present, mainly locals, enjoyed Hoibraten's misfortune but a bigger salute was reserved for Erling Haaland when the cameras, running out of meaningful on-field action, picked the injured striker out on the bench. Haaland smiled and waved back. The camera then zoomed in on Kevin De Bruyne, who slightly self-consciously raised a hand in acknowledgement.

De Bruyne looked hugely frustrated not to be playing. "Kevin started training Monday and tomorrow he trains with us, it's three months," Guardiola said. "Getting better. Erling still cannot train." The surprise was Julián Álvarez

did not start, leaving City with a changing false No 9. Matheus Nunes and Silva combined for City's opening goal. John Stones, entering midfield in that stylish way of his, passed to Nunes on the halfway line. He swapped passes with Silva before crossing and panicking Hoibraten in a fateful intervention.

City were relieved. As well as the awkward temperature, the King Abdullah Sports City pitch did not look fit for a king nor high-level athletes, with signs of overuse. "I would have loved to have a better pitch," Guardiola said. "In football the conditions for the players, the biggest organisation [should] take care of." Do better, Fifa.

Unfortunately, the stadium was far from full. It was not a good look for a country attempting to depict itself as a footballing hotbed worthy of hosting the 2034 World Cup, especially given the focus on human rights here. It is not inspiring for the Fifa self-styled visionaries who have shoehorned another competition into the already crowded calendar, with the 32-team summer Club World Cup from 2025 swiftly bringing criticism from the likes of Silva, sensible voices worried about burnout.

The competition has become about money, about the greed of Fifa and European clubs for television revenue, when really, if it was judged on sporting criteria, it would be a club version of the

Finalissima, European champions v South American. This final version at least bows out with the Champions League winners, City, against Fluminense, holders of the Copa Liberta-

This trophy is about more than a Fifa bauble. For City, this is about the tri-umph at the end of a long road that winded to new horizons, via Seville, to Copenhagen, Dortmund, Leipzig, Munich, Madrid and Istanbul for that tense win over Inter Milan. For some City fans, this journey started when the club were slumping to defeat at York City 25 years ago in the third tier of English football.

Unlike their opener, there was nothing lucky about City's second goal. Stones was involved, passing to Walker, whose majestic through pass released Mateo Kovacic. The third involved fortune again, Silva's shot deflecting in off poor old Hoibraten.

**Urawa Red Diamonds** (4-2-3-1): S Nishikawa — T Sekine, A Scholz, M Hoibraten, T Akimoto — A lto (T Ogiwara 57min), K Iwao (K Shibato 77) – T Okubo (A Schalk 57), K Yasui, Y Koizumi (S Nakajima 64) - J Kanté (B Linssen 64). Manchester City (3-5-2): Ederson – K Walker, M Akanii (J Gyardiol 64), N Aké - P Foden M Akanji G Gyalioti (44), MAR — P Foderi (I Álvarez 64), J Stones (S Gómez 77), Rodri (K Phillips 77), M Kovacic, J Grealish — M Nunes, B Silva (O Bobb 64). **Booked** Akanji, Nunes. **Referee** Mohammed Khaled Al Hoish (Sau).

## Turkish club walk off pitch

The Turkish side Istanbulspor walked off the pitch in a protest over a referee-ing decision in their game against Trabzonspor last night as the league resumed after a one-week suspension that came as the result of a club president punching a referee.

Trabzonspor scored to go 2-1 up in

the Super Lig match through Paul Onuachu, after Istanbulspor felt they should have been awarded a penalty for a clash between their player Florian Loshaj and Batista Mendy that left the former rolling on the floor.

Ecmel Faik Sarialioglu, the Istanbulspor chairman, instructed his team to walk off the pitch, below, although some players appeared reluctant to, and the game was stopped in the 74th minute before being abandoned.

"It is a sad day for football ... we will wait for the football federation's decision from now on," the Trabzonspor coach, Abdullah Avci, said.

The incident came on the first day of matches after Faruk Koca, the president of Ankaragucu, went onto the pitch and struck the referee Halil Umut Meler in the face last week, resulting in the league's suspension. The Turkish Football Federation (TFF) imposed a permanent ban on Koca, who was arrested the day after the match.

The TFF board also ruled that Ankaragucu should pay a fine of two million lira (about £54,000) and play five home games without fans.



## Schumacher to take the wheel at 'top class' Stoke

Steven Schumacher has been named as the new manager of Stoke City after leaving Plymouth Argyle.

The 39-year-old, who guided Plymouth Argyle to promotion from League One to the Sky Bet Championship, joins the club on a 3½ year deal. He replaces Alex Neil, who was sacked earlier this month.

Stoke are without a win from their past eight matches and sit 19th in the Championship, three places and three points behind Plymouth.

'I was attracted to this club by its history and everything it represents," Schumacher said. "The infrastructure, the stadium and facilities are top class and so is the support of the fans

## Results

## Football

Club World Cup semi-final Urawa RD (O) O Man City Hoibraten 45+1 (og) Kovacic 52, Silva 59 (at King Abdullah Sports City, Jeddah)

Carabao Cup Quarter-finals

(0) 1 Newcastle Wilson 16 Chelsea Mudryk 90+2 Wil 38,058 (Chelsea win 4-2 on pens)

(0) 1 Fulham Everton Beto 82 Ke (Fulham win 7-6 on pens) Keane 41 (og)

Port Vale (0) 0 Middlesbro (2) 3

FA Cup second round

Blackpool (1) 3 Forest Green (0) 0 3,188

ence-Gabriel 75

Ekpiteta 84 (Blackpool away to Nottm Forest on Jan 7)

Bristol Street Motors EFL Trophy Second round: South

Portsmouth (1) 2 AFC Wimbledon (3) 5 Sasu 11 Davison 22 Pearce 28 Pell 48 Al Hamadi 89

Vanarama National League: North Banbury United 1 Chorley 4; Gloucester City 3 Curzon Ashton O. South Slough Town 2 Hemel Hempstead Town O.

Pitching In Northern League: Premier division Atherton Collieries O Marine 5; Whitby Town 1 Stafford Rangers 0; Workington O Macclesfield O.

Pitching In Southern League: Premier division: Central Stamford 4 Mickleover 0. South AFC Totton 2 Hayes & Yeading United 1.

JD Welsh League Cup: Quarter-final Cardiff MU 1 Pontypridd United O. Coppa Italia: Third round Napoli O

German Bundesliga Borussia Dortmund 1 Mainz 1; Hoffenheim 3 Darmstadt 3; Werder Bremen 1 RB Leipzig 1.

B Leverkusen	15	12	3	0	42	12	30	39
B Munich	14	11	2		47	14	33	35
RB Leipzig	16	10	3	3	38	17	21	33
Stuttgart	15	10	- 1	4	34	19	15	3
B Dortmund	16						5	
Hoffenheim	16	7	3	6	32	30	2	24
Freiburg	15	7	3	5	19	23	-4	24
E Frankfurt	15		6				5	
	15		1		19			
	15		6		24			
B M'gladbach	15		5				-3	
Heidenheim	15						-8	
Werder Bremer							-7	
	15						-11	
Mainz	16	. 1					-15	
Union Berlin	14	3	1	10	15	31	-16	10
Cologne	15	2					-16	
Darmstadt	16	2	4	10	20	41	-21	10
Spanish La Liga	a At	létic	o N	/lad	rid	3 G	etafe	3

Spanish La Liga Atlético Madrid 3 Getafe 3; Granada O Sevilla 3; Rayo Vallecano O Valencia 1. W D L F A GDPs:
14 2 1 41 20 21 44
13 3 1 38 11 27 42
11 2 4 35 19 16 35
10 5 2 31 19 12 35
9 5 3 33 19 14 32
8 6 3 329 18 1130
6 9 2 19 17 2 27
6 8 4 24 23 1 26

4 6 15 14 1 25 5 7 19 22 -3 23 8 6 16 24 -8 20 7 7 23 24 -1 16 4 9 12 3 -9 16 4 9 23 33 10 16 9 6 14 20 -6 15 8 7 14 24 -10 14 7 8 16 25 -8 5 12 20 40 -20 8 Valencia Rayo Valleca Osasuna Sevilla Alavés Villarreal Mallorca Cádiz Celta Vigo Granada Almería American football NFL Seattle 20 Philadelphia 17 Cricket

Second one-day international South Africa v India Gqeberha (South Africa won toss): South Africa beat India by eight wickets

(halls) R D Gaikwad Ibw b Burger
B S Sudharsan c Klaasen b Williams
N T T Varma c B E Hendricks b Burger
\*K L Rahul c Miller b Burger †S V Samson b B E Hendricks R K Singh st Klaasen b Maharaj A R Patel c sub b Markram

K Yadav c B E Hendricks b Maharaj 1 S A Singh c Miller b B E Hendricks 9 18 (17) A Khan run out 4 99 (9) Extras (w 10, nb 1) 11 Total (46.2 overs) 11 Total (46.2 overs) 211 Fall of wickets 1-4, 2-46, 3-114, 4-136, 5-167, 6-169, 7-172, 8-186, 9-204. Bowling Burger 10-0-30-3; Williams 9-1-49+1.

(balls) South Africa

| South Africa | Challs | R R Hendricks c Kumar b A Singh | 52 (81) | 10 (42 corz in to tut | 119 (122) | H E van der Dussen c Samson b R K Singh | 36 (51) 'A K Markram not out | 2 (2) Extras (% 5, nb 1) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (51) | 5 (5

Umpires Ahsan Raza (Pakistan) and B Jele (South Africa).

Paddy Power PDC World Championship Paddy Power PDC World Championship Alexandra Palace, London (best-of-five sets). First round T Goto (Japan) bit White (Eng) 3-1; J de Graa (Swe) bit R Edhouse (Eng) 3-8 Krcmar (Cro) bit K Brown (Eng) 3-1; S Beaton (Eng) bit W Nijman (Neth) 3-1; M De Decker (Bel) bit D Horvat (Ger) 3-0; R Pietreczko (Ger)

t Mikuru Suzuki (Japan) 3-0; K Pietreczko (Ger) bt Mikuru Suzuki (Japan) 3-0. Second round M Campbell (Can) bt J Wade (Eng) 3-2; M van Gerwen (Neth) bt K Barry (Ire) 3-0.

## **Fixtures**

## Football

Carabao Cup: Quarter-final Liverpool v West

Cinch Scottish Premiership (7.45): Aberdeen v Livingston; Rangers v St Johnstone. Women's Champions League: Group D Hacken v Chelsea (8.0).

## **Darts**

Alexandra Palace, London Paddy Power PDC World Championship.

## Cooper became a victim of own success

As expectations rose his relationship with Nottingham Forest's owner broke down, says Charlotte Duncker

erhaps the biggest surprise about Steve Cooper's sacking is that it took this long. His position had been under threat so many times during his two-year reign that in some ways it is a miracle he reached that milestone.
The Welshman will go down as one

of Nottingham Forest's greatest managers, but with the club struggling for results — having managed only one win in their past 13 matches — Evangelos Marinakis, the Forest owner, decided it was

finally time for a change.

The fans, as they have throughout Cooper's tenure, chanted his name during the defeat by Tottenham Hotspur on Friday, but Marinakis, who was not inside the City Ground, had already started his pursuit of a replacement.

In some ways Cooper was a victim of his own success. When he took charge in September 2021 Forest were bottom of the Sky Bet Championship; only eight months later he had guided them to the Premier League, after a 23-year exile, in a fairytale end to the season that none had foreseen. The target for their first campaign back in the top flight was survival and that was achieved on the penultimate weekend, with victory against Arsenal. But after that the expectations rose, and with them so did the pressure.

The story of last season and the 30 new signings is familiar, but this summer's transfer activity caused problems too. Cooper was keen to add three new faces to his squad but ended up with 13, including seven on deadline day. The head coach was not happy that he would not have a preseason to bed them in.

Marinakis's view was that he had spent close to £300 million to make them contenders in the Premier League and he had doubts over some of Cooper's tactical decisions. including his substitutions and



Cooper, left, led Forest back to the Premier League but his relationship with Marinakis, right, deteriorated in recent months

in-game coaching as results kept going against them.

The pair have never enjoyed a close relationship, but in recent months things became strained. In his press conferences Cooper said he had spoken to the "ownership" but it was understood that this referred to Marinakis's son, Miltiadis. At the end of last season, when the owner commented on the club's success in staying up, Cooper was not mentioned by name; in October, when the head coach reached the landmark of 100 games in charge there was no recognition across the club's media.

Where possible, images of Cooper were kept to a minimum in promotional material, to appease the owner. In fact Marinakis had little time for conversation with people who wanted to praise Cooper's work and would instead point out signings that the head coach had wanted that had not been a success.

Last season Cooper was described by a board member as a "dead man walking". Part of his survival, during sticky spells in September last year

## Early progress stalled

Bottom six of Championship table when Cooper took Forest job in September 2021

	Р	W	D	L	GD	Pts	
19 Barnsley	8	1	5	2	-3	8	
20 Blackpool	8	2	2	4	-5	8	
21 Swansea	8	1	4	3	-4	7	
22 Peterboro	8	2	1	5	-7	7	
23 Hull City	8	1	2	5	-7	5	
24 N Forest	8	1	1	6	-5	4	

but they are now in almost exactly the same position in the Premier League as this time last year:

Season	Р	W	D	L	Pts	Pos
2022-23	17	3	5	9	14	18th
2023-24	17	3	5	9	14	17th

and March this year, was due to Marinakis not being able to find a suitable replacement. Rafael Benítez, Bruno Lage, Julen Lopetegui and Patrick Vieira were all considered, but in fairness to Marinakis, he stuck with the man the supporters adored. Given the turnover of managers at his other club, Olympiacos, where he is on his

fifth manager in 14 months, he can be praised for sticking with Cooper for

The feeling behind the scenes last season was that they needed to do everything they could to survive and that this season they would build. Cooper was unhappy with the club's the standard of a top-flight team.

The dressing rooms and pitches at the ground and the training ground

were upgraded, as were analysis rooms and press facilities, while extra backroom staff were brought in at the request of Cooper. With that, however, the expectations that he would deliver better results grew.

This season, after narrow defeats by Arsenal and Manchester United, followed by a win against Chelsea, there were promising early signs, but there was no consistency with team selection and once Taiwo Awoniyi was ruled out through injury.

It is understood that Marinakis was furious with the substitutions against Luton Town in October, when Forest were 2-0 up and went on to concede two late goals and draw 2-2 at home.

## CONTINUED FROM BACK

Forest set to appoint Nuno

job was on the line several times and in October last year, with Marinakis considering sacking him, he instead ended up signing a new deal until 2025. Forest secured safety with one game to spare and the owner invested further in the summer, signing 13 players.

After a promising start to the campaign, when performances appeared to have improved, Forest then struggled in recent weeks, leading to pressure on the Welshman. The 5-0 defeat by Fulham on

December 6 appeared to be the final straw, but with such a short turnaround to the game against Wolves three days later, Cooper remained in charge and earned a 1-1 draw. But after the 2-0 defeat by Tottenham the feeling among senior staff was that he could not survive and meetings were held over the weekend, when it was confirmed he would be sacked.

Forest are in 17th place in the table

after 17 games having won only three

Sources said that Cooper had lost part of the dressing room after this month's 5-0 defeat by Fulham and when he drastically changed his XI for the draw against Wolverhampton Wanderers he was backed by the players on the pitch. But some were frustrated at their collective lack of game time and the treatment of Joe Worrall and Scott McKenna, who could not find a way back into the squad. The dispute with McKenna stemmed from contract talks, with Cooper saying in press conferences that the defender had an injury.

With little improvement in performances or results, Marinakis knew that Cooper's reign was over and he spent the weekend lining up a replacement. The 44-year-old will no doubt be back in management soon while Forest will look to move in a new and, Marinakis hopes, improved direction under Nuno Espírito Santo.

But despite the sad ending, Cooper will always have a big place in Forest's history. No matter what happens in the coming years, his name will always be chanted with fondness by those inside the City Ground.



## Chelsea progress after Trippier's disastrous cameo

Chelsea Mudryk 90+2

Newcastle United

Chelsea win 4-2 on penalties

Newcastle United did their best to cling on but, in the end, fatigue and the relentlessness of their opponents meant that it was the west London club which reached the semi-finals of the Carabao Cup after a shoot-out in which Kieran Trippier missed his penalty and Matt Ritchie had his effort saved.

The spot kicks took place in front of the travelling supporters after a fan ran on and confronted Martin Dubravka at the other end of Stamford Bridge towards the conclusion of the tie.

It was the sort of full-throttled match that had VAR been in use would have resulted in added time galore, such was the plethora of controversial decisions, the first and possibly most serious of which was Moisés Caicedos ugly chalenge on Anthony Gordon. Caicedo was booked but the replays showed that the former Brighton & Hove Albion midfielder could easily have been sent off. In the dying seconds there were unedifying scenes of jostling after Bruno Guimarães fouled Ian Maatsen.

In between there was plenty of pulsating football and if this had been the first time someone had watched a Carabao Cup tie they would have left believing it to be the most important of all the knock-out competitions such was the sheer intensity as Chelsea threw themselves forward relentlessly in all-out attack after falling behind to Callum Wilson's early goal. This was Chelsea at last playing with the passion that we had come to associate with Mauricio Pochettino, their head coach.

Newcastle palpably tired but found reserves of energy and were buoyed by the fact they would head to their second successive semi-final if they held firm. But in the 92nd minute Trippier failed to deal with Malo Gusto's long range cross which allowed Mykhailo Mudryk to pounce for the equaliser.

