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The Guardian

Newspaper of the year

Trump sexually abused writer in 1990s, New York jury finds

Ex-US president told to pay E Jean Carroll \$5m in damages in civil case

Chris McGreal and Martin Pengelly

New York

A New York jury yesterday found that Donald Trump sexually abused the advice columnist E Jean Carroll in a New York department store changing room 27 years ago.

The verdict for the first time legally brands a former US president as a sexual predator. But as it is the result of a civil not criminal case, the only legal sanction Trump will face is financial. In explaining a finding of sexual abuse to the jury, the judge said it had two elements: that Trump subjected Carroll to sexual contact without consent by use of force, and that it was for the purpose of sexual gratification.

The jury deliberated for less than three hours. It did not find that Trump had raped Carroll, but found him liable for sexual abuse.

It awarded about \$5m (£4m) in compensatory and punitive damages: about \$2m on the sexual abuse count and close to \$3m for defamatory, for branding



▲ E Jean Carroll leaving Manhattan federal court yesterday after a jury found Donald Trump liable for sexually abusing her in 1996 PHOTOGRAPH: SETH WENIG/AP

First UK baby born with DNA from three people

Exclusive
Ian Sample
Science editor

The first UK baby created with DNA from three people has been born after doctors performed a groundbreaking

IVF procedure that aims to prevent children inheriting incurable diseases. The technique, known as mitochondrial donation treatment (MDT), uses tissue from the eggs of healthy female donors to create IVF embryos that are free from harmful mutations their mothers carry and

are likely to pass on to their children.

Because the embryos combine sperm and egg from the biological parents with tiny battery-like structures called mitochondria from the donor's egg, the resulting baby has DNA from the mother and father as usual, plus a small amount of genetic material - about 37 genes - from the donor. The process has led to the phrase "three-parent babies", though more than 99.8% of the DNA in the babies is from the mother and father.

Research on MDT, which is also known as mitochondrial replacement

therapy (MRT), was pioneered in the UK by doctors at the Newcastle Fertility Centre.

The work aimed to help women with mutated mitochondria to have babies without the risk of passing on genetic disorders. People inherit all their mitochondria from their mother, so harmful mutations in the "batteries" can affect all of the woman's children.

For affected women, natural conception is often a gamble. Some babies might be born healthy because they inherit only a tiny proportion of

the mutated mitochondria. But others may inherit far more and develop severe, progressive and often fatal disease. About one in 6,000 babies are affected by mitochondrial disorders.

Most of a human's 20,000 genes are coiled up in the nucleus of nearly every cell in the body. But dotted around each nucleus are thousands of mitochondria with their own genes. When functioning properly, the mitochondria provide vital energy for the cells that make up our organs. Mutations that damage the mitochondria tend to

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News

Tesco chair accused of improper behaviour by four women

Anna Isaac

One of the UK's most prominent business leaders - the Tesco chair, John Allan - faces claims of inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour from four women, the Guardian can reveal.

Allan allegedly touched the bottom of a senior member of Tesco staff in June 2022 at the company's annual general meeting.

It is also claimed that he touched the bottom of a member of staff at the business lobbying group the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), at its annual dinner in May 2019, when he was the organisation's president.

Sources allege that Allan, 74, made inappropriate remarks on those occasions as well as separate, similar comments to two other female members of CBI staff in November 2019 and in 2021 respectively. Some of the women said they were offended by the alleged actions and considered his behaviour to be sexual harassment.

Allan has denied all but one of the allegations - making a comment about a CBI staffer's appearance that she found to be offensive in 2019. A spokesperson for Allan said the other claims were "simply untrue".

A spokesperson for Tesco said: "John Allan's conduct has never been the subject of a complaint during his tenure as chair of Tesco."

The company urged anyone with concerns or information to contact a confidential phone line.

The allegations about Allan emerged during the Guardian's investigation into the CBI, the UK's foremost business lobbying group. Allan was its president between 2018 and 2020 and then vice-president until October 2021.

He has been chair of the UK's biggest supermarket since 2015.

It comes after pleas from women's rights and trade union groups not to drop new draft legislation aimed at tackling sexual harassment in the workplace. The proposed bill would create a legal duty for employers to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and also protect staff from third-party harassment by clients and customers.

Wera Hobhouse, a Liberal Democrat MP, said on Twitter that the fresh allegations illustrated a wider problem of "pervasive" harassment in workplaces. "We cannot let victims down any longer. This is why my worker protection bill, which has cross-party support, must be passed into law," Hobhouse said.

The CBI has promised to conduct a "root and branch" review of its culture. It has not offered a specific response on allegations related to Allan.

The claims raise questions over whether someone in his role can uphold the standards of corporate governance his positions require, according to some of the women. Allan is one of the most senior men in UK business.

The chair of a company's board is expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of behaviour and professional conduct, but their position can make it difficult to ensure proper scrutiny of their own conduct. One woman who shared an allegation about Allan said: "Leading a company or challenging its leadership means you have to hold up standards across all areas of governance, including sexual harassment. He fell short of what the role is meant to mean."

Another said: "It might seem a small thing to some people, but I felt humiliated and undermined by his actions."

The identity of the four women is known to the Guardian.

The details of the allegations are:

- One woman says Allan grabbed her bottom at the CBI annual dinner in May 2019. Allan denies that this occurred. A second source claims they saw the incident at the Brewery in London on 21 May 2019.

- Sources told the Guardian that another woman complained to a manager after Allan commented on her appearance while at the CBI's November conference in 2019. Allan apologised for the remark after discussion with the group's then director general, Carolyn Fairbairn. Allan accepts he told the woman that a dress "suited her figure", but said it was a "misjudged way of seeking to cheer someone up". Fairbairn has previously said of her time at the CBI that "any allegations of inappropriate conduct made to me were taken incredibly seriously and swiftly addressed".

- A third woman claims that Allan made comments about her bottom and that her dress was making it hard for him to concentrate on anything else in 2021, while she worked for the CBI. A second source claims to have overheard the exchange. Allan said he "did not recall" this incident and had no diary entries that show he attended any CBI events in person in 2021.

- It is claimed that Allan touched the bottom of a senior woman who worked at Tesco on the day of the company's 17 June 2022 annual

general meeting at Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire.

In response to the claims, a spokesperson for Allan said: "Mr Allan was mortified after making the comment in 2019 and he immediately apologised. The person concerned agreed the matter was closed and no further action was taken. Regarding the other claims, they are simply untrue."

"Even so, Mr Allan requested that Tesco and Fox Williams - who were instructed by the CBI to conduct an investigation following various allegations - investigate them. Fox Williams decided not to, and Tesco are not aware of and have not received any complaints about Mr Allan's conduct either at the 2022 AGM or over the eight years that he has been chair of Tesco."

Allan has been chair of one of the UK's leading housebuilders, Barratt Developments, since 2014, in addition to his role as chair of Tesco's board. He has also been a non-executive director at some of Britain's biggest businesses, including Royal Mail and National Grid.

A Tesco spokesperson said: "In relation to John Allan's conduct at Tesco's 2022 AGM, Tesco has received no complaints or concerns formally or informally, including through our confidential protector line service."

They added: "At Tesco, we are committed to ensuring all colleagues are respected and feel safe at work. Tesco's people policies apply to all colleagues, and all concerns or complaints raised about conduct are always taken very seriously and investigated thoroughly."

"This is a serious allegation, and if anyone has any concerns or information, we would ask them to share those with us through any of our reporting channels, including through our confidential Protector Line, so we can investigate."

The Guardian first reported claims last month that the former CBI board member made an inappropriate remark about a colleague's dress in 2019 and that he touched the bottom of a different woman at the organisation.



▲ Tesco chairman, John Allan, has denied all but one of the allegations

Souza, remembering Miranda's friendship with Marielle Franco, the Rio politician assassinated in 2018.

One of Brazil's most celebrated rappers, Emicida, tweeted: "Today Brazil has lost a courageous young man who, in fighting for his dreams, ended up unshackling the dreams of many others too."

Brazil's first lady, Rosângela Lula da Silva, said Miranda left a legacy "of struggle and love". "He had a



▲ Miranda was a former Brazilian congressman and LGBTQ+ activist

vivacity which brought joy to politics," tweeted the president of Lula's Worker's party (PT), Gleisi Hoffmann.

Greenwald, 56, remembered how his husband had been born in Jacarezinho, one of Rio's most deprived favelas, and been orphaned at the age of five after the death of his mother.

Despite those humble origins, Miranda rose to become the first gay man elected to Rio's city council and played an important role in 2013's Edward Snowden leaks, which Greenwald spearheaded.

That year, Miranda was controversially detained for nine hours at Heathrow airport as he travelled back to Rio with memory sticks containing documents relating to that project.

"He inspired so many with his biography, passion and force of life," Greenwald wrote. "He was singular: the strongest, most passionate, most compassionate man I've known. I can't describe the loss and pain."

David Miranda, key figure in Snowden leaks, dies aged 37

Tom Phillips

Rio de Janeiro

Brazilian politicians, celebrities and social activists have paid tribute to the "vivacious, loving and combative" former congressman and campaigner David Miranda, who has died in Rio de Janeiro aged 37.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva celebrated the "extraordinary trajectory" of the favela-born politician who served in the country's congress between 2019 and 2022 and was a powerful voice of resistance during the far-right administration of Jair Bolsonaro.

The death of Miranda, who was

also a columnist for Guardian US, was announced yesterday by his husband, the American journalist and lawyer Glenn Greenwald, with whom he raised two adopted sons, João and Jonathan. "He would have turned 38 tomorrow," Greenwald tweeted. "He died in full peace, surrounded by our children and family and friends."

Miranda was admitted to hospital in August with a severe gastrointestinal infection and died early yesterday after nine months in intensive care.

"[I feel] such immense sorrow at the departure of my dear friend David Miranda. A funny, loving, party-loving guy who never gave up fighting for life and for the people of the favela," tweeted the leftist lawmaker Renata

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◀ Scenes from *The Singing Detective* (1986) starring Michael Gambon, left, and Alison Steadman, above. Right, Dennis Potter, who died in 1994, is considered one of Britain's most important dramatists

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH:
ALLSTAR/ALAMY



Dennis Potter script discovered revealing creative origins of The Singing Detective

Steven Morris

It was rather like discovering the television drama equivalent of a lost Harold Pinter or Samuel Beckett play.

A previously unknown script for a play by the dramatist Dennis Potter that sheds new light on his famous series *The Singing Detective* has been unearthed among an archive of his work in his home area.

Entitled *The Last Television Play*, the 60-page script features sequences and scenes that were to appear in the celebrated BBC series starring Michael Gambon as the mystery writer Philip E Marlow, who is hospitalised by a chronic skin disease.

John Cook, a professor of media at Glasgow Caledonian University, who discovered the script at the Potter archive at Dean Heritage Centre in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, summed up his reaction as: "Wow."

He said: "This was it. I'd found not only an unknown television play by Dennis Potter, but the seeds, the origins of *The Singing Detective*, his most famous work. It's a remarkable, wonderfully inventive piece, very experimental."

Potter, who died in 1994, began writing *The Singing Detective* in the spring of 1985 and it appeared on the nation's screens on Sunday nights in 1986. Scenes such as doctors and nurses lip-synching the 1947 hit *Dry Bones* and the protagonist having his skin greased by a nurse to ease his pain became television classics.

In a Radio Times interview publicising *The Singing Detective* in 1986, Potter appeared to have hinted at the existence of *The Last Television Play*, describing how his most famous work had originally begun as a series of scenes set in a hospital ward, which he thought were "quite promising".

But when Cook, the author of Dennis Potter: A Life on Screen, later

asked him if he had kept any draft manuscripts of *The Singing Detective*, Potter said that was unlikely as he had tended to rip them up.

After the Potter archive was saved for the nation thanks to a fundraising effort by residents of the Forest of Dean, where Potter was born, Cook began going through a vast collection of finished typescripts, manuscript copies, notebooks and papers, one of

his aims being to find the beginnings of *The Singing Detective*. "I hoped to find fragments but what I found was a complete, previously unknown television play," he said.

The piece, thought to have been completed a few years before *The Singing Detective*, was written in Potter's painstakingly neat handwriting in a private notebook.

"I see these as the engine room of his creativity, the nuts and bolts of how he worked," said Cook.

In the front of the notebook was a mock eulogy to Potter in his handwriting in which a "vicar" says: "To put the adjectival noun Television in front of the noble old word Playwright is the same kind of diminution as putting the adjective processed in front of the even more ancient word cheese." Potter, the mock vicar goes on to explain, had died after choking on smoked salmon while heading to the US on Concorde.

Cook worked out that the play

'I hoped to find fragments but what I found was a complete, unknown television play'

Prof John Cook
Glasgow Caledonian University

itself must have been written not for the BBC but for a commercial rival, as it was structured to include ad breaks. The main character is not Marlow but a writer called Nigel Barton. Potter fans will know he created a working-class anti-hero called Nigel Barton, who appeared in two of his early works written for the BBC.

While in *The Singing Detective* the nurse who greases the main character morphs into a nightclub singer, in the earlier version a 1980s dance troupe appears. A famous scene when Marlow is wheeled into a ward is backed in the newly discovered iteration by the Doctor Who theme.

Cook said he believed *The Last Television Play* was Potter's homage to the sort of drama he had written in the 1960s and 1970s but was dying out. At one point Barton says: "I know that I'm either writing a play of my own or I'm in a play by somebody very sly and malignant." The remark is followed by canned laughter as the drama morphs into a sitcom.

Cook said it felt like the television drama equivalent of finding a lost Pinter or Beckett stage play. "He takes on all the grand themes," he said. "There's a depth to his work. He definitely deserves to be considered in the same breath as some of our postwar playwrights."

Police step in over noisy French frogs squatting in fish pond

Kim Willsher
Paris

A culture war has broken out in a village in the Savoie region of the northern Alps where three large frogs are threatened with being silenced.

In the latest example of a conflict of rights between town and country, nature and neighbour, 92-year-old Colette Ferry opened her door in the



▲ Frogs are the latest creatures to attract noise complaints in France

small village of Frontenex - whose population is about 1,800 - to two gendarmes recently who said they would be taking away three amphibians who had taken up residence in her garden pond.

The officers said that they were responding to a complaint by a neighbour unable to sleep because of the loud croaking the animals were making at all hours.

Ferry told them that while the fish in the pond were hers, the frogs were squatting. "They're in and out of the water playing with my fish. It's my entertainment," she told a local radio station. "A man came here and was really yelling at me, saying he

could not sleep and he had to work ... but I did not expect the gendarmes. Especially not for frogs! But there's always someone ready to complain about someone else."

Animal noise pollution is a regular cause of rustic arguments in France, which are often seen as symbolic of the clash between those living in rural areas who have long kept animals or rung church bells, and privileged incomers from urban areas of France or abroad who have moved to, or bought second homes in, the countryside.

Most famously, Maurice the noisy rooster survived legal attempts to silence him in 2019 when a judge

ruled he could continue crowing, after thousands of people signed a "Save Maurice" petition.

Ducks, geese, cows and even cicadas have survived attempts at being silenced. Two years ago, senators approved a law to protect the noises and smells of the countryside. "Living in the countryside implies accepting some nuisances," said Joël Giraud, the minister for rural life at the time.

Ferry seemed mostly amused by the fuss and said she was looking forward to even more entertainment when the gendarmerie sent someone round to remove the frogs. "That'll be fun ... they jump," she said.



◀ Carroll said Trump 'shattered' her reputation with his denial when she went public in 2019

PHOTOGRAPH:
BRENDAN McDERMID/
REUTERS

▼ Donald Trump claimed he had no idea who E. Jean Carroll was and mistook her for his second wife in a deposition

PHOTOGRAPH:
BRIAN LAWLESS/PA

Trump must pay \$5m damages to writer after jury's verdicts in sexual abuse case

Continued from page 1

her a liar. Before the verdict in the highly charged case, the judge, Lewis A Kaplan, warned the courtroom: "No shouting. No jumping up and down. No race for the door."

After the verdict, as she was escorted to a car, Carroll said: "We're very happy."

George Conway, a conservative lawyer and Trump critic who encouraged Carroll to sue, said on Twitter: "God bless E. Jean Carroll and congratulations to Roberta Kaplan [Carroll's attorney] and her team for a job well done."

Trump used his Truth Social platform to say: "I have absolutely no idea who this woman is. The verdict is a disgrace - a continuation of the greatest witch hunt of all time." In his deposition, released to the public last week, Trump mistook a picture of Carroll in his company for a picture of his second wife, Marla Maples.

Last night lawyers for Trump issued a statement deriding the case as "bogus" and saying they would appeal "and ... ultimately win".

Politically, Trump has capitalised on his legal woes, leading by wide

margins in polling regarding the 2024 Republican presidential nomination. Nonetheless, he faces mounting and unprecedented legal danger.

In New York last month, Trump pleaded not guilty to 34 criminal charges of falsifying business records over a hush-money payment to the porn star Stormy Daniels during the 2016 election.

Trump looks likely to face criminal charges over attempts to overturn the 2020 election in Georgia, and is also the target of a federal investigation into his actions during the election and its aftermath, including the US Capitol attack.

A justice department special counsel is also investigating the stashing of secret documents at his Florida estate. In New York, he faces a civil suit over his business and tax affairs.

In the Carroll case, a jury of three women and six men was persuaded by Carroll's testimony over three days as she described events in a New York department store changing room in 1996.

Trump's lawyer, Joe Tacopina, said he would use Carroll's own words to disprove her allegation, showing the former Elle magazine advice



◀ A protester outside the Manhattan federal court after the jury's verdict in the civil case against the former president



columnist conspired with friends to falsely accuse Trump because they "hated" him and his politics.

But in seven days of testimony he failed to do either. Carroll testified that the attack had left her unable to have a romantic relationship. She said Trump had "shattered" her reputation by denying the attack when she went public in 2019, after which Elle sacked her. Trump repeatedly called her a liar, including after her first day of testimony when he claimed it was a "made up SCAM".

Carroll told the trial she ran into Trump as she was leaving Bergdorf Goodman one evening in spring 1996. "He said, 'I need to buy a gift, come help me,'" she said. "I was delighted."

Carroll said she suggested a handbag or a hat but he wasn't interested.

"He said, 'I know, lingerie,'" she said. "He led the way to the escalator."

Carroll described herself as "absolutely enchanted" and said she was "delighted" to go to the lingerie department. She told the court he "snatched up" a bodysuit and told

her to try it on. "I had no intention of putting it on. I said, 'You put it on, it's your colour,'" she said.

Carroll said Trump suggested they both try it on, and motioned toward the dressing room. She said she thought it was all a joke. The mood changed rapidly. "He immediately shut the door and shoved me up against the wall. He shoved me so hard my head banged. I was extremely confused," she said.

Carroll said the situation "turned absolutely dark". "He leaned down and pulled down my tights," she said. "I was pushing him back. It was quite clear I didn't want anything else to happen." Speaking quietly and slowly, she said Trump raped her.

Carroll said she would always regret going into the dressing room with Trump. She shed tears as she explained that since the rape she had found it impossible to even smile at a man she was attracted to, and that it marked the end of her sex life.

Two of Carroll's friends told the trial she confided in them immediately after the attack but swore them to secrecy.

Tacopina challenged Carroll during nearly two days of cross-examination. The lawyer focused on her actions during and immediately after the attack, questioning why she hadn't screamed or called the police, and why she had left it for more than 20 years to publicly accuse Trump.

But the questioning backfired after Carroll gave confident and credible explanations for her actions, saying her inability to give a single cause for not screaming was not evidence that she was lying.

"One of the reasons women don't come forward is because they're always asked, 'Why didn't you scream?' Some women scream. Some women don't. It keeps women silent," she said.

Carroll said she was too "ashamed" to go to the police, even if that was the advice she gave in her Elle column.

"I was born in 1943. I'm a member of the silent generation. Women like me were taught to keep our chins up and to not complain. I would never call the police about something I am ashamed of."

"I was never going to talk about what Donald Trump did," she said. But she was motivated to speak as the #MeToo movement took off and women across the US related experiences of assault and harassment.

Carroll also sued Trump for defamation, having expected him to say they had a consensual encounter, not deny it altogether.

"It hit me and it laid me low because I lost my reputation," she said. "Nobody looked at me the same. It was gone. Even people who knew me looked at me with pity in their eyes, and the people who had no opinion now thought I was a liar and hated me."

The jury awarded Carroll a total of \$3m in damages for defamation, \$2.7m of which are compensatory and \$280,000 of which are punitive. They also awarded \$20,000 in punitive damages against Trump over a claim of battery made by Carroll.

Carroll said she considered Trump "evil" and a "terrible" president but denied bringing the lawsuit because of her political views. "I'm not settling a political score. I'm settling a personal score," she said.

Labour looking ahead
Starmer won't rule out Lib Dem coalition
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Anti-waste discovery
Microbes eat plastic at cooler temperatures
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Frilled to be here A Eurovision superfan arrives at Lime Street station in Liverpool in the lead-up to last night's first semi-final of the song contest. The city has stepped in to host Eurovision on behalf of the 2022 winner Ukraine due to the war with Russia. The next semi-final round takes place tomorrow and the final will be staged at Liverpool Arena on Saturday.

'Little evidence' treatment for chronic pain works, says review

Nicola Davis
Science correspondent

Antidepressants commonly used to treat chronic pain lack evidence as to whether or not they work, researchers have said, declaring the situation a global public health concern.

Chronic pain, typically defined as pain lasting three months or more, affects up to one in three people, with conditions ranging from osteoarthritis to fibromyalgia.

While exercise is often recommended, this is difficult for some patients, while there are concerns that opioids and other painkillers such as aspirin and paracetamol could do more harm than good.

Growing numbers of patients are prescribed antidepressants to treat their pain, with hundreds of thousands in the UK estimated to be taking one drug, amitriptyline.

Antidepressants have an effect on chemicals called neurotransmitters,

which is how they are thought to relieve pain. But a new Cochrane review, led by Prof Tamar Pincus of the University of Southampton, has revealed there is little evidence whether or not antidepressants work for chronic pain.

"The fact that we don't find evidence whether it works or not is not the same as finding evidence that it doesn't work," Pincus said. "We don't know. The studies simply are not good enough."

The review, by Pincus and colleagues, looked at 176 randomised control trials involving nearly 30,000 patients. The trials included, among other drugs: amitriptyline, a tricyclic antidepressant; other types of antidepressant called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, such as fluoxetine and citalopram; and duloxetine, a serotonin-noradrenaline reuptake inhibitor.

The team found many of the trials involved very small numbers, making the results unreliable. Only

duloxetine had enough evidence for the researchers to have even moderate confidence in their findings, with the drug found to have a small to moderate effect of substantial pain relief. The results also suggest a standard dose is as effective as higher doses.

Milnacipran, in the same class of antidepressants as duloxetine, also showed a small effect in reducing pain, but there were fewer studies involving fewer people.

"Aside from duloxetine and milnacipran, we don't have any confidence in the results from any other antidepressant in this review," said

'The societal cost is heavy. And there's little we can do for it'

Prof Tamar Pincus
Cochrane review leader

Southampton's Dr Hollie Birkinshaw, another author.

The average length of the trials was just 10 weeks. "There was no reliable evidence on the safety of taking antidepressants for chronic pain, both short- and long-term," the team wrote, adding it was also unclear if antidepressants were effective at treating pain in the long term.

Pincus has described the findings as a global public health concern. "We think [chronic pain] affects something like one in three, one in four people," she said. "The societal cost is really, really heavy, in terms of work absenteeism, disability allowance, personal costs, and there's very little we can do for it."

The authors urged people not to come off their drugs but to speak to a GP if they had concerns. Dr Ryan Patel, from King's College London, said: "If you are living with chronic pain and taking antidepressants to manage your symptoms, the best advice is to continue taking them if they work for you."

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence said: "Our guideline on chronic pain ... recommends antidepressants, including duloxetine, can be considered for people aged 18 years and over to manage chronic primary pain, after a full discussion of the benefits and harms."

National

Call for 'gender balance' in park design to tackle safety fears

Robyn Vinter
North of England correspondent

Women should be involved in the design and maintenance of parks in Britain to help tackle safety issues, researchers have suggested.

Academics examining how parks could be made safer for women found changes such as better lighting, lower hedges and "escape routes" could reduce the risks of harassment and assault which led to women avoiding parks.

The work, commissioned by the mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin, and carried out by Leeds University, involved interviews with more than 100 women and girls. Most said they found parks unsafe.

Brabin said: "I was moved by [the words of those interviewed]. They told us how their lives were impacted on a daily basis by misogyny and harassment. The girls in particular were wonderfully individual and brutally honest, challenging us to 'change society' as well as rework parks.

"This determined spirit gives me hope that a new generation of female decision makers is emerging, to bring a more gender-balanced workforce to our design professions, and shape our towns and cities for the better."

Brabin, and Alison Lowe, West Yorkshire's deputy mayor for policing and crime, have prioritised women's safety in their police and crime plan. They are the only all-women team in charge of a metropolitan area.

Anna Barker, an associate professor in criminal justice and criminology at the University of Leeds' school of law, led the original research.

Barker said: "In Britain women are three times more likely than men to feel unsafe in a park during the day. This is worse after dark, when as many as four out of five women in Britain say that they would feel unsafe walking alone in a park, compared to two out of five men."

"All these factors mean women and girls are less likely to use parks than men and boys, a situation which has a significant impact on their lives. Our guidelines, covering 10 principles for design and management, can enable decision makers to enact change."

Other parts of the guidance include minimising enclosed and hidden entrances, and designing facilities, paths and features so they encourage use by women and maximise visibility. The guidance, in partnership with Make Space for Girls, and Keep Britain Tidy, will be presented in a two-day conference starting today at Leeds University entitled Women and Girls' Safety in Parks: Lessons from Research and Practice.

Conservative MPs condemn use of new laws to hold royal protesters

Rajeev Syal
Jamie Grierson

Conservative MPs have condemned the use of new laws to hold anti-monarchy protesters for up to 16 hours during the coronation after the Metropolitan police admitted it had “regrets” following dozens of arrests.

The criticism came after Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London, demanded a review of policing on Saturday, while Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, declined to rip up the new public order bill under which six members of the protest group Republic were arrested.

New sections of the bill were rushed into law two days before the coronation and were used to arrest six demonstrators. However, all six have now been released and the Met has expressed regret.

David Davis, the former Home Office minister, told the Commons that the home affairs select committee should be invited to review the laws. “Within one week of the public order bill entering the law and in its first serious use, we end up with the head of the Met having to apologise to people who are wrongfully arrested,” he said.

The former Conservative minister Sir Desmond Swayne questioned why protesters were held for so long by the police, saying: “Wouldn’t the minister expect that misunderstanding to have been resolved well within the 16 hours for which the six were incarcerated, and surely there should be some questions asked about that?”

The Home Office minister Chris Philp said a complaints system is available, adding: “Exactly what happened is an operational matter for the police. Clearly on that day ... the police had a lot going on in central London.”

Despite the expression of regret, the head of the Met defended the arrest of six anti-monarchy protesters. Writing for the Evening Standard, Mark Rowley said: “While it is unfortunate that the six people affected by this were unable to join the hundreds

‘Within one week of the public order bill entering the law we end up with the Met having to apologise for wrongful arrests’

David Davis
Ex-Home Office minister

of peaceful protesters, I support the officers’ actions in this unique fast-moving operational context.”

In total 64 people were arrested over the weekend, of which 52 were over police concerns that the coronation could be disrupted.

Rowley said it was “frustrating” the force could not share more information about some of the arrests while investigations continue.

Khan has asked for further information about why the Met arrested Republic supporters and volunteers for the charity Night Star, which hands out rape alarms.

In a letter to Rowley, the mayor of London said: “Despite the welcome efforts of so many committed officers, it is clear that some of the arrests made have given rise to concerns and, in my oversight role as mayor, I am seeking assurance from you that the issues related to these will be subject to a review and lessons learned.”

In an interview with the BBC, Starmer accepted that Scotland Yard got some of their “judgments wrong” after the force expressed “regret” over preventing six Republic campaigners from protesting.

The Labour leader said it was “early days” for the Public Order Act, under which the group was detained for 16 hours before being released and told no charges would be brought. Rather than committing to repeal the legislation, Starmer suggested fresh guidance could make improvements amid concerns it was being used to clamp down on dissent.

“The police have obviously apologised in relation to some of those cases,” he said. “They’re a difficult judgment call, we all understand why action has to be taken in relation to Just Stop Oil and that sort of tactic but obviously we need to protect legitimate protests, so it’s a judgment call.”

“They got some of those judgments wrong, as they have accepted, and I think that’s a learning experience for them, as we go forward we need to ensure there’s perhaps better guidance or something.”

Graham Smith, the Republic chief executive who is considering legal action against the Met over his arrest, has urged Labour to repeal the act.

Police said they suspected the straps being used to secure placards being carried by the group would be used to “lock on” to something to cause disruption, which is an offence which can be punished by imprisonment under the act.

But on Monday evening they personally apologised to Smith, handing back the straps and telling his group no charges will be taken because they could not “prove intent to use them to lock on and disrupt the event”.



‘It massively backfired’ Republican activists gain support after arrests

Daniel Boffey

Graham Smith had just hung up on Jeremy Vine’s BBC Two radio show. “He was sort of suggesting we have this nice little debate about whether or not someone should be locked up for 16 hours so people can wave their flags,” said Smith, 49, looking a little coy as he settled down on his front-room sofa, stepping over an unfinished thousand-piece jigsaw. “It was really partly down to me being quite tired and starting to get antsy.”

It has been quite a few days for the normally mild-mannered and longstanding chief executive of Republic, the country’s leading anti-monarchist organisation, a somewhat lonesome voice since it was formed in 1983.

Despite the car-crash quality of Prince Harry’s sulk from a middle-status row behind Princess Anne’s feathered hat or the introduction to the coronation of that dress by Penny Mordaunt, the sword-wielding leader of the Commons,

the standout story of the crowning of King Charles III on Saturday continues to be the arrest hours before the event at Westminster Abbey of Smith and the five other organisers of the main Republican protest.

Their revolutionary cause might not be wholly shared by the British public, yet a sense of an offence against fair play has been



▲ Graham Smith was arrested before the coronation for conspiracy to cause a public nuisance but released without charge PHOTOGRAPH: SARAH LEE/THE GUARDIAN

widely felt after the arrests, with former chief constables among those voicing their unease. The Met police commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, described them as “unfortunate” yesterday.

Smith and the others were arrested for conspiracy to cause a public nuisance but were all released without charge. On Monday evening a Met chief

▼ Despite extensive talks with the Met before the protest, a group of Republic organisers were arrested
PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTIAN SINIBALDI/THE GUARDIAN



inspector, sergeant and police constable arrived on the doorstep of Smith's terrace home to give him back his phone. "The chief inspector looked quite unsure of himself," Smith said. "He did apologise. I don't think he was supposed to."

It has in many ways been a public relations triumph for the group. The weekend earned it an extra £50,000 in income and offers of free counsel for a legal action that Smith vows he will take against the police for unlawful arrest and imprisonment. But for a comparatively little known organisation, the value of the wall-to-wall coverage, their arguments and the plucky battle against the heavy hands of the boys in blue cannot be overstated.

Smith can see the value of all that now. A friend of a friend spotted him on the TV news in Mexico. "If they were trying to diminish our publicity in order to enhance theirs, it massively backfired, in a spectacular way," Smith said. And yet, he appears genuinely troubled as he details the full extent of the conversations and agreements he had with a senior officer in charge of policing the coronation, Supt Martin Kirby.

There is a photograph taken of Smith after his arrest. He is sat on the ground, his head in his hands. "I actually genuinely think I was in shock, to some extent."

The first meeting with Kirby at Lambeth police station had been as long ago as 8 February, he said.

There he was introduced to a young police constable who would be his liaison officer for the next three months during which Republic shared all its plans. "I had never had any doubts and still don't doubt her honesty and sincerity," Smith says.

At that first meeting the Republic delegation stated its intention to hold a "static protest" at one point and smaller ones further down the procession. "We told them, 'They said there's no problem with any of this. No, that's perfectly lawful.'

"They said, 'You seem quite concerned about this, but really if you turn up and protest peacefully, there's no reason why there should be any problem.'

Further details were shared by email and in phone calls with the police over the plans to take amplifiers and some megaphones. Again, no concerns were raised. A second meeting with Kirby was held on 26 April. A map was provided to Kirby of where Republic would hold its protest and what the placards would say. There were some follow-up calls, but Smith was left with no concerns.

At about 6am on the morning of the coronation, Smith and his colleagues brought down the amplifiers and megaphones from their Premier Inn hotel on St Martin's Lane to Trafalgar Square. Then they returned to outside the hotel to unload a large rental van full of placards. "I managed to get one of those bundles out on to the tailgate and I turn around and these police officers come in, three or four of them, but then all of a sudden all others come out of a van, wanting to know what we were doing."

Smith was ushered away from the van. "I said, 'We have been talking to senior officers'. And he said, 'Who?' And I said Mr Kirby, and he clearly recognised that and seemed a bit disappointed. And then I went to phone the liaison officer. And he said, 'I'm now detaining you' and I went, 'I'm just gonna stay on the phone'. He just said, 'What are you doing? I'm detaining you. And he just grabbed my wrist and took my phone.'

Plastic packs were also found in the van containing 10 adjustable luggage straps, the type to keep bulging suitcases together, but which Smith was going to use to hold the placards on to trolleys as they were pushed down to Trafalgar Square. He was arrested for possession of lock-on devices and then all six of his group were put in a police van and taken to Walworth police station, in Kennington.

Smith gave a statement denying the allegations in his interview and declined to answer further questions. Sometime after 10pm, the Republic detainees were released. Smith is convinced the arrests were a premeditated attempt to kill the protests. The amplifiers and megaphones had also been seized from the protest spot while he was in his cell. Smith wants answers. But, while there may be moments of exasperation, as a jigsaw fan and campaigner for the overthrow of the British royal family, he has learned to be patient.

Slavery King urged to offer reparations for UK's role

Kevin Rawlinson
Maya Wolfe-Robinson

The king has been urged to go further towards offering reparatory justice for the UK's role in transatlantic slavery, even as he was praised for reportedly ignoring Boris Johnson's advice to avoid the issue at all costs.

Academics and campaigners called on Charles to adopt specific measures to help build an understanding of the legacy of the enslavement of black people, as well as putting forward suggestions for how the UK could work towards making amends.

"He should do far more," said Brooke Newman, an associate professor of history at Virginia Commonwealth University. "He has the money and the connections to create an independent commission to really dig into these connections."

However, she said it was encouraging that Charles appeared more willing to listen than some other members of the British establishment.

She was joined by other academics and campaigners, who called for a coordinated international effort to reach a consensus on reparations, and warned the king he cannot expect to live out his reign without properly addressing the issue.

It comes after Guto Harri, an ex-adviser to Johnson, wrote in the Daily Mail that the former prime minister warned Charles ahead of the 2022 Commonwealth summit in Rwanda: "I wouldn't talk about slavery or you'll end up being forced to sell the Duchy of Cornwall to pay reparations to those whose ancestors built it." Sources close to Johnson have questioned the accuracy of Harri's account.

Charles went on to tell Commonwealth leaders: "I cannot describe the depths of my personal sorrow at the suffering of so many as I continue to deepen my own understanding of slavery's enduring impact."

The king has also subsequently signalled his support for research into the British monarchy's role.

While Newman praised him for that, she suggested the crown go further and pay for an expanded research project, with the money being put into trust to maintain its autonomy.

The Labour MP Clive Lewis, said: "I think it's a testament to the fact that [Charles] held [Johnson's] advice in such low esteem that he decided to ignore it ... It is quite clear that the king is a thoughtful individual."



◀ Boris Johnson allegedly told Charles that mentioning slavery in his speech would open up the royal family to reparations claims

Sketch
John Crace



Blue-blooded Labour leadership looks the other way as it locks on to Charles III

Move along. Nothing to see here. Of course you have a right to peaceful protest. Just as I have a right to arrest you if I feel like it. So it would be a good idea for you to move quietly behind this grandstand so the BBC cameras can't film you. Not that they would. They know their place. So move along quietly. Is that a velcro fastener on your jacket? A belt round your waist? Planning to lock on, are we? Then you're nicked. God Save the King.

It had all been just a bit of a coincidence. You know how it is. You rush through a new Public Order Act and then suddenly find you've got a hastily arranged once in a lifetime - well maybe twice in a lifetime - coronation to police. God Save the King.

Not everyone felt the same way. Some were queasy that the Carolean age had been greeted with new limitations on the power to protest. A right that was previously protected under the Human Rights Act. Now, not so much. So, in the Commons it was left to the SNP's Joanna Cherry to ask an urgent question on the policing of the coronation. Specifically, how six people who had previously liaised with the police should get thrown in the slammer? God Save the King.

Suella Braverman was nowhere in sight - she seldom is these days - so it was left to her junior, the insufferable Chris Philp, to answer. It was like this, he said. Proudly showing off his Union Jack socks. It had been literally the best weekend of everyone's life. It had been a pity that there had been some who wanted to protest. What was wrong with these people? And the police had specifically warned him and Suella on Friday night that they had seen some women with rape alarms and some decorators out with some paint. A clear and present danger to the whole nation. God Save the King.

Philp nodded gravely but insisted he absolutely had not told the police how to conduct operations. No need when the Public Order Act had just come in to force. Or when Suella had previously bollocked the Met for not being tough enough on public disorder. It's what Charles would have wanted. And if six people had been wrongfully arrested out of a few hundred protestors, then it was a price worth paying. Acceptable collateral damage. They should be proud to have been detained on such an auspicious day. God Save the King.

Labour was keen not to get involved. On Keir Starmer's instructions. Yvette Cooper remained silent and let her deputy, Sarah Jones, do all the talking. No one was more pro the monarchy than anyone on the Labour front bench. Pierce their skin and their blood ran red, white and blue. They too could not believe their luck that God had chosen such a noble king. And the police had done an absolutely marvellous job on the day. But - in a barely audible whisper - it would be nice if they hadn't arrested six innocent people. Let's move on quickly. God Save the King.

More surprisingly, Desmond Swayne - never one to usually speak up about civil liberties - thought it suspicious that it took 16 hours for the police to realise they had arrested the wrong people. Philp squirmed. It had taken 16 hours to make sure they were innocent. No point letting them go too soon and then having to rearrest them. Those velcro hooks weren't going to investigate themselves. God Save the King.

▼ Plymouth council leader Tudor Evans takes a selfie with Lisa Nandy, Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner
PHOTOGRAPH: STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA WIRE



Starmer refuses to rule out Lib Dem coalition after general election

Aletha Adu
Peter Walker

Keir Starmer has repeatedly refused to rule out a deal with the Liberal Democrats if Labour fails to win a majority at the next general election during an interview after last week's local elections.

The Labour leader has said he is focused on securing a Labour government "with a workable majority", which he believes is achievable based on the party's performance in that vote.

Labour officials have expressed their delight at the party's performance last week, including taking the Kent council of Medway, which the party has not controlled since it was created in 1998.

Labour gained more than 600

council seats, while the Conservatives lost nearly 1,000. Pollsters called the results a terrible night for the Tories, but not a convincing enough win for Labour to be sure of forming a majority government after the next election.

When pressed during a round of broadcast interviews yesterday about possible coalition deals, Starmer failed to explicitly rule out a possible coalition deal with the Lib Dems on more than seven occasions.

Insisting he is "going for an outright majority", Starmer told Sky News: "I'm not answering hypotheticals but we're aiming for a Labour majority and that's what we're confident about.

"I want a clear majority Labour government. And one of the reasons we've made progress this last three years is, for all the noises off, we've

kept a laser-like focus on the progress we needed to make as a party.

"We made really good progress in these local elections, and now we will kick on and kick on for a majority Labour government so we can bring about the change we need," he added.

But the Labour leader was willing to explicitly rule out a pact with the Scottish National party as he said, it was "absolutely clear there are no terms in which we will do a deal with the SNP".

When asked again about a deal with the Lib Dems in an interview with the BBC, Starmer instead focused his attention on the SNP. "Absolutely there is no basis for a deal at all with the SNP because of their politics of separation," he said.

"I do not believe it's in the best interest of the United Kingdom. Now, obviously, you asked me about the

Lib Dems and other scenarios. These are hypotheticals for the future. I want to be clear that based on those results we're on course for a Labour majority. That's what has been my ambition for the country ever since I took over as leader, that continues to be my ambition."

Last year, Starmer repeatedly dismissed the possibility of even an informal post-election deal with Lib Dems, after a similar pledge about the SNP. When interviewed by Bloomberg in July, the Labour leader said his party would not go into coalition with "anyone", including the Lib Dems, who under current polling could win a series of Conservative-held seats in the next election.

The Lib Dems have not ruled out the possibility of a deal. A spokesperson said: "We are totally focused on the issues that really matter to people – the cost-of-living crisis, the failure of this government to manage our NHS and the filthy sewage

water companies are being allowed to pump into our rivers."

Starmer's equivocation around a possible coalition comes as Tony Blair warned him to avoid complacency, despite winning hundreds of seats last week.

The former prime minister told Bloomberg TV that Starmer has "done a pretty good job pulling the Labour party back from where it was", but added, "of course you can't be complacent about these things at all".

The official Lib Dem position on a possible post-election coalition remains similarly ambiguous, although much can be read into the fact that their leader, Ed Davey, has definitively ruled out a deal with the Conservatives but not Labour.

The party, which remains scarred by its experience in the 2010-15 coalition with David Cameron's Conservatives, says that on a Labour pact it cannot comment on hypothetical scenarios, and that it is "totally focused on the issues that really matter to people". The assumption is, however, that the Lib Dems would be open to cooperation.

The justification for ruling out a pact with the Tories is that the Lib Dems are locked in so many electoral battles with them, and cannot both promise to try to remove as many Conservative MPs as possible while holding open the possibility of future coalition.