This was Eddie Howe's 100th game in charge of Newcastle and they have incorporated the full gamut of emotions,

Just a yellow for Caicedo's challenge on Gordon



There was an instant reaction on social media when Moisés Caicedo's foul on Anthony Gordon in the second minute resulted in a booking. Caicedo caught Gordon late and appeared to scrape the back of his leg with his studs but referee Jarred Gillett did not think it worthy of a red. Gordon limped off in the second half.

including elation, at reaching last season's Carabao Cup final only to be defeated by Manchester United. Howe, though, is still juggling a long injury list and chose not to start the usually exceedingly reliable Trippier as the full back is in need of rest despite missing the Premier League win over Fulham on Saturday through suspension.

In spite of speculation that Conor Gallagher could be sold to free up funds for a striker, the midfielder remains one of Pochettino's most important figures. The 23-year-old made several important, brave tackles and his measured shot from just outside the area in the seventh minute struck the crossbar.

A loose ball from Levi Colwill gave possession to Wilson, who surged through the middle of the pitch as if he knew he would pick up some good fortune along the way. Sure enough, Chelsea's central defenders converged to dispossess him only for Benoît Badiashile to miscontrol his clearance and give the ball straight back to the forward with Wilson finishing calmly past Djordje Petrovic, in goal for the injured Robert Sánchez.

The home team responded with intent. Cole Palmer tried his luck with a strike from a tight angle which was easily saved. No one in blue was anywhere close to meeting a tantalising ball across the face of goal from Raheem Sterling but it took Guimarães to block on the line, with his thigh, a sizzling effort from Sterling after a clever pull back from the excellent Gallagher.

Chelsea maintained the pace with Nicolas Jackson unlucky to see a shot on the turn drift just wide and then Sterling forcing an adept low save from Dubravka. The frenetic nature of the match meant possession switched with alacrity. Thiago Silva thought he was being sensible when he tried to slow down proceedings at the back but Newcastle swarmed in on what was perceived as a sign of weakness forcing Pochettino's team to make haste and move forward.

There were squeals of delight from the home supporters when they realised that Christopher Nkunku was preparing to enter the fray. Nkunku had been impressive on Chelsea's pre-season tour but his absence since damaging his knee in Chicago in August has meant his attacking attributes have grown to near mythical proportions given how disappointingly Pochettino's team have performed during this campaign.

This was his competitive debut for the west London club after signing for £52 million from Leipzig, where he was the sort of free scoring, flexible forward that Chelsea, tenth in the Premier League, sorely need more than they everthought they would when the deal was completed.

Late on Gallagher fell in the area under a challenge from Tino Livramento but Jarred Gillet, the referee, made it plain that he did not need VAR to know Chelsea had not won a penalty.

Chelsea (4-2-3-1): D Petrovic — A Disasi (I Maatsen 78min) T Silva, B Badiashile, L Colwill (M Gusto 46) — C Galliagher, M Caicedo — C Palmer, E Fernández (A Broja 32). R Sterling (M Mudryk 78) — N Jackson (C Nkunku, 69). Booked Caicedo, Sterling, Gallagher, Mudryk, Newcastle (4-3-3-3): M Dubravka — E Krafth (K Trippier 46), J Lascelles, S Botman (D Burn 46), T Livramento — S Longstaff, B Guimarães, L Miley — M Almirón, C Wilson, A Gordon (M Ritchie 52). Booked Wilson, Guimarães.

Referee J Gillett. Attendance 38,058.



## Late errors were so costly for Newcastle

ieran Trippier made two very late errors which cost Newcastle a place in the Carabao Cup semi-finals.

Two minutes into added time he tried to nod a cross back to his goalkeeper Martin Dubravka but left it short for Mykhailo Mudryk to equalise.

Then his was the vital first miss in

Then his was the vital first miss in the penalty shootout which resulted in Newcastle going out.



## Carrick's impressive Boro

**Port Vale** 

 $\frac{0}{3}$ 

Middlesbrough

## lan Whittell

Michael Carrick, twice a League Cup winner in his playing days, steered his Sky Bet Championship side Middlesbrough a step closer to this season's Carabao Cup final with an impressive quarter-final victory at Vale Park.

The win carried Middlesbrough into the semi-finals of the competition for the first time since the club claimed their first, and so far only, major trophy in 2003-04 and continued an effective first 14 months at the helm for the former Manchester United midfielder.

The opening goal came against the

run of play and followed a bright opening by the League One hosts, who rode the predictable pre-match hype that surrounded Vale's first ever appearance in a major cup quarter-final. There looked little danger as Jonny Howson, the Middlesbrough captain, gathered the ball from Daniel Barlaser outside the box, but he scored with a well-hit shot that took an unkind deflection, via Jason Lowe, in the 11th minute.

Only 12 minutes later, the Championship side were in control of the tie after a slip by the Vale wingback Conor Grant. That let in Sammy Silvera, who drove across the area before picking out Morgan Rogers, who scored with an excellent finish from just inside the box. It was the former Manchester City Under-21 midfielder's fifth goal of the season, four of them coming away from home in the Carabao Cup.

## This can put the players in danger'

## CONTINUED FROM BACK

Pochettino, the Chelsea head coach, said. "The fans need to be careful with this type of thing because it's a thing that can put in danger the players. I'm disappointed. I don't agree with this yep of thing that happened here in Stamford Bridge and in other stadiums in England or around the world. It's always disappointing with this type of thing because it's dangerous."

thing because it's dangerous."

The match was packed with controversy but, with no VAR in use, the on-field decisions all stood, including the caution given to Moisés Caicedo after his robust challenge in the first minute on Anthony Gordon. Replays



Dubravka, the Newcastle goalkeeper, was confronted by a pitch invader

indicated the midfielder was fortunate not to be sent off and probably would have been had Jarred Gillett, the referee, been asked to review the incident. Towards the end there were unedifying scenes of jostling after Bruno Guimaräes fouled Ian Maatsen.

It was a match to forget for Kieran Trippier, who came on in the second half. The full back miscontrolled a cross that enabled the Chelsea equaliser and must be penalty wide in the shootcut.

put his penalty wide in the shootout.
"He's a transformative signing, one that has taken the group on to a different level," Howe said of his struggling defender. "When he's given us so much, now it's our turn to support him and look after him and that's what we'll do."



## move closer to repeat of 2004 triumph

If Vale had scored from their next attack, only three minutes later, the evening might have progressed in a different fashion, but Gavin Massey could only volley over an open goal from Ethan Chislett's cross from six yards out.

And if Matt Crooks had scored, instead of chipping over after an error from Lowe before half-time, Carrick might have enjoyed an even

more stress-free evening.
The Vale goalkeeper Connor Ripley — who had started his career at Middlesbrough, where his father, Stuart, had been a pop-- faced a second half in front of the massed ranks of

Rogers celebrates after scoring Middlesbrough's second goal

visiting fans, who mocked him mercilessly. But far more painful was Middlesbrough's third goal after 53 minutes when Rogers's pass found Crooks, who struck a fine finish past Ripley.

The evening deteriorated further for Vale when the highly rated England Under-20 midfielder Ollie Arblaster, on loan from Sheffield United, was carried off on a stretcher after an innocuous looking challenge with Rogers. The combination of the third goal and Arblaster's injury dampened what little enthusiasm remained in Vale, players and fans alike, and only a fine stop from Ripley, denving the substitute Calum

Kavanagh, prevented an even more

demoralising outcome.

"We're looking forward to the semi-final," Carrick said. "We're not stupid; we know whoever is left in the draw will be wanting to play us. But we look forward to giving it everything we've got. Jonny Howson has been a professional for 17 years and this will be his first semi-final."

Port Vale (3-4-3): C Ripley 6 - J Debrah 6, J Lowe 5 (T Sang 77min), K Balmer 5 (A lacovitti 51, 5) – G Massey 6 (U Ikpeazu 77), F Ojo 6 (R Loft 45, 6), O Arblaster 8 (R Walters 59, F Ojo 6 (R Loft 45, 6), O Arbiaster 8 (R Walters 59, 5), C Grant 6 – A Devine 6, B Garrity 6, E Chislett 7. Booked Balmer, Loft, Iacovitti. Middlesbrough (4-2-3-1): T Glover 6 – A Dijksteel 6, D Fry 7, M Clarke 6, L Engel 6 – J Howson 7, D Barlaser 7 – M Rogers 9 (L McCabe 83), S Silvera 8, M Crooks 7 (A Bangura 77) – I Latte Lath 6 (I Jones 45, 5; C Kavanagh 73). Booked Clarke, Rogers. Referee M Salisbury.

## **Bubble of optimism** is burst by Fulham

**Everton Fulham** 

Fulham win 7-6 on penalties **Paul Joyce** 

Sean Dyche has worked tirelessly to change the story, as he puts it, in his time at Everton, though rewriting one chapter in particular continues to prove

beyond his control.
Fulham burst the bubble of optimism that had been building at Goodison Park and, in doing so, progressed to a first appearance in the semi-final of a domestic cup competition since 2002, when they lost to Chelsea in the FA Cup.

That they prevailed on penalties, with the outstanding Tosin Adarabioyo holding his nerve in sudden death. amply showed the visiting team's resilience and the celebrations in front of the noisy band of travelling supporters were suitably raucous.

There can be few better barometers of the progress Marco Silva is currently overseeing at the west London club than the scent of Wembley filling their nostrils and talk of silverware fuelling the post-match debates.

This was not a night when Fulham excelled. They led through Michael Keane's own goal until the Everton substitute Beto pegged them back in the 82nd minute, but Silva will not care about that. They have never been so far in the League Cup before and victory is sure to be even sweeter given it came against the head coach's former club.

The sense of deflation for Everton, in contrast, was all too familiar. Dyche will know this was a huge opportunity missed to maintain the feelgood factor that has enveloped a club who are without silverware since 1995.

It was also the fourth time in the past six seasons in which they have cruelly floundered in a penalty shoot-out, although it still felt like fresh torment.

When Jordan Pickford plunged to his left to repel Bobby Decordova-Reid's spot kick after successful penalties from Andreas Pereira, Tom Cairney and João Palhinha, Amadou Onana had the chance to follow Beto, Dwight McNeil, Keane and Arnaut Danjuma

and wrap up the tie. However, the Belgium international theatrically skipped just before striking his effort and tamely rolled the ball for Fulham's Bernd Leno to pounce upon.

The drama recommenced with Car-los Vinícius, James Tarkowski, Kenny



Fulham's players were ecstatic as they held off Everton in a thrilling shootou

Tete, James Garner and Antonee Robinson all on target before Idrissa Gueye struck the post. Adarabioyo was then cucumber-cool

in front of the Gwladys Street to leave Fulham dreaming.
"We are delighted," Silva said. "We

have done something that the club has never achieved before. We are moving in the right direction, but my ambition is always to want more and more." Fulham claimed the lead in the 41st

minute when they built a move through Rodrigo Muniz, Willian and Robinson, whose cross struck Keane on the side of his chest and left Pickford, diving to his left, flummoxed as the ball beat him on

The plaudits Everton have received for their recent Premier League form meant expectation has begun to swirl around them, but they could not deliver on that demand.

There was plenty of huff and puff and balls into the box, but not enough quality in the final third. Dominic Calvert-Lewin was substituted after a fruitless night and his replacement, Beto, finished with a close-range header after Fulham's resolve briefly lapsed.

That brought the lottery of penalties

with Onana, having impressed during practice, left looking silly.
"Everyone has a style of penalty which they think can score," Dyche said. "His record has been very strong in all the rounds and when we've practised them. That's his style.

"If you are brave enough to get up

there and take one then you have to be brave enough for the consequences."

Everton (4-4-1-1): J Pickford 6 — N Patterson 6, M Keane 6, J Tarkowski 6, J Branthwaite 7 — J Harrison 6 (A Danjuma 72min), I Gueye 6, A Onana 5, D McNeli 6 — J Garner 6 — D Calvert-Lewin 5 (Beto 61, 6). Booked Keane, Patterson. Fulham (4-2-3): B Leno 7 — K Tete 6, T Adarabioyo 8, C Bassey 7, A Robinson 7 — H Rede 7 (A Pereira 77), J Palininha 7 — H Wilson 6 (B Decordova-Reid 77), A Iwobi 6 (Dion 86) William 7 (T Cirrey 62, 6). (I Diop 86), Willian 7 (T Cairney 62, 6) — R Muniz 6 (C Vinícius 86). **Booked** Tete, Leno.

## Forget goal drought, Núñez told

## Paul Joyce

Darwin Núñez has been told not to fret over his ten-match goal drought, with Liverpool insisting he is a more complete striker now than last season.

The Uruguay international has failed to score since conjuring a spectacular winning goal for Jürgen Klopp's side against Bournemouth on November 1, which secured progress into tonight's Carabao Cup quarter-final with West Ham United.

Núñez has started six matches in that sequence, yet the 24-year-old remains marooned on seven goals for the season, renewing the scrutiny that was virtually ever-present last term.

Liverpool assistant manager Pepijn Lijnders said there have been individual meetings with the forward to ensure his morale does not dip and added that he has made significant strides in his development, which meant judging him solely on his scoring output was

Darwin is full of desire," Lijnders said. "If we would only judge players on goals that would be so unfair because when we reached our targets, and when we were really there to compete, it was always about the collective.

"I feel there is a good connection between Mo [Salah] and Darwin. For example, the way they see each other and assist each other, and I feel above everything that Darwin is playing a much better season than last year."

Klopp must decide whether to start Núñez, who cost an initial £64 million rising to £85 million from Benfica in the summer of 2022, or hold him back for Saturday's clash with Premier League leaders Arsenal.

Liverpool v West Ham, 8pm. TV Sky Sports Main Event. Radio BBC Radio 5 Live, talkSPORT

## City stroll to final

Guardiola's team outclass Asian champions in Club World Cup Henry Winter, page 54



## Salt's repeat dose

Opener hits another superb century as England win again





## Nuno to take over at Forest

## Cooper sacked and due to be replaced by former Tottenham manager dismissed by Saudi club

## Charlotte Duncker

Nuno Espírito Santo is expected to be confirmed as the new Nottingham Forest manager today after the club

sacked Steve Cooper.
Forest confirmed the departure of Cooper yesterday after the club had won once in their past 13 games. Nuno flew in to finalise his 2½-year deal and his first game is set to be at home to

Bournemouth on Saturday.
The former Wolverhampton Wanderers head coach has been out of work since he was sacked by the Saudi Arabian club Al-Ittihad last month, despite winning the league title last season. His previous Premier League job was a 17-game spell at Tottenham Hotspur that ended in November 2021.

Pressure had been mounting on Cooper in the past few weeks. Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis had been considering options to replace the Welshman, with talks increasing after Friday's defeat by Tottenham.

Though they have the same points total after 17 games compared with last season, there was pressure on Forest to be performing a lot better since having invested nearly £300 million after returning to the Premier League. In the statement confirming Cooper's dismissal, the club thanked him for his work, adding that he had "cemented himself firmly in the club's rich history".

"Everyone at Nottingham Forest would like to thank Steve for his superb contribution," Marinakis said. "His achievement in guiding Forest back to the Premier League will undoubtedly remain an iconic moment in the club's history. We thank Steve for his dedication and commitment during his time with us, as well as the incredible connection he forged with our supporters and the city of Nottingham." Cooper will go to the training ground

today to say goodbye to his players, who had yesterday off. Many players have taken to social media to share their appreciation of their former manager.

It is understood that Marinakis had recently been sounding out potential replacements, such as former Eintracht Frankfurt head coach Oliver Glasner and Julen Lopetegui, who was first choice but ruled himself out.

Cooper arrived at Forest in September 2021, with the club at the bottom of the Sky Bet Championship, but he guided them back to the Premier League for the first time in 23 years. His Continued on page 55

## Raducanu back with old coach

Stuart Fraser Tennis Correspondent

Emma Raducanu has turned to a former childhood coach as she prepares for her long-awaited come-back from surgery next month.

Nick Cavaday, a British former player, has been assisting the 2021 US Open champion on court at the National Tennis Centre in Roehampton over the past week. The 37-year-old was the head coach at the LTA's High Performance Centre in Bromley, where Raducanu trained during her early teens, from 2011 to 2014.

With less than two weeks until Raducanu's scheduled return to action at the Auckland Open, this is the first sign that she is beginning to assemble a support team for her trip. For several months the 21-year-old has used a variety of LTA staff members and hitting partners on an ad-hoc Continued on page 52

## Pitch invaders concern Howe

## Alyson Rudd

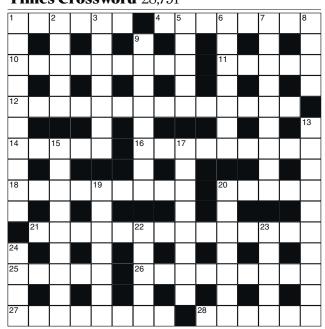
Both the police and Chelsea have launched investigations after supporter ran on to the pitch to confront Martin Dubrayka, the Newcastle United goalkeeper, towards the end of last night's Carabao Cup tie at Stamford Bridge.

The incident occurred Mykhailo Mudryk scored an equaliser in added time which sent the quarterfinal to a penalty shootout which the west London club won.

"I have always said that the safety of players, coaches, managers, referees, linesmen — that's the priority in any football match," Eddie Howe, the Newcastle head coach, said. "So more has to be done to keep especially irate supporters away from the pitch

We need to be careful," Mauricio Continued on page 56

## Times Crossword 28,791



## ACROSS

- 1 Dance held by retired secretarygeneral (6)
- 4 Sphere of influence restricted by
- very large sweetener (8)

  10 Youngsters oddly shunned nudist clubs? (5,4)
- 11 Staff behind alpha male in capital
- 12 Misgivings of backer should start to subside after Thursday (6,8) 14 Squiffy setter's besetting sin (5)
- 16 Cocktail of beer (without head), gin and mixer (9)
- 18 Stole hat to hide wig (9)
- 20 Recalled case of patchy crop growth (5)
- 21 A US scientist of shockingly sham quality (14)
  25 Notice sailors on front of orlop
- deck (5)
- 26 Dinky car, a true original (9) 27 Swapping leaders, get criminal boss (3.5)
- 28 Cactus in grave you could pick up?

## DOWN

- 1 My male ego's challenged in a
- playful way (10)
  2 King of Carthage ignoring power of mysterious symbols (5)

  3 They heartlessly oversaw state
- repression (7)

  5 Unfashionable coiffure and cap (5)
- 6 Asian pop artist overcome by narcotic (7)
- 7 Note in verse dismissing Conservative sporting event (4,5)
- 8 Last of several tattoos for couple (4)9 Coach ticket leads to unexpected
- trouble and strain (4,1,3) 13 Go to welcome new court officials and clerks (10)
- 15 Manages toupee-clad bachelor hairdresser? (4,5) 17 Inept don messed up conclusion (8)
- 19 Go off on sabbath leaving clothes round building (7)
- 20 Old man's wise way (7)
- 22 Swollen belly regularly expelled wind (5)
- 23 English lord in court, close to fire
- escape (5) 24 Wedge book upright (4)

## Yesterday's solution 28.790



Check today's answers by ringing 0905 757 O141 by midnight. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390.

## **Newspapers** support recycling

The recycled paper content of UK newspapers in 2020 was 67%



This was Puzzle Two in the Semi-final at the Times Crossword Championship, where 36 contestants solved it correctly



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## times2

Don't boast about cold water swimming: what gave me the ick this year

**Carol Midgley** 



Eh? You don't need to be in a workplace to find any of that annoying. These are life "icks", not just office ones. The more people work from home, watch Netflix instead of going to the cinema and retreat into podcasts while walking the dog, the more of an island they become. And the less they can bear you sucking your teeth after eating a packet of crisps then saying that you are "excited for Christmas".

Do you bring a stink bomb such as haddock chowder for your packed lunch, a crime which you then compound by drinking it from a cup rather than using a soup spoon? Then you should expect your colleagues to fantasise about killing you. Painfully. Don't blame me: I'm only stating the facts.

I know because I feel it happening to me. Things that didn't used to irritate me much now make me need to bite down on a stick like a patient having a leg sawn off in pre-anaesthetic times. Such as when men say, "Right, I'm just going to point Percy at the porcelain", or women say, "I need to get my steps in" rather than
"I'm going for a walk". I can't abide it when celebrities say, as they do every five minutes, "My children are my priority. They come first." As opposed to what, mate, sixth? Do you think you are special in that, and that we pleb parents put our children about 18th after the welfare of the budgie and getting drunk on cider on Fridays? Also, anyone who writes #blessed about themselves on Instagram Or a pet owner who calls themselves a "pawrent".

Here's a cringing buttocks-clencher: people who use inappropriate shouty exclamation marks on sympathy posts or cards when there has been a tragedy. "So sad!!!!" they'll write on a bunch of flowers. Or "Gone too soon!!!!" What's that about? Ditto



British people writing "Mom", not "Mum", and "reached out", not "emailed". I'd like to "reach out" and tweak their nose quite hard. Women over 30 who wear tutu-style skirts (sorry, sisters, I'm just "speaking my truth"), men who always refer to their car by its make ("The Lexus", "The Audi"). Women who have a special "photo face" with their mouth slightly ajar; anyone who, with great confidence, sings the incorrect lyrics to a song. Adults talking in baby voices and thinking it's cute.

I know. I sound irascible. That's because I am. I'm grappling with the hideous headachey, chest-clogging winter lurgy thanks, I'm convinced, to sitting near someone on a two-hour train journey who failed to cover his mouth when he a) coughed and b) did big hooting sneezes, the absolute worst of icks. Recently a report warned against holding in your sneezes after a man tore a 2mm hole in his windpipe doing just that. Nope. I don't care if it makes your eyes pop out of your sockets like the Tom and Jerry cat, it's your civilised duty to hold it in. Your windpipe be damned.

A friend has just volunteered that "a man using an oven mitt" gives her the ick, which is harsh, but now I think about it, fair. A male friend offers "women with black make-up balls in their eyes" and "any adult who uses a pencil case". Another friend simply replied: "Wallet phone cases." And the word "ick" is itself an ick, don't you think?

Hmm. I think the lesson here is that we are all quite set in our ways these days. Jean-Paul Sartre didn't quite say, "Icks are other people," but he should have.

## At home with the Beckhams

What happens when your TV breaks down? In our house we tend to address the problem by bickering at each other while frantically rebooting the wi-fi and shrieking four-letter words. What never happens is that my husband strips off to his knickers while I photograph him fixing it.

But then he's not David Beckham. Victoria Beckham victoria Beckham posted a photograph of her husband lying on the floor fixing a telly in a New York hotel room in which — and what were the chances? — he is naked save for a tight pair of Calvin Klein underpants. "You're welcome," the proud wife wrote under the snap.

Cynics might say that the Beckhams are always "on brand", that David is almost too perfectly captured and that there may have been more than one take. Oh, and that if you're in a posh penthouse room, wouldn't the hotel handyman come and fix the telly? Tsk, tsk. Perish the thought that this was staged! And just be thankful that we are allowed to share in such unscripted moments of marital perfection.

a few tarts and within seconds filthy-minded people are suggesting he puts them on "Onlyflans".

It is 50 years since Johnnie Cradock uttered the famous words: "May all your doughnuts turn out like Fanny's."

Nigel, you've made it a reality.

## MeToo catches

After decades of impunity, the French film star is facing a backlash over his treatment of women, triggered by a new documentary, says Adam Sage

n 1991 Gérard Depardieu was quoted by Time, the American magazine, as having admitted to participating in gang rapes as a child. Jack Lang, the French culture minister of the day, expressed outrage, although not at the sexual violence. Instead, Lang criticised the US media for bringing up the issue just before the Oscars and thus scuppering Depardieu's chances. It was "a low blow against one of our greatest actors", the minister said.

His comments won widespread support among commentators only too ready to denounce an American conspiracy against French culture and to convey the message that rape was but a trivial matter by comparison with the international glory that Depardieu's talent had achieved.

This month, Rima Abdul Malak, the present French culture minister, has again been talking about Depardieu, although not in the same terms. The country's best-known film star had brought "shame to France", she said in the wake of a TV documentary that features not only allegations that he has committed repeated sexual assaults during his career but also previously unseen images of his coarse and vulgar behaviour.

Denouncing him as "disgusting", Abdul Malak said she was launching a disciplinary procedure that could strip him of the Légion d'Honneur, France's highest honour, which he was awarded in 1996. Her words infuriated Depardieu's family, who accused her of riding roughshod over the presumption of innocence, and also irritated President Macron, who let it be known that he would have liked to have been consulted over the matter.

Yet the minister's intervention marked a watershed for an actor who once had iconic status. At the age of 74, after decades of producers, directors and critics brushing aside his obscenities to argue that he was merely heir to a long French tradition of bawdy fun going back to Rabelais in the 16th century, Depardieu finally seems to have become a pariah.

Investors are refusing to back his films, roles have dried up and TV executives have turned their backs on him. Some say they are reluctant to programme his movies, including those considered as chefs d'oeuvres like Les Valseuses, Jean de Florette or Le Dernier Métro. This week, the Grévin Museum in Paris, the French equivalent of Madame Tussauds, said it had removed his waxwork statue because of "negative reactions" among visitors and on social media.

Depardieu's reputation had been unravelling for five or so years, ever since a criminal lawsuit accusing him of rape landed on a prosecutor's desk. Even so, some movie industry figures continued to defend him, and a small but vocal minority of commentators



still portrayed him as the victim of an un-French form of puritanism sweeping across the Atlantic from the US after #MeToo.

Not now. The coup de grâce was delivered this month by France Télévisions, the state broadcaster, in a documentary that featured footage of a trip the actor made to North Korea as a guest of the regime in 2018.

It showed him subjecting the North Korean woman who was his official translator to an endless stream of crude remarks and acts. At one point he touches her bottom. At another he says, "Her little dress is wide open. You can almost see her knickers." Spotting a weighing machine, he stands on it and then tells her, "124 kilos and I haven't got an erection. With an erection, it's 126." The translator is visibly ill at ease, unable to defend herself against a guest of a dictatorial state, recoiling from him and sometimes laughing nervously.

In a separate scene he tells Yann Moix, the French writer and director travelling with him, that women derive sexual pleasure from horse riding. He goes on to make lewd comments that seem to be aimed at a ten-year-old girl.

Moix had been intending to make a film about Depardieu's North Korean trip but says he abandoned the project on returning to Paris and showing the footage to a 20-year-old apprentice, who walked out after ten minutes and described the actor as "inadmissible".

Many viewers had much the same reaction when they saw the footage, which was leaked to France Télévisions against Moix's wishes. But Anouk Grinberg, a French actress who is the former partner of Bertrand Blier, the director who made some of Depardieu's greatest films, said she was unsurprised. "He is like that all the time. He did not wait to get to Korea to be as vulgar, as rude, as aggressive with women. And on all the film sets, people turn a blind eye." she said.

Depardieu's North Korean trip came shortly after Charlotte Arnould, an aspiring actress, had filed a lawsuit against him alleging that he had raped her. Arnould, now 28, also featured in the France Télévisions documentary, entitled *Gérard Depardieu: The Fall of the Ogre.* She said she had known the

## Nigel's suggestive quince tart

Bless the sweet, pure innocence of Nigel Slater. The celebrity chef and writer posted a photo of his newly made quince custard tart — and the internet fell about laughing. Why? Let's just say Slater's pink glazed pastry looked exactly like female genitalia. Some might say unfannily so. (What? I was quite pleased with that.)

Slater's tarts would certainly do a roaring trade at the Vagina Museum. The British public did not, alas, show much maturity. "A real labia of love, I'm sure," wrote one of his followers. "A nice vulvatey texture," wrote another. One simply wrote "Feliz fannidad". Even Jamie Oliver wrote "Hahahaha". Poor Slater. He makes

## up with Gérard Depardieu





Left: Gérard Depardieu. Above, from top: Hélène Darras and Emmanuelle Debever. Far left: Depardieu with Sophia Loren in 1991

film star since he befriended her father when she was a child. In August 2018, she said, he had invited her to his house in Paris because "he wanted to know how I was getting on". At the time, she was suffering from anorexia and weighed 5st 12lb. Once there he raped her, she said. Arnoud says she returned five days later to vent her anger at him, but found herself petrified and unable to speak her mind in his presence. She was raped again,

Arnould's lawsuit against Depardieu was dismissed after police viewed CCTV footage from his house and concluded that she had agreed to go unstairs with him and had left again without appearing hurried. However, when she challenged the prosecutor's decision, the case was reopened and the investigation is ongoing. Depardieu denies her allegations, just as he denies having attacked Hélène Darras, one of 13 actresses who accused him of assault in interviews with the news website Mediapart in April.

Darras, now 42, has also filed a lawsuit against the actor, whom she encountered when working as an extra in the film *Disco* in 2007, when she was 26. "He looked at me as though I was a piece of meat," she said.

"He came up to me ... then put his hands on my hips and my bottom. He actually said to me, 'Do you want to come up to my dressing room?' I said no, but that made no difference to the fact that he continued to grope me between shoots.

Emmanuelle Debever, 60, a former actress, had recounted a similar story

in a 2019 Facebook post in which she said Depardieu had slid "his fat paw under my skirts to supposedly make me feel better" on the set of Danton. a 1982 film about the French revolutionary leader. Debever never got to see *Gérard Depardieu: The Fall* of the Ogre. A week or so before the documentary was aired, she threw herself into the Seine in an apparent suicide. Prosecutors have opened an inquiry in an attempt to determine whether her act was linked to the assault she allegedly suffered.

The actor denied claims he had ever raped, assaulted or been violent with women in a letter published in Le Figaro in October. Instead, he described himself as the victim of a "media lynching".

Depardieu grew up with five brothers and sisters in an impoverished family in the central French town of Châteauroux, and was by his own admission a "hoodlum". He trafficked cigarettes and earned money as a male prostitute, notably by stealing from his clients, he has said. At the age of 16 he left for Paris where, although untrained, he began an acting career, first in theatres, then in films. He was initially picked for the sort of hoodlum role he knew well but soon spread his wings to become one of the country's most sought-after stars. In 1978, a couple of years after he had played alongside Robert De Niro in Bernardo Bertolucci's historical epic 1900, he gave an interview to the US magazine Film Comment, which asked him whether the rumours that he had participated in gang rapes in

His family defended him. saying that he was *'extremely* discreet, delicate and even prudish'

Châteauroux were true. There were, he was quoted as saying, "too many to count ... There was nothing wrong with it. The girls wanted to be raped."

The French magazine Lui asked him the same question three years later, "Yes, but I went after everyone else because I was a kid, was his reply. "In fact, it's exaggeration to call it rape. It was more a matter of girls going with anyone to belong to the gang."

In 1991, after he had been nominated for an Oscar for his role in Cyrano de Bergerac, Time magazine asked him once more if he had taken part in gang rapes. He was quoted as saying he had. "But it was absolutely normal in those circumstances," he added. "That was part of my childhood."

Unlike the interviews with Film Comment and Lui, which were largely ignored in France and made little impact elsewhere, his comments in Time provoked a furore in the US that ruined his hopes of an Oscar. Depardieu claimed he had been misquoted and won widespread backing from a Parisian cultural establishment prepared to consider that his artistic accomplishment outweighed any controversies clinging to him

whether they be his behaviour with women, his friendships with despots such as President Putin of Russia and President Lukashenko of Belarus, or his exile in Belgium in 2012 to escape the tax hike imposed by the French government of the day.

In an open letter this weekend Depardieu's family, including Julie, his daughter, and Élisabeth, his former wife, defended him against the latest round of accusations. They said the France Télévisions documentary was a "monstrous manipulation" with "fraudulent" use of the North Korean footage to make Depardieu sound like a paedophile. The criticism of him was a "terrifying collective madness", they said, denying that he had ever assaulted or raped anyone. He is "rude, bawdy, Ĝallic, ȟeavy sometimes but not violent. We, who have lived with him and who have seen him live, can testify to this." At home, he was "extremely discreet, delicate and even prudish", the letter continued.

Violaine de Filippis, a women's rights lawyer and spokeswoman for the feminist group Osez le féminisme, was unconvinced, however. She said that the French should use l'affaire Depardieu to prove that they have moved into a new era, and that they no longer accept the long-held claim that Depardieu is just a French man acting as French men always have. "For a long time and even today, there is a kind of view that none of this is serious," she said. "But since #MeToo, mentalities are starting to evolve and people are starting to realise they must react.'

She said that now the French had seen the France Télévisions documentary, they should consider boycotting Depardieu's films in cinemas and on streaming platforms.

"Do we want to give money to that man by buying films? Should we not be supporting other artists?

## The lowdown **Bradley Cooper** and chairs

## This just in: Bradley Cooper likes to torture his co-stars.

Huh. What's his method continuous, terrible singing? Trolling? Tickling?

## That's what you want to know? Not why?

I never ask why with Hollywood folk. There is no point.

Even though, in this case, Cooper is putting a ban on what is arguably — a basic act? He doesn't let anyone sit down.

Right. Niche, very niche. Now, why

## He's got a thing about chairs.

So did my philosophy teacher, but we got through the Plato module eventually.

I'm actually being quite serious. How could you possibly be?

Because Cooper certainly is. In an interview with Spike Lee for Variety's Directors on Directors series, the 48-year-old told his fellow film-maker that he had "always hated chairs" on his sets.

Does he ... find them particularly distracting?

## He blames them for putting his

Even very plain designs? What about boring foldy plastic ones? Hey, what about the swanky director ones? Surely he wants one of those?

Nope. He thinks, from what I understand, that sitting down causes people to disengage, lose focus - zone out.

Yes, that is what they are designed

Which is not conducive to his process. "I feel like your energy dips the minute you sit down,'

Yes, Brad, in a very nice way. Especially with a cuppa and a packet of biscuits. Try it.

No offence, but that response is probably why you look like you — which is absolutely fine, of course





## fashion

## Who wore it best — and who

From Kylie Jenner with a lion's head to Kate's coronation headgear it was a year of going big, says Anna Murphy

o you thought you pushed the envelope when, back in April, you finally plucked up the courage to wear those red socks your Auntie Gill gave you last Christmas. Forget it, 2023 was the year of more is more when it came to sartorial statements. The highlights of this year don't add up to a Best Dressed List so much as a Most Dressed List.

Among the accessories of choice were a tiara — not that we were supposed to call it a tiara for some reason — as worn by the Princess of Wales at the coronation in May. Although she looked

low-key next to all the swan feathers. Then there was the lifesize faux lion's head that brought January's couture shows in Paris to a standstill. Yes, when it came to Kylie Jenner's newfangled take on the LBD the "L" stood not for little but for lion. Grrr.

Confusingly some of the entries might, strictly speaking, be filed under Least Dressed. I give you renaissance woman No 1 Michaela Coel, whose modesty was protected by just a few bajillion bits of bling at the Met Gala in May. And renaissance woman No 2 Beyoncé, who, never one to hide her light under a bushel, actually called her latest outing the Renaissance world tour. She spent a lot of it in variations on a theme of a spangled leotard and knee-high boots. As I said, not much bushel.