I'm not answering hypotheticals but we're aiming for a Labour majority'

Keir Starmer
Labour leader



◀ Rishi Sunak boards a helicopter at Wellington barracks in London yesterday for a short flight to make a health policy announcement in Southampton

PHOTOGRAPH: JEREMY SELWYN

Poll results 'devastating' Tory MPs gloomy as Sunak tries to reassure his party

Pippa Crerar and Peter Walker

Rishi Sunak flew to the south coast of England and back by helicopter to announce a new government health policy yesterday, as he tried to calm Conservative jitters following a disastrous set of local election results.

In the latest example of the prime minister's fondness for short-distance air travel, the prime minister visited Southampton to set out plans for pharmacists to provide prescriptions for millions of patients in England to help ease the GP crisis.

However, instead of getting the train from Waterloo station for the 160-mile round trip, which would have taken one hour 15 minutes and cost around £30 return, he opted to travel by air, at a cost to the taxpayer in the region of £6,000.

The visit, instead of reassuring Tory MPs that he was focused on getting on with the job after the Conservatives lost around 1,000 seats in last week's local elections, unintentionally underlined the fears of some that he is seen as out of touch.

"Is it unfair to say that the weekend was about a powerful unelected individual who is unfeasibly wealthy and lacks the common touch ... and King Charles III?" one Tory MP joked.

"To go backwards from our results in 2019, when we lost 1,300 seats, is a damning indictment of the public view of the government. To outperform our own very low expectations is appalling."

Sunak told reporters in Southampton that the local elections results were "obviously disappointing" but insisted his priorities were right for the country and he would "keep working" to deliver them. His official spokesman claimed he had travelled by helicopter in part because he had "a series of meetings" in the afternoon that he needed to attend.

Yet when his MPs returned to Westminster after the coronation weekend, many were despondent.

One former cabinet minister told the Guardian that Sunak's allies were in "fantasy land" if they thought his plan could see the Tories returned to power next year.

"I think we can still deny Labour a majority, but I can't see a path to us actually winning the election. Rishi has clearly decided his best bet is to stick to the path that he's on, but I don't think that will be enough."

There are also concerns that voters do not see Sunak's priorities as the right ones for the country - or at least don't believe they're deliverable. "If his five pledges were really the people's priorities, then they would

Family business A pharmacist's view

There is no plaque outside the Bassett Pharmacy in Southampton to indicate it was once run by the prime minister's mother, but there is a sign round the back that gives the game away: "Parking for Sunak Pharmacy customers."

Inside, pharmacist Jithender Ballepu expressed reservations about Rishi Sunak's plans for chemist shops to provide prescriptions in England.

"Already there is not enough funding for pharmacies," said Ballepu, who has run the shop on Burgess Road for two years. "There have been so many pharmacies that have closed because of lack of funds."

"Providing antibiotics over the counter is not a good idea because customers would get more pushy trying to get antibiotics ... Contraceptives is fine - we have a protocol to follow."

Ballepu said he was not against the plan in principle. "It's a good idea to get more services for the pharmacies," he said. "But we need to make sure the funding is in place." **Steven Morris**

presumably have voted for them," one MP said.

Others have criticised the party's local election campaign, with Justin Tomlinson, the North Swindon MP, saying the Conservatives had gone into the elections lacking "a coherent message" and had not even held a proper launch event.

"The results were devastating," he told Times Radio. "It's frankly insane for anybody to try and spin it otherwise ... This was off the scale. We lost some very good councillors, not just in Swindon but in many parts of the country. It has to be a wake-up call for the party at all levels. There's no getting away from that."

One former minister said that beyond the sheer scale of losses last Thursday, the way it happened pointed towards more fundamental worries for the Conservatives.

"Obviously, a lot of it was because of where we are politically, but one thing I really noticed in my area this time is that we just don't have the ground operation anymore."

"There is a real lack of volunteers, and this is a long-term problem. We're an ageing party. We're a shrinking party. And every time we lose 1,000 councillors the problem gets worse. It's going to be a real issue in the general election."

However, one backbench MP insisted that despite the opposition gains, there was still a route for Sunak to lead the biggest party after a general election.

"Yes, some of the results were pretty grim, but voters like to give the government a kicking in local elections," they said. "It doesn't necessarily mean they will do the same in a general election."

"Rishi has really stabilised things since Boris and Liz, and in my area people are gradually starting to notice. We're certainly in a much better place. There was a time when Liz was PM that I worried our election loss would be so bad there was an outside chance I'd end up as opposition leader."

Downing Street will, no doubt, take some solace from the lack of appetite from MPs for yet another Tory leadership contest - or bringing back Boris Johnson. One MP admits: "Colleagues have run out of puff, but they're not feeling rebellious. Though I think that's probably the worst of all worlds for the party."

Taiwan Liz Truss's visit to show solidarity puts British policy at risk

**Ben Quinn
Kiran Stacey
Helen Sullivan** *Taipei*

Liz Truss is to visit Taiwan next week, where she will deliver a speech likely to anger Beijing and potentially upset the government's careful approach to China relations.

The former prime minister said yesterday: "Taiwan is a beacon of freedom and democracy. I'm looking forward to showing solidarity with the Taiwanese people in person in the face of increasingly aggressive behaviour and rhetoric from the regime in Beijing."

Truss's office said that she was expected to meet senior members of the Taiwanese government.

When the US House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, visited Taiwan last year, China claimed it had put its army on "high alert" and announced targeted military operations including missile tests.

The Foreign Office is aware Truss is travelling to Taiwan. The government has been attempting to deal with Beijing's growing economic and political reach, with other influential Tory MPs also pressing the prime minister and his cabinet to take a harder line.

Last night a UK government spokesperson said: "We wouldn't get involved in the independent travel



▲ Nancy Pelosi's arrival in Taipei last year caused anger in Beijing



▲ Liz Truss, pictured when she was foreign secretary, is focusing on foreign relations in efforts to revive her political career PHOTOGRAPH: AARON CHOWN/PA

decisions of a private citizen who is not a member of the government."

A Foreign Office spokesperson added: "We have no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong, unofficial relationship, based on deep and growing ties in a wide range of areas, and underpinned by shared democratic values."

The trip follows recent speeches by Truss on China - in Tokyo in February and to the Heritage Foundation, a rightwing US thinktank, in Washington last month - where she began setting out how she believed western democracies should toughen their stance on Beijing.

She is expected to deliver the Taiwan speech at an event organised by the Prospect Foundation thinktank. It was among groups China imposed sanctions on last month in retaliation for Pelosi's meeting with the Taiwanese president.

The Prospect Foundation said the title of Truss's address would be Taiwan: On the Frontline of Freedom and Democracy.

It described her as "one of the key players in bringing the security of the Taiwan Strait into the UK's international vision" at a time when Britain was adjusting its global strategy after Brexit and making a diplomatic tilt towards the Indo-Pacific region.

Asked how the trip was being funded, a spokesperson for Truss said it could be expected that she would update her entry in the register of members' interests in the usual way on her return.

A previous trip to Washington was funded to the tune of £7,600 by the Heritage Foundation, which covered flights and accommodation for her, her husband, two children and a member of staff.

A Chinese government spokesperson said at the time that the thinktank was under sanctions for promoting Taiwanese independence.

Truss, who has begun efforts to revive her career after her short tenure in Downing Street, used her 2023 Margaret Thatcher Freedom lecture in Washington last month to assail "wokeism", praise Ronald Reagan and portray herself as the victim of a vast political conspiracy.

The UK government will be listening carefully to how she expands on her views about China in Taiwan. She used her US visit to condemn the French president, Emmanuel Macron's recent trip to Beijing to ask for support in ending the war in Ukraine as a sign of weakness.

The Demon Headmaster actor Terrence Hardiman dies aged 86

Jamie Grierson

The actor Terrence Hardiman, who terrified a generation of children in the title role of the CBBC series *The Demon Headmaster* in the 1990s, has died aged 86.

His death was announced "with great sadness" by his agents Scott Marshall Partners, who said he was a "beloved client and much-loved stage and screen actor".

Hardiman's chilling performance

in *The Demon Headmaster* was based on the series of children's books by Gillian Cross.

She led tributes to the actor, tweeting: "Very sad to hear that Terrence Hardiman has died. He was a wonderful actor on television, stage and screen and a great Demon Headmaster. Sending deepest sympathy to his family and friends."

The drama was first broadcast between 1996 and 1998. Hardiman hid his piercing green eyes behind dark glasses – only removing them to hypnotise his victims. He reprised



▲ Terrence Hardiman in costume for the CBBC celebrity panto in 1998

the role for a cameo when the series was rebooted in 2019.

The stage and screen actor also appeared in TV series such as *The Crown*, *Wallander*, *Doctor Who* and *Prime Suspect*. He also had roles in *Colditz*, *Secret Army*, *Bergerac* and *Minder*.

Hardiman is survived by his wife, Rowena, and two children.

Among those paying tribute was the TV critic and broadcaster Scott Bryan, who tweeted: "He terrified an entire generation of children in *The Demon Headmaster*. What an icon."

UK has highest number globally of fossil fuel sites in protected areas

Damian Carrington
Environment editor

Fossil fuel extraction and exploration is taking place at almost 3,000 sites in protected areas around the world, analysis has revealed, with the UK having the highest number of fossil fuel sites in protected areas.

Globally, the activities affect more than 800 areas established to defend nature. The coal, oil and gas at the fossil fuel sites would lead to 47bn tonnes of climate-heating carbon dioxide if fully exploited, four times the annual emissions of China, the world's biggest polluter.

The sites included are oil and gas operations, coalmines, fossil fuel sites in development and those with exploration licences. "Every single one of these sites is a sign of hypocrisy, saying on one hand that this area is worthy of protection and then on the other hand, bringing fossil fuel extraction into those same areas," said Alice McGown, a geographic information expert at the Leave it in the Ground Initiative (Lingo), which produced the study.

The study also rated potential CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel activities in protected areas for each country, with China, Venezuela and Saudi Arabia in the top three and the UK, Australia, US and Canada in the top 12.

Affected areas include marine

▼ The Point of Ayr gas terminal, which processes natural gas from the Liverpool Bay gas fields, in Talacre

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY

protection areas in the UK, the Arctic national wildlife refuge in the US, Canada's Rocky Mountain parks, and the Coongie Lakes in South Australia. China's Xilin Gol natural steppe protected area and the Jubail marine wildlife sanctuary in Saudi Arabia also contain fossil fuel activities.

At 509, the number of fossil fuel sites in UK protected areas is highest globally, with most in the North Sea. The analysis found 170 oil and gas sites in the southern North Sea Ospar marine protected area and further sites in the north Norfolk sandbanks, Saturn reef, and Liverpool Bay protected areas. The Faroe-Shetland sponge belt Ospar area is also an area of major fossil fuel exploitation.

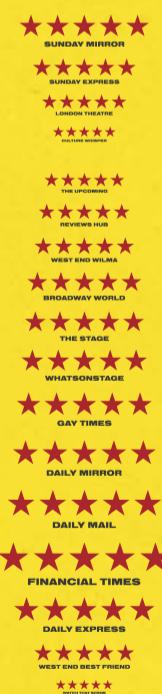
Onshore in the UK, the South Downs national park hosts nine oil and gas sites, with other sites in the area of outstanding natural beauty in Lincolnshire Wolds and the North York Moors national park.

A spokesperson for the UK Department for Energy Security and Net Zero said: "The UK's expert regulators consider and assess the environmental impacts, including to habitats, before any decisions on new oil or gas projects. We know oil and gas will continue to be needed in the coming years as we scale up renewables and new nuclear to boost energy security and bring down bills in the long term."

Half of the 835 protected areas contain small amounts of fossil fuels, less than 1m barrels of oil, or an equivalent amount of gas. The researchers said these often relatively pristine areas would be good sites for protection from fossil fuel industry activity.



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**Arc lighting**

In the village of Whitburn, in Tyne and Wear, rain leaves the early evening sky glowing and a double rainbow arcing over the historic Souter lighthouse, the first in the world built to be lit by electricity.

PHOTOGRAPH:
STEVEN LOMAS/
ANIMAL NEWS AGENCY



Doctors warn unregulated AI 'could harm health of millions'

**Andrew Gregory
Alex Hern**

Artificial intelligence could harm the health of millions and pose an existential threat to humanity, doctors and public health experts said as they called for a halt to AI research until it is regulated.

AI has the potential to revolutionise healthcare by improving diagnosis of diseases, finding better ways to treat patients and extending care to more people.

But its development also has the potential to produce negative health impacts, according to health professionals from the UK, US, Australia, Costa Rica and Malaysia writing in the journal BMJ Global Health.

The risks associated with medicine and healthcare "include the potential

for AI errors to cause patient harm, issues with data privacy and security and the use of AI in ways that will worsen social and health inequalities," they said.

One example, they said, was the use of an AI-driven pulse oximeter that overestimated blood oxygen levels in patients with darker skin, resulting in the undertreatment of their hypoxia.

But they also warned of broader, global threats from AI to health and even human existence.

AI could harm the health of millions via the social determinants of health through the control and manipulation of people, the use of lethal autonomous weapons and the mental health effects of mass unemployment should AI-based systems displace large numbers of workers.

"When combined with the rapidly

improving ability to distort or misrepresent reality with deep fakes, AI-driven information systems may further undermine democracy by causing a general breakdown in trust or by driving social division and conflict, with ensuing public health impacts," they contend.

Threats also arise from the loss of jobs that will accompany the widespread deployment of AI technology, with estimates ranging from tens to hundreds of millions over the coming decade. "While there would be many benefits from ending work that is repetitive, dangerous and unpleasant, we already know that unemployment is strongly associated with adverse health outcomes and behaviour," the group said.

But the threat posed by self-improving artificial general intelligence, which, theoretically, could

learn and perform the full range of human tasks, is all encompassing, they suggested. "Effective regulation of the development and use of artificial intelligence is needed to avoid harm," they warned. "Until such regulation is in place, a moratorium on the development of self-improving artificial general intelligence should be instituted."

Separately, in the UK, a coalition of health experts, independent fact checkers, and medical charities called for the government's forthcoming online safety bill to be amended to take action against health misinformation.

Signed by institutions including the British Heart Foundation, Royal College of GPs, and FullFact, the letter calls on the UK government to add a new legally binding duty to the bill, which would require the largest social networks to add new rules to their terms of service governing how they moderate health-based misinformation.

Will Moy, chief executive of Full Fact, said: "Without this amendment, the online safety bill will be useless in the face of harmful health misinformation."

Scientists find microbes that can digest plastics at 15C

**Helena Horton
Environment reporter**

Microbes that can digest plastics at low temperatures have been discovered by scientists in the Alps and the Arctic, which could be a valuable tool in recycling.

Many microorganisms that can do this have already been found, but they can usually only work at temperatures above 30C (86F). This means that using them in industrial practice is prohibitively expensive because of the heating required. It also means using them is not carbon neutral.

Scientists from the Swiss Federal Institute WSL have found microbes that can do this at 15C, which could lead to a breakthrough in microbial recycling. Their findings have been published in the journal *Frontiers in Microbiology*.

Dr Joel Rüthi from WSL and colleagues sampled 19 strains of bacteria and 15 of fungi growing on free-lying or intentionally buried plastic kept in the ground for one year in Greenland, Svalbard and Switzerland. They let the microbes grow as single-strain cultures in the laboratory in darkness at 15C and tested them to see if they could digest different types of plastic.

The results showed the bacterial strains belonged to 13 genera in the phyla actinobacteria and proteobacteria, and the fungi to 10 genera in the phyla ascomycota and mucoromycota. The plastics tested included non-biodegradable polyethylene (PE) and the biodegradable polyester-polyurethane (PUR) as well as two biodegradable mixtures of polybutylene adipate terephthalate (PBAT) and polylactic acid (PLA).

None of the strains were able to digest PE, even after 126 days of incubation. But 19 strains, including 11 fungi and eight bacteria, were able to digest PUR at 15C, while 14 fungi and three bacteria were able to digest the plastic mixtures of PBAT and PLA.

Rüthi said it was surprising that a large fraction of the strains were able to degrade at least one of the plastics.

Microbes can degrade polymers because they resemble some structures found in plant cells.

Sainsbury's cut in price of bread and butter offers inflation hope

Joanna Partridge

Sainsbury's has cut the price of own-brand bread and butter, in what some are seeing as a sign that soaring food price inflation will start to come down in the coming months.

Britain's second-largest supermarket chain said it had lowered the price of own-label soft white medium,

wholemeal medium, wholemeal thick and toastie white loaves to 75p, a cut of 11%. It also reduced the price of its salted and unsalted butter to £1.89 for 250g, a 5% decrease.

"Whenever we are paying less for the products we buy from our suppliers, we will pass those savings on to customers," said Rhian Bartlett, the company's food commercial director. "As we see the commodity prices starting to fall for wheat and

butter, we're able to lower our prices on two of the products people buy most often, bread and butter."

Sainsbury's said the price reductions would not impact the money paid to farmers for their produce.

Food and drink inflation reached 19.1% in Britain in March, according to official figures, showing the cost of groceries had soared far above the headline inflation rate of 10.1% over the past year for an average basket of goods and services. This marked the fastest annual increase in food and drink prices since 1977, adding to the pressure on consumers from rocketing energy bills.

Surging energy costs and supply



75p

New price of a Sainsbury's branded loaf after the 11% reduction thanks to lower commodity prices

chain disruption after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 have been blamed for higher food and drink prices, along with rising labour costs, the impact of poor weather on harvests and Brexit trade barriers.

There are hopes that prices could ease after a drop in wholesale food prices, though retailers say widespread reductions are unlikely soon, given rising energy and labour costs.

Last month, Sainsbury's reported a 5% fall in underlying profits in the year to 4 March, adding it had spent more than £560m on keeping prices down over the past two years. Tesco and Sainsbury's cut the price of a pint of milk by 5p in April, to 90p.

First UK baby born with DNA from three people

Continued from page 1

affect energy-hungry tissues most – the brain, heart, muscles, and liver. These can deteriorate relentlessly as an affected child grows.

Progress with MDT led parliament to change the law in 2015 to permit the procedure. Two years later, the Newcastle clinic became the first and only national centre licensed to perform it, with the first cases approved in 2018.

Approval is given on a case-by-case basis by the UK's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), which has permitted at least 30 cases.

Doctors at the Newcastle clinic have not released details of births from its MDT programme amid concerns that specific information could compromise patient confidentiality. But in response to a freedom of information request by the Guardian, the HFEA confirmed that a small number of babies have now been born

in the UK following MDT. The regulator said the number of births was “less than five” rather than giving the precise figure because doing so “could lead to the identification of a person to whom the HFEA owes a duty of confidentiality”. The number was accurate as of late April 2023, it said. No further details of births were provided.

The Newcastle process has several steps. First, sperm from the father is used to fertilise eggs from both the affected mother and a healthy female donor. The nuclear genetic material from the donor's egg is then removed and replaced with that from the couple's fertilised egg. The resulting egg has a full set of chromosomes from both parents, but carries the donor's healthy mitochondria instead of the mother's faulty ones. This is then implanted in the womb.

The procedure is not without risks. Recent research has found that in some cases, the tiny number of abnormal mitochondria that are inevitably carried over from the mother's egg to the donor egg can multiply when the baby is in the womb. So-called reversion or reversal could lead to disease in the child.

“The reason why reversal is seen in the cells of some children born following MRT procedures, but not in others, is not fully understood,” said Dagan Wells, a professor of reproductive genetics at the University of

Oxford who took part in the research.

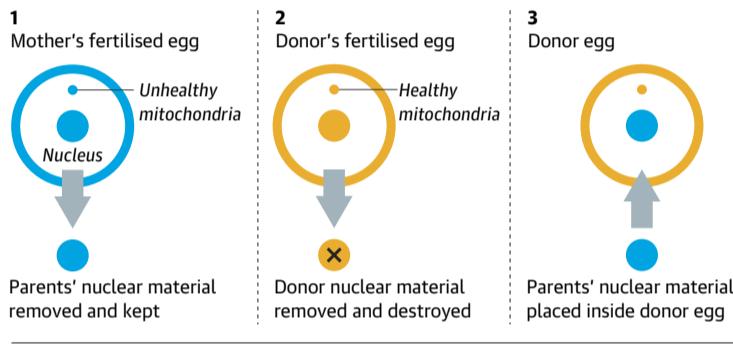
Women with mitochondrial mutations can avoid passing on disorders by adopting, or having IVF with a donor egg. Or to have genetically related children, affected women can have their IVF embryos screened for mitochondrial mutations. Though effective in many cases, this reduces the risk rather than removing it completely, and it cannot help when all of the embryos a woman produces have highly mutated mitochondria.

The UK is not the first to create babies from MDT. In 2016, a US doctor announced the world's first MDT birth after treating a Jordanian woman who carried mitochondrial mutations that cause a fatal condition called Leigh syndrome. Prior to the



▲ The procedure is intended to stop babies inheriting incurable diseases

How mitochondrial donation treatment works



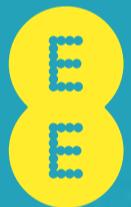
Guardian graphic

treatment in Mexico, the woman had four miscarriages and two children. One died aged six, the other lived for eight months.

“So far, the clinical experience with MRT has been encouraging, but the number of reported cases is far too small to draw any definitive conclusions about the safety or efficacy,” said Wells. “Long term follow-up of the children born is essential. The stage of development when reversal happens is unclear, but it probably occurs at a very early stage.”

Sarah Norcross, director of PET, a charity that improves choices for people affected by infertility and genetic conditions, said it was important for the technology to be used in a “measured and carefully regulated way” while it was assessed. “It is also very important that we respect the privacy of children with donated mitochondria, and their parents, not least because these parents are likely to have had prior experience of illness and bereavement in their family,” she added.

Peter Thompson, chief executive at the HFEA, said: “MDT offers families with severe inherited mitochondrial illness the possibility of a healthy child. The UK was the first country in the world to allow MDT within a regulatory environment... These are still early days for MDT and the HFEA continues to review clinical and scientific developments.”



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UK and European allies could supply long-range cruise missiles to Ukraine

Dan Sabbagh

Defence and security editor

Britain and a group of European allies are hoping to supply long-distance cruise missiles to Ukraine, similar in range to those the US has so far refused to supply Kyiv, which could allow its army to strike deep into Russian-occupied Crimea.

A tender document quietly released by the UK calls for western arms makers to offer "missiles or rockets with a range 100-300km" (62 to 186 miles) to the International Fund for Ukraine, run jointly with Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

The capabilities specified are in line with the high-end Storm Shadow missile, which has a range "in excess of 250km" (155 miles), according to its manufacturer, MBDA, which makes them for the British and French militaries.

A British official, speaking anonymously, said the tender requirements were "rather consistent" with the Storm Shadow, although they emphasised no final decision had yet been taken to supply the cruise missiles to Ukraine.

Ukraine's leadership have long sought long-range missiles to hit enemy troop concentrations and logistics hubs deep behind the frontline, but the White House has refused to give Kyiv weapons that could strike well inside Russia's internationally recognised borders.

Leaked Pentagon papers reported, based on electronic eavesdropping, that Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, complained in late February to the head of the country's military, Gen Valeriy Zaluzhny, that Ukraine "does not have long-range missiles capable of reaching Russian troop deployments in Russia".

High-precision US HIMARS rocket launchers used heavily by Ukraine

fire missiles with a much shorter range of 47 miles. There is also a longer-range, 186-mile variant, but it is this that the Biden administration has repeatedly declined to supply, worried that such a move could be considered escalatory.

Britain is unlikely to want to go ahead without US support, and getting to this point may have required diplomatic wrangling. Rishi Sunak, the prime minister, said the UK "will be the first country to give Ukraine longer-range weapons" - but that was back in February.

Ukrainian sources said they were hopeful. The country's leaders are also likely to promise not to strike inside Russia proper with the

250km

Range of MBDA's Storm Shadow missile, which is in line with the requirements in the tender call

missiles, using them to support a counter-offensive aimed at forcing Moscow to abandon Crimea and other occupied Ukrainian territory.

Ben Hodges, a former commanding general for the US Army in Europe, said he believed Russia's "Black Sea Fleet would already have departed Sevastopol if Ukraine had Storm Shadow", one of several precursors to recapturing Crimea.

Zelenskiy and other Ukrainian leaders "would not want to lose the trust of the west" by using long-range missiles beyond agreed limits, he argued.

Even if the UK and its European partners go ahead, another issue is cost. Each cruise missile is estimated to cost about £2m, a significant expense for the International Fund, which has £320m left of the £520m first raised from the UK and other partners.

Storm Shadow missiles for the UK are made in Stevenage and were

originally an Anglo-French joint development. The missiles were first fired in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and have been used by the UK on a number of occasions to bomb Islamic State targets in Syria and Iraq.

In theory, they can be mounted on the Soviet-designed MiG-29 and Su-27 combat jets still used by Ukraine. Despite Russia's greater air power, Kyiv has managed to retain a small air force, capable of running a dozen or so missions a day, after 15 months of the war.

Britain's Ministry of Defence said: "We have invited industry suppliers to submit expressions of interest" to provide long-range missiles and other arms. A final decision to supply to Ukraine would rest with the five-country executive panel, the spokesperson added.

Suppliers who have expressed interest "will be contacted from 5 June", the tender document says, although the fund has in the past been plagued by delays.

It is likely that any Storm Shadow missiles supplied would be at a reduced export range of about 300km to comply with the voluntary Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which the UK, Ukraine and the US have all signed up to.

Missiles over Kyiv Page 24 →

Music review

Hook-laden glam rockers make others look dull

Måneskin
O2 Arena, London

★★★★★

Alexis Petridis

Damiano David, the Måneskin frontman, stares out into the vastness of the O2 Arena, raising his eyes to the seats at the rear, so high up that tickets come with a warning about vertigo. "Fuckin' ell," he says, almost to himself. "This is a big-ass venue."

David is not a performer much hampered by reserve - it takes him two songs to strip to his waist, and a couple more to start grinding his crotch against the microphone stand while singing "I want to fuck" - but, for a moment, he seems genuinely taken aback.

Few rock bands have taken such an unlikely route to arena-packing success, involving busking on the streets of Rome, Italy's version of The X Factor and Eurovision, a pathway that says a lot about the by-any-means-necessary approach an Italian rock band has to take to get noticed internationally and



▲ Victoria De Angelis on bass and guitarist Thomas Raggi of Måneskin performing at the O2 Arena in London on Monday. Below, band frontman Damiano David, who seemed briefly taken aback by the 'big-ass' venue

PHOTOGRAPHS:
MATTHEW BAKER/
GETTY IMAGES



may also tell you something about the collapse of old-fashioned ideas about credibility and authenticity in music.

As well as giving David an opportunity to briefly reflect on how far they've come, their O2 gig answers questions about who has fuelled this success: judging by the audience, it's largely late teens and twenty-somethings, marginally more female than male, and with little about their appearance that reflects Måneskin's own stylistic devotion to glam rock.

Up on the stage, it's a riot of flared leather trousers, hot pants and platform boots, plus a sparkling cowboy hat that guitarist Thomas Raggi - to reach for a glam-era comparison, Måneskin's equivalent

of Dave Hill from Slade - spends the opening songs endearingly struggling to keep on his head. In the crowd, it definitely isn't.

But you shouldn't confuse a lack of interest in sartorial cues with a lack of devotion: normcore or not, Måneskin's audience are strikingly rabid in their affections. Dispensing with both of your best-known tunes - the Eurovision-winning *Zitti e Buoni* and a cover of the Four Seasons' northern soul favourite *Beggin'* - early in the set is a bullish move, but no matter.

Belying its respectable, rather than spectacular sales, the audience seem to know the contents of Måneskin's recent album *Rush!* by heart. Whenever David stops singing midway

through a line and turns the microphone to the audience, there's never a muted response: they are word-perfect, even when the lyrics are in Italian.

Måneskin's sound is noticeably heavier live, the guitar solos longer, the debt to Franz Ferdinand and the Killers less pronounced and the deficiencies in their English lyrics - boilerplate expressions of vague rebellion and stuff about sex that's never terribly sexy - less obvious: David delivers the most hackneyed lines with a camp flourish that suggests he can't take them seriously either.

The ballads are more clearly linked to the lighters-out anthems that were an essential part of any 80s hair metal band's arsenal, which in turn makes their association with Swedish pop auteur Max Martin - who co-produced Rush! and had a hand in writing the prettiest ballad number they have, If Not for You - seem less like commercial opportunism than a meeting of minds. Before he started knocking out hits for Britney Spears and Katy Perry, Martin was a member of a hair metal band himself: you suspect he gets Måneskin perfectly.

So, audibly, do the O2 audience, whose enthusiasm never lags: after an hour and half, they're still greeting everything as if it's the band's greatest hit. Watching David bump and grind, or Raggi struggling with his hat, you understand why: it's ridiculous, depthless, hook-laden fun, and the band behind it are intensely likable. If that sounds like faint praise, it isn't intended as such. Enthusiasm quite as communicable as Måneskin's is a rare commodity in both rock and pop - deemed uncool in the former and micromanaged out of the latter, it's a strangely heady thing.

Police will not face penalty for release of Bulley's details

Robyn Vinter

Lancashire police will not face any action after releasing personal information about Nicola Bulley to the public, including her problems with alcohol brought on by "struggles with the menopause".

The police were labelled "misogynist" and "as sexist as it comes", by MPs and campaigners during the three-week search for 45-year-old Bulley, who went missing and whose body was found on 19 February.

An investigation by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) found there was no need for enforcement action.

The ICO's deputy commissioner of regulatory policy, Emily Keaney, said: "We wanted to reassure the public that there are rules to protect how personal information is used and shared, and we wanted to be clear that while police can disclose information to protect the public and investigate crime they would need to be able to demonstrate such disclosure was necessary and proportionate."

"We have now spoken with Lancashire police to better understand the steps they took before releasing information. We heard in those conversations the challenging nature



of considering whether and how to share personal information during fast-paced important cases. Based on our conversations with Lancashire police we don't consider this case requires enforcement action."

She said the ICO would give more details about its decision after the inquest in June into Bulley's death.

Separately, no action will be taken against an officer who attended Bulley's home two weeks before she went missing, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) has said. It has finished an investigation into



▲ Nicola Bulley, 45, went missing in January walking by the River Wyre

whether the callout on 10 January could have prevented the death of Bulley, who became a high-profile missing person after she disappeared near the River Wyre on 27 January.

The investigation found the officer could have recorded information better and should have activated his bodycam on the welfare call with the ambulance service, but that there had been no misconduct or wrongdoing.

But the IOPC said Lancashire constabulary should update its guidance for officers. Catherine Bates, the IOPC regional director, said: "Our investigation has identified important learning for the force."

Lancashire police said: "While we do have some procedural learning it is important to note that our attendance was in support of an ambulance deployment and the officer dealt with Nicola with compassion and empathy putting her care at the forefront of his decision making on that day."

A review commissioned by Andrew Snowden, Lancashire's police and crime commissioner, has begun and

will look at the operational response to the missing person investigation; communication with the media, public and family; and the decisions on disclosing sensitive personal information. The review is being done by the College of Policing.

The body of Bulley, a mortgage adviser, was found by members of the public three weeks after she disappeared while walking her dog in the village of St Michael's on Wyre.

In a statement after her body was identified, her family criticised the media and people who had accused her partner of wrongdoing and "misquoted and vilified" friends and family. The family singled out ITV and Sky News, the first to interview Bulley's partner, Paul Ansell.

During the investigation police put in place a dispersal order after TikTok and YouTube influencers arrived on the scene causing a nuisance to search teams. Hundreds traipsed through the beauty spot to take photos for social media or broke into buildings in the hope of finding her.

English councils underspending millions from childcare budget

Sally Weale
Education correspondent

MPs have expressed concern that local authorities in England are failing to pass on government funding for free childcare places to nurseries, after new research showed councils are holding back millions of pounds to offset deficits or add to reserves.

Freedom of information requests submitted by the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) revealed that more than 90 of 150 local education authorities (LEA) underspent almost £46m in total last year.

Fifteen LEAs underspent by at least £1m each, while five of those had underspent by a similar amount in two of the previous three years. The NDNA calculated that over the past four years there had been a £229m underspend of funds intended for providers of free childcare.

The issue was raised yesterday by MPs on the education select committee who are holding an inquiry into support for childcare and the early years, looking in particular at plans to extend free childcare, announced in the spring budget earlier this year.

Providers have long complained that the scheme is chronically underfunded. The fact councils are not passing on all of the funding provided by the Department for Education is a source of additional frustration.

The Local Government Association, representing local authorities in England and Wales, said: "Councils often face challenges in relation to when money is received from government and have to manage this to ensure providers receive funding. Where this is an underspend, this is also often reallocated according to local need, such as to support children with additional needs."

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Victims of forced adoption step up pressure on government for apology

Harriet Sherwood

Women who were forced to give up their babies for adoption in the 1950s, 60s and 70s are stepping up pressure on the UK government to issue a formal apology, following the lead of the Scottish parliament and Welsh assembly.

The women and the children they had to relinquish are urging MPs to demand that the government act on the recommendation of a parliamentary committee that called for a retrospective public apology for the violation of human rights and psychological trauma.

The Labour party is also expected to come under pressure to commit to issuing a formal apology should it win the next general election.

An estimated 185,000 women, most of them unmarried teenagers at the time, were coerced into having

their babies adopted between 1949 and 1976. Many were sent to mother and baby homes run by state, religious or charitable bodies, where they were made to feel shame and guilt, and some were required to do menial labour.

Last year, a parliamentary committee on human rights concluded that the government bore ultimate responsibility for the pain and suffering caused by public institutions and state employees involved in "cruel and brutal" forced adoptions. It called for an official government apology.

The UK government said it was sorry "on behalf of society for what happened" but has not formally apologised.

Michael Lambert, an academic specialising in the welfare state who gave evidence to the committee, said the mothers and their children were "the victims of a terrible injustice at the hands of the state". He said that



◀ Jill Killington in 2017 with Ian Pritchard, the son she had to give up for adoption in 1967
PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF JILL KILLINGTON

forced adoptions "would not have happened without the direction, sanction, financing, and organisation of the state".

"The central governments of the time not only supported, but determined and shaped forced adoption practices, and created the framework upon which local practice rested."

In March, Nicola Sturgeon, the

then Scottish first minister, issued a "sincere, heartfelt and unreserved" apology to those affected, saying it was time to "acknowledge the terrible wrongs that have been done".

Last month, the Welsh government said it was "truly sorry" for the "cruelty" of forced adoptions.

Jill Killington, 73, whose baby was adopted in 1967, said: "The UK

government has nowhere to hide after the apologies issued in Scotland and Wales. But it appears to have no empathy or understanding of the devastation caused to thousands of people. Westminster must now act before it's too late for some of the women whose lives were blighted."

Her son, Ian Pritchard, 55, said: "The government was at the centre of policies which caused such harm to birth mothers and their children, and yet it's refusing to take responsibility. It's an insult."

Helena Kennedy, one of Britain's most distinguished lawyers and a Labour peer, said: "England should apologise to the women who had babies taken from them with the state playing a role - although most of all, I think the churches and religions should be expressing shame at their role."

"The cruelty towards women who got pregnant was a disgrace," she said.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy, the Labour MP for Streatham, said: "Forced adoptions effectively sentenced hundreds of thousands of women to lives of secrecy and pain. A compassionate government would offer a full and meaningful apology for its failure to prevent the pain and suffering inflicted on mothers and their children by these practices."

Painful legacy 'I spent years being angry - so many of us were shamed'

Diana Defries 'When they took her, my knees gave way'

Defries was 16 when she became pregnant in 1974. "My relationship with my family was not good," she said. When the pregnancy was discovered, "all hell broke loose. There was tremendous concern about what the neighbours would think, but no one ever asked if I was OK."

Defries was sent to a mother and baby home run by nuns, where the girls were allocated tasks, mostly cleaning. When her labour began, she was taken to hospital alone in an ambulance. "I had no idea what to expect. My abiding memory was that no one spoke to me. I felt very isolated. When my daughter was born, a nurse just said: 'This one's flagged for adoption.'"

Defries said she has "lots of blanks" about the days that followed. "I felt disconnected from everything. I now know that's a classic response to trauma."

When the baby she called Stephanie was 12 days old, they were taken to the Crusade of Rescue, a Catholic institution, in west London. "When they took her away, my knees gave way. The following week, I was back at school, sworn to secrecy. I didn't tell anyone for years."



PHOTOGRAPH: MARK PAIN

▲ Veronica Smith stayed in a hostel during her pregnancy



▼ Jill Killington with her baby shortly before his adoption

When her daughter reached 18, she made contact with her birth mother and, after a "rollercoaster ride", the pair now had a special relationship, said Defries.

"I spent a lot of years being angry. Only later did I realise it was an injustice. So many of us were sworn to secrecy, shamed into silence. There are people still searching, still suffering loss and grief. Some are now quite elderly and still dealing with ongoing distress."

Ian Pritchard 'I was always looking for approval and fearing rejection'

Pritchard, 55, always knew he was adopted but it was a secret to be kept within his family. "I didn't look like my parents or my brother

[also adopted]. I was incredibly anxious as a child - always looking for approval and fearing rejection."

In adulthood, he suffered from mental health problems and chronic alcohol misuse. It was when he sought treatment that he understood "my identity disconnection, my feelings of loss and self-loathing were linked to my adoption".

Jill Killington, his birth mother, had become pregnant at 16. The family's GP put her parents in touch with a social worker from the Church Army, who liaised with an adoption society. Killington was not consulted nor given the option of keeping her baby, born in 1967.

When her son turned 18, Killington put her details on a

contact register and, nine years later, Pritchard wrote to her. Killington travelled to New Zealand, where Pritchard lives, for his 50th birthday and wedding day.

"Meeting was incredibly intense," he said. "It's very difficult to describe what it's like to be in the presence for the first time of the person who gave birth to you. I felt a very powerful connection." When his birth mother had to return to the UK, "it was like losing her again", he said. Now the pair are in regular contact "like any other parent and child".

Veronica Smith 'When I left the hospital, my brain shut off'

Smith was 24 and working at Butlin's when she became pregnant in 1964. She asked her mother, a devout Catholic, and her sister for help. They arranged for her to go to a hostel in south London run by the Crusade of Rescue, where Smith stayed for six months, doing housework and scrubbing floors.

Her baby, whom she named Angela, was born in a private hospital. "I still don't know who paid for it," she said.

"When I left the hospital, my brain shut off, I didn't think about it much. I only told one friend," she said. But in the late 1980s, Smith had a breakdown and her grief "flooded out".

Her daughter, whose adoptive family had emigrated to Canada, made contact in 2002, and two years later they met. "It took a long time for [the relationship] to grow, but this year has been the best," said Smith.

Now 82, she attended the Scottish parliament when Nicola Sturgeon made a formal apology. "It was beautifully worded and beautifully delivered." The UK government should "get on and do it too," she said. **Harriet Sherwood**

GB News censured after author Wolf compares vaccine to mass murder

Jim Waterson

GB News breached the broadcasting code when it allowed Naomi Wolf to repeatedly compare the Covid-19 vaccine to mass murder without being challenged.

The US author made an appearance last October on Mark Steyn's GB News show and claimed that the vaccine rollout amounted to a premeditated crime, saying it was comparable with the actions of "doctors in pre-Nazi Germany".

Yesterday, the media regulator, Ofcom, said it was particularly concerned by Wolf's "significant and alarming claim" that mass murder was taking place through vaccinations, which she repeated three times without significant inclusion of contrary views. Ofcom said GB News "fell short" of the requirement to protect audiences from potentially harmful content by "allowing Naomi Wolf to

promote a serious conspiracy theory without challenge or context".

In its defence, the channel argued that its audience had different expectations because "GB News has a different approach from many other factual channels". It said it promoted "controversial and contrarian [views] as a way of provoking thoughtful questioning and debate and re-evaluation of important issues".

This is the second significant breach of the broadcasting code recorded by GB News and the media regulator is requesting the broadcaster attends a meeting "to discuss its approach to compliance". However, there is no indication Ofcom will impose a financial penalty as the regulator struggles to deal with new upstart channels pushing the limits of the broadcasting code.

GB News also argued that it did not defend Wolf's views as the "literal truth", but her comments were protected as freedom of expression under the European convention on



▼ Naomi Wolf, the US author, told The Mark Steyn Show that the Covid jab rollout was a premeditated crime
PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE MCGREGOR/THE GUARDIAN

human rights. It also said that as a Jewish woman Wolf believed the comparison with doctors in Nazi Germany was "not excessive and a reasonable comparison".

It argued that it was a mistake to claim that "outspoken and combative language advocating a view that

'A serious conspiracy theory was promoted without challenge'

Ofcom ruling

seems outside the bounds of 'polite discourse' must be harmful".

It comes two months after the watchdog ruled an episode of the Steyn show which aired last April broke its broadcasting rules and was "potentially harmful and materially misleading" with an "incorrect claim" that UK Health Security Agency data provided evidence of a "definitive causal link" between a third Covid-19 vaccine and higher rates of infection, death and people being admitted to hospital.

Ofcom said of the latest investigation: "It is important to stress that in line with the right to freedom of expression, broadcasters are free to

transmit programmes that include controversial and challenging views, including about Covid-19 vaccines or conspiracy theories. However, the broadcasting code imposes a clear requirement that if such content has the potential to be harmful, the broadcaster must ensure that its audience is adequately protected.

"Our investigation concluded that GB News fell short of this requirement by allowing Naomi Wolf to promote a serious conspiracy theory without challenge or context."

Ofcom said it received 422 complaints that alleged Wolf's comments were "dangerous" and included misinformation that went unopposed.

The regulator insisted it recognised the author's right to hold her views and opinions, GB News's right to broadcast them, and its audience's right to receive them: "We emphasise that the code does not prohibit these views and opinions from being broadcast. However, defining content as opinion does not remove the requirement under the code for the broadcaster to ensure that audiences are appropriately protected from potentially harmful material."

Steyn quit GB News in February after the channel tried to make him personally responsible for any fines levied by Ofcom against his broadcasts, having repeatedly railed against the media regulator and claimed it was acting as a state censor.