Then there was the ubiquitous — in celebrity land at least — tights-as-trousers trend, which seems predicated on the fact that your big pants will do a lot of, er, heavy lifting. Emma Corrin was among the first to be big of pant,



non-existent of trouser, at the Miu Miu show in March. It feels as if Kendall and Kylie Jenner have worn little else and I mean that in the most precise sense — ever since.

keeping things low-key either. One of Hollywood's hottest properties, Pedro Pascal, wore shorts and schoolboy knee socks to the Met Gala, an act that I found strangely endearing but others no doubt thought insane. Even our prime minister insists on an ankle-flashing and column inch-garnering

It's not that the men were

cropped trouser. Paul Mescal continued to plough his by now well established "1970s porn star who looks sweet enough to introduce to your parents" furrow. Timothée Chalamet — Kylie Jenner's squeeze, if you are interested in squaring the celebrity circle went with similar for his recent Wonka-related appearances, whether that was in a black alligator suit or a fuchsia velvet one. I would love to know what Roald Dahl would have

Talking of retro moments, not to mention fuchsia, Margot Robbie gave us a reincarnated Barbie and so much  $\operatorname{pink}$  — SO MUCH PINK — that the promotional tour started to feel akin to a fever dream. I like Barbie, and I like pink, but even I felt the need to reach for my (not pink) sunglasses. As for Ryan Gosling's Ken, in his rebellious phase he made Chalamet come across as restrained.

More real world, comparatively speaking, was the stealth wealth dressing out on manoeuvres in the television adaptation of Taffy Brodesser-Akner's Fleishman Is in Trouble and in the final series of Succession. Claire Danes's Rachel Fleishman and Sarah Snook's Shiv Roy gave good power neutral, though the former's wardrobe — with its perfect black leather pencil skirt, its perfect camel knit, and so it went on — was infinitely more chic.

That was until (spoiler alert) the nervous breakdown kicked in, of course. This was when the "You Can Go Home Now" tank tee came out. Which is what, after a year like this one, I know many of us feel like saying

## is top of the 2023 rizz list?

## Disco Keir has it, Bluev does too, so who's the rizziest of them all? By

## Harriet Walker

t's the word of the year that made everyone over 25 feel older than a cry-laughing emoji with a side parting and a final salary pension. We codgers now know 'rizz" is short for charisma and takes in what millennials might call "hot", Gen Xers "fit" and boomers "dishy", as well as a certain age-old je ne sais quoi. But as we all know, anyone can have a winning personality at any age — someone who stands out in a crowd, makes us smile (yes, you Prince Louis). So who had it by the bucketload in 2023? Here is the definitive list of those who, as the kids might say, served rizz this year. (Have I said that right?)

## The 'hot equerry'

Pomp, ceremony, horseflesh and something for the ladies, the coronation had it all - plus Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Thompson, to give him his full name. It augurs well for the new Carolean age - how often does a real-life person actually look the way they'd be cast in the film? Feathered tea cosy hat! Disembodied gold bagpipes strapped to his chest! A skirt?! And he still manages to look like he'd save you from the French then warm you up in his bothy. I see it as a franchise, starting with Hot Equerry: The Divine Right of Schwiiiings.

## **Florence Pugh**

What did the actress do when faced with a ticket to the Met Gala red carpet? Shaved her head and stuck on a feathered showgirl hat, more power and rizz — to her. The girl who didn't care what you thought of her nipples in 2022 has no interest in your view on her hair either.

Glitter thrown by a protester no one could hear is the new manna from heaven. Before Keir Starmer's Mariah Carey moment, people thought he was a bit dull. No, really! Even though they still think he is a bit dull, they now also know he looks quite good covered in glitter and is able to stay focused despite people around him acting like toddlers. In today's political climate, this counts as a win and came with a sparkly boost in the polls that Rizzless Rishi can only dream of.

## Prince Louis at the coronation

Every state occasion needs a tiny Milk Tray Man pointing and yawning at proceedings from the front row.

## **Hugo Keith KC**

A casual, bar-like lean on his lectern, the judiciously deployed dramatic pauses and a Paxman-like approach to focusing politicians on the question



There are few things more rizz than the sight of someone thoroughly rather than the fact that Keith will be remembered for saying "useless f\*\*\*pigs" with a straight face on the six o'clock news — that puts the Covid inquiry frontman squarely on this list.

## Madonna

Four decades of music, halfway through an acclaimed world tour one knee brace, all the hits and 65 years' worth of rizz avant la lettre.

enjoying their job, and it is this

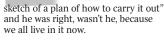
## **Jodie Comer**

The 30-year-old Liverpudlian won an Olivier and a Tony for her role in the one-woman show Prima Facie, and her next film, an adaptation of the feminist apocalypse "cli-fi" novella The End We Start From, has picked up rave reviews. Not bad for someone who says she didn't feel "educated enough" to do theatre.

## **Donald Tusk**

Against a backdrop of distinctly rizzfree, badly coiffed election-winners this year, the return of this familiar face as prime minister of Poland is a fillip for politics' rizz wing. Tusk said in 2019 that there was "a special place in hell reserved for those who promoted Brexit without even a

Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Thompson. Above right, from top: Hugo Keith KC; Maryam Moshiri; Keir Starmer. Above, far right: Lionel Messi; Bluey. Below: Krishnan Guru-Murthy



Your starter for ten: what does the new host of University Challenge have in spades? That's right: rizz.

Last year was pretty rizz-tastic for the Argentinian footballer — he led his country to a World Cup win — but he only continued his rizzing streak this year when in May he turned down an offer from the Saudi team Al-Hilal

worth €1.5 billion because he "loves football". Next, he made David Beckham cry with a beautiful goal against Cruz Azul. "I'm not even sure I can drive home," Beckham said afterwards.

## Krishnan Guru-Murthy

From newsreader to crowd-pleaser, Channel 4's Guru-Murthy (a niche hot-mike heart-throb after a certain interview with Steve Baker) became this year's annual audience favourite to stay in *Strictly* slightly

longer than his natural talents merited — a sort of rizz mascot, if you will. It was a personal triumph for KGM even though he didn't hoist the light entertainment crown. A year ago he had gout; now, after a rigorous training programme, he has rizz.

## Bluey

This Australian cartoon dog family has the most rizz of any children's telly, but the heads all know that it is mum Chilli who is the real star.

## Angela Rayner MP

A self-professed "vape dragon" (who wants them banned), whose preferred cocktail, Venom — vodka, Southern Comfort, blue WKD and orange juice left one colleague asleep in a dog basket, Rayner scored high in rizz with our focus groups.

## Theo Clarke MP

It takes a lot of guts - not to mention rizz — to tell your traumatic birth story at all, let alone in the House of Commons rather than over a nice glass of chablis. Clarke, who gave birth in 2022, in July hosted the first debate at Westminster on the pain many mothers carry with them and is intent on improving maternity services

## Maryam Moshiri

When Moshiri flipped the bird at the top of the hour, BBC cameras beamed it around the world. Not what you might expect on the lunchtime news, but a near-perfect freeze-frame of how many of us feel catching up on the headlines at the moment. It was, she said, a "private joke" — file under "legendary rizz; subcategory: bants".







## times2

## Your weekday brain boost

More puzzles

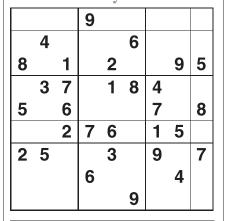
Every day, Monday to Thursday, a page of extra puzzles to give your brain an extended workout

## Samurai difficult

Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

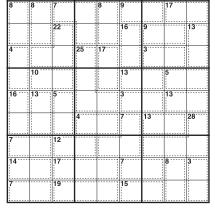
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## Sudoku easy



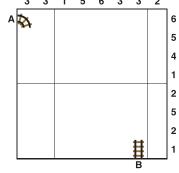
## Killer gentle

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.



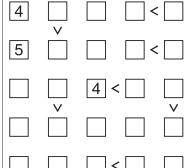
## Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

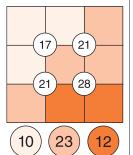


## Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.



## Suko



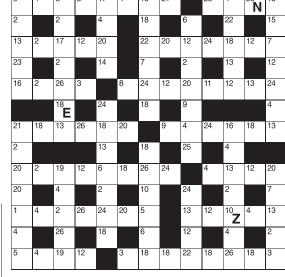
Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

same-day solutions at thetimes.co.uk

Solve Times puzzles interactively with

## Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.



## A B C D Z F G H I J K L M X O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

È

## Yesterday's solutions

SUDUKU											
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KILLER											
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TRAIN TRACKS

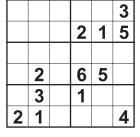
1	4	3	2	5
2	5	4	3	1
4	1	2	5	3
3	2	5	1	4



## Mini

Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

Wednesday's T2



## television & radio

## In the footsteps of a great novelist's grand tour

## **James Jackson** TV review



**Dickens in Italy** Sky Arts

Vigil \*\*\*\*

hristmas pub question of the week: where did Charles Dickens give his first public reading of A Christmas Carol? In a gloomily lit pub in Seven Dials? Outside a Bethnal Green workhouse, urchins gathered at the window? No, it was in a lavish villa in Genoa, cicadas buzzing outside. Slightly disappointing, but you have to hand it to Dickens in Italy with David **Harewood** — for a Dickens thing scheduled near Christmas, this is a long way from The Muppet Christmas Carol.

It's sunny, it's a travelogue, it's Harewood the socially conscious actor having his "prejudices about Dickens challenged while cruising around Italy in a rented BMW saloon. Harewood is surprised because, after admitting to being a Dickens novice, he is finding "him extremely funny, so politically astute - it makes me think this isn't necessarily this quintessentially posh English writer". A summery trip around la dolce vita can do wonders for opening one's mind.

It worked for Dickens too, but not in the way it does for most tourists. When the writer took a grand tour of Europe in the 1840s, did he gawp in wonder at the art and architecture before tea on a veranda? No, he was dismayed by the inequality. He noted the streets in Genoa "emit a peculiar fragrance like the smell of very bad cheese kept in very hot blankets". In Rome, he had no truck with the

Colosseum. The city was still a papal state ruled over by a pope opposed to the country's unification, and Dickens saw past the historical splendour. To him it was social decay: "Broken aqueducts ... broken temples, broken tombs — a desert of decay, sombre and desolate beyond all expression." It inspired whole passages of Little Dorrit.

A focused, inquisitive presence, Harewood seemed far more interested in Dickens the campaigner than in the trappings of this kind of presenting job



David Harewood was taken with Dickens's campaigning instincts

(granted, he did "have a go" at bellringing while learning the origins of the novella The Chimes). So yes, a travelogue with a point, which makes a pleasing change even if I found it just a touch soporific. But then what do Times critics know? This paper gave Dickens's Pictures from Italy book a pasting, sniffing at his newly theatrical prose. Hacks.

Meanwhile, in the finale of Vigil (spoilers ahead), the string-pulling bogeyman was revealed: yes, it was Dougray Scott's Air Vice Marshall Grainger all along, which we got to after another hour of frantic, convoluted, implausible escalation involving more people being shot.

As Amy Silva (Suranne Jones) confronted Grainger with his crimes in a climactic reveal worthy of Poirot, you half-expected a drawling Dougray to sprout a moustache to twirl in front of her. More astonishing was how everyone in the room kept up with Silva's rapid-fire explanation of the timings of emails and messages as her evidence. Realising he was busted, Grainger gave his megalomaniacal moral rationale in which he explained that the Dundair killings had been for a greater geopolitical good for Britain. There was some food for thought in all this, but he got life, justice done.

After submarines and drone weapon arms dealing, you wonder where a third series of Vigil could go. Space warfare?

## Radio choice Ben Dowell



The Reith Lectures

In this fourth and final lecture, Ben Ansell, professor of comparative democratic institutions at Nuffield College, Oxford, asks: can we continue to grow our economies without despoiling the Earth? Focusing on the threats created by our own innovation — from climate change to out-of-control AI

Ansell, above, also asks if our politics is up to supporting sustainable growth. Whether his views withstand the scrutiny of the question-and-answer session remains to be seen. but they are often the most rewarding things about the "Reith". Anita Anand presents the lecture and moderates the proceedings.

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## Times Radio

Digital, web, smart speaker, app **5.00am** Rosie Wright with Early Breakfast 6.00 Aasmah Mir and Luke Jones with Times Radio Breakfast 10.00 Matt Chorley 1.00pm Ed Vaizey 3.00 Jane Garvey and Fi Glover 5.00 John Pienaar with Times Radio Drive 7.00 Pienaar and Friends 8.00 The Evening Edition with Kait Borsav 10.00 Carole Walker **1.00am** Stories of Our Times **1.30** Red Box **2.00** Highlights from Times Radio

## Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz 6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show 9.30 Gary Davies. Boy George chooses his Tracks of My Years **12.00** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** Rylan. An archive chat with Cher **4.00** Sara Cox **6.30** Sara Cox's Half Wower **7.00** Jo Whiley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30** Jo Whiley **9.00** The Folk Show with Mark Radcliffe. With guests Julie Fowlis and Karine Polwart 10.00 Trevor Nelson's Magnificent 7 10.30 Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation **12.00** OJ Borg **3.00am** Sounds of the 90s with Natalie Appleton (r) **4.00** Owain Wyn Evans

## Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz 6.30am Breakfast Petroc Trelawny presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show, featuring listener requests 9.00 Essential Classics Georgia Mann plays the best in classical music with familiar favourites alongside new discoveries and musical surprises

12.00 Composer of the Week: A Vaughan Williams Christmas (1872-1958)

Kate Molleson explores what Christmas was like for Vaughan Williams during the First World War, as a member of the Royal Army Medical Corps. Vaughan Williams (arranger) (As Joseph was Walking; and Sussex Carol); Vaughan Williams (A London Symphony -III. Scherzo; Fantasia on Christmas Carols; Symphony 3 — II. Lento; and The Lark Ascending); and Trad (On Christmas Night)

1.00pm Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert

Ashley Riches and Joseph Middleton perform songs from Saint-Saëns to Ravel. Saint-Saëns (*Melodies Persanes* — extracts: La Brise, Au Cimitiere & Tournoiement): Duparc (La Vague et la Cloche; Phidyle; and Serenade); Debussy (Nuit d'Etoiles; Beau Soir: Fetes Galantes — extracts: En Sourdine, Fantoches & Claire de Lune); and Ravel (Histoires Naturelles) (r)

## 2.00 Afternoon Concert

Fiona Talkington presents music from Brahms, performed by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, joined by the pianist Yulianna Avdeeva and early music group Ensemble Polyharmonique. Plus, new orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and BBC Concert Orchestra. José Maurício Nunes Garcia (Sinfonia fúnebre); Szpilman (*The Life of the Machines*); Finzi (Romance for string orchestra, Op 11); Schutz (Selig sind die Toten; and Unser Wandel ist im Himmel); Joby Talbot (The Winter's Tale — extracts. 1. Act 2 Bohemia, 16 years later, 2. Springtime Festival part 1, Springtime Festival part 2 — Springtime dance); Rautavaara (Notturno e danza); Brahms (Symphony No 1 in C minor, Op 68); Rachmaninov (Piano Sonata No 2 in B flat minor, Op 36); Heinrich Scheidemann (Praeambulum in D minor, WV 33 - just organ); and Christoph Bernhard (*Wie der Hirsch schreiet nach frischem Wasser*) **4.00 Live Choral Evensong**Live from Norwich Cathedral, including music by Leighton, Matthew Martin, Dupré and the world premiere of a new work by Kerensa Briggs. Introit: O Clavis David (Kerensa Briggs) (world premiere); Responses: Michael Nicholas; Office hymn: O come, O come Emmanuel (Veni Emmanuel, arranger Ashley Grote); Psalms 4, 9 (Martin, Elvey); First Lesson: Isaiah 51 vv 1-8; Canticles: Collegium Magalenae Oxoniense (Leighton); Second Lesson: 2 Thessalonians 1 vv 1-12: Anthem: Angelus ad Virginem (Matthew Martin); Hymn: Lo! he comes with clouds descending (Helmslev); Voluntary: Symphonie-Passion (Le monde dans l'attente du sauveur) (Dupré). Ashley Grote (Master of Music), David Dunnett (Organist)

**5.00 In Tune**Katie Derham and Sean Rafferty host a Christmas celebration 7.00 Classical Mixtape 7.30 Radio 3 in Concert

Solomon's Knot perform three of Bach's colourfully scored vocal and choral works. Presented by Ian Skelly. Bach (*O Ewigkeit, du* Donnerwort BWV 60; Wachet! Betet! Betet! Wachet! BWV 70; and Magnificat in E flat BWV 243a with Christmas interpolations)

10.00 Free Thinking
With guests Ian Collins and Natalie Haynes
10.45 The Essay: The Story of Puddings Fiona Stafford explores the stories and symbols behind crème brûlée 11.00 Night Tracks Hannah Peel presents 12.30am Through the Night (r)

## Radio 4 FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz 5.30am News Briefing

5.43 Prayer for the Day 5.45 Farming Today 5.58 Tweet of the Day (r) 6.00 Today 9.00 The Reith Lectures Professor Ben Ansell delivers his fourth and final lecture. See Radio Choice (4/4) 9.45 (LW) Daily Service

10.00 Woman's Hour Emma Barnett presents the magazine show 11.00 South Africa: The Children of Paradise

Fergal Keane and Milton Nkosi visit Western Cape. Last in the series (r) 11.30 The Hidden History of the Wall Rachel Hurdley uncovers what walls can reveal about how humans live (2/2)

12.01pm (LW) Shipping Forecast 12.04 You and Yours 1.00 The World at One

1.45 Mythical Creatures Rhianna Pratchett explores the world of water demons (3/10) 2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Drama: Tess of the Tollbooth

By Ali Sparkes, Night-shift tollbooth worker Tess is stuck in a rut, but regular bridge-crosser Rob could be the remedy. As the new year looms, Tess is looking for a change 3.00 Money Box Live