Jan would move mountains for cancer patients in Northampton. For Derek, she moved his fish.

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Council flat tenant takes fight against 'social cleansing' to the high court

Emily Dugan

A woman who has lived on the same council estate for 30 years has taken developers and her local authority to the high court over plans to demolish her home.

Aysen Dennis, 64, is fighting to keep her two-bedroom council flat on the south London estate and says plans for redevelopment amount to "social cleansing".

The landmark case concerns the Aylesbury estate, once the location of more than 2,000 council homes. It follows the wider trend of social housing being replaced with expensive private properties.

The second phase of a project to bulldoze and rebuild what was once one of Europe's largest council estates is controversial because it proposes cutting the number of social-rented homes in favour of shared and private ownership.

There are 327 social rented homes and a further 46 sold under right to buy on the site. The proposal is to replace them with 614 new homes, only 163 of which would be socially rented, though 50% will be classed as "affordable".

Southwark council and Notting Hill Genesis are named in the claim filed at the high court in London yesterday. The claim argues that the council was acted unlawfully

in granting an application to tweak the wording of the original planning permission to regenerate the estate, making it easier to wave through changes to the masterplan.

Dennis told the Guardian: "It's more profit for the developers because they keep changing the planning application for the developers to make more money ... It's not just concrete walls and profit. What about the human beings who are affected by all this gentrification?"

Lawyers say those made to leave their homes since the project started were not consulted on plans that differ from the original permission. Gains by residents - such as restricting the height of buildings to 20 storeys - could be lost with a 25-storey all-private tower, which is the proposed centrepiece of the next building work.

Saskia O'Hara, of the Public Interest Law Centre, said: "Developers should not be able to sidestep the findings of the supreme court and have a free pass to change what was promised to residents in the historic planning permission."

A Notting Hill Genesis spokesperson said they were considering the court documents and were "very proud" of the next phase of the project to deliver "high-quality, safe, energy efficient and warm homes to replace the existing homes which are no longer fit for purpose".

Kieron Williams, the leader of Southwark council, said: "We're building these replacements because the original homes on the estate were badly built in the 60s. All of the phases meet or exceed our planning policy requirement for half of the development to be affordable homes."

"We measure this by the total number of 'habitable rooms', because our residents need family-sized homes and councils that just count the number of homes end up with lots of one- and two-bed flats that are no good to families."



'While it is right that the fabric of the building is restored, we must ensure people are informed'

Robert Seatter
BBCHistory

◀ A man hit Eric Gill's Prospero and Ariel sculpture with a hammer after writing 'time to go was 1989' and 'noose all paedos' on it in January 2022

PHOTOGRAPH: IAN WEST/PA WIRE

BBC to repair Gill sculpture damaged by protester

Tim Jonze

The BBC will begin restoring the Eric Gill sculpture outside its London headquarters after it was vandalised in 2022.

The work, commissioned to depict Prospero and Ariel from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, was attacked with a hammer by a protester last year. There have long been calls

to remove public works by Gill after his private diaries - published half a century after the artist's death in 1940 - revealed he had sexually abused his two eldest daughters.

Gill's sculpture was carved onsite for Broadcasting House in 1931 and 1932, one of many high-profile commissions awarded to the sculptor during his lifetime.

The work caused a degree of controversy at the time over the size of the sprite's genitalia; Gill later said that he didn't understand why the Shakespearean characters were relevant and that his statue actually depicted God and Jesus.

Despite his keen interest in religion and pious appearance, Gill's private diaries revealed a life of sexual deviancy. As well as the abuse of his daughters, they documented an incestuous relationship with at least

one of his sisters and sexual activity with the family dog.

After the publication of this information in Fiona MacCarthy's 1989 biography, calls have increased for the removal of Gill's public artworks.

In a statement, the head of BBC History, Robert Seatter, said: "Gill's abusive behaviour and lifestyle are well documented and the BBC in no way condones his behaviour. So while it is right that the fabric of the building is restored, we must also ensure people are fully informed about the history connected to it."

When the work is complete it will be accompanied by a QR code that will provide context on the statue.

Rape Crisis offers support on 0808 500 2222 in England and Wales, 0808 801 0302 in Scotland, or 0800 0246 991 in Northern Ireland.



▲ Aysen Dennis says the Aylesbury estate plans keep changing for profit

Landlords 'profiting from letting bad housing to most vulnerable'

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Landlords are profiting from letting bad housing to vulnerable people, the National Audit Office has found.

Gaps in regulation allow owners to profit by providing costly supported housing "with little or no support", the spending watchdog said.

There are an estimated 650,000 supported homes in Britain, with sheltered accommodation for elderly people accounting for the majority. Supported accommodation is also supposed to provide supervision and care for recovering drug addicts, former prisoners, homeless people and victims of domestic abuse.

MPs have warned it is attracting "unscrupulous" landlords as it is

exempt from limits on housing benefit payments, allowing for high rents.

Landlords are engaged in an exploitative "gold rush" as part of a £3.5bn-a-year system that is "a complete mess", the commons select committee on levelling up, housing and communities said last year.

The Guardian has previously reported that police believe criminals are buying properties and setting them up as supported accommodation but providing little to no support.

Gangs can earn hundreds of thousands of pounds a month, West Midlands police have said.

The NAO reported that Hull city

council found 323 hazards classed as a serious and immediate health and safety risk in the 345 supported housing units it inspected from April 2019 to January 2022. Between April 2019 and September 2021, Birmingham city council recovered £3.6m in fraudulent overpayments to supported landlords.

Meg Hillier, the chair of the

£3.6m

Fraudulent payments recovered in Birmingham that were made to supported housing landlords

commons public accounts committee, called on the government to help councils solve the problem caused by gaps in regulation, which come "at great expense to the taxpayer".

No organisation is fully responsible for overseeing supported housing. Local authorities can inspect properties and challenge the housing costs claimed but may lack resources. Not all providers are required to register with the regulator of social housing.

The department of housing is aware of the problem, the NAO said. It provided £5.4m to local authorities to test measures to improve quality in supported housing.

NHS has missed target to reduce record-breaking care backlog, Barclay says

Denis Campbell

Health policy editor

A key government pledge to reduce the size of the NHS's record-breaking care backlog has been broken, the health secretary has admitted.

Steve Barclay slipped out the news in a Commons statement yesterday about a totally unrelated area of NHS policy - his new plan to improve access to GP care.

He disclosed to MPs that the NHS in England had missed its target to ensure that patients who have been waiting 18 months for an operation in hospital would be treated by April.

It is thought about 10,000 people who had been waiting for at least 78 weeks were still languishing on the 7.2 million-strong waiting list, awaiting their surgery, at the end of April.

The failure to eradicate 18-month waits for care is embarrassing for Rishi Sunak, who made "cut waiting lists" one of his five key pledges and insisted as recently as January

that the promise on 18-month waits, which NHS England and the then health secretary, Sajid Javid, first made in the elective surgery recovery plan last year, would be honoured.

It came as NHS England was reportedly working on plans to allow tens of thousands of doctors and nurses to train on the job under plans to tackle workforce shortages.

It is expected that the much-anticipated NHS workforce plan will see the number of medics trained via the apprenticeship route ramped up, with up to one in 10 doctors and a third of nurses potentially being trained this way in coming years.

The head of the NHS encouraged school-leavers to "earn while they learn" through the NHS apprenticeship schemes. Amanda Pritchard,

10,000

Number of people who have been waiting at least 78 weeks for surgery on the 7.2m-strong waitlist

Additional reporting PA Media

chief executive of the NHS in England, told pupils at her former school that "tens of thousands" of doctors and nurses would be able to train as apprentices in the coming years.

Barclay's admission was the second broken pledge on improving NHS care made by a health minister yesterday. Earlier, Neil O'Brien, a junior health minister, had conceded that the target to hire 6,000 more GPs by 2024 - originally set by Boris Johnson - would be missed.

In February 2022, NHS England insisted in its elective recovery plan it would eliminate all two-year waits for planned care by July last year, 18-month delays by April 2023 and waits of at least a year by March 2025. However, since then it has downgraded that commitment to a pledge to "virtually eliminate" 24- and 18-month waits by those dates.

But yesterday Barclay told MPs that about one in 10 of the 120,000 people who had been waiting for 18 months in September 2021 had still not been treated. He said: "Last year, we launched the elective recovery plan, which is making big strides to reduce the backlog brought by Covid.

"We eliminated nearly all waits of over two years by last July and now 18-month waits have decreased by over 90% since their peak in September 2021."

Police failed to warn woman before ex-partner stabbed her

Haroon Siddique

Legal affairs correspondent

A police force breached its duty of care to a woman by failing to warn her that her abusive ex-partner was outside her house minutes before he stabbed her seven times in front of her children, the high court found.

Esengul Woodcock's neighbour made a 999 call to Northamptonshire police about 13 minutes before the attack, on 19 March 2015, informing officers that Riza Guzelyurt was loitering outside Woodcock's house, but the force did not pass on the warning.

When Woodcock left her house, she was stabbed at least seven times. Guzelyurt, who had a long history of harassment and attacks on her that was known to police, was later convicted of attempted murder and imprisoned for life.

Woodcock's claim to sue the police was initially rejected at the county court but, in a judgment published yesterday, Mr Justice Ritchie found

the lower court was wrong to find Northamptonshire police neither owed Woodcock a duty of care nor had breached it.

Ritchie wrote: "[Guzelyurt] had tried twice already that night to storm the claimant's house. In the last two days he had threatened to kill her and sexually rape her children, caused criminal damage to her car, breached bail at her work and in the town, and was focusing on attacking her home."

"In my judgment there would be little point in advising the claimant to ask neighbours to keep watch for RG and to tell the claimant or the police, if the police were then going to keep any such report secret from the claimant at the precise time when the claimant was due to leave the house to go to work."

Guzelyurt had carried out two alleged assaults on Woodcock, been arrested three times and breached bail conditions preventing him from contacting her or going to her home. By late evening of 18 March 2015, the police had decided to arrest him.

'He had tried twice that night to storm the claimant's house'

Mr Justice Ritchie
High court judge

SUDAN EMERGENCY

YOU CAN HELP MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN FLEEING THE VIOLENCE

Following the outbreak of violence in Sudan, tens of thousands of people have fled fierce fighting in Khartoum, the Darfur region and other parts of the country.

This crisis is fast-changing and unpredictable, but **UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has the reach, partners and local knowledge to get aid through to refugees and people forced to flee.** UNHCR's work in Sudan and surrounding countries, however, was already critically underfunded before the present conflict broke out. We need your support to help replenish emergency supplies and get them to people who need them.

An urgent gift of £82 could help provide people fleeing the conflict with protection and essentials like shelter and clean water.

At least 20,000 Sudanese refugees have arrived in neighbouring Chad, the vast majority of whom are women and children. Many more are expected to arrive over the next few days. People are sleeping out in the open or under trees and urgently need protection and lifesaving essentials, medical care, food and water. UNHCR has deployed emergency teams along the border to provide emergency support and is currently working to identify locations to safely host additional arrivals.

Over 10,000 refugees from South Sudan have had to return hastily to their own country to escape the violence. Many more are heading to the border on foot. UNHCR teams on the ground are working with local and national authorities to set up reception centres in preparation for their arrival.

Many more are moving to other neighbouring countries. UNHCR is working closely with partners to support those who have arrived and prepare in the event of more people fleeing.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi has said:

"UNHCR, together with the rest of the UN, remains in Sudan in support of its people. It continues to operate wherever it has safe access and is also using some of the community networks established during the pandemic. UNHCR intends to scale up operations everywhere in Sudan as soon as possible."

The situation is volatile and extremely worrying, but with a gift of £82 today, or whatever you can afford, you could help to save lives.

£82 could help provide shelter, clean water and protection to people fleeing the violence in Sudan.

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unrefugees.org.uk/sudan-guardian

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P23SUAGU1

Sick children suffer as firm fails to send vital NHS medicines

Andrew Gregory
Health editor

Children with serious health conditions are getting sicker as a result of persistent failings by Sciensus, a private company paid millions by the NHS to deliver essential medication, the Guardian can reveal.

Parents of sick children say they have repeatedly been let down by botched, delayed or missed deliveries, while NHS clinicians warn some are suffering harm as a result.

Sciensus failed to send injections to Autumn Powell, an eight-year-old girl with Crohn's disease, four times this year, according to her mother, Dallas Powell. As a result, she suffered stomach cramping, pain and fatigue, and has been off school.

"It makes me mad, frustrated, but mostly it's heartbreaking seeing my child suffering - and feeling helpless," Powell said. "I am not one to complain publicly, but this is serious."

Autumn's NHS doctor had to take emergency action. He prescribed steroids in an attempt to get her symptoms under control while waiting for injections from Sciensus. Originally due on 31 March, then 12 April, then 17 April, then 1 May, the company failed to deliver them on all four dates.

After being presented with the findings, Sciensus launched an investigation. It said it would learn lessons. Within hours of the Guardian approaching the company, Autumn's first injection was delivered.

"Sciensus has added so much unnecessary stress to our lives, when we were already struggling with accepting our daughter's diagnosis," said Powell, 30, from Somerset. "It's unbelievable and it's shocking."

Asked about the case, Sarah Sleet, the chief executive of Crohn's & Colitis UK, a charity, said Autumn's experience was "really upsetting".

"If you're trying to manage a condition like Crohn's and you don't get the medicines you need when you need them, you can become very unwell very quickly," she added. "Some people may even end up needing emergency hospital treatment. Sadly, this family's story is not unique."

In a complaint to the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the regulator, three NHS paediatric clinicians working at two of the UK's largest children's hospitals have raised a number of concerns about Sciensus.

Medicines ordered by the NHS to be sent urgently to sick children have

► 'It's heartbreaking': Autumn Powell, eight, from Somerset, who has Crohn's disease, with her parents, Bruce and Dallas Powell

PHOTOGRAPH:
POWELL FAMILY



been delayed or never arrive, they said. Parents of those with serious health conditions also experience difficulties with the company's app. In some cases Sciensus did not respond to emails and calls about children's missing medicines.

The complaint, seen by the Guardian, said some children experienced a flaring of their disease after delivery delays. The problems added to the already heavy workload of NHS staff at the two children's hospitals, the complaint said, and took clinicians away from treating other patients in order to deal with Sciensus.

Finley Smith, a four-year-old boy with severe haemophilia A, has suffered recurring problems with Sciensus for three years since 2020 when he was 12 months old, his

mother, Charlotte Smith, said. When Sciensus delivered his medication chilled instead of at room temperature, it became unusable and had to be ditched.

"They said they would put in place a safeguard so this didn't happen again," said Smith, 28, from Cornwall. However, the medicines have arrived chilled at least five times since then.

Finley has also been sent out-of-date items by Sciensus. After his parents complained and asked for replacements, he was sent more out-of-date items. Deliveries of essential medication have been abruptly cancelled or simply not turned up "many times", Smith said, repeatedly putting his son's health at risk.

Short of options, some parents have raised the alarm about Sciensus

via social media. One mother said her daughter, diagnosed with cancer, had missed eight weeks of hormone therapy because of the company.

The revelations come after a Guardian investigation last month exposed serious and significant complaints by patients, clinicians and health groups about Sciensus. In response, the CQC said it was reviewing concerns raised about the company.

Another watchdog, the parliamentary and health service ombudsman, has received 18 official requests from patients to examine grievances against Sciensus since August last year, but has not begun any investigations, according to a person familiar with the matter.

In the wake of the Guardian investigation, more than 100 patients have been in touch to complain about the company.

In a statement, Sciensus said that if any patient had concerns, they should contact the company. "We know how important it is for people to get their medicine on time and we have a range of support services to help patients, including a priority helpline and same-day emergency dispensing and delivery," a spokesperson said.

"We are very sorry for the distress that Autumn, Finley and their families have faced as a result of these delays and difficulties."

"We have launched an immediate investigation into these issues, and will be working with clinicians in their local hospital to find out what went wrong. We will take the lessons learned from these cases and ensure it doesn't happen again."



▲ Finley Smith, four, who has haemophilia A, with his parents, Charlotte and Richard. Sciensus sent him unusable medication PHOTOGRAPH: SMITH FAMILY

Kensington buys art for wealthy area despite stark inequalities

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

One of Britain's most unequal boroughs is spending hundreds of thousands of pounds in social infrastructure funds on sculptures and security patrols for wards filled with multimillion-pound homes.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has agreed to spend £226,000 on an artwork outside a luxury development where two-bedroom flats sell for close to £2m. It is also spending £50,000 erecting a sculpture by Sir Eduardo Paolozzi off Kings Road.

In 2021 and 2022, £173,000 went on community safety wardens to patrol wards including Holland as well as Brompton and Hans Town where a terrace house recently sold for £33m.

The spending has prompted accusations that the London borough is failing to level up. Close to 70% of households in the poorest wards in the north, where Grenfell Tower is located, suffer deprivation, according to the latest census. In the south fewer than a quarter are deprived.

The funds come from planning agreements with developers - known as S106 and neighbourhood community infrastructure levy (CIL) - for "local infrastructure". Government guidance suggests projects such as affordable housing, in the case of S106, and play areas, healthcare facilities and schools for CIL.

Over the past two years, neighbourhood CIL spent in Conservative wards has been 10 times higher than in the more deprived wards of Labour and Liberal Democrat councillors, Guardian analysis of spending shows.

The council has agreed to allow Berkeley Homes to use £226,000 from its own S106 payments to erect a 3.5m high bronze sculpture by the artist Nick Hornby at the entrance to a development of 375 apartments at Royal Warwick Square. The sculpture will "sit right at the heart of the scheme, providing a point of curiosity", the developer has said. The council said some S106 money was collected specifically for public art.

The council has also allocated £94,606 from planning payments for a second Hornby sculpture at De Vere Gardens and £54,000 for a Paolozzi sculpture of Oscar Wilde at Dovehouse Green, Chelsea.



▲ Luxury terrace homes in Holland Park, Kensington, west London

The 100% mortgage Risky loan or lifeline out of high rents trap?

Rupert Jones



One of Britain's biggest building societies could definitely have picked a better day to launch a first-of-its-kind 100% mortgage.

Yesterday morning, just as the press release was being sent out and Skipton building society boss Stuart Haire was preparing for his BBC Radio 4 Today programme interview, Halifax reported that average UK house prices fell in April, by 0.3% month on month, and that "we should expect some further downward pressure on house prices over the course of this year". To add to the gloom, the struggling online estate agent Purplebricks reported worsening trading; there was a profit warning from another firm reliant on the housing sector; and the share price of many housebuilders fell.

Skipton's new mortgage is the UK's first 100% home loan for renters. It has been described by some as a "revolutionary" way to help people off the high rents treadmill and into home ownership, and by others as not too dissimilar to the risky loans that contributed to the 2007-08 financial crash.

Wherever you stand, yesterday's wave of news throws the spotlight on the danger of this type of deal: even a small fall in house prices would trap borrowers in properties worth less than their mortgages.

Standard home loans where the borrower does not have to put down a deposit used to be fairly commonplace - there were deals that let you borrow up to 125% of a property's value - but the last was axed in 2008. The financial crisis ushered in a clampdown on easy credit and lax lending and led to much tighter rules on borrowing.

There are a lot of hoops that applicants for the new 100% deal

will have to jump through. Notably, the monthly mortgage payment must be equal to or lower than the rent they are paying. Tenants paying an average of £1,290 a month over the last six months will have a maximum monthly mortgage payment of £1,290. This will also determine the maximum amount they can borrow.

Applicants also have to meet the standard mortgage affordability requirements and pass credit score checks. In an attempt to iron out potential volatility, the mortgage has been designed as a longer-term

'It's like we've learned nothing from the global financial crisis'

Graham Cox
Mortgage broker

product - it is a five-year fixed-rate deal - and the 5.49% interest rate is pricier than the average five-year fixed-rate, which is now about 5%.

Most mortgage brokers were reasonably or very positive about the new deal. David Hollingworth, an associate director at the broker firm L&C Mortgages, said it "offers a measured approach that gives credit for the fact that many tenants will have built up a strong track record of managing their housing costs responsibly".

But some commentators raised red flags. Graham Cox, founder of the Bristol-based broker Self Employed Mortgage Hub, said he was "amazed" that regulators had given Skipton the go-ahead to launch the product. "It's like we've learned nothing from the global financial crisis," he added.

A great deal depends on what happens to the housing market. There's no agreement even on how it is faring now: while Halifax said property prices fell last month after three consecutive months of growth, rival Nationwide said they rose in April (by 0.5%) after seven months of declines.

However, an interest rate rise by the Bank of England on Thursday this week, which is widely anticipated and would be the 12th in a row, would pile more pressure on many would-be buyers.



King of spades

King Charles breaks ground yesterday on Cambridge University's £58m New Whittle Laboratory, named after jet engine inventor Sir Frank Whittle, dedicated to net zero aviation and energy technology.



PHOTOGRAPH:
JOE GIDDENS/
GETTY IMAGES

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John Lewis boss faces confidence vote as firm looks to raise funds

Sarah Butler

The boss of John Lewis will face a confidence vote by staff members today as the business considers the option of raising funds by selling a stake in the business.

Sharon White is considering looking at radical ways to bring in outside investment of up to £2bn as a way to secure the future of the John Lewis Partnership (JLP), partly by diversifying into building flats for rent above shops, after reporting hefty losses from its chain of department stores and Waitrose supermarkets.

Today the former top civil servant, who joined the retailer three years ago, will give an update to the 61 members of the John Lewis Partnership council. A governing body made up of shop floor staff elected by the company's workers, the council is gathering for a two-day meeting at the retailer's Odney Club holiday retreat in Berkshire.

The meeting, a "holding to account session", takes place after each of the two half-yearly financial reports.

The votes are symbolic rather than binding, however they can be influential as the business is owned by its staff and the council has the power to oust the chairman if it sees fit.

The council members represent the interests of the group's 74,000 workers, passed to them via dozens of smaller forums representing the two retail brands around the country.

The partnership has been owned by its employees since the 1920s, meaning they have a democratic say in how things are run and receive an annual bonus based on profits. It is a set-up credited with motivating staff and helping it become a stalwart of the British high street.

White believes the group's retail arm can no longer sustain the profit levels needed to pay a regular bonus to employees. She wants capital to expand into financial services and build to rent above Waitrose stores.

Last year the group slid £234m into the red, despite £12bn of sales, forcing it to scrap its staff bonus this year for only the second time since 1953.

£234m

Losses for John Lewis last year, despite £12bn of sales, forcing it to scrap its staff bonus this year

Polly Toynbee: My family and other radicals

Join Guardian columnist Polly Toynbee in conversation with Guardian chief culture writer Charlotte Higgins at this livestreamed event.

Coming from a long line of radicals and reformers, Toynbee has wrestled with the contradictions of being middle class while championing socialism. In this event, she'll be discussing her new book, *An Uneasy Inheritance*, and what it reveals about social mobility in Britain today.

Wednesday 31 May, 8pm-9pm

Online

The Guardian Live

Upcoming events

An evening with Munroe Bergdorf

For pride month, the renowned activist, model and writer will be in conversation with the former gal-dem editor-in-chief, Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff.

Wednesday 7 June, 8pm-9pm

Faiza Shaheen: How society sets us up to fail

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PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN PARR/MAGNUM PHOTOS



World

Russian missiles shot down over Kyiv as Putin delivers angry Victory Day speech



▲ Security were on alert after the Kremlin drone attack

Pjotr Sauer

Russian cruise missiles exploded in the air over Kyiv as Vladimir Putin marked the anniversary of victory over the Nazis with another attack on Ukraine.

Speaking at a noticeably scaled-back military parade in Moscow's Red Square to celebrate the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany, the Russian president said the "survival of the Russian people" depended on the war in Ukraine, as he used his speech to defend his invasion of the country.

"Today, civilisation is again at a decisive turning point. A real war has been unleashed against us again," Putin said as he gave an angry speech in which he drew false parallels between today's fight with Ukraine's "criminal regime" and the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945.

"We are proud of the participants of the special military operation. The future of our people depends on you," Putin said, standing on the Red Square podium.

He also blamed the west for "destroying traditional values" and propagandising a "system of robbery and violence", saying: "The goal of our enemies, and there is nothing new here, is to achieve the disintegration and destruction of our country."

The largely familiar tone framed the war in Ukraine as a defensive battle by Russia. "Here is to our victory!" he said before leaving the podium.

Victory Day, when Russians celebrate the end of the "great patriotic war", has emerged as the centrepiece of Putin's vision of Russian identity over his 23 years in charge.

Security concerns cast a shadow this year after two drones attacked the Kremlin last week. More than 20 cities across the country had scrapped their parades, including those several thousands of miles from the frontlines.

The traditional flyover in Moscow and St Petersburg was cancelled on Monday and the parade in the Russian capital was shorter than in previous years.

Observers also noticed that this year's parade featured significantly less heavy modern equipment than in years past - and only one Soviet-era tank - a sign the war in Ukraine has inflicted a heavy toll on the military.

"As I expected, the Kremlin tried to hide the severe damage to the army but it's too much to hide," said Dara



▲ One tank from the Soviet era leads the parade, with the lack of modern equipment a sign the war with Ukraine is taking its toll

PHOTOGRAPH:
PELAGIA TIKHONOVA/
MOSCOW NEWS/AP

◀ Left, Russians dance during the Victory Day celebrations in Moscow
► Vladimir Putin strolls across Red Square with leaders of allied neighbours



Copenhagen
Mayor's threat to shut down 'Pusher Street'
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Mistaken identity?
Activists say bear was not jogger's killer
Page 28



Massicot, a senior policy researcher at the Rand Corporation thinktank.

More than 500 Russian soldiers who fought in Ukraine were present at the parade, state media said.

The Russian president did receive a late PR boost on Monday when the heads of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Armenia – three post-Soviet countries that Moscow strives to keep in its orbit – announced they would attend the military parade on Red Square alongside the heads of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

One of Putin's key allies during the Ukraine war, the Belarusian leader, Alexander Lukashenko, also attended, but he skipped lunch amid health concerns. Lukashenko appeared tired and had a bandage on his right hand.

All foreign leaders stayed away from the Victory Day parade last year, which took place two months after the start of the invasion.

Putin's speech came hours after his country launched another barrage of cruise missiles at Ukraine. The country said its air defences shot down 23 of 25 missiles fired at the capital, Kyiv, and reported no casualties.

Ukraine's air force said on the Telegram messaging app: "Overnight into the 'sacred' 9 May, [they] launched an attack on the territory of Ukraine."

Serhiy Popko, the head of the Kyiv city military administration, said the Russians were trying to kill civilians. He added: "As at the front, the plans of the aggressor failed."

Russia's latest missile barrage came as both sides appeared to be preparing for a widely expected Ukrainian offensive that Kyiv hopes will help recapture territory lost since the start of the war.

The Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, described Moscow's shelling as an attempt to demonstrate some military successes after Russia's winter offensive stalled.

"Russia ... needs to sell something to their society," Zelenskiy said, speaking at a press conference in Kyiv alongside the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, who travelled to the city yesterday.

"They were not able to sell Bakhmut to their society because they were not able to capture Bakhmut," Zelenskiy said, referring to the besieged eastern Ukrainian city that Moscow has been trying to capture for months.

The head of Russia's Wagner group militia, Yevgeny Prigozhin, whose troops have been engaged in the bloody fighting for Bakhmut, blamed the country's defence ministry yesterday for the abandonment of positions near the city, in his latest attack against the military top brass.

Von der Leyen said Ukraine was "on the frontline of the defence of everything we Europeans cherish: our liberty, our democracy, our freedom of thought and speech", describing Kyiv as "the beating heart of today's European values".

"Ukraine is fighting for the ideals of Europe that we celebrate today. In Russia, Putin and his regime have destroyed these values," she said.

Analysis
Pjotr Sauer

Old grievances recycled in Red Square but a slimmer parade reveals losses on the battlefield

A tumultuous year of fighting has passed since Vladimir Putin last addressed Russian soldiers in Red Square, Moscow, to mark the country's victory over the Nazis. But the Russian president's Victory Day message to the nation yesterday was nearly identical to that of last year as he cast the war in Ukraine as an existential battle against an aggressive, Russophobic and "woke" west.

"Today, civilisation is again at a decisive turning point. A real war has been unleashed against us again," Putin said as he delivered an angry yet somewhat routine speech in which he drew false parallels between today's fight with Ukraine's "criminal regime" and the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945.

Putin also recycled some of his other go-to grievances, blaming "western globalist elites" for "destroying the family" and "traditional values". What he left unspoken was the battering his army had received over the last 12 months in Ukraine, which was revealed by the scaled-down military parade.

In the run-up to the celebrations, the Russian defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, pledged that the parade would feature 125 military vehicles and 10,000 personnel. But on the day 8,000 soldiers marched, the lowest figure since 2008, while analysts counted only

51 military vehicles in Red Square, less than twice the number of the year before. The only tank seen was a second world war T-34. Like last year the traditional flypast was cancelled in both Moscow and St Petersburg, but while the authorities previously blamed the weather there was no official comment this time. Instead, police were sporting portable anti-drone weapons, a reminder of last week's dramatic drone attack on the Kremlin, just steps away from the celebration.

For all its visual shortcomings the parade did present the Kremlin with the chance to demonstrate its ability to court foreign visitors in the face of western isolation. This year the heads of the five central Asian states sat alongside Putin.

But beyond this symbolic showing, the Kremlin on the day was unable to present its population with a tangible military victory in Ukraine. Ukrainian officials said Russia had recently intensified shelling of the besieged city of Bakhmut, hoping to take it by yesterday. But Volodymyr Zelenskiy said Russia had failed to do so, as Kyiv continued preparations for its own counteroffensive.

Instead, the Russian military leadership was treated to a new tirade by the Wagner mercenary group head, Yevgeny Prigozhin, who yesterday blamed the defence ministry for abandoned positions in Bakhmut. Prigozhin had said he had received only 10% of ammunition promised. "Happy Victory Day to all of our grandfathers but what we are celebrating is a big question," he said, warning that Moscow was not prepared for a Ukrainian offensive. "Stop fucking about on the Red Square," he added.



Russia's military was treated to a tirade by Wagner's head, saying 'happy victory day but what we are celebrating is a big question'



◀ The MEP Sophie in 't Veld said EU leaders had failed to hold member states to account on spyware. 'Everybody is quiet about it. I find it shocking'

EU told to tighten spyware rules in wake of Pegasus surveillance revelations

Jennifer Rankin
Brussels

The EU needs tighter regulation of the spyware industry, a European parliament special committee has said, after concluding that Hungary and Poland had used surveillance software to illegally monitor journalists, politicians and activists.

The committee voted on Monday for a temporary ban on the sale, acquisition and use of spyware while the bloc draws up EU standards based on international law. The moratorium would be lifted only on strict conditions, including investigations into the abuse of spyware in the EU.

The committee found Hungary and Poland's nationalist governments had "weakened and eliminated" safeguards on spyware, "effectively leaving victims without any meaningful remedy".

MEPs also raised questions about the use of the spyware in Spain and Greece, while voicing concern that many EU member states had created a "safe haven for the spyware industry, often in violation of union laws and standards".

The non-binding vote is one of the most comprehensive responses by lawmakers to the Pegasus project, revelations by a journalist consortium that governments used spyware to target domestic opponents, foreign politicians and reporters.

The lead author of the report, the Dutch centrist MEP Sophie in 't Veld, said all member states were guilty of silence on the issue. In an interview before the vote, she said EU leaders had failed to hold Hungary, Poland and other states to account on spyware.

"It's so basic: opposition, scrutiny, criticism, dissent. These are vital elements of a democracy. And they're

being throttled, and everybody is quiet about it. I find it shocking."

The MEP accused national governments of hiding behind arguments that national security was not in the purview of the EU. "That is not a blank cheque for violating the rights of our citizens or destroying democracy."

She also highlighted how EU governments appeared to have granted export licences, enabling spyware companies to sell their wares to repressive regimes.

According to the report, a company in Greece was said to be exporting its products to Sudan, Bangladesh, Madagascar and at least one Arab country, while two French businesses were being prosecuted for exporting surveillance technology to Libya, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

The committee said such actions were "a severe violation of fundamental rights" and "a gross violation" of EU export rules, namely the "dual-use regulation", which prohibits sales of products that can be used by authoritarian regimes to repress their people.

In 't Veld told the Guardian: "The European Commission is so afraid to piss off the national governments that it just refuses to enforce."

The MEPs' resolution also concluded the EU's foreign service, the European External Action Service, was guilty of breaking EU law and of maladministration by helping countries in the Sahel develop surveillance capabilities. Its recommendations are expected to be approved by the full European parliament next month.

The committee was set up after the Guardian, as part of a consortium of 80 journalists working with the non-profit group Forbidden Stories, revealed politicians and activists were being targeted by governments that had bought Pegasus spyware from the Israeli business NSO Group.

At the time of the revelations, NSO Group said the consortium had made "incorrect assumptions" about clients using its technology. In December 2021 it promised to take legal action against customers "misusing" its technology.

80

Journalists involved in the Pegasus project, which revealed governments used spyware to target opponents



▲ A parade in Copenhagen in 2021 celebrates Christiania's half century. The legalised commune began life as a squat on a military base

◀ Pusher Street, a site for sales of cannabis, is now threatened by organised crime that residents fear may lead to a gang war

PHOTOGRAPH: GROUGH.CO.UK/ALAMY

Gang violence could end open cannabis trade in Copenhagen anarchist commune

Daniel Boffey
Chief reporter

The 40-year history of the open cannabis trade on "Pusher Street" in the heart of the anarchist Christiania neighbourhood of Copenhagen could be over, with the city's mayor saying she was willing to shut it down over the commune's fears about rising gang violence.

Christiania is a self-proclaimed autonomous commune in the Danish capital that has been allowed to effectively run itself as a "social experiment" since the 1970s despite periodic threats of a clean-up by national governments.

At its heart is Pusher Street, where

stallholders openly sell cannabis. But the ever-worsening violence in the "green light" district, as organised criminal gangs have moved in and vied for dominance, has prompted concerns for residents' safety.

The mayor of Copenhagen, Sophie Hæstorp Andersen, said, in an interview with the Ekstra Bladet newspaper, that the violence had to end and offered to close Pusher Street's drug trade down if the 1,000 people living in the Christiania commune agreed.

Andersen said: "The violence and crime around Pusher Street has now reached a level we neither can nor want to deal with. In Copenhagen I believe we must have room for Christiania. It is skewed and alternative.

It's creative. But this harsh, organised, violence must be written out of the future around Christiania.

"That is why my message is also that if the Christianites make it clear that they are ready to close Pusher Street and replace it with something else then we in the municipality of Copenhagen are ready to support putting together a plan to find out what should happen to the street."

More than half a century ago squatters broke down the barricades of the Bådsmandsstræde military base on the island of Amager to form a commune in the centre of Copenhagen. In 1973 the Social Democratic government gave Christiania the official temporary status of "social experiment", allowing it informal



▲ Marijuana plants growing openly

'We tried to stop the hashish snakes - enough is enough'

Hulda Mader
Commune spokesperson

official, said there would be a "unified Palestinian response" to the strikes at a time and place of its choosing.

In Gaza, witnesses said the top floor of an apartment building in Gaza City and a house in the city of Rafah were hit by explosions, while the IDF said later strikes targeted 10 military sites. The Palestinian health ministry said the three commanders, their



▲ Inspecting a damaged building in Gaza City after the Israeli airstrikes

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill three Islamic Jihad leaders

Bethan McKernan
Jerusalem

Israeli airstrikes on the blockaded Gaza Strip targeting Palestinian Islamic Jihad yesterday killed three senior operatives and at least nine civilians, including three children, according to the Israeli army and Palestinian officials.

Forty jets took part in Operation Shield and Arrow, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) said, conducting strikes that lasted about two hours, starting at 2am yesterday.

In a statement, Islamic Jihad confirmed three of its commanders were killed. Both Hamas and Islamic Jihad vowed to retaliate, and the region remained braced for further violence.

The unexpected Israeli attack came despite a fragile ceasefire in place since a day of cross-frontier exchanges of fire last week after the death of Khader Adnan, who was on hunger strike while in Israeli custody.

prepared to evacuate about 6,500 Israelis living near the frontier.

Israel reportedly relayed messages to Hamas via Egyptian mediators that it was targeting only Islamic Jihad. Hamas has stayed on the sidelines during recent escalations but is now under significant pressure to respond, given yesterday's targeted operation and the high death toll.

More than 100 Palestinians and at least 19 Israelis and foreigners have been killed in 2023 so far across Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, leading to fears of wider escalation.

Hazem Qassem, spokesperson for Hamas, said in a statement: "This is an attack against the Palestinian people, and therefore there will be a proportionate response whose details will be determined by the joint operations room of all factions."

Dawood Shahab, an Islamic Jihad

wives, several children and others nearby were killed - 13 in all - while 20 more were injured.

An Israeli army spokesperson said it was looking into civilian death reports but had no comment.

Israeli media reported that the attack targeted Jihad Ghannam, Khalil al-Bahtini and Tareq Ezzedine, who were allegedly responsible for rocket fire towards Israel during a flare-up ignited by an Israeli raid on Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque compound during Ramadan in April.

Palestinian media said the men, who had been due to travel to Cairo yesterday for further ceasefire talks, slept at home as they did not think they were active targets.

In a statement, Israel's defence minister, Yoav Gallant, said: "Any terrorist who harms Israeli citizens will be made to regret it."

autonomy. A majority vote in parliament in 1989 set the Christiania Law in stone, legalising the squat and the practice of residents contributing to the communal running costs of Christiania's postal service, rubbish collection and children's nurseries. The police are not welcome and a local form of justice is applied.

The Christianites describe themselves as "anarchists with rules" but the commune's spokesperson, Hulda Mader, has in recent days spoken of receiving death threats after trying to intervene in clashes between drug gangs. There has been a recent spate of stabbings and in October a 22-year-old man was shot dead.

Mader said: "There have been several violent episodes recently. These are not people we know. We suspect it is gangs. We are afraid that the situation will develop into a gang war in Christiania.

"When we Christianites tried to stop the hashish snakes we were threatened with our lives. Enough is enough. We have disclaimed responsibility for what happens on Pusher Street. It is not something that we, as private individuals, can oppose.

"Now there have been repeated episodes of violence, and we simply think that it has become too dangerous for us."

Andersen said a forum for discussion over a new local plan had been established between the Fristaden Christiania foundation, which runs the area, and the Copenhagen municipality and police.

She said: "This is a proposal I am making partly because I am talking to Christianites who want an end to Pusher Street and the raw violence we see with gangs. And partly because the violence has reached a level we neither can nor want to find ourselves in as a city."

Violence erupts in Pakistan after arrest of Imran Khan

Shah Meer Baloch Islamabad
Hannah Ellis-Petersen Delhi

Internet services have been suspended across Pakistan after violence erupted when the former prime minister Imran Khan was arrested at a court appearance in Islamabad and dragged into an armoured vehicle by scores of security forces in riot gear.

The arrest of Khan - who was ousted from power last year and has evaded arrest several times since - came hours after he released a video message reiterating his allegations that Pakistan's powerful military establishment had tried to assassinate him twice.

Khan's arrest is the latest twist in a political and economic crisis that pits him against the military and the government, led by his successor, Shehbaz Sharif, whom Khan alleges conspired to remove him from power and make threats on his life, charges they deny.

Hours after his arrest, protests began to erupt across Pakistan, with the army accused of orchestrating his detention. More than 40 people were arrested and officials said one protester had been killed after they were shot by an officer near a military checkpoint in the city of Quetta.

In Karachi, a police vehicle was set on fire and in Lahore, supporters broke into the house of the military corps commander, smashing windows and setting furniture on fire, while shouting: "We warned you not to touch Imran Khan."

Mobile internet services were cut across Pakistan, according to the telecommunication authority, and access to Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, where videos of the protests were being widely shared, was restricted.

Last night the UK Foreign Office issued a new travel warning advising against going to several regions of Pakistan, and saying "further disruption should be expected".

Khan had travelled to Islamabad yesterday morning to seek bail in two corruption cases, some of dozens involving corruption, sedition and terrorism.

As he entered the court premises, he was arrested by agents from the National Accountability Bureau, the country's anti-corruption body, who were followed by a contingent



▲ Security personnel escort Imran Khan's car as he arrives at Islamabad high court PHOTOGRAPH: AAMIR QURESHI/AFP/GTET

The man who divided a nation

Imran Khan is often regarded as the most divisive man in Pakistan. For some, the former superstar cricketer turned prime minister, who was toppled from power last April and arrested in a corruption case yesterday, is the anti-establishment saviour the country has long been waiting for.

Yet for others, his alleged corruption, economic ineptitude and "scorched earth" tactics since he was removed from office are the reason Pakistan is facing a political, economic and constitutional crisis.

Khan first shot to fame in Pakistan as the Oxford-educated heartthrob who brought world cup cricketing glory to the country in 1992. In 1996, he co-formed and became leader of a new political party, the Pakistan Movement for Justice, or Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party (PTI).

As he remained in political opposition for over a decade, Khan began to adopt a nationalist agenda that drew heavily on Islamic and anti-western narratives, repositioning himself as a devout Muslim. He spoke out against the US war on terror

and fought elections on an anti-corruption agenda but in 2014 was also accused of corruption in a case that drags on today.

But many believe it was the backing of Pakistan's powerful military establishment, who had ruled Pakistan for decades that finally brought Khan to power. According to those in his party, Khan became the "blue-eyed boy" of the military and by 2017 he was elected PM by a slim majority. Khan denies the military had a role in his election.



▲ Imran Khan was arrested as he attended the high court in Islamabad

According to those within his government, the military "called the shots" during Khan's first few years in power. Yet in 2021, cracks began to show. An emboldened Khan began to resent the control of the military. Meanwhile the military were unhappy with the declining economic situation.

Despite Khan's best efforts to prevent a vote of no-confidence happening in April 2022, he was ousted from power after dozens of PTI MPs withdrew their support.

Yet Khan's political capital only soared after he was removed as PM. As he seeks a return to the highest office, he began to position himself as an anti-establishment rebel.