3.30 All in the Mind Claudia Hammond explores the limits and potential of the human mind (r)
4.00 Living Free

Gavin Fischer investigates the most generous trial yet of a basic income 4.30 The Media Show Ros Atkins presents the latest news from the fast-changing media world **5.00 PM** 

5.54 (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 Whatever Happened to Baby Jane Austen? Florence is sued for libel (2/4)

7.00 The Archers Susan offers some encouragement 7.15 Front Row 8.00 AntiSocial
Presented by Adam Fleming (6/7) (r)
8.45 Book of the Week: Starborn —

How the Stars Made Us and Who We Would Be Without Them Cosmologist Roberto Trotta reveals how stargazing has shaped the course of human civilization (3/5)

9.00 When It Hits the Fan The world of crisis management (8/8) 9.30 The Media Show (r) 10.00 The World Tonight

News round-up with James Coomarasamy 10.45 Book at Bedtime:

The Happy Couple
By Naoise Dolan (8/10)
11.00 We Forced a Bot to Write This Show Performances of Al generated scripts (1/6) 11.15 Nora Meadows'

Week of Wellness A trust exercise in a couples therapy session

The impact of French and British Mandates in the Middle East (1/3) (r)

12.00 News and Weather 12.30am Book of the Week: Starborn

 How the Stars Made Us and Who
We Would Be Without Them (r) 12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As BBC World Service

## Radio 4 Extra

Digital only

8.00am Hancock's Half Hour 8.30 Lip Service 9.00 Counterpoint 9.30 Four Joneses and a Jenkins 10.00 The Expedition of Humphry Clinker **11.00** Paul Temple and the Alex Affair **11.30** The Same River Twice 12.00 The Remains of the Day 12.15pm Maya Angelou: A Song Flung up to Heaven 12.30 Mark Steel's in Town 1.00 Hancock's Half Hour **1.30** Lip Service **2.00** Counterpoint **2.30** Four Joneses and a Jenkins **3.00** The Expedition of Humphry Clinker **4.00** Paul Temple and the Alex Affair **4.30** The Same River Twice **5.00** The Remains of the Day 5.15 Maya Angelou: A Song Flung up to Heaven **5.30** Mark Steel's in Town **6.00** Hancock's Half Hour **6.30** Lip Service **7.00** Counterpoint. Paul Gambaccini chairs the first semi-final of the eclectic music quiz **7.30** Four Joneses and a Jenkins. A storm descends on the village **8.00** Sing Christmas. A Christmas Day concert from 1957 9.00 Short Cuts, Josie Long presents a showcase of short festive documentaries 9.30 Midnight in Peking. By Paul French 9.45 November Dead List. By Nick Perry 10.00 Comedy Club: Whatever Happened to Baby Jane Austen? Comedy starring Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders **10.30** The Museum of Everything. Comedy with Marcus Brigstocke 11.00 Alex Horne Presents the Horne Section. Guest Nick Mohammed 11.30 Little Lifetimes 11.45 The Goldfish Bowl

## Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909 **5.00am** Wake Up to Money **6.00** Breakfast 9.00 Nicky Campbell 11.00 Naga Munchetty
1.00pm Nihal Arthanayake 4.00 5 Live
Drive 7.00 5 Live Sport 8.00 5 Live Sport: Liverpool v West Ham United (Kick-off **8.00**) **10.30** Colin Murray **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

## talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz 5.00am Early Breakfast 6.00 Breakfast 10.00 Jim White and Simon Jordan 1.00pm Hawksbee and Jacobs **4.00** Drive with Andy Goldstein and Darren Bent **7.00** Kick Off: Liverpool v West Ham United (Kick-off 8.00). The Carabao Cup quarter-final 10.00 Sports Bar 1.00am Extra Time

## TalkRadio

Digital only

5.00am James Max 6.00 Talk Today with Jeremy Kyle and Nicola Thorp 9.30 Kev and Alex 10.00 Julia Hartley-Brewer 1.00pm Kevin O'Sullivan and Alex Phillips 3.00 Ian Collins 4.00 Vanessa Feltz 6.00 The Talk 7.00 Prime Time with Rosanna Lockwood 8.00 Piers Morgan Uncensored 9.00 The Independent Republic of Mike Graham 11.00 Petrie Hosken 1.00am Paul Ross

## 6 Music

Digital only

5.00am Chris Hawkins 7.30 Lauren Laverne 10.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00pm Craig Charles 4.00 Huw Stephens 7.00 New Music Fix Daily 9.00 Artist in Residence — Gabriels 10.00 Riley & Coe. With the Prisoners 12.00 Freak Zone Playlist 1.00am Peel Acres 2.00 Stories 3.00 Live Hour (r) 4.00 Jukebox

## Virgin Radio

Digital only

6.30am The Chris Evans Breakfast Show 0.30am The Chris Evans Breakfast S 10.00 Eddy Temple-Morris 1.00pm Jayne Middlemiss 4.00 Ricky Wilson 7.00 Bam 10.00 Amy Voce 1.00am Sean Goldsmith 4.00 Steve Denyer

## Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz 6.00am More Music Breakfast 9.00 Alexander Armstrong 12.00 Anne-Marie Minhall 4.00pm Margherita Taylor 7.00 Smooth Classics 10.00 Calm Classics 1.00am Bill Overton 4.00 Early Breakfast

## television & radio

**Viewing Guide** Joe Clay

Percy Jackson and the Olympians Disney+



Since 2010. parents of children aged between 9

and 14 will have come across Percy Jackson, star of one of the most successful children's

book series since Harry Potter. Percy Jackson and the Olympians is a series of six fantasy novels by the American author Řick Riordan, which as of January 2022 had sold more than 180 million copies. There are numerous spin-off novels, along with movie adaptations of the first two books in the series, starring Logan Lerman as

Percy. But they failed to ignite imaginations in the same way as the books, so its creator is trying again with this TV adaptation and it's safe to say it is eagerly awaited — the trailer for the eight-part series had 84 million views in the ten days after it was released. Walker Scobell is taking over from Lerman as the titular 12-year-old,

and as the series begins, Percy has no idea he is gifted, he thinks he's just a kid who sees weird things. Soon, however, Percy discovers he's the son of Poseidon — a demigod (half human, half god) and is sent to Camp Half-Blood, where the other children of Olympians go. However, when Zeus (Lance Reddick)

accuses Percy of stealing his lightning bolt, Percy and his friends must travel across America to find and return it. Newcomer Scobell is a real find and the actors playing the gods bring some star power — as well as Reddick, there is Toby Stephens as Poseidon and Lin-Manuel Miranda as Hermes.

**Painting Birds** with Jim and Nancy Moir Sky Arts/Now, 8pm

There's a Vic and Bob reunion on this Christmas edition of Painting Birds, as Bob Mortimer joins his old comedy partner Jim Moir and his wife, Nancy, for a "dollop of ornithological cheer" and festive larks. Moir

is determined that the Bohemian waxwing should take over from the robin as the festive bird of choice and he paints the berry-eating bird as he sings its praises. Moir and Nancy also travel to Finland with their daughters (chips off the old blocks), where they meet local artists, seek native birds and gaze at the northern lights.

## BBC<sub>1</sub>

6.00am Breakfast 9.15 Animal Park Christmas Special. The keepers think a koala might be prepnant (r) (AD) 10.00 For Love or Money. A woman suspects the man she met online is a con artist (r) 10.45 Frontline Fightback. How a cyclist uses social media to recover stolen bikes (r) 11.15 Homes Under the Hammer Celebrity Special. Jacqui Joseph is joined by Owain Wyn Evans 12.15pm Barania Hunt Form Worthark Pacarourus in West Bargain Hunt, From Wetherby Racecourse in West Bargain Hunt. From Wetherby Raceourse in West Yorkshire (r), (Ab) 1.00 BBC News at One; Weather 1.30 BBC Regional News; Weather 1.49 Father Brown. A body is identified as a woman who went missing seven years earlier (r) (AD) 2.30 Nigel Slater's Christmas Suppers. The cook creates meals from leftwers (r) (AD) 3.00 Celebrity Escape to the Country, Jenny Ryan, AKA The Vixen from The Chase, searches for a new home in Lancashire 3.45 Ricky & Raff Ser Very Northern Road Trip. The Royle campervan hits the north-east of England to visit the Amedical For New York 1.30 Celebrity Reiden of Format Production of the Production of visit the Angel of the North (r) 4.30 Celebrity Bridge of Uses. A team of drag queens take on the challenge (r) 5.15 Pointless Celebrities. Special Eurovision episode of the star-studded general knowledge quiz (r) 6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather 6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather

6.35am FILM: Baking All the Way (PG, TVM, 2022) 6.35ain Fill.wi. Bakinip An Lite Wady (PG, 17VII), 202.
A cookery book author tries to wrangle a gingerbread recipe from baker. Romantic drama starring Cory Lee and Yannick Bisson, who also directed 8.00 Sign Zone: Nadilya'S Simple Spiese (r) (AD, S.1) 8.30 Mary Makes It Easy (r) (AD, S.1) 9.00 Nicky Campbell 10.00 BBC News 1.00pm Fill.Mi. Pillow Talk (PG, 1999) A man who hadden so that the support of the start of the first file for the start of the support of the start of the support of the start of the support of the suppor bickers with a woman over a shared phone line falls for brokers with a woman over a sharee phone line falls for her when they finally meet, and uses a fake identity to woo her. Romantic comedy with Rock Hudson and Doris Day 2.40 FILM: Move Over, Darling (U, 1963) A woman returns home to America after five years marooned on a desert island to find her husband has just remarried. Comedy starring Doris Day, James Garner and Polly Bergen **4.20** A Countryside Christmas. Chris Packham and Michaela Strachan see the Northern Lights (r) (AD) **4.50** Flog Itl Caroline Hawley and Mark Stacey value antiques at Southwell Minster, near Nottingham (r) 5.45 Celebrity Antiques Road Trin With Chris (1) 3.49 Celebrity Antiques Noda (11). With Chirs Hughes and Jake Quickenden (r) 6.45 Porridge. Mackay and Barrowclough discover Fletch is making booze in his cell. Festive special from 1976 (r)

**6.00am** Good Morning Britain. News, current affairs and lifestyle features **9.00** Lorraine. Entertainment, current a ffairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly 10.00 This Morning. A mix of chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather 12.30pm Loose Women. Anothe helping of topical studio discussion from a female neigning or copical scurio discussion from a Temale perspective, Feduring celebrity interviews 1.730 ITV News; Weather 1.55 Regional News; Weather 2.00 Dickinson's Biggest and Best Deals. David Dickinson delves into the archives to share more of his fravoirte moments from Real Deal, featuring a massive diamond right hat any ungroups are withing to half-section. moments from *Real Deal*, reaturing a massive diamonal ring that gave everyone something to talk about (r) (AD) 3.00 Lingo. Contestants try to work out words that appear in the Lingo grids and Puzzlewords. Presented by Adli Ray (r) 4.00 Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jacknot (r) 5.00 The Chase Bradley Walsh presents as contestants work as a team to take on one of the ruthless Chasers and secure a cash prize (r) **6.00** Regional News; Weather **6.30** ITV News; Weather

## Channel 4

6.00am Come Dine with Me Christmas (r) 6.25 Countdown (r) 7.05 The King of Queens (r) (AD) 8.20 The Big Bang Theory (r) (AD) 9.20 Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) 10.20 Frasier (r) (AD) 11.20 Channel 4 News Summary 11.25 FILMs: Christmas in Love (P6, TVM, 2018) A woman tries to change the outlook of a big city executive who has plans to lay off many comployees at the bakery where she works. Romantic employees at the bakery where she works. Romantic employees at the bakery where she works. Romantic drama with Brooke POrsay and Daniel Lissing .105pm Jamie: Together at Christmas. An alternative Christmas dimer (r) (AD). 2.10 countdown. Christophas Biggins is in Dictionary Corner 3.00 Kirstie's Handmade Christmas. Kirstie Allsopp presents as four knitters race against the clock to create a must-have accessory (r) (AD) 4.00 A Place in the Sun. Ben Hillman helps a pair find their dream holiday home in Mojacar, Spain with a budget of £125,000 5.00 Château DIY at Christmas. Tim and Sasha 4t Arbasay Mugitar Spair Spa at Chateau du Puits es Pratx prepare for the last wedding of the season (AD) 6.00 Four in a Bed. The B&Bers visit Rob's Wolds Wine Estate, glamping pods in the middle of a vineyard (r) **6.30** The Simpsons. A department store Santa grants Lisa's Christmas wish (r) (AD)

## Channel 5

6.00am Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine. The broadcaster and guests discuss the issues of the day with co-host Storm Huntley joining him for phone-ins and reading out viewers' correspondence 11.15 Storm Huntley. Debate on viewers correspondence 11.13 storm ratiney. Debate on the day's talking points continues with the presenter, who takes viewers calls on the biggest stories 12.15pm Alexis Conran & Friends. The actor, writer and broadcaster examines the important stories of the day, getting viewers' opinions on them 1.20 5 News at Lunchtime viewers' opinions on them 1.20 5 News at Lunchtime 1.25 FILM: The Christmas Express (PG, TVM, 2017) A journalist makes an eventful train journey with his guiffriend, his ex, and a famous director. Romantic drama with Dermot Multoney and Kimberly Williams-Paisley 3.25 FILM: Crazy About Christmas (PG, TVM, 2021) A best-selling author discovers a website for people who are crazy about Christmas, restoring her hope of finding love. Romantic comedy starting Repoke Purifit and Huston Phines 5.15 FILM: rescoming men nope or innining love, komanut Comedy starring Brooke Burfitt and Houston Rhines 5.15 FILM: A Christmas Carol (PG, TVM, 1999) Miserly Ebenezer Scrooge hates the Christmas season, but is warmed to change his attitude by a series of ghosts. Dickens' classic tale with Patrick Stewart, Richard E Grant and Joel Grey



## 10 million reasons to join

We're thrilled that Off Air with Jane and Fi has now been downloaded more than 10 million times! Thank you to all our fantastic listeners and if you haven't already joined Jane Garvey and Fi Glover for their perfectly candid podcast, what are you waiting for?

**Celebrity Mastermind** Clive Myrie hosts as Jane Hill, Mica Ven, Dr Amir Khan and Jamie MacDonald compete

7.30 EastEnders Suki puts a dangerous plan into action against Stacey's warning, while Sharon and Keanu celebrate a positive step (AD)

The Repair Shop Jay Blades and the team conjure up the magic of Christmas to fix five more items a 1960s home bar, a bedraggled tree, a film projector, a toy Santa and an battered trombone (r) (AD)

Celebrity MasterChef: Christmas Cook-Off 2023 The musician Mel Blatt, the comedian Richard Blackwood, the singer Duncan James and the reality star Faye Winter return to compete. See Viewing Guide

10.00 BBC News at Ten

10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather 10.40 Pirates of the Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge (12, 2017) Deadly ghost scavengers, led by Captain Salazar, escape from the Devil's Triangle, determined to kill every pirate at sea, including Captain Jack Sparrow. Captain Jack's only hope of survival lies in seeking out the legendary Trident of Poseidon, a powerful artefact that bestows upon its possessor total control over the seas. Swashbuckler

12.40am Survivor At the last immunity challenge a guaranteed spot in the final three is on the line for whoever who can endure the longest. For the winner, there is the life changing prize of £100,000 and the title of Sole Survivor Hosted by Joel Dommet Last in the series (r) (AD) 1.45-6.00 BBC News

starring Johnny Depp (AD)

- Richard Osman's Festive House of Games Trivia-based games with Richie Anderson, Simon Gregson, Jessica Knappett and Debbie McGee (3/10)
- 8.00 Only Connect: Fashion The Dandies take on the Peacocks (2/4)
- **Christmas University Challenge** Distinguished graduates of the University of Dundee and Bangor University compete in the third heat
- Belfast (12, 2021) Surrounded by Bertast (12, 2021) Surrounded by sporadic violence and growing danger, nine-year-old Buddy finds himself confronted with the ugly reality of sectarian conflict in 1960s Belfast. As the suffocating stranglehold of increasing turmoil tightens around his once-peaceful working-class neighbourhood, Buddy tries his best to understand The Troubles. Kenneth Branagh's drama starring Jamie Dornan, Judi Dench and Jude Hill (AD)
- 10.30 Mayfair Witches When attending Deirdre's funeral, Rowan is faced with two opposing opinions about Lasher from members of the Mayfair family she must choose who to trust and
- face the consequences (4/8) (AD) 11.15 Mayfair Witches Grappling with an inconceivable offer. Rowan confronts the mysteries of the First Street House with Sip. Meanwhile, Odette makes a horrifying discovery (5/8) (AD) **Mayfair Witches** Rowan reaches out
- to her extended family (6/8) (AD)

12.40am Sign Zone: The Secret Genius of Modern Life Hannah Fry delves into the technology involved in the passport (r) (AD, SL) 1.40 Secrets of the Aquarium. Ian carries out repairs in the deepest tank in Britain (r) (AD. SL) 2.40-3.40 Vigil Amy is left convinced that what she has believed up until now has been a lie (r) (AD, SL)

- **7.30 Emmerdale** Stunned by Kim's confession, Will is left with a decision to make. Meanwhile, Mary's concern for Gus and Ivy grows (AD)
- 8.00 Coronation Street Jenny asks Carla for a loan to buy the Rovers, while Ed's good fortune is short-lived, and Audrey interviews Maria and David for the post of salon manager. Meanwhile, Peter nervously meets the mother of his liver donor (AD)
- Vanishing Act When her family and friends realise Melissa is gone, they are left to deal with the aftermath of her betrayal and scramble to rebuild their shattered lives. Three-hundred miles away, Melissa's shoe washes up on a beach with a decomposing foot still in it. Last in the series (AD)
- 10.00 ITV News at Ten