In November, after he was shot by a gunman at a rally in Punjab, he openly accused the government and military of colluding to have him assassinated. He is now facing dozens of cases relating to corruption and sedition, which he alleges are politically motivated.

Khan's enduring popularity was evident after his arrest yesterday. If he is allowed to contest general elections, due in October, it is widely thought he will win. Hannah Ellis-Petersen



▲ Black smoke billows from a fire during a protest by Khan's supporters in the wake of his arrest

[The arrest of Imran Khan is] a black day for our democracy and country'

PTI
Imran Khan's party

of paramilitary officers. Khan was put into a vehicle with tinted windows and driven off under heavy security, while a scuffle broke out between his supporters and police.

According to a statement released by Islamabad police, his detention was connected to a separate case, the Al-Qadir Trust case, which involves allegations Khan earned billions of rupees through illegal land transactions and where he had not been granted bail. It stated that he would be produced before the court today.

Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party (PTI) called his arrest a "black day for our democracy and country". Fawad Chaudhry, a PTI spokesperson, alleged Khan had been "abducted from court premises". "Scores of lawyers and general people have been tortured, Imran Khan has been whisked away by unknown people to an unknown location," he said.

In a video posted to PTI's official Twitter account, the barrister Gohar Khan alleged Khan had been struck on the head and the legs by paramilitary officers who entered the premises of the Islamabad high court.

The interior minister, Rana Sanaullah, said Khan's arrest was because of his failure to turn up to hearings in a corruption case and denied all allegations of torture.

Insp Gen Akbar Nasir Khan of Islamabad police urged calm and said the situation in the city was normal. However, in an attempt to prevent protest, an order was imposed in the city to prevent gatherings of more than five people and the internet was cut off in some areas.

Since Khan fell from power, he has been on a crusade against Pakistan's powerful military establishment, and in particular the senior army generals who helped bring him to power. But after the relationship disintegrated, they orchestrated his removal as prime minister.

His popularity has since soared, with many admiring his determination to go up against the military establishment, which has long been Pakistan's political puppet master. There is widespread discontent with Sharif's government, as inflation and food shortages have rocketed, and it is expected that Khan could return to power in the next general election, due in October, if he is not disqualified from politics before then.

Italian oil firm Eni faces climate lawsuit for 'ignoring known risks' of fossil fuels

Stella Levantesi

Rome

The Italian oil company Eni is facing the country's first climate lawsuit, with environmental groups alleging the company used "lobbying and greenwashing" to push for more fossil fuels despite having known about the risks its product posed since 1970.

Greenpeace Italy and the Italian advocacy group ReCommon aim to build on a similar case targeting the Anglo-Dutch oil firm Royal Dutch Shell in the Netherlands to force Eni to slash its carbon emissions by 45% by 2030.

"The urgency of taking action against the climate crisis has prompted us to bring the first climate lawsuit in Italy against the country's largest energy company," said Matteo Ceruti, a lawyer for the plaintiffs.

The allegations rest in part on a study Eni commissioned between 1969 and 1970 from its Isvet research

centre, which has been shared with the Guardian by the nonprofit climate news service DeSmog. The report made clear that left unchecked, rising fossil fuel use could lead to a climate crisis within just a few decades.

"Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, according to a recent report by the UN secretary, given the increased use of [fossil fuels], has increased over the last century by an average of 10% worldwide; around the year 2000 this increase could reach 25%, with 'catastrophic' consequences on climate," the report said.

Greenpeace Italy and ReCommon have also unearthed a 1978 report produced by Eni's Tecnico company, which included a projection of how much atmospheric CO₂ levels would rise by the turn of the century.

"It is assumed that with the increasing consumption of fossil fuels, which began with the Industrial Revolution, the CO₂ concentration will reach 375-400 [parts per million or ppm] in the year 2000," stated

the report. "This increase is considered by some scientists as a possible long-term problem, especially since it could change the thermal balance of the atmosphere leading to climate changes with serious consequences for the biosphere."

This prediction would prove to be broadly accurate. Between 1970 and 2000, Earth's atmospheric CO₂ concentration rose from 325ppm to 371ppm. It is now about 420ppm. Further research by DeSmog has shown that Eni's company magazine, Ecos, made repeated references to climate change in the late 1980s and 1990s, while running advertising campaigns promoting planet-warming natural gas as a "clean" fuel.

Eni did not respond to a request for comment on the documents.

Greenpeace Italy and ReCommon announced the lawsuit at a news conference in Rome yesterday, held on the eve of Eni's annual general meeting. The groups say they intend to file the suit in the civil court of Rome by



▲ Eni's own research from 1969-70 forms the basis for the lawsuit

\$49bn

Market capitalisation for Eni, which reported a profit of \$14.12bn in 2022, up from \$9.9bn in 2021

\$5.5m

Amount the Italian competition authority fined Eni for misleading 'green' claims in diesel fuel advert

19 May and will request that hearings begin in November.

Experts in climate litigation say the Eni documents add to a growing body of evidence that oil firms understood the risks posed by burning their products more than half a century ago, but chose to downplay the dangers and ramp up production of oil and gas.

"The findings reinforce and add to the pattern in previous research: oil majors understood the catastrophic effects their products would have on the world, yet failed to warn the public, concealed their knowledge, denied the problem, and obstructed efforts to solve it," said Ben Franta, a senior research fellow at the Oxford Sustainable Law Programme.

With a market capitalisation of nearly \$49bn (£39bn), Eni is among the world's top dozen richest oil companies. In 2022, Eni reported a profit of \$14.12bn, up \$9.9bn from 2021.

In April 2020, the Italian competition authority fined Eni \$5.5m for misleading consumers with "green" claims in a diesel fuel ad campaign.

Last year, environmental groups filed a complaint with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an intergovernmental body, alleging that Eni's plans to boost oil production ran contrary to its goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2050. The case is still pending.

Bear accused of killing jogger 'victim of mistaken identity'

Angela Giuffrida

Rome

Animal rights activists are calling for the immediate release of a female bear captured on suspicion of killing a jogger in northern Italy after a study claimed that the real culprit was male.

The 17-year-old female bear, identified as JJ4, is accused of killing Andrea Papi, 26, who was mauled to death while jogging along a mountain path close to his village of Caldes in Trentino on 5 April. JJ4, considered a "problematic" bear, was captured and taken to an animal enclosure while a court decides her fate.

The case has pitted Maurizio Fugatti, the president of Trentino province, who wants the bear to be put down, against animal activists who have been fighting for its release.

Leal, an animal welfare association, said it presented the regional administrative court, which will announce its ruling on 11 May, with two forensic reports that would clear JJ4, who has been separated from her cubs, of the killing.

According to the DNA tests, the teeth marks found on Papi's body were compatible with an adult male bear and not those of JJ4.

"JJ4 is innocent," Leal said. The association explained that for



▲ One of about 100 brown bears living in the Trento area of northern Italy PHOTOGRAPH: GENNARO LEONARDI/ALAMY



▲ JJ4 first held in 2020 after an attack on two hikers in Trentino province



▲ Andrea Papi, who was mauled to death by a bear while out running

'Animal teeth marks have the same value as human fingerprints [so science] denies the lies ... JJ4 is innocent'

Leal

Animal welfare group

veterinary science, animal teeth "have the same value as human fingerprints", and therefore the science "denies the lies told by Fugatti".

The reports also found that the nature of the attack was "a protracted attempt by the bear to distance and dissuade the victim" and not "a deliberate or predatory attack".

Police believe Papi, who sustained injuries to his neck, arms and chest, had tried to fight off the bear after a blood-stained branch was found at the scene. Initial tests identified JJ4, who had previously attacked two hikers in 2020, as the killer.

Along with JJ4's immediate release from the high-security enclosure in Castellar, Leal is demanding the "immediate resignation" of Fugatti.

Fugatti said he would have had the bear "shot during its capture" had it not been for his order to kill it being suspended by the administrative court. "JJ4 will be killed when the court allows it," he said last week.

Fugatti had also ordered JJ4 to be put down after the 2020 attack against the two hikers but the order was scrapped amid pressure from animal rights groups and Sergio Costa, then environment minister.

There are about 100 brown bears in the Trento area, and close encounters with humans are becoming more frequent. A man was attacked by a bear in the same province in March.

World

Turkish elections



'We're setting out to change the system. The public doesn't believe in the government any more'

Uğur Poyraz
Leader, İyi party

◀ Uğur Poyraz of the İyi party talking to shopkeepers and business owners in Antalya

PHOTOGRAPH:
AYTÜN AKAD/
PANOS PICTURES/
THE GUARDIAN

'The end of the road' Vote will reinforce Erdoğan's power – or overturn the system

Ruth Michaelson
Deniz Barış Narlı

On the Turkish election campaign trail, in an outlying district of the beach town of Antalya, Ugur Poyraz kissed a small child before speaking to local restaurant owners about the economy.

The general secretary of the technocratic and nationalist İyi party (Good party), a broad-shouldered lawyer with a shaved head and tattoos under his shirt, was in full campaign mode, holding voters close, tilting his head to show he was listening, and clapping the men on the shoulders. His security detail – in full suit and aviators despite the heat – clasped a handful of campaign leaflets.

"Save your time, you have our vote," said one man, directing him towards another, who offered Poyraz tea. "How do people pay rent, or school fees – how do they even stock their fridges or buy a packet of cigarettes at these prices?" he complained to Poyraz.

When Turks go to the polls in simultaneous parliamentary

and presidential elections on Sunday, the choice will be stark: re-electing a president seeking to further concentrate power around his office, or a complete overhaul of the system that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his Justice and Development party (AKP) have spent 20 years constructing.

Showing voters what Turkey could look like without Erdoğan remains a challenge. The president has spent two decades shaping the country into his vision of a conservative society and an assertive regional player, replacing Turkey's parliamentary democracy with a presidential system that vastly expanded his powers, and using the courts to crack down on dissent in the aftermath of a failed coup attempt in 2016.

From the perspective of Turkey's opposition, a biting economic crisis and a lacklustre response to twin earthquakes that killed more than 50,000 people should suffice to convince the public to vote Erdoğan out. Yet in an increasingly polarised

► Supporters of the president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, with a campaign van in Istanbul this week

PHOTOGRAPH: SEDAT SUNA/EPA

climate, the president's supporters believe his responsibility is limited.

Some polls suggest that Erdoğan's governing coalition could lose its majority in parliament, but that is only half the battle, as the six-party opposition coalition – which includes the İyi party – needs to win both parliament and the presidency to enact its pledge to convert Turkey back to a parliamentary democracy.

The presidential election pits Erdoğan against Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, of the main opposition Republican People's party (CHP), in what polls indicate is a tight race. For the opposition, the fight is now one of survival: Erdoğan's coalition partner recently declared that opposition politicians could receive "life sentences or bullets in their bodies" if they lose.

Many of those who were happy to see Poyraz told him they were hungry for change, meaning an end to the AKP and Erdoğan, but others were defiant. Three men sitting drinking tea on a quiet street waited until he was out of earshot

before expressing their support for the president and their complete distrust of the opposition.

"What they say and what they do are opposites," said one. His friend interrupted: "Even if the price of onions reaches 1bn lira, our choice won't change. Always Erdoğan."

In the sprawling resort town the race is fierce. Both presidential candidates have come to Antalya to hold rallies, and Poyraz's main competition in the local campaign is the AKP foreign minister, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. The contest is a microcosm of a larger fight playing out nationwide, with the AKP and CHP jostling for the largest share of the 17 seats on offer in Antalya, and upstarts such as the İyi party asserting themselves to try to make themselves indispensable in a future coalition.

Nuri Cengiz, a local CHP official, grumbled about Çavuşoğlu's presence in the race, an effect of Erdoğan making his cabinet ministers run for office. "It's not a fair election considering the fact that ministers are campaigning for



themselves and their party with government funds," he said. "For instance, the other day we hung a Kılıçdaroğlu poster to announce his visit to Antalya and they cut his face out of it."

Still, the opposition believes that Turkey's crippling financial crisis and concerns about how the country is being run will help its ideas triumph over personality-driven politics. Voters in Antalya, a tourist and agricultural hub of 2.6 million people whose surrounding farmlands feed a large portion of the Turkish population, are hurting from the economic crisis and complain of rising housing costs linked to an influx of Russians and Ukrainians after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Opposition parties say they are making campaign stops at local wholesalers to reassure farmers that they can reverse Erdoğan's economic policies and bring down production costs if they win.

The seaside town may welcome the tourists with their boon to the economy, but it also has a fierce nationalist streak. Hours after kissing children and holding pensioners' hands, Poyraz attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony at a local park dedicated to the slain leader of an ultra-nationalist paramilitary group, the Grey Wolves. "Justice will be served," he promised a large group in the park, including many who raised their hands in a gesture of allegiance to the Grey Wolves, who have a decades-long history of violent attacks on minorities and their leftwing opponents.

The İyi party publicly claims to have distanced itself from its nationalist roots but it is also looking to capitalise on the increasing nationalist sentiment stirred up by Erdoğan. Challenging an incumbent, one with a 20-year record of adapting to an increasingly right-leaning political climate and reshaping Turkey in his image, is no small task. Poyraz said: "We're setting out to change the system rather than fight one individual. The Turkish public doesn't believe in this president, his government or the things he represents any more, meaning this is the end of the road for them."

It is not clear that all voters see it that way – the overwhelming majority in Antalya appeared to have made up their minds about the president and the opposition. At the entrance to Antalya's old town, a truck blared campaign music dedicated to Erdoğan while a group of young men screamed the president's name. Most campaign banners displayed giant pictures of Erdoğan's face and little else.

"The question is: will Turkey be a member of the civilised world or drift into autocratic darkness?" said Selim Sazak, Poyraz's campaign adviser. "But no matter how much you hammer on this, on a certain level people look at it as this guy versus that guy. Perhaps we underestimated our ability to make it less about a person and more about principle. We've made a dent, but it's human nature to look at the gladiatorial nature of this. Erdoğan is much weaker than he used to be but he's still quite strong, even here in Antalya."

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Business

House price growth slowest for more than a decade

Julia Kollewe

Annual house price growth across the UK has slowed to the lowest level in more than a decade, with property values in the south of England under the greatest pressure.

The lender Halifax said average prices in April were 0.1% higher than the same month a year ago, the lowest rate of growth since December 2012 and down from March's annual growth rate of 1.6%.

Average prices fell 0.3% in April compared with a month earlier, taking the typical British property price to £286,896. This is about £7,000 below last summer's peak, but about £28,000 higher than two years ago.

The Halifax report showed a mixed picture for house prices in different regions of Britain. The four regions of southern England recorded falls over the past year, with the south-east showing the largest dip (of 0.6%, to an average house price of £387,469), while in all other regions and nations across Britain annual price growth remained positive in April.

In the southern regions - Greater London, eastern England, the south-east and the south-west - buyers face the most expensive average prices, and therefore the biggest impact of higher borrowing costs after 11 successive interest rate rises by the Bank of England. London continues to have the costliest homes anywhere in the country, and the average price fell by 0.2% year on year to £538,409.

Elsewhere, the West Midlands showed the strongest annual growth at 3.1%, taking the average property price to £249,554.

Just behind were Northern Ireland with annual growth of 2.7% to £186,846, Scotland with an annual gain of 2.2% to an average £201,489, and Wales with 1% growth to £216,559.

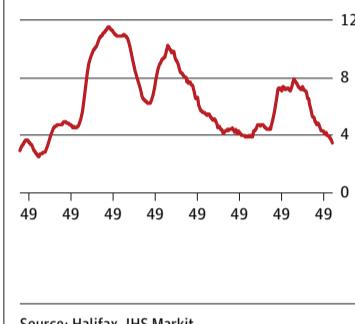
Kim Kinnaird, director of Halifax Mortgages, said: "House price movements over recent months have

largely mirrored the short-term volatility seen in borrowing costs. The sharp fall in prices we saw after September's mini-budget preceded something of a rebound in the first quarter of this year as economic conditions improved.

"The economy has proved to be resilient, with a robust labour market and consumer price inflation predicted to decelerate sharply in the coming months. Mortgage rates are now stabilising, and though they remain well above the average of recent years, this gives important certainty to would-be buyers. While the housing market as a whole remains subdued, the number of properties for sale is also slowly increasing, as sellers adapt to market conditions."

However, she said that while mortgage approvals had increased, cost of living worries "remain real for many

Annual UK house price growth is at its lowest in a decade



▼ Terraced houses in Brighton. The report showed southern England recorded falls in prices over the past year PHOTOGRAPH: ROGER BAMBER/ALAMY



Fox reports \$54m first-quarter loss after Dominion settlement

Edward Helmore
New York

The US television company Fox Corporation reported a \$54m (£42m) loss for the first three months of 2023, after the business agreed to settle a lawsuit over claims that its Fox News division defamed the electronic voting systems supplier Dominion in the

aftermath of the 2020 US presidential election.

The loss was mostly "due to charges associated with legal settlement costs at Fox News Media", the company said.

On an earnings call with analysts yesterday, Fox Corp's chief executive, Lachlan Murdoch, said the \$787.5m settlement was a "business decision to resolve the dispute to avoid

the acrimony of this trial and a multi-year appeal process".

The defamation case was settled last month just before opening statements were to be read in the Delaware court. Murdoch said yesterday the "court severely limited our defences and trial through pre-trial rulings".

The company said it had \$4.1bn in cash as of 30 March, three weeks before the settlement was reached.

Fox News is still facing a \$2.7bn lawsuit from a second voting machine manufacturer, Smartmatic, which Murdoch said was "fundamentally different" from the Dominion case. He predicted the case, filed in New

York, would not go to trial until 2025.

The \$54m loss for the company, which reported a profit of \$283m a year ago, came despite Fox earnings climbing 18% to \$4.08bn in the first three months of the year, more than analysts had been expecting. It said sales had been boosted by a 43% jump in Super Bowl ad revenue, which it earlier predicted would gross \$600m.

Fox News did not, under the terms of its Dominion settlement, offer any direct admission of wrongdoing in its airing of false election claims though it acknowledged "the court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false".

households", and they will weigh on consumer sentiment and ability to buy.

"Combined with the impact of higher interest rates gradually feeding through to those remortgaging their current fixed-rate deals, we should expect some further downward pressure on house prices over course of this year," Kinnaird said.

The average five-year mortgage fix fell below 5%, to 4.97% at the start of the month, but is still roughly double where it was this time last year. The Bank of England is widely expected to raise interest rates tomorrow for a 12th consecutive time, to 4.5%. The central bank could be forced to raise interest rates to 5% this summer, Goldman Sachs has warned, as Britain struggles to bring down inflation, the highest among the G7 group of advanced economies.

Andrew Wishart, senior property economist at Capital Economics, said UK house prices remained "remarkably resilient", adding: "It is possible for the market to remain expensive for some time. But our view that mortgage rates won't decline any further in the near term and the economy will slip into recession suggests a further drop in prices is likely."



▲ Thames Water's Sarah Bentley received a £496,000 bonus last year

Water bosses refuse bonuses amid sewage dumping crisis

Alex Lawson

Three water company bosses have given up their bonuses in an acknowledgement of the public anger over companies dumping sewage in Britain's rivers.

The chief executives of Yorkshire Water and Thames Water as well as the owner of South West Water have declined to accept bonuses this year.

Water companies have been criticised for raking in profits and their executives receiving large pay packets while sewage is regularly released into Britain's rivers, lakes and seas in large quantities.

Nicola Shaw, of Yorkshire Water, said she understood the "strength of feeling" on river pollution and had decided to refuse what would have been her first bonus since joining the company in May 2022.

Annual reports show she could have received between £600,000 and £800,000 if the company met its performance targets. Last year, the company paid out £878,000 in bonuses to directors.

She said: "I understand the strength of feeling about the issues linked to river health, which is why I've decided that this year I won't be accepting a bonus."

Sarah Bentley, who runs Thames Water and last year received a £496,000 payout, forgave her payout alongside the company's chief financial officer, Alastair Cochran, who will also skip his bonus for 2022-23. He received £298,000 last year.

Bentley said it "just did not feel like the right thing to take performance-related pay this year".

South West Water's Susan Davy, who received £522,000 last year, will also not receive a bonus. "This is the right thing to do. We're listening to our customers, we get it," said Davy, whose company spilled untreated sewage 37,649 times last year. She runs Pennon Group, the listed owner of South West Water, and has turned down a pay rise for the past two years.

The exact size of the bonuses that would have been due to the three executives has not been disclosed.

Analysis
Nils Pratley

Water chiefs not taking their mini-bonuses? It's something - but it doesn't seem enough

Contain your excitement at news that bosses of a few water companies won't be taking their bonuses this year. In all three cases - South West Water, Thames Water and Yorkshire Water - acceptance of any bonus at all would rightly have provoked general outrage. These companies were at, or near to, the bottom of the league table in the Environment Agency's last set of annual environmental performance ratings.

At the most sludgy end, South West joined Southern in scoring the lowest possible one star out of four, which the chair of the watchdog - a body that itself has hardly excelled

during three decades of under-regulation - translated into plain English. It meant the companies' environmental performance "was terrible across the board". Thames and Yorkshire were two of four companies getting two stars, which indicated a need for "significant improvement", so still deeply in cruddy territory.

It is conceivable, of course, that the trio have upped their game and undergone a transformation since the EA published its ratings for 2021 last July. But even if they have (don't hold your breath until this July), the timing doesn't work bonus-wise for the 2022-23 financial year. Improvement has to be seen to have happened - and then to be achieved regularly to remove weather-related vagaries.

Given the star ratings, many may wonder if Sarah Bentley at Thames, Susan Davy at Pennon (owner of South West) and Nicola Shaw at Yorkshire are volunteering to forgo bonuses they wouldn't have received anyway. The answer - strange as it sounds - is that, actually, they are probably surrendering a few hundred thousand pounds or so each.

In common with the set-up across the entire UK-quoted company scene, the formula for awarding bonuses tends to include so many metrics that it is hard for a chief executive to be awarded zilch. Aside from financial targets, the service-related metrics themselves contain a dashboard of dials. There's always something to achieve.

Bentley's incentives, for example, include reducing complaints from customers - an area where the numbers at Thames have markedly improved recently. And Davy's bonus last year included ticks for hitting leakage targets, reducing emissions and maintaining a "great place to work" accreditation. That was despite South West's "wastewater pollution incidents, per 10,000km sewer" running at more than three times the target level and the water quality being deemed miles away from the required standard.



▲ Yorkshire Water's Baitings reservoir in Ripponden suffering from drought last year

PHOTOGRAPH: DANNY LAWSON/PA WIRE

The mini bonus surrender, then, can be seen as an acknowledgment that handing out prizes for financial performance or minor operational triumphs is unacceptable if you're still failing on core environmental measures. Quite right too: the customers don't care if South West is a nice place to work; they are overwhelmingly bothered about water quality and sewage dumping.

Bentley and Davy were first out of the blocks in recognising the bleedin' obvious. Counterparts at the sector's other laggards now know what's expected - and shouldn't hang about.

But the other conclusion here is that relying on executives' sense of embarrassment when public anger is red-hot is a terrible way to structure a performance-related remuneration scheme.

Thames has semi-grasped the point by promising to review its pay structure with the aim of giving "a greater weighting to customer service and environmental performance than financial results". It - and others - should go further. Utilities with public service obligations aren't like regular companies, so here's a simpler pay principle to concentrate minds: no bonuses for financial success until the environmental scores are consistently on the right path.

Relying on executives' embarrassment when public anger is red-hot is a terrible way to run a performance-related remuneration scheme

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▼ The performance of TransPennine Express has been a hot political issue in the north of England

PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES GRADY/ALAMY



Time for change? Frustrated commuters await decision on TransPennine contract

Gwyn Topham
Transport correspondent

Once, it had seemed like a good idea to live in the Pennines and to commute by train. Susannah Simmons, a violinist at Opera North, moved to Marsden for quick and easy access to her work in Leeds and Manchester.

"The service was far from perfect, but satisfactory," she says. "But for at least the past year nearly all trains I would have used have been cancelled or delayed,

forcing me to drive everywhere." Like countless others, her life has been upended by the ripped up schedules and woeful performance of TransPennine Express.

Ministers are expected to announce this week whether the operator will be replaced or awarded a fresh deal - potentially for up to eight years. Expectations are that TPE, owned by FirstGroup - the only remaining British transport firm operating passenger trains in the UK - will be given another chance to turn operations around, with a short extension of six to 12 months when its contract expires on 28 May.

But train failures are a potent political issue in the north of England. The announcement was withheld until after the local elections, and the results of last week's vote - and the potential for further backlash in "red wall" seats - have given ministers further pause before renewing FirstGroup's contract, according to a source close to the process.

45%

Reduction in cancellations claimed by TPE this year - but the operator still had the worst record in the UK

MPs and mayors have urged the government to "get a grip" after the operator's record of delayed, disrupted and cancelled services. Regular users describe a grim "lottery" or "roulette". In January, TPE cancelled one in four trains and, despite recent improvement, its cancellation rate remains worse than all other UK operators. Even regulars, used to checking timetables at 11pm the night before travel for ghost cancellations, and then reconfirming before risking a trip to the station, recount trains that still did not materialise, arrived short-formed and overcrowded, or simply failed farther down the line.

UK 'not in race' to develop green tech of the future, Haldane says

Richard Partington

Britain risks falling behind in a multi-billion-pound global "arms race" of reindustrialisation without an urgent launch of a coherent plan for manufacturing, Andy Haldane has warned.

The influential economist, who is on Jeremy Hunt's advisory council, said Britain was "not really in the race at any kind of scale" as other countries lead in developing the green, hi-tech industries of the future.

"The world is facing an arms race in reindustrialisation. And we're at risk of falling behind unless we give it the giddy up," he said.

The chief executive of the Royal Society of Arts thinktank said three factors underpinned the scramble: a need to boost the resilience of supply chains after widespread disruption during Covid; decarbonisation; and rising military tensions.

His warning comes as the US and the EU invest billions of pounds to support domestic production of everything from renewable energy

to microchips and electric vehicles, with Joe Biden's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) pumping \$369bn (£292bn) into America's industrial base.

Haldane, a former chief economist at the Bank of England, said: "China has been at this - green tech - for many years, and has stolen a march in many technologies, including solar and batteries.

"The west has belatedly woken up. The IRA is throwing cash to the wall. The cost of that [is] almost certainly north of half a trillion dollars. Possibly north of a trillion. The EU is playing catch up, [and] the UK is not really in the race at any kind of scale."

At an event in London held by the manufacturing trade body Make UK, Haldane urged the government to develop an industrial strategy to

succeed the one scrapped by Boris Johnson. Haldane was chair of the government's Industrial Strategy Council before its abolition. "What was an imperative a few years ago - to create that long-term platform - now is absolutely essential," he said.

The chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, has



▲ Envision's hi-tech gigafactory in Sunderland is Chinese-owned

'Every year it has got slower, less reliable and more expensive'

Jonathan Carr
Commuter

Jonathan Carr, 30, an engineering consultant, has depended on TPE for his commute to Leeds since moving to Yorkshire six years ago: "Every year the service has got less frequent, slower, less reliable and more expensive." Of late, every day in the office has brought "a significant risk whether I'd miss meetings, and whether I'd be able to get home in less than three hours." He moved from Thirsk to Northallerton for what looked like a better service: "Then they halved the frequency, leaving only one train that would get me in to work at 7am, and that was still cancelled half of the time."

Like many, he is adamant that TPE should be ousted. Ministers have been tight-lipped about the decision, but are reluctant to bring another train service under the state-owned Operator of Last Resort, which already runs LNER, Northern and Southeastern.

Many cancellations have been down to a lack of drivers, with high rates of sickness across train crew. TPE relies on rest day working, or voluntary overtime, to operate its full timetable while training up new recruits. With goodwill lost between staff and managers, few have volunteered. The drivers' union, Aslef, agreed a rate for rest day working in late April, but has since called action short of a strike, which barred members from signing on for the shifts again. The general secretary, Mick Whelan, said industrial action was due to "smashed agreements" regarding rostering and notice given to staff.

A spokesperson for TPE said it was sorry for poor service due to a "combination of ongoing issues", adding: "We introduced a recovery plan at the beginning of February to reduce cancellations and provide greater reliability and stability for our customers. As a direct result of this plan we have seen a 45% reduction in cancellations, and will continue to work to bring these numbers down in the coming weeks and months."

said he wants to turn Britain into "the world's next Silicon Valley". However, industry leaders have warned that repeated "flip flopping" by successive Conservative governments has damaged the British economy.

Greg Clark, the business secretary under Theresa May who implemented the last industrial strategy, said the government had "tried and failed to have longevity" with its manufacturing policy.

Speaking alongside Haldane, Clark said the decision to scrap the Industrial Strategy Council was "a piece of vandalism". The current government had "accelerated" support for British manufacturing, but he suggested a long-term plan was still required. "A short-term strategy is a contradiction in terms."



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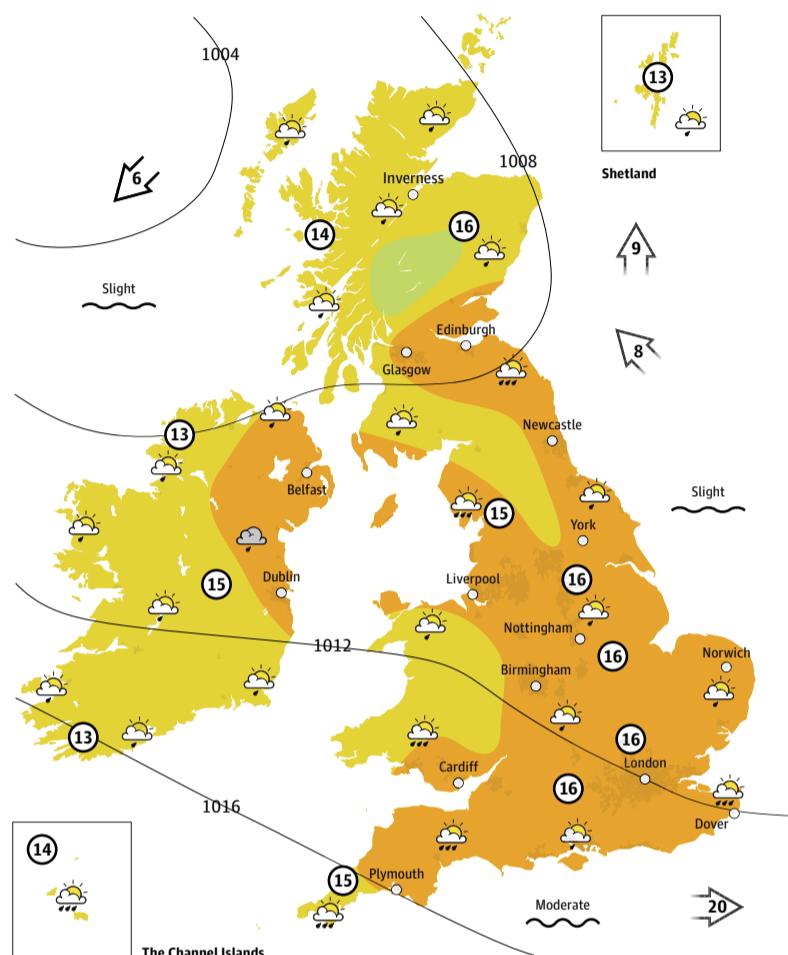
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Weather

Wednesday 10 May 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today



Forecast

Low 8 High 16
Tomorrow

Low 9 High 16
Friday

Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO₂ readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):
Latest 08 May 2023 424.26
Weekly average 30 Apr 2023 424.45
09 May 2022 420.18
09 May 2013 399.74
Pre-industrial base 280
Safe level 350
Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

London

Lows and highs 8 17 Precipitation 85% Air pollution Low

Manchester

8 15 85% Low

Edinburgh

8 15 95% Low

Belfast

8 15 85% Low

Birmingham

8 16 85% Low

Brighton

8 16 85% Low

Bristol

9 14 85% Low

Cardiff

9 15 85% Low

Newcastle

8 16 90% Low

Penzance

10 14 85% Low

Birdwatch

The song emerged from deep in the heart of the reedbed. It sounded like a reed warbler on steroids: that same, familiar rhythm, but an octave lower than usual.

Almost the size of a song thrush, the great reed warbler is the Erling Haaland of the warbler family, making its more delicate cousins appear puny by comparison.

Like its smaller and much commoner cousin, the great reed is rufous above and pale buff below, with a whitish throat. The main difference is the stonking bill, from which emerged that extraordinary song, as if the volume had been turned up to 11.

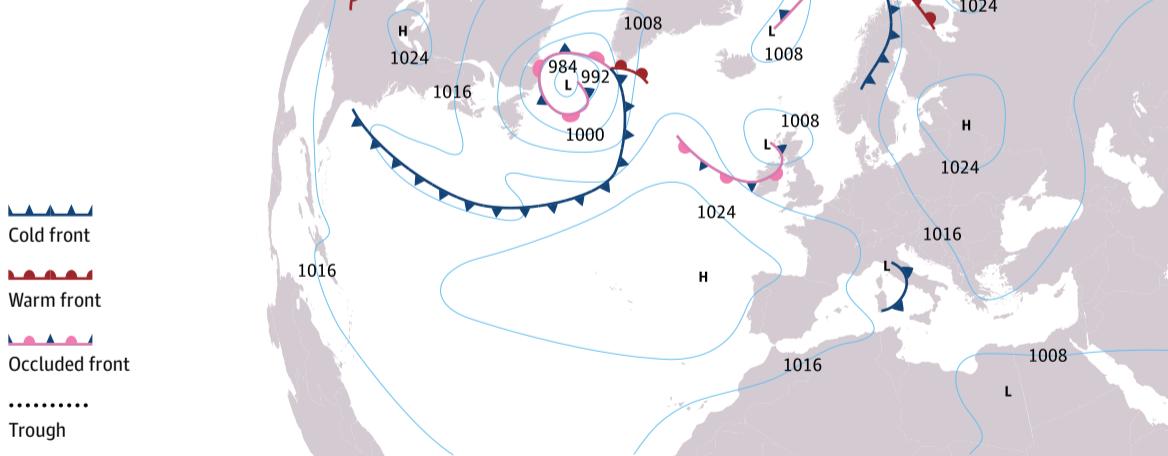
I've seen and heard great reed warblers before - in France and Spain, and a couple of times in Britain - but never near my Somerset home.

This bird, at the RSPB's Ham Wall reserve, had been returning to continental Europe from his winter quarters south of the Sahara, when he overshot his intended destination.

Like the river warbler that appeared here a couple of years ago, he might not find a mate, but his appearance may be a sign that the species is on the brink of colonising southern Britain.

Stephen Moss

Atlantic front



High tides

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

Aberdeen	0500	3.9m	1745	3.8m
Avonmouth	1108	11.9m	2327	11.7m
Barrow	0301	8.7m	1533	8.4m
Belfast	0239	3.4m	1525	3.2m
Cobh	0921	3.7m	2146	3.7m
Cromer	1013	4.6m	2306	4.4m
Dover	0228	6.4m	1455	6.3m
Dublin	0312	3.9m	1557	3.7m
Galway	0916	4.5m	2133	4.5m
Greenock	0400	3.4m	1631	3.3m
Harwich	0323	3.9m	1542	3.6m
Holyhead	0155	5.3m	1427	5.0m
Hull	1003	6.8m	2243	6.5m
Leith	0622	5.1m	1859	5.1m
Liverpool	0241	8.8m	1509	8.4m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises 0516
Sun sets 2037
Moon rises 0143
Moon sets 0833
Last Quarter 12 May

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Lighting up

Belfast	2115 to 0527
Birm'ham	2048 to 0518
Brighton	2035 to 0518
Bristol	2048 to 0526
Carlisle	2103 to 0512
Cork	2112 to 0547
Dublin	2110 to 0532
Glasgow	2114 to 0514
Harlech	2059 to 0526
Inverness	2121 to 0504
London	2037 to 0515
M'chester	2054 to 0517
Newcastle	2059 to 0507
Norwich	2037 to 0505
Penzance	2054 to 0542

Around the world

Algiers	28	Lisbon	22
Ams'dam	13	Madrid	26
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Auckland	17	Melb'rne	16
B Aires	19	Mexico C	28
Bangkok	34	Miami	32
Barcelona	20	Milan	18
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Beijing	29	Moscow	16
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Bermuda	24	N Orleans	28
Brussels	15	Nairobi	26
Budapest	18	New Delhi	37
C'hagen	15	New York	22
Cairo	31	Oslo	18
Cape Town	21	Paris	16
Chicago	25	Perth	19
Corfu	22	Prague	14
Dakar	24	Reykjavik	12
Dhaka	39	Rio de J	26
Dublin	15	Rome	20
Florence	18	Shanghai	23
Gibraltar	23	Singapore	33
H Kong	26	Stockh'm	16
Harare	22	Strasb'g	17
Helsinki	17	Sydney	20
Istanbul	14	Tel Aviv	26
Jo'burg	18	Tenerife	28
K Lumpur	34	Tokyo	23
K'mandu	28	Toronto	23
Kabul	27	Vancou'r	17
Kingston	33	Vienna	17
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Cycling

Tribute to British double world champion Doyle

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Rugby union

Farrell on trying not to 'overthink' his goalkicking

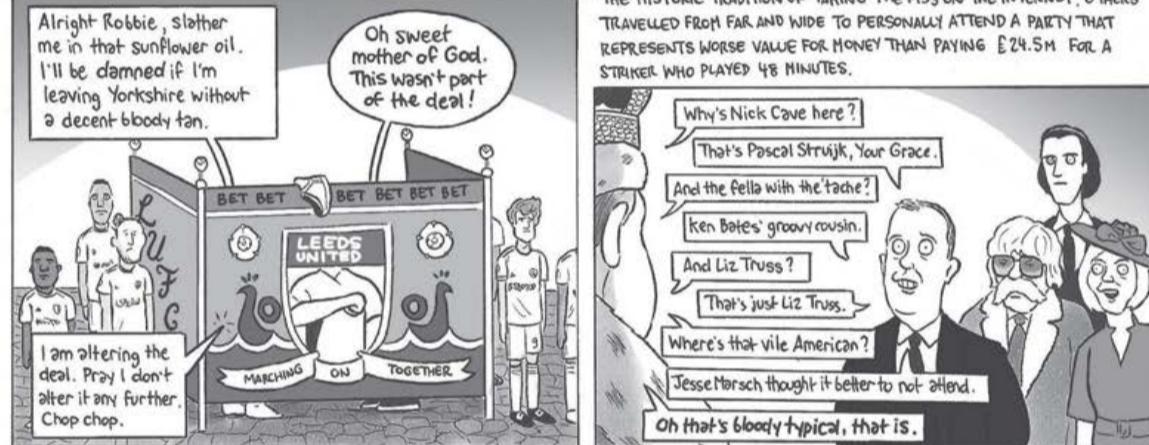
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**David Squires on... King Sam's coronation at Leeds United**

GIVE YOURSELF A FULL-BODY BUNTING FLOSS AND REPORT YOUR NEIGHBOUR TO THE AUTHORITIES FOR WEARING A LIVERPOOL TOP, BECAUSE SAM ALLARDYCE HAS SECURED THE SUCCESSION TO BECOME INTERIM MONARCH AT LEEDS UNITED!



... AND CHRIST KNOWS WHAT WAS HAPPENING BEHIND THAT SCREEN ...



THIS SEASON, LEEDS HAVE RESEMBLED A CORONATION GUICHE: SOFT UP TOP, CRUMBLY AT THE BASE, AN EGGY DISAPPOINTMENT. BUT KING SAM HAS ASSEMBLED A BACKROOM STAFF THAT WILL ENABLE HIM TO RULE FOR ALL ETERNITY - OR AT LEAST UNTIL LEEDS SCRAPE TOGETHER ENOUGH POINTS TO ALLOW HIM TO DISAPPEAR OVER THE HORIZON IN A GOLDEN CHARIOT STUFFED WITH RUBIES AND SCEPTRES. HOWEVER, THERE WAS ONE SETBACK...



SADLY, MONDAY'S RESULTS SHOW THAT SOME TROUBLE-MAKERS ARE INTENT ON RUINING THE PESTIVITIES. MAYBE KING SAM SHOULD USE THE POLICE AS HIS PRIVATE MILITIA AND ROUND UP THE LIKES OF SEAN DYCHE AND STEVE COOPER. LEST THE HORSES BOLT ON LEEDS' SURVIVAL HOPES. BUT WHILE SOME TREASONOUS TIPPY-TAPPY HOUNDS MAY LOOK UPON THE RECENT LINEAGE OF LEEDS MANAGERS WITH DISMAY, IF ALLARDYCE IS SUCCESSFUL WE CAN ALL LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER FESTIVAL OF BAKED GOODS AND ROOM-READING, CELEBRATED IN THE TIME-HONOURED TRADITION.



Sport

Tennis

Pegula and Gauff criticise silencing of female players

Organisers refused to allow finalists to address the crowd afterwards at Madrid Open

Tumaini Carayol

Rome

The consequences of the Madrid Open's decision to deny both women's doubles finalists a speech during the trophy ceremony on Sunday rumbled on into Rome yesterday as Coco Gauff and Jessica Pegula expressed frustration about tournament organisers silencing players.

Gauff and Pegula were defeated in the final by Victoria Azarenka and Beatriz Haddad Maia. Pegula said she felt tension behind the scenes throughout a dramatic two weeks in Madrid and "had a feeling something would happen". She did not anticipate the organisers refusing to allow the players to address the crowd.

"Did I think we were not going to be able to speak? No. I've never heard of that, like, in my life," Pegula said at her pre-tournament press conference. "Even in a \$10K challenger final you would speak. I don't know what century everyone was living in when they made that decision or how they actually had a conversation and decided: 'Wow, this is a great decision we're going to do and there's going to be no backlash against this.'"

Tennis tournaments at all levels conclude each event with a trophy ceremony and both finalists almost always give speeches. In the men's doubles final a day earlier, both teams spoke. The women's finalists did not know their speech had been cut until they were ushered to take photos with their trophies.