10.30 Regional News 10.45 Inside M&S at Christmas The retailer faces problems in the run-up to December 25, including a slow-cooked turkey product that is at risk due to supply issues. Meanwhile, in Essex, it is a race against time to open a new £15million store before the peak shopping season begins (r) (AD)

Heathrow: Britain's Busiest Airport Documentary going behind the scenes of the airport (r) (AD)

12.05am EFL Carabao Cup Highlights Action from the quarter finals (r) 12.55 Shop on TV 3.00 Post & Parcels: Getting Christmas Delivered? Tonight. Meeting the people who are delivering Christmas (r) (SL) 3.25 Vanishing Act (r) (AD, SI) 4.15 Unwind with ITV 5.30-6.00 Gino's Italian Express (r) (AD, SL)

- 7.00 Channel 4 News
- 8.00 Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It New series. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer are in Chippenham to help Tim and Sonia decide whether to update their home or move for a fresh start
- 9.00 Grand Designs Kevin McCloud meets an adventurous pair who are spending £700,000 to build a curved glass family home in the Manchester suburb where they both grew up (1/11) (r) (AD)
- 10.00 The Lateish Show with Mo **Gilligan: Christmas** Mo is joined by the singer Leona Lewis, television cupid Fred Sirieix, the comedian Joel Dommett and the actor Allan Mustafa for a Christmas carol edition of Nursery Grimes
- 11.05 First Dates at Christmas The restaurant's festive guests include a jeweller and a portrait artist, a vicar and a parish worker, a DJ and the self-proclaimed Queen of Christmas, and a pair of students (r) (AD)

12.10am Celebrity Gogglebox (r) (AD) 1.05 Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back (r) (AD, SL) 1.55 The Simpsons (r) (AD) 2.20 FILM: Jackie (15, 2016) Biopic of Jacqueline Kennedy (AD) 4.00 Couples Come Dine with Me (r) 4.55 A Rahy Reindeer's First Christmas (r) (AD SL) **5.50-6.00** Kirstie's Handmade Christmas (r)

- 7.00 World's Strongest Man 2023 New series. James Richardson and
  - Laurence Shahlaei present action from Britain's Strongest Man the opening event of the Giants Live series, held at Utilita Arena in Sheffield (1/11)
- 8.00 Harrods at Christmas A look inside the well-known department store at Christmas time, shining a light on Harrods's 2023 Christmas window display and the annual rush on Christmas eve where famous faces have been spotted
- The 1970s Supermarket at Christmas How the growth of supermarkets in the 1970s helped to change Christmas, as people were given a greater choice of products, from artificial trees to frozen turkey roasts. In the kitchen, the chef Rustie Lee rustles up vol-au-vents and Brussels pate, and tries out a Bird's trifle kit, while in the lab, Dr Chris Clarke finds out why the cheesy filling inside a cheese football snack does not go off. See Viewing Guide Britain's Favourite Ads of the
- **70s & 80s** A celebration of the most memorable, impressive, funny and sometimes shocking British television adverts, as industry experts, stars of the ads, and social commentators discuss how they were made and their social context. Featuring contributions by Jenny Eclair, Lorraine Chase, Jamie MacDonald, Hal Cruttenden, Darren

12.30am Shoplifters: At War with the Law Following shopping centre security teams (r) 1.25 Live Casino Show 3.25 Britain's Great Cathedrals with Tony Robinson (r) (SL) **4.15** Great Artists (r) (SL) **4.40** Friends (r) (AD) **5.30** Entertainment News on 5 **5.40** Pip and Posy (r) (SL) **5.45-6.00** Paw Patrol (r) (SL)

## television & radio

## Celebrity **MasterChef**

BBC1, 9pm

Four previous contestants from the celebrity variant of MasterChef battle it out in this one-off Christmas episode. The quartet are Duncan James of the boy band Blue, All Saints' Mel Blatt, the actor Richard Blackwood and former

Love Islander Fave Winter. Gregg Wallace and John Torode wear Hawaiian shirts and shorts for the first challenge, which is to make a dish that is reflective of Australia at Christmas. The second task is more traditional - cooking a two-course festive feast, with a few interesting ideas to pep up your Christmas dinner.

## The 1970s Supermarket at **Christmas** Channel 5, 9pm

This heady blast of foodie nostalgia reveals what was on the supermarket shelves during the "tinsel-tastic" 1970s. As well as talking heads (Debbie McGee and co),

modern-day shoppers

get the chance to

sample the festive wares. "I always thought that was a posh person thing, but that is actually ungodly," says one after sampling Brussels pâté. Elsewhere, food scientists explore some of the time-saving innovations and the chef Rustie Lee cackles her way through recreating the recipes of the era.

## Mike Yarwood at the BBC BBC4, 9pm

**Rory Bremner presents** a look at the life and career of Mike Yarwood (who died in September), the comedian best known for his affectionate impersonations of Harold Wilson, Ted Heath and Denis Healey. Yarwood ruled

the TV ratings in the late 1970s with his comedy providing a bridge between the 1960s satire That Was the Week That Was and Spitting Image in the 1980s. As a fellow impressionist, Bremner is well placed to assess Yarwood's style, sharing his favourite moments from Yarwood's oeuvre. backed up by clips from the BBC's archive.

Film Starman Film4, 1.35pm

In John Carpenter's gentle sci-fi romance, Jeff Bridges stars as a visiting alien who seeks help from a widow, Jenny Hayden (Karen Allen), while taking the form of her dead husband. She is initially hostile but "Starman" gradually wins her trust. (PG, 1984)

## **Sky Max**

6.00am Motorway Patrol (r) 6.30 Agatha Raisin: Agathaland (r) (AD) 7.30 Agatha Raisin (r) (AD) 9.30 Harry 9.30 Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses (r) (AD) 1.30pm The Unofficial Science of Home Alone (r) (AD) 3.00 The Amazing Mr Blunden (r) (AD) 5.00 Rob & Romesh vs Lapland (r) (AD) 6.00 Never Mind the Buzzcocks Christmas 7.00 Never Mind the Buzzcocks Christmas Special. With Holly Johnson (r) (AD)
7.00 Never Mind the Buzzcocks Christmas Special. With Claire Richards (r) (AD)
8.00 Never Mind the Buzzcocks Christmas Special. With Leigh-Anne Pinnock (r) (AD) 9.00 FILM: Bad Santa 2 (15, 2016) Comedy starring Billy Bob Thornton and Kathy Bates

11.00 The Lazarus Project

12.00 A League of Their Own Christmas Special (r) 1.00am A League of Their Own Christmas

Special 2022 (r) (AD) 2.00 A Very Brassic

Special 2022 (1) (AD) 2.00 A Very Brassic Christmas. The gang must save Christmas 3.30 Christmas Crime UK (r) 4.00 Christmas at the Movies (r) 5.00 Highway Patrol (r)

## Sky Atlantic

**6.00am** Urban Secrets (r) **7.55** True Blood (r) **10.05** Billions (r) (AD) **12.15pm** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **1.20** The Affair (r) (AD) **3.35** True Blood (r) **5.35** Billions (r) (AD) 7.55 Game of Thrones. Tyrion assumes new responsibilities, Jon is taken to the Fist of the First Men, Jaime strikes a deal with his captors and Daenerys meets with the slavers (r) (AD) and Daenerys Meets With the Stavers (17 (AU) 9.00 Watchmen. FBI agent Laurie Blake takes over the recent murder investigation in Tulsa. Meanwhile, the Lord of the Estate draws unwelcome attention (3/9) (r) (AD) 10.05 Band of Brothers. Winters rallies the land of before the confusion of the Normandy landings, and is later chosen to lead an attack on a fortified German artillery position (2/10) (r) 11.10 Westworld. Delores and William continue to tread into dangerous territory (r) (AD)

12.15am Westworld, Bernard struggles with a mandate issued to him by Dr Ford to kill
Theresa (r) (AD) 1.20 Game of Thrones (r) (AD)
3.35 In Treatment (r) 4.05 Urban Secrets (r)

## Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Guest Wing (r) (AD) 7.00 Discovering: Peter O'Toole (r) (AD) 8.00 The Directors (r) 9.00 The 2000s (r) 9.55 The Vow (r) (AD) 11.00 Spector (r) (AD) 12.00 Williams & Mansell: Red 5 (r) (AD) **1.50pm** My Icon: Par Cookey (r) (AD) **2.00 FILM: Kings of Coke** (**15, 2022**) The story of one of North America's most feared criminal organisations (AD) 3.45 My Icon: Kate And Helen Richardson Walsh (r) (AD) 4.00 The Directors (r) 5.00 Discovering: Peter O'Toole (r) (AD) 6.00 The 2000s (r) 6.55 The Vow (r) (AD) 8.00 Spector (3/4) (r) (AD)
9.00 Bad Host: Hunting the Couchsurfing
Predator. More women come forward (r)
10.00 Lance. A personal examination of the rise and fall of Lance Armstrong (1 & 2/2) (r) 1.50am My Icon: Michael Holding (r) (AD) 2.00 The 2010s (r) 3.00 FILM: The Kingmaker (15, 2019) The life and career of Imelda Marco 5.00 Discovering: Peter O'Toole (r) (AD)

## **Sky Arts**

6.00am An Evening with II Divo 8.00 The Joy of Painting 9.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) 10.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents 11.10 André Rieu: Christmas in London 12.10pm Classic FM Live Hall of Fame 2023 **2.10** Cirque du Soleil: Kooza **4.10 FILM: Pursuit to Algiers (PG, 1945)** Sherlock Holmes mystery starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce (b/w) 530 Portrait Artist of the Decade. Nine previous winners paint Judi Dench (AD)
7.00 Portrait Artist of the Year 2022: Christmas Celebrity Special. Festive challenge in which six famous faces paint Noddy Holder, Lawrence Llewelyn-Bowen and Mica Paris (AD) 8.00 Painting Birds with Jim and Nancy Moir Christmas Special. See Viewing Guide 9.00 42nd Street. A performance of the musical 11.30 Peter O'Toole: Along the Sky Road to Agaba. Reflecting on the actor's legacy

1.30am Guy Garvey: From the Vaults 2.30 Nina
Simone: The Lost Album (AD) 4.00 The Agatha
Christie Hour (AD) 5.00 The South Bank Show

## Sky Main Event

**6.00am** Sky Sports News **7.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **8.00** Live Big Bash League: Perth Scorchers v Hobart Hurricanes. Coverage of the T20 match at Ontus Stadium 11.45 My Icon: Solomon Wilcots (AD) **12.00** Lunchtime Live **12.30pm** Live World Darts Championship. Coverage of the afternoon session on day six at Alexandra Palace, London, featuring three first-Alexandra Palace, London, Featuring three first-round matches and one second-round match 4.30 Sports Desk 5.00 Sky Sports News at 5 6.00 Sky Sports News at 6 7.00 Live EFL Cup: Liverpool v West Ham United (Kick-off 8.00). Coverage of the quarter-final match at Anfield. Jürgen Klopp's side beat Bournemouth 2-1 in the previous round thanks to a winner from Darwin Nunez, while the visitors stunned Arsenal at home with a 3-1 without Paul Mount Team Paina a program victory, David Moyes' team have a poor recent record against Livernool, winning only one of the last 15 meetings and have lost the last four fixtures against the Reds 11.00pm-6.00am Sky Sports News

T AUDIO

## Jane and Fi

Listen for free via the QR code, on the Times Radio app or wherever you find your podcasts

BBC4

7.00pm TOTP: Christmas 1991. The Christmas

Day edition, with performers including Queen, Nomad, Chesney Hawkes, James, OMD, Kenny Thomas, Erasure, Right Said Fred and Oceanic

**8.00** dinnerladies. Twinkle and Stan spoil Petula's Christmas plans, and a baby is

found abandoned near the canteen
8.35 Les Dawson on Christmas. The 1980
Christmas edition of topical comedy

sketch show The Dawson Watch 9.00 Mike Yarwood at the BER. Rory Bremner reflects on the life and career of the impressionist Mike Yarwood. See Viewing Guide 10.00 Glenda Jackson Remembers — Elizabeth R. Double Oscar-winner Glenda

Jackson remembers her role of Queen Elizabeth I 10.15 Elizabeth R. Award-winning period drama starring Glenda Jackson (1/6) 11.40 Elizabeth R. The new queen finds herself

under pressure from Parliament to marry and

under pressure trom Parliament to marry and produce an heir. Second part of the award-winning drama starring Glenda Jackson (2/6) 1.10am Elizabeth R. The queen meets an interesting suitor, the Duke of Anjou (3/6) 2.40-3.40 TOTP: Christmas 1991

ketch show The Dawson Watch





THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

## **TalkTV**

6.00am Talk Today with Jeremy Kyle and Nicola Thorp. Stories from the world of politics, current affairs and showbiz 9.30 Kevin & Alex. Hosts Kevin O'Sullivan and Alex Phillips give their unique take on the front pages and the latest news 10.00 Jake Berry. All the biggest stories of the day 1.00pm CrossTalk with Kevin O'Sullivan and Alex Phillips. Analysis, debate and humour 3.00 lan Collins. Hard-hitting monologues and debates 4.00 Vanesca Feltz. monologues and debates 4.00 Vanessa Feltz. monologues and debates 4.0U vanessa Feltz. The drivetime show with political debates 6.00 The Talk. A panel of famous faces debate the latest topics everybody is talking about 7.00 Prime Time with Rosanna Lockwood. The host gets inside the stories of the day 8.00 Piers Morgan Uncensored. The host presents his verdict on the day's global events

9.00 The Independent Republic of Mike Graham.

A run through the day's breaking news 11.00 Piers Morgan Uncensored 11.00 Petrs Morgan uncensored 12.00 Petrie Hosken. Bringing the very best and latest news stories overnight 1.00am CrossTalk with Kevin O'Sullivan and Alex Phillips 3.00 Prime Time with Rosanna Lockwood 4.00 The Talk 5.00 James Max. An initial insight

and Ethel hears distressing news (AD)
6.55 Heartbeat. Nick goes undercover as
a DJ to track down drug smugglers (AD)
8.00 Lewis. When a student's body is hauled from the canal with stab wounds, suspicion falls on her lover — a young astrophysics professor — and his jealous wife (/6) (AD) 10.00 Van der Valk. The body of diamond polisher Ahmed Baykam is discovered cut 10.00 Family Guy (AD)
11.00 Family Guy (AD)
11.00 Family Guy (AD)
11.30 American Dad! (AD)
11.30 American Dad! Francine dreams about Jeff (AD)
12.00 American Dad! Francine dreams about Jeff (AD)
12.30am Christmas Shopping with

## **Talking Pictures** 6.00am Burke's Law 7.00 FILM: D.O.A.

6.00am Burke's Law 7.00 FILM: D.O.A.
(Dead on Arrival) (PG, 1950) (b/w) 8.40
FILM: Profile (PG, 1954) (b/w) 10.00
Together 10.35 FILM: Home for Christmas
(U, TVM, 1990) Family drama starring Mickey
Rooney 12.35pm FILM: Every Day Except
Christmas (U, 1957) Documentary exploring
the Covent Garden market 1.20 FILM: The
Devil's Disciple (U, 1959) Historical drama
starring Burt Langaster and Kitch Douglas (h/w) starring Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas (b/w) 3.00 Saddle Up 3.05 FILM: The Tall Men 5.00 Saddle Up 5.40 Johnny Ringo (PG, 1955) Western starring Clark Gable 5.35 Saddle Up 5.40 Johnny Ringo 6.10 For the Love of Ada 6.55 Maigret (b/w) 8.00 Public Eve 9.05 The Ash Tree P.45 FILM: The Informers (12, 1963)
Police thriller starring Nigel Patrick (b/w)
11.50 FILM: Cry of the Banshee (15, 1970) 11.30 FILM: CTY OF the Bainsnee (12, 1970) Horror with Vincent Price and Elisabeth Bergner 1.35am Moving with the Times 2.00 The Main Chance 3.00 FILM: It Happened Tomorrow (PG, 1944) Fantasy (b/w) 4.45 FILM: Open All Night (PG, 1934) Drama (b/w)

## Film4

11.00am The Bells of St Mary's (U, 1945) 11.00am The Bells of St Mary's (U, 1945)
Musical drama starring Bing Crossly (b/w)
1.35pm Starman (PG, 1984) Sci-fi romance
starring Jeff Bridges. See Viewing Guide
3.50 The Bridge on the River Kwai (PG,
1957) Second World War drama starring Alec
Guinness (AD) 7.05 10 Things I Hate About
You (12, 1999) A teenager is banned from
dating until her man-hating sister gets a
broviriend — but a quirky loner moith he birst the boyfriend - but a quirky loner might be just the man for the job. Comedy with Heath Ledger and Julia Stiles (AD) 9.00 The Spy Who Dumped
Me (15, 2018) Two friends are thrust into an
international conspiracy when one of them discovers her ex is really a secret agent. Comedy starring Mila Kunis, Kate McKinnon and Sam Heughan (AD) 11.15 Bad Boys II (15, 2003)
Two mismatched undercover cops set out to stop a drug lord flooding the market with a deadly form of Ecstasy. Comedy thriller sequel form or textasy. Comedy unriner systems starring Will Smith and Martin Lawrence 2.10am-4.00 Songbird (15, 2020) In 2024, as a pandemic ravages the world, a group of people navigate the obstacles hindering society. Sci-fi thriller starring KJ Apa and Sofia Carson

## **More4**

8.55am Kirstie's Handmade Treasures 9.15 A Place in the Sun 10.05 A New Life in the Sun: Where Are They Now? 11.05 Find It, Fix It, Flog It 1.10pm Car SOS (AD) 2.10 Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It (AD) 3.10 Four in a Bed 5.50 Love It for List It (AD) 3.10 Four in a Bed 5.50 The Yorkshire Dales and the Lakes (AD) 6.55 Escape to the Château (AD) 7.55 The Dog House. A lively French buildog meets a drag queen and his partner (8/8) (AD) 9.00 Father Ted Christmas Special, Fathers Ted and Dougal endure their worst Christmas ever when they get lost in a lingerie department, leaving them in a highly embarrassing predicament. Festive edition from 1996 (AD) 10.15 Father Ted. Dougal and Ted are ordered to campaion for decenor (AD) 10.15 Father Ted. Dougal and Ted are ordered to campaign for decency (AD) 10.45 Father Ted. Ted struggles with a crush he has for a lady visitor, and the arrival of a group of nuns does not help matters (AD) 11.15 24 Hours in A&E. Cameras follow a 47-year-old man with critical injuries to his arm and leg after being knocked off his motorbike (AD) 12.20am Father Ted Christmas Special. Dougal and Ted get lost (AD) 1.35 999: On the Front Line 2.40-3.40 24 Hours in A&E (AD)

## Drama

6.00am Teleshopping 7.10 New Tricks (AD) 8.00 Doctors 9.20 Classic Holby City 10.40 Casualty 11.40 The Bill 12.40pm Classic EastEnders 2.00 Call the Midwife (AD) 3.40 The Upper Hand 4.20 Last of the Summer Wine 8.00 Father Brown. The Roman Catholic priest struggles to save Sid from himself when he studygues to stare to the histories when the work very expeance on his former defence barrister. Crime drama starring Mark Williams (AD) 9.00 Father Brown. Radio quiz Up to You comes to Kembleford and the sleuth suspects one of the cast is responsible when the landlady of the house they are staying at is murdered (AD) 10.00 New Tricks. Sandra's private and professional worlds become intertwined when her mother needs to go into a care home, but her first choice turns out to be the 11.20 Father Brown. The sleuth investigates the murder of a Colonial Postal Service officer (AD) 12.20am New Tricks. The team reopens a The Paradise. Denise returns to the Paradise.