"The guy was like: 'Now you go up on the podium and take one [photo] together.' Then Vika [Azarenka] turned to us and said: 'There's no speeches.' We were like: 'What?' She was like: 'We're not allowed to talk.' We realised there were no

microphones set up, there's nothing. It was very rushed," Pegula said.

The events on Sunday had been preceded by issues during the tournament. The Madrid Open organisers were mocked on Twitter for providing a much larger cake to Carlos Alcaraz than his fellow No 2, Aryna Sabalenka, who shares a birthday on 5 May.

Azarenka responded to a viral tweet on the subject by implying that it reflected the tournament's treatment of the respective genders. "Couldn't be more accurate on the treatment," she wrote. Feliciano López, the tournament director and an active tennis player, defended the tournament in response to Azarenka. "I'm surprised by this reaction after this gesture!" he wrote on Twitter.

Azarenka is understood to have been critical of scheduling decisions behind the scenes. On Friday she and Haddad Maia began their semi-final at 10.50pm. Meanwhile, the Madrid Open has a reputation dating back to its previous owners for scheduling women's matches either extremely early or late, and it has been criticised for employing models as ball girls.

After the final, Gauff sought the tournament officials and said she received an apology. "I was told it was a situation that didn't involve me that happened. I said that situation for me was not deep enough to not have a trophy ceremony. I think that we worked hard to get to that final."

For Gauff, the main issue is that a tournament silencing players sets a dangerous precedent and tournaments should be able to absorb criticism, even publicly, without retaliating. "I do think the player should address the crowd, people who came and supported the event," she said.

"But I think it was just more about the principle behind it, that in future cases, maybe me or somebody else criticises the organisation or tournament, maybe deeper than what was said, I don't know, maybe racism, homophobia, something like that. You can't just cut, no speech, no nothing. You have to take those criticisms."

Following his triumph at the Aix-en-Provence Challenger last week, his first title in nearly four years, Andy Murray will face the home favourite Fabio Fognini in the first round of the Italian Open today. Murray, who has risen to No 42 in the rankings, said of his final matches in France: "I moved well, I hit the ball big from both sides, I returned well. The last two matches are the best I've felt on the court the whole year."

► Jessica Pegula (left) and Coco Gauff were beaten in the doubles final by Victoria Azarenka and Beatriz Haddad Maia in Madrid



Cream of the crop

Robert Kitson picks his Premiership XV of 2022-23

15 Santiago Carreras Gloucester

The 25-year-old Puma has had a remarkable past nine months. Helping Argentina to beat the All Blacks in New Zealand and England at Twickenham is a double to cherish and, having also worn the No 10 and 11 jerseys for Gloucester, the inventive playmaker had to be squeezed into this team somewhere. "It could sound quite arrogant but I want to be the best player in the world," he said earlier this season. He is already an eye-catching talent.

14 Mateo Carreras Newcastle

No relation to his compatriot but the Tucumán-born winger has made a similarly positive impression on English audiences. Along with Adam Radwan, his pace and footwork have left multiple opponents clutching at air; he is a runaway leader on the "clean breaks" list and his total of 13 tries is second only to Harlequins' Cadan Murley. At 5ft 8in tall he is proof that top wingers do not always have to be massive. Aged only 23, he has an exhilarating future ahead of him.

13 Ollie Lawrence Worcester/Bath

Serious respect is due to Lawrence for overcoming the trauma of Worcester's demise as a Premiership side to re-emerge as a potent threat in a Bath team who finished the season with some belated momentum. For various reasons his international career has not taken off but the 23-year-old could yet force his way back into England's midfield plans for this year's World Cup. If he does it will be a fitting reward for his perseverance in adversity.

12 Benhard van Rensburg London Irish

There are bigger-name centres out there but sometimes it pays to trust the evidence of your own eyes. Every time The Breakdown has watched Irish this season their straight-running South African has been central to their backline potency and he makes those around him look good as well. Seb Atkinson at Gloucester is clearly one to watch while Rob du Preez and Sam James have both had cracking seasons for Sale but, at a time when Irish need all the love they can find, Van Rensburg just shades it.

Jean-Luc du Preez resembles one of those 4x4 vehicles that show their true value when the going gets tough

11 Cadan Murley Harlequins

Jack Nowell's international career has been a pleasure to watch and England, should they so wish, now have a ready-made replacement. It is not just the fact that Murley heads the league's try-scoring charts with 15; it is the enthusiasm with which he plays and the strength in the tackle that has caused defenders, not least Max Malins, plenty of problems at certain times. Anthony Watson has also re-emerged from injury looking close to his best while Elliot Daly is certain to feature somewhere in England's World Cup plans but Murley's rise to prominence feels well timed.

10 Owen Farrell Saracens

A fraction early to make this particular call, with George Ford still hoping to guide Sale to Premiership glory, but Farrell has been excellent in a Sarries jersey all season. His kicking has not always been spot-on but the rest of his game has been sharp and decisive and his steely competitive will remains undiminished. A nod, too, to Handré Pollard at Leicester and young Fin Smith at Northampton, clearly a shooting star of the future.

9 Harry Randall Bristol

Harsh on Alex Mitchell at Northampton, clearly, but Randall has the pace and crispness of pass to rival anyone in the league. What has occasionally been missing is the tactical composure to match but his style is perfect for any team wishing to play at pace. Will he be among England's three scrum-halves for the World Cup? Judging by his performance for Bristol against Gloucester last Saturday, he is another candidate making a well-timed late burst for recognition.

1 Val Rapava-Ruskin Gloucester

Some players are more than good enough to be international regulars but, for some reason, it never quite happens. In the case of Rapava-Ruskin there used to be question marks over his work rate and his penalty count but, increasingly, his ability over the ball allied to his obvious strength is obvious for pretty much everyone to see. That said, competition is intense in his position and the welcome return of the fit-again Beno Obano at Bath has added further to Steve Borthwick's loosehead prop options.

2 Julián Montoya Leicester

The third Argentina international to make this list and perhaps the best hooker in the world right now. If England supporters think their

opening World Cup pool game against the Pumas in Marseille in September is a foregone conclusion they have clearly not been paying attention to Montoya's reliable impact at the breakdown and his relentless appetite for the hardest yards. If anyone deserves an off-season break it is him, but his old Leicester coach Borthwick will still be extremely wary of his ability this autumn.

3 Nick Schonert Sale

A tight call at tighthead where Dan Cole's resurgence has given hope to mature props everywhere. In the past Schonert has suffered from ill-timed injuries but has started regularly for the Sharks and been one of the forward pillars that have helped to propel Alex Sanderson's side to the top two in the table. Although Cole may yet have something to say about that when Leicester travel to Salford on Sunday.

4 Jean-Luc du Preez Sale

Another big reason why Sale have been such a compelling force this season. The Du Preez family are clearly a hard-nosed bunch but the lock resembles one of those 4x4 vehicles that show their true value when the going gets tough.



Rugby selector's dream team

The English Premiership has nurtured a number of future stars emerging among the league's mature crop of players

Relentless, physical and a force of nature, he is a perfect example of the formidable talent that leaves South Africa for more lucrative pastures. Has to be included in this team, even if it was his brother who was officially shortlisted for Premiership player for the season.

5 Ollie Chessum Leicester

Deservedly established himself in England's pack this season and would have been a key man in Leicester's run-in had injury while on international duty not cruelly sidelined him. Leicester have plenty of other physical options in their squad, with George Martin among those finishing the season strongly, but Chessum is clearly the type of player that Borthwick particularly likes. While Rob Simmons at London Irish has been quietly influential and Sale's Jonny Hill could yet add another Premiership medal to his collection, the 22-year-old Chessum has every chance of a lengthy Test career.

6 Tom Pearson London Irish

Picked ahead of some highly talented alternatives but anyone who has watched London Irish this season will not be at all surprised. Maybe there will be tougher days ahead, but if England are searching for a World Cup squad bolter they need look no further. Rangy, athletic, hard-working and a strong ball carrier, Pearson almost feels like a throwback to an era when English back-rowers were the envy of the world; his development from here will be fascinating. A warm mention in dispatches, too, for Saracens' Theo McFarland, Bath's Ted Hill and Irish's Juan Martín González.

7 Ben Earl Saracens

As with Pearson, it is impossible to leave Earl out of this year's team. Which makes it all the more ironic that England, under Eddie Jones, opted to ignore him. Clearly there is massive competition in the shape of the Curry twins, Sam Underhill and Jack Willis but none of them are as quick off the mark as Earl, who could probably play Test rugby as a centre. When he plays well, so do Saracens, and his probable duel with the excellent Lewis Ludlam will be a key battle in Saturday's Sarries v Saints semi-final. Leicester's Tommy Reffell also deserves a special mention.

8 Jasper Wiese Leicester

You could pick Billy Vunipola or Sam Simmonds or Alex Dombrandt and still feel pretty happy with life as a selector. That said, if you measure your No 8 by the amount of apprehension he generates among defenders when he bursts off the back of a scrum, there is only one possible pick this season. Wiese would run through brick walls all day if necessary and Leicester have been the fortunate beneficiaries. As with Montoya, you just hope he is allowed a few weeks off to recharge his batteries. If the Tigers retain their domestic title, the South African will be one of the key reasons why.

Farrell changes approach after 'overthinking' goalkicking

Robert Kitson

Owen Farrell has revealed he has changed his mental approach to goalkicking after falling below his usual high standards during the Six Nations championship this year.

The Saracens and England fly-half says he was "overthinking" his place-kicking and is now trying to be less obsessive about it.

Farrell is the third-highest point-scorer in the history of Test rugby behind Dan Carter and Jonny Wilkinson but he has endured some frustrating days this season, not least against Wales in Cardiff when he landed only two of his six attempts.

"I've obviously thought about it," said Farrell, well aware of the need to keep the scoreboard moving in the Premiership semi-final against Northampton this Saturday.

"I don't think I'm ever going to be a person that doesn't think about it enough. It's probably more the other way that's been the problem over periods of this year. Trying to find the fix, trying to think my way through a lot of it. When you've been kicking for a long time, getting out of your own way is probably the key. That's been what I've been working on."

"What I want to get back to is enjoying being out there, kicking balls over the posts and seeing how well I can strike them. I've done enough technical work over the course of my career ... I don't want to bog myself down. In a lot of what I've been doing I feel that has been the case."

For years Farrell's customary side-

ways glance up towards the distant posts has been the inevitable prelude to him hitting the target but he now believes a less intense attitude is the better way ahead.

"It's more that I'm not constantly trying to figure everything out ... trying to bounce around fixing things and ending up losing everything almost. I've stopped trying to think my way through everything. Sometimes the more you think the more it becomes a problem. I feel I've been a little bit like that. That doesn't mean you don't miss. It just means when you miss you're not as bothered."

Saracens, meanwhile, remain focused on making up for their defeat in the Premiership final last season with the director of rugby, Mark McCall, keen that they give a better account of themselves in this year's playoffs. "It wasn't so much losing last year's final, it was how we lost it which is the thing that is driving us," he said. "It felt like we played within ourselves. Anyone can lose a final but when you don't feel you have given it a proper go you carry that all summer. I guess that has driven this season."

Scotland have omitted Fraser Brown, Sean Maitland and Ruaridh McConnochie from a 41-man summer training squad ahead of the Rugby World Cup in France this year. The head coach, Gregor Townsend, has also signed a new three-year contract designed to keep him in the job until at least April 2026.



Owen Farrell is aiming for Premiership glory with Saracens

by a suspension of privileges," reads the panel's judgment. "We do not feel in the circumstances that it could. A removal of privileges for a period would not be an appropriate sanction as it does not reflect the gravity of the matter. Additionally, such a sanction which simply allowed somebody to continue as a distinguished member, but without privileges, would not send an appropriate message as to how unacceptable such behaviour is from someone in such a position."

"We agree with the RFU that the language was archaic and offensive and there can be no excuse for not knowing it was so offensive and for continuing to use it. The language goes against the core principles of the game and the changes that the RFU and the game of rugby worldwide has been pursuing for some time."

"We agree with the submission made to us that the only appropriate sanction is to recommend to the body that gifts individuals the distinguished membership, the RFU Council, that Mr Murphy be removed as a distinguished member and consequent on his removal as a distinguished member we recommend to council that all privileges are removed indefinitely."

RFU removes privileges over racist language

Continued from back page

it is up to the council to remove privileges rather than a position from which to resign. It was not in the gift of the council to impose the stadium ban but the RFU took the additional measure, in accordance with sanctions "placed on individuals who have engaged in discriminatory behaviour at Twickenham".

Murphy accepted the charge as well as evidence provided by witnesses and that the behaviour breached the council's code of conduct. The panel noted a hint of an attempt to describe the incident as "banter" but that was in no way an attempt at justification. The panel also noted the volunteer had subsequently challenged Murphy via WhatsApp, and he called the volunteer to apologise, though only after the challenge.

"We have considered whether this matter could be properly dealt with

as a suspension of privileges," reads the panel's judgment. "We do not feel in the circumstances that it could. A removal of privileges for a period would not be an appropriate sanction as it does not reflect the gravity of the matter. Additionally, such a sanction which simply allowed somebody to continue as a distinguished member, but without privileges, would not send an appropriate message as to how unacceptable such behaviour is from someone in such a position."

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Cycling

Double world champion Doyle led a storied life

Briton will be remembered for successes in individual pursuit and six-day racing – and service out of the saddle

Robert Dineen

I first met Tony Doyle in the lounge of a hotel near his home in Woking. He arrived early, smartly dressed and prepared to give up several hours for an interview about his cycling career. He was similarly generous with his time and wisdom during a friendship that lasted another eight or so years. He was also punctual without fail and I never saw him without a formal jacket. Tony was a proud man and the news of his death last Friday came as a shock.

I considered him a mate and I hoped the feeling was mutual. If I needed a quote, a contact or just fancied a chat, no request was too much for him. When a personal situation of mine had not quite worked out, he was sympathetic, nonjudgmental and robust in his advice. He offered compliments, too, and I knew them to be heartfelt because Tony was just as quick to point out my shortcomings. With Tony, you valued his frankness even when it stung. I could see why he was a valued mentor to young cyclists.

For some reason I could never help him in quite the same way, though I had known about his mental-health struggles since that first meeting. At the time he admitted that he had not long emerged from a difficult spell. Quite sensibly he divulged this off the record, but said that he planned to discuss it in an autobiography. He wanted to demonstrate to fellow sufferers how they might come out the other side.

The last I heard, the book was unfinished. With the help of his wife Adriana, a teacher, Tony had written

several chapters. But without the motivation of a publisher's advance, they had not managed to finish it.

This was a shame. Tony led a storied life. He was twice a world champion in the individual pursuit, in 1980 and 1986, an exceptional achievement when cycling was of strictly minority interest in Britain. Tony recalled training alone on Herne Hill's outdoor velodrome in the depths of winter. As a young rider he made the commute from his suburban home to a job in central London part of his training programme, improvising an interval session en route. It was hardly scientific but the roads were at least less busy back then.

As a professional he was among the main men on the domestic road racing scene. It made a brief appearance on the mainstream in the 1980s through the Kellogg's criterium series but the real money was abroad, both on road and track. Tony chose the latter, submitting himself to the six-day racing scene. Part indoor entertainment, part brutally-demanding athletic event, it involved several days of near-constant riding across the continent. It required stamina, track craft and, with only a limited number of racing slots available, a strong personality.

Tony thrived on it. He became part of the Blue Train of riders who were invited to every meeting and commanded the biggest fees. He won 23 events, the most of any Briton. An imposing, athletic figure, he was known for his fluid, quick pedalling style. He had offers to join European road-race teams but he was doing too well to compromise his career on this winter circuit.

In 1989 he crashed at the Munich Six-Day and suffered a terrible head injury. He ended up in a coma and was read the last rites. Even once he came from the brink the doctors feared brain damage, but Tony pulled through and submitted himself to months of rehab.

Physically he appeared to make a full recovery, helping Britain win silver in the team pursuit at the 1994

An imposing, athletic figure, he was known for his fluid and quick pedalling style

World champion's wheel of fortune

Tony Doyle, who has died aged 64, won individual pursuit gold in 1980 and 1986
MONTY FRESCO/ANL

Commonwealth Games, but he wondered if the accident had affected the wiring of his brain, saying his consistently upbeat approach to life might have been checked.

He retired in 1995, aged 37, and turned his focus to the administrative side of the sport. Later that year he was elected president of British Cycling on a platform which, he said, would bring increased transparency to the executive. The ruling body was acutely political back then, however, and he resigned only months afterwards following a dispute with the board.

Fortunately, Tony could work a room. He was quick-witted, charming and outgoing. He was unafraid to call a politician, cycling executive or journalist in an attempt to network them. He was diligent and persistent too, qualities that presumably helped him find employment elsewhere in the industry, including his role in helping to set up the Tour of Britain and occasional commentary work on Eurosport.

He once told me about the time he worked on London 2012, serving as the chairman of the Olympic delivery board for Southwark, and was struck by a bout of depression. In one important meeting, he had struggled not to walk out, such was his inner turmoil. I hope his family do not mind my recounting such personal detail, but the point is this: he stayed. This is partly how I will remember Tony. For his fight.

In 2019, a few weeks after his 60th birthday, he told me he retained his "passion" for the sport and still had much to give to it. I was concerned about a year ago, then, when he stopped returning calls. It turned out that the enthusiasm that had fuelled him for so long, taking him from training on the A roads of Middlesex to the summit of his sport, had been extinguished. I hoped it would prove temporary.

I wrote to him knowing that he was still reading messages. But I didn't know he had been taken ill. Few of us did. Possibly there should be some comfort in the knowledge that he went quickly and lived with his cancer diagnosis for only a month. But right now it does not feel like it. Travel well, old friend.

Robert Dineen is a sports journalist. He wrote *Kings of the Road: A Journey Into The Heart of British Cycling*

Sport
In brief

Cycling

Leknessund claims pink jersey at Giro

Andreas Leknessund seized the leader's pink jersey from Remco Evenepoel at the Giro d'Italia but was pipped to the fourth-stage victory by Aurelien Paret-Peintre. A seven-man group engineered a breakaway at the 79km mark and built a lead which was over five minutes at one point of the 175km ride from Venosa to Lago Laceno in southern Italy. On the final ascent, the leading duo of Paret-Peintre (AG2R-Citroën) and Leknessund (Team DSM) pulled clear. Paret-Peintre stayed on his rival's wheel on the descent before overtaking in the final metres. Evenepoel (Soudal-QuickStep) finished two minutes behind, giving Leknessund the overall lead by 28 seconds. PA Media

Boxing

Smith's injury delays Eubank Jr rematch

Liam Smith's rematch with Chris Eubank Jr has been postponed for two weeks after the Liverpool fighter suffered a minor injury. The middleweights were due to meet at the Manchester Arena on 17 June, but will now fight on 1 July. Smith won a controversial first meeting in January, stopping Eubank Jr in the fourth round. In the heavyweight division, Britain's Joe Joyce has activated his rematch clause with China's Zhilei Zhang after defeat last month. PA Media

Motor racing

Floersch aiming for F1 after breaking spine

Sophia Floersch has set her sights on racing in Formula One "in the next three to five years" after recovering from a spinal fracture. The 22-year-old drives in Formula Three after breaking her spine at the 2018 Macau Grand Prix, aged 17. Earlier this year she joined Alpine's Race(H)er programme, which aims to increase diversity. At the Laureus World Sports Awards in Paris, she said: "I always dreamt of reaching F1 and now Alpine being behind me actually having the same goals and a clear way of how they want to get there with a woman makes it even better." PA Media



Sophia Floersch
has made a remarkable recovery

Archer an Ashes doubt after elbow issue forces early flight back from IPL

Simon Burnton

Jofra Archer's tortuous search for full fitness has taken another frustrating twist, with the fast bowler ruled out of the remainder of the Indian Premier League season and returning immediately to England to recover from his latest elbow surgery and improve his chances of participating in the Ashes.

Archer has played only five of Mumbai Indians' first 10 games in the IPL and will now miss their four remaining regular fixtures, including yesterday's against Royal Challengers Bangalore at Wankhede Stadium, and any in the post-season playoffs. He had minor elbow surgery in Belgium last month and despite rapidly returning to action has not felt comfortable.

"Archer has been recovering from right elbow surgery," the England and

Wales Cricket Board said in a statement. "However, pushing through the discomfort while playing, hoping it will settle, has proven challenging. Therefore, it has been agreed for him to return to the UK for a period of rest and rehabilitation to give him the best opportunity for a full recovery."

It is more than three years since Archer's elbow injury first flared up, forcing him out of a Test match in South Africa in January 2020, and two years since the first operation intended to cure it. At the time, the England bowling coach, Jon Lewis, shrugged this off as "a small blip on his journey".

Last month was the fifth time Archer had undergone surgery on the same joint, and the player's continued struggles with the relatively light workloads of Twenty20 cricket make his participation in this summer's Ashes, which starts in just over five weeks, look increasingly remote. His early return from India will, however,

allow the ECB's medical department to oversee his recovery with that target, and perhaps the 50-over World Cup that follows in the autumn, in mind. The ECB is confident Archer is fit enough to play T20s but feel he would recover better without doing so.

After news broke of his latest surgery, the 28-year-old said he had been enduring "a worrying and troubling time" but that he continued to target a return to England's Test side. In an interview with Cricinfo last month Archer said: "It's a huge year. I think everything is intertwined; everything bounces off everything else. If I can get

'Pushing through the discomfort has proven challenging'

ECB statement

through [the IPL] then I'll be in a good position to play in the Ashes, and then everything else will follow with it."

Reacting to Archer's setback on Instagram, the England Test captain, Ben Stokes, wrote: "This guy's got a heart of a lion. We know what you've been through and what you've put your body through."

Meanwhile, the broadcaster and former England international Ebony Rainford-Brent is to become a non-executive director of the ECB for a three-year term, with her appointment to be ratified at today's AGM.

"Ebony is a unique talent, a trailblazer who was a winner on the pitch and has achieved so much off it," said the ECB chairman, Richard Thompson. "Her Ace Programme has already made a huge impact in creating opportunities for youngsters from Black communities, and she shares my impatience for making further progress in creating a truly inclusive sport."

Rainford-Brent is joined on the board by Pete Ackerley, whose many previous roles in the sport include a spell as the ECB's head of development. He is currently chief executive of the British American Football Association and Chair of Trustees of Wembley National Stadium Trust.

Analysis

Ali Martin

England still unable to get enough of their pace ace

There are few more alluring fast bowlers than Jofra Archer. Think back to that breakthrough summer four years ago, Archer tearing through the World Cup and Ashes campaigns, hitting stumps, helmets and outside edges at high velocity and sparking talk of a generational talent.

England's supporters have certainly taken Archer to their hearts since that switch from his native Barbados, greeting every appearance with a reworked version of the Depeche Mode classic Just Can't Get Enough. In full flight, cruising towards the crease before unwinding from tight into the stumps, that hyperextensive right elbow adding an extra crack of the whip, he causes the world's best players problems.

The problem in recent times, however, has been that Archer cannot catch a break. Since early 2020, when that elbow started to cause him pain and a rarely seen stress fracture in the joint was diagnosed, England's men have played 139 internationals across all



formats, with Archer featuring in only 27 of them.

As such, it wasn't jaw-dropping yesterday when news emerged from India that Archer is to end his time with Mumbai Indians early. He will now take a fortnight's rest back home and then resume rehab on the issue that has undergone five procedures in the past two years, forced long, cruel absences and is still causing discomfort.

Sussex, Archer's county, were told at the start of the season that they would not see him before the Test summer because of his Indian Premier League commitments. But since then there has been a clandestine trip to Belgium to see his elbow specialist, Roger van Riet, and five appearances of a possible 10. The speed gun, by which Archer is often reductively judged, has still seen 90mph breached. But he has not looked right.

The arrival of Chris Jordan at Mumbai last week, and his subsequent parachuting into their

squad as Archer's replacement, suggests this return home was not entirely unforeseen and England are trying to remain hopeful. As it stands, they say no further surgery is planned and, while Archer could theoretically have continued to bowl four-over bursts in the IPL, this recall to the mothership was the sensible course of action.

This outlook also reflects the sensitive nature of Archer's struggle. It is clearly a distressing time for the player, a recent flavour of which came when news of his trip to Belgium was reported and he reacted angrily on Twitter. A regular user of social media, he has also found a section of the Mumbai support unforgiving in his replies, this the second year of a £800,000 deal after missing the entire 2022 season.

Back in England there is only one series on people's lips, however, and concerns over his involvement in the Ashes are inevitable. The drums have started to beat before

the first Test at Edgbaston on 16 June and Archer's fitness is not the only talking point, with Ben Stokes having missed a chunk of the IPL because of a toe problem - his left knee also a constant worry - and Olly Stone awaiting scan results for a hamstring injury.

Stokes is at least said to be ready to resume for Chennai Super Kings today but Stone's need for crutches over the weekend means a layoff is certain here. As such, with Archer sidelined, it leaves Mark Wood as the last fit member of the three outright quicks name-checked last week by Rob Key, the England and Wales Cricket Board's director of men's cricket. Wood has also been at the IPL - his spot lost because of illness and he will return early due to the birth of his second child.

There is a case to say outright pace need not be pivotal, of course, with Australia's barren run of 22 years without an away Ashes series win owing much to their shortcomings playing fast-medium swing and nip. But given Archer's impact during the drawn series in 2019 - 22 wickets at 20 apiece and that fearsome encounter with Steve Smith at Lord's - they will also welcome not having to negotiate it.

For us onlookers it remains a case of fingers crossed that, with a little over five weeks until the first Ashes Test and the series done by 31 July, Archer can make a late entrance. When it comes to best wishes, he just can't get enough.

Milan sweat on Leão's fitness for Champions League derby clash

Milan will make a late call on Rafael Leão's involvement in their Champions League semi-final first leg against Internazionale, their manager, Stefano Pioli, said yesterday after the winger sustained a muscle injury.

Leão has been one of Milan's most influential players this season with 13 goals and 10 assists in all competitions, but he lasted only 12 minutes of the 2-0 win against Lazio on Saturday. Pioli said Leão would either start the game or not play at all, adding that the Belgian winger Alexis Saelemaekers was a potential replacement for the match at San Siro tonight.

"Today he [Leão] trained, tomorrow I will decide what to do," Pioli said, adding he was not worrying over the 23-year-old's fitness. "I'm going to bed quietly tonight, anyway in the morning Rafa and the doctor will tell me his condition. If he is well he will be called up, otherwise not. If the test is clean he can play. If it is not clean he cannot play - either from the start or the end. I would have preferred to do it today, but it was not possible."

Milan have had a poor run in the league with three wins in their past 10 games to slip to fifth - two points behind fourth-placed Inter. But Pioli focused on their European run during which they knocked out Tottenham in the last 16 and Napoli in the quarter-finals. "We are talking about Champions League, we have not had ups and downs but an outstanding run," he said.

His Inter counterpart, Simone

Inzaghi, said his side must think on their feet as they attempt to overturn a losing Champions League record against their city rivals. The two clubs, who have won a combined 10 European Cups, have faced each other on two occasions in the knockout stages, with Milan winning in both previous ties - in 2003 and 2005. But Inter have been more successful in recent meetings, winning three and drawing two of the seven derbies the teams have played since Inzaghi took over as Inter manager in 2021.

"We have played many times, I said it before. Seven," Inzaghi said yesterday. "We have won, lost, made semi-finals, finals. We will have to be very good at using our heads when we need to, because there are always unexpected events in such important matches. It's a very important match as other finals have been. It's not a derby, but the derby. We know what it means." **Reuters**



Rafael Leão will have a late call made on his fitness to face city rivals

Results

Football

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Semi-finals: First leg

Real Madrid (1) 1 Manchester City (0) 1
Vinicius 36 De Bruyne 67

CINCH SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP PLAYOFFS

Quarter-finals: First leg

Partick (2) 4 Queen's Park (1) 3
Turner 15, McMillan 28 Thomas 33 87
Fitzpatrick 69, Graham 90 Boateng 83

CINCH SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS

Semi-finals: First leg

Airdrieonians (5) 6 Falkirk (0) 2
Devenny 8 Donaldson 61
McCabe 14 90pen Kennedy 68
Smith 16, Taylor-Sinclair 31

Fordyce 41

Alloa (1) 1 Hamilton (0) 0
Donnelly 45

CINCH SCOTTISH LEAGUE ONE PLAYOFFS

Semi-finals: First leg

Annan Athletic (3) 6 Dumbarton (0) 0
Goss 7 24, Muir 40
Smith 62, Docherty 83

Luisint 89

East Fife (0) 0 Clyde (0) 1
Rennie 53

Cricket

FIRST ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL

Chelmsford Bangladesh 246-9 (Mushfiqur Rahim 61, Najim Hossain Shanto 44; JB Little 3-61). Ireland 65-3. No result, rain.

FIRST WOMEN'S 20 INTERNATIONAL

Colombo (SSC) Sri Lanka 145-6 (HMD Samarakkrama 45). Bangladesh 146-4 (Nigar Sultana 75no). Bangladesh beat Sri Lanka by six wickets.

Tennis

ATP/WTA INTERNAZIONALI BNL D'ITALIA (Rome)

Women: First round: L Noskova (Cz) bt S Rogers (US) 4-6

6-1 6-4; A Blinkova (Rus) bt M Sherif (Egy) 2-6 6-2 6-3;

N Párikas Diaz (Sp) bt J Niemeier (Ger) 4-6 6-4 6-2;

B Strycova (Cz) bt M Zánevská (Bel) 6-1 3-6 6-3; Wang X (Chn) bt Stepanini (It) 7-6 (7-2) 7-6 (7-2); L Pigat (It) bt D Cherubini (It) 7-5 2-6 6-3; M Vondrousová (Vz) bt

K Kanepi (Est) 6-0 4-6 6-2; S Kenin (US) bt C Bucsa (Sp) 6-6 7-6 (8-10) 7-5; C McNally (US) bt D Späteri (It) 6-0 6-1;

A Sasnovich (Blr) bt L Fernandez (Can) 7-6 (7-4) 4-6 6-3.

Cycling

GIRO D'ITALIA (Italy)

Stage four (Venosa - Lago Laceno; 175km) 1 A Paret-Peintre (Fr) AG2R Citroën 4hr 16min 04sec; 2 A Leknessund (Nor) DSM +0:02; 3 T Skujins (Lat) Trek-Segafredo +0:57; 4 V Albanese (It) Eolo Kometa s/p; 5 N Conci (It) Alpecin-Decenijn +1:02; 6 A Gebreigzabhie (Eri) Trek-Segafredo +1:07; 7 K Bouwman (Neth) Jumbo-Visma +2:01; 8 D Caruso (It) Bahrain Victorious; 9 E Dunbar (Ire) Team Jayco-Alula; 10 A Vlasov (Rus) Bora-Hansgrohe all s/p.

General classification: 1 A Leknessund (Nor) DSM 14hr 35min 44sec; 2 R Evenepoel (Bel) Soudal Quick-Step +0:28; 3 A Paret-Peintre (Fr) AG2R Citroën +0:30; 4 J Almeida (Por) Team Emirates +1:00; 5 P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma +1:12; 6 G Thomas (GB) Ineos Grenadiers +1:26; 7 A Vlasov (Rus) Bora-Hansgrohe s/p; 8 T Skujins (Lat) Trek-Segafredo +1:29; 9 T Geoghegan Hart (GB) Ineos Grenadiers +1:30; 10 J Vine (Aus) Team Emirates +1:36.

Basketball

NBA PLAYOFFS

Eastern Conference

Miami 109 New York 101 (Miami lead series 3-1)

Western Conference

LA Lakers 104 Golden State 101 (LA Lakers lead series 3-1)

Ice hockey

NHL PLAYOFFS

Western Conference

Edmonton 1 Las Vegas 5 (Las Vegas lead series 2-1)

Fixtures

Football

Uefa Champions League

Semi-finals: First leg Milan v Internazionale (8pm)

FA Women's Super League

Brighton v Arsenal (7.30pm); Chelsea v Leicester (7pm)

Cricket

Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy

Blaze v Storm, Grace Road (10.30am); Diamonds v Stars, Scarborough (10.30am); Thunder v Sunrisers, Sale (10.30am); Vipers v Sparks, Hove (10.30am)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Chester 1.30 Ziggy's Phoenix 2.05 Seantrabrh (nap)
2.40 Savetheladance 3.15 Hadrianus 3.45 Commander Straker 4.20 Shadow Dance 4.55 Broken Spear (nb)
Kelso 1.40 Domandlous 2.15 Curley Finger 2.50 Harper Valley 3.25 Castleton 4.00 Snowed In 4.30 Boltingerandkrug 5.02 Time Leader 5.35 Indian Louis
Fontwell 5.10 Swinging London 5.45 Hot Rod Lincoln 6.15 Doyens From 6.45 Lanspark 7.15 Doyen For Money 7.45 I Giorni 8.15 Calin Baton Rouge
Kempton 6.00 Sparklight 6.30 Polar Princess 7.00 Four Adaya 7.30 Mogwai 8.00 Satin Snake 8.30 Twilight Dancer 9.00 Iconic Mover

Guardiola must now drive home the advantage again and again

City did not lose here, and will rightly consider that progress, but they know Real are a team you never control entirely

Sid Lowe
Santiago Bernabéu

after City got a second-half equaliser but he knows it's not done, not least because Madrid are seemingly never done, something he has repeatedly learned the hard way. Which is why this may even feel like a breakthrough, a turning of the tables. Luka Modric, though, insisted: "We go there with faith."

For the first half hour here, it had been tested yet again but they have been here before, after all. "We were patient," he said. It may feel an unlikely one but it is a key word.

Along with the luck, the magic, the destiny, the divine intervention, that carried Madrid to the most extraordinary Champions League there has ever been last season, there was also patience - an awareness that being the best isn't always enough and sometimes isn't even necessary. Not all game, anyway. As Rodri had put it, City had been the better team for 120 minutes last year and lost it all in five. The former Barcelona manager, Ernesto Valverde, had said it even better: the moment when you think you're closest to beating Madrid is the moment when you're closest to losing to them.

City did not lose here, and will rightly consider that progress, probably even an advantage to take to the second leg, not least because it is at home this time. Yet they also saw again that this is a team you never control entirely even when you appear to have them under control, and the worst thing you

This result may even feel like a breakthrough, a turning of the tables, for City

can do is think you have. When you have the advantage you must drive it home again and again and again. And then you must drive it home some more.

Instead, as City dominated the opening here, seemingly so superior, you could imagine Madrid thinking: *Is that all you got?* It was all a bit bloodless and it was not unexpected: "There will be times we have to run after the ball," Toni Kroos had said, and so it proved. Carlo Ancelotti said: "They had more possession in those first thirty minutes but we weren't worried about that because we were well positioned. We were waiting for the right moment for the transition."

On 34 minutes, there it was: a slick one-two with Modric and Camavinga was running free, a familiar fear about to return, a roar about to take this place. An inevitability, even, Madrid had reached half-time with a single shot, 0.03 xG and the lead.

That is not to say they were satisfied, but it was a start, the goal they wanted. "The manager told us at half-time that we needed to have more of the ball," Modric admitted.

Given something to build on, they set about trying to do just that. Karim Benzema shot just over, Vinícius dashed into the area, the threat palpable, and Rodrygo put the ball beyond the bar. Toni Kroos was then blocked, Vinícius shot into the stands, and Benzema had a go. Vinícius then tied up Kyle Walker. "How could I not love you when you won the European Cup over and over again?" the Bernabéu sang as the momentum built. Madrid could smell blood.

They didn't have. That was when Kevin De Bruyne struck: Madrid have no monopoly on moments, Blue Moon the song now, a lesson learnt perhaps. A new experience lived, certainly, because now it was their turn, because Madrid came back at City who resisted and occasionally ran. Federico Valverde escaped Manuel Akanji, Ederson saved Benzema's header, and there was even a Lambretta from Vinícius. In the 19th minute Ederson made a superb save from Aurélien Tchouaméní, then when he leapt to catch Nacho's shot, on 92.51 he fell to the floor and clung to the ball, happy. They had survived, and sometimes, as Madrid have shown, that is everything.



▲ Vinícius Júnior fires Real Madrid into the lead with a powerful shot
JUAN MEDINA/REUTERS

Sport

Football Champions League semi-final, first leg

De Bruyne blasts City level in semi-final

Thibaut Courtois is beaten by Kevin De Bruyne's strike from outside the area to equalise
MANU FERNANDEZ/AP



De Bruyne banishes the demons and fires City belief

Real Madrid	1
Vinícius 36	
Manchester City	1
De Bruyne 67	
Possession	
Real Madrid 42%	Manchester City 58%
Shots on target	
3	6
Total attempts	
13	10

David Hytner
Santiago Bernabéu

The ball was there to hit and how Kevin De Bruyne hit it. It was midway through the second half, Manchester City were behind to Vinícius Júnior's scorching 36th-minute blast and the feeling was starting to take hold that Real Madrid had this Champions League semi-final first leg exactly where they wanted it.

For City, the demons circled at

the venue where it had all gone horribly wrong for them in the second leg of last season's semi-final; the collapse at the end of normal time, two goals shipped to Rodrygo after the 90th minute, Karim Benzema's extra-time winner. Madrid were en route to their 14th title.

De Bruyne sliced through it all when he cut across the ball with the laces of his right boot, 25 yards out and centrally placed after Ilkay Gündogan's layoff. Boy, did it fizz. It was always likely to take something special to beat Thibaut Courtois. This was it. Whatever Vinícius could do, so could De Bruyne.

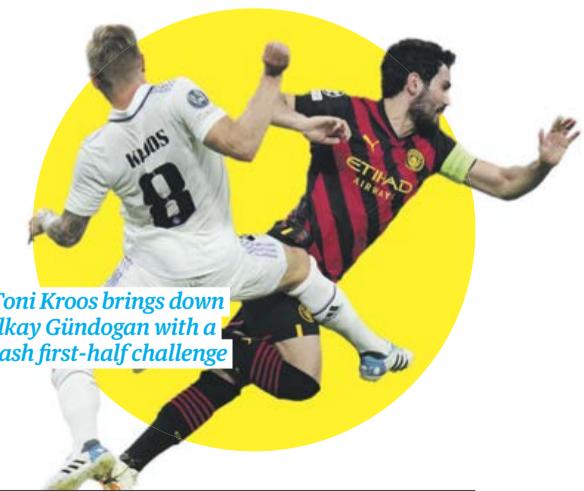
Nothing would be settled here. But at full-time it was easy to feel City were the happier with the draw. The impression would harden when Carlo Ancelotti, the Madrid manager, talked about the control he felt his team had enjoyed, how they restricted City to few clear-cut chances.

Is the holy grail edging nearer for City? Benzema with a far-post header and the substitute, Aurélien Tchouaméni, with another vicious drive - the motif of the evening - extended

Guardiola must drive home the advantage in second leg
Sid Lowe,
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Ederson towards the end but Madrid could not find the winner.

Tchouaméni's attempt came in the 90th minute; there would be no late hoo-doo this time and, when the music had subsided after full-time it was the travelling City fans who made their voices heard. They had suffered last season, locked into their enclosure for what seemed like an age



Toni Kroos brings down Ilkay Gündogan with a rash first-half challenge



16 minutes, albeit none that overly stretched him.

The best was a push around the post to keep out a low Rodri drive on 14 minutes. The opening for Erling Haaland moments later was the clearest, De Bruyne having ushered him up the inside left. The angle was not favourable. Haaland dragged straight at Courtois and he would also thump a header at the goalkeeper. De Bruyne had been the first City player to test him.

Madrid were unconcerned, Ancelotti feeling that City's possession was largely sterile. His team processed the City patterns and they worked their way into the tie. Vinícius and Benzema flickered.

The breakthrough goal was a mixture of beauty and brutality, the former provided by Luka Modric's outside-of-the-boot return flick to Eduardo Camavinga deep on the Madrid left, which got the latter moving. When he found Vinícius, the forward allowed the ball to run under his studs, taking Gündogan out of the action. Now came the power. The shot from the edge of the area was aimed towards Ederson's right-hand post and it positively ripped past him.

City felt a bit of rough stuff before the interval, Dani Carvajal barging Jack Grealish into the advertising boards; Toni Kroos booked for a bad tackle on Gündogan. Grealish pushed a hand up at Carvajal to draw an over-reaction from the full-back. The referee, Artur Dias, did not buy it.

What did City have in the second half? Haaland almost got on to a Gündogan pass in the 56th minute only for David Alaba to move across and make a fine block tackle. Antonio Rüdiger celebrated it like a goal. Alaba and Rüdiger played Haaland superbly, giving him little space.

City could not take their eyes off Benzema, who had gone close after the restart, and Madrid had a swagger in their step. Their threat on the break was clear. But back came City. Back came De Bruyne.

The equaliser was sparked when Rodri stepped up to intercept Camavinga's risky pass out of defence, intended for Rodrygo and, when City worked it for De Bruyne, his shot rocked the Bernabéu. Further back in the buildup, Ancelotti insisted that the ball had gone out of play and he would be booked for his protests. All eyes now turn to the Etihad Stadium.

Real Madrid
4-3-3
Courtois; Carvajal,
Rüdiger, Alaba,
Camavinga; Valverde,
Kroos (Tchouaméni 84);
Modric (Nacho 87);
Rodrygo (Asensio 82);
Benzema, Vinícius

Referee Artur Dias (Por) Attendance 63,485

Manchester City
3-2-4-1
Ederson; Walker,
Dias, Akanji;
Stones, Rodri;
Silva, De Bruyne,
Gündogan, Grealish; Haaland

Analysis
Barney Ronay Santiago Bernabéu

Midfield maestro finds the key in Madrid as Real are locked down in their super prison

Shortly after the post-World Cup resumption Pep Guardiola made some comments about Kevin De Bruyne; sighing a little, looking sad, bemoaning by sly implication the physical state of his champion midfielder. As motivational obiter dicta go it was brutally effective. The Belgian has been sublime on the current winning run. This has been late imperial De Bruyne, a resurgent wave, buried a little behind the cold, hard numbers of Erling Haaland playing (and this is no coincidence) just ahead of him.