2.55 Classic Holby City (SL) 4.00 Teleshopping

Yesterday 6.10am Underground Worlds (AD) 8.00 b.10am underground words (AD). 5.00 Mod Abandoned Engineering (AD) 10.00 The World at War 11.00 Nazi Hunters 12.00 Great Continental Railway Journeys 1.00pm Antiques Roadshow 2.00 Bangers & Cash 4.00 Secret Nazi Bases 5.00 The World at War 6.00 Great Continental Railway Journeys 7.00 Antiques Roadshow. The team visits
Trentham Gardens near Stoke-on-Trent
8.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and
Prunella Scales travel down the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal, revisiting places from the early stages of their relationship and acting careers 9.00 Bangers & Cash. A convertible Triumph Herald brings a few smiles on auction day (3/10) 10.00 Bangers & Cash. An Aston Martin DB6 in need of total restoration looks set to break the Mathewsons auction record and news of a rare Vincent motorbike arriving causes a stir (4/10) 11.00 Abandoned Engineering. Exploring a theme park in Buenos Aires, and a jaw-dropping collection of castles in Turkey (3/8) (AD)

12.00 Great British Railway Journeys 1.00am
Underground Worlds (AD) 3.00 Teleshopping

## Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: 10.40pm The Crime I Can't AS BBLT EXCEPT. AN ADMITT ME UNITED THE CART Forget. Officers remember the race to stop a plot to bomb the Queen 11.30 FLLM: Pirates of the Caribbean — Salzar's Revenge (2017) Swashbuckling sequel starring Johnny Depp (AD) 1.30am-6.00 BBC News

## **BBC1 Scotland**

As BBC1 except: 1.45pm-2.30 Father Brown (r) (AD) 8.00-9.00 Scotland's People 2023. Shining a light on unsung heroes and community champions 10.40 Sportscene: Premiership Highlights, Action from the Premiership Highights. Action from the midweek matches 11.10 FILM: Pirates of the Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge (2017)
Swashbuckling sequel starring Johnny Depp (AD) 1.10am Survivor (r) (AD) 2.10 Weather for the Week Ahead 2.15-6.00 BBC News

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: 10.40pm Walescast. Felicity Evans and James Williams discuss the world of Welsh politics 11.15 FILM: Pirates of the Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge (2017) Swashbuckling sequel starring Johnn Depp (AD) **1.15am-6.00** BBC News

## **BBC2 Wales**

As BBC2 except: 4.50pm Flog It! (r) 5.15 Celebrity Antiques Road Trip (r) 6.15 Porridg (r) 7.00-7.30 Gareth Edwards' Great Welsh Adventure, Exploring St Davids (r)

As ITV1 except: 10.30pm-10.45 STV News 12.55am-3.00 Night Vision. News, sport and weather 4.15-5.30 Night Vision

BBC Scotland
7.00pm The Hairy Bikers Go Local (r) (AD)
8.00 World Pipe Band Championships (r) 9.00
The Nine 10.00 River City. Andrew grows
suspicious of Victoria (AD) 10.30 Two Doors
Down. Ian and Gordon arrange a Father's Day
treat at a carvery (r) (AD) 11.00-12.00
Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby. At
Nimk Hotal in Gonephane (r) (r) Nimb Hotel in Copenhagen (r) (AD)

## RRC Alba

6.00am Alba Today 5.00pm (Beebies Panto 2022 (r) 5.10 Piseag & Cuilean/Kit & Pup (r) 5.20 Bing (r) 5.25 Abadas (r) 5.40 Shane an Chef (r) 5.50 Stòiridh (r) 6.00 CBBC Panto Clief (1) 3-30 Storlinf (1) 6.00 EASE Pailto 2021 (r) 6.05 Ronia, Nighean a' Mheirlich/ Ronja, the Robber's Daughter (r) 6.35 Na Dana-thursan aig Tintin/The Adventures of Tintin (r) 7.00 Dreach Ùr Na Nollaig (r) 7.30 Thuige Seo 7.00 Dreach Ur Na Nollaig (r) 7.30 I huige Seo (r) 8.00 An Lá (News) 8.30 Druthag na Hearadh (A Little Drop of Harris) (r) 9.00 Deilbh Dr Hay — An Island Doctor's Legacy (r) 10.00 Na Trads: An Tobar (r) 10.30 An Lot (The Croft) (r) 11.25 Cuirm: Celtic Connections at 30 (r) 12.00-6.00am Alba Today

54C
6.00am Cyw: Sali Mali (r) 6.05 Caru Canu (r)
6.10 Ahol! (r) 6.30 Patrol Pawennau (r) 6.45
Fferm Fach (r) 7.00 Blodau Rhif (r) 7.05 San
Tan 7.15 Dreigiau Cadi 7.25 Blero yn Mynd
Ocido (r) 7.40 Kim a Ceta Twrch (r) 8.00
Cywion Bach (r) 8.05 Cymlyaluychain (r) 8.15
Octonots (r) 8.30 Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r)
4.40 Nuwr Leh S. Et Kimse (r) 0.05 Chyllo (r) 0.05 Pable (r) Sywioti Bath (1) Asy Syriyiatoyichian (1) A.19

4.40 Awyr lach 8.55 Timpo (1) 9.05 Pablo (1)

8.40 Awyr lach 8.55 Timpo (1) 9.05 Pablo (2)

9.15 Jen a Jim a'r Cywiadur (1) 9.30 Sion y

chef (1) 9.45 Asra (1) 10.00 Bloclau Rhif (1)

10.05 Sam Tan (1) 10.15 Dreigiau Cadi (1)

10.25 Blero yn Mynd i Oidod (1) 10.40 Kim a

cet a Twrch (1) 11.00 Dysgu Gyda Cyw: Blociau

Rhif (1) 11.05 Ein Byd Bach Ni (1) 11.15

Dwylo'r Enfys (1) 11.30 Caru Canu a Stori (1)

11.40 Asra (1) 12.00 News; Weather

12.05pm Pobl a'u Gerddi (1) 12.30 Heno (r)

1.00 Welsh Whisperer – M'n Tetthio Nawr! (1)

(AD) 1.30 Cais Quinnell (1) 2.00 News;

Weather 2.05 Prynhawn Da 3.00 News;

Weather 2.05 Prynhawn Da 3.00 News;

Weather 2.05 Prynhawn Da 3.00 News;

Weather 3.05 Y Kafor (1) 4.00 Awr Fawr: Sam

Tan (r) 4.10 Nos Da Cyw 'Dolig (r) 4.20

Dreigiau Cadi (1) 4.30 Patrol Pawennau (r)

4.45 Fferm Rach (1) 5.00 Stwnsh: Lego Dreigiau Cadi (r) 4.30 Patrol Pawennau (r)
4.45 Fferm Fach (r) 5.00 Stwnsh: Lego
Ffrindiau: Amdani Ferched! 5.10 Prys A'r Pryfed
5.20 Seligo (r) 5.25 Lolipop (r) 5.50 News Ni
6.00 Codi Hwyl (r) (AD) 6.30 Rownd a Rownd
(r) (AD) 6.57 News 7.00 Heno 7.30 News;
Weather 8.00 Pobol y Cwm (AD) 8.25 Nadolig
Llawen Cwmderi (r) 8.55 News; Weather 9.00
Colleen Ramsey: Bywyd a Bwyd 10.00 Cofio
'Dolig Teulu Ni (r) 11.00-11.35 Bwrdd i Dri (r)

## ITV2

6.00am CITV 8.10 What's New Scooby-Doo? 8.35 CITV 9.00 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 10.00 Secret Crush 11.00 Dress to Impress 12.00 Christmas Dinner Date (AD) 1.00pm Celebrity Supermarket Sweep (AD) 2.00 Alan Carr's Epic Gameshow (AD) 3.05 FILM: A Cinderella Story — Christmas Wish (PG, 2019) Family comedy starring Laura Marano 5.00 (hristmas Dinner Date (AD) 6.00 (elebrity Catchphrase: Christmas Special. Stephen Mulhern hosts a festive edition (AD) 7.00 Family Fortunes 7.00 Family Fortunes
8.00 Bob's Burgers (AD)
8.30 Bob's Burgers (AD)
9.00 Gordon, Gino & Fred: Viva España! (AD)

10.00 Family Guy (AD)

Keith Lemon 1.30 The Emily Atack Show 2.10 Celebrity Karaoke Club 3.05 Unwind with ITV 5.10 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records

## ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale 7.00 Classic Coronation Street (AD) 8.05 Never the Twain Oronation Street (AD) 8.09 Never the IWahn 9.10 Wycliffe 11.30 Maigret (AD) 12.35pm Heartbeat (AD) 1.40 Classic Emmerdale 2.40 Classic Coronation Street (AD) 3.50 Midsomer Murders (AD) 5.45 Downton Abbey. A Canadian officer is brought to Downton for recuperation, polisher Ahmed Baykam is discovered cut into three pieces and left on the doorsteps of the houses of his employers, the dysfunctional Cuyper siblings (2/3) (AD) 12.05am Midsomer Murders. Barnaby questions the guilt of a murder suspect (AD) 2.00 Holding. A new discovery reignites the case (AD) 3.00 Wycliffe. Double bill. Drama (SL) 4.50 Never the Twain 5.45 Unwind with ITV

## ITV4

6.00am Minder (AD, SL) 7.00 The Sweeney 8.05 The Champions 9.10 Robin of Sherwood 10.20 Magnum, Pl 11.25 BattleBots 12.25pm The Champions 1.30 Robin of Sherwood 2.40 Magnum, Pl 3.40 The Sweeney 4.50 Minder (AD) 5.55 BattleBots 6.55 The Chase Celebrity Christmas Special. With Tim Lovejoy, Kay Burley, Eni Aluko and Richard Herring. Presented by Bradley Walsh 7.55 Junk and Disorderly. Henry Cole and Sam Lovegrove experience mixed results at the Stafford Show — the biggest classic motorcycle auction and autojumble in the country

9.00 All Elite Wrestling: Collision. Hard-hitting wrestling action from the promotion's newest show, featuring stars including FTR, The House of Black, Thunder Rosa, Miro, and more

11.05 Made in Britain. A look at craftsmen
making acoustic guitars fit for the stars (AD)

11.30 EFL Carabao Cup Highlights. Action from the quarter finals of the competition

12.30am Robin of Sherwood 1.25 Minder (AD, SL) 3.15 The Protectors (SL) 3.45 Driving Force
4.35 The Sweeney (SL) 5.30 Unwind with ITV

## **MindGames**

## Poker Byron Jacobs

## Tiny clues

The following hand was played between two high-stakes regulars: Mariano (Mariano Grandoli) and Jungleman (Dan Cates). As is often the case these days, this high-stakes action was from the Hustler Casino live stream. This hand is an interesting example of how strong players can pick up on and exploit the tiniest of clues.

Both players have stacks of about \$150,000. Jungleman has Ky-Qy and raises to \$2,600. Mariano, with Ay-A, 3-bets to \$8,600. Jungleman calls. All perfectly standard. With the aces Mariano naturally wants to build a big pot and Jungleman's suited, high-card hand is good enough to call.

card hand is good enough to call.

The flop comes Q\*J\*\_4\*\_4\*.
This is a great flop for Jungleman.
Although he is still behind (Mariano's aces beat his queens) he has tremendous drawing opportunities as any heart makes a flush and he can also improve with a king or queen. However, Mariano's aces are still favourite (55-45).

Aces are just such a huge hand.

Jungleman checks, Mariano bets \$13,000 into a pot of \$19,200. Jungleman calls. Although Mariano's bet looks standard it is actually quite large. In principle the flop should be very good for him (he 3-bet pre-flop so will have a lot of high-card hands that connect with the Q-J combination). When their range is strong, players usually bet the flop fairly small (eg about \$5,000 in this instance).

This is because if they have a strong range but their actual hand happens to be weak, they want Villain to fold a lot on the flop. The small bet (exploiting their powerful range) will do the job and it isn't necessary to risk more chips. This means that Mariano's sizing may have alerted Jungleman (who is a very experienced and skilful player) to the fact that he (Mariano) actually has a very strong hand. This may be why Jungleman calls instead of raising (which certainly comes into consideration). This tiny clue may also have helped Jungleman decide his strategy on future streets.

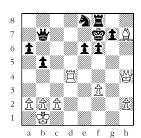
The turn brings Q♣-J♥-4♥-2♠. The 2♠ is a brick, meaning it changes nothing. The pot is \$45,200 and Mariano bets \$40,000. Jungleman calls, for much the same reasons he does on the flop. Here Mariano's sizing is standard. He is almost always ahead and so bets big to extract value. Jungleman calls.

The river is Q♣-J♥-4♥-2♠-8♥.

The river is Q♣J♥-4♥-2♠-8♥. Although he has completed the flush (and is almost certainly winning) Jungleman continues his passive strategy with a check. Mariano now shoves all-in for his last \$85,300. Naturally Jungleman, who has played the hand perfectly calls and wins. Once the flush card has appeared, Mariano's shove on the river is borderline. He may have gone for it as he holds the A♥ making it a little less likely that Jungleman actually has the flush.

## For more puzzles, including Mini Sudoku, extra Codeword, Train Tracks and Futoshiki go to page 6

## **Winning Move**

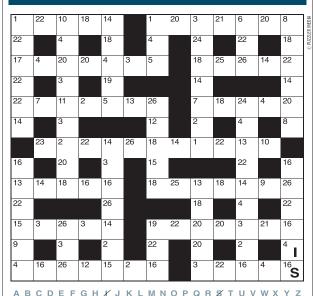


## White to play.

This position is from Zambrana-Beltran Salvador, Zubieta 2023.

White is clearly quite active and the black king is somewhat exposed. However, Black does have pieces close to the danger zone and the pawn wall of g7, f6 and e6 provides a solid defensive bulwark. Nevertheless, with some nifty footwork, White was able to engineer a winning position. Can you find the move sequence to achieve this?

## Codeword No 5089



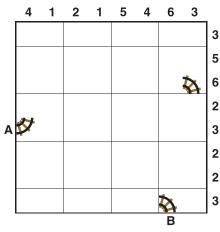
Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. Yesterday's solution, right

Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

## Lexica No 7185 No 7186 O : R : C : W : • : D : T:D:::U:T: F 0 V В U • 0 Ν Μ В L Т Z Α • • Е Е Х Κ N R R I I Y A N • AIIPARII

Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

## Train Tracks No 2122



Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

## **Quintagram®**

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Flipping rabble-rouser's maintaining interest (4)

— — —
 2 Dance record, techno ultimately

26

3 Musician's level on piano (6)

4 Refined fellow, a slippery sort in the main? (7)

5 Restrained criminal provoked people online (10)

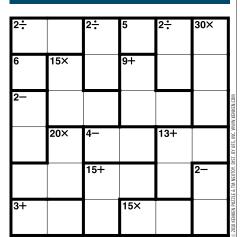




What are your favourite puzzles in MindGames?