It was De Bruyne who pulled himself up to his full height at the Bernabéu; and who seemed, with a single moment of brilliance, to cause a shift of the narrative pressure in this ongoing two-hander.

City needed it, too. By the time the ball was rolled back to De Bruyne by Ilkay Gündogan with 67 minutes gone the Bernabéu had already begun to seethe and purr with a familiar self-generating triumphalism. Manchester City had spent much of the game to that point chasing ghosts, had gone to half-time at 1-0 down, and seemed to be losing themselves once again in the white zone.

Pep Guardiola's team had strangled Madrid for long periods early on. Madrid took their punishment, held their lines. City's poise, their endless stitching in midfield came to nothing. This was like watching an idea come up against an emotion - systems play, clean lines, grooved movements, planned phases - versus a kind of sporting dieu et mon droit.

Towards half-time Guardiola, dressed for the occasion in a skinny-fit undertaker's suit, had begun to point and gesture and



▲ Dani Carvajal shoves Jack Grealish towards the advertising boards

revolve his arms more urgently, seeing shapes, premonitions, ghosts, flickers of disaster.

And of course Madrid scored. Eduardo Camavinga made it, surging forward from left-back, rolling the ball to Vinícius Júnior, who let it run across his body then shot so fiercely into the top left hand corner that even with full view of the ball and the striking leg Ederson could only flail at fresh air. Half-time came like a glorious breaking wave around the home stands. City were being dragged into that place again.

Madrid had been a lovely soft summery place at kick-off, a powder blue sky fading to grey above in the small hole between those towering steel struts. The

Gündogan nudged the ball into space in front of De Bruyne, calculating the distance to goal



▲ Kevin De Bruyne shields the ball from Real Madrid's Eduardo Camavinga JOSE BRETON/AP

Bernabéu is a Frankenstein's monster of a super-ground, still half-built, bandages swinging in the breeze, a glimpse of gleaming steel sub-shell peeking through here and there.

Inside it is both hugely impressive and brutally functional, like watching football inside a super-prison, or a planetary-scale shipping container. There were the usual devotional songs, coronational stuff, the swirling white scarves, the sense of self-celebration, pomp, flash. No other venue in sport performs quite like this. It is both absurd and strangely jolly.

Guardiola had picked his best team, but also a team geared for control. Jack Grealish and Bernardo Silva have one goal between them in the Champions League this season. Their presence isolated Haaland just a little more, paring him back even more starkly as the chief goal threat. Haaland is 22. This was his first game here. He worked hard, but found little joy.

And City's night was heading one way by the time Gündogan did some bits, some stuff, some jinks and feints to make space for what he seemed to know would come next. Gündogan nudged the ball into the space in front of De Bruyne, calculating the angle of the run, the space, the distance to goal. There is a kind of networked thinking in moments like these, an air-drop of ideas. De Bruyne took two quick steps and struck the ball with a lovely severity, snapping down on it with the outside of his foot, like a pistol hammer dropping, and sending the ball always into the same space, hard and low and skimming past Thibaut Courtois's all-consuming grasp and into the corner.

In that moment something seemed to break, to become a little less heavy. De Bruyne was already having a fine game. There were shots, crosses, dribbles. Haaland's impact has been stunning. But this is still City's best, most forceful, most alluring creative player.

There is a sense with De Bruyne of a footballer entering the dog days of his prime. He will be 32 in the summer. This is not your Identikit snake-hipped elite athlete. On his off days De Bruyne looks like a very fit geography teacher who does hill walking and enjoys real ale.

At his best he still has that rare mix of bullocking power and the feet of a fine point artist, the designated free radical in this team, and the closest thing in City's squad to a Madrid-style player.

City will now be narrow favourites at the Etihad. It felt fitting that it should be De Bruyne and a single piece of brilliance, Madrid-ball in Madrid, that made the difference.

Sexism row
Gauff and Pegula shocked at being silenced by Madrid Open



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Elbowed out?
Injured Archer an Ashes doubt after flying back early from IPL

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and analysis**
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Real Madrid

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Vinícius 36



Manchester
City

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De Bruyne 67

'We're unstoppable'
Grealish eyes final after De Bruyne wonder goal

▲ Kevin De Bruyne celebrates with Erling Haaland and Bernardo Silva after scoring the equaliser
GONZALO ARROYO/UEFA/GETTY IMAGES

David Hytner
Santiago Bernabéu

Jack Grealish caught the mood of optimism at Manchester City after their 1-1 draw at Real Madrid in the first leg of the Champions League semi-final, saying they were ready to finish the job at the Etihad Stadium next Wednesday.

City started well but were reeled in by Madrid, who led through Vinícius Júnior's vicious drive on 36 minutes. The holders, who eliminated City last season in the semi-final, were

in charge but then Kevin De Bruyne changed everything, equalising with a fizzing drive in the second half.

"At the Etihad we feel unstoppable," Grealish said. "For me, this is a fair result. It was an incredible shot from KDB, we see it every day in training. We have a new team, a balance of experience and youngsters. I've never felt so confident going on to the pitch with the players around me."

"I had a text from my mum before the game saying: 'These are the nights you dreamed of as a kid,' and it's true. Playing in a Champions League semi-final that everyone in

the world was probably watching, sometimes you pinch yourself."

Carlo Ancelotti, the Madrid manager, insisted his team had deserved better, having largely held City at arm's length. Erling Haaland was restricted by David Alaba and Antonio Rudiger, who stepped in for the suspended Eder Militao. "I believe we deserved to win," Ancelotti said. "We controlled the game well. After scoring we played well."

Ancelotti was furious and conspiratorial, arguing that he had seen the ball go out of play in the buildup to De Bruyne's goal. Ancelotti was

booked for his protests. "It was out of play," he said. "I don't understand why they did not use VAR. The referee didn't pay attention to many things."

Pep Guardiola paid tribute to De Bruyne. "He made an incredible performance for many reasons," the City manager said. "In this type of game, in this type of competition - semi-finals and finals - you need your best players. Ederson and Kyle Walker were exceptional. Now we're going to travel to Manchester and see what we can do better. This kind of game is like a playoff. For the second, you learn a lot from the first."

RFU bans former council member over racist remarks

Exclusive
Gerard Meagher

The Rugby Football Union has banned a former council member from Twickenham for making racist comments during a Six Nations match last year. Alex Murphy has also been stripped of his "distinguished" status and had his privileges removed.

The incident took place in the RFU council box during England's win against Wales in February 2022. A summary of the decision, seen by the Guardian, explains how Murphy was charged with saying to another volunteer "you realise they don't let n***** in the Royal Box". The summary does not name the "volunteer" but details how a similar remark was made near the bar and how their spouse was distressed by the comment.

Last month the RFU concluded an investigation into discrimination in rugby and found that racism exists at every level of the game in England. The report was commissioned after the former England centre Luther Burrell said last year that racism was rife within the sport.

The RFU council is an influential decision-making arm of the union, comprising mainly elected representatives of their constituent bodies who are strictly speaking volunteers. The council has sign-off on a number of key decisions, including the recent change to the legal tackle height. It is the body famously referred to as "57 old farts" by Will Carling when he was the England captain. Distinguished membership is generally for those who have previously served as members of the council for significant periods. Privileges include things such as free tickets for England internationals.

The panel noted Murphy sought to resign from his distinguished membership but

**England
Rugby**
The RFU has stripped Alex Murphy of his 'distinguished' status*

Yes, the police jailed protesters - but they regret it *Marina Hyde, page 3*

The politics of getting a good night's sleep *Barbara Speed, page 4*

US opera singer Grace Bumbry *Obituaries, page 6*

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Inside

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and ideas

Journal

This is a moment of truth for Ukraine. We can't just stand by

As you read this, thousands of young Ukrainian men and women are going through their last training drills, checking their weapons and waiting for D-day. In the big Ukrainian counteroffensive that may start any time now, some

of them will be killed and many more will be wounded. None will emerge unchanged. We thought we had said goodbye to all that in 1945, but this is Europe in 2023. Nobody knows what will happen in this campaign, but we can at least be clear what we want to happen - and firm in supporting the Ukrainians to achieve it. Decisive Ukrainian victory is now the only sure path to a lasting peace, a free Europe and ultimately a better Russia. This alone would be the new VE Day.

Ukrainians have a theory of victory. It goes from success on the battlefield to change in Moscow. For preference, that would be getting rid of the war criminal in the Kremlin. But in the highly unlikely event that Vladimir Putin were to acknowledge his own failure and withdraw his troops while still remaining in power, that would be victory too.

How do they think this might happen, given Russia's dug-in defending forces and major advantages in numbers and air power? One answer is: the way it happened before in Russian history, with military setbacks triggering the revolutions of 1905 and 1917. If the Ukrainian army can push rapidly south to the Sea of Azov, encircle a large number of demoralised Russian forces and cut the supply lines to the Crimean peninsula, there might be some non-linear collapse

of Russian military morale on the ground and regime cohesion in Moscow.

Crimea is the key to this scenario. Ukrainians want to head for the peninsula (but not immediately try to occupy it) for precisely the reason many western policymakers wish them not to: because Crimea is the thing that really matters to Russia. They add that Ukraine can never have long-term security while Crimea is a giant aircraft carrier pointed at its heart.

It's a bold and risky theory of victory, but does anyone in the west have a better one? Many western policymakers seem almost as afraid of Ukrainian success as they are of Ukrainian failure, fearing that Putin will escalate in response. So they nourish a confused idea that there's a Goldilocks outcome - not too hot, not too cold - that will open the way to the nirvana of a "negotiated solution". Or, more cynically (self-styled "realistically"), they are privately prepared for Ukraine to end up losing perhaps one-sixth of its sovereign territory, in a partition that they can call "peace". But at best this would be a semi-frozen conflict, pending renewed war. Here we encounter, once again, the unrealism of "realism".

Most western military analysts think that Ukraine is unlikely to achieve

Timothy Garton Ash



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Timothy Garton Ash
is the author of *Homelands: A Personal History of Europe*

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This is a moment of truth for Ukraine. We can't just stand by
Timothy Garton Ash

← Continued from front

 a decisive victory, thus making moot the question of whether this would trigger the hoped-for political consequences in Moscow. If you have two exhausted armies, that favours defence over offence. Ukraine has great vulnerabilities in its air defences. The fact that there's only one obvious path towards Crimea means Russia is prepared to defend that line. (So it's possible Ukraine might try something else, but even taking back a substantial chunk of Donbas would not have the same psychological effect in Russia as a threat to Crimea.)

The counteroffensive can deploy nine new western-equipped and trained brigades, but these have a mix-and-match zoo of different western weapons, and scant experience in the complex combined-arms operations needed to overcome Russia's defensive lines. Because capitals such as Washington and Berlin have been nervously pondering every item, the Ukrainians don't have the quantity and quality of western tanks, armoured vehicles, long-range missiles and fighter planes they might have had if the west had not held back for fear of escalation.

 The next six months will be decisive. If, come next winter, Ukrainian forces are still bogged down halfway, the west may not deliver a comparable military boost for another offensive next spring. Beside objective difficulties in gearing up our defence industries, there might be waning political support, especially in the US in the run-up to next autumn's presidential election. There would then be disillusionment in Ukraine. Putin would still be in power. He could use his propaganda apparatus at home to sell his partial occupation as a historical restoration of Catherine the Great's empire.

The alternative, perhaps unlikely but still possible, is a decisive Ukrainian victory. Since that would mean a defeat even Putin's state lie-machine could not conceal, the path to victory would bring a moment of increased risk. Although nobody knows exactly what's going on inside the Kremlin black box, intelligence-based analysis suggests Putin has rejected the option of using tactical nuclear weapons, as this would bring no clear military advantage and alienate China and India. But the situation around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, seized by Russia in February 2022 and around which the occupiers have now evacuated the local population, is extremely worrying. He also has other possible asymmetric responses, such as a cyber-attack or targeting a gas pipeline.

What should we do about this? There is no risk-free way forward. Avoiding an immediate risk can mean creating larger risks down the road (the mistake the west made after 2014 when it allowed Russia to keep Crimea and negotiated the sticking plaster Minsk agreement for occupied eastern Ukraine). These risks include not only recurrent armed conflict in Ukraine but also encouraging China to have a go at Taiwan. I've lost count of the number of times Ukrainians have said to me that the west's biggest problem is fear. "The choice is between freedom and fear," President Volodymyr Zelenskiy recently told the Atlantic. So we have to keep our nerve and show just a little of the fortitude that those thousands of young Ukrainians are demonstrating as they prepare to risk their lives.

I'm acutely aware of the need to avoid any hint of armchair heroism. Even if I travel to Ukraine occasionally during this war, I'm not taking a small fraction of the personal risk that Ukrainians face. Responsible governments must recognise, anticipate and carefully weigh the real dangers of escalation. Prudence is not cowardice. But there's also another thing to avoid: the woolly talk of "peace" and "responsibility", which actually means urging, or ultimately even compelling, other people to sacrifice their own homes, freedom and security so that citizens of countries such as Germany, France or Italy can, if only in the short term, go on enjoying these things for themselves.

The west has done that many times before to people in central and eastern Europe. Let's not do it again.

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Coronation

The home secretary's laws mean policing dissent is more politicised than ever

It does the police no good if officers are thought to be at the beck and call of politicians. Such a system, relying on policing by consent, would quickly lose the trust of the public. That is why Lord Denning, the most celebrated English judge of the 20th century, argued that the responsibility for law enforcement ought to lie solely with the police. In a now famous judgment, Denning wrote that the chief constable "is answerable to the law and to the law alone". Yet when it comes to demonstrations it appears that instead of police proportionately applying the laws of the land, officers are being cowed into serving ministerial interests.

Deferring to the executive branch has seen officers forced to apologise over the arrests of six protesters on coronation day. The proximate cause of the mess was the Home Office's decision to expedite new criminal offences to prevent disruption into law last week. This gave the police powers to arrest the leaders of an anti-monarchy group, Republic, for having equipment that "could have been used as part of a 'lock on'-style protest". These turned out to be straps used to transport placards and were about as dangerous as the yellow T-shirts protesters were wearing. The police, it seems, were more bothered about images of disruption of a "once in a generation event" than the disruption itself.

Police have to balance people's right to peacefully express their views with disruption to the wider population. But today's Conservative party seems to have no interest in dissent or respect for opposing views. It thinks anyone who does not share its

views ought to be re-educated into submission. The government criticises repressive laws in dictatorships but is emulating them at home. At the weekend, police arrested volunteers for handing out rape alarms because they could cause a nuisance, which was deemed more of an issue than protecting women in vulnerable situations. Also arrested was a journalist covering the protests, despite the law saying reporters and observers would be exempt.

We have already had judges labelled as "enemies of the people", seen the vilification of "lefty lawyers", and now there is blatant political intimidation of the police. This was typified by the home secretary, Suella Braverman, preposterously suggesting that the police backed Just Stop Oil protests. Freedom of expression - and freedom of assembly - are the cornerstones of British democracy. These liberties should be protected, however inconvenient it might seem, so that individuals can calmly differ.

Public officials ought to be accountable to the public in some form. In England and Wales that is through either mayors or police and crime commissioners. But neither are empowered to tamper with the operational independence of the police. Ms Braverman, like her predecessor, Priti Patel, has such a different view of constitutional conventions that Sue Sim, a former chief constable and national policing lead for public order, warned at the weekend that the country risked becoming a "totalitarian police state".

Ministers need to listen to what protesters are saying, rather than criminalising them for saying it. Last year, the Labour peer Shami Chakrabarti noted that the home secretary had been rescued from oblivion by Rishi Sunak after pleading "redemption for herself but incarceration for those who plead for the planet, against poverty, and even for free speech itself". The instinct of a dictator is to lock up those who disagree. Britain's democracy should be nowhere near this kind of approach.

Russia

Beyond the bombast, new vulnerabilities appear on Putin's home front

There were no surprises during Vladimir Putin's short speech to commemorate the 78th Victory Day in Moscow yesterday. Just as last year, Mr Putin drew risible parallels between the Soviet Union's role in defeating Nazi Germany and his own illegal war in Ukraine. Even the brutal head of the Wagner mercenary force, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has questioned this narrative, which casts Ukraine as a neo-Nazi puppet regime manipulated by a west intent on destroying Russia. But the president resolutely stuck to the usual script.

The boilerplate polemic was, however, delivered against a subtly changed backdrop. This was the most muted 9 May celebration since Mr Putin began to co-opt the anniversary for his own revanchist purposes. Fifteen months after Russia's blitzkrieg invasion ground to a halt last February, the blood-soaked war of attrition taking place in eastern Ukraine has limited the Kremlin's capacity to put on a show in Red Square. The parade was light on heavy military equipment, compared with previous years, and did not feature an air display. In other parts of Russia, events were cancelled altogether, with officials citing security grounds.

A day traditionally devoted to memory was thus overshadowed by present anxieties. Following the recent drone assault on the Kremlin, the attempted assassination at the weekend of a prominent ultra-nationalist, and successful acts of sabotage across the country, there is a new sense of vulnerability on Mr Putin's home front. The provenance of these attacks is murky - Kyiv has denied responsibility for the

Kremlin drones - but their combined effect has been to introduce some sense of war-related jeopardy in Russian everyday life.

The impact of this in stoking internal opposition to the war should not be overstated, given the Kremlin's power to disseminate misinformation and repress dissent. Ostensible popular support for Mr Putin's war has remained steady at about 75%. But for ordinary Russians, it means that simply ignoring the war in Ukraine is becoming less easy to do, especially at a time when military requirements look likely to trigger a new wave of forced mobilisation.

The fearsome rate of Russian casualties, in battles that have yielded paltry territorial gains, has been accompanied by a notably lacklustre response to a recruiting campaign for new volunteers. New legislation to prevent registered conscripts leaving Russia is generating widespread anxiety and fear among the young. The dropping from yesterday's parades of the march of the "immortal regiment" - in which relatives display portraits of those fallen in combat during and since the second world war - was explained in relation to security concerns. A fear that it could be used to publicly mourn those lost in Ukraine seems more plausible.

During the Putin years, Russia's 9 May celebrations have become increasingly bombastic displays of military pride and menacing intent. This year, reality undercut the performance. Mr Putin was unable to point to any recent successes in the field. Western estimates suggest more than 20,000 Russian troops have died in Ukraine since December, and more than 80,000 have been wounded. Should Ukraine's long-prepared counteroffensive yield significant results, further setbacks on the frontline will compound the new sense of domestic unease. Ahead of a new and crucial phase of the war, Mr Putin played the same old rhetorical tunes. As the home front becomes more volatile, amid tensions embodied by Mr Prigozhin, he may begin looking for some new ones.



Yes, the police jailed protesters – but at least they regret it

Marina Hyde



In a deeply unpredictable turn of events – anticipated by only the most casual students of the Metropolitan police – the force has made another howler. Howlers are the specific category of Met misuse of powers where nobody died, or got sexually assaulted, or both. Nevertheless, they can have serious significance. The anti-monarchy group Republic participated in months of briefings and meetings with the Met concerning their protest at the coronation, in which they were informed that their peaceful plans were lawful. As it turned out on the day, however, six members of the group, including its chief executive, Graham Smith, were arrested before the protest even began. According to the Met's account: "They were held on suspicion of conspiracy to cause public nuisance. We seized lock-on devices."

And yet ... did they? The police seem instead to have seized the luggage straps the protesters had used to secure their placards. The force has now expressed "regret" that these arrests took place. This lengthy statement adds: "It was not clear at the time that at least one of the group stopped had been engaging with police protest liaison team officers ahead of the event."

Hmmm. If only there had been some way of establishing this situation in the moment, perhaps on some kind of communication device? Mobile police have carried personal radios since the late 1960s, so maybe the technology still feels new and unwieldy to them, whereas the new Public Order Act – passed at speed into law a whole three calendar days previously – is something with which they are far keener to display an aggressive familiarity.

At time of writing, the allegation about the arrest of the Republic members remained up on the Met's Twitter feed, despite it having also retracted it. In some ways this seems apt, allowing any users now catching up with the story to experience another play-by-play of Met incompetence and overreach as it happened. And of course, the Met indulges in so many displays of strength that later turn out to be cock-ups or accidental displays of weakness that they can't be expected to go back and delete every stupid, high-handed and arguably libellous tweet. The paperwork of correcting their paperwork would be a constant burden.

Demonstrators in Westminster on Saturday

PHOTOGRAPH:
PIROSCHKA VAN
DE WOUW/AP

Starmer didn't condemn the arrests. That suggests his favourite position is not so much sitting on the fence as locking on to it

As a made-up police officer might put it: "I think the public would prefer us to be out catching criminals!"

Or staying in catching criminals, given that the Met is investigating more than 1,000 sexual assault and domestic abuse claims involving around 800 of its officers. Serving officers have been taken off organised crime investigations and counter-terrorism duties in order to investigate wrongdoing in their own force.

The Met remains in special measures, a mere two months having elapsed since Louise Casey's report found it institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic, while the Met chief has publicly grappled with his ability to do something about the above. "In all cases, I don't have the final say on who's in the Metropolitan police," he WTF-ed last month. "I know that sounds mad - I'm the commissioner."

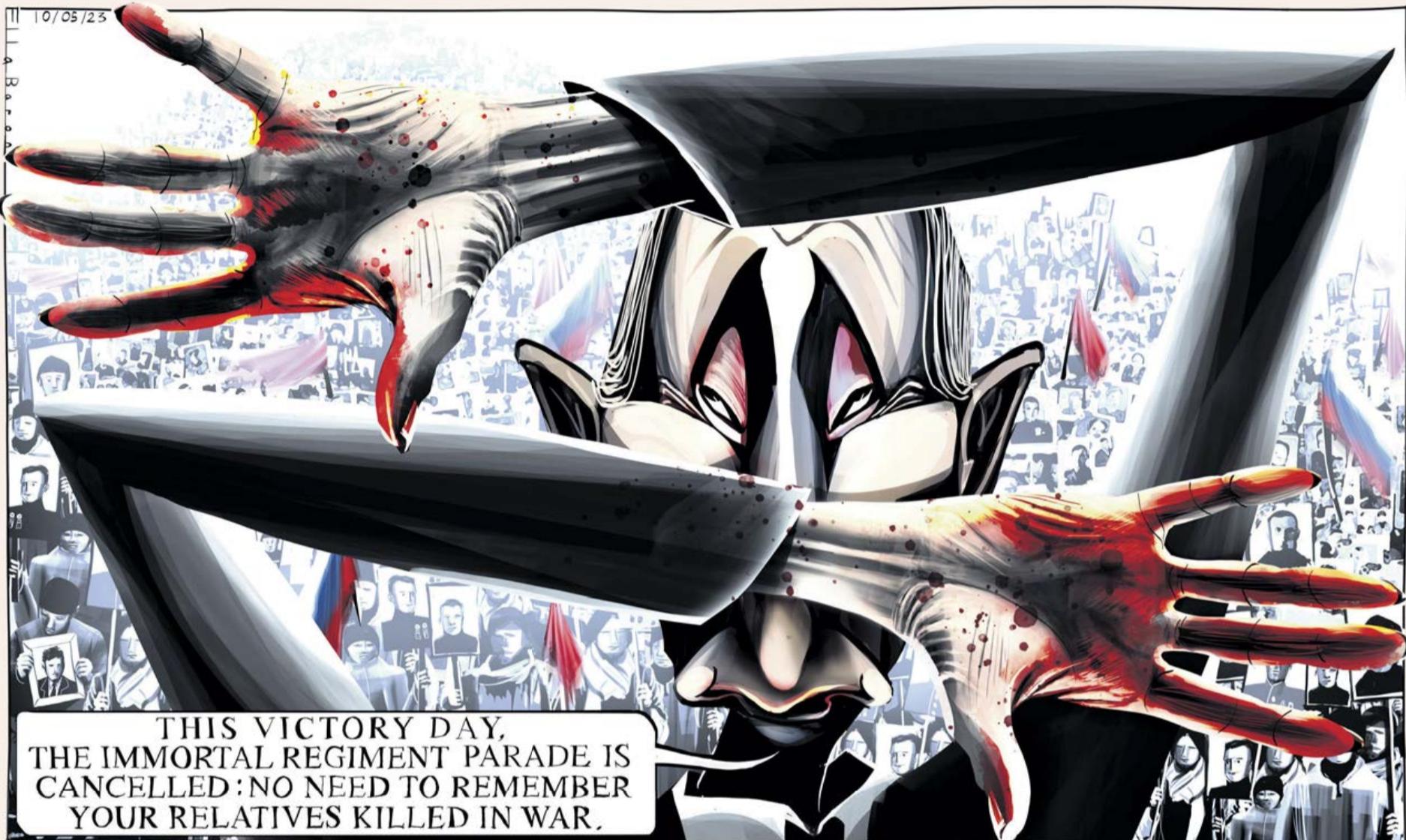
Anyway, back to these "regretted" arrests, which shouldn't be swept under the carpet even by people who fervently disagree with Republic's cause. Unfortunately, rather a lot of sweeping seems to be under way by our politicians, supposedly freedom-lovers to a man and woman. I'm going to shock you here, but at time of writing, Labour leader and former lawyer Keir Starmer couldn't say whether he did or didn't condemn the arrests. A lack of clarity that suggests once again that Starmer's favourite position is not so much sitting on the fence as locking on to it.

Rishi Sunak is at pains to insist that "the police are operationally independent of government", which might be a little too convenient. I'm not sure you get to pass draconian new legislation into law a mere three days before the coronation, then claim its prompt misuse has nothing to do with you. After all, you can hardly say the previous stab at draconian overhaul – the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 – didn't give a clear warning as to how this might play out. (This was the act that allowed for greater sentences for attacking statues than women, encouragingly.)

In that case, the police began quickly and frequently misusing their new powers, either because they didn't understand them or because they didn't care to. The Sarah Everard vigil during the pandemic was an earlier warning bell – we saw how the Met policed protest when given almost unlimited powers.

Yet they keep on getting more. Suella Braverman's Home Office in particular should struggle with Macavitying its way out of this latest foul-up, given that it only very recently sent an official warning letter to Republic stressing that new laws had been brought forward to deal with "disruption at major sporting and cultural events". According to the Home Office last week, this letter was meant to inform, not intimidate: a claim that possibly doesn't hold up in light of events.

Then again, a whole lot of things don't hold up, from the new act to the troubling fact that a mere 6% of those arrested for protesting against the coronation were charged with anything at all. If we looked at any other country and saw people being put in cells, without grounds, for peacefully protesting against the investiture of any type of leader, we would surely have an unfavourable view of it. Lawmakers who lack the courage to take these unfavourable views may think they are doing the popular thing. In fact, they are a danger to us all.



The politics of getting a good night's sleep

Barbara Speed



Do you have a strict bedtime? A sunrise-mimicking alarm clock? A vial of "sleep oil"? A white noise machine? A ban on screens after 10pm? We are, as a culture, obsessed with sleep. Not getting enough, not having the right kind; even sleeping too much. Study after study piles up to warn us that any of the above will give us cancer or dementia. And this week, a new punishment for failing to sleep well has appeared, in the form of the "sleepalyser" (not, admittedly, the official term): blood tests administered after a road accident in order to determine if you were under the "sleep limit".

The Australian Government Office of Road Safety has been investigating this possibility for the good reason that tiredness is a major factor in collisions. In the UK, it accounts for up to one in five, rising to a quarter of fatal and serious crashes. The researchers reckon these tests could be rolled out for use by police within a couple of years, with an accompanying "legal drowsy driving limit".

The problem with this proposal is that it only adds to the impression that any failure to sleep is our fault. People with conditions such as insomnia have always been focused on improving their symptoms. But over the past few years, a good night's sleep has taken on a new status: as something that everybody must pursue and optimise via gadgets and goals. Sleep - as old as life itself, and inherently free - is now worth hundreds of billions of dollars a year, and growing.

All of this ignores several key things. The first is that there is no sleep ideal. The mythical eight hours is not a data-backed recommendation by health bodies. Different people need different amounts: seven hours might be right for you. Warnings of a "sleep loss epidemic" do the rounds every few months, but have never been backed up by reliable data - in most western countries, we seem to be broadly sleeping more than we did half a century ago, despite the rise of screens, stress and all the other things that allegedly keep us awake. If anything *has* changed, it's that we've worked ourselves up into a panic about the whole thing, and could thereby be keeping ourselves awake - an effect that has been labelled orthosomnia.

The real story of sleep is not one of personal responsibility, but of social and economic privilege. Sleep loss epidemics are real - but they're playing out among shift workers and those with caring responsibilities. Those on lower incomes are more likely to sleep less, as are minorities. Women are

more likely to be diagnosed with sleep disorders than men. Our sleep reflects not the bedtime tea we drink or what type of light our phone screen emits, but what is demanded of us in our waking lives. Those who chronically lack sleep are either suffering from a genuine condition or from an economy that refuses to let them rest.

Take truck drivers. A 2018 survey by the union Unite found that almost a third of surveyed HGV drivers said they had fallen asleep behind the wheel, and two-thirds blamed the long working days demanded by their employers. The union said there was a "chronic shortage" of truck stop facilities to allow proper rest, and that deaths of HGV drivers in accidents - of which there had been around 20 per year in the previous five years - were not properly investigated or logged as workplace deaths. Three years later, hauliers staged a protest against their "appalling" conditions and pay by taking the one-hour rest break they are entitled to by law. But when the number of drivers plummeted during the pandemic thanks to Brexit, the government responded by temporarily extending the number of hours drivers could legally work.

The researchers behind the new sleep blood tests have suggested that they could be used in commercial contexts such as mining, aviation and trucking. If so, there's a chance employers and legislators would be forced to reckon with the effects of their practices. A terrible night's sleep could be recognised as requiring a sick day so a driver wasn't under the sleep limit.

Or, as is more likely, the culture of personal blame could balloon further. Driving for 15 hours a day? Perhaps try a lavender sleep spray. Two toddlers, no childcare: have you considered a £1,000 mattress? Nurses covering a double shift in a short-staffed hospital - did you use your phone before bed? Try harder - I'd hate to have to sleepalyse you.

*
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Letters

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Country diary

Sandy, Bedfordshire

Do singing skylarks eat the sky? So many rise from this prairie of wheat that I wonder what fills their little bellies. Not the green grass of the emerging crop, for my jaded and jade-filled eyes see only sterility in the phalanx of leaves, and no corn. This one field, covering two, maybe three, football pitches in area, will eventually give us our daily bread, but it offers not a crumb to the larks.

The ground by my feet offers a band of hope, the slimmest of flower borders, never more than half a metre wide, that has escaped the sprayer's boom. Banked up against the taller wheat, it blooms discreetly with colour and the busyness of insects.

A bumblebee tastes the pearls of white deadnettle, while another, just woken, handwashes its tousled tawny midriff. A solitary wasp is flumped down over the candelabra of shepherd's purse. The stem beneath resembles a fingerpost, with seedpod purses pointing to all points of the compass. A seven-spotted ladybird lumbers on bare soil under speedwell; the tiniest flower, yet so striking in its brilliance it quickens the pulse. I crouch down to peer into its sunny heart and marvel at purple veining on lilac petals.

Spurge has a name that trips off the tongue like lumpy porridge. This plant has the oddest structure. I think of it as a miniature saucer tree, with its overlapping bracts creating the impression of crockery. Spurge lightens in colour towards the top of the plant, as if lit up in lime. One of the euphorbia family, I'd say its luminous crown inspires euphoria.

Fumitory gives a pink flush to much of the border. If only it were taller and louder, instead of a small and bashful scrambler. Its crinkly leaves could be curly kale for pixies, the spikes of numerous flowers dipped in burgundy ink.

And here, too, all around is unloved groundsel, the go-for garden weed, felled by rake or hoe. In this protected place groundsel will develop unchecked to fill the bank with seed, fuelling the skylark summer, opening their throats into full-bellied song.

Derek Niemann



ILLUSTRATION: CLIFFORD HARPER

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Protester arrests were an attack on our democracy

A minister defended the controversial arrests of peaceful protesters at King Charles III's coronation on Saturday, claiming that the police were right to act as "we were on the global stage" (Protest leader says police should hang their heads in shame after 52 arrested, 8 May). Surely on the global stage we want to be seen as a democracy that defends the right to free speech and protest, not an authoritarian state where you are only free to express support for the powers that be.

Although I am neutral about the principle of a monarchy, I felt the need to join the protest by Republic because I was so upset by the way the coronation was being promoted as something that we all supported. It seemed to me that longstanding democratic freedoms were jettisoned so that concocted images of a successful non-contentious event could be projected.

Caroline Hearst
Reading, Berkshire

As a retired judge I am sickened and appalled by the actions of the Metropolitan police in arresting the protesters. A few years ago, Anna Soubry, an MP on her way to parliament, was accosted in what was clearly a public order offence (Report, 8 January 2019). What did the Met do then? Nothing.

Now, however, the Met apparently believes that peaceful protests are a threat to democracy.

It seems that the Met has apologised to the protesters (Report, 9 May). For what? If the officers were correct in arresting the protesters, there is nothing to apologise for. We should remember that repressive rightwing governments cannot act alone. They need willing agents to do the dirty work for them. I think they have now found one such agent. The new commissioner clearly has a great deal of work to do.

Dr Stephen Pacey
Retired upper tribunal judge

All democrats should be concerned about the arrests of protesters at the coronation. It does not matter whether you believe the monarchy to be an essential feature of the constitution and traditions of the country or a redundant relic of feudalism. A healthy society would be able to cope with vigorous expressions of difference.

It seems that we are heading towards George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, where nonconformist thinking is a crime, or the world of the film Minority Report, where you can be found guilty before you have done anything. The police actions in London on Saturday would not have been out of place

in Moscow or Beijing. It needs to be said clearly: without dissent there is no democracy.

David Howard
Church Stretton, Shropshire

Lisa Nandy is wrong about the arrests of Republic members on Saturday (Labour says 'something has gone wrong' over arrest of coronation protesters, theguardian.com, 9 May). The initial arrests, the holding of Republic's leader, Graham Smith, for 16 hours, the eventual releases and then the belated apology were all carefully choreographed. Nothing went "wrong", it all worked perfectly.

Peter Nicklin
Newcastle upon Tyne

When I joined the Met 46 years ago, the first thing I learned to recite by heart were Robert Peel's wise words: "By the use of tact and good humour the public can normally be induced to comply with directions and thus the necessity for using force ... is avoided." Looks like that has been taken out of the curriculum.

Hilary Power
Bristol

If the republicans demonstrating at the coronation want to change things, they should do it in a democratic way and stand for parliament. Oh, I forgot – republicans are not allowed to take their seats in the Commons without swearing an oath of allegiance to the king, his heirs and successors. Back to the streets then.

Leo Thomas
Manchester

Coronation united communities – but left some out in the cold

Thanks to Nesrine Malik for her calm elucidation of the smokescreen that obscures the real fractures of British society (A screen was pulled across a failing nation – just as intended, 8 May). Over the past few weeks I have felt bludgeoned into enthusiasm for the absurd ritual of the coronation. There have been times when I have questioned myself. Am I a killjoy? Do I not recognise the lengths that the royals have gone to modernise the monarchy and present its support for a more inclusive society? Look at all the laudable people who profess allegiance.

Nesrine puts her finger on the phenomenon. It's not much fun feeling out in the cold – witness Prince Harry relegated to the third row at the Abbey – and it's salutary to remember John Galbraith's maxim that it's safer to be wrong with the crowd rather than right by yourself. That's why we need good journalism and rational argument.

Maria Goulding
Gateshead, Tyne and Wear

Your editorial (A dated pageant that could, and should, have been boldly rethought, 5 May) downplayed or omitted several benefits of the coronation. First, it provided the country with a moment not only of celebration but also of reflection about its past, present and future. As the constitutional expert Prof Vernon Bogdanor has pointed out, the monarchy is unique in its "position to interpret the nation to itself". Second, it enabled the UK to project its soft power globally. At the Westminster Abbey service, 203 countries were represented, including presidents, prime ministers and foreign royalty, while the global media and public interest was enormous.

Finally, the celebrations included community-enhancing events, namely the Big Lunch on Sunday and the volunteering-led Big Help Out on Monday. This will have built neighbourliness and civic pride. In their 1953 essay *The Meaning of the Coronation*, Michael Young

and Edward Shils highlighted the collective experience of the Queen's coronation. They described it as a "communion" whereby a country "reaffirms the moral values which constitute it as a society". The coronation was a special opportunity to celebrate our country and to strengthen community cohesion.

Zaki Cooper
London

I would like to share my views on the disruption and cost of the king's coronation. My friends and I had our Sats delayed – along with every other year 6 pupil living in England – due to the bank holiday on Monday. Did anybody consider the thousands of children whose anxiety would worsen with the interruption?

Furthermore, I would like to address the amount of money that was used for what was predominantly a party. I have read that up to £100m was spent on the coronation. All that money could have been given to food banks across the UK; each would have received about £40,000. Would that not have been a better way to celebrate our new king?

Jen Watkinson (age 11)
Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham

Corrections and clarifications

Autism and ADHD are neurodivergent conditions, not mental health problems (NHS turned away 250,000 mentally ill children, 17 April, p2 from p1).

The abbreviation ECG, in a medical context, is usually meant to refer to an electrocardiogram, not an echocardiogram. The latter is traditionally abbreviated to "echo" (Heart risk from some older hip replacements may be greater than thought, 26 April, p19).

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com

Leaving demons of Brexit behind

Your report on the local elections (9 May) says that the Labour party has "banished the demons of Brexit and Jeremy Corbyn's time as leader" and that voters are returning to the fold, on less than a 40% turnout. As a Labour-voting remainder, can someone tell me what the "demons of Brexit" are?

Dr Mark Wilcox
Holmfirth, West Yorkshire

It's unfair of other political leaders to demand Keir Starmer's view on anti-protest legislation when they know he hasn't had a chance to consult with polls and focus groups so he can find out what he thinks.

Tim Rossiter
Crickhowell, Powys

Every year, after canvassing for local elections, I'm left wondering why front doors have letterboxes at ground level. Designers and architects, please note – kneeling on all fours should not be expected of our wonderful postal workers.

Mary Burgess
Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Dr Geoffrey Hinton ('Godfather of AI' leaves Google to speak freely about misinformation, 3 May) worries that AI chatbots "could become more intelligent than humans". Judging by the chatbots used by banks and similar institutions to handle customer inquiries, I would say we'll be safe for several more millennia.

Keith Johnson
Sedbergh, Cumbria

The recent debate on artificial intelligence has reminded me of Mary Shelley's warning of the dangers posed by unregulated scientific advances. In her 1818 book *Frankenstein*, the monster says to Dr Frankenstein: "You are my creator, but I am your master."

John Lovelock
Bristol



Grace Bumbry

US opera star with a magnetic stage presence who was the first black singer at Bayreuth

In the moment the soprano Grace Bumbry projected the single word "Guardie!" ("Guards!") as Amneris at the beginning of Act 4 of Verdi's *Aida*, it was the kind of order that brooked no opposition, and was typical of her command of the role and of the stage.

Bumbry, who has died aged 86, was one of those singers who demanded complete attention. Her magnetic presence in the theatre was seconded by her strong, evenly produced voice, basically a high mezzo that she was eventually able to extend into the soprano range - indeed into the title part of *Aida* itself.

The freely produced top of her register and the rich quality of the lower part of her range comprised an instrument that seemed secure in encompassing any part on stage, any solo in the concert hall. Such was her status in opera, it is easy

to forget that she first came to the attention of record collectors with her imposing contributions to sets of Handel oratorios in the late 1950s, in performances with the Utah Symphony Orchestra under Maurice Abravanel. And in 1961 she recorded *Messiah* in London under Sir Adrian Boult, with Joan Sutherland and Kenneth McKellar, before public and musical taste tended towards smaller-scale performances.

Her first key performances as a soloist were in school productions of *Messiah* at Sumner high school in her native St Louis, Missouri. At the age of 12, she had joined the local Methodist choir, and that fuelled a desire to become a singer. Like the mezzo-soprano Marian Anderson, whose recordings and radio broadcasts the young Bumbry listened to at every opportunity, she initially had little thought of opera, eager instead to become a concert artist. Hearing the St Louis Symphony under its conductor Vladimir Golschmann further inspired her in that direction.

Bumbry, left, and Carlo Cossutta performing in *Aida* at the Earl's Court arena, London, 1988. Below, the Kennedy Center awards dinner in 2009. Front row: Bumbry, left, and Dave Brubeck. Back row, from left: Robert De Niro, Hillary Clinton, Bruce Springsteen and Mel Brooks

TRISTRAM KENTON/THE GUARDIAN; SHUTTERSTOCK

In her teens, however, she came first in a competition on local radio, which led to her appearing at the age of 17 on a national broadcast talent show, singing from Verdi's *Don Carlo* the aria O Don Fatale and reducing the presenter to tears on air. The initial prize had also won her a place at a local conservatory, but it was segregated, and Bumbry was offered only private lessons, which her parents turned down.

A year later she won a scholarship to Boston University, where she majored in music. Unable to settle there, she transferred to Northwestern University, outside Chicago, where the great German soprano Lotte Lehmann happened to be conducting masterclasses. Bumbry was asked to participate, and the veteran singer was so impressed that Bumbry was invited to her school in California.

Lehmann also arranged a kind of scholarship for her new, impecunious pupil - Grace's father, Benjamin Bumbry, was a railroad porter, and her mother, Melzia (nee Walker), a teacher. Bumbry intended to stay in Santa Barbara only for the summer of 1955; in the event she was there for



three and a half years, following a regular curriculum of voice, theory and piano. For years Lehmann remained as Bumbry's mentor.

Many prizes followed, and she took part in the auditions for the Metropolitan Opera of 1958, at which she was declared a joint winner with another soprano, Martina Arroyo. Then she sought out new paths, going to London and participating in Lehmann's masterclasses at Wigmore Hall, where she also gave two recitals of her own, but an audition for Bayreuth proved unsuccessful.