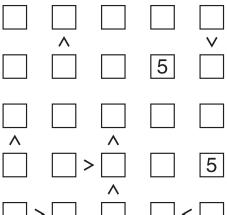
Email: puzzles@thetimes.co.uk

## KenKen Medium No 6081



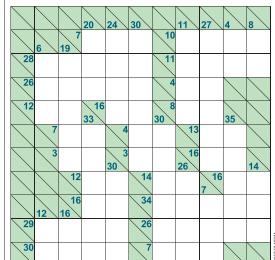
All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

## Futoshiki No 4633



Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

## Kakuro No 3592



Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

## **MindGames**

## times2 Crossword No 9405

## Across

- 1 Horse-drawn cab (6)
- 5 Give way under pressure (6)
- 8 South Asian language (4)
- 9 Idle wanderer (8)
- 10 Absence of hair (8)
- 12 Folk wisdom (4) 13 Foot-operated boat (6)
- 15 Meet an untimely end (6)

## Solution to Crossword 9404



- 17 Celebrated Brazilian footballer (1940-2022) (4)
- 19 Type of sweater (8)
- 21 Four-line stanza (8) 23 Given a decorative
- sugary coating (4) 24 Firm undertaking (6)
- 25 Lays out money (6)

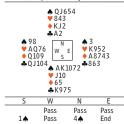
- 2 Military aviation centre (7)
- 3 Tentacled mollusc (5)
- 4 Cinema fan (9)
- 5 Peatland swamp (3)
- 6 Footwear repairer (7)
- 7 Habitually solitary person (5)
- 11 Displaces, ousts (9) 14 Warned of danger (7)
- 16 Achieve one's goals (7)
- 18 Of an identical amount (5)
- 20 Unworldly, green (5)
- 22 Copy, imitate (3)

Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

## **Bridge** Andrew Robson

## Top Tens B. Declarer 9. Count high-card points (iii) Discovery and Wishful Thinking

Try to find out as much as possible before making the critical decision. Dealer: West, Vulnerability: Neither



You win West's &Q lead with \*A, East discouraging with \*3. Your game depends on losing only one diamond trick — it's that - it's that

dreaded king-jack guess.

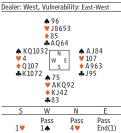
After drawing trumps finishing in dummy, the correct suit to play on is hearts. Not because you have any interest in hearts per se, but because knowing where the heart honours are may tell you where the diamond honours are -– a dis-

the diamond honours are — a discovery play. The heart trick proceeds •3, •2, •J, •Q. West promptly switches to •10. Crunch point: do you play •J or •K?

Let's analyse the heart trick. East would have risen with •K holding •AK. So West must have a higher honour as well as •Q — probably •A, as she may have led •K initially holding •KQ. It

appears West, a passed hand, has AQ and AQJ. If West also held A, she would have opened the bidding. East holds A and you must hope West holds Q. Play dummy's J. As you hoped, J draws East's A. K is promoted and you lose only one more heart. Corps. Page 18 A. A. W. is promoted and you lose only one

more heart. Game made.
Sometimes, you have to assume a card is in a particular place. This may have ramifications for where another card is located.



(1) The vulnerable East would be prepared to bid to 3♠ but not 4♠

to bid to 3♠ bid not 4♠.

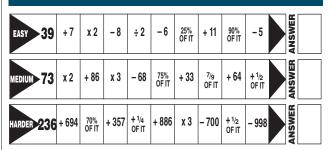
West leads ♠ K, East encouraging with ♠ 8, and continues with ♠ 3 to East's ♠ A. At trick three, East switches to ♦ 3, and you face the king-jack guess.

Here's the wishful thinking. You need West to hold ♣ K in order to

need West to hold ♣K in order to succeed. Assuming it to be so, it fol-lows that West cannot have ♠A— or she'd have opened the bidding. You rise with ♠K. You draw trumps, successfully finesse ♣Q

and soon chalk up your game. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

## **Brain Trainer**



## Polygon



From these letters, make words of four or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc.), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. **How you rate** 11 words, average; 15, good; 21, very good; 27, excellent

## Yesterday's answers

8 9

16

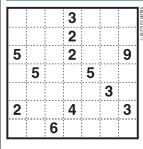
11

13

11 17

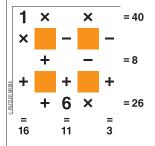
bruit, brush, brut, **brutish**, bur, burst, bus, bush, bust, but, hub, hubris, hurst, hurt, hut, rub, rush, rust, rut, ruth, shiur, shrub, shut, stub, sub, suit, thru, thus, tub, tui,

## Cell Blocks No 4972



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

## Set Square No 3595



Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

## Killer Tricky No 9220

Killer Deadly No 9221

18 23

14

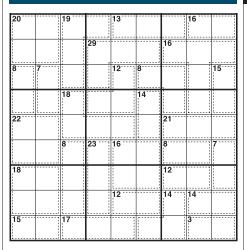
lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

38

As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network

access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).



## **Solutions**



## E E I I S EXTERMINATE LANNA A U LITTORAL HYPE MILMAIL I E O DBLONG CODIFY

3 + 5

## 1 3 8 2 4 1 3 5 7 9 7 9 3 8 2 7 7 1 3 1 3 7 5 9 3 8 2 1 5 2 3 1 1 3 6 8 5 1 5 4 2 1 3 8 9 1 2 1 3 2 1 9 7

Kakuro 3591

## Sudoku 14.540 Tetonor 423

3	6	8	5	7	2	1	4	9		4=0	
7	2	1	6	4	9	5	3	8		159	32
5	4	9	3	1	8	2	6	7		53 x 3	26 + 6
6	3	4	7	8	1	9	5	2		23	174
1	8	2	9	5	3	4	7	6			
9	5	7	2	6	4	8	1	3		21 + 2	58 x 3
2	9	6	1	3	5	7	8	4		59	13
8	7	5	4	2	6	3	9	1		55 + 4	13 x 1
4	1	3	8	9	7	6	2	5			
			_						'	42	156
Su	dol	ku	14,	54	1					21 x 2	26 x 6

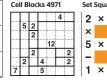




32 61 56

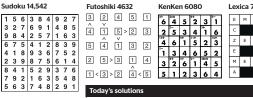














Killer 9219											
3	7	6	5	1	4	9	8	2			
5	4	8	2	9	7	6	3	1			
9	1	2	3	6	8	5	4	7			
7	9	4	6	3	2	8	1	5			
2	6	5	9	8	1	4	7	3			
8	3	1	7	4	5	2	6	9			
6	5	3	8	7	9	1	2	4			
1	8	9	4	2	3	7	5	6			
4	2	7	1	5	6	3	9	8			

Concise Quintagram	Cryptic Quintagra
1 Hide 2 Spell 3 Weather 4 Outward 5 Boundless	1 Grab 2 Disco 3 Player 4 Genteel 5 Controlled





6 2 4 1 | 8 | 3

Squiffer (c) A concertina (Chambers)
Antemundane (c) Before the world's creation (Collins)
Lusory (a) Undertaken as a pastime (OED)

## Chess - Winning Move

Cress – Willing Move 1 Qh5+! Ke7 2 Qc5+ Kf7 3 Bg6+! wins after 3 ... Kxg6 4 Qxf8 or 3 ... Kg8 4 Rh4 and Black has nothing better than 4 ... Rf7 when 5 Bh7+ Kh8 6 Be4+ wins the black

1 Dracula 2 Cheese 3 Baldrick (Tony Robinson) 4 Bird 5 Isle of Wight, as in Osborne House 6 John F Kennedy International Airport or JFK 7 David Cameron 8 Rigoletto 9 Deep Purple 10 Sir Terence Conran 11 Ottessa Moshfegh 12 Andy Warhol's Bad 13 Suakin or Sawakin 14 Jamie Vardy, who scored 23 Premier League goals 15 David Starkey



## **Word watch David Parfitt**

## Squiffer

a A quick drink of strong alcohol **b** A deposit of water in

c A concertina

## Antemundane

a Particularly novel or interesting **b** Pertaining to the weekend c Before the world's

creation

**Lusory** a Undertaken as a pastime **b** Fleeting, transient c Stirring ardent desire

Answers on page II

## Sudoku Difficult No 14,543

## 6 3 4 9 5 5 7 1 6 7 9 6 4 9 6 5 3 8 5 4 7 4 2

## Fiendish No 14,544

					8		1	
	9		2	1				
		2		4	6	5		
	6		8			3		
2				7				8
	7		1			4		
		9		3	2	1		
	3		5	8				
					1		6	

## Super fiendish No 14,545

		5			9	8	1	6	
	2					5		3	
						7			
Г							3		
	6							9	4
	1	4	2						
	5 4			7			4	2	8
EDIA	4	6			2		5 6		
(G PUZZLEK MEDIA					8		6		

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

## The Times Daily Quiz Olav Bjortomt

1 Lucy Westerra is the first English victim of the title character in which Bram Stoker novel?

2 Provolone, Asiago and Taleggio are Italian varieties of which dairy product?

3 Who is the sidekick of the sitcom character Edmund Blackadder?

4 What type of creature is a ruddy turnstone (Arenaria interpres)?

5 Osborne biscuits were named after Queen Victoria's holiday home on which island?

**6** On July 17, 1996, TWA flight 800 exploded 12 minutes after take-off from which New York airport?



5 8 1

7 Which Tory resigned as director of corporate affairs at Carlton Communications to run for Parliament in 2001?

8 Which Verdi opera features the arias Caro nome che il mio cor and Questa o quella?

9 Formed in 1968,

which English rock band is named after a 1934 song by the pianist Peter De Rose?

10 Which British restaurateur founded the Design Museum in Shad Thames, London in 1989?

11 The Booker Prize shortlisted Eileen (2015) is the debut novel of which US author?

12 Which 1977 comedy was the last film produced by Andy Warhol before his death in 1987?

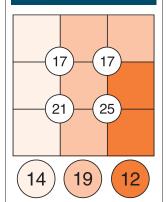
13 Famed for its coral buildings, what was Sudan's only port before the construction of Port Sudan?

14 Which Leicester City footballer won the Premier League Golden Boot in the 2019-20 season?

15 Who is this historian?

Answers on page 11

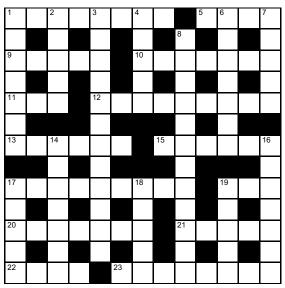
## Suko No 3990



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

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## The Times Quick Cryptic No 2552 by Izetti



- Problems with hat back to front: Miss Woodhouse's? (8)
- Trick? Scot's bowled over (4)
- Some lifelong criminal (5)
- Number of social workers who rent accommodation? (7)
- Woman of the month? (3)
- What to expect: simple chap
- with Yankee's meanness (9) Mottled fruit item given to daughter (6)
- Is troublesome cat about to drink? (4,2)
- Rubbish by an item of furniture that can be turned around (9)
- Vehicle is endless worry (3)
- 20 A heartless wife upset me so formidable! (7)
- Mischief-maker joining the Spanish force (5)
- Small child's bit of money (4)
- 23 Opportunist, almost the last character to appear in court (8)

- Vilified female, a maiden caught in the act (7)
- Sweet dough (5)
- Careful handling of fellow, one with throbbing, lacking bit of sense (12)
- Change part of 'orse's equipment (5)
- Administrative areas with various sanctions one ignored (7)
- Sentimental Greek character disinclined to speak (5)
- Petty misdeed at home consider it silly (12)
- Obvious to take in one person for surgery? (7)
- Herb beginning to speak, interrupting conference (7)
- Kingdom has king, extraordinary male (5) Tree in coastal stretch, we

hear? (5)

19 Manage to enclose second area with trees (5)

Yesterday's solution on page 11

## Literature **Politics** History Philosophy Biography

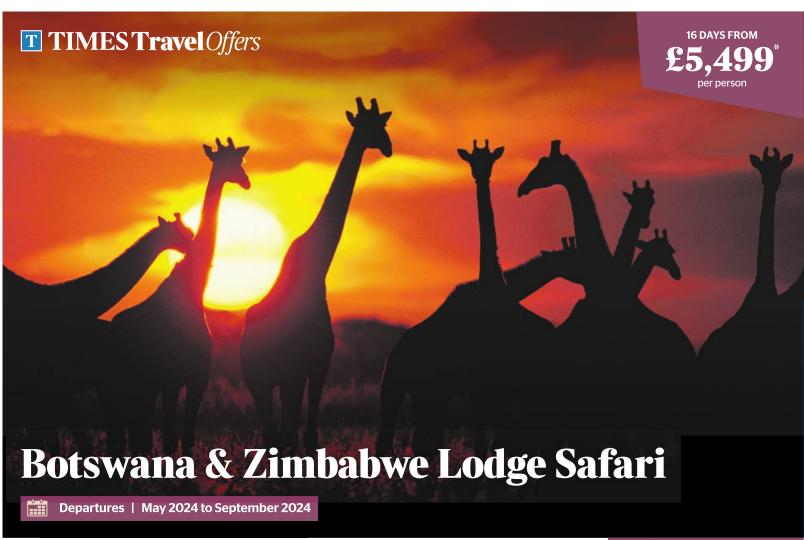
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burnished sunsets complete the adventure. And where better for a sundowner than the shimmering Makgadikgadi Pans?









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All transport and listed activities



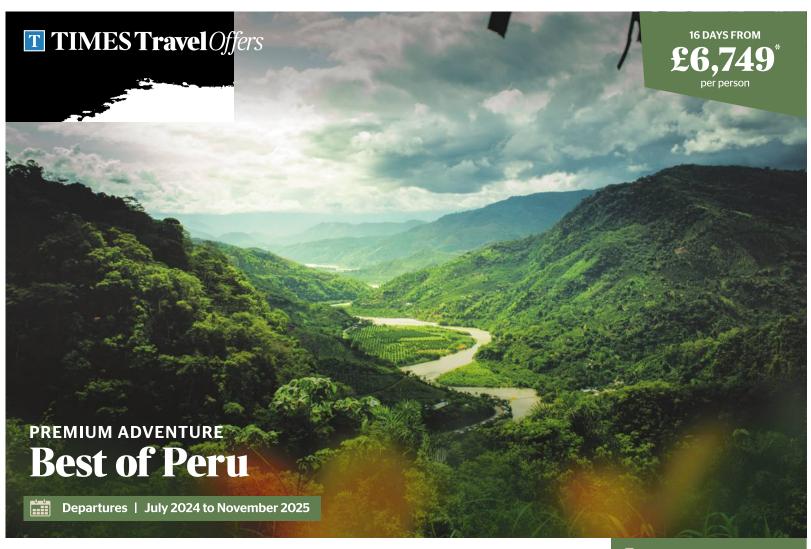
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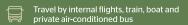
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- $\stackrel{\textstyle \sim}{\swarrow}$  Spend a full day exploring Lake Titicaca, visiting its traditional island communities
- Enjoy a typical Andean "Pachamanca" lunch in the Sacred Valley.

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Take a dip in the natural thermal pools during a two night stay at the Colca Lodge Spa & Hot Springs





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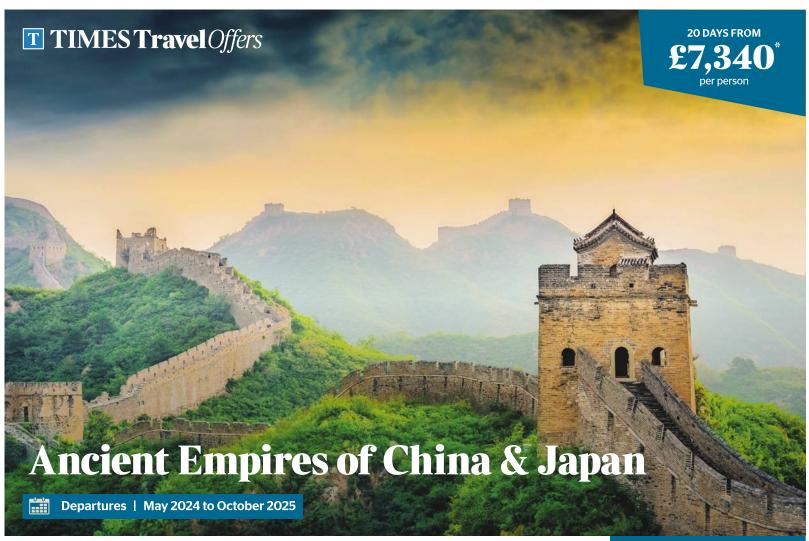
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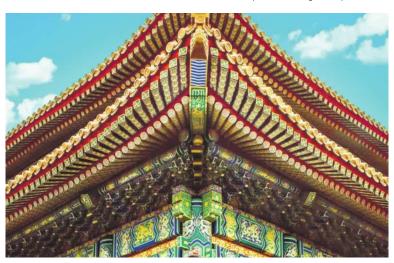
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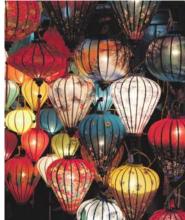
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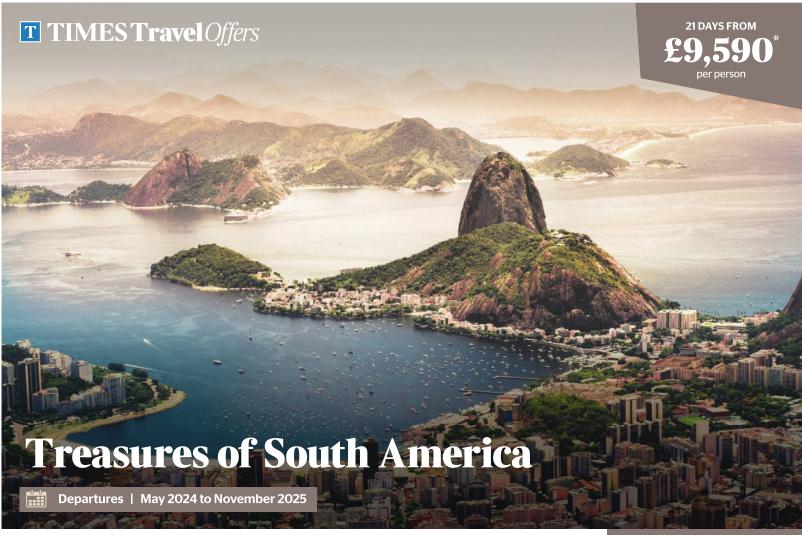


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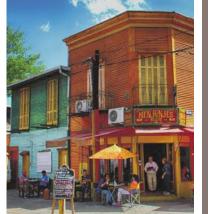
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