After her international stage debut as Amneris at the Paris Opéra in the spring of 1960, she spent a fruitful time out of the limelight, learning her repertory under contract at Basle in Switzerland, where her roles included Carmen, Dalila, Orfeo, Lady Macbeth, and Azucena in *Il Trovatore*.

In 1961 Bayreuth accepted her as Venus in *Tannhäuser*, where she caused a sensation as the first black singer at the festival. Wieland Wagner, the grandson of the composer, who had cast her, told his critics: "When I heard Grace Bumbry, I knew she was the perfect Venus. Grandfather would have been delighted." There were 42 curtain calls. The allure of her portrayal can be judged by the live recording of *Tannhäuser* made at the time, with Victoria de los Angeles and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Wolfgang Sawallisch conducting. She is, indeed, a powerful advocate of profane love, whose hold over *Tannhäuser* can be fully comprehended.

The impresario Sol Hurok drew up a demanding tour schedule for Bumbry for the following year. It included her Carnegie Hall debut, appearances in 21 cities, and a triumphant homecoming to St Louis. In 1963, Bumbry made her Covent Garden debut, as Princess Eboli in *Don Carlos*, with Boris Christoff and Tito Gobbi, a revival of the 1958 Visconti staging, and two years later she made her debut in the same role at the Metropolitan, New York.

Of this performance, Irving Kolodin wrote in the Saturday Review: "She sang the 'veil song' beautifully with a light coloration not easy for mezzos to come by, but she also had the full range of stops to make O Don Fatale an experience in musical drama rather than merely an exercise in vocal agility." The same aria she had sung in her teens on a talent show had won over the Met's exacting audience.

At the Salzburg festivals of 1964 and 1965, she appeared as Lady Macbeth to Fischer-Dieskau's Macbeth. In that role, Bumbry showed her ability to encompass a role that has been tackled by both sopranos and mezzos with appreciable panache. In 1966 and 1967 she reappeared at Salzburg as Carmen, with Jon Vickers as Escamillo and Herbert von Karajan conducting, to much acclaim.

She sang her first Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* in Vienna, then took the role to New York. The famed Met diva Zinka Milanov, who had just retired and who granted Bumbry four lessons, commented that she did not much care for a mezzo in the role, but that when she heard Bumbry she was really convinced that she had the timbre of a soprano and that this, rather than the range of the voice, was the deciding factor.

By the end of the 60s, Bumbry was, in any case, taking on soprano roles, starting with *Salomé* in a new production of Strauss's melodrama at Covent Garden in 1970, and, also at Covent Garden, the title role in *Norma*. She had already sung the opera's mezzo role of Adalgisa there. In her new guise she added *Tosca*, Leonora in both *La Forza del Destino* and *Il Trovatore*, and Gershwin's *Bess* to her Metropolitan repertory, then sang Jenůfa at La Scala in 1974 and Dukas's *Ariane* in Paris in 1975.

At the long-awaited opening of the Bastille in Paris in 1990, she sang Cassandre in *Les Troyens*. In 1997 she staged her formal operatic farewell in Lyon as Klytämnestra in *Elektra*, but she continued to give recitals and undertake carefully chosen roles. In 2012 she sang the Old Lady in Bernstein's *Candide* at the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, and the following year the title role in Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* under Seiji Ozawa at the Vienna State Opera.

Among her best recordings is that of O Ma Lyre Immortelle, the aria of the dying Sapho, in Gounod's opera of the same name. It has always been popular with high mezzos or low sopranos, so Bumbry fitted ideally, her delivery at once dignified and tragic as befits character and scene. The Guardian critic Philip Hope-Wallace wrote in Gramophone magazine: "Miss Bumbry should go far; range, temperament like this are by no means ordinary."

Alongside her operatic career, she had a love of German lieder that stemmed from her work with Lehmann. Her timbre was well-matched to the songs of Brahms, where her generosity of voice and style really came into their own, while in Schubert she was better suited to the larger-scale, more dramatic settings than to the intimate pieces.

Bumbry's 1963 marriage to the tenor Erwin Andreas Jaekel, who gave up his career to manage hers, ended in divorce in 1972. Together they had settled in Switzerland, where she continued to live for many years before settling in Vienna. Her long-term partner, Jack Lunzer, died in 2016.

Alan Blyth

Grace Melzia Ann Bumbry, opera singer, born 4 January 1937; died 7 May 2023

Alan Blyth died in 2007

Philip Ziegler

Historian and biographer admired for his books on Mountbatten, Harold Wilson and Edward VIII

The historian and biographer Philip Ziegler, who has died of cancer aged 93, was never less than scrupulously fair – but also honest – about the shortcomings of his subjects, who included some of the most prominent men and, occasionally, women of modern British history.

Lord Mountbatten's vanity, deviousness and ambition, Edward VIII's meanness and superficiality, even Edward Heath's charmlessness were all revealed, even though they amounted to official biographies and are books that have shaped the men's reputations for posterity.

"The biographer's first responsibility is to the truth and to the reader. If he is not prepared in the last resort to hurt people for whom he feels nothing except goodwill then he should not be writing a biography," Ziegler said in 2011.

The foibles of Mountbatten, the last viceroy of India, were such that Ziegler placed a note on his desk while writing the biography in the mid-1980s stating: "Remember, in spite of everything, he was a great man." That is not necessarily the view any longer of many British and Indian historians, though it is hard to overlook Mountbatten's significance to the modern subcontinent.

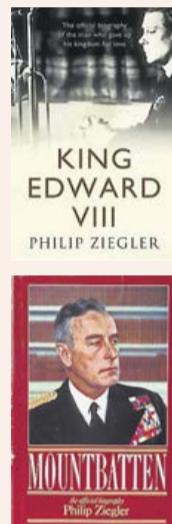
If Ziegler's patrician status and urbane charm helped to smooth his path to selection for such monumental biographies, his industry and the punctiliousness

of his research meant that they come close to definitive. He said: "Ideally the biographer should know everything about his subject and then discard 99% of the information, keeping only the essential. Of course one can never hope to discover anything approaching everything, but one can find out a great deal."

Ziegler was born in Ringwood, Hampshire, to Dora (nee Barnwell) and Louis Ziegler, a retired army major. He was educated at Eton and then studied law at New College, Oxford, graduating with a first. After national service with the Royal Artillery, he entered the Foreign Office, serving as a diplomat in Laos, Paris and Pretoria.

In 1966, with his wife Sarah (nee Collins), whom he had married in 1960, and two small children, he was posted to Bogotá, Colombia, as head of chancery at the British embassy. It was there the following year that, returning home from an embassy reception, he and his wife found armed robbers rifling the house. Sarah was killed in the melee and he was badly wounded.

The tragedy persuaded him to leave the diplomatic service and take a job with Sarah's publisher father, William Collins, then the head of one of the largest publishing houses in the country. Ziegler became editorial director in 1972 and editor-in-chief of the company seven years later. He had already published two books, a biography of the Duchess of Dino, mistress of the wily French



Ziegler in 2013. He exposed Louis Mountbatten's vanity and deviousness and Edward VIII's meanness and superficiality DAVID LEVENSON/GETTY IMAGES

Birthdays

Dennis Bergkamp, footballer and coach, 54;
Sir Bill Cash, Conservative MP, 83; **Donovan**, singer and songwriter, 77; **Sly Dunbar**, drummer and producer, 71; **Jonathan Edwards**, athlete and broadcaster, 57; **Diarmuid Gavin**, gardener and broadcaster, 59; **Sir Chris Gent**, former chief executive, Vodafone, 75; **Graham Gouldman**, songwriter and musician, 77; **Bono**, singer and songwriter, 63; **Alex Jennings**, actor, 66;

Lady Lucinda Lambton, writer, broadcaster and photographer, 80; **Dame Maureen Lipman**, actor and writer, 77; **Dave Mason**, singer, songwriter and guitarist, 77; **Anna Maxwell Martin**, actor, 46; **Al Murray**, comedian, actor and broadcaster, 55; **Ellen Ochoa**, astronaut, 65; **Merlene Ottey**, sprinter, 63; **Prof Edward Peck**, vice-chancellor, Nottingham Trent university, 64; **Sally Phillips**, actor, comedian and broadcaster, 53; **Miuccia Prada**, fashion designer, 74; **Jon Ronson**, journalist and author, 56; **Barbara Taylor Bradford**, novelist, 90; **Venetia Williams**, racehorse trainer, 63; **Debbie Wiseman**, composer, 60.

diplomat Talleyrand, in 1962, and one of the Georgian prime minister Henry Addington (later the reactionary home secretary Viscount Sidmouth) in 1965.

A book about the Black Death followed in 1969, though that was to be his only venture into pre-modern history, and one on the battle of Omdurman (1973), as well as biographies of William IV (1971) and the Victorian prime minister Lord Melbourne (1976).

In 1980, Ziegler became a full-time writer and a regular stream of books followed: biographies of the society beauty Lady Diana Cooper (1981), Harold Wilson (1993), the minor poet Osbert Sitwell (1998), the publisher Rupert Hart-Davis (2005) and the actor Laurence Olivier (2013), as well as Heath (2010), Mountbatten (1985) and Edward VIII (1990), and a short biography of George VI (2014). There were also histories of Barings Bank (1988), London during the second world war (1995), the Rhodes Trust in Oxford (2008) and Brooks's gentlemen's club (1991). Not forgetting Elizabeth's Britain 1926 to 1986 and a book of photographic portraits of the Queen (2010).

All were carefully researched. Given access to the royal archives, Ziegler ploughed through 25,000 letters of Edward VIII, revealing the shallowness of the king who abdicated and, allegedly to her displeasure, the Queen Mother's relentless hostility towards him. His verdict that Edward was well meaning and that no monarch could have been more anxious to relieve the sufferings of his subjects though "few can have done less to achieve their aim", was suitably waspish.

The biography of Mountbatten, for which he was chosen by the Broadlands trustees, custodians of his legacy, was followed by three volumes of the admiral's diaries. The biography of Heath was also both official and comprehensive, but struggled to find the man's elusive charm.

Of the Olivier biography, he told an interviewer at the Cheltenham literary festival in 2013: "In the course of my career I have written about an inordinate number of prime ministers, kings and the like and I suddenly decided in old age that I would indulge myself and do myself an actor." What he found to his alarm that there was very little substance beneath the parts the great actor played.

Following the death of his first wife, Ziegler married Clare Charrington, a social worker and bereavement counsellor, in 1971. She died in 2017. He is survived by the two children of his first marriage, Sophie and Colin, and by the son of his second, Toby.

Stephen Bates

Philip Sandeman Ziegler, biographer and historian, born 24 December 1929; died 22 February 2023

Yesterday's solutions**Killer sudoku**
Easy

9	4	1	7	3	6	5	2	8
8	3	5	9	1	2	4	7	6
6	2	7	8	4	5	3	1	9
2	7	8	3	5	1	9	6	4
4	5	3	6	9	7	2	8	1
1	6	9	2	8	4	7	5	3
3	9	6	5	7	8	1	4	2
7	1	2	4	6	9	8	3	5
5	8	4	1	2	3	6	9	7

Medium

1	3	5	4	8	2	7	6	9
4	9	8	1	6	7	3	2	5
2	7	6	9	5	3	8	4	1
5	8	3	6	7	4	9	1	2
9	2	1	5	3	8	6	7	4
6	4	7	2	1	9	5	3	8
8	5	2	3	4	6	1	9	7
7	6	4	8	9	1	2	5	3
3	1	9	7	2	5	4	8	6

Codeword

S	S	I	Q	S	T	A
L	U	P	I	N	U	M
I	C	O	I	O	S	
P	A	N	T	H	E	R
S	E	A	P	Y		
H	O	T	F	O	X	
O	V	E	T	E		
D	E	F	R	A	J	E
F	R	A	P	T	S	A
S	I	X	T	B	M	
W	H	I	R	T		
I	R	O	N	S		
T	U	M	O	C	E	L
C	O	N	V	H	A	Z
N	D	G	E	E	E	Y

Cryptic crossword

Solution No. 29,065

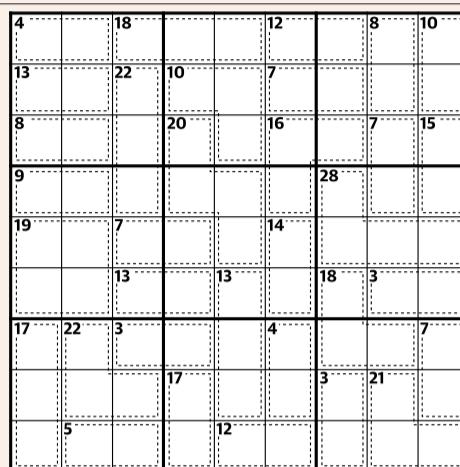
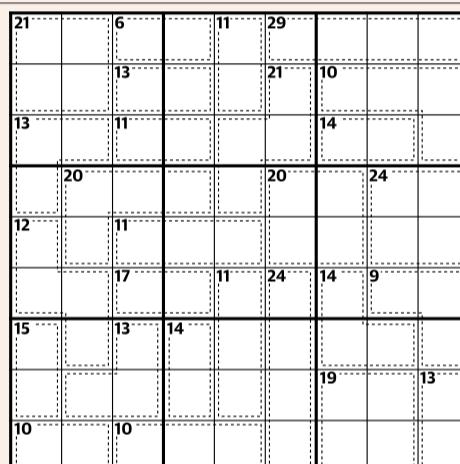
V	M	H	T
C	L	E	V
R	R	T	E
J	A	B	B
Z	I	I	S
H	E	R	A
D	G	E	M
W	E	L	S
W	A	K	R
R	E	B	O
B	E	T	H
I	T	I	Y
S	E	S	Y
N	N	R	E



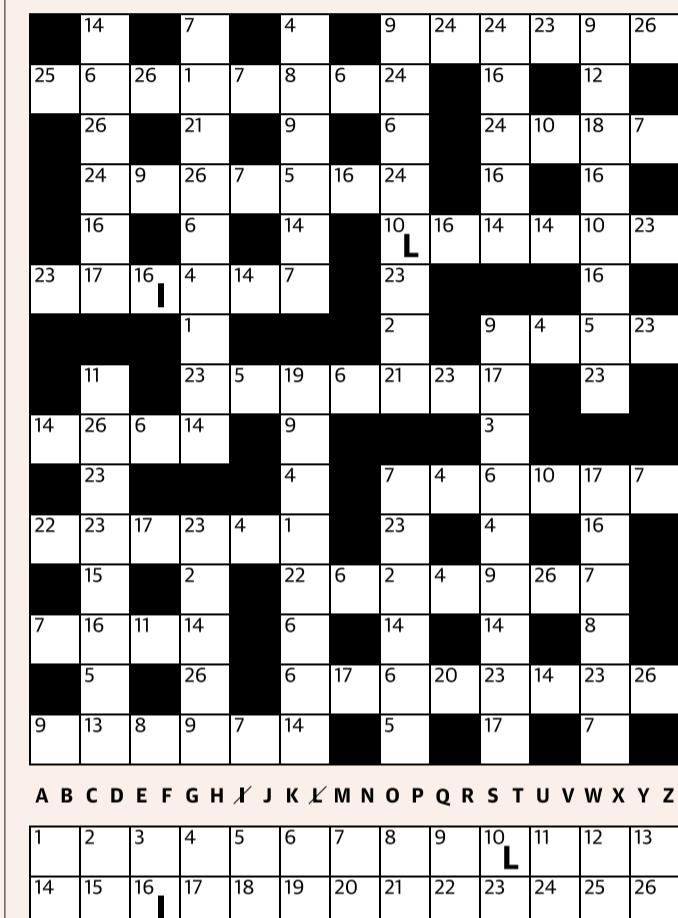
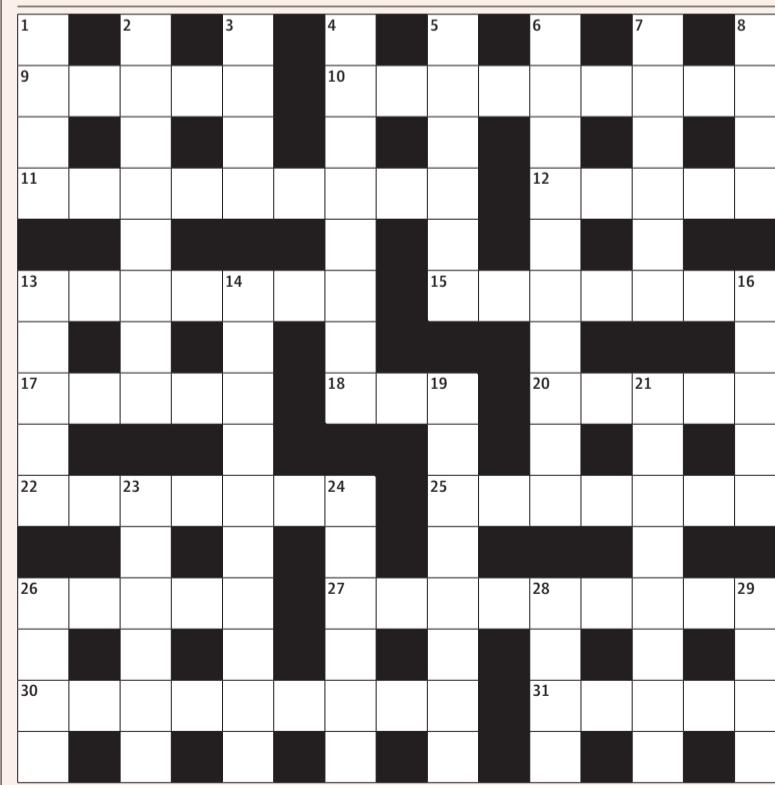
Stuck? For help call 0906 200 83 83. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by AT&T. Call 0330 333 6946 for customer service (charged at standard rate). Want more? Get access to more than 4,000 puzzles at theguardian.com/crossword. To buy puzzle books, visit guardianbookshop.com or call 0330 333 6846.

Killer sudoku**Easy**

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.

**Medium****Codeword**

Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.

**Guardian cryptic crossword** No 29,066 set by Pangakupu**Across**

- 9 First carriage returned in a different place (5)
- 10 Draw in to prepare to shoot a lake bird (9)
- 11 Boy is caught capturing series – on this? (5,4)
- 12 Article about government issue recalled quantity (5)
- 13 Leave sextet enthralled by the main guitarist (7)
- 15 Calm, being about to enter horse race (7)
- 17 Each is discounted in a motive for crime (5)
- 18 A few backtracked, eliminating zero spaces in printed material (3)
- 20 Silver luminance seen in wings of exquisite bird (5)
- 22 Invention having soft (not loud) colour (7)
- 25 Exit path from Nansen's ship, heading for Pole (3-4)
- 26 Four without question recalled in this prefix? (5)
- 27 Bird book without much focus? (9)
- 30 Difficulty in conveying sensation aroused by eg a urinal (9)
- 31 Hunting opening for Holmes in investigation (5)

Down

- 1 Nobleman and king left to the end (4)
- 2 America brought in wise folk to identify a string of items (8)
- 3 Bright item's endless glare (4)
- 4 Current obligation to adopt tax move (8)
- 5 Cold current picked up speed, rising to frozen region (6)
- 6 Maintain opinion on vehicle opponent rolled (4,4,2)
- 7 Old way to bring in a government rebellion, initially a boost for a member? (6)
- 8 Instinctive to limit large surplus production (4)
- 13 Touches up, cuddling male character (5)
- 14 Archdeacon attending hospital department getting warning about a couple of veins (5,5)
- 16 Carefully consider status of the king of the country of the blind? (3,2)
- 19 Travelling illegally, drag American through control (8)
- 21 Most of shop opened by key that's cut? Serious stuff (8)
- 23 Instruction to depart for one uppity solicitor (3,3)
- 24 Island extremely welcoming to some game (6)
- 26 Unknown figure in no way up for an award (4)
- 28 Resist American car disgorging one (4)
- 29 Dull and slimy when extracted (4)



“Leave those weeds alone!

Alys Fowler's
guide to laid-back
gardening

G2

Wednesday 10/05/23

Life & Arts

Fired by the bride

Who'd be a
maid of honour?
page 3



**Brokeback Mountain,
the musical**

‘It’s a story of fear
corrupting love’
page 9

A moment that changed me

A friend told me he had cancer - I said I'd cheer him up

Who tries to comfort a sick man by offering to become his pen pal? Alison Hitchcock, that's who. That was 100 letters ago ...

As soon as I said it, I knew it sounded crazy. "I'll write letters to cheer you up through your treatment," Brian, sitting opposite me in the pub, back in the summer of 2010, looked bemused. He had just told me he'd been diagnosed with bowel cancer and I suspect he was hoping for a cure, not a correspondent. But when someone tells you something that devastating, I don't think it's unusual to feel awkward, helpless, and to say something you later wish you hadn't.

Not only had I said I'd write (who writes letters these days, for goodness sake?), I'd said they'd cheer him up. So they'd have to be funny, and what is funny about cancer? Brian later told me he went home that night thinking I was a bit weird. I couldn't disagree.

Brian and I had met six months earlier on a yoga holiday in India. I'd gone to take refuge from a job in the City of London that was stifling me. I was living in London in my late 30s, on the hunt for a new career and life. Brian was happily partnered with Neil, living in the home counties. We had little in common – but we got on well enough to stay in touch, and so came to find ourselves having a drink in a bar the day after he'd been diagnosed.

Over the next couple of weeks I tried to forget my offer of letter writing and hoped Brian had too. But a small voice kept saying: "He's got cancer and all you have to do is write a letter." So finally, shamed by my own conscience, I sat down with a large glass of wine and put pen to paper. My letter was very everyday: accounts of



'I wrote to make him smile' ...
Alison with Brian

things I'd observed or overheard that I thought might make Brian smile, such as the women at the swimming pool debating whether the chlorine might fade their newly tattooed eyebrows and deciding to swim with their heads out of the water just in case.

That letter turned out to be the first of more than 100 that I wrote to Brian over the next three years as his cancer moved from stage 3 to 4, and he underwent surgeries, chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

As the months passed, and my letters kept on coming, Brian shared what my regular letterbox "gifts" meant to him. He had been shocked by how isolated he felt. He was no longer at work; his friends, not knowing what to say, often said nothing; his social life was almost nonexistent. He said my letters kept him connected to a world he felt increasingly disconnected from. He would take the letters to chemo sessions, where he would share them with

other patients and laugh together at my stories. Knowing someone out there was thinking of him was a real comfort, he told me.

But even more unexpected was how much I came to enjoy writing. I had never been a writer, but I became excited, not just for Brian's reaction, but the whole process. Letter writing gave me the validation that what I was doing – making Brian smile – was worth something. But it also made me see the world in a different way. Every week I hunted out stories, anecdotes and small joys that I could share in a letter. I was forced to observe and listen more intently, understand more compassionately. And, as someone who had always been very private, by sharing so much more of myself through my writing, I learned to trust and allow myself to be more vulnerable. It wasn't just Brian's world that was changing – so was mine.

Brian was given the all-clear in

“ As I hunted out stories and small joys to share, I was forced to observe and listen more intently

2013. My newly discovered love of pen and paper had led me to a degree in creative writing and the confidence to leave my City job and take on a role in a literary organisation. That same year I also got married, with my now best friend Brian the only man at my hen weekend.

But that still wasn't quite enough. Brian and I wanted others to benefit from letters in the same way he had. So, in 2016, we set up the charity From Me to You to educate and inspire everyone who knows someone living with cancer to stay connected by sending a letter or card – so as not to allow anyone to feel the loneliness or isolation Brian had experienced. My crazy letter offer has now led to thousands of letters connecting friends, family and even strangers. Maybe my offer was not so crazy after all. *From Me, To You* by Alison Hitchcock and Brian Greenly is published by Spellbound, £9.99

Arwa Mahdawi

Elizabeth Holmes' rebrand is a cynical abuse of privilege

Meet Liz Holmes. She is a devoted mother of two little kids who loves nothing more than family outings to the zoo, walking her dog and talking to her husband in a very normal voice that is absolutely nothing like the weird baritone her evil alter ego, Elizabeth, affected.

You remember Elizabeth Holmes, don't you? Unlike nice, sweet Liz, Elizabeth was a bit of a schemer. Last year, Holmes was convicted on four counts of defrauding investors, by pretending that her blood-testing startup, Theranos, was functional when it wasn't, and given more than 11 years in prison. She was due to start her sentence on 27 April, but filed a last-minute appeal, buying her a little more time at home.

How did she decide to spend those last precious moments of freedom? Taking her kids to the zoo and doing a photoshoot for the New York Times. After almost seven years of media silence, Holmes recently spent several days opening up to a Times writer. The result is a 5,000-word profile introducing her new persona to the world.

Holmes may never have perfected Theranos's blood-testing technology, but she was always brilliant at branding. Her original persona was almost a paint-by-numbers of what the world thought a tech visionary should look like: she wore black turtlenecks like Steve Jobs; she dropped out of Stanford; she was a vegan on a strict green juice diet; and she was secretive and self-restrained. The press ate her image up. She was celebrated as "the world's youngest self-made female billionaire".

Now, it's fascinating to watch Holmes pivot. Her CEO persona, she is keen to explain, was an act; "a character [she] created" in order to be taken seriously as a woman in tech. Her deep voice was part of that act. Holmes wants us to forget who she was before and get to know "Liz", a delicate flower who, according to the Times profile, "can't stomach R-rated movies". She is a mother of two who has been selflessly "volunteering for a rape crisis hotline". She is a model of docility and domesticity - so much so that when the journalist profiling her, Amy Chozick, gets some dog slobber on her shoe, Liz chases after her to wipe it off.

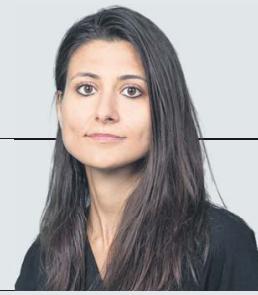
One imagines that Holmes hopes her transformation into Liz will improve her image and perhaps shorten her prison sentence. So will it? Will the right people buy her metamorphosis? I don't know. What I do know is that Chozick was immediately put in Twitter jail for the profile, which caused an outpouring of outrage online. People accused her of not being critical enough of Holmes and seemingly being taken in by the "I'm just a doting mother" rebrand. This

is somewhat unfair, considering that Chozick makes it clear that Holmes is a master manipulator who knows exactly how to charm people. "How could I ask someone who was nursing her 11-day-old baby on a white sofa two feet away if she was actually conning me?" Chozick asks at one point. Holmes is alarmingly adept at weaponising white womanhood.

While I don't think Chozick's profile was a puff piece, I understand the anger it has generated. After all, not many mothers facing prison are given a splashy redemption photoshoot in a major paper. And there are a lot of mothers in US jails. Since 1980, the number of women incarcerated in the US has grown by more than 525% - a rate of growth twice as high as that of men. About 58% of women in prison are mothers of children under 18, according to a 2016 survey. Very few of these women have the press knocking at their door, trying to understand their crimes and humanise them. Very few of these women get a first chance in life, let alone a second one.



She is a master manipulator who knows exactly how to charm people



Billionaires aren't smart - but they are greedy

Money may be able to buy you happiness, but it can't buy you brains. A study published in January found that billionaires aren't any smarter than the rest of us - indeed, those in the top 1% of earners scored lower on cognitive ability tests than those who earned slightly less.

The research - which analysed data from 59,000 Swedish men - found a strong connection between how smart someone was and how much they earned, until they reached a salary of 600,000 kronor (£46,700) a year. After that, factors such as luck, background and personality became more important.

Unless your primary hobby is licking billionaires' boots, I am sure none of this is particularly surprising. Indeed, you need only look at Elon Musk's Twitter feed to realise that being obscenely rich doesn't automatically equate to being incredibly intelligent.

Still, considering the soaring pay gap between CEOs and workers, studies such as this need to be shouted from the rooftops. The wage gap between CEOs and US workers jumped last year to 670 to one, up from 604 to one in 2020. To put that in more tangible terms, CEOs at US companies with some of the lowest-paid staff made an average of \$10.6m, while the median worker received just \$23,968.

The pay disparity isn't as stark in the UK, but it's still bad. An analysis last year found that FTSE 350 chief executives were expected to collect 63 times the average median pay of workers at their companies, while 43 FTSE 350 bosses received more than 100 times their employees' average salary in 2020.

How can you justify this enormous wage gap? You can't. As studies such as this make clear, it's not meritocracy that is driving the wage gap; it's plain old greed.



More money than sense?
Elon Musk

Pass notes



No 4,556

Bridesmaids

Age: Some say the bridesmaid tradition stems from the story of Jacob, who had two wives, Leah and Rachel. They came with their own maids, as described in Genesis 29:24 and Gen ...

Yeah, enough of your history already - get on with the story. Well, fast-forward to the present day and a 27-year-old woman who was going to be her best friend's maid of honour has been fired.

I didn't realise it was possible to be fired as a bridesmaid. What happened? There was a chance she might get pregnant.

Well, she would have looked even more beautiful in her bridesmaid's dress! Indeed, but the bride didn't want her limelight stolen; it was to be a celebration of "one big life event and not two", as the maid-of-honour-no-longer recounted on the discussion site Reddit, under the name esmeraldaH95.

So esmeraldaH95 is pregnant? Not even! She just mentioned that she and her husband were thinking of starting a family. That was it, she was out the door!

Not even invited? She can attend as a guest, but the bride "has insinuated that she would be happy if I still wanted to plan the hen do ..."

Ha! Love it! Bridezilla! Is it OK, though, to fire your bridesmaid? Hitched, a wedding planning site, says it is - "if having that person as part of your wedding party is having a negative effect on your mental health or on your wedding plans".

Yeah, like considering procreation. The cheek of it. But a wedding etiquette expert called Emilie Dulles told the wedding magazine Brides that debridesmaiding a friend is a big deal that should be considered only in extreme circumstances, such as "when some unsavoury or deviant behaviour, nastiness or bitter betrayal of their doing unfolds during the final stages of your wedding plan".

Exactly. Like having a baby. Or just thinking about it. Or putting on a couple of pounds.

Excuse me? A Facebook post that went viral in 2021 told of one bride getting her bridesmaids to sign a contract promising not to gain more than 6lb (2.7kg) before the happy day. The contract contained 37 rules, including no flirting with the wedding guests and no getting pregnant "intentionally".

Whoops, then it was an accident. Well, quite. And what are best friends for, if not to lie to and deceive?

Battle of the bridesmaids! Like that movie, what was it called? Bridesmaids?

Do say: "You know what, congratulations to both of you, and thanks for asking, but I'm actually busy that day, whenever it is."

Don't say: "Aww, thanks, Forever BGF, such an honour. A contract? Where do I sign?"

'It's a way to restore the peace'

Azdyne Amimour and Georges Salines both lost a child in the Bataclan attack in 2015 - but Amimour's son was one of the terrorists. They tell **Steve Rose** why their friendship is so important

Huddled together at an outdoor cafe table in Paris, immersed in animated conversation, Azdyne Amimour and Georges Salines look like typical old friends. Admittedly, they're something of an odd couple: Amimour, a French-Algerian in a flat cap, sneaks a cigarette; Salines, a white, French retired doctor, has just locked up his bicycle and arrives in cycling gear. This is a friendship borne of extraordinary circumstances.

The date of 13 November 2015 is as deeply etched into Parisians' memory as 9/11 is in the minds of New Yorkers. That night, six separate Islamist terror attacks occurred in Paris, killing 130 people. The most deadly of all was

at the Bataclan theatre, where three gunmen opened fire on a packed crowd during a gig, killing 90 people. Salines' 28-year-old daughter, Lola, was one of the victims. Amimour's son, Samy, also 28, was one of the attackers.

Both men remember that time as the worst of their lives. Salines had been swimming with Lola at a public pool just that morning. He and his family spent the day after the attack phoning around hospitals and helplines, desperately looking for a sign that she was still alive. "I finally realised that she was dead," he says. "When, two days later, we saw her body, she was very peaceful. She looked like she was asleep and we wanted to wake her up. It was a terrible experience."

Amimour had no inkling of his son's involvement in the Bataclan attack until police burst into his apartment two days later and took him away for questioning. Amimour didn't even know his son was in the country. An interrogating officer informed him that not only was

Samy one of the perpetrators, but he had been shot dead by French police. "He yelled this at me with such cruelty," says Amimour. "I was shocked, I was sad, and I was angry at my son all at the same time."

Islamic State's key objective in its terrorist attacks across Europe was to create division, says Salines. "They had this apocalyptic ideology: 'We must hasten the end of the world, and so we must hasten the global war between all Muslims and non-Muslims, so we are doing things that will increase hatred.'" In that respect, it arguably had some success. Islamist terrorism has fuelled the rise of anti-immigrant far-right parties across Europe.

In turn, their Islamophobia likely served to push European Muslims further towards extremist groups. It is a vicious circle, says Salines.

As such, his friendship with Amimour is a small but significant attempt to break the circle and heal the divide. "I think we both felt we needed to build a friendship," says Salines.

After the 2015 Paris attacks, many were quick to blame the parents of the attackers, accusing them of negligence or even complicity. Salines took the bold step of seeing them as fellow victims - especially Amimour. "It was clear from the very beginning that this guy had done nothing," says Salines. "I'm familiar with a lot of jihadists' histories, and there are many, many elements in their lives that converged to push them towards Islamic State. Parenting is a very small part of it. And all parents make mistakes."

Amimour has asked himself if he did all he could to prevent his son going down the path of extremism, he says, but he set a positive counter-example. Having emigrated from Algeria in the 1960s, he seems to have embraced the French way of life. He is a moderate Muslim, he says. He drinks alcohol. His wife and two daughters never covered their hair. In his career he has worked in cinema, the music

industry, publishing, hospitality and retail, among other areas. He is something of an adventurer. "I have travelled to five continents, I've had lots of different jobs, I've learned 10 languages and dialects. I'm a curious person. I had a very difficult, very poor childhood, so I wanted to catch up on everything."

Growing up, Samy appeared to be doing fine. "He was never the victim of much racism, because he had light skin," says Amimour. He worked hard at school, he never drank or smoked, he was intelligent, he passed all his exams. I didn't understand. It all happened so quickly."

Samy became more interested in Islam. Trying to get on the front foot, his father suggested he look into studying theology and becoming an imam. But by the time Samy was 24, in 2011, he was watching videos on the internet by jihadist groups in Belgium and elsewhere. He had dropped out of his studies and become a bus driver. He stopped wearing western clothes



Amimour and Salines in Paris



in favour of the Arab-style qamis - a long robe. "When I saw he started to pray, I prayed as well, to keep an eye on him," says Amimour. "I went with him to the mosque three or four times to see what the imam was saying, but it was nothing harmful."

In 2013, Samy left for Syria with two childhood friends, and told his parents: "Don't come looking for me." Amimour did go looking for him, though, smuggling himself into Syria through Turkey, just as his son had. "It was dangerous," he says. "I was sick, the food was awful, but I had strength because I wanted to bring back my son." When he finally found Samy, Amimour was disappointed. "He was like a zombie. We exchanged maybe two sentences. There was always someone watching us."

After three days, Amimour went home to France, planning to return and try again later. "I was optimistic. I never thought I'd lost him." It was the last time Amimour would see his son alive.

After the 2015 attacks, with



I could imagine Georges' pain. And I wanted to show him we are not a family of terrorists

journalists camped outside his door, Amimour and his wife went into hiding. Salines, meanwhile, threw himself into activity. His wife wanted to forget Bataclan altogether, he says. "She prefers to do other things, like painting. For me, it's the exact opposite: I felt the need to act within this field. Because it makes me feel that I have transformed something bad that happened to me, and that happened to my daughter, into something which could be considered good."

He co-founded a victims' NGO, 13Onze15 (named after the date of the attack), and became its public spokesperson. That was how Amimour found him, Salines says over coffee. Salines thumbs through a folder of documents he has brought along. "February 16, 2017," he says, reading a page. "Azdyne sent an email to the 13Onze15 association saying that he wanted to meet me."

Amimour was apprehensive about making contact, he says, "because I was on the wrong side of the barrier". But it was a gesture of compassion. "I could imagine what pain and sadness Georges was going through. So I wanted to share in that with him, but also to show him that we are not a family of terrorists."

"I understood that very well," says Salines, "because in April 2016 I had met with some mothers of jihadists who had left to go to Syria and I realised they were not necessarily fundamentalist Muslims. Some were not even Muslim at all. They had lost their children, they had had a very difficult time."

Salines was familiar with the concept of restorative justice, in which victims and perpetrators of crimes are brought together, usually with beneficial results. Originally it was applied to minor crimes as an alternative to prison; now it is regularly used in the context of terrorist groups and their victims, in places such as Northern Ireland or Spain's Basque region.

The concept of forgiveness is key, Salines says, although it is often difficult to apply in these situations. "It's only possible to forgive the harm done to oneself; it's very difficult to forgive the harm done to others. So since the harm was done to my daughter, it would be her privilege. But I have evolved in my conception of forgiveness. Now I think we don't have to be too ambitious about what it means. I think it can simply mean that you no longer seek revenge. And this is a very important distinction, because it's a way to restore the peace."

From their first meeting both men knew they would get along, they say. "It's been six years now," says Salines. "I've learned a lot of things. We've spent a lot of time telling each other about our respective lives. I had a lot of questions about Samy's youth and his radicalisation." Amimour nods in agreement: "The main thing is to have a dialogue. I discover things about Georges; he discovers things about me. It's been very helpful." In

Amimour with film-maker Myriam François



2020, Amimour and Salines turned their conversations into a book, *We Still Have Words*.

They have worked together on prevention strategies; talking at and holding workshops with government, schools and prisons. (The politicians tend to listen more to Salines, apparently, whereas the prisoners listen more to Amimour.)

The two of them disagree on many things, they both hasten to point out. Amimour believes in God, for example (Salines is an atheist). "I think God is an explanation for the things we don't understand about the universe," he says. At one point Amimour brings up national service, which he believes is a force for integration in French society: "Black and white, rich and poor, they're all living together." Salines disagrees: "We can't expect military service to be a social service." They often tease each other. "He has a lot of strange ideas," says Salines.

"Maybe I'm wrong," says Amimour, "but like General de Gaulle, I listen to all sides, then I form my own opinion. There are a lot of things we don't see the same way but it's completely normal, like brothers or sisters. It's not about big things." Salines jokes: "He thought Morocco were going to win the World Cup."

The harm caused by the attacks continues to reverberate through France, and down the generations. While Samy was in Syria, he fathered a daughter with a woman he had met in France (who was 17 when she left for Syria). She also has twin boys by another father. They are all French citizens, but when it comes to matters of repatriation, politicians, victims' groups and French society are divided. Amimour and Salines argue that they are victims, too.

A new BBC documentary, *Finding Alaa*, by the French-Irish film-maker Myriam François, follows Amimour on his protracted quest to locate his granddaughter, who is now seven years old, and bring her home. After years of legal efforts, in the face of institutional inertia, she finally returned to France last December, but he has still not seen or had any communication with her.

She and her siblings are with a foster family. The mother is awaiting trial. "It's like we've crossed the desert and reached the

fountain and now we can't drink," Amimour says. "We want her to live with us. We have room. But she is getting used to another family, so if we get her back, perhaps it will be too late. I hope not."

He does not even know what his granddaughter looks like, he says. "When I go out in the street, I see children her age and I think: 'Does she look like that? Or that? Is she big? Small? Does she look like her mother? Her father?'"

An estimated 150 French women and children are still in detention in camps in Syria. As with Britain's Shamima Begum, and other European nationals, they are being treated as second-class or non-citizens at home. The approach is misguided in terms of security, says Salines, as well as for humanitarian reasons. "Particularly the children. We leave them in the hands of women who are members of [Islamic State], who tell them every day how bad France or Great Britain is. What will they do when they are adults? If we want to ensure our own safety, we have to bring those people back."

Islamist terrorism has at least receded in Europe since 2015. Whether France or the rest of Europe has become less Islamophobic is a different matter. Salines points to the fact that far-right political groups emphasised economic problems more than immigration in last year's presidential elections, but also to polls showing that younger people are far less Islamophobic. Amimour is less convinced, observing that while several British cities have Muslim mayors, including London, there are none to be found in France. Both agree there is still work to be done.

"The government should do more in terms of prevention of extremism and terrorism, and we should do more in terms of reconciliation and bringing people together," says Salines. In the meantime, small gestures, such as a simple friendship between two men, can make a big difference. They called their book *We Still Have Words* because "if there are words left, there is also hope", Salines says. "We have to talk about these issues. We do what we can, but sometimes it feels like trying to empty the sea with a spoon." *Finding Alaa* is on BBC iPlayer now and on BBC News on Saturday

Down tools!

Itching to get digging, weeding and fertilising now spring has finally arrived? Not so fast! Gardening is much easier when you work with nature rather than against it, says **Alys Fowler**

After almost 30 years of gardening, several of those at fine institutions such as the Royal Horticultural Society and Kew Gardens, I've realised that much of what I was taught is, if not wrong, not exactly on the mark either. All that laboured effort - the weeding, the fertilising, the digging, the tending and pruning, the selecting and conforming - it's not working. Not for the plants, the soil or the community around them, which includes you and me. Indigenous cultures everywhere have based their practices on observing and honouring the ecology, while we in the "developed world" wrote down our rules. Our attempt to control nature has perpetuated poor relations with all the beings in the garden, turning everything into some sort of battle, endless mowing, hoeing, watering or attacking of some critter. It is a lot of work and these days way more than I am prepared to put in. Now spring is finally unfurling, this growing season, perhaps rather than going to work in our gardens, we could all relax a little, spend more time looking and listening, waiting rather than reacting, being in the garden as much as actively gardening. Here is how it's done.

Throw out your spade

If you are even faintly interested in gardening you will have heard of "no dig", in which you eschew your spade and take up a hoe instead. Rather than turning the soil, a structure that has been hundreds of millions of years in the making and thus has thought long and hard about which way up it should be, you lightly hoe or "tickle"



the soil to remove any unwanted weeds and leave its multitudes of microbes, fungi and insects intact, exactly where they want to be. Happy microbes make for happy plant roots, better able to take up nutrients, fight off pests and diseases and withstand drought. As you keep doing it, there will be fewer weeds to remove.

Every soil has its weed seed bank: the adage goes that one year's seed is seven years of weed, but actually it's more like decades for several of them. They are there not to annoy you, but to act as a lifejacket to the soil. Exposed, weed-free soil is very easily damaged or eroded by the weather: the sun bakes it, the wind harries, the rain pelts it, either compacting it or, if a deluge comes, causing runoff. Again, those several million

years of evolution weren't a system sitting still, but advancing to a point of self-resilience. The vast majority of weed seeds need light to germinate. The more you disturb the soil, forking it over, digging things up, the more light you let in and the more the soil has to rush to protect itself. It flushes its weed-seed bank as a protective coat to hold the system together.

Ease off weeding

Talking of weeds, it's time we ditched the word altogether. Even the Chelsea flower show is rebranding weeds as "hero plants". Perhaps we can talk of them as common folk or elders (they've been around a lot longer than us), because every weed in your garden is trying to tell you something. The more one type dominates,

the louder the sermon is. Dandelions are saying your soil is a little compact, low on surface nutrients, particularly calcium and potassium; nettles tell you there is too much surface nitrogen. A flurry of annual weeds - bittercress, chickweed and mouse weeds - say your soil is dominated by bacteria, while thistles, docks, green alkanets and comfrey are another sign that the surface is a little low on nutrients. Brambles tend to proliferate where there is excessive nitrogen, but the land has been left alone so they can take better hold. There is some evidence, though, that they have a potential role in the natural regeneration of tree seedlings: deer won't browse in the middle of a bramble thicket and in a woodland this means the tree seedlings won't get nibbled, while

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Even the slugs settle down in the end. Rotting, disease and pests are just the Earth's recycling system



Alys Fowler in her garden

the mycorrhizal fungi will tap into the woodland network to boost the seedlings with enough growth to make it up and out of the thicket.

Once you start looking into the ecology of anything that we flippantly call a weed, you will discover that it is key in recycling nutrients, providing food in the form of nectar and pollen for all manner of insects, in all manner of weather. And not just for pollinators, but also for things such as leaf miners that turn into micro-moths, and flies that turn into food for hungry mouths reaching out of the nest, which turn into food for raptors flying high above.

Many of these weeds arrive to help the soil out. If you ease back on the weeding (you will still have to intervene sometimes), and instead pay attention to the soil,

many of these common folk will quite quickly become occasional folk instead. Annual ones are a sign that the soil has become bacterially dominated, having evolved from alluvial flood plains to meadows to fields, and thriving in the company of bacteria. They do not do well in the carbon-rich soils of woodlands, where instead fungi thrive.

Therefore, if you have too many annual weeds, add more carbon to your soil in the form of bulky homemade compost, cardboard (shredded, laid down as a sheet or added to your home composting), or brown leaves (you don't even have to make leaf mould). You don't have to dig it in - the worms will incorporate it all into the soil. That is, if you have given up your spade because one of the biggest threats to earthworms is our habit of ploughing and digging, partly because if you are chopped in half, you don't regrow, and because worm tunnels have their own beautiful architecture that supports the soil, but not if they have collapsed.

Embrace rot and death

Now it is time to relinquish tidying up. We all do it: remove a yellowing or nibbled leaf, sweep up the spent leaves and pick up sticks, prune out the dead and dying. In part, the idea behind all this neatening up was that this material would harbour slugs, other pests and diseases. It might, but one soul's pest is another's supper. It is true slugs rather love a pile of damp, slightly rotting leaves, but so do the beetles that hunt them.

This story is played out over and over again: if one thing proliferates in a natural system, something else, sometimes many things, will come to dine on this opportunity, to restore the balance. A garden allowed to find this balance doesn't have pest or disease problems - it has beings, who are living and dying, sometimes thriving, but rarely at the cost of the whole system. This balancing act takes time, several years or more, but I promise you this: even the slugs settle down. Rotting, disease and pests are just the Earth's recycling system. Plants have been around far longer than we have been gardening, with plenty of time to work on the nuances of reciprocity.

Stop chasing fast growth

Since the second world war, we have been falsely worshipping nitrogen and phosphorus as kings. Synthetic fertilisers, a bad hangover from bomb manufacturing, led us to believe we could rig the system. Using them meant farmers could turn every bit of soil into a field, for a while at least, and it trickled down into how we gardened.

'Plants have been around far longer than we've been gardening'



There is no need for manufactured chemicals of any kind in the garden. First, all soils differ but synthetic fertilisers take a one-size-fits-all approach. Regardless of where you are, you apply the same amount of plant food. These synthetic fertilisers don't stay in situ; they run off. And there is evidence that over time, they can deplete soils of stored carbon, reducing fertility, even if organic matter is still added. In short, if you buy fertilisers you are paying for short-term gains. Homemade compost is free and it will build your soil, helping store carbon and feeding your plants. Even if you make it really badly.

Compost in situ

You can do most of your composting without heaving stuff around. Don't clear away your spent crops, leave the pumpkin stems and leaves, take down the old tomato and bean plants and let everything lie on the soil. You can cover it to speed things up - market gardeners tend to use black plastic, but cardboard is plentiful and free. Covered or not, this allows the crop residues to go straight back to where they came from. If you want to plant straight back into the space you just harvested or cleared, try mowing, strimming, shredding or chopping up by hand the spent crops and planting straight into that. It's quicker, avoids hauling stuff to the compost heap and makes for wonderful, friable soil.

I'm not suggesting we should give up compost. It is still the best way to deal with household organic matter: food waste, paper and cardboard, pet hair. You just don't need to bring in extra compost or manures, when in- and on-ground methods might get you to a richer soil with less effort and less cost. If you do bring in compost, never, ever use peat. It is destroying precious peatland habitats that we need for carbon storage, clean water and flood management.



Shift your view of what needs doing. If the dandelion, dock or bramble isn't in the way, leave it

Encourage plant promiscuity

Finally, let us embrace the diverse, the slightly different, the variable in our flowers and foods. For millennia, we have been selecting and breeding plants so that they benefit us - this is our origin story. But for the longest time this was a laid-back process of letting the pollinators go to work, saving seed, growing on and noticing what worked best for the conditions where you were. It is known, technically, as creating a landrace, an ancient cultivar that is variable, often containing many alleles (forms of genes) that are not present in modern, highly bred cultivars. Landrace gardening is the opposite: akin to a plant orgy, you let all your carrot varieties, or whatever it is you are growing, cross-pollinate with each other to create a diverse breeding population. It is a survival strategy that diversifies the gene pool, making it better future-proofed than something highly bred.

The result is a beetroot or a bean or flower that is not uniform. As the different alleles play out their expression, so a landrace varies in colour, size, texture and even flavour. Anyone can become a landrace gardener. It's a fun, five-

year-plus experiment that takes very little effort, and will reward you with vegetables and flowers that work entirely for your system of growing and your soil. Don't want to spend all summer watering excessively (can I remind you how hot last summer was)? Breed a leafy green that doesn't need it. Got poor soil? Breed a potato that loves it. Want a tomato that tastes of something but doesn't mind a late frost? It's all possible.

Sow all the named varieties that have the characteristics you want, grow them and, with the help of bees, promote promiscuity and let them cross-pollinate. Select and save seed from only the ones that do well in your soil. Start again next spring, sowing your saved seed. Up to half of it might not survive, but you'll have oodles of seed, so it doesn't matter. Let the pollinators at the new plants, select seeds from the ones that are working and keep going. In a couple of seasons, you can have garlic that is entirely adapted to your soil - it might take a few more years to find that perfect pumpkin or tomato.

We don't know where we are heading as far as our future on this planet is concerned, but we might as well go there prepared with a wide gene pool, in relation with our common-folk plants and their communities, in awe of our insects, fascinated by our fungal friends, with our soils and our energy replenished. And like any friendship group, that is best done by hanging out, kicking back and enjoying each other's company.

In all of this I am not advocating giving up on gardening, but shifting the perspective on what needs doing. If the dandelion, dock or bramble isn't in the way, leave it. If the plant goes down in an orgy of aphids, leave it for some other garden being to clear up. Let plants die in place, learn to watch and observe before you make a move. You'll see that nature is way more willing to help than cause trouble.

Beware of the shrapnel



As Kharkiv was bombarded, one artist sheltered citizens in his underground studio - and helped children work out their trauma through painting workshops.

Charlotte Higgins reports from Ukraine's most creative bomb shelter

The eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, some 30km from the Russian border, has suffered grievously in the past year. Cruise missiles and shells rained down on it brutally last spring, killing hundreds of civilians, blasting the imposing regional government building and the opera house, cratering apartment blocks, shops, schools, churches and university buildings.

Having withstood the Russian



'He blossoms when he has scale to play with' ... Mykola Kolomiets in his studio with paintings by five-year-old Vanya

assault, the city is now in a state of tentative recovery, despite the occasional artillery hit. Though many buildings are boarded up or ruined, shops and cafes are opening up in pockets. On a recent spring day, teams of volunteers were out tending streetside flowerbeds and sweeping the public squares.

In the early days of February 2022, artist Mykola Kolomiets had no idea of the momentous and deadly events that were coming his way. Instead, he was preparing for an exhibition. The show was planned to celebrate a decade of Aza Nizi Maza, the children's art workshops he'd been running in his studio in the centre of the city.

"No one believed that the war was going to start," says Kolomiets, sporting an orange woolly hat and an infectious grin, "even though we were warned by the experts. My girlfriend joked that the studio would make the perfect bomb shelter."

You can see why: the studio is a labyrinthine, subterranean series of interconnected rooms. What it lacks in natural light - I spot a single window, taped up against the possibility of shattering glass - it makes up for in colour. Every surface is bright with the traces of old paint, and walls are thickly papered with artworks tacked to sheets of chipboard. A large table in the main room is heaped with children's drawings and illustrated books for them to delve into for inspiration

- everything from volumes of botanical illustrations to works on Picasso and Egyptian antiquities.

The quip about the air-raid shelter, though, turned out to be not so much of a joke when they looked at the map of safe refuges the city authorities circulated: the studio was marked on it. "It was a bit of a mess, so we started to clean it up, ready to receive people," Kolomiets says.

They also prepared to sleep there themselves. Kolomiets even evacuated his aquarium and its piscine inhabitants - who are still in residence at the studio - from his 1920s apartment block a couple of

kilometres away. Just as well: the block, the Slovo Building, originally designed to house Kharkiv's writers, intellectuals and journalists, who were later brutally purged by Stalin, took a partial hit in the shelling (it is, thankfully, still standing).

Kolomiets and his girlfriend didn't have to wait long for company. "As it turned out, all the other shelters nearby were in a terrible condition," he says. People living and working nearby soon found their way to the studio - including the entire staff of a nearby Turkish restaurant. "They helped a lot to keep the place going, and they brought a lot of food."

At the height of the shelling, in March and April, some 50 people were sleeping in the studio. The first civilian killed in the city died in their street. At one point in March a piece of shrapnel blasted through to the studio. Kolomiets holds out the twisted scrap of metal to show me: no one inside was hurt, but it's a reminder of that terrifying period. The last among those sleeping there left in August.

In the meantime, Kolomiets decided that the art classes he'd been holding for kids could not stop. He decided, with an artist colleague, to go to the nearby Historical Museum underground



The children's murals - including the soldier whose gun shoots flowers

station, where hundreds of Kharkivians slept during the worst of the bombardment - an experience vividly brought to life in the song Metro by Serhiy Zhdan, the poet, novelist and frontman of the ska band Zhdan and the Dogs.

One part of the grandiose, lofty halls of the Soviet-era station was reserved for sleeping quarters. The other was kept free for activities - breakdancing, for example, to try to give the subterranean inhabitants a bit of exercise - as well as some maths, literature and science taught by a woman the children called "Maria Biscuit", owing to her doubtless sensible notion of resorting to bribery to entice the kids to learn.

It was here that Kolomiets set to work with around 15 children. "We joked that I'd always been dreaming of having a really big studio," he says. "And here it was." For 40 consecutive days from March to May, he ran art classes in the underground.

Kolomiets explains how he worked: he'd start to draw a figure, and ask the children what they thought it might be. One might be a soldier, they'd say, one a volunteer - and they'd work from there. One little boy, Oleksii, spent days drawing and colouring in the tiny pixelated squares that went to form the soldier's camouflage jacket. "It was good to do this repetitious work, switching off your brain, concentrating on patterns," Kolomiets says.

Sometimes he'd leave drawing materials out for the children overnight, and come back in the morning to find something new under way - a picture of, say, a bee or an eye - and they'd work out how to incorporate the fresh drawings into the large works on paper that were taking shape.

"The children were always waiting for us," he says. "They'd come right up to the top of the escalator in the morning." Not just the children, he adds - adults, too, and the station workers would make sure as many lights as possible were switched on to allow them to work.

The drawings, Kolomiets tells me, are still there, by order of the mayor of Kharkiv - so I head to the underground station. There they are, attached to the great pillars

PHOTOGRAPHS: ED RAM/THE GUARDIAN



“The entire staff of a nearby Turkish restaurant found their way to the studio - and brought a lot of food

that run the length of the platform, commuters milling about between them. I spot the picture of the soldier whose uniform Oleksii lovingly coloured, with flowers bursting from his automatic rifle and cats pawing at the leg of his fatigues. I can only imagine the painting of a giant bird, bright with exotic plumage, acted as a reminder of the peaceful, lovely world above that had been shattered by the invasion. Elsewhere I spot the bee and the eye that Kolomiets told me about - they have found their way into an image of a hive that is also a house and, perhaps, a memory of home. A small expectant dog, its ears cocked, is positioned outside.

Back at the studio, Kolomiets proudly shows me some of the work that the young people have been making since the underground emptied of its inhabitants and he resumed regular teaching. Some of them are developing clear individual styles. Anna, who is 14, is currently drawing the destroyed buildings of Kharkiv, with oversize human figures inside. Khrystyna, also 14, is interested in transforming AI-produced images. Vanya, five, is making portraits massively scaled up. The point is, says Kolomiets, that "we are all unique - and we help you develop that uniqueness. It turns out that Vanya, for example, really blossoms when he has huge scale to play with."

I wonder about Kolomiets' own practice as an artist. "I was working on a single painting between 2012 and 2014," he tells me, "and then the war started." He is referring to Russia's illegal incursions into the Crimea and the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, almost a decade ago. When I ask him about that work, he replies: "It was a figure of violence." When he'd finished it, he says: "I felt I'd accomplished what I wanted to achieve." He hasn't made a painting of his own since.

I must look concerned, because he reassures me. Teaching his workshops "is eternal happiness for me", he says. "I truly experience joy in this." Even - perhaps especially - when the Russian cruise missiles and artillery rounds pounded down.

Cuddling cowboys

The two herders from Brokeback Mountain are getting back in the saddle - in a new musical version of the tragic tale of forbidden love. **Ryan Gilbey** grabs his lasso and rides on out

The tent in the corner of the rehearsal room is an off-white, bare-bones affair that scarcely looks robust enough to withstand a draught, let alone the howling wind on a Wyoming mountainside. But this, to quote MTV Cribs, is where the magic happens. The sheep-herders Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist snuggle up together here against the cold, their comradeship flaring into desire. So begins a love affair that will dominate their lives over the next few decades even as they go their separate ways and marry women.

Brokeback Mountain has already cantered from page (Annie Proulx's 1997 short story) to screen (Ang Lee's Oscar-winning 2005 film). Now it arrives on stage, adapted by Ashley Robinson and featuring Lucas Hedges, the grave young star of Manchester By the Sea, who steps into the late Heath Ledger's cowboy boots as Ennis. Playing Jack, the role originated by Jake Gyllenhaal, is Mike Faist, who was

wiry and electrified as Riff in Steven Spielberg's recent West Side Story.

Robinson, an easy-going South Carolina native, takes a seat in front of a wall covered with stark monochrome images of the Wyoming landscape, which serve

as a helpful reminder of the play's brutally isolated setting. Joining him are the director Jonathan Butterell and the composer Dan Gillespie Sells, collaborators from the razzle-dazzle musical Everybody's Talking About Jamie, who are quick to stress that Ennis and Jack won't be belting out any showstoppers. "Can you imagine?" says Butterell with horror.

Why not? "A song lets the audience into an internal dialogue," explains Sells. "But these guys don't have that. They're stuck. There'd be no way of writing that libretto. What we can do is bring you the poetry of Annie Proulx. Ang Lee did that in the film with cinematography.

Here we do it through music."

A country balladeer, played by the flame-haired Eddi Reader of Fairground Attraction, will perform on stage during the show, accompanied by a five-strong band. The 13 original songs that Sells has written will, he says,



'We're reluctant to call it a queer story' ... Mike Faist and, front, Lucas Hedges rehearsing

"speak to the action without narrating it. They evoke a world." Music was a central part of Robinson's vision when he began writing the play six years ago. "I was trying to figure out how to capture the inner landscape of Ennis, who really doesn't say a lot," he tells me. "Music has the ability to communicate the passage of time and the magnitude of space, providing a strong juxtaposition with the sparse rough language of the characters."

Those words were in the pitch he made to Proulx, who can be a tricky customer. Now 87, she told the Paris Review nine years ago that she wished she'd never written Brokeback Mountain because of all the deluded fan fiction it inspired. But within a few hours of receiving Robinson's proposal, she assented. "It's yours," she told him. "Go."

The result is no facsimile of the film. Entering the auditorium, theatregoers will see a sixtiesomething man asleep on stage - this is the older Ennis, who is present throughout as he gazes back at his younger self. "It's essentially a memory play," says Butterell. "It's about the deep regret that Ennis still holds on to. People often say Brokeback Mountain is a love story. I don't think it is. It's a story of fear, and how it corrupts love." He is singing from the same hymn sheet as Diana Ossana, who co-wrote the film with Larry McMurtry and said in 2006 that it concerned "two obviously gay people too afraid to actually commit to their love, so they run off and marry women and live a life unfulfilled out of fear."

But the director isn't keen on that "gay" tag. "I have no gay agenda," he says. "I want the play to be universal. I don't want it to feel niche." Surely he isn't arguing that the characters aren't gay? "It's not my job to assert anyone's identity. Ennis could be a straight man going through a complex negotiation of his sexuality." Sells agrees: "Of course, it's about two men who fall in love and have sex. But there's also nuance. That's why we're reluctant to go, 'Oh it's a queer story.'"

All of which comes straight from the Hollywood playbook of selling LGBTQ+ product. Think of the poster for the AIDS drama Longtime Companion ("A motion picture for everyone") or the trailer for Torch Song Trilogy ("It's not just about *some* people - it's about *everyone*") or Tom Ford plugging his film A Single Man ("It's not a gay story"). Robinson has written a sensitive adaptation, and the team are justified in wanting their work to be widely seen. They shouldn't be surprised, though, if queer audiences tire of such disavowals, and begin to wonder why the mountainous subject of sexuality keeps being reduced to a molehill. Brokeback Mountain is at @sohoplace, London, until 12 August

“Annie Proulx now wishes she had never written the original story

PHOTO: SHONA LOUISE; CINETEXT/ALLSTAR

as a helpful reminder of the play's brutally isolated setting. Joining him are the director Jonathan Butterell and the composer Dan Gillespie Sells, collaborators from the razzle-dazzle musical Everybody's Talking About Jamie, who are quick to stress that Ennis and Jack won't be belting out any showstoppers. "Can you imagine?" says Butterell with horror.

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Here we do it through music."



Classic film ... from left, Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger



Ad pioneers ...
Barbara Nokes
(third left) and
Alex Taylor
(third right)

Review Mad Women,
Channel 4

The trials and triumphs of the real-life Peggy Olsons

★★★★★

Lucy Mangan



The past, as I often used to say to LP Hartley over a pint of Old Toejam, is a foreign country. They do things differently there. And even though I spent my formative years there, this seems never more true than when the 1980s come under scrutiny. What was *happening?* What were we *thinking?*

And so to *Mad Women*, an entertaining jog-trot through the arrival in the 70s and ascendancy through the 80s of women in the advertising industry. The rise of consumerism and growing affluence meant that boys' clubs began to fissure under the pressure to supply and let in hitherto undesirables. Wrong class, wrong chromosomes - sometimes both, can you believe? - started turning up in banking. Then the rot spread, and here we are now with the working classes and women simply everywhere.

It was a time of tight-knit programming and unfractured audiences. Not only were we all having to watch the same programmes, we had to sit through the same ad breaks as well. Though, as Rosie Arnold, who worked her way up the ranks of the Bartle Bogle Hegarty agency from 1984 to 2016, notes, it was often the case that the breaks were the bits you looked forward to most because the advertisements were so good. Clips of the R White's Lemonade man, Lorraine Chase for Campari, Leonard Rossiter and Joan Collins for Cinzano remind you of the truth of this.

So too do the Shake n' Vac woman (beside herself

with happiness to bring freshness back to her carpets) and the sunlit mothers extolling mild, green Fairy Liquid's ability to keep hands that do dishes as soft as your face, though they also remind you of the unquestioned sexism of the time. Women had arrived in the lower echelons of the business, but, as Alex Taylor, who joined Saatchi & Saatchi when its two biggest clients were Thatcher's government and Silk Cut cigarettes, remembers, it was still the case that men - "especially creatives" - would get into physical fights with each other at work. They're so emotional. When Taylor got her druthers, she made the Castlemaine XXXX "Must have overdone it with the sherry" ad, lampooning men instead of lamping them, which seems a much better fulfilment of the brief. Nearly 40 years on, I remember watching it for the first time with my dad and both of us laughing.

"The arrogance of men of little count astounded me," says 80-year-old Barbara Nokes, whose career arc was basically that of Peggy in *Mad Men* - from secretary to copywriter when her talent became undeniable even to the dinosaurs in charge. "The words 'fuck' and 'off' were often applied." She became the creator of possibly the most famous ad of the entire decade - Nick Kamen stripping down to his boxers to wash his Levi's in a launderette, to a Marvin Gaye soundtrack and the appreciation of the young ladies waiting for their smalls to spin-dry. The male gaze suddenly switched to female, and a tradition so long unchallenged lay in a thousand tiny pieces on the launderette floor. Now the Diet Coke ad was possible, for which many thanks.

Perhaps it's a function of age and experience, but the women recalling the trials and triumphs of decades ago seem to have had a lot more fun than those we meet as we move into more recent times. As we reach the Dove campaign, using "real women" instead of models, and the BloodNormal advert for menstrual products that was the first to depict periods remotely accurately (red liquid rather than blue), the screen fills with painfully earnest talk about the power of advertising to change the world. Hmm. Yes. And no. The point of advertising is to shift products. If the best way to do that is to transgress social norms to stand out, advertisers do that. The best way to transgress social norms without putting people off buying your product is usually to do it in a progressive way, so in that limited sense the industry can be a force for good. But if the best way to sell something might be to associate it with a neo-Nazi group, you can bet it would do that too.

This programme isn't a deep interrogation of the capitalist machine. It is a celebration of women making inroads into an industry that, despite its vaunted modernity, excluded them from its inception. And those who were there have great stories to tell and great memories to evoke. It's well made, it's fun, it's a fine advertisement for their talents. It's not going to change the world. And that's fine.

Kids 9pm, Channel 4



The number of children in care in the UK is at its highest level on record, and this striking three-part documentary shows the complicated and emotionally heavy reality of this. Take 17-year-old Xorin (above), back living with his mum after three years in care - but both are struggling with mental health and the threat of the gang that groomed him. Workers from Coventry children's services share their insights into each case. A troubling but touching watch.

Hollie Richardson

Designing the Hebrides 8pm, BBC Two

"When you're the only interior designer on the island and the rugby club needs a makeover - who they gonna call?" Banjo Beale is on Mull this week, where "it's blowing a hooley", and the rugby team's clubhouse is in need of a new bar on a £2,000 budget. His first suggestion is a lick of pink paint. **HR**

and Cathie have more money left than they first thought, and Monique and Ladi are offered a car lift and dinner straight away. But whose advantage will get them over the finish line first? **HR**

Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir 9pm, Sky Arts

"If you're an eagle, you can see a rabbit two miles away." The same can't be said for Jim and Nancy amid torrential downpours. Singer Edwyn Collins and his wife, Grace Maxwell, join the hunt for the golden eagle. Their location: the blustery Isle of Harris in the Outer Hebrides. **DDW**

Naked Attraction
10pm, Channel 4
Another week, another love story laid bare. Nudity at no extra charge. This week, 25-year-old gamer and film fanatic Lauren plays the field, hoping to level up after three years of singleness. Presenter Anna Richardson also meets 28-year-old Ryan, who's on the lookout for a silver fox - complete with dad bod. **DDW**

What's On
Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday



Race Across the World 9pm, BBC One

After 46 days, it's the last leg of the 16,000km journey across Canada for the three remaining pairs to the final checkpoint in St John's, Newfoundland. Zainib and Mobeen have a 14-hour lead. Tricia

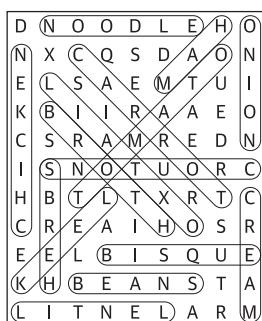
BBC One	BBC Two	ITV1	Channel 4	Channel 5	BBC Four
6.0 Breakfast (T) 9.15 Morning Live (T) 10.0 Scam Interceptors (T) 10.45 Maximum Security (T) (R) 11.15 Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) 12.15 Bargain Hunt (T) (R) 1.0 News (T) 1.30 Regional News and Weather (T) 1.45 Doctors (T) 2.15 Countryfile Diaries (T) (R) 3.0 Escape to the Country (T) (R) 3.45 The Bidding Room (T) (R) 4.30 Unbeatable (T) 5.15 Pointless (T) (R) 6.0 News (T) 6.30 Regional News and Weather (T) 7.0 The One Show at Eurovision (T) 7.30 EastEnders (T)	6.45 Bargain Hunt (T) (R) 7.30 Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) (R) 8.0 Sign Zone: 24/7 Pet Hospital (T) (R) 8.30 Take a Hike (T) (R) 9.0 Nicky Campbell (T) 11.0 News (T) 11.15 Politics Live (T) 1.0 Impossible (T) (R) 1.45 Eggheads (T) (R) 2.15 My Million Pound Menu (T) (R) 3.15 Wonders of the Universe (T) (R) 4.15 The Great British Sewing Bee (T) (R) 5.15 Flog It! (T) (R) 6.0 House of Games (T) (R) 6.30 Italian Road Trip (T) 7.0 The Hairy Bikers' Mediterranean Adventure (T) (R)	6.0 Good Morning Britain (T) 9.0 Lorraine (T) 10.0 This Morning (T) 12.30 Loose Women (T) 1.30 News and Weather (T) 1.55 Local News and Weather (T) 2.0 Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) 3.0 Tenable (T) (R) 4.0 Tipping Point (T) 5.0 The Chase (T) 6.0 Local News and Weather (T) 6.30 News and Weather (T) 7.30 Emmerdale (T)	6.05 Countdown (T) (R) 6.45 Cheers (T) (R) 7.35 The King of Queens (T) (R) 8.25 Frasier (T) (R) 9.55 Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) 10.55 Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) 11.55 News (T) 12.0 Steph's Packed Lunch (T) 2.10 Countdown (T) 3.0 Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) 4.0 A Place in the Sun (T) 5.0 Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) 6.0 The Simpsons (T) (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks (T) (R) 7.0 News (T)	6.0 Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine (T) 12.45 Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly (T) (R) 1.40 News (T) 1.45 Home and Away (T) (R) 2.15 FILM Killer in the Cabin (Jose Montesinos, 2022) (T) 4.0 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) 5.0 News (T) 6.0 Eggheads (T) (R) 7.0 Electric Cars: Which One Should I Buy? (T) (R)	7.0 Great Asian Railway Journeys (T) (R) Michael Portillo arrives in Singapore. 7.30 Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam (T) (R) The Industrial Revolution in Britain.
8.0 MasterChef (T) Food critic Grace Dent asks the contestants to create the ultimate pot luck supper. 9.0 Race Across the World (T) The eight-week expedition comes to an end as the contestants race to the final checkpoint at the most easterly point of the North American continent.	8.0 Designing the Hebrides (T) Banjo redesigns the Isle of Mull Rugby Club bar. 8.30 Wales' Home of the Year (T) The judges visit the south-west. 9.0 Turkey: Empire of Erdogan (T) A look at the Turkish president's brutal response to an attempted military coup in 2016.	8.0 Coronation Street (T) Daisy fails in her mission to put Ryan off Crystal, and Max refuses to share his troubles with David or Daniel. 9.0 I'm a Celebrity South Africa (T) With the clock ticking down and the finish line in sight, the campmates are pushed to their limits in the latest Survival Trials.	8.0 Location, Location, Location (T) Phil Spencer helps Freya and Elliot find a new home in the middle of Edinburgh. 9.0 Kids (T) New series. Young people and families are followed through a crucial year in care, with unprecedented access to those under the watch of Coventry children's services.	8.0 Natural History Museum: World of Wonder (T) New series. Behind the doors of the London museum, a young dinosaur researcher scans a jawbone belonging to a Gorgosaurus. 9.0 999: Critical Condition (T) After a car crash, 26-year-old Tino is rushed into hospital with an aortic tear.	8.0 Chris Packham's Animal Einsteins (T) (R) A look at nature's best navigators. 9.0 A History of Ancient Britain: Orkney's Stone Age Temple (T) (R) Neil Oliver reports on a 5,000-year-old temple discovered in Orkney, which is helping to increase our understanding of Neolithic people.
10.0 News (T) 10.30 Regional News (T) Weather 10.40 Race Across the World (T) The contestants reunite for the first time since the end of the race. Last in the series. 11.40 Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars (T) (R) Gordon tasks the contenders with perfectly de-shelling lobster. 12.40 Weather (T) 12.45 News (T)	10.0 Detectorists (T) (R) Lance is obsessed with finding the thief who stole his gold. 10.30 Newsnight (T) Weather 11.15 FILM Red Joan (2018) (T) Spy drama, starring Judi Dench. 12.50 Sign Zone Future Food Stars (T) (R) 1.50 Saving Lives in Leeds (T) (R) 2.50 Iolo's Borderlands (T) (R) 3.20 This Is BBC Two (T)	10.05 News (T) Weather 10.35 Local News (T) Weather 10.50 Peston (T) Political magazine show with Robert Peston. 11.45 Heathrow: Britain's Busiest Airport (T) (R) An upgraded passenger is unhappy. 12.10 Shop: Ideal World 3.0 I'm a Celebrity South Africa (T) (R) 3.50 Unwind With ITV (T) 5.05 Family Fortunes (T) (R)	10.0 Naked Attraction (T) 11.05 First Dates (T) (R) 12.05 24 Hours in A&E (T) (R) 1.0 Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) 1.50 FILM Les Misérables (Lady Ly, 2019) (T) Thriller, starring Damien Bonnard. 3.35 Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) 4.30 The Secret Life of the Zoo (T) 5.10 The Dog House (T) (R)	10.0 Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts (T) (R) 11.05 A&E After Dark (T) (R) 12.05 999: Criminals Caught on Camera (T) (R) 1.0 Teleshopping (T) 3.0 History of Britain (T) (R) 3.50 Friends (T) (R) 4.15 Never Teach Your Wife to Drive (T) (R) 5.05 House Doctor (T) (R) 5.30 Milkshake!	10.0 FILM The Lost Language of Cranes (Nigel Finch, 1991) (T) Drama, starring Brian Cox and Angus Macfadyen. 11.30 Britain and the Sea (T) (R) With Ellen MacArthur. 12.30 Great Asian Railway Journeys (T) (R) 1.0 Age of Steam (T) (R) 1.30 H2O (T) (R) 2.25 Crossing England in a Punt (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three	Film4	Sky Max	Radio 3	Radio 4	Half Hour (20/20)
7.0pm Top Gear 8.0 Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star 9.0 Made Up in Belfast 9.30 Made Up in Belfast 10.0 FILM Lady Bird (2017) 11.30 Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star 12.30 Made Up in Belfast 1.0 Made Up in Belfast 1.30 Top Gear 2.30 Evicted 3.0 Evicted 3.30 Hire Me: Competing for a Dream Job	of Games 3.0 Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA 3.25 Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA 4.0 Teleshopping	Film4 11.0am FILM The Far Country (1954) 1.0 FILM 23 Paces to Baker Street (1956) 3.05 FILM Sands of Iwo Jima (1949) 5.15 FILM Cowboy (1958) 7.05 FILM Failure to Launch (2006) 9.0 FILM Hunter Killer (2018) 11.20 FILM Heat and Dust (1982) 2.0 FILM Krisha (2015)	8.0 Portrait Artist of the Year 2017 9.0 Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir 10.0 FILM I Am Alfred Hitchcock (2021) 11.40 Comedy Legends 12.40 A Brush With Comedy 2.35 Cold War Steve Meets the Outside World 4.30 Master of Photography 5.30 Auction	Radio 3 6.30am Breakfast 9.0 Essential Classics 12.0 Composer of the Week: Pauline Viardot and Her Circle (R) 1.0 Lunchtime Concert. A second recital from the Ryedale festival, featuring accordionist Ryan Corbett with music by Bach, Semionov, Franck, Repnikov and Albéniz. 2.0 Afternoon Concert. Tugan Sokhiev conducts the German Symphony Orchestra in Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony. Plus, Victor Julien-Laferrière joins the orchestra for Saint-Saëns' First Cello Concerto. 4.0 Choral Evensong. Live from Bristol Cathedral. 5.0 In Tune 7.0 Classical Mixtape 7.30 In Concert. John Storgård conducts the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and violist Lawrence Power in Sibelius's The Tempest Suite No 2, Cassandra Miller's I Cannot Love without Trembling (Viola Concerto) and Tchaikovsky's (arr G Morton) Symphony No 5. 10.0 Free Thinking 10.45 The Essay: Artists and the Spirit World - Estella Canziani's The Piper of Dreams (R) 11.0 Night Tracks 12.30 Through the Night	21st Century Blues (6/6) 2.0 It's Not What You Know (5/6) 2.30 Hobby Bobbies (3/4) 3.0 An Imaginative Experience (1/2) 4.0 Peeler (2/6) 4.30 Five Red Herrings (7/8) 5.0 Catch-22 (8/10) 5.15 Young Victoria (3/10) 5.30 Women Talking About Cars (2/4) 6.0 Hancock's Half Hour (20/20) 6.30 21st Century Blues (6/6) 7.0 It's Not What You Know (5/6) 7.30 Hobby Bobbies (3/4) 8.0 So Bad It's Good? 9.0 Short Cuts (2/6) 9.30 Dark Corners (8/10) 9.45 The Shadow Over Innsmouth (3/15) 10.0 Lemn Sissay's Social Enterprise (2/4) 10.30 Pick-Ups (3/6) 10.55 The Comedy Club Interview 11.0 Alex Horne Presents the Horne Section (4/4) 11.30 Dave Podmore: A Pod for Europe 12.0 An Imaginative Experience (1/2) 1.0 Peeler (2/6) 1.30 Five Red Herrings (7/8) 2.0 Catch-22 (8/10) 2.15 Young Victoria (3/10) 2.30 Women Talking About Cars (2/4) 3.0 Hancock's Half Hour (20/20) 3.30 21st Century Blues (6/6) 4.0 It's Not What You Know (5/6) 4.30 Hobby Bobbies (3/4) 5.0 An Imaginative Experience (2/2)
Dave 6.0am Teleshopping 7.10 Lazy Boy Garage 7.35 Lazy Boy Garage 8.0 Border Force: America's Gatekeepers 9.0 Cops on the Rock 10.0 Storage Hunters UK 10.30 Storage Hunters UK 11.0 Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul 12.0 Cop Car Workshop 1.0 Cop Car Workshop 2.0 Top Gear 3.0 Top Gear 4.0 Driving Wars 5.0 Expedition With Steve Backshall 6.0 Taskmaster 7.0 Richard Osman's House of Games 7.40 Richard Osman's House of Games 8.20 Room 101 9.0 Have I Got a Bit More News for You 10.0 QI XL 11.0 QI XL 12.0 Mock the Week Christmas Special 2020 12.40 QI 1.20 Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish 2.30 Richard Osman's House	E4 6.0am Hollyoaks 6.30 Hollyoaks 7.0 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA 9.0 The Neighborhood 10.0 The Big Bang Theory 10.30 The Big Bang Theory 11.0 Modern Family 11.30 Modern Family 12.0 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 12.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 1.0 The Big Bang Theory 1.30 The Big Bang Theory 3.0 Modern Family 4.0 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 4.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 5.0 The Big Bang Theory 5.30 The Big 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Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch



Solution no 16,538

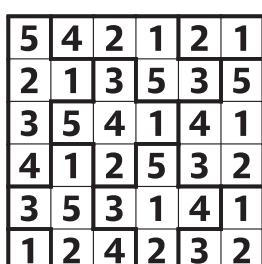


Sudoku no 6056

5	8	2	6	3	9	4	1	7
9	3	1	7	8	4	2	6	5
6	4	7	5	2	1	9	8	3
4	1	3	8	7	5	6	2	9
2	7	6	4	9	3	1	5	8
8	9	5	2	1	6	3	7	4
3	2	9	1	5	8	7	4	6
1	6	8	9	4	7	5	3	2
7	5	4	3	6	2	8	9	1

Word wheel
IDENTICAL

Suguru



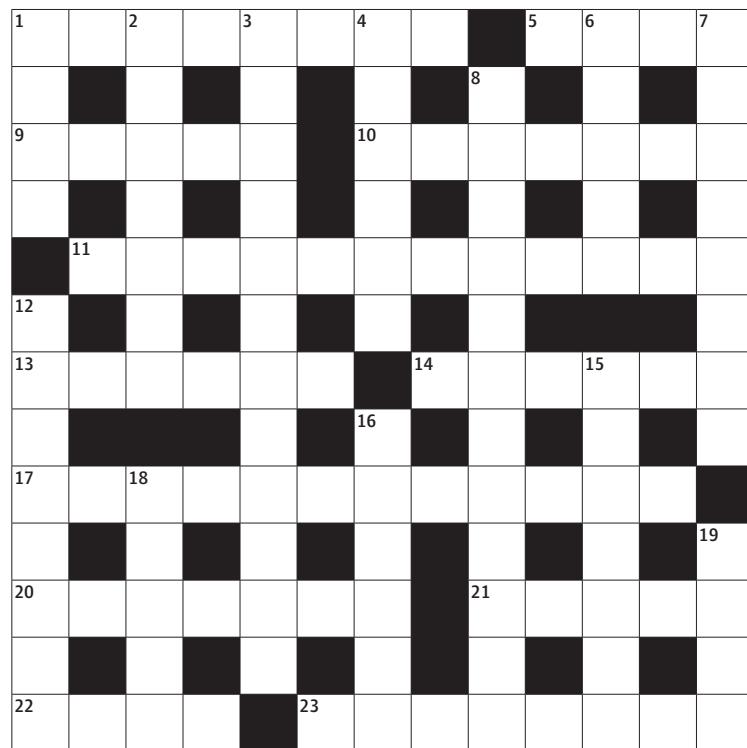
Quick crossword no 16,539

Across

- 1 Balkan capital (8)
5 Having the required capacity (4)
9 (Meat of a) castrated fowl (5)
10 Contemptible people (informal) - storage (anag) (7)
11 Institution for training musicians (12)
13 Illicit romance (6)
14 Head count (6)
17 Rear end (12)
20 Derived by logic (1,6)
21 Go in (5)
22 Decisive blow in the ring (4)
23 Candid (3-2-3)

Down

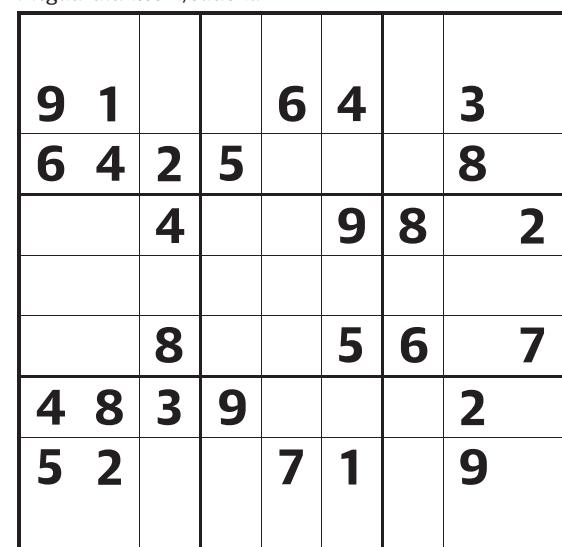
- 1 Dissenting faction (4)
2 Criticism (7)
3 Something indefinable (2,2,4,4)
4 Someone who has made religious vows (6)
6 Party (informal) (5)
7 Hazlitt or Montaigne, say (8)
8 Long-running US TV programme with puppets (6,6)
12 Money added to the bill when buying something (8)
15 Layer (7)
16 Spittle (6)
18 Like an anorak? (5)
19 Old(er) female relative (abbr) (4)



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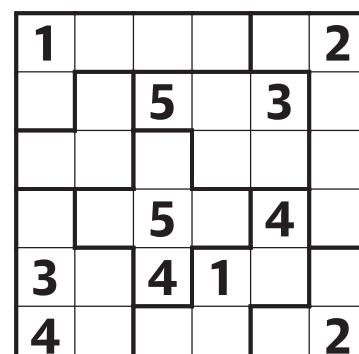
Sudoku no 6057

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku



Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.



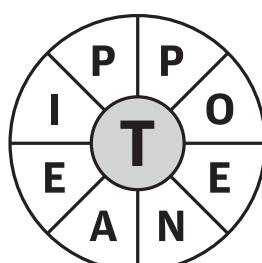
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 evergreens in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.



Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-48. Good-40. Average-29.



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Trivia corner

Which artist has had the second most No 1 British albums, after the Beatles?

- a. Elvis Presley
- b. Madonna
- c. Robbie Williams
- d. David Bowie

Answer top right

